

HISTORIC TREE MAY FALL FOR POWER LINE

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By Megan Trotter



A large oak tree stands on a farm on Buck Mountain Road. And though it has been there for more than 100 years, it may be gone by next year.

Pictured Charles Carter with the majestic oak tree on his farm that may be cut down to make way for a TVA power line.

The tree stands within 200 feet of the TVA's proposed route for new transmission lines and will probably have to be removed during construction. Most people might not think much about just one of the many trees that may be cut down, but Charles Carter knows this particular tree is a part of the area's history.

Before buying the farm on which the tree is located in 1957, Carter lived nearby. He recalls seeing postal service employee carrying the mail past the tree on horseback.

"They came through here every other day with the mail," Carter remembers.

He also recalls a pure-blooded Cherokee woman passing by, uprooted from her native home. When her wagon broke down nearby, she settled down with her husband in Brotherton where some of her ancestors still reside today.

But the memory that sticks out most in his mind happened when he was 21 years old.

A father and son lived on the farm that Carter would later purchase.

While the son was away fighting during World War II, the father became very ill and the son came home to take care of him.

In April of 1946, the boy died of a heart attack while going down to the spring for water. The father died the very next day, not knowing that his son had passed on before him.

The community held a joint funeral for the pair, which Carter attended with his father.

Eleven years later when Carter bought the farm and had to tear down the old house, he kept the wood to make his floors.

“I love old things,” he said. “You know, it’s history.”

Carter’s love of the area inspired him to write a poem dedicated to the old oak tree titled “If an Oak Tree Could Talk and Hear.”

“IF AN OAK TREE COULD TALK AND HEAR

By Charles Carter

*I stand tall and strong and free,
In circumference I measure 16’ 3”
I have limbs large and neat,
I grow acorns for the deer to eat.
I have roots that run deep and low,
They hold me steady when strong winds blow.
I have bark to protect me from the snow.
I have a heart that lets me grow.
I am 100 years old, so they say,
But I may have to be cut down for the lines of TVA.
I stand on the south side of the Old Walton Road,
Please help me bear my heavy load.
Long ago I saw the stage coach rumble by,
I have shaded the house where my owner lived and died.
He and his son died one day apart,
Oh, how it broke this big Oak’s heart.
He and his son are in a better place they say,
Where the “power” will not come from TVA.
Someone that is bigger than you and I.*

BROTHERTON CEMETERY

Putnam Co., TN

Clyde B. NORRIS, b. 8 December 1914 –d. **8 April 1946**

Willie M. NORRIS, b. 15 August 1904 – d. 23 March 1940

***Henry N. NORRIS**, b. 9 June 1875 – d. **9 April 1946**

*Pauline (MORGAN) NORRIS, b. 16 March 1863 – d. 5 June 1976

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