

75 Years of Ministry at

THE OAKS

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ON TO NEW HORIZONS

Published by The OAKS INDIAN MISSION

P.O. Box 10, Oaks, Oklahoma 74359

A Ministry of

THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

\$ 200

ON TO NEW HORIZONS

A 75TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK OF THE OAKS INDIAN MISSION

Written and Compiled

by

Dorothy Brinker

Major Historical Contributors

Atha Evans Maupin

Lloyd A. Osburn

Rev. & Mrs. C.A. Vammen

H. Allen Vik

Dollie Wolfe

ON TO NEW HORIZONS

(Tune: Onward Christian Soldiers)

1. On to new horizons, Oaks will always move.
Teaching Indian children of our Savior's love.
Christ the great redeemer, leads us on the way
On to new horizons, help us Lord each day.

(Chorus)

On to new horizons, Oaks will always move
Teaching Indian children of our Savior's love.

2. We are small in number, as we venture forth
Trusting in Christ Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth.
We are all united Cherokees and all, as we
work together fol - low - ing Christ's call.

(Chorus)

3. Present with us always in past years of grace
Jesus gives us vision, challenges to face
Onward then you faithful, join Oaks' happy throng
Use with us your talents, as we right past wrong.

(Chorus)

PREFACE

The story of the Trail of Tears has been staged in Cherokee, N.C., since 1950 and at Tahlequah, Ok. since 1967. It tells much of the background of people such as those who live at Oaks and why their roots are deep there. The last census showed that Delaware County was one of only six counties that had a net migration into the area of over 20%. Yet it is still one of the counties with the lowest per capita income. Depressed areas usually lose population. The area has a very special something that offsets poverty: Beauty, both in its people and in its setting.

Oaks is a town where, in all directions, the horizon is rimmed with Big fluffy green trees so cushion-y that one is tempted to run and to try to jump into them! And if one spends the night, the many birdsongs are apt to be your alarm clock, each trying to outdo the other, while in the background an owl asks repeatedly, "Who, who, who are you?"

"Green Country" in cooperation with Oklahoma Tourism, put out 200,000 copies of a map on which the nearest attraction to Oaks is listed: "Double Springs, near Oaks, where assassins plotted the deaths of signers of treaty for removal of Cherokees from the Appalachians." That's not at all what I want Oaks to be on the map for! Rather, it's on MY map for some very fine memories:

All of 1976 I worked on a church history at Norman for my church's diamond anniversary. When 1977 arrived and my husband's sabbatical study brought us to Oaks, I knew it was going to be a good semester.

On January 1, 1977, a mutual friend got the Viks and us together at the Arnold Salazars. While eating (the first of many meals together!), Pastor Vik suggested maybe I'd help him with Eben Ezer's anniversary book. I leaped up and, waving my fork frantically, shouted, "NO!" So we spent the next six months across from the parsonage with church history in our typewriter. Pastor's enthusiasm about the Moravians was contagious. Their abandoned site was just half a mile west of our house with nothing but trees, tiny creek, maybe a cow between us. I grew curious.

Soon I remembered Grant Foreman's sentence about how exciting it was to him to discover little-known facts. I know that excitement--over and over and OVER in researching NEOSU, OU, Oklahoma Historical, E. Schwarze's History of Moravian Missions Among Southern Indians, A.M. Gibson's Oklahoma, Muriel Wright's Missionary Wards, Chronicles of Oklahoma, and many others.

We've crammed all we could into these pages and filed pages in the church "archives" and there are choice bits like a brief sentence from interviews in 1930's (Grant Foreman papers): "...

We learned that Reverend Vammen, who lives on Military Road in Oaks, is one of two pastors emeriti in the Central District.

After absorbing the 54 page book about T.M. Rights, I laboriously condensed it to a five page summary, then to one page. And it is finally reduced to one paragraph in our book here. That's an example of the way I work! His picture wasn't in the helpful book by Schwarze where we got other pictures, but we got the missing picture through G. Alton Adair, NY; then Helen R Pinkham, NJ and Theodore B Rights, NJ. The picture came the day after other missionaries pictures were printed, so here is his picture:



Theodore Manessa Rights

It was exciting to find a Vinson Lackey painting at Gilcrease in Tulsa, of "our" early Moravian mission. Then followed two months of trying to know the exact layout. Janie Jackson and Jessie Wolfe took one glance at the picture and pointed.

"That's where Tom (Wolfe) was born in the 1920's! And the other is where Foremans lived! There should be a ravine between the houses...the spring house was in front of the picture..." Their brother Tom was our landlord! The sisters cooked for many years at Oaks Indian Mission. Now Jessie lives near their 90 year old mother and Janie is one of the basket and bead workers whose work is for sale July 29-31, along with that of Nancy Russell, Chairwoman; Nellie Tucker, Secretary-Treasurer; Mary Lee Foreman; and others.

On learning that the mother of Nellie Tucker (Mrs. Charlie) was named Pollie Guess, ex-Superintendent Vammen pondered the news.

"Do you know, you could be related to Sequoyah?" he asked. "His name was George Guess." There's no way of knowing for sure, but when her 10 grandchildren do something creative, Nellie must wonder?

Nancy Russell is a descendant of John Ross, first Chief of the Cherokee Nation 1827-66. His signature brought New Spring Place into being. Nancy grew up around Oaks and was a houseparent.

They all agree that Mary Lee makes baskets twice as fast as the others. She smiles to remember that in the beginning she didn't even care to learn how. Now she teaches her little grandson how.

One night they were weaving long, water-softened reeds as they chatted in Cherokee. A reed grew shorter as fingers nimbly worked it around the sides of a basket..until they found that two workers had opposite ends of the same reed!

I made a basket--in about three hours, with help, and not much larger than a big onion, which is what it looked like when only half completed. I appreciate their skillful, firm, gentle touch!

Nellie's husband was one of the five brothers and cousins whose need for a home started The Oaks Childrens Home. On our first day at Adult Bible Class, he greeted us, "Welcome to Oaks," he said, a smile crinkling the corners of his eyes, "Where the zip code is larger than the population!" Each Sunday Lloyd Osburn opened Sunday School and each week 86 year old C. A. Vammen was there, though Mrs. Vammen was confined at home with arthritis most of the time.

The zip code is on the one room post office next door to the church and in front of the dormitories. Postmistress Norma Foreman hands out mail without asking anyone's name. She long ago assigned all 48 boxes and at least half the daily mail is sent General Delivery. Nick Smith brought strawberries to her from his garden at the end of Main Street, two blocks away. But the town is growing; two blocks in the opposite direction, the new grocery store has been in operation since May.

We'll remember Eben Ezer--the five children baptized, Pastor Vik's excellent children's sermons, Reba Ramsey setting up every communion Sunday, Jan Vik's beautiful voice, and Tom Maupin reading from the altar podium the last Sunday of his life. His death meant that since being anniversary coordinator in November, Atha lost her husband and her godmother Nana Nielsen, who died in Hastings, Nebraska.

At both November's cold celebration and July's hot one, Grace Salazar and Nancy Russell are co-chairmen of entries for arts and crafts.

Elizabeth Wofford has been Sunday School treasurer 16 years and church organist twice that long. She remembers back in the '30's when she felt prejudice for being half Cherokee.

"When I was a little girl, I had such dark hair and skin that when time came for my teacher-mother to take me to visit certain people, she used lemon juice on my skin and soda on my hair to try to bleach me lighter." When asked how long it's been that people have bragged about being part Indian, she shrugged. "How long has Indian Jewelry been popular ? she asked in answer.

While fair-to-dark coloring is still somewhat a status symbol, fair skin and hair isn't always indicative of no Indian blood. One of the blondest girls at the Mission is Mary Cameron, half Cherokee.

A fair staff member is Social Worker Don Beckman, from Nebraska, of German background. He has been at Oaks for three years. Along with houseparents and Chaplain Vik, he spends more time with the children than anyone, helping them with problems, taking them to fun things like library, skating, movies, ball games. He was Master of Ceremonies at the end of school awards banquet, with scrolls and recognition for many. As he left the dining room, someone gently clobbered him with one of the many walnuts on the ground.

"Those nuts sure are handy to get attention with," he Grinned. "Although sometimes I don't know I've been hit til I see the stains on my shirt!" (Walnut, not blood!)

Looking on the awards ceremony in the dining room was Mrs. Beatrice Dew, cook since June, 1968. If one needs to locate someone and can't, "Call Bea. She usually knows!" Sometimes a boy or girl is taking a turn helping in the kitchen. As often as not, she'll refer you to the ball diamond or the swimming hole. Or say, "He left with a fishing pole" Or, maybe, "She's on the gym!"

You never know what to expect from the children. Perhaps they hand you some of the many wild flowers, or call you to see new puppies, or ask for a push on the swings. Maybe they are out searching for interesting fossils or even rarer arrow heads.

"But watch out for snakes! And ticks! And poison ivy!" the Mission nurse Marj Carroll reminds them.

A couple at Eben Ezer who devote much time to Oaks is Mr. and Mrs. Bill Kimbrell, high school vocational agriculture and home ec teacher. Bill is one of the chief cooks at the hog fry where a black iron kettle is filled with a pig, cut into two inch cubes. The meat cooks slowly in its own grease, stirred constantly with wooden paddles, and comes out tender and surprisingly grease-free. The fragrance of smoke and bacon fill the air.

As the smoke crawls around the black pot and curls upward, "On to New Horizons," which is the anniversary theme, it reminds us of the bicentennial monument of the Phoenix, created by Pastor Vik. Full of symbolism, it is a sculpture of the mythical bird which dies, is consumed by fire in its nest, and then comes to life out of the ashes. It was built on the site of the Oaks fire in 1974. That school has come to life again. The facts fills us with hope.

Going back to January 1, when we first met the Viks and Jan fed us the first of 1,000,001 cookies while Al helped unload our Van in deep snow...and we began our memories with them...outing, books, sharing meals, garbage can...Easter Sunrise with Jon holding a real live Easter Bunny found on their front lawn, Sara learning to ride her bike and teaching me to hunt wild onions, I'm aware I never did learn to say "No" to the Norwegian Viks. Maybe they'd say "Button dominoes and home made ice cream" or "Haven't you finished that part of church history YET? We have a deadline..."

But I got even! I taught Sara to blow bubble gum, alienated their dog's affection when they went on vacation, and left many hard decisions on editing to the pastor!

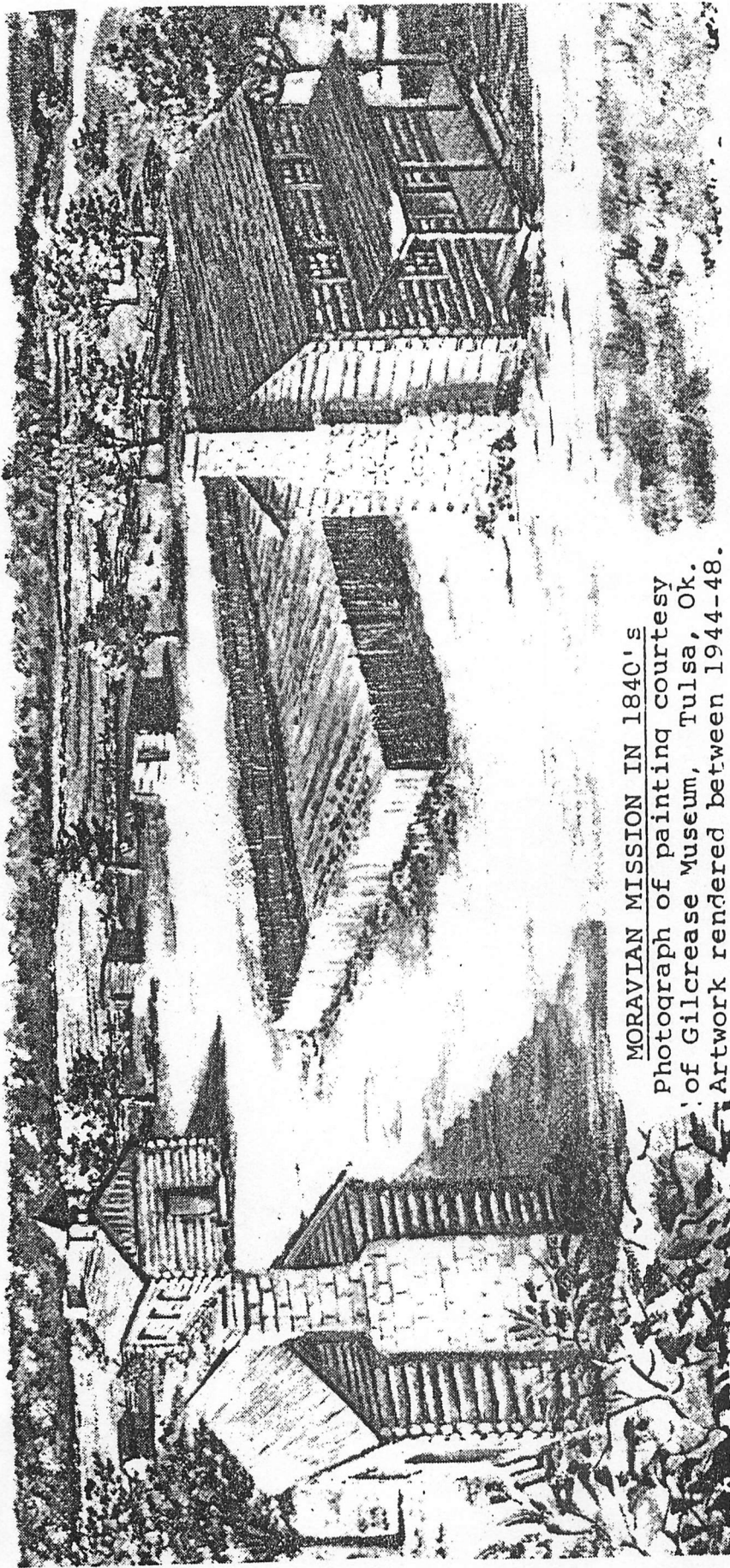
One more thought: I'm sure this arthritic typewriter typed some errors (not Kathy Lamb or I!) but there were times when various little children typed words on this typewriter. One of them wrote the nicest copy created at this machine all year:

dear mrs brinker how come you wont be here
i want you to be here next year how come you wont
ill miss you when youre goen did you know that.

Yes, dear, I know that. And I'll miss you too.

July 24, 1977
Norman, Oklahoma

Sincerely,
Dorothy Brinker



MORAVIAN MISSION IN 1840'S

Photograph of painting courtesy of Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Ok. Artwork rendered between 1944-48.

One of over 100 paintings by Vinson Lackey (1889-1959), who also wrote:

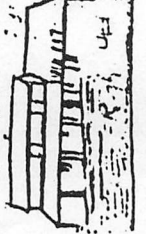
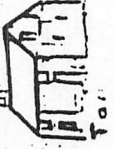
Vinson Lackey, Chronicles of Oklahoma, 1937, pages 179-90: "...buck brushes shield the remains of the chapel's foundation...oaken skeleton was once the schoolmaster's house... sturdy old log walls of the abandoned rectory...shambles of timber and stone...little left except great stone chimney.

CHAPEL: Built June, 1842, by Gilbert Bishop, who found building easier than preaching.

SCHOOL HOUSE: Used for church later, it had a balcony and sliding partition.

MISSION HOUSE: It had an upstairs and a great stone chimney with double flue.

OTHER BUILDINGS: Rent house for farmer, blacksmith shop, barn for four horses, chicken house, smoke house. (All identification from Moravian Missions Among Southern Indians by E. Schwarze, 1923.)



New Springplace, Moravian Mission near Oaks
 Coming with the Cherokee immigrants from Spring place, Ga., in 1839, where they had labored since 1801, the Moravian missionaries established their station, New Spring place, early in 1842 at a big spring on the old military road to Ft. Gibson. Seized by the Civil War, it was reopened in 1867 and served until deprived of its land by the Curtis Act about 1900. Danish Lutheran ministers took over the work of the Moravians and have served in the community since, establishing a mission school a mile east in 1902.

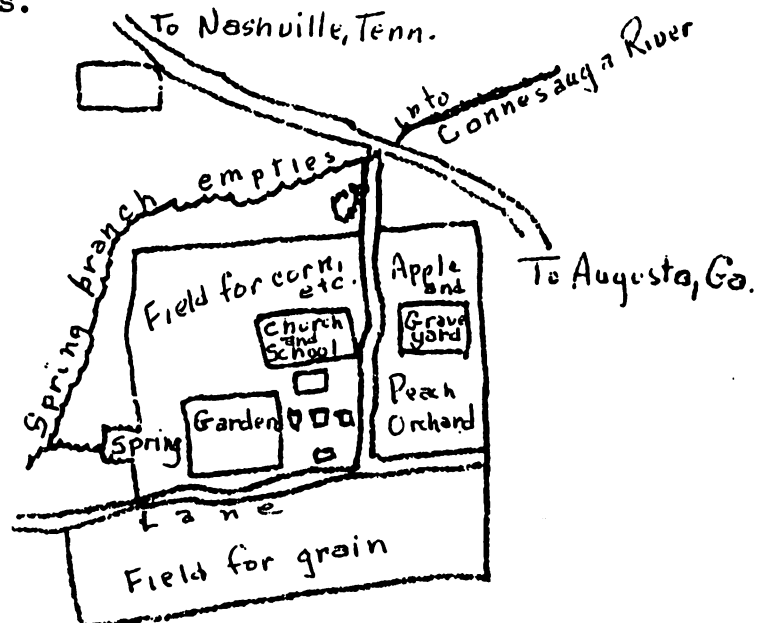
MORAVIAN MISSIONARIES
(1838 - 1898)

Moravians originated in a province of Moravia which is in present-day Czecho Slovakia (formerly Austria). Thus, they came from Southern Europe. And the Danes, who later came as missionaries were from Northern Europe. Yet the two found a common leader of religious thought in a Central European, namely Martin Luther. They are important in the history of Protestantism because they were the first to declare "the evangelism of the heathen is the duty of the church." They accepted the Christian teachings of John Huss, a Catholic monk who was burned at the stake in 1453 for trying to reform the church. Because they were a "protestant" group, they were forced to hide from the Catholic church which was persecuting them. The event of Luther's Reformation helped to take attention away from them. Then again in 1722 they were being persecuted and were given refuge on the vast estate of a German Count Zinzendorf.

This small but extremely mission-minded group of Christians were first successful in 1732 in Greenland and in West Indies. Two years later they arrived in Pennsylvania. They established a training school at Bethlehem, named Nazareth College. Attendance was free for children of missionaries provided they too became missionaries. Classes for boys and girls were apt to be in separate buildings. Even in death, men and boys were often buried in one row, women and girls in another.

