

Mecca on Bridge Street

Excerpts from [*Oral Memoirs of Kneeland Hilburn Clemons, Series 2*](#)
(click on title for the full text of the interview transcript)

Kneeland Hilburn Clemons was the son of pharmacist E. E. Clemons, longtime owner of Mecca Drug Store on the corner of Bridge and Second Streets.

Interviewed by Vivienne Malone-Mayes, October 21, 1988, in Waco, Texas.

Malone-Mayes: This is October 21, 1988 in the home of Kneeland Clemons. He is the son of the former Dr. E. E. Clemons, who was the only black registered pharmacist that was manager of the Mecca Drug Store.

Clemons: Owner.

Malone-Mayes: Owner of the Mecca Drug Store in Waco, Texas. At one point he had an assistant, but the assistant was not a registered pharmacist, and consequently, Dr. E. E. Clemons was the only black pharmacist ever in the city of Waco. Now, where was your father from?

Clemons: Okay, he was born in Terrell, Texas, Kaufman County. And he went through public schools there. After he finished public schools in Terrell, Texas, then he went directly to Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania, which was an all boys school. In fact, he and Dr. Jacques and the famous M. B. Tolson of Wiley College were there at the same time. They were schoolmates not classmates. And then Daddy, when he left Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania, he went from there directly to the University of Michigan and enrolled in the College of Pharmacy there and finished his pharmacy from the University of Michigan. . . .

Malone-Mayes: And how did he come to Waco?

Clemons: He came to Waco from an ad that Dr. Fridia had placed in the paper looking for a registered pharmacist. . . . And after my dad finished college—or finished the College of Pharmacy at the University of Michigan, he couldn't find any work as a pharmacist, you see. And he had passed the board here in Texas and was a registered pharmacist. So he worked doing carpenter work with his dad until he saw this ad in the paper. And he answered the ad that Dr. Fridia had placed, and this is the way that he and Dr. Fridia had met. And he was the pharmacist for Dr. Fridia, which Dr. Fridia was an M.D. And then later on he bought the drugstore part from Dr. Fridia, and Dr. Fridia practiced a very short while after that when they moved from on Second Street up to the corner of Second and Bridge, and then that's where my dad stayed there in business for fifty-three years. In fact, the state of Texas gave him a plaque for being a registered pharmacist in the field of pharmacy for fifty-three continuous years. In fact, I think they gave it to him on the fiftieth year.

Malone-Mayes: Can you remember exactly when he came to Waco? The date or the year?

Clemons: . . . He finished Michigan and he came to Waco around 1912, I think. And then right after he—then Mother and Dad married in '17. And because they were married five years before I was born, and I was the first boy. . . .

Malone-Mayes: We are turning now to the map where we are going to find some locations of businesses that survived more than ten years. . . . I am interested not only in the businesses that were located on Bridge Street, but in the ones that were black businesses located on Bridge Street, but in the ones that were black businesses, and the ones—there were some white businesses, correct?

Clemons: That is very correct.

Malone-Mayes: On Bridge Street.

Clemons: Not particularly on Bridge Street. On the east side of the square. There was Henry's Fish Market, east side of the square. South Second and the square there was the Palace Drugstore. And also, there was Little George's Beer Saloon next to Henry's Fish Market. And also, there was right next to him, was another beer place that I remember his name was Joe; I can't think of his last name. . . . And then you had the Chinaman's Café there. . . . This is on the east side of the square, right on Second Street. . . .

And then—I can't remember—on the south side of the square over here was a grocery store, and I can't remember the name. I think it was United—something. It was owned by whites. And down here on the corner of South Third and the south side of the square was Pete's Hamburger Stand. . . .

Malone-Mayes: But going back then, Bridge Street—let me try to make a list of the businesses that were on just Bridge. . . . I know we had the Mecca Drug Store.

Clemons: Yeah, that is a three-story building, the Mecca Drug Store.

Malone-Mayes: Okay, and then I know that on the second floor we had [Dr.] Sorrelle and—

Clemons: In the beginning, and Lawyer Evans, yeah. . . .

Malone-Mayes: Was Evans the only lawyer we've ever had in Waco?

Clemons: Evans was, to my knowledge, the first one, and the only one that we had for many a year. . . . And then the third floor of the Fridia Building was vacant for a long time, and then an insurance company moved in. I'm not sure. I think it might have been Universal. I'm not sure about the name of the insurance company, but M. T. Toliver was the manager of the insurance company on the third floor of the Mecca Drug Store building, in the Fridia Building.

