

Jake worked long and hard and eventually developed about a half a section of land into cultivation and pasture. This land was later to become his Indian allotment. He also farmed rented land a few miles north in the Tennison area as well as land in the Whiteoak country. Jake was a God-fearing man and was ever grateful for his blessings. He could not read or write. He did not follow the white man's way of religion, but lived the old Indian way of life, ever looking to and worshiping the Great Spirit. Old settlers and others who lived near and knew him well, have said without reservation that Jake was one of the best men they ever knew. He was neighbor and friend to all he met. Some of his Cherokee neighbors were the Woodalls, Buzzards, Fallins, Comtassels, and Timpsons. Jake met his wife, Amanda Brown, also a Shawnee, where she lived with her people west of Whiteoak. Their great joy was in the twelve children they had. Jake worked hard and provided well for them, abandoning the log house and building for them a two story frame dwelling. The family raised corn, wheat and headed grain, and had good herds of cattle and hogs.

About a quarter of a mile south of the Longtail homestead a Shawnee Indian burial ground had been established at a very early date, possibly in the 1860s. This was to later become the Longtail Cemetery. On this slight rise of ground with its gentle slopes dropping away toward Pawpaw Creek, Jake and Amanda laid to rest four of their children at ages of 17, 7, 9, and 7. Jake's mother is in one of the unmarked graves. Eight of the Longtail children are buried here. Just how many are laid to rest here is not known. In late December, 1968, 35 graves can be seen, about half of them have headstones dating from 1895. Before 1895 identifying headstones were not in common use by Indians of the area. What is important though, here lay those who helped pioneer and build this little spot of Oklahoma.

As one stands viewing Longtail Cemetery today, even though they were of a generation or two ago, there is a feeling of closeness and sincere regard for each of them, because they too were a part of the Creator's plan. Henry Longtail is no longer able to visit the burial place of his people, but his outlook on life and death is typical of the Indian who lives very close to the Great Spirit. Henry believes it makes no difference where or how an Indian is buried, as the memory of that one is always cherished. Even those Indians killed and left on the wide plains, those slaughtered by Custer and his cavalymen, those who fell and froze in the Massacre of Sand Creek (Colorado), or those shot and left for the wolves in the north woods will all rise up someday and stand before the Great Spirit.

One would also think that these hardy and humble people would still have their memory respected and cherished, because they did help pave the way for what we have now. It does not seem so. No Shawnees remain now to care for the Longtail Cemetery. White man now owns the section containing this burial place and most of the surrounding country. The fence that once protected the graves has been left to the elements, and time has rotted some of the posts and wires have been broken. Trees and underbrush have come in as if in some feeble effort to protect the graves. Cattle now wander in and out of the cemetery at will. Even with eroding gullies needing filling nearby, the northeast corner of the cemetery has been desecrated with discarded mattresses, old tires, cans and bottles, and the general collection of trash from farmhouses. You walk away a little sick to your stomach.