In spite of these seemingly rigid disciplines, they maintained friendships with members of all Christian churches. Never a large group in themselves, they were noted for their Christian influence. They helped scattered members of other denominations without necessarily drawing them into their own churches.

In 1745 they began missions among the Delawares and Mohicans in Northern United States. From their Southern headquarters at Salem, North Carolina, they were the first successful missionaries among the Cherokees. They began in 1801 at Springplace, Georgia, with about 25 acres of good land, plus 10 acres cleared.



Spring Place, Georgia, 1801-33

So well respected were they that they were one of only two denominations that were agents of the government. As early as 1775, the Continental Congress allocated money for "the civilization of the Indians." From 1819 the Moravians and the Baptists were paid out of an annual \$10,000 fund. Teaching and preaching went hand in hand. The Cherokees from an early date were interested in education. Schools were always welcomed; sometimes churches were only tolerated. Rigid doctrines handicapped the missionaries. Also, religious concepts were hard for the natives to understand, such as the concept of sin. The Cherokees had a rite called "going to water," which gave the Baptists an advantage because they baptized by immersion.

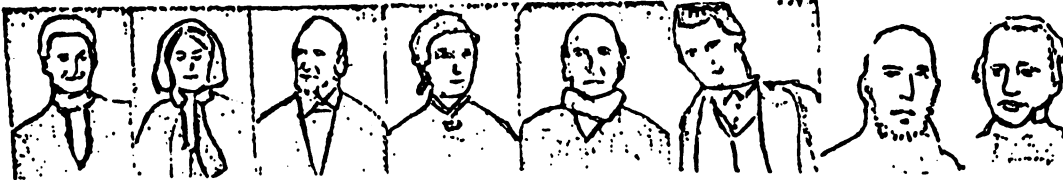
Population expansion and discovery of gold in the hills of Georgia caused pressure to be intensified for Washington, D.C., to move the Indians to the West. President Jackson (1829-37) was in favor of this removal and worked to accomplish it. The first groups went peaceably and in 1817 settled in what is now Arkansas. In 1834 Georgia authorized a state lottery by which Spring Place Mission was lost to a bartender. The Mission Home found temporary shelter in nearby Tennessee. The final removal was begun in armed guard, lasted a full year, and resulted in hundreds of deaths. This trek became known as "Trail of Tears."

If those who drove them from their homes became symbols of white man's injustice to the refugee Cherokees, the white men who shared with them the dangers and the heartache of the journey became symbols of Christian love. There were three Moravian Missionaries who left the comforts of homes to arrive ahead of the Indians. After searching for a good place to settle from 1838 to 1842, (Barren Fork and Beattie's Prairie, forty miles apart), their final choice was almost half way between; other mission stations came later.

In Going Snake District, north of Tahlequah, near the Illinois River, they named the place New Spring Place, after their former home in Georgia. There were many reasons for choosing the site. Several full-blood Cherokee Moravians had come there. It was a healthful locality, fertile and well watered and was on the Military (toll) road between Jefferson City and Ft. Gibson. It was further described by Richard Mann, a fullblood Cherokee educated at the Moravian Mission (and grandfather of Lee Mann, still a member of Eben Ezer): "My mother was among the first Indians to arrive... Wild game was abundant, nuts of all kinds were in the woods, plenty of fish were in the streams. They had little need for money that the white man so craved. I have seen wild pigeon in such droves that they hid the sun as they flew over, just like a cloud, and when they lit in the timber, they'd bend the trees several inches toward the ground. The deer you could see in droves like sheep. Wild turkey was plentiful..." In 1943 Mrs. Vammen wrote a Women's Missionary Society program, mentioning the wild onions, blackberries, watercress, violets, anemones, dogwood, red-bud, stately sycamores, persimmons, and oaks, all of which are still in evidence.

Land was obtained for the Moravian Mission site by special permission of the Cherokee Council through Chief John Ross, a Methodist, but friend of all missionaries with a special fondness for the Moravians. On his way home from Washington, D.C., to the Cherokee Nation, he brought a trunkful of books for the mission school's opening in 1842, and sent Ross children to its school. (Elizabeth Ross, Vol. 42, G. Foreman papers).

In the 60 year period from 1838 to 1898, there were many Moravians in the Cherokee Nation. The words "Missionary" and "Teacher" were often synonymous and sometimes terms overlapped and sometimes they alternated stations, which facts made it like untangling thread to identify. The list includes: A.E. Welfare, Joe Hillman, C.L. Rights, Linebach, Herman Beck, Shields, Thomas, Albright, D.Z. Smith, S.S. Warner, Richard Wolfe, and maybe others.



Voglers Bishops Mack Welfare DZ Smith Ward

The first missionary was Miles Vogler, a young school teacher who made the 8,000 mile trip with two others in 41 days. His ministry of eight years here was interrupted with an equal eight years in West Indies. Then he was back only two years when he died from a fever. From 1846 to 1854 at least five teachers died. One of these was also named Vogler, probably his sister.

Presiding at his funeral was a co-worker of seven years, Golbert Bishop. He had been a cabinet maker in Pennsylvania and was able to put these talents to good use at New Spring Place. In 21 years he returned East only twice, both times to marry. His small son buried James Ward, the teacher whose ambush caused the mission to close during the Civil War.

Preaching the dedication sermon at Gilbert's church was a co-worker who was much loved by the Indians. They called him "Cawk" meaning "Crow" because it sounded like his name, Edwin J. Mack, and because he always wore black. He lived closely with them for 30 years, hunting and fishing, preaching and teaching in their language. When Mary E. Israel Payne (familiar names at Oaks) was 12, she worked for the Edwin Mack family.

Mack's term overlapped seven years with T.M. Rights. On Rights first day's preaching, October 16, 1870, there was so much rain that nobody came. Another time, a man listening to him was shot from outside and fell as if dead but was only injured. Rights perservered, part of the time alone in an 80 by 30 mile circuit, and remained 28 years (except for two when he taught at Nazareth Hall, Pa.) For 18 months

he was in charge of the Female Seminary at Tahlequah. His father and only daughter died and are buried at Oaks. The future of the Indian Territory mission stations was in doubt after the Dawes Commission of 1893 broke up Cherokee domain by assigning allotments. A letter from headquarters asked Dawes Commission for a copy of the new Cherokee treaty and inquired if the mission stations would be allowed four acres instead of the 160 they received under the Treaty of 1866. Receiving an affirmative answer, Springplace Mission, I.T. closed. (The prefix "New" had been dropped sometime during the 60 years it existed).

For over a dozen years when it became obvious statehood was coming, Indians tried for many years in vain to have Indian Territory become a separate state called Sequoyah. With statehood on November 16, 1907, the Cherokee Nation passed into history. But in 1902 the Moravian mission had passed its heritage on to the Evangelical Danish Lutheran Church (which in 1960 became part of the American Lutheran Church). This year, 1977, the Mission celebrates 75 years of Lutheran work at Oaks. Last year the Children's Home celebrated its Golden Anniversary (1926-76).



Today, The only visible remains of the Moravian Mission are the ruins of the Spring house built in the 1850's. This picture was taken in the 1940's. It has deteriorated considerably more since then.

An Act.

Granting permission to the Moravian Board to establish a Missionary Station in the Cherokee Nation

BE it Enacted by the National Council, That permission be, and is hereby granted to the Board of the Moravian Society at Salem N. C., to erect a Missionary Station near the head of Spring Creek, on the Military Road in this Nation, for the purpose of carrying on their labors in the instruction and improvement of the Cherokee people.

Tahlequah Nov. 24th 1842

Approved - Jno. Ross

PRINCIPAL CHIEFS

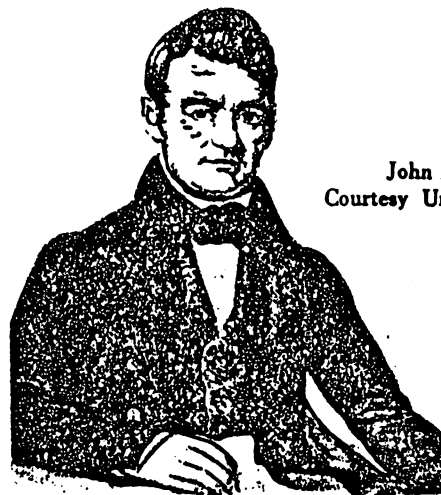
Eastern Cherokees

Mogtog
Attacullaculla
Oconostota
Tassel
Hanging Mauge
Blackfox
Pathkiller
William Hicks
John Ross
Wm. Potter Ross
Rev. Lewis Downing
Rev. Ochalata
Dennis Wolf Bushyhead
Joel Bryan Mayes
Thomas Mitchell Buffington
Col. Johnson Harris
Samuel Houston Mayes
Wm. Charles Rogers
J. B. Milam
W. W. Keeler

★

Western Cherokees

John Bowles
Takatoka
Tahlonteskee
John Jolly
John Brown
John Rogers



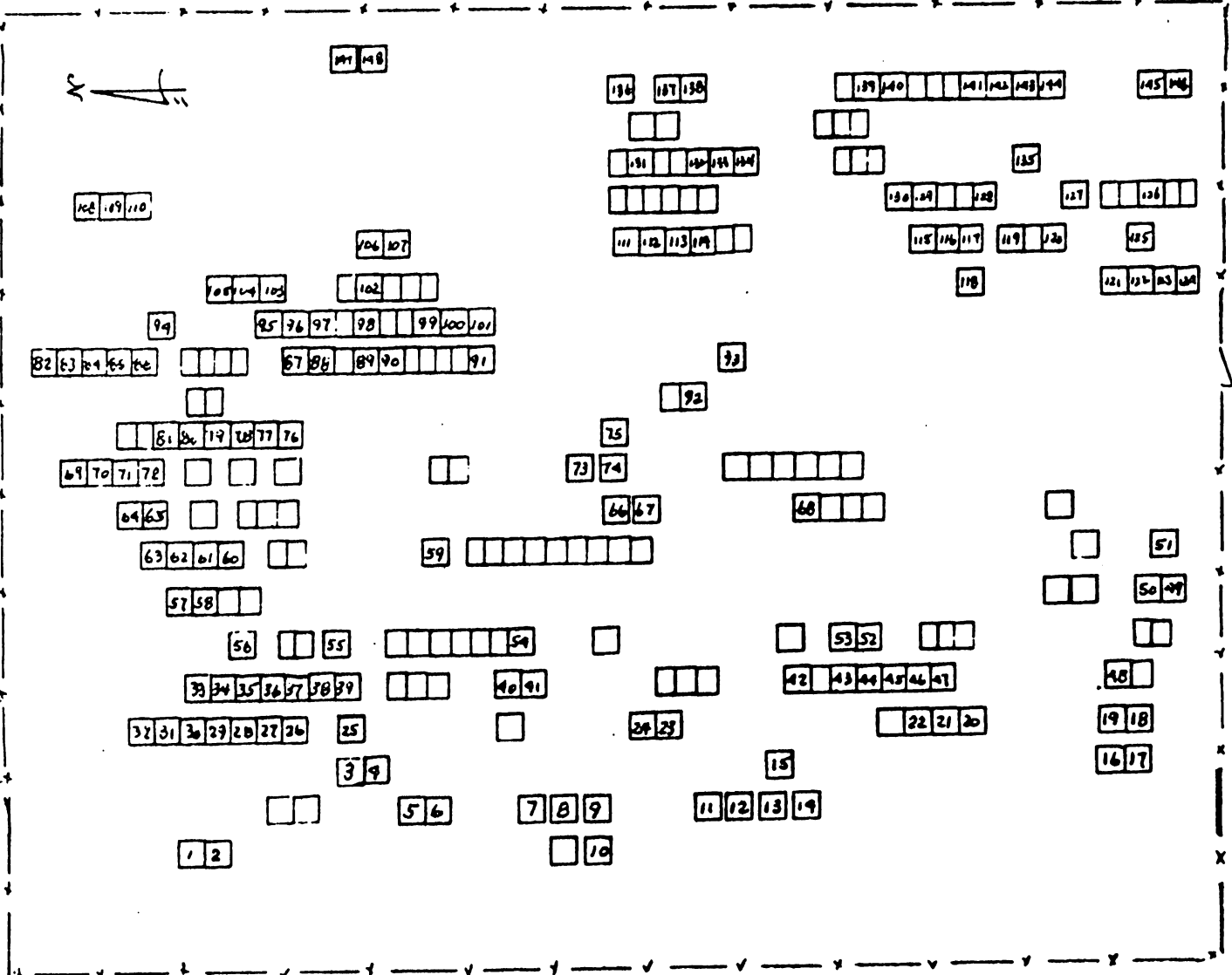
John Ross, Cherokee leader.
Courtesy University of Oklahoma Library.



... Charles Hicks, a brilliant mixed-blood, who led in writing the Cherokee constitution. This document contained an outline of the new government, defined the powers of officials with such Indian names as principal chief for chief executive, and the legislative body was called the National Council. In most respects, this constitution was similar to the United States Constitution. Charles Hicks died in 1827, and William Hicks served as interim chief until an election was held under the constitution, which elected John Ross as principal chief. Though only one-eighth Cherokee, Ross was enduringly popular with the full-bloods. Since they outnumbered the mixed-bloods at least three to one, they could out-vote the mixed-bloods, too. Ross studiously adopted the full-blood point of view and thus assured his continuation as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, winning every election until his death in 1866. 114 OKLAHOMA : A HISTORY OF FIVE CENTURIES

MORAVIAN MISSION CEMETERY

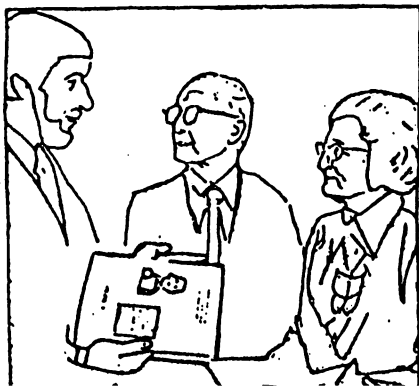
Location: Sec. 33, R23E, T20N, Delaware County.
 Condition: Fenced and maintained.



OUR PEOPLE AND WHERE THEY REST

(Pages 32, 33, 34 in Vol. 6, which was completed in 1971) Deaths since 1971 are therefore not included. If you know of any prior to 1971, that should be on this list, please tell Dorothy Brinker, 1309 Melrose Drive, Norman, Oklahoma, 73069. We want to have the information as complete as possible at historical research places.

Cherokee James Tyner and his sister find locating lost graves very revealing

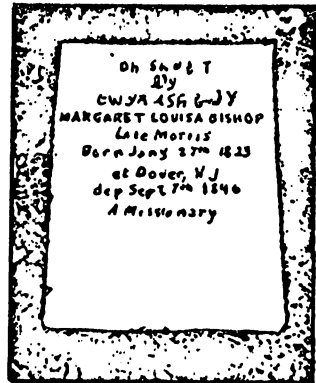


- 1843 -- Infant Vogler b&d Feby
- 9/46 - Margaret Louisa Bishop b 1/23, N.J.
- 8/46 - Elizabeth Benezet Smith b 6/23, Pa.
- 11/48 - Gertrude Smith b 4/26, N.C.
- 8/54 - Miles Vogler, b 12/10, d at Mt Zion
- 8/54 - Emma C. Vogler, b 9/22, at N.C.
- 1860 -- Eugene Joseph Bishop, 9 yrs old
- 1862 - James Ward, Jr. b. 1826, missionary
- 1869 - Isaac Jacob
- 1877 - Mattie Elizabeth Rights, 1 year
- 1878 - David Israel, 41 years
- 1881 - William Smith, 1 year
- 1886 - Benton H. Mitchell, 2 months
- 1891 - Infant Wood 4/3/91
- 1891 - Sista Israel, 2 months
- 1893 - W. Emory Thorne, 2 years
- 1894 - Susan Cleveland 62 years
- 1894 - Sallie E. McCrary, 32 years
- 1894 - Viola McCrary, 5 months
- 1895 - Emma Maria Beck, 1 year
- 1897 - J. C. Cleveland, 76 years
- 1897 - Floy Smith, 1 year
- 1899 - Ora Foreman, 10 months
- 1902 - Jesse Smith, 1 month
- 1902 - Ivan Dixon, 2 years
- 1903 - Giles Woods, 51 years
- 1903 - Saphonia Hobbs, 54 years
- 1906 - Infant boy Foreman, 2/27
- 1906 - " " " " , 2/28
- 1907 - Statehood

Doubtless, there are unmarked graves of other missionaries. And there are memories for many who read this page of others buried here.

