

till after he was dead, 'cause we moved around so much. And then them times they didn't have school like they do now--school was too far away and we had to walk, what little schoolin' we did get. 'Course they got to having school in our old church building there. But the old church burned down and I went to school there a little while and I went to school up here at Oaks a little while and down south a little while that's all. I never did finish the fourth grade.

(Did you say you had a Cherokee alphabet book?)

I got it here somewhere, but I don't know where it's at. I'd have to dig up everything I have to find it.

(Did you teach yourself to read Cherokee too?)

I guess I did. I don't remember of any one teaching me. I used to have a half-brother. He lived down at Kenwood. Our Uncle Peter lived up that road apiece, he was aunt Susie's brother. Aunt Susie was Sam Welch's mother. Old Uncle Peter used to take Ben and come up to his house--you know my half brother. And they used to paper the house with newspapers, you know--'course everybody did. They used to have this old Cherokee newspaper--what was it called? Cherokee--?

(Advocate?)

Um-huh. Cherokee Advocate. And he said there was Cherokee writin' on there (Cherokee words). And he said that's where Ben learned to read. He said he just stood there, just look, kept lookin at that till he knew what it mean. He just kept repeatin' that word over and over, till he learned to read.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE CHEROKEE LANGUAGE BE RETAINED AND NOT FORGOTTEN

(Yes that Cherokee Primer will help a lot of the young Indians too, to learn to read and write as well as learn new words too. Yeah, that's something to me is very important that the Cherokees don't let their language be forgotten.)