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Interview with Dr. Jack Chalender and Dr. Bob Chandler

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Recommended Citation

Chalender, Robert A.; Chalender, Ralph E. "Jack"; and Chalender, Bob L., "Interview with Dr. Jack Chalender and Dr. Bob Chandler" (1990). *College of Education One-Room Schoolhouse Oral Histories*. 126.
<https://scholars.fhsu.edu/ors/126>

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CHAPTER TWO
AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. RALPH E. "JACK" CHALENDER
AND DR. BOB L. CHALENDER

Dr. Jack Chalender, what schools did you attend?

JACK: My elementary school was a rural school, in Miami county, called North Windy, school district 88. Then I went to Wellsville High School and from there I went to Emporia State and the University of Kansas and then the University of Washington and Columbia University.

Dr. Bob Chalender, what schools did you attend?

BOB: I went to the same rural school, District 88, Miami county, Richland township, North Windy for all eight grades. Then four years to Wellsville High School and then I broke with family tradition, and attended Kansas State University, Wichita State University, University of Arkansas,, Colorado University and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

At North Windy, what subjects did you study?

JACK: In a rural school, you studied it all. You took the basic course, which met all the state requirements. That basically was reading, English, mathematics, geography, or social studies, and whatever other courses the teacher wanted to throw in. We had art by radio and we had music everyday and physical education which would be playground activities. We probably had as good of physical education program as they did in the large elementary schools in the cities. So I'd say the complete curriculum was covered.

BOB: We had spelling. We had writing.

JACK: That's right! We had penmanship and we took it and we learned to write so it could be read.

BOB: And we practiced penmanship.

Art by radio sounds interesting. What is it about?

JACK: In those days there was a program that was developed and started at the University of Kansas. Maude Ellsworth was the teacher. The rural teacher was given an outline of what was to be presented and we all got excited everytime we took the class...every week or maybe twice a week. We had whatever

was needed for the lesson on our desk and then Maude came on the radio and she taught different concepts each time. She taught the basic colors and things like that. She gave instructions and we followed those instructions. Then she played classical music, while we did the project. We sent in our papers and we got graded. It was fun and an innovative program. It was recognized nationwide. It was really wonderful. I learned a lot.

BOB: The curriculum, for the other courses, was set by the county superintendent. There were curriculum guides sent out so that every rural school was assured that they were covering the basic material that was deemed appropriate and deemed necessary at that time. You just didn't have a one room school teacher that was left out there by herself with out any direction at all.

JACK: That curriculum guide was a big brown book and later on in my life I helped write some of those units. Bob is absolutely right, you followed those and were checked on to see if you did. It was for each grade, not just one grade but for all grades.

Who checked on the teacher?

JACK: The county superintendent plus anyone else who wanted to come in.

BOB: The county superintendent visited our school. I can remember our county superintendent when I was in elementary school was a woman by the name of Miss Hazel King. She came to our school and visited on several occasions and she wrote copious notes and talked with the teacher afterwards. So the teacher had an evaluation, at that time. Today we think about evaluation as being something innovative but it was carried on back in those days also.

JACK: That lady is still alive. She must be 90 years old.

BOB: She was a Republican. She ran by political party and was county superintendent the whole time both of us went to school.

Talking about the teaching method and evaluation, what type of teaching methods did they use?

BOB: I would say offhand that cooperative education is not a new concept. The children in the upper grades helped teach those who were in the lower grades. The students in the eighth grade would listen to first

graders read and would help and assist. We had unit projects. We had group activities. We had lecture. I feel we had diverse teaching technology.

JACK: It was direct teaching. The teacher was in complete charge. What the teacher said was the law. The students knew it and the parents respected the teacher. If you didn't produce at school, the teacher called your parents and you had to answer to your parents when you got home. As far as counseling is concerned, probably the best counseling I had was in elementary school. The teacher knew us inside and out. If we weren't reading or if we didn't do our work or if we misbehaved, the teacher knew it. Incidentally, there was a spot on the grade card for conduct, which was for behavior. The teacher would just call your parents. They'd come up to school and have a talk with the teacher, with you sitting right there. So counseling, is not a new concept. In fact, we've gotten too far away from it. We had better counseling at the elementary level, in those days, than we had in the forty or fifty years that I've been around the teaching profession since.

