

Interview with
BOBBY POYNTER
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project: Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted at the Poynter's Home
Edgewood, Texas
Saturday—July 26, 2008

Interviewed By: Robert Nieman and Nancy Ray
Longview, Texas

Present At Interview: Bobby Poynter, Robert Nieman, Nancy Ray



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BOBBY POYNTER

TEXAS RANGER, RETIRED

ROBERT NIEMAN: All right, this is Saturday, July the 26th, my name is Robert Nieman, I'm assisted by Nancy Ray. We are visiting with Bobby Poynter of Edgewood, Texas. The purpose of this interview is to discuss Ranger Poynter's career as a Texas Ranger. Mr. Poynter, do I have your permission to record this interview.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, you do.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Poynter, you understand that this video tape will belong to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And Mr. Poynter, finally, do I have your permission to present copies of this tape to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools, and once transcribed, place on the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum website?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Poynter, what is your full name.

BOBBY POYNTER: My name is Bobby Charles Poynter.

ROBERT NIEMAN: That's P O Y N T E R?

BOBBY POYNTER: That's correct.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where you born, Bobby?

BOBBY POYNTER: I was born in Dallas County, near Mesquite, Texas. Uh, On June 15th, 1934.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And were you raised there?

BOBBY POYNTER: I was born and reared on a farm right there near Mesquite.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Right where you telling us earlier where that old Big Town Mall was.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, it's the Zachariah Motley Plantation or farm which was well-known around Mesquite. He was my great great-grandfather. And I was born and reared uh in Dallas County right there on that farm and I stayed there until I left to get out in the world for my own.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Who was, who was your mom and dad?

BOBBY POYNTER: My Dad's name was Charlie Poynter and my Mother was Jurine Jordan Poynter.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How do you spell her first name?

BOBBY POYNTER: J as in John U R I N E. Jurine.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And did you have any brothers and sisters.

BOBBY POYNTER: I had one brother and one sister. My brother's name is Donald, Donald Gene Poynter, and my sister was Patsy Ann Poynter.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And your wife?

BOBBY POYNTER: My wife is Josephine Thomas Poynter and she was born and reared out in beautiful downtown Burbank, California.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Really?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Been there a time or two. Uh, do you have any children?

BOBBY POYNTER: I have two children..., I have a boy, Steven, and a girl Leslie.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh, where did you go to school?

BOBBY POYNTER: I went to school, the first school I went to was a little two-room, one school teacher, eight-grade school out in the country there by the farm. Its name was Murphree M U R P H R E E School. And I went there a couple of years and they discontinued that school

and I moved into the Mesquite school system. And was in Mesquite school until 1951 when I graduated from high school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Murphree, that's not a common name. Of course as you know, we have Tracy Murphree, a Ranger up in Denton, I wonder if you ever asked him if that's any relation?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I don't. I didn't ask him and I have never thought about uh why. That school... my Mom and Dad also went to school there and several of the people that lived out on the farms... Uh I guess this was before bussing and uh they went to little country schools or community schools. There right next to it was the church and that sort of thing and all those people in that community went to that school usually and to the church right there. But then when uh, uh they closed it, well we were bussed then into Mesquite.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you were in school, what were some of your favorite courses? Or favorite teachers.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, most of the time it was uh either playing sports of some kind. Going to study history or mathematics or something like that... I just did it and got by. But, uh, I would think that one of my best uh or most fun I had was uh in the area of sports. And I played football and baseball and all that kind of thing and I guess baseball was the big thing. I was a catcher as far as the baseball and I lettered four years in high school baseball and two years as a varsity in football. And uh of course Mesquite now is a 5A, big time school where back then we were not all that large a school. But we played many of schools in our area like Garland and Grand Prairie and Irving and Arlington and Carrollton and all those type places around the Dallas area which are of course big, well-known high schools today.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Were there any particular teachers or coaches that influenced you? I know I've got some teachers that I still think back, they really influenced my life.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, we had a fellow who was the superintendent of schools and uh the coach, whose name was Ethridge, I guess had as much to do with uh framing my life as anyone. Mr. McDonald, who was well-known as the superintendent of schools at Mesquite for years and years... well he was really a great guy.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember his first name?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I don't, it's been so long, uh, but Mr. McDonald was the kind of person, and of course then, the superintendent was right there on campus like the uh principal. You had the superintendent, you had the principal, and you had the teachers as far as that and they were uh... he really was a fair fellow. And I guess that my way of thinking is as close to his and was framed that way as I can remember because I thought the way he handled his business was so, so great. Uh, the coach, Coach Ethridge, of course I had more than Coach Ethridge, but Ethridge was the first coach that I'd ever had as far as either baseball or football or track, or any of those, and Coach Ethridge was one who uh was a, was an older person at that time but maybe it was all the circumstances around. In the old school, uh we all had to do our showers in what looked like an old cistern and you know it was up under the bleachers and he was just a fellow that everyone could trust and believe and... And then the last person I guess was the Band... I was in the Band for about seven or eight years while going through school, played a trumpet, and his name was Greenhall. And Mr. Greenhall whose still alive

NANCY RAY: How do you spell his name?

BOBBY POYNTER: G R E E N H A W He was probably instrumental and, and as far as academically, uh not only did he teach me how to play an instrument and to learn how to be a member of a band or orchestra, and of a choral group and all this, he uh he was very good bringing all the people together. And we all sort of thought he was the greatest guy going. So,

in school, those were the major players that I remember. But all during school, every teacher that I had you remembered because they had some special thing about them whether it was from back then as comparing to what my grandkids do today, uh, writing was very very important. And you know back in the sixth and seventh grade, if you... the teachers were very very concerned about your handwriting and you really had to work on that and spelling and all those those things where today they sort of don't care what your writing looks like because most of the kids now seem to put it on a computer of some kind anyway and it... it doesn't matter. But nearly all the teachers that I had as I remember were teachers that were concerned about whether you learned anything and how well you were as a student in the areas of getting the work done and being trustworthy and being someone that you could be trusted to get things done because you always had homework and things... and you had to bring all this in and you had to do those things. So not only from having been raised on a farm and have that kind of background, well I was taught from the time I can remember starting school until getting out of school because that uh... what you said or what you said you would do is what happened and you did that and so it kind of shaped my character I think as a young person that made it especially good for the time when I moved on into developing a career and getting into law enforcement and finally the Rangers. But at college, I didn't go to college immediately after high school. I was married, and I married my high school sweetheart. Josephine was a young gal that had come there from California and uh the first time I saw her well I said oh ho, that old Scottish gal that's the one I've gotta try to catch. Well, we uh, of course, went all through high school together and then after she graduated from high school, she was behind me a year or so, well we married and of course started a family and whatever. And I just went to college now and then, part-time, finally ending up several years later with a degree uh from the Corpus Christi State University.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You said that you didn't go to college immediately, what you do right after high school?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I went to work. I actually started working uh part-time when I was about 16 years old at a drive-in movie. And of course all the guys and gals, mostly the guys, worked then. Not only did you work on the farm out there but you had uh a job of some kind on the weekends or at night or something where you had spending money. Of course back in that time, early '40s and, and all, there was just one car in the family. Most of the time you didn't have a lot of money or whatever but if you had some spending money, well you made it yourself. And when I graduated from high school, I continued that movie type job as assistant manager at one of the theatres in Dallas and stayed a year or two doing that. Then I went with the City of Dallas as a personnel... in their Personnel Department, and stayed about a year and then went as a court clerk. And I guess uh as the court clerk, that's how I at that time became so interested in uh law enforcement. Now, my law enforcement thoughts did not start there. I can remember back in First Grade, well I wanted to be the Lone Ranger. I mean I was always playing Lone Ranger. So being a Ranger was my dream. But as things happened, your dreams sort of stays in the background until something happens that sort of points you into an area where you say, well, that's the way I'm going. And so I started uh right out of of from the City of Dallas... uh the Department of Public Safety had a lot of activity that was handled there at the Police Department and we were all in the same building in downtown Dallas. And I got to know several troopers and of course I was very young at that time, 21 years old, and I applied for the Department of Public Safety to become a trooper... I was just 21. In fact, I was accepted to go to a school and be a trooper before I was old enough. Uh I had to wait until I turned 21. So I actually was 21 on June the 15th of 1955, and I became uh a DPS trooper... I was in school on July 5th, 1955.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What class did you attend?

