

CHARLES CLAYTON GUMM, JR.

Manuscript 1975

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ORAL HISTORIES OF FORT WORTH, INC.

Charles Gumm, Jr. tells of his own parents' lives in Fort Worth, and their interests in the First Methodist Church and Chamber of Commerce, among other things.

He shares a handwritten account of his grandmother Boaz prior to marriage and tells of her taking food to the men working to get the railroad into Fort Worth.

He also shares the biography of W. J. Boaz who was an interested citizen of Fort Worth.

MARY BELL ANDERSON

b. May 5, 1848 at Pirtle, Rusk Co.

lived with her grandfather, Maj. John B. Dickson, early merchant of Fort Worth after death of her mother when she was 12.

Tells of Fort Worth schooling and the Civil War days.

Met W. J. Boaz at Birdville and later married him.

W. J. BOAZ

Came to Tarrant Co. on horseback 1859

Operated store in Birdville with father when it was county seat.

Became prisoner in Civil War; escaped.

Moved to Fort Worth in 1866 and started real estate office where Dillard's is.

On City Council in 1873.

Helped get T & P here.

Contributed to start of TCU here.

Helped TWC and on Board of Trustees.

Gave property for Van Zandt school.

Donated money for Missouri Methodist Church (now St. Andrews Methodist Colored Church)

Gave site on Handley Drive for school; never used so returned to heirs.

Gave lot for fire hall or police station on Missouri; not used; returned to heir;

Heavy contributor, along with Winfield Scott, for getting Armour and Swift here.

Charles Clayton Gumm, Jr.

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I am a native Texan being born on Carter Street off Beach in Sycamore Heights on December 26, 1917. While my father Charles Clayton Gumm was born in Frankfort, Delaware and later lived on a farm near Showell, Maryland, my mother Jessie Boaz was born here. They built a new home at 1418 Elizabeth Boulevard in 1919 when that area was a bald prairie. In fact a picture I have of the house shows no trees. It was in the original Ryan Place Addition developed by John C. Ryan. The development started to the east with a western extension on Elizabeth and Willing. Willing, named for Willing Ryan, became Fairmont as it went north.

My Fort Worth education consisted of kindergarten and elementary at E. M. Daggett and Central High later called Paschal. A second grade picture I own has names of children on the back. I told Ernest Chilton that I would like to share that picture with my early classmates. His brother Andrew who was killed in World War II is in the picture.

My university days were at the University of Texas, receiving my Electrical Engineering B.S. in 1939. The U.T. Marching Band and Kappa Sigma fraternity were my other interests there.

After marriage on September 8, 1940 to Mary Rhodes Borden in San Antonio, I worked for International Business Machines until called into the Navy in June of 1941. My service ranged from a YMS4 (mine sweeper) in the Atlantic to the Caribbean, following a 1942 promotion to lieutenant. Later service was on DE 33 U.S.S. Tisdale (destroyer escort) in the Pacific where I qualified for Commanding Officer. (1943-45) Winding up in the hospital on Guam after the Okinawa campaign. I eventually was discharged from Mau Island, California hospital in 1946 as a Lt. Commander.

A year in Houston at Leeds and Northrup after receiving my Professional Engineers License was the prelude to my establishing Southwest Instrument and Engineering in Fort Worth. This now goes by the name of Sweico, Inc.

My other interests have been with the Kiwanis, Salvation Army and Union Bank, having been on the board of the latter two. I'm also a member of the National Advisory Council, a small national federation of independent businesses.

Our name was originally spelled Gum. My father and later his brother Calvin D. added the extra "m" as young adults although a sister, Edith, never changed the spelling.

My father went directly into college since there were no high schools in his day. After studying at Appleton Teachers' College in Wisconsin and Vanderbilt he received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

Bishop Hiram A. Boaz, President of Polytechnic College (later T.W.C.) brought my father to Fort Worth. W. J. Boaz, benefactor of the school, interviewed the young professor in his home, introducing his youngest daughter, Jessie. My father later jokingly told me "Everything else being equal, it was no sin to marry a rich man's daughter." They were married in 1912.