Malone-Mayes: I noticed in the directory here that they had the Farmer's Improvement Bank.

Clemons: Okay, I'll show you exactly where it was. Okay, you come down Bridge Street here, right next to Mecca Drug Store was a beer saloon, which was a two-story building owned by Minnis Watson. That's Fannie Watson's daddy. . . . And then above the beer saloon was a pool hall.

Malone-Mayes: Okay. Do you remember who owned that?

Clemons: Yeah, Minnis Watson owned the pool hall, too.

Malone-Mayes: Okay. And, of course, that was black business.

Clemons: Right. Now, right next to that was a café owned by T. J. and Irene Smith.

Malone-Mayes: Um-hm. . . . Is that a café that was used by the people on Bridge Street a lot?

Clemons: Definitely so. They would eat between the two, Ashford and Smith.

Malone-Mayes: Okay. Café—T. J. and Irene Smith. I heard it was quite popular. So what was after the café? Or what was above the café? . . .

Clemons: Above the café? I don't really—I don't think there was anything because it wasn't—excuse me for a minute. That—the café—Minnis Watson's building was a two-story building. The café was not a two-story building. Now, in later years—now, coming on down Bridge Street, next to the café was a taxi stand that was owned by Herbert Walker, which he later opened up Walker's Auditorium, you know, in East Waco.

Malone-Mayes: Yes, I remember Herbert Walker. But he began with a taxi stand right here.

Clemons: Right here.

Malone-Mayes: On Bridge Street.

Clemons: There was a vacant lot right here. You can see the vacant lot.

Malone-Mayes: Right.

Clemons: And here was the taxi stand, and right next to the taxi stand was a barber shop run by J.C. Caldwell and Simmons. . . . Okay, right next to the barber shop was the entrance to the Gayety Hotel, which was a black hotel.

Malone-Mayes: Who owned it?

Clemons: I don't remember the owner. I know in later years it changed hands. They sold it to somebody, but it still remained open as a black hotel. . . . Now, the Gem [Theater] used to be located on the south side of the square, but then in later years it moved over there on Bridge Street, right there under the Gayety Hotel. . . .

Malone-Mayes: Okay, and do you remember who ran the Gem? Was it black owned or—

Clemons: No, it wasn't black owned. It was white owned and had all black employees.

Malone-Mayes: Black employees. And then, just keep down that side. What—

Clemons: Okay, coming on down next to the Gayety Hotel. Now, let me see, I don't remember.

Malone-Mayes: They've got here Lodge something.

Clemons: Lodge Hall. There was something in there, but it wasn't really old. But right next to that was Dennis & Boykins. It was Dennis and Boykins who owned that. And Boykins worked—he and old man Dennis were in business together there. They were down on the ground floor. And above that was Atlanta Life's insurance office, which Tom Wilson was the manager of Atlanta Life's insurance office here. And Tom is the brother of J. J. Wilson, you know, which is the principal of Moore High, yeah.

Malone-Mayes: Yeah, I remember him because he was choir director at New Hope Baptist church. I suppose that I should say that—somebody listening—

Clemons: Right next to where Dennis & Boykins was, was the Farmer's Improvement Bank. That was a black-owned bank, Farmer's Improvement Bank.

Malone-Mayes: Now, I know that was owned by R. L. Smith.

Clemons: R. L. Smith. . . . C.H. Furlow, yes, and I. P. Anderson, Sr., were the owners of the bank. I mean, the owners, but they worked there. But Furlow and I. P. Anderson, Sr. and Mr. Smith, R. L. Smith, were the owners of the place.

Malone-Mayes: I think R. L. Smith and the Farmer's Improvement Association are given credit for owning the bank.

Clemons: Probably so. Now, maybe Furlow and I. P. worked for R. L. Smith. That might have been the connection. And right next to that, I think, was the Smith Printing Company, which was owned by Mr. Smith. . . . And Mr. Rhone was an employee there then. And then later on Mr. Rhone bought the business, which was the *Waco Messenger* paper, from Mr. Smith and he moved to East Waco. May have been later years.

Malone-Mayes: But that was after the tornado.

Clemons: Oh, yeah, that was after the tornado.

Malone-Mayes: Right. So Smith Printing Company stayed on Bridge Street until the tornado. And, of course, you wouldn't have any idea when—I think he was L. J. Rhone.

Clemons: Yeah, L. J. Rhone. That was his name. Yeah, L. J. Rhone.