BOBBY POYNTER: Oh, back then,... this was the last class that uh went to the old uh..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Camp Mabry

BOBBY POYNTER: Camp Mabry school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: M A B R Y

BOBBY POYNTER: And we were... uh, the next couple of years... I say it's the last class, we actually didn't have classes then, they were already patrolling that classrooms out of there and we actually went,... I was sent to Houston where I spent 2 months or so at Houston in classroom. And doing ride-by, on-the-job training and all that kind of thing. Back then, we didn't have the school as we know it now. Of course uh , they all talk about the Highway Patrol school and all that kind of thing. I did not attend the Highway Patrol School as it was at that time. I... the school I went to, there were only 5 of us that went in service at that time so we didn't have a full-blown school, it was sort of in between uh the main school. In 1957 is when they started the again the DPS.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember the names of those four other patrolmen?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I don't. Uh, Chester Davis was one and Chester's now deceased. And been deceased for a good while. Uh, oh there's several and I can't remember their names.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What does your school, schooling, let's put it, consist of doing... besides classrooms. What were your classroom subjects?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, let me get a drink of water,..... The school itself, we got all the like the First Aid things, had all the classroom on the traffic laws, and of course we touched on the criminal laws and we did several other kinds of laws. Uh, the part about uh... the athletic part, was not like your regular Highway Patrol school at that time. You just went to most of the

activities as you went through and most of it was the classroom. So we did everything, about everything you did in the regular Highway Patrol School, except ride the motorcycles... I think that was something we quit about then. Motorcycles... they started doing away with riding the motorcycles. And we, we did not have the boxing that we had a few months later when the school started back. So, I went through a shortened version of the..

ROBERT NIEMAN: How long was the school?

BOBBY POYNTER: About two months and it was three, actually about a 12-week school, something like that.

Side conversation during short break

ROBERT NIEMAN: OK, you just finished your Patrol school, where is your first duty station?

BOBBY POYNTER: First duty station was at the Driver's License Service in Houston, Texas. And Houston, Texas, at that... that was 1955, one thing I remember about Houston... the first speeder that I was in the car and chasing was doing the school times here then, we were on the ride-alongs you know that time. It was Interstate 45, well uh, Highway uh 45 at that time was just a two-lane road and we were on the road uh between Houston and Galveston.

NANCY RAY: Did you say ride-along?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, we were with another Highway Patrolman.

NANCY RAY: Ah, OK.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Were you driving or was the?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, uh I was just a student.

ROBERT NIEMAN: We went over a previous one earlier today... the difference between the ride-along and the driver.

BOBBY POYNTER: This uh..I was just riding, uh, to see what it was all about. In fact, I was trying to think before ya'll came what that first trooper's name was but I can't remember right now who that was. But uh that was ... and I think back, ever, I've had three tours of duty in Houston over the years and that first tour, Highway 75, uh 45, was two lanes wide and it was under construction. And was just in Houston, and this is 2008 and it's still under construction. (laughter) But it's not two lanes wide, now it's six lanes wide but still they're working it and whatever. I don't think they'll ever finish..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Probably not. Let me go back, something I failed to ask you. Did you have monitors in your school?

BOBBY POYNTER: Uh, no, we just had the instructors.

ROBERT NIEMAN: OK, do you remember any of those instructors?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well uh, Holloway Shelton was one... well, I can't remember who else and there was two or three captains and there was some sergeants but I can't remember their names now.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you go into..., you've gone to Houston. Who's your captain and who's your sergeant?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, the sergeant there was uh... Captain Ownby, O W N B Y, in Driver's License. And Shelton was the lieutenant. And uh, back then that's all we had. We had a sergeant and I don't recall... Ownby... Shelton was the sergeant I believe at that time and made lieutenant a little bit later. But uh when I finished that school and I was out, I stayed there a year in Houston and then came to Dallas and stayed in Dallas several years as a trooper. And then I went back through Highway Patrol school which was the updated, new Highway Patrol

school and that was inuh 1964 I believe it was, something like that. And when I came out of there, well I went to Denison, Texas as a Highway Patrolman uh instead of being...

ROBERT NIEMAN: In your first tour in Houston, in '55, did you know Ed Gooding? He was a Highway Patrolman down in Baytown.

BOBBY POYNTER: No. He wasn't there at that time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: No, he was in Baytown.

BOBBY POYNTER: No but I don't recall him being at Baytown at the time... he could have been but I don't recall him being there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: He was in '57 when he went in the Marines.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I just didn't know him. But he was on patrol and I was in Driver's License, that's the reason because we were in the office all the time and he was out on patrol all the time and I did not know him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And you had to go back to school in Austin, how long was that school and what was that school's number?

BOBBY POYNTER: I don't remember the numbers of the schools, it was one of the uh... we had just,... well let's see... I just don't remember the number of that school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How long did you have to go?

BOBBY POYNTER: We went uh 15 weeks, I think it was. Something like that. And it was exactly, the same Patrol school as they have now except you have a little bit longer I think now than then. And we did everything in the Patrol school as was normally done that I missed out on when I came into the Department because we didn't... we were transitioning between Camp Mabry and the new... and I went to the new academy there at the DPS Headquarters.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you have to do everything or was some of it...

BOBBY POYNTER: I did it all, all over. I didn't have to but I volunteered to go back through because I wanted everything, for my record.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you uh do you remember your monitors there?

BOBBY POYNTER: No.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And...

BOBBY POYNTER: I do not.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And you got out of there and you go to Dallas?

BOBBY POYNTER: When I got out of there I went to Denison.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Denison, OK.

BOBBY POYNTER: Denison, and was there... that was a substation type schedule there for, you were a one-man unit usually for about three days out of the week and then a two-man unit on the weekends and then sometimes it was just a one-man unit... And there was three stationed at Denison and three or four troopers at uh Sherman.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you went back up to Dallas, you went to Highway Patrol there, I mean patrol or still in D..?

BOBBY POYNTER: I was still in DPS when I went back there but in driver... what we call driver improvement. My title at that time was called Hearing Officer. Now they still have Hearing Officers in DPS I believe but they're not commissioned, they're lawyers now and they're involved in suspension of drivers license and...

ROBERT NIEMAN: What did you do in Dallas?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I worked with the courts and uh interviewed people that were problem drivers and had all kinds of problems as far as even medical or alcohol problems or things like that. And made decisions as to whether they should be licensed or not licensed. And

then represented the Department in court when... when uh those folks uh would not uh voluntarily go along with whatever program we had. We also conducted classes for problem drivers and all that type of activity... uh taught schools and things that had to do with interviewing of people and uh inter.. and doing what... sort of like interrogations but we called it interviews to find out their problems and why they were such bad drivers and determined whether or not their medical problems were those that could be controlled or if their drinking problems were those that we could change attitudes on and things of that nature. And I did that for about four years, four or five years...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Then you went back to Houston again?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I went back then to Highway Patrol for the full Highway Patrol school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you went back to school, did they knock you back to student pay?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, well, no, I just went right on. I was just back through school. Now the problem was that if you didn't make it back through school, well you had a problem because if you couldn't cut it in that school... I was ... at that time I was 32 years old I think, thirty something years old, I can't remember the exact date. And so that was my only concern that I uh couldn't cut it like the younger guys did. But I found the school not to be any problem at all as far as being athletic or being able to handle it. It wasn't that big a deal. The only thing that happened to me was that I got two ribs broken... the other guy that broke my ribs was named James Bags. And after James... he didn't go out in the field, I think he stayed right there in Austin and was the athletic or the boxing guy, afterwards. I guess because he was so good... he broke everybody's ribs (laughter). But Bags was a pretty good guy. Before that, I went to school, I was involved in,...with a trooper by the name of Gray. Bob Gray and I, we went

around and put on Judo demonstrations and I was a Judo guy... and I guess that's why I didn't have any trouble going through school. Uh Bobby Prince went through that school. Bobby, of course later, made captain uh in the Rangers which I was really happy with. Bob and I were good friends. We drove back and forth a lot of times to the new school, went to school... but uh back then Bobby was one heck of a boxer. And uh

ROBERT NIEMAN: Golden Gloves Heavyweight Champ of Tarrant County.

BOBBY POYNTER: I was a boxer at Mesquite High School but uh not anything like he was and I wasn't his size,..., but I helped Bob with Judo and he helped me with the boxing and so we sort of worked one another out a little bit... but uh it uh didn't do much good because I got my ribs broke, broken (laughter). That's about the only thing that happened to me, the rest of the time it was good. Driving and all that, of course I'd had all that, so it was just a refresher sort of.

