

Miss Balentine's maternal grandparents were Monroe Amley Keys (1825-1870) and Lucy Lowrey Keys (1832-1912). Her mother was Lydia Keys Balentine.

She tells that the Keys name is Irish. Sometime early in the 1800s there were three Keys brothers who came to America, settling in Georgia and they each married full-blood Cherokee women.

She interjects that one time Dwight L. Moody, the great evangelist, visited Vinita. He induced several Cherokee girls to attend Moody College. It was a great opportunity for higher education, and the girls profited much for themselves, and also to help their people progress after they returned.

Recalling her early days as a school teacher, she talks of riding horseback or going by horse and buggy several miles to school. Sometimes she would board with one of the families in the school district. To be a teacher in those days was \$10 to \$15 a month. Most of the children walked to school, and a few living far away came by horseback. That time seems far removed from to-day when mothers now have to take their children to school by car, even if it is only one block. School houses were used for many purposes in the early days. The distant ringing of the school bell called the faithful to church on Sunday, civic and social gatherings took place in the school house, and on occasion funerals were conducted there. They were also the voting polls, fox and coon hunters meeting place, and other activities.

In the olden days a school or church was not complete without the large bell in the bellfry. Miss Balentine says that on Sunday morning, when she was a little girl, the ringing of the church bells in town was a beautiful sound. The bell of the old Pleasant Hill Mission Church was removed and taken to Dwight Mission at Marble City where it is preserved.

The thinking of parents who lived a century ago is hard to understand. Many children were discouraged or forbidden from speaking their Indian language, where one of the parents was of white man blood. Perhaps it was their sincere belief that by learning English and white ways they could better compete in our world. This fact, among others, added to the eventual downfall and destruction of the Indian Nations. To-day the Indian who is bi-lingual does very well for himself, and proudly proclaims his Indian heritage.

From facts gleaned from her parents and grandparents she talks about the Cherokee homes in Georgia. In her knowledge of the Cherokee history it has never been revealed that the Cherokees lived in mud hogans as portrayed in reconstructed roadside Indian villages supposed to depict the 200 years ago. To see this display is a disgrace to the Indian peoples. She tells of hearing her grandfather tell of the neat well kept log cabins of the Cherokees in Georgia. Yards did not have grass, but were kept swept clean with buckbrush yard brooms. Floors in the homes were scrubbed with white sand and they looked wonderfully clean. Lawnmowers and spray floor wax had not yet come into being. It would seem that to-day's painters and drama writers get their Indian tribes terribly mixed up, she says.