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## Interview no. 756

Wesley E. Stiles

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Wesley E. Stiles  
INTERVIEWER: Wesley C. Shaw  
PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: January 1986  
TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted  
TAPE NO.: 756  
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TRANSCRIBER: Esther T. Cornell  
DATE TRANSCRIBED: February 1986

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Born in Dayton, Texas, December 17, 1898.  
Entered U.S. Border Patrol July 28, 1924.  
After a few years, transferred to another branch of INS.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Early Border Patrol History in Del Rio, Texas; Immigration Law.

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: HOURS: 1 hour PAGES: 19

Interview with Wesley E. Stiles by Wesley Shaw on January , 1986

Stiles: My name is Wesley Stiles. I was born in Dayton, Texas, December 17, 1898. My parents were Wesley Elmo Stiles and Stiles. My mother died when I was age one and a half years and I went to stay with my grandparents and at the age of about six they passed on and I was passed on to my aunt and uncle who at that time resided in Indian Gap, Texas.

My coming into the Border Patrol was pretty much luck. I was working jobs just anywhere I could get one and there came out a notice for Railway Mail Clerks examination. And I took that in Texarkana, Arkansas, in May of 1923. I was 35 on the eligible list. I didn't hear anymore about it till December 1923 I got an offer of working in the Texarkana terminal of the mail clerks department through the Christmas holidays. When that job played out, I went on down to Dayton, Texas, where I was born and some of my relatives lived there and I got a job working on a dragline. That job was what was called a 'spotter', where you'd spot the dragline operator where to put the dirt. While I was there I got a notice from the Civil Service along in June 1924, wanting to know if I would take a job with the Border Patrol and that it would be very much like a soldier's job. Having been eighteen months in the Army, I knew a little about that. So I immediately replied to that notice and told them I would accept the job. The next notice was a telegram telling me to go to Galveston, Texas, to take the oral examination, and that I should be there on July the 5th, 1924, and present myself to the board of examiners. I went on to Galveston and took the

examination, and they told me, "Just go on back home, don't quit any job you might have and wait your time till you hear something from this." The next notice I received was a telegram telling me to report to the Inspector in Charge of the Immigration Service, Del Rio, Texas. I quit my job, got cleaned up, and took off for Del Rio. Arrived in Del Rio July the 27th, got in at midnight, went to the hotel. The next morning being Monday, I reported to the Inspector in Charge. And that was on July the 28th, 1924.

Shaw: Do you remember the name of the Inspector in Charge?

Stiles: The Inspector in Charge at that time was T. P. Cook. He was an old Immigrant Inspector, worked on the Canadian border and also on the Mexican border in stations in Arizona. He had been here about two or three years. No one knew what we were supposed to do or how we were supposed to do it. Five other men reported for duty. They were a day or two ahead of me because they said they didn't have anything to do but to come on. So we just walked around and looked wise. Nobody knew what to do, how to do it, or when to do it. This was rather amusing in a way. I had previously done a lot of hoboing and I knew my way around railroad yards. I could get around pretty well. But one time, this Mr. Corbin who was appointed Chief Patrol Inspector at that time. Mr. Corbin was a good man; he was knowledgeable, but he had no horse sense at all. He didn't know how in the world to do or what to do. He was an Immigrant Inspector purely. He didn't know very much about handling the men. We didn't have any transportation, all we could do was just walk around.

Shaw: Mr. Stiles, was the Immigrant Inspector in charge of the Border Patrol, too, or did they have a separate -

Stiles: This was more or less under the Inspector in Charge.

Shaw: Of the bridge?

Stiles: At the bridge. We were under Mr. Corbin, and Mr. Corbin then was directly under Mr. Cook, the Inspector in Charge. For the first month, we didn't have anything to do or any transportation, or any badge. They said we could get us some guns if we wanted to. You should have seen the old relics that were pushed off on us (laughter). For weapons.

Shaw: What did they tell you you were supposed to do?