MORAVIAN MISSION CEMETERY

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. A. P. Irons 1875 1953 | * 67. Dh shu'it lb gwya isra'eloy
(Here buried Lisi, a teacher
(to the) Cherokees) | 116. Grace T. Mann 1894 1913 |
| 2. Louise Irons 1876 1960 | Elizabeth Benezet late Kummer.
Born Jun 7 1823 at Bethlehem, Pa.
Departed Aug 27 1846. A Missionary. | 117. Lucile Mann 1917 1918 |
| 3. Earnest Mariss 1884 1916 | * 68. Dh shu'it oi gwya isra'eloy
(Here buried Ollie, a teacher
(to the) Cherokees) | 118. A. Henderson Mann 1861 1949 |
| 4. Bessie M. Mariss 1900 1967 | Gertrude Smith late Spough.
Born Apr 21 1826 at Friedburg, N. C.
Departed Nov 21 1848. A Missionary. | 119. Johny O. Jones 1914 1915 |
| 5. Bartha O. Culp 1900 1942 | 69. Daniel A. Smith 1864 1939 | 120. Lillie M. Burchett 1895 1951 |
| 6. Harry Culp 1879 1948 | 70. Sarah Bluebird Smith d. Aug 17. 1926 | 121. Mattie S. Hancock 1883 1963 |
| 7. Sidney A. Dixon OKLAHOMA MI
U S NR WW II 1912 1956 | 71. John D. Smith 1835 1917 | 122. Robert J. Hancock 1861 1941 |
| 8. Hayden Hutchison 1853 1933 | 72. Rebecca E. Smith 1893 1916 | 123. Addie L. Hancock 1914 1915 |
| 9. Susie Hutchison 1863 1955 | * 73. Dh shu'it isra'eloy
(Here buried (a) teacher.) | 124. Martha A. Hancock Oct 7-11 1918 |
| 10. Fred Carroll | Emma C. Vogler Born Sep 27th 1822
at Salem, North Carolina. Departed
Aug 7th 1854 at New Springplace, C.H. | 125. William W. Hancock 1900 1970 |
| 11. Mary Jane Jones 1866 1940 | Matte Elisabeth Rights 1876 1877 | 126. George W. Cobb 1857 1931 |
| 12. U. T. Jones 1863 1939 | * 74. Emma Maria Beck 1894 1895 | 127. Evert Wilborn Jan-Aug 1931 |
| 13. Octavie Harper 1885 1956 | * 75. Isaac Jacob died Apr 30 1869 | 128. Ollie Dinsmore 1906 1912 |
| 14. Hugh F. Harper 1917 1964 | 76. Jesse Smith Aug-Sep 1902 | 129. Della M. Kinn 1871 1912 |
| 15. Saphonia Hobbs 1849 1903 | 77. Ora Foreman Feb-Dec 1899 | 130. Louis Martin |
| 16. Anna Larson 1869 1944 | 78. Floy Smith 1896 1897 | 131. James W. Lyman OKLAHOMA Tec5
Co B 739 Tank Bn WW II 1923 1964 |
| 17. John C. Romer 1924 1963 | 79. William Smith 1880 1881 | 132. Earnest Barnes 1909 1910 |
| 18. Robert Lee Oakes 1889 1954 | 80. Grover C. Smith 1885 1911 | 133. J. A. Barnes 1856 1921 |
| 19. Johanna M. Oakes 1890 1937 | 81. Dal Cleveland 1884 | 134. Clara Barnes 1854 1926 |
| 20. Ella Williams 1887 1970 | 82. Joe H. Cleveland 1873 1966 | 135. Wm. Dewey Ott 1898 1955 |
| 21. Minnie Pitcher 1908 1969 | 83. Joe R. Cleveland 1912 1963 | 136. Alex Fields OKLAHOMA Pfc
500 Air Sv Gp AAF WW II
1910 1965 |
| 22. Sam Lamont 1878 1926 | 84. Varnie Cleveland 1909 | 137. Alice K. Davis 1972 1930 |
| 23. Ella N. Rusk 1868 1943 | 85. Roy L. Cleveland 1906 1963 | 138. Lonnie Stapleton 1931 1938 |
| 24. J. M. Rusk 1865 1960 | 86. Emma B. Thorne 1865 1891 | 139. Joseph S. Layne 1873 1918 |
| 25. Dave Isreal 1874 1951 | 87. W. Emory Thorne 1851 1893 | 140. Eyoutie Layne 1877 1949 |
| 26. Jennie Isreal 1884 1929 | 88. Susan Cleveland 1832 1894 | 141. J. D. Fain 1922 1941 |
| 27. Roscoe Carnes 1896 1969 | 89. J. O. Cleveland 1821 1897 | 142. Leota Fain 1925 1927 |
| 28. Roscoe Carnes Jr. OKLAHOMA
T/Sgt. U S M C 1923 1952 | 90. Giles Woods 1852 1903 | 143. Robert L. Fain 1867 1919 |
| 29. Marshall A. Carnes 1922 1923 | 91. David Isreal 1837 1878 | 144. James I. Fain 1896 1954 |
| 30. Nellie Smith 1879 1947 | 92. Benton H. Mitchell Feb-Apr 1886 | 145. Donald R. Troglin 1944 1964 |
| 31. Dollie Smith Hitchcock 1914 1950 | 93. Susia Israel May-July 1891 | 146. Leonard W. Troglin 1913 1960 |
| 32. Lerach Smith 1874 1954 | 94. C. W. Dixon 1874 1938 | 147. George D. Knight Sr 1887 1963 |
| 33. Infant Boy Foreman Feb 27 1906 | 95. M. J. Dixon 1874 1938 | 148. Bessie L. Knight 1893 1962 |
| 34. Infant Boy Foreman Feb 28 1906 | 96. James L. Dixon 1898 1916 | |
| 35. Bryan Smith 1900 1910 | 97. Ivan Dixon 1900 1902 | |
| 36. George H. Foreman 1909 1912 | 98. Viota Mann 1887 1970 | |
| 37. S. W. Foreman 1874 1924 | 100. Ples R. Mann 1883 1946 | |
| 38. Maggie Robbins 1894 1929 | 101. J. T. Mann 1922 1930 | |
| 39. Lila A. Foreman 1876 1932 | 102. Lee A. Moore 1891 1917 | |
| 40. Florence Lamont 1885 1955 | 103. Mayme E. Dixon 1910 | |
| 41. Cal. L. Laront 1856 1942 | 104. Oscar O. Dixon 1905 1970 | |
| 42. G. C. Carroll 1879 1916 | 105. Alfred E. Dixon 1914 1965 | |
| 43. James T. Carroll 1871 1918 | 106. Baby Boy Dixon 1931 | |
| 44. Lola A. Carroll 1881 1951 | 107. Leona E. Dixon 1901 1951 | |
| 45. Elmer Carroll Jr. Apr-May 1938 | 108. Infahnt Wood Apr 3 1891 | |
| 46. Elmer M. Carroll 1908 1968 | 109. Sallie E. McCrary 1862 1894 | |
| 47. Harry Carroll 1911 | 110. Viola McCrary Mar-Aug 1894 | |
| 48. Stella Mae Rusk 1914 1962 | 111. Amos L. Jackson OKLAHOMA Tec5
3748 QM Trk Co WW II 1926 1966 | |
| 49. Ora M. Noe 1932 1952 | 112. Delbert J. Jackson 1923 1929 | |
| 50. Sharalet L. Noe Jan 12 1951 | 113. Ardern R. Jackson 1932 1933 | |
| 51. Caleb M. Sales 1869 1951 | 114. J. E. - - - | |
| * 52. James Ward Jr. 1826 1862
A Missionary | 115. Miss Margret Criner 1902 1920 | |
| * 53. Eugene Joseph Bishop 1851 1860 | | |
| * 54. Infant Vogler B&D Feb'y 3rd 1843
at Canaan, Cherokee Nation. | | |
| 55. Lucy Thomas 1888 1910 | | |
| 56. Infant Petris Apr 16-18 1909 | | |
| 57. Mary Whittington 1897 1939 | | |
| 58. Pauline Foreman 1914 1948 | | |
| * 59. Dh shu'it isra'eloy
Dk'oh'p gwya isra'eloy
Miles Vogler Missionary of the
United Brethern Born Dec 17
1810 Died Aug 1 1854 at
Mount Zion, Cherokee Nation | | |
| 60. Chester C. Foreman 1937 1945 | | |
| 61. Ronald L. Foreman Mar-Apr 1941 | | |
| 62. Elias Foreman 1876 1955 | | |
| 63. Florence Foreman 1882 1962 | | |
| 64. Sarah T. Adair 1866 1945 | | |
| 65. J. W. Adair 1860 1931 | | |
| * 66. Dh shu'it oy gwya isra'eloy
(Here buried Wegi, a teacher
(to the) Cherokees) | | |
| Margaret Louisa Bishop late Morris.
Born Jan 27 1823 at Dover, N. J.
Departed Sept 7 1846. A Missionary. | | |



* From 1846 to 1854 at least 6 live missionaries died at New Spring Place. Their monuments are all of this same design. (And four of their children)

"Orbit" in Oklahoma City's Oklahoman, January 21, 1973, carried a story "Recovering the Buried Past," by Ivy Coffey about James W. Tyner of Choteau and his sister Alice Tyner Timmons (Mrs. Boyce) of Norman, who compiled the books OUR PEOPLE AND WHERE THEY REST by visiting more than 57,000 graves, covering 37 tribes and cemeteries in 16 northeastern Oklahoma counties. They received a national commendation certificate for their efforts to preserve and localize history.

Mrs. Timmons gave us permission to use these pages in our anniversary book (* at the Indian Symposium, NESTC, Tahlequah, Ok, April, 1977 D. Brinker)

Cherokee Alphabet.

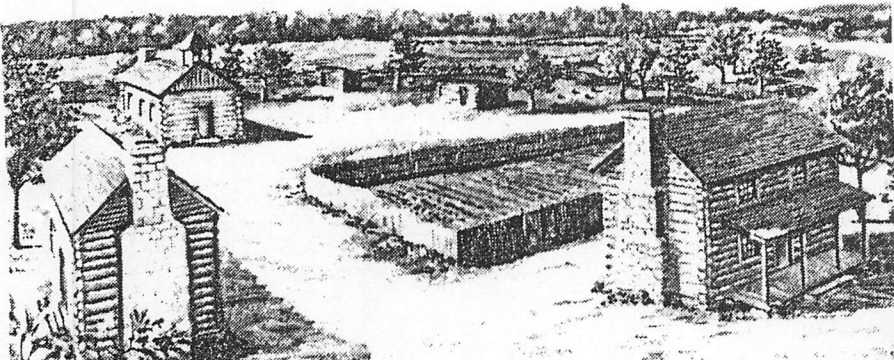
D _a	R _e	T _i	᎒ _o	᎒ _u	i _v
᎑ _{ga} ᎒ _{ka}	᎒ _{ge}	᎒ _{gi}	A _{go}	J _{gu}	E _{gv}
᎒ _{ha}	᎒ _{he}	᎒ _{hi}	F _{ho}	᎒ _{hu}	᎒ _{hv}
W _{la}	᎒ _{le}	᎒ _{li}	G _{lo}	M _{lu}	A _{lv}
᎒ _{ma}	A _{me}	H _{mi}	᎒ _{mo}	᎒ _{mu}	
᎒ _{na} ᎒ _{hna} G _{nah}	A _{ne}	h _{ni}	Z _{no}	A _{nu}	᎒ _{nv}
T _{qua}	᎒ _{que}	᎒ _{qui}	V _{quo}	᎒ _{qu}	E _{quv}
U _{sa} ᎒ _s	A _{se}	B _{si}	F _{so}	᎒ _{su}	R _{sv}
L _{da} W _{ta}	S _{de} T _{te}	A _{di} A _{ti}	V _{do}	S _{du}	᎒ _{dv}
᎒ _{dia} L _{tla}	L _{tle}	C _{tli}	J _{tlo}	᎒ _{tl}	P _{tlv}
G _{tsa}	V _{tse}	h _{tsi}	K _{tso}	J _{tsu}	C _{tsv}
G _{wa}	᎒ _{we}	᎒ _{wi}	᎒ _{wo}	J _{wu}	G _{wv}
᎒ _{ya}	B _{ye}	᎒ _{yi}	h _{yo}	G _{yu}	B _{yv}

Sounds Represented by Vowels

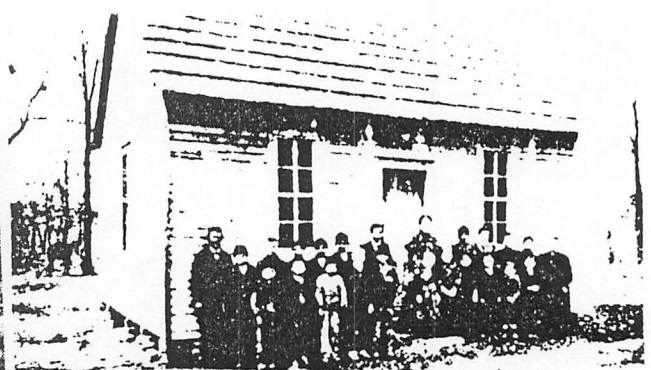
<p>a, as <u>a</u> in <u>father</u>, or short as <u>a</u> in <u>rival</u>!</p> <p>e, as <u>e</u> in <u>nate</u>, or short as <u>e</u> in <u>met</u></p> <p>i, as <u>i</u> in <u>pike</u>, or short as <u>i</u> in <u>bit</u></p>		<p>o, as <u>o</u> in <u>note</u>, approaching <u>aw</u> in <u>law</u></p> <p>u, as <u>oo</u> in <u>fool</u>, or short as <u>u</u> in <u>pull</u></p> <p>v, as <u>u</u> in <u>but</u>, nasalized</p>
---	--	---

Consonant Sounds

g nearly as in English, but approaching to k. d nearly as in English but approaching to t. n k l m n q s t w y as in English. Syllables beginning with g except **S** (ga) have sometimes the power of k. **A** (go), **S** (du), **᎒** (dv) are sometimes sounded to, tu, ty and syllables written with tl except **L** (tla) sometimes vary to dl.



Moravian Mission painted by Vinson Lackey



Mission School 1914



Mission Home

old school

Mission buildings in 1924



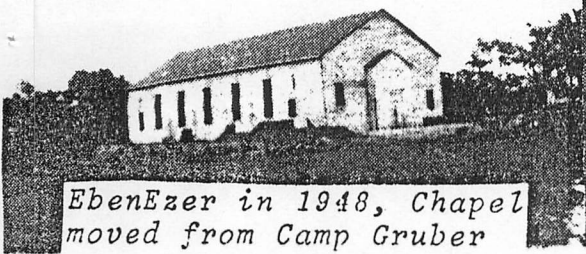
First School Bldg at Oaks



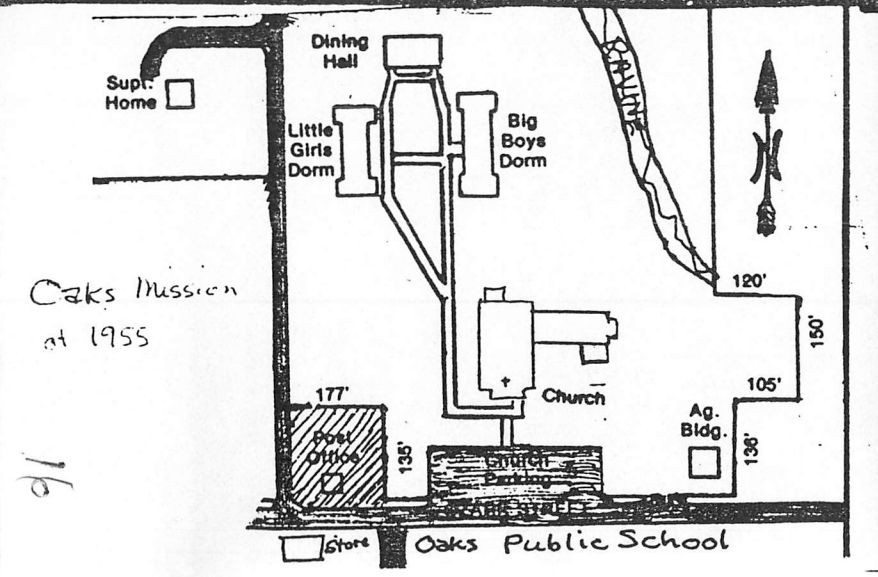
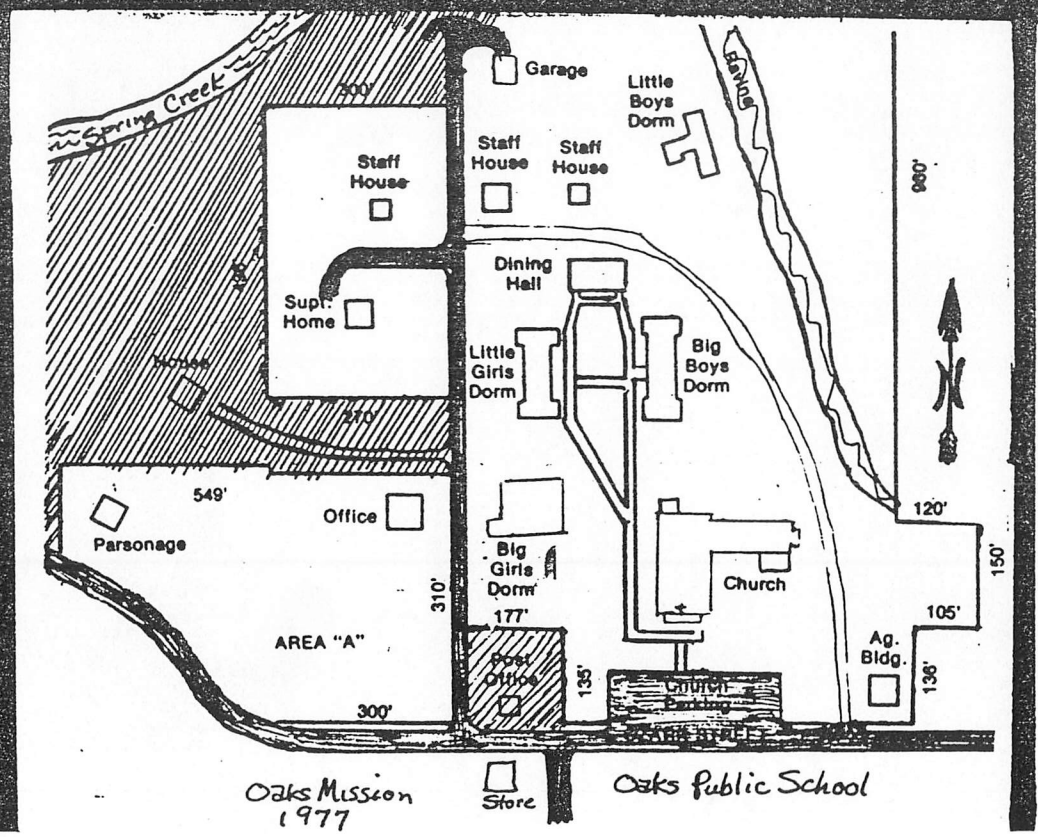
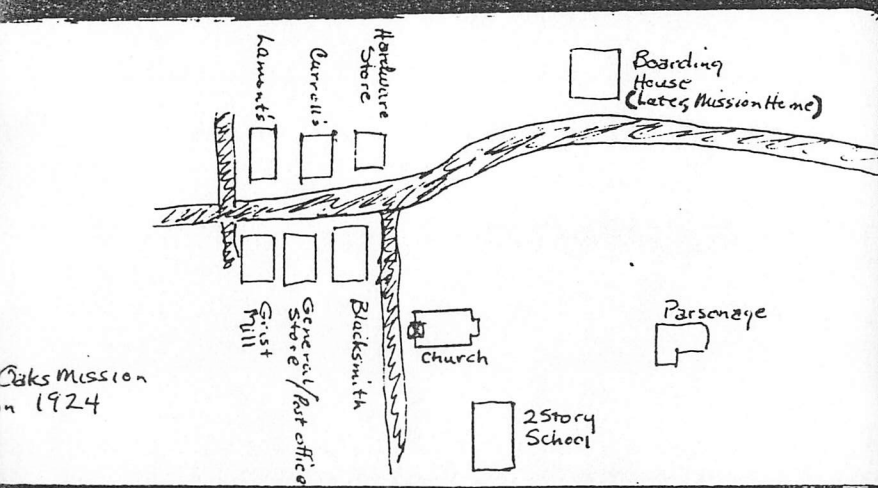
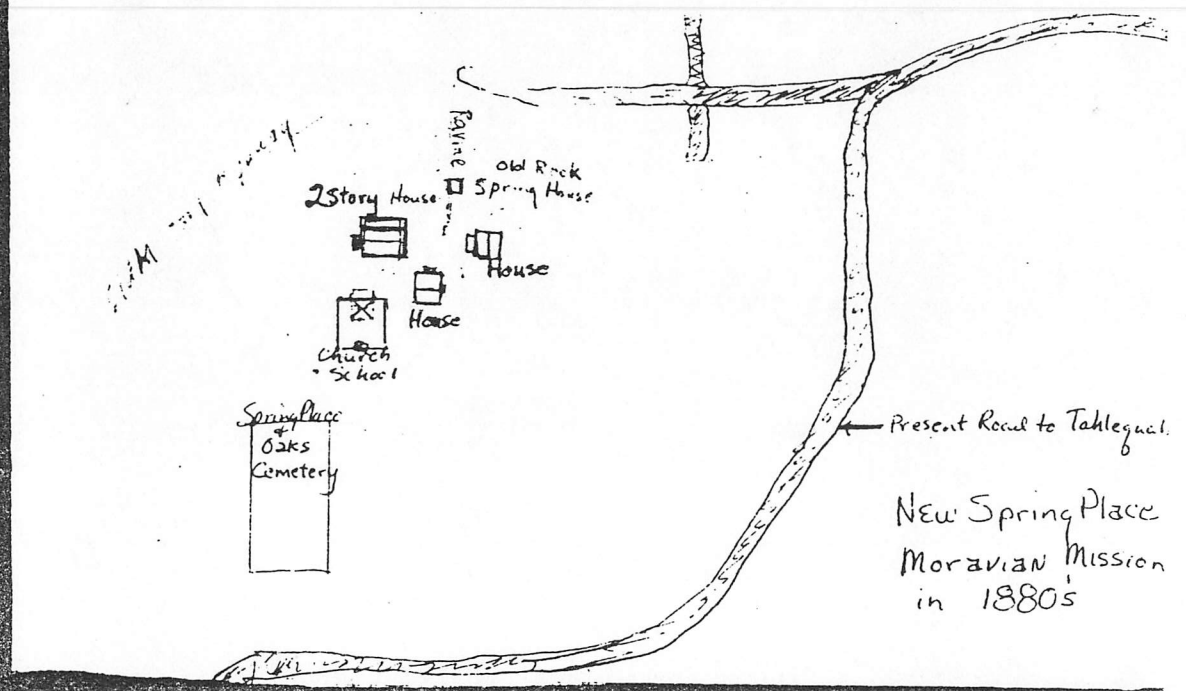
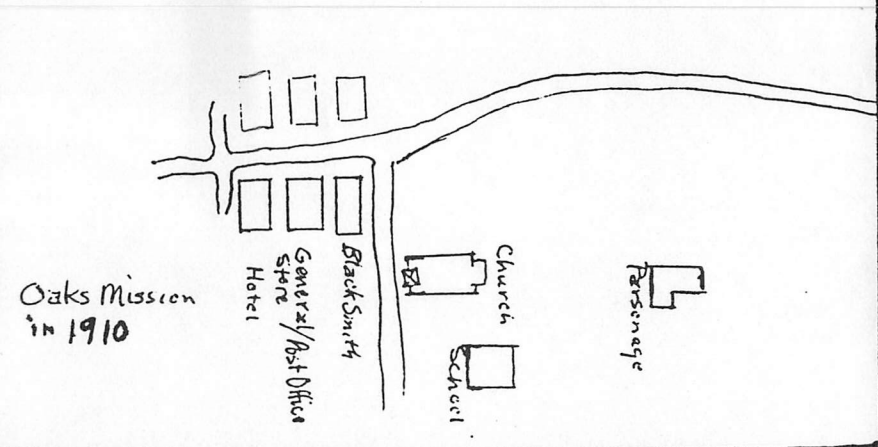
Our Cherokee Indian Mission