BOB: There wasn't anything unusual about parents, both mothers and fathers, coming to visit the classroom. I can't remember too many weeks, that went by, in which there wasn't a parent in the classroom. They would come in and sit in the back of the classroom and stay for a while.

We've talked about counseling. What about other services like speech pathology, learning disabilities classes, were those services offered?

JACK: In those days, there wasn't any federal or state money for that type of program, but the teacher knew each individual child. She knew their basic needs and wants and their parents. I'd say that we had as good of a program with the one room school teacher as we have with the specialized programs today. She simply gave of herself and of her time. I use the female gender because I only had female teachers, in the one room school. I can recall students who had speech difficulties, learning difficulties, some had emotional difficulties and I feel the teachers handled those problems very adequately.

BOB: There was also a county health nurse and when there were health problems that service was available. There was a county health check of the school. They checked the water and the sanitation of the school. So there was, in fact, some help in that way.

I think Jack is absolutely right. The teacher knew the student and knew the community so well, that if there was a problem she was aware of it and would visit with the child and the parents.

JACK: Another auxiliary service, that was started at North Windy, was the lunch program. We just had a pot bellied stove that was run by coal and started with cobs until we got electricity. Then the teacher got a hot plate and she really started one of the first hot lunch programs in the country. She'd bring either canned soup or our parents would provide it and we'd have a hot lunch program. I've often thought of that when I read of innovative programs. Our teacher was far ahead of her time. She started a hot lunch program with a two burner hot plate. Before that hot lunch program, you brought your lunch in a metal pail.

BOB: You'd put your sandwich in the cloak room and if it was very, very cold the sandwich would freeze.

Let's return to something that was mentioned earlier, the playground. What type of games and activities did you play?

JACK: We all had to learn to play together and it was a matter of learning to get along with one another. Some of us, myself included, were some of the most unathletic people in the world. We'd choose up sides and play softball. I remember whoever was captain would say, "We'll take Jack." That meant I was a pretty good guy but I was a terrible ballplayer. So they put me out in centerfield as far away as I could go. Once in a while I could hit the ball. The teacher supervised us. It wasn't a matter of the teacher leaving us at all. She was there every second. I don't know how she stood it. We played a lot of games and we played together. We'd swing the little ones and we'd teeter-totter. Then we'd play games like Andy-Over, where we throw the ball over the schoolhouse.

BOB: Over the coalhouse.

JACK: As we got stronger, we could throw it over the schoolhouse. I don't ever remember breaking a window. We played Run Sheep Run.

BOB: Dare Base and New Orleans.

JACK: And another one, that we'd get thrown in Jail if we played it now, called Black Man. If you got caught and got put on the base, you were the black man. Then your team had to come and rescue you.

BOB: We played Fox and Geese. In the wintertime, we'd make a fox and geese ring. Then we'd divide it in to four parts and make paths in each section. In all the sections, the goose could get out but in one if the goose went up that path he was caught. There was no place for the goose to go. We had a large Playground area.

JACK: We cut hedge sticks.

BOB: And played ice hockey.

JACK: We just took a can and the sticks. It's a wonder we didn't get killed but we didn't. Everyone played together and the older ones looked out for the younger ones. There was sometimes a bully around but if there was

everybody ganged up on the bully and put him in his place and that took care of it.

BOB: The older kids would play games like Drop the Handkerchief, so that the little ones could succeed. Nobody thought it was sissy because it was a turn for the little ones. I remember playing that with the little kids and as an older one you'd pair off. An older student would go with a younger student and that way they'd have some success.

JACK: We played Hide and Seek.

BOB: Another thing is that the teacher would let us out in shifts so that we could use the swings, teeter-totter and merry-go-round. The little kids would go out early so they could swing and then she'd have them come in and take a nap or rest while the bigger kids played on the equipment. So there was a differentiated schedule.

JACK: She also scheduled the outdoor toilets. The little kids would go first and then the upper classmen. We had a well outside that we all shared. Although our parents were asked to send us a tin cup, that had our name on it, we didn't use it. We drank right from the

well or used each others cups. None of us ever died.

BOB: The well was a deep well and it supplied water for the whole community.

JACK: The water was so good. I can taste it right now. It was cold.

Talking about scheduling, what was the length of the school day and the school year?

BOB: We ran for eight months. We got out in April. The length of the day was 8:00 to 4:00. I can't remember for sure.

