Resources Of Cherokee County Defined In Address

TALK IS MADE OVER WWNC BY LOCAL EDITOR

Citizen-Times Devotes 2 Full Pages, Write-up To This County

Much has been said of the beauty and the hospitality of Western North Carolina.

Thanks to the press, the radio and other media of advertising, the "state within a state" has enjoyed a reputation surpassing any other section of these United States.

We of the western section of North Carolina feel that nothing could be added to that which we already have. Any time of the year you will find the southern end of the great smokies enchanting, you will find the climate healthful, the towns progressive, the people, generally, happy and contented.

The citizens of the mountain section of North Carolina like to look upon their land as one with common interests. The various communities are made up of the same dispositions.

Down where the Blue Ridge mountains lose their steepness, where the rugged crags and rocky fords change from treacherous precipes to fertile, sloping valleys, lies Cherokee county.

On the south the red clay hills of Georgia sweep into a sandy flatness and the rugged, barren hills of the Copper Basin of Tennessee lead off to the west.

At this tip end of the state Cherokee county majestically tranforms the flatness of the Georgia Tennessee land into towering mountains, studded with virgin timber, to a hazy richness silhouetted against the skies.

Truly when one enters the giant, green Valley River valley they realize they are no longer on ordinary soil. They are entering a land rich in scenic beauty, a land inhabited by hardy pioneers of pure American stock who through their own initiative tilled the seemingly untillable, cut the virgin timber stands to make their homes and build roads accesible to every part of the county.

Because of the difficulties they faced, the original white settlers in the lower end of the mountain range naturally became more industrious than those of the lowlands. They had to fight the ruggedness of the mountains for their own subsistance.

Created by an act of the legislature in 1839, Cherokee county was named in honor of that tribe of Indians that once gayly inhabited its confines. It is one of the largest counties in the state having an area of 462 square miles. The 1932 census gives it a population of 16,151, but the figure could conservatively be estimated closer to 20,000 at the present.

The first white settlers were mostly natives of North Carolina and came largely from Buncombe, Haywood and adjoining counties. They were of English, Dutch, Scotch and Irish decent.

Murphy, the county seat, was the first white settlement, and was first known as Huntington, from Col. R. S. Hunter, who, by permission of the government, had established a trading post among the Cherokee Indians at the confluence of the Valley and Hiawassee rivers.

In 1836 Brigadier-General John E. Wool estabished an army post at Huntington for the removal of Indians to the Oklahoma country. The post was named Fort Butler in honor of B. F. Butler secretary of war ad interim in the cabinet of President Andrew Jackson, under whose administration plans for the removal were formulated.

Land Deeded

Several years ago through the liberality of the Tar-Heel investment company, composed of Louis M. Bourne and Dr. S. Westray Battle, of Asheville, an acre of ground surrounding and including the fort was deeded to the town of Murphy for a public park.

When Cherokee county was established in 1839, the new county site was given the name of Murphy in honor of one of the state's distinguished superior court judges, Archibald D. Murphy, whose championship of popular education resulted in the foundation of North Carolina's system of public schools.

The name of the town was originally spelled M-u-r-p-h-e-y, but through a typographical error on the part of a legislative clerk, or the state printer, it was spelled M-u-r-p-h-y as it remains today.

Andrews, 16 miles east of Murphy, was first settled in 1885, when Col. A. B. Andrews, one of the pioneers of Western North Carolina, and a party of railroad officials came to Cherokee county looking for a place to establish a commissary from which to supply crews then engaged in building a railroad westward from Bryson City.

The trading point thus established soon grew into a thriving village and Andrews was incorporated in 1905. It is the seat of the F. P. Cover and Sons tannery plant and the Teas Tanning extract company. These two plants use thousands of dollars worth of acid wood and tan bark annually providing a source of income to residents of this section that is unsurpassed.

Marble, nine miles east of Murphy, is the scene of a large marble quarrying and finishing industry. The town is said to be the smallest incorporated village in the state The quarries of the Columbia marble company have supplied a large part of the paving in the towns of the county; the Murphy court house, said to be one of the most beautiful in the state is built of pure marble and even dwellings and barns are finished with it.

At Kinsey, three miles south of Murphy, the finest talc in the world is mined and shipped to American and foreign ports.

The forest area of Cherokee county is approximately 204,895 acres, comprising 75 per cent of the total area. More than 62 per cent of the forest area is farm woodland including some 22,000 acres of woodland pasture. The Appalachian veneer company at Regal, three miles east of Murphy, is one of the largest veneer plants in Western North Carolina.