ROBERT NIEMAN: So now you're out of school and you're going back to

BOBBY POYNTER: Highway Patrol at Denison. One, and where it was a small area, and one of the best assignments I guess as far as a trooper was concerned that I had. And I was there for like about 3 ½ years and made sergeant and went back to Houston. And that was in, I guess 1964. Made sergeant and stayed sergeant there for several years and then uh in 1970, you know I was... I got that wrong, '67. I'd made,... went to trooper up in Denison in '64 and then made sergeant in '67 and went back to Houston. And in '73 is when I was promoted to Ranger.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you were in Denison, on, on... did any particular... sometimes Highway Patrolman would assist in criminal investigations or whatnot, were you involved in anything like that?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, we never did. Most everything we did was strictly Highway Patrol work. We'd go to... of course back then, you might go to work on Friday afternoon say at 4

o'clock and your shift might be over with at 4 o'clock Sunday morning. We didn't have... you know you just worked from can to can't back then. For now, I think you sort of have an 8-hour day or 10-hour day, something like that. Back then it was whenever you could you, you got through, you got started you got through. Well that's a one-man station well that's the way that works.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you have many people wanted to run from you?

BOBBY POYNTER: Not many, but back then, we had uh, our cars were fast enough they didn't run from us too much. One of the things that I remember so well as a trooper at uh Denison was that every once and a while a fellow... we would partner up, Ted Hood, was one of the troopers that I worked with a lot. Ted and I, on two occasions, Ted and I uh came up to a railroad crossing where a train was going across and we could see as the train... oncoming headlights coming and ran into the side of the train. Now that's something you'd think would never happen twice, but it did. It happened twice to us.

NANCY RAY: I lived in Denison at that time

BOBBY POYNTER: Oh did you?

NANCY RAY: Um hum.

BOBBY POYNTER: In '64, '65?

NANCY RAY: Yes. I remember that wreck.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, remember, we had two of them out there.

NANCY RAY: I just remember one.

BOBBY POYNTER: And they both happened where the guy ran into it and

NANCY RAY: Flatbed

BOBBY POYNTER: And I told Ted, look, that car's gonna run into that train. And sure enough, and they were both drunk. But I worked a lot of accidents uh between Oklahoma and Denison. And uh investigated a lot of accidents. We hardly had time to work any kind of cases. And they had a good sheriff's office at that time that worked most of the cases. As far as sheriff... the Ranger was stationed over at Gainesville and he uh... if we had something

ROBERT NIEMAN: Lewis Rigler?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, Lewis Rigler was over at Gainesville.

ROBERT NIEMAN: L E W I S

BOBBY POYNTER: And uh Lewis would come over and work cases or whatever, but uh we never did any criminal work.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, I didn't explain myself as well as I could. When I said did they make a run from you, I meant did they run for the bridge... you know into Oklahoma?

BOBBY POYNTER: Oh yeah, that was always... at that time we those... 440 Plymouths. And one of those cars... you just didn't outrun them. And uh a 4-mile stretch from the Denison city limits to the bridge, and you seldom, I don't remember ever not being able to catch a speeder before he got to the bridge. And, uh, of course back then, most of the... it was, you didn't have radar in the car, it was a chase usually. And when you'd get behind one and realized that he was speeding and he realized you were behind him, and the chase was on. Well, they couldn't outrun you. One of the things that I remember at Denison that was so fun, a lot of time the kids out there would get at an overpass at one of the county roads or Farm-to-Market type roads, they would get up on the uh top of the bridge so they could see all around and then they'd start the two cars, the drag race. Well, one... ever so often, well we'd sneak in there and get behind them and get in that line and then we'd uh do the drag race with one of them and then take them down

to the JP you know (laughter). And of course back then you didn't have people that for us, we'd tell them all OK, all of you line up and come on and come down to the JP office and here they'd come. Of course we knew all of them and they knew that if they didn't come, well daddy and mama would get a call and here we'd go. But they all come down to the JP office and they'd all be lined up and they'd get their tickets you know at the JP office and have to pay it before they could go home and that sort of thing... for drag racing. But uh it was sort of one of those things that where I don't think law enforcement today has that type of re... you know relationship with your... with the people that you are enforcing the law with. But those kids would get caught, well they just caught you know, and here we'd go. And we'd do that every once and a while but we could always outrun them. When we ended... to come off that bridge with them and were side-by-side with them, well...(they would say) uh oh, we're caught (laughter). And we'd get them lined up. But it was a fun, fun time to be in law enforcement, especially as a trooper there in Denison. And uh then of course we made sergeant and moved the family... I was talking to Jo the other day... I think we've moved 12 times in the 25 years that I spent with the Department of Public Safety. And it seemed like every few years, we thought we were in the military. Every two or three tours or so we'd get promoted in some way or change jobs and back then the Department of Public Safety would not let you work as a supervisor uh over people that you had worked with. You had to move and be a supervisor with new people. And I guess it was the way it had been forever that way, but it was sort of hard on you because you ended up having to move. And so ever time you turned around, you were going to a station like Houston or Dallas or San Antonio or some place where you had to start over as a supervisor or new people in your supervision. .

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, you went to Houston then as a sergeant?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And how long were you there?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, from 19... I made sergeant in I believe was in November or so of 1967... '67, '68 and that time, I believe '67 and then I made Ranger on September the 1st of '73.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, while you were in say Houston the first time, did,...was your office in the same office as the Ranger office?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes it was.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you uh Captain Purvis?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, and

ROBERT NIEMAN: And Klevenhagen

BOBBY POYNTER: Klevenhagen was the captain, acting captain at that time, in the office. And we were in a... one building had everybody in it. Had uh the Rangers, and had the Highway Patrol and had the Driver's License, everybody. And they only had one, one building.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, I know Jimmy, or Jim Ray, Chief Ray,

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Made a statement to me one time, he'd never known a man in his life that had a fire in him the way Klevenhagen did.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, he was quite a fellow and uh of course we all were so close that we all knew one another and uh if you, back then, it was sort of like old time where uh your family... everybody knew everything you were doing. So, we all new the captains and the sergeants and the sergeants all knew everybody and, and it was sort of a great big happy family. Each different branch had its different thing to do and that's what they did. But Klevenhagen was the first... I guess the closest Ranger I had ever known as a captain... of course Lone Wolf

Gonzaullas back in Dallas but I also knew Klevenhagen before that time and didn't know him like I did Lone Wolf Gonzaullas.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Gonzaullas is Portuguese, G O N Z A U L L A S.

BOBBY POYNTER: He was, Gonzaullas was I guess, was the person who actually made my mind up that if I ever got the chance to be a Ranger, I was going to be one. And uh, and so I thought a lot of him. And only knew him professionally, did not know him personally or visit in his home or anything like that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, while you were sergeant there in Houston, is there anything you remember there that would stand out... or what were your duties as a sergeant?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I had about 22 people that I supervised, that's both sworn and uh clerical people. And I ran uh the Driver Improvement office activities which was, like I talked about earlier, where we handled the problem drivers and folks that had uh their licenses suspended, those with medical problems and things as well as uh I had one of the Driver Examining offices. The Headquarters office had a Driver's License office in it and I was the supervisor over that. In addition to that, we served a lot of warrants and things as well as uh we had a telephone answering uh service. We had about 7 or 8 ladies and at that time, who answered the calls that the communications uh would have had to answer otherwise. But Houston was so big and so active, that I headed up that and looked after those. When I left, well I think the warrant service, uh the Highway Patrol took that over and did the uh telephone answering thing and supervised those ladies and all... but at that time, of course, we had regional commanders and whatever he wanted accomplished, well he'd pick a sergeant someplace and that sergeant would have to..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Who was the regional commander down there at that time?

BOBBY POYNTER: I can't tell you. I can't remember who that was.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, you're still in the same, all of you in the same building...

BOBBY POYNTER: At that time, we had more than office, we had uh a regional office and we had two outlying offices. One was in Pasadena and one was in, in Bellaire, I believe it was. But uh that's all we in there. I don't know how many they have now which I think they have several.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well at that time, especially, you, well they still do, you had to make yourself real known, well known if you wanted to be a Ranger. The Ranger captain, I guess Eddie Oliver, was there then?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, it was uh... Eddie Oliver had been before that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Pete Rogers?

BOBBY POYNTER: Pete Rogers was the Ranger captain at that time and there were several things that uh back then, most of the Rangers were... uh many of the Rangers let me put it that way, were not even in DPS. They were picked from outside agencies where they had put on uh, maybe had been outstanding in those areas, and had made their name and uh, became well known and, and therefore got looked at to be a Ranger.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I know, when Glenn Elliot made Ranger in '61, one of the Rangers made it the same time, was a sheriff.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, well, when I made Ranger, there were six... they had just added uh, 8 new positions into the Rangers, there were 55 and they changed it... No, there was... which upped it to 88 men, 88 people. And I was uh... so they uh made six of us I believe at that time. And, in, at that time when I made Ranger, I was Houston, there was Ray Martinez and there was uh, uh, Rudy Rodriquez, not Rodriquez... well I can't call their names now. I guess that shows I'm getting old I can't remember anything.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Art Rodriquez?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, there weren't, it was... I thought I'd never forget all their names, but everyone of the ones that, that made Ranger at that time uh that stayed in the Rangers, went on up to either be Senior Ranger Captain or at least a captain in the Rangers. And their names will all come to me in a little bit. Uh, Maurice Cook was one of them. Uh, uh, I can't call, I can't call them right now, some more will come to me. But uh, the Highway Patrol... all the work that we did at that time, uh I don't know of anything special that I did to get noticed as a Ranger. But uh, but I did do a lot of things as a trooper. And as a Highway Patrolman that if you have not done very well, everybody would have known about it and you would have not gotten a chance to be a Ranger. Now you could take the test, but if you screwed up somehow, you weren't going to become a Ranger.

