

CLARK, WINIFRED M.

STORIES

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MARY CAROLINE BUDNOT.

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Indian Pioneer History-S-149.

October 18, 1938.

Mary Caroline Boudinot.

When Carrie Boudinot, as she was called by her family, was a child she had an allotment three miles northeast of Braggs. Her father, Richard Boudinot, her mother, Mary Katherine Boudinot, her sisters Elinor, Harriet and Rachel, and her little brother Willie lived in the one-room cabin which had a narrow board leanto on the north side. I became acquainted with these people when Carrie was seventeen years old. Grandmother Boudinot was staying with them at that time.

Dick Boudinot was an educated Cherokee Indian, but a trifler. All that he ever accomplished was in his own imagination. He had a broad, brown face with drooping eyes. He was a great speech maker, having strong opinions about how the world's affairs should be conducted. One night I heard him say to his wife: "Katie, those onions are ready to gather. We must get up at four in the morning and get them out of the ground." The next morning he arose and went out to the garden. Katie followed and dug the onions. He squatted along the rows talking continually

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but not touching an onion. He was dressed as if ready to go to town, so after the six o'clock breakfast he went off to the north switch whistle stop of the Iron Mountain railroad where the local would pick him up. He was on the way to the Agency as usual where he went as often as possible.

Katie was a white woman, though on the rolls as a sixteenth. She was quiet and unassuming and seemed very much like an Indian woman, except that she had blond hair and gray eyes.

Willie was blond like his mother, Rachel and Elinor medium blond with light brown hair, Harriet had straight black hair and gray eyes, but Carrie was decidedly Indian with very dark brown hair, Brunette complexion and dark brown eyes. She wanted to be white and tried to bleach herself with anything that people told her would do it. Carrie Boudinot was restless, dissatisfied with their way of living, filled with the fire of ambition and determined to put her plans into action. Her dream was to have an education and to travel. "I want to see the world and I'm going to do it." she would say.

Grandmother Boudinot was responsible for the good

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foundation that these children had received up to the time that I had the subscription school in the neighborhood. Carrie, at that time decided: "There are too many Carolines in this family, henceforth I am Mary." When she went to Nazareth Academy, and Tahlequah Normal she was called Mary.

Two years from the time Mary started in earnest to gain an education she was teaching school. She did not like teaching so went to business college and in three months had acquired enough ability as a typist to obtain a job. This did not last long because her uncle, Frank Boudinot, helped to place her in an office in Washington. While there she went to night school, taking English, art and music for which she had considerable talent. I received a letter from her telling me that she was giving lessons in English to the Japanese Ambassador's children. She had been in Washington a few years when she became a clerk in the American Embassy that went to Cuba where she expected to stay one year but was there eight years.

When she had been in Cuba but a short time and was curious to learn something about the place, each afternoon she would stroll along the narrow streets looking in the

shop windows. Three months of sight seeing went by, then one day some negro soldiers appeared at the Embassy and demanded custody of the "spy". The Ambassador was surprised and told them they had no spy in the office because they were all Americans. The leader pointed to Mary and said: "She is Spanish spy." It was hard to convince them that she was an American Indian. It seemed that they did not recognize Indians.

Several years went by before Mary had a furlough of two months. During this visit to her people she bought a home for her father and mother and furnished it nicely. This home is at 1307 north Locust street in Muskogee. The only income that the family have comes from Mary. She has for years sent money home each month to meet their expenses and to her father for his personal needs, but the habit of years is hard to break, so he will still ask a dime loan of his acquaintances.

Mary was transferred from Cuba to Riga, Latvia, just at the beginning of a northern winter. She wrote that she did not get warm until the next summer. She had her first sleigh ride in a queer sleigh with a high front seat on

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which the driver sat so wrapped in furs that the only visible part of him was his red nose.

Mary wrote: "I have not told anyone that I am Indian. They don't know about Indians and even have little respect for the United States. I want to come home or to some country where they speak English.