JACK: Just when everybody got there is when we started having school. That may have been 8:00 or 8:30, if the weather was bad. The teacher started working the minute she got there. Sometimes we had days off, if the weather was bad or if somebody was ill. I remember one family, the father was sick so the older boys were needed to put the crops in... so we just didn't have school. The older ones went and worked and then we made up those days. However many days the state required, the teacher was required to teach those but we took off work days. That happened several times in my period at North Windy.

BOB: If a family member in the community died, we didn't have school. We had a family that lived very close to the school, and when there was a death in that family, school was not in session because all the children and their parents went to the funeral. So those sort of things were flexiable. You had the flexablility because it was a community school.

What about competency tests? And grade level tests?

BOB: We had to pass a state and county exam to finish eighth grade.

JACK: It depended on the teacher. There wasn't a test like the Iowa Basic Skills or anything like that. Our teachers always gave individualized tests and they could tell what your reading level was and where you were and what you should be accomplishing.

BOB: We had the Reed/Tracey test and the Metropolitan Readiness test. They were used wisely and a teacher, if she felt it necessary discussed it with our parents in laymans language.

JACK: And they were expected to help us at home and they did.

BOB: It was not uncommon for each parent to invite the teacher to come for dinner one time during the year. We all looked forward to it. That way the teacher found out a little bit about the home setting. She got to visit with your parents about your activities and how you were doing.

What about library?

JACK: The library, by today's standards, would have been pretty pathetic. We had a little library up in the corner of the room. The budget was to buy all the Kansas Reading Circle books, which were approved books.

BOB: There were six to eight of those a year.

JACK: I think one for each grade level. Good students read every book in the library, every year. The teacher assigned us research projects. We did have a set of World Books that were kept up to date. I remember reading pages and pages in the World Book. The teacher would give us an assignment, I think to keep us busy. The teacher often times brought magazines and books from home. It wouldn't meet today's standards.

BOB: There was a county library system in which they sent a box of books...

JACK: A trunk.

BOB: A trunk of books. You had that trunk of books for a month. We read everything in that trunk of books. Good students would read every book.

JACK: They'd read the first grade books, the eighth grade books. I remember...

BOB: Reading them all!

JACK: The teacher would always read to us, everyday.

BOB: The Billy Goat Gruff Series

JACK: Johnny Tremain. If we got in from recess on time she might read to us a few chapters. She made us want to read. Every teacher I had was just tremendous.

What type of atmosphere did they have at North Windy school?

BOB: It was very warm and caring. We felt the teacher loved us and we loved her. In fact, we were all in love with the teacher. When they got married, we hated the man that married the teacher. It was a sense of family. It was a sense of, as Jack mentioned

earlier, respect. We were told that what the teacher said was right and we had to obey and follow the directions of the teacher. That was expected from the home, as well as the school and the Board of Education. So the atmosphere was one of, we had a job to do, we had to learn, and the teacher was there to help us. It was a very positive atmosphere. I couldn't ask for a better educational setting than we had at little North Windy Rural school.

JACK: That didn't mean the teacher couldn't get mean because she could. She could let you have it when you needed it. I don't ever remember a teacher using any corporal punishment but the big kids used to always tell the little kids that the teacher had a rubber hose. I never did understand that, unless they were going to use the rubber hose to beat up on you, if you didn't behave. I don't think that ever existed. I don't remember anybody getting paddled or swatted or anything. That didn't mean the teacher couldn't be plenty firm because they were. When we cut up and she decided that was enough, we knew not to go any further.

BOB: I liked to talk a lot and I had to stand in the corner, periodically. If you talked too

much, you stood in the corner for a period of five or ten minutes. I'll tell you, it seemed like an eternity but sure got you calmed down in a hurry. I don't remember any of the kids ever getting spanked. I remember being told by my mother and father that if I got spanked at school I'd get a worse one at home. That was one of the better deterrents.

What was the enrollment of North Windy?

BOB: The lowest enrollment when I was in school was 18 and I recall we had up in the forties at one time. There were 36 or 40 seats and they were all full...first through eighth grades were taught. The classes got smaller, while I was attending North Windy, because farmers began to consolidate and others moved in to jobs in Kansas City. You could originally make a living on eighty acres but then that became impossible as technology began to advance. Therefore, it became necessary to have more land and the labor market became diversified. Our father stopped farming in 1936.

JACK: You had to because you couldn't live otherwise.