ROBERT NIEMAN: That's back in the days when a captain would say you're gonna be a Ranger, you're gonna be a Ranger regardless of the test. And if he didn't want you in the Rangers, you were gone.

BOBBY POYNTER: That's sort of the way it was. It took only one person to say no, you... we don't want this guy and you were out. And uh, and most of the time, uh you had to do something sort of special. You know, like Ray Martinez, was the... was the Austin policeman that was involved in the sniper in the tower and uh that sort of thing. So everyone had something in their background where they felt like that they would uh, was showing well. And uh, of course when that, that many positions came open, I said well maybe this will be my chance. And fortunately, I was number 1 on the list... so when I made Ranger well, it was myself and five others that got uh to go and I went to uh, Gonzales was my first station.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And you also got from a sergeant's bumped back to a private's pay.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, no, the pay was still as a sergeant. Once a sergeant in DPS, and of course you're always one, but Rangers made the same as sergeants at that time. We called ourselves privates and regular was a big one if you remember in

ROBERT NIEMAN: As he said in his book, Lewis Rigler loved being a Ranger private and didn't want any part of being a sergeant.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, private. Well, and he was very proud of being called a private. But uh, most everyone at that time who was in DPS, they were sergeants and got to make Rangers and then they became privates again. But the pay grade stayed the same so we didn't lose any money.

ROBERT NIEMAN: So you were stationed in Gonzales.

BOBBY POYNTER: Stationed at Gonzales. And as a Ranger, there had never been a Ranger station, an active station, in modern times, at Gonzales. Uh, I don't know about the old-time Rangers whether they had anyone there or not... I'm sure there were some at some time, point and view in time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well the last group that went into the Alamo was the Gonzales Rangers.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, well they put me in there and uh I had two different, two counties that I worked. Gonzales County was one where I did the most and there was a sheriff and the Sheriff's Department had a couple of deputies I think and a Highway Patrol were stationed there. Didn't have a sergeant there, just a substation.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What was your other county?

BOBBY POYNTER: Hallettsville was in that county but I can't remember the name of that county now. But uh I stayed there for about 3 years and then was transferred to uh Corpus. Now Corpus was really busy...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Now back to Gonzales, what company were you in?

BOBBY POYNTER: That's Company B. That's San Antonio, Captain Wood, John Wood, was the captain and uh

ROBERT NIEMAN: And your sergeant?

BOBBY POYNTER: At that time, uh, goodness, uh Bob, uh, he's passed away now of course but I can't call Bob's name now. Shows you that I guess I'm really... (laughter)

ROBERT NIEMAN: I know it but I can't think of it either. I know who you're talking about.

BOBBY POYNTER: I guess if I'd known about earlier that we were gonna do this well I would have put everybody's name together so I could remember it, but uh...

ROBERT NIEMAN: I know who you're talking about... Did uh, Selwyn Denson, was he ever your sergeant?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, Selwyn had just retired I think from the Rangers and I never worked with Selwyn.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Bob Favor was sergeant but he was out in

BOBBY POYNTER: And Bob was just another Ranger but he was out in West Texas in Company...

ROBERT NIEMAN: I know who you're talking about but I can't think of it either so...

BOBBY POYNTER: Uh... I'll think of it here in a minute maybe. But, uh, the uh, when I made Ranger and got to go to Gonzales, the big thing I noticed about Gonzales is Gonzales, all the activities in Gonzales, and people make their livings... you would have thought you were still in the 1800s. Because it was mostly cattle, a lot of uh livestock raised there, and everyone was uh, lived about the way you would have lived in the 1800s. And it was really a good place to live at that time. And we worked a lot of cases. I handled mostly there... there were

burglaries and thefts. There weren't too many armed robberies or murders. There just a lot of things where people would uh steal. And uh, I think it ended up about uh, I had over my career in the Rangers, I had worked over 500 or so major crimes. But in Gonzales, most of it being thefts and murders and things, nearly... I think had about a 70 percent uh, uh, solution rate on burglaries and that sort of thing which was pretty good at that time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, John Wood hadn't been captain very long.

BOBBY POYNTER: No, not too long. Now he had been stationed down in Corpus Christi and uh I guess that uh he may have left the vacancy there and never filled it. He made captain and was a sergeant down there I think.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was the shadow of Captain A. Y. Allee still hanging on?

BOBBY POYNTER: Still hanging on in that area and of course he worked for Allee I think.

And uh, Allee was

ROBERT NIEMAN: A L L E E

BOBBY POYNTER: We'd still have company meetings. but he wasn't uh, you know it was sort of like now on the reunions well we'd have meetings ever so often and get together and all the old Rangers and all we'd get together in San Antonio or someplace and it was fun to get to mingle with what I called the old-time Rangers at that time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I don't think I'm out of line here saying or being wrong, Allee was very typical of the old-type captain who absolutely ran his company.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, he did. And uh so did John Wood. John Wood was sort of in my... sort of uh like the old-type captains and sort of like the new-type captains. He was trying to break he was sort of in the breaking through where Allee ran everything and everything that happened in that company happened because he wanted it to happen.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And he didn't want to bring it forward.

BOBBY POYNTER: That's right. And most of us who were in the Rangers at that time, were picked uh, and... because we seemed to be a similar kind of breed. We sort of did what had to be done and got it accomplished and uh it was sort of the way it was expected. But then as years passed, well then it became more and more uh where you didn't work, you know didn't take a case and work on it solid, day and night for a month or two or whatever, you sort of went home at night and you looked after your family and did things that before that time, if you got a case, it wasn't over with and you weren't home until that case was finished. Or until you were finished with the case and could convince the Captain that you had done everything that you could do. And uh that was sort of the way we worked cases then. If it took laying out you know on surveillance someplace, well you laid out on surveillance and you did that. Sometimes uh the Ranger... you were by yourself during that time. When I was stationed at Gonzales, '73 to '77, some time in there, it was still like the old-time thing where you did what had to be done. And uh many times uh, you'd go out on a case and you'd say well I'm gone and I'll see you when I get back. Now you still might be in the county but you might be uh two or three counties away as well. But as time went along, well that sort of changed and you were at home a lot then at night or whenever you could be. But in Gonzales, uh, of course I worked a lot of uh theft cases there, burglary cases as well, and armed robberies and several,.. a lot of murder cases. Of course Gonzales is not too far from uh San Antonio, Texas, so we had a lot of activities that was carried... from people that lived in San Antonio and we uh had a lot of stolen things that we found or caught in Gonzales as they were going toward Houston and worked them. And, but, many of the things in Gonzales uh were armed robberies and burglaries and things. The first actual murder case that I worked was at Hallettsville. Uh, one of the uh, constables was shot and

killed out on the road, side of the road. I guess at that time he'd stopped someone. And of course I won't go into any details on that investigation but we caught the person at Hallettsville uh on the very day that he had killed the person. We tracked him and caught him and uh he killed him with a shotgun. But that was the first murder case that I had actually worked as a Ranger while I was stationed there. I worked on a lot of murder cases after that. Much of the case work that I did as a Ranger was either armed robbery or murder cases. After staying in Gonzales for about uh a three-year period, well I was transferred down to Corpus because they needed more help down there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Your wife mentioned earlier about something in Gonzales...

BOBBY POYNTER: Oh, well when we first went there, sort of a fun part for my wife, she tells the story every time she talks to someone. She went to the beauty shop to get her hair fixed and cut and she went in and of course in a little town like that, when she sat down, well these two older ladies were in there getting their hair fixed and when she came in and sat down, well the beautician was talking to my wife and whatever and had asked her what her husband did and all and she said well he was a Texas Ranger and they had just moved there and whatever. And these two old ladies, older ladies, they were under the hairdryers and one stuck her head out from under the hairdryer and asked the other one what did that lady say her husband did? And she said well she said he was a Texas Ranger. And she said oh mercy, you don't mean our town's got so bad they had to send one of those here (laughter). So it's funny but apparently their experience, as these older women back in that time, were that uh if the Rangers showed up there was something bad had happened, or was happening, that was their understanding of what the Rangers were all about that he'd come or come around unless there was something really bad.

