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INDEX CARDS

Tribe-Cherokee
Cherokee Nation
Trading Post

Mary J. Stockton.
Field Worker.

59

C. 15-37

Joel W. (Pete) Buffington.
(Cherokee)

"Pete" Buffington, as he is generally called, was christened Joel W. Buffington. He was born at Chapel, now officially called Boatman on the west side of the Grand River, three miles southwest from Salina and about ten miles southeast of the town of Pryor, the county seat, in what is now Mayes County, Oklahoma. It was then Cooweescoowee District, Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory.

His father, John Ross (Cooie) Buffington, who is now eighty years old, was born and still lives, at the place where his son, Pete, the subject of this sketch, was born.

His father was christened John Ross Buffington, in honor of a famous chief of the Cherokee, now long since dead. John Ross's name in the Cherokee language was Coowee-scoo-wee, and of course the namesake inherited the Cherokee name along with that of the English name- his friends at first called him "Cooweescoowee", which, being rather long and cumbersome, was contracted to "Cooie", and that is the name by which this aged citizen of Mayes County is commonly known.

Pete's mother was formerly a Miss Sadie Highland, and while he talked freely and entertainingly with your field worker he was able to give me but little information

about his mother's folks. She is still living. at the old home where she was taken when a bride, on a farm near the little town of Chapel, or Boatman.

Pete's paternal grandmother was Miss Nancy Bryan, sister to Joel M. Bryan, who died but a few weeks ago at the home near Chapel at an advanced age.

Mr. Bryan, above referred to, was born in that community more than 80 years ago, his father being one of the founders of the village and the community church, commonly known as "Bryan's Chapel." Near by is a family cemetery where ancestors of the Bryan, Buffington and Mayes families have been buried for nearly a hundred years; the original Joel Bryan and the first John R. Buffington (Pete's grandfather) having settled there prior to 1840. It is said that they came from Georgia in 1832, settling first near the present town of Maysville (Arkansas), on the Arkansas-Oklahoma border, moving but a few years later to Chapel, where they have remained ever since.

Teter

Pete took for his wife a Miss Tector, daughter of Rev. Grant Tector, pioneer minister of Mayes County;

— they live just across the west line and in the edge of

Rogers County-twelve miles southeast of Claremore and about the same distance southwest of Prior, their address being Inola, Oklahoma, Route 2. Their home is but half a mile west from Rucker, a good neighborhood school, where Mrs. Buffington was employed as a teacher for several years. Pete, who is now in advanced middle life, is a well known and successful farmer in his community and has a comfortable home, where they delight in entertaining their friends, Mrs. Buffington's dinners being something long remembered.

Pete says that his father, as well as his maternal grand uncle, the late Joel Mayes Bryan, established the trading post near this ancient church and did a thriving business for many years, the ~~elder~~ Buffington being usually employed in bringing goods to the store for sale and transporting the "country produce" (at first game and hides and later farm products) to the market. At first their goods came by boat up the Arkansas River to Fort Gibson, from which point they were transported by means of mule or ox teams in heavy wagons to the trading posts. After construction of the M. K. & T. Railroad,

Pryor, formerly called "Coo-y-yah" and later Pryor Creek, became their shipping point and the new towns of Pryor and Choteau cut off much of their trade and the once country-wide trading post became a neighborhood store.

As stated the original name of the place was "Bryan's Chapel" (a church near which the store was later located) and the first post office was called "Chapel", but after several years it was discontinued. Joel M. Bryan then moved across the Grand River and established a trading post at the foot of the Ozarks which later developed into the town of Locust Grove, which was established when the Kansas, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad was built in 1912, the new town being about a mile and a half south from the old "Locust Grove". The store and post office were then moved to the new location.

Mr. Pete Buffington is related to the Buffington, Bryan, Lindsey, and Mayes families, all prominent in Cherokee history.