

called Echno. Sometime in the 1880s a post office was established in the store. Later, the name was changed to Needmore. When the railroad came thru the post office was moved a short distance south to be near the mail delivery. Shortly, there followed another change in names, this time to Bernice. In more recent years Bernice town was also moved a half mile west due to the forming of Grand Lake. All these changes and moves Mrs. Bunch has witnessed. In what was once an all-Cherokee country, few Indians live in the area now, having been exploited and, by the mechanics of whiteman progress, driven out to scatter to the four winds. Mrs. Bunch has been one of the more fortunate in having been able to stay, and here she says she will spend her last days.

Of the old towns of Indian Territory days she says that Aften, Fairland, Ogeechee, and Grove were more like little country store settlements during her young days. Many of the early settlements grew into towns, but some like Ogeechee, Echno, and others disappeared.

Not far from her home community the Old Military Road crossed thru Indian Territory. She recalls hearing her father talk about being on cattle drives on this road, and seeing covered covered wagons and military caravans going to Texas and the west.

Her grandmother, Annie Snell, came from Georgia in the Trail of Tears march when she was 12 years old. Annie Snell lived in the Honey Creek country of the old Delaware District, and according to the older Indians of to-day she was the matriarch of a wide expanse of that country. This full blood Cherokee pioneer lived to be about 100 years old, and is buried in the Indian cemetery that bears her name near her old home place.

Historic Oldfield Bend of Grand River was a part of her early day community. This was at one time the homeland of Gen. Stan Watie and James M. Bell prominent Cherokee leaders of early days. The Watie and Bell families had a little cemetery on the old Watie home place, but it has now disappeared in the wake of white invasion.

She tells about her father, William Ballard. He had never had an opportunity to go to school but had taught himself to read, although he could not even write his name. This self-educated Cherokee was a representative from the Delaware District to the Cherokee Supreme Court in the 1880s and 1890s. Mrs. Bunch recalls the times when her father would take her and the other children to school at Tanlequan in a wagon. Traveling then, was mostly across country over trails. It was easy to get lost for the people unfamiliar, but her father kept direction by the sun, stars, and sometimes familiar landmarks. Now and then he would stop and ask some Cherokee family about directions and to pass the time. As for directions, they would usually say "just ride over there" which would mean anything from a few yards to many miles.

Her mother used to tell the children of the hard and bitter times during the Civil War. The family was displaced of their home and possessions in the Cowskin Prairie by the ravages of war, and they moved down near Ft. Gibson until the war was over. Her mother was very intelligent and passed on to the children much of the ways of life. She was well versed in many things and could read and write both the Cherokee and English languages.