Stiles: Catch aliens (laughter). That's what we were supposed to do. The thing that established the Border Patrol was the influx of European aliens. Getting out of Europe from the depression there, coming through Mexico and into the United States. That was the main purpose of the Border Patrol that was organized and went into effect July the first, 1924. And we looked for European aliens. And we caught a few, just by main strength and awkwardness, you might say. (Laughter) Anyway, all of August we didn't do anything, we just wandered around town here. My partner and I met in Galveston. His name was Quincy Bynum. He and I became partners from then on until he passed away in '69.

At the end of August, They divided us up. Some went to Comstock, some went to Langtry, and Bynum and I were sent over to Fort Clark, or Brackettville. Without any transportation, mind you. We were just sent over there. Walk around and look wise (laughter).

Shaw: What did you check? Did you check what few cars there were coming through?

Stiles: We didn't bother any cars. We didn't have any authority to go into cars or stop cars. Anyway, during the month of August, Bynum and I stayed at Brackettville. We didn't have any place to eat; we stayed in

the jail; the sheriff gave us a place to sleep in the jail, and we had our own cots. No place to eat. So we finally made arrangements to eat with E Troop of the Fifth Cavalry. They charged us I believe it was 35¢ a meal to eat there. They were very nice to us. If we came in to breakfast kinda late, they'd fix us a breakfast and feed us, take care of us. We stayed there at Brackettville until along in October. Then some of the men wanted to take leave and a little vacation. I don't know what they'd been doing that they needed a vacation. But anyway, Bynum and I were picked up then and sent to Comstock to relieve the two men up there.

Shaw: Did they send you to any kind of a school, or tell you what your authority was?

Stiles: No. That was the thing about it. None of us spoke any Spanish to speak of and somebody suggested, we'd better get you a speaking dictionary (laughter). That's the best way to learn Spanish. But anyway, we didn't have any schooling. No one knew what to do. That was the big trouble.

Shaw: And you didn't know what your authority was?

Stiles: Just look for aliens. The little law book that they gave us was about that thick, it wasn't an inch.

Shaw: About how many pages?

Stiles: Oh, it wasn't over a hundred, of thin paper. That contained the 17 Act, which was called the Literacy Act. That was passed February the fifth, 1917. And that caused all immigrants coming into the United States to pass a literacy test.

Shaw: What did it consist of?

Stiles: That consisted of, when an immigrant wanted to come to the United States during that time, up to '24, when the Visa Act went in....

In the iteracy test, we'd hand them a card and say, "Can you read this?"

Shaw: In English or Spanish?

Stiles: It was in Spanish. Of course, if he could read in English, we'd try him in English. The Jews got in on that when they were passing the laws and they had to put in there, "Some language or dialect including Hebrew and Yiddish (laughter). That was the card. But there was lots of them that couldn't read anything BUT Yiddish coming out of Europe at that time, but we didn't get too many of that. Of course that included the Chinese at that time. That law existed and we worked on that, that was the Deportation Law and the 17 Act of the apprehension of criminals and others that were in violation of moral turpitude. That held all the way up to the Visa Act of 1924. Then when that came into effect, that kinda put another obstacle for them. They had to go to the American Consul and get the Immigrant Visa which is \$18 and then when they got to the bridge they had another \$8 to pay. That was to the transportation company.

Shaw: Was that what was known as the Head Tax, the \$8.00?

Stiles: Yes. Now, we didn't pay much attention to the Mexicans. They were coming over here to chop cotton, pick cotton, or some vegetables. All purely farm work. They would come up and say, "I want to go and work." "All right. You got \$8.00?" And he'd pay what they called a Head Tax - \$8.00 Head Tax. And then they'd send him over to the transportation company, which was held to be the bridge company. Railroads and steamships were the transportation companies there, but in the rulings they figured that the bridge companies and railroads coming into the United States were the transportation companies, and they were the ones that

collected the \$8.00 and put it up for deposit. If the man said, "I don't know if I want to go back to Mexico or not - I may want to stay." Well, all right, if you stay you can get your \$8.00 back. It will go into the regular fund and you will be considered an immigrant admitted to lawful residence. If you go back, you can go to the transportation company and we'll give you a note showing that you're going back and you'll collect your \$8.00 there.

