

down and the lumber used in the building of the Maple Baptist Church by the Cemetery. A few of the old timers still living in the area recall when they went to Maple Courthouse for the various government payments. Also some remember when there was a post office at Maple Courthouse and Old man Sutton was the postmaster."

Perhaps on a dark rainy night one might ~~one might~~ see and hear the ghosts of many Indians, stage coach travelers and wagon freights not far south-west of the little village of Akin. In old days there was the village of Sweetown on the main dirt road from Muskogee to Ft. Smith. Few people now living remember seeing or hearing about the place, but it did exist at one time, and important to the settlement of this little wilderness. At Sweetown there was a stage stop, a trading post, and a little log school.

Along the old stage coach line there were many other stage stops in the early days besides Maple and Sweetown. Although nothing remains now to mark those other nearby places, some of them were Camp Creek, Childers Station, Buffington Station, Sanders Post Office, Buckskin Station, Drake Stand, Thompson Stand, and Foreman Station. All of these places relate to Indian families of early Indian Territory.

In the settlement of Skin Bayou country some of those families who figured prominently were the Faulkners, Adams, Suttons, Moss, Blairs, Barretts, Gunters, Duncan, Ballinger, McDaniels, etc. Notable of them was David Faulkner, a landowner, farmer and businessman, and at one time Assistant Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Of course, of that area was Sequoyah, perhaps the most noted of all Cherokees.

Mrs. Neal tells that Sequoyah operated a salt works up north of his home. Near Sequoyah's home was a trading post, probably known as the Gunter Post, where he did much of his trading during his time in that area.

Again in talking about Maple Courthouse, she says that the place was named from the little grove of maple trees that grew there. Probably in early times the place was called Maple Springs. The first trading post established there was operated by Samuel Martin, who was also the first postmaster. The last murder trial at Maple Courthouse was that of Spade Sunshine for the killing of Creek Culley, a Creek Indian. The trial judge at that time was A. M. Littlejohn. Sunshine was found guilty and hanged. Sunshine's story might be typical of events of that long ago time. The Creek Indian Culley lived near a place called Janns, and was known as a doctor and fortune teller. Some man had lost a horse and he went to the fortune teller. Culley told him that his soothsayer powers pointed to one, Sunshine. Sunshine heard about the accusation, and went to find Culley, whereupon he ended his fortunetelling. The year was 1888, and when convicted, he was put in the National Jail at Tahlequah. He did not like it there and escaped and went home. A short while later he returned to Tahlequah on his own free will and was hanged. Perhaps people of this twentieth century would find it hard to believe that men of that character did live and begin the settlement of what is now Oklahoma.

Scattered among the hills and clearings of Miller's Ridge country, nearby Atkins, Hanson and Circle, and other close by are many single graves, old family cemeteries, and burial places long abandoned and forgotten. There are the single graves of Blackfox, Rev. John Thomas Duncan, and Teddy Taylor. Of the many little family burial places in that part of the county, a few are Dave Faulkner, George Faulkner, David Moss, Garvin, Leslie, Downing, Seabolt, Fleetwood, etc.