

Katie likes to reminisce on the good years she was at Chilocco. She was one of the class of sixty students who graduated that year in 1930. She often wonders what became of her schoolmates, and tells of those she knows about. Several have passed away in these 40 years, and these, to her knowledge, are Jesse James, George Taylor, Lucille Keel, Edgar and Ernest Scroggins, Nellie McDaniel.

Long ago her father had told her how a whiteman tried to get some of their land. As related to her, she says that the whiteman told her father that he only wanted a small amount of land not much larger than a 'cow hide'. Her father was about to agree to let him have it, but then he learned from a friend how the whiteman measured off the land. A 'cow hide' would be cut in the smallest strips that could be made and then whatever amount of land the leather strips could enclose was what the man wanted. But her father backed off from that proposition. While this account might have its humorous side, it reflects the many schemes and devices that have been used to separate the Indian from his country.

At the beginning of the Cherokee Nation following the Removal from the East, there was Switchler Lowrey, a full blood, who came and first settled on Lowrey Prairie. Decendents of this pioneer are many and the Lowrey clan hold a reunion every year at Tahlequah. Mr. Lowrey is buried on the prairie he helped develop, and is at rest in a little graveyard way out in the middle of a pasture. His grave marker reads "Switchler Lowrey, died May 30, 1905, age 116 years old". Four other pioneer Indians are buried in this little cemetery, but in a very short time it will disappear in the face of progress and neglect. Even now all the markers have been knocked down by cattle and are partly buried.

In the days of the Cherokee Nation, there have been little country stores at Lowrey, a school, and a church. At one time the community had a post office. Miss Sam tells that the first post office was in the house she now lives in which was long before her time. At one time there were many Indian families living on the Lowrey Prairie. Now, the only other nearby Indians are the Phillips and Sourjohns. Oklahoma and Texas cattlemen have just about taken over the country there.

She recalls her days when she went to Indian School. She says that what impressed her most was the beautiful stone buildings, the big oval that was used for the park and parade grounds, and the friendliness of the other Indian children there. The strict discipline had its good and bad effects. The nature of the Indian allowed for being asked to do something, but when forced to do a thing only made the separation line between Indian and white darker. Herded like so many cattle, a joy in disguise perhaps, was the privilege of "Town Day", when once a month the students could go to Arkansas City, if they had sufficient money in the opinion of the powers. It would suffice to say that a great many students did not go to town. The boys and girls were trusted, of course, but they were never allowed to go to town on the same day. At school white night guards patrolled the campus, buildings, and orchard to prevent any tryst, which was considered a criminal act.

Katie has no way to travel, but occasionally a friend will come and take her to town, or to the Indian Church at Johnson Prairie or Rocky Ford. Her days are well-filled with many little chores and activities and she finds no time to be lonely. For those who live this way of life, they have no need of ulcer pills or tranquilizers.