

Interview With

**HOWARD “SLICK” ALFRED**  
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project:  
Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted At Home Of  
Howard “Slick” Alfred  
Athens, Texas  
Thursday—June 30, 2005

Interviewed By:  
Robert Nieman  
Longview, Texas

**E-Book Project Staff:** Robert Nieman, Volunteer; Byron A. Johnson, Christina Stopka  
& Judy Shofner, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum staff.



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Howard "Slick" Alfred  
Retired Texas Ranger

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** (tape starts in middle of sentence)...This is Thursday, June 30, 2005, and we are in Athens, Texas at the home of Howard Alfred. My name is Robert Nieman. The purpose of this interview is to discuss Texas Ranger, Howard Alfred's career. Mr. Alfred, do I have your permission to video tape this interview?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Mr. Alfred you understand that this videotape will belong to you and to me?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And finally, do I have your permission to present copies of this tape to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools and etc.?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Would you please state your full name and where is your current address.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I am Howard B. Alfred, I live at 2419 Cecil Drive in Athens, Texas.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And when and where were you born?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I was born in Tyler, Texas in 1933, November the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And your parents names?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** My parents were Ross and Elizabeth Alfred.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Are they still living?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** They are both deceased.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you have any siblings?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I have one sister still alive, there was four of us in the family.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What were their names, chronologically?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** My brother was Bill Alfred and I have a sister, Betty Lee and a deceased sister Patsy Bryan.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You the youngest?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I was the baby.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Where did you go to school and when did you graduate?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I went to school in Tyler and graduated from Tyler High School in 1951.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Is that John Tyler?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it was ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Just Tyler then.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Just Tyler High School then, just one high school there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, did you do any college?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Hadn't done any college.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** When....one of the things we strive to do in these, we try to not just do your Ranger, we try to do a person's whole life, so somebody a hundred years from now is looking at this and they want to do more, and we can tell them more about you. When you were in school, what were you're favorite subjects?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh, I don't know that I had any favorites subjects, I guess I was a....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Mine was girls.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ...basically one that primarily wanted to finish school. But I did ....at that time it was very important to me that I graduate from high school.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you have any special teachers or friends?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh I had some great teachers and what not, I don't remember all of them. We had our hundredth anniversary of my grade school, that would be Douglas Elementary in Tyler and my first grade teacher was at that hundredth anniversary celebration, which was two or three years ago and that was Ms. Hazel Chapel. And as far as I know Ms. Chapel is still alive today. But I had a teacher in junior high school that was Mr. Richards, who was my homeroom teacher and was also my algebra teacher, and he made algebra easy for me. He taught me some things about algebra and I got by algebra I and II.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You was talking about your alge....he made algebra easy for you?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, I just ah.... I knew when I ....when I really got it, when I got the meaning of algebra, and it became quite easy for me then. But I've never applied my algebra since then.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Any special friends?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh I had a lot of friends. There was an old boy named Jerry Raley was a good friend of mine, Joe McClain, all through school.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How did Raley spell his last name?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** R-A-L-E-Y. Jerry Max Raley. Just a lot of friends, Bobby Joe Moore and I think Bobby Joe is now deceased. And as far as I know Joe and Jerry are still alive at this time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you participate in any extra-curricular like band or sports?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I played a little football in junior high school and a little baseball and a little football in high school, but not much. I never did make the first team.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know that feeling.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah and then when I graduated from high school I just went pretty soon after that into the military, went into the Air Force in 19....January of 1952.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How long were you in the Air Force?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I stayed in there for four years, I got discharged in January of 1956.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Where all were you stationed and what were your duties?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I started out in San Antonio and then went through my basic training in Wichita Falls, went through a technical school in Schnook Field, Illinois and come back to Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth. And ah....went to work on a....in maintenance, I was working on B-36's. And transferred from Carswell to Limestone Air Force Base in Maine, which was a brand new Air Force Base at that time, there was two squadrons of us from Fort Worth. Fort Worth went up there with 69 ....from the 70<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron...(unintelligible). And I finished my tour of duty, was discharged in Maine.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Question....basic question that I over looked, what is your wife's name and do you have any children?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well my wife's name is Mary Alice and I have been married about 25 years now. I was married 24 years before that to Iva Alfred and Iva and I had three children which was ah...we had a son, David, who passed away in 1981 and David was born in 1954 and Janet is my oldest daughter and she was born in 1957. And I have a third daughter, Julia, was born in 1962. Mary Alice and I got married and she had three children, a girl, Mary...Mary Kay and a boy named Paul and a boy named Angus. Paul and Angus are in the Dallas area and Mary Kay is now Mary Kay Webb and lives in South Carolina.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I guess the first question I really have to ask, how did you get the nickname Slick?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh, the best I remember a Highway Patrol, a partner of mine in Longview gave me that name. We had a problem with a fellow we arrested. Back in those days we ....we didn't handcuff very many people when we arrested them, mostly drunks. And....and ah...we started into the cool house there in Longview, to put this guy in jail and my partner, Billy Davis....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** It wasn't Glenn that give you the nickname?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, no, it was after Glenn. Billy Davis was walking in front of this subject and the subject jumped Billy. And when he did, well Billy wasn't a very large fella at the time, and when he did he ah....Billy just kind of spun around. And when he did ah...I just hit the guy with my fist one time right in the face and jarred him loose from Billy and knocked him down. And we got him subdued, and when that was all over with Billy said, "That was the slickest thing I ever saw". So Slick just kind of emerged from that. And he'd probably tell you a different line along that way. But that's where it started, Billy Davis my Highway Patrol partner started it.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** All right, well let's go back then, you're just out of the Air Force, now what?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well when I come out of the Air Force I had one child and was expecting a second one at that time, and we lost that baby about a month after we got home. I went to work for my uncle.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What was that baby's name?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That baby's name was Phillip Wayne.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Phillip Wayne?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Uh hum, he was born dead. But I went to work for my uncle in his garage at West Bow Street and Spring Street in Tyler. And I was writing work orders and just kind of doing around there. And I had made application for the Highway Patrol while I was still in the service and I believe it was in April when I tested for the Highway Patrol there in Tyler at the American Legion building. And there must have been just ....seemed like there was just hundreds of people there taking the test for Highway Patrol at that time. And I didn't hear from them again until some time in May when I got a call from Sergeant Frank Feasel in Tyler.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How do you spell Feasel?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** F-E-A-S-E-L I believe. But ah...he ah....asked if I was still interested in going with the Highway Patrol and said he had my investigation to do, that I had apparently passed the test and what not. So I told him yes I was still interested and so he did the investigation. And then later I was called and went to school in June of 1956, in Austin.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And what school was that?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I ....if my memory serves me correctly, it was the 23<sup>rd</sup> Highway Patrol school, it was the second school, I believe, at the new Highway Patrol training grounds, which is at the DPS Headquarters. And the old training ground was at Camp Mabry.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well had you ever thought about being in law enforcement?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh I'd always wanted to be in law enforcement, I just ah....there was a Highway Patrolman lived about six blocks away from me, his name was Glen Ray York. And I used to see Glen Ray come in over at his home with his patrol car and everything and I thought, boy that just would be the grandest thing around. And ah...had another great old fella that lived up the street from me, was a Tyler City Police officer.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What was his name?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And his name was E. J. Wade, was a police officer there in Tyler, for the City of Tyler, for years.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you have anyone in your family background in law enforcement?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, no never did, none that I know of.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did you talk to the patrolman or Officer Wade much before you got into law enforcement?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I just...he knew that I was interested in that and ah...his daughter, Martha Chrome, went to work for DPS in the office there in Tyler some years later. She had married a friend of mine named Bobby Chrome, he was my older brother's brother-in-law. And ah...so Martha, Mr. Wade's daughter, worked at DPS for years and retired eventually from DPS.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well ah...were you given any choices while you were at ah...in school, that this is where I want to be stationed?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, I think we had three...three choices and of course I put in Tyler as one, but they weren't in the habit then of sending a person back to their home town. Ah...so...but I just put District 12, which was the Tyler District was my first choice and then I really don't remember what my second and third choices were. But ah... I can remember Chief W. J. Elliott coming into the academy down there and he handed us envelopes after we were about to complete our schooling. And ah...when he handed me mine he said, "Your lucky." And I opened the envelope and it said Longview. And I said, "Yes I am lucky". So I was very fortunate in getting a station.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well he was from Tyler was he not?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, he was.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you remember his graduation speech? Ed Gooding could quote it word for word.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ed said he walked up, he said E. J....or he said Chief Elliott was crusty.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's right, he was.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He said he walked up there, looked us over and said, "I brought you here with a three cent stamp, and we can replace you with a three cent stamp," and turned around and walked off.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well that's...that's just about ...about the way he was. But he was a very nice gentleman, he really was.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you ah....he ended his career in Tyler if I remember right, didn't he or not?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No I think he ended his career in Austin.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ok.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** As the Chief, at that time I believe he was called Chief of the Highway Patrol.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, so now you're going to Longview.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Going to Longview.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And did you move there immediately?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** My wife got ill just about the time I got out of school and was hospitalized and so they let me stay in Tyler for a week before I moved to Longview. And then after she got out of the hospital we went to Longview and found us a place to live.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And where did you live in Longview? On Young Street wasn't it?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, we lived on East Young Street, 206 or 209 East Young Street.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What did you do that week you were in Tyler?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I worked at the Tyler office. And I can remember about the second day, I went to work, we wore Sam Brown's back in those days....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** It's a belt.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....with a leather strap over our shoulder and this, that and the other. And ah....of course I was very anxious to go to work, I was very proud to go to work. But the Tyler office at that time was the District office and the Captain, Lieutenant and everyone else was stationed right there. And I was working with a Highway Patrolman named Lacey Thomas. And Lacey I believe has come and picked me up that morning, I was living with my mother and dad there in Tyler. And he had picked me up that morning and about ten o'clock that morning I reached up from my Sam Brown strap and I kept feeling there and I didn't have my tie on. And we had tying ties at the time, we didn't have snap on ties. And I reached up there and I had my top button buttoned, but my tie wasn't on. So I got up as quick as I could and I eased into the office where Lacey was in there and I says, "Would you take me back at my house so I can get my tie". I said, "Didn't you notice I didn't have my tie on". He said, "Yeah, but I thought that's the way you wanted it". So I think we got out of the office without the Captain or Lieutenant seeing us and I went back home and put my tie on before we went out on the road.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** So now you go to Longview.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** So I moved to Longview and I moved into a duplex on Young and I had never met my partner to be. Then when I moved into the duplex there was an older couple living behind 206 East Young and his name was Elliott. And I quickly found out that their son was Glenn Elliott who was going to be my partner. And ah...so I actually met Glenn Elliott's mother

