

born (1926), but they came back to Blackgum in 1932. There was no school in Blackgum at that time, so my grandfather built one out of surplus lumber--a one-room schoolhouse with grades 1-8. He was one of two teachers, and there were about 60 students. I understand the Vian Times last month published an old photograph of the Blackgum school, with my grandfather and the other teacher, along with the students, including my father and his "cousins by the dozens." Dad recalls that my grandfather was paid \$60 a month by the county--when the county paid at all, and sometimes he had to take a discount on the check in order to cash it. During that period he was also taking courses up at Northeastern towards a college degree, which he earned after about 20 years. After that he and my grandmother moved out to Shawnee (I think that was in 1944), where he became principal of the Acme School and also served as School Superintendent for Pottowattomie County. My father was in the Army at that time.

My father attended a number of colleges, including Northeastern, which is where he met my mother (Wilma Boatman Bias). So even though I have never been to Tahlequah, I owe my existence to it! My parents transferred to O.U.--so that my father could go to engineering school--and got their degrees there. They were living in Tulsa when I was born (1950), but after my father's discharge from the Korean "police action" we moved to Maryland, where I lived until I was 17 and went off to college.

I have never had too much contact with my grandfather's family (he died in 1972). My grandmother passed away in 1987, but her sister Opal Abbott still lives in Blackgum. Her brother, Lon Pack, lived in Blackgum until his death last December. His wife Cleo is still living there, and their daughter Phyllis (whose married name I don't know), is a faculty member in the English department at Northeastern.

I am curious about Bill Wahpepah, whom you mention in your book. The custodian and bus driver at the Acme School when my grandfather was principal (during the 1950s and early 1960s) was a Kickapoo man whom we knew just as "Mr. Wahpepah" (the biggest and strongest man I had ever seen--but I was just a little kid). During the summers he and his family moved out of their house and lived in a wickiup he had built on his property--it was, after all, before universal air conditioning! Anyway, I was wondering if Bill Wahpepah was related to him--especially since he came from Shawnee.

Is the Cherokee Nation involved in publishing? Has the tribal newspaper been revived? I have more than a journalistic or political interest--I have worked in printing and publishing for over twenty years now, and I do all the typography and design work (including cover design) for BIDOM. In my "day job," (which is actually at night) I work for Lazernet Graphics in New York, which is the parent company of Spectrum Multilanguage Communications, the largest non-English typography service in North America. I was going to offer to create a Tsalagi typeface which could be used in desktop publishing computer applications, but I see that a Yale man named Joe LoCicero has already done it! I have enclosed is his key map and release notes--did you know