



12-15-1992

The Man from Ducktown

Gwen Jackson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

Recommended Citation

Jackson, Gwen (1992) "The Man from Ducktown," *Westview*: Vol. 12 : Iss. 2 , Article 10.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol12/iss2/10>

This Nonfiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

The Man from Ducktown

by Gwen Jackson

Our family always laughed when Dad told us his birthplace was Ducktown, Tennessee. Who would name a place Ducktown? This summer I discovered who named Ducktown when my husband W.L. and I journeyed to the southeast corner of Tennessee.

The narrow, winding road around the mountains was like an Indian path. We came first to Turtletown, Dogtown, and finally Ducktown.

The Ducktown Basin Museum, located in this neat little copper mining town, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. After watching a twenty-minute slide show, we knew that we had traveled an old Cherokee Indian trail through the Cherokee National Forest to get to Ducktown. The entire area is rich in Cherokee Indian history. Ducktown was originally named Hiwassee by the Indians. It was from this area that the Cherokee were forced westward to Oklahoma on the "Trail of Tears."

Dad told the story of how his mother

worried about cave-ins at the copper mine or black lung disease that could leave her with five small children to raise. Dad's father saved enough money to buy train tickets. In 1918 that seemed like a fortune, because there were five children and two grand-parents, besides the parents, Robert and Meg Nola Brown, who arrived in Olustee, Oklahoma. Like the Cherokee, they migrated west, but for health reasons.

Ducktown was like finding a hidden treasure. To see where Dad was born and played as a child and to walk where grandparents and great-grandparents once lived was a thrill. To see beautiful forests and streams where the Cherokee lived, fished, and hunted was an honor.

There is an old Indian saying, "Not to know your ancestors is like blowing in the wind."

Dad died this June 5, 1992, but he left his family with so many memories.

(Gwen Brown Jackson of Amber, Oklahoma, is an active free-lance writer and editor of the Grady County Genealogical Newsletter.)