

BRIEF HISTORY OF CHEROKEE COUNTY

In the southwestern corner of the state of North Carolina the Cherokee lands secured by the Echota Treaty were organized into Cherokee County by an act of the North Carolina Legislature in 1839.

From the time of the treaty until the formation of Cherokee County, this territory had remained under the jurisdiction of Macon County.

The Cherokee Indian Reservation of Qualla is to the North and the Indians hold several thousand acres of land in Cherokee County. Many full blooded Cherokees and other natives of varying percentages of Indian blood live in the county.

As you enter the county from the east you come to Topton, which is just as its name implies the top of the pass. Then to Rhodo whose name is said to have originated from the boardhouse proprietress there who served "raw-dough biscuits." The town of Andrews was named for Col. O. B. Andrews who was outstanding in the development of Western North Carolina.

Fort Butler, located just outside of Murphy, was headquarters for General Winfield Scott when he came into the western part of the state to round up all the Cherokee Indians who had escaped after Pres. Andrew Jackson's famous edict to move them to the west. This site is now designated by a marble marker.

The name chosen for the county seat was Murphy and the site selected was at the confluence of the Hiwassee and Valley Rivers. The town was formerly called Huntersville for Col. A. R. S. Hunter, who was the town's first white settler. He established a trading post with the Cherokees in 1830. The County seat was later called Murphy (Incorporated in 1851) after Archibald D. Murphey, the "Father of Public Education in North Carolina." Through a clerical error the "e" was dropped in the legislative act incorporating the town. The present courthouse of native regal blue marble was built in 1926.

Present population of Cherokee County is 16,335. County contains 293,900 acres of which 255,600 are forested. Water covers 7,500 acres. Agriculture predominates. Poultry and poultry products, livestock and livestock products and forest products are the chief sources of agricultural income. Industries include 7 woodworking plants, 6 textile plants, 1 talc and 2 marble companies. The states most extensive marble and limestone deposits are found here.

The tourists business is important. Hiwassee and Apalachia Dams and lakes (built by TVA) both afford excellent fishing, boating, etc. There are several good trout streams well stocked. Hunting is good. Nantahala

forest provides hiking trails and camping and picnicing facilities. Many different minerals in varying quantities afford sport for rock enthusiasts. The John C. Campbell Folk School, Field of the Wood and the nearby Copper Basin draw many tourists.

The Palmer Museum at Marble contains pioneer and Indian relics and mineral specimens.

Hiwassee, Valley and Nottely Rivers flow through the county. The Southern Railroad connects with the Louisville & Nashville at Murphy. Good roads connect all sections of the county.

This collection is 95% of the Cherokee County Historical Museum/price white