

E. H. Bush, Sr.
Interview 35a
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ABSTRACT: In this interview, former Diboll schoolteacher and Superintendent E. H. Bush, Sr. and former teacher Fenner Roth reminisce about teaching school in Diboll during the 1930's. They talk about discipline problems, dealing with the Great Depression, teacher and superintendent's pay, and the heavy workload. Mr. Bush tells stories about disciplining students, coaching the basketball and baseball teams, and trying to keep the hogs away from the children as they ate lunch

Becky Bailey (hereafter BB): I am interviewing Mr. E. H. Bush at his home in Lufkin, Texas. Today's date is July 5th, 1984. My name is Becky Bailey. Fenner Roth is also present at the interview.

Mr. Bush's wife: What's all that for anyway?

BB: It is for the Diboll Historical society.

Fenner Roth (hereafter FR): We are going to write a book about the people that were in Diboll.

BB: Mr. Bush, when were you born?

E.H. Bush (hereafter EB): August 12, 1903.

BB: Where?

EB: Jonesborough, LA.

BB: When did your family come to Texas?

EB: Pardon?

BB: When did your family come to Texas?

EB: Well, I came here in 1928... I got married then.

BB: What did your father do for a living when you were at home?

EB: He was an insurance salesman.

BB: Did you have a lot of brothers and sisters?

EB: There was a family of seven boys and girls: four boys, three girls.

BB: Where did you fit in?

EB: I was number four. I was the fourth child and fourth boy... fourth boy.

BB: What kind of an education did you have? Did you start..?

EB: High school, Ruston, LA. I played high school baseball and football there and finished in December 1922. I went to Centenary College in January 1923.

BB: What did you study to be?

EB: Well, I studied to be a schoolteacher, coach, sports in high school. I taught in high school.

BB: How long did you go to college?

EB: Well, four years.

BB: Went four years. Okay.

EB: Actually I got out in three.

BB: Oh.

EB: Did a little extra work and got out in three years... three and a half, really.

BB: Where was your first school that you taught at?

EB: Vivian, LA.

BB: When did you come to Diboll?

EB: September, 1928.

BB: So you had been teaching for about four years by that time?

EB: Two years.

BB: Two years?

EB: Two years.

BB: How did you hear about Diboll?

EB: How did I hear about it?

BB: Yes.

EB: Well, I played baseball with a fellow by the name of Buster Jackson in Leesville and his family came over to visit. And at that time I was unmarried and he had a good looking young sister that came along with him. And so I thought I would be real nice to her and take her to a show. And so when she came back home she wrote me a letter and I answered it. One correspondence led to another. So in September 1927, yes, I guess it was September in '27 or '26, we got married.

BB: And she lived in Diboll.

EB: No, I went back and taught a year in Vivian before I moved to Diboll.

BB: Did you...

EB: Pardon?

BB: Did you come to teach? Or...

EB: Well, I came to ...down here and played baseball game with Diboll one Sunday. I was signed up to play with Leesville and so I ... we were playing Lufkin up there and so I couldn't understand why they kept saying we would start the game as quick as Bull gets here. And I didn't know who Bull was. And he was Bull Durham. And so I had a good day at the bat with a home run and a single and Mr. Durham was president of the Diboll school board. In fact, he was the boss, I guess, you might say. What he said went.

FR: That was Mr. E. C. Durham, wasn't it?

EB: Yes, it was E. C. Yes, he had Jake and, I have forgotten the other boy's name.

FR: Edwin and Jake was the boys.

EB: Yes, Edwin and Jake were the two boys.

FR: Yes.

EB: So I didn't even...Never thought about applying for a job here. When I was playing with Abilene in West Texas League, why I got a letter from my wife saying I had been hired to teach in Diboll. So I had signed to go back to Vivian and so I resigned my job there and came to Diboll to teach. Came down here and found out that I had to teach a

bunch of stuff that I wasn't really prepared to teach. One was physics. And I had never had a day of physics in my life.

BB: Oh, no. How did you stay ahead of the kids?

EB: Well, it was awfully hard work, I tell you, to stay ahead of them. And to make some of those experiments was something else. Never had seen them made, you know. It was something. So I made it out though. I had some boys in class that were mechanics and so the mechanic end of it, they worked out pretty good for me. So...