But as being the first station in modern times of being there, well they weren't accustomed to a Ranger coming into Gonzales, I guess. So that was sort of a fun thing and..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did uh you... you transferred to Corpus, I mean did you request it or...

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I was sent there. The Captain said hey, we're gonna change you and send you to Corpus. Uh, there wasn't a lot of activity after I was there for a while that wasn't being taken care of by the local law enforcement folks. I was just sort of there. But Corpus was running rampant. There was only,... Jim Peters was stationed at Corpus and he had his hands full. And Robstown which is near there and uh several of the other towns that he had to work around there were just overloaded with activity. And there had been two people at Corpus but there was only one at that time so they closed the station in Gonzales because of inactivity and sent me down to Corpus.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was Glenn Kreuger down at Kingsville?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, he was. No, he was over at Beeville.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Beeville, I meant Beeville, yeah. Did you work much out at the King Ranch?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I did not. Uh, George, uh Gene Powell, and Gene Powell was one of the persons who made Ranger with me. We made Ranger at the same time and Gene was sent to Kingsville. And he worked uh out, worked Kingsville. And uh so he did his thing over there and most of my work... I had Robstown which was about 90% uh Mexican-American people and uh and Jim Peters worked on the other side, Aransas, Aransas Pass and over in that area.

ROBERT NIEMAN: In your work, did you ever get into Duval County?

BOBBY POYNTER: Only during election time or when something happened that carried you into that area. But nearly election period, uh the Rangers were, our company went down and worked Duval County (laughter).

ROBERT NIEMAN: George Par, P A R, the duke of Duval,

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah,

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ruled with an iron hand.

BOBBY POYNTER: One of the funny things about that was when we were, of course some of the stations there, there'd be a barn out in the county. Of course it wasn't towns like we know now but uh maybe one of the precincts would be a guy's hay barn and he would open that barn up and you'd have your... that would be the precinct, that's where you'd have the election, where they'd vote. But one of the funniest things, uh uh, on one of the elections I went down and one of the first ones there that we'd been asked to work... we went into the gymnasium and they had a... had a county precinct uh in each corner of the museum, uh, in the in the ... the building. And the area where I worked most of the time to watch the counting and all... when I walked in, the person had on one of those green, uh billed caps like accountants used to wear,... back, way back, and he looked like one of those big-time money counter, you know, he'd have this green snap-cap on and the big joke at that time was that uh when he counted the votes, he would count one for you and one, two for me and one for you and one, two for this other one. So that's how they got the votes you know, they weren't really... So we were there to watch how they were counting the votes to make certain that they counted the votes correctly.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Of South Texas...election of... announcing the results of the vote before the election.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah. Or waiting until it's all over and see they wanted to get the vote.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ya'll ever have any dealings with George Par?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, that's before my time. Uh, he was... the Rangers there before me..., well, that's,...they had a lot of dealings with him but I was not involved in any of them. In the Corpus area, well most of the cases involved uh murder, all kinds of murder and whatever, uh armed robberies, very few burglaries, I didn't work burglaries. I worked a few thefts, a lot of oilfield thefts at that time, but uh, in fact I worked a lot of oilfield thefts.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was Sissy Farenthold's son's murder before your time?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, it was just before I went down there. Uh, Jim Peters, who I worked with there, had worked on some of that. But that was really before his time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Sissy Farenthold run for governor and one of her main goals was to disband the Rangers.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And the Rangers ended up solving her son's murder.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah. They dumped him out in the ocean there someplace. And that was before, just before, my time. That was the Ranger generation before me. But uh, and it seems like as Rangers, uh a generation comes in and you've got this generation of Rangers and they work for a long, long time and then they retire and then you have this new group of Rangers coming in and they work for a long, long time. So you can almost go by generations of Rangers as to the activities.

ROBERT NIEMAN: While you were in Corpus, you went back to college?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, I went back to college in Corpus and got, finished up the degree.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What did you get your degree in?

BOBBY POYNTER: It was in uh, law enforcement management. Uh, criminal... I think they call it criminal justice management.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was you thinking about trying to promote in the Rangers?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I really had never thought much about promotion as far as Rangers. I did go up for promotion a time... not in the Rangers, I went up for promotion I think twice in the Rangers but a lot of times there you take a promotion exam just so you can become uh more familiar with the exam and promotion area. But all I'd ever wanted to do was be a Ranger, I never was all that wanting to be the Ranger captain or whatever, I just wanted to be, be a Ranger. And so that's, I never I didn't try much.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do ... any cases in particular that you can relate to us?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, there was only one case that really I, had always bothered me. Most all the cases that I worked on uh had some kind of thing that we probably could talk about. But, and I won't mention names or things in this because I don't believe this particular case I can remember all the details. But it was sort of funny, and my wife tells it ever once in a while, this story. But Dallas, uh not Dallas, but Houston, the chief of police in Houston uh, his house was broken into and his wife was, was assaulted and that sort of thing and the guy that did it uh had.. we had gotten information that he had uh had fled and was in Corpus Christi. And.. but he wasn't in town he was outside of town so it became the Sheriff Department's responsibility. Well uh they asked me if I would head up that trying to determine if he was actually in town and as we started developing intelligence to try to determine if he was the person. We learned that yes it was and that he was in a house and had a potential of 7 or 8 children as hostage. That could be hostages in that. So, uh, we, I headed up the uh group that we went out to, to arrest this guy. And he had, he had broken into several major homes in Houston and each one of them he

had assaulted the women in the house and had been told, uh it was told that he would not be taken alive and all that kind of thing that goes along with those types of uh cases. And uh this was in the middle of the night and it was a bad night. It was raining, just rained real hard and uh of course lightening and things of that nature was going on. And went out to where he was and we set up the perimeter to where we felt like he couldn't escape unseen or unknown and so I uh went on the bullhorn that I had and told him that this was Bobby Poynter, Texas Rangers, and that uh... called him by name. Well, the funny part was, is that when I called his name and said that this is Bobby Poynter, Texas Ranger... the biggest cloud of thunder you could imagine happened

ROBERT NIEMAN: *CLAP*

BOBBY POYNTER: Clap of thunder and uh and lightening streak that you could imagine happened. I mean it, just like it was a picture show sort of thing and uh of course uh I uh worked with him in a hostage negotiation situation at that time. Uh I did uh hostage negotiation type things at work too. And uh after a while, I was able to talk him out. No one got hurt or whatever but it was really funny and all the deputies and things that were out there working that case talked about when we told him that Rangers were there, this lightening and all got his attention. (laughter) So that was sort of funny.

JO POINTER: And of course our daughter said that he finally gave up because he got tired of listening to her dad philosophy. (laughter)

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ROBERT NIEMAN: OK, we're back on line.

BOBBY POYNTER: We were down in Corpus after that. After that uh episode, well uh naturally, I hadn't been at Corpus too long when that happened and from then on well I was

called on for a lot of different things and I, and I say, to this day, that uh either the good Lord was looking after me telling me this is what you ought to be doing or He was trying to tell me that you maybe oughtn't to be doing this kind of work. But uh from then on, well I got uh a lot of calls for things that involved uh hostage-type things. As well as we had a lot of things involving uh uh of course the Border incidents where it involved murders of people that were uh from Mexico or whatever. And a lot of times, I only, I worked cases out of Mexico but I only made one trip to Mexico as a Ranger. Of course at that time, I didn't go as a Ranger, I left my badge and my gun in Texas and went over. But uh it made you appreciate the Rangers in Texas when you had to deal with uh the Federales in Mexico. Because they were certainly not the same type of folks uh that we were. We had a murder case that we were working and we went over there and of course I came back with a murderer but he came back uh, but not until after they had walked through several houses and, and uh sort of uh caused some problems that I didn't like very well. But anyway, we got the murderer and I brought him back and we're here. But, but most of the things in, in Corpus, one of the things that, that... most of them we solve the problem, solved the cases. They went to trial and they were convicted and had a good solution rate in Corpus. Many of the burglaries and things like that, which I didn't work too much on, I spent mostly, I spent most of my time in murder cases. But one murder case especially that I never did uh solve, I know who did the murder but I could never bring a charge against them... involved the Banditos. It was a murder case. Kathy, Kathy Robinson was the victim's name. And Kathy was, the interesting part of working this case, Kathy was, what in the Banditos, they call a Mouse Frau.

ROBERT NIEMAN: A mouse what?

BOBBY POYNTER: House, house mouse they call it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Oh, house mouse.