Lucilla (now Housewright) was the first born. She lives in Florida with her husband who is Dean of the School of Music at Florida State. He suggested a rock concert on White House lawn. I came along four years later.

Teaching English at T. C. U., managing the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and helping the West Texas Chamber of Commerce kept my father busy. Having children when World War I broke out prevented his serving in the armed forces so Herbert Hoover appointed him Food Administrator for the Fort Worth Area. He had a lot of responsibility for Hicks Field where many flyers trained. Camp Bowie and the paving of Montgomery Street to Camp Bowie were also activities in which he was involved. By studying at home at night and passing the bar exam, one could become a lawyer, so this was another challenge met.

He was stricken with a severe heart attack while visiting me in California while stationed at Mau Island Navy Hospital and died in 1945. My father was a very fine and kind man; an articulate man who was a strong influence in my life.

My wife and I have four children, Charles C. III is an attorney in this area. Gail Hazlewood whose husband runs my ranch in Johnson County, Laurie Davenport who teaches in an Irving school and William Boaz who is taking his masters at North Texas State and hopes to get his PhD some day in psychology.

Actually Gail's full name is Gail Borden, since that was my wife's family name. Her relatives were in the Battle of Independence for Texas and received a land grant near Sugarland, Texas for their part of the battle. They were relatives of Gail Borden who is the inventor of evaporated milk and also had the first printing press in Texas. Her father was Pascal Panlou Borden, a brother of Gail.

My children have Scotch Irish heritage through my family. My grandmother Boaz ne Anderson was a stern God-fearing woman that was strict in her beliefs and firm in her desire to carry out what she believed. Being an ordinary boy, I enjoyed teasing my older sister. Many times my grandmother chased me around the room wanting to cane me with her cane for teasing. When she came to live with us, she still believed in the times when Indians were present. She thoroughly bolted her door to her room. It wasn't enough by locking; she shears in between the door, wedging it tightly so no one could open the door. This worked to her detriment because when she had a stroke we could not get in the door. Fortunately, her window opened on to the roof of the porch. I was young and could go out on the porch roof and go through the window to open the door in order to get her to a hospital. She was very strong against drink and said she would rather die first than use a tonic prescribed for her that had alcohol in it. After that she was attended by a nurse until she died in 1939.

My grandmother used to tell me about the Ederville Spa which was supposed to have mineral waters in their well. It would take half a day to go from Sycamore Heights to Ederville in a horse and buggy. After taking a half day in a buggy, they needed a bath! If people took baths in the mineral water, it could cure various and sundry diseases -- or make them feel better anyway. They spent the night because it wasn't worth coming back the same day since it was such a long trip -- all of five or six miles. It wasn't a direct route I am sure. The roads in those days went around everyone's farms and different tracts of land. She said they enjoyed their little outing. Someone would prepare a good meal.

The hotel burned to the ground; probably the promoters didn't have enough funds to rebuild it. The township was laid out in lots and blocks. They had a community area with a park laid out. The lots were laid out in 25 foot widths, 100 feet deep. In some of my abstracts it shows where the lots sold at that time for \$3,500 which was a tremendous amount of money for a lot only 25 feet wide.

Ederville didn't have anything to promote its further development and just died on the vine. It was not on the Trinity but up on the hill in a nice wooded area. I still own a little tract of land out there that is still divided off in lots and blocks in the old town of Ederville. However, the streets were never developed, it was just pasture land. The City of Fort Worth still recognized the old survey of Ederville where it was taken into the city limits.

The water had sulphur content in it that tasted bad. I presume that when something tastes bad, they think it is good for you.