Iron ore, high grade asbestos, feldspar, managanese and gold will be found in the county but have never been mined to any extensive scale.

Cherokee county is served by two railways—the Southern which comes down through the county to Murphy from Asheville and the Louisville and Nashville which runs into Murphy from Atlanta, Ga. A privately owned lumbering railroad extends south from Andrews into Clay county at Hayesville.

Good Roads

The highway system of the county includes state and national trunk line routes, and a system of fairly good secondary soil and gravel roads. Highway No. 10, known as North Carolina's "Main Street", and No. 28, another main line highway converge at Murphy.

These two state routes form U. S. 19 which extends from Canada to the Guilf, and U. S. 64 from Eastern Carolina to California.

Last week work began on the last unpaved link of No. 19 from the North Carolina-Georgia state line 17 miles below here to Blue Ridge, Ga. When this paving project is completed this fall, the route will become the principal trunk line between the East and the South.

Cherokee county ranges in elevation from about 1300 fet above sea level in the western part to about 5000 feet in the northern part. The elevation at Murphy is 1,614 feet and at Andrews 1800 feet. Grassy Top in the northern part, and Weatherman Bald in the eastern part, are each 5000 feet above sea level.

The stream valleys are narrow and deep, the currents swift and there are many falls and shoals furnishing fine sport for anglers.

Of monumental importance to the citizens of Cherokee county at present is the Tennessee Valley Authority's plans to build a $15,000,000 dam on the Hiawassee river 18 miles below Murphy at the site known as Fowler's Bend.

Already hundreds of workmen are busy making accesable roads into the site from Murphy and from Turtletown, Tenn., over which they will haul the ponderous machinery used in building Norris dam.

Thousands of dollars in increased business is anticipated by Cherokee county merchants when the project gets under full sway. Many unemployables will be put to work regularly and the towns are already increasing their capacities in all lines to meet the bid for increased business.

Of more importance to the people at large is the fact that the TVA's decision to build this dam in North Carolina marks the initial efforts to bring the benefits of the Tennessee Valley Authority's yardstick power and flood control policy into this state.

That, the Cherokee county people consider of greatest consequence. They realized the TVA did not care to step in where they were not wanted. They continually urged upon the TVA officials the importance of undertaking this project. A motorcade went to Knoxville while all the business house shut down. Wires were sent to Washington officials imploring them to back up Cherokee county in their fight for a dam in this section. Time and outlay were spent without reserve. And finally the decision was made. The appropriation went through and the people rejoiced that not only they, but the state at large, would have the benefits of this governmental institution.

Nor has the TVA by any means confined its interest to Cherokee county through its flood control program. It's more far-reaching program of sensible rehabilitation has been patterned in many ways. It's most important, in the instance of Cherokee county, was its interest in agriculture.

Being principally an agricultural section farmers have derived great benefits through its program of test and demonstration farms. Through the efforts of the Tennessee Valley Authority Cooperative a cannery at Murphy has been refinanced and is proving a real boon to farmers in that section.

While heretofore the farmers have had to rely principally on corn, wheat and other staple crops, a new source of better revenue has been opened to them. The refernce is to vegetable crops. As long as there was no market—no medium of exchange for them—the farmers stuck to their corn and wheat.

Now the cannery buys up their tomatoes, their beans, every vegetable they raise and either can them or find a profitable market for them.

Cooperatives Become Popular

Sometime ago a cooperative creamery was established at Brasstown close to the Clay county line for the benefit of the dairy farmers in that section. It grew and thrived. The farmers learned the importance of the word "cooperative" when applied to their farm products and soon cherished the idea.

Today cooperatives are meeting with success in the Cherokee county area and their exponents are handling half-dollars instead of dimes.

In back of the creamery which brought about this change lies the John C. Campbell Folk school at Brasstown.

It was established several years ago by Mrs. John C. Campbell in memory of her husband who spent his life in behalf of the Southern Appalachian mountaineers.

He realized the falk schools of Denmark had a place in America. He became interested in the work while staying here in Asheville. But he never lived to see his dream come true.

Mrs. Campbell, however, had become interested in the work. With the help of the Brasstown citizens and Uncle Luce Scroggs, the school was founded.

Small of student body and small of faculty it seeks to combine the two and do away with cut-and-dried

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