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Elizabeth Ross, Field Worker
Indian-Pioneer History
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Interview with S. W. Ross,
Park Hill, Oklahoma.
Cherokee County Townships

Cherokee County contains seven townships. Five of them were named for persons once residents in the old Cherokee districts.

Crittenden Township recalls the name of a family which lived for many years several miles distant from Tahlequah. This was a Cherokee family. Briggs, the name of a rural postoffice was named for John Briggs, a white man who operates a small store some miles east of the Illinois River, and when the townships were being named one was named Briggs. Hulbert received its name from Ben H. Hulbert. Cookson Township recalls the name of a family, the oldest member of which settled near the Illinois River many years before the Cherokee Nation became extinct as a government. This man, John M. Cookson, once served as member of the Cherokee National Council, engaged in mercantile pursuits, in his home locality, and for him the Cookson Postoffice was named when placed in operation in 1895. Peggs (the name should be Pegg) was the name given a postoffice which was established some eighteen miles north

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of Tahlequah several years before the close of the nineteenth century. The first settler near the site of this postoffice was Thomas Pegg, prominent in Cherokee affairs in the early days, and in the Civil War period Captain of a company of Cherokee soldiers in the Federal Indian Brigade. The name of the postoffice was selected as that for the township. Grandview is the name which has been borne by a locality several miles north of Tahlequah since the period of the nineties of the last century. A number of early day persons of varied prominence lived in the locality previous to the Civil War. In the section stood the headquarters of the United States Agent to the Cherokees, and in one of the pioneer homes long since vanished, lived the ~~reverend~~ Edward Gunter, Methodist minister of white and Cherokee nationality. A weather-stained marble headstone in what was once a burying ground, marks the grave of ~~Reverend~~ Gunter, who in 1838-9 conducted a detachment of Cherokees to Indian Territory from Georgia, when the Cherokee population was expelled and sent away to a new location west of the Mississippi River. Park Hill Township was named for the locality of that name which lies about four miles south of Tahlequah. The name was

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originally given to an eminence which overlooks the locality from the south. The man who bestowed the name in 1835 was, according to the recollections and testimony of early/day residents, the Reverend Samuel Newton, a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Cherokees of the western group or nation. During the years since the eminence was named a number of notable persons have lived in the Park Hill locality, including the Reverend Samuel A. Worcester, D. D., for twenty-three years in charge of the church, mission school, and printing office~~s~~ maintained in connection with the mission; Principal Chief, John Ross, whose home was near the center of the locality; George M. Murrell, merchant and postmaster of Park Hill in 1844, owner of "Hunter's Home" which yet stands; Return Jonathan Meigs, engaged in mercantile affairs in the early period, besides others of note in the bygone time.

These townships largely lie in what was for a long period the Talequash district of the Cherokee Nation. That district was practically as large as Cherokee County when that county contained a portion which was annexed to Wagoner County several years ago. A considerable portion of the

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people now living in the various townships of the county are descendants of pioneer Cherokees of the western and eastern Cherokee Nations.