Another thing my grandmother talked to me about was when the railroad came to Fort Worth. The company that was supposed to be promoting the railroad to Fort Worth ran out of money. It was laid upon the citizens of Fort Worth that if they wanted to get it there, that the railroad must be in the outlying city limits by a certain date. This meant everyone had to help. My grandmother drove her buggy out to Village Creek with food and drinks for the men working on the railroad who weren't regular railroad workers. I believe the railroad workers were on strike or could not get paid so the citizens were having to do the work themselves to bring the railroad actually into Fort Worth.

I understand the east side of Fort Worth in the early days was known as a haven for all the bad people in the hills where the law couldn't find them. This land where they hid out later became our grandfather's land in 1870. He came to Tarrant County in 1859 from Kentucky. He served in the Confederate Army, was wounded, taken prisoner to Chicago. He escaped and returned home. After the war was over, he sent word to his father and brothers to sell their tobacco crop, put it in gold and come to Texas. Much later when Fort Worth needed a packing plant here my grandfather and other interested citizens furnished the money to interest Armour and Swift in building their packing houses. This was the only way communities could grow in those days; today it's the same thing. You have got to have somebody to promote the community with their abilities and funds. We were the cowtown; the market was here

where they shipped the cattle from the west and south Texas ranches on trains. This was the period of the drives, of course. We, being the headquarters of the train traffic, why not have the meat processing right here also, shipping out prepared beef instead of shipping on to Chicago or Kansas City? So, the people in those days said "Why not get big packers in here? Well, they are not going to come in unless they are guaranteed that would happen here!" So we took the community spirit and the money behind it to help convince them and help out financially.

My grandfather did not like a lot of publicity; my grandmother too -- and the same way with my parents and myself. The things grandfather did were not done to foster people knowing about him. Of course, it didn't mean that he didn't make money, he was a great money maker, but he did it quietly and honestly. He was an ardent church-goer and the money was used to build churches and schools. The land out at Ederville was given to the county for a school but they never used it so it reverted back to the family later on.

The first home was in Birdville. There he lived around 5th and Throckmorton. As the town grew, he kept moving out. At the time of his death, he lived on the eastern side of town now called Sycamore Heights.

As the story goes, my cousin was talking to my Uncle Clem (Clement A. Boaz) one day. Clem bragged about what a good businessman his father was so Everett Comer a cousin who was officiating at that time with him, ran across these papers and said "Clem, I thought you said your father really knew about money; how to take care, make good buys and watch everything. But I see here that he paid \$800 for the block of 5th and Throckmorton!" Clem heatedly defended his father by saying, "Yes, but I'll have you know it had a five room house on it!"

My grandfather Boaz was a charter member of the old Missouri Avenue Methodist Church. In fact, when they built the church, he made the statement that he would match every dollar that the church raised to build the church. It is still in existence as St. Andrews United Methodist Church.

Boaz Street is nearly out of existence because most of it was the frontage street for the North-South Freeway. I think my cousin, Everett Comer, managed to salvage a street sign with Boaz on it.

My mother died last fall at the age of 84. She was the youngest and last of the W. J. Boaz family. Her brother was 21 years younger than her.

William Jesse Boaz was born 22 August 1840 in Hickman Co., Kentucky to Samuel and Agnes Freman Boaz. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather had all been born in Pittsylvania Co., Virginia, where Thomas Boaz, the great great-grandfather settled after arriving in 1750 from England.

