

Roegiers Family Farm:
A Porción of Edinburg

Discovering the Rio Grande Valley

Reports from the

Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools Program

Report # 1

The Norquest Family: A *Porción* of Edinburg

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Fike Farms: A *Porción* of Edinburg

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Roegiers Family Farm: A Porción of Edinburg

A report prepared for
The Roegiers Family

and for UTRGV and the CHAPS Program class titled:

Discovering the Rio Grande Valley: The Natural and Cultural History of South Texas

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Published by CHAPS Program at
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Edinburg, TX
2017

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First Printing: 2017

ISBN 978-0-9982070-2-5

UTRGV's Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools Program
1201 West University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78539

www.utrgv.edu/chaps

Dedication

This book is dedicated the memory of Camiel Roegiers, his brother Alfred Rogers, and all the members of the Roegiers, Rogers, and DeBouvre families who brought their families to the United States from Belgium shortly after the turn of the 20th century and made their way to settle permanently in Edinburg, Texas.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Daniel Cardenas, Assistant Art Director for the design of the front cover of this report as well as to Elisa Flores and Dr. Kimberly Selber of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's *The Studio* Marketing and Communications Department for their support of all projects developed by the CHAPS team. We would also like to thank all the members of the Roegiers and Rogers families who participated in this project. Thanks to the Border Studies Archive for their ongoing support of this project.

Foreword

Whether the effects of Hurricane Beulah, changes in flora and fauna, evidence for ancient settlers, or the presence of a multi-lingual and multi-cultural populace being transformed into “Americans” it is the nuances derived and identified in the natural and cultural records that provide us with a textured view of the past. For six years the interdisciplinary Community Historical Archeology Project with Schools (CHAPS) Program team of anthropologists, archaeologists, biologists, geologists, and historians have explored a cross-section of farming families’ and their properties which constituted the very foundation of Edinburg’s agricultural past. This book presents a beautiful portrait of the Roegiers family that arrived in Edinburg from Belgium in 1920.

Interdisciplinary cross-college collaborations such as the CHAPS Program are critical for moving the frontiers of science and building a more thorough understanding of the universe and human history. I am so very pleased that faculty from the College of Sciences and from the College of Liberal Arts have recognized the value of such interdisciplinary undertakings and have made, and will continue to make, valuable contributions to our knowledge of the history of Edinburg. Through detailed conversations with the early immigrants to Edinburg and examination of their artifacts, the CHAPS Program team not only reveals experiences of early colonizers and pieces of history they are carrying with them, it also documents the landscape changes and needs of the community.

The CHAPS Program has documented how early inhabitants of the city of Edinburg transformed the dry brush land into the highly productive agricultural landscape through their hard work. Agriculture, particularly the production of fruits and vegetables, still predominates in the Rio Grande Valley with agriculture and associated industries employing a vast majority of the Valley’s residents and significantly contributing to the region’s economy. The knowledge gained through the CHAPS Program is paving the way for the development of new and locally relevant educational programs including our new Master’s degree in Agricultural, Environmental and Sustainability Sciences and an upcoming Bachelors in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems at UTRGV.

The CHAPS Program also provides UTRGV students with an enriching experiential learning opportunity, which is culturally and geographical relevant to the students, their communities, and the university. The disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches employed by the CHAPS Program foster professional development skills, preparing students to become engaged leaders for creating new knowledge and building solutions to local and global challenges.

With, the Research Relevant to the Rio Grande Valley, Community Engagement and Student Success being identified as three of the top five priorities in the inaugural Strategic Plan of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), the CHAPS Program is at the forefront in addressing the university’s core priorities. I commend the CHAPS Program leadership, students and community partners for this participatory approach to studying the archeological history of the Edinburg residents and shedding light on the early transformation of the South Texas region into the “Magic Valley” as it has come to be known.

Parwinder Grewal, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, and New Program Development
Formerly Dean of the College of Sciences
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Preface

Commercial agriculture, based on the cultivation of citrus and field crops, was the twentieth century economic foundation of the lower Rio Grande region of Texas. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries railroad and irrigation projects turned dry brushland into the “Magic Valley.” As a consequence of these developments century-old ranches were subdivided into 20- and 40-acre parcels and sold to thousands of migrants from Europe, Mexico, and other parts of the United States seeking to make their fortunes in agriculture. By 1940 on the eve of World War II, more than 100,000 people lived in Hidalgo County representing a fourteen-fold population increase since 1900. Of these fewer than 7,000 people made their home in Edinburg, the then thirty-year-old county seat. This is less than ¼ of the current enrollment at UTRGV.

Today the citizenry of Edinburg lives in a bi-lingual, bi-national, and bi-cultural environment of Spanish- and English-speaking peoples. Were we to travel back eighty years to the 1930s and visit the ice houses, packing sheds, cotton gins, and streets of Edinburg it would not be unusual to hear people being greeted in a cacophony of languages- “Good Day,” “Buenos días (Spanish),” “Dzień dobry (Polish),” “Guten Tag (German),” “God dag (Swedish),” and “Goede dag (Flemish).” Through the social process known as “chain migration” friends and family will learn of opportunities and then follow previous migrants to the new community. In this study we learn of Camiel Roegiers, a Flemish-speaking Belgium national who, as a “bird of passage,” makes three trips to the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century to work and live in Texas, Virginia, Kansas, and ultimately Edinburg, Texas. Along the way he was joined by his siblings, and in-laws.

This is the sixth study by the Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools (CHAPS) Program of an Edinburg-based farming family and their land. As another “*Porción*” of Edinburg we are pleased to continue contributing to our knowledge of the archaeology, biology, geology, and history of our community before development erases all memories of this earlier era.

On behalf of my CHAPS Program colleagues in this endeavor, Roseann Bacha-Garza, M.A. (CHAPS Program Manager), Juan L. Gonzalez, Ph.D. (CHAPS Co-Director, School of Earth, Environmental, Marine Sciences), and Kenneth R. Summy, Ph.D. (Professor Emeritus Biology) we wish to thank the College of Liberal Arts, College of Sciences, Carrol and Odie Norquest, and Dr. Margaret Dorsey of the Border Studies Archive for their on-going support of these studies. Thanks are also extended to the Houston Endowment for Civic Engagement, our students, and especially the Roegiers and Rogers families who willingly shared the story of their families’ American sojourn.

Russell K. Skowronek, Ph.D.
Houston Endowment Chair for Civic Engagement
Professor of Anthropology & History
Director CHAPS Program

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Introduction

A Never-ending Stream...

Roseann Bacha-Garza

I remember the first time I met Roy Roegiers. It was during the spring of 2016 as the CHAPS Program team of instructors met him for coffee at Whataburger on University Drive in Edinburg, Texas.¹ Our biggest cheerleaders were in attendance as well; Kelly and Odie Norquest. Kelly proceeded with the introductions and assured Roy that his family history was in good hands with us. Roy's general appearance was rough and tough. I specifically remember his hands; dark and worn, with thick, leathery skin. I thought to myself, "now, those are the hands of a farmer!"

The CHAPS Program has been conducting a class every fall semester since 2011. The class is titled *Discovering the Rio Grande Valley: The Natural and Cultural History of South Texas*. Beginning with the Norquest Family, the students of the CHAPS class have produced a thorough edited report about a farming family of Edinburg each year since 2011. The Norquests may have reluctantly agreed at first to be our initial "victim" if you will, but upon completion of their family study by our students, they've been active participants in lining up subsequent families to be studied since then.

As we questioned Roy about the Roegiers family history, he was very animated and excited with his answers. You could tell he had such fond memories by the way he smiled when speaking of his parents and their life on the farm. His parents were from Belgium and his father, Camiel Roegiers, had moved to Edinburg in December of 1920 with his first wife Emily DeBouver; who incidentally was not Roy's mother. After Emily's death in 1946, Camiel married Emily's niece, Irene DeBouver and together they had two children; Roy and Clara. The family dynamic was only somewhat complicated but thanks to Roy's memory, it was very easy to understand.

Roy invited us to his sister's home so that we could meet her and view the contents of a weathered, antique suitcase. Clara was very friendly and made us feel at home as we all gathered around her kitchen table; gawking in amazement at all the personal documents, photographs and correspondence. What a tremendous cache of primary source documents; a historian's dream come true! Of course, the more excited we got, the happier Roy and Clara became. In the old suitcase were shipping manifests with Camiel's name on them. Other items included were wedding certificates, passport documents, naturalization papers, and a patent application, just to name a few. There was personal correspondence in the form of postcards written in their native language of Flemish. These were addressed to them in the various places they called home before they ultimately settled in Edinburg. Additionally, there was a plethora of fantastic photographs. Clearly the Roegiers' had discretionary income that afforded them the luxury of taking so many photographs.

¹ Note: CHAPS is an acronym that stands for the Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools. The instructors for the CHAPS class are Russell Skowronek, Juan L. Gonzalez and Roseann Bacha-Garza.

Camiel's path to the Rio Grande Valley began in Belgium in 1907. He traveled to New York on a Red Star Line passenger ship, and from there went via cargo boat to Galveston, and then by train to League City, Texas. Two years later in 1909 he returned to Belgium.² There after marrying Emily, he returned to the US in 1909 on another Red Star Line vessel to New York where he and Emily disembarked to travel by train to a dairy farm in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Two years later in 1911 they moved to Lenexa, Kansas.³ Camiel Roegiers traveled to Edinburg with wife Emily, his brother Alfred and Alfred's wife Emma and their children in 1920. Emma and Emily were sisters. Eventually, Alfred and Emma changed their name from Roegiers to Rogers to assimilate into American society. Alfred and Emma were fondly called "Mom" and "Pa" and family gatherings at their home, next door to Camiel and Emily's house, were a weekly tradition. Both Camiel and Alfred's families grew up near each other; many of whom still reside in Edinburg or other locations in south Texas.

As our class commenced and the students got to work, Roy and Clara were ready for us. They assisted by bringing their cousins in to the picture and we scheduled oral history interviews with a total of seven Roegiers and Rogers family members. Although the Rogers family members are no longer farming, their input was very important to the scope of the project which was designed to track the human-land interaction of those still farming in Edinburg, Texas. Their stories, their memories, and their participation greatly assisted in creating a thorough and comprehensive document.

In the following chapters, many aspects of the Roegiers family's journey to deep, south Texas are described. What pushed them out of Belgium? What pulled them to the United States? What path did they take to get to their ultimate settling place? What contributed to their successes while farming in the Rio Grande Valley? And finally, what was the process through which our CHAPS Program students conducted their research and recorded their findings? It will be impossible to include all the family photos and documents but we've included those that relate to the story as it is told.

The reason that this introduction chapter is titled "A Never-ending Stream...." is that even after the final presentation when the students had put this project to bed, Roy continued to show up in the CHAPS Program office with more and more information that he thought would be helpful to the project. He offered contact with additional relatives who had expressed interest in being interviewed for the report. He brought old newspaper clippings that outlined their tobacco crops. He uncovered more photos that he thought should go in the report. Almost like a kid in a candy store, it was so refreshing to see his face light up as he would say to me, "look what I found!"

The love and respect that both Roy and Clara show for their parents is very heartwarming. Camiel died in 1956 when Roy and Clara were young children. Their mother, Irene was left to run the family farm. She was astute enough to pen a three-page history chronicling her husband's journey to the US and his experiences as an American farmer. Somehow she knew it would prove to be important someday. She ran the farm like a champion. She knew the business; knew when she needed help and wasn't afraid to ask for it. She raised her children and ran the farm; all successful endeavors. She was a strong

² Roegiers, Irene, *The Life Story of Camiel Roegiers*, October 31, 1956, p. 1.

³ Ibid.

woman and I wish that she was still alive so that we could have included her oral history in this report. She is in and all over this report, nonetheless.

Roy Roegiers is the only farmer left in his family. He has continued the farming traditions on the same land cultivated by his father almost 100 year ago. Camiel's Belgian passport lists him as a farmer. That is the only life this family has known. In 2020, the Roegiers family will have been farming in Edinburg, Texas for a century. What an accomplishment! Bravo!



CHAPS Program Interdisciplinary Studies Class group photo – Roy Roegiers' property in Edinburg, Texas – October 24, 2016. Pictured are: (Kneeling front row) "Jake" the dog and Dr. Juan Gonzalez (Standing middle row) Cheyanne Uvalle, Sandra Pichardo, Jennifer Quintero, Sara Chavez, Lizbeth DeLeon, James Severn, Jesus Sierra, and Lucas Torres (Standing back row) Roy Roegiers, Mauro Sierra, Steven Cantu, Olivia Salazar, Aram Rivera, Rebecca Merino, Juan Garza, Juan Matta, Dr. Rod Summy, Dr. Russell Skowronek and Madelyn Ibarra. (Missing: Octavio Ortiz, Annaiz Araiza) Photo taken by Roseann Bacha-Garza.

Chapter 1

The Roegiers' Journey to America

Annaiz Araiza and Cheyenne Uvalle

The Roegiers family story begins in northern Belgium in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In 1907 their journey to Edinburg, Texas began. It would take thirteen years and be a circuitous route with stops along the way in east Texas, Virginia, and Kansas. This family of farmers would bring a taste of Belgium to the Rio Grande Valley.

Belgium

Formed from a portion of the Netherlands in 1830, the Kingdom of Belgium shares borders with France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Leopold I ruled as a constitutional monarch from 1831-1865. During his reign, his daughter Charlotte married Maximilian von Habsburg, the younger brother of Franz Josef I of Austria-Hungary. In 1864, they became the emperor and empress of Mexico. During the next three years, they were supported by 1500 men in the "The Belgian Expeditionary Corps" colloquially known as the Belgian Legion, until Maximilian's execution in 1867.

Leopold II succeeded his father in 1865 and ruled until 1909. Twenty years into his reign the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 authorized a claim made on his behalf by Henry Morton Stanley for the Congo. Unlike Leopold, the Belgian parliament was uninterested in joining the other European nations in the race to colonize Africa. With that, he moved to create the Congo Free State (1885-1908) as a private project. Detailed in Adam Hochschild's 1998 book, "King Leopold's Ghost" the result was a brutal two decade-long extraction of ivory, rubber, and minerals with an associated cost of millions killed. Reports of these deaths and associated abuses led to a major international scandal in the early twentieth century. The Belgian government ultimately forced Leopold to relinquish control of the colony to Belgian civil administration thus creating the Belgian Congo (1908-1960). Prior to 1908, no Belgian regular army forces were stationed in Africa.

During the rules of Leopold I and II Belgium, long a leader in textiles and weaving led Europe in the Industrial Revolution especially in mining and steel-making. Agriculture and animal husbandry was the subsistence foundation of the country. Like most of Northern Europe they experienced famine from 1846-1850 during the potato blight. While more than a million died in Ireland, some 40-50,000 died from starvation in Belgium during these years.

The Roegiers Early Years

The Roegiers story begins in Waerschoot [variably Waarschoot], Belgium, a small agricultural town approximately thirty minutes south of Ghent in the Flemish speaking section of Belgium. Desiderius (Desire) Roegiers was born on April 29, 1852 in Waerschoot. His wife, Maria Constantia Bonamie, was born nine months earlier on September 6, 1851, also in Waerschoot. They would have three children. The eldest, a daughter, Pharaildir was born October 1, 1879. She had two brothers Camiel, born May 22,

1882, and Alfred, born April 14, 1884. Little is known about this period except that the Roegiers were farmers.⁴ While it can only be treated as conjecture, we will assert that the Roegiers were not a wealthy family.

In 1900 their eldest son, Camiel would have been eighteen years old and thus would have been eligible for selective conscription. Most of Europe had, by this time, opted for a universal conscription which obliged everyone to serve. In Belgium, this meant that the burden of military service fell more heavily on the poorer classes. While we do not know if Camiel was “chosen”, we do know that those conscripted were required to serve for eight years in the regular army followed by five years as a reservist. This much is certain, in January of 1907, twenty-five-year-old Camiel left Belgium on the *S.S. Westernland* a passenger ship of the Red Star Line.

1st Voyage to America

According to, the Life Story of Camiel Roegiers, written in 1956, by his wife Irene, vivid detail is explained with regard to the journey of Camiel Roegiers’ first journey to America. In this recollection of events, Irene Roegiers, tells his story but not the reason he left Europe (Appendix 11). She mistakenly said he traveled on the “*Lone Star* passenger ship,” perhaps because they lived in the “Lone Star” state, when in reality, based on documents preserved by the family Camiel sailed on the “Red Star” Line vessel *Westernland*. She explains that the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean lasted fourteen days arriving in New York on February 11, 1907. Once Camiel cleared Ellis Island, New York, he traveled on a cargo vessel to Galveston, Texas.⁵

There is no evidence to explain why Camiel came to Galveston in 1907, but Clara Duffey, Camiel’s daughter, has a picture, which shows the aftermath of the great Galveston hurricane. (Figure 1.1) Her theory is that Camiel came to Galveston to work on the reconstruction of Galveston. On September 8, 1900, a hurricane with sustained wind velocity of eighty-four miles an hour gusting to 100 miles an hour hit the coast of Texas at Galveston.⁶ An estimated 10,000 to 12,000 people died in the path of this vicious hurricane. Total destruction sums up the affect of the Great Hurricane of 1900. In addition to clearing the debris, recovering bodies, and rebuilding the town and port a six-mile-long seawall seventeen feet tall was built to serve as a protective barrier.⁷

⁴ Serota, Tom, Oral History Interview, Appendix 8, Border Studies Archive, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Library, Interviewed by Cheyenne Uvalle, Rebecca Merino, and Juan Matta, November 2016.

⁵ Roegiers, Irene, p. 1.

⁶ Handbook of Texas Online, John Edward Weems, "Galveston Hurricane of 1900," accessed December 11, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ydg02>.

⁷ Ibid. 1



Figure 1.1 Hurricane clean up in Galveston in 1907. Workers removing bodies from wreckage.
Courtesy of Library of Congress.

With a lot to be repaired in efforts to reconstruct the city, Galveston encouraged immigration. Through the efforts of Rabbi Henry Cohen and Congregation B'nai Israel, Galveston became the focus of an immigration plan called the Galveston Movement that, between 1907 and 1914, diverted roughly 10,000 Eastern European, Jewish immigrants from the crowded cities of the Northeastern United States.⁸ A conclusion might be drawn that maybe Camiel was part of this migration to aid in the recovery of Galveston. According to Irene Roegiers' history Camiel traveled from Galveston by train to League City, Texas and there worked for 1 ½ years on a farm and then later worked on the "wharves" for six months.

A "Belgian Wife" and a 2nd Voyage to America

In 1909, Camiel learned that deckhands were needed on a vessel bound for Europe. This "free" passage carried him home to Belgium. According to his daughter Clara, her father Camiel intended to return to America after finding a "Belgian wife."⁹ He succeeded in

⁸ Wikipedia contributors, "1900 Galveston hurricane," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=1900_Galveston_hurricane&oldid=752128349 (accessed November 29, 2016).

⁹ Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 4, Border Studies Archive, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Interviewed by Olivia Salazar, James Severn, Roseann Bacha-Garza.

his romantic endeavors and married Emilie Debouver¹⁰ on April 7, 1909. Thus, the next time he was to step foot on American soil, it wouldn't be alone. Within a month of their marriage they embarked for New York (Figure 1.2). Irene Roegiers reports that they traveled on a passenger ship named the *Red Star*.¹¹ Again, it is clear she was confused as were infact on the Cunard Line ship *S.S. Campania*, not on a "Red Star Line" vessel.

After only three months in Belgium Camiel returned to America with his wife Emilie and other family. The manifest, dated May 8, 1908, from the Cunard Line ship *S.S. Campania* contains the names of the Roegiers that landed in America. In addition to Camiel, there was his wife Emilie DeBouver (born October 18, 1879), his brother Alfred (born April 14, 1884), his wife Emma DeBouver, sister of Emilie (born December 11, 1881, and their daughter Alice Marie. However, Alice Marie's name doesn't appear on the list because she was a child just 18 months old. According to Alice Marie's daughter, Marjorie Burch, "Alfred and Emma came to this country as immigrants, not speaking a word of English with no job waiting for them, an 18 month old baby in tow crossing the ocean on a boat taking weeks to enter the United States by way of Ellis Island and on to Fredericksburg Virginia."¹² Alfred Roegiers would later change the spelling of his last name to Rogers. It is uncertain but Camiel and Alfred's sister Pharilda may also have traveled with her husband Emile Maenhout (born February 14, 1878) to Fredericksburg.

It should be noted that Roegiers family arrival at Ellis Island was near the crest of the great European immigration to the United States. In 1907 more people immigrated to the United States than any other year, a record that would hold for the next 80 years.¹³ Approximately 1.25 million immigrants were processed at Ellis Island in that one-year.¹⁴ Despite the island's reputation as an "Island of Tears", the majority of immigrants were treated well, and were free to begin their new lives in America after only a few short hours on the island. It is known that about two percent of the arriving immigrants were excluded from entry.¹⁵ The two main reasons why an immigrant would be excluded were if a doctor diagnosed that the immigrant had a contagious disease that would endanger the public health or if a legal inspector thought the immigrant was likely to become a public charge or an illegal contract laborer.¹⁶

The Red Star Line

In 1907 and again in 1912 Camiel Roegiers sailed on vessels operated by the Red Star Line - *S.S. Westernland* and *S.S. Kroonland* - two of the many passenger ships which actively transported passengers west with the Red Star Line (Figure 1.3) The Red Star Line carried immigrants to New York. Founded in 1871, it operated for 64 years until it ceased

¹⁰ "Texas Birth Index, 1903-1997," database, Family Search(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VD6K-BBM : 1 January 2015>), Roy Camiel Roegiers, 27 Jul 1947; from "Texas Birth Index, 1903-1997," database and images, Ancestry (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 2005); citing Texas Department of State Health Services.

¹¹ Roegiers, Irene, p. 1.

¹² Burch, Marjorie, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

¹³ "A Record Year for New Americans" The Statue of liberty- Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/ellis-island-history#1907>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Arrival at the Island and Initial Inspection" The Statue of liberty- Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/ellis-island-history#Arrival>

¹⁶ Ibid.



Figure 1.2 (left) Camiel & Emily (Emilie) Roegiers, (right) Alfred & Emma Rogers.

operations in 1935. It is described as a joint venture between the International Navigation Company of Philadelphia, responsible for the development of the American Line, and the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belgo-Américaine of Antwerp, Belgium.¹⁷ During the Red Star Line's period of activity, its main "ports of call" were situated throughout Europe and North America: in Antwerp, the aforementioned city of Belgium, the cities of Liverpool and Southampton—located in the United Kingdom—as well as Philadelphia and New York City, which were the connecting ports of the United States of America.¹⁸ Within the span of its 64 years, the passenger line transported about three million immigrants from the city of Antwerp to the United States of America and Canada.¹⁹

The Red Star Line's port at Antwerp was 41 miles away from Camiel's hometown of Waerschoot.²⁰ (Figure 1.4) Red Star Line ships "had a black funnel with a white band bearing a five-pointed red star. The house flag was a white burgee with a red star".²¹ Some of these line's ships are reported to have sailed as Belgian flagged vessels. Additionally, the majority of the Red Star Line ships ended with the suffix "-land"—such as the S.S. *Lapland*, *Pennland*, and *Noordland*—with the specific purpose of making it easier to associate the ships with the Red Star Line passenger company. All of these passenger ships were active during the time period when Camiel is recorded as having traveled from Belgium to the United States of America, between the 1907 and 1912.

¹⁷ Harnack, Edwin P (1938) [1903]. *All About Ships & Shipping* (7th ed.). London: Faber and Faber. p. 566.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ <http://www.redstarline.eu/home.html>

²⁰ Glenivick Gjonvik Archives. <http://www.gjenivick.com/PassengerLists/RedStarLine/#axzz4SdT0wqND>

²¹ Harnack, Edwin P, p. 566.

SALOON, GALLEY, AND STEERAGE ALIENS MUST BE COMPLETELY MANIFESTED.

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED STATES

Required by the regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor of the United States, under Act of Congress approved February 20, 1907, to be delivered to the collector of customs at the port of arrival.

S.S. *Neerland* sailing from *Antwerp* *March 21, 1912*

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Rank	Country	Place of Birth	Place of Residence	Occupation	Remarks
1	De Boeck	29	M	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
2	De Boeck	27	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
3	De Boeck	25	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
4	De Boeck	23	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
5	De Boeck	21	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
6	De Boeck	19	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
7	De Boeck	17	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
8	De Boeck	15	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
9	De Boeck	13	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
10	De Boeck	11	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
11	De Boeck	9	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
12	De Boeck	7	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
13	De Boeck	5	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
14	De Boeck	3	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
15	De Boeck	1	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
16	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
17	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
18	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
19	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
20	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
21	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
22	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
23	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
24	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
25	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
26	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
27	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
28	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
29	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
30	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
31	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
32	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
33	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
34	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
35	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
36	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
37	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
38	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
39	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
40	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
41	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
42	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
43	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
44	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
45	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
46	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
47	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
48	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
49	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
50	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
51	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
52	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
53	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
54	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
55	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
56	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
57	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
58	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
59	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
60	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
61	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
62	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
63	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
64	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
65	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
66	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
67	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
68	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
69	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
70	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
71	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
72	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
73	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
74	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
75	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
76	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
77	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
78	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
79	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
80	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
81	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
82	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
83	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
84	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
85	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
86	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
87	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
88	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
89	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
90	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
91	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
92	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
93	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
94	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
95	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
96	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
97	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
98	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
99	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	
100	De Boeck	0	F	First	Holland	Amsterdam	Amsterdam	Shipper	

Figure 1.3 Ship manifest from Camiel Roegiers third voyage to the US in 1912. Camiel's name is listed 9th from the bottom.



Figure 1.4 Image of SS Finland at Red Star pier in Antwerp. Retrieved from <http://www.allaboutshipping.co.uk/2015/01/16/red-star-line-a-forgotten-shipping-giant-of-the-atlantic/>

Two Years in Virginia

Following their arrival in New York City in 1909, the Roegiers traveled by train to Fredericksburg, Virginia (Figure 1.5) where they spent two and a half years working on a dairy farm. According to Marjorie Burch, Camiel and Emilie were accompanied by his brother, Alfred and his wife Emma, who continued to accompany them throughout the following years.²² Emma Rogers' niece, Irene, would later become Camiel's second wife in 1946. During their first year in Fredericksburg, the Roegiers were paid twenty-five dollars a month in addition to an included furnished house. After considering inflation over the past one hundred years, the twenty-five-dollar income is equivalent to around six hundred and thirty dollars in 2016. The following year in Virginia, the Roegiers' monthly pay on the dairy farm was doubled. Their fifty-dollar paycheck equals about one thousand three hundred dollars in 2016 dollars, which additionally maintained the inclusion of a furnished domicile. During their stay in Fredericksburg, Marjorie Burch stated her Uncle William was born in 1909. He would be the "oldest male" on Marjorie's mother's side of the family, and one of Camiel's nephews.²³



Figure 1.5 Historical view of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Retrieved from www.fredericksburgva.gov/documentCenter/view/162
Fredericksburg had been war-ravages 40 years earlier during the American Civil War

Heading West: The Roegiers in Kansas and a Third Voyage to Belgium

In 1911, after two years working on the Virginia dairy farm, the Roegiers migrated to Kansas City, Kansas. During their first six months in this city, the Roegiers worked on a farm for forty-five dollars a month—which is roughly one thousand one hundred dollars today—and included meals. For farmers, the winter is the one time of the year that things slow down. Many of today's Winter Texans are farmers from more northerly regions where snow ends outdoor work. For reasons unknown, Camiel Roegiers returned to Belgium for the last time during the winter of 1911-1912. On March 18, 1912, less than a month before RMS *Titanic* would sink, he arrived in New York on the S.S. *Kroonland*, a Red Star Line vessel.

²² Marjorie Burch, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

²³ Ibid.

Meanwhile in Kansas, the Roegiers' time spent as dependent employees, swiftly transitioned to a life of entrepreneurship in the year 1913. During the same year, the Roegiers rented one hundred acres of land, at a rate of five dollars per acre; this is equivalent to about five hundred dollars per month for the entirety of the rented property. Five years later, in 1918, Camiel and Emilie Roegiers transitioned to a larger portion of land measuring one hundred and sixty acres. This land was similarly rented for eight dollars per acre, about one thousand three hundred dollars in contemporary value.

According to Clara Duffey, the daughter of Camiel, the Roegiers brothers were joined by members of Emilie and Emma DeBouver's family, consisting of their brother Julius and his wife Irma and their children which included Irene, Richard, and Danny. Irene would later become Camiel's second wife following Emilie's death.²⁴ The DeBouver family joined Camiel and Emily Roegiers while they lived in Lenexa, Kansas. The Roegiers couple agreed to sponsor their relatives, which consisted of Emily's brother Julius Debouvre, as well as his wife and three children: Irene, Daniel, and Richard. (Appendix 12 and Appendix 13)

The Roegiers' time in Kansas was defined by agricultural prosperity. Within the year of 1918 alone, the farming couple sold one thousand one hundred bushels of cultivated products which were priced at three dollars per bushel. Fast forwarding to the worth of the dollar in 2016, this is around seventy-six dollars per bushel. Described as a "very good crop," this harvest consisted of thirty bushels of wheat per acre and eighty bushels of corn per acre. Considering the agricultural bushels their acreage yielded in 1918, Camiel and Emilie Roegiers experienced a profit worth two thousand dollars for that year's harvest; this is equivalent to an impressive fifty thousand dollars in accordance with today's economic system after considering the inflation of the dollar bill according to modern conversion applications.²⁵

American Prosperity and The Rape of Belgium

American agriculture prospered during the second decade of the twentieth century because of World War I. In August of 1914 Germany and Austro-Hungary went to war with France, Britain, Imperial Russia, Italy, and ultimately Belgium. King Albert I, who reigned from 1909 to 1934, wanted to remain neutral and have no involvement in WWI, but its neutrality came at a very high price.

The Treaty of London of 1839 making Belgium a "neutral" nation whose borders were to be inviolate, had been signed by Prussia. However, the German Chancellor, Theobald Von Bethmann Hollweg, referred to it as a "scrap of paper".²⁶ The Germans invaded and occupied the Belgian territory in order to outflank the French army, which resided in eastern France. Therefore, the Treaty of London was not taken into consideration, or even given the most minimal thought. Not only were the Belgians outnumbered and so, could not stop the German forces, they also could not stop the resulting destruction.

²⁴ Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 4.

²⁵ from <http://www.in2013dollars.com/1909-dollars-in-2016?amount=2000>

²⁶ "Records of the Great War, Vol. I", ed. Charles F. Horne, (*National Alumni* 1923)
<http://firstworldwar.com/source/scrapofpaper2.htm>

The name that was given to the atrocities that the Belgians had to endure during World War I was the “Rape of Belgium.” One can surely imagine what really happened during the years of the war from 1914 to 1918, and why many Belgians decided to flee their country in search of a better life. According to Marjorie Burch, Camiel’s grand-niece, the hardships in Belgium were excruciating, as there wasn’t any milk for children, and people were literally dying from starvation.²⁷ These were probably the hardest years Belgium had to endure while being invaded and occupied by the German Army. Thus, the harshness the Belgians physically and emotionally endured during this period is hard to imagine. “Almost from the first hours,” writes war historian John Keegan, “innocent civilians were shot and villages burnt, outrages all hotly denied by the Germans as soon as the news – subsequently well attested – reached neutral newspapers. Priests were shot too.”²⁸ As stated in many books and articles about the brutality of the German officers, all the terrible things they did to the Belgians was because they believed they were enemies, same as the French. It is believed that approximately 89,000 Belgians died during the war, at least 27,000 were killed directly and 62,000 by other forms such as lack of food and shelter. The Germans burned down the homes of many Belgians and executed entire families, including women and children. “The killing was systematic,” writes Keegan. At one small Belgian town – Tamines – 384 were killed.²⁹ Not only were they burning towns but also libraries as noted in the city of Leuven, they not only burned the books from the university they killed residents and forced the 10,000 residents who lived there to leave.³⁰ (Figure 1.6)



Figure 1.6 Destruction of the university library, 1914 N.J. Boon – from Project Gutenberg eBook, *The New York Times Current History: The European War, February 1915*. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18880>

Mass execution of Belgian families was probably one of the main reasons for the migration of many Belgians during the early 1900s. The Belgians didn’t leave the country out of pleasure, but because they feared for their lives. As they watched their families slaughtered by the Germans, they saw long hard work, disappear in a blink of an eye; burned

²⁷ Burch, Marjorie, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5, Border Studies Archive, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Library, Interviewed by Madelyne Ibarra, Annaiz Araiza, and Sandra Pichardo, October 18, 2016.

²⁸ Shuster, Mike, *The Rape of Belgium* (Special to Great War Project) [http://greatwarproject.org/2014/08/06/the-rape-of-belgium/\(pg.1\)](http://greatwarproject.org/2014/08/06/the-rape-of-belgium/(pg.1)) (accessed December 1, 2016)

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Wikipedia contributors, "Rape of Belgium," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rape_of_Belgium&oldid=754257697 (accessed December 11, 2016).

down. Many left the country in fear, and swore they would never return. During this period in time, many Belgians arrived in the United States. Many of them were farmers and they settled along the northeastern part of the U.S., with the majority settling in Michigan, while others continued the search for cheaper land. Many were migrating to America in hope of a better future. The agriculture business in Belgium prior to WWI was coming to an end. The failure of the home-based flax industry combined with repeated failure of crops particularly that of potatoes, the poor man's staple, created large numbers of destitute people who often were reduced to begging and wandering around the countryside and into towns as vagabonds, looking for work.³¹ To keep beggars from roaming the towns, the office of welfare for that country actually paid many people to migrate to other countries. Whatever the reason, everyone migrated in search of prosperity and a better tomorrow for their families. Saying farewell to their familiar world, to family and loved ones, eagerly looking forward to the Promised Land with all its opportunities and diverse population groups was difficult to do. Leaving everything they owned behind, and carrying with them only their culture and traditions to a new country was a difficult but a welcome change.

On October 24, 1917 six months after the United States entered World War I Camiel and Emilie Roegiers attempted to “rescue” Emilie’s brother Julius, his wife Irma, and their children Irene, Daniel, and Richard DeBouver who were residing in Mariakerke in East Flanders, Belgium, from the horrors of the war. They certified that they were “able and willing to support and to take care of them” in their home in Lenexa, Kansas (Appendix 12). They were unsuccessful in this attempt. The DeBouvers would arrive in Kansas three years later in 1920.

The Roegiers Become Texans

The abundance of the Roegiers’ yield in 1918 made the subsequent move to Edinburg, Texas in 1920 possible. Locally known as the “The Valley,” the southernmost portion of Texas which encompasses the Roegiers future home in Edinburg, relied, and continues to rely, heavily on agriculture with citrus fruits being the king crop. According to Roy Roegiers, Camiel heard about the land in Edinburg through a newspaper ad while living in Kansas. The newspaper boasted Edinburg’s ideal climate in comparison to Kansas, this possibly excited Camiel with regard to the agricultural prospects viable after transiting to south Texas.³²

As a result of this promising portrayal, before finalizing their decision to move to Edinburg, Camiel Roegiers and Alfred Rogers visited Texas in January of 1920 and purchased twenty acres of land a few miles northeast of Edinburg for three hundred dollars per acre—about seven thousand dollars in 2016. In an interview, Marjorie Burch stated Camiel and his brother traveled together to Edinburg utilizing locomotive transportation which advertised available property in the southernmost regions of Texas. Referred to as land excursions, these trains traveled with the purpose of advertising affordable land to prospective buyers from around the country.³³ (Figure 2.1) The Roegiers contributed to their

³¹“Emigration” <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~belghist/Flanders/Pages/emigration.htm>, Last modified October 24th, 1999.

³² Roegiers, Roy and Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1, Border Studies Archive, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Interviewed by Stephen Cantu, Jennifer Quintero and Aram Rivera, October 13, 2016.

³³ Marjorie Burch, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

relocation-funds by selling everything that wasn't immediately necessary for their stay in Texas while they lived Kansas. (See Appendix 15)

In December of that same year, the extended Roegiers family and the DeBouvers began their move to Texas. A railroad car carried their three mules, some furniture and household necessities. Camiel and Emilie Roegiers, along with Alfred and Emma Rogers with their four children Alice, Bill, Bert and baby Anna, left Kansas the same day, as did the train car holding their all of their belongings. Although there were no highways at the time, the Roegiers drove a Model T Ford from Kansas to Texas, completing the drive in the same amount of time as the railroad car holding their personal possessions. After driving for ten days, in December of 1920, the Roegiers arrived to what would become their lifelong home, Edinburg, Texas. Upon their arrival, Camiel and Emilie Roegiers immediately established themselves as both prosperous agriculturists and a cohesive family. (Figure 1.7)

Life Starts in the Citrus Valley

Camiel and Emilie Roegiers spent their first three weeks on their property in Edinburg living in a tent. This time was quickly followed by the construction of a one-bedroom house. The following year, they continued to add onto the original first room. They concluded the construction of their home after completing the fifth room of the house. In 1950, Camiel and 2nd wife Irene remodeled the home, which Roy Roegiers continues to live in today (2016). The alterations of their home consisted of the outside of the home being refinished, as well as the construction of a car garage and wash house, with rocks all transported from Oklahoma. Camiel remarried on March 11th 1946, following the death of his first wife, Emilie, who had died earlier that year on January 12th.

Lucile Rogers, youngest daughter of Alfred and Emma wrote the following in 1934 when she was thirteen years old:

“It was eight o'clock in the morning, December 10, 1920 when my parents moved to Edinburg, Texas from Kansas. It was all brush where they stopped, two and a half miles north of Edinburg. I was my mother, father aunt, uncle, two brothers and two sisters who came. They camped there that night. They stayed there about eight days and then built a garage where we lived for 3 or 4 months. It was 6 months after they came to the Valley that I was born on June 24, 1921. They then built another house 2 miles north and a half mile east of Edinburg. It was not until four years ago that we built another house where the old one used to stand. We lived there ever since.”³⁴

Ten years later, in the year 1956, his second wife Irene Debouver Roegiers, wrote Camiel's life story (Appendix 11). By this year, Camiel Roegiers had resided in his original home for thirty-six years. Camiel Roegiers added an additional fifty acres of land to his original twenty acres, totaling seventy acres of land.

³⁴ Marjorie Burch's family scrapbook.

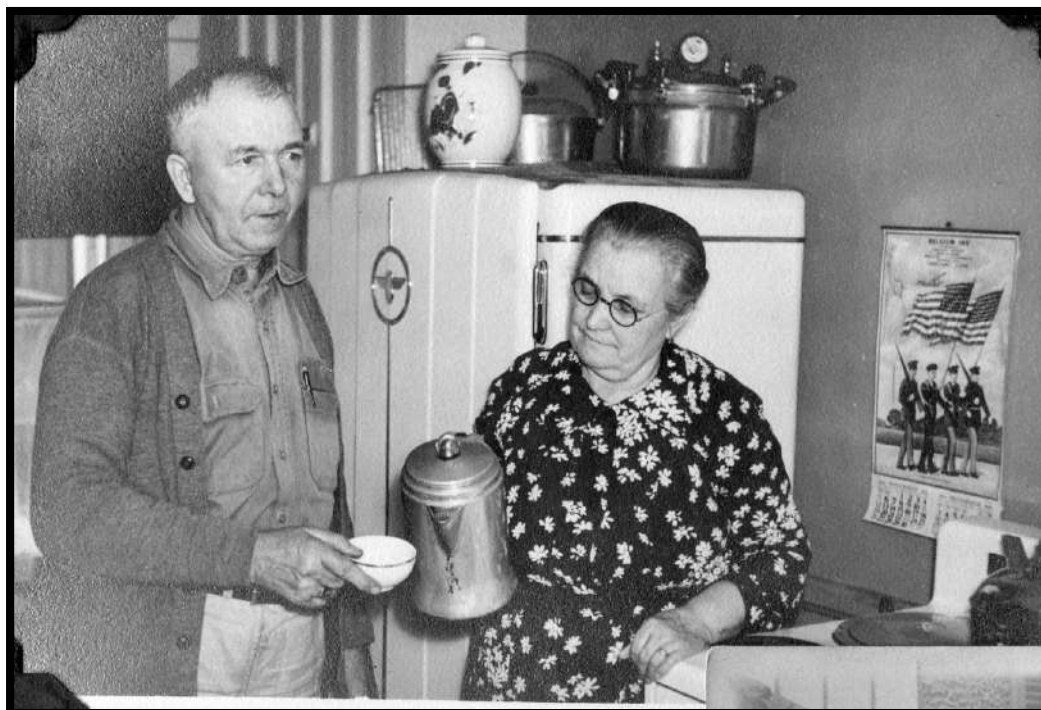


Figure 1.7 Camiel and Emilie Roegiers in their kitchen in Edinburg, TX, 1944.



Figure 1.8 Camiel Roegiers delivering dairy cans to the creamery. Circa 1925.

Camiel spent his first twenty years in Edinburg as a dairy farmer. (Figure 1.8) Additionally in 1956, Camiel and Irene Roegiers had thirty-five acres of grapefruit and oranges. Irene Roegiers states Camiel had grown his orchards from seedlings. The other thirty-five acres of land were described by Irene as “crop lands” and were utilized to cultivate crops of cotton, corn and other vegetables.

At the Intersection of Rogers and Roegiers

Members of the Roegiers and Rogers family continue to live in Edinburg and various other cities throughout Texas. (Figure 1.9) Roy and Clara Roegiers continue to live on the street where they grew up, which now carries their family name; Roegiers Road. Both are retired after contributing years to their work. Although the farm is no longer their primary source of income, Roy continues to plant orchards of oranges on the original acres of land, first bought by his father. As a family, they have managed to maintain a history that is rich with stories and priceless memories. They have a profound family history, and a glimpse into that history will continue its illustration in the following chapters.



Figure 1.9 Alfred and Emma Rogers pictured above in front of their home sometime in the 1920s.

Chapter 2

This is Our Land: Land History of the Roegiers Project

Lucas Torres and Mauro Sierra

In January of 1920, Camiel and Alfred Roegiers left the frozen fields of Kansas and saw for the first time the Lower Rio Grande Valley. They were part of a land excursion party visiting with the intention of buying land. The Valley was becoming very popular with the citrus business and it was rapidly growing. The history of the Valley's rich soil, however, takes us back to the mid-18th Century when the Valley was explored for settlement by the Spain. José de Escandón, whom in 1749 colonized Hidalgo County and what would later be known as the Rio Grande Valley. Escandón was instrumental in dividing 80 portions of land, known as *porciones*. Each *porción* given to Spanish settlers contained a league or approximately 4,428 acres of land. Furthermore, it was important for the *porciones* to start from the river so the settling farmers could have access to water. The *porciones* were rectangular in dimension and measured approximately 9/13 of mile in width and about 11 to 16 miles in length.³⁵

The Spanish crown issued 59 leagues to José Salvador de la Garza in what would be Cameron County. At the end of the Mexican war in 1848, Cameron County was created. At this time, Mexico signed the Guadalupe Treaty agreeing to accept the Rio Grande as its boundary with the United States from El Paso to the the Gulf of Mexico. The treaty also permitted the existing Mexicans owners to keep their land. A few years later, in 1852, Hidalgo County was formed. Ranching was the main economy for Hidalgo County and due to the remoteness of the region, people called it the "Republic of Hidalgo".³⁶ However, at the turn of the 20th century, the Lower Rio Grande Valley changed its main focus from cattle ranching to citrus orchards which eventually dominated the economy. This brings us to our study of the Roegiers family and their life as 20th century dwellers of Hidalgo County.

Initial Purchase from the Stewart Farm Mortgage Company

Camiel Roegiers migrated to the Lower Rio Grande Valley to a small town named Edinburg due to the booming agricultural business. Camiel Roegiers was born on May 22, 1882 in Waarshoot (variably Waerschoot) Belgium. At age 25 in January of 1907, Camiel, the middle child of Desiderius and Maria Bonamie Roegiers, took passage on on the Red Star Line vessel SS *Westernland* from the nearby port of Antwerp and arrived in New York on February 11. From there he traveled to League City, Texas north of Galveston. There he worked on a farm for a year and then on the wharves in Galveston before returning to Belgium in 1909. In April of that year he married Emelie DeBouver (born October 19, 1879). Camiel, his new wife Emelie along with Camiel's younger brother Alfred (born 14 April 1884) and his wife Emma DeBouver (born 11 December 1881), the younger sister of Emelie, and their infant daughter Alice, sailed on the Cunard Line vessel RMS *Campania* to the United States on May 8. There they worked for two and-a-half years at a dairy farm in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 1911, the extended Roegiers family moved to Lenexa, Kansas

³⁵ Knight, Lila, "The Creation of a Magic Valley: Irrigation in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, 1904-1965", *A Field Guide to Irrigation in the Lower Rio Grande Valley*, (Historical Studies Report No. 2009-01), Buda, TX: Texas Department of Transportation, 2009, p.9.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 10.

where they rented land and grew crops. In 1920, Camiel and Alfred had become very successful in their agricultural earnings and so they decided to visit the Rio Grande Valley as part of an excursion party with the W.E. Stewart Land Company. (Figure 2.1)



Figure 2.1 W.E. Stewart Land Excursion Party (section of larger) group photo upon arrival in Rio Grande Valley in 1920.

Camiel (1st row 3rd from left) and Alfred Roegiers (standing 2nd row 2nd from left).

On January 23, 1920, Camiel bought 20 acres of land from Stewart Farm Mortgage Company for six thousand dollars. (Appendix 14) The acreage was in brush and was valued at 300 dollars an acre. This warranty deed and subsequent warranty deeds of the Roegiers's family were found in Hidalgo County Clerk's office. The warranty deed indicated Camiel gave three thousand dollars in cash and agreed to pay the rest in payments. However, months later, in September of 1920, Camiel gave another two thousand seven hundred ninety dollars for what the warranty deed indicated were "*the South 20 acres of lot Number Five (5) in Section two forty-three (243) Hidalgo County, Texas*". (Appendix 16)

Soon after returning to Kansas, Camiel and Alfred auctioned almost all of their farm equipment. Two huge advertisement articles were posted; one dated "October, 25." Camiel sold his hogs, implements, poultry, hay and feed, horses, some mules, cattle, and household goods. (Appendix 15) He also bought a Ford Model-T and had three mules transported via train as they headed to their new home in Edinburg.³⁷ Once there they would be joined by their wives' brother Julius (born 16 November 1884 Drongen, Belgium-died 17 February 1960 Edinburg, Texas) and Irma Maria (Ravats) DeBouver (born Drongen, Belgium 19 November 1887-died Edinburg, Texas 13 September 1965) and their three children Irene, Richard, and Danny.

³⁷ Roegiers, Irene, p. 2.

This heavy brush land, Camiel Roegiers stated, was highly underdeveloped.³⁸ According to Camiel's son, Roy Roegiers's testimony, his father was provided tools, at no charge, to clear the brush. Some of those tools are on display in the dairy storage shed that still exist at Roy's house.

In the early 1920's, the citrus business grew significantly and was very profitable in the Valley. Camiel's purchase of 20 acres was the greatest investment of his life. He arrived in a time when the citrus industry was beginning to prosper in the Valley. To make a profitable citrus orchard only required a piece of land.³⁹ The reason for the citrus commodity in the Valley was due to the unique climate only found in certain parts of the United States, which included Florida, Arizona, and California. In fact, in 1921, the Valley had its first-ever shipments of citrus. In 1925, the Lower Rio Grande Valley had an estimated two million citrus trees.⁴⁰

The Railroad Goes Through It

The Roegiers and the Railroad Companies

As the citrus industry kept booming in the Rio Grande Valley, there was a need for more trains and railroads to come in to the region. Citrus needed to be transported out of the Valley and various companies were looking to invest in the area. Edinburg was one of these areas that was a place of interest, but most interestingly, the Roegiers' property was on the minds and maps of these companies. In an initial map drawn up by John Closner in 1914, there was a railroad that traveled north up in to the intersection of what is now Rogers and Roegiers Roads, respectively. (Appendix 17) This document begins by stating:

Know all men by these presents: That we, the undersigned, being the owners of certain 640 acre sections of land in Hidalgo County, Texas, hereafter described have sub-divided the same into smaller tracts, as is more particularly shown on plot hereto attached: the ownership of said section being more particularly described as follows: John Closner – West one half of Sec. 243; Closner and Sprague – Sec. 241, 245, 246, 250, and the west 189.6 acres of Sec. 267.

What is interesting about the above quote is that it talks about 640 Acre Sections and how those are then subdivided into smaller tracts of land. This tradition of land subdivisions goes back to the time of the United States under the Articles of Confederation. According to the Confederation Congress in the Northwest Ordinance of 1785, the new lands attained by the United States with the Treaty of Paris of 1783 would be divided into townships.⁴¹ One township was 6 miles by 6 miles (6x6 Miles) for a total of 36 Square Miles. Each square mile was a 640 Acre Section. These would then be divided into a half section (320 Acres), a quarter section (160 Acres), half-quarter sections (80 Acres) and quarter-quarter sections (40 Acres). (Appendix 18) As stated in the block quote above, John Closner owned quite a few of the sections in the Edinburg Township in 1914, one of which would be purchased by Camiel Roegiers through the W.E. Stewart Farm Mortgage Company.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Knight, 56.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 57.

⁴¹ Albert C. White, "Land Ordinance of 1785," *A History of the Rectangular Survey System: U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), 11-14.

In 1925, Camiel sold the western part of his property for five hundred twenty-five dollars to the *St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway Company* for the construction of the railway. (Appendix 19) Many years after the death of Camiel Roegiers, on March 23, 1975, the Missouri Pacific Railway Company, a company that took over St. Louis Brownsville, and Mexico Railway Company, offered to sell back the easement bought from the Roegiers in 1925. Irene, who had become Camiel's wife and later his widow, bought the property back for a sum of one thousand seven hundred seventy-five dollars. The Law Offices of McDonald and Stewart settled this purchase for Irene.

The proximity of life to the railroad system led Camiel Roegiers to invest in a patent for an "Anticreeper for Railroad Rails." (Appendix 20, 21) Invented by William I. Russell, the Anticreeper would aid in keeping the railroad rails from splitting and would make the rails more resilient under the weight of the train. In 1964, when Roy Roegiers found out about the investment his father had made, he wrote a letter to Evans and Company, U.S. and Foreign Patents Office to which he asked if there were any royalties to be collected by himself and his family. (Appendix 22) However, there was never any response from the company to Roy's questions.

Gaining and Losing Land

Roegiers Property History from 1930-1957

In 1930, Camiel continued to buy more property in the same subdivision where he bought his first twenty acres of land. Camiel bought "*the east ten (10) acres North twenty acres (20) lot Number eleven (11) Section two hundred-forty-three of the Texas Mexican Railway Company Survey of Land in Hidalgo County, Texas*" which had been previously owned by a Mr. John Allen. (Appendix 23) In 1942, Camiel paid land taxes for nine hundred fifty dollars (\$950) for another 20-acre tract of land. The land titled as: "*All of the East one-half (E1/2) of Lot No. one (1), 1 Section two hundred forty-four (244) Texas- Mexican Railway Company's Surveys, containing twenty (20) acres of land more or less.*" (Appendix 24) This payment of taxes was also a payment for the land that Camiel bought from the First National Bank in Mercedes, Texas.

Shortly thereafter, in 1946, Camiel and his wife Irene sold five acres of land to his brother, Alfred Rogers and his wife Emma. As per Warranty Deed No. 11787, the five acres are identified as "*The South Five (5) acres of the West Ten (10) acres of Lot No. Six (6) in Section No. Two Hundred forty-three (243) Texas-Mexican Railway Company Survey, Hidalgo County, Texas*". (Appendix 25) This property sold to Alfred Rogers was adjacent to his brother Camiel. The second sale took place in 1953. On February 10, 1953, Camiel and his wife Irene sold to Alfred Rogers a piece of land. The tract situated in: *Hidalgo, County, Texas, described as the Two (2) acres of the West Twenty (20 acres) of Lot Section (6), Block 243, Texas-Mexican Railway Company's survey of lands in Hidalgo, County, Texas.* (Appendix 26)

In 1957, Camiel and his wife Irene bought the neighbor's ten acres of land owned by George Schlagel. Mr. Schlagel bought the parcel in 1920, but died years later. The land in Mr. Schlagel's estate was inherited by his sons who resided in other states. They sold the land to the Roegiers for two thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$2,250). The land is titled as "*The West One – Half (W-1/2) of the North Twenty (N-20) acres of lot Eleven (11), in Section Number 243, Hidalgo County, Texas, said Section Number 243*". (Appendix 27)

Between the 1930's and the 1950's the Roegiers gained and sold land to their family members. These were all investments for Camiel, investments that would later on benefit his wife and his children.

If It's Under, It's Mine

The Roegiers Family and Mineral Deeds

On January 24, 1949, Camiel and his wife Irene Roegiers signed several gas, oil, and mineral contracts with companies who had an interest in exploring their properties. The first contract signed was for five (5) years with Presley E. Vinson. The lease was for "the purpose to exploring, investigating, prospecting, drilling, and mining for and producing oil, gas and all other minerals, laying pipe lines, building roads, tanks, power station, telephone lines and other structures thereon to produce, save, take care of treat, transport and own said products, and housing its employees." This included Roegiers's property titled: *East Twenty (20) acres of Lot Number One (1), Section two hundred Forty four (244), Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County, Texas.* (Appendix 28) The lease also allowed the Roegiers to use gas at their own risk for their dwelling. The lessee also was responsible to compensate Mr. Roegiers in the event of any damage done to his crops or citrus trees. Citrus trees under one-year-old were paid ten dollars per tree. All other citrus trees were paid less when older than one year and depending on their condition. Five years later, on February 1, 1954, the contract ended and a release of oil and gas lease agreement was signed by the Roegiers to end their agreement. (Appendix 29)

On May 3, 1951, the Mex-Tex Oil Company as well as Camiel Roegiers gathered to make an agreement with regard to mineral rights found on the Roegiers property. Before Naida H. Martyn in San Antonio, Texas. Robert E. Tucker, president of the Mex-Tex Oil Corporation stated that: (Appendix 30)

"One-half (1/2) of the oil, gas and other minerals in and under the East Ten (10) acres of the North Twenty (20) acres of Lot Eleven (11), Section Two Hundred and Forty-Three (243), Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo Country, Texas, according to the map or plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Country Clerk of Hidalgo County, Texas, to which reference is here made for a better description."

According to this text, the Roegiers family could only claim half of the royalties of the minerals, oil and gas found on their property. However, no minerals, gas or oil was found during that time.

On March 23, 1977 Irene Roegiers, also signed an Oil Gas and Mineral Lease. This document states: (Appendix 31)

"This agreement, made this 23rd, day of March, 1977, between Irene Roegiers, widow of Camiel Roegiers, deceased, Rt. 2, Box 326, Edinburg, Texas 78539, Lessor (whether one or more), and Charles A. Brandt, P.O. Box 3507, McAllen, Texas 78501, Lessee, Witnesseth:

I, Lessor, in consideration of Ten and No/100 Dollars (\$10.00) in hand paid, of the royalties herein provided, and of the agreements of Lessee herein contain, here by grants, leases and lets exclusively unto Lessor for the purposes of (a) exploring, prospecting, drilling and mining thereof for the producing therefrom, and from lands operated therewith, oil, gas and all other minerals, (b) saving, treating, transporting and caring for said products, (c) removing therefrom, and from lands operated therewith, water, being and other refuse, and injecting, operating and maintaining thereon all structures and facilities necessary or

convenience for any and all said purposes, together with the revisionary rights of Lessor, the following described land in Hidalgo County, Texas to wit:

40.00 acres of land, more or less, being ALL of Lot 11, Section 243 of the Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County, Texas, according to the map of said Survey recorded in Vol. 1, Page 16 of the Map Records of Hidalgo County, Texas."

According to the lease signed by Irene Roegiers and Charles A. Brandt, Brandt would give the Roegiers family royalties if there were any minerals, oil, and gas were found. According to Roy Roegiers, in memory, there were no oil, gas or minerals found, they never received any royalties and never benefited them in any way.

The Land as a Return Investment

The Roegiers Sell their Lands

In 1953, Camiel and his wife Irene sold some of their property to Hidalgo County for the construction of FM 1925 known today as Monte Cristo Road in Hidalgo County. The area sold was the *East one-half (E-1/2) of lot 1, Block 244*. (Appendix 31) In 1957, Camiel and his wife Irene sold a piece of land to Richard De Bouver and his wife Ruth. Irene and Richard were siblings. They sold the *"North four and half a (N-4 1/2) acres of the West Thirteen and 26/100 (W-13.26) acres of Lot Seven (7), Section Two Hundred Forty-Three."* A year later, Richard signed over his warranty deed (for unknown reasons) to his brother Daniel De Bouver. The agreement to continue to pay for the parcel was agreed between the Roegiers and Daniel De Bouver. Also, this was the last found document signed by Camiel Roegiers just before he passed away.

On February 4, 1972 Irene sold to David Rogers two sections of land from lot 5 section 243. One was *0.21 and the other 0.61 acre of land*. On February 21, 1972, Irene Roegiers signed an agreement with Texas Department of Transportation to sell them about *five (5) acres of lot 5, section 243* for six-thousand three hundred eight two dollars. The sale was for the construction of Highway 281. On this date, another deed specifying the relocation of the drainage pipelines at Roegiers's land containing *0.33 acre of land in lot 5 section 24*. Hidalgo County paid for the expenses for three hundred thirteen dollars. While searching for warranty deeds, it was learned that on November 25, 1945 Irene Roegiers was married to A. Jetton. She apparently had property before she married Camiel Roegiers: *lot number twelve, and the adjoining one half of lot Eleven (11), block 258 in Edinburg*. However, on April 9, 1946, when she was married Camiel, she sold her property for four thousand dollars (\$4000) to O. J. Heil.

Camiel and Irene also bought burial spaces at Hillcrest Cemetery located at 1701 East Richardson Road, in Edinburg, Texas. The Hillcrest staff was able to provide a copy of a *ledger numbered 26 and titled as Block No. 9* containing the Roegiers, De Bouver, and Duffey burial dates. At the bottom of the ledger contains space # 1 to Emily (Emelie) Roegiers buried in January 12, 1946 and in space # 2 Camiel Roegiers buried on August 8, 1958. In 1985, Irene Roegiers bought four burial spaces at lot 17 where her brothers are buried in spaces 1, 2, 3, and 4. Irene brothers include Daniel, Richard, Noel, and Noel's wife Juanita. There are three more burial spaces in lot 16 numbered 21, 31, and 41. These spaces are available for burial (refer to ledger copy number 26 Block No. 9). (Appendix 33) Irene DeBouver Roegiers died on February 20, 2006 and is buried in Lot 9-16-1 at Hillcrest Cemetery. She is near her husband Camiel, her parents and siblings. (Figure 2.2, 2.3)



Figure 2.2 Emily & Camiel Roegiers headstone in Hillcrest Cemetery, Edinburg, TX

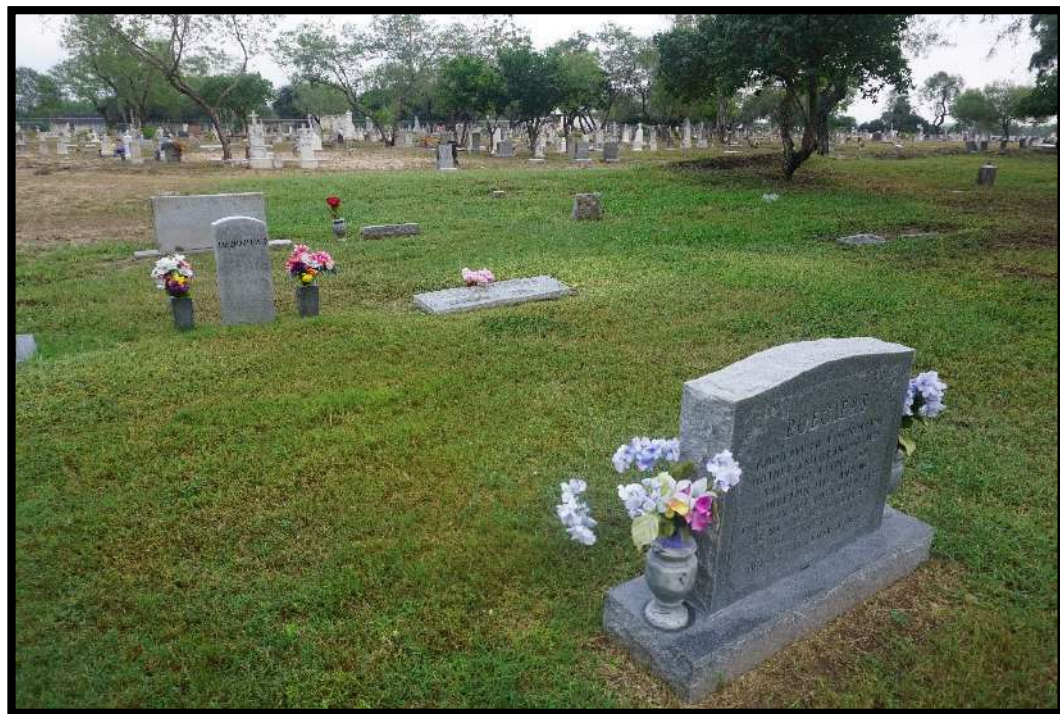


Figure 2.3 Irene Roegiers headstone in Hillcrest Cemetery near her parents (DeBouver)

Conclusion

The Roegiers's property has changed over the years. The current home site is located at 2912 N. Roegiers Road, Edinburg, Texas 78539. An aerial photograph of the Roegiers's house was compared with an aerial imagery dated January 16, 2016 by Google Earth satellite. (Appendix 34) According to Roy Roegiers, the aerial photograph was taken on or about 1952. He estimates 1952 because the Oklahoma stone that was used to cover the

three-foot concrete wall was bought in Oklahoma and transported to his house. The concrete block wall is seen on the northeastern area of the main house. It is also next to the dairy house. Also, the railroad build in 1925 was not present in the satellite photograph and was speculated to have been removed sometime between the 1952 and 1976 when Clara moved to her new home. Clara's house is located at 923 E Rogers Road, at the southeastern area shown on the satellite aerial photograph. It is about 100 yards east of the intersection of Roegiers and Rogers Road. Also, Clara's son Douglas Bryan Duffey's house was built in Roegiers's property in November 6, 2001. His house has an address an address of 903 East Rogers Road, Edinburg, Texas and is located at the northeastern part of the Roegiers and Rogers Road.

As time passed, the Roegiers bought and sold land. Camiel Roegiers the patriarch of the family took a risk moving his family down to the Rio Grande Valley. This was an unknown land with strange people, and strange customs and an even stranger language than their own. But as they came into the Valley, they became the strangers. Able to provide their family members with cheap and inexpensive lands the Roegiers sold their property to the Rogers and DeBouvers as we saw in the pages above. With this, the Roegiers began a small family centered Belgian community in the Rio Grande Valley. Unknowingly, their legacy and their property would live on.

Chapter 3

Family Traditions and Celebrations

Sandra E. Pichardo, Lizbeth De Leon, James Severn & Octavio Ortiz

The Rio Grande Valley has a history of people settling and making a living in this land. This particular region is known for its year-round ability to grow crops.⁴² Yet variable rainfall and soils often can be challenging for farmers.⁴³ The irrigation projects that supply water for agriculture led to the commercialization that put the Valley on the map. Here we consider cultural activities such as gatherings and games. Reunions are a regular event designed to help relatives stay connected. Family holiday gatherings are imbued with other traditions that reach back in time. You can learn a lot about your family at a reunion, which can be memorable events where relationship can be examined and renewed.⁴⁴

The families that chose to journey to the Rio Grande Valley were known as the Roegiers or Rogers. Part of the family chose to stay with the original name as the other half of the family changed it to Rogers to better assimilate to the American society. Camiel Roegiers was born May 22, in 1882 in Waershoot, Belgium. He came to America in 1907.⁴⁵ Two years later in 1909, he returned to Belgium and married Emelie DeBouver on April 7 of that year. (Figure 3.1). Then, in the company of his brother Alfred and his wife Emma DeBouver, the younger sister of Emelie, the four left Belgium for the United States. For two and a half years they worked on a dairy farm in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 1911 they moved to Lenexa, Kansas to farm wheat. Profits were so good during the ensuing years during World War I that in 1920 they came to Edinburg, Texas and bought land. Arriving in Model T Ford, they lived in a tent for three weeks. Eventually they built a one room home and expanded it adding several rooms and a garage. In the Magic Valley, the Roegiers and Rogers families made their home and became active in the community while holding on to familial traditions and celebrations that came from Belgium. This chapter explores these traditions from Europe and the new traditions and way of life that the next generation created in Edinburg.

Religion

Religion is part of the cultural system within the Belgian culture, and plays an important role. In Belgium, Catholicism is the primary religion; however, there are other minority religious groups such as the Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim. Baptism, Sunday Mass attendance, the seven sacraments, the Ten Commandments, and confession are some practices in the Catholic Church. Fifty-eight percent of the population in Belgium is identified as Roman Catholic, under Spanish rule. Catholicism was the only permitted religion in Belgium. The Catholic Church had significant power until the middle of the 20th century influencing the requirement for religious education in public schools.⁴⁶ The majority of the Roegiers/ Rogers family which migrated to Edinburg, Texas is Catholic. Clara, states

⁴² Vogl Urike, Huning Matthias, "One nation, one language? The case of Belgium" Dutch Crossing, vol 34, no 3 2010

⁴³ Roegiers, Roy and Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

⁴⁴ Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 4.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1

⁴⁶ "Religion in Contemporary Belgian Society", Wordlatlas.



Figure 3.2 Grandsons of Alfred and Emma Rogers. Pictured from left to right: Tommy Serota, David Rogers, Roger Serota, and Bobby Rogers Altar Servers at St. Joseph Catholic Church Edinburg TX. Circa 1950.



Figure 3.3 Prayer card for Alfred Rogers

Marriage

Marriage was also important for the Roegiers family as it was for other Catholic families, marriage would take place at a church, however, McGurk states that “in those days, if you were not Catholic, they married them in the priest’s office, I remember as a kid that was kind of bad”. McGurk states that being Catholic was significantly important for marriage.⁵⁰ (Appendix 35) and figure 3.4 illustrates the marriage announcement and license of Camiel and Irene Roegiers, parents of Roy Roegiers. Irene and Camiel were married at Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg on March 11, 1946. Wedding anniversaries were celebrated in the Roegiers/Rogers family, for example, the 50th anniversary of “Mom” and “Pa”, the image in figure 3.5 portrays the significance of marriage for the family. Lynette Fortson, great granddaughter of Alfred and Emma Rogers, states that many women in the family were in the Altar Society, they would clean the church on a regular basis. The Roegiers/Rogers family traditionally held a reception after the wedding when family and friends could visit. Fortson states that “wedding parties would take place at reception halls or at Great Uncle Bill’s house and lawn”.⁵¹

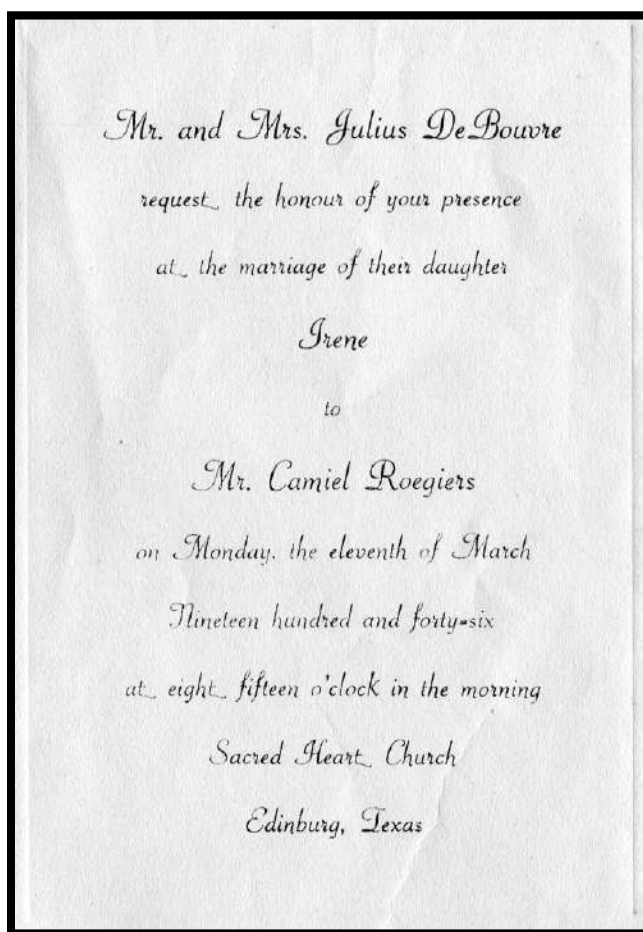


Figure 3.4 Wedding announcement of Irene DeBouvre to Camiel Roegiers, Monday, March 11, 1946 at Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg, TX

⁵⁰ Linda Rogers McGurk, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7, p. 159-177.

⁵¹ Lynette Fortson, E-mail Interview, Appendix 42, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Interviewed by Sandra Pichardo, November 28, 2016.



Figure 3.5 Emma and Alfred Rogers 50th wedding anniversary celebration. Standing left to right: Margie Ball Burch, Bill Burch, Mary Alice Ball Foreman, Kenneth Foreman, Tom Leidner, Dorothy Ann Rogers Leidner, Father Beasley, Emma Rogers, Alfred Rogers. Seated far left: Pharilda Rogers Maenhoot, Irene DeBouver Roegiers, Camiel Roegiers, Julius DeBouver, Irma Ravats DeBouver. Seated center row: Clay Edmiston, Alice Rogers Edmiston, Bert Rogers, Dorothy Rogers, Frank Serota, Anna Rogers Serota. Seated far right: Noel Maenhoot, Bill Rogers, Mary Rogers, Lucille Rogers Green, Don Green. January 6, 1957.

