

October 15, 1968

Index side A, second part Recording time: 15 minutes.

Informant: Mattie Hinton Douglas, 60-year-old, of Cherokee ancestry, Parkhill Community, Cherokee County, Oklahoma.

Subject: Mrs. Douglas was born in the log house which was the home of Chief John Ross, her grandfather. She has lived in this home community all of her life and ~~owns~~ the land on which the Ross home stood.

At the beginning of this visit, she showed pictures of John Ross, and others of the Ross family, including her mother, Henrietta Ross Hinton. John Ross was born in Georgia and came to Indian Territory in the Trail of Tears march in 1839, and lived out his life in the Parkhill community. Her great uncle, Ross Hove, a Cherokee, went west in the Gold Rush of 1849, and is believed to have died of cholera in 1851 in Utah. A sister of John Ross, Jenn Elizabeth, married a Scotsman by the name of Wiley Ross.

In the early days of settlement of the Indian territory, many of the people were closely-related by blood, and it was not uncommon for first cousins to marry. This was a matter her mother feared as it was believed the offspring would be deformed or mentally retarded. After Mattie's mother passed away, it was learned that her maternal grandparents were first cousins, a matter unknown to her mother.

She tells of the McGee's faction, white soldiers who married into the Hinton family, but were not received well. One Abe McGee, operated a store at Ft. Gibson in the 1870s.

While on this visit, we went to see the Ross Cemetery, about a mile southeast of Parkhill town. This cemetery was established by Chief John Ross, and the first interment was that of his son Charles, who died at the age of 21 and was buried there in 1841. At this young age he had just finished law school in the East. This old cemetery contains the graves of many prominent early day Cherokee citizens, including that of Chief John Ross, who was leader of the Cherokees for 17 years.

Mattie mentions that a Rev. Worcester and a Rev. Foreman established the first printing shop in Indian Territory in 1828. The first print shop was on the Illinois River where they could use water power. Later the shop was moved to Parkhill and known as the Mission Press. Here much material was printed in both Cherokee and in English, including hymnals, school books, newspapers, etc.