and Dad before I ever met Glenn. And ah....my son got well acquainted with Glenn's dad because every time Mr. Elliott and my boy would get together, Mr. Elliott would give my boy a half a stick of juicy fruit gum.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Which boy was that now?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's my son David, my oldest who is now deceased. But he was about 2 or something like that at the time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And this was 1956 wasn't it?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** '56 and David was born in 1954, this was the latter part of 1956, September of 1956 when I got out of school. And he called Mr. Elliott, Gum, cause every time he saw him well he gave him that piece of gum.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you remember your first time you met Glenn?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Glenn drove up in the front of my house, I can see it.... I can just see him driving up there in that Highway Patrol car and got out and come to the door. And Glenn and I met right there on my door step, was the first time we met. And ah...got in the car with him and we drove off and went to work. And we worked together for about 5 years and ah.... I say together, it was just Glenn and I there. I worked about, I guess a year and a half or something like that and then they assigned another car to Longview, so Glenn and I started working separate in different cars.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well being a former truck driver and I know when you sit beside a person as close as you and I are sitting right now, almost around the clock, tempers can get short. Did you and Glenn ever have any cross words.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Never had a cross word.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I'd heard that before and that's amazing to me.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well we just ....we just I guess were very compatible and what not, but ah..... I had a lot of respect for Glenn, cause I saw right away that he was a man of abilities and knew what his job was and how to go about doing it. And I was very grateful for being able to work with someone like that to start off with.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And who was your Sergeant?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** My Sergeant was Lloyd Webb.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Who was Glenn's....the guy that broke Glenn in.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** He was....yes, he was Glenn's partner at one time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well can you ....anything while ya'll were Highway Patrolmen together that you could ...would like to relate? I know he mentioned something about some kind of .....driving or something between Gladewater....I think that's where Gladewater....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it was between what was then Longview and Greggton, Longview and Greggton were separate entities at the time. And between Longview and Greggton it was four lane, non-divided highway and had improved, raised shoulders that were most of the places. And some....always along on those raised shoulders were storm drains, right at the shoulder of the highway. Glenn and I got in a pursuit going west out of Longview toward Greggton and we were driving along there and probably running, oh around 100 miles an hour, pursuing this vehicle and came up behind some other vehicles and the driver we were pursuing passed them and he went to the wrong side of the highway and passed them. And ah....which was of course a very dangerous move. So you know, in a very short span of time there my mind went to working and said, "well what are we going to do". And we were rapidly coming up behind the vehicles too. So about that time I found out what we was going to do. Course Glenn hit the shoulder of Highway 80, to my surprise ....total surprise, at a 100 miles an hour and of course we passed

those cars, and it was just zip, zip, you know and we were past the cars. And when we hit Highway 80 again I can remember I was still trying to catch my breath from going up on the shoulder because I didn't know which way we were going.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How long had you been a patrolman?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Not very long at that time. I didn't .... I hadn't learned all the tricks of the trade, but that's one more there that I learned. But ah....Glenn was a great partner and he was a great driver too.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I think he pretty much known for his, shall we say, aggressive driving.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well back then you just ....you kind of had to be an aggressive driver. Cause there was no radar or anything like that and everything that you did was basically a pursuit of some kind or the other.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I know....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** So good driving was a ....was a necessity.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I know through my interviews with him and other Rangers who were Highway Patrolmen, that ah....faced many more really in some ways more dangerous situations than you ever did as a Ranger. I know using Glenn for the example there, talking about Highway 80 out there around where the Mickey Mantle restaurant was at, he rolled right out in the middle of the road with an old boy and you know, bad guy, real bad. And there's other incidences and Ed Gooding was the same way, were very ....could you relate any situations like that.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh I know there was a lot of them. I can remember one where we stopped a guy on a...I think just for his bad driving and speeding and things like that. And

ah....that's when I found out some more about Glenn Elliott and about his toughness and what not. Because we was just standing there talking to the guy and just all of a sudden he just poled Glenn right in the stomach. And of course Glenn went with the punch and come right back with his punch. And that was all of that show. And ah...yeah that was really something and I kind of marveled at was his....one his durability in taking that punch and two his quick reaction to delivering his own.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well when ya'll....you got your car and he had his car, did they give you a rookie to train?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, we were the only two there for ah....so there wasn't anybody else to train.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What was your area basically?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well if we worked at the same times, one of us would work south and east of ...of ah....Longview.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Back towards Lakeport and that area down in there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, and then over into Harrison County. We worked to Hallsville on Highway 80, being over in Harrison County. And the other would work north and west.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He talks about a case, well it wasn't a case, an accident, he was talking about...we were talking about that road down towards Lake Port.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He came upon a wreck in his car and it was a terrible wreck, and he got the people out and discovered it was his mom and dad. And I think you came along right after that, can.... I mean I've heard him tell the story, can you probably fill in a lot of details that he.... I think leFort Worth

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I .... I don't know .... I don't really remember ....his mom and dad worked out south of town there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, there at Resistol.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Resistol hat factory and I really don't .... I remember them having the accident and Glenn...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Came upon it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....came upon it and this, that and the other and then I went on out and worked it. Because it was his folks and what not. And I don't really remember many details of the accident right at this time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well ah....how long was it before they assigned more patrolmen there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How long was it just you and Glenn for that area?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it was Glenn and I until the time that Glenn made Ranger in 19.....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** '61.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....'61 and then I got another partner....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And who was....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....there then ah...now let me think.... I think that's when Billy Davis moved over there, or there ....at one time there was a guy over there named Charles Blankenship.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well there was a guy between you....that Glenn worked with, between you and Webb, I think he went up to Daingerfield and then he.....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Kenneth....Kenneth Walker was his partner.....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** ....he's passed away.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....when I came to Longview, when I came to Longview Kenneth had transferred to Daingerfield.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He has since passed away.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, he ....he ah....worked for the Highway Patrol for several years and then went to work for the railroad and ah....passed away several years ago.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You ah....well ah....when Davis come, was he already an experienced officer or did you have to train him?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, he was a....Billy Davis had been on the coast and then he came up to Kilgore and was an officer ....was a Highway Patrolman there in Kilgore for awhile. And then when Glenn .... I believe it was when Glenn made Ranger that Billy transferred over to Longview.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, go back to your school, I want to ask you....your highway patrol school, did any other people that you graduated with become Rangers, besides yourself?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ah yes, yeah ah....a guy that ah...kept on working and was probably ....has just recently retired as the oldest working Ranger that there ever was and that was Leo Hickman. And Leo and I went through highway patrol school together. Ah.... let's see, I don't recall any more that went on to be Rangers.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You left the Highway Patrol for awhile.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, after I'd been on about ten years, I got into a scrape over in Kilgore and it was, you know, a gun deal and this, that and the other. My wife got all in a tizzy about that....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Care to expand on it?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....and stayed on me. Well this was a deal where I jumped a speeder in Kilgore and run him back toward Longview and stopped him just outside of Kilgore. And ah....that was a four lane highway and I pulled up beside of him and motioned him over and he stopped quicker than I did and I had to wait for some more traffic. I was in the inside lane and he was in the outside lane. And he pulled over on the shoulder and stopped and I had to wait for a car to pass. And when I turned I come in at an angle behind him, not parallel with him. And ah...so I reached in to get my ticket book, I'd checked him at like 70 miles an hour and I don't remember what the zone was at that time, he was running about 70 miles an hour. And I reached down to get my ticket book and when I picked it back up and started to get out of the car, he put a 30 caliber carbine right beside of my head. And I remember the clip on it was about that long, had a banana clip in it, what we call a banana clip. And ah...he asked me, you know, "what the hell you want", you know. And I said, "well I stopped you for speeding". And he said, "no", said, "you're lying". And I said, "no". And I'm sitting there with both hands on the steering wheel, with my clipboard in my hand, my pistol at my side, strapped into my holster.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And no partner.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And alone, and so he told me he said, "you're after me for something else". And I said, "I don't know you, don't know anything about you". I said, "I stopped you because you were speeding". And ah...so we set there and talked back and forth in that manner for a pretty good while. You know, I'm lying and he's, you know, telling me no. I don't know anything about you, which was very true, I didn't know who he was. Well he finally told me, he said, "well just get the hell out of here". And he stepped back with his gun and I just put my clipboard down in the seat, put my car in reverse and backed up, turned around and he just followed me down the highway for a short ways with that rifle. And then he got back in his car

and he made a U-turn on the shoulder of the lane and went back the wrong way toward Kilgore. And I was at a place, and you might be familiar with it, but it's just on the Longview side of ....oh it's about a mile from Highway 31 out of Kilgore toward Longview on what was then Highway 26, which was....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** 259 now it's 31.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** It was at a place called Rabbit Creek and there's no cross over in the Rabbit Creek area until you get on toward Longview. So I just went on down and I saw him leave and I picked up my radio and called Kilgore and told them what had happened. And that's when Kilgore informed me, said, "yeah that's the guy we're looking for, for shooting up his house and shooting at his wife and kids". Which was the first I knew of who this man was.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** They hadn't broadcast that? I mean, well obviously not.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** They may have while I was sitting there busy with him, but I didn't hear it and he didn't hear it. If he'd of heard it, that would of probably been the end of me with the disposition he had right at the time. But I didn't know anything about it at the time. And apparently while this was all going on was when Kilgore was, I imagine, on their channel talking about this incident that happened that he was involved in there in Kilgore. But anyway, I went on to the first cross over I can get to and turned and headed back toward Kilgore. And in the mean time a Kilgore unit says, "there he goes by the Streamliner going south on 26", which would be toward Kilgore College. And so they got in pursuit of him and I was, you know, much further behind, but trying to get there. And ah....they got right at the....what is it, five points, right there at the college....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** .... I believe there's five intersections coming together there, five streets...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, it's right there at the corner of Kilgore College, north corner.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well he just....he bailed out of his car, dropped down on his knees and started firing that rifle at that Kilgore car that was coming in pursuit of him. Of course....and then I heard them say, he's...you know, he's firing at us. There was three officers in that Kilgore car, the Chief .....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What year was this, about '66 or....you said about ten years after....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, it was about '65 or something like that. And I know that Chief's name just as well as I know my own, but I can't think of it right now.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That's before my time there.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But anyway, the Chief was driving and an officer was sitting beside of him and the officer that was sitting beside of him was Tatum Brown. Tatum Brown was an old deputy worked in Rusk County and had come to work for Kilgore PD. And then there was another officer sitting in the back, and I don't....Clammer was the Chief of Police.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you remember the suspects name?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, not right off. But anyway, he fired at them and Mr. Brown finally eased up beside the suspect's car and raised up and shot him through the vehicle, and he shot through the passenger side, the window was down apparently, and shot him through and through, I guess it would be from the left side to the right side here and knocked him over, dislodged him from his gun. And that was about the time that I got there. So, you know, we got his gun and he went to the hospital and stayed a little while, come out and put him in jail, charged him with aggravated assault on a police officer and I think he got something like a two year sentence out