Family Remedies

Alternative medicines are referred as a history of diverse practices that were traditionally passed from generation to generation in various societies. This includes the skills, knowledge, theories, and experience of various cultures. Herbals, vegetables, or spices are used to maintain or cure health. Remedies are also traditions passed down from family to family. The Belgian Roegiers/Rogers family practiced some remedies to cure fever, cough or a cold. Linda McGurk states “I remember sore throat, I would get some honey with bourbon in it, or whisky, you would just swallow it real slow so it would kind of burn out the sore throat.” McGurk also remembered her mother putting an ice bag on her head and taking towels to put ice in it to put on her head. She states that her mother was a housewife, she would do the house chores, take care of the children when sick and use these remedies before taking them to the doctor. McGurk states that the family would not use the roll up string on the forehead remedies but the family was accustomed to using traditional remedies to cure young children. She states that at first the family would use this sort of natural remedies to reduce the fever, and if it would not work, then they would drive to the doctor or the doctor would come over to their house. McGurk states “he would come to our house and check us out, can you imagine! That does not happen anymore”⁵²

Language

⁵²McGurk, Linda Rogers, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7.

Language is an ability to communicate and express in complex ways within the same group. A linguistic junction of Latin and Germanic Europe has shaped and developed the mix of languages found in Belgium. Today Belgium has three official languages, Belgian Dutch or Flemish, French, and German. Belgian Dutch colloquially called “Flemsih” is spoken in Flanders, the northern part of Belgium and is the most widely spoken language. There are 5.2 million people in the northern half of Belgium who speak Flemish. French is spoken by 4.6 million people in the southern Wallonia region. German-speakers have made up a small portion of the populace following the annexation of “New Belgium” from Germany following World War I. English is widely spoken in Flanders but less in Wallonia. Language policy in Belgium is characterized by the “territoriality principle”, referring to a way of institutionalizing multilingualism in which territories are allocated specific languages regardless of the language that individual inhabitant spoke at home. The implementation of this principle lies at the basis of the far-reaching federalization process of Belgium, which, in 1993 led to the establishment of a two-tier federal system of Regions and Communities.⁵³

The Roegiers/Rogers family hails from Waarschoot located northwest of Brussels near Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp in the Flemish province of East Flanders in Belgium. Thus, the first generation migrants spoke Flemish as their first language. Not surprisingly, after their migration to the United States that language displaced by English. Linda McGurk, granddaughter of Alfred Rogers states that her grandfather changed the spelling of the family name following their move to Edinburg, Texas to reflect their new identity as “Americans.” She states that half of the family changed their last name to become more Americanized or to “blend in” to the culture in the Valley. McGurk states, “you know, they tried to fit in by making their name more kind of regular, I guess”. She states that the older generations her grandparents, father, aunts, and uncles spoke Flemish. All of Alfred and Emma’s children spoke Flemish as their first language and entered school not knowing any English. She remembers particularly on Sundays, when she would listen to the older people speaking in a different language.⁵⁴ Clara also states that the younger generations did not speak Flemish; their parents would encourage them to learn the English language. Today, some of the family members speak Spanish. Clara states that she does not speak Spanish, although she understands a little because she worked in J.C Penney as a teenager, she states, “I learned things necessary for a job, I learned line names and ages”. Clara does not know how to read or speak Flemish, her mother Irene who was born in Belgium did speak the language but did not know how to read or write in Flemish.⁵⁵ Clara and Roy’s father Camiel chose not to change their last name, hence the presence today of cousins named Roegiers and Rogers. Marjorie Burch, granddaughter of Alfred Rogers states that her grandparents spoke Flemish to grandchildren, although they did not understand as much as the older generations. She states that her mother Alice, daughter of Alfred, did know how to read and write Flemish. She also states that her grandmother Emma DeBouver was always embarrassed about her English, since it was accented. She recounts family gatherings and activities and states that at home Flemish was the language. Marjorie Burch knows only certain words, she states, “I just knew words, I couldn’t carry on a conversation”.⁵⁶

Foods and Sunday Gatherings

⁵³ Vogl Ulrike, *Huning Matthias*, pp 229-230.

⁵⁴ Linda McGurk, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7.

⁵⁵ Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 4.

⁵⁶ Marjorie Burch, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

The Roegiers/Rogers Family tried to make every moment spent together as a family very special. Marjorie Burch, granddaughter of Emma and Alfred Rogers, remembers the delicious meals Emma “Mom” Rogers prepared for the family and referred to her as a great cook as she recalled various meals prepared by her. The one food that is dearly remembered by the family is the raisin bread that “Mom” patiently prepared every Saturday for the gatherings at the Rogers home. The raisin bread was the first thing that family members mentioned when asked what they remembered most about their childhood with “Mom” and “Pa.” Tommy Serota, Alfred and Emma’s grandson, refers to the raisin bread as the “best-remembered dish.” He describes the bread as “an old-style, hand-kneaded bread that you put in raisins and cinnamon and all kinds of stuff and went great piping hot with a cup of coffee. It was wonderful.” Several family members have attempted to prepare the raisin bread using “Mom’s” recipe, but the remakes have yet to taste the same. “Nobody makes it like grandma did,” said Tommy.⁵⁷ The raisin bread prepared by Emma Rogers was so popular, that it even earned a spot in the local paper: (Appendix 36)

It was one of the smells that the kids remember most from walking into “Mom’s” house. Walking around the house and smelling the aroma of the raisin bread through the open windows was like a little bit of heaven for Tommy. Upon talking to Marjorie, we learned that “Mom” was considered to be a great cook and prepared a variety of both Belgian and American foods for the family. “Kelamapop” a potato soup and “Tochepop” a rice soup were two Flemish meals that “Mom” prepared. “Pop” means soup in Flemish, according to Marjorie. Another dish recalled upon the conversation with Marjorie was a cabbage roll dish deliciously prepared by “Mom”. The dish consisted of cabbage leaves stuffed and made into rolls. The rolls were then arranged into a dish and cooked in tomato sauce.⁵⁸ The family prepared their own potato chips and a blackberry wine that according to Lynette, worked better than the cough syrup. The family also canned fruits, vegetables, jams, jellies and pickles. Belgian honey cake was another Flemish dessert that was also prepared by the family matriarch and very much enjoyed by the family. According to Lynette, the honey cake has anise, which is a distinctive European flavor.⁵⁹ (Figure 3.6)

Sunday’s were a very special day for the Rogers and Roegiers Families as they spent the day at “Mom’s” and “Pa’s” (Rogers) for family time and to enjoy a slice of Emma’s famous raisin bread. Although Sunday gatherings were not an official holiday or celebration, to the family it was an important family day that was respected as such and enjoyed to the fullest. On this day, the family was able to spend quality time with one another and even though the entire family was not together every Sunday due to personal reasons, the time spent with the family members who were present was unforgettable. As years went by and family members grew older, Sunday gatherings got smaller because some family members moved away or had a family of their own and were unable to attend “Mom” and “Pa’s” home every Sunday for raisin bread and family time. Linda explained a typical Sunday as going to church with her family, then coming home to eat lunch at home and then heading to her grandparent’s home.⁶⁰ The men played Belgian Bowling, women played cards and the kids were just being kids playing around the farm and forgetting about school, chores and any other duties that they may have had. They ran around and played in the orchards, the

⁵⁷ Serota, Tom, Oral History Interview, Appendix 8.

⁵⁸ Marjorie Burch, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

⁵⁹ Lynette Fortson, Email interview by Sandra E Pichardo, Nov 28, 2016, Appendix 42.

⁶⁰ Linda McGurk, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7.

boys enjoyed shooting their BB guns and Roy enjoyed playing the role of escort by showing his out of town cousins the farm.⁶¹

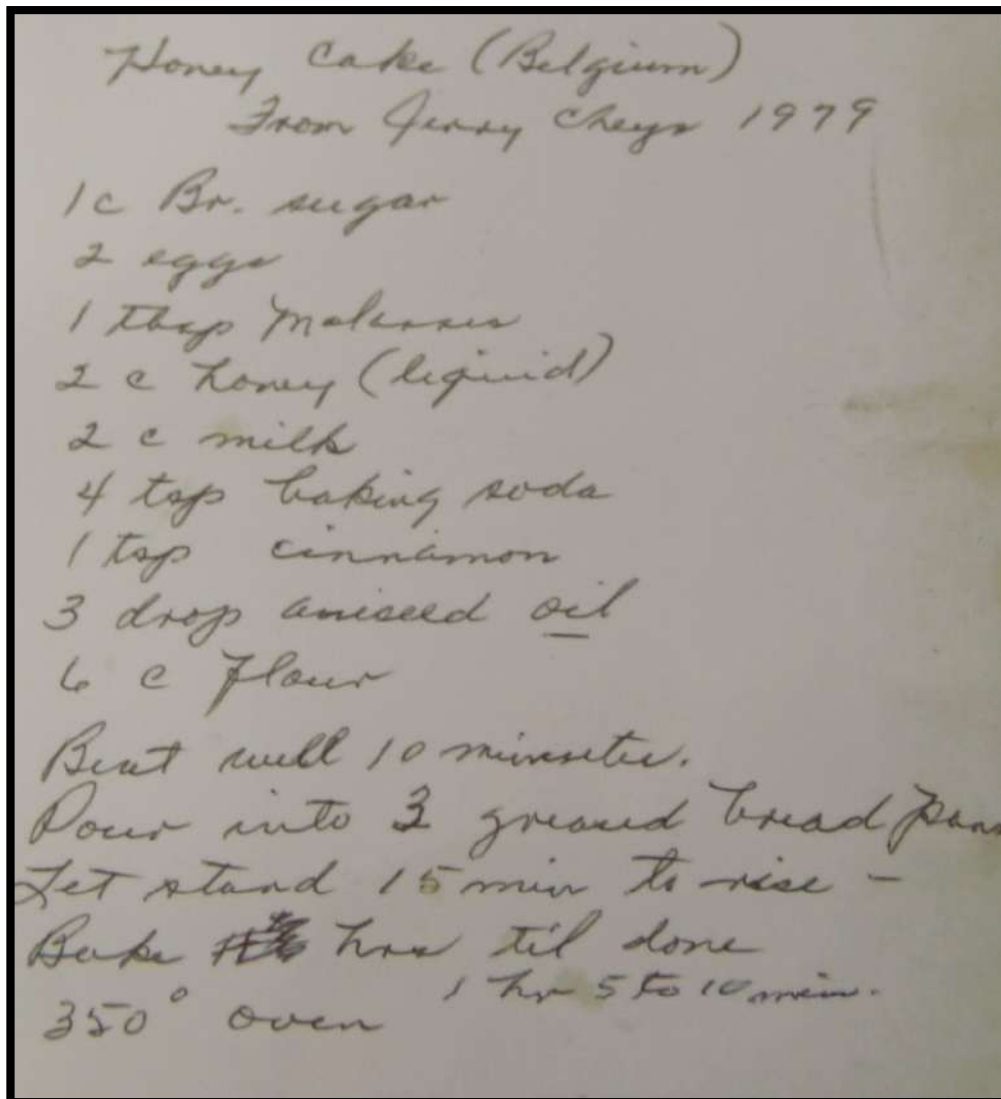


Figure 3.6 Roger's Family Honey Cake recipe (1979) enjoyed every weekend at Mom and Pa Rogers' house. Courtesy of Marjorie Burch.

An important part of the Sunday gathering and dearly remembered by all was the Belgian or "Feather" Bowling played by the men in a dirt alley created by "Pa" in the fields. Belgian Bowling was described by Linda as a Belgian pastime and was similar to bocce or horseshoes.⁶² The game was played with 3 x 6 ½ inch wooden disks, which are still in the possession of Roy Roegiers. Shaped like wheels of cheese each weigh about three pounds and are carved from ebony. (Figure 3.7). The object of the game is to roll the disk or wheel as close to a pin or feather as possible. The opposing team would try to knock opponent's

⁶¹ Roy Roegiers, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1, Border Studies Archive, The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Library, Interview by Stephen Cantu, Jennifer Quintero and Aram Rivera, Oct 16, 2016.

⁶²Linda McGurk, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7.

disks away from the target and so score points. The men had fun playing Belgian Bowling and drinking beer on Sunday afternoons.⁶³ (Figure 3.8). “Pa” prepared homebrew that was enjoyed by the adults and root beer for the kids. The kids were told not to drink the root beer until aged, but according to Lynette, her mother Mary Alice Rogers, had told her grandchildren that the kids would drink the root beer anyway and they remember it tasting bad because they would not give it time to age.

The women of the family would sit around a table on the back porch playing card games and catching up or sharing conversations with each other (Figure 3.9). The card game played by the women was similar to Bridge card game. Anna Rogers Serota was the best card player. The family was very well liked and the card game was a popular game among the Belgian community. Belgian priests from around the Valley would sometimes join them.⁶⁴ (Appendix 37)



Figure 3.7 Belgian bowling discs. Hand carved out of ebony wood. Numbered with roman numerals. Diameter 6 ¾” with thickness of 2 ¾”. Weight approximately 3-4 pounds each.

⁶³ Roy Roegiers, Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

⁶⁴ Lynette Fortson, Email interview by Sandra E Pichardo, Nov 28, 2016, Appendix 42.



Figure 3.8 Belgian or Feather bowling game enjoyed by the Roegiers and Rogers families and friends on Sundays at Mom and Pa Rogers home, Edinburg, TX. Courtesy of Marjorie Burch



Figure 3.9 Roegiers/Rogers women playing a Belgian card game on Sundays, Edinburg, TX. Courtesy of Roy Roegiers

The children enjoyed a delicious slice of hot raisin bread with butter as much as the time spent with their cousins running around in the orchards. The older children watched over the younger children while they played in the farm. Although a lot of their time during their Sunday gathering was spent in the orchards. They knew very well that they were to keep out of the dirt alley where the men played their Belgian Bowling. A very popular game among the children was hide and seek; boys against girls. They would run into the orchards and hide between the orange trees or climb the trees and hide up there. The children ran around the fields and picking crops such as beets, carrots and oranges and eating them there in the field. It brought the family together. Sunday gatherings also served to get haircuts by the family hairdresser, Anna Rogers Serota, daughter of Emma and Alfred Rogers.

Christmas

The food prepared by Emma Rogers was enjoyed by the family on a daily basis as the family meal, during family events, Sunday gatherings and holidays. Besides the very much enjoyed and cherished Sunday gatherings celebrated by the family, the holiday that stood out the most in the interviews was Christmas, a holiday celebrated by the entire family. Despite the fact that some of the family members moved away as they grew older because they got married, left to school, job opportunities or simply to open new paths, Christmas was the holiday that brought the entire family together. The Rogers Family had a big Christmas party and invited the entire family to join the celebration.

The family would set up long tables outside. Clara recalls a cousin, Dorothy Ann, taking a Santa Claus suit to the Christmas party and one of the cousins would dress up as Santa. She described how fun it was for all the kids to try to figure out who it was that was dressed up in the Santa suit. Linda remembers the Santa suit and says it was a “big” thing for the family.⁶⁵ The family drew names weeks in advance for the gift exchange which was held on Christmas Eve. The important part of the Christmas celebration was seeing the family together who some they had not seen in a long time. Christmas Eve consisted of tamales and snacks, but not a formal meal according to Lynette. The tamales were prepared by locals and were a Christmas gift for the family. The savory tamales were stuffed with pork or javelina and there was sweet tamales as well that were made with raisins.⁶⁶ On Christmas Day the families attended mass, most of them at St. Joseph Church, followed by a family dinner each with their smaller family group. Emma and Alfred and the family enjoyed a big fat turkey that “Pa” fattened up. Lynette recalls her grandmother, Alice Rogers Edmiston, would make *Sandies*, a European style shortbread/butter cookie rolled in powdered sugar.⁶⁷ Although there may not have been an abundant amount of Christmas presents, what was important was the time spent together as a family and having fun enjoying the moment together and creating great memories. Upon listening to the family describe the Christmas parties, their emotions flourished. They referred to the Santa suit with great pride and joy. Needless to say, the family enjoyed their Christmas parties and family time very much.

“Mom,” as recalled by Marjorie, believed in keeping your hands busy at all times. They learned so much from “Mom” and “Pa.” The girls were taught to knit, crochet and embroider. Linda on the other hand recalls “Mom” knitting a sweater for each of her grandchildren. Since there were many grandchildren, fifteen in all, she knitted the sweaters

⁶⁵ Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 4.

⁶⁶ Lynette Fortson, Email interview by Sandra E Pichardo, Nov 28, 2016, Appendix 42.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

when it was their turn to get one and they would not get another sweater until it was their turn to get another one. Once they would get their sweater they had to hope not to outgrow it before it was their turn to get another one again.⁶⁸

Education and the Community

Many immigrant families travel to the United States for various reasons; chief among those reasons is to provide a better life for the next generation. Education is a factor that can change the dynamics of an immigrant family. For the Roegiers and Rogers education became much more than a part of childhood, it created community bonds and became part of traditions.

Family Education

Linda McGurk, the Principal at Milam Elementary School in McAllen Texas (Appendix 38) explains that her father Albert Rogers who was born in Kansas went to college for a year or two, but her mother and grandparents did not. While the older generation worked hard on cultivating newly purchased lands in the Rio Grande Valley their children would go to school and help the family at home. "Working on the family farm was a priority and an expectation of Alfred and Emma's children. The older children helped milk the cows every morning before going to school remembers Anna Rogers and she would go with Pa to deliver the milk door to door to their customers. Alice, Bert, Anna and Lucille did graduate from high school. Bill focused his life on farming. When Bert attended Jr. College, he drove the school bus and would take Anna, Lucille, Margie and Mary Alice to school."⁶⁹ Roy Roegiers and his younger sister Clara Duffey saw their father work the land with the assistance of hired labor and help from extended family members. They helped with the chores on the property as well. "We did a lot of farm work and mowed the grass, stuff like that. Picked the fruit. Worked on the vegetables. We never really took care of the cows, we did have cows at the time, but I guess we were just too young to do much of that."¹⁴ When not at the family home Roy, Clara and most of the Rogers cousins went to school in the Edinburg area. The family has Catholic roots going back to Belgium, and for Clara and Roy their Catholic faith was also a part of the education. Clara described going to Catholic School in Edinburg at Sacred Heart in her early education. They would carpool with their neighbors, the Martins, who owned Martins Feed Store. The Martins were active in 4-H and introduced Roy and Clara to the 4-H Program. Roy and Clara's father passed away in 1958, during that time the siblings found comfort in the 4-H program. Roy and Clara raised chickens, pigs and had sheep. "I was proud to raise my own pigs, take them down to show, and get them qualified to enter (the show)." Roy explained his role in 4-H and how he participated in 4-H throughout his years in high school. As well as raising animals, Clara was involved in cooking and sewing projects, and later she joined the Serganettes, the drill team at Edinburg High School. Clara recently attended a 50-year reunion with past members of the drill team.

⁶⁸ Marjorie Burch, Oral History Interview, Appendix 5.

⁶⁹ Memories in Marjorie Burch scrapbook.

Post-Education and Careers in Teaching

For the next generation of Roegiers and Rogers, a college education was the next step in creating an American dream. For Linda and Clara, they would create a career in education. Clara was the first in her immediate family to go to college. While Roy volunteered for military service with the Navy during the Vietnam War, his younger sister Clara, at home with her mother, entered Pan American College. “So Pan American College, what can I say about it? It was expensive but somehow my mom made it possible. There were many fees, tuition, books, and student services fees; not really sure what all the charges were for. Just like these days, education is expensive.¹⁶ Clara was like many first-generation students and the struggles that students faced today at UTRGV, Clara faced when it was Pan American College. Clara drove Roy’s TransAm to school while he was away in the Navy. She often had trouble finding parking or keeping the car filled with gas (even though gas was about \$0.21 cents per gallon at that time).

Clara worked at the local bowling alley making \$0.80 cents an hour. Later she worked at J.C. Penney making \$1.60 per hour.¹⁷ She sure enjoyed the raise in pay! Clara studied Education during her time at Pan American College. She was also involved in Greek Life, and later married her high school sweetheart who went to school on a baseball scholarship. Clara did her student teaching at nearby Sam Houston Elementary School, she explained that the program was very different then than it is now. Her first three years were basics then as a senior, when did student teaching when she assisted a first grade teacher at Sam Houston School in Edinburg. She graduated from Pan American College in 1971, but took a little time off when pregnant with her first child. The next year Clara began working full time as a teacher at Monte Alto where she worked until she retired after thirty-eight years of teaching. Along with Linda McGurk, many of the women in the extended Roegiers and Rogers families were educators. They came to this region as many immigrants have before, to create a better life for the next generation. The commitment that they had to preserving family ties and creating new ones in the community through education is a tradition that the Roegiers and Rogers have contributed to the Magic Valley.

Chapter 4

Farming and Agriculture

Stephen Cantu, Juan Garza, Aram Rivera & Olivia Salazar

“Know’ st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom,
Where the gold orange glows in the deep thicket’s gloom,
Where a wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?”

-Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe⁷⁰

When the Roegiers family first started farming in Edinburg, Texas in 1920, Camiel Roegiers and his first wife Emily Debouver owned the farm. Camiel started a dairy farm in Edinburg, and later the Roegiers farm would add citrus groves to take advantage of the Valley’s weather. It is clear that the farm animals, packing sheds, and refrigeration technology played a significant role in the history of the Roegiers. Since 1920 the farm established by Camiel Roegiers has successfully supported his family. Here, based on interviews with his children, Roy and Clara, with second wife Irene Debouver Roegiers reveals life in this corner of Edinburg over the past century.

WHO HELPED IRENE ROEGIERS AFTER CAMIEL’S DEATH?

There is much work to do while maintaining a family farm and the Roegiers’ family has been able to keep up even though they experienced many difficulties. Running a farm requires multiple people to work together to harvest the products during each growing season. Camiel Roegiers would hire workers in order to maintain the farm, and when he died in 1958 his wife Irene Roegiers employed workers to keep it all running. Mrs. Roegiers was a hardworking, determined mother that was able to keep the farm running while also raising two hardworking individuals; their children Roy and Clara. (Figure 4.1) Mrs. Roegiers took the challenge of keeping the farm running after her husband’s passing and was able to uphold the leadership that would be passed down through her family many years later as the farm still remains in their children’s, Roy Roegiers’ and Clara Duffey’s, hands.

The Roegiers farm has successfully been kept within the family since the 1920s, and is possibly one of the only family operated farms left in Edinburg, Texas. Roy Roegiers is able to run the farm now all because his mother was able to juggle all the hard work from the farm, her job in packaging, and raising two children. When asking the Roegiers children, Roy and Clara, about their mother, they recall how hard working and good their mother was throughout the whole deal. Roy and Clara remember their mother always doing everything she could to take care of them and the farm even when Roy served in the Navy and Clara studied in college.

Roy speaks very highly of his mother and shows just how much she worked to keep everything going strong. “My mother, my mother took care of everything. I mean the farming operation, day to day living; actually she even had a job and things like that.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ Stambaugh, J. Lee., and Stambaugh, Lillian J. The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas Its Colonization and Industrialization 1518-1953. Austin: The Jenkins Publishing Co. 1974.

⁷¹ Roegiers, Roy, Clara Duffey, Oral history interview, Appendix 1.

Even as Roy went on to serve in the US military, Mrs. Roegiers found the means to take over as much as she could on her own as the family bought equipment that would let her do a large majority of the work herself. “When I was gone, my mother took care of it herself. We had bought a new kind of, a new tractor...after I got out of high school. So, she learned to drive the tractor, she did the disking, and all of the, not the real hard work, but just, and, when it came to irrigate she got somebody to do that. Then the job fell back on me when I got back.”⁷²



Figure 4.1 Irene Roegiers in front of date palm tree at their homestead in Edinburg, TX

When it comes to the Roegiers farm, family is very important. Since Roy and Clara were young, they have lived their life on the farm and experienced working and playing on a farm. They would help by doing small jobs when they were little, and they continued to help as they grew up. (Figure 4.2) Mrs. Roegiers would take care of most of the jobs around the farm where she could, but at times just like in most families, the children, Roy and Clara, were given chores to help their mother out. Roy recalls some of the chores that he and his sister assisted with when they were younger. “...We did a lot of farm work and mowed the grass, stuff like that. Picked the fruit, worked on the vegetables. We never, we never really took care of the cows, we did have cows at the time, but I guess we were just too young to do much of that.”⁷³

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

Their mother understood that they also had other priorities when they got older. Clara recalled how strong and good of a mother Irene was by letting her children go down the path they wanted to go. “Well she was strict too. We had to follow the rules. I guess she learned that from her own up-bringing that you had to do stuff, but it was, I don’t know if it was any harder or different cause I feel like she was really great, she got us to do everything, got us to go places....My mom just took over and did everything.”⁷⁴



Figure 4.2 Clara, Camiel, and Roy working in the yard in front of water tower; windmill in background

While Roy joined the Navy and Clara continued her studies to become a teacher, Irene Roegiers adjusted to the chores associated with running the farm. She really did take care of everything in order to make sure that her children had the life that they sought. Clara stated that when she was studying at Pan American College, her mother made sure that she was always able to study. “...I remember chores, I would, well, we didn’t really do a lot of stuff. I would have to be the dishwasher or the dish dryer. We would always dry the dishes and put them away. But ,then when I got in college and my brother was not even there my mother spoiled me more I didn’t do anything I was going to college, I had to study. She was a good mom.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Duffey, Clara, Oral history interview, Appendix 4.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.67.

Irene kept the farm running with the help of different individuals who either guided her or aided with the physically demanding work that had to be done. She did so much for her family and the farm, and she tried her best to do everything she possibly could for her family. However, running a farm is a very hard and demanding job to do by one's self, leaving a need for more help to be required. The Roegiers were surrounded by family from both the Rogers and the Debouwer sides. This helped Irene with taking care of the harder physical jobs, and knowing when to do what during the season.

There were two main people that both Camiel and after his passing Irene received help from involving the farm. They were Bill Rogers and Danny Debouwer. Bill Rogers, an older cousin of Roy and Clara, assisted the family by giving Irene farming advice.

Clara recalled that her mother would get help from some of their relatives. "She didn't really actually do the farming because we had relatives, some of the other Rogers, Bill Rogers was like a farmer around here so she would look to him for advice and help and he helped out a lot. I give him credit because she probably wouldn't; she knew what to do but maybe couldn't do all the things that were necessary."⁷⁶ Clara also said that Bill Rogers was the one to call whenever there was a question about farming because he was a good farmer. "...He was farming all the land around us, so when my dad passed away he kind of helped to know what to do and when to do this and you know my mom would follow his advice."⁷⁷

Danny Debouwer, Roy and Clara's uncle, also assisted on the farm by doing different types of jobs. Danny also helped when Camiel was alive by helping drive the tractors. Clara said that her uncle Danny Debouwer, who was Irene Roegiers' brother, continued to help on the farm by doing some manual work different from driving the tractors. "...Uncle Danny would [help], but he didn't really drive a tractor [anymore] he would do maybe the hoeing and stuff."⁷⁸ (Figure 4.3)

Running a farm required many hands. The Roegiers farm required additional people outside of the family to be hired to run their farm successfully. Clara said that her mother also obtained help from people who were near their farm. "...And then when my dad died my mom would hire different people...she would hire these other people down the road, the De La Rosa's, she would hire them, and these other people the Morales' to do the other farm work. Maybe even my dad hired them because I think they worked for him too. He would hire people too to pick the stuff, and water the stuff and irrigate it, stuff like that."⁷⁹

Mrs. Roegiers, much like her son now, was a very determined individual who did her very best to keep the farm up and running. She looked towards her family when she needed help because the Roegiers, Rogers, and Debouwers were a tight family that went through

⁷⁶ Roegiers, Roy, Oral history interview, Appendix 1.

⁷⁷ Duffey, Clara, Oral history interview, Appendix 4.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.



Figure 4.3 Photo of Irene, Richard, and Danny Debouver, c. 1920.

many of the same hardships. They stood by each other as they moved from Belgium and somehow ended up in the same area of the United States, and stood by each other while taking care of farming as they all lived close to one another. Family truly is one of the elements that kept the Roegiers' farm operating after Camiel's passed away.

THE ORCHARDS

The Roegiers have successfully cultivated two major products on their farm: dairy and citrus. The history of when the Roegiers adopted citrus in their farm dates back many years, and was even present during times they ran the dairy farm. Roy and Clara are not truly sure when exactly the citrus orchard started on their farm mostly due to it most likely being when they were young. Roy gave an estimated idea of when the citrus trees were planted since seeing them in a photo. "We have picture of them in my sister's house from an aerial photo of it back in the maybe 40's or 50's. We really haven't looked at the date, but I mean they've been [around]." ⁸⁰ (Figure 4.4) Although the picture shows the citrus already planted, leaving the exact year unknown, he remembers that they were still very young trees since he was the one that had to replant them later after a weather disaster "...but these are

⁸⁰ Roegiers, Roy, Oral history interview, Appendix 2, Border Studies Archive, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Interviewed by Jesus A. Sierra and Lucas Torres, October 18, 2016.



Figure 4.4 Aerial View Roegiers Property with Home and Railroad Track (at lower right corner of photo)

all young trees, I'd say young trees maybe 20 or 25 years old because they froze and I planted them."⁸¹

The Roegiers family eventually bought more land in order to plant more orchards in other fields. Clara discussed the different types of citrus trees that they had in the past in a hay field, just north of their original property. "We still have Valencias and other different varieties and the last time we had (an active) grapefruit orchard, where is it now? It is (out) where the hay field is. We still have that property; its 18 acres and it was twenty but it has shrunk now so it's down the road by Monte Cristo Road."⁸²

Clara Duffey also discussed that the new orchard had all different kinds of oranges. It is an orange grove with multiple kinds that need a knowledgeable person who knows when they are ready to be picked and if any of them are damaged as well. Some of them had to be replanted as well due to the freezes. "There are two varieties of navel oranges and two other varieties of oranges as well. One kind is Mars and the other is Valencias. Some get ready at different times of the year. Some are early oranges; some are late oranges. When the trees died, we replanted some and had to replant others. We ended up with a mixture or variety of oranges."⁸³

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Duffey, Clara, Oral history interview, Appendix 4.

⁸³ Ibid.

Growing up near a citrus orchard gave the Roegiers family much to do. Clara recalls working and playing in her family orchards. Although Clara does not remember when the orchards first appeared, she has many fond memories of adventuring in the orchards, especially in the home grove. “I remember playing there because we loved for them to irrigate because then we could play in the canal water at that time... And other times we would play hide-and-go-seek in the orchards with our cousins. That was in orchards around our house. I also remember myself and Roy cutting grass and weeds for our animals.”⁸⁴

The farmland has really changed over the years as Roy and Clara grew up. While the land is still the same number of acres, there have been many new homes placed there, as Clara explained in her interview. (Appendix 4) “I still live in the same home acres, but they have gotten smaller. It was twenty acres of orchard originally. Some trees have been removed to make room for my house and my son’s house. The highway came through our property and Rogers Road was widened and now most recently a power company has surrounded our property.

The Roegiers family is truly about family. They all have stayed close to one another in order to help each other out as much as possible. Family members had helped on the farm just as they did when Camiel and when Irene would run the farm as well because the Roegiers family have a caring nature and a long history of working on farmlands. Clara’s children have even been able to help on the farm a few times which has left them with memories about how Roy and Clara have lived through the years. As Clara explained, “...and when my kids were teenagers and I guess even some cousins, Uncle Noel’s kids, Roy decided that we would save labor cost and we were going to pick fruit ourselves and he had his trailer and his tractor and the boxes we would get the boxes from the citrus association. So, he picked up the boxes and brought them to the orchard. We got ladders and we would pick the oranges. My two sons, my daughter and even some cousins would spend many hours climbing the ladders, and filling up the buckets and then the boxes to be hauled to the association to be packed. They have memories of it; they hated it at the time, but they have good memories...”⁸⁵

The citrus orchards not only provided an income for the Roegiers family throughout the years, but also gave the family memories that they will cherish forever. These memories are unique and special as not everyone grows up on a farm. The orchards have been around since Roy and Clara were young. Although several natural disasters occurred throughout the years, the fields were always replanted because in order to keep the farming business alive.

CROPS

“The rich and abundant growth of all plant life, a growth so rapid and profuse as to seem “as if by magic,” has suggested the name of this fertile semi-tropical section of the United States as “The Magic Valley of the Lower Rio Grande.”⁸⁶ This was what was said of the LRGV in the early 20th century, about the time when the Roegiers family was making their move from the Midwest (Kansas). During this epoch, citrus fruits “are the Valley’s

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 73.

⁸⁶ McGregor, J. I. The “Magic Valley” of the Lower Rio Grande. Houston: Southern Pacific Lines, Agricultural Dept. 1931. P.4

primary crop and Texas grapefruit is conceded to be as fine as any produced in the world.”⁸⁷ Camiel Roegiers, Roy Roegiers’ father, initially started with a dairy farm in the Valley, and operated it until 1940 (Figure 1.8). During an interview with Roy Roegiers when asked why his father, Camiel, abandoned the dairy farm, he explained that they needed “to provide refrigeration to have the milk so it wouldn’t spoil, that was part of the health reasons why they wouldn’t let us continue with the dairy business.”⁸⁸ Roy Roegiers was born in 1947, so he did not work on the dairy farm. Citrus seemed like a more viable option, being that the Valley is known for its long summers and citrus does not have to be stored in a cool climate. “The total cost of bringing a citrus orchard into bearing amounts to between \$700.00 and \$1000.00 per acre. A good orchard at five years should produce on average of four and one-half to five boxes of fruit (80 lb each box) to the tree, and fifty to sixty four are the average number planted to the acre...”⁸⁹ and “At a price of \$2.00 per box, shows a gross income of from \$500.00 to \$600.00 per acre.”⁹⁰

IRRIGATION

Irrigation was crucial in pioneering the citrus industry in the early 20th century, right at the time when Roy’s father Camiel was making his move to the Valley. The irrigation systems, prior to the concrete-lined canals “began as early as the 1870’s...beginning with a pumping plant at the river operated by steam engines, large pumps “lifted” water from the river into a large earthen main canal that extended northward. Most of the main canals extended along the western edge of the irrigated lands as the natural topography drains toward the northeast.”⁹¹ When Camiel Roegiers purchased his land in 1920, the advent of concrete-lined canals was still a number of years away. “E. Marvin Goodwin visited Mission, Texas; in 1925... Goodwin was inspired and developed irrigation systems with concrete-lined canals, the first of its kind in Texas.”⁹² The Irrigation Act of 1913 created the Board of Water engineers and made far-reaching changes in the development of irrigation districts. The exorbitant financial costs of a pumping plant and a canal system, along with maintenance and operational costs, led the transition of these systems from the hands of privately-owned enterprises to public-sector control. The Roegiers purchased their land and came at an ideal time. Some of the irrigation districts had already come into fruition. I asked Roy where his father, and later he received his water from for irrigation purposes. Roy stated that he “belonged to irrigation district number one.”⁹³ Roy was not sure of the cost during his father’s years to irrigate the land, but in the contemporary time it’s “around \$14.00 an acre”...and is allowed, “two irrigations per year”⁹⁴ Some of the equipment and fixtures used to the farm can be seen in Figures 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11)

⁸⁷ Ibid. P. 4.

⁸⁸ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

⁸⁹ McGregor, J., P.4

⁹⁰ Ibid. P. 4

⁹¹ Knight, Lila, P.13

⁹² Ibid. P. 13

⁹³ Roegiers, Roy. Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

⁹⁴ Ibid.



Figure 4.5 Irrigation Valves are located in every other row in the orchard on the Roegiers Farm.



Figure 4.6 Knock-down borders in between the orchards. Roy constructed these himself and still uses it to knock down dirt barriers after irrigation.



Figure 4.7 Border machine. Creates a dirt-barrier to keep water in during irrigation



Figure 4.8 Fertilizer machine. Used by Camiel Rogiers. It was pulled by a horse for the vegetable crops, c.1940.



Figure 4.9 Harrow or "Spike Tooth." Used to level the ground and break up dirt clumps in the opened field after it is plowed or disked. Circa. 1950-1960's.



Figure 4.10 "Packer." Equipment used to level the ground after plowing and was pulled by horses. It is no longer in use. Circa 1950's.



Figure 4.11 Aram Rivera standing next to the “Flying Saucer”-used to clear vines and leveling the ground. Weight is used to spin it counter-clockwise. circa 1990.

SOIL

Another pivotal role the Valley provided the Roegiers family was its rich alluvial soil, which allowed the crops to burgeon. The success of the Roegiers family’s orchard, and continued production of citrus, is due in large part to the soil. Hidalgo fine sandy clay loam is the type of soil that is present on the Roegiers property. “The surface soil of Hidalgo fine sandy clay loam is brown or rather dark brown fine sandy loam from 6 to 12 inches thick...the “Top soil and subsoil are calcareous, and the buff layer, which continues to a depth of many feet beneath the surface, is very calcareous...Small, white, soft, line concretions are generally present below a depth of 18 inches and near the surface snail shells are common.”⁹⁵ Hidalgo fine sandy clay loam is a crucial element in why the Roegiers family has been in the agriculture industry for almost a century now. “We’ve had pretty good soil here, we have good drainage,”⁹⁶ responded Roy when asked about the soil on his property.

⁹⁵ Beck, M.W. Devereux, R.E., and Hawker, H.W. Soil Survey of Hidalgo County. Washington, D.C. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and United States Department of Agriculture, 1925.

⁹⁶ Roegiers, Roy. Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

RAILROAD

The advent of the railroad lines in Texas, more specifically the Lower Rio Grande Valley, increased the market exposure for the farming industry and connected new towns and markets that exacerbated the industry. “The State of Texas has one major claim to fame in the American railroad industry: there are more miles of railroad line in Texas than any other state...Texas had become the leading state in railroad miles by 1905 and has maintained the lead ever since.”⁹⁷ The first railroad line in the LRGV was the Rio Grande in 1871, beginning in Brownsville and ending in Port Isabel for a total of 22.50 miles.”⁹⁸ On July 1, 1912, the company St. Louis, Brownsville, Mexico, purchased the San Antonio and Rio Grande Valley Railroad, an unincorporated line operating between San Juan and Edinburg.⁹⁹ This line from San Juan to Edinburg was constructed in 1913 with a total of 7.89 miles.¹⁰⁰ The railroad went across the Roegiers property, but ironically they didn’t use it first-hand (Figure 4.12). Roy said the family “delivered it to different packing sheds and maybe they used it [railroad] to transport it.”¹⁰¹



Figure 4.12 St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico. Railway went through the Roegiers property at one time.

⁹⁷ Zlatkovich, Charles P. *Texas Railroads: A Record of Construction and Abandonment*. Austin: Bureau of Business Research University of Texas at Austin, 1981. P. 3.

⁹⁸ *Ibid* p. 28

⁹⁹ *Handbook of Texas Online*, George C. Werner, "St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway," accessed December 10, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqs30>.

¹⁰⁰ Zlatkovich, Charles P, p. 44

¹⁰¹ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

HIGHWAYS

When you think of highways in the Valley or in general, one tends to associate them as a fairly recent innovation. “The Valley’s system of modern highways had its beginning about two hundred years ago...It seems that when a grant of land was made by the King of Spain, the grantee was required to construct a road through his lands to connect with roads in adjacent grants.”¹⁰² José Salvador de la Garza, who was one of José de Escandon’s early settlers, created a road in 1781 from a point that is now a few miles west of the city of Brownsville.”¹⁰³ “Little is known of it, but it is likely that it was used to facilitate travel between different settlements.”¹⁰⁴ Fast-forward some time to the “building of the Military Highway in 1846, by Lieutenant George B. McClellan, an engineer in Taylor’s army, in order to facilitate the transportation of supplies to the American forces, which were then making preparations to invade México.”¹⁰⁵ “The present day paved United States Highway 281, extending west from Brownsville along the river, follows about the same route.”¹⁰⁶ In an interview with Lucas Torres, one of the CHAPS Program students, Torres asked, in what year “did you sell the property for the Expressway 281?”¹⁰⁷ Roy responded, “We sold that in 1967 or ’68.”¹⁰⁸ The Roegiers family, you could say, contributed to what is now highway 281, albeit, by eminent domain. Basically, the government can expropriate land that you own by “compensating” you, per se. Roy mentioned that he sold a piece of the property for 281 and for the transmission lines. I asked Roy how many acres he sold, “back when we sold for the expressway it was 5 acres and something and now we sold like 3 acres to the transmission line.”¹⁰⁹

FARM LABOR

On August 4, 1942, the United States government signed the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement with Mexico, the first among several agreements aimed at legalizing and controlling Mexican migrant farmworkers along the southern border of the United States. Texas opted out for the first five years of the Bracero program due to the inflexibility of the agreement. Texas decided to circumvent the government and hire farmworkers directly from Mexico. The pejorative term “wetbacks” comes from undocumented farmworkers fording the Río Bravo (Rio Grande).¹¹⁰ A correspondence to the Honorable Tom Connolly by Engelman Products Company stated that “had it not been for the Mexican Labor, with an illegal status, that was available, I am sure the Valley would not have had sufficient labor at the proper time to harvest its seasonal crops.”¹¹¹ The Mexican labor redounded greatly to the agricultural boom even though they were paid paltry wages. “Agricultural wages in the

¹⁰² Stambaugh, J. Lee., and Stambaugh, Lillian J., p. 253.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Roegiers, Roy. Oral History Interview, Appendix 3, Border Studies Archive, The University of Texas-Rio Grande. Interview by Lucas Torres. Oct. 20, 2016.

¹⁰⁸ Roegiers, Roy. Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Handbook of Texas Online, Fred L. Koestler, “*Bracero Program*,” Dec. 6, 2016, www.tsha.org/handbook/online/articles/omb01.

¹¹¹ Cramer, A.L. RGDOC262. Folder 38. Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives, Museum of South Texas History. Edinburg, TX.

Valley are undeniably lower than elsewhere in Texas.”¹¹² In the Valley “for regular farm work on cotton farms, when the typical daily rate in the Valley was \$2.50, in these other areas of Texas they were from \$3.50 to \$5.00.”¹¹³ I did ask Roy Roegiers if he remembered his father having workers, more specifically braceros, helping with the labor, “That was a big thing for them too because, uh, I mean that was, I don’t know...I don’t know how that really worked. That was kind of before my time. We had Spanish speaking people... people from basically Mexico living on our property at one time.”¹¹⁴ These people did help with farming.

FARMING ANIMALS: DAIRY COWS

When did the Roegiers begin their endeavors in the dairy business?

According to The Life Story of Camiel Roegiers document, his wife Irene Roegiers wrote the following: “The first 20 years he [Camiel Roegiers] he was in dairy business.”¹¹⁵ This is referring to December of 1920 when Camiel and his family moved from Johnson County in Kansas to Edinburg, Texas after purchasing land from an land excursion 12 months prior, “In Jan 1920 he came to Edinburg, Texas on the land company train and he bought 20 acres of land in brush at \$300 an acre 2 miles north and ½ mile east of Edinburg.”¹¹⁶ In today’s monetary standards, the total price for the 20 acres would have been sold at an estimated total of \$72,518, with each acre being sold at an estimated price of \$3,625.

How much did the dairy cows cost?

Though none of the interviews go into specifics about the financial aspects regarding the purchasing and maintaining of the dairy cows, there is a news posting from Hutchinson, Kansas dating back to December 23, 1921 that can provide an idea pertaining to the cost of dairy cows. “Here are some of the results: Mr. W. E. McMurry of 114 Ninth West owns a 240-acre farm in Lincoln Township eight miles south of Hutchinson, one half mile north and three miles east of Darlow, and this farm is operated by the son, Fred E. McMurry. They have been putting 80 acres of this to wheat every year, reserving 160 acres of it to maintain a herd of cows they have on the place and the necessary farm stock they have to keep around them. Last year Mr. Murry had ten Holstein cows. He sold from these cows \$1,978.01 of milk. Raised seven heifer calves from them from valued at \$50 apiece or \$350.00, making a total income of 2,328.01. The expense of feeding, which includes all feed purchased and the expense of preserving the feed grown on the, including the filling the silo, amounted to \$641.20, which deducted from \$2,381.01, leaves a net credit of \$1,686.81. This would indicate that the cost per head of feeding the cows was \$64.12 and that the net income per head from the cows was \$168.68.”¹¹⁷ In today’s money, the gross income from the seven heifer calves and milk he sold from the ten Holstein cows equates to around \$32,154. The

¹¹² Nelson, Eastin., Meyers, Frederic. Labor Requirements and Labor Resources in The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. P. 23

¹¹³ Ibid. P. 23

¹¹⁴ Roegiers, Roy, Clara Duffey. Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

¹¹⁵ Irene Roegiers, pg.3

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ . "Chapter 2 - Birth to Jr. High - Farm Animals." In THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN UNIMPORTANT IMPORTANT MAN

total cost to feed the cows and maintain their food supply would equate to around \$8,659 decreasing the net profit to around \$22,780. In other words, despite spending \$866 per cow they were returning a profit of \$2,278 per cow.

How were the dairy cows farmed?

According to Roy Roegiers, the following is his explanation on how to milk a cow: “This is what my dad used in the dairy business this is where you put the cows head in there and that way the cow had a feed throft on the other and it would eat and feed while they milked.”¹¹⁸ What Roy was referring to in this quote was a type of stanchion. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a stanchion is defined as “a device that fits loosely around the neck of an animal (as a cow) and limits forward and backward motion (as in a stall).”¹¹⁹ Roy also shared his experience milking the dairy cows during our interviews with him. “Well, four was a pretty good number of cows to have. I mean you have to milk them twice a day and it might take thirty or forty minutes each cow to milk it so I mean you had one or two hands to milk or maybe four hands to milk all of them at one time. Then you would have to put four more in there. I don’t know how long a person wanted to endure I mean.”¹²⁰ After milking the cows, depending on what they were going to use the milk for they would either make butter with it or taken to a local creamery (Golden Jersey) to be bottled as soon as possible. These products were sold to the locals.

Why did the Roegiers transition from dairy to agriculture?

This transition became apparent soon after the death of Camiel Roegiers in 1958. Prior to Camiel’s death, Camiel was keeping the dairy portion of this farm going while at the same time purchasing more land to use for other crops and grapefruits/oranges. Roy stated the following “I was too young, but we got out of the business probably around ‘53”¹²¹ in response one of the CHAPS Program students asking him if he knew if any other families were dairy farming as well. So, with the family pulling out of the dairy business and the sudden death of Camiel Roegiers, this ushered in a change in farming priority, specifically towards the other crops and grapefruit/orange orchards. However, Camiel’s brother Alfred also had a dairy farm next door.

SWINE & 4-H

How was 4-H and Swine a part of the Roegiers family?

4-H became a huge part of both Roy Roegiers’ and Clara Duffey’s life after their father died in 1958. “(Roy).....after my dad died in ’58 then we more or less, got more involved in 4-H, and then we got to start raising animals, and that’s when...(Clara) That was fun. The animals were fun. We had, Roy had pigs, they were his pigs, and he had mother pigs with baby pigs.”¹²² “(Roy) In a program that, there was like five, 4-H’ers got a deal. One person got a boar, and that person was responsible for breeding those other five pigs and then at the end of the year, we had to give the program back a pig, so that it would give somebody else a start in his business. And that was just a revolving program, that we did it

¹¹⁸ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 2.

¹¹⁹ "Stanchion." Definition in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary

¹²⁰ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 2.

¹²¹ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 2.

¹²² Roegiers, Roy and Clara Duffey, Oral History Interview, Appendix 1.

in, so we, I mean, it was a beautiful, wonderful way that, and I stayed in the pig business I'll say 'til probably my senior year in high school. And, and we raised pigs, but, it was, I was proud to raise my own pigs, take them down to the show, and get them qualified to enter. I mean, instead of going out to buy a pig."¹²³ With 4-H, Roy and Clara could avoid dwelling on their father's passing and continue living a normal life. "I'm sure some of my friends did different things because no one else seemed to live out in the country that I knew; and we really didn't have neighbors. It was one person; one boy in my neighborhood that was my age and I really didn't even know him in school. He was a year younger than I was this boy; I knew his family; I knew who he was. When we road to school to St. Joseph's, we did a car pool with a family down the road and they had a lot of kids and sometimes we would go over to there. That's how we got into 4-H because they were all in 4-H, and they got us involved after my dad died. You had to be nine to join 4-H. And I guess I was about eight when he died. And so that's why I really don't have memories of him going back there I guess, I see pictures but I really don't have the memories. I have some memories but not a lot of memories. I don't know if it is the same with Roy."¹²⁴

PACKING SHEDS

What is a packing shed and how do farmers use them?

These packing sheds serve as distribution hubs that send their products to different markets. In this case, these sheds sort fruits and vegetables that farmers bring to them. There are four main operations that take place in the packing shed. As soon as the packing sheds received any harvest, the first order of business would be to remove any fruit/vegetables that are considered rejects; rejects meaning any part of the harvest that is unmarketable. At the same time, the rest of the harvest will be cleaned to help prevent the spread of disease amongst the harvest. The next order of business would be to assort them by their size and color prior to the grading process. After this, the third order of business begins. "Two main systems exist: Statics systems are common in tender and/or high value crops. Here product is placed on an inspection table where sorters remove units which do not meet the requirements for the grade or quality category... The dynamic system is probably much more common. Here the product moves along a belt in front of the sorters who remove units with defects..."¹²⁵ Depending on the packing shed, several practices are conducted prior the final order of business. Waxing is conducted with citrus and other crops "to reduce dehydration, improve their postharvest life by replacing the natural waxes removed by washing and to seal small wounds produced during handling... or just to increase shine and improve appearance."¹²⁶ Degreening involves the "degradation of chlorophyll which helps bring out the natural pigments masked by the greenness of the crop. In special chambers, citrus fruits are exposed from 24 to 72 hours (depending on degree of greening) to an atmosphere containing ethylene (5-10ppm) under controlled ventilation and high relative humidity (90-95%). Conditions for degreening are specific to the production area".¹²⁷ Another practice used is "controlled ripening", which "...is performed in purpose built rooms where temperature and relative humidity can be controlled and ethylene when the process has been completed. The process involves initial heating to reach the desired pulp temperature. This is

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Camelo, Andrés F., Ph.D. "Chapter 2. Preparation for the Fresh Market." In *Manual for the Preparation and Sale of Fruits and Vegetables from Field to Market*.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Camelo, Andrés F., Ph.D.

followed by an injection of ethylene at the desired concentration. Under these conditions, the product is maintained for a certain amount of time followed by ventilation to remove accumulated gases. On completion of the treatment, the temperature is reduced to the desired level for transportation and/or storage.”¹²⁸ And one of the last practices that are commonly used is pest and disease control. There are different methods/treatments that are performed after the harvest to prevent/control pests and diseases. One example is the use of fungicides on citrus due to the fruit’s fungistatic activity. “This means that they inhibit or reduce germination of spores without complete suppression of the disease.”¹²⁹ Chlorine is another chemical that is used to sanitize fruits. “It is used in concentrations from 50 to 200 ppm in water to reduce the number of microorganisms present on the surface of the fruit.”¹³⁰ Lastly, the final operation in the sheds is the actual packing. “The main purpose of packing is to ensure that the product is inside a container along with packing materials to prevent movement and to cushion the produce (plastic or moulded pulp trays, inserts, cushioning pads, etc.) and for protection (plastic films, waxed liners, etc.”¹³¹ These precautions are in place to achieve the following: “1. Contain product and facilitate handling and marketing by standardizing the number of units or weight inside the package. 2. Protect product from injuries (impact, compression, abrasion, and wounds) and adverse environmental conditions (temperature, relative humidity) during transport, storage, and marketing. 3. Provide information to buyers, such as variety, weight, number of units, selection or quality grade, producer’s name, country, area of origin, etc.”¹³² Once these requirements are met, the packed crops can finally be sent off to their destinations.

How is the working environment?

“Packing sheds are usually built with cheap materials. However, it is important to create a comfortable environment both for the produce and the workers. This is because product exposed to unfavorable conditions can lead to rapid deterioration in quality. Also, uncomfortable working conditions for staff can lead to unnecessary rough handling”.¹³³ Packing sheds need to be both near the production area (crop field) and near roads and highways. They also need to have one main entrance to easily process and control supply and delivery. Size also plays a part inside the shed as then need to large enough to anticipate future expansions and the creation of new facilities. Size outdoors is also important as this helps prevents delays via congestion of vehicles entering and leaving the area. Another major component that is required is good ventilation in the summer and protection in winter. The buildings are also designed so that there is a sufficient amount of shade in the loading and unloading areas throughout the day. Electricity is critical for equipment, refrigeration, and particularly lightening. “Because pack houses usually work extended hours or even continuously during harvest, lighting (both, intensity and quality) is critical in identifying defects on inspection tables. Lights should be below eye level to prevent glare and eye strain... The working area together with the whole building should have excellent lighting.”¹³⁴

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Camelo, Andrés F., Ph.D. "Chapter 2. Preparation for the Fresh Market." In *Manual for the Preparation and Sale of Fruits and Vegetables from Field to Market*.



Figure 4.13 Engleman Gardens packing house San Carlos where Alice Rogers and Irene DeBouver Roegiers worked

Hurricanes and packing sheds

The effects of a powerful hurricane can cost millions of dollars in damage to agriculture and public infrastructure. In one instance, the 1933 Cuba-Brownville hurricane made landfall in Brownsville on September 4th in the evening after passing through Cuba a few days earlier. The hurricane had an average wind speed of 80 mph, and gusts reaching 125-mph. “The storm lasted 38 hours in the Valley. Thirteen inches of rain fell across the area.... Many of the buildings were destroyed at Harlingen and San Benito. The Lower Rio Grande Valley saw 90% of its citrus crop wiped out.”¹³⁵ This goes to show how one hurricane, in the span of a few days can cause farmers to lose their work.”

REFRIGERATION

When was refrigeration introduced in the Valley and how was it used?

Prior to refrigeration technology, people would either preserve their crops somewhere away from the elements (cellars, ice boxes, etc.) or use preservation tactics (salting, spicing, smoking, pickling, and drying). When refrigeration technology came to the Valley via the railroads and their refrigerator cars (1880’s- late 1920’s), actual refrigeration depended on ice being placed inside to maintain the temperature. This would occur until the 1950s when mechanical refrigeration became the norm.

Mechanical refrigeration provided cooling without the need for ice and instead used gases. In the case for the use of refrigeration, “Controlling temperature is one of the main

¹³⁵ Roth, David, and National Weather Service. Texas Hurricane History, pg. 42

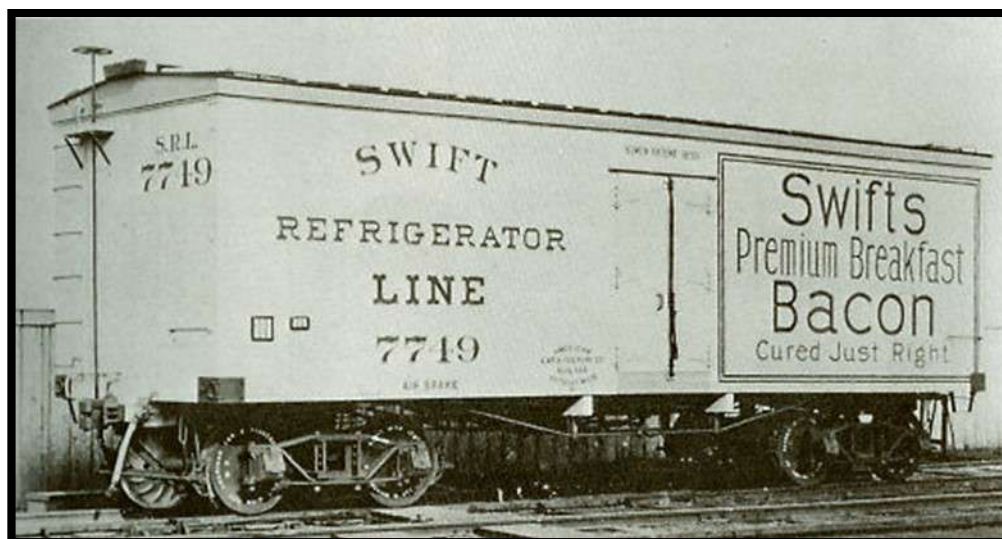


Figure 4.14 One of the first cars out of the Detroit plant of American Car & Foundry (formerly Peninsular Car Company). Built in 1899 for Swift Refrigerator Line. (Chicago Historical Society)

tools for extending postharvest life: low temperatures slow product metabolism and the activity of microorganism responsible for quality deterioration.”¹³⁶ So depending on the type of crop, packing sheds would store them in refrigerated rooms.

WEATHER EFFECTS

The Rio Grande Valley has been nicknamed the “Magic Valley” because of its vast beautiful and fertile land in which farmers can grow crops all year round depending on what time of year it was. For this reason, many people came from far and wide to come grow crops in the Rio Grande including the Roegiers family. However, things were not always magical in the Rio Grande Valley.

There were many years of extreme natural events such as drought, hard freezes and incredibly hot summers. There was even a hurricane that hit in 1967. Back in 1949 and 1951, the Valley experienced its worst freeze since 1899 with low temperatures in the teens, which was incredibly detrimental to all farmers and ranchers in the area. Agriculture was a booming industry at the time and those farmers who enjoyed it in 1949 and were able to continue farming did so but likely had their crops wiped out by the freeze in 1951. Replanting citrus crops for example, is a long painstaking process, which requires skilled workers to till the land and uproot the old trees to make way for new ones, which need hours of soaking up water to first start to grow and ultimately take five years to mature before bearing fruit again. The freezes caused there to be no work for the people of the Valley and migrant workers for a very long time, which threw the Rio Grande Valley in a downward economic spiral, which caused a domino effect to all the areas sources of income, which rely heavily on agriculture and ranching. Stores and restaurants closed down and even the TexSun citrus cannery in Weslaco Texas and many major packing sheds, which provided jobs for local residents. Roy Roegiers even recalled losing half his citrus crop in the freeze of 1989, which affected the whole Rio Grande Valley adversely. The freezes of this time

¹³⁶ Camelo, Andrés F., Ph.D. "Chapter 3. Storage." In Manual for the Preparation and Sale of Fruits and Vegetables from Field to Market.

were so bad that the Rio Grande Valley went from having 69,000 acres of citrus to less than 20,000 acres. These freezes led the Texas Citrus Mutual to set up a tree insurance program to stop such great losses from affecting the Rio Grande Valley in the future.

In addition to the freezes of this time, the Valley was also in a drought! From 1949 to 1957 the Rio Grande Valley of which the Roegiers property was part experienced less than half of its usual annual rainfall. The drought got so bad in 1953 that it spread all the way north to Oklahoma. In addition to the drought and the freezes, the years that were not freeze years brought incredibly high temperatures in the summer some as high as 118 degrees making the Rio Grande Valley a very difficult place to grow crops or raise livestock. Some ranchers reportedly moved their cattle by truck and trailer up north to Oklahoma and Kansas to escape the high temperatures, which was claiming the livelihood of their cattle.

Aside from all the anomalies in the climate at the time, the Rio Grande Valley was not done seeing hardship. In January 1958, 10 inches of rainfall befell the Rio Grande causing roads to be blocked many animals and insects to die and damage to homes and businesses. Shortly after this flood came the big one, Hurricane Beulah in 1967.

Hurricane Beulah started as a tropical storm in the Caribbean and hit the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, after which the hurricane moved north west into the Gulf of Mexico when it reached category five intensity only to slowly die down to a category three when entering the opening of the Rio Grande river. This hurricane was a record breaking one only outdone by Hurricane Betsy 1933 in terms of damage causing \$200 million in overall damages about \$1 billion in today's dollars and caused over 100 tornadoes across Texas and brought around 20 inches of rain. Many people were not fortunate to take shelter from the hurricane and at least 600 people were killed by the elements. U.S. Senator Ralph Yarborough requested \$30,000,000 in low interest emergency loans from the government to help aid in rebuilding the badly damaged Rio Grande Valley area. Many people took a personal financial hit like fishermen who lost their boats to damages caused by the hurricane and were faced with thousands of dollars in damages and no way of fishing or shrimping to make the money. One shrimp boat fleet owner from Port Isabel lost several boats totaling an estimated \$150,000 in damages. For residents who were not near the gulf power outages caused people to lose the food in their refrigerators and electricity in some areas did not come back on for weeks because about a quarter of all major wiring and cables were damaged. The power outages in comparison to the hurricane itself might not seem all too bad but it did cause a water supply company in San Benito to be unable to pump water to the city because of the electric pump failure due to the lack of electricity, which left people without drinking water for part of the day.

CONCLUSION

The Roegiers family has been able to see the growth and challenges of running a farm in Edinburg, Texas as the property has remained in the hand of its original owners. Family is one of the main reasons why the farm has been able to remain functional through all the different changes within the work field and the unexpected natural disasters. As the purpose of the land has changed from dairy to citrus in the year of 1940 due to the soil and climate in the Valley being more suitable, the main leadership being the Roegiers family never changed even though the rough years of flood and freezes the family always bounced back.

Chapter 5

The Process

Sara Chavez, Madelyn Ibarra, Jesus Sierra & Jennifer Quintero

Students of the CHAPS class at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley visited the Roegiers' property and conducted archaeological, geological, and biological research which consisted of analyzing artifacts, soil, flora, and fauna that were encountered on the property. The results of said research are discussed below along with a brief description of the specific processes the students followed in order to establish conclusions about the history of the property.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

The pedestrian reconnaissance, consisting of sixty man-hours, of the fifteen remaining acres of the Camille Roegiers homestead yielded evidence of human activities on the property. These can be divided into three categories: 1) Tools and structures associated with the Roegiers' dairy, farm, orchard, home, and railroad; 2) Incidental trash deposited by those who pass-by; and 3) prehistoric.

Twentieth Century farm-related materials

The Roegiers family has owned the property at the corner of Rogers and Roegiers Roads for ninety-seven years. During that period, their home and associated outbuildings for a variety of activities associated with their farm, dairy, and orchard were built. While their uses have in many cases changed over the past century, a significant portion of their associated features have survived often recycled into other uses or simply saved by Roy Roegiers. He also preserved several farm tools and machines that were once used on their crops (Figure 5.1). Many of these are detailed in Chapter 4 "Farming and Agriculture." It is notable that the entrances to the home and associated farm buildings and that into the orchard are paved with gravel or cobblestone. Roy Roegiers also mentioned that when the power lines were being constructed through the orchard in 2015 that large amounts of a similar stone were used in their footings. Roy also mentioned that the petrified wood found in the compound was brought from Starr County.

Incidental Trash

Common detritus associated with late twentieth and early twenty first century America litters the edges of the Roegiers property along Hwy 281 Frontage, Rogers, and Roegiers Roads. This includes aluminum, plastic, and glass beverage containers and the ubiquitous plastic shopping bags. While noted these items were not collected. In the interior of the orchard a number of golf balls (not collected) and two fragments of ceramic table wares were recovered (Figure 5.2). One an ironstone "coffee cup" fragment (Row 4) and the other a stoneware plate fragment marked "Made in China" (Row 20).



Figure 5.1 An assortment of farm tools that were preserved by Roy Roegiers (Photo by Lucas Torres)

Prehistoric Artifacts

Evidence of prehistoric activity on the Roegiers property was identified on the eastern portion of the orchard and adjacent to the family home. These include, from the orchard, three distally beveled bifaces and unifaces made from primary and secondary chert flakes.¹³⁷ (Figure 5.3). An expended chert core was recovered adjacent to the Roegiers family home (Figure 5.4). This artifact was analyzed with a Bruker Tracer IV X-ray fluorescence unit. X-ray fluorescence is an analytical technique that returns information about the elemental composition of a sample. The sample is illuminated with an X-ray beam and the atoms which are struck by the beam, emit X-rays in response, usually at several different energies. Different elements produce different distributions of emitted X-rays so the spectrum of emitted X-rays can be used to identify which elements are present in a sample. This analysis revealed that it has high levels of zirconium and titanium which is consistent with El Sauz cherts quarried in Starr County, Texas (Figure 5.5).¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Hester, Thomas R. 2004 *The Prehistory of South Texas. The Prehistory of Texas*. Timothy K. Perttula, Editor. Texas A & M University Press, College Station, p. 140.

¹³⁸ Gonzalez, Lovett, Skowronek, p. 82.



Figure 5.2 Two pieces of ceramic collected from Roy Roegiers's property believed to be tableware



Figure 5.3 Three chert flakes that were found in Row 1, Row 8, and Row 10 on Roy Roegiers' property.



Figure 5.4 Chert core collected on Roy Roegiers' property

The most significant prehistoric artifact is a ground- or polished-stone adze or axe (Figure 5.6). Roy Roegiers and Clara Roegiers Duffy remember the artifact in the family home from their earliest childhood recollections in the 1940s, but have no idea where or when it was found. In prehistoric south Texas there is evidence of ground stone pipes, arrow shaft straighteners¹³⁹ and mortars.¹⁴⁰ Turner, Hester, and McReynolds only mention similar ground stone tools in east Texas.¹⁴¹ That said, given the great temporal and spatial presence of such artifacts across the Americas it may not be a “memento” from their father’s farm in Kansas, but in fact locally-made and used. The mineral composition of the stone axe was analyzed using X ray diffraction. The rock can be classified as a “greenstone”, or metamorphosed basalt based on the following mineral assemblage, albite, quartz, epidote, and chlorite and trace amounts of hornblende.

¹³⁹ Hester, p. 141, 145.

¹⁴⁰ Gonzalez, p. 38-40.

¹⁴¹ Turner, Hester & McReynolds, p. 296-297.

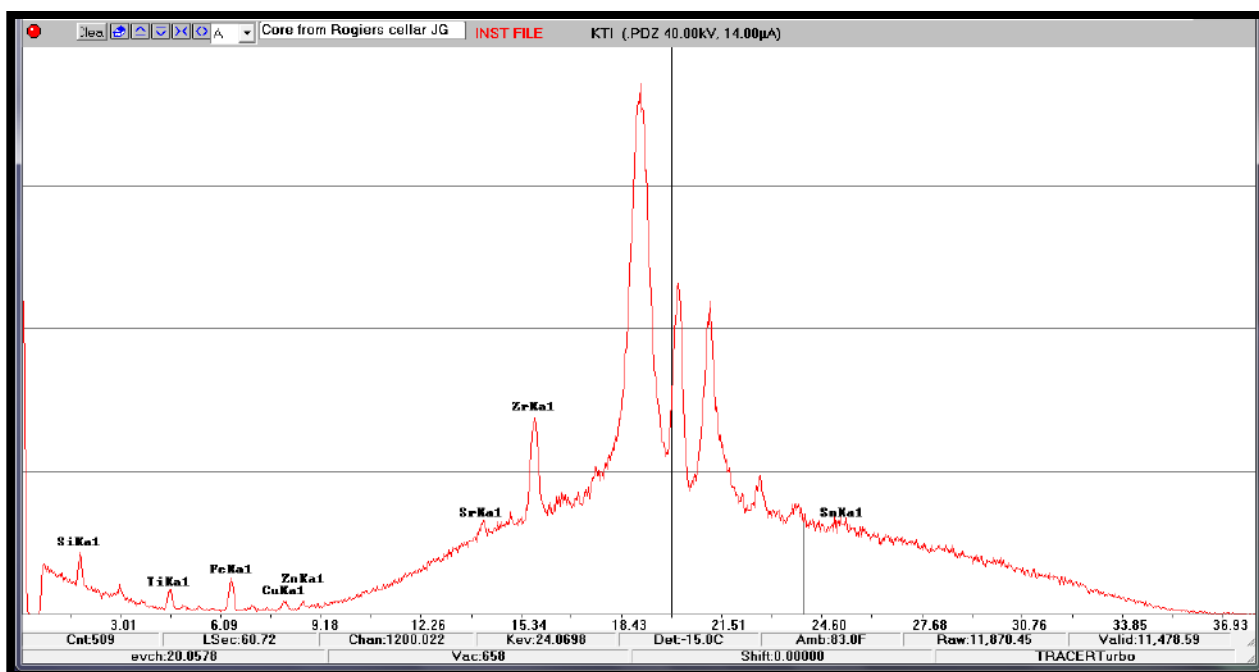


Figure 5.5 X-ray fluorescence results for the expended chert core that was recovered on the Roegiers' property. The results show that it contains high levels of the elements Titanium and Zirconium, which are the finger print identifiers of El Sauz chert. Analysis completed using Bruker Tracer IV X-ray fluorescence unit.



Figure 5.6 Prehistoric polished stone adze or axe that was kept in the family home. Roy Roegiers and his sister Clara Duffey remember its presence since their childhood.

A Prehistoric Site

The subsurface geological survey of the Roegier's property provided insights into the formation of the property. A more general study of the soils which surround the property indicate that deposits of *Raymondville Clay loam* and *Rio Clay loam* are found at multiple locations within a two-mile radius of the farm. Based on the work of Gonzalez et al. (2014c) this suggests that even at this location, some 16 miles (25.5 kilometers) from the Rio Grande, water would have been available at a number of deflation troughs during periods of heavy precipitation. This suggests that the artifacts found on the Roegiers property are remnants of a prehistoric campsite.

GEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

The geology section of the study was conducted by taking samples of soil from the Roegiers property. Because of Dr. Juan Gonzalez' analysis that lead to the possibility of discovering El Sauz chert on the property, it is speculated that prehistoric Native Americans might have occupied the area in or around the Roegiers farm. Traversing the South Texas Sand Sheet (STSS) in prehistoric times between the nearest sources of running water, the Rio Grande to the south and the Nueces River to the north, a distance of over 175 km, would have been possible only seasonally or after heavy rains.