Malone-Mayes: Now, do you happen to know anything about this Mr. Smith?

Clemons: No, the only thing I knew about him was when he was there running the *Waco Messenger* paper, and, now, where he was born or came from I do not know.

Malone-Mayes: Did he start the *Waco Messenger* or did Mr. Rhone start it?

Clemons: Mr. Smith started the *Waco Messenger*. He and Mr. Rhone were working together. And then later on after the tornado, I think Mr. Rhone moved to East Waco there on the corner of Chestnut and Clifton Street.

Malone-Mayes: Right. Okay, moving on down. What is there—

Clemons: Moving on down past the bank, I don't remember any of the businesses down here.

Malone-Mayes: I had heard that there was a Kuykendall on one of—

Clemons: Okay, Kuykendall's business—okay, that was right before—it was a second-hand business. It was located—

Malone-Mayes: Unclaimed Freight or something, he called it. Anyway, I've got that.

Clemons: Yeah, Unclaimed Freight was down there. Where I don't remember. But the name is very prominent in my mind. Now, Kuykendall's second-hand clothing store was right in here to the west of Dennis & Boykins to the east, one of the two, I don't know which one. And it was Kuykendall, and he was a minister, Rev. Kuykendall. I don't know his initials because there is a big family of the Kuykendalls. . . .

Malone-Mayes: One Kuykendall, as you recall, owned the second-hand store and the Unclaimed Freight.

Clemons: No, no, he had nothing to do with the Unclaimed Freight House. The Unclaimed Freight House, to my knowledge, was owned by whites. Now, across the street here on the south side of Bridge Street there were a couple of white-owned businesses right down here on the corner of Bridge and First Street. I don't remember the names of the businesses. But I can only start here on Bridge Street with McMurray's Barber Shop. . . . And before his barber shop, about two doors down, was a pool hall. But I don't think that the pool hall was way back, say, between '26 and '36. In later years it

opened up. But I remember a McMurray's Barber Shop. Now, right next to McMurray's Barber Shop, upstairs, was Dr. Mitchell's office. He was an M.D. . . .

Malone-Mayes: I have it here, too, that T. A.—Dr. Webster was at 111.

Clemons: All right, I had forgotten about Dr. Webster. Dr. Webster's office was down on Bridge Street, right above the Smith Printing Company, right in there about Smith Printing Company and the bank, where the bank used to be, the Farmer's Improvement Bank.

Malone-Mayes: And they have here a J. C. Ashford they call a contractor . . . and he was at 118-1/2 Bridge Street.

Clemons: I don't remember him being on Bridge Street, but I remember him as a contractor. He was a black contractor. He was related to B. G. Ashford, who ran the restaurant. . . .

Malone-Mayes: They've got here, "a mutual protective—"—I've got to get my glasses out. And they've got here, "a citizen's mutual benefit," always were together, and Continental Casualty Company—" (unintelligible) (both speak at once)

Clemons: Okay, Continental Casualty Company. Yeah, I forgot about that. Continental Casualty Insurance Company was—Mr. Randle was the manager of Continental Casualty Company here in Waco. . . . Now, his office was located right above J. C. Caldwell and Simmons Barber Shop, upstairs.

Malone-Mayes: That was the insurance company.

Clemons: Yeah, Continental Casualty.

Malone-Mayes: . . . They've got here that he [Dr. Gordon] practiced on 127-1/2 Bridge Street.

Clemons: Okay, and also, on the east side of North Second Street, on the square there, where B. G. Ashford's Café was. After Dr. Fridia died and moved out of his office there—in fact, he moved his office up to 127 on the corner of Second and Bridge Street there, 127 Bridge Street. Now, after his death, and years after that, Dr. J. M. Vandavell opened up. He was a dentist. He was a black dentist, and he opened up his office right above B. G. Ashford's Café, which was right behind Mecca Drug Store on the Second Street side. J. M. Vandavell, he was a black dentist.

Malone-Mayes: Now, he was above B. G. Ashford's Café?

Clemons: Right. . . . And until he—well, he wasn't in ill health, but he built a new home on the corner of South Second Street and Clay, right across from St. James A.M.E. Church. And he moved his office from North Second Street there, right behind the

drugstore, down to his house. . . : Yeah, that's about all I remember in the block of Bridge Street there.

Malone-Mayes: And now, I would like for you to tell us about the life on Bridge Street there. . . .