Oaks Mission in 1933

Aerial View of Mission



EbenEzer in 1948, Chapel moved from Camp Gruber



Maps showing the development of OAKS since 1880.

16

NIELS LAURIDS NIELSEN



Rev. & Mrs. Nielson

Niels Laurids Nielsen, born March 22, 1863, in Denmark, was only three when his father died. Even with five fatherless children, his mother was able to give them important Christian training at very young ages. When Niels was eight, he was already hired to a farmer as a shepherd boy. He remained a sort of shepherd all his life, for he was a pastor. At age 14, he felt called to be a missionary and was further encouraged through fellowship at The Moravian Brotherhood at Christianfeldt, South Jutland, where he worked as a gardner and came in contact with prospective and returned missionaries.



Rev. & Mrs. Nielsen, Brush, CO.

He started training school at Danish Mission Society, Copenhagen, though he did not finish before sailing to America in August, 1888, age 25. A month later he began a two year stint at a sawmill at Menominee, Michigan, and saved \$600 which enabled him to attend two years at Trinity Lutheran Theological Seminary, Blair, Nebraska, until spring of 1892. That year he spent the summer at Tahlequah learning the Sequoyah syllabary of 85 characters, which he mastered well enough in three weeks to read Cherokee but not to speak it.

In September he opened his first school at Pumpkin Springs, east of Moody, I.T. in a deserted house with an enrollment of eight. He preached through an interpreter.

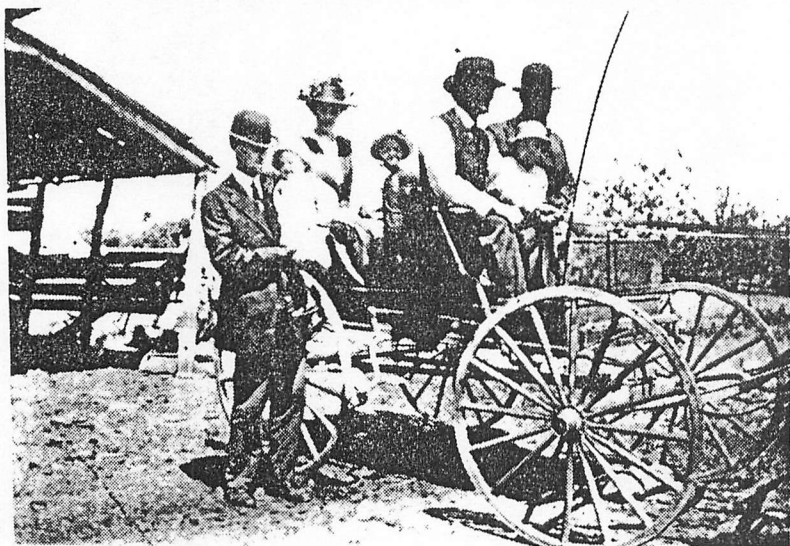
The next summer, Nielson was seriously ill with malaria, recovering enough by September to make a trip to Blair, Nebraska, to marry Jensine Christensen, his fiancée chosen by his mother. She had recently arrived from an old and established home in Denmark to begin life in a primitive cabin-and to discover new foods like biscuits and cornbread. In 1976, Nana Nielsen (no relation) wrote more about food around the time of statehood:



Nielson's first home

"The Nielsens had a big garden. They had horses, cows, pigs, and chickens. There was plenty of fruit---wild blackberries could be picked by the gallon in a few minutes. Walnuts and hickory nuts and mulberries were plentiful. That eased the food bill. Staple food was the native diet of cornbread and sorghum. The children must have had a balanced diet as they were healthy and active. Most of them stayed the year around for lack of proper homes."

Reverend Nielsen enjoyed walking and even covered 25 to 30 miles a day. His wife did not like to walk nor did she show much enthusiasm for riding a mule he obtained for a trip across the Ozarks. Later, there were many pleasant hours riding side saddle on a horse named Maud. In 1908 they became the proud owners of a brand new top buggy. Before the end of his ministry among the Cherokees, he acquired an old Maxwell car which is recorded as having been somewhat less than mechanically perfect.



Mr. & Mrs. Emil Hansen, 1903 & Rev. Nielsen

Because of a predominance of whites in his school at Moody and because the Moravian Church Board requested him to look after the scattered Moravians, Nielsen was invited to go to Oaks. He gladly accepted, and moved there early August, 1902. Oaks was also a larger community, consisting of a post office, three stores, a blacksmith shop, grist mill, and a hotel.

Lutherans approved the transfer after a visit by Reverend G.B. Christiansen, President of United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church whose visit was recorded by the following:



Oaks first school and church building.

Sunday School record of New Spring Place, Oaks, Okla., Feb. 9, 1902:

Sunday School opened at 11:00 a.m. The Lord's Prayer was repeated by David Mann, who heard the primary class. Mrs. Ella Rusk heard the infant class. Collection 26¢. 36 answered roll.

Services were announced and Rev. Nielsen occupied the pulpit, followed by Rev. Christiansen, who was visiting the congregation. He stated he would do his best to get the mission started at New Spring Place. The time occupied by the two Revs. was 1½ hours, very cold day, good attendance.

Signed: J. T. Carroll, SS Supt.
(A white man who married a Cherokee of their eight children, some are still at Oaks: Charlotte Adair and Mary Carroll, Charlotte's half sister)

The promise given by Rev. Christiansen was kept and the Lutheran Mission School started with over 60 children in attendance. When they came to Oaks, Rev. and Mrs. Nielsen brought with them two orphan children, David Woodard and Roxie Hooper. Granny Robbins, who travelled "The Trail of Tears" and her son William also came.

Missionary work among the Indians, as many missionaries can testify, is a slow and trying process, and not until 1898 did Reverend Nielsen experience the joy of baptizing his first convert, a girl of 16. This happy event made it necessary to buy a record book. Thus, we find the following title page for the church established late October, 1903, and named Eben Ezer Lutheran:

Ministerialbog
for.

Den for danske ev. luth. Kirkes Indianer

mission i Amerika.

Imagine this 35 year old Dane, who had arrived from Denmark only 10 years before, as he labored to title the book about the Cherokee Indians, whose language he had recently learned. Should he title the book in English, Danish, or Cherokee? His mother tongue won out both on the title page, his instruction comments, and the first entry, which is on the next page.

Aaret 1899

~~Dobte~~ (baptized): Annie England, 16 Aar

~~Optagne~~ (joined): Josephine, Jennie, William Robbins

The following year, "Aaret 1900" shows the records:

Doðe (died): Jose Vean Robbins, Martin England, John Rogers
Dobte (baptized): Cloth, Martin, Jim, Martha, and Mettie England;
Nanny Hatfield; John Rogers; John David Mann;
Edward Theodore Adair; Sarah Elisabeth Mann.

"Aaret 1901" we find the first "Konfirmerede:" Bertha Mann
and the only other entry "Dobte and Doðe:" Aron Terrel.

"Aaret 1902" Dobte: Dennis Hooper, Effa Viola Mann, Millie Scott,
Rosa Hastings, Effie Bruton, Charlie Scott.

Konfirmerede: Tila Miller, Florence Paine, Narcissa
Mann,

Optagne (New Members): 29 (10 Additional names in 1903)

Among the other willing workers in the church were Uncle Dave Mann and his wife Aunt Lizzie, Uncle Bob Mann and his wife Aunt Lottie, J.T. Carroll and his wife Lola, Less Carroll, Dave Israel, Will Israel (who donated his store building for the first school), John and Ella Rusk (she was sister of the Isreal boys.) As the church mission grew, their daughter Florence became one of the earliest (second?) teacher at Oaks. Graduating from Dana College, Blair, Nebraska, she taught three years before Nana Nielsen, and was paid \$15, \$20, and \$25 monthly salary, then spent the rest of her life deeply committed to both church and school at Oaks. In later years she and her husband "Cal" Lamont operated a general merchandise store and the Post Office. Mrs. Rusk was the first caretaker of the church after it was built in 1913. Her salary was \$12 a year and out of that she always gave Nana \$5 to send to the orphanage. I doubt she ever spent any on herself.-- (quoted from Nana Nielsen's letter 10-76).

The first teacher who came to assist Reverend and Mrs. Nielsen was Miss Marie Christensen. We have a copy of a small souvenir booklet loaned by Maud Smith Edwards on which 49 names are listed. It is presumably the roll of the Lutheran Mission School for 1904, The names being 3 Edwards, 3 Foremans, 3 Griffin, 2 Hunter, 2 Hamilton, 2 Jackson, 2 Layne, 6 Mann, 2 Petris, 3 Rusk, 10 Smith, 4 Sprague, and one each: Dixon, Floyd, Hooper, Gatfield, Harrison, Reeves, and Ward.

In the 25th Anniversary booklet (1928, page 35) is a list of "Workers employed by the United Danish Ev. Luth. Church among the Cherokee Indians from 1892-1928," with 19 names between those of Rev. and Mrs. Nielsen and Reverend and Mrs. C.A. Vammen. (This list is almost in chronological order, but not 100% - Abelone Nielsen (Larson) should have been nearer the beginning; she was "Miss Abbie" of the 1915 boarding house). In that same booklet, Rev. N.C. Carlsson, President of the Synod (and brother-in-law of Mrs. C.A. Vammen) mentioned that attendance "increased to considerably over 100, necessitating the employment of three teachers."

GWY JOZYAJ

CHEROKEE HYMNS

MARBLE CITY, OKLA.
DWIGHT MISSION PRESS
1909

Hymns GWY JOZYAJ

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| HYMN 1 | S.M. | IKAT OHEA |
| Meeting of Christians | | S4WJ KR. |
| 1 | IKAT OHEA, | HYMN 2 |
| | Za ova; | 7a |
| | S4WJ OERA | Introduction of |
| | JROJ KR | Public Worship |
| 2 | IKAT OHEA | 1-DE. DEOSA, |
| | Ovraha | Ta-ryia |
| | Tuy ova, | Dy-a-oh |
| | S4WJ KR. | Evveha |
| 3 | IKAT OHEA | 2 Ova-za-za, |
| | Tajvt; | ha ova; |
| | S4WJ OERA | IKAT OHEA |
| | Tajvt. | IKAT OHEA |
| 4 | IKAT OHEA | 3 Dy-a-oh |
| | Ovraha | De-oh |
| | Tuy ova | Vy-za-za |
| | Ovraha KR. | 4 Tuz ova |
| | | De-oh, La |
| 5 | IKAT OHEA, | Ova-za-za |
| | Dy-a-oh | Tajvt. |

The Dwight Mission where this was printed was a Presbyterian station established for the Arkansas Cherokees in 1820. It was moved to the new Cherokee Nation eight years later. Reverend Sam A. Worcester came along to teach. He had been closely associated with Cherokees in Georgia and Tennessee. He brought the first printing press to Cherokee Nation and became the publisher of Cherokee Almanac at Park Hill. He established another mission there in 1836. He and the Moravian Missionaries worked together.

Certificate of Baptism

Maud Smith
child of *Charlie Smith*
and his wife *Bessie Smith*
born at *Kaushi*
was baptized in *Oaks Church*
on the *8* day of *March* A. D. 1902
— in the name of —
the Father, of the Son, and
of the Holy Ghost.

Sponsors: *The congregation*

N. L. Nielsen
Pastor.

COPYRIGHT APPLIED FOR, 1900, BY DANISH LUTH. PUBL. HOUSE, BLAIR, NEBR.

Maud Smith Edwards is one of the first Children baptized at Oaks by Reverend Nielsen (3-8-02). She now lives in Tahlequah and shared this certificate with us.

Reverend Nielsen firmly believed that the success of the Mission was directly linked with the Mission School and resisted all attempts to become public when Oklahoma became a state. The school became so widely known for excellence that in 1915 a children's home or a Boarding House was set up for children from distant places. The Boarding House was Doc Carroll's abandoned house which everyone worked to make liveable. It was supervised by "Miss Abbie" (Abelone Nielsen who became Mrs. C.V. Larsen, Blair, Nebraska). She had her furniture shipped from Chicago at her expense and the rest was picked up any where we found it. She was paid by Synod, with other expenses paid by the children at \$9 a month, though I am sure none was turned away because of inability to pay (Nana quote).

A year after statehood, Nana Nielsen was hired as teacher--and thus a tradition began, for almost without exception there were warm memories of "Miss Nana" along with those of Rev. and Mrs. Nielsen. On October 18, 1976, Miss Nana wrote much history about those early days from 305 Villa Faith, Good Samaritan Village, Hastings, Nebraska, 68901.

"...when I received the call, I was told there would be 30 little Indians. Velma Lamont told me there were 80 on roll. They dwindled down - as did my 74 in 1908. I probably averaged 50 - ages from 5 to 17. Some had to sit three in those home made seats and desks. All furniture was handmade, unpainted, including my desk which appeared to have had paint. The first school was an old store building 70 feet by 30, divided into one long room, a platform and sliding doors leading to a smaller room used for quilting by the ladies. Back of that was a little room used for wood and tools. The building was set upon a few large stones leaving clear sweep for the wind and room for pigs and dogs to fight and find shelter from the heat. The floor was worn with big cracks so we didn't need a dust pan. We just picked up the paper and swept the dust through the cracks. I had a picture of myself standing in the door with a big box holding the water bucket and dipper beside me. The water was carried from the spring below the hill. There was a bell tower with a bell. The parents were to pay tuition in the form of a load of cord wood. That burden fell to only a few. Did we freeze in winter! My room in the parsonage was awfully cold as there was no way of heating it. Being anemic from malaria, I froze all night regardless the amount of cover. Our mattresses were all made from corn shucks.

Margaret Nelson (Anderson) taught two years as my health was broken after the first three years. Again I was asked by the board to come back. I refused to come back unless I could get a helper. I sometimes had as many as 20 beginners. G.B. Christiansen's daughter Anna did a fine job with the little ones. She organized an adult choir which became famous.

G.B. Christiansen was President of Trinity Seminary, Blair, Nebraska. He was later president of United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Julia Johnson (with sister Marie, who stayed only a few years) followed Anna and continued directing the choir. Miss Julia had a remarkable voice and musical talent. She and Miss Nana became a wonderful team. Everyone loved them. Miss Nana stayed until a short time before the Nielsens retired in 1924, but returned for another school term in 1924 when Reverend Vammen arrived. Under the tutelage of Miss Nana and Miss Julia, students daily heard the Word of God and grew in their relationship with Him.

A new four room new school was built in the summer of 1919. Mr. and Mrs. Loft and Gertrude Jensen were the teachers. I remained as an all around helper in the Mission.

Everything used to be carried by freight wagon over rough roads through Flint Creek, from Siloam, so people learned mostly to make out with what was at hand. There were three stores. Mr. Petris and Doc Carroll each had a little store besides Mr. Martin's big store (the present pool hall).

Children walked as far as three or four miles. As there was no bridge--only a tree felled across Spring Creek-- sometimes one would fall in and had to be dried out. People were very poor. There was no welfare. Some were undernourished and scantily clothed.