As he grew into manhood, the Civil War was changing lives. William Jesse Boaz was in a regiment that became a part of Gen. Deshler's Brigade and was transferred to the Trans-Mississippi Dept. in Gen. Hindman's Division. All were captured at Arkansas Post and shipped on Jan. 1, 1863 to Alton, Illinois and on to Camp Douglas near Chicago the last of January 1863. On March 16, 1863 William Jesse escaped by scaling a wall at the prison. He returned to his former home in Kentucky where he got horses and money. He and his companions were recaptured and robbed; then sent for six weeks to the penitentiary at Alton, Illinois. Soon exchanged and rejoined command. After consolidation, William J. Boaz was in Col. Roger Q. Mill's Regiment, Grandbury's Brigade, Cleburne Division. He emerged from the continuous battles as Captain of the Company, having succeeded Captain McCracken, who was injured. They drew lots for furloughs and he won five weeks. While returning to join his command, he learned of Lee's surrender. He returned to his father's farm for one year and then worked for a Mr. Shipley in his general mercantile store. After Mr. Shipley moved, he opened a store at Birdville with his brothers and father. He met and married Mary Bell Anderson on August 22, 1868. J. F. Ellis and he formed a partnership in mercantile business for several years. Later in 1874 he became senior partner in Boaz, Marklee and Co., Private Bankers. Then opening a real estate and land office with Mr. J. F. Ellis in 1877 at the corner of Houston and 2nd. A few years later he bought Capt. M. B. Loyd's interest in California and Texas Bank where he continued for the next twenty five years. In 1882 he and Capt. Edrington _____ Traders National Bank where he was vice president. At a later date, he and C. R. Shapard and Luther Boaz, his oldest son originated the American National Bank where he served as an official until his death. He carried extensive private loans and investments in city and county property. To keep up with his real estate business, he built a real estate office on Boaz Street. He died Dec. 14, 1916. His wife died July 12, 1939. Both are buried in Eastwood Cemetery.

Jessie Agnes Boaz b. April 24, 1890 was educated in public schools and LWU. Studied two years in Randolph Macon Women's College at Lynchburg, Virginia. Married July 17, 1912 to Dr. Chas. Clayton Gumm who was head of English Department in Poly College, Fort Worth. He had studied two years in Giurteen, Germany. Practiced law in Fort Worth after resigned, until died Sept. 14, 1945.

Children: Elizabeth Lucilla b. Sept. 19, 1913 married Wiley Lee Housewright Dec. 27, 1939.
Charles Clayton, Jr. b. Dec. 26, 1917 married Mary Borden Sept. 8, 1940.

Biography - W. J. Boaz

Came to Tarrant County on horseback in 1859.

Settled near Birdville.

Operated mercantile store with his father, Samuel.

Goods for store were obtained from Galveston. His brother, Richard, drove a wagon there to get merchandise.

Gold was carried in money belt as nearest bank was Memphis, Tennessee.

Birdville was at that time county seat.

Volunteered services for Confederate Army.

Captured and sent to Chicago as prisoner.

Escaped prison by jumping over wall and was shot in the stomach during escape.

Made way back to Birdville in 1865.

Moved to Fort Worth 1866.

Started Real Estate business renting houses.

Established office at 208 Houston Street which is now opposite Striplings.

On April 3, 1873 citizens of Fort Worth held first city election.

Out of 15 candidates, 5 were chosen for City Council - M. B. Loyd, M. D. McCall, A. Blakeney, W. J. Boaz and J. P. Alexander.

First home place was on block bordered 5th and Throckmorton, Houston and Sixth.

A group of citizens including W. J. Boaz were instrumental in bringing T & P to Fort Worth.

W. A. Darter, a big member of Christian Church, was told by W. J. Boaz to get Add Ran College to move to Fort Worth. Contributed good amount of money to help start T.C.U.

Gave considerable money and was on original board of trustees of T.W.C. and gave money every year since to T.W.C.

Gave property to school for Van Zandt school corner of Hattie & Missouri.

Donated money-matched dollar for dollar of everyone else-in establishing Missouri Methodist Church (now St. Andrews Methodist Colored Church)

Gave site on Handley Drive for school but never used and returned to heirs.

