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NOWATA SETTLERS

The first permanent settlers of Nowata County were truly the Riley families;. They settled near Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation "West" prior to 1832. Then moving to northeastern Cherokee nation Indian Territory, before the war between the States; they were old settlers from Tennessee, Name or Settlement Coody's Bluff, Samuel K. Riley was a carpenter and stone mason, and constructed the first building in this part of the country, also built the first Skiffs and Canoes, and was the first Ferryman on the Verdigris river, between Coffeyville Kansas, and Fort Gibson, in 1872. He made the first flat boat operated with oars paddles and poles. This is the oldest Ferry operated by three generations of the Riley family with only one improvement a "Cable" with pulley & ropes, until in 1898 a Swing-
ing bridge was constructed by James M. Jolly and Dr. Eddy which served the community for twelve or fifteen years. After this bridge was condemned a bridge Company of Kansas City, built a steel toll bridge. After Statehood the County bought this bridge moving it to another part of the country and the State built the present bridge, a wonderful structure in 1927, under the administration of Martin E. Trapp.

The fords or crossings along the Verdigris in the vicinity of these bridges are namely; Riley -- Cherokee, Brown, Cherokee, Bushyhead Cherokee, Yellowleaf, Delaware and Greenway, white adopted crossings.

A stage coach carried the mail from Goffeyville by way of Coody's Bluff & Claremore changing for fresh horses when necessary along route. It is worthy of mentioning Mr. Frank Barrian one of Nowata's leading merchants of today was our Stage Coach driver of yesterday.

The Riley Cemetery is the oldest cemetery in Nowata County located three miles north of Coody's Bluff. The first little body buried being the infant of the Riley-Coody family in the early fifties.

The Delaware Indians old playgrounds was located on Lightning Creek near Alluwe in Nowata County; where they met twice a year to receive the "Payments" on their moneys derived from the sale of their land in Kansas, when they came to the Indian Territory in 1867, and was adopted by the Cherokees.