BOBBY POYNTER: Some of them called it mouse frau but it was a house mouse they called her. That was quote house mouse. And the, a house mouse in the Banditos is a girl the... was not... did not belong to any particular person as, as their girlfriend but uh she kept house and cooked meals for them and usually worked under the direction of whatever Bandito, whatever house she worked in, that Bandito's old lady or wife as they called them. Uh, she was sort of her slave in a way. But she was involved in, in being anyone that came there... well she had to do whatever the Banditos wanted her to do. Well, this kid was a 15-year old girl and uh uh we got, I got called in on the case... she had been found murdered out on the island there at Corpus. And after working that case, uh, for a long time, uh finally got down to three people in the Banditos who uh I know were involved in that. And one of those uh Banditos, especially one pulled the trigger, but I never could prove it. And that girl, that case bothered me for a long time. Uh I had a daughter about that same age and I just couldn't imagine uh the mistreatment that was going on from Banditos. Uh I guess, when, as was happening especially some kid that was 15 year old and of course she had been involved in the Bandito situation there for several years so she must have started when she was 12, 11 or 12, you know, just a young, young girl. But, uh, those kind of cases and I... one of the cases that I remember uh involved a ritual-type killing out on Padre Island. Uh, they had went out and they had all the satanic signs and all that involved a lady and her daughter,... out of, she was out of uh the Panhandle area, and they had come to Padre Island to swim and to do those kinds of things. But she was involved in that. And the primary investigators on that was the, you know, uh you know the National Park police. And we were all involved, and I was involved in that. And we never solved that case. But most everything else uh, it was, it was just good old police work and you finally tracked down who did what and you

arrested the person and they went to jail. And they usually were convicted. Same thing with a lot of the burglaries and armed robberies. It was a similar kind of thing there. Uh, a lot of dope... I did not work dope. I just worked murders and armed robberies while I was there. Bu uht, one of the funny things my wife talks about a lot... back up at Gonzales when we were there, I worked a case there where the local Post Office had been burglarized and a lot of uh money orders taken and things like that. And in working that case, well, I was able to develop some latent prints and whatever, and of course this guy was an old con, ex-con, and of course his prints were on file. So it's a fairly easy burglary case to work. But I arrested him, he was still in the area, and I finally got him arrested and I brought him down and it was on a weekend and uh uh he wanted to confess and give me a statement. And in that, uh I... we didn't have a lot of time and because I was concerned that because it was uh... he had some other cases against him, that I needed to get it done so we could get these others. And the funny part about it, my wife came down to type up his statement that he had made because he didn't write very well, but we typed it up, but in that, he was, while she was typing this statement up for us for him to sign, the person said, Ranger Poynter, said, uh, you know the only thing I hate, I just got out of the pen here in Texas, and the only thing I hate is we have pork every day. It was terrible. I just... just the food was terrible (laughter). Now I have a friend that went to prison up in Kansas, at Leavenworth, and said that all the food was so good up there, do you think that you could work this out, since I've cooperated and all this, where I can go to prison, back to prison, at Kansas, at Leavenworth so I can get good food and that sort of thing (laughter). And of course, I told him, I said well, uh that's... I don't know whether I can help you there but I'll sure put a good word in for him (laughter). But after that, well you know... I, I don't know where he finally went but uh

the uh the Federal authorities got involved in it... and they may have sent him to Leavenworth, I don't know. But more than likely he went back and got pork again in Texas.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, the old saying, if you gotta go to the pen, take the Federal pen over the state... you gotta stay longer, but conditions are a whole lot better. (laughter)

BOBBY POYNTER: That was sort of the way he was. And it was funny and we laughed a lot about that. But, at that uh... it sort of works it up to the time that I retired.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Were there any particular cases that you had particular satisfaction in?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, and, you know, I worked a lot of, most of the time, the cases that I worked, I tried to work with the officer that it was assigned to. Most of the time, my cases were not directly assigned to me. They were local law enforcement who had a lot of problems with trying to solve their case and they would call and say you know, Bobby, I sure need some help on this. And fortunately, for me, I had a lot of success with interrogation processes. Uh, and if I got to talk to an old boy for uh at least a while, and I usually could uh come up with the as to the solution of that and who did the killings or whatever. Help them to solve the case. But there was no special cases... uh a lot of them I guess you could have, I could have made something out of and said well, here's a great case that I worked or whatever, but I always... I didn't, I always included the local officer in it when we did it and we worked together on those cases. And it was just sort of like a team then. The, the detective that was assigned, either from the county or from the city, he and I would get together and we would work those cases and of course, they didn't have jurisdiction other places and if we had to travel to Houston or had to travel to Louisiana or some place, we'd get in my car and here we'd go. And we would solve those kind of cases. But there are no outstanding cases, they were all outstanding that I got to work on but, but I don't

have any that I could go back and look through files and maybe come up with some cases and then get to talking, you know about those particular cases. .

ROBERT NIEMAN: Being a port city and a Naval city, do you have any extra... a lot of trouble or any trouble with the stevedores or people coming in on ships or Naval personnel?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, not really as far as that being outstanding. Of course you always had your uh fights and things that came in where you maybe have a murder or so and then you'd be involved in trying to get that solved before the sailor shipped out, if it happened to be a sailor or something involved in it. But uh, oh we, we didn't... we worked a lot of cases where people uh were uh probably killed in the ocean, out in the ocean or dumped out there, uh a case like the Farenthold case didn't happen while I was there. Uh, we had a lot of ships that were uh, were uh that were sunk on purpose and that sort of thing that we worked a lot of that trying to identify that it was uh uh uh fraudulent insurance or something where they had killed, where they had sunk the boat on purpose and things. But most of the ones that uh I worked on were as I say, were not those that you'd see written in a magazine or something. They were just file cases.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, how long were you a Ranger?

BOBBY POYNTER: Seven and a half years actually. Uh, I worked uh... I retired in 1980 and what happened there, I had, I had 25 years in, I was on my 25th year with the Department of Public Safety, and a few years before that, the first year that we had a reunion at the uh Waco... Lone Wolf Gonzauillas was at that reunion. And we were staying at the... what was the Holiday Inn right across the Brazos River where we had as past years, uh and we had breakfast there one morning and uh Lone Wolf said, Bobby, once you have worked and done all the things that you could possibly think you wanted to do working as a Ranger, if you get the chance, you take your retirement and you go with an oil company and you make some money before you get too old to,

to be out investigating and doing those kinds of things. So that's the way that you oughta go unless you want to try to just make captain or something like that. Well, it wasn't too long after that, I believe that was in '76 something or '77 or sometime, I can't remember that was, when the chance came up with an oil company that's... was called Champlin Petroleum Company at that time, which later became... and was... purchased by Union Pacific, the railroad, and it became known as Union Pacific Resources. But we were called Champlin at that time. Their investigator, their manager of Corporate Security had passed away from cancer and had been gone for maybe a year or two. And I was offered the job of regional security manager for Champlin Petroleum Company. And uh, thinking back on what Gonzauillas had suggested that I do, I uh took that job and retired and took the job as uh... as security manager for Champlin Petroleum Company. And in that, of course, most of the work was like most corporate security, it's, it's uh... there's a... but in the oilfield there was a lot of thefts and things that I worked on. And I had done a lot of theft work for Champlin Petroleum prior to going into the Rangers. Prior to getting out of the Rangers. And uh so I guess that was one of the reasons they let me know about the position. And so I went with them and I stayed with the Union Pacific Resources heading up, doing their corporate security work, and all kinds of things... travelling all over the United States and doing all those things that you imagine... Uh, we only had three people and uh each of us had a region, an area. And I had California and all up in the... North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Alaska, not Alaska but Canada. All that and worked all those cases... and worked more cases for them over into the Eastern part of the United States. So from 1980 until uh '92, I did uh the oilfield corporate security work which was very satisfying and whatever. But at the same time, one thing that, maybe is one of the reasons that I never really cared... went to try to be the Ranger captain or something like that because my plate was really

full with activities. At the same time, that I was a Ranger, and before that, in fact for 26 years, uh, I was a uh credentials-carrying uh special agent for the United States Air Force. The Air Force has uh through its reserve program for... they have special agents, and that's criminal investigators. The Army has CID where the Air Force has what's called AFOSI. And I was uh... when I was a trooper up in, in Denison, I uh became a, just before that, I became a card-carrying uh special agent for the Air Force. And I worked on a lot of very highly classified, sensitive investigations for the Air Force involving uh counter intelligence, sorta like being uh, an undercover narcotics agent or whatever. But I worked a lot of cases as an OSI agent. Uh, and I worked there for say for 26 years and I went uh all over. Uh, one of the... it protected people on some occasions uh working with uh the State Department and others and that, one of the last persons of any renown, was the Crown Prince of Iran just before his father was uh lost the country over there. Uh, I was protecting him up in the uh, the Panhandle. He was at the air base up there taking uh pilot training. And uh he was there when his dad uh was uh lost control of that country. Uh, there for 30 days during that time. Well, I was a Ranger as well at that same time so I had a lot of activity that not only involved being uh a Texas Ranger and a lot of cases that I worked and successfully worked on and some that I wasn't quite so successful on. But I worked a lot of cases that have a lot of national security situations with them. And of course I had, took 15 days a year or had 15 days a year that uh I spent doing that and sometimes I would take my vacations and do that. But I spent a lot of time as uh, as an OSI agent. And in those, there were several cases that uh are still classified that I worked on. And I guess I went from being a technical sergeant uh to being uh the commander uh of the OSI Detach, the district which had several detachments under it and uh made Lieutenant Colonel and retired from the Air Force as well as from the Rangers.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well when were you on active duty as a Ranger, the Air Force?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I was only on active duty uh ever so often. I never, uh I was in the reserve program and that's the way they operated. The rest of the time I was on active I was on duty I just didn't get paid for it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you take basic or..

