

The first school that Wilson attended was an old frame building about a mile up the hollow from his home, appropriately named Mulberry Hollow School. For a while he went to the Stoney Point School which was over the mountain to the west. School children in those early days all walked to school, some traveling three or four miles thru the woods and over mountains. Many of the early day teachers spoke both languages which which was almost necessary as some of the children did not speak English.

From Mulberry Hollow came many Cherokee preachers. Among them were Rev. William Wolfe, Rev. Ned Hoskins, Rev. Tse-tsa Spade and a Rev. Ketcher. About halfway up Mulberry Hollow is the newer community church built near the older community cemetery. Back down the valley is the building that used to be the later schoolhouse. The school is closed now, and the building is used as the arts and crafts center.

Patriarchs of the valley long ago included John Hair and Tso-syi-yi. Common to any Indian settlement were the old men who gave counsel and were looked to as leaders.

Wilson tells that long ago he remembers when making a living was a hard job. Not much land was available for farming, and what cultivation there was amounted to just little two-three acre patches. Wood cutting, tie hockers, and a little bit sawmill work was about all there was. But by their own ingenuity they sufficed as few other peoples could. Edible plants, roots, berries, fruits and nuts along with wild game and catches from the streams added greatly to their table. By comparison, as he says "they just made it living hard way". Like many of the older Cherokees, Wilson is well versed in the things of nature. He knows every tree and most shrubs and plants, and knows the Indian use for many of them. Across the road from his house is a little hazel nut thicket along with chittum wood, Yellow tree, spicewood, yaho, and bittersweet. Yellow snakeroot, puccoon, mueseib, horehound, horsemint and other plants are found in his valley. Wild bean, carpenter square, and turnip granny are gathered in season for cooking. With these surroundings, he would not trade places with anyone. The comforts and pleasures of the cities have no appeal to him. When night comes Mulberry Hollow is an inky blackness on a moonless period and the multitude of night sounds are music to these people. One can listen a moment there after twilight has gone and hear the screech owl, whippoorwill, horned owl, crickets, treefrogs, bobcats, jarflies, and other voices foreign to the stranger. Wilson makes no claim to being versed in the use of Indian medicine, but he does know much about the use of herbs, roots, leaves, bark and other medicinal properties, including clay, stamp water, and compost. The valuable ginseng and black snake root are no strangers to him. To the Cherokees, some plants are known only by its Indian name, for instance, the oo-ta-lun-ti which is used for the treatment of rheumatism. The foul smelling heartwood of the blackhaw is another of the items included in his medicines. He tells that there have been times when he brought wild plants from Coon Mountain and transplanted them in his backyard to have for his use.