

Eva Walker - Hillside Indian Mission

The studies offered at the Mission were of a general nature for the Indian children. Classes went up to the eighth grade and covered the subjects of reading, spelling, arithmetic and history and later, book-keeping and music were added to the curriculum. There was always Sunday School and Church services. Friday night was set aside for literary society programs. Church services were attended by parents and others living in the community as it was one of the few places of worship in that sparsely settled country.

While most of the support of the mission came from the parent Church, the Indian children paid a small board and room charge, and the non-citizens of the Territory paid a little more. At its beginning it was the only school in the area and some children came from a distance of fifty miles. Those children living long distances of course boarded at the school, while those living nearer walked or rode to school. Sometimes as many as forty children were boarded at the mission.

Most of the Indian children attending the mission were Cherokee, although a few Delawares, Osages, and Shawnees, as well as a few white children. The mission life was simple but adequate. Food was hauled by wagon from the supply in Kansas. Rules to govern the activities of the children were strict but did not work a hardship on anyone.

Many Indians who later became prominent and successful attended this school. Among them was the Rev. W. E. Sunday, a full blood Cherokee, children of Chief Rogers, and the parents and seven aunts and uncles of Chief W. W. Keeler.

Not far to the west of the mission was a 10-wire fence built by the government separating the Cherokee and Osage Nations, that ran from the Kansas line to Tulsa. Few people remember this boundary, but it did exist in those early days.

In the early days of the Mission a cemetery was established at the location, and remains in use today, a witness to the importance the school in those early days.

The school was closed about 1906 and left to decay and pass away along with many other frontier places.