BOB: So he moved into the heavy equipment business and worked on Starlight Theatre and building roads and other things. All of the kids at North Windy were farm kids. We were all poor and happy. We were all white, protestant kids. There were a couple of Catholics.

JACK: You did a lot of things in combination. The Social studies units were done in combination-- first / second, third/fourth, fifth/sixth and so on.

What were the ages of the students who attended North Windy?

JACK: They started at six but sometimes a teacher would start some youngsters at five years old. They might come the second semester. It was more than babysitting the teacher taught them phonics and they were able to write their name and spell before they actually started first grade. That was the exception to the rule.

BOB: I came early. Miss Rhodes allowed me to come the last month of the school year. I've always been beholdng to my brother because his responsibility was to take care of me. I went that month before the fall term. Jack's

right, I knew my numbers, letters and alphabet. I knew how to write my name. I knew my mother's and father's name and the birthdays of all the members of the family. That was the last month before school got out, April.

JACK: They taught phonics and I'd like to see it continue.

BOB: The age of the students varied because the boys would go and farm. Thurst Cox was at North Windy and he was 16 or 17 years old. We found out early that if I gave Thurst Cox a cookie he'd take care of me. He wasn't a bully. He was just big and if anybody said anything about me Thurst would stand up and clear his throat and I didn't have to worry.

Was there a lot of transit families in your school district?

BOB: Not very much they were all farm families. They stayed put.

JACK: If they did leave, it was the first of March, that was moving day for the farmers. However, there was very little moving.

Tell me about special events, holidays, and graduations at North Windy?

BOB: First of all, the graduation was a county graduation. When you finished the eighth grade, you went to Paola, with all of the eighth graders who had finished their work, and went through the ceremony. You had an invocation, an introduction, presentation of diploma, and a little talk by someone and then the closing prayer. It was a special occasion. You were dressed in your Sunday best and all the family was there. The school did not have a separate graduation because there might have only one or two graduates. In my case, there were two.

JACK: The special occasions were just wonderful. We had what we called community meetings. This was when the community just came in for a pot luck dinner at night. Sometimes, there would be a program, and sometimes the adults played cards. There were games for the kids. Everyone played together and enjoyed it. We played pitch, that was the most popular game. Some people played pinochele but bridge was a little too sophisticated. We had the best food. Everybody came to these, even if you didn't have kids in school because it was the social event of the month. If somebody was

ill or couldn't come, somebody took them a big plate of food. We had programs that the teacher presented. Every kid participated. You'd give a recitation or we'd give little plays. We sang songs. We did little dances.

BOB: Folk dancing.

JACK: If the teacher wasn't musical, she got somebody in the community to come in and play the piano. They were just really great events.

BOB: We had a money maker every year, a box supper. A girl would decorate her box and fill it with goodies and food. Then the auctioneer would sell it and all the old men knew whose box was whose. They knew how much money the kids had and would run the bid up to your last penny and then they'd let you win the bid. One of the biggest ones was who got to buy the box of the school teacher. I can remember the teacher's box going for as much as ten or twenty dollars. That was considered unbelievable! Then we went from box suppers to penny suppers. Remember, Jack?

JACK: That's right, penny suppers!

BOB: All the mothers brought in food and they charged you a penny a dip for all the food. That money went to buy books for the library. I remember we had a record player, that was a big thing, and they bought that with the money from the penny suppers.

JACK: We bought a globe. Everybody had the best time and they would laugh. Everyone would stay a long time at the penny suppers. On the last day of school, we'd have a special program. A child would give their recitation and the teacher would give out little awards. We got certificates for spelling, reading, perfect attendance...

BOB: Citizenship. Then, we'd have a big dinner with homemade ice cream. Then the dads would play the kids in softball and the kids always won. It was always arranged that the kids would always win.

JACK: Everybody played.

BOB: Everybody played and everybody had a good time.

JACK: Some the mothers would play. Our mother did.

BOB: Our mother was a good player.

JACK: In the community, they put on three act plays at the school. Again, Mother was always the

coach of those. We had a float that we always took to the Wellsville parade. We always thought we were going to win and a lot of times we did! Oh we'd work on those floats. I remember that the Meyers had a big barn and we'd put the float in there and we'd work on it. There was community activity and everyone was proud of their school.

BOB: Another thing that happened was, we always played the neighboring schools in softball in the spring. We didn't have a gym so we couldn't play basketball. We'd even get together and run races with other schools that were within two or three miles of us.

