

'Lost Tribe' Of Cherokee Indians Found By County Health Nurse On Daily Trips In Northwest Escambia To Lessen Misery

By OSCAR R. ALESHIRE

"As county nurse in Escambia county's Public Health unit, I start each day's work from the intersection of two modern city streets, whizzing even at that early hour with every form of automotive transportation, both foreign and local.

"It is a 'far cry' from such a setting of whirring wheels and blinking traffic lights to what I often find when my questing car has registered fifty or sixty back-woods miles on the 'tattle-tale' face of its speedometer.

"For me each day holds the charm of unknown objectives, and chance to serve some discovered need; yesterday was no exception for, shoved back from civilization, twenty miles from a main highway, as I drove it, I found my 'lost tribe' of Cherokee and various dilutions of Cherokee Indians. Some of them were perfect specimens of their race. This I know from having lived among two of this country's most primitive and unspoiled tribes for several years.

"Having known the primitive, happy, unspoiled Indian, who knew no language or mode of living but his own, these poor, lost outcasts touched my heart in some strange way that I cannot express in words.

"Pushed back by the selfish and uncharitable encroachment of the white man's desire for more and more of what first belonged to them in their better days, this poor remnant of a once proud, friendly, trusting people were making their last stand in ignorance and much poverty.

"They didn't know they'd had forebears both proud and strong. They didn't even know they'd had a language of their own with which to sing most beautifully of streams and trees, of birds and clouds, of love and flowers.

"They are making their last brave, uncomplaining effort, unconscious of their bravery and the last frayed virtues which cling to them like ghostly



ELIZABETH U. GREENWELL

shadows from the past, unknown to them, but clear to kindly-curious eyes. No, no call for help or aid has sounded from this poor sad band. I'm glad I found my poor 'lost tribe.' I'll strive to hold my vision of their far far past and maybe, somehow, serve their suffering present."

(The above are excerpts from a narrative report made by Elizabeth U. Greenwell, staff nurse of the Escambia county health unit, whose territory embraces the northwest section of the county.)

INDIAN BRAVE LEAVES

William Walker was one of the bravest of the Cherokee braves that made their home for many years at the head of Perdido creek in lower Alabama. He was called "Hawk Feather," and many times, as a young Buck, proved his prowess as a hunter and trapper. But Hawk Feather was a born farmer. He liked to see maize growing and waving in the fields. His father, too, was like that. So much so that he had erected a crude grist mill near the Cherokee camp. It was not hard to understand then why Hawk Feather adopted the ways of the white man, took the name of the white man and one night more than 50 years ago, with his rifle and pack, pushed his canoe into the sluggish waters of the Perdido and started out for a new life.

As William Walker, the young Buck stopped at Bay Springs, Florida, not much in the way of mileage from the camp of the tribe, but far enough away that Hawk Feather was given up as forever lost to the Cherokees, very possibly because of the fact that he liked to plant and work as white men did, rather than to hunt, fish, trap and kill as was an Indian buck's true calling in life.

Lives Among Whites

Walker trapped and hunted, went among the white men and negroes in the turpentine camps and the

Jackson. "As a young girl, as was the custom in those days, we went into the turpentine camps as soon as we were old enough and I have scarcely ever known any other kind of life, except farming, since we have been down here. My boys and son-in-law work on the river and in the cotton fields and we have enough for our modest needs. One of my sons moved back to Alabama, but the other one is down to the river 'dead-heading' logs right now.

"The Cherokees of my childhood were growing out of the Indian tribal customs even then. We did not live in tepees, nor did our men hunt with the bow and arrow. That was an older generation, but we did live a camp life and it was a happy one too. My father though, like my brother, wanted to raise things and see them grow. My father had a little grist mill even, but he also loved to hunt and trap. He used to tell us children of how his father hunted with bow and arrow and what a strong man he was."

Mothers Huge Brood

Mrs. Jackson, a little woman, seemingly shriveled up from hard work and age, was in her bare feet and chewed tobacco, but with all, helped mother the brood of grandchildren that help to make up the population of the "lost tribe" to something more than 20, full blood and mixed Indian and white. They are happy, generally healthy, know something of modern life, in that they get to the town movies once in a while and the children all plan to be educated in schools nearby. Mrs. Jackson's four daughters, Julia, Rosa, Viola and Lena are typical Indian girls, with all of the tribal features and great is the rejoicing among them when a new offspring has the long black hair of the Cherokee, as deep in their hearts they are still Indians.

Find Much Misery

A day as guest of Nurse Greenwell, making her rounds of the upper northwest section of the country, had other thrills, too, besides finding and picturing the "lost tribe." These intrepid visitors of mercy, as they push back into the heretofore rarely visited parts of the county, are finding and correcting much misery and suffering. Hook worm, pellegra, tuberculosis, weakened vision, bad teeth and other diseases are found throughout the sector.

These men and women with their

usually large families, are proud. They do not ask for help. They cling to their ancient cabins, many of them built 75 and 100 years ago. All that they ask is a break from nature, so that their meager crops and livestock will come through. True there is much poverty and lack of privilege, especially among the children, but as roads are built into these wild parts, schools opened and county and state agricultural and health agents reach into the hinterlands, conditions are becoming much better and it should not be a far distant day before they will have much the same mode of living as their village and city cousins.

Lumber Hand Hewn

We saw old cabins built before the Civil war—the old "shot-gun" type, now almost extinct, with a long open hall extending from the front porch to a porch on the rear, where the cooking and eating was done, while the two front rooms, on either side of the open hall, with their wide fireplaces were the living and sleeping quarters of the residents.

