

Driving on the three blocks of Locust Grove's main street today it is hard to picture a time when thirty acres along Pipe Springs Creek were a corn field. It is this same place where Locust Grove now stands. Mrs. Welch lived in that day when a wagon road passed by the cornfield going east toward Pipe Springs. She also saw the first store built in Locust Grove. A man by name of Wilkerson put in the first general store there which served a wide area of trade. As the town began to grow, it took its name from the grove of locust trees that grew on the hill south of the creek. She also saw the K.O. & G. railroad come into Locust Grove on its way north, as well as the day the railroad was removed. In Mrs. Welch's 87 years she has seen the many changes that have brought northeast Oklahoma to its position to-day, and yet she says with all the progress and conveniences we have now, she enjoyed the older days much better.

She says she cannot remember a lot of the things in her time, but does remember her home on Spring Creek with its rail fence around the yard, the cool clear water, the beautiful woods, and the good farm land they had. In her early days before there was a Locust Grove, they went to Wagoner to buy their supplies. Later they would go up to the depot at Locust, leave their wagon at the livery yard and take the train to Wagoner, returning late in the afternoon.

Mrs. Welch has spent all her life among her Cherokee people. Her one regret is that she never learned to read the Indian language as she feels that she has missed much. She does speak the language however.

It was while they were living on Rose Prairie that she saw her first automobile. A neighbor had just bought a Ford and brought it home. She and her husband went over to look at it. While there word came of the tornado that had just hit Peggs. They paid the man \$8. to take them to Peggs where they helped in the rescue work.