BB: Was it a lot different teaching in Diboll than it was in Vivian or was that....

EB: Yes, it was. For me it was, because I had to teach four or five different subjects. And I didn't have but two subjects in Vivian. One was math and the other was bookkeeping. And I was new on bookkeeping, too. However, I did that in the summertime when I was playing ball. Got the lessons up and everything. From there it was just...Diboll was something else. Whew... I wish I had stayed in Vivian.

BB: What all did they have you teaching besides physics?

EB: Geometry, biology, physiology. I pulled a good one on a girl in class. She always... she never did know anything. I would ask her questions... "I don't know" "I don't know". I said, "What's your name?" "I don't know" and I told that joke on her at the fiftieth reunion here. That was Ruthie Wright. She was just a kiddo, but...

BB: But she didn't know.

EB: She just didn't know. So I thought, well, if she was ... just a routine you know, so I just slipped a blind question in there and said, "What is you name?" And she said "I don't know," and started crying. That was a meanie on my part. But we had to have a little fun once in a while.

BB: Was Vivian a sawmill town, too?

EB: No, it was an oil town...above Shreveport there. It was an oil town.

BB: What was it like moving to Diboll? How did it strike you when you first came? What did it look like?

EB: Well, I ... well; I had lived in ... when I was just a child I had lived in Jonesborough, LA. And that was a sawmill town. Tremont & Gulf Lumber Company and they hauled logs from down the backwoods. They come in there with those things loaded with big logs. Man, they were whoppers. And we kids would get out there and run them, you know. We would jump from one to the other, you know, and try to stay ahead of the sinking. And...

FR: You mean you would get out in the millpond and ride those logs?

EB: Yes, run from one to the other. They would chase us off and we would come back another day. Which was very familiar to me. The buildings were. I first thought I hadn't lived in a place where you turned off the lights. They said, we don't turn off our lights down here. We just let them burn. They would take so much rent and that was all regardless of where they used a lot of electricity or not. So... but I didn't like it much the first year, I was ready to go back to Louisiana. I went back and stayed one year and then I decided I would come back to Texas. I guess, I liked Diboll. It wasn't so bad after all. I came back and stayed then, seven or eight years.

BB: Okay, you stayed one year and then you left?

EB: Yes.

BB: Where did you go then? Back to...

EB: Went to Arcadia, LA. ... My older brother was a newspaper man there and he got me the job coaching football and baseball.

BB: When you moved to town the first time...did you live in a company house? Or did you...

EB: Yes, we lived in this old house that my daddy-in-law lived in. They had a big old house there, and it had an upstairs to it, you know. So we, my wife and I and baby, lived out there.

BB: How many years was it before you came back to Diboll when you left?

EB: One year.

BB: You came a year and you left a year and then you came right back, so it really hadn't changed much in a year's time.

EB: No.

BB: How big was the school then?

EB: About 135 in the whole school.

BB: Whole school from first grade to twelfth. Were they teaching twelve grades by then? Or eleven?

EB: I don't think...they had eleven then...eleven.

BB: What did you come back to teach the second time? Same thing you taught the first time?

EB: About the same thing. Civics, history, world history, geometry.

BB: Okay. Did you and your wife have children while you lived there?

EB: We had one child. Yes, Buddy Bush. He is still living. He is the auditor, county auditor now.

BB: Did he go to school there very long in Diboll?

EB: He graduated from Diboll High School. Then he went to Nacogdoches.

FR: Stephen F. Austin?

EB: Yes.

BB: What kind of team sports did you have here?

EB: Well, baseball and basketball. There wasn't any football I didn't want any football. There wasn't enough boys. We had a good little baseball team. We won what they called the East Texas High School championship one year there. That little left-handed pitcher named "Coot" Agee. He is dead now. He got killed in a car wreck. He had a scholarship to the University of Texas, but the accident snuffed him out. He was a good little left-handed pitcher. I guess the biggest thing we won that year or somewhere along about that time, was John Reagan out of Houston. We played them two games and won one and lost one with them. And they had a real big high school then. And I just had a small country team.