Shaw: Is that what was known as the old A Card?

Stiles: Yes. Now this Green Card we had so much talk about, that came about in Detroit. The people living in Canada wanted to come into the United States and work and then go back. They had a trial on that and the immigrant allowed that he had the right to come in on that visa and work, and some of them did without a visa. And finally they ruled that if he could pay his visa from our consulate from Canada or Mexico or anywhere, he could come on into the United States, and then if he was going to commute from a job in Mexico over to the US as residents of Mexico to a job over here, he would be classed as a commuter. And he could go and come daily.

Shaw: That meant that this didn't go on his five-year residency to become a citizen.

Stiles: No. He could go as a commuter from then on. Any time that he remained out of his work here for six months and he was not coming at that time, to a job that he had, he was excludable. And I excluded many of them because I was on a board chairman at that time. About the next thing that came along for the Border Patrol, that touched them, was the two Violation Acts that passed, Section 2 and 1A. Section 2 was the first entry. The first entry was a Section 2. He hadn't



violated very much law, so they'd run him back. And if he refused, then we'd go into a hearing and we'd deport him. But the second man to be caught and kicked out, or deported, he'd become a 1A.

Shaw: And what was that?

Stiles: A 1A was a violation of Section 1A.

Shaw: What were the penalties?

Stiles: Well, a thousand dollars.

Shaw: That excluded a lot of them, didn't it? (Laughter)

Stiles: The law said any person who had been previously deported from the United States could not thereafter reenter the United States. So that left this 1A man - it didn't make any difference what kind of application he made, he just was out. That all took place around 1928, 29.

Shaw: Let's go back to the Border Patrol. You said that you didn't have any transportation when you and Bynum went to Brackettville.

What did you do?

Stiles: Well, let me go back and pick up that. After Bynum and I went to Brackettville, we were there afoot and both of us single and we had a little money, so we proceeded to buy us an automobile.

Shaw: Between the two of you?

Stiles: Between the two of us ourselves. And we used that, paid for our own gasoline and everything until it was along in 1925 before we got them to allow us any money for gasoline. And they allowed us \$13.00 to buy gasoline.

Shaw: Thirteen dollars a month?

Stiles: Yes. We had that, and used the car. But still transportation was a problem, because ours was the only car, other than the government and that belonged to the office here to go to the bridge.

Shaw: What was your starting salary?

Stiles: Oh, one-forty.

Shaw: A month?

Stiles: Yes. Sixteen eighty, somewhere along there, a year. When they moved us up to Comstock, we had the automobile to move around in.

Shaw: When did you get your first uniform?

Stiles: The first uniform came along in about July in 1925, about 1925. They made arrangements with some uniform outfit that had been making a bunch for an army in South America. And they just put a stripe on them, on the leg of ours, and some blue on one or two spots, and the darndest looking things you ever saw. Kind of khaki color.

Shaw: Did the government furnish them or did you have to buy them?

Stiles: They furnished them.

Shaw: How many did they furnish you?

Stiles: One only (laughter). Then they came out later on in 1926 we began to pick up on the uniforms. The ones in the pictures I showed you, with the Sam Brown belts - that came along in the early part of 1926. They were nice looking uniforms, nobody minded wearing those. The others were ridiculous.

Shaw: You said you didn't have a badge. When did you get your badge?

Stiles: The badge came along about the second month, maybe along in August before we went to Brackettville. Before that we didn't have a darn thing to show who we were or what we were supposed to do.

Shaw: Did anybody ever question your authority?