JACK: Sometimes we'd get to go on a picnic over in the timber and that was a big deal.

BOB: Some of the boys would sneak off and go swimming. If you believe it, in April! Shimmy out of your clothes and dive in the cold.

JACK: It was great!

The community used the school for activities other than school?

JACK: All the time.

BOB: The school was open every night.

JACK: You were suppose to keep it clean and be careful of the fire.

BOB: And stoke the fire in the wintertime so when the teacher got there in the morning there would be coals so it would heat the classroom by the time the children got there.

JACK: We didn't have any formal organization like PTA or anything like that but this far excelled any PTA I've ever seen in my whole life.

BOB: Everybody was involved with the school.

JACK: The people who didn't have kids involved in school they'd join right in. If a family was down and out, you'd help one another. Sometimes if they needed money for clothes or food the community would just take care of it through the school. There was no embarrassment.

BOB: At Christmastime, every child got a Christmas present. There were people who checked that every child got a nice Christmas gift at the school Christmas party.

JACK: We had a cedar tree that was all decorated. We made the decorations at school. I guess that would be art work. It was really fun.

BOB: We strung popcorn and cranberries. And the tree was lit with candles and I remember the men sitting with buckets of water in case the tree would catch fire.

Was there a school board for your school?

BOB: Yes, a three member board. They were elected by the patrons. They had staggered terms so they would not be all be elected the same year. As I recall most of them were men but occasionally a woman would be elected. They were the ones who hired the teacher, and set the budget.

JACK: They had certain forms that they had to send into the county superintendent and the county treasurer. They wrote the teacher's check each month. They called it a voucher but it was a check. They met whatever expenses you had like cobs and coal and chalk. They had a little budget for school supplies so we really didn't go without.

BOB: Another thing is that the teacher was the custodian. She took care of keeping the building clean. The older children helped sweep and the younger ones dusted erasers. Then in the summer, the school board hired

some family to go in and wash the windows, scrub the floors and get the building perfectly clean. I remember on occasion our family did that. I think we got twenty dollars or ten dollars for cleaning it. We spent two or three days and oiled the floors. When the school opened the school was clean polished and ready to go. The desks had been washed.

Let's talk a little bit about the building. Do you know when the building was built?

JACK: I have a history of all the schools in Miami county that Toots Dickey, from Osawatomie, gave me but I don't recall...

BOB: It was built before you and I started. There was North Windy and West Windy. West Windy were our rivals and Jack's wife attended there. South Windy got fancy and became Poplar Ridge. I don't know what happened to East Windy and I don't know where the Windy came from. On our grounds, there was a schoolhouse and a township hall. The school used the township hall. The township hall had the stage in it and that's where we gave our plays. The school was made of wood.

JACK: In very few cases, in Miami county, were the schools made out of stone or bricks. If they

were made out of that, there was a stone mason around who donated his labor and built it.

Is the North Windy building still standing?

BOB: It's still there and is used as a community building today. It is on several acres on the land that was donated by a farmer.

JACK: It was donated by the McCarthy's and has since returned to them.

BOB: When the school district consolidated. They consolidated with Wellsville. North Windy also had two outdoor privys with a modesty panel at the front so you couldn't see in. We didn't have indoor toilets at anytime that I was in school. They were all outdoors. They had the lime on it and the odor of an out door privy.

JACK: They were at the back of the lot.

BOB: You couldn't smell them in school. It was placed in a location that drained off so there was no way it could interfere with the well.

JACK: The boys would throw things at the girls toilet and the girls would scream.

BOB: The girls would complain about that we were peeking.

JACK: We'd throw hedgeapples...

BOB: Corncobs...

JACK: The girls would scream and carry on and the teacher would come out and take care of that in short order.

BOB: There was a swing set, a teeter-totter and we had a merry-go-round, until it got dangerous. There were a lot of broken limbs, so they took it out.

JACK: But it was strictly a one room school. It had the type of desks that are now in museums.

BOB: The desks were originally screwed to the floor. When they modernized, they put the desks on runners, so they could move them over to the side so we could play and do things in the room. We had some double desks originally but they caused a lot discipline problems so they went to the singles. There was a book shelf under each desk and an ink well that you could use for penmanship. We eventually went to bottled ink but at that point we used the ink. We had blackboards and they were black. They were slate. They went around half of the room.