of that. But I know ....and when he ....if he went to the pen at all, it was for a very short period of time, but when he got out I know that we posted his picture at every highway patrol office in East Texas so that they would know who he was. But I don't remember his name, I remember he was a little short fella, worked at Kilgore Ceramics and after that he moved to Edgewood and ah....because that was later on and I had a nephew that was a Highway Patrolman at Canton.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And what was his name?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Gary Alfred, this was ....this was several years later when he'd got out and all that kind of stuff. But there was a ....where Gary worked I made sure they had a copy of the picture of him. And he lived up there and he went to Oklahoma, the story goes, and eventually in Oklahoma, it's my understanding, that he became a police officer in either Broken Arrow or Broken Bow, Oklahoma somewhere up in there. And then ah....he supposedly committed suicide some time later.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** But you wife....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** She just insisted that I get out of this business. And ah....so I quit under pressure and went to work for the Hartford Insurance Company as a claims adjuster. And ah....during that period of time well, Lloyd Webb passed away in about 1967, I guess. And I went to Lloyd Webb's funeral and there all my friends were and Lloyd Webb, in uniform and I wasn't. And then I said, I'm in the wrong place and I immediately after that funeral I applied for reinstatement with DPS and got reinstated and moved to Center, Texas. And I stayed in Center until sometime in 1969 and then moved back to Longview when an opening come up there. And then in September of 1970 I made Ranger.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did ah....did ...well ah...while you were in Kilgore...or in Longview as a highway patrolman, was Dan North a highway patrolman in Kilgore?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, he was...he was in Henderson.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I mean Henderson, I'm sorry. I was thinking about Al Cuellar.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Cuellar was in Kilgore yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And Dan North in Henderson, they both become Rangers.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And of course Glenn was in Longview.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did these guys influence you....well what made you decide you wanted to be a Ranger?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I had always thought about being a Ranger, as being part of ....you know, being a highway patrolman and then being a Ranger. And of course I guess with Glenn making Ranger and his interest in the Rangers, and I was around him through all of his application process and all this kind of thing. And I just got interested in the Rangers and I said, you know, it sure beats writing tickets and wrestling drunks. And ah....you know, it's really desire is not that minute but you know, just go into criminal investigation. And ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** .... I just ...I knew an old highway patrolman, he was pretty elderly, his name was Vineyard, when I moved to Center. And I was watching Mr. Vineyard, he was up in his 60's at that time and all that kind of stuff, and I decided, you know, this is not the job I want to retire in. Because it's just ah...you know, highway patrol I was getting to an age where, maybe I can realize that the highway patrol is really for younger type people, because I had several old friends on the highway patrol.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Young people bullet proof and invincible.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, something like that. But ah....but I had, had an interest in the Rangers.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you....while you were there ah....of course you had no ....obviously no way of knowing, but did you get to know Mitchell...Bob Mitchell, he was a Ranger in Tyler while you were in the highway patrol still, I'd think.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well just for a short time. I didn't.... I didn't really get to know Bob very well.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about Jack Dean, he was over there about that time in the highway patrol wasn't he?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Jack Dean was highway patrolman in Tyler when I was in Longview, I don't know when Jack come on.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ah.... I'm assuming 1970 when you went in the Rangers, the competition was fierce.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** 1970 and .....was when they started giving the first competitive examination for Rangers.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And how many took the test?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And I took.... I took the test and I have no idea how many more took it. I'm sure state wide it was a great number of people.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How many openings were there that year?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** When I made Ranger there were seven openings.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And who all made it besides yourself?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh goodness, myself and Leo Hickman ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Highway patrol together and Ranger together.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....we were in highway patrol school ah....no I really don't remember who all.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well obviously, you know, Longview....I'm sorry...ah...Dallas had an opening, Childress had an opening, I guess that's where Hickman went. But were you given a choice where to go or were you just told?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, I was .... I was told where I was going.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And you went to?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Dallas.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And who was your Captain?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** My Captain at that time was Captain Bill Wilson.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Let me go back...what Captain's did you serve under in the Highway Patrol?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ah.... I served under Captain Guy Smith, who made Major and was Regional Commander later and ah....Glenn Warner.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Before we get off on the Rangers, I want to go back, one other incident I know you're involved in as a highway patrolman. That's the guy who kidnapped the police officer in Irving and ya'll stopped him in Gladewater.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Could you relate that story?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, this Major Smith was ...Guy Smith was the Regional Commander in Dallas and Glenn Warner was our Captain in Tyler. And ah...of course communications weren't near as good back then, and I can't tell you what year that was, but it was prior to '61, cause Glenn and I were there. Glenn and I and Bob Knowlins from Henderson.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Jim Ray was....it would have been '57 or '58 cause Jim Ray was a Ranger in Tyler and Jay Banks was the Captain in Tyler....I mean in Dallas. So it would have been '57 or '58.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. But ah....we were getting information through our Tyler dispatch about this Irving police officer that had been kidnapped and was being held hostage in his patrol car and he was driving the car. And he was being pursued east on Highway 80, Interstate 20 was not heard of at that time. And of course there was a lot of talk going back and forth, Lloyd Webb was our Sergeant and I guess Glenn and I were working probably in the same car I believe at that time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I believe you were.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah....Bob Knowlin had started up toward Highway 80 from Henderson, it was myself and Lloyd Webb and Glenn Elliott and Bob Knowlin. And the pursuit kept coming toward us and Tyler and Dallas were having back and forth traffic and we couldn't hear Dallas' traffic, we could only pick up relayed traffic from Tyler. And apparently they were deciding what to do and finally Tyler... Glenn Warner called Glenn and I...Captain Glenn Warner, called Glenn and I and said, "do not let him out of our district, stop him". So that was all we needed, so we gathered just west of Gladewater.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Out there around the rodeo area I think wasn't it?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Pretty close to the rodeo grounds. I remember we got two big 18 wheelers and stretched them out across the road and they stretched from an embankment on the north side of the highway to railroad on the south side, the railroad embankment on the south side of the highway. So there was no way he was going to get by that point. And I don't remember whether we put fuseze's (sp?) out or just what. But anyway, Bob Knowlin and I took a

position on the railroad embankment and I believe Sergeant Webb was over on the embankment on the north side and Glenn was down by the road on, I believe, the south side, if my memory serves me correctly. And ah.... I had a .30 .30 rifle, Bob Knowlin had a rifle and Glenn had a 10 gauge shotgun, sawed off, with a pistol grip handle on it, barrels looked that big.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That belonged to Lloyd Webb.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Belonged to Lloyd Webb. And ah....but anyway, the pursuit came on directly to us and my officer locked his brakes some distance back up the road and skidded and just barely bumped one of the wheels of one of the trucks that we had across the street. And by the time he stopped, Glenn was on the hood with that shotgun right in this guys face. And I come down with my rifle and went in like from the passengers window. And that guy threw the gun down and put his hands up hollering, “don’t kill me, don’t kill me, don’t kill me”. And so everything turned out well.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I remember you told that story to me the first too, you said you looked up there and it looked like you was looking .....that shotgun looked like you was looking down the end of a fruit jar.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, that was the biggest barrel I think I’ve ever seen, well that was prior to me seeing the barrel of this ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Carbine?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....carbine.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, and you said.... I remember you told me, “good lord Glenn, don’t shoot, cause if you shot him you’re going to get me too”.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** It would hit everybody in the country. But there wasn’t anyway that guy was going to get by us after the Captain told us, don’t let him get out of our district.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Captain Warner, I met him at a previous meeting here a few years ago and we were talking about that incident. And he said he had just made Captain and he said that's one of the most difficult orders that he could of ever had to give just being a brand new Captain.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, we knew that they were having some difficulty with....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Over around Mineola, best I remember, he had shot up some....a police car.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh he'd been firing at the pursuing officers, there was police, highway patrol and city officers and deputies and what not, behind him. You know, coming all the way out of Dallas they'd pick up a car here, there and you know, and he had shot the windows ....windshields out of one car, one highway patrol car I know.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well you ah....any more highway patrol stuff before we move on to the Rangers that you'd like to relate?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well no, you know, I know there's a lot of stories buried back there ah.... I became a partners with another highway patrolman named Tom Arnold later and I don't know just when, after Glenn left for the Rangers.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Tom Arnold from Hallsville?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes. And Tom and I were partners, if I can remember....we had a pretty hard pursuit down some county roads, Tom was riding and I was driving. After the pursuit was over with and we got the subject handled and all this kind of stuff, Tom said, "next time we get in a pursuit", said, "would you put both hands on the steering wheel". And he said, "I was drawn up tighter than anything", said, "you was sitting there with your arm just over on the steering wheel". Of course that was, you know, I thought I was being pretty safe and what not,

cause it was a pretty high speed pursuit. But I can remember Tom, “no more of this kind of driving”.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well you are in the Rangers, you’re stationed in Dallas, Bill Wilson is your Captain, who was your Sergeant?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Lester Robertson.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What kind of man was Wilson and Robertson?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well, of course I knew Captain Wilson from the highway patrol school, because he was my PT instructor in the highway patrol school.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Your what?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Physical training instructor in the highway patrol school. So we were kind of casually acquainted through that. And ah....you know, let me say this, I think ....going to Dallas, making Ranger and going to Dallas was probably one of the most forceful things that could of happened to me, as far as my Ranger career was concerned. And I say that because of the value of the experience of working in a metropolitan place and I became deeply involved with the Dallas Police Department, the Dallas Sheriff’s office, I worked Denton County, Colin County. But the experience of being in Dallas and learning so much from a lot of experienced officers working for Dallas PD and Dallas Sheriff’s office....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was Will Fritz still there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Will Fritz had just retired....or I don’t remember whether he retired or passed away. But he was..... the next guy that was the Captain of robbery and homicide was I believe Captain Jack Davis.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** For the record there, Will Fritz was Dallas PD.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes. A very nationally known or probably internationally known police officer and Dallas had a very good police department back in those days.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What ...what kind of person was Wilson and Roberts to work for?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well of course Bill Wilson couldn't be ah....Lester Roberts was a good fella and he got along and he was a good ....good Ranger Sergeant, for what Ranger Sergeant did back in that time, which was mostly to take care of the office. I got along well with Lester and well with Bill Wilson. And of course Glenn ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do what?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I just.... I just can't ....starting out as a Ranger and getting sent up there was just....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Invaluable?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....just real invaluable experience to me.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** In 1970 you missed the Lone Star Steel strike .

