CHILDHOOD:

I started school when I was six years old. At that time most of the Indian children couldn't speak English, I know I couldn't speak a word of English when I first started school. My father died when I was very young, in fact I was two years old at the time, (probably about 3, k.k.) I don't remember him, but I was raised by my grandparents, maternal grandparents mostly, and they spoke nothing but the Indian Kiowa language in the home; 'course they had children and they could speak English very well, but some of us younger ones couldn't speak it. I had a younger brother Woodrow who unfortunately passed away while he was still a baby at the age of two; and we couldn't speak English at all when we first started school. Thinking back it amazes me how fast some of these children learned to speak English when they first started school. I could speak very little but I think about the second semester, of my first year of school, I was able to talk and carry on a conversation with the rest of the rest of the white kids. I got along very well, thinking back I made very good grades. I guess I was in the top three per cent of the class when I was in grade school.

(LWhere did you go to grade school?)

Well, Washita was a consolidated school, we started school at what we called primary, but it's first grade now. I moved very fast at the beginning, in fact, I moved two grades in one year--second and third, the first semester I was in second and the second semester I was in third. I know I missed one year, because at that time we, the Indians in that part of the country, we had smallpox and I wasn't immune, immunized, and I contracted smallpox. I missed one year of school, small as I was I wouldn't have thought I lived but I did, it was very hard on me. But after I got well and started back school, I caught up rapidly.

SCHOOL:

(Did the other children seem to have any problem with diseases?)

Yes, they all had some problem but they were lucky enough to be immunized for smallpox and I wasn't. But after I contract it they didn't think it was necessary that I be immunized, then.

(Now this is between '25 and '30 when you were in grade school?)