

Point Rock at Buck's Pocket.



Artist sketch of Creek Path Mission.

Creek Path, a Cherokee settlement area, was established around 1780, desiring to move away from a settlement that was an important site to Cherokee because it derived from the junction of an important trail because it led from the Creek territory to the Valley and points north.

Creek Path consisted of the Gunter's Village, and Brown's Cornsilk and Wasasa also formed the population of the village was 600.

The Creek Path Mission was the present community of Cross Warrantown, approximately a mile from Brown's Creek, and about four miles from the mission fronted Jackson's Trail. This stretch of trail later became part of the road was established by federal authority and Sand Mountain by way of Collinsville, and Centre.

John Brown and his children played significant roles in the founding of the settlement was in Brown's Valley, and the first school for them. In 1817 Catherine was one of the first female students to be baptized by the Board. David, John's son, and soon became a Christian convert.

In 1820, John Brown, being that his children had learned and desiring to establish a mission school he established the school granted in April of that year at the site of the mission.

The school construction by the time the timber had been cut, the house was begun, steps made, a door and windows were inside hewn down. Services were held on By Thursday of the next week and opened for the first male student and became the mission teacher.

People of all ages exhibited interest and enrollment increased so rapidly that a second building was constructed. Catherine Brown accepted the first female student.

It had been said that before

Creek Path

Creek Path, a Cherokee settlement in the Guntersville, Alabama area, was established around 1785 by Chickamauga Cherokees desiring to move away from a rapidly expanding white frontier. It was an important site to Cherokee history. The settlement name was derived from the junction of an ancient trail called the "Creek Path" because it led from the Creek territory in Alabama to the Tennessee Valley and points north.

Creek Path consisted of the larger villages of Creek Path proper, Gunter's Village, and Brown's Village. The smaller villages of Cornsilk and Wasasa also formed part of the settlement. Maximum population of the village was 600-800.

The Creek Path Mission was located a mile or less west of the present community of Crossroads, about two miles east of Warrentown, approximately a quarter of a mile on the east side of Brown's Creek, and about four miles from the Tennessee River. The mission fronted Jackson's Trail, the first road in the area. This stretch of trail later became part of the Georgia State Road which was established by federal authority in 1816. It extended across Sand Mountain by way of the present towns of Albertville, Collinsville, and Centre.

John Brown and his children, Catherine and David, had significant roles in the founding of Creek Path Mission. Their home was in Brown's Valley, and the creek and valley were named for them. In 1817 Catherine was admitted to the Brainard Mission as one of the first female students and was the first Indian to be baptized by the Board. David, too, entered the mission at Brainard and soon became a Christian convert.

In 1820, John Brown, being very pleased with the things his children had learned and desiring instructions for himself, requested a mission school be established at Creek Path. His request was granted in April of that year and erection of the school began.

The school construction began on Friday and by Sunday the timber had been cut, the house put up, the roof covered, the chimney begun, steps made, a door and puncheons for the floor split and the inside hewn down. Services were held on Sunday for the first time. By Thursday of the next week, the school was completely finished and opened for the first male scholar. The Reverend Daniel Butrick became the mission teacher.

People of all ages exhibited an earnest desire to learn, and the enrollment increased so rapidly there was no room for applicants. A second building was constructed to house women students and Catherine Brown accepted the charge of the girls' school.

It had been said that before Sequoyah perfected his alphabet, he

visited at Creek Path, where David Brown assisted him with a portion of it. It was David who sent a copy of the complete syllabary to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. in 1825. This was probably its' first introduction to government officials. David also worked with his father-in-law, George Lowrey, in translating the New Testament into Cherokee and also did an official compilation of Cherokee laws for the Cherokee Council.

The mission was well attended by 1836 with the number of students ranging from 40-60. The removal of the Indians and the events leading up to it disrupted the missionary work among the Indians. The Creek Path Mission was abandoned in 1837. The Old Missionary building was used as a home by different families for a number of years, and was finally torn down in 1921. Today, a magnolia tree on a small island in the Gunter'sville reservoir is all that remains of a mission and school whose existence is a dim echo in the minds of local residents.

Willstown

Numerous groups of Creeks visited Dragging Canoe's followers and took part with them in raids that were launched from the Five Lower Towns. In order to keep in close contact with the Creek Nation, the Chickamaugas founded Willstown in 1770. It was situated on Big Will's Creek just above the present village of Lebanon, in DeKalb County, Alabama. The town extended north of Lebanon for several miles. Willstown was named for a half breed chief called Red-Headed Will, and was a place of importance in Cherokee history.

Missionary work among the Indians started around 1800 and contributed much to the Cherokees' advancement. Early in 1817 the Brainard Mission opened using federal funds and equipment. For twenty-one years a small group of dedicated missionaries labored to impart to the Cherokee students knowledge which would make them useful citizens and Christians. The school also offered English, vocational arts, and religious instruction. By 1820 about eighty Indian students boarded at the mission. Between 1823 and 1839 ten branch stations of the mission were established throughout the Cherokee Nation. One of these was at Willstown.

Popular and influential Major George Lowrey (a former Jackson County, Alabama resident and Assistant Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation for nearly thirty years) was instrumental in the establishment of the Willstown Mission. Several of his children had attended the Brainard Mission and he had become active in religious work. His daughter, Lydia, married Milo Hoyt whose father was to become the superintendent of the Willstown Mission. Sequoyah, Major Lowrey's brother-in-law, lived at Willstown for a time.



Major George Lowrey (From an oil painting by the Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art)

The mission at Willstown served the Cherokees of this area until the late 1830s. It had two schoolhouses, two corner stores, a blacksmith shop, springhouse, and a mill.

