

Let's just use a, say briefly, oh 1830 or 1835, in the founding of the first Negro school. The first Negro student graduated from Tahlequah High School in the year 1966, in two years. That boy was the first boy to, first Negro boy to be, not boy, first Negro born in Tahlequah City Hospital. His father brought him up here to Northeastern last year and enrolled him and he said, "I don't know how I'm going to keep him in school financially. I just don't know." He is the first Negro graduate in Tahlequah's history. We want him to go to Northeastern State College. I don't know whether he's in school this year. I just don't know. At least, I do know that it took something like a hundred and forty-two years to finally start a Negro education. Here we could finally graduate one. To my knowledge, I don't think we graduated one last year. Maybe we did, I don't think so. We have one or two this year which could possibly graduate, and this is one observation I want to make. In there somewhere, I didn't talk about it, when we established the Colored High School here in town. Course, this now, is the Board of Education Building across the street from the Gulf Service Station. At one point, we almost integrated. We said we believed that the negro people were not getting a fair shake in education. They're crowded, the quality of education is not what it would be for the Whites, the Indians and they probably should be integrated. You know how we integrated them? We put them on buses and shipped them to Fort Gibson every day. That was our integration here in Tahlequah. Daily, for a period of years, I can't quote you the number of years but I will just estimate from what I've read, and maybe, six years. All Negro students who wanted to attend high school were still maintained in their elementary school. Their high school age people were put on the bus. That was back in, I think 30's and 40's.