As this page was being prepared, we received the following words from Mr. and Mrs. A. Laurence Mortensen, recent visitors at Oaks, who left here with names of former residents to visit when they returned to their home at Good Samaritan Village, Hastings, Nebraska: ".We met Nana Nielsen. She looked ill, but was sweet; she was down in bed. Olga Hansen (the college friend of Mrs. Vammen's she asked us to greet) was writing letters for her. Nana is sweet, 90 years old and "ready to be called home". She says she's to be buried in the Moravian Cemetery since she feels Oaks is home. She said she taught at Oaks from 1908-11...had to leave Oaks to take care of her mother (Note: Church record book indicates she moved to Minneapolis in 1925). She was back at Oaks in 1943 to 1960, then she came here..."

Before the above letter was received at Oaks on Monday, May 16, the Mortensens phoned Brinkers late Sunday, May 15, to say Nana had died the day before and sent her obituary from their newspaper.

Mortensens also wrote:

"...just had the nicest, warmest telephone visit with Mrs. (S.S.) Kaldahl...she invited us to come to visit...she sounded so gracious..."and on June 17: "...We called on Mrs. Kaldahl one afternoon. Charming lady. When she and her husband left Oaks to go to Wolbach (our former home!) in 1929, they took an Indian girl with them so she could finish high school there. When she graduated, she got a diamond from a Wolbach boy. However, she went back to Oaks to marry her boyhood sweetheart. She had two lovely daughters. When her husband died, the man in Wolbach apparently hadn't forgotten his first love. They married and live on a farm near Wolbach...she came to see Nana Nielsen a day or two before she died. Mrs. Kaldahl has three sons and an adopted daughter..."

TWO ERICKSEN SISTERS wrote in November, 1976:

"Oaks was a little bit of Heaven on Earth to me as a child because of Mr. Nielsen and Little Mother Nielsen. They greeted everyone who came to the Mission with open arms and made you feel you belonged from the minute you met them and forever after.

We attended the Lutheran Church as Dad and Mother had been raised Lutheran and they were overjoyed to find it, and soon afterward started to the Lutheran Mission Boarding School as our school house at Chewey burned down. Miss Abbie took care of us and we were permitted often to go over to the Nielsen's house to visit and to help with lots of things. One of the favorite things we did was to go out to the pasture to get the cows and Mr. Nielsen was like the Pied Piper letting us troop along and teaching us how to kick the small rocks off the road with a slight twist of our toes of our shoes to the right and left to make the road smooth and we did this as we walked and visited and laughed along the way. When we got home, the cows were fed and milked and the milk put into crocks and put on the rock ledges in the spring house and this is where Mother Nielsen took over and skimmed the cream and made butter and cheese and this we gradually learned to help with and it fed all the children at the boarding house besides the Nielsen's.

Then there were the home duties such as making bread and sweet rolls or coffee cakes. We helped pick the raisins off the stems or smashed the cardimium seeds with the mortar and pestle. Later on, we learned to make the loaves of bread and coffee cakes and cakes, pies, cookies, etc., which we had for dessert. Sometimes we all ate at the Nielsen's instead of at the boarding house and Mr. Nielsen read from the Bible and offered what we thought were awfully long prayers, but as you grow you realize how important they are.

Sometimes they let us help clean their pretty little house, the parlor and dining room and their great big homey kitchen with its good smells, getting ready for Sunday. Sunday mornings any child in the whole area had the privilege of helping ring the church bell with Mr. Nielsen, calling all the people to Sunday School and church and evening services and the good teachers and people from the congregation taught and sang in the choir. Miss Nana was my favorite.

...other memories...visiting many people, such as Granny Robbins who came across the "Trail of Tears" (who had a grandson Billie who worked with my Dad for quite a few years.) Granny Robbins invited us to stay over night and sleep in her soft feather bed that you had to climb on a stool to get into (quite a contrast to the corn shuck mattresses at the home!) The next morning she was up ahead of us and made a fresh blackberry pie. She gave us a piece of it before we went back to the boarding house.

Nettie (Erickson) Bagley and
Jane Erickson

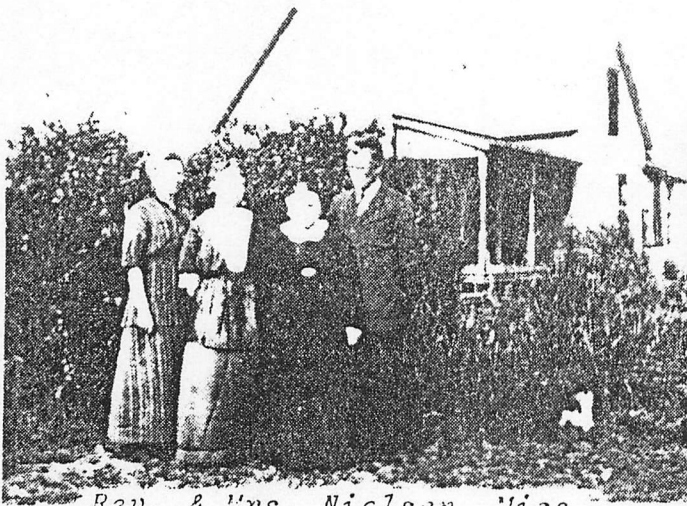
THEIR BROTHER PETER ERICKSEN, P.O. Box 452, Siloam Springs, Phone 524-4557... loaned 10 pictures to us and wrote "...I started to school at Oaks 1917-22 through the 7th grade (first two years went somewhere else and 8th grade in Illinois) During these years, I lived at the parsonage with the Nielsens...roommates were Ed Reeves and Freddie Wilson...saw Nielsens hopes and aspirations, teacher of the Bible, educators, doctors, counselors...I know their stipend was very small and I have seen them take money from their pockets to help someone in need...most unforgettable, dedicated people I have known in my lifetime...strict rules and regulations... I know now Bible history and the 10 commandments made me a better person...in the same category were my teachers; Nana Nielsen, Julia Johnson, Gertrude Jensen, and Abbie Nelson.

PEARL PETRIS BOX (Mrs. & Mrs. Carroll C. Box, 12330 E. Camilla St.
Whittier, Ca. 90601

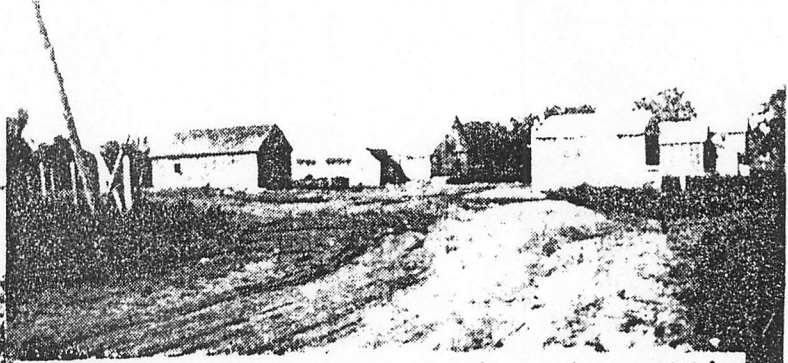
"...I attended Oaks from 1910-19...the happiest years of my childhood...fondest memories of the Lutheran Church and school...community Thanksgiving dinners and sales (for mission work)...doughnuts and coffee at Christmas, along with the largest cedar trees I've ever seen...Easter with beautiful flowers and hundreds of brightly colored eggs, that seemed perfect... highlight of each week was quilting attended by all our mothers and supervised by Mrs. (Gertrude) Jensen (Mrs. J.P. Nielsen)...delicious bread and sweets of all kinds and homemade cheese that would rival gourmets of today...Miss Nana Nielsen sent the snapshots I am enclosing..."

AVA SISK DAY, Route 4, Box 33B, Lubbock, Texas 74783

"...cannot attend due to health...cannot give enough praise for the blessings for the excellent teachings I received through Reverend Nielsen and his dear wife...never more consecrated and devoted people... through them in church and school that...led me to go into ministry... my saintly mother loved the Nielsens and worked with them. My four brothers were baptized by Reverend Nielsen and sang in the outstanding choir directed by Miss Julia Johnson...especially grateful for friendship with her and Miss Nana and grateful to Miss Margaret Nelson...am now retired with a Christian husband and there is only one brother and I living..."



Rev. & Mrs. Nielsen, Miss Hans and Miss Julia.



Main Street of Oaks during the 1920's



Ebensker Ladies Aid



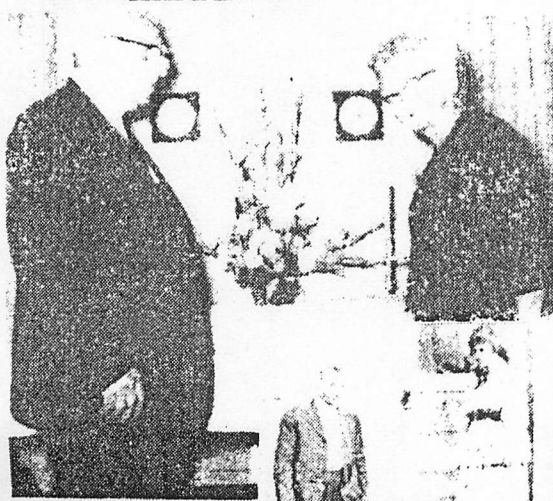
Washday at the Mission



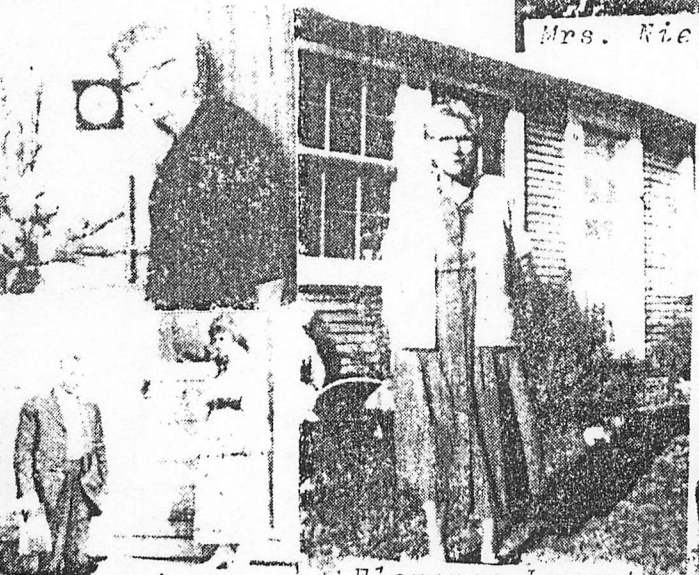
Starting for Church in Rocky Ford (1924)



Mrs. Nielsen & Sunday School Class



Golden Anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. Stennis Loft.



Gertrude Jensen and Mr. Loft



Florence Lamont Teacher & Postmaster



Nettie & Henderson Mann

ALTON ADAIR, 918 Sebring Ave., Pine City, N.Y. 14871, wrote on Nov. 8, 1976: "...when Mother Sarah Smith (Adair) was 12 she began living with Reverend T.M. Rights family...I was born 1895 and remember attending Sunday School at New Spring Place, Oaks, and Christmas at Moody, Oklahoma, and at Old Swayback. In 1901-02 I attended Lutheran Mission at Kansas, Oklahoma and remember Reverend (Emil) Hansen's quiet dignity...he taught the older children to play baseball instead of Old Two Cat...my favorite friends were William Robbins and Nana Nielsen (Nana wrote in her letter about the same time: "Alton Adair walked seven miles to my Sunday School class 1908-09, and he still writes to me at 81.")

Letters received November, 1976, from people who had been at Oaks during the significant year 1932 are quoted here, even though they pertain to the Vammen era. In 1932 the school legally changed from a parochial to a public school with five teachers: Ralph O. Mortensen (from Royal, Iowa), Helen Sagen Romer, Edna Simonsen Johnson, Elna Hoffgaard, and Walter Jensen. For the eight month term, the salaries ranged from \$70 to \$112.50 monthly. The budget was \$5,318 for the year.

Beloved Mrs. Helen Sagen Romer taught every grade at Oaks (but mainly first grade) from 1938-62, 34 years, retired in 1962, and died in August 1976. In 1939 she had married Pastor John C. Romer, a widower with five children, who served EbenEzer Lutheran Church from 1938-47, when he died.

MR. AND MRS. RALPH O. MORTENSEN, 224 East 13, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 50613: "...we had been planning to make the trip but due to physical readons, cannot...will try to come in the spring of 1977...I should be remembered as principal-teacher-coach. I remember many of the boys and girls and would love to see them. Now after 43 years in education, (nine as principal, teacher, coach, and 34 as superintendent, I am happily retired at the birthplace of my wife..."

"MISS EDNA" SIMONSEN JOHNSON, originally from Nebraska, wrote from Los Angeles, California: "...I am sending the one and only copy of the Cherokee Tribune School Day activities of four pretty wonderful years I spent teaching and learning at Oaks..Those dear children never openly questioned my book knowledge, but they certainly did question my native intelligence! (Examples: (1) Being completely turned around on hikes in the woods; (2) Starting fire in the stove shaped like an old fashioned copper wash boiler with no grate to shake and no good opening for a draft, often with damp or even ice-encrusted wood. (3) Attempting to rescue a lad's cap in the pigpen containing a sow and litter. Robert Bussy composed a song about this with the phrase "Miss Edna was a hog-tamer."

But her book knowledge helped her class make a diamond for the new baseball game, added that year to popular basketball. The game's score was 24-3 with Miss Edaa coaching, unable to do more than yell "Hit!" or "Run!" Also, Four-H started at this time, and Russell Ferguson dubbed the County Agent "Mr. Soybean" as the agents were forerunners of this profitable crop. I often asked "Did I teach or learn?"

Greetings and enduring love,
"Miss Edna"

ALFRED (AND AGNES) JENSEN, 910 Third St., Hood River, Oregon, 97031: "...My first teaching assignment was at Oaks Mission High School, the year of the move from the old school house to the new building...Lloyd Osburn and Eugene Frazier were among my pupils...(Ask Gene if he remembers the fire on February 27, 1935!)...Rev. C.A. Vammen married us on December 10, 1933. Mrs. Vammen and Jessie Wolfe prepared the wedding dinner and that evening Reece and Jessie Wolfe were guides to a preaching mission at Holland School, 12 miles across the Illinois River (40 by land). The faculty in ~~1935~~ consisted of C.A. Vammen, Superintendent; Ralph Mortensen, high school principal, and Alfred Jensen in high school. Grade school: Severin Sorensen, Helen Sagen (Romer), and Ruth Johnson. Some "highlights" he remembered: "Sings", school plays, Sunday School at Dave and Sally Russell's, evening preaching at Flint and Bull Hollow, Blackfox family and others singing at services. I was back at Oaks a second time in 1954-64."

~~1932~~

There were also letters from Stella Hendrickson, , Arizona; Velma Pederson "Congratulations from all the Lamonts," Wolbach, Nebraska; and D. Horne, Athens, Georgia.

FORMER PASTOR GEORGE E. BASELER (11-69, 3-75). Immanuel Lutheran Church, 111 North Mason Avenue, Amboy, Illinois, 61310: "...Pastor and Mrs. John Jorgensen (6-66, 8-69) and we talked about driving to Oaks... but cannot...learned about this event last month from one of the board members at the ALC convention in Washington, D.C....enclosed is \$30.00..."

Indicative of the close ties among the early members of the Eben Ezer Lutheran Church is the fact that descendants of some of them are still on the church rolls.

Also indicative of their warm friendly relations is that in October, 1934, one of them whose name is on the 1900 baptism list wrote the following words to Reverend Nielsen at Elk Horn, Iowa, when Mrs. Nielsen died:

"...I feel her presence so near and can see that wishful and pleading look she always had on her face which drew all people to her...Her life, like Christ Jesus', wasn't lived here on earth in vain. The fruit will be gathered many days hence..."

Sincerely your Sister in Christ,
Nannie Hatfield

Quoted in the 25th anniversary booklet, N.L. Nielsen's final paragraph is:

"It was a sad day when my wife's health and strength gave way and we had to leave the blessed mission work at Oaks, Oklahoma, with the dear souls we had loved and with whom we had dealt so much".

C.A. Vammen's article "Brief History of Oaks Mission School" says that in 1892-1903 N.L. Nielsen had a school about 15 miles from Oaks. In 1896-1903 there was a subscription school at Oaks; the building later sold for \$10.50. "In October, 1900-02 Marie Christensen taught 63 - 90 days per year." (But we have this dated 1904!)

SOUVENIR



1904

Lutheran : Mission : School
OAKS INDIAN TERRITORY

1903-1904



Presented By
Marie Christensen
Teacher



REV. N. L. NEILSEN,
Residing Pastor and Missionary

Pupils

Julian Layne	Will Petris.
Roscoe Rusk	Freeman Smith
Roxie Hooper	Winnie Hatfield
Mary Foreman	Viola Layne
John Smith	Charlie Smith
Cecil Griffin	Ben Harrison
John Sprague	Ethel Griffin
William Robins	Ada Rusk
Maud Sprague	Lelah Griffin
Lillie Smith	Maud Smith
Dottie Hunter	DeWitt Mann
Otis Rusk	Maggie Foreman
Gertie Mann	Effie Foreman
Narcissa Mann	Floy Smith
Ruth Mann	Emma Sprague
Jim Petris	Fanny Edwards
Robert Smith	Myrtle Sprague
Helen Edwards	Robert Mann
Rebecca Smith	Lulu Floyd
Galelee Mann	Dave Jackson
Alvin Edwards	Lucius Dixen
Ada Jackson	Grover Smith
Goldie Hamilton	Warner Hamilton
Gertrude Ward	Lucy Smith

Laura Reeves

The 25th Anniversary Book (pg 35) said "all former teachers are living except Marie Christiansen..." We don't know how many have died but that Nana Nielsen died May 14, 1977, and is buried at Oaks, Okla.