Soil

With the assistance of Dr. Juan Gonzalez, three separate groups of CHAPS Program students were able to dig seven boreholes (Figure 5.7) using a hand operated auger throughout different locations within the Roegiers farm. The data gathered from each borehole (Figure 5.8) read that after digging an average of one-meter-deep (with the deepest hole reaching 1.9 meters), the groups came across a caliche layer that is usually buried 1 ½ m to 2 m deep underneath the soil.

This caliche layer is prominent in South Texas because the evaporation level outpaces the rainfall the area receives therefore creating a calcified layer of soil that proved to be impenetrable by the CHAPS Program's hand operated auger. The soil sampled from the Roegiers property proved to be typical of the area. Due to the limited rainfall, the region has the same type of sandy loam soils throughout. The surface soil found within the Roegiers property consisted of a dark brown color that contained a grainy texture throughout (Figure 5.9). According to results from the United States Geologic Services, the area's soil is categorized as Hidalgo fine sandy loam, which covers most of the Roegiers property and a small area northeast of the property, consists of soil that is defined as Hidalgo sandy clay loam (Figure 5.10). The soil classified as Hidalgo Series - represented by Map Symbol 25 & 28 - consists of deep, well-drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in calcareous loamy sediment. These soils are on nearly level to gently sloping uplands.

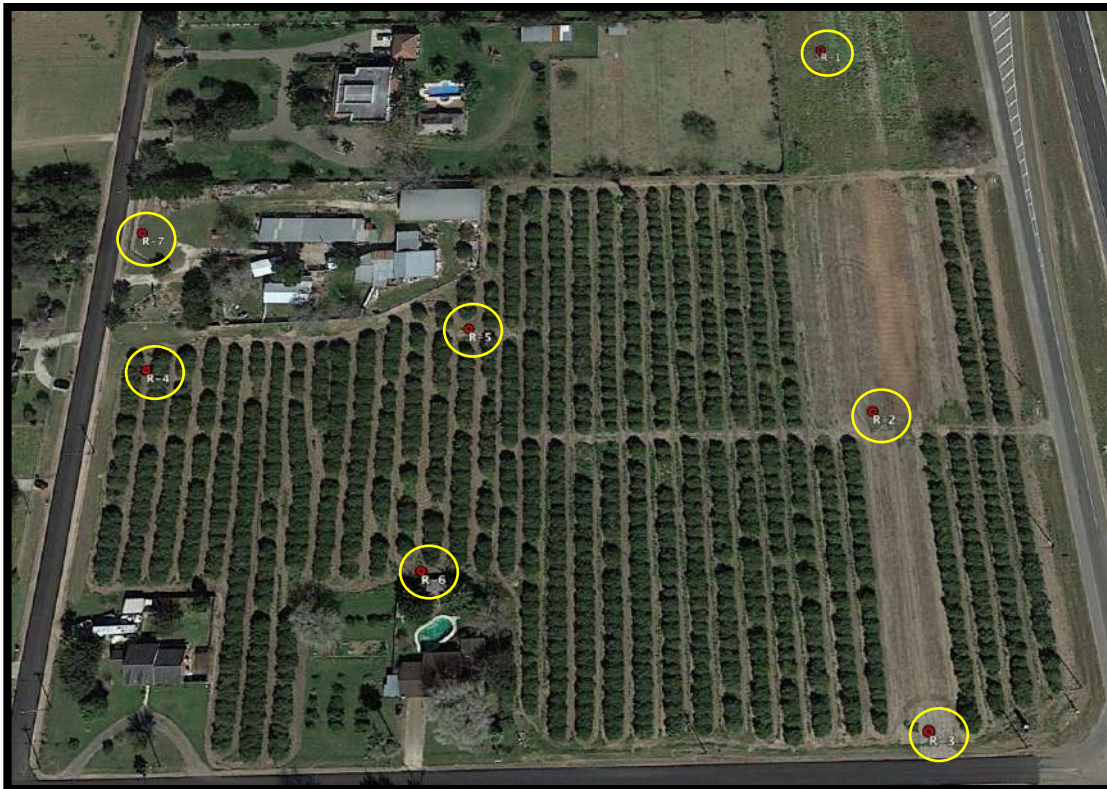


Figure 5.7 Seven borehole locations scattered throughout Roy Roegiers' property (image courtesy of Google Earth taken of the Roegiers property at 3016 N Roegiers Rd, Edinburg, TX)

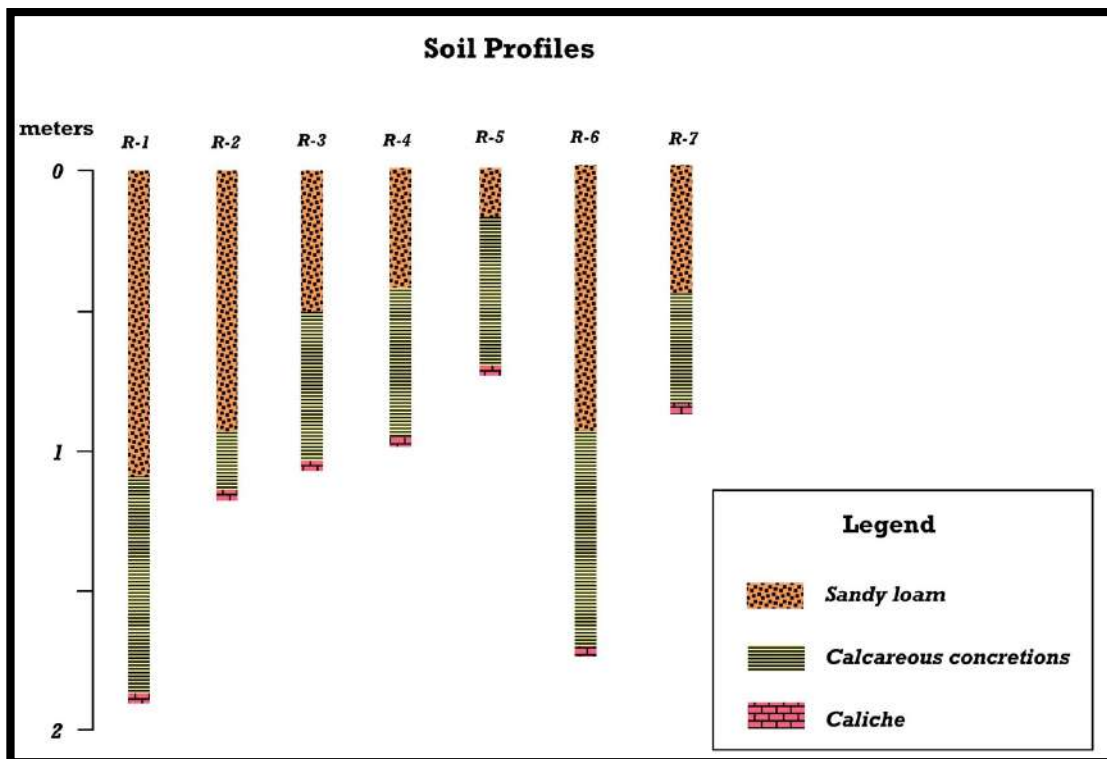


Figure 5.8 Data gathered from each borehole labeling type of soil found at each location.



Figure 5.9 Dr. Juan L. Gonzalez with CHAPS Program student Mauro Sierra III pulling a sample of dark brown soil that was collected using the hand-operated auger while digging boreholes during class.

Deflation Troughs

Dr. Juan L. Gonzalez's discovery of an El Sauz chert core on the property has led the CHAPS Program students to believe that the area was once inhabited by prehistoric Indians or that the area was at least a major crossing point during the prehistoric ages. With the Roegiers property so far from the Rio Grande river (30.57 km) or any source of water, one must question how it was possible to find El Sauz chert (which is not local to the area) on the Roegiers farm. As gathered from Gonzalez et al. 2014 South Texas has a plethora of deflation holes throughout out the South Texas Sand Sheet (STSS). The STSS is the area between the Rio Grande [river] and the Nueces River and is created by the sand from sand dunes that is spread throughout the area by wind creating a sandy soil layer over a depression of underlying clayey substrate. The wind erosion can carve out circular or oval shaped depressions that are known as deflation troughs that can act as water reservoirs and hold water after rainfalls from several weeks to a year.¹⁴² Now, courtesy of Google Earth, we have attained a satellite image of the Roegiers property in proximity to three deflation troughs. The image (Figure 5.11) was captured December 1996 and provides evidence that the property is located within 7.20 km from the nearest deflation trough. The distance

¹⁴² Gonzalez, Juan L., Russell K. Skowronek, and Bobbie L. Lovett, 2014c Deflation Troughs, Water and Prehistoric Occupation on the Margins of the South Texas Sand Sheet, Evidence from Hidalgo County, Texas, *Journal of Texas Archeology and History*. 1(1): 70- 93.



Hidalgo County, Texas (TX215)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
25	Hidalgo fine sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	4.3	19.3%
28	Hidalgo sandy clay loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	18.1	80.7%
Totals for Area of Interest		22.4	100.0%

Figure 5.10 USDA Soil map and key pertaining to the Roegiers property. Hidalgo fine sandy loam (28) covers most of the Roegiers property and a small area to the northeast consists of soil that is defined as Hidalgo sandy clay loam (25). Photo courtesy of the USDA, chart courtesy of US Geologic Services.

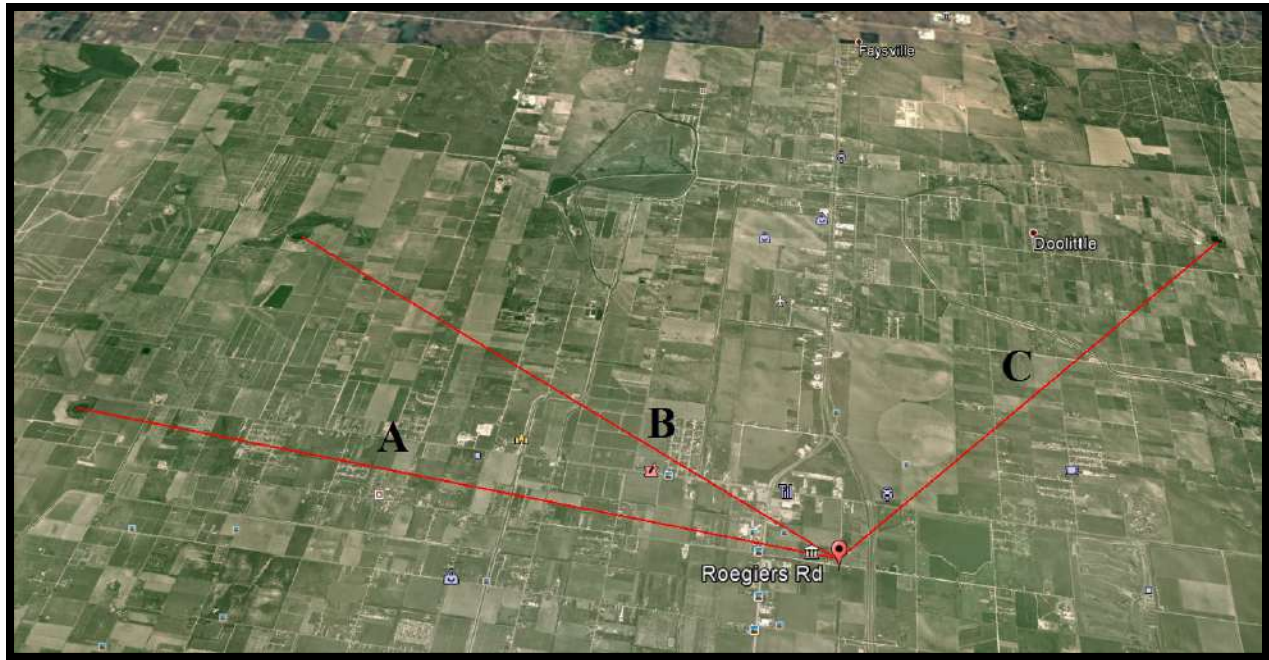


Figure 5.11 Locations of deflation troughs in proximity to the Roegiers' property
(Image courtesy of Google Earth)

between the Roegiers property and Line A's connecting deflation trough as 8.93 km, Line B's distance as 8.18, and Line C as the nearest distance to a deflation trough at 7.20 km. The neighboring deflation trough can attest to the possibility that the Roegiers property once could have housed a prehistoric settlement.

BIOLOGICAL FINDINGS

A large majority of Roy Roegiers' property is now occupied by orange orchards, however, upon first glance of the area surrounding his house it is noted that there is an abundance of trees, shrubs, and grass. A biological survey of the property was conducted and different species of animals and plant life were identified and were collected. The survey consisted of a walkthrough of the eight acres that Roy Roegiers currently owns where the CHAPS Program students collected and observed samples of flora and fauna. Below the findings are discussed and categorized by flora and fauna.

Flora

It's evident that many plants on the property are native to the Rio Grande Valley, such as the Prickly Pear Cactus (*Opuntia lindheimeri*) (Figure 5.12) and Texas Ebony (*Ebenopsis ebano*). There were also some plants present that were not native to the area, such as the Date Palm Tree (*Phoenix dactylifera*) and its bright orange fruit, as seen in Figures 5.13 and 5.14. Notably, there were plants on the property that are believed to have had difficulty surviving in the rapidly developing environment of Hidalgo County. Many of the plants that were able to survive were drought-tolerant, such as the perennial Buffelgrass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), which was observed on the Roegiers' property.

Included in Appendix 39, is a comparison of plants that were found at the Roegiers' property combined with a list of findings at other properties the CHAPS program has studied and reported on throughout the years. Like most of the previous properties, there were many native plants and trees, such as Hackberry (*Celtis pallida*) and Huisache (*Acacia farnesiana*). The tree we saw at the Roegiers' property that was seen across all of the other properties in the previous reports was the Mesquite tree (*Prosopis glandulosa*), which is native to the Rio Grande Valley.



Figure 5.12 Prickly Pear Cactus (Courtesy of Sara Chavez)



Figure 5.13 Date palm tree in Roy Roegiers' front yard; not native to the RGV (Courtesy Sara Chavez)



Figure 5.14 Fruit from a date palm tree on the Roegiers' property (Courtesy of Sara Chavez)

While walking through the property attempting to identify plants, Roy mentioned that he recalled that the tree was very small when he was growing up, but now it towers over his house (Figure 5.15). In addition to the native plants that were observed across multiple properties, we also found that there were non-native plants on the Roegiers' property that were also identified on properties in the previous CHAPS reports, such as the aforementioned Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*). An imported, non-native plant that was identified on only the Roegier's property was the Fig Tree (*Ficus carica*) (Figure 6.16).

Fauna

According to the United States Department of Homeland Security, The Valley supports a diverse array of rare, threatened and endangered species of animals and is an area that sustains a large neo-tropical bird population (United States Department of Homeland Security 2007). As the survey of the Roegiers property was conducted, we were able to observe and encounter a variety of animals that ranged from a Cotton Tail Rabbit to an Orb-Weaver Spider.

As documented on the chart in Appendix 39, in comparison to past surveys conducted by the CHAPS Program in different properties, the Roegiers property report is first at reporting the observance of animals such as, Eastern Cottontail Rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), Hare (*Leporidae*), Texas Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis annectens*), Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) (Figure 5.17), Antlion (*Myrmeleontidae*), whose holes can be seen in Figure 5.18, and an Orb-Weaver Spider (*Araneidae*) as seen in Figure 5.19.



Figure 5.15 Tall mesquite tree in front of Roy Roegiers' property (Courtesy of Sara Chavez)



Figure 5.16 Fig tree in Roy Roegiers' backyard. (Courtesy of Sara Chavez)



Figure 5.17 Common grackle, native to the Rio Grande Valley (Courtesy of Sara Chavez, Edinburg Municipal Park)



Figure 5.18 Antlion holes in front of Roy Roegiers' home, west side of the property. (Courtesy of Sara Chavez)



Figure 5.19 Orb-weaver spider observed lying in its web in a Lotesbush (*Ziziphus obtusifolia*) Courtesy Sara Chavez

During the interview with Roy and Clara, it was discussed that they used to see an abundance of horned toads on their property. They believe that they are no longer around because of the infrastructure that has continued to grow over years. Roy made an interesting point during the interview conducted inside of his home. He believes that the reason for which the horned toads are no longer around is because the pesticides used on the orchards have evolved over the years and probably spread throughout the property, causing the horned toads to either die, or leave to seek shelter elsewhere. Roy also recalls seeing a javelin as he was growing up, and Clara mentioned seeing a raccoon not too long ago.¹⁴³

Natural Disasters

Many natural disasters plagued the family. It was very difficult to figure out what had happened during the floods of Hurricane Beulah that had made landfall on September 20, 1967. As we interviewed Roy Roegiers, he mentioned that he was not here during this time. He was in the service during this time as he mentioned in the interview, “It didn’t actually flood here. At least well, I wasn’t here to see it but they said the water was just like saturated and it really wasn’t, I mean but you can see this is pretty high ground here.”¹⁴⁴ In 1966, Roy joined the Navy and spent the next four years on active duty. That is the reason on why he does not have a great recollection of the flood. He did mention that when he was stationed overseas in Guam, he explained the difficulties of the not being able to be home,

Roy Roegiers *“I did not have any (means of) communications; they use to post little tid-bids on the wire, I mean wire service. If you look up, it is just like the, well I can’t describe it; maybe we’d get the highlight of what was going on in the United States and every once in*

¹⁴³ Rogiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁴ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 3.

a while we would see in there and I'd see the Valley is isolated place. (with reference to the RGV during hurricane Beulah) O my god no electricity, no good water to drink, here I am all the way to Vietnam. What can I do for them? It just made you worry to."¹⁴⁵

Other family members also mentioned of this phenomenon, there were different expressions towards the way that the flood affected them and their family. In comparison to the rest of the families from previous reports, Roy Roegiers' mother Irene and sister Clara were fortunate to have the railroad in front of their home. The railway worked in favor of the family in where the flooding of Hurricane Beulah did not affect the home.

Other natural disasters that the family had to deal with were with freezes. The Roegiers and Rogers were agricultural families that depended on the land and the crops that were planted. While walking with Roy around the property he mentioned that the trees were fairly young and mentioned that they were about twenty-five years old. This was due to the freeze of the late eighties in which the orange trees suffered (Figures 5.20 and 5.21). In the beginning of the interview that was conducted with Roy (Appendix 2) he mentioned that he had a tool that they used to push the brush into the fire, which can be seen on Figure 5.22. Linda McGurk explained:



Figure 5.20 Orange trees that died as a result of the 1983 freeze.

¹⁴⁵ Roegiers, Roy, Oral History Interview, Appendix 2.



Figure 5.21 Orange trees that were cut as a result of the 1983 freeze.

Linda McGurk: *I remember as a child, there were big freezes, 'cause my dad had a lot of money invested [in citrus]. His way of saving money was to invest in land, that's why, he continually bought land around the railroad tracks across from Roy's house. He bought land and then he invested in putting orchards in a lot of his land. I remember there was a bad freeze when I was a kid, maybe in the 50s and I just remember all the trees died because it was so cold, they were frozen. I remember them burning [all the orchards]. (Appendix 7,)¹⁴⁶.*

In comparison to the other families, with the exception of the Eubanks, “they did not live in Edinburg when ‘the big one’ (Hurricane Beulah) hit”. Previous families in CHAPS Program reports have commented on Hurricane Beulah, a category 5 hurricane that occurred in 1967 (Eubanks)¹⁴⁷. The Eubanks had established their home on hill that would prevent any kind of flood damage to the home. The other families had flood damage and reported that there was detrimental damage to the land and the lives of the people in Edinburg as stated in the Norquest report by Patrick Twist talks about the Valley-wide wipeout of citrus in the freeze of 1983, followed by the freeze of 1989. It was these succession of freezes

¹⁴⁶ McGurk, Linda Rogers, Oral History Interview, Appendix 7.

¹⁴⁷ Garcia, Janette, Santiago Lopez, Rolando Silva, Jose Aguinaga, Mark Allen, Jose Barrera, Ezgar Chavez, Elizabeth Garza, Saira Gonzalez, Pedro Guajardo, Felix Guerra, Sarafin Hernandez, Tim Hinds, Raul Lopez, Denise Martinez, Elisa Mora, Tom Perez, Alfredo Puente, Kassandra Reyes, Arnulfo Rodriguez, Gerry Salinas, Chris Scott, Miram Silva, and Mariana Vazquez 2016 The Eubanks Family: A Porcion of Edinburg. A report prepared for the Eubanks Family and for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Community Archaeology Project with Schools Program. The University of Texas-Rio Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, Texas. Published by CHAPS Program at The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley Edinburg, TX 2016, p. 51



Figure 5.22 Tool that Roy attached to his tractor and use to push brush when clearing land in his orchards.
(Courtesy of Jesus Sierra)

that led to the fall of the RGV as the “King of Citrus”. Farmers did not find sufficient resources to replant/restart their orchards, which generally took twelve years to finally reach ripe age and produce sufficient fruit to provide enough money to pay for itself (Twist/Saenz 2011/pg G-14)¹⁴⁸. This also explains on why Roy mentioned that the trees that he had in his orchards were fairly young (Figure 5.23). During the walk around the property, Roy also showed the kerosene heaters that were used to help prevent having the citrus trees freeze (Figure 5.24).

After gathering data across these different areas of study, one may conclude that prehistoric activity took place on or near the Roegiers’ property. The CHAPS class students’ intensive research, along with the assistance of Dr. Russell Skowronek, Dr. Roseann Bacha-Garza, Dr. Juan Gonzalez, and Dr. Rod Summy has led us to believe this to be so, based on previous studies done in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

¹⁴⁸ Garcia, et al, p. 51



Figure 5.23 Citrus trees that are currently on Roy Roegiers' fifteen-acre property.



Figure 5.24 Kerosene heater preserved by Roy Roegiers (Courtesy of Lucas Torres)

Conclusion

As the years progress and the CHAPS class completes another research report, we are gaining ground on our goal to publish a thick volume set of edited reports chronicling the farming families of Edinburg. We have been fortunate to have worked with some very interesting and cooperative families to date. With this being our sixth report, we are building momentum on this front and having less difficulty finding families who want to participate.

As multidisciplinary students of history, anthropology, biology and geology here in the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas, we continue to uncover unique and special tidbits of information that speak to the untapped narrative that when revealed, and show just how curious and fascinating this region really is. The adventurous farming families that have settled in Edinburg on the frontier borderlands with Mexico have originated from various nations. Although our region is characterized as predominantly Hispanic, we have a vast melting pot of nationalities representing generations of people that have called this place home for nearly a century. To date, we have studied farming families who hail from Swedish, Mexican, English, German, Ukrainian and Belgian origins, just to name a few.

The CHAPS class represents a comprehensive learning experience that truly engages the student in the local community. Regional research, although not the most appealing avenue for some scholars to follow, has proven to be intriguing along this natural and international border between two countries. As World War I was brewing in Europe and the Mexican Revolution was building south of the border, new immigrants to the United States were looking for a piece of the American dream. Those not interested in industry chose to push westward in order to find some good farmland to call home. It is no surprise that many ended up in the Rio Grande Valley during at time when boosters and land developers were targeting Midwestern farmers and promoting this region as the “Magic Valley”; where successful year-round farming was guaranteed. Fully equipped with rail transportation, packing sheds, irrigated farmland and icehouses; word spread quickly that this was a good place to take a chance at achieving one’s dreams.

Although some of the farming families of Edinburg are no longer in the farming business, Roy Roegiers is still pushing forward and continuing the legacy that his father Camiel began here almost one hundred years ago. Even though the total number of farmed acres is a bit smaller than what they owned in the past, Roy is still farming and does not seem to be retiring any time soon. Our goal at the CHAPS Program is to record and preserve as much regional history as we can before we lose that capability to urban sprawl and industrial development. Although these are all good indicators of positive economic growth, it proves difficult to research the natural and cultural history of this region when historical locations are covered with new construction and cement.

We’d like to thank the families that have graciously allowed us to invade their homes, businesses and farmland in order to conduct thorough and meaningful research. It is our goal to represent these families well and to provide vast and valuable primary and secondary sources for future generations of students to come.

Appendix 1

Interviewee: Roy Roegiers & Clara Duffey

Interviewer Team: Jennifer Quintero, Aram Rivera, & Stephen Cantu

Date: Thursday, October 13, 2016

Location: Clara Duffey's home in Edinburg, Texas

Transcribers: Jennifer Quintero, Aram Rivera, & Stephen Cantu

This interview was conducted with Roy Roegiers and Clara Duffey. Throughout the interview, Clara would assist Roy by including addition context to Roy's answers and providing more insight into the questions at hand. The group conducting the interview was Jennifer Quintero, Aram Rivera, and Stephen Cantu. This particular interview took place in the kitchen area of Clara's home in Edinburg, Texas. This interview aims to give insight into the life of Roy Roegiers, including his origins, family, culture, and farmland and how they came to be in Edinburg, Texas.

Introduction: As we are getting ready to start, Clara takes a quick phone call and we wait for her to return to the table.

Roy: Are we ready?

Jennifer: Yes

Clara: We're gonna try.

Jennifer: So, It's October, Thursday, October 13th, 2016, and we are interviewing Roy and Clara. Roy Roegiers.

Roy: Roegiers. Yes. (Clarifies pronunciation)

Jennifer: And it is Jennifer Quintero as an interviewer

Stephen: Stephen Cantu

Aram: And Aram Rivera

Jennifer: Ok. So we're gonna start with... the first section is like about the family and the property. So where were your parents born?

Roy: Uhh, my dad was born in Belgium and my uhh, his first wife was born in Belgium also. And his second wife was born in Belgium.

Clara: Our mom.

Roy: Our mom. Uhh, my dad was born in 1882. I don't know when his first wife was born.

Clara: I don't know either.

Roy: But my mother was born in 1914.

Jennifer: And where did they live?

Roy: Uhh, my dad kinda came to the United States in like 1909 to work, and he stayed here about three years, and then he went back to Belgium and married his first wife. Then they came back to the United States. Uhh... I think to Virginia.

Clara: Virginia's what I always heard too.

Roy: And uhh, lived there for several years and then they migrated to, to Kansas and then they came to Texas, eventually.

Jennifer: Uhh, when and where did they get married? Your parents.

Roy: Uhh, I think they got married in Belgium.

Clara: Our mom? No. His first wife got married in Belgium.

Roy: His first wife.

Clara: But our mom; they married here.

Roy: They got married here in like 1946-1947, something like that [Monday, March 11, 1946].

Clara: We could look for that thing somewhere, but I'm not sure where it is.

Roy: We'll put all that in there when...

Clara: We'll get the certificate if we find it. We'll get the proof.

Jennifer: And, here? In Edinburg?

Roy: In Edinburg. [at Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg, TX]

Jennifer: Okay.

Clara: That was in 1946 or 45...

Roy: 46

Clara: 46

Jennifer: Uhh, when did they pass away?

Roy: Uhh, dad died in 1958, and his wife died in 1944 or 45. First wife. And my mother died in 19...

Clara: [To Roy] That's the one I was hoping you were gonna answer. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: 19 or 2000... well it's been 10 years ago, so it's been about

Clara: (asking her granddaughter that was in the kitchen at the time) when did your mom die Brianna?

Roy: 14

Brianna: 2007.

Clara: 7 so she died in 2006

Roy: Okay.

Clara: A year before [Grandma died]. 2006.

Jennifer: Uhh, do you know where they were buried?

Roy: My, our mother...

Clara: All of them!

Roy: All of them were buried in Hill Crest Cemetery

Clara: Camiel and his first wife Emily. Then our mom...

Roy: They were buried side by side, then there's one person buried between our mother and her husband

Jennifer: Did your parents ever tell you any stories about what life was like in Belgium?

Roy: Lots of stories, but uhm... my mother, my mother lived there during World War I, and my dad, he never really told us anything, what was going on over there. My mother, we didn't pay much attention to her, I mean, just like most generations do, but uhh, I do remember her saying something that uhh, they were in the country when the war was going on and uhh so my grandfather, was of age and served in the military, I guess you could say. And the trouble was that they were fighting the Belgians and he, I mean, they conscripted him, that's the right word, into the army, and he wasn't really willing to serve, so he always went A-wall. And he came back to the farm. And uhh, supposedly they came and rounded him up a couple of times and that's, I don't know if he uhh, finishes, how long he did that back and forth but uhh, supposedly, uhh, like my mother told us that uhh, they one time had to move because the fighting got too close or whatever, so they kind of abandoned their farm and went somewhere else and came back maybe a couple of weeks later and there was food on the table. The kids were hungry, and like I say, she, this is kinda the story; well she was only, she was only uhh what...

Clara: 5 years old.

Roy: 4 or 5 years old when she heard the story, so maybe, I don't know if she embellished it, or what, but anyway they claim that a couple of the kids ate the food, and they died! Like they were poisoned from, from whoever was occupying the country. But I mean that, that's just uhh, the way life was over there. I mean they uhh, I guess they stayed there the whole, during the whole war and came to the United States in like 1919. Yeah. As soon as they could get out of that country they, they came to the United States.

Jennifer: Uhh, and what was your family's reason for coming to the United States from Belgium?

Roy: Well my, my dad just uhh, well he came here with his first wife before World War I, and I guess that was the reason. He was trying to get away from the war. But they, my uhh grandpa and grandma and my mother and them maybe they couldn't, they, they didn't have uhh permission or whatever was required to leave the country, so they ended up staying there. But like I say they, when, after the war, uhh my dad was already a citizen here in the United States, so I guess he got permission for them to come to the United States and be with them, which was good, I mean, that they got away from the war out there in the country. [Camiel became a US Citizen on May 3, 1920 and Irene was naturalized on May 11, 1944 in Edinburg, TX – see Appendix 40]

Jennifer: Uhm, how did your family hear about the land available for sale in Edinburg?

Roy: Well, uhh, I guess it uhh, just kind of uhh, word of mouth, or maybe they had people advertising it up there. I mean how, I don't know how they really found out about it, but it just uhh...

Clara: They lived in Kansas at that time, so we're assuming, maybe newspaper ads, or something.

Roy: And painted it as a, uhh the weather was nice down here compared to Kansas, so they said well maybe we'll move down there to the Rio Grande Valley, you know. And uh, they made a trip down here in like 1920, I guess they found the land that they wanted, and they; well maybe you didn't have a choice, maybe you know, just uhh, kind of a choice, so they chose 20 acres and, and uhh, when back or maybe paid a down payment on when they were here, or maybe decided on it when they got back to Kansas. And then they moved in like 1921. [Camiel bought the initial 20 acres of land for \$6,000 in 1920 which is \$300 per acre – see Appendix 14]

Jennifer: Do you know who the land belonged to before your family purchased it?

Roy: I don't really know who. I think it was the Stewart Land Company who was selling it, but I don't really know who owned it. They may have put it together as a, I mean uhh, I've never really looked to see who, who was the actual owner but uhh, I think he bought it from Stewart Land Company.

Jennifer: Uhh, do you know how much the land was purchased for?

Roy: I think it was three hundred dollars an acre.

Jennifer: We read that on the paper right.

Clara: That's where we got the information.

Roy: We've got deeds and everything that we're gonna put in, in the, in the book whenever we get to document this here.

Jennifer: How long do you predict that you will keep the property?

Roy: Oh... (Gasping)

Clara: Another how many years? [Audible Laughter]

Roy: Well, we've had it, we've had it since '21, '20, so in another four more years, we'll have had it 100 years.

Clara: So at least for four more years. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: I'm hoping to, I mean uhh, eventually, I mean, this area keeps growing, and uhh, sooner or later, we're gonna be uhh consumed by the, everything that goes up in the area, I mean it's just uhh, uhh, so it's really, it's really our choice, as long as we wanna keep it. But I mean, sooner or later, we'll probably need to... price it right, I guess we sell it. We got a lot of heritage too, but I mean, we're both getting old, so it's just.

Jennifer: Have you or a family member ever found something unusual in the property? Like prehistoric artifacts, or anything interesting to you all?

Roy: No.

Jennifer: No?

Roy: No. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: I think uhh the most unusual thing was a raccoon. I didn't know they lived around here, how did that raccoon get here? [Audible Laughter]

Clara: That wasn't that long ago. It just came here from somewhere.

Roy: They're talking about artifacts.

Clara: I know. I know. That was an unusual animal!

Jennifer: Oh, well I was thinking anything...

Clara: Why does a raccoon live here? There's no woods around here. How'd it get here? [Audible Laughter]

Roy: Well, there was a javelina here one time too.

Clara: Javelina too. Hm hmm

Roy: But I don't know if it got away from somebody, or just came. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: We used to see horn toads when we were kids. Horn toads were plentiful. And they were around the ant beds and we had a lot of those big red ants and you would find them there. They were a lot. Now we don't even see a horn toad at all. I don't know if you all know what that is.

Aram: Yea. I've actually seen one at my grandparents' property. Yea.

Clara: Oh wow!

Jennifer: We used to catch them.

Clara: Yea?

Stephen: Yea.

Clara: You did too? You remember, see! Wow! Where did you catch them?

Stephen: In Laredo

Jennifer: That was in Mission.

Clara: In Mission. Have you seen any lately? Well, you caught them and you're young.

Jennifer: I saw one like maybe two months ago... but one. One.

Clara: Really!

Jennifer: I used to see them a lot.

Clara: But did you see it at a ranch or something somewhere or is that like in your yard?

Jennifer: In my yard.

Clara: Really?

Aram: I think they're endangered now [are in decline].

Clara: I guess here because of all the chemicals that they use around the orchard now.

Roy: And population too.

Clara: Hm Hmm.

Roy: And they don't really have many red ants around here anymore. In your, when you, when you've made your tour around here you'll probably see them red ants. I got some in my house, but I don't think...

Clara: I think we have one in the corner over here...

Aram: Yea, some fire ants.

Clara: No. Big ones. Bigger ones.

Roy: The big red ants. Don't let them bite you because, because they're pretty...[Audible Laughter]

Clara: And they were pretty plentiful when we were kids. We were always getting stung. And there was some kind of weed. What do they call that weed? The... what do we call it? It has a real name, the one that would always burn us when we would pass through there...

Roy: Oh, tingle weed!

Clara: We call it tingle weed. I'm sure it has a different name.

Roy: It has a, that's, that's kind of its uhh, uhh, when you guys made your tour if you haven't done that part yet, you probably won't see it because it stays dormant until the winter time.

Clara: That's stuff I didn't even know. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: Wow, tingle weed, but I don't think that's its real name. But it's, if you walk around it, it gets your leg all burned too. It's not thorns, it's just, it's not thorny at all, it's just... maybe you have them out in your area where you live too.

Roy: The spines on them has a little poison, toxic poison in it, that's what causes the tingling effect.

Clara: On the leaves.

Jennifer: So, when were you born? And where?

Roy: I was born 1947, here in Edinburg.

Clara: And me, 1949, in Edinburg. Was it Grandview Hospital?

Roy: Yeah. Grandview.

Jennifer: And both of you grew up here?

Roy: Hm Hmm.

Clara: Yes. We lived in Roy's house, as a kid, that's where I lived. Now he still lives there. When I got married, I build a house... I had a mobile home, on the other side of the freeway, and we've since sold that property. Then, we moved over here. About, how many years? Thirty something years...

Roy: '76 or '75. Something like that.

Clara: Yeah, '76. This, when we built this house.

Roy: To be kinda closer to mother. And now my son lives in that house. One of those girls is my granddaughter. They live next door.

Jennifer: So, are you all Rogers, or Roegiers?

Roy and Clara: [together] We're Roegiers.

Jennifer: Roegiers, okay.

Clara: It was very hard in college when they would ask me, "Say that again." [Audible Laughter]

Roy: Well we, I call myself Rogers because of uhh to make it simpler for everybody, but then they say, "Well that don't look like Rogers" well it's, it's...

Clara: Then he always gets the Roy Rogers joke. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: Roy Rogers...

Jennifer: Can you spell it out for us?

Roy: R-O-E-G-I-E-R-S

Clara: Too fast. Or you got it?

Jennifer: [Laughing] Well, it's recorded. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: Oh, that was pretty fast! It's in this paper too R-O-E-G-I... It's correct in there.

Jennifer: Okay. Uhh, how many brothers and sisters do you all have?

Roy: Just us two.

Jennifer: Just you two. Okay, so it's Clara and Roy Roegiers.

Roy: Right.

Clara: Now my married name is Duffey.

Jennifer: Okay.

Clara: I'm divorced but I still kept the name, Duffey.

Jennifer: And your birth dates.

Roy: July 27, 1947

Clara: January the 12th, 1949

Jennifer: Uhm, did you, okay did you all have specific chores or roles as you were growing up?

Roy: Uhh, we, we did a lot of farm work and mowed the grass, stuff like that. Picked the fruit, worked on the vegetables. We never, we never really took care of the cows, we did have cows at the time, but I guess we were just too young to do much of that.

Clara: You should have seen that lawn mower. I think I was a teenager.

Roy: We uhh, we had, we used to have a push lawn mower.

Clara: No electricity.

Jennifer: We saw those at your...

Clara: Oh you saw it?

Jennifer: [To Roy] We saw them on your property.

Clara: [To Roy] Oh, at your house

Roy: And then we, then we uhh, we stepped up in life and bought a used electric lawn mower. And we'd push, I'd push that around, and I don't know if you've ever mowed grass, but with an electric lawn mower, you have to watch that cord. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: And that's a new experience. When you have to mow grass...

Clara: I remember that too.

Roy: ...with an electric lawn mower. You have to figure out when you get to the end, that you gotta be sure you don't turn and run over the electric chord. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: And then we, we got a gasoline mower, but that was probably 5, 8; 5 or 6 years later.

Clara: Are you gonna ask about the refrigerator? The TV? Or they're not questions on here?

Jennifer: You can say them. You can talk about it.

Aram: Yeah. You can add.

Clara: I remember the refrigerator was with the ice in it.

Roy: Oh, well that was probably, yeah we probably had a refrigerator with ice in it. We had to go to town every once in a while...

Clara: An ice cube!

Roy: ...to buy ice. Then we finally bought a regular

Clara: Electric

Roy: an electric refrigerator, but uhh, I mean...

Clara: And our grandparents had that ice longer than us.

Roy: Oh yeah.

Clara: A little tiny refrigerator with an ice, big cube of ice.

Roy: Buy a, go to the store and buy a 25-pound chunk of ice, and maybe it wouldn't fit in there. You try to put all of it in there that you could because it was waste if you didn't.

Clara: You bought it.

Roy: I mean, and the more you put in there, kinda the colder it kept it in that refrigerator. We learned not to open that door and stand there in front the door.

[Audible Laughter]

Roy: I mean; those were all things that you learned growing up. And you just have to.

Jennifer: Okay, so did you enjoy your chores?

Roy: Oh yea, I enjoyed my chores! (Clara sitting next to Roy, smiling, nodding her head NO.) I mean that's just uhh...

[Audible Laughter]

Roy: ...that was part of our, part of my life. As far as I'm concerned, I just uhh, I mean, people enjoy playing sports, but I enjoyed my chores.

Clara: I didn't enjoy them that much. Especially that, that lawn mower. But then, the other chores we had, we had a cow once upon a time. Later in life, we had a Holstein cow.

Roy: Yeah. Actually...

Clara: She had a calf.

Roy: ...after my dad died in '58 then we more or less, got more involved in that, in 4-H, and then we got to start raising animals, and that's when...

Clara: That was fun. The animals were fun. We had, Roy had pigs, they were his pigs, and he had mother pigs with baby pigs.

Jennifer: And you all showed?

Roy: Yes.

Clara: We showed.

Roy: Well, I...

Clara: Mine didn't make it to the show because... (Laughs)

Roy: ...I raised my own, my own, well I got a, a pig

Clara: Oh yeah.

Roy: In a program that uhh, there was like 5, 4-H'ers got a deal. One person got a Boar, that person was responsible for breeding those other 5 pigs and then at the end of the year, we had to give the program back a pig, so that it would give it to somebody else. And that was just a revolving program, that we did it in, so we, I mean, it was a beautiful, wonderful way that, and I stayed in the pig business I'll say till probably my senior year in high school. And, and we raised pigs, but uhh, it was uhh, I was proud to raise my own pigs, take them down to the show, and get them qualified to enter. I mean, instead of going out to buy a pig.

Jennifer: Uhh, do you remember any events in your life that left a significant impression? Maybe something you witnessed, or...

Roy: Well I, I uhm, I happened to be going to Sacred Heart School, when that new courthouse was built, and somebody exploded a bomb in the courthouse, and I went over there, snuck over there, I mean...

Clara: (gasps) Oh, I didn't even know that!

Roy: Yeah. I snuck over there after school, or during school (Clara gasping in the background) and I saw where it was, and actually I mean there was body parts I mean (Clara gasps in awe) the guy was where the bomb was.

Clara: How did you get over there?

Roy: Walked over there.

Clara: With who?

Roy: By myself.

Clara: Or Junior.

Roy: Uhh, I don't think I went with him, I just, I just walked over there, I just went so...

Clara: You skipped school? [Audible Laughter]

Roy: No. It was like during the lunch hour.

Clara: [Laughing] Lunch hour?

Roy: I went to lunch you know. [Audible Laughter]

Clara: I never knew that. I never knew that.

Roy: Well, I mean if you could visit, I don't know if you know where Sacred Heart School is...

Aram: No.

Roy: Sacred Heart Church. It's about six blocks away.

Aram: Wow.

Roy: And here I was, maybe...

Clara: 4th grade is the last grade you attended at Sacred Heart

Roy: No, I was in the, maybe 3rd grade. So I wandered over there. [Audible Laughter]

Stephen: You escaped and you... wow.

Roy: They probably never missed me, but anyway I went over there. That was a significant, but then that, when my dad died too. That was uhh, I mean, I was only 11 years old, so I mean that was uhh really a significant thing to...

Clara: I think the thing that comes to my mind, you mentioned it before was 4-H, we got involved with 4-H, and that kept us going, meeting people, and, and learning things. I think it was really good outside of school. That was really uhh, having the animals, and everything. The persons who got us in, it was the Martins, from Martins Feed Store. Their family was all big in, in uhh, 4-H. And so they told us to come with them and we came to the meeting and we joined. We stayed involved in 4-H all through high school.

Roy: Yeah. But that was something that uhh, I mean, like I say, my dad died in '58 and it seemed like in the fall of '58 we got involved in that organization and that just kinda broke the sorrow or whatever it was.

Clara: Hm Hmm. It gave us uhh, new things to do.

Jennifer: What is something that you hold dear to your heart when you were young?

Roy: 4H.

Jennifer: Ok.

Clara: I think another thing that we, I remember was like getting together with our cousins because **Roy** and I and on those Sundays the other cousins would come over to their mom and pa's house, they live next door to us. Mom and Pa live next door to us and they had all the relatives because they had a lot of kids and grandkids.

Roy: That was kinda tradition that every Sunday we get together and the boys would go out with bb guns and play heck with all the wildlife out there.

Clara: Frogs [Audible Laughter]

Clara: Don't put that in there. [More Audible Laughter]

Roy: We just loved that part, I mean they were from the city so when they came out to the country, they really enjoyed being out here and I was kind of their escort.

Clara: And we played hide and go seek, girls against the boys a lot of times. We hide up in the orange trees; we climbed the trees and hide.

Roy: Be quiet so they don't find you.

Clara: Or it'll be their turn to hide and we had to go find them, just like hide and go seek, so those were good memories. Every Sunday they would come but different cousins wouldn't always come cause some didn't live here, the BB gun ones lived in Harlingen I think. The girls that I liked to hang out with lived in Victoria so...

Roy: They didn't come as often.

Clara: Yeah, most of the other cousins were older than us but... oh tell them what the adults were doing.

Roy: The adults were either playing cards or bowling. Now I'll have to either take pictures of that or present them or show you what they are and we would spend lots of time, they would spend Sunday afternoon and just bowl all afternoon and have competitions. The basis of the game was...

Clara: Like if this table was a bowling alley. (showing us how the game was set up)

Roy: But it was a lot bigger than that...

Clara: Of course.

Roy: It might have been 50ft wide and 100ft long.

Clara: Yeah.

Roy: The object is this ball...

Clara: It's not round.

Roy: It's a bowl, but it's about this wide, has curved things on it, actually it's curved that it won't run in a straight line and the object is to roll it around this pin, and it goes around this pin and it lands on the stake in the middle.

Clara: And if it does...

Roy: If it's still there when you get through, I mean with...

Clara: Other people are gonna knock it off...

Roy: Like two people on each side bowling, you may have four balls, four uh bowls, balls or whatever, bowls

Clara: Bowls, bowls.

Roy: Bowls, and you roll them out there and ok you see your competition is sitting out there on top of the stake, so you go try to knock them off, and the ones who's closest at the end of the round is what scores the points and they kept track of it and just its something that, I mean that would be a good something that somebody could up and see if you could figure out any history about that.

Clara: Belgian bowling.

Everyone Together: Belgian bowling.

Clara: The other people, the women, or the other people would be playing cards inside the rooms. No air condition, I'm pretty sure we didn't have air condition back then, but we didn't remember it being hot though... [there was a screened porch with metal louvers]

Roy: No.

Clara: I guess we had more breeze then or something.

Roy: Well we just had fans and umm really on the shady side of the house I mean.

Clara: Mom and pa, mom would make the raisin bread, every Sunday she would make this raisin bread and I visited with Marjorie the other day and she has the recipe in the book, like the original recipe, I don't know if it is and then she gave me some honey bread, and I didn't remember that honey bread but when I tasted it, it came back the memory, can you believe that? After I tasted it I said I've tasted this before.

Aram: That's pretty cool, it's like déjà vu.

Clara: I'm gonna give y'all some, it's in the refrigerator. I went there a couple of days ago and I put it in there. Ok you can ask **Roy** more questions I'm gonna warm it up in the microwave.

Jennifer: What did you dream of when you were younger? Like what were your aspirations?

Roy: Well I really wanted to move out of the Valley but uh I mean there was uh; and when I got the chance to join the service, that's when I got to see the world I'm saying and seeing what there was out the Valley and I came back and I stayed here, so it's just uh, I mean uh, a lot of people have the opportunity to leave the Valley and I guess they get their education and a good job somewhere and they just disappear, but I was loyal to my roots.

Jennifer: Ok, so we know there is a lot of objects on your property, what object on your property holds the most sentimental value to you?

Roy: Really my house, because my house was being built in the twenties and has been evolved to what it is now. It's nothing real fancy, but I mean it's my home.

Aram: So now we are gonna go to the section under military, and the first question is did your family have a military background?

Roy: They didn't. I was really one of the first person... well my uncle was in World War 2 and then I just joined 'cause during Vietnam it's either get drafted or volunteer I think that's in there somewhere too... (looking at questions)

Aram: Yeah.

Roy: and that's why I really joined 'cause I didn't want to get drafted and I wanted in a branch I felt more comfortable with because when I was in the transition from high school and college, I was working one place several of the people that I was working with tried to encourage me; join the Navy. So that's why I joined the Navy because they said, "you don't want to be in the Army"; especially in that time period so I joined the Navy and I liked it. A lot of people don't like the military but I don't know if it's because it was something so much different from being here and I got to see so much of the world I say in my travels, but after four years I was ready to come back.

Aram: Do you remember how the environment was like here in the Valley during that time?

Roy: Well I wasn't really here so I don't know what it was but they had a hurricane while I was gone in the service, I happened to be in Vietnam at the time. I mean there wasn't telephones like there is now or emails or anything like that so seeing something on the wired service and that's about the only thing they put out a wired service of things that was going on. Here I see a hurricane in South Texas, what can I do about it? I mean, I see that there is no power here; that they're isolated from the rest of the world because there's some much water they can't bring anything in or out, so I just had to stay in amazement. I might get letters from my mother about every two weeks, whenever, maybe the mail couldn't even get out so I mean I get letters and things like that and then I finally find out she's been doing. It was really in suspense I mean that was...

Aram: Ok; this question you already answered regarding the enlistment or draft so let's skip to the next one. How old were you when you enlisted?

Roy: I was probably 19 years old when I joined the Navy, which was hard to imagine because here I never really been away from home and I joined the Navy, went to boot camp, after boot camp I got my orders, of all places to Vietnam, and I says I joined the Navy to not to be in Vietnam [audible laughter] and I get orders to Vietnam. So I supposedly was gonna catch a ship over there and when I got there I spent about 14 days in Danang and they didn't know where my ship was.

Aram: Wow. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: It had been there, but then it was going back to Guam where its home port was. So they said we'll send you to the, well it was in transit to the Philippines, which is on the way to Guam. So they send me to the Philippines, get there; "oh your ship left about two days ago." So they put me on another plane to get to Guam, and would you believe it, I beat the ship there...

Aram: Wow. [More Audible Laughter]

Roy: from Guam. Our ship, the abbreviation was "LST", stood for "Landing Ship Tank"; we called the last ship there. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: Because we're so slow.

Aram: That's a good name.

Clara: Last ship there, never heard that before either, if I did I don't remember.

Roy: That's why I got acronyms all the time.

Aram: So when you were there, what was your role?

Roy: The Navy, our job on the ship was to haul cargo from Danang, up the river, and back and forth supplies and stuff like that and we did that for about 12 months, off and on.

Aram: Ok, and another one (question) is, your rank at the time.

Roy: When I joined I was an E1, which is like a firemen apprentice and then I worked up my way to firemen, which is like an E3, then I took the test and made E4, and then I had to keep studying all the time and I made it to E5 and I got out of the Navy as an E5, I said well, I'll like to join the reserves so I joined the reserves and I spent 17 years in the reserves and the reason I liked doing that was because every year we got a chance to ask for where we wanted to go on our two weeks. They didn't tell you where wanted to go you just kinda ask. So they gave me a chance to go anywhere I really wanted to and put in request and that's amazing how...

Clara: Vacations on the government.

[Audible Laughter]

Aram: How does one progress through the ranks exactly?

Roy: You have to study, you have to do good, I mean be loyal, dedicated, hard worker, do as you're told and things like that and then you get evaluated and eventually you'll take a test of the skills, correspondent courses and you learn that and you learn it on hands training and that's how you further advance.

Aram: Alright. Were you awarded any medals?

Roy: I have quite a few medals; I don't know what they are right now.

Aram: Well that's ok.

Roy: But I mean I have medals at home, we can find out what they are if we need too, I just don't remember them off hand.

Aram: Ok. How did your family feel about you entering?

Roy: Well I don't think; my mother probably didn't like it.

Clara: She was very sad all the time; always worried.

Roy: Well like I said my dad died, so I was the sole surviving son and a lot of people said I didn't have to go, but I just felt dedicated that I wanted to go; so I went and spent my time there.

Aram: While you were gone who watched over the house?

Roy: My mother, my mother took care of everything. I mean the farming operation, day to day living; actually she even had a job and things like that.

Aram: Wow.

Clara: She didn't really actually do the farming because we had relatives, some of the other Rogers, Bill Rogers was like a farmer around here so she would look to him for advice and help and he helped out a lot. I give him credit because she probably wouldn't; she knew what to do but maybe couldn't do all the things that were necessary. Things were different mostly it was orchards at that time, we didn't have crops anymore, we didn't have animals, it was orchards...

Roy: Citrus.

Clara: Citrus.

Aram: Do you still stay in touch with any of your "battle buddies"? [Audible Laughter]

Roy: No. I haven't seen anybody that was in the service with, well they were...

Clara: From all over.

Roy: All over.

Aram: Ok, alright and as soon as you came back from Vietnam what did you do afterwards?

Roy: Well I went to college a little bit, but I just, I didn't feel comfortable I say in college and I just had felt the farm was my occupation so I just decided to become a farmer and that's what I did.

Aram: How do you feel about your time spent over there?

Roy: I guess it was useful, but I mean it was just uh, I mean we were doing what we were told, so we just had to do whatever we, I mean... it wasn't popular, so I tell people kinda a joke when I left Guam. I flew back to San Francisco and I got back to San Francisco before I left Guam... because America's day begins in Guam, and so actually when you fly to the United States, you get here before you left. [Audible Laughter]

Aram: Yeah I remember my neighbor told me about that...

Clara: The time zone.

Aram: Yeah, he was in Japan but this was like during the fifties.

Roy: Yeah.

Aram: So he told me about that; they'll have a second breakfast essentially. [Audible Laughter]

Roy: I mean for being young, to tell people well you got to the United States before you left, like you're in a time zone.

Aram & Stephen: Yeah.

Aram: Like time traveling.

Stephen: Twilight zone. [Audible Laughter]

Aram: Ok, and did the war affect your family, like your farm in any way?

Roy: Not really, I don't think it...it just ...I mean it was still... I give my mother credit, she did a good job taking care of it while I was gone, I mean it was probably hard for her, but...it just...I mean we didn't have to sell anything or anything like that.

Clara: And we really didn't have animals at that time either, just no farm animals...

Aram: Alright.

Stephen: So I'm gonna continue and we're gonna talk a little bit about the environment here. What is the biggest change that you can see in this area compared to how things were when you were younger?

Roy: Population.

Clara: That's what I was thinking exactly; people.

Roy: People.

Clara: We had no neighbors. We had one neighbor; the Wilsons right?

Roy: Yeah.

Roy & Clara: And Bill, Bill Rogers.

Clara: That's our only people who lived in this neighborhood.

Stephen: Wow.

Roy: And now it's uh... we was wondering because we were served by North Alamo Water Supply and we counting and there's 22 people living in this area now, that's served by North Alamo Water Supply.

Clara: On this side of the freeway.

Roy: Just on this side of the freeway.

Roy: From about three or four families it was up to that amount.

Clara: And the freeway wasn't here, what year did they make that freeway?

Roy: Well it started in probably '71.

Clara: '71.

Stephen: 281?

Roy: Yeah.

Clara: And our road I think was the last road that they paved. We went to the city of Edinburg and said all “the other roads are paved, why not ours?” They said “well we’ll get to it”.

Roy: They finally took us into the city limits and after that...

Clara: And the road still wasn’t paved.

[Audible Laughter]

Roy: So they finally decided to pave it and they didn’t really pave it, they just put tar down on there and little rocks, loose rocks on it.

Clara: But all the other roads were paved, even over there on La Hielera, we called loam paved streets; neighborhood.

Aram: I guess some things don’t change over time.

[Audible Laughter]

Stephen: What year was this?

Roy: It was probably umm... well actually they took us into the city limits in about ’83 or ’84...

Stephen: Oh ok.

Roy: Maybe it was ’93, ’94, somewhere in there. We were having a freeze at the time when they took us in and we knew it was gonna be hard and know that we’re in the city we gotta follow all the city regulations. When we have to burn trees we gotta get permission from the city and the fire department and stuff like that. Before I mean we just... we did a lot of things I mean we can’t do nowadays.

Stephen: And what type of animals do you remember seeing around this area, when you were growing up?

Roy: There was coyotes, we hear them at night.

Clara: There’s still some.

Roy: And the reason we hear them is the planes would go over and they howl and you can hear them howling.

Stephen: Yeah.

Roy: You didn’t know where they but there was brush in different areas and I think they stayed in the brush. We had a lot of rabbits...

Clara: Rabbits. That’s what I was gonna say, rabbits.

Roy: Either Jackrabbits or Cottontails and we really had a lot more birds than we got now too, I mean maybe people have ’em in their yards but I mean... I think they kind of get spooked with population.

Clara: Do we even hear the doves anymore? Do we hear them ‘cause we use to hear the doves.

Roy: Well they were making their noise trying to get rain.

Clara: [imitates dove noises] Something like that, I haven’t notice them anymore, doing that, but we have a bird feeder so we see a lot of birds. We have hummingbirds, a lot of hummingbirds, I don’t remember seeing those as kids though, [looking at Roy] so hummingbirds once in a while? We hardly ever saw them either.

Roy: No we didn’t see them.

Clara: Yeah, they were like a novelty if you saw one.

Stephen: Yeah, I think this question was already answered but you had pets right?

Roy: No.

Clara: We always had dogs and cats and then I remember when we had that one cow that we had, the cats had a lot of milk.

Roy: Yeah.

Clara: But the cats, we just... they were like wild cats, I mean they were our cats, somebody gave them to us or we got them, no registered cats or dogs just regular dogs and cats that somebody was giving away, that's how we got them.

Stephen: And do you recall any natural disasters that may of affected your family crops?

Roy: Well I don't remember all the years, but I remember when I was young we had freezes and when you had a freeze, you end up losing your income for several years, so I mean that created hardship, and when you start having them maybe three or four years apart like they happen back in the fifties, it kind of really devastates you and back when I was young we didn't have a lot of.... we had irrigation, but it wasn't as...

Clara: Sophisticated as it is now.

Roy: As available I'll say as it is now, because we didn't have Falcon lake, it was built like in '52 or '53 and from that point on, they stored the water up there and then we could get an allotment and we could irrigate more freely 'cause it was stored. But in early fifties, there was droughts in that period of time and then we got freezes again and Beulah. [Falcon Dam was dedicated in 1953 by President Eisenhower]

Stephen: '67 I think?

Roy: Yeah '67, but there was another hurricane back in '33, that was the year my mother, my mother started working in the packing shed supposedly, and that was the year they had the hurricane, '33, '34, somewhere there and it devastated the crops, it made nobody... with a job. But the freezes is the biggest and we're basically long overdue for a freeze. The last freeze we had is like in '89 and we never waited that long.

Clara: It's the climate change.

Roy: Global warming. [Audible Laughter]

Stephen: So I'm going to continue and we are going to talk a little about the environment here. What is the biggest change that you can see in this area compared to how things were when you were younger?

Stephen: What do you do, like to, you know, when your crops are destroyed? Like for income?

Roy: Well it's either tie your belt or...

Clara: You have a second job. Farming doesn't pay, so you, I mean it doesn't pay on a small scale.

Aram: I think they pay for insurance, I think.

Roy: Yeah we have insurance now, but the insurance uh uh kind of makes you survive, they don't really give you a good income, it uh, I mean if you, uh, if you had a freeze it may pay for replanting your trees, but then you've got to take care of them for, it takes five years to go from the time you plant a tree to the time you pick an orange.

Stephen: Oh Wow!

Roy: So I mean it's a long-term investment.

Stephen: What were the people of Edinburg like when you were growing up?

Roy: They were very friendly; I mean we were kind of close-knit community; I mean it was. How everybody knew everybody, and how you don't hardly ever see anybody you know anymore. But I mean I don't know if that is a good or bad, I mean that's just the way it is.

Stephen: UhHm.**Clara:** Did we tell you about the school bus? We didn't ride the school bus all the years because we went to Sacred Heart School for a while, we rode the school bus when I was in second grade and he was in 4th or 5th.

Roy: 4th grade, I guess it was.

Clara: I don't know, but anyway, you and I were the last persons to get on the bus. We had to stand up all the way to school, there were no seats and when we could come home, we were the last one to get off for some reason. The last one to get on, the last one to get off. It

was a long ride; the bus was packed, full. I don't think they allow kids to stand anymore now, but do you remember that, too? No seats!

Roy: No seats, well there were seats, but I mean, uh, every seat was occupied.

Clara: There were seats, but there were no space for us to sit.

Roy: Yeah.

Clara: And there was another group, two girls that got on with us. Remember the girls? Marta!

Roy: Yeah

Clara: Yeah, two girls, maybe there were three? Two girls got on with us, and at that time the bus driver was a student. That's what I remember.

Roy: Yeah.

Clara: We always had student drivers.

Roy: Always students.

Clara: Student bus drivers, they were more like the, I guess, were high school students, college students, I don't know. And our cousin Bert used to drive the bus. Way back when our mom was in school.

Roy: Because it was only, I mean you only had a job for...

Clara: Two hours.

Roy: An hour or two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. Not many people wanted a job like that, I mean...

Clara: Then I remember Linda, the other lady was with us, the meeting, her dad used to drive the school bus when her time and age. Like when he was a kid. He would drive the bus when he was in high school.

Stephen: Wow.

Clara: So they had a...otherwise she would walk. My mom used to talk about walking three miles to school and back, three miles back. They'd walk to school; could you imagine? And they would cut through pastures and there would be cows in there...ha-ha

Clara: Any short cut they could get.

Roy: Like we were talking about me wandering off from school. I mean you had to find your own way home, I mean...

Clara: True.

Roy: And you might live two or three miles away from home to be able to try and remember how you got there.

Clara: We never walked home though.

Roy: And in the dark, cause a lot of times, uh, school started at eight o' clock and how long does it take to walk three or four miles?

Clara: Did you ever walk to school ever? I never walked to school.

Roy: Furthest I remember walking is from our house to the school [bus pick up area].

Clara: The bus didn't go down our road it came down where Roy's house is.

Roy: I came down here and we had to come down here every morning and wait for the bus, so we got a little lean to...to get out of the cold in the morning.

Clara: It was cold [in the morning]..

Stephen: Yeah.

Clara: The bus would come pretty early, like early dusk, cold mornings.

Stephen: Yeah, um... do you remember any discrimination in Edinburg when you were growing up?

Roy: No. I mean, uh, there...we were really a good community, I mean there was really ...really, I mean everybody blended in, everybody just kind of...

Clara: I didn't have any problems either or hear any problems, like you hear about, the...the recent thing the football players painting the other school and stuff. We did have some of that stuff.

Roy: We did that to...to the neighboring campuses, we would go to McAllen [the Bulldogs were our rivals].

Clara: The bonfires, we used to have bonfires now I guess there not allowed, I don't know if any school has a bonfire.

Aram: They still do, um, but it's kind of controlled though.

Clara: Where? Who has one? Here in Edinburg? Where?

Aram: In San Juan

Clara: San Juan does?

Aram: I think, uh, Alamo, their high school.

Clara: PSJA then? Edinburg has a burning of the C, burning of the E. They just put a big letter up and just light it, put it on fire. That's the...what do you call it...the bonfire now. That's what we do here. You say over there too?

Stephen: Ok, now I'm going on Education, a few questions on that. Um, did your parents want you to get a good education?

Roy: Well, they never really had a good education, so, I mean whatever...whatever we did was probable more superior than what they had. And sometimes it mad, well they didn't really say go to college because most of my, I think most of...my dad probably only went to 4th grade or something like that.

Clara: My mom 7th grade or 8th grade.

Roy: It was, uh, were just, I mean...

Clara: But for me, I mean, Roy wasn't here and my mom either wanted me to be a hairdresser, or a teacher, or a nurse. So she had goals set for me. Well I picked the teacher, but good thing I didn't pick the hairdresser 'cause you don't make money there.

Aram: Yeah.

Stephen: Yeah.

Clara: Our cousin did that, one of the other Rogers, Marilyn, she was older than Roy, about three years older than you, she became a hairdresser. But later she also became a teacher, then she married someone who made a lot of money, so she didn't work.

[Audible Laughter]

Clara: She was lucky; her husband was into computers...computers just got started. So he's from Edinburg too. So they did good, they moved to Plano.

Aram: When you were going to college, I remember, you went to college for a bit. How much was the tuition at the time?

Clara: Uh...

Roy: It wasn't very much; I mean it seemed like it was less than two or three hundred dollars for a semester.

Clara: I was thinking each class was like eight or 10 dollars to take a class. Each class you take was real cheap. They did have that activity fund thing too.

Stephen: And this was in the...

Clara: Sixties.

Roy: But it wasn't in a state supported school, it was a local school at that time. It was um...

Clara: Pan-American University, Pan American College.

Roy: Pan American College.

Clara: They had that student activity fund. They always had that.

Roy: That was in '65-'66.

Clara: I graduated high school in '67 and college in '71 or something...in '71.

Roy: Yeah, it was small, too, it was, it, well, I don't want, I mean, when I went through high school I had no intention of going to college. And I didn't take a lot of courses to prepare me for college, so when I got to college it was a big shock to me.

Stephen: Yeah.

Roy: So I didn't really blend into, I mean...

Clara: He was working in the D.E. program for the high school, worked while you were in school. I think they still have some of those programs.

Roy: Oh! Vocational...vocational school, in high school and I learned to weld in there that was what my, I say, secondary, primary occupation became, a welder.

Clara: And you're still welding, making people gates, and stuff with the weld, so you're still using that.

Stephen: Did you have a favorite subject; I mean in school?

Roy: Well my favorite subject in school, uh, I got one year I had a biology teacher that was so good, wanted me to grow some plants in the green house so every morning I got to school early and I even had to go to the front door and they had to let me in school 'cause I had to take care of the plants, and I felt privileged to be able to do that. Biology and Math was my favorite subject, but not the fancy Math, arithmetic mainly.

Aram: Yeah.

Roy: The old style math.

Stephen: Yeah.

Stephen: Okay, we're going to finish off here with farming the land. We already answered, your mother sustained the land after your father passed away. Um, did your family hire workers to help them out?

Roy: I mean we had workers back in the...I mean my dad when he died was 76 years old and he was still actively involved in the farming, so he had workers that did the actual physical labor.

Stephen: Oh Okay.

Roy: And we always had workers that did the physical labor. He was management of everything.

Stephen: Was it the Bracero program? Migrants?

Roy: That was a big thing for them too because, uh, I mean that was, I don't know...I don't know how that really worked. That was kind of before my time. We had Spanish speaking people... people from basically Mexico living on our property at one time.

Stephen: Okay. And who did the farming in the orchards?

Roy: When I was gone, my mother took care of it herself. We had bought a new kind of, a new tractor before I...after I got out of high school. So she learned to drive the tractor, she did the disking, and all the, not the real hard work, but just, and, when it came to irrigate she got somebody to do that. Then the job fell back on me when I got back.

Aram: I wanted to ask a question. At that time how much would you say it cost to maintain the land, with the equipment and all that?

Roy: It was...It was pretty cheap, but we didn't get a lot of income, it was, uh, proportionally it was just...just to get by, that's why she had to work too.

Stephen: Where did the water come from?

Roy: Rio Grande.

Stephen: I know you mentioned the cistern you would store it in.

Roy: There was a canal system, uh, established in the early 20's and, uh, and everybody bought a little certificate to allow them to water so many acres. And back in those days they built the canal systems that we have here, **and that's how it** got to this area. As time went along they put it underground and just like right now it still comes underground, but it

comes all the way from the river, mind you, and the amazing thing about it is that it's higher by the river than it is here. So they have to put gates in the pipe in the canal system to keep the water from coming too fast. But, however, that was back in the 20's mind you, before we had all this modern technology. We used to figure this out, figure out how to build a canal system. They would do that, build pumps on the river and pump it up high.

Stephen: It would depend on rain also? Right? And the drought?

Roy: Well you had a certain amount of water you were allowed, but you had to depend on rainfall. If you didn't get rainfall and you used your water, well, then you were...I mean you were just, it was kind of rationed or whatever you would say and so it was just...it was just a way of life. Water allotment.

Stephen: How do you calculate how much water for your orchards?

Roy: There's so much gallons in an acre-foot and you're only allowed two irrigations per year, and it's suppose to take two hours to water an acre.

Stephen: So you base it on time?

Roy: On time.

Stephen: Do you remember any, like, first companies or corporations that came into the valley? Like at what time or the first ones?

Roy: When I was, uh, when I was, uh, working or when I was going to college I worked at Wilbur-Ellis, used to be Tide. And there was an agricultural chemicals company, and they did a lot of business with the farmers and had a lot of innovations for farmers.

Stephen: One last question, organic, how do they do it? I mean, I know they...you need pesticides, I mean there is all these bugs how do people...

Roy: There's certain people grow organic stuff, but it doesn't appeal to the public as much as...because of, when you go to the store you want a pretty orange or grapefruit, you don't want one that's rusty, so...when you don't grow that pretty orange or grapefruit it doesn't appeal to the public and that's why a lot of people don't want organic and everything. It costs really more to grow something organically than does...

Stephen: It's more time into it, I mean...

Roy: There's certain things that you have to do that you can't do when you're growing with chemicals and you have, uh...uh, other problems that you need to encounter that...that to grow stuff organically and if it just...it just...

Stephen: A long process?

Roy: Yeah. It takes like 5 years from the time you start growing from regular commercial farming back to organic farming, 'cause you have to clean up your ground, get all, everything, out of it.

Stephen: Wow!

Aram: I was curious can you, like, explain to me the process of growing citrus?

Roy: Well, it, uh, start with a little tree, well actually a seed...

Aram: UmHm.

Roy: And you plant it in a...now they do it in a green house, before they used to do it in a field. They'd plant it maybe 4 or 6 inches apart and then they take them from there when they reach a certain height and transport them further apart. Then they got to bud, then they let them get big and then the bud takes, they take it and plant it in the field. And from the time you plant it in the field it takes probably another 5 years before you really get into commercial production. You're spending your money for all those years.

Aram: UmHm...

Roy: Trying...trying to get it up to, well, like these trees (pointing to trees in the yard) are now probably, they were planted after the '89 freeze.

Stephen: Oh Ok.

Roy: And they're almost getting over the economical productive age there. Getting too old, but I just don't want to...

Stephen: Then you have to re-plant?

Roy: Re-plant them, but I just...I don't...I mean...I don't, at my age I don't want to start.

Stephen: It takes 5 years when it starts producing fruit...

Roy: And it takes a lot of work to do it. I mean when you plant in the orchard, you, we had to tank water, then you, draw, make a ring around them and you put water in their...maybe every 4 or 5 days. It's just like this year is dry, that it's been, maybe a continuous cycle keeping water around them trees. Cause if they dry up they'll die on you, and you got a lot of money invested in each little tree.

Stephen: Yeah.

Roy: It's a big...

Aram: It's a big process

Aram: Uh, I rem... do you remember any, well if you were here in 2004, like, when it snowed? Uh, how was that? How did that go with your uh...?

