

ROSS, ELIZABETH . SUGAR MOUNTAIN.

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"SUGAR MOUNTAIN"

A few miles east of the Illinois river, from the point where the Barren Fork flows into the larger stream, a large and wooded hill arises above the surrounding woodlands. This height has long been called the Sugar Mountain for along its slopes were once many sugar maple trees, the sap of which was collected and boiled down, poured into small receptacles or molds, becoming solidified into sugar. The cakes of sugar were then ready to be sold or traded and a quantity was disposed of each year. One of the principal makers of maple sugar was a Cherokee whose name was William Flute, usually referred to as Bill Flute. The home of Flute was near where many of the maple trees stood and he always collected the sap and made sugar when the proper season arrived. On horse-

back, Flute carried his product through portions of the country and to Tahlequah, usually finding ready sale.

Numbers of the fullblood Cherokees acquired some of the sugar, using it in sweetening their boiled corn or hominy.

Children ate it as children eat candy, as also did many adults. Flute died years ago and thereafter the making

of maple sugar at the base of Sugar Mountain ceased. An extensive and splendid view is obtainable from the summit of the Sugar Mountain and at no great distance from the crest a fine spring flows from beneath the rugged stones, sending forth a small stream which winds its way down into the lowland. In bygone years a number of the fullblood Indians lived in the vicinity of the Sugar Mountain, their log houses, corn fields and small peach orchards being situated among the woodlands.

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