

at Christmas the Indians would give a bag of corn, home made bread, a kunutche ball, dried fruit, a piece of cloth, gingerbread, a hand of tobacco, a clay pipe, and other useful but inexpensive gifts. They all enjoyed those early day Christmas times. One Christmas ne received ten little .22 rifle shells which made him so glad.

He lives near the old Indian Territory District Courthouse known as Saline. He remembers the first little log building of the Saline Courthouse which was located on the Red Cloud Duncan place. Later it was moved farther east and rebuilt as a large two story frame and stone building, which still stands today, altho used as a residence, it stands also as a monument to a proud and hardy people. He remembers the first courthouse building as a little log structure with rough board floor and a fireplace. As he recalls the building did not have the cracks chinked between the logs, but it sufficed as a center of law and justice. He says punishment was swift and just, sometimes resulting in whipping at the tree, or hanging. He says a return of Indian law from the old days would correct some of the present day ills of the country.

He reflects on the history of the Cherokees since they have been in Oklahoma and feels that they have had and are having a hard time. He says you cannot make a white man out of an Indian, which the government and others have been trying to do for two or three hundred years, and are working even harder at it today. He thinks the government is the one who make big line between whiteman and Indian when great promise was made that "you go live in Indian Territory, and it all belong to you as long as water flows and grass grow". He dont understand what happen. No place to move Indian, but government keep taking land, state taking land, City of Tulsa taking land, build big dams and make lakes - no more running water. Cant get to lakes for whiteman summer nomes and boat docks and "keep out" sign. State take over all wild game and fish, now tell Indian not his no more. Sometimes have to buy license to hunt and fish Indian's own game. Dont understand. Government take 10,000 acres land near Pryor for war plant. Use one-tenth of land. Rest of land could blong to Indians. But no, only big white cattlemen get benefit on lease, for over 25 years now. Indian hunting place to live, No place to go. What government dont take, white man takes. Very few acres in Cherokee Nation now owned by Indian. Most Indians limited to about 40 acres of land, but whiteman can own thousands of acres. South of Leach, one whiteman owns 9000 acres. Once Indian could till and tend a piece of land in Cherokee Nation without being bothered and live happy. But whiteman and government would just not leave him along. The Indian wants no more to be like whiteman, than whiteman wants to be like Indian, except whiteman wants what Indian got. whiteman laws and land use have even killed the Indian's natural way of making a living, as he was primarily a hunter, fisherman, and woodsman. Had he been left along when transplanted to Indian Territory in 1839, he then today could be enjoying the kind of life characteristic of his race. Mr. Hughes believes the jumping off place in the existence of the Indian race is very near.

He says the Indian was put here just to live and get by, and not to get rich and own much land and many thing.