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"CREEK TOWN".

The term "Creek town" is seldom heard at the present time, but in bygone years it was of frequent mention. Reference was not to a town in the generally accepted meaning of the term, but to a small settlement, the people of which really belonged to the Creek tribe.

When the several Indian tribes were being removed from east of the Mississippi river to Indian Territory, during the thirties of the nineteenth century, small numbers of Creek citizens, living at the borders of the original Cherokee country, were removed along with the Cherokees. They were in groups which settled here and there in the regions set apart for the Cherokees. Through an act of the Cherokee National Council, these small bodies of Creeks were given the rights of Cherokees and allowed to continue in occupancy of the lands upon which they had established themselves.

One of the oldest Creek settlements was that which was made a short distance south of the confluence of the Barren Fork river with the Illinois,

some five to six miles southeast of Tahlequah, and immediately east of the Park Hill locality. These Creeks built themselves log houses, with wooden chimneys, lined inside with thin pieces of stone, or with adhesive clay or mortar made from lime and sand. They cultivated small tracts of the fertile land, raising corn and beans and a variety of the sweet potato known as the "Spanish potato". They used mortars in which to pound their corn into hominy grits, and hunted in the woodlands and caught or speared fish in the streams. Small wooden houses were built above the graves of deceased members of the small community, which was known as Creek Town. The women of the town rode forth on peddling expeditions at times, offering fish, fresh or barbecued, hominy grits, sweet potatoes, or nuckleberries and wild onions in season, and occasionally carried eggs and chickens for sale or barter.

The Creeks were peculiar people. Upon arriving at a home out in the more extensive settlements, they rode up as near to the fence or gate as possible and there remained silent, waiting for some one to appear

from the house. Never was a call or hello made. Statue-like the women peddlers remained patiently waiting. If no one appeared, they turned their ponies and rode away.

It was said that most of the members of Creek town were not full-blood members of the Creek Nation but were Lucchees, members of a once powerful tribe which had been reduced by wars and pestilences, finally being incorporated into the Creek tribe.

In course of time the number living in the so-called town became few and eventually all disappeared but until the beginning of 1890 several were yet alive. New owners now live in the section once occupied by Creek town, and they are now remembered by a comparatively few persons of today.

On Christmas day it was a custom of the members of the settlement to make a great deal of noise with their firearms, firing their guns throughout the day, beginning in the early morning.

In settlement of an old claim against the Government the Creek Town people once received a

good-sized monetary payment and led a merry life while the money lasted. Among those whose names are yet recalled by some few persons, are those of John Thompson and Jim, whose surname was Cane, for they lived in the midst of tall wild cane and woodlands. There was also Creek John, sometimes called John Walker; also Creek Lem; Creek Ned; two men who were known as old Creek Arch and young Creek Arch; Figgylumby, an aged woman; and Big Betsy, Walking Betsy, Kayeugi, and Pepsy.

NOTE

This article was written from personal recollections.
Elizabeth Ross.