BB: Yes. Did the kids play baseball all year round or did you have all the rules and regulations that they have now with UIL?

EB: Oh, yes. We might cheat a little bit if we had a chance. But...

FR: Mr. Bush, you remember back in those days you didn't have a gymnasium and basketball was played outdoors.

EB: Outdoors.

BB: Oh, really?

EB: We got a bunch of tin wash pans and fitted them up over to make a ...

BB: To make the hoops?

FR: Reflector for the lights.

BB: Oh, reflectors for the lights?

FR: We played at night, see.

EB: We had to play at night...didn't have...

BB: What kind of floors? Did you have a dirt...

FR: Dirt.

EB: Dirt floor.

BB: Just marked it off...kind of like they would?

FR: Yes, with lime.

BB: With lime like you would a football field?

EB: Yes.

BB: Oh, my goodness.

EB: Oh, it was... back it was something. And for drinking water we had, I think, a barrel or something up on scaffolding. And I think, once a day the ice folks would put in a hundred pound block of ice, or a fifty-pound block or something like that. A hundred pound block had a water fountain out there that came through that was made out of concrete. We had a little cool water, but most of the time it was hot.

BB: What did the school look like then? How many teachers were there and that sort of thing?

EB: Well, I am trying to find a picture, but I couldn't find one. How many teachers there were. I don't remember. There wasn't too many. There wasn't a whole lot of them. I have forgotten...

FR: When I came there in '33... there was a teacher, of course, for each grade...

EB: Yes.

FR: And a superintendent. I would say there weren't over twelve to fourteen teachers at that time.

EB: Yes, I know it. That is about right.

FR: And we were still playing on dirt courts. Basketball.

BB: Even in '33?

FR: Yes, I don't know when they built the gym. It was a long time...

EB: It was after I left here. A good while.

BB: Mr. Bush, when did you become school superintendent?

EB: Let's see. Sometimes in the early '30s. About '35 or '36. Sometime in there.

FR: No. Now I went there in '33 and you were superintendent. Now I don't know whether that was your first year or your second year. I kind of believe it was your second year.

EB: It might have been.

FR: I think you became...

EB: I followed Mr. Miller.

FR: I think you were either in '31 or '32.

EB: That is about right.

FR: Because I went there in '33 and you were superintendent.

EB: That is about right. I think I was superintendent all total about five years.

BB: You were a fairly young man to be superintendent, weren't you?

EB: Well, I guess so.

BB: Yes. Well, did you give up your coaching and all that when you became superintendent?

EB: No, you had...still had to do all that... a whole lot of extras.

BB: Oh, you still had to teach, too, and be superintendent.

EB: Oh yes. That didn't cut you off from having to do those other things.

BB: Oh, I see.

EB: Yes, I guess that is about right.

BB: How many classes did you have to teach then, when you were superintendent?

EB: At least two, maybe three.

BB: And then your coaching in the afternoons.

EB: Yes. After school. There wasn't no end to the work that you had to do as superintendent. Well, I didn't have to drive a bus there in Diboll. But I did at other places when I was superintendent. If the bus driver didn't show up, I would get in the bus and make the round and pick up the kids and bring them to school. That's out at Buna.

BB: What kind of a salary did you get back in those days?

EB: About \$1900.

BB: A year.... you're talking....?

EB: Yes.

BB: Okay.

EB: I think I argued with the school board like heck to get a five dollar raise. They hated like heck to make a five dollar raise on it. Boy wasn't that something? I don't even like to think about it because it makes me bitter... to think what they get now. Beginning teacher gets \$10,000.

BB: Yes. Last year was my first year. We got eleven.

EB: Eleven. Well, that is good.

BB: Yes. But it doesn't buy very much now days either.

EB: I think I got \$1,900 or maybe I got \$2,000. \$1,900 I think is what sticks in my mind.

FR: The first year I went there... I got \$85 a month... nine months a year.

BB: Oh, nine months.

FR: Nine months.

EB: \$100 was good pay.

FR: And we had to discount our checks 10% because the state was broke. And to sell it the bank would cash it but discount it 10%.

BB: Instead of \$85 you got \$8.50 knocked off, huh.

FR: Yes, that's right.

