

William Henry Toney

interviewed by

Mrs. W. A. Schmidt

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ORAL HISTORIES OF FORT WORTH, INC.

My name is William Henry Toney. I was born May 19, 1882 in Sumpter County, Alabama. The county seat is Livingston. My mother's parents by the name of McGowen also lived there. The other children were Nan, Lucy Leona born Jan. 5, 1892 in Ryan, Oklahoma and my brother, Charlie. I worked over on the farm when I was young as well as splitting rails and working in a sawmill and grist mill.

The family moved to Mississippi for two years, to Texas in 1904 for a time and later to Oklahoma for ten years.

After I was a married man with a family I came through Fort Worth on my way to Louisiana as a railroad bridge foreman. It impressed me enough that I later decided to move my wife, Cora, and daughters, Opal and Jewel to the Northside where I worked for Armour's.

I went to work for the Transit Company on October 18, 1917 at 20¢ an hour! Incidentally, the circus ground used to be where the Traction Company is now located. By that time I had a farm out north of Everman where I raised wheat, oats and a few cattle. I gave up the farm because my wife became ill.

I had streetcar runs all over Fort Worth. My memory of WWI is of the soldiers riding the streetcars out Camp Bowie. Each morning I saw them hauling out soldiers killed by the flu by wagon loads.

I like buses, especially those with automatic gear shifts, better than streetcars. You can get a bus rolling in the time you'd be fooling with the gears of the others.

My dad taught me as a boy at home that hard work doesn't hurt anyone if you do it reasonable. I always take my rest but sometimes it's hard to find time. One year I worked 363 days...out of the year. Each of those days I drove a night run of nine hours and fifty minutes; then took on another four hour trip.

When I retired in 1961 at 78 after 43 years with the Transit Company, I was driving a bus from 5:20 AM to 2:25 PM six days a week. That was 111.3 miles per shift. My route went south as far as Bilglade and Trail Lake Dr., then back to Berry at University and east to the starting point at Hemphill. I never got tired of seeing the same things and places day after day because there's too much to think about. When you drive, you've got to drive!

I knew nearly everyone that rode my bus regularly. Even if I didn't know their name, I knew where each got on and off. Many called me "Tony" thinking that was my first name.

I retired at 78 after 43 years with the company, experiencing only three robberies or attempted robberies in all that time.

After the death of my first wife, I married Charleen Cox. Although there's nearly forty years difference in our ages, we have had a good marriage of twenty one years already. I've always worked hard and tried to lead a clean life so I've been healthy and never had to use a lot of medicine.

I've enjoyed my home and growing roses. I even won a prize on my rock garden!

Note: Mr. Toney died March 11, 1975 after a short illness. He held fifty year pins from three Masonic groups..Fort Worth Lodge 148 (April 7, 1967), Chapter 58 (April 30, 1971) and Fort Worth Council 42 (Aug. 17, 1971). He was a member of Worth Commandery 19 Knights Templar, Moslah Temple, Tarrant Chapter No. 8, Eastern Star. His funeral service was held at Meadowbrook Baptist Church where he and his wife held membership.

He had friends in all walks of life, race and age. His life may be best summed up in a poem written by Chris Kuntz, 9 years old on May 7, 1975.

WHAT I THOUGHT OF MR. W. H. TONEY

I thought of Mr. Toney was nice kind and sweet. He loved me I could tell and his last words to me are you coming to visit me. Those I will never forget.

He always gave me candy and let me go to his house. He even let me go to church with him.

He lived along life. But I guess the Lord was ready to get him.

He belonged to Meadowbrook Baptist Church. That is what I thought and knew of Mr. W. H. Toney.

Nemesis of Bad Men

Veteran Detective to Retire After 31 Years

Detective Sgt. Charlie C. Carmichael, nemesis of bad men, is quitting the Fort Worth police department after more than 31 years of service.

The 59-year-old detective will retire on a pension next Wednesday, 31 years and four months to the day he joined the department as a patrolman on the North Side.

Carmichael will take a job in the plant protection force of Bell Aircraft.

The detective at times met with violence and killed two ex-

convicts during his long career in uniform and plain clothes.

Began in Niles City.

Carmichael began as a patrolman in Niles City and walked a beat for years on the North Side and in the downtown area.

By keeping his eyes open he became a burglary expert and arrested so many night time prowlers he lost count of the number.

He became a detective 23 years ago and has been a sergeant for the last eight years.

On Aug. 18, 1932 he shot to death Alfred Howe, an ex-convict, after Howe had robbed W. H. Toney, a street car motorman in Polytechnic.

The robbery occurred near Carmichael's residence. Carmichael, off duty at the time, was summoned by another motorman on the car. The officer fired two shots. He was wounded in the hand.

Struggle in Auto.

On Dec. 16, 1945, Carmichael, then a detective, killed another ex-convict, R. E. Davis, a holdup suspect, in a hand to hand struggle in the detective's automobile at 1st and Lamar when Davis, armed with pistol, resisted arrest.

The detective was commended by the county grand jury and received a purse of \$464, donated by Fort Worth citizens.

Carmichael is the only man left in the department of the four who participated in the celebrated Wise County raid of 1933 when Harvey Bailey, wanted in the kidnaping of Charles Urschel was taken.

Carmichael lives at 832 Holden with his wife, A son, Weldon C. Carmichael is an FBI agent in Chicago. Another son, Cordell, was killed in World War II while serving with the Air Force.

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