Clemons: Life on the square through the week was a very quiet life, businesswise. You maybe would make enough money to pay expenses, you know, utility bills and whatnot. But, now, Saturday was your get-over day. They called this your red bean day, you know. Because if you didn't make it on Saturday, eventually you were going to close up. You would make, say, three, four, five times on one day what you would make in all the week, for this reason: Waco, originally, was—it was bordered by a very large rural area, and, in fact, it was—Waco survived on the fact that cotton, corn, and cattle were the major things that kept Waco and the rural area surrounding Waco going, at this time. All the country people, say, from Gholson, and down on South Third Street, and from wherever there was a very close rural area to Waco, Texas, would come to town on Saturday. And when they would come to town on Saturday, they would all meet there at the drugstore. And then some of them would—from the drugstore they would stay all day long. They would eat in the restaurants there. Some of the men would go to the pool halls, you know, some would go to the beer saloons. But Saturday was your big business day, and you made enough on Saturday businesswise to keep you going the rest of the week. Because you had the rest of the week the in-town people living here in Waco. Say, people who had very meager jobs like domestic jobs, you know. . . . So you had to make your living off of the people who lived here in Waco during the week, which it was a fair—just maybe, a fair living. You made enough to stay open if you watched yourself and didn't get too happy and start spending money, you know, where you really didn't have to spend it. But if you would watch yourself during the week—as I said, you only had those people. They were your ministers, your teachers, and of course, all the doctors sent their prescriptions to my dad, you see.

Malone-Mayes: That's what I was going to say. The Mecca had a monopoly, I imagine. All the black medicine—I mean, the physicians—black physicians—

Clemons: And a lot of black people would go and have the white remedies or the white physicians to examine them, but they would insist that you call that prescription down to Mecca Drug Store.

Malone-Mayes: Now, did he give credit? Did Dr. Clemons give credit?

Clemons: Yes, yes, he gave credit, and when the tornado came about my dad had enough credit out on the street then that he never did collect to open up another drugstore free of debt. You know, he could have paid cash. He had this much credit out. I mean, bad credit out on the street. And he did let credit out. He was very, very, more sensitive about letting people have credit. And then with him being as careful as he was, he got burned badly with credit, you see. . . .

Malone-Mayes: . . . I know that Dr. Clemons spent most of his days back there fixing medicines.

Clemons: Oh, yeah. We worked—my brother and I would go maybe for two days without even seeing our dad, you know, for this reason: the drugstore opened at seven in the morning, and it closed at eleven o'clock at night. . . . He always stayed busy, you know. And then he would close up at eleven at night, and then he would always have to do his books after that day's business, you see. So it was always twelve and after when he got home. . . . We walked from 1107 North Sixth Street every day, five days a week, down to First and Clay Street to Moore High School, you know. And if we didn't go by the drugstore, going to school in the morning, or come by the drugstore in the evening after we left Moore High, we didn't see him. Because by the time we got up, say, at seven, why, he was already gone. . . .

Malone-Mayes: . . . And it's not like it is today, where you open up a whole lot of pills, and you just type it up. . . .

Clemons: Right. . . . [A] pharmacy in those days had to go from scratch. . . . And making those suppositories and pills, and, as they call it, with the mortar and pestle, they had to triturate all of their mixtures, you know. . . . He worked from the elbow up in filling all the prescriptions. You had to work then. Pharmacists in this day and time don't have to do a thing but pour the pills out of the bottle, count them, and type a label and put them on and charge the customer. It has gotten just that easy. . . .

Malone-Mayes: . . . How was he able to keep such good relationships with all the dentists and physicians and everybody in town when I do know they had quite a bit of competition? . . .

Clemons: He was very, very friendly with all of them, the M.D.s and the dentists, all of them, all the black businessmen. I'm not saying it because he was my father, but he was very well liked by all of them.

Malone-Mayes: This is what I know. And I know that many men, even who were not professionals, they gathered at the Mecca . . . They just gathered at the Mecca, to sit there and chat, you know.

Clemons: Well, this is what *mecca* means. The meaning of *mecca* means—this might not be, say, the Webster dictionary mean, but it was like a central, community meeting place. And this is the reason he named it Mecca. . . . And I never will forget on the sign, under the drugstore, there—outside the drugstore—he had *Botica*, B-o-t-i-c-a, which was drugs in Spanish. And we had a very large Spanish trade, you see. Because, see, North Second Street, up from Washington, all the way up to Jefferson and past Jefferson north, and in that area was nothing but a settlement of Spanish people. And he had all that trade to pull from.