BOBBY POYNTER: I took basic training back uh when I was 18 years old uh and I joined the National Guard of Texas, and, and took my basic training as a slick-sleeve private uh in uh for the Air Force. But that was in 19... I was eight... nineteen years old, I guess, so that would have been about '52.

ROBERT NIEMAN: So you retired from the Air Force at a Lieutenant Colonel?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, in 1988. So up until that time as uh, as a trooper and as a Ranger and as uh uh the security manager for Champlin and Union Pacific Resources, uh I was also uh a special agent for the Air Force and uh so I couldn't... I just... uh I guess I decided that being a Ranger captain would require me to devote full time to being a Ranger captain or Ranger sergeant at that time they were called. So I, as it played it out, I did not make Ranger sergeant but I made Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force as moving up through that so therefore got uh, got all the promotions and I spent time in Washington, DC, and other places and a lot of things that I did were very, very interesting. Worked on...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did the Rangers know you were in the Air Force?

BOBBY POYNTER: Oh yeah. Uh, Captain Wood knew it and then everybody else knew it. Just like now, you know, we have, we have people in DPS that are in the military.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, I know, but you were working in this, you know, special field.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, yeah. But I had to be very careful that I didn't uh take away from being, as time as a Ranger. And I say, that, well before I went into the Rangers, I was a special, assigned special agent in the Air Force. And that's where I got most of my, before being a Ranger, criminal investigation training. Uh you had to have a considerable amount of training as an investigator and an interrogator and uh of course back then, all of the things that you would think of that a Federal investigator would be involved in, well I had that training before then and I'd go every month to that training and get that training, and finally graduated from their uh Special Investigation schools and did all those things.

NANCY RAY: With so many, with so many things going on, how did you balance all of those things with your home life?

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, I think for that, I can't answer because I neglected my family a lot. But, my wife was pretty good. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: Well, that's good. (laughter)

BOBBY POYNTER: And the only thing that I look back on and my wife and both didn't realize it was so bad, but our daughter made a comment uh that, uh, about having lived in so many places and having been in so many schools. I think that she was in uh, for several years in a row, she was in a different school every year until she got to be a Junior in high school. In her Junior year in high school..

JO POYNTER: Junior and Senior year

BOBBY POYNTER: Junior and Senior year

JO POYNTER: She was in Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth... six different schools.

BOBBY POYNTER: So we went a lot of places and did lots of things and so the, the uh training that I received in, as a special agent, criminal investigator, from the military, in Air Force, served me very well in the Rangers. And uh, and I was able to be successful as a Ranger because of a lot of that. And uh, but it also made it to where it was so... my life has been so full, and I have been so many places, but my wife of course has not gotten to go a lot of those places. I tell her about sometimes in Washington, DC, and things we did up there, and whatever, and of course she never has even been to Washington, DC. And up in Wyoming or up in Canada and places where I've been on special things, she hasn't been there. Or on some of those times we were on those old transport airplanes and they'd take off and they'd shake...

ROBERT NIEMAN: She wasn't there either

BOBBY POYNTER: She wasn't there either, you know (laughter)

JO POYNTER: I was Reese Air Force base. (laughter)

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you retired from the Rangers and joined the oil company, did you stay at Corpus Christi?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, I did for, until uh... I retired in '80, and then we, the oil company moved me from Corpus, where we have this big huge refinery and chemical plant, to Houston which was the regional headquarters for the Western part of the United States, including California and all that. Well, it was out of Houston. And then our other, we have two regions and the other regional office was at Denver. Denver, Colorado. And that worked everything East. But as the case, even with the Rangers, wherever the problem was, we went to handle, we'd go handle that problem. So uh, it was uh... it was quite a career. The thing that I do regret is, I guess, is that I would have loved to have been a Ranger captain. But I didn't try to be a Ranger captain. I sort of followed some advice that Lone Wolf Gonzauillas gave me. That once

you had done a lot of the Ranger work, being the Captain... you wished you were back being a Ranger because he wanted to be a Ranger instead of being the captain. And, but you don't go back, I mean you still be... do what you want to do, he just got involved in as much as he could. So, uh, when he, when he said that and told me that, a few years later when the opportunity came up, I said that I'm gonna to that. I'm going to retire and everyone uh um... I couldn't think of some of the people that I was promoted with as far as Rangers and

JO POYNTER: Oh, I can tell you who made Ranger with you.

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, who was that?

JO POYNTER: OK, six of you made a Ranger. Bob was number one on the list, Maurice Cook was number 2, uh Bruce Casteel was number 3, Bill Walk (sp?) was number 4, uh Rudy Gon, uh Rudy Rodiquez, was that his name? No, Ray Martinez

BOBBY POYNTER: Ray Martinez.

JO POYNTER: Ray Martinez, and uh Gene Powell.

BOBBY POYNTER: Gene Powell. And of course all those guys, except for Ray, and for uh

JO POYNTER: Bill Walk

BOBBY POYNTER: Bill Walk,... made Senior Ranger Captains. So

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, Gene made assistant.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, yeah, yeah.

JO POYNTER: He did not make Senior....

BOBBY POYNTER: So, there was no doubt in my mind that out of our group, uh afterwards, if I had not taken retirement and went with the oil company, at some point in time I would have made uh, maybe Captain.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, how did you end up in Edgewood, Texas? (laughter)

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, Edgewood, Texas... of course I was born and reared at Mesquite. And Mesquite is now Dallas, you know how when you're coming out of Dallas... and uh my Dad had some property here, which is where we are, uh and I said well, I'm not gonna go back to Mesquite and Dad didn't go back to Mesquite, Dad left Mesquite and came here and for about 35 years before that time. So, we decided that uh... the oil company combined all of the security things in all the regions and put them into one at Fort Worth, Texas. And this was in 1980, '88. Well I was transferred from Houston then in '89 to Fort Worth, Texas, with the oil company. And that's where my headquarters was. When we moved to Houston, from Houston, we decided that we would never move again, the Lord willing. And so we decided that we would retire at Edgewood, Texas, which is where my Dad and them were. And Jo's folks had already... well they were deceased, and, and we had no pulling to go this way or that way so we came, came to Edgewood, Texas, and uh, and I drove... when I was in town or at the office, and I traveled a lot, I'd drive into Fort Worth and then I'd come back to Edgewood. But most of the time..., was driving from Edgewood to the Dallas airport or to, at Love Field, or whatever to go to Timbuktu or wherever I was going with uh, with the case that I was working. And so we came here and settled and my daughter, who uh was uh... graduated from the Law School at the University of Texas, and she was an attorney in uh Corpus Christi. Well, she and her husband, they decided that they did not want to move all around and so they brought... and they wanted their son to start school in one school and to graduate from that school, and so they moved here as well. And my son, who was a military person, spent 21 years and retired from the Air Force. Uh he retired out of the Air Force at Lar...

JO POYNTER: Del Rio

BOBBY POYNTER: Del Rio, Texas, and he was in business there for a while and then he decided that they would move back here. So they moved back here and made it to where uh, they've been here now all these years with us and we've had sort of like uh... my Dad and Mother were still alive, and my sister and brother was around, and we just had all family right here. This was like being at Mesquite again. But it was at Edgewood, Texas. And so, that's sort of the way the story went is that we were not going to move again. And my son said, I'm not moving again and my daughter said, we have ... I have moved so much I'll never move again. And so we all decided we were not moving again and it was not that we wanted to live in Dallas or in Mesquite, so we came here.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You uh, your daughter became... and is, the District Attorney here, isn't she?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yes, she's uh, when she moved here, uh, she uh interviewed for uh a Federal uh prosecutor job in Dallas. But then when it became uh, when it became obvious to us that the uh District Attorney was, who was here at that time, was maybe not gonna run for District Attorney again, well, she decided well maybe this was a good thing to do. So she came here in January of one year and then she was here that year and then she ran for District Attorney the next year she was here. And won. And has been the District Attorney of Van Zandt County for all those years. Fortunately, has not been, had an opponent.

