

CLARK, WINIFRED M.

JOHNSON WATERS.

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WINIFRED M. CLARK- STORIES.

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JOHNSON WATERS.

Indian Pioneer History-S-149.
October 18, 1938.

Johnson Waters.

One of the early day figures familiar to the people of Braggs was an old Cherokee Indian named Johnson Waters. He had a daughter Nellie who kept house for him on the allotment several miles southeast of town. They would come into town almost every Saturday. He nearly always bought whiskey and got drunk and she would have to go home alone for he would spend the night in the calaboose, which was a small building in the negro section of town. When Johnson Waters was full enough he would cry, laugh or sing, and we could hear him nearly all night.

One night when I was at home alone, just after we had moved into our new unfinished house, I heard the tread of a horse going around the house. It was moonlight and I had not yet lit the lamps. I had left the big gate open so that my brother might drive in when he came from the farm. It was time for him to come but I knew he would not ride around the house. I was afraid of the man on the horse. A large chimney stood in the middle of the house and the partitions of the rooms were not completed so I kept on the

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opposite side of the chimney from the horseman and circled two or three times around the chimney for protection in case he used his gun, but when he began to call "Jinny", "Jinny", I knew him. I realized he was drunk and that he thought he had gotten home, so I went out to the edge of the porch and stood in the light. He went to the gate as if about to go away but turned his horse to face me and with one hand raised sang or chanted something in Cherokee. It had a musical cadence, strangely beautiful. Just as I was beginning to enjoy it he suddenly kicked his horse to go out of the gate on the lope and whooped for a get away, but John Marlow, the marshal, was there in the shadows and caught his bridle as he passed, so he spent the night in the little jail, whooping and singing.

One morning Johnson Waters was found in his last sleep, with his head on the side of the Iron Mountain railroad. He had started to walk home.