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I was part of the Lone Star Steel strike, yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh you were?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. But not as a Ranger.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh, okay.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I was there as a highway patrolman.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well we're kind of jumping back again, but any experiences there you could relate?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, most of my experiences were just as a highway patrolman. Glenn was still a highway patrolman but was working with the Rangers.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** No that's....Glenn .....this is in '57 his was highway patrol....'68...the '68 strike I'm talking about.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh okay, well I'm talking about the '57.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, okay.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I was not at the '68 strike, I was a highway patrolman in '70 at that time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well let's talk about the '57 one then.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well '57 was ....you know I can remember it being a bitter strike and a lot of things happening there. I didn't get directly involved in to much of it, I was just working patrol and answering calls, I don't remember who I was working with. They took Glenn, Glenn was working with the Rangers at that time because of all his familiarity with the area and people and everything and these other officers and what not. So I .... I was just on routine patrol out there, I didn't have any earth shattering experiences with anything during the strike, just worked.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well when you go to Dallas, who were the other officers in Dallas besides yourself and of course the Captain and the Sergeant? How many men ....field Rangers were there in Dallas at that time, there's like three today.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, there's Charlie Moore was a Ranger there and Charlie was later a Captain....made Captain and went to Lubbock. And ah....myself, Stuart Dow, I guess...was Stuart there at that time.... I guess Stuart Dow was the other Ranger up there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Other people at that time besides Glenn would have been ah....Mitchell was he still there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, Mitchell was at ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Tyler.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I don't know when Mitchell ah....made Sergeant.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** It was '71 or '72.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** It wasn't long, he was at Tyler and Glenn was at Longview, Red Arnold was at Mount Pleasant.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Lewis Riggler, was he still in.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Lewis Riggler was at Gainesville.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about Max....Max Womack, had he made Ranger yet?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I don't remember when Max made Ranger, but he was over in ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Atlanta.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....Atlanta.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Frank Kemp?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Frank Kemp was at Paris. And Tom Arnold was at ah...Fort Worth Worth.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was G.W. in the company then?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ah...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** G.W. Burks.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** G.W. Burks was... I believe he was a Sergeant in Austin at that time.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you remember your first case as a Ranger?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No I don't, I just .... I spent a lot of time with ...at ah... I went down to the Dallas PD and got acquainted with a bunch of officers down there. And I worked, you know, I worked burglary and theft cases with them. And I can remember a burglary and theft investigator I worked a lot of cases with was Norman Hensley, who is now deceased.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was he Dallas PD or Dallas....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Dallas PD, burglary and theFort Worth And we were working on recovering much of the Engersol Rand air compressors that had been stolen and we recovered all of those. I worked murder cases with robbery and homicide. And you know, I felt like that I was there for a purpose of, you know, if they needed anything out of their jurisdiction and what not, I was there to help them. But I remember one big murder case we worked there was ah....and I was just a young Ranger, don't know just exactly what the dates were and what year. I think it was when a Mr. Garren got murdered in his home during a burglary. And ah.... I helped on that case and it turned out to be...involved just numerous defendants. And we had a .... It was such a high profile murder that Henry Wade was the district attorney at the time and he sent a young attorney over there to work with us name Jim Barklow, one of his prosecutors, and be there for, you know, writing warrants, search warrants or anything like that. And we worked on that case for a good long while and that was in the days when there was no capital .....no death penalty. The death penalty had been done away with, you may can.... I don't remember what part, but in the early '70's it was done away with for a period of time there. But anyway, we worked that case out and got any number of defendants there and I can't remember the names and all of them, cause I was....like I say, I was there for the purpose of helping Dallas PD and not making a report for myself or anything else. So the names just kind of got away from me over time and what not. But anyway, we got all these defendants and wound up prosecuting them and Jim Barklow, I'll never forget him for his diligence in helping us and the Dallas Police Department in solving the case and then handling all the legal end of it and then he prosecuted the case, he was the prosecutor. And he got those people sentences like 1,700 years in the penitentiary, 1,500 years, 1,000 years in the penitentiary. And to the best of my recollection two of the defendants in that case committed suicide in the penitentiary....ah...you know, big loss. So ....but I'll never

forget Jim Barklow as long as I live for his diligence in the way he ....and he's a young ....you know, he's a young attorney at the time, I think Jim is in private practice in Dallas now.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** B-A-R-K-L-O-W?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's the way I ....that's the way.....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did all the convictions stand?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, yes. But I remember during the court proceedings he says....he asks the jury to give these people a sentence that would tell the Department of Corrections that we want these people in the penitentiary the rest of their life. And so that's the kind of sentences that they handed down. And I don't know of any other sentences like that ever happening, I never heard of any....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I've never heard of that, even if they only had to do 10% of it, they're not going to get out.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No. But ah...what the jury was trying to tell, you know, the criminal justice system and TDC was, you know, we want these people in prison forever. And they handed down those sentences and that was one of the most remarkable experiences that I can remember.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And I'd think rewarding.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And as a learning experience, very learning experience. And I had done the same thing at the Dallas Sheriff's office and I had a lot of contacts down there and worked a lot of offenses with those people down there you know, not my offenses but just being with them on their offenses.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Getting experience that would be invaluable in the future.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's the way I learned to be a Ranger.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How long were you in Dallas?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I stayed in Dallas 5 years.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Get any cases that were, for lack of vocabulary, your cases that you'd like to discuss?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Worked a triple murder in Princeton, Texas in Colin County out of McKinney, it's up on Highway 38 in Colin County, where Robert Excel White was involved in. Do you remember that name?

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh yeah, it took 'em 20 something years to ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** To execute him.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Describe that case to us.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Myself and the ...and the Chief Deputy up there, Jerry Kunkel.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How do you spell that?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** K-U-N-K-E-L I believe.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** K-U-N-K-E-L?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Uh hum. Might be K-L-E.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh well.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But ah...and Jerry is still a Constable up there in Colin County. But he was the Chief Deputy at the time and he and I got the case. And I answered the call very early one morning, went to Princeton and never will forget, I got stopped by a train coming from Dallas, Garland where I lived going to McKinney. I got stopped by a train in Plano, switch engine, and I can remember how flustered I got, I was talking to those people on that train, saying you know, you can't imagine where I need to be right now and why I need to be there, there's 3 people been killed up here and I got to get to it. Here ya'll are ....and I'm....this is the

way I'm talking to myself...you know, get the hell out of my way. And it seemed like I was at that train stop....crossing forever, and there wasn't but one road that went through Plano at that time....or two roads and that was Highway 5 which I was on coming out of Garland and Highway 75.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was headquarters at that time out of Garland or was it back ....when you were over there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, it was at ....it was in Garland but it was .... I guess it was ...it was in a different place.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Northwest Highway?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** It was on Northwest Highway.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** All right, okay...go ahead with this...

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well anyway, we got up there and found the owner of the station had been killed, along with two young men.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What was it a service station?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, service station. And ah....it was an old Gulf service station, I never will forget, it had a threshold on the front door about that deep and we waded blood in there just about that deep.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You're indicating about 2 or 3 inches there...about an inch or two.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** About an inch of blood, I'd say, just you know the old concrete floor was just covered.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Had they been shot or hacked?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** They were shot multiple, multiple times with a carbine rifle. But Jerry... I met Jerry up there and we got to working that case and ah.... I think I was the ....we worked on

it all the next day. And then late that next night we got word from Mississippi, Green...Greenwood, Mississippi....Greenville, Mississippi I believe, a small town, it's on the ....close to the Mississippi River.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Greenville.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ah...well there's a Greenville and Greenwood.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well there's a Greenville and Greenwood.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Greenwood up here I believe. Well we got word that they had a man over there that they believed was involved in a killing out of Dallas. So Jerry Krunkle and I ...Jerry called me or I was up there, I can't remember what it was, I believe .... I believe I had gone home for awhile. But anyway, I threw some clothes together and Jerry and I took off for Mississippi. And by daylight the next morning we were at .... I believe it was Greenwood.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** 82 crosses the Mississippi at Greenville.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That's the only bridge I think, until you get up around Helena.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Right, but I think this was at Greenwood, and I could be wrong, but anyway, we went up there and they a man in jail who had ....and we were met there by a relative of this suspect who was a Deputy Sheriff. And the suspect had called him and told him he was at such and such a place there in his county and ...to come out there and pick him up. And we found out later that Robert Excel White was this person. And he started to kill his cousin, because after he had made the call he had kind of changed his mind. Then he decided against that and anyway, his cousin brought him in, put him in jail and called us. So we got over there and we started ....we did all our preliminaries, we did everything just by the book. We got a magistrate and got him warned, got the whole business through, this was a small Sheriff's

department, so I'm pretty sure it wasn't Greenville, it was Greenwood, I think they had one employee there, one clerk type employee there. But we just...we got all that taken care of and then we started talking to him and we stayed over there I think two days talking to him. And he finally give us a confession.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What was his motive?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Just wanted to kill somebody and wanted money. Implicated two other people with him. Anyway, we got all that information, he waived extradition and we carried him before the District Judge over there, he waived extradition and we started back to Texas with Robert Excel White. He had been very talkative, been very thorough but he wouldn't tell where the murder weapon was, but he told us what it was. And it was a 30 caliber M2 carbine.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** M1 turned to a full automatic.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Right. And ah...and I can remember talking...he was talking about shooting and he'd go like this and he'd say, "boy that was bad shooting son of a bitch". And that's how cold he was. But anyway, we started back and we come down and we come up Interstate 20 was open then and we come back, and we were coming through Louisiana and we come up the southern route from....when we left we went through Arkansas and went that way getting there because it was the quickest way. And we were coming back through Louisiana and I'll never forget it, I think I was driving and Jerry Krunkle was sitting on the right, and Robert Excel White's handcuffed to a belly chain in the back. And he kind of come up toward the front seat just as we were crossing the Red River between Bossier City and Shreveport and he said, "you know what, you two son-of-bitches have been good to me, I'm just going to take ya'll to where the gun is". Well of course this ....that would cement our case by discovering ....finding the weapon and especially from his directions. So he said, "it's in Waco". So we took off and

when we got back into Texas I called Tyler, DPS station, and told them to radio ....get in contact with the Ranger office in Dallas and see if we could get a helicopter to take us to Waco and we were coming, you know we were somewhere north of Tyler there and we were coming into being in Dallas in an hour or hour an a half, or something like that. We were driving at a pretty good speed. So anyway, we got...we got to Dallas and Krunkle and I got on the DPS helicopter, which was at an airport just across from the old DPS office on Northwest Highway, it was a little airport over there. 635 goes right around the edge of where this little airport was. We got on that helicopter and we flew to the Ranger office in Waco to use them and we landed in the front lot of the museum, probably about where the huge Texas flag is now.... the pole, we landed right in that area. And he...you know he was playing games with us all this time and ah....just....he'd just tell us this in Waco, "when we get to Waco I'll take you". So we landed there and Bob Mitchell met us at the Ranger office.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Bob's the Captain of Company F by now.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. And ah...he met us there, we got cars and he said it's in Cameron Park, you know where Cameron Park is?

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** No I do not.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Directly west of the ....up the river from ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Just right up the river ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** (unintelligible)...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, okay, I know where it's at.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....museum. Just get on that street right out there and go west and Cameron Park is up there. We went to Cameron Park and we went out and he said, "right by that chain link fence right there", and he said, "I threw the gun and I heard it hit the water". The

Brazos River at that point ...and at Baylor down there, somewhere around Baylor there, they call that Town Lake right behind the Ranger museum and all that is called Town Lake. And they can control the depth ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Of water.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ...of that river down in there somewhere, right around Baylor. Well, when he said I heard it hit the water, you know, it's in the river. So I just started walking up there to that chain link fence and I walked off down there a ways and looked down there and I see that gun down there on the bank of the river. And we found out later, and I think we were down there on a Thursday and that Tuesday they let the level down in the river.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well you had to have divers and....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** So...yeah....so I started off down there and Captain Mitchell and them were hollering at me, "Slick you can't get down there, Slick you can't get down there it's all mud". I got down there and I got... I found some old boards and I got to throwing them boards out in front of me and got to crawling down those boards. And they come and pitched me boards and stuff like that. And I crawled on boards out there and I got that gun. He had told us that there was one bullet left in the chamber, the magazine was empty but there was one bullet in the chamber. And we...of course the gun is wet and muddy and all this kind of stuff. And when they checked that gun it was just exactly like he said. Of course they run ballistics on it and it come back, you know the shells up at the scene matched what come out of that gun. So we knew we had the right gun, we had the confession, now the gun just cements his confession.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well if you hadn't of found the gun, would that....would that of hurt...would it have stopped the prosecution?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well, you've got to have something to coincide with that confession to make it valid. You know, you've got to have some physical evidence to go with that confession.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, now then you go to court with him, does he plead guilty?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, they tried him and I don't....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I mean, did he change his confession to not guilty?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well, yeah, he tried to lay it off on these other guys finally....you know when he finally got....realized what he'd done and all that kind of stuff. And I can't recall the other guys, it was two brothers' names that were involved. But we arrested them and then we found out that Robert Excel White had been in Waco the night prior to the murders. And he had stolen this gun from a guy in Waco who he killed, so he'd committed another murder in Waco. He took this gun that he used in that killing up there. And then they come back to Waco and discarded the gun and then he took off and left the two brothers in Waco.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You arrested the two brothers?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Later we arrested the two brothers, yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And what was their sentence? Were they given the death penalty?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, I don't think so.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** They didn't....they didn't do the shooting.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** They didn't participate in the shooting and all that. But see, years later he got ....his death penalty was reversed.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I was getting ready to say, this is just really the start of this story.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah. They had the trial for him and they give him death and ah...then later it was reversed on a technicality, if that's what you call it. I believe Dr. Greggson, you've probably heard of him, he's a psychiatrist that testifies on a lot of capital murder cases.

