

PATTON, PAULINE R. Carselówey

INTERVIEW

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FIELD WORKER JAMES R. CARSELOWEY
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INTERVIEW WITH PAULINE R. (CARSELOWEY) PATTON
Vinita, Oklahoma.

My name is Pauline R. (Carselowey) Patton. I am a half-breed Cherokee Indian, born January 24, 1883, ten miles southeast of Vinita, Indian Territory, on the farm.

My father was James M. Carselowey and my mother was Kate (Emory) Carselowey. They moved from Going Snake District, Cherokee Nation, to Delaware district in 1870, and settled on the place where they raised a family of eight children, and where they both resided until their death. My father died in 1900 and my mother in 1932.

My early life was uneventful, but I can remember my first term of school. Our teacher was appointed by the National Board of Education at Tahlequah. Our school was called the Carselowey School, in honor of my father, who helped to establish it in 1885. The school is fifty-two years old this month, and has never missed a term.

My first teacher's name was Nellie Tee-see-yah-kee. She was a fullblood Cherokee Indian, a graduate of the Cherokee Orphan Asylum, but spoke broken English. The

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school board sent us two fullblood teachers, at different times, and I always thought they had taken our name for a fullblood name, and naturally thought it was a fullblood school, but it wasn't. It was a mixed school of Cherokees, Shawnees, Delawares and whites. There were quite a few fullblood Shawnees who came to school there, and it usually took them about three years to learn to speak English. During that time they never advanced beyond their ABC'S, but as soon as they learned to speak English, they would go right on, the same as other children.

All of my brothers and sisters played one or more instruments, and everybody in the neighborhood said we were natural born musicians.

I SEE MY FIRST PIANO

I remember one day while at school the word got out that one of our neighbors, by the name of Benjamin F. Chouteau, had gone to town to bring home a new piano. It was the first one to be brought to the neighborhood, and I had never seen one. I could not think of anything

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all that day, but that piano. The road ran fairly close to the school house, and I kept looking out of the window all day, for fear I would miss sight of it. Finally about three o'clock in the afternoon someone whispered, "There comes the Chouteau piano." Most all the children jumped up and left the room to get a view of it, but all were disappointed, for it was in a big piano box, and that was all we could see. I made a trip over to the Chouteau home as soon as I could, and that was my first sight of a piano. Several years afterward I was in the piano business, and I have spent the latter part of my life teaching piano.

The sight of that piano played on my mind stronger than anything that has happened before, or since. I could hardly wait until I got home to tell the folks about it, and I had a great longing to learn to play one. About the first thing I did when I got home was to tell about it, and ask father to buy us one, but he only smiled, and said, "Perhaps, sometime."

Finally, when the Strip Payment was made, I think about 1893, my father made an addition to his house, and

bought us a high top organ. Imagine my surprise when I walked in from school and found that fine looking instrument in our house. With the joy of that organ, a new world was unfolding for me, a world of music. Never will I forget the thrill that went through me when my fingers ran over those precious keys. My younger brother, Mack, was as wild as I was about it, and the folks would not promise which would be the first to take lessons, and of course I thought it would be one of the older ones, as I was the fifth in line. My older brother, Robert, had already learned to play the violin, and as he was grown, I thought it would be he, but he stuck to his violin. I began to learn the chords by ear, and soon was playing his accompaniments. My father was a violinist himself, and played by note, and he knew it would not do to have me learn to play by ear, if I was ever to be a musician. Then the unforgettable day came when my mother told me that they had decided that I was to be given music lessons, if I would try to learn. How I did try, my school work was always second in my mind and

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I learned music very fast.

When I finished school at Tahlequah I secured a school and became a country school teacher, at the same time giving music lessons to any who desired to take music in the district. I enjoyed the music teaching much better than the school work, but stayed with both for a few years.

While I was teaching in the Cherokee Nation, a few miles south of Edna, Kansas, I met and married Albert Goodman, and in about a year a baby girl was born, whom we named Kathryn, after my mother. My husband wanted me to go on and teach school, but as he had not done a lick of work since we had been married, I decided that my life should not be wasted, working and making a living for him, so I took my baby home to my mother, and went on with my teaching, but without my husband.

I kept up my music studies, as now I wanted to get the best training possible. I attended normal school at Tahlequah during the summer, and always took a special course in music.