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN CHEROKEE

ᏊᏃᏃᏃ / ᏍᏩᏃᏃ / ᏆᏂ, / ᏍᏩᏃᏃᏃ / ᏆᏂᏃᏃ / ᏍᏍᏃᏃᏃᏃ. / ᏃᏃᏃᏃ ᏆᏃ / ᏃᏍᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ. / ᏃᏃ ᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ, / ᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏍᏩᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ. / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃ. / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏍᏩᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ, / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃ ᏆᏃᏃᏃ. / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏆᏃᏃᏃ, / ᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏆᏃᏃᏃ, / ᏃᏃ / ᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ / ᏆᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃᏃ. /

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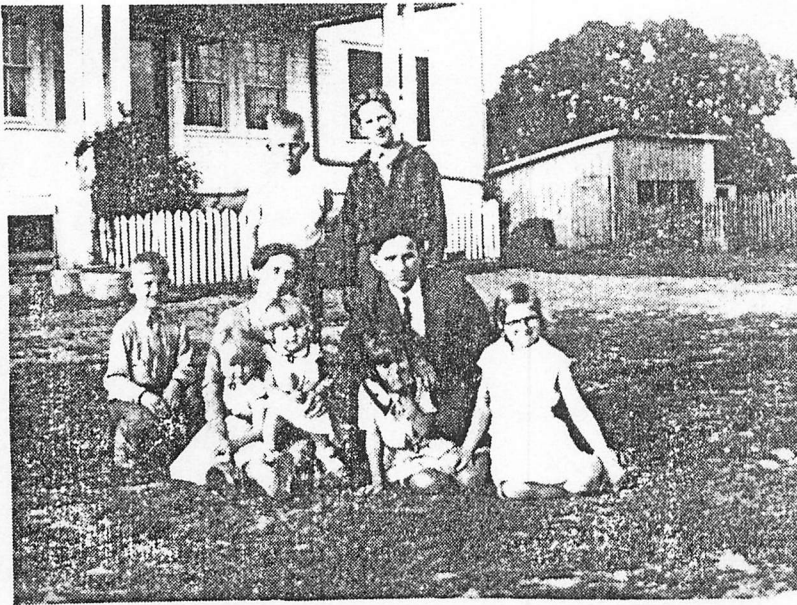
Ogidoda / galvladi / hehi, / galvgwdiyu / gesesdi / dejado?v?i. / Jagwuiyuh i gesv / wigananugo?i. / Ahni / elohi / winigalsda / hadanhtesgv?i, / nasgiya / galvladi / jinigalsdiha. / Nidadodagwis / ogalsdayhdi / sgi?vsi / kohi / iga. / Digesgi?vsigwuhno / desgitugv?i, / nasgiya / jidigayojineho / jojitugi. / Ale / hlesdi / udagoliyediyi / gesv / widisgiyatinvstanvgi, / sgiyudalesgesdigwusgini / uyo gesv?i. / Jajeligayheno / Jagwuiyuh i / gesv?i, / ale / jahlanigidiyu / gesv?i, / ale / ejalvgwdiyu / gesv / nigohilv?i. /

/ Emen /

Our Father / heaven / dweller, / Hallowed / be / thy name. / Thy kingdom / let it make its appearance. / Here / upon earth / take place / Thy will, / the same / as in heaven / (it) is done. / Daily (adj.) / our food / give to us / this / day. / Forgive us / our debts, / the same as / we forgive / our debtors. / And / do not / temptation / being / lead us into (it). / Deliver us / from evil existing. / For thine / the kingdom / is, / and / the power / is, / and / the glory / is, / forever. /

/ Amen /

CHRISTIAN ADOLPHUS VAMMEN (1924-58)



Reverend C.A. Vammen's family in 1930.



Rev. and Mrs. Vammen
Retirement, June, 1958

One Indian Summer night, October, 1923, Christian Adolphus Vammen received a phone call from soon-to-be-president of Synod N.C. Carlsen, at Blair, Nebraska. He asked if he would consider becoming a missionary to either the West Indies or to the Indians at Oaks, Oklahoma. Although Oklahoma had been a state for 16 years, both areas sounded equally foreign to him. He had come from Denmark in 1909, to Blair, Nebraska, where he had been ordained in 1918. He served a parish in Oskis, Minnesota, and was presently serving at Staplehurst, Nebraska. From childhood he had wanted to be a missionary.

Someone warned him: "You do wrong to take your four children down among those wild Indians." (He wrote later "There were two mistakes in that statement. 'Wild Indians' didn't apply to the Five Civilized Tribes. Nor did we hurt our children. They not only learned to live with them, but also to love them deeply").

The family arrived at Jay, Delaware County seat, on a hot day in June with the wind flapping the shades of their Model T Ford. A few miles farther south they found their road blocked by Saline Creek, and they still had 20 miles to go. For \$7.00 a ferry service powered by two horses and two mules towed them across. They were accompanied by two members of the Staplehurst congregation who drove a truck containing their belongings.

Continuing down the bumpy, dusty road, they arrived at Oaks on June 22, 1924. The Nielsens were still there and didn't leave for another week. Consequently, the Vammens with their four children were assigned the upstairs of the parsonage while the Nielsens occupied the main floor. Later, it was a welcome day to have the whole house to themselves.

At that time, the mission consisted of four framed buildings: Church, School, Parsonage, and Boarding House.

The year following their arrival, Vammens moved into the three story Boarding House, used by children attending Oaks Mission School. This building was later called the Mission Home.

"The Parsonage wasn't modern but it was home," Mrs. Vammen remembered. "We always had extra children. In addition to our own seven, for 14 years I had the privilege of being house mother to as many as 50 children. A number of them said I was the only mother they ever had. I pray that my efforts were not in vain. There was poverty in the area and hungry mouths to feed, clothing to be distributed, not only to the Mission Home children, but also to other people of the community."

Reverend Vammen managed the mission on \$1,500 a year. When he asked for additional funds, Danish Ev. United Lutheran Church said, "The money we have isn't for red skins; it's for Danish children." Vammen finally said he would resign if the church couldn't provide money "for orphans, barefoot in the snow." The Synod soon raised another \$900 annually.

Both Reverend and Mrs. Vammen are Danish, and met at Dana College, Blair, Nebraska. She was born Tomina Neve, on January 8, 1891, in Ringsted, Iowa. Her parents were immigrants from Denmark and were successful farmers.

"Father loved to keep us happy, loved young people and enjoyed using his hay rack to bring them to church meetings." She walked three miles to chapel for religious instruction on Saturdays. The Chapel later became St. Paul's Church. She memorized the 10 commandments and hymns because books were scarce. In 1905, she was confirmed. Both she and a sister became organists. On April 9, 1918, she was married to Christian Adolphus Vammen, with her brother, A.V. Neve, performing the ceremony.

"Now, I was to be a pastor's wife and I prayed that God give me the wisdom and love for the task," she said. One commentator wrote about her "...mother of seven children, devout Christian, remarkably able cook, and an intelligent lady who more than once during my visit to Oaks in January, 1947, had to serve as the efficient memory of the good superintendent."

Christian Adolphus Vammen was the sixth son in the family of 13 children. "In raising a large family", he said, "my parents had to be very economical, which had an influence on me, but they much more influenced me in a spiritual way. When three brothers were hired out to farmers by the year, the whole family was on their knees in prayer. And there were tears, many tears." November 2, 1901, at the age of 10 1/2, he too was one of those hired out to a farmer.

Of the 13 children of Anne Olivia (Hoppe) and Mathus Vammen, four came to America, the first in 1905. At that time, Adolphus, as he was known, promised to join big brother as soon as possible. This turned out to be March 27, 1909, when he was almost 18. A brother still at home "wondered if that kid knew what he was doing?"

"To be sure," he said, "I had many things to learn, but I learned fast. Quickly, I learned that the sea was rough and that 13 days of seasickness was tough."

At Ellis Island, he bought a carton of food for a dollar to last him on the train ride to Nebraska where his brother was in school. During a wait in Chicago, he entered several stores where he allowed clerks to try everything on him from shoes to suits and hats, though he had less than five dollars in his pocket.

As the train approached Blair, the conductor patted him on the shoulder. "Next stop," he said. Those beautiful words, Next Stop, became the first English phrase he learned. He and his brother had a happy reunion and both continued their education at Dana College, Blair, Nebraska.

"I took classes equivalent to high school and then graduated from the seminary, after which I thought I should go where I couldn't hear anything except English spoken, so went to Maywood, Chicago, for a year."

He didn't go to his alma mater in 1975 when the Queen of Denmark was there because, he said, "I had a queen at home!" But May 14 of this year he went for a celebration. His son Dr. A. Vammen, Tulsa, Oklahoma, accompanied him.

When he got to Oaks, he thought he would like to teach but was told he couldn't qualify. There was a provision in effect that one had to have only an eighth grade education, plus Oklahoma school law and Oklahoma history, to get a teaching certificate. "I knew I could whip that and went to Tahlequah and took those two courses and kept going on Saturdays and summers. Before I got through, I received a bachelor's degree in 1938."

After a while he decided that since he was now called superintendent, he should get more education, so he enrolled at the University of Oklahoma. Each weekend he preached three times--at Oaks, across the Illinois River at Chewey, and at Flint. Late Sunday he drove the 220 miles to Norman, arriving at 4:30 a.m., slept a couple of hours, and went to classes Monday until Saturday. Eventually, he received a Master's in education in 1940. During this time, Mrs. Vammen had the care of 50 children, first grade through high school ages. She was "just pasted down!"



Walker Tucker with guitar
first boys in the Home.

Rosco Rusk
Cong. Pres.



Class of 1926



Oaks General Store



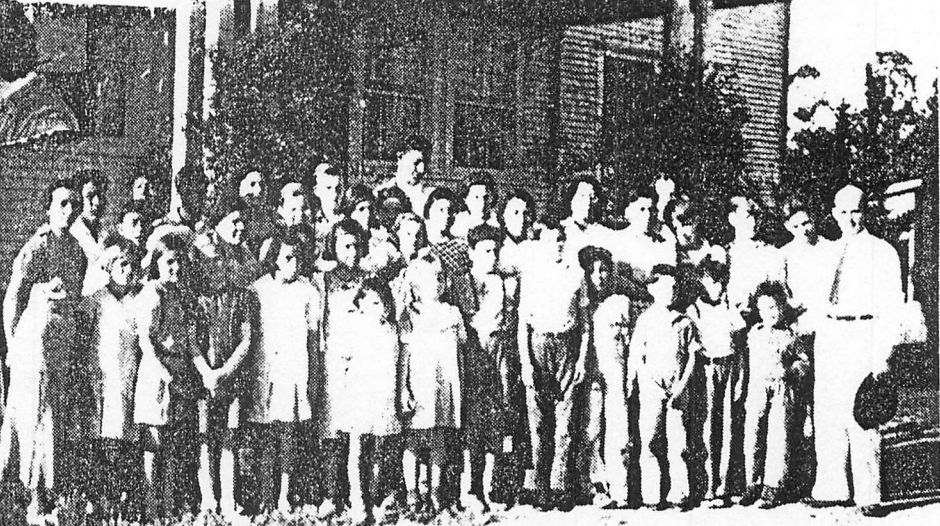
Walter
Rasmussen
(teacher)



"The Upstairs gang"



Mrs. Vammen
Dresses the girls.



Rev. & Mrs. Vammen with their family



Tillie Dorfler
Granny Robbins
Doris Welch



Church Choir of 1925



Helen Romer with
Kindergarten

Little Ruel Vammen
oversees brick layers
at school.

Nielsen's years have been labelled the pioneer years and Vammen's, the years of growth. Through artful persuasion (and tenacity) Mr. Vammen was able to solicit contributions by explaining the plight of his "children of the forest." He brought in funds for great expansion. Once he took a crate of strawberries to Speaker of the House, Bill Willis as he gently reminded him of the need for paving from Route 33 to Oaks. Old timers still call that "Strawberry Lane!" Another time, through personal solicitation in the congregations of the United Danish Ev. Lutheran Church, he raised \$14,300 for the red brick school dedicated in 1931 to replace the none-too-sturdy two story frame high school building.

"Thanks for your contributions," he once wrote. "You have been very cooperative. That is Christ's way, for He said, 'Ask and it shall be given unto you'".

His fund-raising ability was further evidenced when someone in a beer parlor saw him enter and voiced his surprise.

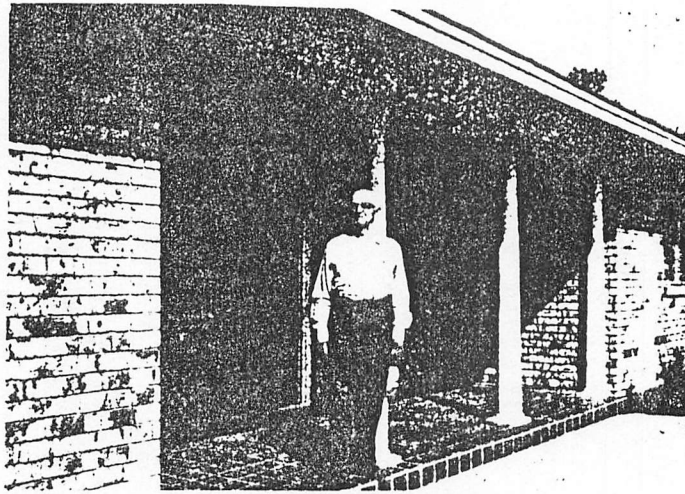
"Yes," Mr. Vammen said, "I guess you are surprised. I've come to collect for the Red Cross and expect five dollars from you!" He got it too!

Mr. Vammen worked hard at building up the facilities of the mission and school. The value of the four frame buildings he inherited from Nielsen was about \$8,000.

He claimed that the school building leaned far one direction and then the other-so much so that "the only reason it didn't fall down was that it didn't know which way to fall!" From this start, the Mission School grew to 20 buildings, most of them brick or stone, valued at \$325,000. Financial aid came mainly from the Lutheran Church - UDELIC. To a lesser extent, there has been Federal aid, such as in WPA days during depression times. State aid came after the school became public and was consolidated in 1932.

When he took over the school, there were 60 pupils and when he left, 300 pupils, 53% of them Indians. (In 1976, there are 443 pupils, 85% of them part Indian, 65% at least one-fourth Indian). The annual budget when he arrived was \$5,700 and \$125,000 when he retired. Two years after they arrived, they took five Indian children into their home which was the beginning of the children's home that still serves today. When he retired, there were two brick dormitories, housing 111 Indian children from grades 1-12, and a central dining hall. When they arrived there was a staff of three teachers; Nana Nielsen, Anna Jensen, and Hanna Nyholm, and Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Andreasen who were in charge of the Boarding House. There were eight teachers in 1932, the year of consolidation with the public school. During his tenure, a three room

cottage housed business offices and on May 5, 1974, a six office administration building was dedicated and named Vammen Hall, with 80% of the work done by the Oaks High School vocational carpenter class. From their original white frame parsonage (where Mrs. Vammen lowered milk and other perishables into the well), they progressed to the Boarding House, then to a native stone home in 1938. It is presently occupied by the Superintendent of the Mission, Lloyd Osburn. After retirement a modern brick all-electric home was built for them in 1964 between the parsonage and the superintendent's home, where Mr. and Mrs. Vammen celebrated their 86th birthdays this year.



VAMMEN HALL (Home ~~and~~ Administration Building). Dedicated on May 5, 1974.



THIS IS YOUR LIFE, C.A. & Mrs. Vammen at the 50th Anniversary of the Children's Home, November 1976.

BIG MEDICINES

1. For Poison Spider or Ant Bite - Apply onion quickly. It relieves pain instantly.
2. To Bring Boil to Head - Cut stem out of ripe tomato. Turn tomato over boil.
3. For Poison Ivy - Put yellow cucumber on rash.
4. Asthma - Use one half teaspoon of lemon juice before meals and at bedtime.
5. For Hardening of the Arteries - Make tea from the red sassafras. Drink plenty.
6. Blackberry Wine - Good for vomiting, cramps in stomach.
7. Chest Cold - Mix turpentine and hog lard to a paste. Rub on hot wool cloth and apply to chest or back.
8. Kidney Trouble - One radish three times a day.

THINGS TO EAT

1. SQUAW BREAD -

One pint sour milk Three heaping teaspoons baking powder
One tablespoon shortening One teaspoon salt
One half teaspoon soda

Add enough flour to make the dough easy to handle. Knead it smooth and roll out until your dough is about one half inch thick. Cut this into portions about the size of a quart jar lid and make some slits in it. Now cook in deep fat, just like doughnuts.

2. WILD ONIONS AND SCRAMBLED EGGS -

Gather wild onions while they are tender and clean them. Then chop them up very fine, including the tops. Into a heavy covered skillet put a cup of bacon drippings and heat this. Add the onions and brown lightly. Now add a cup of hot water, put the lid on tight and simmer. Stir frequently until the water is cooked away. Now add six or seven eggs and scramble together. Salt and pepper and serve.

3. WATERCRESS SALAD -

Mix one bunch of watercress with a hard boiled egg and a small amount of chopped onion. Add your choice of salad dressing and toss and serve. Pieces of ham or crumbled bacon may be added to the salad before adding the dressing if desired.

4. BEAN BREAD -

2 cups cornmeal 2 eggs
1 teaspoon salt 1½ cups milk
1 teaspoon baking powder 2 cups cooked pinto beans, drained

Mix together the dry ingredients and add milk and eggs. Stir in beans and pour in a greased pan. Bake at 450 degrees for about twenty minutes or until brown.

5. MUSHROOMS -

Soak mushrooms overnight in salt water. Salt and pepper cleaned mushrooms and roll in flour. Fry in hot grease until brown. Serve hot.

6. CONNUCHE -

Beat up hickory nuts very fine until it can be formed into balls. Place in a sauce pan and cover with boiling water. Stir well separating the shells from the "goodies". Strain through a cloth or fine sieve. Add either cooked rice or mashed hominy. Heat and serve in a bowl just as you would soup. Season with sugar or salt.

LLOYD ARVEL OSBURN (1958-Present)



When Lloyd Osburn was interviewed for this contribution, there were two things he liked most to talk about: One of them was a tribute to his parents and the other was frequent references to former students he had known.

Of the first he said: "I was born at Lowrey Prairie, Oklahoma, near Tahlequah, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Osburn. My mother had been Lou Ella Ratliff. Both parents came to this area in the early part of the century, from Washington County, Arkansas, in the area of the White River by Fayetteville."

He is third from youngest in a family of 11 children. They lived on a 60 acre truck farm. How did they eat?

"Mother canned everything. Father raised cattle and hogs for our meat. We had several cash crops; cotton was one of them. Another was 12-15 cows; we separated their milk and sold the cream, fed the skimmed milk to the pigs, then sold them. Hunting was not only a major sport, it was a cash crop in winter. We trapped and we hunted with dogs, catching coons or anything we could make a dime on."

"We always ate really well but were poor so far as money was concerned. I can remember mother's table--two or three different kinds of meat, three or four vegetables, hot corn bread or rolls. Bees for honey. Dairy cows for milk. We always had our own horses.

Back in the early 30's cars were scarce. I think our first car was a used 27 model T we bought about 1932. Some of us boys spent half our time working on it. I don't like mechanical work, but these were so simple anyone could work on them. We were well motivated too--we wanted to go somewhere!"

"Also, there was lots of fun swimming, fishing, playing baseball. Square dancing was a favorite form of entertainment. One thing we looked forward to probably more than anything else were visits of older brothers and sisters who had jobs in town. They had cars and they brought good things to us. I always enjoyed going and spending a couple of weeks with my brothers in Muskogee. Some nephews and nieces were about my age and we had good times. Besides our family of 11, mother and dad raised four grandchildren. My parents died in the 1950's. They were 81 and 84 years of age.