BB: Oh, my goodness. Okay, you salary came from the state or came from....

FR: The common school district, I guess, which was the state.

EB: That was what they called rural aid salaries schedules...they had a ...schedule for teachers based on this rural aid schedule.

BB: Uh-huh.

EB: A lot of the teachers didn't get but \$100 a month. That was considered good pay at that time.

FR: And I guess that was for nine months out of the year, too. They didn't pay you for twelve.

BB: What would you do in the summer time?

EB: Go out and work in the lumberyard. Push one of those dollies up that broken down...

BB: They put you on the dolly run, huh?

EB: Yes, I did a good bit of that.

BB: Mr. Roth, did you do that, too?

FR: No...I...my father was a paint contractor and I worked for him in the summer time.

BB: Oh, you painted.

FR: I painted.

BB: Who was the county superintendent then?

EB: Howard Walker.

BB: Howard Walker.

EB: He is still living around here somewhere. David Walker is his son. The District Judge.

BB: Oh yes. The District Judge.

EB: I think he is the youngest of the Walker family. No, I mean the boys. I had several of his girls in Junior High in Lufkin. There was Ruth, and I have forgotten their names.

BB: What do you do now that you are retired, Mr. Bush?

EB: What do I do? Work in the garden. I work one garden and then move over and work in the other one a while and then I go back to that one and work some.

BB: What are the main differences that you see in the way things are done now and the way things were done back then, when you first started?

EB: Now, they have all sorts of help for the administrators. They have all sorts of office help. They got that in before I got out of the business but you just didn't have any help then.

BB: You did all the secretarial work yourself? Record keeping and that sort of thing?

EB: Oh, yes.

BB: What kind of records did you have to keep for the state back then?

EB: Well.

BB: I mean is it the same thing we do now? The attendance records and all that? Did you have to do all that?

EB: Oh, yes. We had to make out an annual report and turn it in to the state, which included attendance.

FR: I don't know how much reporting has increased but in those days we thought we had too much of it at that time because we had no help.

EB: No help.... That's right.

FR: We had to do it all ourselves.

BB: Yes...how long were you superintendent in Diboll?

EB: Five years.

BB: From there where did you go?

EB: Well, let's see. From here where did I go? I think I went to Newton, Texas. Went to Newton, Texas.

BB: And you did the same sort of work there?

EB: No, I believe I was principal and teacher. Stayed for a year and a half and went down to Buna as superintendent. Stayed there four or five years.

BB: Did ya'll have principals...in your different areas and then you were over the principals?

EB: Yes. Principal...uh-huh.

BB: I see. Okay. How was the school? Describe what the school looked like. Was it all in one big building?

EB: Diboll was...no, we had a high school building and then there was an elementary building.

BB: But it was all on the same lot.

EB: It was on the same lot and they had kind of a step deal over the fence at various places where the children could come over and get in there. And the hogs could come in with them and help them eat lunch. Yes. I had a little problem...discipline problem there one time. I told the kids that they were going to have to eat in the library or study hall to get away from the hogs. The hogs would run up there and get them a bite of something he could get his mouth on and run off with it, you know. So they didn't much want to do it, but they finally went with my wishes on that. Because the kids sat around in a circle, you know and if one had something that another one didn't have...they would swap around.

BB: Trade.

EB: Trade. Trade back and forth, but that was the problem. The hog business. Boy, when that whistle blew, they knew what that meant. They knew it was time to go get lunch.

BB: Kids and hogs alike.

EB: Yes.

BB: So you didn't have a cafeteria of any kind?

EB: No. We didn't have any cafeteria.

BB: The kids all brought their lunches.

EB: Yes, they brought their lunches. If they had one, or go home for lunch and come back.

FR: See back in those days, we had an hour for lunch and Diboll was close enough that those in town went home and those from the country brought their lunch. Those that rode the bus.

BB: So you had a bus system back in those days?

EB: Pardon?

BB: You had a bus system?

EB: Yes. They had one bus and we had a problem there one time. The kids got to stealing other kid's lunches, you know. I don't know how I got on to it, but I got on to one of the girls there. Came in one day and said, "Mr. Bush, so and so, they didn't steal our lunches." Well, do you know who is doing it? Well, she told me who had been getting some of it and so I made them apologize. Public apology in front of the study hall. They had stolen these lunches and that put a stop to it.