They had come up with a ruling that if a psychiatrist talked to the defendant, he must give it, the Miranda warning.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Never heard that before.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No. But that's...that's what they reversed his conviction on, was the fact that Dr. Greggson, the psychiatrist, did not give him his warning. So then in 1985 or '86 or somewhere along in there, we tried him again, found him guilty and he got the death penalty again. And then he was executed ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know it was after 1999.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....24 years later.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I know it was after '99, cause that book Glenn and I did came out in '99 and the night we had our first book signing they executed Stanley Faulkder and I remember you saying you had one sitting on death row longer than Faulkner set on death row.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Just Robert Excel White.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** At that time he'd been the longest resident there. And he was....he was executed I believe in March of ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** 2000....somewhere in there.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Somewhere along there ....2001 or something like that.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well, what ...did they just keep appealing or...why did they keep putting off, after '85 he's convicted again?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well, it's just, you know, he just has that right to that many appeals, I guess to the Supreme Court. And it just took that long to get him executed.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Any other cases while you're in Dallas?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, I worked a lot of cases....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well that stand out?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....there in Dallas and Denton and everything, but ah.... I worked a couple of murder cases that are still unsolved, you know, you hear all the stories about I solved all my cases.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I don't know of any Ranger that could say that.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I didn't.... I didn't solve all mine.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know Glenn didn't, I know Ed didn't...Gooding, I don't know of any of them that did.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** When you hear of a guy saying he solved all of his cases, he apparently didn't work too many cases. But ah....nothing....nothing just real outstanding. Had two girls killed in the Plano area that are both still outstanding and worked 'em, worked 'em, worked on 'em and just never....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What's the details behind the killing?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** One of them was taken out of a Laundromat in an apartment complex, you know....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh these are two separate murders?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And the other one was apparently ....apparently taken out of her car on Highway 75.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know those bother you, Bob Mitchell I visited with earlier today, we were talking about this Smitty Blackburn that was murdered up at Lone Star Steel strike in '68. And he said that still bothers him today, and I know it bothers Glenn today.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, it does, you don't....it's just one of those things you don't ever forget about, it that, you know, you left something hanging out there. And you're thought process just keeps going back, well did I do everything I could do. And ah...you know, you beat you're brains out trying to think of what else could I have done and all this.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well you do the best you can do.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. And these had very little physical evidence in either one of these cases that we could of tied to anybody to start. We had a suspect in one and never could ....never could make him, never could do anything on him.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Time you...in that five years, was Bill Wilson your Captain the whole time?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, no Bill Wilson went to Austin as Assistant Senior Ranger Captain and I don't know just exactly what year it happened. G. W. Burkes was promoted to Captain and he came to Dallas and that's about the time we moved out to ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Garland.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....to the other....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I-20.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I-30 I mean.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I-30....I-30.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Burkes was a little different.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh yeah, he was....he was very different, but Burkes was very meticulous ah....he was very detailed type of person. You know, I had a desk right outside his door all the time I....until I finished my tour in Dallas.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was Lester Robertson your Sergeant the whole time you was over there?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Uh hum.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, what made you decide to leave Dallas?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Just ah.... I'd always ....after I stayed there two or three years, I knew I wanted to get back to East Texas, you know, that's where I'm from and that's where I know and I just ah... always talked about it to Burkes and Burkes would "I'm going to get you back to East Texas somehow or another".

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well when Mitchell left Tyler in '71....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Stuart Dowell had a little more time on the Ranger service, I had more DPS service than he did, but he had more Ranger service than I did. So he got the Tyler station, I asked for it and he asked for it, and he got it. And ah....then in late I'd say about mid 1975 ah....the Ranger that was stationed here in Athens, Dale Brice, became ill with cancer and that....in the middle of the year there, and we heard that it was terminal cancer. And I beat around the bush for a long time and I finally picked up the telephone and called Bob Mitchell told him, if I'm out of line please tell me, but I said, you know, I'd heard that Dale Brice had terminal cancer. And I said, "you just tell me", and I said, "if anything, you know, happens to Dale I'd like to be considered for that station". And Bob Mitchell told me at the time, said, "Well Dale is terminal", and he says, "as far as I'm concerned you got it".

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did you...go ahead.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** There was how I got to come back down here.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you Ranger with Roy Scott?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Glenn and Mitchell told a ....well you heard it up there at the cabin when we was up there, about ya'll switching out....sitting up ....would you relate that...some of that, just for the record. How ya'll worked that, cause that's really a touching story.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well, Roy was a ...was diagnosed with a brain tumor....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He was a Ranger in Greenville.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes, a Ranger in Greenville. And ah....of course we.... you know, we were all...we was pretty close, all of us, and worked well with most everybody. And ah....so when after Roy had one or two surgeries, he needed to have another one and he said, no more. And he just felt like he'd had all he could stand and was ready to take whatever came with it. And so when he got so bad that he couldn't do anything else, well they finally had to put him in the hospital, you know, keep him in the hospital, couldn't do anything. And then he went into a semi-coma and then when he did that well we started sitting up with him ourselves and some intelligence people and what not started setting up with him 24 hours. And did that until he passed away.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay, you're coming to Athens then, Dale passes away and you come to Athens, and this was when?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I came here January 1, 1976.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And this duty station has got, you know, has had some great Rangers, had Dale Brice, had Benny Krueger and what...what was your....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Jim Ray was a Highway Patrolman here.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Jim Ray was a Highway Patrolman here.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah... I had ah....you know going through Longview, this was the route to Austin. Come through Tyler and then come through Athens, go to Waco and go to Austin. Well I'd been through here many times going back and forth through Tyler and in service school or down to pick up a new car or something like that in Austin. And I'd always admired Athens, I thought East Tyler street in Athens, which was the Tyler highway....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Beautiful homes.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....was one of the most beautiful streets I'd ever seen, just loaded with beautiful homes. And the courthouse was just beautifully landscaped and decorated and I always used to like this town. And ah...and of course it was close to my home, in Tyler.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Who was the Sheriff here then?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** J. W. Brownlow.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What counties did you have....well let me say, J.W. Brown is the current Sheriff, Ronnie Brownlow and former Ranger's father.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, and I had... I was assigned Henderson County, Navarro County, which is Corsicana and Fairfield which is Freestone County, was my working area.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ah...you've come into a...I'm assuming, a pretty good situation....was your situation here with Sheriff and what not.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well ah... real good, I wasn't ah....of course I ....by this time I knew Ronnie Brownlow but didn't....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was Ronnie a Ranger himself by this time?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** He was a Highway Patrolman and I don't .... I don't know just exactly when Ronnie made Ranger either, but he ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did he succeed Bobby Prince down in Palestine?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes...well he, no, Ronnie ...Ronnie was on and had been to Laredo as a Ranger and then to Austin as a Ranger before he come to Palestine. So ah... but he did replace Bobby, but that wasn't when he first made Ranger.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, I know, but I mean he came into Palestine after Ronnie... I mean Bobby.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Anyway, I'm sorry, go ahead.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah...but ah... I came in and of course J. W. Brownlow had been great friends with Dale Brice, the Ranger there. And ah.... I came into a sad situation as far as coming into the Sheriff's office, especially because J. W. was so close to Dale. And I really had to work myself in with ....and gain the trust of Sheriff Brownlow here and what not, because of his personal relationship with Dale and what not. And I respected that in him, because he just... I didn't feel like he was going to welcome just anybody here, you know, and I just... I wanted to be the person that he wanted to be here. And that was....that was important to me and I think it was to Captain Mitchell and everybody else concerned.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Who was you Sergeant?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Who were some of the other Sheriff's ....Glenn says it ain't going to get no better either...who were some of your other Sheriff's in your other counties?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I had a Sheriff named Jerry Shelton over at Corsicana and then Sonny Sessions was the Sheriff down in Freestone County and Sonny had been there for years and years and years....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Any relation to Grady?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, no.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Grady Sessums was a former Ranger Captain.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, that's Grady Sessum, S-U-S-S-U-M?

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ah...sounds right.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And this is Sessumns, S-E-S-S-U-M-S.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah...Jerry Shelton was a new Sheriff in Navarro County. And ah...you know, I didn't know him and he didn't know much about law enforcement at the time, I really had a hard time working myself in over there. Sonny Sessions was another guy that was in law enforcement, law enforcement people know what you're talking about, it was kind of a stand off out there, I'm going to watch you and see what you do and I'll let you know when it's time for me to trust you and all this kind of stuff. And ah...so...but I worked up a good relationship with him on through the years and we're still good friends till this time. He's finally retired now, he'd been there longer than anybody ever had.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well before we get off into a bunch of your cases here, there's one that's not much of a case, but I'd like to hear about it. Happened with you and a guy that succeeded Glenn, Ronnie Griffith, of course he may be in Tyler....in Dallas at the time, I don't remember. It's a case where a guy had a knife and ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, Ronnie was in ....was in ah....well he was stationed in Dallas at the time, because he had just come off down this way, just kind of familiarizing himself, because he joined ... he joined me at Kaufman County. His territory was Kaufman County and then Henderson County.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Started there and Ronnie worked Kaufman County, so he come down here to just familiarize himself mainly just to see the great lake area. But ah.... I .... I don't know just how .... I had a warrant or we got information that this guy was wanted, I believe I had a warrant for him, or maybe Ronnie had....no I had a warrant. But this guy was wanted in Dallas or Greenville, I can't remember which now, for something. And of course it was a felony type case and ah...so anyway, Ronnie and I got involved in going and looking for this guy because we were up there in the lake area and that was where he was supposed to be. So we went to this place and we didn't have a picture of the guy. This lady come to the door, went to this address and she come to the door and we said we're looking for so and so and ah... you know, is that him there. Cause we'd seen him (unintelligible)...she said, "no that's my son, this person you're looking for is another son and he's not here". Well just...we did some talking and she did some talking and this guy come in and he got in on the conversation. And you know, yeah that's my brother and all this kind of stuff. And ah....so we said, we'll....we're going to go get us a picture of this guy. And there again I'm....my memory is fuzzy. But Ronnie and I drove off, both of us had the same feeling, that that's the guy we're hunting right there. Something just said, you know, that's....that's the guy we're hunting right there. So anyway, we went back off away and directly they come out of the house and got in a car, the mother and this guy come out of the house and got in a car. And we followed them on up to Gun Barrel. So we backed off there and they came to a convenience store there in Gun Barrel and we set there and watched them, then they drove off and we just followed them. And we weren't trying to be inconspicuous or anything else, we just obviously were following them. Well they drove out of Gun Barrel and into the Mabank area, went on through Mabank out on 198 which they call the Falby Road And we just kept following them and then finally ....the mother was driving and the boy was on the

