

ROSS, ELIZABETH. ROSE CRIST MILL. 7192 357

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Grant Foreman
Director S.149.
August 16, 1937.

ROSS GRIST MILL

So far as known the grist mill on the Park Hill branch was owned by William P. Ross during the period he lived south of the stream mentioned, which was from a portion of 1855 until toward the close of 1859. The mill seems to have been built several years before the close of the fifties.

What was once known as the Good farm and home, near the old Cherokee male seminary, was originally improved by William P. Ross. He built the residence. The home and farm and orchard were disposed of by him to John G. M. Hawkins and Ross then removed to the former Hawkins home south of the Park Hill Branch before the close of 1855. The wife of Hawkins was Maria Coodey, a daughter of Joseph and Jane (Jennie) Ross Coodey, and a sister of Chief John Ross.

The Ross Mill, near the mouth of Bumgarner Hollow on the Illinois River some miles northeast of Tahlequah, was the most complete establishment of its kind in Indian Territory, comprising a complete flouring mill, a grist mill,

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a saw mill, and a carding machine, for much wool was produced in the Indian country. Grain was brought from points in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas and Indian Territory. Interested in the mill were Daniel . . . , John . . . and Lewis Ross. Often the grinding machinery was operated day and night. Lewis A. Ross, then a young man of 24 or 25 years of age, used to relate that after remaining up night after night he could sleep at brief intervals half-reclining against the piled-up bags of wheat and flour. Henry J. Abby, a Civil War veteran, employed on the estate--Glen Eyrie--of General A. J. Palmer, told me when I met him while in Colorado Springs some years ago that he (Abby) cultivated the Ross mill farm in 1860 and raised the finest crop of corn he had ever seen. Toward the close of that year, Mr. Abby said, he drove to Ark Hill in a wagon, taking to her home "the old lady Ross, who had been staying with the Ross boys at the mill since 1808," the year in which her husband, John G. Ross died. Mr. Abby further said that as the war drew near he returned to Wisconsin, enlisted in the Union volunteer army and served to the end of the conflict.

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There was a fine orchard at the mill and a brick residence and the surrounding hills were filled with wild turkeys, and numerous wolves, several panthers and numerous wild cats.

The late Mrs. John Price, formerly Katie McDaniel, used to relate that she as a girl would carry a bag of corn on her pony to the mill from her father's home near the present Troctor, and that "young Lewis Ross" would attend to the grinding and place the bag of meal on her pony.

There is nothing to indicate that John G. Ross and his wife Elizabeth, usually called Eliza, were related, though some have opined they were, while others have differed. He was born in Scotland, she, of one-eighth Cherokee blood near Lookout Mountain, Tennessee.