

Strange it is, that in that day when lawmen did not go into Younger Bend country looking for a suspect, the people of Briartown took the matter in their stride with no worry whatever. The outlaws of Younger Bend traded at Briartown stores, visited with friends and acquaintances, and contained their activities elsewhere.

One of the people who helped make Briartown country a settlement was William Green Russell. Russell was a white man, and was married to a Cherokee Indian. Mrs. Russell and her children had land title rights in the Cherokee Nation where the family settled on 600 acres of river bottom land southeast of Briartown. Mrs. Russell had relatives who had come from Georgia and who had already settled in the area. The William Russell had been at home on their Canadian River place only a few years when a malaria-typhoid epidemic struck in the early summer. When the family recovered from the sickness, Mr. Russell suffered a stroke in late summer and died. He was buried in the Briartown Cemetery and his monument reads: In Loving Memory of Our Father W. G. RUSSELL Departed This Life August 24, 1877 Age 66 Years." Russell had gone to California with the 'Gold Rush in 1849'. Later in the late 1850s Russell went to Colorado and is credited with discovery of the first gold deposits found in that State. Descendents of this remarkable family can still be found in Oklahoma.

The West family were Cherokees who came from Georgia, and first settled at Ft. Gibson. Miss West father, Dick West, came to Briartown country when a little boy. He has just celebrated his 91st birthday and is perhaps the oldest living resident of this area. Dick West was born in Ft. Gibson in 1881 when there were still Federal troops stationed at the Old Stockade. Buck Barnes is another of the old timers who has spent all his life in Briartown country. Buck is 81 years old.

Miss West says that to her knowledge the Choctaws have never crossed the river to live in the Cherokee Nation; and in like manner the Cherokees stayed in their own country. Briartown is only three miles from the old site of the Choctaw Nation capitol at Whitefield. Like many other areas of Oklahoma to-day, few Indians are to be found in what was once all-Indian settlements and communities.