right side, and they pulled off the road out there and he got out on the right side. And we saw he had a knife in his hand and he had it up against his stomach and he told us, quit following us, you know. We said well....said, “we know that you’re the guy we want”. And he said, “well that’s...you know, that’s right, I am, ya’ll aren’t going to take me, I’ll kill myself first”.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Had the blade pointed toward himself?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. And ah...so he....he hit the fence line out there and he started walking up the fence line and we just keep driving and Ronnie was in the passenger side and I was driving...Ronnie Griffith. And we was talking to him and ah....we got over into Van Zandt County, so we called VanZandt County and told them what we had, a man with a knife there and wasn’t threatening us, but was threatening himself....(unintelligible). So Ronnie got out and I told him, I said, “here”. And I handed him a ...got a knife stick I carried with me ever since the highway patrol days, bois arc knife stick. Made out of bois arc wood, it’s about so long and ah... I told Ronny, I said, “here take this with you”. And so Ronny started up there and this guy started walking backwards and every other way, and he was watching Ronny and I was driving up the road and Ronny was walking. Well about that time here comes VanZandt County with rifles and shotguns and everything and we had to get out and say, “no, no, no, back off, back off”, you know, “this is not something you need this with cause he’s just got a knife”. So when they got there we kind of had more people, so I got out of the car and I started over and I got on the other side of him and we kind of had him penned in. And then Ronny and I just started kind of closing in on him, you know, he’s threatening himself and all that. And in a minute Ronny just flashed that stick out and hit him right in the hand that this knife was in and knocked that knife out of his hand. And he said, “oh my hand, my hand, my hand”. And we said, “man is your hand hurting”,

said, “you was going to kill yourself awhile ago, you know, what are you complaining about that hand for”. But anyway, we disarmed him and took him in and arrested him on these warrants.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did....what did....didn't Ronny say something to you when he got out of the car and started to move around? Something like, if he cuts me, you shoot that son-of-a-bitch?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I think that would have been a known fact.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well anyway.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But ah...yeah that...that would have been a certainty if that had happened. But Ronny wasn't.... I told him don't get close enough, you know, just ease up there and see if you can get in striking distance with that stick. And it worked.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about some cases now that....well not that this wasn't serious, but it was just a good story out of it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I just ah....really worked a lot of cases and it was just....this was a good Ranger station for investigations. But down here you just ...you don't have the, you know, the big glamorous cases very often and things like that. But you just work everything from burglaries on up and I just.... I just worked hundreds of cases you know and what not. And mixed in with that, had a lot of murders and most of my murders here were not who done it's, but you know, we knew who our suspect was and all this. Or family violence ....come out of family violence and stuff like that. So I just ah....you know, the who done it murder cases are kind of thin.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I notice from my own observation watching the news, usually they know who did it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, I worked several murders here, one year we had 12 or 13 murders that year and solved every one of them. But it....you know, like I say, they weren't the strictly who done it types.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I talked to many Rangers and they've all said the same thing, that you run a line up Interstate 35 and the type of crimes on the whole that Rangers work east and west of that line are greatly different.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Totally different.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** The pace is ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah you go in the ....you get sheep and goat thefts out there and you know, like in the Dallas area I was telling you about work heavy burglaries up there and things like that. And we work a lot of burglaries here and what a Ranger does here is work with the police department, the Sheriff's department or whoever and so you work their kind of crimes mostly, you don't set your own tone, oh I'm not going to work that, that's too minor for me.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did you find many....did most of your Sheriff's call you in at first or did they wait until they were almost ice cold before they'd call you in?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, after ...after a period of time and after that get acquainted time I was telling you about and things like that, well we usually got a call pretty quick from most of the Sheriff's. Now some of the little police departments would leave things hanging awhile before they'd give us a call or we'd learn about them from somewhere else and go offer our assistance to them, you know. And ah....so...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well would you describe ....an experienced law person like Sheriff Brownlow, as opposed to a relatively inexperienced law person, would the inexperienced one try

to do more himself before he'd call you and try to, for lack again vocabulary, prove their spurs before they'd call for help?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well yeah I think you'd find that probably to be a true statement in most ...most of the cases, some of the cases. But ah...I don't think it's just a cut and dried thing.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well you know.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** You know a new Sheriff usually wants to come in and shine a little bit himself.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And of course your job as a Ranger is to let them shine.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I never tried to ... I worked a little different than most...some of the Rangers do. You know a lot of the Rangers work the cases up, make the reports and present the case to the District Attorney and all this kind of stuff in similar counties. You know, Glenn did a lot of that in his smaller county down there and all that kind of stuff. I was more of a Ranger that, I felt like that ...that the Sheriff's department or the police department ought to carry the report. You know, and I'm here to assist in making that report fit to go to court and what not and anything I can do, but not particularly to make that report and take it. Let them handle their own crime so to speak, but be there to help them. And that's kind of the way I worked most of my cases. But sometimes, you know, you're put in the lead and you got to ....you got to take the lead and got to be prepared to take the lead.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Let's talk about a kidnapping case. I don't know if this was a kidnapping with the gun ah....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. Amy McNiel.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** N-E-E-L or N-E-A-L?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** E-I-L.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** N-E....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** N-E-I-L.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay....Amy McNiel.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** McNiel...well I don't know. That's probably ....well I probably got more self satisfaction out of that case than any case I ever worked, because you know, a policeman can work all of his life thinking ....trying to help somebody, but when you realize that you might have been a help in actually saving somebody's life, it's a nice feeling.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well give us the background and the story on that case.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well we went to Waco for a company in January, 1985 or February, it was cold that day I remember and we was all there in Waco. And a call come in over there that this young girl, thirteen year old girl had been kidnapped....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Amy McNiel.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....and taken away from her brother on her way to school. And ah....so Captain Mitchell said, let's go...let's all go to ah....well let me think of the name of the town now.... well I feel like a fool now, I can't even come up with the name of the town, right south of Fort Worth Worth, out of Cleburne....starts with an A....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Azel?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Huh uh...I didn't think I'd ever forget that.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh well, we'll think of it after while.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But anyway, he said, "ya'll all meet there", you know. So we all rolled up to a Pop's Fried Chicken or something like that, downtown there. And ah....of course the Captain went to the home, the FBI was there and all this and we just were sitting around waiting for instructions. When the fact of the matter is that these guys had come up and kind of run her

brother off the road I think and just took her out of ....it seemed like they were in a jeep and just took her out of it and took off. And ah...so anyway, we stayed there all that day and some of the Rangers had some visitors they'd brought with them to the company meeting and of course they were ...(unintelligible)...and of course Jim Ray was one of them, he was with Ronnie Brownlow. Captain Mitchell told the guys, said, "the ones of you that's got visitors go on home and take them home and if we need you we'll let you know".

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was Jim Chief of CLE at the time?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, he was...he was retired.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Oh retired.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** He had come over here just with Ronnie to go to the company meeting, which he did pretty regular back in those days. And then I think Joe Davis had somebody with him. And the rest of us just ah....we took up quarters at a bank there, which Mr. McNiel was a Director of this bank and ah...Don McNiel was his name. And ah....so we just kind of set around there and then they made a phone call, the kidnapers made a phone call and were demanding a ransom.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Do you remember how much?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** \$100,000. And so they said, you know, we'll call you later. And this is over a period, you know I think this is like Thursday and maybe this call didn't come in until Friday or something like that. And anyway, we just got going and they said, we'll call back. There a bunch of us there in the bank and we all counted out and ah....got serial numbers of money and all this kind of stuff you know and laid money out for Mr. McNiel, the bank gave him the money to do that. And then I think we marked it or whatever, I'm not sure, I don't remember what we did toward recording the serial ...(inaudible)....most of it or not. Anyway,

we put the money together and ah...we spent the night .... I can remember we spent a night at the bank and then ah...the next day you know, there was some ... I think some calls made. You know we weren't privy to all the calls and what not, but ah...maybe you can cut that part of the story a little short and then get to the hunt. But anyway, they finally said, you know, leave there and go to the ah.... I believe I was the Road Runner station at Miller Road and the Interstate there in Dallas, near Buckner Blvd. So we did that and of course in the mean time Captain Mitchell had organized us into groups and what not and the FBI was working with Mr. McNiel and we were just to follow, you know, an inconspicuous distance. We took off and we went there and got to there and then he got another phone call while we was at Miller Road that directed us to go to Interstate 20 and 69 north of Tyler, to the Texaco station I believe it was and wait for further instructions. So we went that direction. And of course Mr. McNiel was in a separate car, his own vehicle, which I think was a Lincoln Continental or maybe a Lincoln Towncar. And so we went over there to Tyler and waited and he got a call there that said go to the Gulf station seven miles east of Mount Pleasant on Interstate 30, there will be a phone booth there, you know, put the money down by the phone booth, blah, blah, blah, whatever. And ah...well then of course, we're in the background....(inaudible)..was handling where we were going, we sent some Rangers on ahead of Mr. McNiel. Johnny Aycock and somebody else, then contacted Brantley Foster the Ranger in Mount Pleasant, they met up there and then they got ....they got undercover out there around that Gulf station while we were in route. You know ...you could call him and tell him all this, that and the other. And ah....then Mr. McNiel, as we got to Longview...as we approached Longview on Interstate 20, he had some car trouble and we pulled over there right at the county line.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** (unintelligible)....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Right at the county line, Gregg county line and Smith county line, at this closed service station. He was having some generator problems or something, but anyway, we got it to going again through some means and I guess the will of the good Lord, but it made us a little late getting to our location. So we just got on the road, after we got up there well we just spread us out along the road to be as inconspicuous as possible, you know, and mingle with the other traffic. It turned out we ....(inaudible)....was late ....getting to be late at night when we got to Mount Pleasant. And so anyway, that's what we did and did that for a good long while and then Captain called .....(dead spot in the tape recording).....place at Mount Pleasant, just off of the Interstate, a closed service station. So we all went up there and set behind this closed service station. And we were sitting there discussing things and Bill Gunn was riding with me, had been my partner from ah....from where we started....(inaudible)...went and got in the car with Captain Mitchell while we was sitting there and Johnny Waldrip was a Ranger from ....let's see, where was Johnny from, Grady or somewhere down there, at that time....had come and set down in the car with me. Of course we had maintained radio silence all this time, we'd been talking on what we call our back channel, we weren't on any public open channels or the DPS stations weren't reading us or anything else, we were just totally on our own. So after we'd been sitting there a good while and ah....after a little bit Johnny Acock, Ranger Acock and Brantley Foster called and said, "you know there's a vehicle come up to this phone booth out here and acted kind of goofy, took off back toward the interstate and is headed back toward Mount Pleasant now" and kind of described the vehicle. Well of course I just cranked up and Johnny and I took off and we went to the interstate. And just as I was getting on the interstate coming down the on ramp to the interstate, there goes this vehicle their talking about. So I just get right in behind that vehicle and he pulls out and passes a cattle truck. Just as he gets in front of that cattle truck, he cuts right