Roy: Well, uh, the snow isn't as bad as the cold. And the years that we got the snow it didn't hurt the trees as bad as the freeze. Because the freeze...when it snows it's like maybe 32 degrees, something like that. When it freezes it's gotten down to 10 degrees. When it gets down to 10 degrees for 3 or 4 days, and it don't get out of that temperature, I mean, that's just...you just totally wiped out. I mean one of the...we used to have palm trees growing, these big tall, I mean they got that old because we never had a freeze and that particular freeze it got so bad that it froze all the palm trees that had been there for 50 years. And maybe it will be another 50 years before they come back again. They'll never get that big. There's people that planted them along their property...

Stephen: UmHm...

Roy: And they were big, that was kind of a status symbol, that, just like the oak trees...how big oak trees get now, it shows how long you've been living at that house and these palm trees are the same way. They've been in the valley a long time.

Stephen: How much is it a...like, how does it work, by the pound, when you sell your oranges?

Roy: Well, we belong to the association. They pay us after they process them. I mean they pick it, they got to take the expense of harvesting out of it, take the expense of putting it in packages, and we get left over, and that left over sometimes it's not very much because, I mean, every time that they don't, uh, do juice fruit you don't get a good price for that. The best price is when you have, good, clean, fruit, but that's expensive to grow and your trees have got to be young and viable, I'll say.

Appendix 2

Outdoor interview of:

Roy C. Roegiers

Conducted on: October 18, 2016

At: 2912 N. Roegiers Road Edinburg, Texas 78539

Interviewee: Roy C. Roegiers (RR)

Interviewers: Jesus A. Sierra (JS) & Lucas Torres (LT)

Jesus Sierra: Proceeding with the interview you said that this was a fertilizer machine

Roy Roegiers: A Fertilizer machine

Jesus Sierra: Ok, and these are the wooden handles that you were explaining that the bean planter would probably have

Roy Roegiers: But this probably a hundred years' old

Jesus Sierra: A hundred years old wow

Roy Roegiers: I don't know maybe 80, 90 years old

Jesus Sierra: What are these?

Roy Roegiers: This is what my dad used in the dairy business this is where you put the cows head in there and that way the cow had a feed through on the other and it would eat and feed while they milked

Jesus Sierra: And this is all you guys had

Roy Roegiers: Well four was a pretty good number of cows to have I never worked but I mean you have to milk them twice a day might take thirty or forty minutes each cow to milk it so I mean you had one or two hands to milk or maybe four hands to milk all of them at one time then you would have to put four more in there. Four more in there so I don't know how long a person wanted to endure I mean

Jesus Sierra: The other thing about that ah that you are saying what was the amount of dairy cattle that you had

Roy Roegiers: I think it was around thirty

Jesus Sierra: Thirty cows were you guys the only family in the dairy business here in the Valley

Roy Roegiers: I think there was a lot of little family farms because it was just a good occupation to be in. Besides everybody needed milk down here I say. It was a just an item that was perishable I say, that needed to be consumed fast.

Jesus Sierra: Did you guys have any other family's dairy families that you know

Roy Roegiers: I don't know if they did or not because I was too young

Jesus Sierra: You were still too young

Roy Roegiers: I was too young we got out of the business probably around 1953

Jesus Sierra: How about this one right here

Roy Roegiers: That is a grain drill that one you see has a wooden tongue so I expect that it was pulled by horses at one time. I don't think you have a picture of that one

Jesus Sierra: So it was pulled by horses and it would start planting?

Roy Roegiers: No the wheels would actually turn something in the mechanism to distribute the seed that would fall down the tubes and that is why it is spaced so often and that way

Jesus Sierra: For the rows

Roy Roegiers: For the rows

Jesus Sierra: And this right here

Roy Roegiers: That was to rake hay

Jesus Sierra: To rake hay

Roy Roegiers: Yeah to rake hay, that was way before they had hay balers I mean they pick it up and put in in wagons and take it to the hay loft

Jesus Sierra: Did you all have a hayloft

Roy Roegiers: Ah they may have had one but I mean that was before my time

Jesus Sierra: And I know that you do the bales now,

Roy Roegiers: Yes square bales and round bales

Jesus Sierra: If you were to do the comparison to this machine to what you have now?

Roy Roegiers: Well when I was young man probably your age I used to be able to pick up bales square bales probably 65 pounds maybe all day long so now I can't find anyone to do the work that is why I do the round bales and I have no hand labor cost that is why a lot of people do the round bales.

Jesus Sierra: And this over here

Roy Roegiers: I built that

Jesus Sierra: You built this!!

Roy Roegiers: Yes, because we used to take down the borders in the orchards, like the boquilla every several rows and that was designed to go in the three-point hitch of the tractor and drive through there and it would split the border down and levels it back down

Lucas Torres: What do you call it

Roy Roegiers: Border knocker down

Jesus Sierra: How about those

Roy Roegiers: That was a fertilizer machine that fit a ford tractor

Jesus Sierra: Ford Tractor

Roy Roegiers: So I mean that is progress I got those made when I was in high school they were left over from another tractor and we got those adapted to the Ford tractor because we got a Ford

Jesus Sierra: How about the bike

Roy Roegiers: The bike

Jesus Sierra: Was that something you used when you were a child or you just had there

Roy Roegiers: Well my uncle accumulated a lot of bikes lots of the time because that was his only commute he used them to go to work. That was how he could commute from the country to go to town to work. And he got an old bicycle and said ah I'll give it to you. So it's just sentimental again my uncle gave it to me. Some people have wanted to buy that bicycle because they have never seen one like it. But you know I

Jesus Sierra: You know a little bit about it

Roy Roegiers: Well it has shock absorbers in the front that is why they say it is unusual to find a bicycle with that

Jesus Sierra: I remember the Schwinn's had two shock absorbers the way that one has one the Schwinn's had two I don't know if you recall that

Roy Roegiers: I didn't get a bicycle until I was ten or twelve years old. I never used bicycles until then.

Jesus Sierra: This one right here is this also a fertilizer spreader

Roy Roegiers: That is home made

Jesus Sierra: I can see that; it is very interesting to see that you used a differential to turn the wheels with a spinner to spread the fertilizer

Roy Roegiers: Some way or another in your r notation you need to write it, it needs to be documented.

Jesus Sierra: I saw it the first day and I was like wait a minute I did a double take and said that is a deferential

Roy Roegiers: It was built about 60 years ago in a blacksmith shop. It is welded in the input shaft and then it is welded to the disc machine, yes from the one that break the ground. It had a shorter tongue and made it longer. It had a bigger turning radius. I actually planted buffle grass seed.

Jesus Sierra: Bubble grass

Roy Roegiers: Buffalo grass

Jesus Sierra: Buffle

Roy Roegiers: Buffle, it's a grass that grows in dry land but its real kind a hairy grass seed that is very difficult to distribute so we put in here

Lucas Torres: Good grass for the cows, it came from Africa, it was introduced to the Valley around 1950

Roy Roegiers: Yeah

Jesus Sierra: How about this one right here

Roy Roegiers: You (Farmers) used to use this one right after they plowed or disced your land you would end up with clods and it is called a clod breaker or something

Jesus Sierra: Kinda turned the dirt finer in a sense

Roy Roegiers: It might have been pulled by horses too at one time

Jesus Sierra: As time progressed you had to fix the equipment you had to work with what you had at your time and this right here

Roy Roegiers: This is pulled by horse...

Jesus Sierra: And this has the wooden handles it got some of the...

Roy Roegiers: Original wooden handles, you can probably still find the handle up north like in Amish country I think it looks more original that way.

Lucas Torres: what is this called you said

Roy Roegiers: That is a cultivator c-u-l-t-i-v-a-t-o-r or something it was a people driven cultivator is it working

Jesus Sierra: Yeah it's still working

Roy Roegiers: Yeah a people driven cultivator you push it through the field it has a big wheel on it

Jesus Sierra: And start working

Roy Roegiers: This is the same way it had people cultivator it used to have little things for if you had delicate crops like carrots or and get real close to them and probably ride on top in the bed and just kinda watch him plow out the crops.

Jesus Sierra: Those are lawnmowers right

Roy Roegiers: Yeah those are just, and hmm there is one that has steel wheels. That's why I kept them all is just as time progressed they changed.

Jesus Sierra: What are you going to put a tractor on the back (laughter)

Roy Roegiers: (laughter) that one was probably designed to be pulled from this side, and I designed it to push from the back, because there were different time that I wanted it to move dirt, I did a lot of crazy things

Jesus Sierra: where did you learn to do all that machinery and welding?

Roy Roegiers: I learned to weld in high school and that is where I guess my innovation whatever you want to call it and that is a hand duster over there it used to have a handle on it have you ever seen one the backpack sprayer

Jesus Sierra: Yes

Roy Roegiers: It is just like that, you put the dust in there you see the bellows right there

Jesus Sierra: O yes right there

Roy Roegiers: The bellows do the pressure and dust the crops and things like that

Jesus Sierra: Very interesting the way you set up everything right here and

Roy Roegiers: I ordered these rocks and they came in very dirty, and it took me about a month to wash them. I washed every rock here I saved the big rocks for the rock garden

Jesus Sierra: So all these stones you ordered them from where

Roy Roegiers: Ah just from a place by Rio Grande City

Jesus Sierra: Rio Grande City ok

Roy Roegiers: And the stuff that I washed out of was very fine stuff and put it in there in the drive because it was always muddy and so found a use for it

Jesus Sierra: Can we walk around a little bit more

Roy Roegiers: Yes

Lucas Torres: What is the time?

Jesus Sierra: About eleven

Lucas Torres: Ah ok

Roy Roegiers: This is a spike tooth harrow

Jesus Sierra: A spike tooth

Roy Roegiers: See it has teeth and you used to be able to adjust it and there is probably around three section or four sections that lay side by side

Jesus Sierra: And that was used for:

Roy Roegiers: It was used to smooth the ground out

Jesus Sierra: So it was used to smoothing the ground out ok, your barb wire so did you guys have your land fenced? All of your land or

Roy Roegiers: I took this down in 1976 of a piece of land that I rented from somebody and I just never did anything with it

Jesus Sierra: Ok you rented the land from somebody?

Roy Roegiers: Yeah

Jesus Sierra: What were you planting there?

Roy Roegiers: Grain and corn

Jesus Sierra: Grain

Roy Roegiers: Yeah and milo and corn

Jesus Sierra: But when you were young; when your father had the eighty acres was that fenced or

Roy Roegiers: No that wasn't fenced

Jesus Sierra: That wasn't fences

Roy Roegiers: You don't like to have fences around row crops because that just makes it harder to do tillage and planting

Jesus Sierra: Especial with the equipment and machinery and

Roy Roegiers: Did you take a picture of that one

Lucas Torres: No didn't get a picture of that one, what is it?

Roy Roegiers: That is a brush pusher after freezes

Lucas Torres: A brush pusher?

Roy Roegiers: Brush pusher when you prune your trees you throw everything out to the middle and then you push it out to the fire with that thing

Lucas Torres: What is it called, you said?

Roy Roegiers: I call it a brush pusher

Jesus Sierra: Brush pusher

Roy Roegiers: A citrus brush pusher

Jesus Sierra: And the citrus that you guys have, since your family was into the dairy, when did they plant the trees?

Roy Roegiers: My dad probably planted the trees on some 9 acres in 1925-30 we have picture of them in my sister's house from an aerial photo of it back in the maybe 40's or 50's we really haven't looked at the date but I mean they been

Jesus Sierra: They've been around

Roy Roegiers: They've be around, but these are all young tress, I'd say young tress maybe 20 or 25 years old because they froze and I planted them

Jesus Sierra: You replanted them

Roy Roegiers: Yup

Jesus Sierra: And that freeze what other crops did it affect your family farm

Roy Roegiers: At that time our main thing was citrus

Jesus Sierra: Citrus

Roy Roegiers: Yup

Jesus Sierra: Was it just this or you also had part of the 80 acres

Roy Roegiers: We had this right here and some more over there we probably had half of this in citrus at one point

Jesus Sierra: And that point of time you had no more...

Roy Roegiers: We had someone to take care of the open land well I was the one taking care of some of the open well what I call the open land. Where the row crops were, and then I had an uncle while I was taking care of it for my mother while I was in the in the service gone.

Jesus Sierra: You were in the service? What branch were you in?

Roy Roegiers: Navy

Jesus Sierra: Navy. Were you in any of the...

Roy Roegiers: I was in Vietnam

Jesus Sierra: Vietnam, how long were you on the service for?

Roy Roegiers: I spent 4 years in the regular and 17 years in the reserves

Jesus Sierra: Thank you for your service, (walking and clears throat...) since we are already, the big machine that you have out there

Roy Roegiers: The flying saucer

Jesus Sierra: Yes, the flying saucer

Roy Roegiers: And probably see it through the fence (walking to edge of property)

Jesus Sierra: Yeah

Roy Roegiers: This are some old bed springs I mean you see a flowerbed at my sister's house

Jesus Sierra: Yes

Roy Roegiers: Those are the old bedsprings of the flowerbed

Jesus Sierra: Ok

Roy Roegiers: That's why I call it the flower bed because she plants flowers on it and everybody wonders (flower Bed)

Jesus Sierra: You did that for her

Roy Roegiers: Yeah

Jesus Sierra: Nice

Roy Roegiers: Yeah the bed turned into a flowerbed. This is modern equipment right here.

Jesus Sierra: and this is your home right?

Roy Roegiers: Yea this is my home.

Jesus Sierra: The stone?

Roy Roegiers: The stone goes all around the house

Jesus Sierra: Ok was the way parents

Roy Roegiers: they put it on like the 50's

Jesus Sierra: 50's

Lucas Torres: Is that the stone they brought from Oklahoma?

Roy Roegiers: Yes, they left it, they dropped it off. I don't know if you know where Wallace use to be? There is a packing shed back there just passed where the railroad track is now

Jesus Sierra: On this side

Roy Roegiers: Courts

Jesus Sierra: Yes

Roy Roegiers: On that side of the road they dropped it off there and we had to haul off all this rock with an old Chevy pickup truck.

Jesus Sierra: Old Chevy pickup, I see that's what you still have.

Roy Roegiers: Yeah

Jesus Sierra: (Laughing)

Roy Roegiers: Not that one

Jesus Sierra: No but you still have Chevy that's what I mean.

Roy Roegiers: yeah

Jesus Sierra: So all the stone

Roy Roegiers: All the... stone it took us many trips

Jesus Sierra: And what was you could say the purpose behind bringing the stone was it

Roy Roegiers: All of it

Jesus Sierra: And what was you could say the purpose behind bringing the stone was it?

Roy Roegiers: It's just decorative around the house

Jesus Sierra: Decorative ok

Roy Roegiers: This is the cellar

Jesus Sierra: Oh

Jesus Sierra: And what was your father happen

Roy Roegiers: We think he came from Kansas and we think that when you live in Kansas you have tornados...

Jesus Sierra: Tornados

Roy Roegiers: ...and so he probably just he didn't know that we didn't have tornados down here, so he probably built it. The shelter is probably a lot cooler we use to have shelves for storing home canned goods there and he use to make wine and different thing like that and that's where he did all that. This is, have you seen this?

Lucas Torres: what's it called?

Jesus Sierra: Is that a bell or does this

Roy Roegiers: That's a cistern.

Jesus Sierra: Cistern

Roy Roegiers: When it rains hard it use to come off the house going in there and I think they filtered it. That where we use to take our suction for our water to wash dishes actually drinks it too, that was probably attached to this one time. I haven't taken this off in ages. It still got water in it.

Jesus Sierra: Yep

Roy Roegiers: I'm surprised because this with this big tree I'm sure the foundation is broken. Not much water.

Lucas Torres: How old do you think this is? (Cistern)

Roy Roegiers: I think it was probably built when he first got here. In 1920

Lucas Torres: Ever since you can remember yourself you remember this

Roy Roegiers: I remember that just like know it's open (talking about the cellar)

Lucas Torres: ok

Roy Roegiers: When we were kids my mother said, "Don't get close to that because you'll fall in. I left it open for everybody to

Jesus Sierra: To see it?

Roy Roegiers: To see it. I put the concrete steps to it. (the cellar) It use to have wooden steps.

Lucas Torres: How big is it in there?

Roy Roegiers: Go down and see

Lucas Torres: Is it a 10 by 10 or what?

Jesus Sierra: My phone is dead so.

Lucas Torres: Aw ok. I say it's like an 8 by Maybe 8 by 10.

Roy Roegiers: All concrete wall

Lucas Torres: Ok

Jesus Sierra: And your cousin said that your uncle also had one

Roy Roegiers: They also had one at their house

Lucas Torres: This is the area

Roy Roegiers: That they found

Lucas Torres: Where is the area where you all use to burn your trash?

Roy Roegiers: Probably way back where the barn is

Lucas Torres: This is called what?

Roy Roegiers: That's another cistern that was built in the 50's to store water in also came from the river

Jesus Sierra: Came from the river?

Roy Roegiers: Yeah

Lucas Torres: This is not a water well?

Roy Roegiers: No the only water that came from the river

Lucas Torres: So how does it how does it river drain in there?

Roy Roegiers: It catches the rain and then it comes in here

Jesus Sierra: From the irrigation system

Roy Roegiers: It has underground pipeline over that way

Lucas Torres: So is this more modern than that one over there.

Roy Roegiers: Can you imagine digging that one by hand? It's probably about 10 feet deep. And it wasThis is Roy, it probably has the date around here somewhere.

Jesus Sierra: will it still be functional?

Roy Roegiers: It probably will be functional. If you wanted to bleach it out and clean it up. But since we have north Alamo water now we won't have to worry about that anymore.

Jesus Sierra: When did you start having running water in here.

Roy Roegiers: We had running water for

Lucas Torres: Right here, it says 19 and then it got a 53 in here (the number was very clear)

Roy Roegiers: Yea it's probably 1953. Maybe one eight

Jesus Sierra: There is another date over here. There too, February 18, 1953

Lucas Torres: You were born in what year?

Roy Roegiers: Forty-seven

Lucas Torres: Forty-seven, six years old.

Roy Roegiers: Six years old, that's why I don't remember much about that either. I remember digging a hole. I remember trying to get out that hole.

Lucas Torres: where is the area where the Braceros

Roy Roegiers: I show you

Lucas Torres: Ok. There is like a foundation in the ground, right?

Roy Roegiers: I think maybe the when the geologist comes maybe he works in here should try to work a little bit especially

Jesus Sierra: Around that area

Roy Roegiers: There is the flying saucer.

Jesus Sierra: That's the flying saucer. So that is also to level out the land?

Roy Roegiers: That's to get the vines and stuff out from underneath the trees

Jesus Sierra: Ok

Lucas Torres: But you haven't used it, right?

Roy Roegiers: I've used it in here

Lucas Torres: Pretty banged up over there

Roy Roegiers: Oh yea, its banged up its because I've hit trees with it

Jesus Sierra: It is serving its purpose.

Roy Roegiers: And it did not have enough weight on it, so I used same old window weights.

Lucas Torres: Know I see that your workers have been scrapping off, pulling off, the vines missed by the flying saucer

Roy Roegiers: I have a man that doing that because of the vines missed by the flying saucer

Lucas Torres: Manually

Roy Roegiers: Trying to get a tumor

Jesus Sierra: What were some of the animals that you would see? Wild animals.

Roy Roegiers: Aww there was probably coyotes and jack rabbits, and cotton tails.

Jesus Sierra: Cotton tails. I was reading on one of them the previous reports that they had said that there was wild donkeys

Roy Roegiers: That might have been possible because my dad brought two or three mules, so they must have had domestic animals. Bring some mules to work in, but this was all brush.

Jesus Sierra: Yeah

Roy Roegiers: I mean if you can visualize going to San Manuel or someplace like that to clear all that brush by hand it was just a big job like 20 acres like that. Make it productive

Jesus Sierra: People complain about cutting a city lot now and days. Can you imagine before

Lucas Torres: Let me ask you something about them horny toads

Roy Roegiers: We were talking about that today, nobody says they've seen horny toads anymore, I don't know where they went to. I don't know if they just got captured by and they are in somebody private collection or just got instinct.

Lucas Torres: There was a report of one of the Eubanks they describe that right after the Beulah hurricane they were all gone

Roy Roegiers: Yeah, they probably drowned they had nowhere to, I mean

Lucas Torres: Yeah, water was around for days, right?

Roy Roegiers: Yeah, they probably didn't, they were amphibians, I guess you could say they were a dry land animal that they didn't have enough sense to get up on something.

Lucas Torres: take us back to your navy experience, when you were out there in '67 that's when Beulah hit here, what communications did you have with your mom?

Roy Roegiers: I did not have any communications I was they use to post little tid bids on the wire photo, I mean wire service if you look up its just like the, well I can't describe that, maybe we get the high light of what was going on in the United States and every once in a while they would see in there, I'd see the valley is isolated place. O my god no electricity, no good water to drink, here I am all the way to Vietnam. What can I do for them? It just made you worry to, I got mail from them that wasn't very regularly either. It just kind of

Lucas Torres: You mentioned the other day that something that they charged so much for a minute to call from

Roy Roegiers: When our ship was home port in Guam, and we would come in there and I think it was like seven dollars a minute to talk to the United States and you had to really try to relay to the people, I mean there is different times from here in Guam, so we had to know to be awake or sleep or they going to be home because of they didn't charge anything, you go over there and make your phone call, or maybe no one be around. So it would just be a waste of effort for everybody.

Lucas Torres: You still remember that number?

Roy Roegiers: Well in 1956 was one of the numbers back early phones and 2956 was one of the land lines, land lines, so you probably can look through different phone books and still find them the names of us in the phone books.

Lucas Torres: How much did it flood here?

Roy Roegiers: It didn't actually flood here. At least well I wasn't here to see it but they said the water was just like saturated and it really wasn't, I mean but you can see this is pretty high ground here.

Lucas Torres: The railroad track

Roy Roegiers: The railroad track was high and it didn't get passed by the railroad tracks.

Jesus Sierra: Where were the railroad tracks?

Roy Roegiers: It was up there where the gate is.

Jesus Sierra: Ok

Roy Roegiers: Right there in the front. Didn't you see the sign up there?

Jesus Sierra: I saw the sign. I just never

Roy Roegiers: The sign

Jesus Sierra: And it went parallel to the street

Roy Roegiers: Parallel to the street.

Lucas Torres: Did you see any of the animals back then? Compared to now, I know there is a whole bunch of jack rabbits. Jack rabbits, right?

Roy Roegiers: Not many jack rabbits. I see one every once in a while out there while I'm working, I mean there has been times when I was younger that almost hunt them because there was so many of them. Know you

Lucas Torres: White tail?

Roy Roegiers: Jack tail, Jack rabbits.

Lucas Torres: But the small bunnies (cottontail bunnies)

Jesus Sierra: Cotton tail

Roy Roegiers: there wasn't much of them either. You really weren't hunting for rabbits.

Jesus Sierra: and where was the Bracero?

Roy Roegiers: this is kind of the main part of it. There is another little room back here and a little bit over this way, so I mean would be a good place for the geologist too

Jesus Sierra: to come and

Lucas Torres: we already mentioned it to Santos, perhaps we might bring a metal detector to see if we can find, even if we can find some coins from Mexico because I'm sure that

people that came here, I'm sure they brought Mexican coins, they must have dropped something that we could recover here.

Roy Roegiers: they might even have some

Lucas Torres: spoon or something

Roy Roegiers: maybe beer bottle tops or something like that

Lucas Torres: some corona?

Roy Roegiers: If it hadn't rusted away, there may be some medicine bottles, or some stuff down there too.

Lucas Torres: how many do you think your father had here Braceros?

Roy Roegiers: we may have had 5 or 6 or 7 mainly when we had cotton to pick

Jesus Sierra: or it was mainly during the cotton season.

Roy Roegiers: During season. (cotton season)

Lucas Torres: do you remember any of the guys when you were small? Ever seen them working

Roy Roegiers: I remember seeing them working, work and sometimes well like I say, I was eleven when my dad died and we were after that my mother didn't want to have all those people around here so she just quit having them around.

Jesus Sierra: so who would pick the crops after that?

Roy Roegiers: after that well after my dad died we kind of abandoned the real farming part of it and gave it to somebody else. One of my other cousins

Jesus Sierra: Ok, so basically you guys were renting out the land

Roy Roegiers: yeah

Jesus Sierra: ok. The barn

Roy Roegiers: this is new

Lucas Torres: The cow was put on this foundation and while it was eating someone milked it.

Roy Roegiers: Yah.

Lucas Torres: There is no refrigerator, what did your father do with the milk?

Roy Roegiers: He would take it to be processed at Golden Jersey and put in bottles. It had to be distributed immediately.

Lucas Torres: There is an old creamery by the courthouse?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. That is the old place where they would take the milk.

Lucas Torres: That is the Golden Jersey Creamery?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. That is the Golden Jersey Creamery.

Lucas Torres: That building is still in existence. They are now law offices and there is a restaurant in building.

Roy Roegiers: This is a picture of my house. This is how it looked like before we put the rocks around it.

Roy Roegiers: We are looking at the old structure part of the barn where the cows were milked. There is a sink and some tools that were used back then.

Lucas Torres: These are saws?

Roy Roegiers: This is a one person saw and this other one is a two person saw.

Lucas Torres: These are some of the tools your father used to clear out trees?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. He used these saws and axes.

Lucas Torres: Was this a fire pit?

Roy Roegiers: This is a fire pit that I build to sit outside and watch television.

Lucas Torres: During cold weather, they used old heaters. I haven't seen those old heaters.

Roy Roegiers: Come over here. I'll show you a heater but, it is not complete.

Lucas Torres: What kind of rock is that?

Roy Roegiers: I call it river rock. It's sandstone.

Lucas Torres: It's sandstone.

Roy Roegiers: We had a rent house that had all these stones around it. When the house got old we took the stones off and brought them over here. (farm) That is why I made that ledge to put the stone there. I never did it. I am too old now.

Lucas Torres: You were going to make that ledge?

Roy Roegiers: Yah. Here are the heaters?

Lucas Torres: How many heaters did you all have?

Roy Roegiers: I have no idea. We called those smudge pots.

Lucas Torres: These heaters are called smudge pots.

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: I have seen 30 to 40 in the fields at a time.

Roy Roegiers: These heaters used kerosene fuel to burn. They may burn 3 to 4 hours.

Lucas Torres: These heaters were used for the outside.

Roy Roegiers: They are used outside to heat the orchards to control the temperature.

Lucas Torres: Tell us about the freezes.

Roy Roegiers: Oh, the freezes are really bad; because, it wipes out your livelihood for many years. If it freezes, you have to replant the trees. It will take five years to get back into production again. You have to take care of the baby trees.

Lucas Torres: It takes 5 years to produce again?

Roy Roegiers: You have to make sure the trees don't dry. You have to tank water them 4 or 5 gallons twice a week. It's time consuming and a lot of work.

Lucas Torres: What year was most devastating to the orchard production?

Roy Roegiers: There were many years that were devastating to the orchard production. But, I think it was in '89 the most devastating year. We had one in '83 and in the '60th

Lucas Torres: In '89 how many acres did you lose?

Roy Roegiers: I probably lost 50 percent of the trees. Some trees were burn really bad. We had to replant the trees.

Lucas Torres: Your family was the first to pick the first bale of cotton.

Roy Roegiers: The cotton was picked by hand. There were no machines then.

Lucas Torres: What was the price for the bale of cotton?

Roy Roegiers: It was about 2 cents a pound.

Lucas Torres: Would they pay much more for the first bail of cotton?

Roy Roegiers: No. Not back then. You were just recognized as one of the best farmers in the newspaper.

Lucas Torres: What year did your family picked the first bail of cotton?

Roy Roegiers: I think it was in '51 or '52.

Lucas Torres: The first bale of cotton in 1951 was picked by your family.

Roy Roegiers: Yes. I don't remember if it was here in Edinburg or somewhere else in Texas.

Lucas Torres: What cotton gin did you take the cotton to?

Roy Roegiers: There was a cotton gin on 18th street. It used to be where Junior's store is. The cotton gin has to be remote because of the dust that it gives off.

Roy Roegiers: These cots came out from the old jail. They remodeled the jail.

Lucas Torres: They are very uncomfortable.

Roy Roegiers: The prisoners have a good life now.

Lucas Torres: What vegetables did you all planted?

Roy Roegiers: I don't remember; I was 11 years old.

Lucas Torres: Where did your father get the ice.

Roy Roegiers: Icing Dock.

Jesus Sierra: Is that what is called “Yeleria”

Roy Roegiers: The big, white, 3 story build that is still there.

Lucas Torres: Tell us a little bit about what you remember about your father?

Roy Roegiers: He was very old; so, I saw him like my grandfather. He was 76 years old and I was 11-years old there was a lot of years difference.

Lucas Torres: You said your father had a heart attack?

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: Where did that happen?

Roy Roegiers: In the house. He was sitting in his chair relaxing then he was not responsive to my mother. We took him to the hospital but, he was already dead.

Lucas Torres: What Elementary School did you attended?

Roy Roegiers: I went to Sacred Heart Catholic School and Saint Joseph. Jefferson Elementary School for 1 year that was for 4th grade.

Lucas Torres: Where did you go to Middle School?

Roy Roegiers: Where the administration used to be.

Lucas Torres: What year did you graduated?

Roy Roegiers: I graduated in 1965.

Lucas Torres: Do you see any of the people that you went to school with?

Roy Roegiers: Every once in a while I see someone. I didn’t have vary many friends. We just had our 50th class reunion a year ago. I saw some people for the first time. They still recognized me.

Lucas Torres: What kind of car did you drive?

Roy Roegiers: A 65 Ford Fairlane

Lucas Torres: Brand new car?

Roy Roegiers: Yah. Brand new.

Lucas Torres: Just for the record we are concluding today’s interview

Appendix 3

Interviewee: Roy Roegiers

Interviewer: Lucas Torres Jr

Date: October 20, 2016

Location: Roegiers's home located at 2912 North Roegiers Road, Edinburg, Texas

On October 20, 2016, I, Lucas Torres Jr. interviewed Mr. Roy Roegiers at his home. Our interview took place outside. During our interview, a cool front and storm hit us as our interview was in progress. My questions to Mr. Roegiers were regarding outdoors events that took place when he was growing up. Mr. Roegiers spoke about the house cellar, Braceros, farm equipment, and other issues that impacted his life. The interview provided important information in our understanding regarding land, daily activities, and upbringing.

Lucas Torres: Today is Thursday, October 19, 2016 (Date should be October 20, 2016) it's about 6:15 PM, my name is Lucas Torres, I'm a student at UT-RGV-Chaps Program. Today, I find myself with Mr. Roy Roegiers.

Lucas Torres: Are you in agreement with today's questions Mr. Roy?

Roy Roegiers: Whatever they are

Lucas Torres: I am glad to hear that Roy. You are giving us an account of things that happened in the past and current things. Is that correct?

Roy Roegiers: Yes

Lucas Torres: Today, we are going back over there to the storage room where you had that sink so we can identify some of the tools you have there on the wall.

Roy Roegiers: okay

(As we are walking to the storage room from the front of the house, we spoke of the hot weather which was around 99 degrees. A cold front was expected later on the evening. As the interview continued, the cool front came in pretty aggressive from the north as it came with heavy rain.)

Lucas Torres: This room...

Roy Roegiers: That's the milk house

Lucas Torres: Milk house

Roy Roegiers: Because we used to separate the crème from the milk in the little house

Lucas Torres: okay.

Lucas Torres: When was this room right here built?

Roy Roegiers: Oh, probably in the 20's or the 30's.

Lucas Torres: Okay that sink that we have here?

Roy Roegiers: Actually, that sink came out of the house

Lucas: We see some (mechanical) tools

Roy Roegiers: From various implements from different time periods because left over back on the old days they used to furnish you with some tools so you could operate with them

Lucas Torres: We see here (I pointed at some old hand saws which were hanging from the wall. They appeared to be old and rusted.)

Roy Roegiers: A double, two men saw, bucking saw
Lucas Torres: We have a smaller one over here
Roy Roegiers: a handsaw, it was probably used to clear brush in the field. A lot of these are broken but still put on there anyway.
Lucas Torres: Just for the record, you have open wrenches, right?
Roy Roegiers: right
Lucas Torres: you have here an L wrench?
Roy Roegiers: it may have been used for nuts on a wheel
Lucas Torres: that's a kind of interesting tool
Roy Roegiers: Speed wrenches to turn it faster.
Lucas Torres: I pointed out at some metal tongs.
Roy Roegiers: I made that for when cooking corn
Lucas Torres: So is it pretty old also?
Roy Roegiers: It not it's probably about 20 years old.
Lucas Torres: Whatever happened to that what's that called monkey wrench?
Roy Roegiers: It's called a pipe wrench, I probably tried to put a cheater pipe on it and broke it.
Lucas Torres: You got yourself here a...
Roy Roegiers: That is what you called a single tree
Lucas Torres: A single tree?
Roy Roegiers: You put that where the two horses are hitched
Lucas Torres: Is that when you're gonna pull a wagon
Roy Roegiers: It is for the implements out there (He is referring to the antique farm equipment pulled by horses)
Lucas Torres: And? (I pointed out at a tool that appeared to be hacksaw)
Roy Roegiers: It's just a handsaw
Lucas Torres: It's a handsaw. Is that like sort of a Japanese type saw?
Roy Roegiers: Nah it probably you put your wood cross buck and you can saw, make firewood out of it.
Lucas Torres: (I pointed at an item hanging from the ceiling.)
Roy Roegiers: That's something to do with the milking business I think we used to run. There used to be a cotton filter in there.
Lucas Torres: okay
Roy Roegiers: In the inside of it, and then you pour the milk in there. It comes running out in the separator.
Lucas Torres: I see that it has little holes so it can drain in there.
Lucas Torres: There are other tools out there, I see this right here.
Roy Roegiers: It was probably used to shovel coals into a stove
Lucas Torres: okay, (I then pointed at a hook hanging from the ceiling.)
Roy Roegiers: It was used to hang animals, dead animals
Lucas Torres: It's a metal hook, Okay
Roy Roegiers: Ready to butcher them
Lucas Torres: So this room has some interesting stories
Lucas Torres: I would to like say, it's a 10 by 16 (I was referring to the size of the milk house.)
Roy Roegiers: Are you going to take pictures in here?
Lucas Torres: I'll take some pictures
Roy Roegiers: This is like the inside of it take pictures of the outside

Lucas Torres: We are looking at the north side part of the building, which has two windows right?

Roy Roegiers: Yea

Lucas Torres: And we can't see outside obviously because it is covered

Roy Roegiers: I put a cover because they are not waterproof, weather proof

Lucas Torres: But you also have...

Roy Roegiers: Plywood on the outside

Lucas Torres: You don't have...

Roy Roegiers: Cement blocks

Lucas Torres: How bout this right here (as I pointed at a mirror)

Roy Roegiers: It's an old mirror...that little basket up there was used gather eggs in it..

Lucas Torres: This little basket (I pointed at the basket) okay

Roy Roegiers: I see a baseball in there...

Lucas Torres: oh yeah...

Lucas Torres: How bout that tin can over there, its looks like a coffee can

Roy Roegiers: it probably used to be old coffee can, a coffee pot you would put over open flames

Lucas Torres: Okay

Roy Roegiers: There over on top you can see some milk bottles

Lucas Torres: oh yeah...oh yea you got some milk bottles, you are right

Roy Roegiers: And this used to turn butter...

Lucas Torres: It's a small barrel glass, maybe a two or three-gallon size

Roy Roegiers: Panels inside and it rotates to makes the butter...

Lucas Torres: Let me take some photographs, hold on! What is this supposed to be? That chair?

Roy Roegiers: That used to be in a movie theater,

Lucas Torres: ahhh

Roy Roegiers: When they took them out...there was a whole bunch of them..i said I'll take some of those.

Lucas Torres: What theater we are talking about.

Roy Roegiers: It was on East Harriman

Lucas Torres: In Edinburg...East Harriman?

Roy Roegiers: Harriman

Lucas Torres: It wasn't the theater you and your dad used to go?

Roy Roegiers: No, actually probably if you look this up theaters have Spanish speaking movies

Lucas Torres: What area is close to that theater that....is not there anymore right..?

Roy Roegiers: No the theater is not there...there is a pool hall its right there in first block just east of the courthouse.

Lucas Torres: On university drive, that leads all the way to 281?...

Roy Roegiers: yep there use to be called "Harriman."

Lucas Torres: There is a pool house on the north side of the street? Is that might be the one

Roy Roegiers: it's on the south side, it might be a lawyer's office...

Lucas Torres: okay, it's kind of interesting this is like a three seat

Roy Roegiers: yep, there is more of them...I have another one, it single one somewhere else, I think they came in groups of 10 or 12's, something like that..

Lucas Torres: I'm going to pause for second here we are going to take some photographs....
(PAUSE)

Lucas Torres: As we continue right now, Roy

Roy Roegiers: Do we take a picture of the smudge pot?

Lucas Torres: Oh yea, let's go back over here...Is it a smudge pot?

Roy Roegiers: yes

Lucas Torres: Going back to the smudge pot. What are they for? Can you describe that heater?

Roy Roegiers: They used to put kerosene or diesel fuel in there and light it in the wintertime having a freeze that would increase the temperature in the orchard. Keep it from freezing.

Lucas Torres: Yes...They are kinda interesting those heaters. And..I would imagine they would need several of those, Right?

Roy Roegiers: They probably had one for every four trees.

Lucas Torres: Okay

Roy Roegiers: I mean and then maybe skip one tree, one spot

Lucas Torres: We are looking maybe...

Roy Roegiers: Hundreds of them!

Lucas Torres: Hundreds

Lucas Torres: (I am taking photographs of the smudge pot. The smudge pot is old and its chimney has been broken).

Lucas Torres: Roy is holding on to the...what is that thing called (Roy was holding to the chimney as I was taking photographs).

Roy Roegiers: The chimney...

Lucas Torres: The chimney there you go

Lucas Torres: Did we miss anything here in the back yesterday, no right?

Roy Roegiers: Did you get a real good picture of the "flying saucer?"

Lucas Torres: No, let's go take a photograph of it, "flying saucer."

Lucas Torres: The flying saucer my understanding you mentioned yesterday is to remove like all these weeds that are climbing the trees.

Roy Roegiers: the trees

Lucas Torres: it rips off the roots from the bottom, right?

Lucas Torres: It kinda scrapes along the ground, prevents them from growing, pull off the ground.

Lucas Torres: Okay

Lucas Torres: (we are going to the back)..You know what why don't we take photographs of this foundation, right?

Roy Roegiers: okay

Lucas Torres: Okay this is the foundation that you mentioned the other day

Roy Roegiers: There used to be a house where our labors lived, spent the nights, whatever...

Lucas Torres: okay

Roy Roegiers: cots, beds...It was a very not a fancy house but at least a roof over their head.

Lucas Torres: Exactly...

Lucas Torres: We are talking here about Braceros

Roy Roegiers: Braceros, I think that's what they were called

Lucas Torres: Yea, we are talking about Hispanic Mexican people...

Roy Roegiers: Yea, right

Lucas Torres: Was there a name...I heard some stories and documentaries regarding them being called back then being called which now a kind of obscene or remark, actually back then used to be called, "Wetbacks."

Roy Roegiers: Wetbacks because they swam across the river, that the reason they got

Lucas Torres: Now days things have changed we can't use that word no more

Roy Roegiers: No we can't...

Lucas Torres: Exactly, let me take a photograph of this slab right here, there is only a slab the remains now actually the place has been demolished or removed from here and what remains here in the back Mr. Rogers, Roegier's house by one of garages that he's got in the back is the concrete slab that was left behind...

Roy Roegiers: I am gonna try to clear by next Monday...

Lucas Torres: Okay

Roy Roegiers: You said that you want to use your metal detector to see if find anything

Lucas Torres: Yes, Exactly, because we want to, it looks from here was this dirt

Roy Roegiers: I think it probably see the difference

Lucas Torres: Yes

Roy Roegiers: Around here the building probably went to here at one time

Lucas Torres: Okay

Roy Roegiers: that was the main structure over there

Lucas Torres: Let me photograph (I am photographing the concrete slab.)

Lucas Torres: why don't we come by here and look at the flying saucer...

Roy Roegiers: Flying saucer

Lucas Torres: Okay we got here... (The flying saucer was on the other side of the fence) So the flying saucer is attached to a tractor right?

Roy Roegiers: Attached to a tractor

Lucas Torres: And it pivots

Roy Roegiers: It spins that why the weight is here so it puts more pressure on the ground here see how its got the dirt accumulated

Lucas Torres: Yes

Roy Roegiers: It causes it to keep on...rotating

Lucas Torres: Rotating

Roy Roegiers: Counter clockwise

Lucas Torres: Counter clockwise

Roy Roegiers: yes

Lucas Torres: It's pretty, pretty heavy machinery right?

Roy Roegiers: Its heavy, its drag behind 3.8 carry the field I don't use because I only have one field.

Roy Roegiers: Take pictures of the cellar?

Lucas Torres: Yea, let take more photographs of cellar

Lucas Torres: Now we are walking to Mr. Roegier's house

Roy Roegiers: Cellar, strong shelter whatever hole in the ground

Lucas Torres: Exactly

(As we walked to the cellar, we stopped to examine the cistern.)

Lucas Torres: Okay this right here is kind of interesting that's the one we talked about the two days and this is called what?

Roy Roegiers: Cistern

Lucas Torres: This cistern in diameter would you say is like?

Roy Roegiers: Maybe 8, 10 feet

Lucas Torres: 8, 10 ft in diameter

Roy Roegiers: 10 foot deep

Lucas Torres: 10 foot deep

Roy Roegiers: I do not know how many gallons it holds but it has a liner with brick but holds water so it must have some kind plastic.

Lucas Torres: Let me see if I get a hold of photograph of this thing before the rain catches here in the back.

Lucas Torres: There is a date her that mentions February 18, 1953 it's got Roy and Clara and (initials of) C.R.

Roy Roegiers: Probably got my dad's initials, C Roegiers

Lucas Torres: Okay, Why don't walk over here because the rain the storm that was suspected to today, I think the rain is going to hit us right now. So let's get back over here.

Lucas Torres: I'm trying to walk inside the cellar trying to take some photographs in the inside... Let me see if I can... (It raining hard with aggressive winds.)

Lucas Torres: I am going to pause this for a second

Lucas Torres: As we continue right now, in my investigative work doing here for our school project...It's ah 6:30 pm right now.

Lucas Torres: We are actually in one of Roger's garage because it started to rain pretty hard and windy. They are inspecting a cold front today, on this date, and ahh. Let me ask you something Roger. You mentioned something when you were small you remember when you and your father go to the theater there in the downtown area. What kind of movies did you all like to see?

Roy Roegiers: He liked Westerns

Lucas Torres: Westerns movies

Roy Roegiers: Actually, the Aztec

Lucas Torres: Aztec?

Roy Roegiers: Aztec and Westerns, the citrus probably had the other kind of movies

Lucas Torres: There is a movie...There was a theatre that was in the downtown called the Aztec?

Roy Roegiers: The Aztec theatre mostly westerns

Lucas Torres: One that was the one, the Aztec. That was the one?

Roy Roegiers: Aztec it was over there on Cano Street

Lucas Torres: Is that theatre still there?

Roy Roegiers: No

Lucas Torres: No?

Roy Roegiers: It probably converted to Edelstein's (Furniture)

Lucas Torres: Did you ever go to McAllen theatre called, the one in downtown on 17th street. It's an old old theater.

Lucas Torres: Back in your time, you grew up using what make and model of tractors?

Roy Roegiers: I grew up using the Massey Harris Tractor; it was a very popular tractor at the time. They sold out the Massey Ferguson and the John Deere was also very popular. But, we didn't have a John Deere dealer down here at the time.

Lucas Torres: But, John Deere seems to be the Cadillac of all cars; was it the Cadillac for tractors at that time?

Roy Roegiers: It seemed to me. It was a very popular tractor, I think it was very popular because they did a lot of research and build a very good product.

Lucas Torres: American tractor, John Deere? Is John Deere an American Product?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. But, some were made in Mexico.

Lucas Torres: Ah!

Lucas Torres: From the time you grew up here until to today, what has drastically changed down here that has impacted your life?

Roy Roegiers: Our neighbors, we used to be a closed net community and now we hardly see our neighbors. I think it is because of their lifestyle or they are too busy. One 4th of July, we had a gathering of all the neighbors and that really felt very nice. We used to exchange phone numbers and get to know one another.

Lucas Torres: I understand that to the North of your house our D.A. resides there?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. He resides in what was my uncle's property.

Roy Roegiers: Alfred Rogers sold the house to his son. His son lived there for a while. He sold the house to someone else. Then Mr. Rodriguez bought the house and moved the house. Built new house.

Lucas Torres: Your father was the first one to move here?

Roy Roegiers: He and his brother both moved here at the same time. They had adjoined property.

Lucas Torres: I went to the courthouse and I was looking at the 1920's maps of this region. I noticed that your father bought this property in the 1920's.

Roy Roegiers: Yes. He and his first wife Emily bought these properties.

Lucas Torres: I noticed that the lot was not recorded until 1925.

Roy Roegiers: Yes. They probably never had a cleared title to it. They were hoping, they didn't have to pay for it and still maintain ownership without having to exchange ownership until they paid it off.

Lucas Torres: I also notice that in 1925, your father sold property to the railroad company. The titled of the company end-up with Mexico. He sold property from San Antonio all the way South to The Valley and to Mexico. He sold about 150 feet by xx?

Roy Roegiers: You found that document, I had been wanting to find that information.

Lucas Torres: I will provide you a copy.

Lucas Torres: The lot right here is Tex-Mex Lot 243.

Roy Roegiers: Yes. I think there are 12 sections 640 acres.

Lucas Torres: Your father bought more property later on in his life.

Roy Roegiers: Yes. If you keep researching, you will find that he bought a lot of properties.

Roy Roegiers: Some of the property he bought was because of back taxes. People couldn't pay for their property taxes. He would pay for the back taxes and buy the land. The Tax Department loved that the taxes were being paid off. The property would go back to the tax rolls.

Lucas Torres: Are you happy or proud of your father's accomplishments?

Roy Roegiers: I am real proud because of his accomplishments and he only went to the 4th grade. He had to work that was the way of the peoples' life. He didn't get a college education because he had to work. Getting to the 4th grade was a big accomplishment back then.

Lucas Torres: Do you consider your father accomplished?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. He was a go-getter; considering that, he was a foreigner and had to learn the English language to communicate with the people.

Lucas Torres: Do you think he is an accomplished businessman?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. He was a very good businessman. He was not a wealthy man; but, if he had money, he would reinvest it in some land and that's how he made his money.

Lucas Torres: Your mother also did a lot for the family?

Roy Roegiers: My mother, the second wife, she helped him out; since, he was already old. She encouraged him and would boost him up.

Lucas Torres: Has "The Valley" changed a lot?

Roy Roegiers: Oh yes! "The Valley" has changed a lot. When my mother, my grandmother, my grandfather and probably three kids came to San Juan, they came in the train. They had to walk to Edinburg and it probably got dark on the way. It was very difficult to get around back then.

Lucas Torres: Your grandparents were also here?

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: On your mother's side?

Roy Roegiers: Yes

Lucas Torres: What is your grandfather's name?

Roy Roegiers: Julius DeBouver.

Lucas Torres: Your grandmother's name?

Roy Roegiers: Irma.

Lucas Torres: They are from Belgium?

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: They were in Belgium during World War 1?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. It was occupied by the Germans at the time. They came to United States after World War 1? They wanted to be closed to my father. His wife and Julius were brother and sister. They had root connections.

Lucas Torres: There are transmission lines that run by your property. I assumed that you sold them property too?

Roy Roegiers: Well, you don't have a choice. They have a law call Eminent Domain. You have to settle with them; whether, you like it or not or get an attorney and still risk losing all of the property.

Lucas Torres: That Eminent Domain Law is very intrusive.

Roy Roegiers: It is written for the purpose of the community. (Public Service) They will pay you their price and you just have to settle. They should pay a good price. This also happens with the highways, Eminent Domain Law.

Lucas Torres: When did you last sell property for transmission lines?

Roy Roegiers: Last year. (2015)

Lucas Torres: When did you sell property for the Expressway 281?

Roy Roegiers: We sold that in 1967 or '68. It took 20 years to plan; because, of lack of funds and people complained. They had to keep moving the plans for the road. [Irene sold property to the Texas Highway Department on February 21, 1972 – see Appendix 41]

Lucas Torres: No, roads were being done until 20 years later

Roy Roegiers: They had too many complaints from the people. The city of Edinburg had a feed lot on Shunior Street next to the school business builds. It smelled very bad. The city moved them by the hill. Then the highway went right through the feeding lot. They closed the business.

Lucas Torres: They couldn't find land?

Roy Roegiers: That or they went under and didn't recover.

Lucas Torres: Where did you go to High School?

Roy Roegiers: I went to Edinburg High School. The High school and Middle School were in one building. It used to be one of the administration buildings. The city grew and then there was one high school and one middle school.

Lucas Torres: Do you remember any of your teachers?

Roy Roegiers: No. It is too long ago.

Lucas Torres: Do you remember your principal?

Roy Roegiers: No.

Lucas Torres: What about minority groups.

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Roy Roegiers: There were more Hispanics than Anglos in the school. The Anglos were more prominent.

Lucas Torres: Were there any African Americans?

Roy Roegiers: There were about 20 African Americans in the whole school.

Lucas Torres: Were you in any clubs?

Roy Roegiers: I was in (FFA) Future Farmers of America for four years.

Lucas Torres: What animals did you raise?

Roy Roegiers: I didn't raise any animals for the FFA, only for the 4H.

Lucas Torres: What is the difference between the FFA and 4H?

Roy Roegiers: The FFA is mainly for boys and the 4H is for both boys and girls.

Lucas Torres: Why were you more loyal to the 4H?

Roy Roegiers: Because I had joined them first and my project was with 4H.

Lucas Torres: Was your sister also in 4H.

Roy Roegiers: She was also in 4H.

Lucas Torres: FFA is during school hours; is 4H during school hours?

Roy Roegiers: No. 4H is after school hours?

Lucas Torres: Does it still exist?

Roy Roegiers: Yes. But today, they are more active than back then.

Lucas Torres: Were you in any sports?

Roy Roegiers: No. I tried little league; but, I lived out in the country and could not make it to practice. Baseball games conflicted with 4H activities.

Lucas Torres: Roger it has been a real pleasure meeting you and hearing your story. I am glad that I heard your story as you were growing up. Your father was a successful person and he only went to 4th grade. He was from Belgium and came to the United States on a ship. He worked here for a while and went back to Belgium, and got married. He brought his bride to the United States and made a living. He first wife died and then he married your mother, Irene DeBouver.

Lucas Torres: Is there anything you want to add?

Roy Roegiers: I don't know, maybe will have some more before we get through. We will keep on thinking about different things to talk about.

Lucas Torres: I guess for today; we will end this conversation.

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: This conversation that was provided to me (Lucas Torres) at your own free will, Right?

Roy Roegiers: Yes.

Lucas Torres: This conversation end at 7:00 P.M. on October 20, 2016.

Appendix 4

Oral History Interview with Clara Duffey

Wednesday 10/26/16

Location: CHAPS Office

Present: Clara Duffey (Interviewee), Olivia Salazar (Interviewer), James Severn (Interviewer), Roseann Bacha-Garza (Interviewer).

James Severn: Today is October 26, Wednesday, 2016. We are at the CHAPS office, we are here to interview.

Clara Duffey: Clara Duffey.

James Severn: I am James Severn I am here with my colleague.

Olivia Salazar: Olivia Salazar.

James Severn: And Professor.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Roseann Bacha-Garza.

James Severn: How are you doing today Clara?

Clara Duffey: Doing good; it's been a pretty easy day.

James Severn: Ok, so we have a few questions for you. Uh just to start off, would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself?

Clara Duffey: I went to this school, UT-Pan Am but it was called P.A.C. Pan American University, but I don't..

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Pan American College.

Clara Duffey: Pan American College at that time. And then they changed, now they changed again to even different colors. Different mascot. So anyway I'm from Edinburg, I've always lived here never lived anywhere else, always lived in Edinburg Texas. So I'm proud of the University that it's here and growing.

James Severn: And so how old are you? If you don't mind me asking.

Clara Duffey: 67. I'm proud of that.

James Severn: And your date of birth?

Clara Duffey: January the twelfth Nineteen Forty-Nine. Edinburg Texas Hospital is where I was born.

James Severn: Edinburg Hospital?

Clara Duffey: I think it was called Grand View Hospital, I don't know my memories get mixed up with my childrens, because they were born in Edinburg too. So one of my children were born here, and the other two were born in McAllen, but at that time you had a doctor from McAllen he wanted you to go to a hospital in McAllen. So things change.

James Severn: And uh your career, I know you mentioned before you were a teacher?

Clara Duffey: Yes. I got a teaching degree from this University and I taught for 32 years at Monte Alto. I stayed in the same school all the years that I taught. I taught various grades, I started in second grade, and then I did third grade, and then I did fourth grade, and then the last thing that I did was Pre-K. So I went backwards, it was a lot of good experiences.

James Severn: What was your favorite grade that you taught?

Clara Duffey: Pre-K.

James Severn: Pre-K?

Clara Duffey: I liked the babies. And it was really unusual because a lot of time the kids that come to Pre-K they don't speak English around this area where we live especially Monte Alto so it's amazing but a lot of those students of course their parents went to that school and they know English from hearing it from the parents. The parents still speak Spanish at home though. I had a good principal, I had started with one principal and then so

through the years I had about tree different principals but it was really good, all of them, I liked all of them.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Do you speak Spanish?

Clara Duffey: Not really.

Roseanne Bacha-Garza: Do you understand Spanish?

Clara Duffey: I understand a little Spanish, I used to work at J.C. Penny's when it was downtown in Edinburg. And I learned the things necessary for a job at J.C. Penny's, clothing and sizes. And then I learned the things necessary for the kids at school, like their age, their name, their stuff that they would need for school but I could never teach them how to read in Spanish I'm not that good at it to read myself in Spanish. I took many years of Spanish but, I think I should move to Mexico and really learn.

James Severn: Uh so you mentioned you're from Edinburg, but how long have you lived in Edinburg?

Clara Duffey: The 67 years.

James Severn: 67 years of your life?

Clara Duffey: Yes.

James Severn: You mentioned earlier, but follow up question, have you ever lived anywhere else?

Clara Duffey: No.

James Severn: You have lived in Edinburg your entire life?

Clara Duffey: I've just gone visit other places, but just a vacation and none of my kids have moved away either. They're all here in Edinburg the three kids.

James Severn: Have other members of your family moved from the area?

Clara Duffey: I just have a brother and he has lived here except when he was in the service and then he came back home. And I had some cousins that have moved away of course a lot of the other realitivies I have don't live here anymore. Actually.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: What is your brother's name?

Clara Duffey: Roy.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: No you said another brother that went away.

Clara Duffey: No he went to the service

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Oh ok.

Clara Duffey: But then he came back.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Oh ok.

Clara Duffey: But I have cousins that have left, but none of my kids.

Roseann Bacha Garza: Ok, so.

Clara Duffey: Just cousins that have moved on. We see them at reunions and get togethers but we don't see each other much, most everyone's family is there. And hangout with their immediate families.

Olivia Salazar: How was it like growing up in Edinburg, like how is it different from then?

Clara Duffey: From then to now? In Edinburg back then there was not as many people like you had an annual, I should have counted how many people were in my graduating class. But it was very few compared to hundreds of kids that graduate now, and there are four high schools now and then we only had one. And it is still the same though but I notice the schools they stay and then they remodel them, change them to a different name and they turn around and go around, but it was very different then. Except I went to the Catholic school for first grade then public school in second grade, then third to seventh grade I went to a different Catholic school, and then eight grade I started middle school, they used to call it junior high. And then I stayed there for one year. Two years? No one year. Because it was eighth grade, then I went to Edinburg High School and became a Bobcat. And a campus

Serganette, I became involved in the Serganettes [mainly through the influence of my cousin Marilyn Rogers who lived down the road on Rogers Rd.], and I was there for the four years. And had friends and just life was pretty good we thought it was terrible when we were going through it but it was really pretty good. My brother was two years older and two grades ahead of me. So it was different with a boy than with a girl.

James Severn: And what were the Serganettes?

Clara Duffey: A drill team.

James Severn: A drill team?

Clara Duffey: It used to be a military drill team. But its still here and going on, the Seranettes had their fiftieth anniversary and their still going and my sponsor she still lives also her name is Mrs. Mulligan she uh, she was at our reunion our fiftieth anniversary which she wasn't the only sponsor who started it, I think it was Kay Teer um I know we had a Misses O'Neil and there was Misses Mulligan, I know they have other people since she retired, but they still have it but a different uniform different things.

James Severn: Um so any of the differences, the physical differences if you want to describe the physical differences in the community.

Clara Duffey: Oh gosh. That's something that goes around and comes around to, I was just thinking that I still live in the same neighborhood where I grew up. I still live in the same acers got smaller, it was twenty acers of orchard when I lived there I guess it is still twenty acers but some is taken up for homes, my brother lives there, my son built a house there, and I live there, we still live in the same place, the roads used to be dirt and the bus would pick you up if you don't live on the main corner you would have to walk up the block, and it was pretty cold and you would have to wait for the bus. We only rode the bus when we were in the public school. Cuz the Catholic school there is no bus. So uh its um sometimes we would get on the bus and there wasn't even a place to sit. The busses were overcrowded I don't think would happen now-a-days, they are overcrowded but somehow they arrange it, we had to drive standing up going to school. There weren't enough seats and they wouldn't let us sit I don't know which one it was, we were the last ones to get on. There were two other girls that would get on with us too.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And where in this picture, um.

Clara Duffey: Okay the house.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Where, the house is here, and this is the road.

Clara Duffey: The railroad track.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: This is where the gate is to Roy's property, where did you have to walk.

Clara Duffey: We had to walk to this road over there.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: So this one over here. So you walked to.

Clara Duffey: We walked to.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Down Rogers Road?

Clara Duffey: Yes. But we walked on the railroad tracks [or on a dirt road (very sandy) alongside the smooth easy way to walk or the chard – road used by the tractors and equipment picking orange trees].

Roseann Bacha-Garza: On the railroad track.

Clara Duffey: Right next to it.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And then you, but when the railroad track hit what is now Rogers Road is where you got your bus?

Clara Duffey: Mhmm.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: On the side of the house we had a dirt ride right there that we walked beside the railroad track.

James Severn: And how long would it take you to get there?

Clara Duffey: Oh no time, just a few minutes probably. Ten minutes yeah. But if its cold and wet and rainy, I think my mom would drive us when it was rainy like you see people do we never made one of those little bus stops so I see a lot of people do that they still do that the parents take them in the car and they wait for the bus cuz they still have to walk somewhat the bus doesn't go in each and every neighborhood.

James Severn: So how would you help your family as a child?

Clara Duffey: Oh my goodness. I remember chores I would, well we didn't really do a lot of stuff. I would have to be the dishwasher or the dish dryer we would always dry the dishes and put them away. But then when I got in college and my brother was not even there my mother spoiled me more I didn't do anything I was going to college, I had to study she was a good mom. And I was in 4-H when I was a kid so we learned how to do all the we had cooking classes [food shows and sewing classes and dress shows}, and we had animals so I would help take, we joined 4-H the ones that sponsored us, we had chickens. We raised chickens together, Roy and I raised chickens for the Mercedes Livestock Show. And we had pigs. He was more involved with the pigs, he had a mother pig and baby pigs and so we had pigs and we had lambs, we never really had any cows I always wanted to have em but they were like really expensive too, you had to provide your own food it was expensive for a lamb to eat much less a cow. But later we had a cow. And we had her not just for 4-H we had her because we were going to milk her. I never learned how, my brother learned how to milk cows to because my mother she grew up milking cows as a kid, she was a farm girl too [she tried to teach us].

Roseann Bacha-Garza: You used to have a dairy farm on your uh.

Clara Duffey: Yeah my family did. But I wasn't there, I wasn't out there at that time. It was before I knew anything about it. I think the dairy farm was gone before I had any memories [I was too young], I kinda remember the cows being there, behind the barn, and I kinda remember there was a horse that we all always wanted to get on the horse but they said the horse wasn't broke to a saddle so we couldn't really get on the horse so I didn't learn to ride a horse either. We did raise that one cow and I remember my brother and I feeding it we would walk it and well we even had to walk the pigs, if you could imagine walking a pig. But the cow barn is still there Roy said he took you all there. I don't know if you noticed it's still there of course those things that they put the cows in it's in the front of the house.

James Severn: Oh yeah, he showed us those.

Clara Duffey: I remember boxes of corn that we had a machine that we would put the corn we would shell them; it was fun I liked doing those things. I guess I was an outdoor person. I didn't like washing the dishes. The thing that I hated the most was I was learning to iron and I would iron Roy's handkerchiefs and we had to iron our pillow cases. If you can believe it does anyone still iron a pillow case or to learn how to iron handkerchiefs or pillows. But that was my chore to iron the pillow cases and I would burn myself sometimes or get a blister, but that was the way it was at our house I'm sure some of my friends did different things because no one else seemed to live in the country that I know and we really didn't have neighbors it was one person, one boy in my neighborhood that was my age and I really didn't even know him in school he was a year younger than I was this boy I knew his family, I knew who he was. When we road to school to St. Joseph's we did a car pool with a family down the road and they had a lot of kids sometimes we would go over to there, that's how we got into 4-H because they were all in 4-H, and they got us involved after my dad died that's when we got involved. You had to be nine to join 4-H. And I guess I was about

eight when he died. And so that's why I really don't have memories of him going back there I guess, I see pictures but I really don't have the memories. I have some memories but not a lot of memories. I don't know if it is the same with Roy.

Olivia Salazar: Who were some of your childhood friends growing up?

Clara Duffey: Oh ok, my childhood like I was saying, the kids that lived down the street, the Martins. Actually its Martins Feed Store they had nine kids and we had a carpool, they had older brothers, and they would drive us to school. And Melodee was in my grade at St. Joseph and I had other friends at St. Joseph's and I don't really remember any friends from first grade and from second grade, but I remember my second grade teacher so well. But I don't really remember the friends and it turns out I'm rambling, it turns out that lady is still living my second grade teacher, I thought that she was the most beautiful person in the world she was just really pretty she was Ms. Wallace now she is Mrs. Newey and she still is alive as far as I know the last couple of years I haven't heard anything else, she still lives in Edinburg, still pretty. She had kids to that grew up, but I can't believe it is still her, I mean to see your second grade teacher, do you all remember your second grade teacher?

Roseann Bacha-Garza: I do.

Clara Duffey: Well isn't that something. You should try to remember every year, every teacher. Than in third grade I had a nun. And basically at St. Joseph we were always with the same friends because every year after year the same people were in the same grade, once in awhile we would get new people and then I just recently saw one of my friends from St. Joseph because her dad passed away and I heard about it, I saw her, I have her phone number but we don't really get in touch and our lives just go separately but that's how that goes. That was my younger years, in high school I had different friends, and Seraganettes and neighborhood friends or people we would carpool with and we became friends just like now how you meet people I guess. And then um two of my best friends my high school friends have passed away, and so they both had cancer, its really a sad so time goes on but its hard to think about them. Oh and a third high school friend, there were three really good friends, and she died right out of high school in a car accident, she died. Then my other two friends had cancer, one died one year than the next year the other died so my three really good friends.

James Severn: I'm sorry about that.

Clara Duffey: But I still have other friends, new friends, different friends.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: There you go.

James Severn: So if you don't mind me asking, what was it like growing up with a single mother?

Clara Duffey: Well she was strict too, we had to follow the rules, I guess she learned that from her own up-bringing that you had to do stuff, but it was, I don't know if it was any harder or different cuz I feel like she was really great, she got us to do everything, got us to go places. We were you know; we did what everyone else did. Just went on, life went on. That's the way it seemed for me, I don't really remember, I remember my dad being there when I was young, and I would have memories like we would eat together, and what we would have every Sunday after church, we would eat the same thing every Sunday we would eat like a routine, this chicken baked, a baked chicken dinner. And it was, so you had those memories but its, I don't really have a lot of memories of my dad being there, but my mom just took over and did everything. Maybe its different if it's a dad raising you instead of your mom. I don't know how it would be if a dad raised his kids. My grandkids are raised by my son because their mom passed away, so they have a different. And my little granddaughter doesn't even remember her mother, she was four and I was eight. And so the

older one she was she was about seven, she still has memories of her mom. But um maybe when she is 67 she won't. But she still has family and she sees them.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Tell us about Irene and her family like your mom, her tell us about her history. Tell us.

Clara Duffey: Well the history that she, well she grew up in Belgium, and her family seemed like they were poor they lived in a farm, or my grandfather was a farm worker and uh the time she tells us about was the time of the war that broke out in Europe and uh 1914 was when my mom was born and she had older brothers and sisters I don't know exactly we have a list, I have my cousin that wrote down everybody's name, maybe we should include that, who know. But anyway my mom, and the next one to her was my uncle Danny, and then after him was Uncle Richard and those two brothers and her are the ones that came to America. And uncle Richard was the baby, but there was like nine kids in all, so that's three and two more were born after them, after they came to the United States so that's five, and four kids must have died in Europe and only one lived that was born here, the one that was born in Edinburg died, I think it was a girl, but I think my Uncle Noel maybe he was born here, he might have been born here too. So I actually knew four relatives born from people from that family.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And Noel Debouver?

Clara Duffey: Yeah.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: And Richard Debouver, and Danny Debouver. Danny was the oldest boy. And well my mom and then him and Richard, and Noel was the baby. And my mom always said he was grandpas favorite and the others were always made to work, but he got spoiled he was the baby also. So I don't know, but his daughters are my cousins that I see a lot those cousins that we hang out together, they are going to come for thanksgiving two of them. So were still close.

James Severn: So you grew up with a lot of family near you, did you have, did family help support you all taking care of the land?

Clara Duffey: Well the other family the Rogers family grew up with my mom because they are like her age. And my dad was the age of Pa, the older brother, there were two brothers, yeah Alfred they came together and they were about the same age, a couple years apart so they farmed together and did everything together, they did the same things, they moved together you know stayed together and just happened to have a lot of children. My dad's first wife never had any children. So that's why Margie was telling me, one of the cousins that lives here in Edinburg.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Margie Burch?

Clara Duffey: Yeah you met her. She said that she loved kids so much, and she could just never have any kids, so when she passed away my dad was going to go back, this is the story that I heard. He was going to go back to Belgium to find a Belgium wife, but then he ended up marrying his wife's niece.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Oh ok.

Clara Duffey: And my mom had been married before to somebody else, I don't know if he had died. But uh that's how they got together I guess. So she was the age of Margie's mom. My mom was Margie's mom's age. They packed fruit together, I don't know I guess that was before she married my dad, they were also cousins because Margie was Alice's mom and Margie's mom was also Debouver and was grandpa's sister and she was my dad's wife. So there were three more Belgium's that came together, they came some time together. They followed each other, they were in Virginia or Kansas or they all came together, they all stuck together. So she was friends with all those cousins.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Alfred's wife's name was Emily.

Clara Duffey: Emma.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Oh Emma. And Emma's niece is your mom?

Clara Duffey: Yes.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: And also my dad's wife's name was Emily.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: That's where I saw Emily.

Clara Duffey: And they were sisters. Emma and Emily were sisters.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Right.

Clara Duffey: And I really don't know anything about her because she died before I was born, she died in 1945 or 6 something like that 1945 I think. Something like that. But I don't really know anything about her, I see the pictures and the pictures and of course we think she was wonderful also because we don't even know her but just because she is part of our history.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And the stories you have heard. That makes sense.

Clara Duffey: So times just different it's so weird that my mom was the age of all of Alfred's kids that they rode the bus to school together and stuff like that. Linda's dad drove the bus, Mrs. McGirk's dad, he was the bus driver. And so well they all did different things. I guess Alice packed like my mom and then Bill did the farming it goes back to your question; he was a farmer he farmed all the neighborhood land around. He farmed his dad's property, he farmed the other property that he owned, when he got married his wife had property from her family so he was farming all the land around us, so when my dad passed away he kind of helped to know what to do and when to do this and you know my mom would follow his advice. My brother says she drove the tractors and everything. But I guess so, I don't really remember her driving the tractors, I was probably in school or something. But I.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Did you ever help in the citrus orchards, and pick citrus? Did you?

Clara Duffey: Oh yes, when I was younger and older, when I was older. I don't think the orchards were there when I was a kid. They might have been, but I remember playing in the orchards too, I remember playing there because we loved for them to irrigate because then we could play in the canal water at that time. There would be a big canal that brought the water, but now the orchard has those valves, those pipelines, before that it was the canal. And we would play in the canal, swim in the canal, and then we would water the yard and we had a cistern that we would fill up and the water would come out and we would get to play in the water, I liked that. Roy didn't like it as much, but I did. And um so the sand was, after they irrigated the dirt was really soft to play in the orchard too. But the trees, I remember the trees being there later, maybe they were there all along too. I know my dad grew vegetables when I was a kid because I do have memories of that too, but he might have had it on different land.

James Severn: What kind of vegetables?

Clara Duffey: I remember them having like lettuce or cabbage and all kinds of stuff we would take them to like there was a Piggly Wiggly store, there was a Valley Mart a lot of different little stores in the Valley at that time, you could go sell your stuff to them. And my uncle Noel would, no Uncle Richard and Danny would help him with the farm, drive the tractors so that was the workers that would work. And then when my dad died my mom would hire different people I think uncle Richard and uncle Danny would, but he didn't really drive a tractor he would do maybe the hoeing and that stuff but she would hire these other people down the road. The De La Rosas, she would hire them, and these other people the Morales' to the other farm work. Maybe even my dad hired them because I think they

worked for him too. He would hire people too to pick the stuff, and water the stuff and irrigate it, stuff like that.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Well according to this handwritten history of the life story of Camiel Roigiers here on page three in her hand she says um “We now own 70 acres; the first twenty years he was in the dairy business.” So by 1956 when this document was written by your mother he had been living on the same piece of property for thirty-six years so the first twenty of those years was the dairy business, and then he has uh grown most of his fruit trees from seedlings so that orchard that we took the students through to walk where we did the archaeology research and what not, those uh trees were grown from seedlings.

