

Mr. Ross has lived in many places in the old Cherokee Nation. One time when he was living in Strang area before the town was built, he was working for a Cherokee family by name of West. He remembers that he was hauling corn to the railroad at Adair that fall. He recalls that on that day in September 1901 when he arrived in town with his load of corn the town was full of people, for it was learned that President William McKinley has been assassinated.

He recalls also, when he was about 13 years old, that Adair and Pryor were rough towns. He tells that when colored people came thru Pryor, the townspeople waved them on thru town, as those good white people were beginning to get hold of the Indians lands and were very proud of their accomplishments.

Mrs. Ross tells about a more recent time regarding Pryor. A colored Preacher had stopped in Pryor to buy some gas, but no one would sell him any. He told one of the service station operators that a great destruction would come to Pryor in a few hours. That was in 1942. The preacher then drove on out of town where he run out of gas. Along about dark that same afternoon a cyclone struck Pryor leaving many dead and injured. At that time Jenks was down toward Tahlequah and he saw the cyclone which he described as a green and red ball within the black cloud and funnel.

Some of the history of the town of Adair has not always been one of Christian fellowship. Mrs. Ross relates a time long ago when colored people could come into Adair to trade, but they were not to hang around. After one man had bought his necessities and was walking up the street, a white man was following him, kicking him. A white woman who ran a little store there was watching the scene. At last the colored man turned around and hit the aggressor in the face with his fist and broke his neck. Immediately the colored man was about to be mobbed, but the white storekeeper interceded and took the man into the store and called for the lawmen. She explained what happened and the case was closed.

In 1901 when Jenks was living over on Rock Creek east of Adair he used to work in the hay fields down around Chouteau. Because of the feeling against the colored people there, he would walk to Adair and get on the early morning train around 6 o'clock. Coming home he would wait for the late train that came north from Chouteau so he could get off after dark at Adair. He would always get off the train on the dark side away from the depot. Then he would run nearly all the way back to his home on Rock Creek. He remembers when white people in Adair would holler at him, "This aint Kansas, get out of town!".

He tells that he was just 'a big ole boy' when they had a hanging at Tahlequah. People came from miles around 'just like they was coming to a baptizing'. There was hardly standing room. People were even up in the trees to get a good look, like buzzards come to roost. He tells that the first of the two Indians to be hung was a nice looking, well dressed young man, who walked up on the gallows unaided and gave a little talk in Cherokee. An interpreter told the gathering that the man said he was innocent, and the reason he was there was because of bad company. The second man was named Bearpaw, but he had nothing to say. The black hood was placed and the trap sprung, supposedly settling an account for murder.

Jenks tells that his father, Stick Ross, lived all of his life around Tahlequah and when he died he was buried there.