The Reverend Ard Hoyt, who was at the Willstown Mission in 1824, was one of the first to be credited with writing the Cherokee spelling book in English. He served as an interpreter for the Cherokee spelling book in English and translated the prophecies of Isaiah into Cherokee.

Today, a gray granite monument marks the site of the Willstown Mission which had been destroyed when they were forced to move in 1838.



Major George Lowrey (From an oil portrait by George Catlin, courtesy of Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History & Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The mission at Willstown opened in 1823 and served the Cherokees of this area until their removal. The mission site included two schoolhouses, two corncribs, six or eight cabins, a smokehouse, blacksmith shop, springhouse, sawmill, and a gristmill.

The Reverend Ard Hoyt became superintendent of the Willstown Mission in 1824 with one of his sons, Venable Durius Hoyt, being one of the first teachers. Hoyt's daughter-in-law, Lydia, is credited with writing the first Cherokee hymn. Major Lowrey served as an interpreter for the missionaries and helped complete a Cherokee spelling book in English letters and translated portions of the prophecies of Isaiah into the Cherokee language.

Today, a gray granite monument marks the site of the historic Willstown Mission which had served the Cherokees of this area until they were forced to move in 1838.



Granite Marker marking the spot of Willstown Mission in Fort Payne, Alabama.

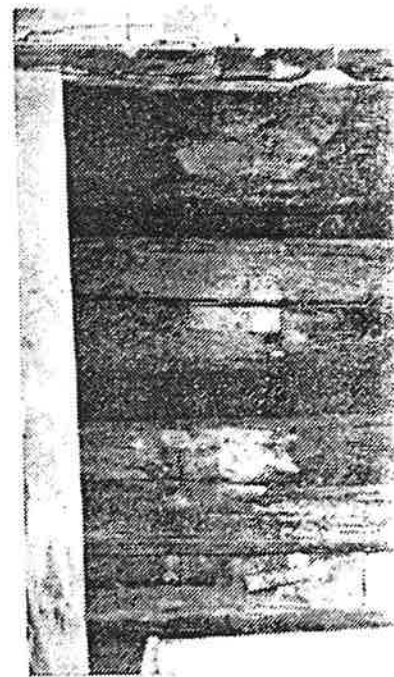


Cherokee Plantation.

Cherokee

Approximately two miles north of Fort Payne, Alabama at the point of the old Cherokee Avenue — stands the stately plantation house reputed to be the oldest original

One of the great attractions of the Cherokee background. Oral histories tell of the arrival of John and Molly Ross in 1790 when they came from Gadsden, Alabama to Willstown in 1790. Ross was the progenitor of the Cherokee John, who became the Principal Chief Andrew, a Justice of the Cherokee Nation known of the nine Ross Children which now forms a portion of the

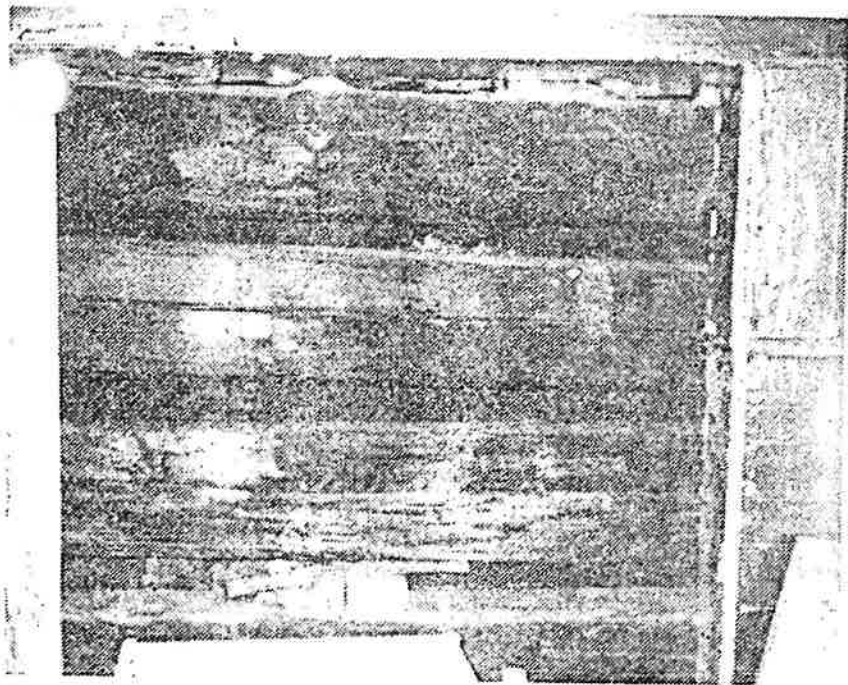


Original logs from the Ross plantation.

Cherokee Plantation

Approximately two miles northeast of the business district of Fort Payne, Alabama at the point where 45th Street joins Godfrey Avenue — stands the stately structure, Cherokee. Cherokee is reputed to be the oldest original home in the State of Alabama.

One of the great attractions of Cherokee is the historical background. Oral histories tell that the house was built by Daniel and Molly Ross in 1790 when they moved from Turkey Town (near Gadsden, Alabama) to Willstown (now Fort Payne, Alabama) in 1790. Ross was the progenitor of a large and distinguished family. John, who became the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and Andrew, a Justice of the Cherokee Supreme Court, were the two best known of the nine Ross Children. Both lived in the log structure which now forms a portion of the interior walls of Cherokee.



Original logs from the Ross cabin as seen from the Cherokee attic.