

Mrs. Gourd talks about the Cherokee families who have lived in this community. Some of these are the Gourd, Jumper, Agent, Turner, Drywater, Hicks, Downing, Starr, Ross and others. There were many of the older Cherokees who lived their entire life in this area, and many are buried in the cemeteries at Moodys, Blue Springs at Gideon and at Molly Fields. Smaller burial places started by families still exist such as Agent, Gourd, Parris, and Johnson.

Mrs. Gourd first went to school at the Cherokee Orphans Asylum at Salina. When the school burned she then went to the Cherokee Female Seminary and graduated there. She recalls that one of her teachers there was Janana Ballard, a well known Cherokee educator of the old days. Cornelius Alberty was the Superintendent when she went to school there. Those were some of the happiest days of her life, and the girls all seemed to act as sisters rather than friends. She remembers that the Female Seminary had a colored man who carried the mail to and from town. Somehow letters from the boys at the Male Seminary were not looked upon as favorable, and when a letter came with a one-cent postage stamp postmarked in Tahlequah it was almost sure to be from one of the boys. Probably in the thought of protecting the girls somehow the letters were opened and read by the matron, and if no tomfoolery was afoot the letter was delivered. In those early days she says Tahlequah was just a little place.

Long ago Moodys was a little village with two stores, a grist mill, saw mill, post office, school and church. Like many similar places it has disappeared and only a little country store remains. An old church house still stands and is used once in a while. Back in the woods still live several Cherokee families, but their number is not like it was in older days when most of Moodys Community was Indian. Blond-headed white kids now wade in Fourteen Mile Creek and break pop bottles on the bridge, where once Cherokee boys gigged crawfish and gathered water cress. There was a time when the valley was farmed by Indians and no fences were put up to bar passage from place to place. The Indian no longer farms in the valley, for the whiteman has come and as if a three-wire fence was not enough, they build strong five-wire barbed fenced. Often attached to the top wire are "keep out", "no trespass", and "private, do not enter" signs. There is hardly any need for the signs, for the white race, rather than the individual, has worked his forked tongue overtime since the treaty was signed back in the 1830s, and his greed shows as a brightly colored blanket.

Many of the Cherokees of the area attend the Olive Church where Rev. Beamer preaches in both languages. To the north is the Johnson Prairie Indian Church, Snake Creek Church, and Rocky Ford Church. Frequently these churches come together for an all night and all day Sunday meeting. For beautiful singing in both languages, one would have to go far to hear any to surpass that at these Cherokee gatherings.

A wonderful time of the year for the Indians of many years ago was harvest time. Beans would be gathered and put in the sun to dry, and after drying they would be shelled out by hand and sacked up for future use. Pumpkin