BB: When did you stop teaching all together? And working?

EB: I can't remember exactly...about '72, I think.

BB: What is the main change you saw in all those years?

EB: Discipline is deteriorated. They just don't have any discipline any more much. I hate to say what some cases of discipline. I didn't fail to use a board myself. And sometimes I had to use it pretty vigorously.

BB: To get a point across?

EB: To get a point across. I kind of got ashamed of how much application I put on to some of them on account of after they mixed the races, you know, blacks and white but they...

BB: What was the parent's attitude back then as opposed to when you stopped teaching, as far as their children were concerned? What they wanted from education?

EB: I don't know if they have changed a whole lot. At least my attitude about it hasn't changed any. If I had a kiddo that needed paddling...that he got. But sometimes it is kind of hard to get around to some of us. If you could talk to them that was the best point but some of them....

FR: Don't you think children start to school much earlier now? At an early age than they did when we taught?

EB: Well, they had a law of seven years old when they started.

FR: Yes, I think that was the age and now they start them in kindergarten at five and six.

EB: Yes, at five and six.

FR: I think it was seven when we were there.

EB: I think they were, too... seven years old.

BB: Do you ever miss teaching?

EB: No, not really. It hadn't bothered... hadn't bothered... hadn't bothered me a bit.

BB: Hadn't bothered you a bit.

EB: No, I haven't regretted and I haven't wanted to go back to the classroom and take it over because from what they tell me goes on, why I don't think I could put up with that.

BB: Yes. I think so, too.

FR: I think they would run you and I both off from the way we ran it, and the way they do it now.

BB: When the depression started in the early thirties, you were just getting out of college and starting on your own....

EB: Yes.

BB: And you had a regular job, so it didn't hurt you that much. Did you see cases around here where people were really bad off... or destitute... or anything like that?

EB: Oh, they used to the old freight train would come through Diboll. That thing would be loaded with hitchhikers and they would get out there and come by the houses and beg something to eat or ask for something to eat. If they get it, okay. And if they didn't get it, they would move on to the next town. My folks were pretty generous in giving handouts, you know. But those old box cars...not box...Well, box cars and those old empty other cars would be, you would see them filled up with people hunting... hunting... going from place to another hunting jobs. I know one summer there, the boys... Ag boys had a project in tomatoes and I I think it was some place up there and as far as I know, they sold enough tomatoes.

(End of side one)

They might have gotten a little better than one-half cent per pound. But that was the regular standard price... one-half cent per pound for tomatoes and they had a good crop of them. They had one of those places where they kept those plants; I've forgotten what they call them.

BB: I don't think the Ag boys now days do much of the actual gardening, do they? Don't they mainly raise animals?

FR: Well, I imagine that has got to be more productive... more money in it is the reason for it.

EB: Cold frame... that where they put those...

FR: Cold frame.

BB: Yes, that is where they begin to start the tomatoes... uh-huh. What was your opinion of the presidents during that period of time? Were you interested in politics very much?

EB: Yes, when I was teaching it in high school I kept up with it pretty close. Let's see, that was during the Hoover days?

FR: Yes.

BB: Yes.

EB: Herbert Hoover...Oh, it was just...

FR: I guess when you went to Diboll though, Roosevelt was president. He had defeated him.

EB: Oh, yes, he was president for a long time.

FR: Four terms... three and a half terms.

EB: I was in junior high in Lufkin when he died. We had a session in football.

FR: He must have served around fourteen years or close to it.

BB: How did everybody feel when they heard of his death?

EB: Well, it just depended on whether they regretted it. There wasn't anything they could do about it. Just one of those things that you can expect, you know.

BB: Yes.

EB: You are not going to live forever, so...

BB: I guess it was a lot different when he died as opposed to when President Kennedy was shot. Wasn't there a lot of difference?

EB: Oh, yes. That was different. That hurt me. That was one time that it hurt me. I thought he was really a smart man and we needed somebody that was smart to handle things.

BB: You never know.

