

At that time there was no town of Welling. About the first part of 1887 the first store appeared near the mission, and in selecting a name for the promising community, it was agreed that it would be named for a Miss Josephine Welling, a teacher at the Mission. From the time that the first building was erected in 1887, until it was officially closed in 1956, the Mission has been used constantly for educational, religious, and recreational activities. The first building was a frame building made of native materials, and with volunteer labor. This building was used for some six years, but other buildings were constructed on higher ground away from Baron Fork River and the Mission relocated at its newer facilities, placing it within the town of Welling. The first pastor was probably the Reverend A. Grant Adams, followed by the Reverend Canol Leiper. The teachers at Elm Springs Mission boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Riley Keys and his mother Minerva Keys. The Keys home was a mile from the Mission. The trail over this mile led through the woods and there were two small creeks to cross. The teachers made the walk daily for school work, also made one trip at night for church services. It could have been a hazardous night trip, as panthers, wild cattle, and outlaws roamed the hills. In rainy weather the trips were hampered with swollen creeks. Mrs. Minerva Keys was concerned for the safety and health of the teachers and believed that they should live nearer the mission. She was influential in getting an allotment of four and a half acres of land for the Mission. This was the same piece of land in use when the Mission closed, and is now owned by Reverend and Mrs. Homer Moutette, who are missionaries among the Indians.