Clara Duffey: Yeah but they’re not the same.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Not the same?

Clara Duffey: No there has been hurricanes and fruit freezes, more freezes that would kill the trees and we would have to replant them, so we bought stock from other people.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Well it’s interesting um I’m kinda, I’m sorry James I’m going off course here. Well in addition to where she says “We now own 70 acres, 35 acres in grapefruit and oranges and 35 acres in crop lands where we grow cotton, corn and vegetables.” And uh I was looking through the Hidalgo County Court Records for land and deed transactions because this is part of what we teach the students for the class how to do that research how to and well I didn’t print that out, but one of the things I did see was a contract between your dad and a woman with the last name of Richardson which I would imagine Richardson Road is maybe named, I don’t know we would have to do some research into that, but it was a contract for uh farming.

Clara Duffey: Vegetables.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: There was one for tomatoes.

Clara Duffey: Yes, we sold tomatoes.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Another one for iceberg, and I am pretty sure I saw one for different types of citrus trees. Because they mentioned specific names of types of trees one started with an M and now I don’t know and I’m upset for not print.ng them out.

Clara Duffey: There are different names, like Mars.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Yes, yeah.

Clara Duffey: There were different, Marsh or Mars. I think Valencia. We still have Valencia and like different varieties and the last time we had a grapefruit orchard where is it now? Its where the hay field is same road Roigiers road we still have that property its 18 acers it was twenty but its shrunk now so it’s down the road by Monte Cristo road.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: It’s from our house, you just drive.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: From the north.

Clara Duffey: And it’s got powerlines on it too, but it’s a hay field.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: So the fields that we were walking.

Clara Duffey: Is the orchard, and originally where the cows were.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok and where the new orchard is that’s now oranges? Or?

Clara Duffey: They’re all oranges.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: All oranges, so its an orange grove.

Clara Duffey: Yes. There are navel oranges, and those mars, or valencias, different kinds. Some get ready at different times of the year. Some are early oranges, some are late oranges, but yes they replanted some naval orange trees are old, and some froze and then they had to replant others, and different kinds of navels. When I go try to pick oranges, I used to sell them a lot to the people at my school Monte Alto, everyone loved the navels. And there’s different types of navel oranges, some have different like a little belly button on the bottom

and the other ones are smooth. But they're still navel oranges but they have like an inside naval I guess in the orange.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And are you able to recognize if like when the fruit is ready to pick or if it's damaged by maybe an insect or if it's frozen and not going to continue to ripen.

Clara Duffey: Well the frozen, yes. If you have like a freeze for over 24 hours and get ice crystals in it and it will rot. Maybe it's not 24 hours I don't know what the time frame is. But like I was walking there when you were there that day I picked this orange and said "That orange can't be any good it's a young orange on the tree and it's still green, it must have a bug or something." So we took it home with us and uh your friend, we cut it with Roy's knife and I didn't find any bugs in it or anything and he ate it. I was thinking how could this orange be any good if all the the others are yellow. That's how I would tell if its got a bug and it has the little hole there that's how the bugs can get in there, and they spoil the orange. And then sometimes the tree grows sour limbs and then the fruit on that one is a sour orange and we have some of those too sometimes. And believe it or not the people that come there to pick them, they know not to pick them, you'll see them being left there. They are good pickers; they recognize oranges that will be no good like those branches have thorns on them. When it grows a sour branch with the thorns and the fruit is all bumpy, but if a person doesn't know then they would pick them all. So the things through the years.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And so how do you fix it?

Clara Duffey: You cut off the branch.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And then it's gone.

Clara Duffey: Yeah. And when my kids were teenagers and I guess even those cousins that uncle Noels kids, Roy decided that we would save labor cost and we were going to pick fruit ourselves and he had his trailer and his tractor and the boxes we would get the boxes from we belonged to the citrus association. So he put the boxes on the, he put them on there, we got ladders we would climb the trees and they were big and we would pick the oranges. My two sons and my daughter even she's the young one she enjoyed it. They have memories of it, they hated it at the time, but they have good memories. Even my cousins remember picking the oranges cuz they picked, well we had another field that's the two fields I told you, and we had another field across the freeway and that one we ended up selling that one and it was that's the one I remember them picking from, I think grapefruit it was a grapefruit orchard and we sold it to somebody that was going to make a house there or a ranch or something, but the orchard has grown up and brush has taken over the trees. But that area was part hay field, part orchard and I think they might have been connected at one time and then they put the freeway, and that piece was sold because it was across the freeway.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: When did the freeway come through, do you remember?

Clara Duffey: I don't remember what year.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Was it in the 70s?

Clara Duffey: I don't know exactly what year that was.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Because when I was researching today with the deed records uh this is a visual aid for class next week but um it is Irene Roigiers individually and independently executrices of the estae of Camil Roigiers deceased that she received 6,382 dollars in 1972 from the Texas Highway Department.

Clara Duffey: Oh yeah.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: For being 5.128 acers of land more or less out of part of the south twenty acres of lot 5 section 243.

Clara Duffey: Twenty acres, and I think that was, and now it's about 11.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And yeah I had printed out what I think is lot 243. So I guess um.

Clara Duffey: That's where we live that's where our house are.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: I'm wondering if this was the deed for the highway 281 all though I'm not sure.

Clara Duffey: Yes, it would be the freeway. Does it say what year?

Roseann Bacha-Garza: It says 1972.

Clara Duffey: That sounds about right.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: But you don't know if it was, I imagine that road was there for a long time and has been there for a long time but not necessarily a paved highway.

Clara Duffey: No it's the highway now they sold it for the freeway. Yeah I'm pretty sure that's what it was, what kind of road was there anyway?

Roseann Bacha-Garza: I mean it had to be a dirt road because it had been traveled.

Clara Duffey: And it comes out over where the Bair's is I guess right there by their house. I'm not sure what road what the name is because you know there wasn't even a rode there because maybe a designated road because there was a canal where Mrs. McGirk lived across the freeway, you saw where here house was?

Roseann Bacha-Garza: I didn't, no.

Clara Duffey: It's a carpet company now.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Yes, right.

Clara Duffey: Ok so all that land was together, there was no road out there between them. And it was a canal.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Right and Mr. Bair lived right across the on the east side of 281.

Clara Duffey: Yeah, on the east side of 281.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: And Dewayne did.

Clara Duffey: Which 281? The freeway?

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: And Howard lived on the other side, the west side.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: Yeah, yeah right. With Mrs. Bair. I used to do ceramics with Mrs. Bair, the one that lived in the old folk's home. Howard's wife Joanne, she used to go to ceramics classes with me. But no there was no road through there. And some of our land stayed on one, it cut the land like we had a piece and we ended up selling it to people on that side and then we ended up, because the road wasn't straight and it didn't take the property line of the people they took a piece here and piece here and it ended up differently. But uh that's why we ended up selling the property across the freeway.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: And my mom was sick so that what my brother says that's why we sold it so we could take care of her.

Roseann Bacha-Garza: Ok.

Clara Duffey: We had to get a provider.

Roseann Bacha Garza: Sure.

Clara Duffey: And stuff like that. Sad to see those grapefruit trees amongst all the other wild trees.

James Severn: I'm going to skip a little bit because you kinda already answered some of the questions.

Clara Duffey: Maybe I should buy it back. I used to live there actually when we got married, we had a mobile home over there, that's where we had our, my first home, across the freeway.

James Severn: So I'm going to skip a little bit because you already have actually answered some of the stuff that we were going to ask, but that's good. Um I'm interested though in

what was it like in your teenage life in Edinburg but I'm interested now, can you tell us a little bit about Pan American College?

Clara Duffey: Oh goodness. Ok so Pan American College, what can I say about it, what did I do here. The fees were expensive we thought then, student services fees, or whatever those things were for, now they're like really expensive I'm sure and I don't know if there was financial aid at that time like a lot of people FAFSA or whatever they call that program now we didn't have that. I worked at J.C. Penny's when I was going to college and I had never really worked before. I was just involved in my Seragentettes, my 4-H, and I never had a job, and then when I got into college, I first worked at the bowling alley as a cashier for the food court that bowling alley that's the library now, that's where the bowling alley used to be we had a bowling alley in Edinburg where the library is. And I worked for this family that owned the bowling alley and for like 80 cents an hour was my pay. And then uh a friend of my got me a job at J.C. Penny's wrapping presents during Christmas and that job paid me a dollar sixty and hour so I was all thrilled, doubled my wages. So I quite the bowling alley with regrets because I hate leaving, I never want to change but I went ahead and took the job J.C. Penny's then I stayed there all the rest of my college time the four years that I went to college and then when I got married the last year before I graduated, and I was in a sorority but I really didn't participate much in the sorority I didn't really keep up with any of the people in the sorority. And I got married to my high school sweet heart and he was a baseball player here at Pan Am, he got a scholarship to play baseball. And um so we got married and I had one more year of college to finish and to do my student teaching it was one semester of student teaching, you could take a few classes at the same time but now I think if you are going to be a teacher you have to spend the whole entire semester doing student teaching so I just went to one school, the school when I was a student teacher the school is right there across from Edinburg Central Office Sam Houston School is the name of it, my mother in law was the cafeteria manager there so I went to that school. I was put in the first grade, I always liked the little kids, and then I was in the second grade when I got a job. But uh then I was pregnant so I kept working at J.C. Penny's because I thought I can't go teach I'm pregnant, I'm going to have kid so the baby was born in December and then when school started the next year as a teacher, and then I continued to work at J.C. Penney's and I don't think its \$1.60 and hour, but the teacher salary was a lot better than that so the next year when school started I was a teacher again. And I really got the job because of my relatives, the ones who lived on the other side of the freeway. They used to be my neighbors but she was older than I was, Bill Rogers daughter, which is, I think he was older than Bert, older than Linda's daughter who was a teacher at Monte Alto that's how, she said come to work with me, we'll carpool so I went to work at Monte Alto which was 18 miles away and we carpooled for all the years one year we even had five people in our carpool we would really, people would come drop off their cars and we'd all go together so that we would save gas driving and it was fun, we would talk all the way over there and talk all the way home

James Severn: So, were um the first then in your family to go to college?

Clara Duffey: In well my immediate family

James Severn: In your immediate family

Clara Duffey: Because Dorothy Ann, she was my cousin, she was a teacher. So, there were people that were older. Roy didn't go to college. We are the only two kids, so nobody else went to college. Then, I had my uncle Noel's daughter became a teacher, Mary Ella. She taught at San Antonio for all her years. So, um that was my immediate family. I consider those as my real close family.

James Severn: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: The other cousins were my second cousins or third cousins, and we would hang out with them every Sunday. Because every Sunday their family um Mrs. Burch and um I don't even remember Mrs. Burch being there actually, but I am such she was when she lived here cause her kids are like my age, Marjorie's and um then Mrs. Burch's sister had girls that I really think were my age. Mrs. Burch's kids are a little bit younger. They are like about maybe five years younger than me so when your kids that just you know you hang around with those you hang around with. You know do you get along with your cousins who do you get, people who are your age. So, I loved for those other cousins to come from, they lived in Victoria. So, that was um the nieces of the um one you all met Lynette, and then she ended up coming to college over her to Pan Am too. She got a scholarship or something form, she was in Victoria. So, she came over here for one year I think and then she probably went back to somewhere else, but um

James Severn: What uh year did you graduate?

Clara Duffey: From college?

James Severn: From College.

Clara Duffey: 70. I think 1970 or 71. 67, 60...I graduated from High school in 67, so 68, 69, in 71. In 71, I guess I graduated from college. I got married in 70, and graduated in 71, so.....

James Severn: And so, while you were in college Roy was in the um Navy

Clara Duffey: In the service, yeah in the Navy

James Severn: Navy

Clara Duffey: He was like two years ahead of me. I graduated from High School in '67 and he graduated in '65.

Clara Duffey: So, um I think he had to start college that year, and then um I don't think he really liked going to college or whatever, then he got drafted. He was going to join the army so he joined the Navy.

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, he was gone when Hurricane Beulah came through, but you were here.

Clara Duffey: I was here.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Can you tell us a little about what you can remember from that?

Clara Duffey: I just remember it was my mom and I at the house. We didn't leave. We didn't go anywhere. I don't know if they had shelters for other people. They may have, but we never left. I guess our strong rock house. The windows could blow out. We were always afraid the windows were going to blow out. But um we just it the um it was exciting the storm just a blowing, we, the eye coming over we would hear reports or you think you saw the eye coming right over your house. And then the aftermath was just it rained, but not a whole lot to me. The rain didn't rain that much but maybe it did, but I think it flooded the other cities that maybe had toller or the drainage passing by or something like that. I think it just flooded our way, but it didn't never get in our property at all. Maybe because the railroad track was there and I think the land was coming from that direction from where and the highway was. What year was the hurricane?

Professor Bacha-Garza: 1967

Clara Duffey: Cause then the freeway wasn't there yet either, so the only highway was the 281 highway. Oh, that's what I was going to tell you. That's what's interesting, that I was going to tell you a long time ago 281

Professor Bacha-Garza: Which is what business 281 is today.

Clara Duffey: Used to have medians. There used to have streetlights in the middle, palm trees and now, what they took them all away, and now how many years later they decide the

other streets should have medians. That why I said, it goes around and it comes around.
Cause now even McAllen now 10th street

Professor Bacha-Garza: I know they are going to put those medians.

James Severn: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: I don't know and um we used to hate the medians, we were, I was driving in college when the medians where there. And I would run out of gas sometimes too. I wouldn't put gas in the car. He (Roy) had bought a car before he went to the service I guess. I got to drive his car it was a Firebird.

James Severn: We will just say that you drove his car.

Clara Duffey: I remember that I drove it when he was in the service or I guess he bought it before he went to the service or maybe when he came back sometime, but um he likes cars. But we had another car a pick up different vehicles all the time, but that one was fun.

James Severn: The firebird?

Clara Duffey: Yeah a Trans Am

James Severn: Oh

Clara Duffey: Trans am. A blue Trans Am

James Severn: Wow

Clara Duffey: I am still running out of gas. To this day, I still think that I have enough gas. I was just cruising into the gas station the other day by Walmart Canton, and I was, Oh I hope I make it there or I will have to call someone to come bring me gas.

Professor Bacha-Garza: You have to be careful. I know it can hurt the engine.

Clara Duffey: It my gage on that car. I don't think it correct. It says two little bars left and I'm running out of gas with two bars. No one believes me

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah. Awe

Clara Duffey: So, when it gets to three I need to get the gas. I have ran out in it once or twice, the Honda, right away. When I first got it, I ran out

James Severn: Do you want to take question number 11?

Olivia Salazar: Yeah, um are there any special family traditions or holidays that were important you and that you still celebrate today?

Clara Duffey: We always think of Christmas because that when we would all get together with all to cousins. The Roegiers family will have a big party, and we were invited, and um I think we changed names with people. I don't remember if we did or not, different times we did different things, but anyways we would just have a party every Christmas, and it was a lot of fun getting everyone together and talking and seeing all of those cousins that we don't always see. Cause a lot had moved away, but it really my Debouwer family cousins didn't go. It was just us 'cause we lived next door to where they lived, and that one teacher that I went to school with Dorothy Ann, she would make the party exciting, and she was only I don't know how many years older I say she was then me, but she will always get a Santa Claus suit or somebody would be Santa Claus. And we would always kept on trying to guess who that Santa Claus was. It was some family member who would dress up in the Santa Claus, but I think my cousin Dorothy Ann even did it herself before. She was Santa Claus, but it was fun. And she was the oldest in her family and she had Bobby and Mary. And everybody has died. Well, Bobby still lives, but the two girls past away already. My cousin past away already. So, she lived a long life though because she was sickly. She lived longer than everybody expected her to live because she had a lot of medical problems, but she lived pretty good. And another tradition every Sunday, they would have um the people that live in Edinburg, Ma and Pa, they would she would make raisin bread, and Roy told you about the bowling. And the Belgium tradition lived on with that Belgium bowling. Who? Marjorie has a picture.

Professor Bacha-Garza: She, yeah she gave me one.

Clara Duffey: I haven't seen it yet

Professor Bacha-Garza: Um I'll go get them next door, and I will show you

Clara Duffey: Yeah okay or whenever you want. That was um I didn't really pay attention to the bowling either because we hung around the girls and the younger kids. It was mostly the men that were bowling, and maybe I think there were not just family there. I really think there were other people to, but the only people that I really ever saw were the kids that I hung around with. And um we would play hide and go seek in the orchards that were there then too but it seemed like we would always go play hide and go seek by the orchards. That was always by my house over there that orchards. And it was the girls against the boys. And we would be hiding from them and then they would be hiding from us. And Roy said that they would be shooting BB guns. That was probably some other time. But um

Professor Bacha-Garza: The other um, were there other families from Belgium that your parents

Clara Duffey: I think there were like maybe there were at different times yes. I think so too because I remember when they would come play cards. That was another tradition. My dad would play cards. My mom really never played cards but they would play cards and smoking a lot of cigars or pipes. And I had asthma. I was always getting sick Roy said because of that. And then um they would come to the living room and then smoke and play cards. I don't know about dominos, but I like to play dominos too. Cards and dominos, I like to play all those things.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Any particular card game?

Clara Duffey: I don't know what game they played really. But then on Sundays like when the men were bowling, the women were playing card over in Ma's house, and I was a kid so so I really didn't learn. They played Canasta I think or some game. I never learned to play any of those games really.

Professor Bacha-Garza: And Ma and Pa's homestead was on the similar property that you guys were on?

Clara Duffey: Ma and Pa's their house was like even with mine. Like you look out your house and see their house. Like right there.

Clara Duffey: No, right there, um were where you there when they were looking at where the wind mill was? Or you were not in that group? It was exactly North of our house.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, yeah

Clara Duffey: At my brother's house, right there were that house is right there now. That's where their house was.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, were the windmill is?

Clara Duffey: No, where the windmill is was our house.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay

Clara Duffey: Back there where that house is right cross to the north of our house

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay

Clara Duffey: That house they

Professor Bacha-Garza: They moved Ma and Pa's house somewhere else?

Clara Duffey: Yes

Professor Bacha-Garza: But it was located where that?

Clara Duffey: Right there

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: Uh huh same place and that house was, um after Ma and Pa moved to town, I guess back then Linda her dad, was into real estate so he got them. My dad died first in 1958. He bought their land and they bought them a house in town, and they moved to town.

He wasn't farming any more. And I don't know if that was before or after my dad died. I think my dad died before him. I don't even know who died but it seems like then I didn't see them as much anymore. And well I think I was probably in high school by then. Cause I think my dad died first. And because I remember oh who was it my grandpa, Uncle Burt Linda's dad was the one who came to pick me up when my grandpa died I think at school. He came to get us. So, I think my dad died before my grandpa. I'm pretty sure, and so that is how the family was close you know we would take care of things like that. That um who do you call, you call your family or somebody. So, the same thing about the farming. They would contact Bill. He was the farmer, and Burt, Linda's dad, was the one who would be more about the selling of property and doing that kind of stuff. He was the business man you see because he owned a company too. Well he was the bus driver, and he wanted to be a business owner. But um anyway that was really close the house. We would walk over there. We had a road between our houses actually. When and it was just well the cows were, I don't know where their cows where. I just know our cows were behind the barn. Where the rock barn is the one that is on this side, on the east side. That's where I remember the cows being, and the windmill right there in the middle. And the boat was kind of there too. Was anybody in the group when they were digging the windmill?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, we were in the group on Monday.

Clara Duffey: It went down

Professor Bacha-Garza: it went way down yeah.

Clara Duffey: I remember that windmill being there but I of course we have pictures so I probably remember seeing the pictures.

Professor Bacha-Garza: uh huh, okay. Well.

James Severn: okay

Clara Duffey: And that is two traditions and um other traditions we will go to church always every Sunday we would go to church.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Catholic church, right?

Clara Duffey: Catholic church. First we went to Sacred Heart in Edinburg, then they made St. Joseph and um we did will the sacraments of church as it goes through time, and um oh we um I remember to as a kid we will always have baked turkey oh not turkey. Baked chicken, potatoes, beans, I guess for Sunday dinner. Every Sunday. I guess that chicken was in the oven. When we got home we ate.

James Severn: it will be ready

Clara Duffey: And we always went to the same mass, sat at the same pew for some reason we always sat in that same pew

Professor Bacha-Garza: yeah

Clara Duffey: But now we just sit anywhere. I still go to the same church but um if you are late you have to find your own spot. We were always early with my family. Now we're always late.

James Severn: Do you um have any pictures from um from the catechism or um confirmation

Clara Duffey: No, I have um, yeah I have a picture of me making my first communion, and I think we have picture of Roy in his first communion.

James Severn: um do you grandchildren go to that church also or?

Clara Duffey: Yeah I am trying to make them go. My kids are not too good at going to church. Um let's see maybe one of them or two are good at going to church, they all got their sacraments too and made their communion and got their sacraments

James Severn: I was going to same if maybe we could have a comparison of you doing your sacraments with one of your grandchildren that would be um a nice picture. Especially in the same church.

Clara Duffey: Well my daughter she became more Catholic because she went to St. Edwards in Austin. So, she had Catholic friends there, and I think a lot of that is your peers. So, now when she um the girls my first daughter in law wasn't catholic there Christians and so we never made the kids go to church. And since my son wasn't that involved with going to church they never went to church. They never baptize or what is it called, received into the church. So, they were not baptized when they were babies, but then um when they became older I got them to go to CCD at the church that is what they call it, and um my daughter is their sponsor. So, she became their sponsor for their sacraments. They did their baptism, their communion, and their confirmation all in the same day. That's their thing that's those two. Now the other two, that daughter in law is catholic and she was married before those, so her oldest daughter is baptized and now her, my son's first baby, my daughter was the sponsor again for him. For his baptism and now the other baby hasn't been baptized yet. But anyways he still doesn't go to church yet either. My oldest son now the one he is starting to go to church because his girlfriend his catholic so, she gets him to go to church.

James Severn: okay so I am going to have to leave in a second we will pause it but do you have a picture of you from graduating

Clara Duffey: Pan am? Graduating from Pan Am. Wow I don't know I haven't found one. Those pictures, I've only looked at old pictures. I haven't looked at new pictures, but I can look. That will be my job.

Professor Bacha-Garza: okay

Clara Duffey: I'm a stay at home grandma so

James Severn: I think it might be nice to you know since now that we are UTRGV to show some of the history of pan American college, and you being a graduate that would be nice

Clara Duffey: Yeah that's true it would be good.

James Severn: if you do find a picture.

Clara Duffey: Okay, and my son, both of them, graduated from here two. Just my daughter went to St. Edwards.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Leave it running

James Severn: okay

Professor Bacha-Garza: yeah

James Severn: so, I am taking off.

Professor Bacha-Garza: okay

James Severn: if you want to bring this to me on Friday. Are you going to be here Friday?

Olivia Salazar: I'm going to be here Thursday, so will you be here Thursday?

James Severn: I didn't want to be here tomorrow but I will be here unless can she drop this off to you tomorrow and I pick this up with you on Friday?

Professor Bacha-Garza: yeah I'll be here um I won't be here on Friday. But I will be here tomorrow afternoon

James Severn: what time

Professor Bacha-Garza: after 3

James Severn: after 3 okay I can do that yeah 'cause I am taking my son to Trunk or Treat tomorrow. I have to go to the Brownsville campus

Clara Duffey: oh, my goodness

James Severn: and then go pick him up from school

Professor Bacha-Garza: okay **James Severn:** yeah I go to work there twice a week but um I trust you with it

Clara Duffey: how old is your son

James Severn: seven and he um Mrs. McGurk is actually his principal

Clara Duffey: oh, my goodness

James Severn: yes

Clara Duffey: everybody wants to be in here school did you all plan that or is that were you actually live

James Severn: we yeah we live right across the street and um didn't plan it and but it's a great school

Clara Duffey: a lot of people want their kids to be there

James Severn: yeah it's a really great school. I love the experience he is getting

Clara Duffey: my daughter did her first year of teaching there too cause when she graduated in St. Edwards she couldn't um she wanted to be a therapist so she had to take other courses to get into the therapy school so she worked for Mrs. McGurk too. She was the PE teacher for one year

Professor Bacha-Garza: oh, awesome

Clara Duffey: then she went on and yup Mrs. McGurk helped a lot of people

James Severn: she's really great. So, after 3 I can pick this up from you tomorrow

Professor Bacha-Garza: yeah

James Severn: okay so then I can turn it into the archive and I can get the copy and everything

Professor Bacha-Garza: and you guys have to do the transcription

James Severn: got it

Professor Bacha-Garza: let's pull out your um the pictures and let's look at um

Clara Duffey: the old or the new? There all old

Professor Bacha-Garza: let's look at the old ones first 'cause I want to start making a list of things to scan. Thank you, James

Clara Duffey: this might take the rest of the night

Professor Bacha-Garza: well

James Severn: thank you Clara

Clara Duffey: yes

James Severn: I enjoyed talking to you but I have to go to class in a little bit so

Clara Duffey: that's okay

James Severn: you got this. It's a good experience for an Anthropology Major

Professor Bacha-Garza: yeah

James Severn: okay thank you

Professor Bacha-Garza: thank you James

Clara Duffey: this are the things that I brought out today, and I don't even know what they are. The wedding of Irene and Camiel. See it's kind of old but not old.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay

Clara Duffey: See this is well I think it's their wedding picture. I really don't know. They didn't have a white wedding.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh

Clara Duffey: that's a picture of them

Professor Bacha-Garza: And she was, how old?

Clara Duffey: She was born in 14 and they got married in 46

Professor Bacha-Garza: okay

Clara Duffey: So, you can do the math. 14, 46 take away

Professor Bacha-Garza: she was 32

Clara Duffey: 32 good

Professor Bacha-Garza: and he was

Clara Duffey: he was um

Professor Bacha-Garza: he was [born in] 1880, 82 so 18 plus 46 is, 64 probably. 64, 32, he was twice her age.

Clara Duffey: Yeah, I think that's what we calculated that one time.

Professor Bacha-Garza: that is a beautiful picture.

Clara Duffey: isn't it nice. Yeah

Professor Bacha-Garza: I love it. And she was Irene Debouver and he's Camiel Roegiers. Does his first name happen to be Otto? Or is he Camiel Otto or is there Otto in there?

Clara Duffey: No, not that I ever heard of. Why?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Because another think that I had seen in the records, the Hidalgo County Deed records in the Court house, um is this Otto C. Roegiers bought a Bar Café. What was it called?

Clara Duffey: I think it must be someone else.

Professor Bacha-Garza: From Mr. France which is an old name from this area. And it was um

Clara Duffey: wow. Same spelling of the last name

Professor Bacha-Garza: The Buckhorn Café. So, I just think, I found that to be so coincidental. 'Cause Otto C. Roegiers.

Clara Duffey: I don't think so no. Otto C. Roegiers

Professor Bacha-Garza: was there a cousin that came with them for a little while

Clara Duffey: not that I ever heard of.

Professor Bacha-Garza: it was 1936.

Clara Duffey: Wow. Wow.

Professor Bacha-Garza: very interesting

Clara Duffey: yes

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay well I wanted to ask you if that was really it

Clara Duffey: You want to put it back there so you can remember then here's the paper clip that was with it.

Professor Bacha-Garza: yes. Oops. Okay. Alright.

Clara Duffey: I don't know what else I brought in here. These are pictures of Roy and I when we were small. These are pictures of Roy and I in our childhood. That is what I found today. And these are the prayer cards of all the people in the family. When somebody dies the catholic people and probably other people too

Professor Bacha-Garza: Right

Clara Duffey: Have...okay that's um

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, yeah

Clara Duffey: I think I found them all today. That is what I did. Okay here's Camiel

Professor Bacha-Garza: That's Alfred

Clara Duffey: and here is um Emily, his first wife, and here is his wife Emma, and here is their sister Ferweda, and her husband Emiel Manhoot. And this is my grandpa and my grandma. The de...this is the

Professor Bacha-Garza: The Debouver. Oh, wow. So, they were here too?

Clara Duffey: They came later than these other people came. Well they probably came the same time here maybe, but they didn't do the same thing. He was a worker for people and the Rogers owned their property. So, they were always doing work for other people. So, they probably maybe worked for them or just other people. The Debouver.

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, the Debouver they

Clara Duffey: They moved about the same time. They were in Kansas, and came over here at about the same time probably. I don't know when they came actually

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, they were, do you think they all kind of traveled together perhaps?

Clara Duffey: That's what I say they manage to stay together somehow.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah. So Emma and Julius had Richard, and Daniel, and Irene, and Noel, and they had nine kids you said?

Clara Duffey: They had five more kids.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Some were more

Clara Duffey: They passed away yeah

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay. Alright. It's a big maze

Clara Duffey: Yes, it is

Professor Bacha-Garza: But that's it. Oh, okay. Wow

Clara Duffey: And these people (Alfred and Emma's kids) have about nine kids too. But their kids are like the age of these people (Alice, Bill, Bert, Anna, and Lucille).

Professor Bacha-Garza: Wow

Clara Duffey: Cause Phirilda was the oldest, she was the oldest then my dad then Alfred

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay. And that so then there were only three?

Clara Duffey: I think there were more kids too, but I don't, those are the only ones I know. Maybe there were ones that didn't make it to America.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Interesting

Clara Duffey: They were very young.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, my. Wow. Okay. There are good.

Clara Duffey: Yeah. I thought that was something. I first I was making down as I found them. The last one I found was Emma.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Wow

Clara Duffey: That all together. In the same places.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: And I don't know what these things are either. These are all the old pictures. And I don't know who some of those people are. This is...I can recognize my dad, and I think this was his wife. So, so this is way back then. All the I, we don't need those at all I was just, I got them out just because I don't know who some people are. I don't know who that is. I just got them out. Decorative work here. That would have probably be me. I decorated this pictures.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh

Clara Duffey: And Marjorie couldn't really find her um grandpa on that big picture. The one that I

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh

Clara Duffey: I hope it's in here.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: But I am thinking that might be him. I am not sure. This is my dad. So that's him.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well I will show you the picture that she

Clara Duffey: She found them.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah she did find some

Clara Duffey: Oh, yeah that would be interesting. And then I um I don't know when that is. I thought that was interesting to the Orchids Texas' Grapefruit.

Professor Bacha-Garza: What is this um?

Clara Duffey: That looks like the sand dunes at the beach right? I took those out today. Out of boxes. I was looking through everything. I don't really...what does it say on the back?

Professor Bacha-Garza: 1 of 64

Clara Duffey: I don't really know who anybody is but I figure maybe. You know why it is these are here, because I wanted to ask Marjorie who these people are.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh.

Clara Duffey: I was there basically I got them for her. She probably knows more than I do about this. And again I am assuming this is Marjorie's grandpa. I think that's Alfred. That would be Emily, and Emma, and my dad, and her, and I don't know who these kids are. Maybe one of them is Marjorie. These girls, I don't know. That is why I was going, I got them out to ask her. She is the oldest person we know.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Right. Well.

Clara Duffey: That looks like the Church in Reynosa. I am thinking. That to me looks like. Have you ever seen the church in Reynosa? Have you ever gone there?

Olivia Salazar: no

Clara Duffey: I haven't been there in a lot of time either, but I am thinking that's the church there. I'm thinking that. This is my uncle Danny and my mom, and his mom, and uncle Richard. That's them in the picture there. It looks like it's cut off I don't know is someone else or why they would do that but.

Professor Bacha-Garza: oh, here take a peak in here. I am just going to run and get the pictures from next door.

Clara Duffey: Okay good so I can see that.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, I am going to do that, and then the other things that I will like you to pull out are the um do you have any of the um the um

Clara Duffey: I can look for it for next time if I don't have it.

Professor Bacha-Garza: The um these.

Clara Duffey: Okay those.

Professor Bacha-Garza: The passports, and the um shipping the um documents and how they got over here.

Clara Duffey: What happened to that stuff. Oh, here is that big picture. That um yeah because you were going to copy those things. I think she was going to copy these.

Professor Bacha-Garza: I can open the door now because everybody is gone. But now what is um

Clara Duffey: This here is when um I think this is when my mom came to America.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, right

Clara Duffey: This is here um and this is uncle Danny, and I don't think that is really uncle Richard. I think I heard a story that they just stuck anybody's picture because they needed a picture. But they did dress boys like girls.

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, this is Irma and Julius. Oh, my goodness

Clara Duffey: And I can't believe my mom's hair was that light because she had dark hair when I knew her.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well yeah I apparently had

Clara Duffey: You had blond hair before too?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: And I don't know this thing goes on like this. I don't know what that is either. This is probably

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah I would defiantly like to scan that.

Clara Duffey: And this is just a letter I don't know what that is about. March 1944, whatever I don't know what that is. I don't know why that is there. This is immigration and migration services

Professor Bacha-Garza: "I am an American day for the honoring of American citizenship by giving recognition to all citizens who have come of age or have been naturalized during the past year" oh that's nice.

Clara Duffey: 1944, I guess.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: Where is it? What town? Hidalgo, Texas. Okay well that is in our lifetime, 1944. I was born in 49 I didn't even read that. I was looking for these things too. Oh it is the same thing is guess. Or something else. A certificate of maintenance, maybe he had to check in. oh you see how Camiell is with two L's here. I don't know why he's name is. Forgot the E here. So, we don't really know the real spelling. That's his signature.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: And this is E. So, now there is not E in it. I guess they did it in different ways for different things. This is written in another language so

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, yeah that's French it looks. Oh this document is where your father is willing to sponsor the um Debouver.

Clara Duffey: Oh, okay

Professor Bacha-Garza: To come here. "that um they respectfully request that the um United States of America allow the immigrants Julius Debouver and Mrs. J. Debouver born Edema Gravest respectively um and their children um from Belgium to come here and join um Mr. and Mrs. Camiel Roegiers." Well that's nice. I will like to scan this too.

Clara Duffey: And this is Emile. This is another name that he used. The payment in full of something. It is not in any order. That is what I was going to do. Put things in order, but I haven't done that. I got started looking at those other. Looking for those death certificate things.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, wow. This is um. This is important. This is the um the purchase of lot 5 block 243

Clara Duffey: That is the one you are talking about?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: That is where we live, and I don't know I haven't even looked at this.

Professor Bacha-Garza: And this is...

Clara Duffey: This is all things Roy had in here, and I haven't really looked at them.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah this is again another um sponsor. He agrees to um employ him too. Oh that is in Belgium. That is in a foreign language.

Clara Duffey: This was written to my mom. Mrs. Irene Roegiers and family. So, this not that long ago.

Professor Bacha-Garza: This item was in here?

Clara Duffey: Yeah, it was.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Here let's put this one back

Clara Duffey: And um those were not in anything. They were just there.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay.

Clara Duffey: I still haven't found the um oh here is more land things I think it's Stewarts.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, this has to do with the Missouri Pacific Railroads

Clara Duffey: Oh

Professor Bacha-Garza: Property um that is going through your property. Um this is a

Clara Duffey: Is that to get the land back? The Railroad back because this one here says that they had to bring 1750 dollars to the deed for the land for the railroad adjacent to your property. Yeah, and that is almost the same date.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Right.

Clara Duffey: It must be made to get the property back

Professor Bacha-Garza: I guess so.

Clara Duffey: That's probably when we rebought it.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Uh huh okay.

Clara Duffey: We used to walk down the road next to the railroad track, and that is another thing we always used to do on Sunday, play on the railroad track, the train didn't come that often.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Not too many trains going through.

Clara Duffey: I don't know what all these are

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: Bill of sales but I don't know what these are. This oh man, pack rats like Roy says.

Professor Bacha-Garza: This is, this is the um this um, title company closing has to deal with this deed that I found in

Clara Duffey: Oh, wow

Professor Bacha-Garza: In the records, in the hidalgo county clerk's office. The deed record. This has to deal with the sale on March 6th in 1972

Clara Duffey: Oh, wow

Professor Bacha-Garza: For, probably for the um the portion of the land where the um expressway 281 went through

Clara Duffey: Oh, okay

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: And this was in the same envelop so I don't know what that was. Maybe these here. I already forgot what these were. This was the one that was...I don't know. Did we already look at that one? We looked at that right, didn't we? Or no?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, we looked at that

Clara Duffey: Was that in here?

Professor Bacha-Garza: I will just put that back in here

Clara Duffey: I don't even know. These were in here, so I don't even know lot 11 it says, but lot 5 you are saying. So

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well no actually some of the

Clara Duffey: Are lot 11

Professor Bacha-Garza: There were um some that said 11 and and some that said 5

Clara Duffey: I think 11 was the one that's across that we paid and we sold now.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: Cause the other one is called lot one

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay

Clara Duffey: Water patrol. I don't know where that is either. That's um down here.

Professor Bacha-Garza: 42, 1942

Clara Duffey: 42! My Gosh! Wow! That doesn't look that old does it?

Professor Bacha-Garza: No, it doesn't but it is. Okay

Clara Duffey: And this is another one that wasn't in anything. North Alamo Water. That's not that long ago then.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well oh that is where they had the agreement with Miss Richardson. I remember seeing

Clara Duffey: Oh, really

Professor Bacha-Garza: Um I think there are documents. Yeah. I don't know what this is so I am going to put this aside for now.

Clara Duffey: Okay that was in this one.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: North Alamo Water.

Professor Bacha-Garza: And this one says 2250 dollars paid by Camiel Roegiers and his wife.

Clara Duffey: It's in well my lifetime.

Professor Bacha-Garza: And yeah for the west one half and the North 20 ace lot 11 section 243 Hidalgo, Texas.

Clara Duffey: Is that when they put the freeway? No, what year is that?

Professor Bacha-Garza: 1936

Clara Duffey: No, I couldn't be that then. Oh I guess that is when they bought the land then?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah. This is, yeah. I couldn't find the deed. The earliest deed information I found when looking online was in 1925.

Clara Duffey: Oh

Professor Bacha-Garza: But this one is a little bit, and then I saw 1936 also. So, that is a good one. This is the one that I wanted to look at.

Clara Duffey: Oh, the public sale over there.

Professor Bacha-Garza: The Camiel Roegiers closing out public sale flyer from the newspaper, and it says "I am going to quite farming in Johnson County and move to Texas. I will have a closing out public sale at my place 1 mile West and 1 mile South of Overland and 3 miles East and 1 quarter mile North of Lenexa beginning at 10 o'clock on Monday October 25. Oh, my gosh that was exactly, how many years ago? 1920 he did this right? So, we are Aug wait, so this is almost 100 years old, this paper. That is amazing. This is going in the book. It has to go in the book.

Clara Duffey: And I don't know what this is a picture of. It looks like a hurricane. I guess it is. I don't know why we have those. For some time he used to work over there in Galveston, I think.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah because...at League City

Clara Duffey: At Leak City. So, this might be from there, but we don't have any reference to it or anything. Some more old pictures. Copies of pictures. I think those are pictures that I got when I went to Belgium. This is another newspaper thing. See what year that is. Oh, when he got the first bale of cotton.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, this is important too!

Clara Duffey: First bale of cotton.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah. I really want to have a little excerpt in the report that has to deal with having the first bale of cotton. So, I have a very large, I have a large bed scanner in the office right next door. I can scan this. The whole thing.

Clara Duffey: The whole big thing. Oh, wow!

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, I can

Clara Duffey: And then shrink it to whatever size you want.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, exactly

Clara Duffey: I don't know if there is anything in here. Oh, some more pictures. Another picture of something.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, this is an aerial view. Um

Clara Duffey: Of what. Let's see if we can figure it out. Does it say anything on the back? I am already cheating.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Um 1938

Clara Duffey: Lot 1?

Professor Bacha-Garza: 244

Clara Duffey: Oh, that's the one that is just north of our house. Yeah just property is it let me see. Where is our house, it on there too maybe it might be.

Professor Bacha-Garza: It might be down here.

Clara Duffey: Watch um. This looks like Monte Cristo road.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah.

Clara Duffey: Which one does or?

Professor Bacha-Garza: This one is probably Monte Cristo.

Clara Duffey: Um I don't know. Roy knows. Roy knows, you will have to ask him. That was in here. There is an orchid. We did have an orchid there too, but there is a lot of orchids around. I don't know what none of these things are or anything. I think it is.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah, I can scan this too on the big bed scanner.

Clara Duffey: You know what this might be, this might be that sale yard. You think that will be back there? 19 ace, yeah that's probably that sale yard, and maybe this is Monte Cristo road, and this is, I don't know what that is. Looks like so many cars here.

Professor Bacha-Garza: This very long wide photograph.

Clara Duffey: Can you get it?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well I, it's from 1920. I am going to scan this on the large bed scanner too.

Clara Duffey: Oh, my goodness.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah um but I am going to, that is amazing!

Clara Duffey: And this one I found. That is my dad right there, but we don't know which is Alfred. I don't know if we can tell from Marjorie's pictures.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah

Clara Duffey: So, we can tell which one he is.

Professor Bacha-Garza: But look how many people there are. I mean there is probably two hundred people there.

Clara Duffey: It looks like a graduation or something.

Professor Bacha-Garza: I know.

Clara Duffey: Did we look at these already on this side? Oh, this in Belgium. Did we look at this? Jules Debouver

Professor Bacha-Garza: No

Clara Duffey: It is a different one. It is all written in Belgium

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, yeah. I can't read Belgium. I mean I can read French so I could probably

Clara Duffey: Get some of it?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Get a little bit of it.

Clara Duffey: That is the problem we had getting their birth certificate because we couldn't read the language either. This, some of these things look very old by the way that they are tattered. This is in English. Some of it is in English. I guess it is just the names.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah

Clara Duffey: And Jules Debouver. Some of it is not in English, and it is not in an envelope or anything so. And this other one too it is. And I have know idea about those books

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, look there is money in here.

Clara Duffey: Yeah, I saw some a little while ago. And what does it say oh that one though.

Professor Bacha-Garza: 10 pesos. That is so strange. 10 Japanese pesos

Clara Duffey: Wait was it in this one? I saw money somewhere too, and I don't think it was that one. But it was the 10. Maybe I did see it in there.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah, it was kind of hanging out right here.

Clara Duffey: See how the name is spelled there too. Maybe we are spelling out name wrong all this time. Passport of who? Camiel, now it is two O's.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, my. Yeah this is Emiel Rogers. That's 09.

Clara Duffey: Oh, that is the passport so. This is another one. What year is this one? "in case of death notify Alfred Rogers."

Professor Bacha-Garza: Ellis Island

Clara Duffey: That is in 1926. This passport. And now it is spelled the way we used to spell it.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Emiel Manhoot

Clara Duffey: That is the other one I was showing you. That lady's husband. Their sister's husband. What does it say?

Professor Bacha-Garza: It says, "On the..."

Clara Duffey: Ellis Island

Professor Bacha-Garza: Ellis Island, New York on July 23, 1909 Emiel Rogers Mansfield hall leaving tonight about 8 o'clock southern road, meet me. Emiel Manhoot

Clara Duffey: Oh, he wrote this?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yes, at Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Clara Duffey: We tried finding what that place was, mans, that is some good research for you, we don't know what Mansfield hall was. We tried finding out about that. We couldn't find anything out about that.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay.

Clara Duffey: Because it seems like that was their address. This is his wife there.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Right

Clara Duffey: I think she was older than him. Somewhere I had seen that. Date of birth is 1882.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Can I scan this?

Clara Duffey: Oh, yeah

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: And I am okay with you scanning those too. This looks like um Jules. This maybe something about them because this is my mom's middle name, Stephania. Stephania, that is their grandparents I guess. This is like a catechism book where they keep records in. I think that is what that is. We probably don't need that.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: There is this one. What is in that article. I don't know what this is too.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Edinburg, Texas. Oh, it's um an article in um Belgium were it talks about him being in Edinburg, McAllen, Pharr, and San Juan. But I can't, um I can't read any of it.

Clara Duffey: Oh, okay. This is somebody's death, and it is written in English, but it is not any of the people that we really know. It's the people from Indiana.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay.

Clara Duffey: And what was this one again? Oh, we took something out of here, which one did we took out? That one I think.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay. Well let me put it back.

Clara Duffey: And I think I already looked at all this.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay

Clara Duffey: And we will look at all the same ones again, in less we put them aside. I haven't looked at that side.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay.

Clara Duffey: This is that death in somebody in service. This is one that I am pretty sure we already looked at. Absolutely yeah we put them here in this stack. The ones that we don't need.

Professor Bacha-Garza: General warranty deed, and I am trying to look for the date. 1920. Yeah I would like this one to scan. Okay.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Clara Duffey: Another warranty deed here John Allen to Camiel Oh, that one is in the records.

Clara Duffey: Oh, you recognize it?

Professor Bacha-Garza: That was 1925, I think if I am not mistaken. 1951

Clara Duffey: Oh, this is 1930

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay yeah

Clara Duffey: That part it is something different over here.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay so um it's another piece of property.

Clara Duffey: Here is my brother.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Awe

Clara Duffey: On the tractor

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, we need those. Absolutely need those because I know Stephen Cantu, one of the interviewers. Oh, my goodness look at him.

Clara Duffey: And that with him and I

Professor Bacha-Garza: That we need

Clara Duffey: Outside of our house. Well there is a lot more pictures. I have at that age.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Where there dates on these? 1951. Yeah okay.

Clara Duffey: Yeah that is right.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Okay.

Clara Duffey: I am trying to read the language. My mother never learned to read Belgium either. This is um my mom again, Uncle Richard and Uncle Danny. The three kids that came over on the boat.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, my goodness.

Clara Duffey: Well they are bigger now. See how his eyes are cross

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah

Clara Duffey: He never really did good in school.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Irene, Richard, Daniel.

Clara Duffey: Here is a picture of them picking fruit. I am sure you want that one too.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well if this, if she was born in 1914, this is, what is this 1920?

Clara Duffey: She looks about what?

Professor Bacha-Garza: 5

Clara Duffey: She was 5 when she came up out here. So, she is probably older because he was a baby remember? She is probably about 7.

Professor Bacha-Garza: From 1921, so this was taken

Clara Duffey: Oh, does it say?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well I don't know, but if she was 7 years old. 7 plus 14 is 21. It doesn't have a date on it. Who was in this picture?

Clara Duffey: This is um let me see that is my dad on that side, I am assuming this is Uncle Alfred. That is my dad, and I don't know if that is Emma or Emily.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, okay

Clara Duffey: Well anyways is that citrus trees?

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah

Clara Duffey: Does it have any date on that? No

Professor Bacha-Garza: No

Clara Duffey: Edinburg, Texas

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, well what we will do is when we scan the pictures, and when we decided what to put in the record

Clara Duffey: I think we looked at that, this, yeah

Professor Bacha-Garza: We will put like cerca meaning around such and such date

Clara Duffey: Oh, okay. And these are boats too

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, is that you?

Clara Duffey: Yup Roy and I.

Professor Bacha-Garza: That is so cute.

Clara Duffey: we were cotton pickers

Professor Bacha-Garza: what is that 1952. Is that the two of you? Oh, my god that is darling

Clara Duffey: that is the horse I guess I remember

Professor Bacha-Garza: and that is your dad? Oh, my gosh, there you are in the fields

Clara Duffey: that is on the trailer again. The truck. What year is it? What year is this?

Professor Bacha-Garza: These are 52

Clara Duffey: 52

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah. And there is your mom and dad. Oh, these are perfect. Okay I am going to put these with this group.

Clara Duffey: Okay. Did we go through this? What is this?

Professor Bacha-Garza: I am not sure.

Clara Duffey: Rio Grande Valley Continental Exhibit Corporation. We will let you open that one. Let's see what that is. Maybe that is a handwritten something. 1931.

Professor Bacha-Garza: "I, William Russell party of the first part of the sum of 10 dollars and other valuable consideration do here by transfer to the release of the party of ¼ interest in paten. Paten 1812757 Ante Creeper for railroad rails. Filed in patent office."

Clara Duffey: I never hear of this before.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Wow

Clara Duffey: And who is it to? Did my dad send it or is it something he did for somebody else?

Professor Bacha-Garza: It was William Russell to your father.

Clara Duffey: Oh.

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, I wonder what

Clara Duffey: The story is

Professor Bacha-Garza: That patent is. Maybe we will send one of the students looking for that.

Clara Duffey: What is what too, maybe it has something in there.

Professor Bacha-Garza: Agreement William Russell to Camiel Roegiers. Huh, interesting. Maybe they

Clara Duffey: Maybe it is the same thing as the patent refer to in the letter

Professor Bacha-Garza: Well maybe they um maybe they invented something together

Clara Duffey: What is that about?

Olivia Salazar: this is

Clara Duffey: The same thing too

Olivia Salazar: your brother wrote it.

Clara Duffey: Oh, my brother wrote it

Olivia Salazar: it, the last page is for those wondering

Clara Duffey: Oh, is that William Russell too

Olivia Salazar: yeah it has William Russell in it

Clara Duffey: Notifying

Olivia Salazar: about the patent

Clara Duffey: Well I guess he was trying to find out something about it maybe.

Olivia Salazar: yeah

Clara Duffey: Because it is all together in the same packet. I didn't know anything about it myself. So, maybe this is it.

Professor Bacha-Garza: oh, yeah that looks like a patent. Oh, yeah United States patent office. Huh wow.

Clara Duffey: All together that pain stuff. More of the patent office examination

Professor Bacha-Garza: Anti Creeper. Wow.

Clara Duffey: Anti creeper for railroad rails this is 30 apparat from the patent office

Professor Bacha-Garza: I would like to know if we such be initialed to any royalty or other money mentioned in the article. Interesting. "Whoever reads this letter would probably wonder why I Roy Roegiers who is not related to William A. Russell is writing you. Well it is this way William Russell sold the patent rights to my dad who is Camiel Roegiers in Edinburg Texas. This happened on July 25, 1931 well your dadawe Roy wrote this [a letter to the US patent office on March 9, 1964 – see Appendix 22] when he was in High school. He studied American History under Mr. Peterson who recommended me writing to you to gain information

Clara Duffey: Never heard anything back I guess we are going to have to ask Roy

Professor Bacha-Garza: We are going to have to ask Roy

Clara Duffey: All of that was maybe in here too

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah let's keep this together. Yeah

Clara Duffey: He didn't tell us anything about that did he.... Oh look it was petroleum. I don't know what that is

Professor Bacha-Garza: Um well you also in the hidalgo county clerk's office with the deed records there are also mineral rights um information

Clara Duffey: Oh, it shows you that

Professor Bacha-Garza: That's the abstract of title to

Clara Duffey: 244

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah one of the lots that you guys owned

Clara Duffey: 20 acers that's the one that I think is a hay filed now

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah okay

Clara Duffey: 244 Roy knows all those numbers to wow that's the copy that they keep over at Hidalgo County office to

Professor Bacha-Garza: Yeah uh huh but that's yours so that

Clara Duffey: Our copy

Professor Bacha-Garza: So, when you do your um why they sign the title then that's what they were given

Clara Duffey: and here another paper that's the

Professor Bacha-Garza: Oh, yeah. This is the,

Clara Duffey: the block I guess

Professor Bacha-Garza: Hold on the lot and the block. This is the Edinburg town site.

Clara Duffey: Oh.

Appendix 5

Oral History Interview of Mrs. Marjorie Burch

Interviewed by Madelyne Ibarra, Annaiz Araiza and Sandra Pichardo

October 18, 2016 in the home of Mrs. Marjorie Burch in Edinburg, TX

Marjorie Louise Ball Burch is the oldest living relative of Roy Roegiers and Clara Duffey on the Roegiers (Rogers) side of their family. She is the granddaughter of Alfred and Emma Rogers and cousin to Roy and Clara.

[The information in brackets is information that was updated by Marjorie Burch on November 30, 2016]

Madelyne Ibarra: So, this is Madelyne. It's October 18, 2016. We're interviewing Marjorie Burch, and we have...

Annaiz Araiza: Annaiz

Madelyne Ibarra: and...

Sandra Pichardo: Sandra Pichardo

Madelyne Ibarra: Mrs. Burch, what is your birth name?

Marjorie Burch: Marjorie Louise Ball

Madelyne Ibarra: And why did your grandfather change his last name to Rogers?

Marjorie Burch: When he had children in school here in the U.S., he had five children just made it easier just to change it to Rogers.

Madelyne Ibarra: And did you notice any difference or discrimination towards your family or the Roegiers family because of the last name? Was there like diff--

Marjorie Burch: I never heard anything about it. No... [4 older children only spoke Flemish when entering school. No bilingual-Nov. 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: Ok, and when were you born and where?

Marjorie Burch: Myself?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes.

Marjorie Burch: I was born in Edinburg.

Madelyne Ibarra: In Edinburg? What year?

Marjorie Burch: 1929.

Madelyne Ibarra: Ok, and how many siblings did you have? Just your sister?

Marjorie Burch: One sister.

Madelyne Ibarra: One sister. Ok, and you said she was a year older... correct?

Marjorie Burch: Year and a half.

Madelyne Ibarra: Year and a half. What was her name?

Marjorie Burch: Mary Alice Foreman

Madelyne Ibarra: And what's the reason... why did your family leave Belgium?

Marjorie Burch: Better life.

Madelyne Ibarra: Better life.

Marjorie Burch: I was telling Sandra it's a good thing they left because Belgium and the hardships over there was... They didn't have milk for children... I'm not talking about when they left but in 1914 the war got so bad in Europe and they didn't have milk for children--they died. People died from starvation. It was really bad so it was really good they came over when they did. They came over 1909.

Madelyne Ibarra: In nineteen oh nine?

Marjorie Burch: Nine... I think.

Madelyne Ibarra: Oh ok. So this is before the war?

Marjorie Burch: Yeah.

Madelyne Ibarra: Was there like any like... an inkling-

Marjorie Burch: I'm sure there was....

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes?

Marjorie Burch: I'm sure there was.

Sandra Pichardo: Did both you-- your grandfather and his brother come at the same time?

Marjorie Burch: [My Grandparents and my mother and my grandfather's brother-Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Marjorie Burch: Well, you know, you asked me that. The one-- the brother came over earlier as a single man and then he went back to Belgium and got married... and then I assume they all came together 'cause they were all living in Fredericksburg, Virginia. So I'll assume they came together.

Madelyne Ibarra: Oh, so then you lived in Virginia first and then Kan-- well...yeah...

(Non-verbal agreement between Marjorie Burch and Madelyne Ibarra that she understood Madelyne meant her "grandfather" lived in Virginia not Marjorie herself)

Marjorie Burch: Then they went to Lenexa, Kansas. They had one child-- well my mother came with them she was Belgian and then my brother- *her* brother, the oldest was born, "oldest male" was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia. And they came down Lenexa, Kansas and they had two more children there. So I don't know how long they stayed there. Quite a while, I think. From 1909 to... I think Clara knows the date when they came to the Valley [1920 when they moved to the Valley- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: Umm... Do- Did your family have any heirlooms or any... anything they took from Belgium? Like... like any keepsakes?

Marjorie Burch: Not really. No, they... I had a few old things I didn't know if you wanted to look at them or not. That's my grandmother's pin... [brooch- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: Oooh how pretty.

Marjorie Burch: And this was a handkerchief. It's in Brussels, they have a little statue over there. Everybody goes by to see that statue, it's called "Manneken Pis" because the little guy and he's peeing (laughter). And it's a fountain and it comes out *you know where*. (Laughter) So there are all kinds of souvenirs. Why I have that I do not know (laughs). And then I bought that tapestry in Brussels when we went over. They have a lot of tapestries over there. They're very nice.

Madelyne Ibarra: I know. Ok...

Marjorie Burch: So, I understand some of the family still has some of those bowling balls. I was talking about the men play-- had that Belgium game, bowling game outside, outdoors. They played in the citrus orchard in my grandfather's... and several of the cousins I think still have some of those that would be a souvenir.

Madelyne Ibarra: Wow... yeah.

Marjorie Burch: of way back when that they brought home from Belgium, I think.

Madelyne Ibarra: (laughs) They made sure they brought the bowling balls (laughter). Uhm..

Marjorie Burch: at one time. They went back several times so I don't think originally they brought...

Madelyne Ibarra: (laughs) Ah... ok! Uhm. And why did your family relocate to the Rio Grande Valley?

Marjorie Burch: Well uh... My grandfather and his brother came on a land excursion on train... Clara has a picture of it, I couldn't believe it when she showed it to me (laughs). Those people that came on that train and then they bought land. It was just brush land. That's when they purchased the land, on Roegiers road actually is. Well a lot of the land is on Rogers road.

Madelyne Ibarra: So they were advertising? Like for this land excursion in Kansas?

Marjorie Burch: [Possibly- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: So he made sure first he came down, looked at it, made sure he wanted it and then he went back and then--

Marjorie Burch: Purchased it for his family. Yeah.

Madelyne Ibarra: Was it difficult for them to adapt here from--

Marjorie Burch: I've never heard any problems... I know my grandmother was always embarrassed about her English. I thought she did fine. They still spoke Flemish at home (laughs). They could speak English, but they spoke Flemish at home... to all of us... to my family.

Madelyne Ibarra: Did you pick up Flemish?

Marjorie Burch: Mhm.

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes? (laughs)

Annaiz Araiza: Can you still speak the language, or...

Marjorie Burch: I just knew words. I couldn't carry on a conversation. But boy, when they talked to me I understood (laughter). My mother included (laughs).

Madelyne Ibarra: What about you? Like, did you like growing up here? Did you have like any friends outside your family, like...because I know that when Clara and Roy came over they said that they would have a lot of family gatherings on the weekends...

Marjorie Burch: [Yes, my grandparents' house on Sunday- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: But outside of the family did you like hangout....

Marjorie Burch: Oh sure, in school.

Madelyne Ibarra: And, was it difficult for your family to continue cooking traditional Belgium food when they arrived in the United States.

Marjorie Burch: I don't really know. I know my grandma still cooked Belgium food. She made two soups that I can remember, Kelamapop and Tochespop, that's what we called them in Flemish. One was a rice soup and the other was a potato soup. Oh she made, like cabbage rolls I guess is what we call them. You stuff a cabbage leaf and cook them in a pan with tomato sauce. It was wonderful. I never did it. I wasn't good at that. But she cooked fried chicken and waffles, you know, just like any other American would. She was a good cook.

Madelyne Ibarra: How was school for you? Was it difficult?

MARJORIE BURCH: School?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes.

Marjorie Burch: For me?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes.

Marjorie Burch: No. Not any different than anyone else.

Madelyne Ibarra: Um, was it far from where you lived, school? Like getting there.

Marjorie Burch: Well, my sister and I and my mother lived in town, so from the farm it was what, like two and a half miles north.

Madelyne Ibarra: Where was the school located?

Marjorie Burch: I went to Sam Houston still there, across the street from the city hall. You all know where it is? That old building still there. Where they went to school, I don't know, I can't tell you [That's where I went to school. Jr. High and High School where administration building is now. I don't know where the family went to school- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: How was life in the farm?

Marjorie Burch: Like I say, we didn't live out there, so. And I wrote up, I told her, I wrote up something that you all can take. And this is, I'm not a secretary and I'm not a journalist so you all have to credit, correct it and edit it or whatever, so all of that is in here, what we did on Sundays and...and what they had to do before they went to school. My father, my grandfather had a dairy farm so they had to milk the cows in the morning before they went to school. And my aunt had to go with her dad to deliver the milk door to door before she went to school. And I remember my mother saying she rode horseback to school. That's how she got to school. Hard to believe isn't it?

Annaiz Araiza: Is this Model T Ford you all came in, is it the one in the picture?

Marjorie Burch: What?

Annaiz Araiza: The Model T Ford.

Marjorie Burch: Oh, I'm not sure if it's the same one or not. I know they did come down in a Model T Ford, but I don't know if it's the same one in the picture.

Annaiz Araiza: Ok.

Marjorie Burch: And back then like I wrote in that, I remember when they didn't have electricity, didn't have running water. Then they had a faucet in the kitchen sink, I remember that.

Annaiz Araiza: It made everything much easier.

Marjorie Burch: Pardon?

Annaiz Araiza: It made everything much easier.

Marjorie Burch: Oh yeah. And then my grandfather had a tank of some kind outdoors, that was, that had lime in it. With that he, they could get some light at night. I remember studying home, studying my homework with the lantern, but then later all the other conveniences came along. But they, no they still had to have a cistern for water and that rural water like most of us do out in the country now.

Madelyne Ibarra: How old were you when your parents divorced?

Marjorie Burch: Pardon?

Madelyne Ibarra: How old were you when your parents divorced?

Marjorie Burch: Oh, I was just a baby. Less than two years old. I didn't even know my father at all.

Madelyne Ibarra: So then who made the decisions around the house?

Marjorie Burch: My mom. (Laughs)

Madelyne Ibarra: What do you recall about Hurricane Beulah or any other catastrophes that happened here?

Marjorie Burch: Or you mean related to the farm?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes.

Marjorie Burch: You know I don't know because my grandparents had already moved to town by then. I do know that to get to town, work or whatever, they had a little boat that they would, go down to 281, leave the car there, yeah. My cousin, had, she was a teacher,

and she had, she lived down on Rogers Rd. So, that's, I'm sure that was in Beulah too. But the farm, I don't know how it affected the farm.

Madelyne Ibarra: What year did they move into town from the farm?

Marjorie Burch: I don't know, I don't have that information. If you went to the courthouse you could find all that information. When, when they purchased land, who they bought it from, when they built the houses, I would assume would be there, would be recorded.

Madelyne Ibarra: So then the two brothers, one stayed with the farm and the other, which is your grandfather, moved to town?

Marjorie Burch: [Yes, well into 80 years of age-Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: Ok.

Marjorie Burch: Just the last few years of his life, yeah. And my grandmother, too. And that's the house that Roy still lives in on Roegiers Rd. Amazing. My Grandparents lived next door. (Laughs) [Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Madelyne Ibarra: So the most devastating thing that happened to the farm was the flooding and all that?

Marjorie Burch: Umm...

Madelyne Ibarra: like the worst part

Marjorie Burch: I don't know how the flooding was, I was already married and had children. I know we had a freeze in '51. Then we had a freeze again in '62, that what pretty much obliterated the citrus industry.

Marjorie Burch: So I'm sure they were affected by that since citrus was one of their main farming. Now Roy, can tell you more about that I'm sure.

Madelyne Ibarra: How has the farm changed in size?

Marjorie Burch: In size?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yes.

Marjorie Burch: Well, I have no idea. It's been so long, except for Roy, he still has property there, he has citrus and he has farmland, and like I was telling her the property, were where its Boys and Girls Club and the Idea School, and how they had that Paws opened out back there [on the same property- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]. All that belonged to my uncle, they lived there on Rogers Road, and they tore that house down, my cousins sold that property.

Marjorie Burch: And I had another uncle who lived down the road and he had quite a bit of land too. He wasn't a farmer, but he owned quite a bit of land.

Sandra Pichardo: You said your grandfather owned about 20 to 30 acres?

Marjorie Burch: Mmm...I think that's all he had. Now that's what he originally bought when they came over, you can probably find out at the courthouse. I'm sure yeah...

Madelyne Ibarra: So how many uncles do you have?

Marjorie Burch: Uncle Bill and Uncle Bert... two.

Madelyne Ibarra: Okay, two.

Madelyne Ibarra: And who owns the farm now? Just Roy?

Marjorie Burch: His part... yeah.

Madelyne Ibarra: And the other part? No?

Marjorie Burch: Well, I was telling her, that I understand that the district attorney lives where my grandparents' house was... [The rest of the Farm I don't know- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Sandra Pichardo: So your...

Marjorie Burch: I don't know if he bought land with that house.

Sandra Pichardo: So your grandfather's land is completely gone?

Marjorie Burch: Gone.

Sandra Pichardo: Gone like dispersed?

Marjorie Burch: [Sold- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Sandra Pichardo: Okay.

Marjorie Burch: As far as I know.

Madelyne Ibarra: Do you know how much your grandfather paid for the farm?

Marjorie Burch: Have no idea.

Madelyne Ibarra: No?

Marjorie Burch: No, have no idea. I'm sure that's recorded too.

Madelyne Ibarra: So where 281 is, before that was your land as well, that was your family's land?

Marjorie Burch: 281?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yeah.

Madelyne Ibarra: You know? Was it? No?

Marjorie Burch: No, their land was off on Rogers Road, I don't know, like half a mile east, I would say, from Rogers Road, 281 was not the expressway, that's the business 281 that went through town. That's all we had then.

Marjorie Burch: In fact, I think when they but the expressway, some of that went through some of my family's property.

Madelyne Ibarra: And? Do you have any other stories that you would like to share with us?

Madelyne Ibarra: Do you ever wonder how different your life would have been if your family was living in Belgium? Or do you think they would have left anyway?

Marjorie Burch: I have no idea, I never think about that.

Madelyne Ibarra: How many times have you gone to Belgium, to visit?

Marjorie Burch: One.

Madelyne Ibarra: Once?

Madelyne Ibarra: When was that?

Marjorie Burch: I think in '69, '70 something like that. We took my mother back, to Brussels, she still had cousins there, she was born in Woorshoot, and she had cousins there as well.

Marjorie Burch: And so we visited the family and since my mother passed, we haven't had any contact with the family. I'm sure there's other cousins...

Marjorie Burch: Cousins... cousins... cousins...two or three times renewed.

Madelyne Ibarra: So when you went there did you stay at a hotel, or did you stay with family?

Marjorie Burch: Hotel.

Madelyne Ibarra: Hotel?

Madelyne Ibarra: What did you do? Like what fun things was there to do in Belgium?

Marjorie Burch: Mmm... one of those cousins met us at the hotel, and she took us by train, I had never ridden in a train before, over to the town where my mother's cousins were living, so we spent the whole day visiting with them. That was the fun part.

Marjorie Burch: What else?

Marjorie Burch: Well, we did go shopping, we were there for just a few days, we were on an excursion, from there we went on to Rheim [Rhine River- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]. Stuff like that.

Madelyne Ibarra: So did you go to France...since Belgium is right in between?

Marjorie Burch: No, it was all in Belgium.

Madelyne Ibarra: Okay.

Marjorie Burch: From Brussels around, and back to Brussels.

Marjorie Burch: Well, we went back to Rheim, And that's Germany I think?

Madelyne Ibarra: Yeah.

Marjorie Burch: Yes, we got off this ship in Rudisheim [Germany- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch], so we did go.... And yeah we got off in France. (laughter)

Madelyne Ibarra: And in one day you're able to cross, like, the whole country? Or?

Madelyne Ibarra: Anything Else?

All: Thank you.

[“My Memories on the Farm attached”- Nov 29, 2016-Marjorie Burch]

Appendix 6

My Memories on the farm

Thinking way back when my grandparents (Alfred and Emma Rogers, everyone called Mom & Pa)

Came to this country as immigrants, not speaking a word of English with no job waiting for them,

An 18 month baby in tow, crossing the ocean on a boat taking weeks. Entering the U.S by way of Ellis Island and on to Fredrickburg, Virginia. They stayed and worked a few years and then their oldest son William was born. After a time they moved on to Lenexa, Kansas my grandfather learned dairy farming.

Their next 2 children were born, Albert and Anna. Back in 1920 or so, my Grandfather and his brother came to the Valley on a land excursion train and purchased land 2 1/2 Miles north of Edinburg and maybe 1/2 mile east. All brush land. They cleared the land by hand. Went back to Kansas,, to bring their families to Texas driving a Model T Ford. Camped North of town for some nights. My Grandfather built a garage and they lived in that while he built a home.

Later he removed that first house and built a 5 room house, the one that we remember to this day.

Daughter Lucille was born in 1921. They had no electricity or running water even in the last house.

I do remember one water faucet in the kitchen sink. I remember doing homework by a lantern.

.Later my Grandfather had some kind of tank with white lime that afforded some kind of light. The children had to help milk the cows and then deliver milk to homes before going to school. I remember the old milk house with a big separator and washing those big utensils.

The children only spoke Flemish so had to learn English. My Grandparents spoke Flemish to the Grandchildren. I understood them and knew words but not conversational. My Mother could read and write Flemish. Even so Alice Bert Anna & Lucille, graduated from High School Bill preferred farming.

They had chickens and Pa would fatten the turkey that we had for Christmas dinner. They set up long tables and all the family was invited. We also had tamales on Christmas Eve and had a gift exchange.

Every Sunday we would gather in the afternoon and have raisin bread that my Grandmother made on Saturday in a large dishpan full of dough. The women visited or played cards and the men would play a Belgian bowling game under the citrus trees. My Grandfather served homebrew and he also made rootbeer for the children.

My sister and I spent every weekend at the farm as my Mother (a single Mom) worked, seven days a week at that time

We lived in town so on Saturdays my sister and I would ride double on our bike out to the farm. We had so many fond memories. After Uncle Bill and Uncle Bert married, we spent many great times with them and their families. All lived on Rogers Rd. I learned to drive a stick shift car with Uncle Bert, pulling a palette with the garbage to the corner to dump. Uncle Bill would let us ride his big old work horses.

Note: Marjorie Burch also remembers that her grandfather, Alfred Rogers had a dairy farm.

Written memories submitted to the CHAPS class students by Marjorie Burch

Appendix 7

Interviewee: Linda Rogers McGurk

Interviewers: Sara Chavez and Lizbeth De Leon

Date: October 27, 2016

Location: Linda McGurk's office at Milam Elementary in McAllen, TX

[Introduction] Sara Chavez: This is Sara Chavez and Lizbeth De Leon with UTRGV CHAPS Program interviewing [spoken by Linda McGurk] "Linda McGurk". Today's date is October the 27th and it is approximately 12:07 pm. We are going to begin our interview.