FR: Well, there was a lot of difference there because Roosevelt was old and had been ill and Kennedy was assassinated, which makes quite a difference in everybody's attitude.

EB: Yes, that is the difference.

BB: Yes. Since you have been back around in this area and gone back just driving through Diboll, how does it impress you now?

EB: Well, it is a modern town now. I used to tell the kids when I was down there, one of these days you will see houses all up and down there and it will be a modern town. Of course, that has come about through Arthur Temple. Boy, those old shacks that used to be down there for people to live in. There was a general moving when one moved to get them a different house. Somebody was ready to move in from another direction. But now...

BB: Did the kids believe you when you told them that it would all be different?

EB: Well, I don't know whether they did or not. They got stuff around there now I guess won't wait. Gymnasiums and all that, and I couldn't even get.

FR: Well, some of them. I know a little old house that we lived in back of the doctor's place there. My wife was hanging a picture up on the wall and it was so... leaned so badly it might be that far away from...when you got down to where it ought to up against something...it just...

BB: Oh, no.

FR: Is that old Masonic building still standing there where we had the auditorium?

EB: I don't know. I don't ever get down that way any more.

FR: You know the school didn't have an auditorium and we used the Masonic...the lower part of the Masonic hall for the school auditorium.

BB: Did ya'll have plays or anything like that? Or just...

EB: Oh, yes. They had the usual annual play of a sort.

BB: Well, you know, they don't have one now. That is why I was asking.

EB: Oh.

BB: Not that I know about. But they used to?

EB: Oh, Yes. They made a big to do out of it.

BB: What about the Halloween carnival and things like that? Did they have those? Back then?

EB: Yes. The PTA usually had sponsored a deal. They would have a big pot of...what did they call that? Hash? No...

FR: Goulash.

EB: Goulash, yes, they called it goulash, you know. And they would sell it and make some money.

BB: What all did they have in it? Was it just under a fire outside or something like that?

FR: Yes, just a big wash pot with meat and all kinds of vegetables in there as far as I recall.

EB: I have a grade book here that I kept. Let me see...biology class. Let's see what year this was.

BB: That's neat.

FR: Do you want to cut this off?

BB: That's fine.

EB: Here is some of the kiddos.

BB: Oh, that is your grade book.

EB: Yes. I got another one here somewhere. Here's one Bobby Albritton, Majorie Berry... you might recognize... Ruth Burgess... Ruth Burgess is now...well, she is retired.

FR: What year is that?

EB: It is suppose to be...

BB: September of '28 to May of '29.

EB: Yes, that was my first year there.

FR: I wasn't there then.

EB: That was my first year there.

BB: I see. You didn't really give a number grade. You gave letter grades.

EB: I gave them in letters then we could convert them to numbers.

BB: Oh.

EB: An A was worth so many... so much... A would be worth ninety.

FR: Ninety to a hundred or somewhere in there.

EB: Yes.

BB: Huh...

EB: I see some of these... Dot O'Hara.

FR: Yes, I remember her.

EB: Paul Strauss.

FR: Sure, I remember him.

EB: And he married...oh fiddle, I can't think of her name now...Vivian Smith.

FR: Yes, I remember her.

EB: She is a retired teacher now.

FR: She lives over there by me now. She has been to our meeting...Vivian Warner.

BB: Vivian Warner. Oh, really. Let's see what she made.

FR: Yes. Let me know and I will tell her about that.

EB: Vivian Smith.

BB: What did she make?

EB: Vivian Smith was a pretty good...

BB: I started to say, she made A's. Look at all those.

EB: A's and B's.

BB: A's and B's.

EB: I jumped on them one day about their grades... and this girl spoke up... Vivian Smith spoke up and said, "I haven't gotten anything less than an A." I said, "Well, you come here and look at my book and I will show you what you have been getting. I don't know what they have been giving you, but"... K.P. Glass was her homeroom teacher. And he gave her what he thought she ought to have or wanted to give her. Boy, that called for a little horse talking on their part. I said, "You all are going to have to get that straightened out because that isn't right." She had...

BB: How many people did you have in your class? How large were your classes?

