

# REFLECTIONS OF THE

When the Trail of Tears wagons pulled into Waynesville November 9th of last year, little did the occupants know this would be their best stop on a long journey from Red Clay, Tennessee, to Tahlequah, Oklahoma. They had no reason to expect a reception other than the lukewarm hospitality they had experienced all along the route. They had been promised Missouri hospitality when the train crossed the Mississippi River, but that had not materialized up to this point.

"Missouri hospitality began in Pulaski County," a wagon train leader enthusiastically exclaimed after camping overnight in Laughlin Park near Roubidoux Spring in Waynesville. This is one of the known sites one of the Trail of Tears groups used as a camp some 150 years earlier.

Ernie Carlton, the Pulaski County Coordinator of the Trail of Tears project, says wagon train participants were thrilled over their warm reception in the county. He said he was told the location along Roubidoux Spring was the nicest campground at which wagon train members stayed during their long journey.

Carlton, whose great, great grandfather was among the Cherokees on the Trail of Tears, says Pulaski County hospitality was complimented repeatedly throughout the remainder of the commemorative trek. In recognition of this hospitality, Indian leaders at a final ceremony in Tahlequah presented Carlton with a scroll of the Lord's Prayer in the Cherokee language and with the Cherokee seal signed by the chief of the

Cherokee nation.

"It was reliving a part of history," Carlton says. "I'm happy to have been a part of it. It was touching that when it was all over, Pulaski County received recognition for its hospitality. I want to thank all who helped to make the wagon train's visit such a great success."



Trail of Tears Wagon



Missouri Wagon



The Wagon Train



Bowling Green Kentucky Wagon



# TRAIL OF TEARS by GARY KNEHANS

For 18-year-old Aaron Hair of Waynesville, being a Cherokee Indian is much more than just a mostly forgotten fact stored in a dusty chamber of the mind. Aaron displays his heritage with pride and involves himself in activities that celebrate his Indian ancestry.

When the Trail of Tears commemorative wagon train passed through Waynesville last November, the native American teen made a sign written in the Cherokee language to welcome the visitors. The sign received an immediate response from an Indian in the wagon train, Archie Mouse.

"He waved when he saw it," Aaron says. "I went down to the park when they got all settled and started talking to him. He's from Kenwood, which is about 30 miles from Tahlequah, where I'm from. It turned out that he's related to the Hair family."

Tahlequah, Oklahoma, was the final destination of the survivors of the Trail of Tears march in 1837. It is still considered the capital of the Cherokee nation and is the center of Cherokee culture. When he was younger, Aaron lived in Tahlequah with a grandmother, whose ancestors were on the Trail of Tears march. It was from her and another grandmother that the Waynesville

teenager learned quite a bit about his Indian heritage, including some mastery of the Cherokee language.

"That's all my grandma speaks at home," explains Aaron. "So, living with her, it was either to speak with her (in Cherokee) or not to speak to her. I can understand it real well, but it's hard for me to make sentences."

What is not hard for Aaron to do is performing native dances, which he started learning when in the sixth grade. Not only has he mastered the dances of his tribe, he also is quite proficient in performing some dances of other tribes.

"You see, most of the dances that are going on at powwows right now are Plains Indian dances, like the Sioux," says Hair. "The Cherokees have the stomp dance, the green corn dance, and others."

This multi-tribe influence can be seen in the Indian clothing Aaron wears to powwows and other native American events. His leggings and headpiece are derived from Plains Indian styling. He wears Kiowa-style moccasins.

In addition to participating in cultural events celebrating his ethnic background, the young Indian has spent some time researching records of the Trail of Tears. From a diary kept by a doctor travelling with

the tragic march, Aaron says he read about an Indian named Dreadful Waters, who was buried near the Roubidoux Spring in Waynesville.

"I thought it was kind of weird, because Dreadful Waters is my grandma's family's name," he notes. "I was talking to my grandma about it. She said the family had lost some relatives on the way and no one knew what had happened to them."