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While teaching school near Vinita in 1908 I was married to O. L. Patton, a piano salesman for J.W. Jenkins Music house, out of Kansas City. When my term of school closed ~~we~~ both went to work for the music house at Kansas City, and after working a few years we opened a piano and music store in Vinita. It was a business we both loved and we had a good business and did well.

AN OLD BILL OF SALE TO TOWN LOT

In 1910 we bought my mother's Vinita property, at the corner of East Canadian and Second Street. Our first title to the lots was an old Bill of Sale which read as follows;

VINITA, Indian Territory
June 25, 1885.

BILL OF SALE

From Joe R. Rogers
And Vick Rogers

To

Jane Patton

For, and in consideration of the sum of One
Hundred dollars, to me in hand paid, the receipt of

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which is hereby acknowledged; I have this day sold and by these presents, do hereby grant, sell, convey and deliver to Jane Patton, of Vinita, C.N., all my right, title, claim and interest in the following described property to wit;

One parcel of broken land, or two (2) Town Lots, 150 by 150 feet, fronting west. The same being and laying south of the J. L. Dameron place, on the east side of the M,K.&T. railroad, in Delaware district, Cherokee Nation, and within the corporate limits of the town of Downingsville, in said nation; together with the buildings now standing upon said lots, consisting of one box house 16 by 20 feet, out-houses & etc which said property is commonly known and designated as the Vickey Rogers residence.

To have and to hold the aforesaid property, unto the said Jane Patton, her heirs and lawful assigns, for her and their use forever.

Insomuch as the title guaranteed to me, under the laws of the Cherokee Nation. Signed and delivered

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at Downingsville, Cherokee Nation, on this, the 25th
day of June, 1885.

Joe R. Rogers
Vick Rogers.

I transfer all my rights
& Title to the within
described property to
James M. Carselowey,
Aug. 4, 1894.
Jane Patton.

In the Presence of J. H. Akin.

This old Bill of Sale was written out in long hand,
and witnessed by one of the towns leading lawyers at that
time and his signature looks to be the same as the one
who wrote out the Bill of Sale. It will be noted from
the old instrument that lots were not numbered those days.
It will also be noted that the Bill of Sale is headed and
dated at Vinita, I. T. while down in the legal description
the town is called Downingsville. This can be explained
from the fact that the town went under the name of Vinita
long before it legally adopted the new name of "Vinita."
I have had old timers tell me that the legal name of Vinita
postoffice in 1885 was still Downingsville, although the
town was known at Vinita.

We built a nice music store on part of the lots we
secured from this old Bill of Sale, and felt very proud that

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we were now in our own home, with both residence and store. Times were good and we were getting ahead fast.

My daughter, who always went under the name of Kathryn Patton, had grown up and graduated from the Vinita high school, and also in the school of music, at the Sacred Heart Academy, and she too, went to teaching, and later took a business course at Miami, Oklahoma.

In 1920 my husband's health began to fail, and he lingered along for four years, during which time he tried to keep up his business. I was right in the store with him, but did not realize how weak he was growing mentally, until after his death in the Spring of 1924. Then, when I took our business in hand, I realized for the first time that we were financially ruined. I closed out the store and decided to go back to my music, and make it my life work for the rest of my days.

I then went to New York and took a music course in the "Dunning System" of music. After I had mastered it, I came back to Vinita and organized my first music class and soon had all the pupils I could handle. I was

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determined to learn all I could about the teaching of music, since I was going to make that my study for the rest of my life, and the next summer I went to Chicago and took another post graduate course, and the next year I went to Fort Worth and took another course, all in the Dunning System. My music class kept on growing, and in the course of a few years I had paid all of our old debts, which had accumulated during my husband's illness, and began investing my earnings in building and loan stock. In a few more years this had helped me out so much, that I was able to build me a fine studio and home opposite the high school in Vinita where I was much handier to the pupils. The teachers worked in harmony with me, by letting the children out to take their music lessons during school hours.

I served from 1929 to 1935, as State President of the Dunning System of Music Teachers, and I am now a member of the examining board of Oklahoma. I have at last far surpassed the greatest dream of the little Indian girl, who so many years ago longed for a fine piano, like the Chouteaus had.

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This fine old piano is still in the Chouteau family, after nearly fifty years of hard use, and is owned by the oldest daughter, who is now the wife of Charles F. Landrum, of South Bell Street, Vinita, Oklahoma

In 1926 I had the honor of playing the wedding march on this famous old piano when she, a widow, was married to Mr. Landrum. The old piano is in fine shape and is greatly treasured by the family.