EB: Let me see. There is one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. That's twelve on that page. She got... twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen. And here is a physics class with Velma Ashworth, Ruth Albritton, Johnny Brooms from Corrigan. That's three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen. There were thirteen. Edna Vaughn. I have tried to think of that girl's name a lot of times and I could never think of it. She was a great big girl. Aden Vaughn was Lefty Vaughn.

FR: Yes, I remember him.

EB: Preston Stovall was a crippled boy. I made a mistake when I was checking him out. And I said, "Well, you are a basketball and baseball player of some sort." And he shook his head, "No." And he said, "Polio." He was a cripple boy. I just... see Davy... I don't know who Davy Riley is. Faye Potts from down at Corrigan... There was a bunch that came up from Corrigan.

BB: You mean they lived in Corrigan and drove?

EB: Yes, to high school. So they could graduate from a qualified high schools... Paul Kellow.

FR: Yes, I remember Paul.

EB: Aden Jayroe.

FR: Yes.

EB: [unintelligible] Hendrix.

FR: Yes.

EB: Roberta Edens. She came from Corrigan up here.

BB: Mr. Roth, did you teach in high school, too?

FR: Well, the first year I taught in grammar school. I was principal in grammar school. The second year, I was principal and taught in high school. Physics. That is the reason he hired me. He didn't want to teach physics.

BB: He didn't want to teach physics.

FR: So I ended up with physics, chemistry and biology.

BB: I want to know one thing. You know, now days to be a principal, or any of those things, you have to have a Master's in that area. But you didn't in those days?

FR: I imagine. You didn't in those days.

BB: You didn't in those days.

FR: No, but you were suppose to go to summer school and work toward a Master's which I did. I went back to summer school.

BB: But a Master's in any area. Didn't matter or was it a Master's in administration?

FR: I think it was just a Master's, but I never did teach long enough to ever get a Master's degree.

EB: Here are some of them that you would remember. Robert Hamner.

FR: Yes.

EB: Gilbert Hill.

FR: Yes.

EB: Played baseball. Ethel Grace. I can't remember who that one is. Inez Gipson... I don't know that one... I don't remember that one. Gordon Culpepper, Lawson Cunningham. We were talking about him the other day. He was raised down here. Lived on the river and they were talking about the kind of whiskey they made. I didn't ever drink any of it, so I don't know what kind of whiskey he made. Lawson

Cunningham. I remember talking to him and he lived down here on the river. Willa Faye Barnum. Hollis Ashworth.

FR: Who was that, Barnum?

EB: Willa Faye.

FR: Yes, that was... she had a brother. What was his name?

EB: Dub.

FR: Yes.

EB: His daddy I think was a sawyer.

FR: Yes, I think he was.

EB: His daddy was a sawyer. My father-in-law was a sawyer. Howard Jackson.

BB: What is that exactly?

EB: Pardon?

BB: A sawyer.

EB: He saws logs up, you know, into lumber.

FR: He controls the carriage that cuts the logs.

BB: Okay.

FR: Cuts the timber. It is one of the better jobs in a sawmill.

BB: It looks like it would be dangerous.

FR: It is.

EB: Do you remember Guy Nunly?

FR: Yes.

EB: I understood he fell off a car or something and bumped his head and died from it.

FR: I don't know. I hadn't heard that.

EB: Well, that was when he was a young man. At least I think he did. Kenneth Nelson.

FR: Yes.

BB: Oh, no.

EB: You know Kenneth.

FR: He is down there now.

BB: Yes.

EB: William Price was up here for the fiftieth reunion and he brought me one of these caps, you know. He wrote me a nice letter. I never did answer. I am sorry but I didn't. Collis Ryan. He married the little...oh, I have forgotten her name now. Vera Smith. She worked in the county clerk's office or county sheriff's office or something for a while. Claudine Scarborough, Bennie Squires, Argo Strauss, Morgan Tony.

BB: Do you have any pictures from those times?

EB: Well, I looked for them and I didn't find anything that I ... I let my son and his daughter come over here and pick out a bunch of stuff and I think they got about everything I had because I didn't figure they would...you know, they would keep it. So... Claude Wilkins, Franklin Weeks, you remember Franklin?