Stiles: Well, yes, one time Bynum and I grabbed a freight train here, we were gonna ride over to Spofford - that was the junction then. We'd ride over there and then catch the midnight train coming back. The brakeman tried to throw us off, cause he didn't know what it was all about.

In those days they didn't allow hobos to ride the freight trains much, they'd kick them off. That's the only time we ever got questioned about it. We had one man that drove the car most of the time, the government car - his name was Sentilly. So one time he decided - the boss did - that he'd send us off up to Comstock to check the road up there. That was in the latter part of August, somewhere along in there. And it was comical, because we went up there, and you know the old road forks, one goes uptown and the other runs straight over the hill. Well, we stopped there to check the cars. Every Mexican kid in town that had a car, and the others too, would have to make that circle there to see what in heck's going on. (Laughter) We didn't have much luck catching anybody. At times we'd stretch a rope across the road out here at the forks of the road, with a sign on there, "U.S. Officers" and pull that up if somebody came and look in the cars. That didn't prove very much. Most of the information along that line that we got on the European aliens, they were coming along walking, and we'd get word of them from ranchers telling us so-and-so had passed there. We caught quite a few European aliens, Syrians and everything in the world.

Shaw: Well, now, your Mexican aliens - you didn't really bother with them, did you?

STILES: We just didn't bother with them. We didn't start bringing them in or investigating them or interrogating them until along in '26 and then they came out with the form to fill out. We had a regular form we had to fill out when we brought one in and it was signed, and then we'd take them down and give them a VR. But on this Section 2 and 1A of the Act that came along in 1928. When I went to Hidalgo, in 1929, there were over 300 Section 2 aliens in jail in Edinburg

that we'd picked up and were handling on deportation.

SHAW: Were part of those from here? How big an area was that?

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO:

STILES: Wright was patrolman and he worked in Falfurrias and all down through that part of the Valley. And he used to bring stuff in to us from Falfurrias and Kingsville and all around that he had apprehended for the Border Patrol, and brought them into Rio Grande City. I was there a year in Rio Grande City and handled them there. We prosecuted all of them in violation of Section 2 and filed a complaint on them for the Commissioner.

SHAW: Was this a formal deportation, or did it include a jail term?

STILES: They were deportees then, in violation of Section 2. It was usually a small - one month's - sentence and kick 'em out. But I handled all that deportation work.

SHAW: But that was after you left the Border Patrol.

STILES: That was after I left the Border Patrol. The only way I came in contact with the Border Patrol was handling them when they brought in to me.

SHAW: At that time you were a pretty important man, weren't you? You held all the deportation hearings, all the -

STILES: I handled everything - naturalization, registry work, VSI hearings.

SHAW: What did your area cover at that time?

STILES: All of that. As I say, when I went to Hidalgo - transferred down there, there were over 300 Mexicans in the Edinburg county jail under deportation proceedings. I'd go to jail at night, haul a load of Mexicans to the Edinburg jail and while I was there, hold a dozen hearings (laughter) and go on back.

SHAW: Were you fair with your hearings?

STILES: Well, we did a lot of work, run out a lot of Mexicans.

Up until 1940, the Border Patrol caught all the aliens that came in.

At the bridge we didn't bother anybody other than those applicants.

That's the only thing we had anything to do with. Those that were coming

as applicants, the regular route. The rest of them that we handled

were ones that the Border Patrol caught wading the river or after they

got in or working or something of the kind. And I handled all those.

SHAW: Did they have a representative or anything? Were they entitled to a lawyer?

STILES: Some of them did. They didn't have sense enough to do that.

It didn't do them any good, because they realized that they weren't

gonna do much with them. I never did understand just why they wanted

to prosecute all of them but they did. The higher ups.

SHAW: When you came to Del Rio, you said they'd split up and some

stayed in Del Rio and some went to Comstock, some went to Brackettville.

Did you have a defined area that was your area of responsibility?

STILES: No.

SHAW: You just worked any place -

STILES: Any place you saw one that looked wet (laughter). No, you had

no area to work. It might have been considered so with Eagle Pass.