Lizbeth De Leon: So, we're going to start off with the home and personal life questions. Who came directly from Belgium and what is their relation to you?

Linda McGurk: Okay, my grandparents, which are Alfred Rogers and his wife Emma Rogers, or Roegiers which they were originally called and then they changed their name to Rogers I think when they came over. And at that time, uh, they had one child which was my aunt Alice Rogers.

Sara Chavez: And they all came from Belgium together?

Linda McGurk: The three, yeah. And I think they also came with, uh, Roy's dad and his dad's first wife, which was Emily.

Lizbeth De Leon: Grandparents came, Emma?

Linda McGurk: Yes.

Lizbeth De Leon: Emma was, uh...

Linda McGurk: My grandmother, "Mom" and her husband, which was Alfred which was, we called him "Pa". My grandparents, with their oldest child, Alice.

Lizbeth De Leon: Where were you born? And...yeah, where were you born?

Linda McGurk: Where was I born?

Lizbeth De Leon: Yes.

Linda McGurk: Okay, I was born in Edinburg.

Sara Chavez: And when were you born.

Linda McGurk: I was born in 1943.

Lizbeth De Leon: Was it called Chapin or it was Edinburg already?

Linda McGurk: No, I think it was Edinburg. Well, my dad, do you want to know about the family? My dad was born in Kansas and when his parents came from Belgium, uh, I think they first were in [Virginia] for a while, but they just kind of migrated down the United States, and my dad was born in Kansas. Then they came down to the Valley and they had...let me look at the paper stuff that I have. Can you stop it a minute to look at the papers?

[1st part of interview recording ends]

[2nd part of interview recording begins]

Lizbeth De Leon: [Question inaudible]

Linda McGurk: Okay, in our, in my family I have two brothers.

Lizbeth De Leon: Two brothers. No sisters?

Linda McGurk: Nope.

Lizbeth De Leon: Okay, um, who did you live with growing up? Did you live with your parents or...?

Linda McGurk: Yes. We all lived out in the same area. You've been out to where Roy's house is. Before the expressway came in, you know, we had like a joining property. Our family house was just to the east of where Roy lives now, but there was no expressway. So it was all farmland, farm and citrus land between our house and then the house where Roy currently lives. And then next door to him was the house my grandparents built and then down the road just a little bit was my uncle Bill. So it was kind of like, you know they just they bought all the land together. So I grew up on what's now called Rogers Road, in that house where they sell flooring now. I think it's a two story house and it sells carpet and flooring that's the same house that my dad built and that I lived in all my life.

Sara Chavez: Okay, so the structures are still there?

Linda McGurk: The structure is still there. Now, all the other houses - my grandparents' house - they tore down. And so the property, my uncle Bill's house, they tore it down. It's where that IDEA School is and all the facilities that go with that, that was all where my uncle lived. And they farmed, my uncle Bill was the farmer. And then my dad planted a lot of citrus. And then my grandfather was the dairy farmer and also a farmer. And so was, uh, Roy's dad. So I grew up out there.

Lizbeth De Leon: With the family. What were everybody's chores around the house, did anybody have a certain role.

Linda McGurk: Well, we had a cow and my brother had to, thank goodness I didn't have to milk the cow, my brother did milk the cow and my dad and I remember when I was a kid they like made butter and you know we drank the milk and they made butter out of the milk also. So, uh, my brothers had more helping chores, I didn't. I washed a heck of a lot of dishes growing up. [Laughs] We didn't have a dishwasher so being the only daughter I was the dishwasher.

Sara Chavez: For a large family.

Lizbeth De Leon: So it would be more like of women in the house chores.

Linda McGurk: Yes, I helped my mother in the house and my brothers helped my dad. But then my dad went to work in business. He went to work for a gravel company and construction. So, you know, he wasn't farming. His dad and his brother did the farming.

Sara Chavez: So if you wanted to do outside work, would they let you? Like if you wanted to milk the cows or if a female wanted to go do the outside work.

Linda McGurk: I guess so, I mean, my brother would just squirt milk at you and that kind of stuff. But, we just had a cow for our personal, you know, for the milk.

Sara Chavez: It wasn't like distributing it was just personal?

Linda McGurk: No.

Sara Chavez: Oh, that's nice.

Lizbeth De Leon: For what reason did your family move to Rio Grande?

I think, you know, they came for land cause in those days the land was advertised and they had those land companies who would lure people to the area for cheap farmland. So if you're a farmer and you're coming over from Belgium that's what you're looking for, where you can buy the land and make a living. So, I know they came for that and they just migrated down the United States.

Sara Chavez: And the whole family came?

Linda McGurk: Yes.

Sara Chavez: Okay.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, and then my grandparents, they had their children as they came down. They came over here with one child then by the time they finished they have 5. The last one being born in the Valley.

Lizbeth De Leon: So the family didn't know anybody here, like the family just came because they knew...

Linda McGurk: I'm sure y'all will research that, but I remember my dad telling me that in Edinburg where the city golf course is, that house, and it's still there, there's a white building at the municipal golf course, that it was one of those places where they brought people. And then out by Delta Lake there's a big 'ol house, a huge two story structure, and he said that was another one.

Sara Chavez: This is abandoned now, right?

Linda McGurk: Yes.

Sara Chavez: Okay, I know where that is.

Linda McGurk: You know where that is? Before you turn into Delta Lake. Yeah, in those places, see, they would get you to come down and they would give you, I mean, they would provide you with a place to stay while they took you out and showed you the land that you could buy. And that lured a lot of people down to The Valley because it was cheap land.

Sara Chavez: That's really interesting I didn't know that.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, it would be interesting to research those companies that brought people down.

Lizbeth De Leon: Your parents or grandparents never told you their experience like how they came in, by train, or how was it?

Linda McGurk: I think they drove, but I don't know. Because my dad was, like I said, born in Kansas and then they came down here. But uh, you know, they weren't educated people. My dad did go to college, I think, a year or two, but that was it. My mother didn't go to college; I know my grandparents didn't go to college. I know one of my aunts went to beauty school, Anna, because she would give haircuts to everybody. But they were, a very strong family unit, you know, like I think how a lot of the Hispanic families are very strong family units. They were very Catholic. I mean everybody was Catholic cause my parents, my mother was not a Catholic so when my mom and dad got married they wouldn't even marry them in the church in those days. If you weren't Catholic, they married them in the priest's office. I always remembered that as a kid, like that was kind of bad, but uh, that was important to the family: the religion and going to church every Sunday.

Lizbeth De Leon: So, your mother she acculturated to the Catholic?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, and she did later become a Catholic. But she was Methodist, her family was Methodist. But I know she did it for my dad.

Lizbeth De Leon: So going back to the changing last names do you remember anything, uh, your grandfather mentioned like as to why he changed his name?

Linda McGurk: If you read on this it'll say they changed when they became citizens. I guess just to be more American or less Belgium or, you know, they tried to fit in by making their name more, kind of regular I guess.

Sara Chavez: You don't remember a specific reason that they mentioned?

Linda McGurk: No.

Sara Chavez: Yeah it's kind of something that you don't really talk about.

Linda McGurk: No, and it was always that way. I grew up with my name being Rogers. And then Roy and Clara were Roegiers, but you know that's just the way it was so we didn't really question it.

Lizbeth De Leon: Are there any family anecdotes?

Linda McGurk: Like what, what do you mean “anecdotes”?

Sara Chavez: Like, uh, little stories that are passed down to kind of teach you a lesson.

Linda McGurk: We had a lot of traditions, things that we did, but I can’t think of...you know, we were expected to be honest, and fair, and we were spanked if you did something wrong, and you better always tell the truth those kind of things. We had a lot of traditions, like every Sunday where we got together, I mean, that’s unusual. And we did that until the families got so big and then when my grandmother died, too. But before that when I was growing up every Sunday afternoon, I mean, you went to church every Sunday morning, you came home had Sunday dinner, then in the afternoon everybody went to the grandparent’s house. And we, uh, my grandmother always baked homemade raisin bread every Sunday and we ate that hot with butter. And the women would sit on the back porch and talk and, you know, share stuff. And the men were outside playing that Belgium bowling game that they had. My grandfather had this court, I mean it was dirt, but it had like a palm thatched roof and the men had these wooden things, they were round and flat on each side and they, you know, they played this [bowling] game, kind of like horseshoes, but you rolled the ball and you tried to knock the other person’s [ball] off the whatever-you-called it, the pole thing that was in the ground. And that’s what the men did, they laughed and talked and played that. And then my aunt would give haircuts to anybody that needed a haircut. [Laughs] Got a lot of things accomplished on Sunday afternoon! [All laugh] And then, you know, there was no air-condition, no TV or anything. And the kids, we all just played outside. And we kind of hooked up by ages. The oldest boys, of course, didn’t want to play with the girls, you know, but we did have one cousin that was our age and we would try to make him be our “baby” or our “husband”. [Laughs] You know, we tried to make him play with us, that was Tommy. And you know we just ran around in the fields and we would eat a lot of stuff that was growing in the ground. Beets or carrots or, you know, we would just pull them up and eat them or pick oranges off the trees, so it was good, it made us close.

Sara Chavez: That sounds fun!

Lizbeth De Leon: We actually found some like golf balls, I don’t know if you remember, in the farm area.

Linda McGurk: Really? I don’t know where those came from. No telling! We weren’t playing golf. [Laughs] But, just playing and then we would all go home and we did that every Sunday.

Sara Chavez: Every Sunday, from morning church to night time?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, it was church and then lunch at your house then you went over there in the afternoon.

Sara Chavez: Would they make you come in when the sun started going down?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, then we’d all go home we didn’t eat supper there. We all went home. But a lot of us lived close. We lived really close and then my uncle Bill and his family lived really close. Then my aunt Anna and her family lived in town. Alice and her girls, um, they lived in town. And then when my youngest aunt got married she did move to Harlingen, so it was harder for them to come, but the ones here, you know, came every time.

Lizbeth De Leon: Very close family, always together. Do you remember anything that your grandfather or your parents brought from Kansas or from Belgium? Anything in particular, something valuable or in the family.

Linda McGurk: Um, no, I know of course they brought the language. The adults, they didn’t, I guess because they wanted us to assimilate with the population, they didn’t teach us to speak Belgium. They spoke it, the adults. Of course, we didn’t understand what they were saying. Which, now with the Hispanic parents are trying to hang onto their culture and their language, but in those days they didn’t, you know, they didn’t teach us the language, but no

I can't think of a thing that they brought; I guess it was more customs and traditions. My grandparents had a, they built a bird cage, and see I remember that, on the back porch of their house. They had a birdcage probably about this big [signals hands about 3 feet wide] and maybe about 5 feet tall. And so I was always fascinated, all the kids were, because they had like doves in there. Instead of parakeets, they had doves. [Laughs] But uh, and then I don't remember them having a lot of like dogs and cats; I don't remember them having a lot of pets. But I'd say they brought more traditions and values and culture.

Lizbeth De Leon: So it was the older generations were the ones that spoke the Belgium language.

Linda McGurk: Yes, it would be my grandparents and my dad's age, but it stopped there. See then with the kids of them, we were not taught the language.

Sara Chavez: Well, you talked about the raisin bread, and that wasn't a special occasion thing?

Linda McGurk: No, it was every Sunday. And then my grandmother, Mom, knitted so any of the grandchildren, which there were a lot, like – [counting the grandchildren] – Most family, all the children...all of Mom and Pa's children had 3 children except the youngest daughter had 4, so that was a lot of grand kids. But Mom would knit a sweater for you when it was your turn, so you would wait several years, you know, because that was her deal. So you waited to get your sweater and hoped you didn't outgrow it before you got another one! But she did do that, she would knit us a sweater when it was our turn.

Sara Chavez: And was there any other food that was eaten on special occasions or holidays?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, I can't remember the food being special or like, Belgium food. We did, you know, every Christmas Eve, we went to Mom and Pa's house and one of the uncles would dress up like Santa Claus although everybody knew who he was cause, you know, it wasn't a very good Santa Claus suit, but that was a big deal. Just to go over there and be together for a while. And then we'd do that Christmas Eve and everybody else of course had their other side of the family, you know, when the parents married. But we all, that part of the family got together every Christmas Eve and there was always a Santa Claus. We must have drawn names 'cause there weren't a lot of presents, but it was just everybody being together and laughing at the Santa Claus because you knew who it was. [Laughs]

Sara Chavez: What other major holidays were celebrated? Like Easter...?

Linda McGurk: I just really remember Christmas a lot that we went over there. Thanksgiving? I can't remember going over there as a child, so...

Sara Chavez: Was it just your family then, for Thanksgiving?

Linda McGurk: I guess we would, yeah, just stay with our own family. And I think some of the families like Margie and her sister, they were the oldest and they spent a lot of time there because their mother worked at the packing shed, but they stayed at Mom's and Pa's a lot. So I'm sure in her interview she told a lot about it, because she could remember when there was no electricity in Mom and Pa's house and they had lanterns. I don't remember that, as a kid Mom had a stove and there were lights so, you know, it was a little bit different generation. Plus, I didn't spend the time over there because I had both my parents, but I know Margie and Mary Alice kind of grew up at Mom and Pa's house. So I'm sure [she will] have more to add on what went on.

Lizbeth De Leon: Talking about the "Mom" and "Pa", did someone, you know, like create that?

Linda McGurk: Start that?? I guess, yeah. That's what everybody called them. "Mom and Pa", but yeah that's what we always called them.

Lizbeth De Leon: It sounds like, respectful, like "Mom" and "Pa" like, with love.

Linda McGurk: Yes, so that's what we always called them "Mom" and "Pa".

Sara Chavez: So, we already talked about religion, but did anybody change religions? Did anybody go away from the Catholic religion?

Linda McGurk: Well, it's interesting now, you know, I mean, you're young people you know, everybody of course has their own beliefs and I guess, I mean I just know that I certainly believe in God and I know if you're a good person and do follow the Commandments, you know God is going to take you to Heaven. So, I'm sure a lot of the kids are Catholic, but I'm sure some have gone to some of the different denomination of the churches.

Sara Chavez: Yeah, it's very common now.

Linda McGurk: When we were raised it was very strict, you didn't go to Communion if you didn't just go the Confession. I remember my dad – and I do remember my dad on his knees praying, that was common. We lived in that two story house, I'd go up the stairs to my bedroom and I could look into theirs and I would often see my dad and I'd think to myself, "Why don't you get down on your knees?" because it was the old way, which was good. It was a good way.

Sara Chavez: Did anybody, kind of like, officially declare that they were leaving Catholicism?

Linda McGurk: No, just as they grew up and kids go away to college or get a job then the parents of course don't have control over them anymore. I would say the majority of our family is still Catholic. Definitely the large majority, but I couldn't say that every grand kid is.

Lizbeth De Leon: Did you, uh, go to church often or was it a particular church the family attended?

Linda McGurk: Yes, we all went to St. Joseph's in Edinburg.

Sara Chavez: Would you all meet there or go together?

Linda McGurk: Well, as we got older I know my mom and my aunts would always go to the Echo after church to have coffee as a group. But like I said aunt Lucile and her family moved to Harlingen and then they moved to Victoria, so then they weren't here. But, Aunt Alice and Aunt Anna – Aunt Anna was the aunt that my grandfather lived with after my grandmother died. They ended up, they moved to town I don't know when, but they did, I guess as they got older, they sold the house out in the country and they bought a little house in town. And, um, I think I have a picture of my grandfather standing in the front yard. And they both lived there and then in, probably '62, my grandmother died. She went to lay down because she wasn't feeling good, and died in her sleep. So then, Pa moved in with Anna, his daughter. And he lived there with her till he died.

Sara Chavez: Kind of going back to traditions, what music was listened to the most? Like, by the first generation and then if you can remember by generation.

Linda McGurk: [Laughs] See I don't remember. My dad just liked "The Yellow Rose of Texas" and he just liked country songs. But I don't know about my grandparents.

Sara Chavez: Oh, you don't remember them ever like listening to the radio?

Linda McGurk: I'm sure they had people that played instruments, but I don't remember that as a kid.

Sara Chavez: And then your generation, like the grandchildren, did you all listen to the same kind of music growing up?

Linda McGurk: Well, we just listened to whatever was popular at the time. When you're in high school and college you get all into the popular music, but my dad, they belonged to the

[Knights of Columbus]. I remember they used to go to those dances and always enjoyed dancing and the music.

Sara Chavez: Was it church music?

Linda McGurk: It wasn't church music; I just know my dad liked western music and cowboy movies. [Laughs] Shoot 'em up, bang bang. He hated the movies where they'd break into song. He was like, "That's not real! Nobody's out talkin' and then they suddenly start singing." My mother liked those kind of movies, but my dad liked just "cowboys" and "guns" and "Indians" and western movies. [Laughs]

Sara Chavez: So one of the other questions was about instruments, but you're sure they played but don't remember anything specific?

Linda McGurk: I don't remember what, but it could have been an accordion. I vaguely remember that, but maybe Margie or somebody older would remember. I'm sure they had musical instruments but I don't remember what it was.

Lizbeth De Leon: So we were talking about pets before, do you remember any pets in particular?

Linda McGurk: I don't at my grandparents' house. I'm sure they had cows, of course, and possibly goats. Chickens, I think they had chickens. I just don't remember dogs and cats at their house. They could have had them, um, but we did growing up. But we did growing up, we had the cow to milk and then we always had dogs and cats and horses.

Lizbeth De Leon: So the farming was, you know, that was like a...

Linda McGurk: Kind of like a communal thing, you know, because they shared the farmland. Like I said, everybody farmed but my dad. Of course they farmed their own property, but I'm sure my dad had something worked out with his brother to farm his land 'cause my dad didn't farm it.

Sara Chavez: Oh, ok so it was farmland but he didn't himself...

Linda McGurk: He himself did not farm it 'cause he had that, he got the job in construction. And my dad went to college for 2 years and he was a businessman, so I know he was very respected in the family to advise them. And he took care of his dad's and mom's business stuff.

Sara Chavez: So what would happen if somebody started feeling ill? Would you go to the doctor or were there any home remedies to try first?

Linda McGurk: Oh, yeah! [Laughs]

[All laugh]

Linda McGurk: I don't know...Oh, I remember when I had a sore throat I would get some honey with some bourbon in it, or whiskey, and you would just swallow it real slow so it would kind of burn out the sore throat. But they did take us to the doctor, but that was one I remember as kid because it was like, 'Whoa!' you know it would just burn as it went down your throat, but I guess I don't know if it helped.

Sara Chavez: I know in the Hispanic culture we have a lot of things to try first, like, before we go to the doctor. Was there anything that you remember, like for fever maybe?

Linda McGurk: No, I don't remember...Oh, I do remember they would put just the ice [bag] on your head or they'd take a towel and put ice in it and put it on your head. They took us to the doctor. I mean, in those days I remember the doctor coming to our house! Can you imagine? He would come to our house and check us out. That doesn't happen anymore.

Lizbeth De Leon: You have to hunt them.

Linda McGurk: Hunt them down and then go wait for hours! But, yeah, that was very different in those days.

Sara Chavez: So the doctor would come and would he bring that little [bag gesture]?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, he had that little black bag I guess everything was supposed to be in his little black bag to check you out so...as a kid I remember that.

Sara Chavez: Would he come right away or would you call him?

Linda McGurk: I don't know. I mean, I just remember him coming, which was nice.

Sara Chavez: That is nice, cause you're sick and you don't have to leave.

Linda McGurk: Right, you don't have to leave the house! But that hasn't happened in a long time. But, you know I mean, growing up for us we didn't have air conditioning, we didn't have TV's, you just played outside. I remember we all had window fans. You'd get this box fan and put it in your window. And it had like a timer you could turn it on and your sheets would just be flapping. [Laughs] But it was good! You know, cause, we didn't have air conditioning. But we played outside a lot. You know, hide and seek. People would, friends or family came over, and then later, much later, probably in maybe the 50's or 60's my dad decided to build a swimming pool because he was in construction. So, and that, in the family, some of this when you read it, the family talks about how they thought like, 'Wow! Uncle Bert so rich he has a swimming pool.' But he built it himself, you know, dug it out and plastered it. And uh, so that a lot of the cousins would come swimming at our house. And then my dad also had a pool table out in the garage and so the men a lot of the times they'd come over and play pool. And then the kids would swim. So, that was the excitement in the neighborhood.

Sara Chavez: Um, were you one of the only ones in the neighborhood with a pool?

Linda McGurk: Oh, yeah.

Sara Chavez: So a lot of people would, it would bring a lot of people over?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, you see, my Uncle Bill that lived down the road oldest daughter had 7 children and they lived nearby so those [cousins] would come over a lot and some of their memories are of coming over to our house. That was kind of luxury but it wasn't built by a pool company. It didn't have a diving board! [Laughs] But it was a pool with water.

Sara Chavez: Did he have to get a permit for it or he just...?

Linda McGurk: I don't know, I don't know. And then the other thing my dad did, 'cause we lived on a dirt road, gravel road, it was called caliche, and he did pave – because you had your windows open, no air conditioning, and a dirt road, every time a car went down the road, if the wind was blowing right, which it usually was, from the South, it blew all the dirt into your house. So my dad finally paved the strip, like, in front of our house. I guess because he was in construction he had access to that. So that was a big deal too! Cut down the dirt. And then, later, later, now I think it's all paved.

Sara Chavez: Yeah it's all paved.

Lizbeth De Leon: But he started it! [All laugh]

Linda McGurk: And then we lived, see, it's not there anymore, but right in front of Roy's house was a railroad track and it was active. So I remember growing up, it was in front of Mom and Pa's house, it was in front of where Roy grew up, and it went on into town. But, oh my gosh, we were warned as kids, 'You stop at the railroad track, you stop at the, you know...'. My dad was always on us about that because it was dangerous. And we spent a lot of time, like, on horseback or riding all over, you know, so they were just always warning us about the railroad track to be careful. Because Roy's house and Mom and Pa's house, you had to cross the track when you left the house, you had to cross the track when you came home. So it was right in front of their house.

Sara Chavez: He showed us where it was – very close.

Linda McGurk: Very close, and trains went on the track in those days.

Sara Chavez: Maybe that's why you don't remember any dogs and cats. [Laughs]

Linda McGurk: Maybe there weren't any! [All laugh] You know, they probably had dogs, but they were just so used to running around everywhere. They weren't kept in the house! That's for sure.

Lizbeth De Leon: When, um, when you think about Pa what do you remember?

Linda McGurk: He was little! When you see him in the picture he was a small man. And I guess I was always, because my dad was much taller, I mean...[shows picture of Pa]...look are they standing or are they sitting? But you can tell in this picture that they were small people. Look at my Mom and Pa in the background. They were small.

Lizbeth De Leon: I think you have a little bit from him!

Linda McGurk: [Looking at pictures] Like, you know, I love to look at the old pictures. He was kind of quiet. He wasn't loud at all. But I think he was a very good daddy [and a hard-worker].

Lizbeth De Leon: What about your Mom, like um, your grandmother?

Linda McGurk: She was just, to me, I mean, she was always in the kitchen. You know, she was always cooking or taking care people.

Lizbeth De Leon: They're so cute!

Linda McGurk: [Looking at picture of old car] Yeah, look at that car! Goodness.

Lizbeth De Leon: Like the light blue car, right?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, but they were happy. You know, good parents. So...okay, what else?

Sara Chavez: Was there any traveling that you remember? Like family vacations or any traveling as a whole family altogether?

Linda McGurk: Our family didn't go a lot. I remember one trip my dad took us to Mexico City. And, I mean, that was a big deal. I remember all the traffic, I was just like, 'Oh, my god! The way these people drive down here!' But, I mean, that was really the only big trip that I can remember.

Linda McGurk: Uh, maybe about 12. 10 or 12. And then one time we drove to California. I remember that trip because there was no air conditioning in the car. And they had a thing they would put in the window where you could put ice in it, in the car, and I guess somehow the air would kind of blow the coolness. It was a very hot trip. But I think my parents had friends, I'm sure they had friends, that lived in California and we went out there to visit them. But was hot. You know we drove through the desert and we didn't have air conditioning. I remember that trip. But only those two trips, I think, did we ever take that were big. We just stayed here.

Sara Chavez: And we kind of talked about this earlier, about the family playing any sports, the boys with the Belgium bowling, um was there anything else that included like the whole family? The girls and the boys?

Linda McGurk: Um, no. I mean, I just remember what I described to you. [Also, they played cards a lot]. The bowling, and it has a name I'm sure, I just don't know what it is. Although, I think there was a paper in here. [Linda shuffle through papers containing information on the family and Feather Bowling] Do y'all know?

Sara Chavez: Roy might know.

Linda McGurk: Roy would know! There was a paper in here that said 'something' bowling. I'll give you all copies of some of this stuff when we finish. Here! Belgium bowling, they call it "Feather Bowling". Ok yeah, okay, see [reading from papers about Feather Bowling] "The game originally was a Belgium pastime akin to Horseshoes", see it was set up like horseshoes with those pole things in the ground, "And Bocce", or something. "These games had many similarities, though little is known about the exact origin of the game. They call it Feather Bowling. Feather Bowling is a game played with wooden balls

shaped like wheels of cheese”, and that was what they were like, round with the flat. “The balls were rolled down a dirt or synthetic alley.” Ours was dirt. “And the object of the game was to get the ball as close to the feather (which is that iron stick) as possible. Teams take turns rolling 12 balls and may knock their opponents balls out of the way. The team with balls closest to the feather at the end of the game wins.” And I’m sure they probably drank beer when they were doing it! [All laugh] I’m sure. Kids didn’t, but I’m sure the men did.

Lizbeth De Leon: Anybody involved in politics?

Linda McGurk: Politics? Uh, no. No.

Lizbeth De Leon: You didn’t go out for voting or...?

Linda McGurk: I mean, we voted, but nobody was in any kind of, or ran for any kind of offices. No, very much, you know, we lived in the country. So it was, you know, like I always rode the school bus to school because we lived out in the country. But um, no nobody was in politics.

Sara Chavez: Was your family affected by the Depression or World War II?

Linda McGurk: I remember as a child, there were big freezes, cause my dad had a lot of money invested, his way of saving money, was he invested in land, that’s why, he continually bought land around the railroad tracks across Roy’s hose. He bought land and then he invested in putting orchids in a lot of his land. I remember there was a bad freeze when I was a kid, I do not know, I when I was a kid maybe in the 50’s and I just remember all the trees died because it was so cold, they were frozen. I remember them all burning them, I am sure they were affected, and I would hear my parent talking about the Depression, but as a kid you know that your parent’s protect you from the bad times, they won’t tell you that much. I remember polio being a big scare when I was a little girl cause, my mother, you know, if you got sick, she was always scare, you were getting polio because before they got the polio vaccine. Kids got polio and were crippled; I just remember her being very scared at times when we got sick. I remember when we were kids we got like measles bad, I don’t remember anybody getting mumps but I remember having the bad measles where they put you in a dark room, you were sick for a quite a while. Those kinds of things they were scared of and I know the Depression affected them but as kids we were not really aware of it. They did not talk of stuff in front of us, but I mean we ate stuff that you don’t eat now-a-days, I mean we would eat a lot of things on toast, like creamed tuna on toast, creamed, you could get meat in jars, I don’t know how it’s called, but I remember having creamed...

Sara Chavez: Like Spam or something?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, it would be like creamed beef. Of course we ate a lot of tuna because we ate fish every Friday, all of our life so then we did not eat meat on Fridays, ever. So we ate a lot of tuna and I remember also there we some kind of can, fish in a can, maybe it was Salmon.

Sara Chavez: Yes.

Linda McGurk: But, umm...

Sara Chavez: So it might be an effect, but they did not directly tell you?

Linda McGurk: No, we raised rabbits, which I would never eat rabbits, but we did; we raised them and they killed them and later as I got older I remember, [they] killed cows and we had a lot of meat.

Sara Chavez: And who would kill them?

Linda McGurk: I guess the slaughterhouse, but I remember that we had a lot of beef, they [would] divide that between the families, you know ‘cause one cow was a lot of meat.

Sara Chavez: Yes.

Linda McGurk: So they would divide them, but (umm) ok, what else?

Sara Chavez: And, so, World War II, do you remember anything directly from World War II?

Linda McGurk: No.

Sara Chavez: Ok, umm.

Linda McGurk: And I don't, you know my dad never went to war, I don't remember anybody in the family, they might have but I was not aware of it. I don't remember.

Sara Chavez: And what about social movements like umm, Vietnam, was anybody involved in social movements like that?

Linda McGurk: Of course Vietnam was more like when I was first married, and my husband grew up in the Bronx in New York City, so I just know we were scared that he would get drafted when we were first married and umm, but he didn't and we decided what a good time to have a baby (laughs) because that put you down lower on the draft list, you know he didn't enlist 'cause it was right when we were first married but of course a lot of people did, you know enlist.

Sara Chavez: Did anybody protest the war that you remember? Were they against the war?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, no, umm, I mean, none of our family protest it.

Sara Chavez: Ok, so now those were more like the personal questions, now we are going to move to more property questions

Linda McGurk: Ok.

Sara Chavez: And, so this is going to be specifically about the house you grew up in, do you remember what kind of rooms were in the house, like a laundry room, a kitchen, did you have any specific rooms like for any activities?

Linda McGurk: Uh, originally the house had a living room, my parents room, they had a bathroom, the kitchen, and then a screen porch on the back. Then later, cause my dad could fix things and built things, he added on to the house. He closed the porch and added on, he built a bomb shelter, I guess they were worried (laughs) a lot of the wars because he built, he built under the house a concrete room like a cellar and umm...

Lizbeth De Leon: We saw one, so it was your dad?

Linda McGurk: Umm, I mean so which one, where did you see one?

Sara Chavez: We saw one at Roy's.

Linda McGurk: At Roy's, they had one too, yeah, no my dad built one at our house, that screen porch and then it had this big old door, in the floor and then you could raise it up and then the steps went down, and then later when my dad enclosed that room and made it like a family room you could get to it from outside the house. I am sure that is still there on that house where it sells carpeting and the flooring, it was on the street side, and it was just a concrete like entrance that you could down with a door like on the top of it so we had that, so if Roy had that then my uncle Bill might've had a cellar in his house, of course that house is destroyed.

Sara Chavez: We were not aware of that.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, so he might have been, I mean all might have been worried about being bombed, umm...

Sara Chavez: We saw one at Roy's; it was all the way down.

Lizbeth De Leon: Yes, just how you described it.

Linda McGurk: It was the same way, that's the way it was, it had, it was like a trap door, this flat door. I remember as a kid, you know, and we used to keep like my mother would make jelly, you know stuff like that, that kind of stuff, that was kept down there, of course, I was always, you know it was roach heaven, so I was little, but it was there. I mean I knew

what it was and what it was for, so umm, yeah, and my dad; you know he would fix anything at the house. The house originally, well I guess it still is, well it was up on post, you know, it did not have any concrete foundation; it was on post, but I did not know Roy's, I did not know they had one too, they probably, probably all the men built it.

Sara Chavez: Probably, it still goes down there, the stairs and everything.

Linda McGurk: (laughs, yeah) It was the same way, ah ok.

Sara Chavez: I think he was even fixing it, he was bricks around it.

Linda McGurk: Really, well I bet they all built them with each other for each other.

Sara Chavez: Your dad helped out a lot.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, because he was good in construction, but I remember he was one of those guys, he could fix the washing machine; he could fix the car, yeah, so when I got married, I thought all men came that way (laughs) and they don't, they don't.

Sara Chavez: Kind of setting up expectations for you (laughs).

Linda McGurk: I did not realize the boys in New York did not have any of those experiences, (laughs).

Sara Chavez: So he would make the changes to the house and everything?

Linda McGurk: And fix everything.

Sara Chavez: So, where, what would you do with trash, would you burn it?

Linda McGurk: Yes.

Sara Chavez: Ah, ok.

Linda McGurk: We always burned the trash, we had barrels, and you burned the trash.

Sara Chavez: so it was collected weekly or how?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, whenever that can got full, we burned it

Sara Chavez: Ah ok

Sara Chavez: Was there running water, do you remember was the water running?

Linda McGurk: Umm, we had a cistern. We got water from there and then later I remember when we got hooked up to one of those rural water services. So then we had water coming through the pipes and but I remember also my dad hooked up rain water, we had a big thing to catch rain water and I know as a kid or as a teenager we could wash our hair with the rain water, I don't know, but we had a faucet in the house that also had rain water coming through it but we did have a cistern and of course we had the plumbing you know that went through a drain in the yard, septic [system], and that's how the toilet water absorbed into the ground.

Sara Chavez: Do you remember your parents talking about running water before you were born? Or they...

Linda McGurk: Yeah, I don't know what they had before; probably it started in steps, you know where they had the [cistern], but I do remember when we hooked on to the (what it's called) the rural water company. I mean it was the big deal and all of us got it out there.

Sara Chavez: That was a big change.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, and the same thing we had [city services], the septic [system]; the city of Edinburg finally you know brought that out.

Sara Chavez: Umm, the bathroom was there inside the house?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, but I can remember the bathroom was inside the house, yes,

Sara Chavez: Umm, was there cemetery on the property, I know way back then on properties...

Linda McGurk: No...

Sara Chavez: So you had a city cemetery?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, the one in Edinburg, but then all the family they ended up buying plots together, the one on Taylor road. You could go out there, my Uncle Bill, my Aunt

Mary, their daughter, are buried there. Then you had my Mom and Pa buried there, then you had my parents buried there, then you know there all together cause then they bought the [plots] at the same time.

Sara Chavez: Umm, now do you remember any structures being built, like the barn or any outdoor structures around being built?

Linda McGurk: Only the things my dad would built in our house, we had a garage, we had a two car garage he built and then on to this room for the pool table (laughs), and but at Mom and Pa house as a child I remember the barns and Marjorie could probably remember more of that.

Sara Chavez: 'Cause the barns were already there as far as you knew?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, as a kid the barns we already there.

Sara Chavez: Ok.

Linda McGurk: and there was a little tool shed that we liked to play in a lot, it was already there.

Sara Chavez: Were you allowed to play in there?

Linda McGurk: We would go in there, I guess it did not have a lock on it when we were playing you know, the girls were playing, we would go in there, and we would play hide and seek a lot, so you would go to places like that to hide.

Sara Chavez: Now as far as the landscape, umm like around the area, like you said that there was just farm land and that there was just caliche, umm, what changes of landscape were there that you could remember?

Linda McGurk: What do you mean? What changes?

Sara Chavez: Like the road being paved, umm you remember the roads being paved?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, that was more when I was like in high school.

Sara Chavez: Umm ok.

Linda McGurk: 'Cause growing up, well no even in college, because my husband was not from down here and he was like what kind of road is this, and he had a friend that has a car well he did not even want to drive his car down there because they were from New York they would never see roads that had rock on them and dirt. So I guess it was caliche for a long time.

Sara Chavez: Wow

Linda McGurk: It was just, you know you had your little yard area and then you just had farmland, I mean I grew up there was citrus all around our house, there was a canal there, and we would walk the canal, cross it, and then we were right behind Ma and Pa's house. Because like I said there was no expressway there. So, we had a pasture where our cow was back then. Behind the growth was a pasture and then the cow would walk along the canal and we had a pen with a roof on it for the cow, and to milk the cow. We had a canal on the south side and a canal on west side [of our house], and we would swim in the canal and it was not very clean (laughs).

Sara Chavez: Was it also used to water the oranges?

Linda McGurk: Yes, we would irrigate out of that canal, yes and they would water all, whether it was farm crop or tress. They would irrigate with the canals.

Sara Chavez: Yeah, because we found some irrigation pipes there in Roy's property, and I don't even know if he was aware it was there. We found them in orange orchards like, those big concrete pipes.

Linda McGurk: That's part of irrigation.

Sara Chavez: Yeah we found that...

Linda McGurk: I don't know if the canal to the south of Rogers Road is there or not, I have not noticed.

Sara Chavez: I don't think there is.

Linda McGurk: Maybe, they put them underground, but like growing up there were canals everywhere out there, 'cause I would always go down and fish possums out where [the canal] goes under the road it 'will go round and round and round. When I was a little kid I would always go there with a stick you know (laughs) and try to rescue any animal that was there and then try to beg my father to let me keep 'em, but a lot of times I just take them out and did not tell him and just run off. (laughs) He never let me keep possums, now that I am an adult, I understand why (laughs).

Sara Chavez: Do you remember the highway being built?

Linda McGurk: No, you see I was gone, but I remember that was a big deal that they came in and you know when they do that they kind of you don't have any choice. I think originally it was supposed to go through our house and they did move it. If you look at that two story house where they sell that stuff, you will see, it was not that much to move it over it a little bit; so it did not take in our house, but umm, it started kind of right where the canal was in our cow barn. That where the express way that was the land they took in, and I am sure they took land from Roy too.

Sara Chavez: Umm, so was there any conflict with the city officials with the land?

Linda McGurk: No, I think it was, you know, when they do that they pay you; you don't have a lot of choice. I guess you could try to fight it, but I mean you know that process, yeah, that just how it was.

Sara Chavez: Now as far farm equipment around the property, um, do you remember any farm equipment or how it was stored.

Linda McGurk: Most of it, was my uncle Bill, he was a farmer so he had a big farm with tractor [plows] and stuff and then of course Roy's dad had a big barn with a lot of equipment.

Sara Chavez: So everything was kept just in the barns?

Linda McGurk: yeah, it was all kept on the properties of people who did the farming.

Sara Chavez: So even for your dad's farm, they would...

Linda McGurk: They had the equipment, yeah; we did not have any farming equipment in our house.

Sara Chavez: You kind of touched on the crops a little bit, but you remember...

Linda McGurk: Yeah, I mean, I know that they had citrus and of course they had oranges and grapefruit and then I know we would pull stuff out of the ground so it could've been carrots, it could have been beans, I don't know if it was potatoes. But I just know that if there was anything edible, you know we were just kids, we just pull it up, and it was dirty, you just ate it, simple. (Laughs) But I do not remember what the crops were.

Sara Chavez: And you also mentioned preserves, umm, what kind of jelly was there, like what kind?

Linda McGurk: My mother would make grapefruit jelly.

Sara Chavez: Oh...

Linda McGurk: I remember that, and it must've been corn because I remember my parents would freeze corn.

Sara Chavez: Ah, ok on the actual cob?

Linda McGurk: No, they take it and boil just a little bit, and then they had these things that you could, they had like a razor blade and you could do it like that, it would cut all the corn kernels off and then they would put it in bags and they would freeze it.

Sara Chavez: Ah, ok kind of like the one you buy now, but it was homemade.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, kind of what you buy at that HEB (laughs), but it was homemade, but, I remember my parents doing that, so they must grow corn too.

Sara Chavez: Ah, ok it's interesting, umm, so would she sell the preserves?

Linda McGurk: It was for us to eat.

Sara Chavez: Now do you remember any talk of pesticides, or anything like that?

Linda McGurk: Well, I'm surprised we survived because in those days, they had those crop dusters, they would just come down, spray the crops and come up, and everybody [would run] outside to see it. So we are standing out there, watching the planes going, you know. And we did not have any air conditioning so it was going in the house, so it was, we were breathing it, but, luckily it did not kill us.

Sara Chavez: Wow.

Linda McGurk: So yeah, I remember the crop dusters,

Sara Chavez: Did they try to keep you away from them?

Linda McGurk: Umm, no, I'm sure they would not let us go out in the middle of the field, where they were but we were free to go outside and watch them because they were real low and then they would go up. So it was always fun to watch, but yeah crop dusters were big.

Sara Chavez: Umm, what do you remember of any pests? Like any bugs that they told you to stay away from?

Linda McGurk: I remember we had a lot of, [asps in the] hackberry trees, and we all had tree houses that my dad built up in the trees for us. Like my brother had a boy's tree house and I had the girl's tree house. And I remember those asps were in the trees and if they landed on you they burned you.

Sara Chavez: The fuzzy worms?

Linda McGurk: Whenever they would irrigate, you know, it was fun, they irrigated our yard too, you sometimes get fish, turtles, stuff that was in the irrigation water. I remember growing up with roaches. My room was upstairs and we had an attic, where they stored a lot of the clothes and I remember I go in there to get clothing out (laughs) I would go in to put it on, they would be flapping around in your clothes. So I remember that, as a kid, I was scared of the roaches. And then we had rats die in the wall, I remember that happened a few times because this was above the ground. The rats would get up in the wall and then they die, and then it would smell really bad. I remember my dad cutting a hole in the wall, in the house, and get the rat out and they would put something in the walls for the smell like a powder. Possums' we had a lot of possums, flies, we had horses, so you know where the flies landed on, (laughs) and then landing on the food, yes, when the windows were open. I guess it was normal, country things (laughs).

Sara Chavez: Now, as far as storms, what do you remember of Hurricane Beulah?

Linda McGurk: I remember because I was married and I had a one-year-old baby, and at the time I lived between McAllen and Edinburg; I lived on Hobbs Drive. So the water came across from McAllen. McColl Road was totally flooded. So where Marjorie Burch lives, and she lives on McColl Road, it got in their house. So it was a lot of flooding and a lot of damage.

Sara Chavez: And then as far as your Uncle, do you remember anything?

Linda McGurk: See I don't remember what flooded over there, you know what Roy said? Did it flood?

Sara Chavez: I am not too sure, umm, you know what? It did not because of the railroad tracks.

Linda McGurk: Really?

Sara Chavez: Yes, he said the railroads helped water stay on that side.

Linda McGurk: Now my uncle's house, my Uncle Bill's house, was on the other side of the railroad tracks; [I believe] it went in his basement or his cellar, whatever you want to call it, but see like what we had at our house it was like a bomb shelter you know. What my Uncle Bill had was he built his house like the houses up North. It was a cellar which had the stairs going down [from the kitchen]. They did their laundry down there. It would fill up totally with water. I do remember that they had to pump the water out from that cellar.

Sara Chavez: Now you talked a little bit about the freezes in the fifties and how they had to come and plow all the [orchards] and burn them, do you remember anything else being destroyed with the freeze, like any of the cattle?

Linda McGurk: No, I just remember my dad, whenever it got really cold, he would take a water hose, put it in a tree, and then we had icicles, you know (laughs). So that was a huge deal as a kid, you put the water hose up and then you get up in the morning and the whole tree was covered with ice. SO, umm, but no I don't remember, I don't know if it killed the cattle. See I don't remember any animals dying.

Sara Chavez: What about droughts, do you remember any big droughts?

Linda McGurk: No, and I know I don't, I think as a child they would probably did not share that, but and we did have irrigation and I guess as long as there was water to irrigate with.

Sara Chavez: And it was fine?

Linda McGurk: Yeah.

Sara Chavez: So the next section is outside of home life, so it's just kind of about your personal life, like outside. So where did you go to school?

Linda McGurk: [Pan American College]. I went to Edinburg schools and then I went to college there; it was called Pan Am then.

Sara Chavez: And what year did you graduate from Pan Am?

Linda McGurk: Sixty-four; I graduated in Sixty-one from high school and then I went through college fast because my husband was a year older than me and the boy from New York I did not want to leave (laughs). So he would go off in the summers and I would just go to summer school so I graduated [early].

Lizbeth De Leon: What did you major in?

Linda McGurk: Education.

Lizbeth De Leon: Education...

Linda McGurk: But it's ridiculous, I thought I [would never work because] my mother never worked outside the home. She was the housewife, so growing we were expected to go to college, you know. Parents did not have college but we were expected to go to college. So I remember thinking, 'Well, I'll just get [a degree] in case I ever have to work.' Well yeah (laughs). Forty years later I am still working (laughs), but umm, I am glad I got it; I am glad that they made me go to college. You know, so but I went to school there, it was fun.

Sara Chavez: So umm, as far as elementary school, high school all of that, do you remember how it was set up? Do you remember one class room back then?

Linda McGurk: No, I went to what was Sam Houston which I think the buildings, they are still there; they are kind of close to the college, but it had plenty of classrooms. You know, I mean not huge schools, but then Jefferson was a new school and I remember I got moved there like in second grade and then it was funny because later I went back to teach there (laughs), where I [attended]. The high school that I went to was, it was right next to the college. In those days they had buildings that belonged to Pan Am right next to the high

school so, umm, they were old buildings. Now they turn those buildings into the school district's administrative offices, so they are still there.

Sara Chavez: And you said that you rode the bus, but what happened if you missed the bus? Or, did you ever miss the bus?

Linda McGurk: No, I never missed the bus (laughs) my parents made sure, and we were like the last ones on the route. They picked us up right outside, on the road [by our driveway]. So, in those days they would honk if you were not there but we were usually out there.

Sara Chavez: Wow, so they would kind of wait a little bit?

Linda McGurk: I mean they would not take off if you were not there, so, because you rode the bus every day. I can remember I always had to stand in the aisle 'cause I was one of the last ones to get on; it was real crowded.

Lizbeth De Leon: It changed, over time.

Linda McGurk: Yeah, it changed, but all the time, they were crowded.

Sara Chavez: So, what do you remember you and your school friends doing for fun?

Linda McGurk: Um, just, I mean when we were little, you go to someone's house to play and that's what we did. I can remember having a friend that, I would go to her house to spend the night. She lived in town so that was fun. Then they loved to come to our house because we lived in the country. And then my brother had horses, so they would always want to ride. So just play games; like I said growing up we played a lot of 'Hide-and-Seek', we played card games, you know, 'Go Fish' and there was another I remember, 'Canasta'. We just played card games, a lot of games [like pick up sticks, checkers, jacks].

Sara Chavez: And then as you got older, like in high school, did you go out to the movie theater or anything?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, we would go to the [drive-in-movies], as we got older in those days. If you wanted to go eat, we would go to Reynosa when we were in college. I guess there were not many places to eat over here and it was safe place then; you would go over there to eat supper or go dancing.

Lizbeth De Leon: So these were around when?

Linda McGurk: It was in the sixties, when I was first married that was where all couples would go. How sad now, you know, real sad.

Sara Chavez: Yes.

Linda McGurk: But, um and I can remember there were not pizza places. My husband is from New York, he ate pizza all the time in New York. But he came down here and he is like, they were no pizza places.

Lizbeth De Leon: Where did you meet him?

Linda McGurk: At school, in college; he came here to play basketball, a scholarship he got.

Sara Chavez: So it was a big difference?

Linda McGurk: Big difference, but, I mean it was...I think Milano's might have been open. That one down in Donna, but there were no Pizza Hut, not like now.

Lizbeth De Leon: No fast food?

Linda McGurk: No, hardly any. Like I said, when you party as a teenager, college kid or high school, you went to Reynosa.

Lizbeth De Leon: So you went to dances and clubs?

Linda McGurk: We would go to clubs over there, it was very nice.

Sara Chavez: Was there trouble getting across, or when you came back?

Linda McGurk: No.

Sara Chavez: That sounds nice.

Sara Chavez: So do you remember any animals, do you remember seeing a lot of like...were you interested in birds, like the different birds that they would come? Or you just did not really pay that much of attention?

Sara Chavez: So what kind of stores and restaurants were in the area here in Edinburg? Was there a grocery store you could go to?

Linda McGurk: Yeah, Piggly Wiggly, (laughs), that was the name of it, "Piggly Wiggly". I remember that as a kid that was where we went. It was the real name of it, it was [west of the] court house. Going toward the college, it was right there on the left.

Lizbeth De Leon: It was like a store?

Linda McGurk: It was a grocery store.

Sara Chavez: So the court house, it was the center of town, wow, now it is the college.

Linda McGurk: The old court house; I mean I don't know if you've seen pictures of it, some of those pictures in the background. But yeah the old court house it was right in the center. It was a square building right where the one is now.

Sara Chavez: What about restaurants? Would you and your family would go out to restaurants, or most of it was homemade?

Linda McGurk: No, we did not really go out. When I was in college there was a restaurant in Edinburg called the Palm Café that the athletes would eat at. They gave them like a card to eat there. So I remember going there sometimes but not with our family, you know, it was more when I got older into college. I just don't remember us going out to eat. My mother did not work, so she cooked.

Sara Chavez: And your husband, do you remember his reaction to the restaurant selection in the area.

Linda McGurk: Well, there was another place, you know where the museum is right now in Edinburg. It was a restaurant right with a filling station right in that corner, it was what they called the [Highway Grill]. And [the athletes] also had a food card to that place, because Pan Am, they did not have cafeteria at the college in those days. The [athletes] lived in a dorm that was just South of that bank in the square. Where the south Subway is there was a restaurant, [Don Diego's], and they would eat there sometimes. They would eat there after [basketball] games. There were few restaurants but not that many.

Sara Chavez: But as a family, do you remember?

Linda McGurk: No. As a family, we would go in McAllen. There was a Mexican food restaurant, [Palmetto Inn], anyway I remember going there as a kid.

Sara Chavez: And that was just because Mexican food. Like if you wanted to have Mexican food you went there?

Linda McGurk: Yes.

Linda McGurk: I am sure the men drank, 'cause I remember my dad drank beer and I remember that growing up but, not the women. I never saw them drinking.

Sara Chavez: So what can you tell us about the first bale of cotton? Do you remember anything about the first bale of cotton?

Linda McGurk: No, I just remember it was a big deal when they brought in the first bale.

Sara Chavez: That is pretty much what we heard from Roy; that it was a big deal.

Linda McGurk: It was a big deal, yeah. See, when the first year I was married, I lived in Sebastian with my husband, so that is a big cotton area. But also in Harlingen and that area...but so, I remember, yeah, that was a huge deal and a lot of times the same people would get it year after year because I guess they figured out they could grow their cotton and get it early before everybody else.

Sara Chavez: Do you know the price of it?

Linda McGurk: No.

Sara Chavez: So then, do you want to say anything else? Because those were our end of questions!

Linda McGurk: I just think I personally feel blessed to be raised in the family I was because, you know, if you have caring parents and strong family support, and I felt that I had that growing up, [it helps mature you and make you who you are].

Sara Chavez: Yeah, your family sounds like amazing.

Lizbeth De Leon: Do you have a daughter or son?

Linda McGurk: I have three sons, and they are all grown and married, but then we have seven grandchildren, but only one granddaughter. We are short on girls in our family! One granddaughter, needless to say she is the princess.

Appendix 8

Interviewee: Tom Serota

Interviewers: Cheyenne Uvalle, Rebecca Merino and Juan Matta

Date: November 2016

Location: via telephone

Rebecca Merino: So we are officially starting to record.

Chyenue Uvalle: Okay.

Tom Serota: Alright.

Chyenue Uvalle: I'm Cheyenne, Tom and uh, my first question for you is, um, in class, we were told you lived with your grandparents?

Tom Serota: No, that is incorrect. I did a lot of work during the summers for my grandparents but I never lived with them.

Cheyenne Uvalle and Rebecca Merino: Oh okay.

Chyenue Uvalle: That makes things different.

Tom Serota: However, let me make a little correction. In his later years, my grandfather did live with my family.

Chyenue Uvalle: Oh, okay. Could you tell us maybe something that you remember from having your grandfather live there with you? Like, anything that might –

Tom Serota: Oh my goodness. (*Laughter*) Unfortunately by then, he was probably, I guess, upper seventies and he was starting to get a little bit senile.¹⁴⁹

Chyenue Uvalle: Mhmm.

Tom Serota: And, uh, I guess now you would call it Alzheimer's or something. One of the things we would all remember [was] he had a habit of taking my mother's steak knives, you know the kitchen knives, out of the drawer and he'd sharpen them until there was almost nothing left. They'd be half as thick as they used to be.

Chyenue Uvalle: Oh wow.

Tom Serota: So we'd laugh about that. But you know he was a pleasure to have around you. He'd have a lot of old, uh, sage comments he'd wanna make. Towards the end, he started to drift into the – I don't know what to tell y'all, if you ever had a grandfather or grandmother who had Alzheimer's, it's pretty, pretty crazy.

Chyenue Uvalle: Yeah.

Tom Serota: That was, that was the latter part of his life.

Chyenue Uvalle: How about whenever you were working with him on his farm? Did he ever say anything about Belgium?

Tom Serota: Yeah, we talked a little bit about it. Not a lot. I don't, don't think for any particular reason. He said that they were always a hard-working family, worked in the land, worked us all and everything. I think one of your questions later on about Belgium, I think they did, uh, some kind of farming, like a small family farm, like he had over here in the United States.

Chyenue Uvalle: Okay, alright.

Tom Serota: And I talk real fast, is that a problem?

Rebecca Merino: Oh no, as long as we're picking you up, you're fine.

Tom Serota: (*Laughter*) What's next?

¹⁴⁹ Note: Per Margorie Ball Burch personal correspondence, "Pa did not have Alzheimers nor was he senile; he was lucid." January 31, 2018.

Rebecca Merino I guess during your childhood, when you were with your grandparents, do you remember any significant storms happening?

Tom Serota: Uh, the biggest storm that I can think of was, uh, back in 1961, it was Hurricane Carla.

Rebecca Merino Hurricane Carla, okay.

Tom Serota: Yeah, and I remember there being water everywhere. We lived, my house, was about, oh, eight blocks from the high school, and at the time, Edinburg, if you can imagine, had one high school, not five, or whatever it is now.

Rebecca Merino: Yeah.

Tom Serota: There was water everywhere, toads were coming out. I mean, it was, it was just crazy. Um, and as a result of that, you know that's when they put in the Valley floodway levy, so that was a good side of it. But for two or three weeks, there was water, some 40+ people died –

Chyenue Uvalle and Rebecca Merino: What...

Tom Serota: From the flooding. It was a big deal.

Chyenue Uvalle: I had no idea.

Rebecca Merino: Wow, okay.

Tom Serota: Yeah, it was quite a thing. But you gotta understand, back then, we didn't have the tracking notifications coming and all that warning to people to leave. Now, they know exactly where it's gonna go. Back then, it was kinda like "Okay, we're going to wait here." That was back 50-some years ago.

Juan Matta: Okay Tom, this is Juan. Uh, what was one of the biggest changes you witnessed in the Valley as a child?

Tom Serota: Ah, okay, let me see, uh... Well, I noticed that there was a change from a – Back, back in those days, they had a lot of labor that gets done in the field, picking the fruit, the cotton, it was done by migrant workers mainly, people coming from Mexico and eventually, that got overruled by mechanisms, machines. You know, bringing in cotton pickers, cotton harvesters, stuff like that. (*Unclear*) Another change was that the Valley was full of citrus tree groves, I mean there were orchards everywhere, and that slowly got pushed out, you know to put, to make more land available for cotton, sorghum, you know, sugar cane and people. Let's see... one of the things, one of the crops, it may not be what you want, but one of the crops I worked with was aloe vera, you know, that cactus with medical qualities.

All: Oooh.

Tom Serota: As a matter of fact, I volunteered on the first commercial picking of these plants down there. This is way back when me and my buddies were volunteered (by our moms) to go help our cousins pick the cacti, so we were volunteers for free. One of the problems with, or one of the changes was a whole lot more illegals started coming on over from Mexico. I mean, of course, now it's predominately Hispanic (*unclear*). That was when the Valley slowly started growing. You know Edinburg, I always think of Edinburg as having 16,000 people where McAllen had 50 or 60 or 70,000 while we were kids. I think Edinburg is starting to catch up now but the Valley was just beginning to grow. There used to be miles of fields and undeveloped land between Edinburg - Pharr, Pharr - McAllen, now it's all (*makes sound alluding to how close everything is*). Now let me see, am I rambling in the wrong direction? Or am I –

Juan Matta: No, no, no.

Rebecca Merino Oh no, you're fine. The more information the better.

Tom Serota: Oh okay, well also, if you can believe this, very little drug use back then. Most people, occasionally might be doing a joint of marijuana but it's nothing like it is now.

All: (*Laughter*)

Tom Serota: There wasn't very many gangs going on, to think of, you know, nothing major. Believe it or not, there were no problems with teenagers or young adults or winter tourists going from Edinburg or McAllen to Reynosa, we used to go over there occasionally.

Juan Matta: Going across the border?

Tom Serota: Yeah, go across the border. Eat supper and dance. Go down to Progreso and all that. As a matter of fact, Progreso was the biggest place to eat and dance; it was so easy to go across. Right now, I wouldn't go there or to any border town, bless my soul.

All: (*Laughter*)

Tom Serota: But anyway, that's about it, right now guys, that's about what I had.

Chyenue Uvalle: Thank you.

Rebecca Merino: That's awesome.

Tom Serota: I know I'm rambling around there but I gave you some of the highlights.

Chyenue Uvalle: No, it was perfect, thank you. Okay, so the next question I have is, um, can you tell us anything about raisin bread? We heard a lot about that in class.

Tom Serota: (*Laughter*) Raisin bread was my grandmother's favorite, or should I say, best-remembered dish. And what it is, is an old-style, hand-kneaded bread from a Belgian recipe that you put in raisins and cinnamon and all kinds of stuff and she made it every Sunday. We went to the farm every Sunday, all day Sunday. And boy, it'd come out of the oven all piping hot and that actually was wonderful (*unclear*) with a cup of coffee, oh my god, it was wonderful.

All: (*Laughter*)

Tom Serota: As a matter of fact, it was one of the smells I think most of the grandkids will say they remember most about walking into Grandma's house. I mean, we called her Mom [Ma], you know Mom's [Ma's] house, was the smell of raisin bread, it permeated the house and of course, there was no AC back then, so you could smell it even outside.

Chyenue Uvalle: Yeah.

Tom Serota: You'd be walking around the house and with the aroma going through the windows; it'd be like a little bit of heaven.

Rebecca Merino: Oh.

Tom Serota: Everybody loved it and four or five of my cousins have the recipe for it but to be honest, nobody makes it like Grandma did.

Chyenue Uvalle and Rebecca Merino: Hmmm.

Tom Serota: I mean, it was family tradition. I don't know if it came from Belgium or not, it probably did or else she started trying to, one day, messin' around and experimenting, came up with it. It was wonderful. One of my more pleasurable memories of my Mom, I mean Grandma.

Rebecca Merino: Well, you kind of mentioned, uh, how the weather brought lots of water and flooding but were there any other major fears maybe in the Valley?

Tom Serota: In terms of fears, the only, you know I thought about that a lot because I'm not one to get easily scared. Again, I didn't worry about a lot of things. But back then, that's when they were starting the fallout shelters, everybody had to have a fallout shelter because of Russians are going to bomb us. My grandfather had a fruit cellar that we turned into a quasi-fallout shelter and we had a fruit cellar at my house in Edinburg that we turned into a quasi-fallout shelter, you know, nothing more than a hole with a door on it. In school we had to practice duck and dive underneath the desks and stuff like that. It was crazy.

Rebecca Merino: Oh yeah.

Tom Serota: It was because of the supposed nuclear holocaust, you know. Obviously, it never happened. That'd be the biggest fear. There's also then, if I think about it, there was

polio, TB, whooping cough and diseases that we don't even worry about now, you know, that were pretty common then. Had to go get our shots at school. I think every semester, we had to go and get our shots at school for polio and all kind of crazy stuff. But in terms of fears, that'd be about it. I didn't worry about a lot of things.

Juan Matta: The next question is, uh, do you know what [was the] biggest fear your parents had, when you were growing up? Maybe?

Tom Serota: You know, I believe they had the fear of, well, I wouldn't say fear but a concern about the nuclear stuff. They turned the fruit cellar into a fallout shelter but we never used the damn thing. But in terms of fears, I think the normal parental fears of, you know, "Are we doing enough for our kids?" a lot of stuff like that. I don't think they were worried about a lot.

Chyenue Uvalle: Alright, so, um, was farming a family occupation before leaving Belgium? And you said that it probably was, right?

Tom Serota: I mean, I really don't know but it probably was. That's just too far back in my rusty dusty past. I'm sure they had some kind of farm over there. I think they had a dairy farm, and maybe a produce farm.

Chyenue Uvalle: That's what I was going to ask, I think in class on Monday, we were trying to figure out if they were doing dairy farming in Belgium or what was happening.

Tom Serota: I believe they were. One of my relatives has a milk glass, milk container, you know, well, you all wouldn't know, like the ones they use to leave on the steps in the morning.

Chyenue Uvalle: Mhmm.

Tom Serota: That was from Rogers Dairy. I don't remember who has that but it's probably the only one in existence and I don't know if it came from here or Belgium, I bet it came from over here. My grandfather had a small dairy.

Chyenue Uvalle: Okay.

Tom Serota: He had a farm but he also did the dairy farming and citrus groves.

Rebecca Merino You may have mentioned this to Juan or Chyenue while talking to them, uh, earlier last week, but so what do you do for a living now?

Tom Serota: What do I do?

Rebecca Merino Yes.

Tom Serota: I am retired.

Rebecca Merino: Oh, yeah.

Tom Serota: I retired in 2013. I've lived in Corpus Christi and then I retired and I moved to Rockport, little city of Rockport, for over four years now.

Rebecca Merino Okay.

Tom Serota: But before that, I had a variety of jobs. I mean, you didn't ask me that but I –

Rebecca Merino What did you do, you know, your variety of jobs?

Tom Serota: Okay, let's go in reverse order. The last ten years before I retired I was what they call a professional certified home inspector. You know, when people buy real estate, they need to find out what's wrong with their home. I did that for ten years and was very successful at it. Made a lot of money, thank God. Before that I worked with an engineering firm here, there in Corpus Christi for three years. Before that, I was in the US Fish and Wildlife Ecological Services office and Fishery resources Office. I was there for about thirteen years. Thirteen years before that, I was a state employee. My wife and I were both state employees in Austin for about 12, 13 years. Then, about four years before that, I was in the US Navy.

Rebecca Merino Oh wow.

Tom Serota: That's about the story of the last 40+ years of my life.

Chyenue Uvalle: That's awesome.

Tom Serota: I've been a Navy guy, I've been a Fed, I've been a state employee, I've been an engineer, and had my own business, I did it all.

Rebecca Merino You dipped your toes everywhere.

All: *(Laughter)*

Tom Serota: That's right.

Juan Matta: Okay, uh, the next question is, did you have any, uh, traditions that your family maintained after leaving Belgium? That you all would do, maybe like on Sundays when your families got together?

Tom Serota: Well, I was a small kid, I wasn't privy to a lot of the adult conversations back in those days but, uh, I'm not sure what kind of traditions they had, that were carried over. There's a game called "Belgium Bowling", then again it's not like, it had pins like it does now that was played in a kind of rectangular pit. The idea is to roll a mahogany; I can't call it a ball but it's called a "bowl" (Figure 3.9). I mean, well, you can't see the gesture on my finger but you can't see that, can you?

All: *(Laughter)*

Tom Serota: But it was a game that my grandfather came up with. We made a bowling pit right there on the side yard on his farm and it was very popular. All the grandchildren came over on Sunday, and that was one of the traditions. The other one I guess would be dinner every Sunday with the family. And of course the raisin bread. We were, they were devout Catholics, so all of our family was Roman Catholic. Some of us are not anymore but we all started off... I guess they brought that from over there.

(15:06) **Chyenue Uvalle:** Okay. Um. Have you ever travelled to Belgium, Tom?

Tom Serota: Never have, you know, we thought about it years ago, but never did. A couple of the family has. I think Margie Burch, my cousin went. I think my grandmother and grandfather never went back um...we just never made it over there.

Rebecca Merino Did your parents attend school?

Tom Serota: My father dropped out probably around freshman or sophomore. My mother finished high school, then in order to get her beauty license went to beauty school. But my dad never went back. He had to work. In...matter fact, I was the first one in the family to get a bachelors and masters and all that and they were very proud of me for doing that.

Rebecca Merino Wow, well, good for you Tom.

Tom Serota: Yeah, well you know, I went to Pan American when it was still Pan American College...whatever it is now University of Texas, A&M or whatever it is. (laughs) I'm just kidding. But it was a little bitty school then.

Juan Matta: Um. When you were growing up were there any birds or mammals that can no longer be found around your home?

Tom Serota: Yeah well ya know the one I really do miss, most of my training was in biology..ya know fishery and biology... is called the Texas Horny Toad.

Rebecca Merino Okay.

Tom Serota: People call them horny toads, but they're horned lizards. And they were...used to be just about everywhere in the Valley. Number one: there wasn't a lot of pavement back then and all the alleys were dirt. But they started using DDT for the boll worms and that took care of the ants, and there went the horny toads. But they're slowly coming back, but I do miss the horny toads. And, going down my list here, the white winged doves used to be everywhere down there. With several severe freezes and the brush clearing and all that, the white wings went back to Mexico or up...up to San Antonio, or right around here to find nesting habitat. But I guess, they're coming back too. Later on I think you asked me about the critters from when I was a kid and I'm sure the European starlings are down

there, English sparrows are down there, ring-neck doves are down there. We saw very few of these back in those days, these are non-native things that people have brought in. The ocelot and the jaguarundi are in trouble now, but ya know, I guess that's just progress.

Chyenue Uvalle: Alright. Has the...how has the climate changed, has the climate changed since, has it changed since you were a child? Like the climate in the Valley or...

Tom Serota: Well I guess it's basically the same but, uh, it feels now that it's a lot hotter now than it was then. Back then we had, again, no air conditioning, so you'd just lay there in bed at night with the fan blowing on you if you had one, just sweating g like a dog. You can imagine how it was, having no AC back then, and with the humidity. But, because of that it's hard to say really, whether or not it's hotter or colder. I think it's probably a little hotter now and dryer. I think it rained a lot more then.

Rebecca Merino: Okay. So going back to your grandfather, do you think if he came over in the 21st century he would have still stuck to farming?

Tom Serota: Well, unfortunately, he probably would have had to because he had maybe a 5th or 6th grade education over in Europe. So I don't know what else he would do when he came over here. He'd probably have to do something like that.

Rebecca Merino: Okay.

Tom Serota: Again, that's kind of a hypothetical...I don't, I'm sure that would be what he'd have to do, all things being the same.

Rebecca Merino: Okay.

Juan Matta: Also, when you were growing up, uh what was the area around the farm like? Was there a lot of mesquite, cactus, or agricultural fields, or...?

Tom Serota: Yeah, I understand, actually, the area, right now is called North Edinburg. Matter of fact the road to the property is called Rogers Road because we had so many Rogers living there, they named the road after them. It was all uh, agricultural land, ya know they had cleared it long before I came on the scene. There was some brush like that in McCook and around there. I'd say mainly agricultural land.

Chyenue Uvalle: Okay. Can you, like, describe a typical day working with your grandfather, whenever you were working with him? As far as like the chores you would do.

Tom Serota: Oh my god, it was a mess. Ya know, looking back on it now I really, really enjoyed it, but at the time, he worked me like a dog. And I mean (laughs) we'd start at, early morning, we'd go and have breakfast with Mom of course, which was always a joy. And we'd start working. Working would either be digging what they call furrows so we could irrigate. That is back-breaking work, and we'd do chopping the weeds, trimming trees, taking care of the chickens, cows, typical farm type stuff. I was just a little kid and of course my bigger brother, he was three years older than I, and he got the pleasure of driving the tractor, the one tractor we had. So, he'd be doing that up there while we were down there doing all the manual stuff. Um, one of the things that I remember also was I kept getting blisters. My family were the only city-slickers out of the whole family, the rest of them grew up on a farm close to my grandfather's. I wasn't used to doing all this manual labor, so I'd go out there and I'd get blisters from chopping all the damn weeds and grass. My grandfather, now this may be kind of crude, but my grandfather said, "Well, Tom, the only way to stop blisters is before you start in the morning you have to pee on your hands."

ALL: (Laugh).

Tom Serota: Being a dummy I said, "Ooooooooookay!" I'm sure he had a chuckle out of that. I thought, if it'd stop the blisters...

ALL: (Laugh)

Tom Serota: But, anyway, he would work me to death, ya know which was good because, actually what he did, I think, I don't know if this was purposefully or not, was to teach me that if I didn't want to do that kind of hard work all my life I better go to school.

Juan Matta: Oh, yeah.

Tom Serota: So he was successful in that because as soon as I could, I said enough of this and planned to get my education. But no, I had a good time, I really had a good time. He was not very vocal. We would talk of course, but not a lot. He would joke around, he would tell me jokes I never understood, but I'd still laugh. And uh, ya know he was just kind, and it was time to work. Twelve o'clock we'd go in and eat lunch, come back and work again until it got dark.

ALL: Wow.

Tom Serota: But the main thing I learned was, "Dummy, if I don't want to do this for a living then I better get to school. "So, that's what I did. And I would love to think that was at the back of his mind. I was actually too young to do some of the heavier work, well not too small, but ya know, not as big as an adult; but I did do a whole lot of work though. Back in the day they had what they called the Bracero Program, where workers would come over from Mexico, and I think he had one or two who stayed on the farm—I think one. I hate to say it but most of the ranchers, most of the farmers, had them working there. And it wasn't like it is today, it wasn't a proud thing, but it was something we had to do because at the time, it was just all manual labor. learning

ALL: (Laugh)

Tom Serota: I'm just rambling. I know I am.

Rebecca Merino: Oh no, you're fine, the more information the better.

Tom Serota: Well I'm giving you a lot of information but, I don't know how good it is.

Rebecca Merino: No, it's all good, all good. So you had mentioned, uh, that the farm used to be a dairy farm at one point, so besides cows, did you keep any other animals on the farm?

Tom Serota: Um, there was an occasional jackass there; um no I'm just kidding. They had a mule. I think they had two horses and an occasional goat. But the main thing was the dairy cattle. Early on, I think he had 12, I could be wrong, I think he had about 12 at the time.

Rebecca Merino: Okay.

Juan Matta: Also, in class we were told about your grandfather selling vegetables to local people and businesses uh, did he grow the vegetables himself or did he purchase them?

Tom Serota: He had a fairly large vegetable plot, and everyone did back in the day, if you had the land you had your vegetable plot. It wasn't like there was an HEB on every corner like there is now, so you had to have your own food stock. So, he had a fairly sizable plot, and both of his, let's see, they would be his sons, Bill and Bert, had large farms. They'd just plant acres and acres of tomatoes, peppers, watermelon, and corn. But I do not remember him selling any produce to anybody. He did sell milk to some folks around there. But I'm thinking it was just milk, but I could be wrong. The produce selling must have been before my getting involved.

