

T-377-1

John Dry, Cherokee

John Dry, 79-year-old full blood Cherokee, Double Springs Community, Cherokee County, Oklahoma.

Far up on Fourteen Mile Creek is the old Indian community of Double Springs. It is here that John Dry was born and has lived all of this 79 years. In these quiet surroundings, seemingly far removed from speed and confusion of this mid-twentieth century, Mr. Dry has seen the many changes that have come to his homeland, including the turn of events that wiped out the Cherokee Nation. The stove wood is neatly stacked on his front porch, and his hunting dog thumps its tail against the floor just outside the door--both seem to speak a warm welcome to this humble home built on the sunny side of the hill.

Mr. Dry talks of his grandmother, Nancy Dry, who came from Georgia before the forced removal to Indian Territory. She had lived up in the Flint River Country and was buried in the Rusk (or Russell) graveyard near Little Kansas. He talks about some of the old Cherokee burial places, many of which have been abandoned or have not been used for a long time. Some of these old cemeteries are Bigfeather, Neugin, Grease, Lone Prairie, Terrapin and Downing.

The first school to be built in his community that he remembers was a long log structure that was called Hogeye School. It was located on the hill northeast of his home. Later the school was relocated down nearer the creek near the old Double Springs Cemetery and the center of the community. Much later a fine new school was built as the Double Springs Public School. Now this school is no longer in use and the happy voices of children have given way to the lonely creak of the playground equipment moved now and then by a gentle wind.