

REESE, JOE

INTERVIEW

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Gus Hummingbird,  
Field Worker. 6-17-37.

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An interview with  
Joe Reese, a full-  
blood Cherokee Indian.

Joe Reese, a fullblood Cherokee Indian, was born in Coingsnake District, Cherokee Nation, March 11, 1861. His parents were Andy Reese and Callie (Ketcher) Reese, a sister to Jeff Ketcher.

#### Early Life.

Most of Mr. Reese's early life was spent on a small farm on what is now known as East LeVine, which is located about five miles north of the city of Stilwell, Oklahoma.

His father at that time owned about a ten acre farm in this community, which was very thinly settled.

They lived on this farm until he was about twelve years old when the family moved to Baron Fork Creek near what is now the village of Christie. Joe remained with his family on this place until he was a man, or when he married. The place on East LeVine was sold to some old Cherokee by the name of Cornsilk.

After moving to the Christie community, Joe attended the old white school. He attended this school until he finished the fourth grade. He went to only one teacher during this time and that was Miss Etsy Little, a Cherokee girl.

Joe had brothers and sisters who also went to this

school. They were Betty, Kate, Johnson, Richard, and Ellis.

Johnson was killed by Walker Park several years ago. Richard was killed by a train in 1917. The rest still live near Proctor.

#### Churches.

The earliest church that Joe knows anything about was the Cherokee church known as "Big Mea", later called Antioch Baptist or Levine church. This church was well established when he was a small boy and his parents attended this church. J. B. H. Gritts was the preacher who served this church/in the early days.

#### Indians.

The old timers who lived near Mr. Reese at that time were Ross Shell, Ed. Mainstick, Cornsilk, Wolfe Coon, Jeff Ketchernd, Jim Fishinshaw. These old timers lived the simplest way. The daily food was usually cornbread, beans, with meats of all kinds. This food was found on almost every table in this country at that time. Most of the food consumed by the family was raised on the small farms of these Cherokees. They did not plant such large crops of corn, which was the chief crop in those days. Five acres of corn was considered a large crop. This was stored in small buildings called cribs.

The land produced about twenty-five bushels to the acre. All of the Cherokees owned hogs. There was plenty of mast at that time and plenty of trees produced abundant crops of acorns. Therefore, there was not much of this corn fed to the hogs. They got fat on the mast. Joe's father has owned as many as two hundred hogs at a time.

He has owned as many as two ty sows at a time. Pastures are not known then. If a family needed meat, they would go to the woods and kill as many as they wished.

Any Cherokee who had owned hogs at any time had a claim in the woods that enabled him to kill any amount of hogs his family could use.

#### Trading Posts and Milling Posts.

~~Dutchtown, Cincinnati, Siloam and Evansville were~~  
their main trading and milling points at that time.

Dutchtown was their nearest town. Vol English was the early day trader at this place. He was all kinds of a trader. He was a merchant, store keeper, and a farmer.

Cincinnati was their milling point. This was also their main market for fur and hides. Bill Rhea was the trader at this place.

Siloam was also a good trading point. This was the largest town the Cherokees visited. The only drug

store in this country was located at this place, although there was a little medicines kept at Evansville by the doctors who lived there.

Later Henry Dannenberg, a Cherokee, established a small trading store near the present site of Stillwell, Oklahoma. This little store was located near the New Hope Cemetery. Later after the railroad went through the Cherokee country this store was moved to about the center of the town now.

Several years later this little store was allowed a post office, the first in the Joinsville District. Henry Dannenberg was the Post Master.

Stillwell Springs was also a mining point. This was a water mill and was established by Doctor ... a white man, who was permitted to come to the Indian Territory because he established a mill which would help develop the Cherokee Nation.

Court House.

The Courthouse of Joinsville District was moved two or three times during territorial days. This courthouse was first located in ... about a mile south of the old ... plantation. This would be about three miles southeast of the ... village of Christie, Oklahoma. It was at this place that

they hung Terrapin Leach. After the hanging of Leach the Courthouse was moved to the prairie about two miles west of this place on the Barren Fork Creek bottom. It was at this place the great rioter fight took place.

After the fight at this Courthouse, in which several men were killed, the Courthouse was moved for the last time to the Leachester Creek about six miles west of the present town of Hartsville, Lincoln. This Courthouse was where Walker Bark was convicted and hanged for the murder of Johnson Reese, the father of Mr. Joe Reese.

He remembers the guards who guarded Walker Bark during his trial. They were Louis Taylor, a colored man; who had married a Cherokee girl, John [?], George [?]

He is not a member, Lincoln [?] the Sheriff of [?]

stings and [?] [?] [?]

he Reese were not in favor of the allotment law. The majority of the [?] are not in favor of this