Juan Matta: Well that was the other part of the question. When he did go sell either the milk or vegetables, if you ever went along with him and if you did...

Tom Serota: Well no, I think that was before I really started working with him, well I mean working and going out there. To answer your question, no I never did.

Juan Matta: Okay,

Tom Serota: I would have liked to. I'm sure that where that milk glass, or jar, that has Roger's Dairy on it came from.

Chyenue Uvalle: Well, that's, I mean that's pretty much all the questions we had planned to ask you. I don't know if there's anything else you'd like to share.

Tom Serota: Well, you asked me about the memories from when I was a kid. You asked for my memories with my—and we called him Pa, P-A. To me he had, what I'd consider "old world value". He was a very hard working person, very honest, loved his family, and he was very proud to be in the United States, very proud to be in Texas. And when they came over here, and it something that doesn't happen so often now, the people coming over, they'd come and they try to assimilate. They would try their best to become a part of this country and I don't think that's happening 100 percent right now. And that's about all I have guys; I probably talked your ear off.

Chyenue Uvalle: No, that was wonderful; we loved hearing all the information.

Appendix 9

Interviewee: List as Lynette Fortson please Mary Lynette Fortson

Interviewers: Octavio Ortiz and Mauro Sierra III

Date: October 8, 2016

Location: Via Telephone between the homes of Octavio Ortiz, McAllen, TX and Lynette Fortson, Coppel, TX

Octavio Ortiz: Ok just to state our names, my name is Octavio Ortiz

Mauro Sierra III: My name is Mauro Sierra III

Octavio Ortiz: And we are here gathered on October 8, 2016, can you please state your name mam?

Lynette Fortson: Lynette Fortson

Mauro Sierra III: Lynette Fortson

Lynette Fortson: Yes, my maiden name was Lynette Foreman, Lynette Foreman Fortson.

Mauro Sierra III: Lynette Foreman Fortson...

Lynette Fortson: ...and to further complicated, my official name is Mary Lynette. I don't use the Mary

Mauro Sierra III: Ok Mary Lynette

Octavio Ortiz: What will be the most proper name to direct you during the interview mam?

Lynette Fortson: Lynette

Octavio Ortiz: Lynette, ok very well, Lynette just the first question, gradually, so you can orchestrate the story that you want to provide us on your knowledge, what made the Rogers Family come to the Rio Grande Valley?

Lynette Fortson: They were Farmers. They immigrated from Belgium, they were farmers and they immigrated to Virginia all our records are in, or what records that I have are on the possession of Marjorie Burch in Edinburg I send them down last week and so from Virginia they went to Kansas and from Kansas to the Rio Grande Valley. As farmers.

Octavio Ortiz: As farmers.

Lynette Fortson: As farmers.

Octavio Ortiz: And further, just a follow up question on that, what crops did they grow down here in the Valley?

Lynette Fortson: I know they did citrus, the family ate what they grew. To tell you specifically what other than citrus I don't know. We played in the citrus orchard as kids, we played in the nearby cornfield and stuff, but weather those all those cornfields were ours or the neighbors, I don't know. I know citrus was planted on their property. And I know their family and their grandchildren lived out of the farm.

Octavio Ortiz: Very well...

Lynette Fortson: I know that was something my mom always recalls that during the depression, that she never remembers being without, because they could eat off the farm where our grandparents raised everything.

Octavio Ortiz: Would you like to share any personal stories that show the customs of building the family down here in the Rio Grande Valley?

Lynette Fortson: Well I was born in Edinburg, and my great-grand parents are the oldest family members that settled there. We lived in Edinburg for six weeks but then we moved to Victoria, but we went back all the time, Edinburg was my mom's home so we were always going back down there. I went my freshmen year of college down there and I lived with my grandmother. I always remember the family always being centered on that farm down

Rogers Road, that was just the center that was where we all went every Sunday afternoon the whole family gathered out there, Mom (that's my great-grandmother Emma Rogers) made raisin bread on Saturday and on Sunday you got one slice of Raisin bread, the kids played outside, The men were doing Belgian Bowling under the trees you stayed away from that bowling alley, you did not go near there you never walked across it all this kids, we all knew you don't walk across it you left those men alone. The women were in the back porch drinking coffee visiting and sharing family gossip, kids just ran out the orchards field we were playing boys against girls, playing hide and seek out in the orchard. The older ones took care of the younger ones, I should have been special. When we went down there, we went to the Mom and Pa together on Sunday afternoon then we headed back to Victoria. Then when my great grandparents sold and moved to town the family still gathered. In Christmas Eve the whole family got together it was just very family oriented. All around the location was always Mom and Pa's house whether the country or town that was always the location, then when they were gone, then the family was huge but by then the family was huge, and different families started their own thing wherever they were.

Mauro Sierra III: Before we continue I would like to go into this quick question, we understand you are Marjorie Burch's niece correct. **Lynette Fortson:** Correct,

Mauro Sierra III: All right, who are your parents?

Lynette Fortson: My mother was Mary Alice Ball Foreman, she was Margie's sister. She (my mother Mary) was the oldest grandchild of Mom and Pa Rogers or Alfred and Emma, mother was the oldest grandchild. Margie was the next grandchild and the youngest of the grandchildren is younger than me.



Marjorie Ball Burch and Mary Alice Ball Foreman, granddaughters of Emma and Alfred Rogers
(right image c. 1930)

Mauro Sierra III: So you are Mary Alice's child.

Lynette Fortson: Daughter yes, I am her second child.

Mauro Sierra III: Is she the one was born in Belgium?

Lynette Fortson: No, the one that born in Belgium was my Grandmother Alice Marie Rogers Edmiston, Mary Alice and Margie's mother was the one born in Belgium

Mauro Sierra III: so it is Alice

Lynette Fortson: My mother was Mary Alice; Alice Marie was born in Belgium. An interesting thing that's in the ship manifest that Margie has down in the scrap book is that on that ship manifest on Ancestry.com around 2000-2001, the only name searchable in their archives was Alfred Rogers, and on the manifest and on the right his wife is listed as his spouse coming with him. My Grandmother is not mentioned, she was under two, my guess was she was child and she was a child in arms. But that when she came over she came over with them, those were the three that came from Belgium. Then Pa's brother Camille came and I know that you are in touch with Roy and Clara Roegiers. That would be my great great grandfather's brother's family.

Octavio Ortiz: Another question I do not know if you know the answer to, but the division of name, or the difference between the two Rogers, can you share know any in sign knowledge as to why that happen?

Lynette Fortson: Yes, that was when people were coming into Ellis Island. I did some research on Ellis Island, I was also a classroom teacher for years, and as people immigrated through Ellis Island it was very common to change your name to a more Americanized or Anglesized spelling, and Mom and Pa chose to change theirs to Rogers and Uncle Camiel and his family decided to stay with Roegiers. [I found out since this interview that this is incorrect. Aunt Margie said Pa changed the spelling when his children entered school.]

Octavio Ortiz: Did the division of the two names separate the family in any form?

Lynette Fortson: No, that was something that we learned as kids that why they were spelled differently. There was no, emotional division, is that how you say it? It was just a difference of spelling when they came over here, but the family was still very very close.

Octavio Ortiz: I've noticed that a lot in these projects that family always loses its property but in this case, I've seen that the Rogers did not lose their property at all, was it the agriculture? What maintained them with income? Was it just the continuing of farming, or did they do any natural gases or any other income that they fabricated from the land itself? How would you say that they did it to accommodate to the growing of the cities to basically to contribute themselves to the society?

Lynette Fortson: Mom and Pa were farmers they lived off the land that what they did, they didn't do anything else. As their kids got older, my grandmother Alice Marie, as she got older, she went on working up and down the Valley in packing sheds, she was a seasonal worker. So she moved with the crops up and down the Valley working in packing sheds way till her late years, she was still packing fruit there for the Edinburg Citrus Association. So that's what she did because she did not get beyond a high school education, that's what she did. Bert Rogers who own property behind Mom and Pa, as he got older, I know he was involved with Crow Iron Works, his daughter is Linda McGurk and I know that you are interviewing Linda, she will know more about that. But, I know they owned land, and they had some citrus orchard also, whether they took care of the orchards themselves or leased them out, I don't know. She will know that, but as he got older he bought the property it was behind Mom and Pa. I do not know if he bought from Mom and Pa, or if he bought his own adjacent to theirs, and that also backs up to the land that Roy Roegiers owns. So, I know he had an outside job that was involved in business in town. Bill Rogers, their other son, lived also on Rogers Road, Aunt Margie told me the other day the land they lived on actually had belonged to Aunt Mary's family, the Teetaerts who were also Belgians that came down from Michigan I believe. The Teetaert land that Aunt Mary had, her dad built the house, the

Teetaert house. This is Bill Rogers house, down the road from the one Mom and Pa were in. So I know that Uncle Bill, Bill Rogers was only a farmer, he did citrus farming and I don't know what else, but he was a farmer. Then, Uncle Camille I think, my records are all in Aunt Marjorie, I want to say that Clara and Roy's dad was my grandfather's brother. Now there's a huge age gap there. Clara and I are the same age. Roy and Clara's father was my Grandfather's brother as I'm recalling. They were also citrus farmers, and their land was adjacent to Mom and Pa's, and they were citrus farmers. Now Roy did other things he did fencing and that kind of thing. Clara became a schoolteacher and their mother Aunt Irene worked in the packing shed also. Like I said, Bill Rogers stayed a farmer; the others did do other things. Camille Roegiers stayed a farmer, but the others did do other things as the kids got older. They might still own some orchard farm property but they did do other things.

Octavio Ortiz: As kid, or as a memory that you have, do you remember any whether condition that effected totally on the crops? Did any natural disasters, any hurricanes; Hurricane Beulah was a big one, and do you recall a drought? I know that the orchestrating of citrus, being a citrus farmer basically it's a given property, you have to depend on the land and the rain, it's really everything out there, and, do you recall any event that the crops were affected so much that the crops were overwhelmed?

Lynette Fortson: I don't, I know that Uncle Bill Rogers was a part of the water board for that area and that was really important to the family that helps. I was a kid but heard this from adults, mother told me that it was a big deal that Uncle Bill was in that water board because that how water decisions where reached. In addition, water was critical, they did irrigate, and there would always be rows between citrus trees there were this hills, these long rows of hills as kids I remember running down those hills of dirt. One of my cousins wrote memories about how hard it was to build those hills of dirt that kept the water when you irrigated, and you took your turn when you irrigated so the water was managed was part of the water board Uncle Bill was on. I remember thinking back later that we never got in trouble for running on top of those hills. And they had to manually maintain those and ran on top of those hill thinking it was like being on a mountain and we were destroying all their hard work we were just playing outside while the men bowled and woman drank coffee, I was surprise that we were not told to stay off those hills because they were critical. I remember that irrigation was very important freezes were a big deal, I was such a little kid at the time, I was in my teens when my great grand parents moved to town, and we were in Victoria so I don't remember ever saying on losing crops to a freeze or things like that. With hurricane, Beulah Aunt Margie and Uncle Bill Burch's house on McColl Road did go 18 inches under water and they used the irrigation to control the flooding. I dont think that was an issue where the other family were on Rogers Road. I think the land was a little higher, I don't remember that being a topic of discussion, I think I would of herd as a child I was born in 49 if you need a point of reference, yeah I don't remember any of that thing, other that irrigation was critical

Octavio Ortiz: Can you share in detail anything that you might recall that might contribute to the story itself of the Rogers? Or participation on the citrus festival?

Lynette Fortson: They never did that kind of stuff, I did not even know there were festivals like that, I didn't even know those things existed. It was a big deal when the citrus was coming in, my grandmother went back to work in the packing shed. When those things happened, beyond that they never took part. There would have been pictures of family members.

Mauro Sierra III: Let us go back to something you mentioned earlier; your Uncle Bill married into another Belgium Family?

Lynette Fortson: I'm pretty sure that the Teetarts were Belgian, Yes, but Marjorie Burch can tell you more about that.

Mauro Sierra III: Do you remember by any chance playing with that other Belgium family children?

Lynette Fortson: That was my great-aunt's family ok, I played with Uncle Bill and Aunt Mary's kids but not with Aunt Mary's family, Margie would know some of them, no I don't remember playing with them they are a generation older than me.

Mauro Sierra III: Ok.

Lynette Fortson: As far as I know, none of them are still down there. Aunt Margie told me the other day that the house that Aunt Mary and Uncle Bill lived in out on Rogers Road had belonged to Aunt Mary's parents and that their dad lived with them after her mother died and Uncle Bill and her moved into the house until he died. I didn't know how they started living there until now.

Mauro Sierra: So you don't remember your family members participating in these other events, would you say that perhaps the Rogers and Roegiers family were secluded from the other all Edinburg population?

Lynette Fortson: No, they were big at church. You worked hard, you worked six days a week and then you went to church on Sunday and had family time on Sunday. You worked from sun up to sun down and then you went to church on Sunday to have family time. So that's where you pretty much spent your time. They were very active in the Belgian community down there they played card games, they played a Belgian card game called Whist, (my records have the card game as Weason. Margie could verify) and at my adulthood my grandmother was still playing cards. And my great aunt they were still playing whist. (Weason) I didn't know how to play the game until our family reunion in 2007 and that's the only time I played it. There was this Belgian community, there were these Belgian farmers gathered on Sunday afternoon. The men went bowling and the women visited and they went to church, they were active in church. St. Joseph's Church, a part of St. Joseph's Church was funded by the Rogers family. The baptism font was paid for by Aunt Mary and Uncle Bill Rogers, who's Godchild my sister Peggy was thought by the family to be the first to get baptized there but according to church records Peggy wasn't the first. The former stained glass windows were paid for by family members, I mean that's what you did. You worked on the farm, you went to church, you supported those areas and that was the community. There was a big Belgian community, and they went to church and that was your community. The church was your community.

Mauro Sierra III: So then St. Joseph's church was mostly comprised of these Belgian families down here in the Valley?

Lynette Fortson: I wouldn't say mostly, but they definitely had a big impact on the church. That church was built in 1948, cause that when my sister was born, so it must have opened by '48. Then after that most of the family was married there, buried out of there, baptized, first communion, went to school in St. Josephs, I had cousins that taught in St. Josephs. My aunt sold the tickets at the carnival for years and years and year. You know, the church was a big part of our family, kind of. Instead of going to the Civic Center, that was your center, the church. It was the social center outside of the family.

Octavio Ortiz: How was the school system set up? Did everyone attend school go on to college, or did they go on to farming or did farming fade away itself with the children.

Lynette Fortson: Roy I know is still involved in farming and some of the children own farm land. Margie and Bill Burch who have the land over on McColl Road always leased it out. They leased it out for someone else to do the farming on it. But a lot of the land down there, like all of Uncle Bill Rogers family, they've all moved away. So, as the kids got older

and the grandkids came in, most of them went to high school there in Edinburg. I don't know if all five of Emma and Alfred's children graduated high school, at least four of them did. I don't know if any of them went on to college. Bert might have. His official name is Albert, he is Linda McGurk's dad, he might have gone on to college, the others did not. Anna became a hairdresser and then she worked at the court house for years. You know, she cut our hair and did our perms. It was very nice. We were a simple European farm family. We did things ourselves. You did things yourself.

Octavio Ortiz: You mentioned something that really caught my attention right now. You said that they leased the land to other farmers, kind of like crop sharing. Do you know, I know that that the Beahr Brothers were big people that also took on different lands, do you remember any of the growers that farmed the land also?

Lynette Fortson: No, and the only person that I know has other people farming their land is Margie and Bill's land on McColl Rd. The other land that Uncle Bert owned, I don't know who owns that property now, I don't know. The only one who still owns land is Roy Rogers. I was a grand-daughter so you know, I don't know where any of that land went. These were my great aunts and uncles; I don't know here any of that land went. It would have eventually gone down to Aunt Mary and Uncle Bill's three kids, but some of them moved away. I'm guessing some of that land was eventually sold but I really don't know.

Octavio Ortiz: Are there any other questions you might have?

Mauro Sierra III: I really don't have any other questions.

Octavio Ortiz: You said you also have a scrapbook, pictures of the family itself and you passed them on to Marjorie?

Lynette Fortson: Yes, yes. Aunt Marjorie has them now.

Octavio Ortiz: Any last words? Any last information you would like to share?

Lynette Fortson: There were some notes I was reading though, the Boy's and Girl's Club out there in Edinburg, you know where that is?

Octavio Ortiz: Yes, ma'am.

Lynette Fortson: It was built around 2007. That land was originally Rogers land. Now, which Rogers owned it, I don't know, but two of the people that were very involved in the fundraising for that were Gary and Debra Burch. That is Marjorie Burch's son. He's my first cousin. That's so interesting that he was involved in a philanthropic project on something that was originally family land.

Octavio Ortiz: Are there any other lands that might have been contributed to the community also that we might actually find on the archives? Cause' we can go into the land archives and see how it has basically been developed now, like with the Boy's and Girl's Club. Do you recall any other contributions that were made that way we can touch basis on that or basically start looking for that? Note: I don't think any Rogers donated the land for the Boys and Girls Club but I was told it was built on what was formerly Rogers land and among the big volunteers on getting it fundraised and built was Gary Burch and his wife Debra, and he is a great-grandson of Alfred and Emma Rogers.

Lynette Fortson: There are some things in the scrap book that I took Aunt Marjorie the other day that I thought were interesting and she knows some of this. There is a photograph that's an aerial view of the Rogers property. I do not recall where I got it from. When I did this reunion basically this was a gift to my mom. It was a gathering of her first cousins and we did gather all but two of them. And as we did all of that I started remembering things that we did in the house of Mom and Pa as a kid. I got memories from my mom, and Aunt Marjorie, and I started emailing all the first cousins. Then this stuff started piling in. Through that some people brought photos and other started scanning the photos and those became the scrap book that Aunt Marjorie has to a great extent. In there is the ships manifest

when Mom and Pa came over from Belgium, the ships manifest is in there so that's definitely something worth y'all getting a hold of, the aerial view of the Rogers property. Now, I can't tell you which aerial view is there but somebody has records to tell on that. The other thing that is in there that might be worth something, research wise is something I was speaking to Aunt Marjorie about, and she did find the photos I was referencing; there is a photo in there of three young men holding up two rattlesnakes by the tail. Real long rattlesnakes, were talking about dead rattlesnakes. Underneath it, it says Laguna Seca Ranch, 18-something or rather. Aunt Marjorie has those flagged in the book. There it says Bill and Bert Rogers who were my great-uncles, but it was done by some history group. And the name of whoever it was, is at the bottom of that photo.

Octavio Ortiz: That is very interesting. Did you write any history or participate in any research or write anything on the Rogers family? I remember hearing it mentioned that you had something written?

Lynette Fortson: I gathered all these family memories is what I did. And then they became the scrap book. I gathered memories from all of mother's first cousins that were still alive. And I did it through email and one would send something and someone would bounce off of that, and another one would bounce off of that and then another one. It was their memories of Mom and Pa, and Sunday after noon, and raisin bread and the recipes are in the scrap book. The men playing bowling, the cousins still have those old bowling balls. And well they are flat disks, not round balls, they are flat. And they are real heavy. Playing it outside, people talking about the cellar. The other day I was sick and I wished I had some of their blackberry wine. I remember when I would get sick my parents would give me blackberry wine 'cause we didn't have cough syrup when I was a kid and it helped. It was a big help; it was a bigger help than the cough syrup they later developed. Its things like that that people were remembering. Having Thanksgiving, and Christmas, and going to church and seeing all the cousins at church. The women were in the altar society at church. It was all this stuff that got bounced around and I gathered all of that and compiled it all in 17 pages.

Octavio Ortiz: We want to get our hands on that scrap book now. So dealing with the culture down here, how would you describe it? The heat or the atmosphere down here. What are some of the things that stand out that you might describe South Texas as?

Lynette Fortson: Hot. Dry. Desert. Dependent on water. Dependent on rain and irrigation, they were critical. Although it was hot and dusty that didn't keep you from doing your work. You had work to do, and that what you did. And so there wasn't any kind of micky mousing around or whatever, you did what you needed to do. There was a strong family ethic and a work ethic and faith ethic. This wasn't a family that taught faith a lot. You really didn't show it unless you were going to say a prayer before a meal but your butt better be at church on Sunday morning. And you better be a part of the church community, a contributing part of the church community. There wasn't any business of what was going to be done on Sunday afternoon. All the children were going to go outside and play. We just did it. We could go and get water when we got thirsty but don't interrupt the conversation. And we just did it. It was what you did and it was fine. You felt like you were part of something bigger than yourself and we depended on each other. And still now. Some of us are first cousins twice removed and we connect with each other through Facebook. We're still in contact with each other 'cause we care. When my mom died, she died 10 days after her first cousin died, and there we are in the rosary and here is her other first cousin there at the funeral. I mean, you just buried your sister and now you're here and he was there from out of town. And then I get to church the next day and there is my mom's first cousin's daughter in the back row of the church. And I said, "Diane this is too soon for you" and I'll never forget what she said, "I am here to show that the Rogers family women are strong." It's still that all

these years later, we're still close and she's lived in San Antonio all these years. It happened in my mom's funeral and it had happened at her aunt's funeral. We're still tight. We might be far but we're still tight. And this is something I fear my children are losing because my children are spread out. My children don't have that connection. They don't know who all these people are anymore and I'm sorry, it's because we're far.

Octavio Ortiz: Were going to continue with this research. Would you be comfortable if we find more information on the scrapbook to follow up with you?

Lynette Fortson: Yes, that's fine.

Octavio Ortiz: Thank you for your time. You will see this contribution as a recorded history and so you will get the pleasure of seeing this book.

Lynette Fortson: Thank you.

Mauro Sierra III: Have a great day.

Appendix 10

Interview via telephone with David Rene Rogers

November 1, 2017

Conducted by Roseann Bacha-Garza

Border Studies Archive, University of Texas- Rio Grande Valley Library

Transcription by Emily Gray

Roseann Bacha- Garza: This is Roseann Bacha-Garza from the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. Is this David?

David Rogers: Yes, it is.

Roseann: Hi! How are you today?

David: Oh, I'm doing fine.

Roseann: Good! I just want to introduce myself as the program manager for the CHAPS program, and the person who will be interviewing you today with regard to the Roegiers family and the Rogers family of Edinburg, Texas and the project that we're working on for our CHAPS interdisciplinary studies class. Are you familiar with what we do?

David: Yes, really familiar, you know, talking to the other family members. Especially Roy and Clara.

Roseann: Ok, good, good! Ok, well as you know, we have, uh, we've studied Roy and his family with regard to farming in Edinburg for the past roughly one hundred years now, almost. And, uh, with regard to our study, Roy had mentioned to me that you were interested in being interviewed on behalf of your family, and the Rogers' side of the family.

David: Yes.

Roseann: So...and I did get your permission form, so thank you very much. So if you don't mind, let's go ahead and begin.

David: Ok.

Roseann: So first, what I want to ask you is to state your name.

David: Ok, my name is David Rene Rogers, and I was born January 14, 1940 in Edinburg.

Roseann: Ok, great. And where do you live now, Mr. Rogers?

David: I live in a small town called Alva, Florida. It's just about fifteen miles east of Fort Myers, Florida.

Roseann: Ok. And until what time did you live in Edinburg? When did you move away?

David: Uh, we left there...I think it was about June 1984. We moved to Pell City, Alabama. At that time, I was working with a golf course contractor, with my excavation equipment. We built several golf courses in the eastern part of the U.S while living in Alabama. We lived there about eight years, and uh, then found out there was a lot of land leveling going on in south Florida, so we moved to Florida, and we've been here ever since.

Roseann: Ok, great. So now tell me David, who were your parents?

David: Ok, my father was Albert Rogers. They called him Bert. My mother was Dorothy. Her maiden name was Dorothy Haven, and her parents lived in Edinburg also. They were originally from Illinois, where my mother was born, before they moved to Weslaco. My grandfather worked for the W.E. Stewart. Land Co Company as a civil engineer. Later they moved to Edinburg when my Grandfather was hired as the manager of Hidalgo Water District No 1. My mother and dad met at Edinburg Junior College.

Roseann: Ok, so that...your wife's maiden name is Haven? Spelled H-A-V-E-N?

David: Yes. So, yeah, my mother's. My mother's maiden name.

Roseann: Ok, that's right, your mother's. So Bert was married to Dorothy, and how many children did Bert and Dorothy have?

David: They had three. I'm the oldest. My sister, Linda, was born in, uh, I think '43, and then I have a younger brother, Michael, who was born in 1950. Michael passed away...I can't even remember the exact date now; uh...I think he was about fifty years old when he died. He had cancer... lymphoma cancer and he passed away.

Roseann: Oh... I'm sorry to hear that. So now Bert's parents were Alfred...?

David: Yeah, Alfred and Emma.

Roseann: And Emma, ok. So Alfred and Emma were your grandparents, and Alfred was the brother to Camiel Roegiers, right?

David: That's right. He was a couple years younger than Camiel.

Roseann: Ok. And to your knowledge, when did Alfred change his last name from Roegiers to Rogers?

David: I was told it happened at Ellis Island, but I'm not a hundred percent on that.

Roseann: Ok.

David: The story I heard was he wanted to be more Americanized, wanted to fit in better, so he changed it. That's the story I heard, so I'm not one hundred percent sure that's accurate.

Roseann: Ok, ok. What do you know about your grandfather's journey from Belgium, and then to the United States, and then eventually to settling in Edinburg?

David: Ok, well, what story I've heard, and I presume it's correct, is they actually had a sponsor over here. Somebody in Virginia, probably paid their way over, and then they worked this person for a while and my Uncle Bill was born in Virginia. And then eventually they moved to Lenexa Kansas, where my Dad and Aunt Anna were born. They lived there for a few years before they came to the Valley in 1920.

Roseann: Uh-huh, and so from what I understand, Alfred and Camiel settled next door to each other. Correct?

David: Oh, yes, that's correct.

Roseann: Ok, so were they both working on the dairy farm? Did they start out together?

David: I don't know whether they were actually together, but they, you know, probably pooled their resources. Uh, both of them had dairy herds and both of them did cotton and vegetable farming. And they grew several different kinds of vegetables, and would take it into town to sell in the farmers' market. And I know the dairy products were sold to Golden Jersey Creamery and private customers.

Roseann: Where was the Golden Jersey Creamery located? Was it in Edinburg? And if yes, where in Edinburg?

David: Yeah, it's right there where Melden Engineering Company is now. Uh, right across from the, uh, courthouse.

Roseann: Ok, um, so what was the progression of the farming in your family? Today we know that Roy had still been farming since... you know, continuing the farming legacy that Camiel started on their side of the family. How did farming progress on your side of the family? On Alfred's side?

David: Ok, well, my grandfather, he was actually still farming...let's see Alfred was down here. He probably quit farming sometime around 1958, '59... somewhere around there. And my father started buying up his farmland. And in 1961, I bought my Grandfather's home place, a house and five acres when my Grandparents moved into town. My Grandfather and Grandmother lived until their death.

Roseann: When did they pass away?

David: Uh, let's see... My grandfather died in 1970, and my grandmother died in 1962. After Mom died Pa move in with his daughter Anna Serota.

Roseann: Ok, ok. So now with Albert, your father, purchasing farmland and continuing to farm, did any of that pass on to yourself or your brother? I mean, I know Linda went to

school to become an educator. Did you continue farming? Any other people in your family continue farming?

David: Uh, well, actually what they did... my Uncle Bill, William Rogers, my father's older brother, he was a farmer. He and his father farmed. He farmed up until his death. Let's see... he died in 1977 and he was still farming at the time. And at that time, I think Roy had started taking care of the groves... the land that my dad had bought from his father. Mostly citrus orchards. His brother took care of the groves for him. I think Roy started doing the grove care after he came back from the navy.

Roseann: Whose brother took care of the groves?

David: My dad's brother.

Roseann: Oh, Uncle Bill.

David: Yeah, his brother, Bill.

Roseann: Ok. What about the de Bouver family? Where there any cousins or brothers on that side who started farming? Or were they just working with the Rogers and the Roegiers farms? How did that work with the de Bouver family?

David: Uh, the only ones that I knew that had any land was Roy's mother's brother. This was Roy's Uncle Dan. They had a small piece of land over off of what is now Jasman Road. My dad bought that land when Dan got too old to handle it.

Roseann: Ok, so while you were growing up and experiencing farm life in Edinburg, do you recall what happened and how farming was affected during certain natural disasters such as freezes, floods, or hurricanes, or droughts?

David: Well, there was a freeze in, I believe, 1962, right after I had bought grandfather's property. At that time there was a real hard freeze, and a lot of the trees were killed. Some of that land went out of groves, and they just started raising cotton, grain, corn, you know row crops. So like I said, my uncle was the one doing the farming then. My dad, he was half owner of Crow Iron and gravel Company in Edinburg, Texas, so he wasn't actually doing farming. But he supplied the finances for it.

Roseann: And what about... do you remember living through Hurricane Beulah in 1967?

David: Yes, I remember it very well. At that time, I was living on Rogers Road, in my parents' home place. I had bought my parent's house, when they moved to town. So we were living just east of where the 281 expressway bypass would be built. There's a house right there, the corner of Rogers Road and the bypass. That was my parent's home. Like I said, I ended up buying it, and I was living there. I can remember after Hurricane Beulah, we had about a foot of water running down the road and everything flooded. The only way we could get to town was to drive back west to the railroad track. It runs parallel to what is Roegiers Road, so we just drove on the rails to Monte Cristo Road and got on into town. There was water on the west side of the tracks so deep you couldn't go through it, but, uh, that only lasted for a few days. A lot of trees down, that kind of thing. I remember the wind blowing the rain so hard that water was coming in under the windows and we were trying to mop is up so it wouldn't hurt the walls and floors. I don't remember how much rain we had during the storm but it continued to rain for the next week or so, probably twenty or so inches. I remember that a lot of the colonias that were built in low areas had water up to the windows and it caused a lot of misery for those people. After hurricane Beulah the County started planning the drainage system that is in place now.

Roseann: Ok, so you mentioned that your father, after he was finished farming, he went into a gravel business?

David: Well, he never really farmed himself. He had land, and my uncle did the farming for him. So, yes, he was in partnership with Vergil Crow in Crow Iron and Gravel Company in Edinburg, Texas.

Roseann: Oh, by those caliche pits out there, probably?

David: The Iron Works was in Edinburg, and the Gravel Plant was west of La Joya, Texas.

Roseann: Ok, so what about you? What path did you take as you grew up in this family?

David: Ok, well, I got out of high school and I wanted to be a veterinarian, and I attended Texas A&M for a year. After my freshman year I didn't have the grades I was going to need to get into Vet school, so I decided I'd better think of something else. I couldn't afford to go take any classes over, so I ended up transferring to Pan Am and, got a bachelor's degree from Pan Am in Industrial Arts and a minor in Agriculture. I don't know if these degrees are even available now at UTRGV as they were small departments then. I worked at Crow Iron while I was in college and continued after graduation.

Roseann: And are you married, and do you have any kids?

David: Yes, I was married nineteen years to Priscilla Lane. We have three children: Steve, Scott and Elisabeth. We divorced, and I remarried Nancy Cross, and we have one daughter, Debbie.

Roseann: Ok. So while you were growing up in Edinburg... I know you said your grandparents eventually moved into town, but I was wondering if you could tell about family get-togethers? Other family members that we've interviewed refer to "Mom" and "Pa", and the get-togethers they would have on Sundays, where the men would partake in Belgian bowling, and the women would play cards in the kitchen. There was always some kind of raisin bread. Are there other memories that you have of those family get-togethers that you can tell us about, that perhaps include cultural traditions brought down from Belgium?

David: Um, not so much going back to Belgium. We were very much, I guess you could say, "Americanized". But yes, we'd head over to the grandparents on Sunday afternoon pretty regularly. The men would bowl, and then us boys, there was three cousins, we were all about the same age and we would get to bowl some. We would team up with our fathers or one of the uncles. In the winter my Grand Father always had winter visitors or Snow Birds down from Indiana so the Bowling court was very busy. I think all were Belgians that were either relatives or old friends. Pa had a small house between Camiel's house and his where his brother in law and sister Phrarildis stayed during the winter. If we were not watching the bowling, we were running around the neighborhood playing in fields and orchards, doing this, that and the other. The girls were doing their girl thing, you know. I remember the women would be in the house, playing cards and talking. 'Course ...raisin bread just every Sunday. It was always fun for us to get over there and see everybody. At Christmas time, we would always have a big get-together at their house. Back when we were all young. After everybody got older we weren't doing that, but, uh it was always a lot of fun being able to see all the cousins. There was probably at least fifteen cousins who would show up, so there was always lots of kids to play with.

Roseann: So can you tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up in Edinburg?

David: Uh, well I started school at Sacred Heart. I was there a year, and then Dad switched me over to public school. I graduated in 1958. I can remember going to the football games... I never played sports, although I was in the High School Band. I always had stuff out in the country, and never wanted to stay after school. But I always enjoyed going to games and stuff like that. I had a after school and Saturday job while I was in High School at Dr. Bakers veterinary clinic that kept me busy. I helped in the clinic feeding, cleaning, and handling the animals. He had a busy, large animal practice and would use me to help on these calls.

Roseann: Did you do any farming while you were still in high school with your uncles?

David: Yes, I used to drive tractor for Uncle Bill some. You know, whenever he was needing a little extra help. I can remember picking cotton, you know, making a little extra money. It wasn't anything very serious, just enough money to be able to go to the picture show or buy something. I would also help him move his cows from one pasture to another. He had a herd of about seventy-five cows that he would just honk the horn on his old pickup truck and the cows would follow to the next pasture down the road. He always needed someone on horseback to keep them all to gather. I had the horse and always like to help.

Roseann: Did you ever...I know you had mentioned that Alfred and Camiel had dairy animals on their farm when they first came here and established themselves in Edinburg. Did they continue with animals on the farm as time went on, or how long do you remember them having those types of livestock animals?

David: I remember them when I was in junior high. It would have been in the early fifties. It seems like they quit having the dairy cattle there and just had beef cattle and the groves.

Roseann: Is there anything else that you would like to tell me, that you think would be very good to record for the purpose of this report?

David: I can't really think of anything that would have a bearing on it. You know it was a simpler time to be alive back then, you know. It was nice having...I had a boy cousin down the road that I would play with when I was a kid, and my sister had a girl cousin there too. They were my Uncle Bill's children. His oldest daughter Dorothy Ann, was five years older than me, and then there was Bobby, who was two years younger than I, and Marilyn who was a year younger than my sister. These were my uncle's three kids. My sister and I would walk or ride bikes three-quarters of a mile down the road and go play with the cousins.

Roseann: What do you remember about Highway 281 going through, in between, basically, your family's homes? I know there's one of the homes on the east side of Rogers Road. One of them now is a flooring store, but it was described to me as being one of the Rogers family homes. When 281 came through, I know that Irene, Camiel's second wife, had sold some property to the Department of Transportation to put that highway through. Wasn't there already a road there? Was this highway that went through, I think it was in the '70's? Was it just a bigger and newer improved highway system, or was there already a road there?

David: I was living there before they put the 281 bypass in. Like you said, it went past the little house that was my family home. It was my parent's old home place. Later on I bought the house. In fact, I owned the house at the time the expressway was put in. We thought it was very inconvenient, because before the expressway we could just drive straight over west to 281, and, you know, come on into town. When they put the bypass in, we had to turn north up to Monte Cristo, and go west and then back south into town. So it caused a lot of irritation, changing things up. My Dad also sold land to the DOT his land was just north of Irene's land. I think they took about three hundred feet of the east end of his twelve acres.

Roseann: Was there some kind of autoroute going north, you know, toward Falfurrias and then on to San Antonio that was maybe a little bit further west of that? Perhaps along that railroad route?

David: You mean, the expressway, which was the only road that was put in.

Roseann: What year was that put in? Do you remember?

David: Uh, I think about in 1966 or '67...something like that. You know they put the access roads in first and then they built the main lanes. That was kind of the second part of the project.

Roseann: What about railroad transportation? Do you remember anything about railroads in town? Where they went? Were there passenger rails or cargo only?

David: Yeah, there used to be a railroad track right in front of Roy's house. It ran between Roegiers Road and his house. I think they removed the track...let's see...I remember around

'65 them pulling the track out. At that time, I'd already sold my grandfather's house and moved into my father's house. I think it ran all the way out to Hargill, there was a spur track off of there, and maybe it went on to Raymondville...I'm not sure. 'Course there was the main track in town. There was a depot there in Edinburg, just east of where Pan Am is now on west 107. And there used to be passenger trains running at one time. F. H. Valsing had big ice plant north of town on Monte Christo road and the rail road tracks ran out there. That is where the rail cars carrying produce were iced down before they were sent north, but that's been a long time ago. I also remember there were spur tracks running to the big packing sheds and cotton gins. A lot more produce was shipped by rail back then.

Roseann: Yes it has. Ok well, I think I've asked you all the questions I have on my list. Is there anything else you can think of that I may have missed?

David: Uh, I think you probably have it pretty well covered.

Roseann: Ok, then I would like to thank you for participating in this interview. I did get your signed permission form, so that was good. Thank you very much. And, I will have this interview transcribed, meaning I will have somebody write it out word for word. I will send it to you via email, so that you can review it, because maybe we didn't catch a certain word right, or we may have spelled something wrong, or heard something incorrectly as we were transcribing. We want to give you the opportunity to read it, and advise any corrections or omissions.

David: Ok.

Roseann: And that will...

David: There is one thing I might add that I did not go into farming and such, but in 1972 I started a land leveling business while I was still working at Crow Iron. This is an agricultural related business that designs and constructs water and soil conservation projects for farms, and that's what I've done until I retired in 2010. My son is still running the business here in Florida

Roseann: And what was the name of the business that you started?

David: When we were in the Valley, it was Rogers' Land Leveling.

Roseann: Rogers' Land Leveling, ok.

David: And then, we moved to Florida, we had to reincorporate as a Florida corporation, and it became D.R. Rogers, Incorporated.

Roseann: D.R. Rogers, Incorporated, ok.

David: Right.

Roseann: Ok, very good. Ok then, well, I want to thank you for your time, and look out for an email from me with a transcription of this interview. Then if you wouldn't mind taking the time to make any corrections, or additions, or omissions and send it back to me. We'd like to include this in the report that we're going to be printing sometime at the end of this month. So, I'll get it to you soon, and if you could turn it around pretty quickly, that will help us get it into the appendix of this report.

David: Ok, I'll do it as soon as I get it.

Roseann: All right, thank you so much, sir. You have a great day.

David: You too. Bye.

Roseann: Bye-bye.

Appendix 11

Oct 31, 1956

The Life Story of Camiel Roegiers

Camiel Roegiers born May 22, 1882, in Waarschoot Belgium, Europe. In 1907 he came to America on the Lone Star passenger ship which took 14 days to cross the Atlantic ocean before it docked in New York. Then he took a cargo boat to Galveston, Texas, from there he rode the train to League City Texas. There he worked on a farm for $1\frac{1}{2}$ years. Then went to work on the wharf for about 6 months. The boat he was working on needed some deck hands to help sail across the Atlantic ocean for free passage back to Europe. It was rough sea and it took 21 days to sail across they docked at La Havre France. Then he took a train to Gent Belgium there he met his sister. He stayed 3 months in Belgium with his brother, then got married and came back to America in 1909 on the Red Star and docked in New York. Rode the train to Fredericksburg Virginia. Where he and his wife went to work on a dairy and worked there for $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. The first year at \$25.00 a month and house furnished the second year for \$50.00 a month and house

The Life Story of Camiel Roegiers, written by Irene Roegiers on October 31, 1956, Edinburg, TX

Appendix 11-continued

2

In 1911 they moved to Kansas City, Kansas. Worked about 6 months on a farm. $\$45^{\circ}$ a month and board for both.

In 1913 they rented a farm of 100 acres at $\$5^{\circ}$ an acre cash rent. In 1918 they rented a larger farm 160 acres at $\$8^{\circ}$ an acre cash rent. The same year he sold 1100 bushels of wheat at $\$3^{\circ}$ a bushel.

Had a very good crop on the whole farm the wheat made 30 bushels an acre and the corn made .80 bushels an acre both brought

about $\$3,000^{\circ}$ clear. In Jan 1920 he came to Edinburg Texas on the land company train and he bought 20 acres of land in brush at $\$300^{\circ}$ an acre 2 miles north and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of Edinburg. Went back to Kansas on the land company train. They held a Public sale and sold everything they wouldn't have a use for in Texas.

In Dec. 1920 he shipped 3 mules some furniture and other household goods in a railroad car. They left Kansas the same day the rail car left. In a model T.

Ford and arrived in Edinburg the same time after driving 10 days there were no highways. They lived 3 weeks in a tent.

After the three weeks they built themselves a one room house. After another year or so they built another room onto it and kept on til they had a 5 room house.

In 1958 we remodeled the house, refinished the house on the outside with rocks which were shipped from Okla. Also built a new car garage and wash house with the same rocks. He has lived on the same place which he owns for 36 years. We now own 70 acres.

The first 20 years he was in the dairy business. Has grown most of his fruit trees from seedlings. Which we now have 35 acres in Grapefruit and oranges. The other 35 acres is crop lands where we grow Cotton, corn and vegetables.

Appendix 11-transcribed

The Life Story of Camiel Roegiers Unedited handwritten account by Irene Roegiers (October 31, 1956)

Camiel Roegiers born May 22, 1882 in Waarshoot Belgium, Europe. In 1907 he came to America on the Lone Star passenger ship which took 14 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean before it docked in New York. Then he took a cargo boat to Galveston Texas, from there he rode the train to League City Texas. There he worked on a farm for 1 ½ years. Then went to work on the wharf for about 6 months. The boat he was working on needed some deck hands to help sail across the Atlantic Ocean for free passes back to Europe. It was rough seas and it took 21 days to sail across they docked at La Havre France. Then he took a train to Gent Belgium there he met his sister. He stayed 3 months in Belgium with his brother, then got married and came back to America in 1909 on the Red Star and docked in New York. Rode the train to Fredericksburg Virginia. Where he and his wife went to work on a dairy and worked there for 2 ½ years. The first year at \$25.00 a month and house furnished the second year for \$50.00 a month and house.

In 1911 they moved to Kansas City, Kansas. Worked about 6 months on a farm. \$45.00 a month and board for both. In 1913 they rented a farm of 100 acres at \$5.00 an acres cash rent. In 1918 they rented a larger farm 160 acres at \$8.00 an acre cash rent. The same year he sold 1100 bushels of wheat at \$3.00 a bushel. Had a very good crop on the whole farm the wheat made 30 bushels an acre and the corn made 80 bushels an acre both brought about \$2000.00 clear. In Jan 1920 he came to Edinburg Texas on the lands company train and he bought 20 acres of land in brush at \$300.00 an acre 2 miles north and ½ mile east of Edinburg. Went back to Kansas on the lands company train. They held a public sale and sold everything they wouldn't have a use for in Texas. In Dec. 1920 he shipped 3 mules some furniture and other household goods in a railroad car. They left Kansas the same day the rail car left. In a model T Ford and arrived in Edinburg the same time after driving 10 days there were no highways. They lived 3 weeks in a tent.

After the three weeks they built themselves a one room house. After another year or so they built another room onto it and kept on til they had a 5 room house. In 1950 we remodeled the house, refinished the house on the outside with rocks which were shipped from Okla. Also built a new car garage and wash house with the same rocks. He has lived on the same place which he owns for 36 years. We now own 70 acres. The first 20 years he was in the dairy business. Has grown most of his fruit trees from seedlings. Which we now have 35 acres in Grapefruit and oranges. The other 35 acres in crop lands where we grow cotton, corn and vegetables.

Appendix 12

CERTIFICATE of MAINTENANCE.

We the undersigned Camille ROGIERS and Mrs. C. ROGIERS née Emilia Marie DEBOUVRE, Belgians by birth, residing in Lenexa, Kansas, respectfully request the United States of America to allow the immigrants Julius DEBOUVRE and Mrs. J. DEBOUVRE née Irma RAVAT, respectively 35 & 30 years old, accompanied by their children Irene 5, Daniel 4, Richard 6 months, Belgians by birth, residing in Mariakerke 10^e Gand, East Fl. Belgium, to land in this Country where they are to join their relatives Mr. and Mrs. C. ROGIERS.

We hereby certify that we are able and willing to support and to take care of them.

Camille Rogiers

Mrs. Rogiers

We the undersigned witnesses and Notary Public, hereby certify that Mr. and Mrs. Camille ROGIERS are well known by us and that their above statement is true to the best of our knowledge.


Witnesses.

Mrs. Alice M. Collins E. H. Haskin

T. J. Mason Notary Public.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 24th day of October A.D. 1917

Commission expires Oct. 7th, 1920 E. H. Haskin
Notary Public.

 IMPORTANT. This certificate must be presented to the nearest American Consul in Belgium, with your passport to which it must be pinned, in order to be shown upon landing, to the Immigration Authorities of the United States.

The above is a notarized document showing Camiel and Emily (Emilia) Roegiers agreement to sponsor their relatives, the Debouvre family, from Belgium in 1917.

Au nom du Roi
des Belges,

Nous, Ministre des Affaires étrangères,

prions tous les Magistrats ou Officiers, tant civils que militaires, quels qu'ils puissent être, des Princes et Etats étrangers, de laisser passer librement Monsieur

De Debourre, Jules, ancien,
et son Epouse, Irma, et leurs
enfants, Irène, son, Octave, son Richard,
belges d'origine, domiciliés à Merville,
avec ses bagages, allant en Amérique (Ch. d. A.)

sans permettre qu'il lui soit opposé aucune entrave ou empêchement et de lui donner ou faire donner toute aide et secours, ainsi que Nous le ferions Nous-même, en tant requis.

POUR LE MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES
Le Chef de bureau délégué,

Delivré à *Gand*
le *premier décembre 1899*
Le Gouverneur de la Province

Signature du porteur : *Jules Debourre*
Camiel Rogiers

VALABLE POUR UN AN


SIGNALLEMENT

de M ^r	de M ^{me}
Né à <i>Bruxelles</i>	<i>Bruxelles</i>
Nommé le <i>11/11/1899</i>	<i>11/11/1899</i>
Cheveux <i>noirs</i>	<i>noirs</i>
Sourcils <i>id.</i>	<i>id.</i>
Yeux <i>bruns</i>	<i>bleus</i>
Front <i>ordinaire</i>	<i>ordinaire</i>
Nez <i>pointu</i>	<i>id.</i>
Bouche <i>moyenne</i>	<i>moyenne</i>
Menton <i>ronde</i>	<i>ronde</i>
Visage <i>ovale</i>	<i>ovale</i>
Barbe	
Taille <i>1m. 590</i>	<i>1m. 570</i>
Signes particuliers : <i>néant</i>	

ROYAUME DE BELGIQUE

The above are travel documents for the family sponsored by Camiel Roegiers: Julius Debouvre, his wife Irma, and children Irene, Richard, and Daniel.

Appendix 14

	
<h3>WARRANTY DEED</h3>	
<p>The State of Texas,) County of Hidalgo.</p>	
<p>Know All Men by These Presents:</p>	
<p>That the STEWART FARM MORTGAGE COMPANY, a corporation duly incorporated and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Missouri, hereafter referred to as "Grantor," for and in consideration of the sum of Six Thousand and 00/100 - DOLLARS to it paid and secured to be paid by Camiel Roegiers as follows: The sum of Three Thousand and 00/100 - DOLLARS in cash, which is hereby acknowledged and confessed, and the further sum of Three Thousand and 00/100 Dollars by the Grantee herein executing five promissory vendor's lien notes of even date herewith to order of Stewart Farm Mortgage Company, each for the sum of Six Hundred and 00/100 Dollars, maturing in one, two, three, four and five years from date, respectively.</p>	
<p>All of said notes bear interest at the rate of six (6) per cent per annum from date until maturity, interest payable semi-annually, and at the rate of ten (10) per cent per annum from maturity until paid; also ten per cent per annum on all past due interest until paid; all of said notes provide that failure to pay any of said notes, or interest thereon, when due and payable, according to the terms of said notes, shall at the option of the holder or holders of said notes, mature all of said notes, and providing for the usual ten per cent attorney's fees in case of default.</p>	
<p>HAVE GRANTED, SOLD and CONVEYED, and by these presents do GRANT, SELL and CONVEY unto the said Camiel Roegiers</p>	
<p>of the County of Johnson</p>	<p>State of Kansas</p>
<p>the following described property, situated in the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, to-wit: The South twenty (20) acres of Lot Number Five (5) in Section Two Fortythree (243) Hidalgo County, Texas, said Section #243 having been originally patented by the State of Texas to the Texas Mexican Railway Company by Letters Patent dated November 24th, A.D. 1884, and recorded in Volume 24, at page 553 of the Deed Records of Hidalgo County, Texas; and said lot being indicated on the map or plat of a subdivision of the said Section and others, which Map or Plat is recorded in Volume 1, at page 16 of the Map Records of Hidalgo County, Texas, to which reference is specially made</p>	
<p>All rights, titles and privileges incident and appurtenant to said land and premises hereby conveyed, which exist under and by virtue of that certain deed and water contract executed by the Edinburg Irrigation Company, for the supplying of water thereto for irrigation purposes under the terms and conditions therein stated and contained, which said deed and water contract is here now referred to and made a part hereof. It is expressly understood, agreed and stipulated, that insofar as, and to the extent that same relates to, affects or pertains to the land hereby conveyed, the "Grantee" hereby assumes and agrees to keep and perform all now existing covenants, agreements, obligations and undertakings set forth and contained in said deed and water contract as herein assumed, undertaken and agreed to be kept and performed by the "Grantor" herein. It is further understood that all rights invested in the "Grantor" herein to the water and water contract of the Edinburg Irrigation Company to furnish water to the land hereby conveyed is, by this conveyance, transferred and conveyed to the "Grantee" herein. It is expressly understood and agreed, and in all things reserved from this conveyance any war- ranty for any and all laterals as may hereinafter be constructed on or over said land by the Edinburg Irrigation Company, and it shall at all times have the right to enter upon said land for the purpose of constructing and maintaining such laterals or necessary appurtenances as may be necessary thereto. From the covenants of warranty contained hereinafter, there is excepted such lands as are required for canal and lateral rights of way, telephone and telegraph rights of way, and public roads and rights of way, for public or private roadways along the perimeter of said lands, of the usual width, and the water charges and liens reserved in said water contract.</p>	
<p>As a part of the consideration hereof, the "Grantee" herein assumes and agrees to pay when due, all State, County, Drainage and all other taxes whatsoever for the year of 1920 and thereafter, and all water rentals, taxes and charges what- soever which may accrue or become due or owing upon said land and premises hereby conveyed, beginning on the first day of November, 1919, and thereafter.</p>	
<p>It is expressly agreed and stipulated that a vendor's lien is hereby retained against the property conveyed hereby, until the notes described herein and all interest thereon, together with all taxes, which the "Grantee" hereby agrees to pay, and the incumbrance and interest assumed hereby are fully paid and satisfied.</p>	
<p>To Have and To Hold, the above described land and premises, together with all and singular the rights and appurte- nances thereunto in anywise belonging unto the said "Grantee" herein, subject only to the terms and provisions of the Water Contract of the Edinburg Irrigation Company, and the said "Grantor" hereby binds itself and successors to warrant and defend all and singular, the land and premises against the lawful claim of all persons, save and except those mentioned above, whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof.</p>	
<p>IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Stewart Farm Mortgage Company has caused these presents to be signed in its corporate name by its Vice-President, and its corporate seal to be hereto affixed and attested by its Secretary on this</p>	
<p>23rd day of January 1920</p>	<p>STEWART FARM MORTGAGE COMPANY.</p>
<p>Attest: <i>M. S. Loftis</i> Secretary.</p>	<p>By <i>C. F. Adams</i> Vice-President.</p>

Warranty Deed - Sale of the Southern Twenty Acres of Lot 5, Section 243 in Hidalgo
County, Texas by the W.E. Stewart Farm Mortgage Company to Camiel Roegiers

23 January 1920

As I am going to quit farming in Johnson County and move to Texas, I will have a Closing Out Public Sale at my place, 1 mile West and 1 mile South of OVERLAND; 3 miles East and 1/4 mile North of LENEXA, beginning at 10 o'clock on

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25



Horses and Mules



HOGS

HOGS
14 HEAD SHOATS, WT. ABOUT 150.
3 BROOD SOWS.

POULTRY

PO
ABOUT 5 DOZEN HENS.
ABOUT 4 DOZEN PULLETS.

HAY and FEED

HAY and FEED
 1 TONS TIMOTHY HAY.
 2 TONS PRATIE HAY.
 2 STACKS STRAW.
 700 BUSHELS OF OATS.
 ABOUT 1000 BUSHELS CORN IN CRIB.
 ABOUT 20 ACRES CORN IN FIELD.
 4 ACRES KAFFIR CORN.
 20 BUSHELS RED RIVER OHIO POTATOES, GOOD FOR SEED.

MISCELLANEOUS

MISCELLANEOUS
1 GRIND STONE; FORKS; GARDEN TOOLS; AND OTHER
THINGS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION.
1 WATERLOO BOY NO. 1 CRACK SEPARATOR.
1 SET GOOD BREECING HARNESS; 1 SET GOOD BREECING
HARNESS; 1 SET FARM HARNESS; 1 SET SINGLE HAR-
NESS.

IMPLEMENTS

1 IMPLEMENTS
1 MCDONALD BINDER, USED 2 SEASONS; **1** HOOSIER WHEAT
 DRILL, USED **1** YEAR; **1** NESCO MANURE SPREADER,
 GOOD ONE; **1** LOW BOY WAGON AND BACK; **1**
 LOW WOODEN WHEEL WAGON AND BACK; **1**
 WAGON; **1** RIDING CULTIVATOR; **1** CORN QUEEN WAGON
 FOR CORN; **1** CATTLE GRADER; **1** NEW JOHN DEERE CORN
 PLANTER, USED AS NEW; **1** KINGMAN 22 INCH GEAR
 DRILL, USED **1** YEAR; **1** WALKING PLOW, **1** 11-
 INCH WALKING PLOW, **1** 11-INCH JOHN DEERE
 HAY RAKE; **1** BUCK RAKE; **1** MCDONALD
 WAGON, USED **1** YEAR; **1** 22-INCH CORN DRILL.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

HOUSEHOLD GOODS
1 DOMESTIC RANGE; 1 ROUND OAK HEATING STOVE; 1
WARDROBE; 1 DRESSER; 1 BOOKCASE AND WRITING
DESK COMBINED; 1 WASHING MACHINE, GOOD AS NEW;
CHAIRS; TABLES; RUGS; DISHES; BEDS AND VARIOUS
OTHER ARTICLES USED ABOUT THE HOUSE.

TERMS: SUMS OF \$10.00 AND UNDER, CASH. ON SUMS OVER \$10.00, 5 PER CENT INTEREST FROM DATE. NO OTHER ARTICLES USED ABOUT THE HOUSE.

Ladies of the Trinity Church, Lenexa, Will Serve Lunch

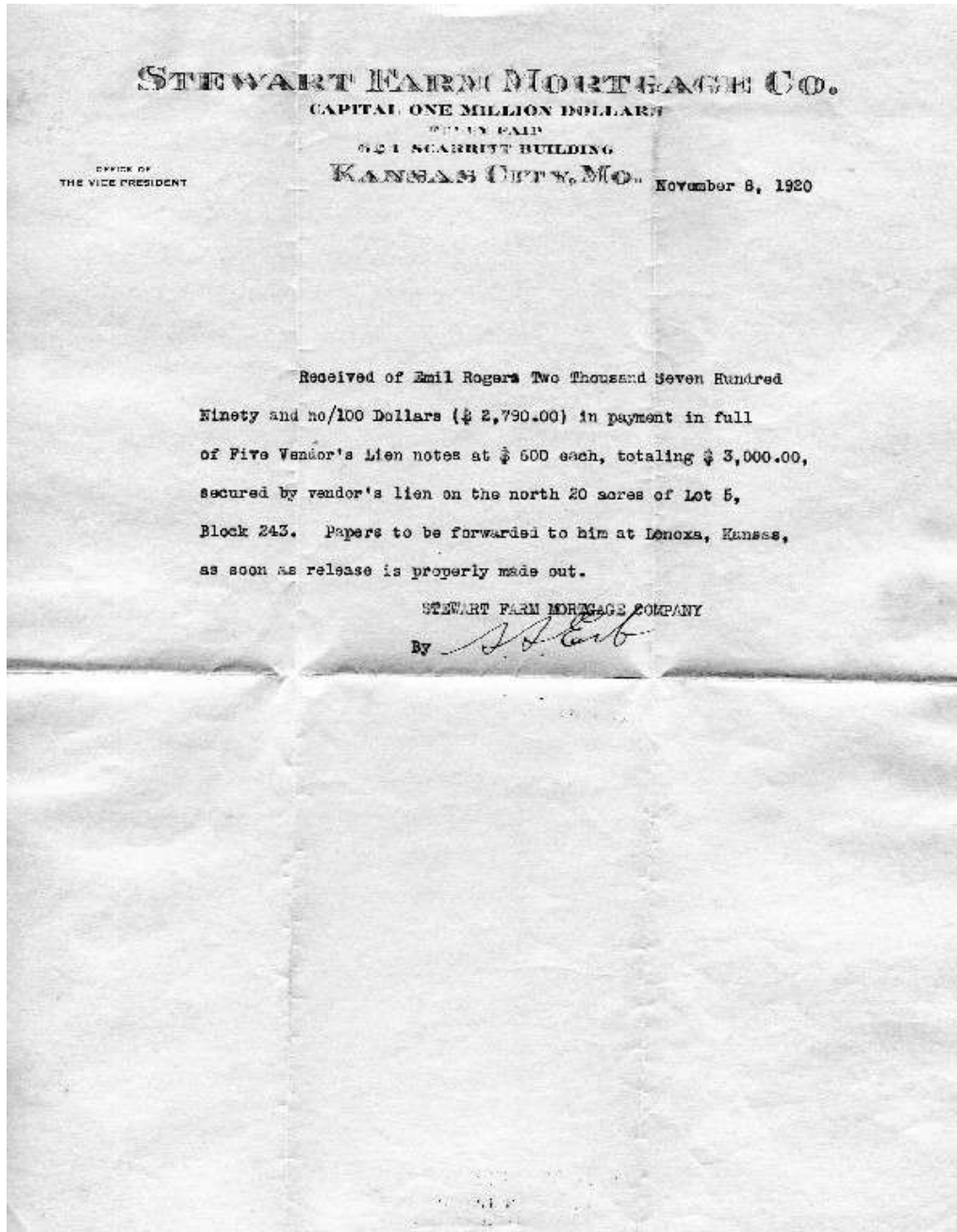
EMIL ROGERS, Owner

Andy James, John James, Auctioneers.

E. H. Haskin, Clerk.

THE OLATHE MIRROR PRINTS THE SALE BILLS.

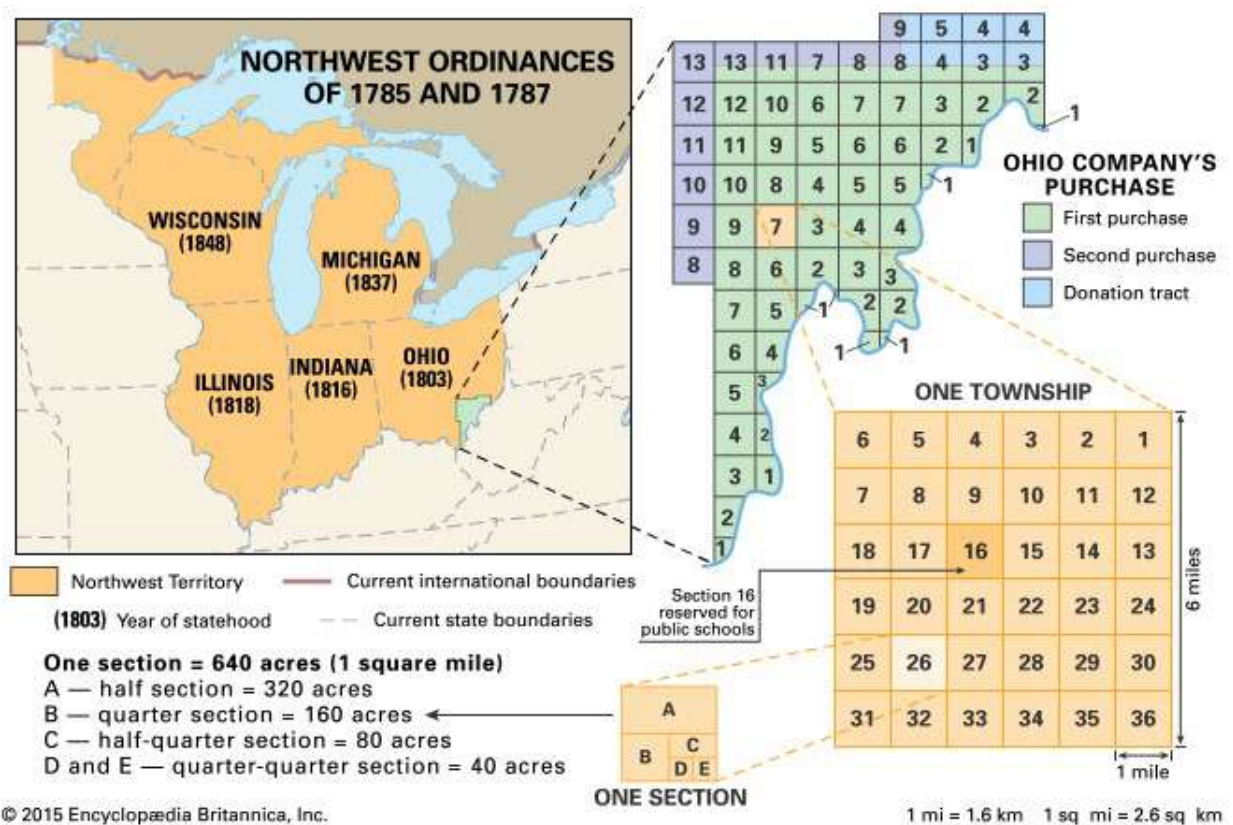
Appendix 16



Memo from Stewart Farm Mortgage Company to show receipt of payment for north 20 acres of Lot 5, Block 243, November 8, 1920.

205

Appendix 18



The Northwest Territory, Created by the Northwest Ordinances of 1785 and 1787, with the Ohio Company¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. "Northwest Ordinances: United States (1784, 1785, 1787)." Digital Image. Encyclopedia Britannica. June, 2016. Accessed December, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Northwest-Ordinances>.

WARRANTY DEED

With Vendor's Lien

SINGLE AND JOINT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

_____ Daniel Rogers _____

to

_____ The St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway Company. _____

STATE OF TEXAS
County of Hidalgo

} Know All Men by These Presents:

That We, Daniel Rogers & Emily Rogers, my wife

of the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, for and in the consideration of the sum of
(252500) Five Hundred Twenty Five No/100 DOLLARS.

to us in and paid by The St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway Company have GRANTED,
SOLD AND CONVEYED, and by these presents do GRANT, SELL AND CONVEY, unto the said The St.
Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway Company of the County of Kiberg State of Texas all
that certain tract, piece or parcel of land lying and being situated in Hidalgo County,
Texas, described as follows, to-wit:

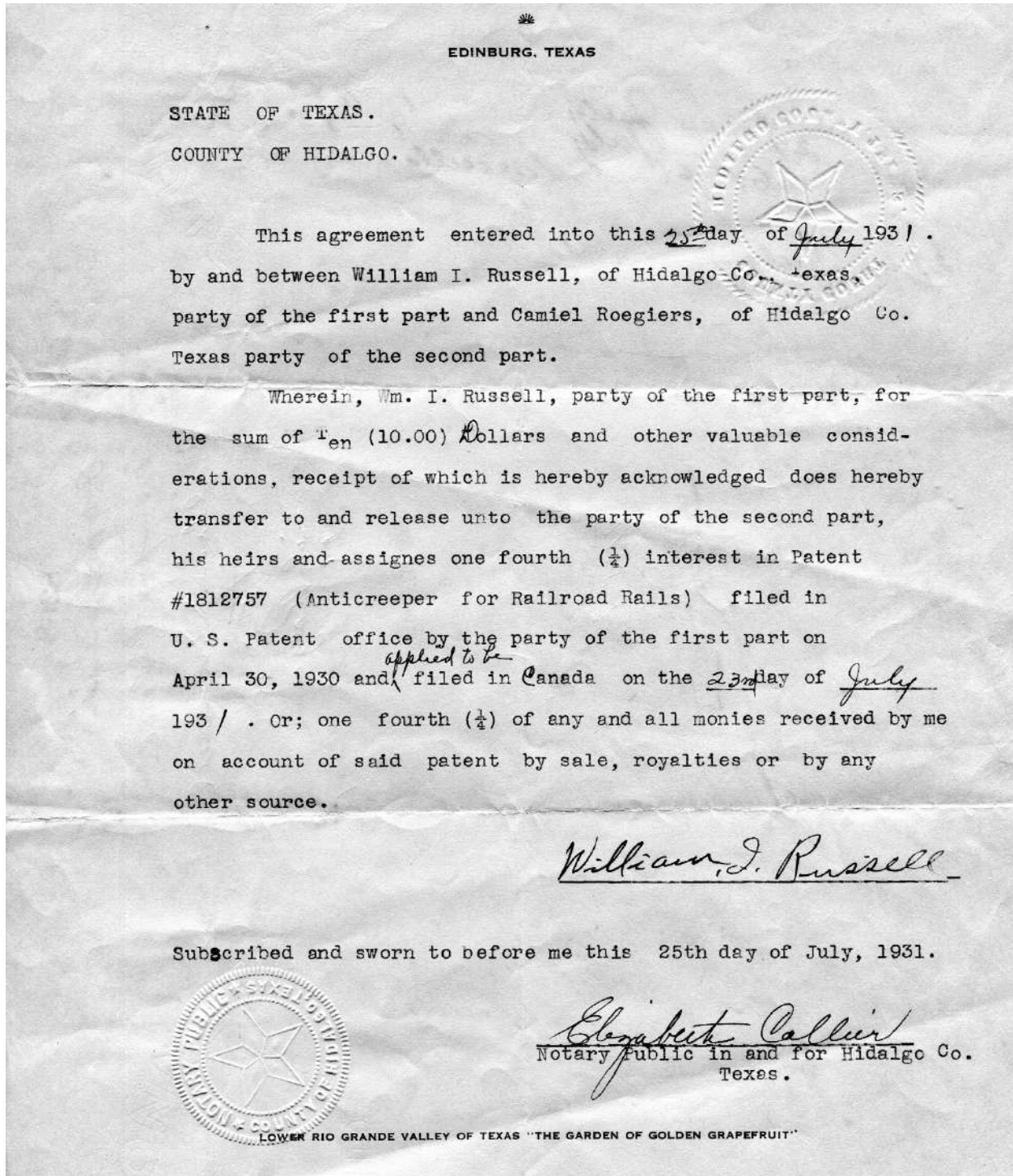
A 116.8 foot strip of land over and across the south one half of Lot 5 Section
243 of the Texas Mexican Railway Survey as same appears on file and of record in the
Clerks office of Hidalgo County, Texas, and more particularly described by metes and
bounds as follows:

Commencing at the point of intersection of the center line of the proposed St.
Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway as now located and the southerly line of the said
Lot 5, said point being 26.8 feet from the southwest corner of said Lot 5, for the place
of beginning, thence easterly along the said southerly line a distance of 50 feet to a
point, Thence northerly 80 feet from and parallel to the center line of said proposed
railway a distance of 545.5 feet to a point, Thence westerly at right angles a distance
of 10 feet to a point, Thence northerly 80 feet from and parallel to the center line of
said Proposed Railway, a distance of 114.5 feet to a point, Thence westerly a distance
of 106.8 feet to a point in the westerly line of said Lot 5, thence southerly 66.8 feet
from and parallel to the center line of said proposed railway, a distance of 660 feet
to a point in the southerly line of said Lot 5, thence easterly along the last mentioned
line, a distance of 66.8 feet to the place of beginning, containing 1.78 acres, more or
less.

As a further consideration the Grantors reserve the rights, privilege, and the
Grantee herein agrees, to use the East ten foot strip herein conveyed for cultivation and
the removal of certain citrus trees and grape vines for a period of two years from the
date hereof.

