

Bob Swinea on Studying in the Cloak Room

BS: This was when I was going to elementary school, Holt's Elementary School. and sometimes I reminisce and think back to some of the things that happened there, and one of the things that happened there was, as I've said before in my main story, I had to miss a lot of time. Especially during the harvest time. Picking the cotton and gathering the corn. And although school was out for 30 days to allow for that, 30 days was never long enough. And so when I returned to school, all confused and everything, I had a friend named Thomas Driver. He of course was a classmate, and he attended class on a regular basis and he had older sisters and brothers who were as we called educated. They were teachers. As a matter of fact I was taught by one of his sisters and one of his brothers. His brother was a disciplinarian and he was also the principal. But, when I would get back to school, Thomas was going to bring me up to date. And I might add, that during this time, this was not his brother that was our teacher. So, in order to bring me up to date, during our lunch hour, we would go in a place where they stored coats and hats, we called the court, the cloak room, and we would go back in there and even the teacher would also allow us in there when the classes was going on, when school was going on, because we were isolated from the class. And Thomas would teach me all about what had passed while I was away. And he was very good at it, especially in the math area, because he taught me how to use formulas. . .

Bob Swinea on Hitchhiking to High School

BS: When I used to go to high school, as I said, the year that I started to high school, that was the same year that the buses started running. So we used to ride the bus. But the bus taking you to school, it would go around through the Prospect, Bethel, and Aspen Hill area, which instead of being about a 15 or 20 mile trip, it was probably about a 50 or 60 mile trip. So sometimes I, after milking the cows and all of that stuff, before going to school, I couldn't make it to, to the bus stop. And the bus driver, who was Roger Skyrus, he was not about to wait for you and we didn't expect that. So I would just go ahead and hitch hike to school. And I could hitch hike to school faster than I could go on the bus. But during my hitch hiking, I got a ride to one day in this eighteen-wheeler, which was a milk truck going to the Milky Way Farms to pick up milk. And he had to pass right by my school, my high school in Pulaski, Tennessee. Bridgeforth High School was on the north end of town, so you could get a ride to Pulaski, but you still had quite a ways to go to get to the school. But since Milky Way is north of Pulaski, I got a ride all the way to school. . . So after that, in hitch hiking, the driver of this eighteen wheeler that was going to pick up the milk, we got to be good acquaintances or good friends, because he used to pick me up every morning. He would blow his horn before he got to where I lived, and I would run out and get in the truck and he would take me all the way to school. So we did that for a long time and even on Saturday he used to stop by and I would go all the way to the Milky Way Farm with him to help him pick up the milk.