Eagle Pass Unit was not under this unit and they might have considered

that they had a certain territory, but they didn't.

SHAW: At that time, was there Customs along with the Immigration?

At the bridge? Did they have to declare what they brought in?

STILES: Well, there were Customs Inspectors.

SHAW: That's what I mean.

STILES: They were the field customs. Not the bridge men. The ~~Customs~~ men were on the bridge, they were the inspection there. But ~~these~~ were men that were Customs, I forget just what they were called, ~~anyway~~ they crossed them and they worked right along with the Border Patrol.

SHAW: That's what I was wondering. Any time you're trying to ~~apprehend~~ apprehend people, you're going to apprehend some goods right along with it.

STILES: Yes, they worked right along with us. In fact, we'd ~~all go~~ go out together on a camping trip, bootlegging joint.

SHAW: Did a lot of whiskey come across at that time?

STILES: Yeah.

SHAW: Were you in on any of the apprehensions?

STILES: Yes. We found out if they were aliens and then we'd ~~bring~~ bring them in. A couple of Border Patrolmen and I took off one Saturday - well, during the week - cruising around down toward Jiménez to ~~see~~ see what we could see. And we located a place down there where we ~~could~~ could tell there had been a lot of in-and-out cars, so we said, well, ~~we'll~~ we'll just back off now and Saturday afternoon we'll ease in here and ~~see~~ see what happens. Well we did, on Saturday afternoon we eased in and concealed our car and ourselves and after awhile, we saw them put in the alcohol. Twenty cans of alcohol, 5 gallons to the can and put it in on the Mexican side, and relayed it on across. We had spotted the car that came in to get it - it was a Hupmobile. So we charged ~~them~~ them when they hit this side. We got the alcohol and **two of the men** the Mexicans got back on the other side - they outran us. We brought the Hup and the alcohol in to Del Rio and we turned it over to ~~Customs~~ Customs.

SHAW: Were you involved in any candelaria wax smuggling?

STILES: No. There was quite alot of bootlegging. There wasn't much dope smuggling. We had a little old guy who lived here in Del Rio and I think a time or two, they had caught him smuggling dope.

SHAW: From Mexico?

STILES: We didn't know where he got it; we caught him on this side. We caught him out here at the forks of the road one time. He drove a little we called it - a Ford Roadster. And we knew, we had some information that he had it and was going north with it. So we ganged up on him and stopped him out there at the forks of the road. The Customs men were along with us at that time. A man by the name of Harrison Hammer was in the Customs force. All of us went over that little Houpie with a fine tooth and Harrison Hammer finally said that he noticed, when he picked up a little five-pound grease can (we used to carry a can of grease with us all the time), well, he picked that up and put it back down and opened it up and there it was - looked like it was full of grease. So he didn't go on. But he went back over again, got to thinking about it. Well, that can wasn't as heavy as it should have been for five pounds. Went back and dug down in the bottom and there was his dope, down in the bottom of that grease can. (Laughter) So that stopped them that time. He had a son that operated out of Comstock and Langtry on bootlegging. He operated north. We'd run into him once in awhile, on bootlegging. I went to Immigrant Inspector in '28, in August of 1928. But before that we worked with the Customs and the Alcohol Tax Unit. All told there were about 15-25 law officers in Del Rio when I came there. That was counting the Border Patrol, the Customs - the Mounted Customs they called them - the Alcohol Tax Unit, the Rangers, the county officials. One of the chief indoor sports -

of course, it was outdoor, too - the train came in here from the east. It would get in here about twelve o'clock at night and every cockeyed officer in the town and the county would gather around down there at the depot when that train came in, walking up and down there. And the tourists on that train, their eyes just run out. "What in the world?" Lots of officers down there - some with two guns, some with just one (laughter).

SHAW: Did any of the Border Patrolmen use horses during your time here?

STILES: No. They came along with horses in 1940. Aubrey Hudson was a horseman and he talked them into putting a bunch of horses in here.