in front of it and takes an exit, which I can't see for the cattle truck. And he takes that exit and in the meantime we had passed Ranger Joe Wiley and Ranger Jimmy Ray. So I called them on the radio and I said, "the car that we were talking about just took off the interstate and I couldn't get off, I had to go on by the exit". So they took the exit and I went on down to the next exit and I took off and Johnny and I started toward there. And in the meantime they called the Captain ...Ray and Wiley called the Captain and said, "well what do you want us to do", and said, "well just go ahead and try to stop him and let's see who they are". Cause we didn't know at the time whether this was the car we was looking for or not, or whether...you know, whether it was the kidnapers. So ...and I didn't see this...I'll be telling this part of it, hearing about it. Joe and them took their little Kojak light and put it up there and turned it on and tried to stop this car. And when they did, apparently bodies come out the back windows with guns and opened fire on Joe and Jimmy Ray. This was in downtown ...by this time they were in downtown Mount Pleasant, in a construction area. And ah...they disabled Joe and them's car...from the transmission I heard, it was, they're headed back toward the interstate. Well Johnny and I had immediately turned around and we headed back towards the interstate. Start to get on the interstate and there again, there goes this car.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Same entrance ramp?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, no, it's on down the road. But ah....it goes...it had already gotten back on the interstate at another entry.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Headed west?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Headed west toward Mount Vernon. So here we go. And I'm in a brand new Ford, I had just gotten that car, it's got overdrive in it and I just had it on the floor....and that.... I believe that was a Buick. And it was just slowly pulling off from me, I was probably a

quarter of a mile behind them, you know, by the time I got down on the interstate, then went by and then by the time I got up to speed, I'm at least a quarter of a mile behind them. And they kept moving off from me just a little bit. Well, the FBI had already broken down their, you know, their operation, their part of it, unbeknownst to us. I guess the Captain, you know, probably knew that, but I didn't know it. But ....and I'll get into that a little bit more. But we went on west just running better than 100 miles an hour is all my car would do, it would just go to 100 and that's all there was on the speedometer, you know, so I don't know how fast we was going.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** About what time a day is this?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** This is night.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Or night?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, it's after midnight. And ah....so we go on and we approach Mount Vernon and at Mount Vernon our car goes through there....the suspect car and then I see a car ...police car come out, cause I saw the glimpse of a flashing light. And so I tried to make contact with that car to let them know what they might be chasing. And I never made any contact. Well this was an FBI car, you know, that had been going home and they called them about it and he dropped the road up there and then when they come through, he got into it. And of course he got in between me and the suspects. So anyway, we just kept on going. And we got on up several miles to the little town of Saltillo there on Interstate 30. And unbeknownst, but they were about to run out of gasoline. And there was a Mini Mart over there and they were going take off and try to get gasoline, I guess at that Mini Mart. But anyway, they left the interstate and in the meantime John Dendy had caught up with me, Joe Wiley and Jimmy Ray had the road blocked. And all the Ranger cars were in behind them, so they had... Ranger cars had to pull out and go

back up another way to get to the interstate to even get started down towards where we were chasing them west, so they were a good ways down. And John Dendy finally caught up with me, John Dendy and D. J. Maulder I believe is his name, he was a deputy for Johnson County Sheriff's office, was riding with Dendy. And so they start....Dendy passes me and gets between me and the FBI car. So anyway, they start slowing down and of course we all get together then and they see this little station, they go over there and they run around this station. And the FBI car and Dendy is chasing them and I miss the driveway and went down in a ditch, so I had to go up around and in the meantime they come out and then they hit the road going down into this little community of Saltillo which is really nothing but like that station, as far as I know, and a bunch of homes down there. And they go down here and of course Dendy is right behind them at that time and the FBI car is right behind them, and we're....Johnny and I are kind of on down, you know, everything is in sight. And they run off the road and they go up into this woman's yard and hit her flag pole and stop. And they bail out shooting.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** How many is in the car?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Didn't know at that time, but there's five of them and one....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Little girl.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....and one, our little girl. But they ....several of them run out and got in front of this woman's car, whose garage door is down and she's got a brand new Dodge van, you know, a nice van, parked right in front of it. And they get between the garage and the van and start firing...(inaudible)...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Have they got the little girl with them?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, she's in the car. Of course we....we still didn't know all the circumstances at the time, but we had, you know, yeah hey this is our kidnappers. But we didn't

know where she was, but didn't....we could see the people up there just images, you know, two o'clock in the morning. There is a light up there and Dendy's lights are up there, the FBI car pulls right straight in behind this little lady's van that's parked in the driveway, the sirens going and when shooting starts those agents they....they hit the floor board. And Dendy is firing from his car and I'm firing from my car here, I'm parked parallel with the street, here, Dendy is headed into the yard, the FBI car is right behind the van. So Dendy and his partner ....Dendy opens up on them with a rifle and I ...all I've got is my pistol.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about Waltrip?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Waltrip is left handed and he got out...I had a shotgun in the backseat and he got out with a shotgun. And then he started around the back of my car and I'm behind my door firing up there at them, at that garage, behind that van. And you know, you can't hear anything but gun fire and this siren screaming, cause these agents are down in there and the sirens still wide open. And so I got a shot at one of them's head and I think I hit the mirror, the side mirror on that van, cause his head ....he went down when I fired. And then I ....so I started shooting under the van, just shooting ricochet shots down under the van. And anyway, that lasts for I don't know how long, maybe two or three minutes, long enough that I fired I think four shots and then I reloaded and I fired three more, I'm shooting my revolver.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** .357?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** .357. And ah.... I can tell you how the good Lord look after you on deals like this, I keep ammunition under my seat, different kinds, calibers, .45, you know, 9 mm and .357. When I reached .... I'm sitting here holding my gun up and I got to reload I think, cause I don't really remember how many shots I've fired, and I reach in my floor board, looking off over here all the time. And I put my hand on a box of ammunition and bring it up here, .357 magnum,

you know. So I get ammunition and reload....empty my chamber ...or my cylinder and reload and then I fired, I think, three more shots after that. And then it was all over with. And ah...cause they started trying to give up and we just started moving in on them. Maulder went up to that Buick and he saw the.... there was a female involved in this and he saw her and then he saw Amy. And so he got Amy and come out and I was coming around the car about that time when I said, "Is that Amy". And he said, "Yes". And is said, "Let me have her". And I took Amy and I took off back to my car and left them with the clean up there. And just about the time I got back to my car, some more Rangers started arriving, you know that's how far behind they were. And the first person I saw at my car, which I'm sitting there holding my pistol and got Amy down under me, Prince, Bob Prince, Sergeant Prince. And I said, "I got Amy right here". And he said, "Take her back up to the road and contact her father". So that's what I did and then of course by that time they had everybody and they was lining them out there on the street and all this kind of stuff. So I took Amy back up to that Mini Mart and I contact... I don't know if it was Captain Mitchell or somebody ...or the helicopter I guess and then they contact the FBI and the FBI was with Mr. McNiel and I told him to come to this location, you know, that we had Amy. And so I got to see the reunion between the daddy and the girl.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And she was how old?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Thirteen.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did they just pick her because her daddy was a banker?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Just wealthy person. And so ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did ....you've got that pistol over there, who gave that to you?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** The family, they gave four of those pistols ah....they gave one to me, and I believe one to John Dendy and one to Captain Mitchell and one to the Sheriff Eddie Boggs over at Cleburne, Johnson County.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well what kind of pistol is it?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** It's a combat commander .45 automatic, it's engraved and I'd be glad to show it to you.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** When we get done here I want to get some pictures of it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Okay. And it's got etching on it and then it's got written on it, it's got my name....mine's got my name, Texas Ranger H.P. Alford ..Slick Alford or whatever and then you turn it around, the other side of the barrel it's got etched on that, "Love and appreciation Amy, 1985".

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Have you had any contact with her since then?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I've seen her two or three times.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** She still live in the area?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah and she's married to a boy that works for DPS now and if I'm right, I believe I'm right, that her brother also works for DPS, the brother that was with her when she was snatched.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That was rewarding.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was any of the suspects wounded?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah they had one guy named James Foot, was shot in the foot and I think one other was shot in the elbow.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I'd say you probably got the one in the foot.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I feel like I probably did and then Dendy probably got the guy with the elbow coming out from behind that van. Of course Dendy says that he was shooting ricochet shots under there too, I don't know about that. But anyway, start shooting like that, then that brought an end to it, cause they didn't have anywhere else to go.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I can imagine the people in the house. You know, in bed asleep and then all of a sudden.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That was the most interesting trial, this lady was an elderly widow lady and she was in there by herself when all this started. She was the dernest witness you ever heard and a great witness, you know, she said, "I just heard all these sirens and then I heard that gun fire and I heard these people screaming and I knew people was getting just killed"...and blah, blah, blah and all this kind of stuff. She was....and then she finally heard this guy knocking on her door and she said, "I'm so glad to hear him, he said his name was Captain Mitchell with the Texas Rangers". She made a great witness, the District Attorney made a great case and I got to hear ....like I said, I got to see the reunion, then we went inside the store and I got to hear the call to the girl's mother. Let me find out what time I'm supposed to be talking about here.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** A little break....went out and looked at that pistol you were presented, you want to describe the pistol, what it was for, what it is and who presented it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's a hitched .45 caliber automatic combat commander and the family, McNiel family presented those to us.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Presented you one, Bob Mitchell one....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Bob Mitchell, John Dendy, and Sheriff Eddie Boggs from Johnson County where ....where the O'Neil's lived ....McNiel's lived, I sorry. And they called us to Austin and Governor Mark White presented each one of the four of us with one of those pistols.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Was it one ceremony?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** In Austin or Waco?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** In Austin, at the Capital.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That's something to be extremely proud of.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** We were, I think all of us were. And it's something I'll always cherish, just the whole case and the way it turned out, you know, got the little girl back home safely and she wasn't injured in any way.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** That's got to be touching, when we get done....it doesn't relate to this at all, I've got a story I'd like to relate to you of a similar....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Okay.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But that's one that will always stay with me.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Any other cases or stuff as a Ranger that ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I was involved in the Carrasco siege at Huntsville.....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well tell me about that.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....back in the early '70's.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** There's a new book out on that, called *Eleven Days in Hell*, it's a very good book.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I got it right over there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I talked to ah....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I got the author's signature and ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Estel?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....and ah....Mr. Estel's signature....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I asked him on that, and he said that book is about 95% accurate.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. That was a.... I was there from the second day through the finish.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What were your duties?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well I wasn't on the attack teams, because I was .... I was here from Company B at the time, I was still stationed in the Dallas area.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did G.W. take you down?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And Captain Burkes and I were here...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** G.W. Burkes.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah...then ah....we worked the night shift and when ...when it came down to the final deal, Company A in Houston, which was.....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Keith Rogers was Captain.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....Huntsville would assist....Huntsville was in their territory, so they became the lead outfit along with the detachment of TDC people.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Texas Department of Corrections.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yes. And Wallace ...Ranger Wallace Spiller and myself were at the main headquarters, the big office right at the .... I guess it would be on the north side of the courtyard from where the event took place. And he and I went out and got some of the hostages after Lieutenant Stewart with TDC had cut 'em loss from their...when they had them a shield made of law books, they'd been in the law library for the eleven days that they were in there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Trojan Horse they call it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And they made a Trojan Horse type deal and when they started to come down, and after they ....they tried to (inaudible)...with water pressure off the fire trucks from the

Huntsville Fire Department and one of the hoses broke. And that was quite a situation, there's a.... I'll always admire Mr. Estel, who had to make life and death decisions involving the hostages, but he said from the beginning, he says, "They're not going to leave this prison".