JACK: We had a recitation bench. It was just a long hard bench. The teacher would ask for the first grade to come up. They'd come up and sit on that bench. The teacher would visit with them and they would recite.

BOB: She'd be giving spelling lessons to another grade and checking math problems on the board of another class, while she was listening to the recitation.

JACK: If one of the pupils didn't know the answer it wasn't unusual for one of the older kids to whisper the right answer to the kid who was trying to recite. When we got ready to go she'd say, "turn, rise, pass." That's what you did. You didn't push over each other. Then she'd say, "Fourth grade, reading, turn, rise, pass," and we go up and sit on the recitation bench. We walked to school.

BOB: Or on a cold day our parents would take us.

JACK: Or we rode a horse.

BOB: We had a sled, in the wintertime. A farmer would hitch up a team. The Shields had a sled. They would bring a horse and pick up everyone.

JACK: There was a horse shed at North Windy. If you rode the horse to school and didn't want it left there all day you'd just turn the horse loose. I don't understand this, but I guess by instinct the horse would return back home. I remember, the Cox kids would pick me up on their horse. They'd put me on the front of the horse, facing the rider, and call me the windshield. They'd turn that horse loose and go just as fast as they could possibly go! It scared me to death.

BOB: We had a collie dog by the name of Queen. Queen would walk with us to school and then go home. At the end of day, Queen would be on the step of the school and we'd walk home. That was a protection because if anybody messed with us Queen would go after them. So we had protection going home. We were afraid of gypsies. On a couple of occasions, the gypsies did come by and we were told to cut across the fields. Gypsies had been known to steal children.

JACK: They were mean. This was a problem but nothing ever happened.

How far did you live from school?

BOB: A mile and a half.

What were the Boundries of the school district?

BOB: A two mile circumference would catch it. Two miles north, south, east and west.

JACK: The boundries changed according to the population.

BOB: When the enrollment went down two schools consolidated. Eventually, they consolidated and went to town and I'm not sure that was a good idea.

JACK: Poplar Ridge didn't have enough students so that school board met with the North Windy school board. They just worked out an agreement and the money the county would have allocated to Poplar Ridge just went to North Windy. There wasn't any transportation problems because the parents just agreed to get the kids to school. Prairie Belle was another one that closed.

BOB: North Windy was on an all weather road. A sand road...that might be why they consolidated with North Windy.

Describe how a typical day began at North Windy.

BOB: Before school you had an opening exercise. you lined up outside in two lines and said

the pledge of allegiance. Then, you marched in to the classroom and took your seat. There was always the flag salute and a prayer in the morning, that was before the Supreme Court got involved with that, and we read from the Bible periodically.

JACK: Then she'd read to us out of those books. They chose good books. I can still remember them reading to us.

BOB: They read the classics. The Board was concerned about us getting water indoors, even though the well was pretty close, so they got a stone water fountain. They put a chunk of ice in there when it was hot so we would have cool water.

There was an ante room where you'd hang up your coats. Each of the students had a peg with their name. There was a closet with a door on it and you put your lunch in there to keep it away from flies and such. There were three windows on each side. They weren't too tight. In the winter, it could get a little chilly, if you sat near the windows. In the spring the school was hot.

JACK: There were mice. We had those from time to time. Before we had electricity, we had a big Coleman lamp. It was the biggest excitement

when it got dark and the teacher had to pump the lamp up and start it. We'd all get in a circle, so we could read by the light. It was just a big event.

BOB: We were told if you read in the dark, it would hurt your eyes. We would all complain about it being dark, so the teacher would get the Coleman lamp. No one ever complained about the cost or anything so she kind of went along with it. On those dark days, when she'd light the Coleman lantern it would make the room more cheerful.

JACK: It was just exciting!

Was getting electricity a disappointment or a letdown after the excitement of the lamp?

JACK: No , that was an exciting time too. The teacher taught us how much it was going to cost. We couldn't have the lights on in the school a lot and the people had made this available for us so we couldn't abuse it. And we didn't. It was a real privilege to have an electric light on. We got a kerosene stove that the teacher used, on occasion.

BOB: But they didn't like the odor. The big pot bellied stove had a reservoir on it. (An appendage, that holds water, that was right

next to the stove.) This allowed us to so have hot water to wash our hands. When you got to fill the reservoir, for the teacher, it was a big deal. We moved from cobs to wood to coal in the stove.