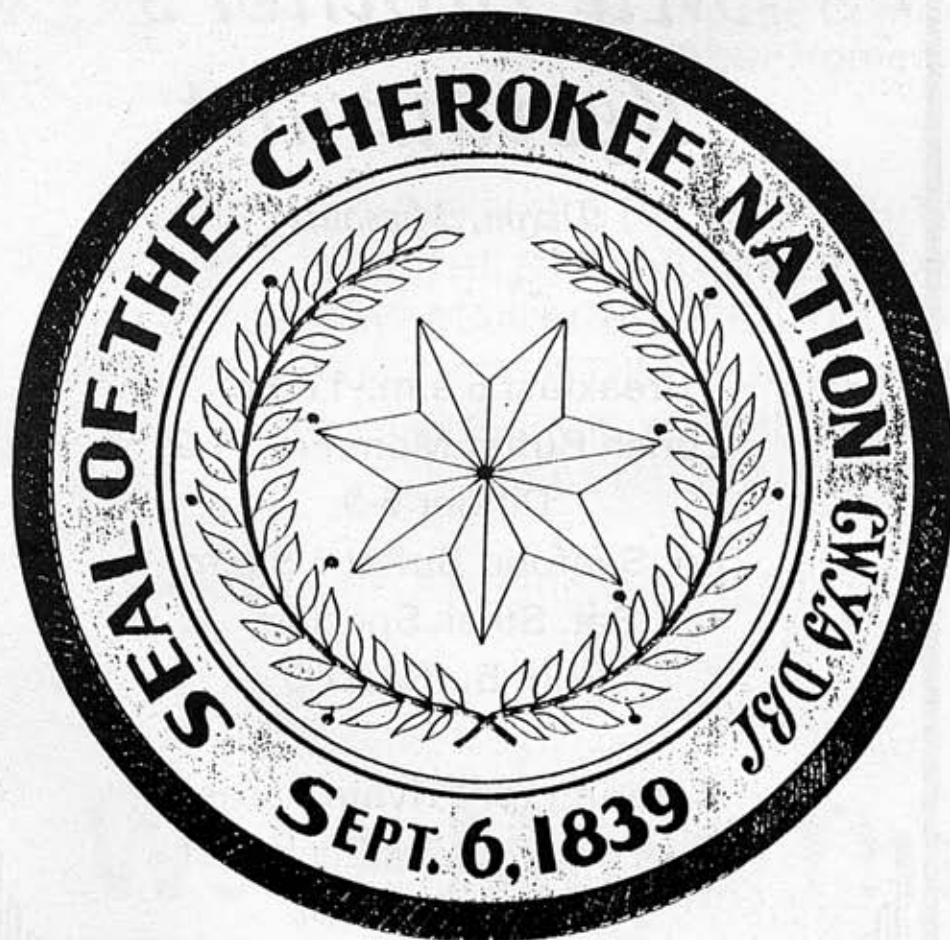
Hair admits that not all of his young Cherokee peers share this strong interest in heritage. "A lot of them assimilate, especially the ones that live in cities," he observes. "However, they still know that they're Indians."

"There are still a lot of kids I know in Oklahoma who go to powwows and dance," he says. "Some of them believe in the Indian religion. Some don't. It's like with any other culture, I guess. It's strong in some areas; and in some areas, it's disappearing."

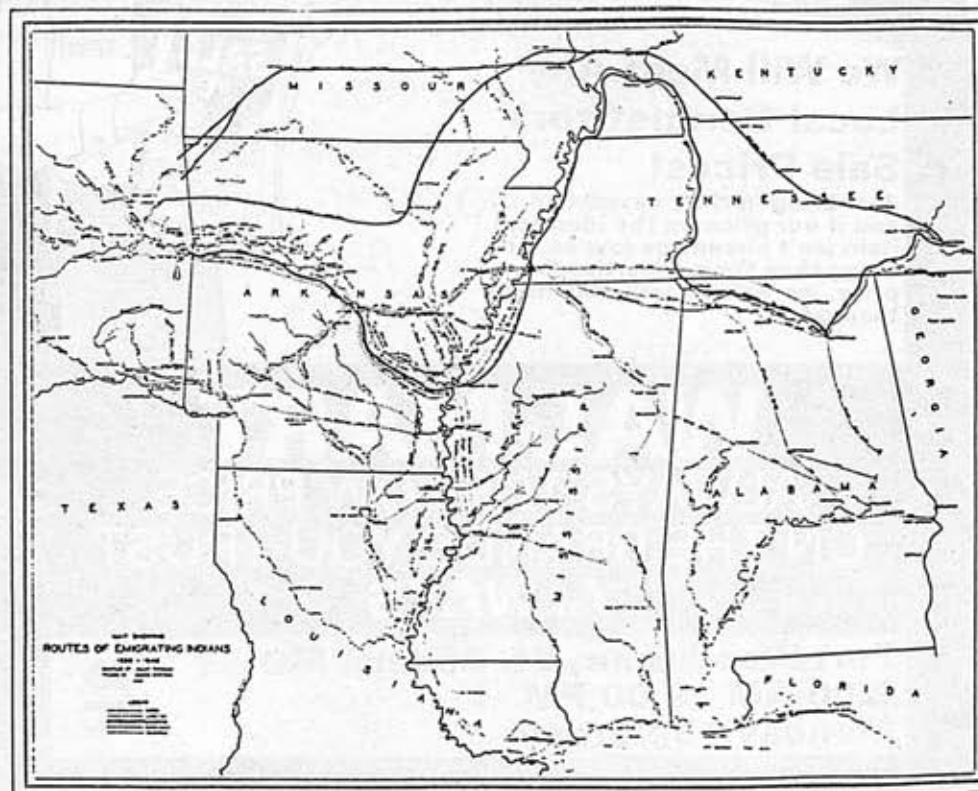
But, for this remarkable teen, pride of heritage burns strong in his heart, even to the point of wearing Indian clothing to his recent graduation from high school. Aaron plans to participate in several powwows and dances this summer and to attend college at Northeastern Oklahoma University, where the Cherokee influence is strong.



