

For many years, John Christie lived on his farm three miles northeast of Vinita. During the depression of the 1930, he quit farming and worked on a bridge gang building highway bridges.

John went to his first school at Double Springs southwest of Stilwell, and later attended the Cherokee Male Seminary.

He was farming his place northeast of town then World War I came. He tried to enlist, but was turned down by reason his farm work was more important to the national cause. He remembers going with many friends who enlisted to see them off when the troop trains came through Vinita. This was a sad time, as some of them he never saw again.

At one time, the Vinita country was all Indians. Some of the prominent Cherokees living here in the early days were Chief Tom Buffington, Hooley Bell, Lucian Buffington, Sam Big Knife, Landrums, Downings, Ballards, Garretts, Foremans, Scrapers, Brewers, Gunters, and many more. Frequently, on the streets would be seen the Delaware Bluejackets, Walkers, Falleaf, and Fox. Also, the Shawnees joined in harmony with the Cherokees and Delawares of the area, and some of these were the Carpenters, Longtail, Squirrel, Harvey, Daugherty, Secondine, and Beck. Coming from Lightning Creek, Madden Creek, Pecan Creek, the Cabin Creeks, and the surrounding area would be families of the Falling, Ironside, Buzzard, Corntassel, Bread, Doublehead, Luli, Woodall, Parris, Chouteau, Keys, Meeks, Whiteday, Blackfeather, Blossom Boot, Ketchum, Deal, and many others. Tom Bluejacket operated a store east of the railroad of Illinois Street.

As the town of Vinita grew, an ice plant was established near the point where the two railroads crossed. About this same time, an elevator was built just south of the Katy depot. A big boon for Vinita was installation of an electric plant by the ice plant about 1917.