Square-headed, hand made nails were the only kind used and few of them. The joints were hand-mortised and the shingles hand-made and placed. The homes in some cases were surrounded by "stake and rider" fences, a type only heard of occasionally in these days. One farmer, Bert Goodall, who makes a good living blasting out old pine stumps, has lived on his place and his father before him for more than 60 years. He split some of the original yellow pine that went into the rails of the present fence.

J. M. Ross Goes To Company Meet

J. M. Ross, local insurance agent of the New York Life Insurance Co. left Saturday for Signal Mountain, Tenn., to attend the company's convention at that place. J. M. Ross is one of the leading agents in West Florida and South Alabama, having won this distinction for the past four or five years in succession.

Dr. A. T. Hoffman has returned from vacation and will be in his office Tuesday morning.

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GOP SLAPS AT FUND PI

Michigan Chiefs Ask Of U. S. Spend

(By The Associated Pr

DETROIT, Sept. 5—Michigan publican leaders met a committee investigation of excessive campaign expenditure the state today with demand the group inquire into the federal funds.

Howard C. Lawrence, R state chairman, said "there (federal) money being spent campaign than all the m Republicans of Michigan raise."

Louis R. Glavis headed a investigators sent by the committee to inquire into that some \$3,000,000 had cumulated for use in whose citizens vote in a election Sept. 15.

Frank Murphy, high com of the Philippines seeking ocratic nomination for said "the really big expenditure being made" to prevent re-tion of James Couzens, in Republican senator. Couzens received censure of party recently when he announced support President Roosevelt election.

A manta, or blanket fish caught off the Florida coast more than 18 feet long and wide.

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DOUBLE BILL PROGRAM
Sunday and Monday
JACK DEMPSEY
in
"Idols of Millions"
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—also—
WILLIAM HAINES in
"YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL"
A star-studded musical production featuring the W-PUS BABY STARS.
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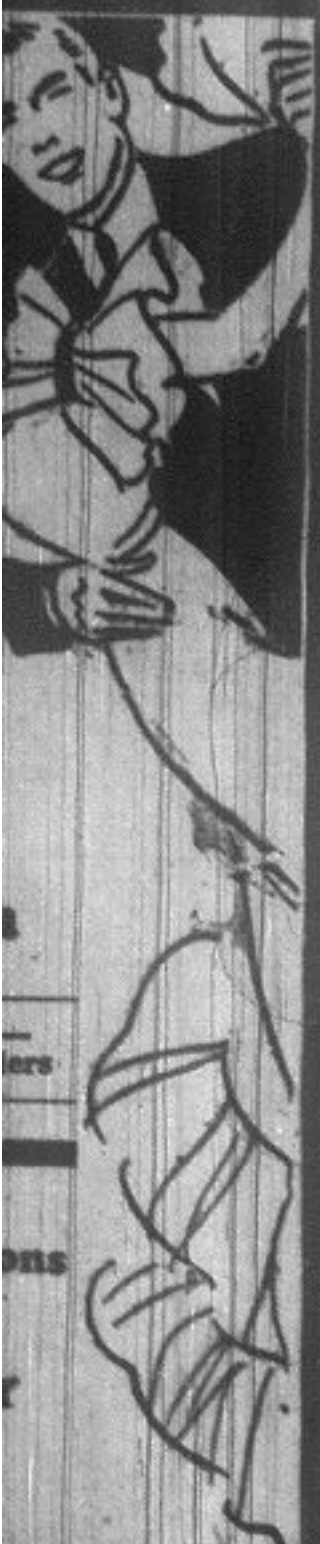
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Lives Among Whites

Walker trapped and hunted, went among the white men and negroes in the turpentine camps and the lumber mills and had soon earned enough to buy himself a little patch of land. This he cleared and planted. Tenderly he watched his crops grow to maturity. He was happy.

Next he built himself a cabin, most of which still stands today and as he now lived as a white man, he was accepted as a white man. He gave up all Cherokee tribal customs, forgot their language for that of the whites and then to make his metamorphosis complete he fell in love with a white girl of the section and married.

As the years passed and his children grew to manhood and womanhood, educated in the ways of white men and schooled in the scattered country schools of the period, something of William's Indian blood cried back to tribal days. He no longer was a Cherokee, but that innate love of one's family, impressed greatly upon him by having lived the life of the white for so many years, caused him to search out his two sisters, living as he last knew, still at the head of Perdido creek.

Seeks Out Sisters

About fifteen years ago Hawk Feather returned to camp, driving, if you please, a new model automobile of that day. He found that the white influence had predominated the old tribe to a large extent and he was alike with his brethren-white. He found his sisters with little difficulty and persuaded them to return with him to his little place in Bay Springs.

One sister has returned to the Alabama camp, but the other, now known to the world as Lizzie Jackson, having married a white man and born him four daughters and two sons, with three of the daughters and one son is still a member of the little 'lost tribe,' tucked away in the forests of Northwestern Florida.

Hawk Feather went to the Happy Hunting Ground about five years ago, but his wife and several of his children and grandchildren remain on the little farm, together with Mrs. Jackson and her three daughters and the children of two of the latter. One of the daughters, Rosa, is married to George Spear, a blond farmer boy of the south and they have seven children.

Mrs. Jackson, who has just turned 75, has the indelible stamp of the Indian, while her four daughters and several grandchildren, show even a more pronounced trait, but in their talk and general manners of living there is little left of the Cherokee.

Tribal Customs Forgotten

"I don't remember much about the old tribal customs," said Mrs.

heretofore rarely visited parts of the county are finding and correcting much misery and suffering. Hook worm, pellegra, tuberculosis, weakened vision, bad teeth and other diseases are found throughout the sector.

These men and women with their

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