JACK: There was a guard around the stove. If you'd been out playing in the snow and all, you'd put your gloves on the rail. When the gloves got too hot they'd smell. It would just be terrible, so our teacher made a place for us to put our mittens and our gloves down on the floor. They would dry just as well.

BOB: We wore long underwear, overalls, and long brown socks. I hated those darn things.

JACK: We held them up with a rubber band.

BOB: In the winter time we had boots. The boots had a pocket for a knife on it. I had blue and white stripped overalls with a pocket in the top that you'd put a pencil in.

JACK: The girls wore dresses and cotton hose. They never wore overalls or pants. They had those long brown socks.

BOB: We all had mackinaw coats. They were heavy and awful.

JACK: We had sheepskin coats, too. That was really uptown.

What about the teachers bell?

JACK: The teacher had a bell that rang that would tell you to come in from recess. I have that bell. My mother was on the school board and she gave it to me. I don't think it was legal but I'm glad I have it.

Both of you went on to college and successful careers in education. Do know what happened to your classmates?

JACK: Sure I know them all. They're still all around.

BOB: Most of them stayed in the region. They do just about everything. A lot of them are farmers. There's some bankers.

JACK: Eddie was in the Navy and an engineer. Roberta and Loretta married. Jimmie Price worked for T. G. and Y. and later worked for another company. The Cox family went into construction. I think they all graduated from high school. I'm not sure how many went on to college but that wouldn't be a fair assessment of the school because of the war. Many of them left school and joined the service because that was the thing to do in those days.

BOB: I don't think that there were any that weren't a success.

How do account for this success?

BOB: I think the success was the one-on-one teaching and the close relationship between the parent and the school. It just pays dividends. I think another reason for the success was that our parents were absolutely certain that education was the way to succeed.

Did going to a one room schoolhouse prompt you to go into education?

JACK: I never had any desire to do anything else. I thought when I was in the rural school that I was going to be a teacher. I thought I could do things as well as the teacher and I guess I thought I might even do it better.

BOB: I played school from the time I was three or four. Then I started teaching Sunday school class when I was twelve. I think our parents encouraged us. The teachers encouraged us. Teaching was an honorable profession and you could make a reasonable living being a teacher.

Today you hear of scandals in government, entertainment, and even schools. Do you recall any scandals at North Windy?

BOB: I can't remember any. I remember, my dad got upset one time because someone thought we shouldn't play cards in school and Dad didn't see anything wrong with that. He squared that around pretty quick. We played pitch at recess, in the wintertime. I don't remember any scandals. All the teachers were above reproach.

JACK: I don't think there were any. I'm sure that in the county there were probably problems here and there but I just don't recall them.

What were some of the weaknesses of the one room school?

JACK: I think that there were some teachers who were inferior. I didn't have any of them and I don't know who they were but I'm sure they were there.

BOB: We didn't have science equipment. Our science was textbook and maybe a little experiment the teacher dreamed up.

JACK: We took health habits and that wouldn't have kept in step with today.

BOB: But I don't think I was short changed. I really think I was well equipped to go on to high school. I didn't have any trouble at the high school... didn't have too much trouble at K-State. I think I was well trained.

JACK: I think the one room school has faded into the past and I think that's progress. I have no quarrel with that. I'll never let anyone belittle my one room school because I think I got as good of a basic education, as if I had attended a larger city school.

Do you believe that some of the trends in education are circular and what you experienced in a one room school is coming back again?

JACK: I see it everyday and I just smile.

BOB: We talk about shared partnership with the parents, teacher-student relationships, cooperative learning, and that's what we had.

What were the benefits to a one room school education?

BOB: I think it was the closeness and the caring and the counseling. As Jack said, we had the best counseling in the world. The teacher loved us and if something went wrong and we

weren't responding she dug in after it. I think knowing your student is still critical. Our teachers knew us very well and knew our parents very well.

JACK: It was one-to-one teaching even if there were forty kids the teacher took time for each child. That made the difference. I think she instilled a desire for learning. In some of the homes, there wasn't too good of a background for it, so the teacher was actually teaching the student and the parents. I know times change but the history of the one room school will go down as a plus.

BOB: I think we got encouragement because the teacher said to us, "Even though you are a rural student you will do well in high school. You have the tools. You will go to high school you will graduate." We heard that from the time we were first graders all the way through eighth grade. It was reinforced by our parents. You felt like you couldn't let your family down, your teacher down and your community down.