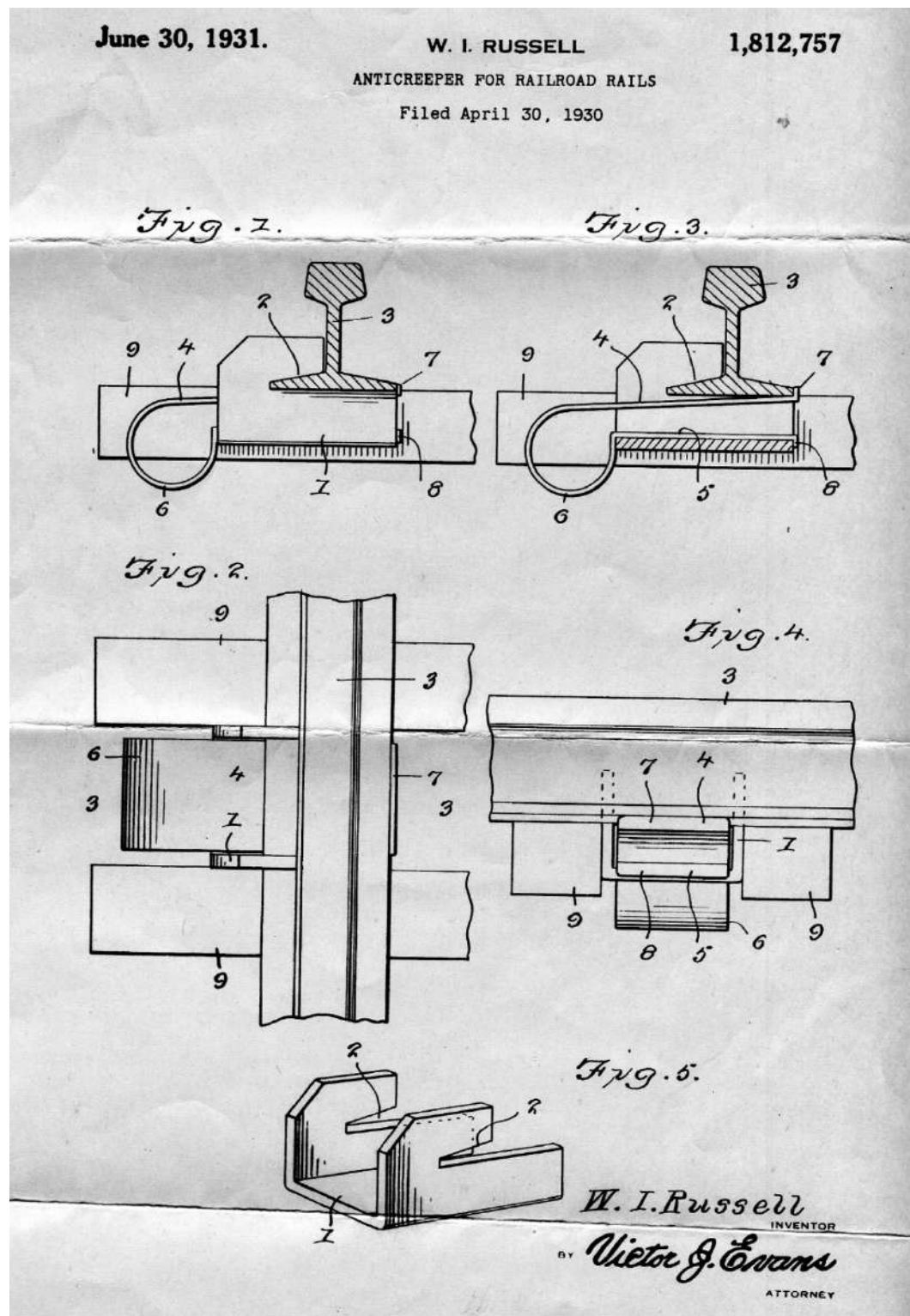
Warranty Deed with Vendor's Lien - Camiel Roegiers to the St. Louis, Brownsville and
Mexico Railway Company, 1925.

Appendix 20



Camiel Roegiers' agreement with William I. Russell for $\frac{1}{4}$ interest in Patent # 1812757.

Appendix 21



W.I. Russell "Anticreeper for Railroad Rails" Patent Drawings

Appendix 22

Victor J
Evans & Co.
U. S. and Foreign Patents
Victor BLOE 724-732 N. 1st Street N.W.
Washington D.C.

Rt 2 Box 326
Edinburg, Texas
MARCH 9, 1964

To whom ever it MAY concern;

I would like to check into
A patent which was patented June
30, 1931. It's patent number is 1,812,751.
AND SERIAL number is 448,684 and it
was patented by William I. Russell
of Edinburg, Texas. THE name of the
patented invention is called ANTICREEPER
for Rail road Rails.

In the patent prospectus of
Patent No. 1,812,751; "Anticreeper for Railroads
Rails"; Invented by: William I. Russell;
Patented June 30, 1931 Expires; June 30, 1948

In the article mentioned above
which was written about the patent
I found AND article devoted to
the Valuation - Outright and Royalty which
interested me very much. I would
like to know if we such be intitled
to any ROYALTY OR other money
mentioned in the article.

Letter from Roy Roegiers to Evans and Company, 1964.

Appendix 23

It is hereby stipulated and agreed by and between both parties hereto that this deed is given subject to a lease now held by Camiel Roegiers "Grantor" and that Camiel Roegiers will defend and release and receipt John W. Allen "Grantee" from all claims for any breaking or grubbing or clearing said undivided land.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, the above described premises together with all and singular the rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging unto the said Camiel Roegiers

heirs and assigns forever. And I do hereby bind my heirs, executors and administrators to **WARRANT AND FOREVER DEFEND** all and singular the said premises unto the said Camiel Roegiers his

heirs and assigns against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof

Witness my hand at Burnsville, Minnesota this 26th day of July A.D. 1920

John W. Allen

Witness of Deed of Grantor
D. O. Johnson
Lulu C. M. Smith

Minnesota
THE STATE OF TEXAS,
County of Clay
Clay County Texas on this day personally appeared John W. Allen

Before me Notary Public in and for Minnesota

known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that he executed the same for the purposes and considerations therein expressed.

Given under my hand and seal of office this 26th day of July A.D. 1920 D. O. Johnson

Notary Public for County of Clay, Minn.
My Comm. Expires Feb. 15, 1924

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
County of
in and for
County Texas on this day personally appeared wife of known to me

to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and having been examined by me privately and apart from her husband and having the same fully explained to her she the said

acknowledged such instrument to be her act and deed and declared that she had willingly signed the same for the purposes and consideration therein expressed and that she did not wish to retract it

Given under my hand and seal of office this day of A.D. 19

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
County of Hidalgo
I, Don A. Hill, Clerk of the County Court of said County do hereby certify that the foregoing instrument of writing dated on the 26th day of July A.D. 1920 with its Certificate of Authentication was filed for record in my office this 26th day of August A.D. 1920 at 9:15 o'clock A.M. and duly recorded the 29th day of August A.D. 1920 at 10:00 o'clock A.M. in the Public Records of said County in Volume 322 on Pages 99-100

Witness my hand and the Seal of the County Court of said County at office in Burnsville, Minn. the day and year last above written

Don A. Hill Clerk
County Court By J. E. H. County Texas Deputy

Warranty Deed between John Allen and Camiel Roegiers

Appendix 24

C-142 WARRANTY DEED--With Single, Joint and Wife's Separate Acknowledgments. MARTIN Stationery Co., Dallas

THE STATE OF TEXAS, }
COUNTY OF HIDALGO: } KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF MERCEDES, TEXAS, a banking corporation,

of the County of Hidalgo State of Texas, for and in consideration of

the sum of

- - - Nine Hundred Fifty and no/100 (\$950.00) - - - - - DOLLARS,

to it in hand paid by Camiel Roegiers, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,

and the assumption of all taxes for the year 1942 and subsequent years,

have Granted, Sold and Conveyed, and by these presents do Grant, Sell and Convey unto the said

Camiel Roegiers,

of the County of Hidalgo State of Texas, all that certain

described tract of land in Hidalgo County, Texas, described as follows, to-wit:

"All of the East one-half (E½) of Lot No. One (1), in Section Two Hundred Forty-four (244) Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Surveys, containing Twenty (20) acres of land, more or less".

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises, together with all and singular, the

rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging unto the said Camiel Roegiers, his

The First National Bank, Mercedes, Texas, does

heirs and assigns forever; and / ~~he~~ hereby bind itself, its successors and

assigns ~~to him, executors and administrators~~ to Warrant and Forever Defend all and singular the said premises

unto the said Camiel Roegiers, his

heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming, or to claim the same or any

part thereof.

Witness my hand and seal of office this 14th day of August, A. D. 1942.

EXECUTED this 14th day of August, A. D. 1942.

Attest: THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF MERCEDES, TEXAS.

By: *[Signature]* President.

[Signature] Cashier.

O. D. 1942

Warranty Deed between First National Bank in Mercedes and Camiel Roegiers

Appendix 25

APPENDIX L

#11787

General Warranty Deed.

Camiel Rogiers, et al.

-to-

A. R. Rogers.

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF HIDALGO.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That we, Camiel Rogiers and wife, Irene Rogiers; and Alfredo Rogers and wife, Sara Rogers, of Hidalgo County, Texas, in consideration of the sum of Ten and No/100 Dollars (\$10.00 and other good and valuable consideration, to said grantors in hand paid by the grantees hereinafter named, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,

HAVE GRANTED, SOLD AND CONVEYED, and by these presents do Grant, Sell and Convey unto A. R. Rogers of Hidalgo County, Texas, all that certain property situate in the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, described as follows, to-wit:

The South Five (5) acres of the West Ten (10) acres of Lot No. Six (6) in Section No. Two Hundred Forty Three (243) Texas-Mexican Railway Company Survey, Hidalgo County, Texas, as shown on the map or plat thereof, which is on file and of record in the Office of the County Clerk of Hidalgo County, Texas, reference to which is here made for further description.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said premises, together with all rights, hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging, unto the said grantees above named, his heirs and assigns forever. And we do hereby bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators, to Warrant and Forever Defend the title to the said property unto the said grantees above named, his heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof.

WITNESSED this 12th day of June, A. D. 1946.

Camiel Rogiers.

Irene Rogiers.

Alfred Rogers.

Sara Rogers.

State of Texas

County of Hidalgo.

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared Camiel Rogiers known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me that he executed the same for the purposes and consideration therein expressed.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this _____ day of June, 1946.



L. E. Manning

L. E. Manning.

Notary Public Hidalgo County, Texas.

Warranty Deed No. 11787 between Camiel Roegiers and Alfred Rogers, 1946.

Appendix 26

Warranty Deed between Camiel Roegiers and Alfred Rogers, 1953.

have Granted, Sold and Conveyed, and by these presents do Grant, Sell and Convey, unto the said
A. R. Rogers
of the County of Hidalgo State of Texas all that certain
tract, piece or parcel of land situated in Hidalgo County, Texas,
described as the North Two (2) acres of the West Twenty (20) acres
of Lot Six (6), Block 243, Texas-Mexican Railway Company survey of
lands in Hidalgo County, Texas, according to the map or plat thereof
of record in the office of the County Clerk of Hidalgo County, Texas,
to which reference is hereby made for all purposes.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises, together with all and singular the
rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging unto the said

A. R. Rogers, his
heirs and assigns forever and we do hereby bind ourselves, our
heirs, executors and administrators, to Warrant and Forever Defend, all and singular the said premises
unto the said A. R. Rogers, his

heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming, or to claim the same, or any
part thereof.

WITNESS our hands at Edinburg, Texas

this 10th day of February 1953.

Witnesses at Request of Grantor:

Camiel Roegiers
Irene Roegiers

JOINT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE STATE OF TEXAS, }
COUNTY OF HIDALGO }

BEFORE ME, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, on this day personally appeared
Camiel Roegiers and Irene Roegiers, his wife, both
known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me that
they each executed the same for the purposes and consideration therein expressed, and the said

Irene Roegiers, wife of the said Camiel Roegiers
having been examined by me privily and apart from her husband, and having the same fully explained to her, she, the
said Irene Roegiers acknowledged such instrument to be her act and deed, and she
declared that she had willingly signed the same for the purposes and consideration therein expressed, and that she did not
wish to retract it.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE, this the 10th day of February A. D. 19 53

(L.S.)

Olivia C. Spelman
Notary Public in and for

Hidalgo

County, Texas.

Filed for Record on the 10th day of February A. D. 1953, at 2:30 o'clock P. M.
Duly Recorded this the 14th day of February A. D. 19 53, at 9:56 o'clock A. M.
Instrument No. 2634

GEO. L. ANDERSON, County Clerk
Hidalgo County, Texas

By *M. Hakestradt* Deputy

Appendix 27

G-108—WARRANTY DEED—With Single, Joint and Wife's Separate Acknowledgments 4748 Martin Stationery Co., Dallas

**THE STATE OF TEXAS, }
COUNTY OF HIDALGO** **KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:**

That we, Ernest Schlagel, a resident of Clay County, Missouri, Harold Schlagel, a resident of Johnson County, Kansas, and Floyd Schlagel, a resident of Los Angeles County, California, and being all of the children and the heirs at law of our father, George Schlagel, who died intestate on the 24th day of November, 1936 in Johnson County, Kansas, and our mother who predeceased him,

of the County of _____, State of _____, for and in consideration of

the sum of

Two Thousand Two Hundred Fifty and No/100 - - - - - DOLLARS,
(\$2,250.00)

to us in hand paid by Camiel Roegiers and wife, Irene Roegiers,

DOCUMENTARY
RECORDED
INDEXED
FILED
CLERK
DEPUTY

have Granted, Sold and Conveyed, and by these presents do Grant, Sell and Convey unto the said Camiel Roegiers and wife, Irene Roegiers, as joint tenants with all rights of such tenants at common law including the right of survivorship, of the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, all that certain piece, parcel or tract of land situated in Hidalgo County, Texas, described as follows, to-wit:

The West One-Half (W-1/2) of the North Twenty (N-20) acres of Lot Eleven (11), in Section Number 243, Hidalgo County, Texas, said Section Number 243 having been originally patented by the State of Texas to Texas-Mexican Railway Company by Letters Patent dated November 24, 1884, and recorded in Volume 24, at page 553, of the Deed Records of Hidalgo County, Texas; and said lot being indicated on the Map or Plat of a subdivision of the said section and others, which Map or Plat is recorded in Volume 1, at Page 16, of the Map Records of Hidalgo County, Texas, to which reference is especially made, and being the same property conveyed by Stewart Farm Mortgage Company by warranty deed dated January 4, 1920, recorded in Volume 106, on Pages 347-8, of the Deed Records of Hidalgo County, Texas, to which reference is made of this description.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises, together with all and singular, the rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging unto the said Camiel Roegiers and wife, Irene Roegiers, their heirs and assigns forever; and we, the Grantors do hereby bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators, to Warrant and Forever Defend all and singular the said premises unto the said Camiel Roegiers and wife, Irene Roegiers, their heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming, or to claim the same or any part thereof.

Witness our hands at the various counties and states shown in the acknowledgments taken by notaries public, this _____ day of February, A.D. 1957.

Witnesses at Request of Grantor:

Ernest Schlagel
Ernest Schlagel
Harold Schlagel
Harold Schlagel
Floyd Schlagel
Floyd Schlagel

Warranty Deed between Schlagel Family and Camiel Roegiers

Appendix 28

PRODUCERS 88 (2-47) WITH 640 ACRES POOLING PROVISION

#2216 OIL, GAS AND MINERAL LEASE

THIS AGREEMENT made this 24th day of January, 1949, between
Camel Roegiers and wife, Irene Roegiers

Lessor (whether one or more) whose address is: Route 2, Box 326, Edinburg, Texas
and Presley E. Vinson Lessee, WITNESSETH:

1. Lessor in consideration of Ten and no/100 Dollars
(\$10.00), in hand paid, of the royalties herein provided, and of the agreement of Lessee herein contained, hereby grants, leases and lets
exclusively unto Lessee for the purpose of investigating, exploring, prospecting, drilling and mining for and producing oil, gas and all other minerals,
laying pipe lines, building roads, tanks, power stations, telephone lines and other structures thereon to produce, save, take care of, treat, transport and
own said products, and housing its employees, the following described land in: Hidalgo County, Texas, to-wit:

East Twenty (20) acres of Lot Number One (1), Section
Two Hundred Forty Four (244), Texas-Mexican Railway
Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County, Texas.



This lease also covers and includes all land owned or claimed by Lessor adjacent or contiguous to the land particularly described above, whether the
same be in said survey or surveys or in adjacent surveys, although not included within the boundaries of the land particularly described above. For
the purpose of calculating the rental payments hereinafter provided for, said land is estimated to comprise twenty (20)
acres, whether it actually comprises more or less.

2. Subject to the other provisions herein contained, this lease shall be for a term of five years from this date (called "primary term") and as
long thereafter as oil, gas or other mineral is produced from said land or land with which said land is pooled hereunder.

3. The royalties to be paid by Lessee are: (a) on oil, one-eighth of that produced and saved from said land, the same to be delivered at the wells
or to the credit of Lessor into the pipe line to which the wells may be connected; Lessee may from time to time purchase any royalty oil in its pos-
session, paying the market price therefor prevailing for the field where produced on the date of purchase; (b) on gas, including casinghead gas or
other gaseous substance, produced from said land and sold or used off the premises or for the extraction of gasoline or other product therefrom, the
market value at the well of one-eighth of the gas so sold or used, provided that on gas sold at the wells the royalty shall be one-eighth of the amount
realized from such sale; while there is a gas well on this lease, or on acreage pooled therewith, but gas is not being sold or used, Lessee may pay
as royalty at monthly intervals a sum equal to one-twelfth (1/12) of the amount of the annual rental payable in lieu of drilling operations during
the primary term on the number of acres subject to this lease at the time such payment is made, and if such payment is made or tendered, it will
be considered that gas is being produced from this lease in paying quantities; and (c) on all other minerals mined and marketed, one-tenth either
in kind or value at the well or mine, at Lessee's election, except that on sulphur mined and marketed the royalty shall be one-tenth (10%) per long
ton. ~~Lessee shall have the right to purchase any royalty oil in its possession, paying the market price therefor prevailing for the field where produced on the date of purchase.~~

4. Lessee, at its option, is hereby given the right and power to pool or combine the acreage covered by this lease, or any portion thereof as to oil
and gas, or either of them, with other land, lease or leases in the immediate vicinity thereof to the extent, hereinafter stipulated, when in Lessee's
judgment it is necessary or advisable to do so in order properly to develop and operate said leased premises in compliance with the spacing rules of
the Railroad Commission of Texas, or other lawful authority, or when to do so would, in the judgment of Lessee, promote the conservation of oil and
gas from said premises. Units pooled for oil hereunder shall not substantially exceed 40 acres each in area, and units pooled for gas hereunder shall not
substantially exceed in area 640 acres each plus a tolerance of 10% thereof, provided that should governmental authority having jurisdiction prescribe or
permit the creation of units larger than those specified, units thereafter created may conform substantially in size with those prescribed by govern-
mental regulations. Lessee under the provisions hereof may pool or combine acreage covered by this lease, or any portion thereof as above provided
as to oil in any one or more strata and as to gas in any one or more strata. The units formed by pooling as to any stratum or strata need not conform
in size or area with the unit or units into which the lease is pooled or combined as to any other stratum or strata, and oil units need not conform as
to area with gas units. The pooling in one or more instances shall not exhaust the rights of the Lessee hereunder to pool this lease or portions
thereof into other units. Lessee shall execute in writing an instrument or instruments identifying and describing the pooled acreage. The entire
acreage so pooled into a tract or unit shall be treated for all purposes except the payment of royalties as if it were included in this lease, and drill-
ing or reworking operations thereon and production of oil and gas, or either of them, from any stratum or strata so pooled shall be considered for
all purposes except the payment of royalties as if the operations were on and production were from the land covered by this lease, whether or not
the well or wells be located on the premises covered by this lease. In lieu of the royalties elsewhere herein specified, Lessor shall receive, on pooled
production from a stratum or strata unitized under the provisions hereof, only such portion of the royalties stipulated herein as the amount of the
acreage (surface acres) covered by this lease and included in the unit as to the unitized stratum or strata, or Lessor's royalty interest therein on
an acreage basis, bears to the total acreage (surface acres) so pooled in the particular unit involved; provided, however, no reduction of shut-in gas
royalties shall be made under this provision. The production from an oil well will be considered as production from the lease or oil pooled unit from
which it is producing and not as production from a gas pooled unit; and production from a gas well will be considered as production from the lease
or gas pooled unit from which it is producing and not from an oil pooled unit.

5. If operations for drilling are not commenced on said land or on acreage pooled therewith as above provided on or before one year from this
date the lease shall then terminate as to both parties, unless on or before such anniversary date Lessee shall pay or tender to Lessor or to the credit

of Lessor in First National Bank at Edinburg, Texas, (which bank
and its successors are Lessor's agent and shall continue as the depository for all rentals payable hereunder regardless of changes in ownership of
said land or the rentals) the sum of Forty and no/100 Dollars
(\$40.00), (herein called rental), which shall cover the privilege of deferring commencement of drilling operations for a period of
twelve (12) months, in like manner and upon like payments or tenders annually, the commencement of drilling operations may be further deferred
for successive periods of twelve (12) months each during the primary term. The payment or tender of rental under this paragraph and of royalty
under paragraph 3 on any gas well from which gas is not being sold or used may be made by the check or draft of Lessee mailed or delivered to
Lessor or to said bank on or before the date of payment. If such bank (or any successor bank) should fail, liquidate or be succeeded by another bank,
or for any reason fail or refuse to accept rental, Lessee shall not be held in default for failure to make such payment or tender of rental until thirty
(30) days after Lessor shall deliver to Lessee a proper recordable instrument, naming another bank as agent to receive such payments or tenders.

Oil and Mineral Deed, 1949.

Appendix 29

T-7346 - (2)
TEXAS - N. MEXICO - LOUISIANA

1897 RELEASE OF OIL AND GAS LEASE

AMERADA PETROLEUM CORPORATION, a corporation of the State of Delaware, Tulsa 2, Oklahoma.

do hereby release, relinquish and surrender all of its right, title and interest in and to a certain oil and gas mining lease dated the 25th day of JANUARY, 1949, made and entered into between SAMUEL ROBERTS and wife, IRENE ROBERTS.

and PRESLEY E. VINSON Lessor
Lessee
said lease being recorded in Block 96, on Page 39-41, in the records provided by law for the recording of oil and gas mining leases, and covering the following described lands located in the County of HALLAM State of TEXAS, to-wit:

East 20 acres of Lot Number 1, Section 244, Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County, Texas, and containing 20 acres, more or less.

Signed and executed this 1st day of FEBRUARY, 1954.
AMERADA PETROLEUM CORPORATION.
By Assistant Secretary Vice President
Notary Public Seal

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, } CORPORATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT—TEXAS
COUNTY OF TULSA, }

BEFORE ME, the undersigned a Notary Public in and for Tulsa County, Oklahoma, personally appeared A. R. DENISON, known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me that he executed such instrument for the purposes and consideration therein expressed, and on behalf of and as the act of said corporation and in the capacity therein stated.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE this 1st day of FEBRUARY, 1954.

My commission expires 20th day of August, 1955.
Notary Public, Tulsa County, Oklahoma.

Filed for Record on the 10th day of February, A. D. 1954, at 9:38 o'clock A. M.
Duly Recorded this 12th day of February, A. D. 1954, at 9:18 o'clock A. M.
Instrument No. 1827
GEO. L. ANDERSON, County Clerk
Hidalgo County, Texas

By L. Brennan Deputy

Oil and Mineral Deed Release 1954

Appendix 30

Mineral R 8449
131-WARRANT DEED Texas Standard Form

The State of Texas, } Know all Men by These Presents:
County of HIDALGO

That Mex-Tex Oil Corporation, a Texas corporation, acting by and through its duly authorized officers,

of the County of Bexar State of Texas, for and in consideration
of the sum of ---Ten & 00/100 - - (\$10.00) - - - - -

DOLLARS

to it in hand paid by Camiel Roegiers, the receipt of which is hereby
acknowledged and confessed, *as follows:*

have Granted, Sold and Conveyed, and by these presents do Grant, Sell and Convey, unto the said
Camiel Roegiers,

of the County of Hidalgo State of Texas all that certain

One-half (1/2) of the oil, gas and other minerals in and under
the East Ten (10) acres of the North Twenty (20) acres of Lot Eleven
(11), Section Two Hundred Forty-Three (243), and the South Twenty (20)
acres of Lot Eleven (11), Section Two Hundred Forty-Three (243),
Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County,
Texas, according to the map or plat thereof on file and of record in
the office of the County Clerk of Hidalgo County, Texas, to which
reference is here made for a better description;


SUBJECT to an existing Oil, Gas and Mineral Lease executed by
Mex-Tex Oil Corporation to S. P. Bell;

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises, together with all and singular the rights
and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging unto the said Camiel Roegiers, his
doe
heirs and assigns forever and it /~~do~~ hereby bind itself, its successors and assigns,
~~heirs, executors and administrators,~~ to Warrant and Forever Defend, all and singular the said premises
unto the said Camiel Roegiers, his

heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming, or to claim the same, or any
part thereof by, through or under it.

WITNESS its hand at San Antonio, Texas,
this 3rd day of May 19 51.
Witness at request of Grantor:

ATTEST: MEX-TEX OIL CORPORATION
Josephine Spencer Tucker BY: *Robert E. Tucker*
Secretary President



Mineral Deed with the Mex-Tex Oil Corporation, 1951.

21(15)

THIS AGREEMENT, made this 23rd day of March 1977, between

WITNESSES:

40.00 acres of land, more or less, being All of Lot 11, Section 243 of the Texas-Mexican Railway Company's Survey of lands in Hidalgo County, Texas, according to the map of said Survey recorded in Vol. 1, Page 16 of the Map Records of Hidalgo County, Texas.

2. Subject to the other provisions herein contained, this lease shall be for a term of ten years (from this date) (called "primary term") and as long thereafter as oil, gas or other minerals are produced from the leased premises or this lease is continued in force by any other provisions herein.

[illegible]

Edinburg 78539 Texas (which bank and its successors are Lessee's agent and shall continue as the depository hereunder regardless of changes in ownership of the leased premises or in the status of any party related to any such transfer hereunder, by death or otherwise).

[illegible][illegible]

FROMUCLIN SE 06V ,CPCH VCI 8 88;
MITH AIA ACAPU PQQLIHA POUYOWAG
PACHSE DULI;

55344-2 11050

553916-25 7855

Oil Gas and Mineral Lease 1977

Oil, Gas and Mineral Lease, 1977.

219

658

553416-12

48566

Oil, Gas and Mineral Lease, 1977.

Appendix 32

378

#6477

RIGHT OF WAY EASEMENT

STATE OF TEXAS

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

COUNTY OF Hidalgo

THAT Camiel Roegiers and Irene Roegiers husband and wife

of the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, for and in consideration of the sum of \$1.00 and other good and valuable consideration to Us in hand paid by Hidalgo, County, a political subdivision of the State of Texas, acting by and through its Commissioners' Court, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, have this day sold, and do by these presents grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the County of Hidalgo the free and uninterrupted use, liberty and privilege of passage in, along, upon and across the following lands in Hidalgo County, Texas owned by Us and being particularly described as follows, to-wit:

All that part of the east one-half (1/2) of Lot 1, Block 244, of the Texas-Mexican Railway Survey Subdivision, in Hidalgo County, Texas lying north of a line parallel to and 40 feet south of the survey centerline for the proposed Farn-to-Market Road No. 1927 as staked on the ground and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the northeast corner of said Lot 1, Block 244;

Thence N 80° - 28'W, along the north boundary line of said Lot 1, Block 244, for a distance of 667 feet, more or less;

Thence S 90° - 33'W for a distance of 12.6 feet, more or less;

Thence S 90° - 38'E, parallel to and 40 feet south of said survey centerline, for a distance of 508 feet, more or less;

Thence S 79° - 42'E parallel to and 40 feet south of said survey centerline, for a distance of 159 feet, more or less, to a point on the east boundary of said Lot 1, Block 244;

Thence S 90° - 33'E, along the east boundary of said Lot 1, Block 244, for a distance of 18.1 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning and containing 0.22 acres, more or less, none of which is in the existing road.

For the purpose of opening, constructing and maintaining a permanent highway or, along, upon and across said premises, with the right and privilege at all times the grantee herein, his or its agents, employees, workmen and representatives having ingress, egress and regress in, along, upon and across said premises for the purpose of making additions to, improvements on and repairs to the said highway, or any part thereof.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD unto the said Hidalgo County as aforesaid for the purposes aforesaid the premises above described.

Witness Our hands, this the 16th day of April, 1953.

Camiel Roegiers
Irene Roegiers

Monte Cristo Easement

Monte Cristo Easement

[illegible]

Appendix 34



Aerial view of Roegiers Farm prior to the building of Highway 281 (view from north west corner of the property toward the south and east).



Google Earth (aerial view) Image of Roegiers' property accessed September 4, 2017
Note: Highway 281 at right.

Appendix 35

The STATE OF TEXAS No. 307

Marriage License

COUNTY OF HIDALGO

To any Regularly Licensed or Ordained Minister of the Gospel, Jewish Rabbi, Judge, District or County Court or any Justice Peace in the State of Texas Greeting!

YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO SOLEMNIZE THE RITES OF MATRIMONY

Between Mr. Camiel Roegiers
and Mrs. Irene De Bouver
and make due return to the Clerk of the County Court of said County within sixty days thereafter certifying your action under this license.

Witness my official signature and seal of office at
Edinburg, Texas the 27th day of Feb. 1946

D. C. Hogan Clerk of County Court
By Amador Rodriguez Deputy
Hidalgo County, Texas

J. Philip J. Kennedy hereby certify that
on the Eleventh day of March 1946
I united in Marriage the parties above named

Witness my hand this 14th day of March 1946
Rev. Philip J. Kennedy Catholic Priest
Edinburg, Texas

Returned and filed for record the 14th day of March 1946
and recorded the 14th day of March 1946 in Book 28 Page 307
W. Kamin Deputy D. C. Hogan County Clerk

Marriage license for Camiel Roegiers and Irene De Bouver witnessed on February 27, 1946.



Raisin Bread Is Sunday Treat In Rogers Family

Mrs. Alfred Rogers, a long time resident of Edinburg, is quite well known for her bread-baking. The Raisin Bread is best liked and most in demand by her family. Most any occasion that arises, Mrs. Rogers is called upon to make the bread.

It has been a family treat for many years that the family gather at the A. Rogers' home each Sunday for Raisin Bread and coffee. Mrs. Rogers serves it as a dessert or snack rather than with a meal.

3 lbs. white flour
1 package dry yeast
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
½ package seedless raisins
1 pint milk
½ cup warm water
¼ lb. butter or oleo
3 whole eggs

Mix all dry ingredients and add
Heat milk to lukewarm. Dis-

solve yeast in ½ cup warm water and add to mixture. Add milk and mix well. Let dough rise to double in bulk which is about 3 hours. Keep dough in warm place. Knead again and let rise for another hour. Divide into two large loaves or place in greased pans for baking. Bake for 1 hour in 350 degree oven. Brush with melted butter when done to soften crust.

Apple Season Brings New Recipes To You

Here's a new way to use apples — a Yankee Apple John, that's a Down East cousin of an Apple Cobbler. The recipe comes from Winfred S. Carter. It must be one

Appendix 36 continued


Rogers Family Raisin Bread Recipe

- 3lbs white flour
- 1 package dry yeast
- 2 tbsp Sugar
- 1 tsp Salt
- ½ package Seedless Raisins
- 1 pint Milk
- ½ Cup Warm Water
- ¼ lb butter or oleo
- 3 Whole Eggs

Directions:

- Turn oven on at 350
- Mix all dry ingredients and add eggs.
- Heat milk to lukewarm.
- Dissolve yeast in ½ cup warm water and add to mixture.
- Add milk and mix well.
- Let dough to double in bulk-about 3 hours
- Keep dough in warm place. Knead again and let rise for another hour.
- Divide dough into 2 large loaves or place in greased pan for baking.
- **Bake 1 hour in preheated oven-reduce the baking time to about 25 minutes for modern/conventional ovens**
- Brush melted butter on baked bread to soften crust.

Appendix 37



Weason/Whiesen
Belgian Card Game – some similarities to Bridge
4 players

Directions by Roger Serota
July 1, 2007

As well as I can remember here it is.
Cards are shuffled for the first deal and dealt out 4-4-5, with the last card in dealers hand is trump.
After first hand cards are never shuffled again, only cut by person on right.

Player on left bids first, unless someone at the table has **truelle (three aces)**, in that case the person with the fourth ace is his partner and the fourth ace also makes trump. Have no idea as to the correct spelling of some of the Belgian words. They must make 8 tricks.

If no aces ———person can pass – **passureke** or ask for a partner – **frouck**, if no one goes with the asker, he has the option of going by himself for the 8 tricks.

Pay rate= 8 tricks =1 cent per opponent
9 tricks= 2 cent
10 tricks = 3 cents
11 tricks _ = 4 cents
12 tricks = nickel
All the tricks = dime
Pay rate is double when there are three aces
Any player can go by himself at any time but he can not change trumps.

Next- any player can declare **avedance**, or go for 9 tricks and name his own trumps. Think this is called a **half a dance**.

Next in line is **avedance in trumps**.
Pay for these is a nickel from the other three opponents.

Next is a **messtette**, or **no tricks at all**, and there are no trumps, pay for this is also a nickel per opponent.


Next is a **bludda messette**, here the declarer shows his hand and if anyone can set him he loses, only one player needs to play to set him
Pay for this is double or a dime

Next and last is **solo slim**, or a **full dance**, declarer has to get all of the tricks
pay for this is also a dime.

Last time I played was with Father Francis and Loraine in San Antonio about 10 years ago.
You might want to check with Loraine, but I believe this is right.

Roger

(PS- Roger and Tom played with/ taught Clara and Lynette at the Reunion 2007)



Belgian Card Game Directions, July 1, 2007. Courtesy of Marjorie Burch

Years of service

Ben Milam Elementary family celebrates two important anniversaries

BY DANYA PEREZ-HERNANDEZ
STAFF WRITER

MALLEN—Concerts, dance parties, and even a rap contest have been taking place at Ben Milam Elementary School this year to commemorate the school's 50-year anniversary and its principal's, Linda McGurk, 25 years of service at the campus.

"I like being around the children and the staff here," McGurk said. "What other job do you walk into and there are all these little kids that are happy to see you. ... No day is ever the same; you never know what's going to happen."

Milam Elementary, home of the Mustangs, was built in 1966 but opened its doors to the community in February 1967. McGurk is only the third principal at the school, with Alvah Rhodes and Roger Larson holding the position for the first 25 years.

McGurk has been with McAllen Independent School District for 28 years and said even as she's been offered other positions within the district during her tenure; her place is at Milam with the children.

"Some people, their goal is to move up from elementary to secondary and then central office," she said. "But that just has never been my goal."

Her day begins at about 7 a.m. getting ready to greet the children and their parents as they begin their school day. For the past 25 years one of her goals has been to engage all the children and their parents from the moment they pull up to the school.

The same happens with teachers, as most describe the work environment as more



Ben Milam Elementary principal Linda McGurk walks the hall Thursday in McAllen.

Delcia Lopez | dlopez@themonitor.com

of a family setting in which the principal trusts the teachers will do their job right and with the children's best interest

at heart.

"We are definitely a family here," said pre-K teacher Ada Gomez. "Mrs. McGurk, she be-

lieves in us and believes we can do our jobs. She's always given

See MILAM | 5A

Years of Service The Monitor Newspaper, honoring Linda McGurk's 25 years of service in the McAllen ISD, April 25, 2017, p. 1

MILAM

From Page 1A

us that trust that you know what's best for our kids."

It's not uncommon to have teachers and other staff with long tenures at the elementary school.

Gomez has worked there for 26 years and has taught kindergarten most of her career there. What makes the school special, she said, is that there's a family-like bond among teachers, staff, students and parents.

"What they say about Milam is 'You can't get into Milam unless somebody died,'" joked Gomez.

For parent Gina Karam Millin, the love for the elementary school and memories of her own time there as a child, drove her to move back into the area in order to have her children attend the school.

"Milam has always been an extraordinary school since I went there in the '70s," Millin said. "They've had really good leadership from the beginning, and even though it's very diverse with the socio-economic breakdown of the area, they tend to rise above."

Millin is also part of the school's Parent Teachers Organization and helped put together a series of events to celebrate the anniversaries. The series will culminate at the end of the school year with the dedication of a playground addition.

Her most vivid memo-



Linda McGurk, Ben Milam Elementary principal, is greeted by students Thursday at Ben Millam Elementary.

MILAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FACTS:

- >> 952 students
- >> 87.4 percent of students are Hispanic
- >> 63.7 percent of students economically disadvantaged
- >> 47.1 percent of students considered at risk
- >> 15.5 years average teacher experience

ries as a child are seeing the teachers go the extra mile to make school fun and engaging for her and her classmates. A legacy that she has seen continued now with the new generations.

"I know that not all teachers do that," she said. "But that's been the history of Milam; that you have very strong leadership and therefore you have very good teachers and the teachers want to go above and beyond, because it's a very positive environment."

At 73 years of age, McGurk admitted to be think-

ing of retirement, but said she wants to see the school continue with the legacy of being a welcoming campus where children will make good memories of their first years in school.

"You want elementary school to be the place where they learn, but a place that's fun," McGurk said. "We expect our kids to work really hard and learn a lot, and to be successful, but you want to keep them happy and not over stress them."

*dperez-hernandez@
themonitor.com*

"Years of Service" The Monitor Newspaper, honoring Linda McGurk's 25 years of service in the McAllen ISD, April 25, 2017, p. 2

Appendix 39

Animals						
Common Name, <i>Spanish Name</i>	Scientific Name	Roegiers	Eubanks Location 1	Eubanks Location 2	Atwood	Cantu
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	<i>Sylvilagus floridanu</i>	Y				
Hare (Jackrabbit)	<i>Leporidae</i>	Y				
Javelinas*		Y				
Land snails	<i>Gastropoda/ Achatina fulica</i>	Y	Y			
Peccary, <i>Javelina</i>	<i>Tayassuidae</i>	Y				
Texas horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma cornutum</i>	Y		Y		
Texas Garter Snake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis annectens</i>	Y				
Texas Horned Toads*		Y				
Black snakes, Indigo snakes*						Y
Birds						
Common Name, <i>Spanish Name</i>	Scientific Name	Roegiers	Eubanks Location 1	Eubanks Location 2	Atwood	Cantu
Cardinal*			Y			
Chacalaca*			Y			
Green jay*			Y			
American coot	<i>Fulica Americana</i>					Y
Belted kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>					Y
Buff bellied hummingbird	<i>Amazilia yucatanensis</i>				Y	
Common Grackle	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	Y				
Golden fronted woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes aurifrons</i>				Y	
Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>					Y
Great kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>					Y
House sparrows	<i>Passer domesticus</i>					Y
Mockingbird, northern mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>		Y		Y	Y
Mourning dove	<i>Zenaida marrouira</i>	Y				Y
Marsh hawk, North harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>					Y

White-winged dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	Y			Y	Y
Whitetail hawk	<i>Buteo albicaudatus</i>				Y	
Insects and Arachnids						
Common Name, Spanish Name	Scientific Name	Roegiers	Eubanks Location 1	Eubanks Location 2	Atwood	Cantu
Antlion	<i>Myrmeleontidae</i>	Y				
American snout	<i>Libytheana carinenta</i>					Y
Brown lacewings	<i>Hemerobiidae</i>				Y	
Brown longtail	<i>Urbanus procne</i>					Y
Ceraunus blue	<i>Hemiargus ceraunus</i>					Y
Checkered white	<i>Pontia protodice</i>					Y
Dainty sulphur	<i>Nathalis iole</i>					Y
Dragonfly	<i>Anisoptera</i>	Y				
Great southern white	<i>Ascia monuste</i>					Y
Gulf fritillary	<i>Agrulis vanilla</i>					Y
Harvester ants	<i>Pogonomyrmex barbatus</i>	Y			Y	
Jumping spider	<i>Pyrrharctia isabella</i>			Y		
Little yellow sulphur	<i>Pyristia lisa</i>					Y
Lyside sulphur	<i>Kricogonia lyide</i>					Y
Mallow scrub-hairstreak	<i>Strymon istapa</i>					Y
Monarch butterfly	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>				Y	
Painted lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>					Y
Phaon crescent	<i>Phyciodes phaon</i>					Y
Red admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>					Y
Fire ants, Red ants	<i>Solenopsis invicta</i>	Y			Y	
Rounded metalmark	<i>Calephelis perditalis</i>					Y
Snout butterfly	<i>Libytheana bachmanii</i>				Y	
Swallowtail butterfly	<i>Palilio polyxenes</i>				Y	
Tropical checkered- skipper	<i>Pyrgus oileus</i>					Y
Western pygmy-blue	<i>Brephidium exilis</i>					Y
White peacock	<i>Anartia jatrophae</i>					Y

Wooly bear	<i>Salticidae</i>			Y		
Yellow sulphur butterfly	<i>Pieridae</i>	Y			Y	
Pantropical Jumper	<i>Plexippus paykulli</i>					
Bold Jumping Spider	<i>Phidippus audax</i>					
Giant Wolf Spider	<i>Hogna carolinensis</i>					
Orb-weaver spider	<i>Araneidae</i>	Y				

Plant comparison chart showing the observation of different plant species across all family properties on which the CHAPS class has reported.

Form 2603-A

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

No. 1250447

Application No. 173-215

Personal description of holder of certificate: Sex Male, age 53 years, color White, complexion Ruddy, eyes Blue, color of hair Lt. Brown, height 5 feet 8 inches, weight 170 pounds, marks or distinctive marks None, marital status Married, place of nativity Belgium. I certify that the above given data are true and that the photograph here attached is a likeness of me.

ORIGINAL

Camiel Roegiers

(Complete and ind signature of holder)

The United States of America
County of Leavenworth
ss: Camiel Roegiers
Resident of Route 1, Box 81, Ellensburg, Texas.
Having applied to the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization for a certificate of citizenship, pursuant to Section 32a, of the Act of June 29, 1906, as amended, and having been to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that he was naturalized by the District Court of Johnson County, at Olathe, Kansas, on May 3, 1920.

Now Therefore, in pursuance of the authority conferred in Section 32a, of the Act of June 29, 1906, as amended, the certificate of citizenship is issued this 27th day of March, thirty-six and sixtieth, pursuant to statute.

By direction of the Commissioner,
Deputy Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization,

29495

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Seal

Camiel Roegiers US Naturalization and Citizenship certificate; naturalized in Lenexa, Kansas on May 3, 1920.

NON VUOL VINCERE MA VUOL

Edition No. 1317

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.

United States of America } *(complete and true sign[ature] of holder)*
Southern District of Texas } *S.S.*
Chas. F. Brown, Jr. of the

The Court hereby found that

In testimony whereof the seal of the said court is hereunto affixed this 11th day of May in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-four and of our Independence the one hundred and sixty eighth



Hail V. Watts
 Clerk of the U. S. District Court
 By D. A. Burke Deputy Clerk

Appendix 41

Texas Highway Department
Form D-15-14
Page 1 of 4
Rev. 10-61

6551

Processed by NPT, KH 5-15-71
Revised 6-24-71
P.C.

DEED

DEED
Parcel 10

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF Hidalgo

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That Irene Roegiers, Individually and as Independent Executrix
of the Estate of Camiel Roegiers, deceased

of the County of Hidalgo, State of Texas, hereinafter referred
to as Grantors, whether one or more, for and in consideration of the sum of Six
Thousand Three Hundred Eighty-Two-----(\$ 6,382.00) Dollars
to Grantors in hand paid by the State of Texas, acting by and through the State
Highway Commission, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, and for which no lien
is retained, either expressed or implied, have this day sold, and by these presents
do Grant, Bargain, Sell and Convey unto the State of Texas, all that certain tract
or parcel of land in Hidalgo County, Texas, and being more particu-
larly described as follows, to wit:

Being 5.21 acres of land, more or less, out of and part of the South 20.0 acres of
Lot 5, Section 243, Texas-Mexican Railway Survey, Hidalgo County, Texas, according
to a map or plat of said Subdivision, recorded in Book 24, Pages 163-170, of the
Map or Plat Records of Hidalgo County, said South 20 acres, being the same land
described in a deed from Stewart Farm Mortgage Co. to Camiel Roegiers, dated Jan-
uary 23, 1920, recorded in Volume 106, Page 353, Deed Records of Hidalgo County,
Texas, and said 5.21 acres of land, more or less, being more particularly described
by metes and bounds as follows:

COMMENCING at the Southwest corner of Lot 5, Section 243; thence as follows:

South 81°07'04" East, along the South line of said Lot 5, same being the center-
line of a 40.0 foot dedicated road (Rogers Rd.), a distance of 860.18 feet to
a point on the proposed West right of way line of US-281 Expressway;

North 8°53'33" East, along the proposed West right of way line of US-281
Expressway, a distance of 20 feet to a point on the North right of way line
of said 40.0 dedicated county road (Rogers Rd.) for the POINT OF BEGINNING
and the Southwest corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

THENCE, North 53°53'14" East, along the proposed West right of way line of US-281
Expressway, a distance of 70.72 feet to a point for an inside corner of the parcel
herein conveyed;

THENCE, North 8°53'33" East, continuing along the proposed West right of way line
of US-281 Expressway, a distance of 590.0 feet to a point on the North property
line for the Northwest corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

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Property deed – Irene Roegiers sold property to the Texas Highway Department for
the building of US Highway 281, p. 1

Appendix 41 continued

Form D-15-14
Page 2 of 4
Rev. 10-61

DEED

THENCE, South $81^{\circ}07'04''$ East, along said North property line, a distance of 352.36 feet to a point on the proposed East right of way line of US-281 Expressway for the Northeast corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

THENCE, South $9^{\circ}07'18''$ West, along the proposed East right of way line of US-281 Expressway, a distance of 590.0 feet to a point for an inside corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

THENCE, South $36^{\circ}06'46''$ East, continuing along the proposed East right of way line of US-281 Expressway, a distance of 35.38 feet to a point on the West line of the Hidalgo County Water Control and Improvement District No. 1 Canal right of way for an outside corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

THENCE, South $8^{\circ}53'32''$ West, along said West line of the Hidalgo County Water Control and Improvement District No. 1 Canal right of way, a distance of 24.98 feet to a point on the North right of way line of said 40.0 foot dedicated county road (Rogers Rd.) for the Southeast corner of the parcel herein conveyed;

THENCE, North $81^{\circ}07'04''$ West, along the North right of way line of said 40.0 foot county road (Rogers Rd.), a distance of 425.62 ft. to the POINT OF BEGINNING and containing an area of 5.21 acres of land, more or less.

SAVE and EXCEPT, HOWEVER, it is expressly understood and agreed that Grantors are retaining title to the following improvements located on the above described property, to wit:

None

Grantors covenant and agree to remove the above described improvements from said land by _____, 19____, subject, however, to such extensions of time as may be granted by the State in writing; and if, for any reason, Grantors fail or refuse to remove same within said period of time prescribed, then, without any further consideration, the title to all or any part of such improvements not so removed shall pass to and vest in the State of Texas forever.

Grantors reserve all of the oil, gas and sulphur in and under the land herein conveyed but waive all rights of ingress and egress to the surface thereof for the purpose of exploring, developing, mining or drilling for same; however, nothing in this reservation shall affect the title and rights of the State to take and use all other minerals and materials thereon, therein and thereunder.

178

Property deed – Irene Roegiers sold property to the Texas Highway Department for the building of US Highway 281, p. 2

Form D-15-14
Page 3 of 4
Rev. 10-63

DEED

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described premises herein conveyed together with all and singular the rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging, unto the State of Texas and its assigns forever; and Grantors do hereby bind ourselves, our heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, to Warrant and Forever Defend all and singular the said premises herein conveyed unto the State of Texas and its assigns against every person whosoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this instrument is executed on this the 21st day of February, 1972.

Time Line Roegiers
Individually and as Independent
Executrix of the Estate of Camiel
Roegiers, Deceased.

SINGLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE STATE OF TEXAS

County of Hidalgo

Before me, _____ the undersigned _____, a notary public in and for said County and State, on
this day personally appeared Irene Roegiers, Individually and as Independent Executrix
of the Estate of Camiel Roegiers, deceased, known to me (or proved to me on
the oath of _____, a credible witness) to be the person _____ whose name _____
is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that she executed the same
for the purposes and consideration therein expressed.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this the 21st day of February 1972

Notary Public in and for Hidalgo County, Texas.

WIFE'S SEPARATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE STATE OF TEXAS,

County of _____

Before me, _____, a notary public in and for said County and State, on this day personally appeared _____, wife of _____, known to me (or proved to me on the oath of _____, a credible witness) to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and having been examined by me privily and apart from her husband, and having the same fully explained to her, she the said _____ acknowledged such instrument to be her act and deed, and declared that she had willingly signed the same for the purposes and consideration therein expressed, and that she did not wish to retract it.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this the _____ day of _____, 19____.

Notary Public in and for _____ County, Texas.

179

Property deed – Irene Roegiers sold property to the Texas Highway Department for the building of US Highway 281, p. 3

Appendix 41 continued

DEED

Form D-15-14
Page 4 of 4
Rev. 10-61

CORPORATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

STATE OF TEXAS

County of _____

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, a notary public in and for _____ County, Texas, on this day personally appeared _____

_____ of _____, known to me to be the person and officer whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that the same was the act of the said _____, a corporation and that he executed the same as the act of such corporation for the purposes and consideration therein expressed, and in the capacity therein stated.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this the _____ day of _____, 19____.

Notary Public in and for _____ County, Texas.

6551

Parcel No. 10
County Hidalgo
Highway No. U.S. 281 Expressway
Control 8021 Sec. 1 Job 13
Account or Federal No.
Between 2.0 Mi. N. of Edinburg, South
and
2.0 Mi. N. of P.M. 495

DEED

Irene Roegiers Grantors
FILED FOR RECORD
THE STATE OF TEXAS
This day of _____, 19____
A. D. 19____ at _____ o'clock M.
This day of _____, 19____
A. D. 19____, in _____
County, Texas, Records of Deeds, Book _____ Page _____
By _____ County Clerk
Deputy.
Charge ROW Bond Fund, Return
to Stewart Title Company

ENDORSEMENTS

THE STATE OF TEXAS,

County of _____

I, _____, Clerk of the County Court of said County, do hereby certify that the foregoing instrument of writing, dated the _____ day of _____, A. D. 19____, with its authentication, was filed for record in my office on the _____ day of _____, A. D. 19____, at _____ o'clock _____ M., and duly recorded this the _____ day of _____, A. D. 19____, at _____ o'clock _____ M., in the Deed Records of said County, in Volume _____ on Page _____.

Witness my hand and the seal of the County Court of said County, at office in _____, Texas, the day and year last above written.

Clerk of Court, _____ County, Texas.

By _____ Deputy.

180

Property deed – Irene Roegiers sold property to the Texas Highway Department for the building of US Highway 281, p. 4

Appendix 42

**E-mail interview initiated by Sandra E. Pichardo addressed to Marjorie Burch, Lynette Fortson, and Linda McGurk
Answers below provided by Lynette Fortson via s-mail from Dallas on
November 28, 2016**

Mrs. Burch,

My group is working on the "Family Tradition" Chapter. We are working on the Holidays/Family gathering and Food section. We have some questions for you. We ask that you please answer the questions with as much detail as possible as your answers will help us complete the section. Thank you so much for your time, Mrs. Burch!

Sandra E Pichardo

Lynette Fortson's Answers (daughter of Mary Alice Ball Foreman, niece of Marjorie Burch, granddaughter of Alice Rogers Edmiston, great granddaughter of Alfred and Emma Rogers)

A lot of this was covered in my interview but I don't think you got those notes. My reference information is in the family scrapbooks I made and have loaned to Aunt Margie Burch for this research project so I'm working from memory in my answers.

1-How was Christmas for you all? Did you all get together Christmas Eve and Christmas Day?

Family Teens were often in the Living Nativity at St Joseph's church. The large Rogers Clan used to gather on Christmas Eve for a gift exchange and visiting in someone's home. We drew names weeks ahead to know whom to buy for. One of the men would dress like Santa and make an appearance. We all dressed up for this gathering. A few pictures are in the scrapbooks I loaned to Aunt Margie. Snacks were served but not a meal. Christmas Day each family attended Mass, most of us at St. Joseph's. Christmas dinner was celebrated with our smaller family groups. We lived in Victoria from 1949-1973 but went to Edinburg for Christmas at my grandmother's (Alice Rogers Edmiston) many of those years. Christmas Eve supper was usually tamales made by someone local. I remember raisin and pork varieties. We have continued the tamale tradition with our children.

2-Who joined the celebration? Just Family or friends/neighbors too? **Just family. The extended family clan Christmas Eve, my grandmother's group Christmas Day.**

3-If friends joined the celebration, were the Belgian friends? If so, was it friends you all met here or did your grandparents know them from Belgium? **Belgian friends were often around. The adults knew them but I didn't since I didn't live in the Valley.**

4-What food was prepared for Christmas? Turkey or ham. Desserts? **Cookies. My grandmother made Sandies, a European style shortbread/butter cookie rolled in powdered sugar. Drinks? My stepgrandfather (Clay Edmiston) made his own eggnog. He wasn't Belgian but I remember it being served Christmas Day.**

5-You had mentioned you all had tamales, what kind of tamales? What were they stuffed with? I remember pork, sometimes javelina, and raisin varieties. Who prepared them? **I don't know who. They were local though, not relatives.**

6-What other holidays would you all celebrate? New Year's, Easter, 4th of July, Thanksgiving, etc. **Easter was a holiday for new clothes and hats, church, egg hunts, big dinner, visiting. We sometimes went to Edinburg to be with family for Easter.**

7-How would you all celebrate the other holidays? What foods, desserts, and/or drinks were prepared?

8-How long would it take you all to prepare for the holidays? Was it just that day or did you all prep in advance the foods, décor and who would take part in all the prepping? **Cookies were baked ahead. Traveling. Shopping for special clothes for Christmas, Easter, First Communions was done ahead. Decorating for Christmas was done ahead. Dinners were cooked the day of.**

9-Any Belgian holidays that you all would celebrate? What days were they and how were they celebrated? **I don't remember ever celebrating any but religious holidays.**

10-What is your fondest memory of the holidays? **Seeing relatives; I only saw a few times a year, especially cousins around my age.**

11-Can you tell us more about family gatherings/celebrations? What foods were usually prepared? **First Communions were celebrated with the Godparents and the immediate family, maybe the grandparents, with photos and a nice dinner at home after church. (Photos in scrapbooks) (Figure 3.2)**

12-What days were your gatherings and how was the day like? Was it a routine or just as the day went by? **Every Sunday afternoon on the farm my great grandparents hosted any family who wanted to come. Men bowled. Women visited. Kids played outside. We all went to get one slice of Mom Rogers' homemade raisin bread.**

13-Who would get together during family gatherings? **Family, friends, neighbors, etc Family mostly. Some were extended family, my great grandparents' siblings.**

14-Were family gatherings as big or the same or smaller than holidays at the ranch? **Good sized at the farm. Bigger if out of town relatives like us were there, which was more likely to be for Christmas or Easter.**

15-What language was typically spoken during holidays/gatherings? **The older adults spoke Belgian (my great grandparents and their children who also spoke English.) Everyone else spoke English.**

16-What would you all do during family gatherings? **Games, haircuts, etc. My great aunt Anna Serota was a hairdresser so she would cut our hair and sometimes give us permanents when we were down visiting. This was usually done at her home though, not at the big family gatherings.**

17-Who was the best at playing Belgian bowling? **I don't know who was best but only the men played. There's a photo in the scrapbooks.** (Figure 3.8)

Card game? **Wiesen. Not sure about the spelling. My notes are in the scrapbook I loaned Aunt Margie. My grandmother Alice Rogers Edmiston and Great Aunt Anna Rogers Serota were great card players. Belgian priests from around the Valley would sometimes join them.** (Figure 3.7)

18-What do you remember most about the gatherings? **Playing with my cousins. If it was a gathering at my great grandparents' in the country on the farm, the kids played outside in the orchards and fields unsupervised. The older took care of the younger. We played hide and seek, girls v boys or chase or juts ran around. We loved it!**

19-How were the family weddings usually celebrated? Would family members marry through church? What church? **Many family weddings were at St Joseph's Catholic Church. My parents were married at the church the family attended before St Joseph's was built.**

Many women in the family were in the Altar Society and cleaned the church. I would go with my grandmother and Aunt Annie when it was their turn to clean if I was in town visiting.

20-Would you all make big parties to celebrate weddings? **There would be a reception after the wedding when family and friends could visit.**

21-What foods would you all usually have and who would cook it? Would someone in the family bake the cake or would you all purchase it from outsiders?

22-Where did the wedding parties usually take place at? **Reception halls or Great Uncle Bill Rogers had his kids on his lawn.**

23-Did you all celebrate wedding anniversaries? What can you tell us about those? **50th anniversaries. There's a picture in the scrapbooks of my great grandparents 50th anniversary dinner for the grown ups at a restaurant.** (Figure3.5)

24-Where did you all purchase wedding dresses/suits?

25-Did you all celebrate birthday parties? What were the celebrations usually like? **A few friends or cousins.**

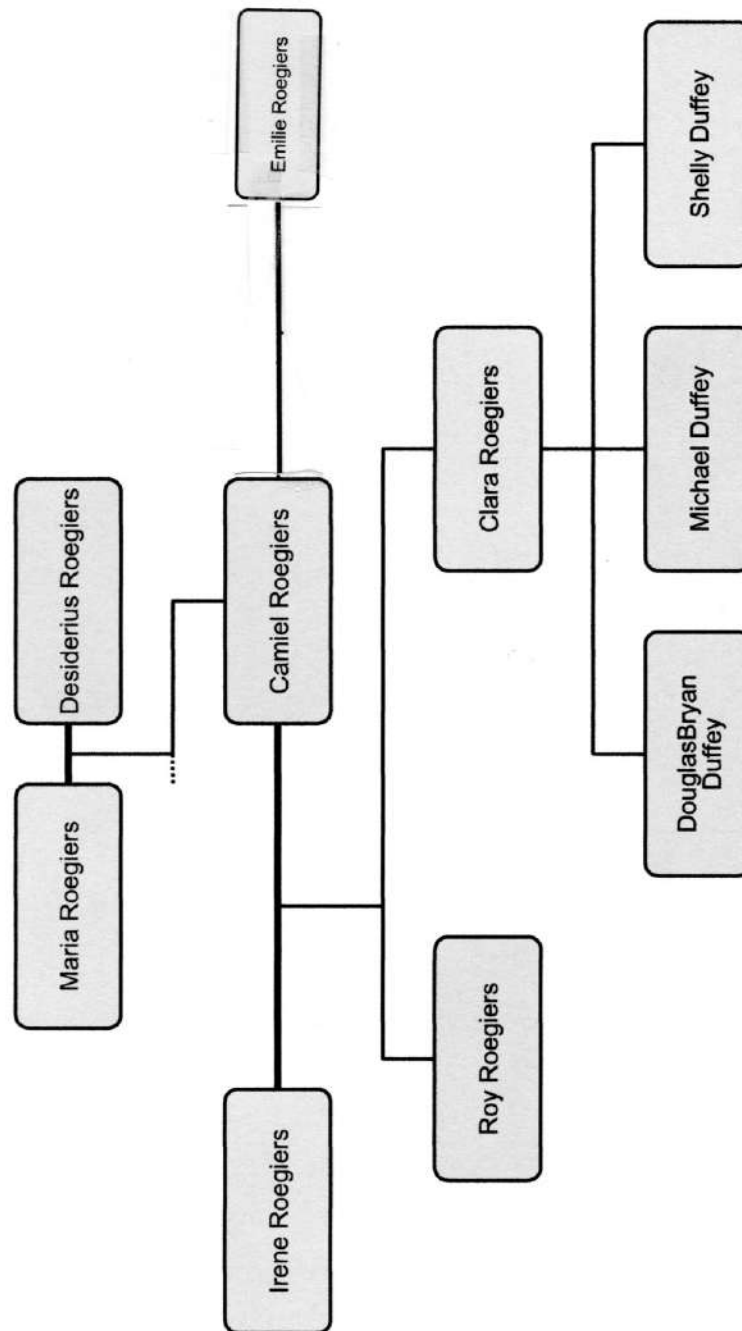
26-What is your fondest memory of the family gatherings and celebrations? **Time with my cousins. We still know each other well because we saw each other regularly, even my second cousins or some more removed in the bloodline but close to my age.**

27-Anything you would like for us to add or specify about the foods, holidays, or family gatherings/celebrations? **I'm sure someone mentioned the raisin bread Mom Rogers baked every Saturday and served at the Sunday afternoon family gatherings. There was also a Belgian honey cake, I forget the name, but it had anise in it, a distinctive European flavor. Those recipes are in the scrapbooks. My grandmother and Mother and I like those store bought European shortbread cookies. My guess is it's a European carryover.** (Appendix 36)

My mother, when interviewed by one of my children for a school project, said they never went hungry during the Depression because they could eat what was raised on the farm. She also recalled making their own potato chips and root beer. The kids were told not to drink it until it aged. But they would anyway and it would taste bad. Beer was an adult beverage. My great grandparents made blackberry wine. I was a sickly child in the winter and Mother would give me some of Mom and Pa's blackberry wine for my cough. It worked better than the cough syrup that was eventually developed but my wine ended when cough syrup came out. Family also canned fruits, vegetables, jams, jellies, pickles. Some still do. Cousins and nephews have made wine and beer recently. One has a beer brewery in Austin now.

Many of the women were great at needlework. My great grandmother made sweaters for everyone. You had to wait your turn to get one. We have some beautiful crocheted decorative pieces. My grandmother made clothes for me occasionally. Stitchery and sewing of varied kinds continues into my generation and the generation younger than me, across five generations here.

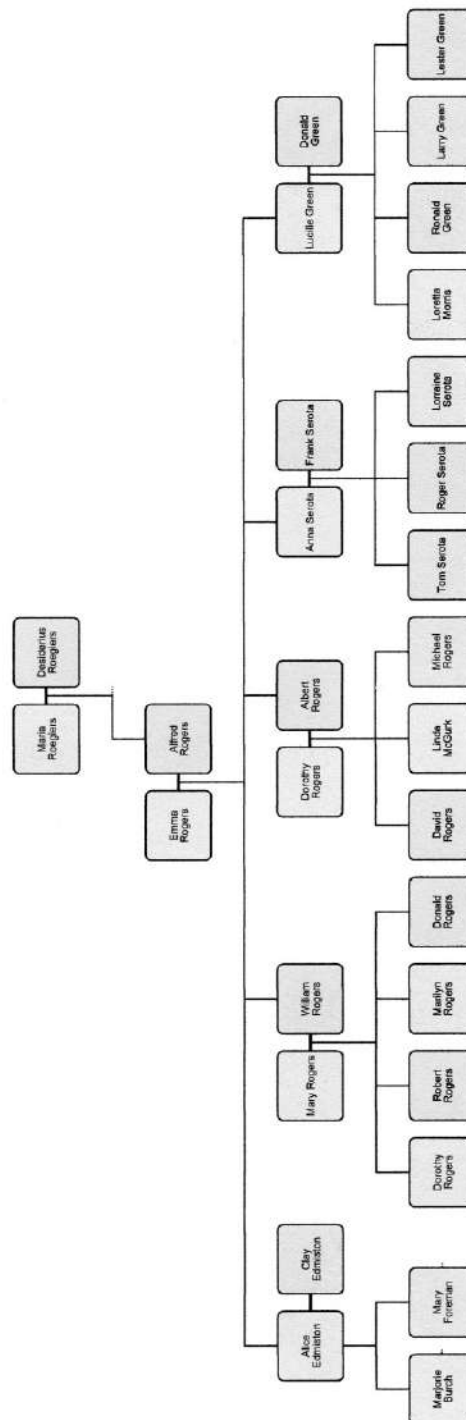
Camiel Roegiers' Family



Printed from Family Echo - <http://www.familyecho.com/>

Family Tree representing Camiel Roegies, his first wife Emilie DeBouver Roegiers, his second wife Irene DeBouver Roegiers, Camiel and Irene's children and grandchildren. Participants in this project were Roy Roegiers and Clara Duffey.

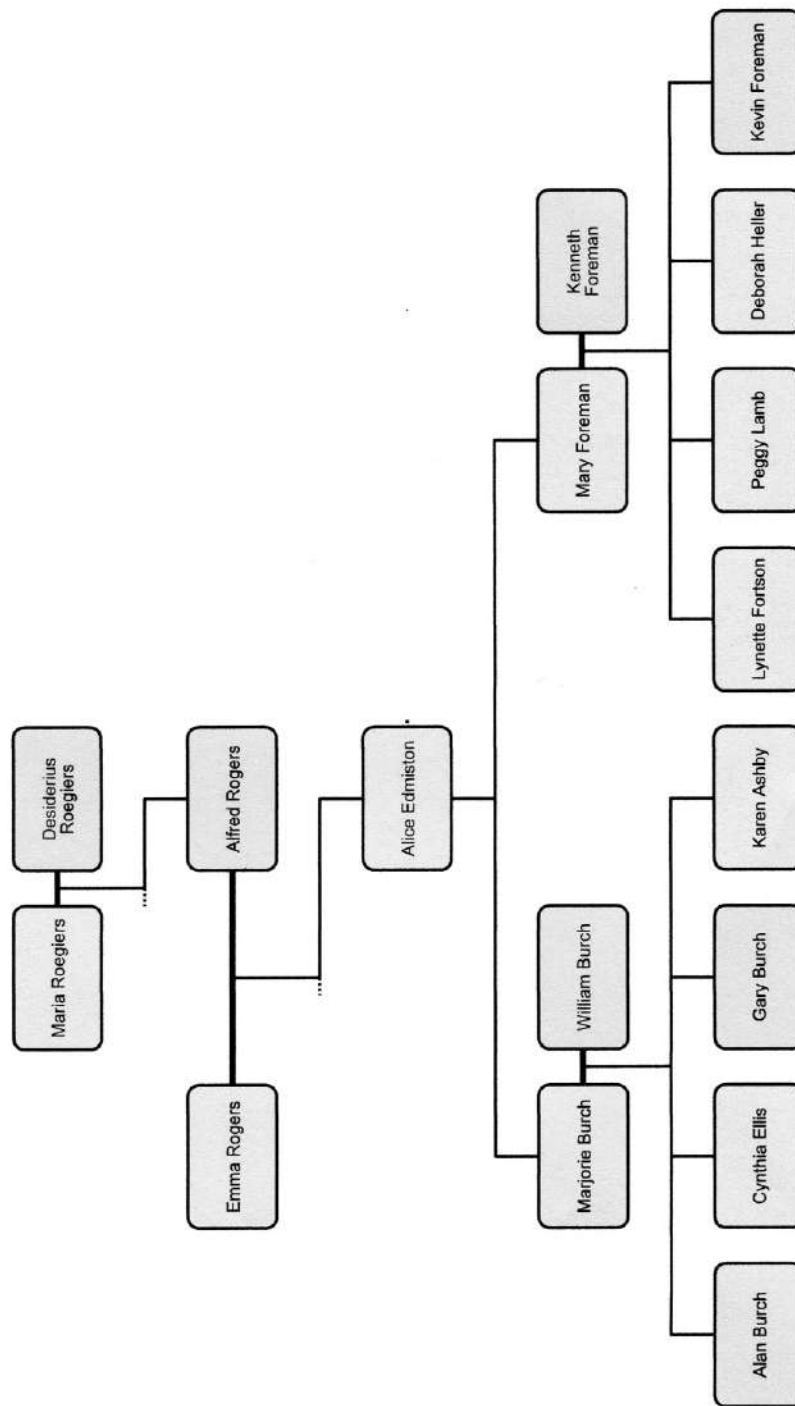
Alfred/Emma Rogers' Family



Printed from Family Echo - <http://www.familyecho.com/>

Family Tree representing the families of Camiel Roegiers' brother Alfred and his wife Emma (DeBouver) Rogers. Participants in this project from the Rogers family were Alfred and Emma's grandchildren Marjorie Burch, Linda McGurk, David Rogers, and Tom Serota.

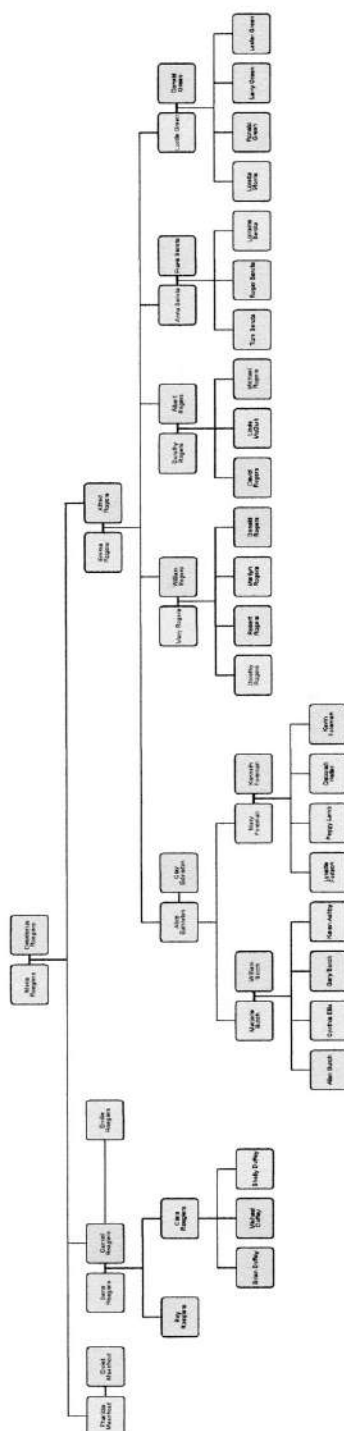
Alfred/Emma Rogers, Alice Edmiston Family



Printed from Family Echo - <http://www.familyecho.com/>

Family Tree representing Alfred and Emma Rogers portion of the family through their daughter Alice Edmiston. Participants in this project include Marjorie Ball Burch (daughter of Alice Roegiers Edmiston) and Lynette Foreman Fortson (grandniece of Marjorie Ball Burch and great granddaughter of Alfred and Emma Rogers).

Roegiers Family Tree



Printed from Family Echo - <http://www.familyecho.com/>

Family Tree of Roegiers Family beginning with Desiderius (Desire) and Marie Constantia (Bonamie) Roegiers, parents of Pharilda Roegiers Maenhoot, Camiel Roegiers and Alfred Rogers. Although we did not have any interaction with Pharilda's descendants while preparing this report, we wanted to make sure she was included.

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