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Where were you when the final shooting occurred?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I was at the headquarters....the door of the headquarters building that goes into courtyard at a building over here on the north and they come down from the second or third floor...second....third floor from the library, in a building right adjacent to us, which was in plain view from our vantage point, where Wallace and I were. And ah...but we had spent all the rest of our time in behind the library, we slept on mattresses out on the ....out by the laundry, out there all during the night and what not, just kept, you know, we had somebody there all the time, just keeping constant vigil.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you ever personally think it would end peacefully?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, I never did, from what I knew and of course, I didn't know anything first hand, I just knew what they were relaying to us and all, and it sounded like the negotiations they were going through, that they didn't have any intention of coming out peacefully.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well it...it's....you know ah...Cal Thomas, a commentator for Fox News, was a reporter up there for Houston and he said about it, "It's a tragedy that two people died, but it's a miracle that everybody didn't".

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's right, that's really right. Two of the hostages died.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And I know I talked to Mr. Estel at the reunion here a few weeks ago and he said that they were talking about releasing one of the hostages and he said, "I kept thinking to myself, I just hope they release Linda Woodall, and about that time I looked up and here she come running down the ramp". She'd become a warden I guess over at Gatesville.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. Mr. Estel was a very courageous man too, and he stood by his job, he stood by his convictions and I'll always admire him for the way he handled that situation. I think he was doing ...I don't know how it could have been done any better.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ah....some people you worked with ah... I guess from your era especially, you always have to start with Homer Garrison.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Your thoughts.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Great guy and a good leader and a well respected person, both within the department and outside, you know, the politics of the state and what not. And I just.... I thought he was a great person.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Adams...Jim Adams.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Jim Adams was a outsider that came in and I think did a good job. Mr. Adams and Captain Mitchell were sitting right over there and had dinner with us one night at that table and I have a lot of respect for him for ah....he overcame a lot of obstacles.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I've heard other Rangers describe him, when he come in I wasn't going to like him, especially somebody from the FBI. He ended up next to Garrison, the best.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, well the Rangers and the people like Bob Mitchell especially, sold Mr. Adams on the Ranger service.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well Jim or ah....Jack Dean described him as, he's only about 5'7" tall but his brain was 7'5".

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah he was a very intelligent fella, he really was. And I just.... I had a lot of respect for him because of, you know, the way he handled things while he was at DPS and for a transition that was probably very hard for him to make.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about Jim Ray?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Jim Ray was a great guy and I knew Jim Ray from the time he was a Highway Patrolman here in Athens and he made Ranger just about the time I come on in 1956, I don't know what year he made Ranger.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** About that same time.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. And I always .....always liked him, I knew his brother Esten Ray better than I knew Jim at the time, cause Esten was a Highway Patrolman there in Tyler and I was a Highway Patrolman in Longview.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What about the brother between them?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I don't know him.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Okay. Anyone else, we've already talked about Glenn and Mitchell and what not, so any other ....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** All right, Billy Davis was always a good friend and a good partner. Tom Arnold was a good friend and a good partner. And you know, some people like that.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Bobby Prince, did you serve under him?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah he just....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** His son's a Captain now.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Huh?

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Randy's a Captain now.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, that's what I hear.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** The first ah....since at least 1935 in the organization, it's the first father and son Captains, ever.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah. Well Randy's a good boy.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Everybody says Randy will end a Senior one day.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** He may...he may very well do it, cause he's sharp.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** When did you retire?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I retired in 1987.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** The same year Glenn did. What date did you....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I retired in November.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** You went about two or three months....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Wait a minute, wait a minute, I retired in '86, cause I went in as Sheriff in ...(inaudible)..

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** So you retired before Glenn?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Cause he retired August 31, 1987.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** In fact I watched that video the other night of his retirement party. You were there.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, I sure was, wouldn't have missed it.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** What made you decide to retire?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well mostly finances. I had been.... I had gotten about all I could as far as retirement was concerned. Because at the time 80% was the best you could do in DPS, it's changed now, thank goodness.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** They just got a big pay raise.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** And ah.... they got all those changes and the big pay raise three years after I retired, I guess they was waiting on me to retire. But ah....

(conversation between third person).....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** But you retired and who succeeded you here?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Ray Nutt.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Ray Nutt? And had you already thought about running for Sheriff?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Not until just prior to my retiring. And of course I had .... I had to retire to announce to run for Sheriff, so that's why I had to retire in '86. Cause I had to run during the year of '87 to go in, in '88.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Whom did you defeat?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I had two ex-officers here, one a ex-DPS trooper named Jim Billings, ex-policeman and a deputy Sheriff named Mike Burton. I beat them in the ...beat both of them in Republican primary.... I mean in the Democratic primary, and then I had a Republican candidate who was a former official with ATF who was in the upper echelon of ATF, and he moved to the community here named ah....ah....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** So when did you assume office?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I went into office in November of '87, the Sheriff that was here, Charlie Fields, Jr. got ill during 1987 and just as soon as I won the election, well Charlie resigned and I was sworn in as Sheriff. And that was his wishes.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Of course you....there's been some Sheriffs here, I don't know how good, but had a lot of notoriety, Jess Sweeten.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah. Jess Sweeten was our kind of law man, but he....like you say, he got a lot of notoriety.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Can you expand on....or would rather not? That's okay. And then of course Ronnie Brownlow's dad.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Was a great man, good gracious, he was here 26 or 28 years as Sheriff and most of those were two year terms where he had to run every two years.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I had a Sheriff now, David Birds, tell me said, “I thought I knew what work was until I got to be Sheriff, then I found out what work really was”.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it’s a lot different from any work we’re used ....we were used to, when you go into the administrative end of the Sheriff’s office. Especially when I ...when I went in we were in a old jail that was ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Is that in the courthouse?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No we was down a block from the courthouse. And it was beginning to fall out of compliance and become overcrowded and wore out and everything else. It was built back in the early ‘20’s. And so I went in ’87....November of ’87 and in ’91 moved into a new facility. And that was a tough transition.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Of course I realize you was never a Captain.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Right.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** But is there any comparison between a Sheriff and a Captain really?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, I think it would be ....of course a Captain becomes a little more familiar with administration than a Ranger, field Ranger does. And that’s quite an adjustment, so like Captain Mitchell was being appointed for Sheriff over in Waco was probably easier than me coming in as Sheriff in Henderson County.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And how long was you Sheriff?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** For 12 years, a little over 12 years.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Is it comparing daylight and dark to try to compare a Ranger to the deputy....or to a Sheriff?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Nah, no I don't think there's any comparison that could be made there, especially a ....maybe you could in a time a little further back, but now days a Sheriff has really got to be more of an administrator than .....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Today the Lord High Sheriff.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....(inaudible)....and all that kind of stuff.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** When the days of the Lord High Sheriff are gone. Where in the people come to the Sheriff for everything from birthing to .....

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it's ....it's just a..... it's just a different deal now. Departments are getting so large, like in this little county right here, you know, Ronnie Brownlow is sitting there now with .... I had over 90 employees and he's gone well over 100.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Did you have the opportunities to do any significant work with you CID, criminal investigating division?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well only when I first started, I made every major call with them, not to oversee them or look across their shoulder or anything like that, just to be of help if I could. I went to every murder and ah...where they got a call and this, that and the other.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well did it...did you work, you think, more ....or make sure your department was more involved in getting Rangers in on cases up front?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Oh ah....we did that, of course there wasn't any problem here within Athens, and I'm talking about with the police department or with the Sheriff's office, prior to my going in about Ranger involvement. Because they ....they ah....called us very frequently.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I'm amazed when I listen to Rangers, current Rangers, and retired Rangers and what not, though that so many of them, they don't get called until the case is already ice cold.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well that's...I know that's the case in a lot of things, but I think it's the rapport that you're able to build with your Sheriff's office. And I'm not faulting any Ranger ....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Sure, I understand. Well a lot of the Sheriff's.... I would imagine, this is just my own personal observation now, it's not official. But I ....and I like the man....but I think working with a J. B. Smith could be difficult, cause J. B. is such a high, high profile person.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well and Smith County is his county, you know, that's the first thing you got to....you got to consider....

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Lock, stock and barrel.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** ....and that's the way he looks at it, this is my county, you know, you just work here, as far as the Ranger is concerned. Oh J. B. works well I think with most of the Rangers that have been in over there.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Yeah, yeah.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** But ah....but a lot of Sheriffs are very protective of their business, their county.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well anything else you'd like to add?

**HOWARD ALFRED:** No, by the time you leave, I'll think of a hundred things.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I've got plenty of tape, but I could always come back. I did that with Bobby Prince about two or three times.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** He'd think of things and the next time I'd see him, we'd add some more to it.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I just....you know I'm.... I'm.... I had a great career in DPS and I had a good career as being a Sheriff and I spent 42 years in law enforcement and it, you know, it

just....it had it problems and all that, but it wasn't anything but great for me. I wouldn't swap my career for anything else I can think of right now.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And world wide that Cinco Peso badge is special.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well it's known and what not and I think .... I think more and more and more as we get along, it's earning that respect that it's got, it's not....and I don't mean any disrespect anywhere, but I think you know, we got a different breed of Rangers coming in now. They have a different way to handle investigations and much more equipment, technique, expertise and all that kind of stuff and it's just going to get better, I hope. I just.... I think the Rangers are the best thing that ever come out besides sliced bread.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** There's a lot of people think that. Slick if you don't have anything else, I don't know of anything else to ask. I'm like you, I get down the road, I might think of some things.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well then I'll probably be the same way. I just ah...

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know you've got.... I'll put this on the record, you've got a lot of real good friends that think a lot of you, leading the pack is Glenn Elliott and Bob Mitchell.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Well we just...and that goes both ways.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And Jim Ray thought a lot of you and you and I both knew Jim well enough to know that if he didn't like you, you'd know that too.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, yeah that's right. I just .... I always thought a lot of Jim and I'm sorry I didn't see more of him during his illness and what not.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** And I know Bob and Glenn, you know and of course....well of course I know Glenn better, but I know he thinks the world of you.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** Yeah, well they just....that goes both ways.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I just find it absolutely amazing that ya'll rode together that long and never had any cross words.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** We never had a problem, at all and I just .... I can't tell you why, other than we just ... we just got along real well and always have since.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** I know he calls you every Saturday morning .

**HOWARD ALFRED:** That's right, that's right, come over and eat biscuits with me one Saturday.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Well I don't have anything else Slick, for right now at least.

**HOWARD ALFRED:** I don't guess I do either.

**ROBERT NIEMAN:** Thank you.