But they weren't too good.

there were

SHAW: You said/five others besides you that were here. Do you remember their names?

STILES: Well, I'll give you their surnames; I can't remember their first names. There was Dewey L. Knight from, I don't know how he got here, but he was one of the six. Hamberlin was a bellhop from Dallas. Salmon was from Oklahoma. Quincy Bynum was from Athens, Texas.

I was from Dayton. One was a nut - I don't know how he got in - from over in Louisiana. His name was - I can't remember his name. At the expiration of six months - we were all appointed for six months - we all had to take an examination. Now the district director at that time was Hanson.

SHAW: He was in San Antonio?

STILES: Yes, he was district director of the whole district. Hanson was an old Ranger, and he thought the only guy who was worth a darn as an officer was one who wore a big hat and good lookin' boots and chaps, a cowboy outfit. He was the only kind of a guy who could do anything. So he was there, and I guess the only thing that got Bynum and I by



was that we had spent money on our own to assist us in apprehension of aliens and paid for it ourselves. I think that's the only thing that got us by, cause we didn't look like cowboys (laughter).

SHAW: Didn't you have a hat in your uniform?

STILES: No. It didn't have a hat. Just anything you wore. You see some of them back there on those pictures there now, various and sundry types of hats they had.

SHAW: I didn't notice that. I noticed all the uniforms looked real neat.

STILES: Well. So three of us passed: Quincy Bynum, Dewey L. Knight, and myself. The other three got kicked out after six months.

SHAW: How long was it before they replaced them?

STILES: Well, six months would have been along in February. March was the first new ones coming in aside from the draft for the Mail Clerks bunch.

SHAW: This was a regular Border Patrol examination?

STILES: Yes. Charlie Magby, I broke Charlie in on March 13, 1925 when he came on the job. Charlie was an old timer here, he was born here, he knew the country. I didn't have to show him anything. Couldn't show him anything if I'd wanted to. But then more of them drifted in. Along in the 30s another large group came in. What year did you come in?

SHAW: Oh, I didn't come in until 1955.

STILES: '55. Well, these were '36 along there. Most of them were sent out to various places. Some went out to Menard.

SHAW: What were they looking for up there?

STILES: Mexicans. By that time they were picking up all Mexicans. They worked those cedar breaks.

SHAW: We still worked those when I came in.

STILES: They worked those cedar breaks to get those Mexicans outta there. Those woods were full of them. In '19, during the War we had lots of entries. They'd get off into the cedar breaks and up in there. We had the jail full here. My job was still handling warrant work.

SHAW: At that time, you were the OIC at the bridge, right?

STILES: I was the Immigrant Inspector then, but I did come in contact with the Border Patrol.

SHAW: As an Immigrant Inspector you held all the hearings and all that? What did the OIC do?

STILES: Nothing (Laughter). He was not a man that wanted to take authority. I was OIC here and I did it all. Any decisions to be made, I'd make them. I handled him in this way: I'd go to Mr. Cook and say, "Mr. Cook, don't you think we ought to do it something like this? I believe it'd work out alright." He'd fall right in with that, yessiree. One time I was off up in New Mexico on a vacation and I'd no more than landed there when I got a phone call, come right on back, we need you here. I had to turn around and come back. They were about to move him to San Antonio and he didn't want to go; he wouldn't go. It was just more than he could do. He wanted me back here to take over (laughter). I never did get a promotion from the hearing job and all of that that I was doing until I was made hearing officer. I just did the same work I did before. I worked three days at Eagle Pass and two days here. Then I switched. Two days at Eagle Pass and three here. I did that for five years.

SHAW: While you were in the Border Patrol, did the government ever furnish your cars?

STILES: No.

SHAW: When did they start furnishing cars?

STILES: In 1926. I got a Chevrolet Roadster, a touring car, in 1926.  
The first car that we got.

SHAW: Did they have one for each team?

STILES: No.