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Clemons: . . . During World War II, you know, the soldiers would always come into town from Fort Hood in a convoy. And they would park all their trucks right there on the square around the city hall, you see. And all the black soldiers would unload, and, let's just say, 50 or 60 percent of them would come back there in the drugstore. The rest of them would go to beer saloons, pool halls, or what have you. And this is the time that—well, you might say, this was his get-over period, you know. Well, we would close the drugstore up on Saturday night. We wouldn't close, not at—we would close, maybe at twelve. Well, after he had worked all day from seven in the morning till twelve, he would close up, do his books. After he would get through doing his books, then he would mop and wax his own floor. So by the time he got home it was two o'clock, and he never felt like getting up and going on to church, you know.

Malone-Mayes: Did he open on Sunday? . . .

Clemons: No, it wasn't closed on Sundays. It was open on Sunday. Sunday was pay day. Everybody that worked at the drugstore got paid on Sunday. And, see, he made it this way because his big day was on Saturday. Not that he didn't have enough money to pay his help, but he had more money on Sunday than he had Saturday morning when he opened, you see. So he paid everybody on Sunday. He never would come down until twelve or one o'clock on Sunday, and we closed early on Sunday, say, six o'clock, you know. . . .

Malone-Mayes: How did he get started? Dr. Fridia?

Clemons: Dr. Fridia sold him the drugstore and let him pay it out to him. . . . All the fixtures and everything were in there, and he worked for Dr. Fridia. In fact, he was a registered pharmacist, and he used to laugh about it all the time. He would fill prescriptions in the back of the drugstore for Dr. Fridia, and Dr. Fridia's office was upstairs, back there where Mr. Ashford's . . . cafe was. And he said, then when he would get through filling prescriptions back there, he worked the front of the drugstore there for Dr. Fridia, which they had a counter there and they served food like chili and hot dogs and hamburgers. And my dad would serve chili, make chili, and make the hot dog and hamburger, and then he would have a prescription and he would go in the back and fill the prescription. But he worked the front and the back for Dr. Fridia. . . . And this is when Dr. Fridia decided—he didn't give anybody else a chance but my dad to buy it because my dad had been so vital to him, you know, in his business there. . . . Nobody had a chance to buy it but my dad, and my dad bought it and paid him out. . . .

Malone-Mayes: . . . Did you all work in the drugstore as little boys?

Clemons: Um-hm. He started us out working for fifty cents a week. And what we had to do then, on our way to Moore High School, we had to go by in the mornings, empty the trash out, and take a rag and we had what you call a feather duster and dust all of the top of the counters off and the tables there, you know, that were there for the soda fountainAnd my brother and I did this, and he paid us fifty cents a week. . . . And then we had to give him fifteen cents of that fifty cents back for him to save for us. He made us start a savings account with him. . . . And that's still instilled in my brother and it's still in me,

you know. . . . He said, “What I want to teach you is how to work.” This is what he preached all the time. And he said, “You always do a job this way and then you will never have to worry about having a job. Always do your job to the extent where if you are even sweeping this floor, you sweep this floor so well that nobody can come behind you and sweep it over and get some dirt up off of it and dust up off it. Do your job where nobody can come behind you and do your job better than you, and you will always have a job and you’ll never have to look for a job.” This was his philosophy. . . . My dad was like this in the drugstore: you had certain chores to do, and you did them. When you got through, if there wasn’t a customer in the store or one wasn’t coming in the front door, he always told all of his clerks, “Then you can sit down and rest and blow for a minute.” You know. But he says, “The minute a customer hits that front door—don’t wait for him to walk in, and don’t ever be sitting down. You ask him, May I help you sir? or Could I help you in some way? What was it you that were looking for?” You know. “Don’t ever approach a customer sitting down.” And this was beat into our heads, and all of his help knew the same thing. When the customer hits the front door, you hit your feet, and got up and met the customer. And this is the way I have been on every job that I’ve ever had. It’s just a part of my life that my father taught me. And he taught everybody that worked for him. Ola Tillman, now, that was a matron down at the Waco P.D. jail, down here on Fourth, you know, and Waco Drive; she comes down every so often—by here, you know—and she talks about—my daddy’s nickname was Pete, you know, and she talks about what Pete taught her, you know, and how it was still a part of her life. And she’s grown and has grandchildren now, you know. So it’s just that he taught everybody that worked for him the same thing, you know. Don’t ever—and if you did, he said, “Now, what you can do if a customer never comes in that front door, and it’s an hour,” he said, “you can sit down for an hour, and I’m not going to say anything to you. But be sure all your work is done when you sit down.” You know. And this is the way Negroes in that day and time, Vivienne, accumulated so much. Because they all—most of them, not all of them, but most of them were workaholics. And this is the way they accumulated enough money to buy property, farm land and property inside of the city, and accumulate the wealth that they had. Because they worked themselves to death. . . . They used to call it from can until can’t, you know. From sunup till sundown, see, and past sundown. So they called it—it wasn’t from sunup to sundown, see, it was from can until can’t, till you couldn’t go any further. And this is the way they accumulated their wealth. . . .