JO POYNTER: She has not. She had an opponent the first year that she ran.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Nancy, you got any other questions or?

NANCY RAY: No, I just sat here and listened to the story.

JO POYNTER: But did he ever tell you about the nitwit in Gonzales?

BOBBY POYNTER: Yeah, I told them about that. (laughter)

JO POYNTER: I mean here he's picking out a country club. (laughter) He doesn't care that he's going to prison, he just wants good food.

BOBBY POYNTER: But there's a lot of things that you know uh, in the Rangers, I did, I was called on for ... to provide, I was a pretty good rifleman, and this was for sniper duty on some things that...

ROBERT NIEMAN: ... Jim Gant and Stuart Dow, that uh... Sniper, uh Ranger Sniper Squad or?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, uh we did not have back then, a squad. Just, certain people who were qualified were called upon and most of the time it was by the uh, by uh the Federal Government. It would have some kind of thing happen as far as Border Patrol or something like that and they wanted some of the local law enforcement to be involved in it when we were called upon. And usually it was in the, when a criminal of some kind was in flight and they had him...caught some place, well of course we could get to uh some place in Texas almost immediately. If it was South Texas, well of course we had a helicopter, I had a helicopter right there and I spent more time flying in the helicopter and going to places, as much time, as I did my car it seemed like. So that uh uh I did a lot of that. And did a lot of, as I mentioned, interrogation work for people. They might just call and say, you know, we need to interrogate someone. One funny thing that I forgot when I was in Gonzales. We had a case we worked where the old boy had stolen a bunch of saddles and tack. And this old boy was an ex-con and sorry. You know, we called him old sorry. But, I identified him and uh got him arrested. Well, we wanted to make our case better and uh so uh I just, we took, I took him to uh uh to Austin and ran him on polygraph and of course he failed the polygraph as far as,... and then he confessed and did the things that we like for them to do a lot of times. But I told him I sure did need those

saddles because he had three or four. And uh, he claimed that he had dumped those saddles out in the uh, there in the Hill Country at the lake there. And of course you know it's a pretty deep lake and all and I said, well, uh we need to find those saddles, can you show me where they were? And so it was getting sort of dark but we went on and he carried us right to it and there was a pier there, a good obvious place. He said, when I found out the Rangers were onto to me, well I dumped these saddles right here. They're right down there. And uh so uh he uh, we said, well, we need, need you to go down there, dive down there and get one of them, bring something up so we can see that you did dump those down there. And so, he jumped off and he dove down, you know, when he come up he'd just fight and he'd breathe and whatever,... he'd go back down again... and he'd fight again you know, and he'd come back up and finally, I said uh, I asked him, "do you know how to swim?" He said no, he didn't (laughter)... and we were diving him... We talked about that story for a long time. That was a Ranger deal, he didn't know how to do it but he was going to find that saddle. And of course I didn't dive down to see if I could find the saddles and we never did go looking for those saddles. I think that he was probably just telling us a big story. But who knows, those saddles may still be down there to this day.

ROBERT NIEMAN: (laughter) Might be a little mil'd (mildewed).

BOBBY POYNTER: But a lot of fun things happened in the Rangers of course. And being in the Rangers, if you're going to be in law enforcement, that's the place to be. Folks that are in local law enforcement and other law enforcement, and not having been in the Rangers, just have missed it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You said,... you said you do a lot of interrogating, or, did you use... you know everybody develops their own style. And it... when they are interviewing a suspect.

BOBBY POYNTER: Well, what you, what... yeah, I guess you do your own style. I had a lot of professional training for interrogations but you always go back into what your, what fits you. That's what you use. And I was always able to get, seemed like, always able to get close to the person that I was interrogating and be able to work up to or build up to the questions that I needed answered. And was able to get that done. And I'm sure that that was a combination of professional training that I'd had as well as just my personality that I was able to do that. And, and a lot of the folks uh, you know, they,... I became their friend as far as

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well one thing I've heard is that you don't ever lie.

BOBBY POYNTER: No, that's, well, that's not necessarily true. 'Cause I lied a lot. (laughter). What you don't lie about is you don't tell them something and be, go back on it. They trust you. Now that doesn't mean that you don't lie about a story or embellish stories or do some things that they, that you, that maybe are not quite the truth. But, you,... they don't,... you got to make sure that they don't feel like they cannot trust you. Because most of the time, people who uh are going to confess, they want to confess anyway, but they don't want to confess to somebody that they don't feel like appreciated the fact that they were confessing and that they could trust. But, they knew, you know... embellishing stories and doing things were different. I mean you tell them a lot of things that might not be exactly the truth but I, I don't think that I've ever had a prisoner or a person I interrogated who was either a con, or someone who had never been in prison before,... just a brand new outlaw you might want to say that I talked to that when it was over with that said they believed that what I said to them was what was going to happen. They did not, they did not state that they, that they could not trust me. And a lot of times, these old boys that were around that that were in the counties where I worked, they would say, especially in the uh Spanish community in like Robstown or places like that. Uh, they would

call and say, I want to talk to the Ranger. And when I'd go and talk to them, they knew that when they talked to the Ranger, that it wasn't, they were getting the straight stuff,... that that was what was going to happen and they did not feel like that if they told you where the gun was or whatever, that they would be mistreated or couldn't depend upon ..., like the local law enforcement. Many times, you'd go to uh, there'd be a murder like at a dance like in Robstown or some place, well when I got involved, which might have been two or three days later, or whatever, well the family would say, I'll talk to the Ranger, but they wouldn't talk to you if you had anybody with you. And they'd come and they'd tell you the whole story. And they'd tell you, "I'll tell you this, but I don't want you to tell anybody I told you." And, and you would either have to say, I can't make that promise or you would say, yes, I'll make that promise. I won't tell that you told me this or that you were the one that did that if I could make my case without doing it. And they believed you. If you said no, I'll have to tell them, they believed that too. But likewise, they trusted you as a person... and that's how I got most of the things done that I did. And, and nearly every,... if I ever had the opportunity to sit down with a criminal, it might take an hour or two but I could get the story. And they'd tell me about it. And most of the time, if it involved a theft or burglary or something, I could get some of the property which of course makes your case then once you get the... some of the property, then everything else is believable. And if you can get it all in and if they confess, well the confessions are believable then because you backed it up with proof. And uh, one, one dance I worked... I worked a murder and, of course, everybody when at a big dance are at the restroom at the time of the shooting happens you know. But I did all the usual interro, interviews that you would do, and got down to where I knew what the story was and knew that..., who was involved in it, and I just put out the word that I needed to talk with whomever had information and uh when they uh... a

day or two later I'd get this phone call or someone would say, Bobby, you, someone wants to talk to you, and I'd go visit them and you'd sit down to talk about it and I'd have... give me the gun or do this or that or tell me who did it, tell me why it happened and, and the reason that it happened and those things to where, most of the time, murders happen because of,... of like that old saying, the rest of the story... and if, when you know the rest of the story, then you know why the murder happened. And then you learn that but you've got to uh get the people to trust where they'll say, I'll tell you even though I'm gonna go to prison, or whatever. And like, I've found that was what I was most successful in doing is through interrogations. And it was, it was fun.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Bobby, you got anything else you want to add? I don't know much of anything else to ask. Nancy?

BOBBY POYNTER: No, I sort of feel like that it's been a rambling thing but

ROBERT NIEMAN: No

BOBBY POYNTER: But it's been, and it's been so long that I couldn't remember some of the names and things and, and uh, of course now that I'm retired, after I retired from the oil company, I opened my own business and did a very similar thing as I did for oil companies as I did as that. And I got a lot of work uh for different oil companies, uh major oil companies.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When did you retire from the oil company?

BOBBY POYNTER: In '92.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Yeah.

BOBBY POYNTER: And then I opened my own company and retired the company in '03, uh '03. And uh have been just raising black cows (laughter) and other kinds of colored cows since

that time. So, that's sort of my history and what I've had so I've been in law enforcement since, or some part of that, since I was uh 21 years old and I'm 74 right now.

JO POYNTER: Well, actually,...

ROBERT NIEMAN: ... Kind of getting kind of old to thinking about changing professions now, aren't you?

BOBBY POYNTER: I'm like that moving, I'm not moving again.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, I appreciate it.

JO POYNTER: I tell you what, it, we moved so many times that... *(end of recording)*