SHAW: Just one for the whole station?

STILES: Just one for all of you. If they were gonna go, they had to go together. As you come up Main Street, you know this adobe house on the right after you pass that tailor shop, in the next block there's an adobe house. That was the first Border Patrol office.

SHAW: I knew there was one on Second Street.

STILES: Well, that was Border Patrol and I painted that (laughter). Another guy and I took on that painting job. But this one there was adobe, a two-story adobe. And that was, we moved into that along in 1925. Along about that time, Mr. Corbin who was the first man in charge of the Border Patrol, he lasted less than six months. Another guy came in by the name of Watkins. They put him in charge. And I don't think he lasted but about that much, then he was gone. And then another guy came in by the name of Carlbert (?). Carlbert was originally an Inspector from Denver, Colorado. He was assigned temporarily to El Paso, in the Border Patrol. And later on he came on here. From here they made him the Chief Patrol Inspector. I think by that time they'd gotten to Chief Patrol Inspector. And then another guy who didn't like the job, he didn't like some of the bosses up the line. He asked to go back to Laredo and he did. Then they got a guy by the name of Bentley. He was a great big guy, kinda hale-fellow-well-met. He didn't last too long. About the same length of time. In two years' time, they had one about every six months. And then after Carlbert, a guy by the name of Virgil Lott (?) was Chief Patrol Inspector. By that time they had consolidated Eagle Pass and Del Rio. Lott then had charge of both stations. When

Lott went out, they still remained consolidated. Then it began to settle down. Aubrey Hudson came along. Aubrey got along pretty well with them. He was a horseman. This guy who was the supervisor of all the border, from El Paso (I don't think he went any further west than El Paso), his name was (can't remember). He was still supervisor when I went into Immigration. He was supervisor of all the border district at that time.

SHAW: When they separated Del Rio and Eagle Pass, they made Del Rio the Sector Headquarters?

STILES: Yes. Del Rio was the main station.

SHAW: Our territory in Del Rio ran from Lozier Canyon, which is west of Langtry, to (can't remember name of draw) to Eagle Pass' territory.

STILES: To my knowledge, no distinct division was made while I was in the Border Patrol. You worked anywhere you wanted to, or anywhere they'd send you. On details.

SHAW: Who made the decisions on where to send you on detail?

STILES: The boss here in charge.

SHAW: Were you given any per diem at that time?

STILES: No.

SHAW: They just sent you?

STILES: They just sent you (laughter). You took your grub with you. I've got a little coffee pot that I bought when Bynum and I went to Brackettville. We bought us a little camp-out kit, so we'd camp out. I still have my little coffee pot.

SHAW: When you were in Brackettville, did you have to call in every day?

STILES: No. It was funny. Watkins - he was the guy who said, "Now, you park at a certain spot there on the top of the hill out here." You didn't go down to Eagle Pass like we do now - take out over the hill.

and on down. You topped the hill there, then you'd angle off down and get in the valley in the river bottom, and there's a road that you'd travel from there all the way down to Quemado. You'd come out on top of the hill at Quemado. You didn't have any road on top of the hill.

SHAW: You just followed the vega down?

STILES: You followed the vega down. But he had an idea we should stop at a certain place, park out there in the sun under a mesquite, and you stay there for so many days, and then you move on down to another spot. Well, we did. He was the boss and that's what he said to do. I told Bynum, it doesn't make any difference to me or you. If we don't catch anything, it's not our fault. We stayed there (laughter). It did not get organized good - it took them a long time to get organized. I hoboed a whole lot after I got out of the Army, and before I got in the Army in 1918, I did a lot of hoboeing in my time. And working any kind of job I could get. I worked the sawmills making cross-ties, and during the Depression in the 20s, you couldn't get a job, and I worked for a dollar and a half a day and took it in groceries. Times were rough then. And when I got this job with the Border Patrol and came here, I said, "Boy, where have I been all this time?"

END OF INTERVIEW