Malone-Mayes: . . . I don’t remember even seeing many women in Mecca.

Clemons: No. He wouldn’t have been able to allow us down there. Because, well, you know, my mother used to laugh all the time. We would pick up a lot of slangs from the drugstore, you know, and they weren’t vulgar or anything, you know. Mother would say, “Now, where in the world did you hear that.” You know, we would say, “At the drugstore.” And she would tease him to death. She would say, “You know, Honey, I’m going to stop my kids from coming down there, working at that drugstore because they’re picking too much up down there.” (laughs) . . .

Malone-Mayes: Did she ever go to the drugstore much. I never—

Clemons: Never did. Never did. Even wanted her to come there, but she wouldn't go down there. She said, "That's, you know, your place of business, and you don't need me down there." And she thought that a wife never should have any business hanging around her husband's business. It's just my mother, you know. She said, "This is my end up here. I'm going to take care of this. You take care of that end down there." This is the way she always put it.

Malone-Mayes: Well, I'm sure women came in there. But I never saw any women hanging around down there, always men.

Clemons: No, never did. Never did.

Malone-Mayes: Same way as the Jockey Club Barber Shop. Now, you never—women didn't hang around too much.

Clemons: You never did see anybody hanging out in the—now, they hung out—in later years they used to play a little checkers there in the Jockey Club. But for many a year—that didn't even go on in the Jockey Club. The Jockey Club was a high-class barber shop. And when you went in there, you knew that you were in the Jockey Club, and you weren't around on Bridge Street at McMurray's Barber Shop. You knew that, see. There's the difference in day and night, you know. That was a high-class barber shop.

Malone-Mayes: But, now, Bridge Street was really the social—and that wasn't on the square—the social area, would you say, for blacks and poor whites or what?

Clemons: No, no, blacks only.

Malone-Mayes: Okay.

Clemons: That was it. This was the ultimate for black people. This was their social world—area, and there was no more. You had, oh, my goodness, in later years, you know, Walker's Auditorium. You had—

Malone-Mayes: Yes, I'm talking about like between '26 and '36.

Clemons: No, Bridge Street was all they had, the square.

Malone-Mayes: Right.

Clemons: They would congregate at Ashford's restaurant, the Mecca Drug Store, T. J.'s restaurant, uh—what else? There weren't many other places because none of the—see the people wouldn't go to beer saloons, you know.

Malone-Mayes: My recollections—is this yours, too? Lots of people just really fraternized on the streets on Saturdays.

Clemons: Right.

Malone-Mayes: I believe that's how many men met their wives and things. Because when you consider how some people from China Spring married some people, say, from Gholson or from Harrison Switch and stuff, I wondered, always, how did they ever meet. Because my mother used to say to that it was a day's trip to come to Waco and go back home. So, evidently, these people—really that was where they did their courting and most everything, was on the square.

Clemons: A lot of people would meet there at the drugstore; they would court, and a lot of them would come up in their cars on Sunday evenings. This was the big day for people to come up and get curb service. We gave curb service, and we would fix you an ice cream soda or a malt or a coke or a Dr Pepper, whatever you wanted. And we had trays that would hang on the side of the car, you know. . . . And we would fix the drinks inside the store and then take it outside on the Second Street side of the drugstore. Of course, that was the only side you had open. Because the Bridge Street side was all filled with businesses. So on the side of the drugstore there, and this was a big Sunday evening social gathering, you know, of black people then. They would come, you know, after they would go home from church and eat dinner, and, maybe, take a nap or something. They would come down relaxed, you know, in their cars, and they would get an ice cream soda or either get some ice cream or a malt, and sit there and eat it in their cars. And they would just sit there and watch the people go by, you know. And we didn't get any tips or anything. (laughs) . . .