Gave lot for purpose of fire hall or police station corner of _____ & Missouri but City did not use and deeded back to heirs. (Scrap books)

W. J. Boaz and Winfield Scott were heaviest contributors for getting both Armour and Swift to Fort Worth.

Mary Bell Anderson Boaz

Both parents descendants of Scotch Irish Presbyterians who were Scotch but came to America from the north Ireland country for reasons explained in the history of England by Mac Caulay. The Andersons (the name at first, Andrew's son) came first to Maryland or Pennsylvania but settled later in Augusta or Orange County, Virginia near Staunton. Soon after Daniel Boone settled in Kentucky, William Anderson, my great-grandfather, went there. My grandfather, Hugh Allen Anderson, was born in a fort called Logan Station and lived there until he moved to north Alabama near Courtland for a few years before going to the Arkansas Ozarks for more good lands.

The Dicksons first to Pennsylvania, thence to North Carolina and to Tennessee before going to the Ozarks (named by the French who printed the first map of that country Auzovacs for a tribe of Indians by that name). Both _____ parents had ancestors in the American Revolutionary War. The families met first in Benton Co., Arkansas and my parents married there July 28, 1840, but moved to Rusk Co., Texas about 1846 where I was born May 5, 1848. It was at Bellview later called Pirtle five or six miles east of Kilgore. My uncle and aunt who taught the school lived at the time with my parents and would often take me to school with them. In 1852, my parents moved to Selma, Texas where I was sent to school and learned to spell in Webster's "Blue Back" spelling book. When nearly through the speller I saw my older brother's Second reader by McGuffey and was surprised that I could read it readily and the Union Sunday School had a small library which I enjoyed. To learn to write from a copy was then thought to be the correct plan, so we sometimes had copies from "Poor Richard's Almanac", (Benjamin Franklin) one of which I remember was like this. "Experience is a severe school but fools will learn in no other" and others that seemed to makd us think.

The Indians, said to have been the wild Comanches, would sometimes make raids into the settlements along the Cibolo Creek to steal horses and killed several persons on one raid taking a good many horses. Once father had warning of their coming and had a fine horse tied to the gallery post where he and John the colored man could with a gun guard him from a window through the night. They came and took the other horses from the field, killed one of the watchdogs with a bow and arrow, killed two people further down the creek. Forty years later, the United States government paid us and the other neighbors for the horses stolen at that time. Some of the settlers led by an old fighter pursued, overtook and killed four of them at Bandera Pass but the ones who had the horses had separated and taken another trail so they escaped. My father died there in 1885 and my mother had died in 1860. They and one little sister are buried in a small neighborhood cemetery across Cibolo Creek from Selma about a quarter of a mile north of the San Antonio road and the graves are marked by a substantial concrete fence and marble monument. My maternal grandfather, Major John B. Dickson had moved to Fort Worth, one of the first merchants here. In 1860 he sent our aunt in the overland stage coach to take me and little sisters to his home in Fort Worth at the corner of Houston and First streets fronting east and across the street south from Dr. Peak's residence. Father brought us in a wagon and when we had reached a high hill on the old Buchanan road near where the Baptist Seminary now is, we came in sight of two towns several miles distant and they looked about the same size. There our uncle returning from Galveston where he had purchased a new stock of goods intercepted us and after greeting, jokingly asked us to which town we were going, as one town is Birdville and the other is Fort Worth. Within a few days we entered a good private

Their names have been duly perpetuated in the names of two of my children and aunt; & daguerreotype has been carefully kept.

When father took us home to Selma in 1866, we were surprised and delighted to find there another aunt with her daughter from the Arkansas Ozarks to spend some months with us. Father and I went home with them for the summer of 1867, stopped at Fort Worth to see some relatives and friends, especially we enjoyed the friendship of the Misses Ruth and Lou Brown, formerly of Maryland. At Birdville, where we awaited some other travellers for company through the Indian Territory, we met W. J. Boaz and relatives. Continued spring rains delayed our travels for several weeks, and then we went on, with the understanding that a correspondence by letter with W. J. Boaz and Mary Bell Anderson were married at Selma, Texas and started in a buggy to Birdville, which we reached in eight days.

Feb. 15, 1930

signed MARY BELL BOAZ