

## A WALK THROUGH POND BEAT

It's the 1930's. I came across the river from Morgan County on the ferry old man Holt runs, and I'm walking up the Pike (South Memorial Parkway).

On the left is the two-room wooden Farley school that has grades one through nine. The school bus is pulling out on the road. Robert Long has driven his son, James, and the other white children from Pond Beat to school, and now he's going back there, where he lives and manages the Schiffman & Co., Inc. land. The day is warm, so the canvas curtains that are on each side of the bus are rolled up. The sides of the bus are wood, which comes up so far, and then there is a long open space, like a window, but there is no glass, only the canvas curtains. The bus goes so slowly that you could get off and run beside it. It would never get up enough speed to blow your hat off.

Inside the school, Lilly Latham is teaching from the primer, and Billy White is being careful not to miss a word, because if he does, she will give him a slap on the cheek. The principal, Mr. P. Roscoe Ivy, is talking with Vivian Fleming, Margaret Hobbs, Eva Jane Bell, James Long, and some of the other students on the playground, which has a good variety of equipment. Behind the school is a big outhouse. It has an awful smell when you go in!

When the white children from Pond Beat finish the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they usually go to high school in New Hope. They can ride on a bus to New Hope from Farley School. Duncan Woodward drives

himself and his sister Edith from their home in Pond Beat to the blacksmith shop that is at the intersection of the Pike and the Farley-Triana Road. He leaves the family automobile there, and they catch the bus. Duncan knows Jack Turner, the blacksmith, because that's who his daddy, Lee Woodward, goes to when he needs any blacksmith work done. Actually, Duncan really likes the blacksmith's sister, and since I can see into the future, I can tell you that he will marry her in time to come.

Across the pike from the Farley school for white children is the Farley school for black children. Its only playground equipment is a swing on the tree and a seesaw out in the open field. No bus is there because black kids walk to school. The schoolhouse is white frame and has two good-sized rooms. The children only attend school when there are no crops to work. Rosetta Thornton, tall, thin, and light-skinned is in her classroom, and the children know she books no nonsense, which is probably why one of her students says, "She's as mean as a snake!"

Now we've passed the blacksmith shop, and I'm turning west on the Farley-Triana Road. I am on my way to the Harris farm, but I'll show you around Pond Beat on the way. In a mile or two we will pass the road going south to where Lehman's Ferry was.

There it is, on the left. Percy Joiner lives down that way. He and his brother Claudie bought land that had been part of the Timmons plantation after Claudie