FR: Yes

EB: He is with the Foundry, I think. Irene Wilkerson, Gordy Weeks. I was looking for a young lady that I used to go with over at Leesville and called and said, "I used to live near Diboll." And I said, "What is your name?" "Gordy Weeks." I said, "Well, heck you went to school with me, girl." I had her in..... Gordy and Lucille Weise.

FR: Yes.

EB: Ruth Wright was the one I was talking about a while ago. Telling you "what is your name." And she forgot and then she said, "I don't know."

BB: Yes.

EB: Franklin used to keep our baseball scores for us.

BB: Would you go on a bus to these baseball games out of town or did you take the train?

EB: We usually could get enough cars.

BB: Go in cars and the parents would drive?

EB: No. The boys would drive.

BB: Oh, the boys would drive them. Boy, you wouldn't do that now days, would you?

EB: Dot O'Hara.

FR: Back in those days, you did anything you could to get there.

EB: Yes, Bobby Atkinson, Eugene Baker, you remember him?

FR: Yes.

EB: Margaret Berry, Ruth Burgess. Well, that is a repeat on some of these other classes. Aleene Scarborough, Vivian Weeks, Othal Womack. Do you remember Othal Womack? They lived out here across the creek somewhere. Mary Alice Weeks, Bertha Weisinger, Gordy Weeks, Paul Weeks.

FR: Yes, I remember Paul Weeks.

EB: He had a little polio, I think.

FR: He was crippled. No, he got...I was there when he got hurt. We were still living in Diboll as a child, and... do you remember Joe Ballenger?

EB: Yes.

FR: He was batting and he missed the ball and the bat slipped out of his hand and hit him on the leg. And he was crippled the rest of his life from it.

EB: Well, I'll be dog.

BB: Hum.

EB: I didn't know how it happened.

FR: No, it was an accident. It wasn't polio.

BB: I know what I was going to ask you. The black school and white school were completely separated, is that right?

EB: Oh, yes.

BB: Is that right? As the superintendent you didn't have anything to do with their...?

EB: None other than to issue them some books or give them books or something so they could...

BB: Something like that.

EB: I didn't have anything with them.

BB: What about the few Mexican families that were in town? Weren't there a few Hispanics?

FR: No.

EB: Do what?

BB: During that time?

FR: I don't remember any.

BB: Weren't the Miranda's family and the ...

FR: I don't remember any Latins there when we were there, do you?

EB: I don't remember any, either. We didn't have any in the white school.

BB: Huh.

FR: The Negro school had its own principal. But we didn't have any Latins in school at all that I recall in any grades.

EB: They told me... I don't know whether this is right or not, they told me that one of the principals, I have forgotten his name... his name was Davis.

FR: I remember him.

EB: He went out to California and that great star, colored boy was his son. Way back there. I don't know whether that is right or not.

FR: I don't know. I hadn't heard that. No, the Davis that I was thinking about was a white man and he was principal and superintendent when my mother taught school.

EB: Yes. He is the one that jumped out the window chasing some boy and got hurt.

FR: Yes. Broke his leg, I think.

EB: Broke his leg. They told me about that I don't know how many times.

FR: Yes. I was in about the first grade and I remember him.

EB: He jumped out chasing some boy and wanted to catch him and broke his leg or hurt his leg, or something.

BB: Oh, goodness. Sounds like you had problems with discipline back then, too.

EB: Yes... I didn't believe in sparing the rod and spoiling the child.

FR: Oh, there were some smart boys and girls in school at that time. Real smart and real... you know, they worked real hard and then there were some that went to school because they had to and they didn't really care.

BB: Yes.

EB: I remember an old boy. I told him if you don't know your lesson tomorrow you are going to wish you had. Well, tomorrow came and he still didn't know his lesson. I was going to give him a good boarding. I made him shell down his pants and oh, boy...his daddy had done worked him over and I said, "Boy, you can put you pants back up. I am not going to whip you. Not on top of that." He said his daddy had beat the hell out of him. I forgot his name. Anyhow, I didn't whip him. I told him he could just forget my part of the licking. He could just do without it.

BB: The one his daddy had given him evidently hadn't done much good either. So...

EB: Oh, no. Sometimes they were pretty rough on them.

FR: Cut that off. I want to say something.

END OF INTERVIEW