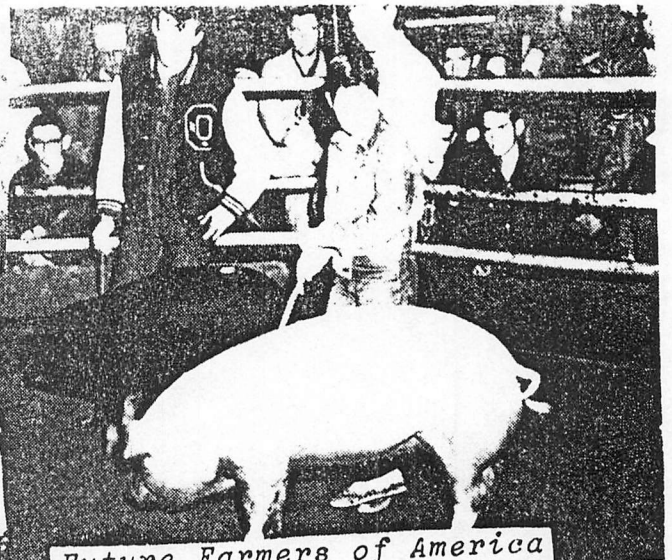
My family always went to Sunday School and church. It wasn't anything unusual to have maybe 40 relatives and neighbors eat Sunday dinner with us. Whenever we asked anyone to go home with us, they would always go. Mother was a "excellent" cook. She slaved on Saturday getting everything set up for the Sunday meal. We kids helped her.



Dinner Time



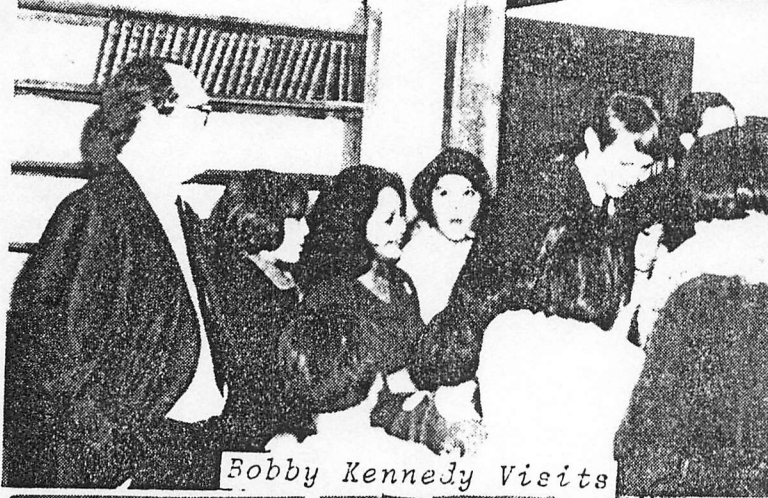
Wait for everyone to say Grace



Future Farmers of America



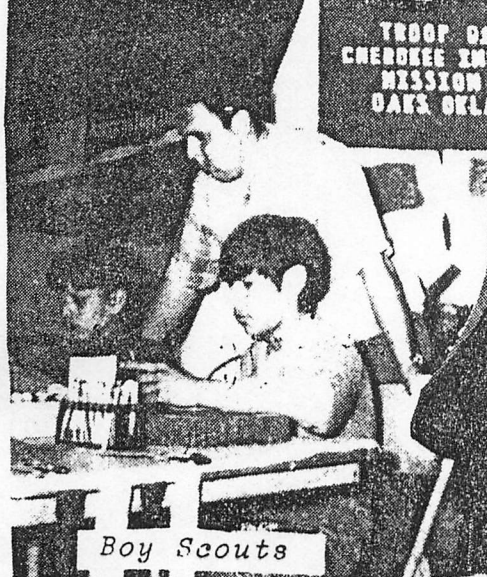
Can I play too?



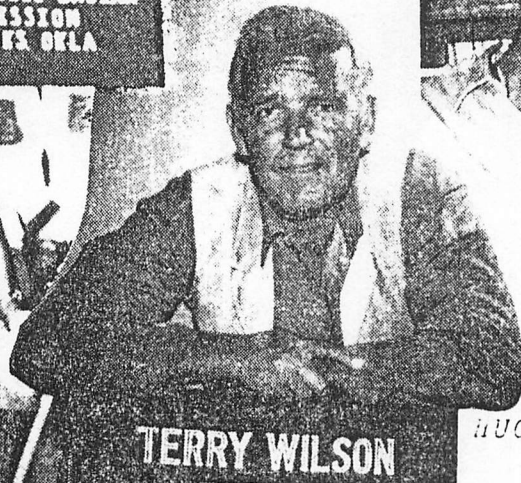
Bobby Kennedy Visits



Charley Tucker takes the boys for a ride



Boy Scouts



TERRY WILSON



HUGH O'BRIAN

Famous Sponsors of Oaks Children

"We were pretty good to help her on wash day too. We carried water from the well, heating it up in the old black kettle setting in the yard.

"At the time of my finishing the eighth grade, many boys that age around Lowrey didn't go on to high school. There wasn't one closer than Oaks or Tahlequah. One Sunday after I'd been out of grade school a year, Ed Adair came to our house and during his visit, he asked, 'Do you want to go to high school,'"

'I sure do,' I answered.

"Get your clothes," he said.

"I got my suitcase and he brought me to Oaks. It was 1932, the first year Oaks was a public school. I worked for room and board and went to school. I stayed with Mrs. Lila Philips until the next spring, when she died of a heart attack. Then I stayed with her daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Robbins. By that time, bus routes were established for Oaks, so I stayed home in 1934-35 and rode the bus, then for a summer attended and graduated from Boyley High at Northeastern in Tahlequah." (Note: In 1938 three school buses covered approximately 25 square miles, today, 4 buses cover approximately 58 square miles.)

"It's peculiar how someone can change your life like Mr. Adair changed mine. His mother was Sarah Smith, a very fine woman. She stood out among people as very refined. What a lady! She'd been trained by the Moravian missionaries. She'd worked for Reverend T.M. Rights from age 12 until they left shortly before she married."

"My most outstanding teacher was Severin Sorensen, a good science teacher who also coached basketball. Every night he spent time in the science lab setting up experiments for the next day. We students helped and got to know him. He took kids home with him when he went to South Dakota at Christmas. My brother Vernon got to go once. On one of those trips, he married a girl from home. They came back to Oaks last November to the celebration, having retired a couple of years ago as vocational agriculture teacher. They live in Nebraska City, Nebraska now."

Within a week after December 7, 1942, when Pearl Harbor was bombed, Lloyd Osburn enlisted in the Army Air Force. I was stationed at Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, for basic training and at Yukon, Oklahoma, for flight training. We flew over Norman and Oklahoma City. I was in the Air Force only four months. I wasn't much of a flyer. In cadet training, half of the enlistees didn't make it. "The same day they discharged me, I went across the street and enrolled in the V-7 Navy Program for Officers Training at Columbia University in New York. The next assignment was at Ohio State and then I was

sent to San Diego to open a school for Air Craft Surface Craft Recognition School. After that, a submarine commander learning some of us wanted sea duty, suggested we join submarines. My roommate was chosen but they said my recognition training should be used on a carrier, so I spent one and a half years on a carrier named USS Independence.

Before military service, Mr. Osburn had graduated from Northeastern at Tahlequah and taught two and a half years. At college he met his future wife, Lillian Robertson, in a education psychology class. "My buddies wrote notes to her and signed my name. So--we met as a result of lax discipline," he grinned, leaving one to wonder how a 20 year School Superintendent felt about that paradox.

Lillian was one of five girls with six brothers, born and reared north of Sallisaw, where she graduated from high school. Her grade school was across the road at Dwight Mission. She remembers daily Bible study through sixth grade. This was a Presbyterian station established for the Arkansas Cherokees in 1820. It was moved to new Cherokee Nation I.T., eight years later. Reverend Sam A. Worchester came along to teach. He had been closely associated with Cherokees in Georgia and Tennessee, brought the first printing press to Cherokee Nation. He became the publisher of Cherokee Almanac at Park Hill where he established another mission in 1836.

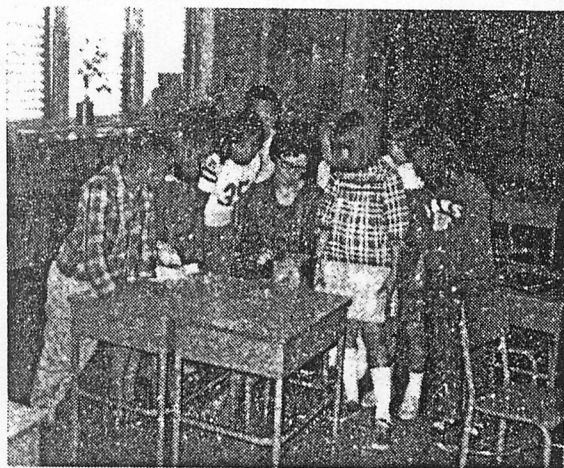
Lloyd and Lillian were married July 2, 1943, at San Diego. When he was called to report to the USS Independence in San Francisco, they got there to find the carrier had been hit by a torpedo and it took over two months to repair the huge hole. Finally, they shipped out on Osburn's first wedding anniversary. Two days later, their first child, Priscilla, was born. Her daddy didn't see her until she was 16 months old, November, 1945. Priscilla is now Mrs. Nickolas Fitzgerald. She attended college at Blair, Nebraska, and graduated from Oklahoma State, Stillwater. She lives in Tulsa and had two children who often come to Oaks to visit their grandparents. The other two Osburn girls are Janet, who attended Bethany College, Lindborg, Kansas, and graduated from Central State, Edmond; and Carolyn, who attended Northeastern A&M, Miami, Oklahoma. Janet and Carolyn both work in Houston, Texas.



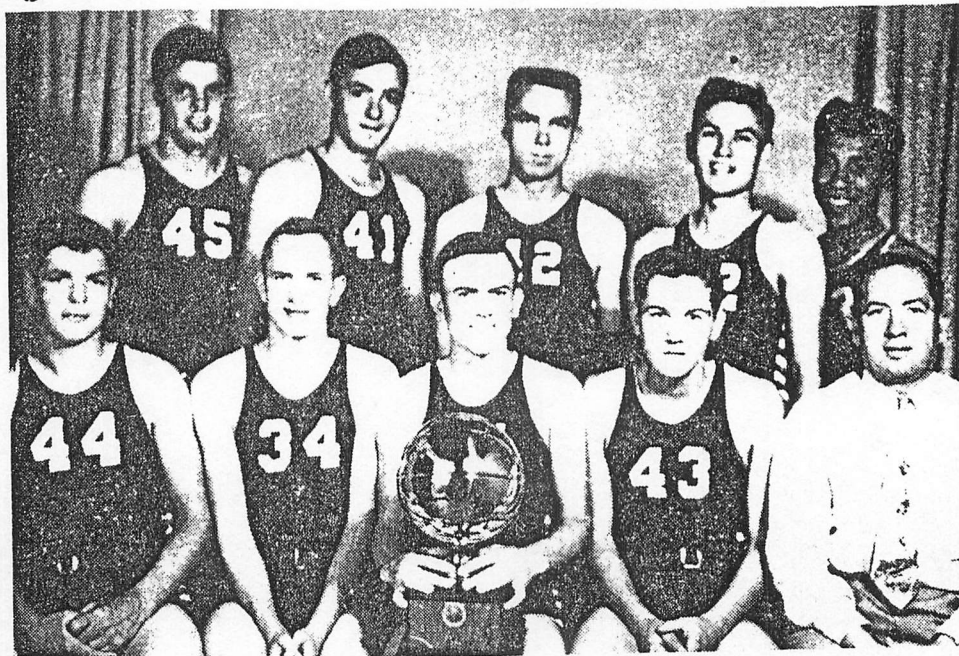
Back at Oaks, after the war, Mr. Vammen talked Mr. Osburn into teaching a semester of American History. After that, he went to Oklahoma State, Stillwater, and got his Master's Degree. Then he taught three years at Talala in Rogers County. At the same time, Lillian's first teaching was across the line in Nowata County, in a rural school where she was the only teacher for eight grades.

"That probably made her the good teacher she is today; she had to be diversified," her husband complimented her.

(Pictured at the right is Mrs. Osburn with some of her students.) She has taught the fourth grade at Oaks for twenty-four years. In addition to teaching school she is also the 4-H Club Leader, a Sunday School teacher and the Church Secretary.



They came back to Oaks in 1949 for him to be high school principal-teacher. In addition to a business course with typing and accounting, he also taught American History, Oklahoma History and was basketball and baseball coach. Lillian taught fourth grade all the years since that one. Mr. Osburn coached nine years until 1958 when he became Superintendent. Midway through his coaching career, he had a team of Class B Champs, out of 500 Class B Schools in the State of Oklahoma. The "NE Oklahoma Electric Cooperative" paper from Vinita, for February, 1954, had this to say about the team: "In the past five seasons to January 26, 1954, they won a total of 161 games out of 173 in all classes of basketball competition." Here is the 1953 winning team:



(top-left) Gary Lovett 45, Frank Tayrian 41, Daniel Jackson 42, Sonny Lamont 32, Curtis Sugar 33, (bottom) Gene Carrol 44, Paul Kahdahl 34, Bob Walker, Jimmie Thompson 43, and Lloyd A. Osburn, Coach. Others were: James Almond, Junion Barnett, Richard Bobo, Wayne Brickey, and Alvin Crittenden.

The only other coach at Oaks was Mack Oyler, a junior high coach "and a great individual."

Earl Brashear, who became the biggest builder in Muskogee, graduated in 1952. An orphan, he stayed with brothers and sisters, eventually became a math teacher before he bought a house, remodelled it, sold it, bought another--pretty soon he quit teaching and became a builder.

This led to Mr. Osburn's comment "The most satisfaction out of all my years here is when we get letters from the former kids thanking us for what the home, school, and individuals did for them."

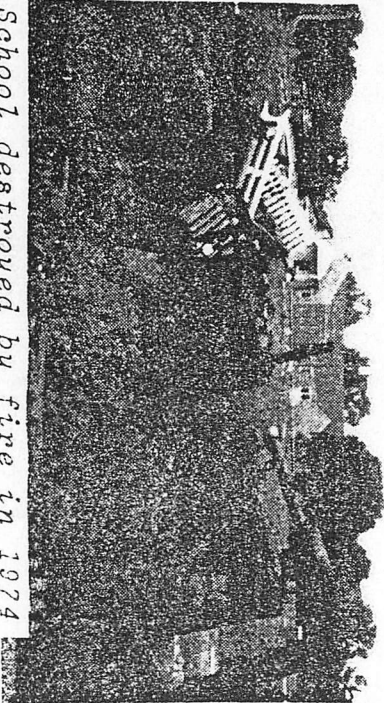
Another person about whom he reminisced was Reverend John C. Romer, a widower who came to Oaks with four boys and a girl. The last ten years of his life, he was married to the Oaks popular first grade teacher, Helen Sagen Romer. After his death, Helen stayed on at Oaks, teaching until 1962. She retired and moved to Muskogee, Oklahoma, where she lived until her death in 1976. She was returned to Oaks for burial. All the Romer children did well: Harold, the Osburn family dentist in Tulsa; Robert, District Manager of International Harvester, Memphis, Tennessee; Howard, electronics at Dallas, Texas. Carlton died 10 years ago. The only daughter, Dorothy, is a supervisory nurse at St. Johns Hospital, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

A number of Oaks graduates, at least seven have become doctors, unusual for a school our size. Some of these are: Adolph Vammen, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Warren and Ruel Vammen, Texarkana, Texas; Clarence Drake, Kansas City, Missouri; Paul Kahdahl, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Billy Forest is an army dentist who spent much time in Alaska.

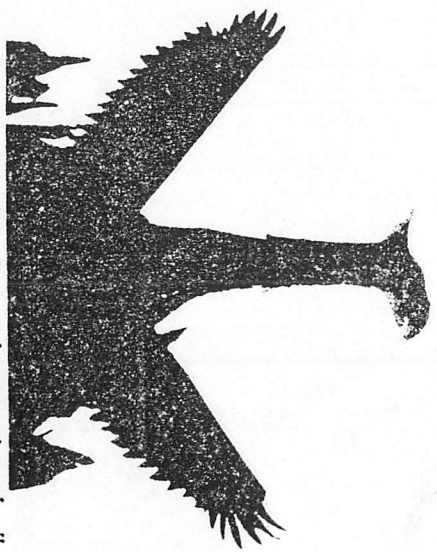
The most prominent building in Oaks is EbenEzer Lutheran Church. Lloyd remembers in 1948 when Mr. Vammen bought the Chapel from Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. It had to be cut in sections and hauled by truck to Oaks, then reassembled. The old mission church was also moved from its location south of the rock gym. It was joined to the newer structure (using half of an army barracks for the fellowship room) and is now the education wing of the church. George Tehee and Buck Jackson were hired for the long, slow process of chipping and shaping the rocks to cover its exterior. They and others dug the rocks from about 20 miles north of here. The completed structure was dedicated in 1953.

When pressed to do so, Mr. Osburn mentioned building programs that had been completed while he was Superintendent of the Home: "The annex to Seminole Hall (big boys dorm), an area with a basement recreational room that almost doubled the size of the dorm. Chickasaw Hall (big girls dorm) near the office, and Creek Hall (little boys dorm)." The

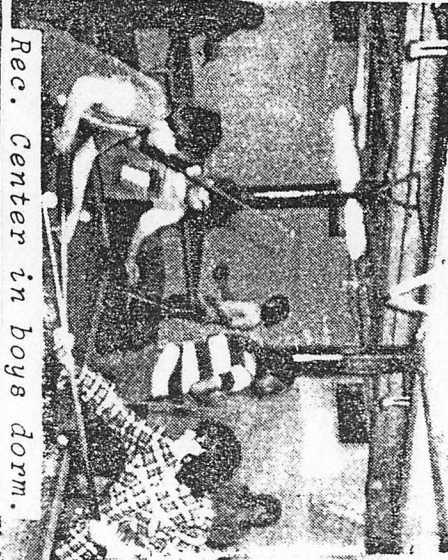
School destroyed by fire in 1974



Phoenix says "Oaks Rises Again"



Rec. Center in boys dorm.