Aaron Hair in ceremonial Indian clothing.



CHEROKEE SEAL





# BLUE BOY

# TRAIL OF TEARS DIARY

The Trail of Tears commemorative wagon train visit in Pulaski County quickly captured the attention of 79-year-old Eva Berry of the rural Laquey area. After all, she had spent her early childhood living, playing, and attending school with many Cherokee Indian children in Oklahoma. Her father, though not an Indian himself, actively participated in many Indian events, even dancing at Cherokee powwows.

Still, it was another Cherokee connection that made Eva so interested in the wagon train. Her great uncle, J.T. Wall, was one of the federal marshals that brought one group of Cherokees through Pulaski County in the original Trail of Tears. J.T. eventually took a Cherokee bride. He also took in an Indian boy who lost his family during the tortuous trek. The boy's father was an Indian chief.

"This little boy was all that was left of the family," says the Laquey woman. "He just sat and grieved. And that's why they called him 'Blue Boy'."

"Blue Boy" became known as Ed Walls. The "s" was added because J.T.'s wife insisted that the boy wasn't a Wall. Ed later moved to St. James, Missouri, where there are some Walls currently listed in the phone directory. Mrs. Berry believes at least some of them are descendants of "Blue Boy."

Eva says she was born near Tulsa, Oklahoma, but her family moved to Delaware County, Oklahoma, when she was about two years old. She says her father, Frank Wall, spent some time as a boy with her great uncle and "Blue Boy." Eva's dad knew a lot of Indians and worked with them.

"Don't you remember the night that the Indian men all spent on our yard?" her sister once asked Eva. "Mom cooked for them to show that they considered her a suitable wife."

Mrs. Berry says her older brother, Ulysses, was extremely interested in Indian ways and became a blood brother to some Cherokee friends. He had plans to take a younger brother to Tahlequah for initiation

into the tribe, but suffered a heart attack and died before he could do this.

The Laquey woman credits her brother, Ulysses, with telling her much of what she knows about "Blue Boy" and the Wall family's life among the Cherokee Indians. The family moved to Pulaski County in 1929 when they purchased her mother's family farm near Cookville.

Eva says she didn't feel well the night the wagon train visited Waynesville last fall. However, she did get to make contact with Archie Mouse, an Indian on the train, when the procession moved through Laquey from Waynesville.

"I wanted to shake hands with him and tell him that my great uncle had brought Cherokees through here," Mrs. Berry says. "A white man had started to come toward me, but I told him I wanted to speak to the Indian. Oh, he (Archie) smiled real big and here he came. I got to talk with him."

It was a thrill she won't soon forget.

## Excerpt From Diary Kept By Dr. W. I. I. Morrow, Who Accompanied One Contingent Of Cherokee Indians On The Trail Of Tears March

March 1, 1839. The detachment traveled 12 miles to Wilsons — the whole country over which we passed a complete desert. Saw some fine gangs of deer. The detachment camped on Bever Creek. Came on with Major Cox to Mr. Bates' on Little Piney five miles from Wilson's — a poor broken country except on the river — narrow rich bottoms, a sickly mean country — Little Piney a branch of the Gasconade — a warm pleasant day — appearance of rain — commenced snowing

about midnight — a very sudden change in the weather — quite cold at daylight, 2nd March. Snowstorm from the north — Mrs. Thompson came to Camps, her husband Johnston Thompson died at Potosi. The Detachment moved one and one-half miles below Bates' on Little Piney — The coldest day we have traveled. Sunday 3rd March very cold — Detachment did not move — Lewis Ross returned. March 4th — Clear and cold — (Bates' in Pulaski Co. Waynesville the county seat.) Jas. Harrison two miles below Bates a mean man — will not let any person connected with the emigration stay with him 4th March, traveled to Harrison's on Big Piney, very cold — Distance

10 miles. 5th March, traveled 12 miles to Waynesville on Roberdeau Creek, a branch of the Gasconade — clear and pleasant day, stayed at Col. Swinks, a genteel man, and pretty wife and quite familiar. March 6th. The Detachment made a late start, the morning warm, wind from the south, look out for rain — traveled 14 miles to the Gasconade River at Stark's, through a barren and sterile country, the day continued pleasant — Sydney Roberts in this neighborhood. March 7th. Fine morning, made an early start, reached our encampment at Beans on the Osage Fork against 10 clk (distance 10 miles) still a barren country. Beans a mean house.

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