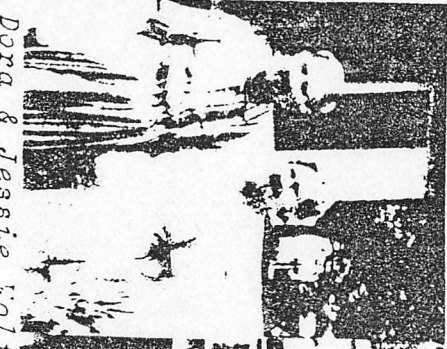
Lets Go Fishing



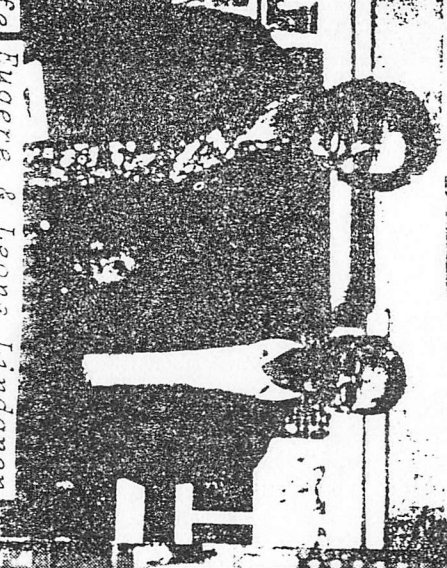
"Lets Play Ball"



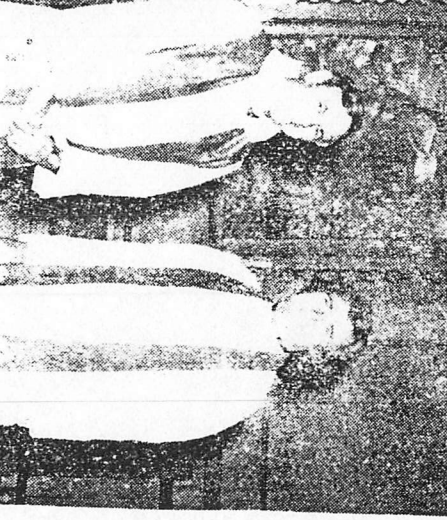
Dora & Jessie Kolfe
Jessie was Mission
cook for 44 years.



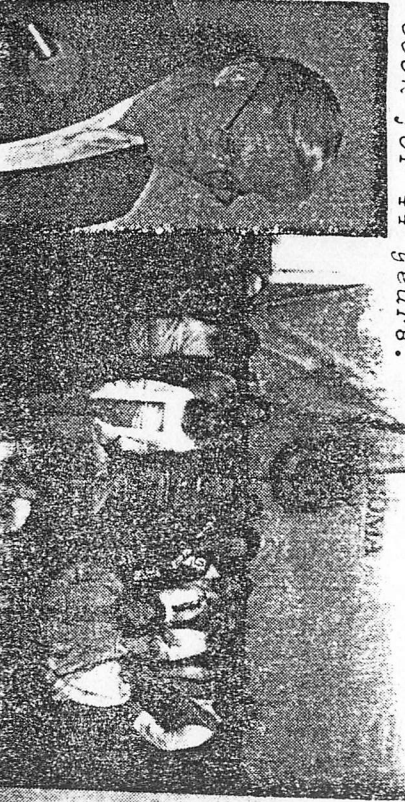
Fugere & Leone Lindgren
(former Houseparents)



Dr. John Hawk (SSM District.)
and Pastor H. Allen W.L.



Dr. Archie Madsen,
District President
Oaks Youth Meet
Bicentennial Home Train



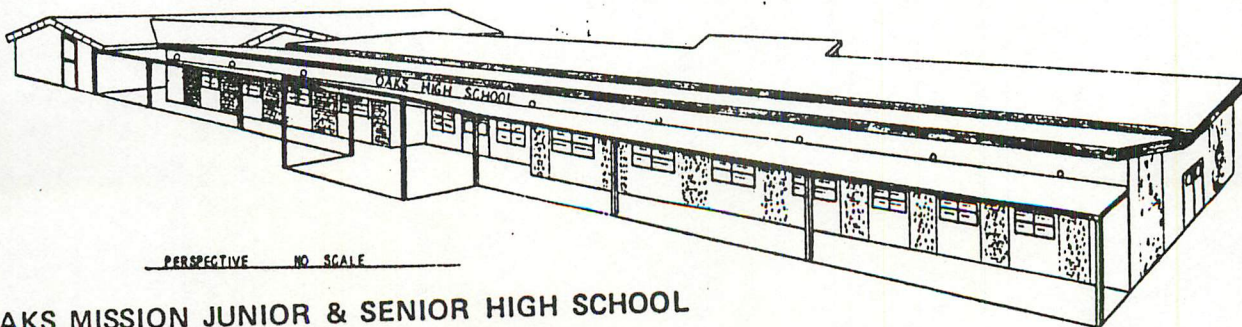
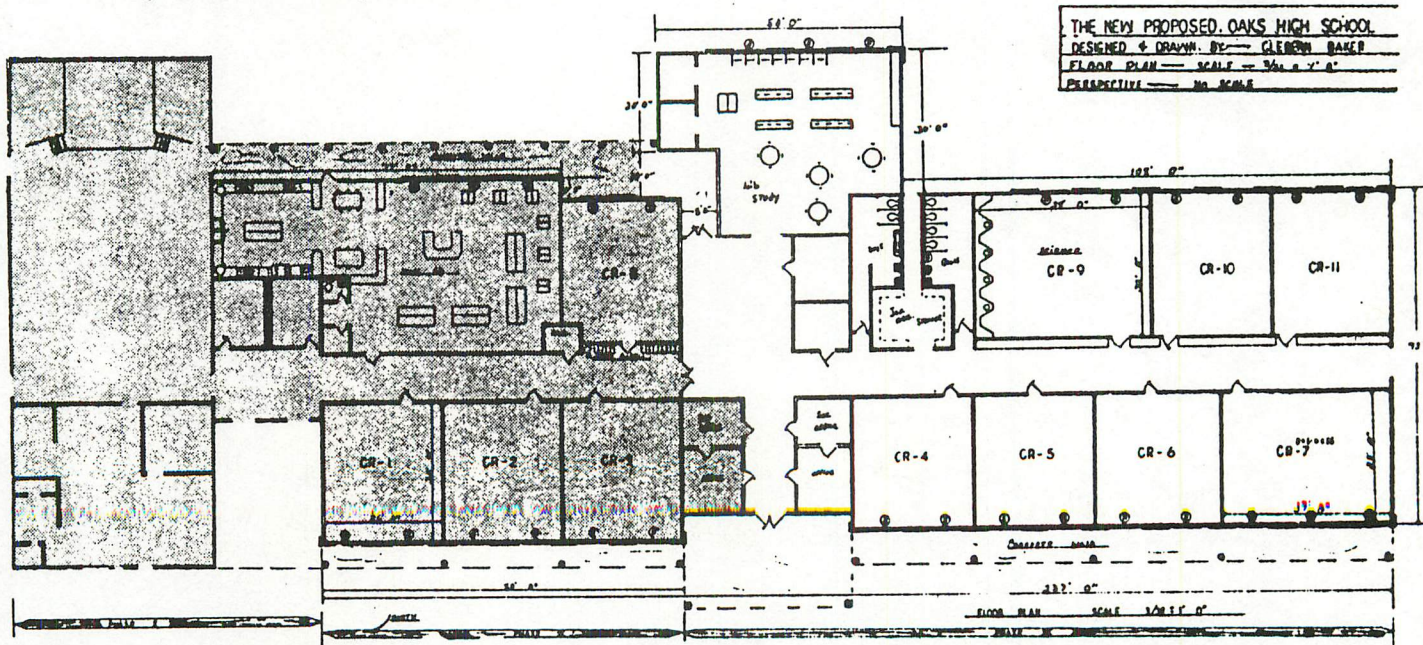
Oaks Roman's Anniversary



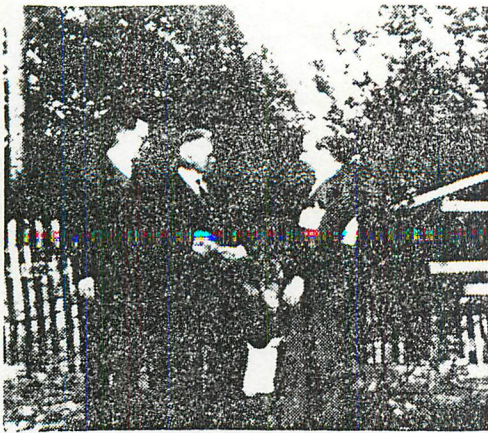
Administration building named for Mr. Vammen. At the school; four rooms were added to the grade school; "it was two rooms when I took over." Also built were a new **gymnasium and the Vocational Carpentry building.** For the past three years Mr. Osburn has been very busy helping to plan and construct a new Junior and Senior High School Building, which will replace the Old School Building destroyed by fire in February, 1974.

The first carpentry teacher was William Redding, who stayed four years, and Mr. Baker has been supervising ever since. For 12 years they have produced a nice building each year, the projects completed by the carpentry class are: Adolph Vammen's, Oaks; Christie Carlton's, Kansas; Slim Whitby's, Oaks; Bud Pitts', Kansas; Dollie Mann Wolfe's, Oaks; Utah Humphrey's, Kansas; Creek Hall (little boys dorm), Oaks; The Gymnasium, Oaks; Dale Heavner's, Kansas; The Administration Building, Oaks; Vernon Osburn's, Kansas, and Alfred Forrest's, Oaks.

Next year the class will remodel and add to the Superintendent Osburn's home north of Oaks to have it ready for when he retires. When that time comes, he looks forward to golfing which he began in World War II, fishing which he's always enjoyed, and traveling in the United States, with maybe one trip aboard.



OAKS MISSION JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



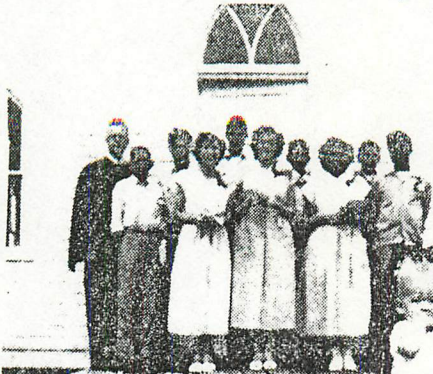
Rev. Nielson bidding farewell to Rev. Vammen.(1902-24)



Rev. Vammen with Family (1924-58)



Rev. John Romer & Helen Sagen Romer (1938-47)



Rev. Svendson (1948-50)



Deacon Dave Russell, at Russell Chapel.



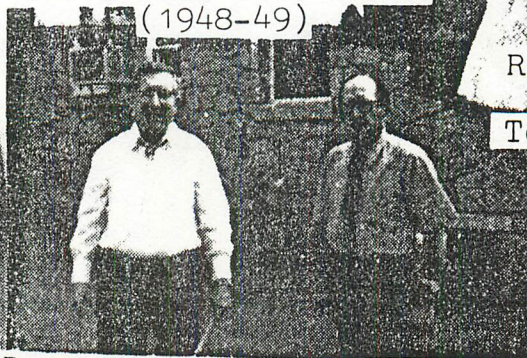
Rev. & Mrs. V.W. Bondo (1948-49)



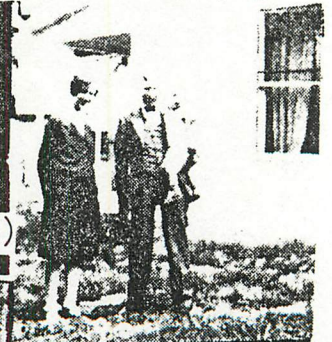
Rev. S.S. Kahldahl (1952-58)
Teacher: 1920's



Rev. Franklin Highby and Confirm. class (1959-65)



Rev. George Baseler (1969-75) and Lloyd A. Osburn



Rev. John Jorgenson with Confirmation class (1966-69)

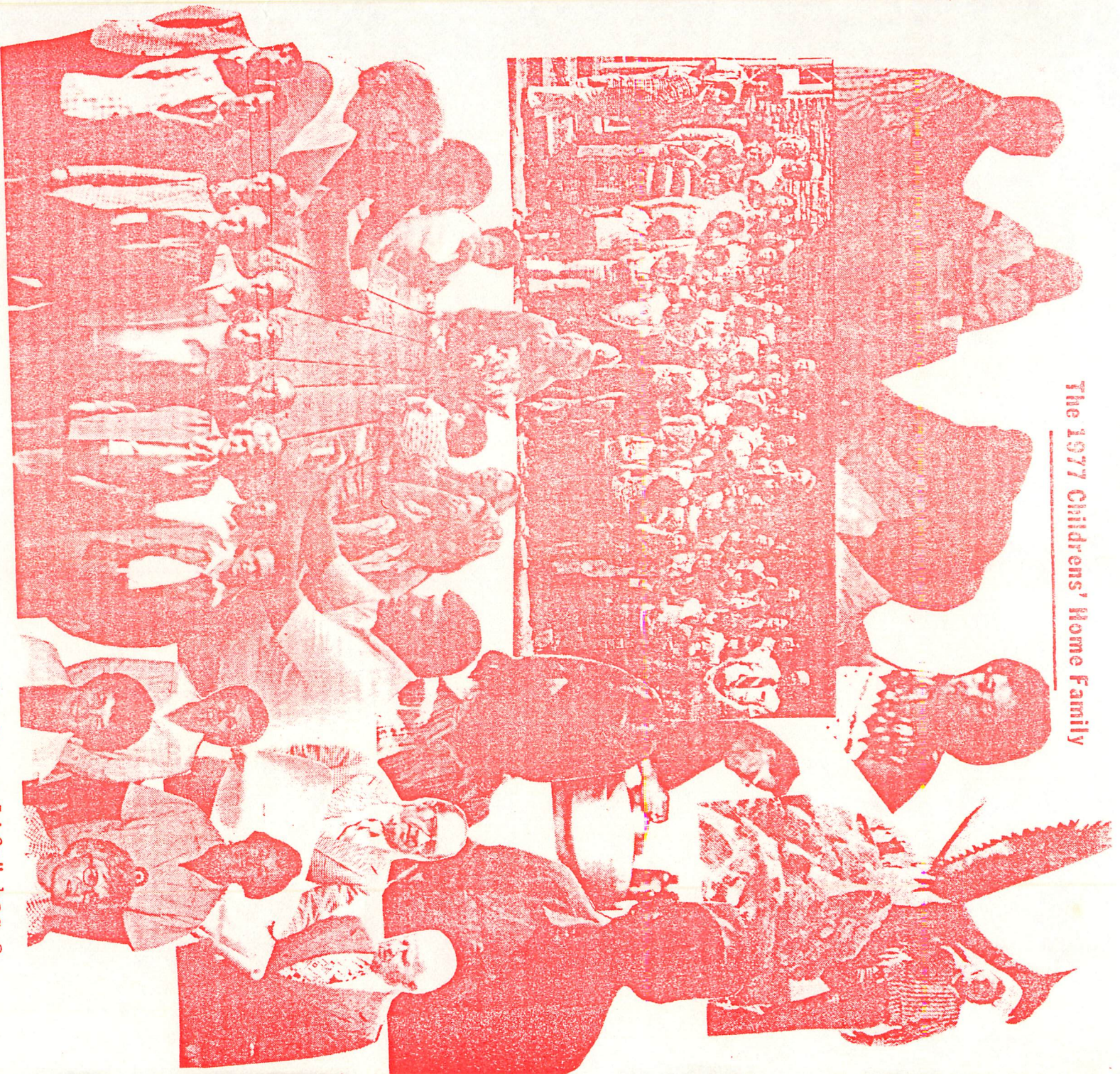


Rev. H. Allen Vik & Family 1975-Present

Sunday School Records
by Elizabeth Wofford

	Average Attend- ance	Average Collect- ion		Organist, Elizabeth Wofford and Helen Romer.	House Parents (It is impos- sible to list all house par- ents but a par- tial list fol- lows: (not in order)
1927					
28	61	\$2.16	(Very neat notes		
29	67	1.82	in the same hand-		
30	80	1.67	writing, but no		
31	92	1.70	signature.)		
32	112	1.24+			
33	86+	.91			Nancy Russell
34	72+	.77			Eldee Hayes
35	57+	.82			Mary Carroll
36	60+	1.28			Molly O'Leary
37	57	1.30			Mr. & Mrs.
38			Lily Jorgensen		Charles Tucker
39	74	1.89	Mildred Hansen		Mr. & Mrs.
40	83	1.00	Margaret Oakes		Dennis White
41	84	.89	Barbara Hansen		Mr. & Mrs.
42	73	.85	Priscilla Vammen		Jesse Henry
43	95	2.04	Ardis Vammen		Mr. & Mrs.
44	74	1.66	Alta Vammen		L.C. Evans
45	74	1.90	Velma Dixon	Colon Fields	Mr. & Mrs.
46	75	2.59	"	(Janitor) 1945-	O.J. Turtle
47	75	2.68	"	Present	Mr. & Mrs.
48	76	3.10	"		Holger Christainsen
49	81	4.78	"		Mr. & Mrs.
50	71	3.51	"		Eugene Lengrin
51	84	2.60	"		Mr. & Mrs.
52	94	4.43	"		Jack Swim
53	144	5.64	"		Mr. & Mrs.
54		5.28	"		Billy Fields
55		4.59	"		Mr. & Mrs.
56		4.46	"		Don Bussey
57		5.05	"		Colleen Toro
58		8.24	"		
59		3.91	"		
60		4.76	"		
61		9.65	Elizabeth Wofford	Ramona Russell	Cooks for Mission:
62		8.25	"	Winfield (First	Jessie Wolfe
63		9.00	"	Secretary) 1949-	Jannie Jackson
64	68	10.10	"	1966.	Beatrice Dew
65	70	6.60	"		
66	68	11.01	"	Colleen Winfield	
67	65	12.52	"	(Secretary) 1966-	
68	63	11.00	"	Present.	
69	61	8.58	"	Dollie Freeman Man	
70	63	6.84	"	Wolfe (Secretary)	
71	64	5.95	"	1969-Present	
72	70	8.20	"		Social Case Workers:
73	64	6.90	"		Sol Bird Mockicin
74	63	6.98	"		Bill Hermans
75	51	9.13	"		Don Beckman
76	54	10.49	"		
77	63	10.95	"	Kathy Osburn Lamb	
				(Secretary)	
				1977-Present	

The 1977 Children's Home Family



The PHOENIX, a symbol of "the resurrection and of new life" has a special significance to the Oaks Indian Mission. We see our work, as servants of Christ and His Church, as an attempt to help mold and shape new lives for the Native Americans. Last year during the 50th Anniversary of the Children's Home, we ministered to the needs of 117 dependent and neglected boys and girls. In conjunction with the Double Anniversary Year, an ambitious development program has been launched. The theme: ON TO NEW HORIZONS, Speaks of our effort to provide an even more successful ministry to Native Americans. The estimated cost of the proposed development program is 1.5 million dollars over the next five years. Individuals and congregations are invited to help expand this work by sending gifts to the Oaks Indian Mission, Box 10, Oaks, OK 74359. The invitation is also extended for you to come visit us anytime, take a tour, have a meal and stay overnight. Our door is always open!

