

# Farewell Speech of Chief Nettlecarrier

, Overton County, Tennessee, USA

[L]  
[SEP]"I am Nettlecarrier I am Chief I speak.[L]"Edward Irons, the time has  
come for my departure.I delayed my going to stand by you as you mourn  
the loss of your son. But the days grow short and we must finish our  
journey before the winter's cold deals harshly with the young ones and the  
liver eaters. Our scouts are already in the Arkansas Land and they prepare  
our winter home there. [L]"Oh, the saddest of leaving, I will miss the sweet  
water from the cool mountain stream, the view from the high hills and the  
moon bow over the falling river. I will miss the thrill of the hunt where the  
deer and the bear are abundant. Surely this is near the happy hunting  
ground where the spirit finds everyday the buffalo and the deer so easy to  
take.[L]"I will miss you, old friend, you have been my brother, like the man  
of the other tribe I know not about in the story from the talking book. We  
are like David and Jonathan, you have always spoken truth to me....Other  
white men sometimes speak to red man with forked tongue. [L]"You have  
bought some land from me. I cannot know how you can buy land.... Land  
will be here after you are gone. How can you own it?[L]"But we must go ,  
my nation is restless with the crowding in of white men. They come with  
the rising sun, each day there is another one.The forest fills with the scent  
of many men. The sound of the white man's ax continues all the day. I  
came up in this land like the rising sun. I was strong and warm but the  
day is fading and the shadows of my life grow long. I must follow the  
setting sun as it drops behind the hills in the west country and perhaps I  
will learn where it goes when it is old and retreats from the glowing  
sky.[L]"We have the copper kettles, the muskets, the iron knives and axes  
you gave us. They are good, they help us feed our children. We leave  
you the land.[L]"William Dale with your land claimer you go about always  
pointing a direction. You say on this side of line is Kentucky. That was the  
land where my father's fathers killed the ancient people in the dark bloody  
ground between the rivers and their spirits were angry and our people  
died and fled to other lands for many many moons. On the other side of  
line you say is Tennessee. I think Tennessee is far beyond the rising sun.  
You say this is the 17 hundred and 99th year, but I think it is much  
more.However you are young and will learn much more.You read well the  
talking book about the other tribe. Read it to many people it is good.  
Come sit at my feet, I give you my blessing.[L]"You have taken the  
daughter of my friend Edward Irons for your wife and I will give you a gift.

I know you like this river but they say it is taken. Some say it is my father Obed's, some say Obedial Ferrell claims it is his river. I will give you all the land this river drains. I also give you the sunshine, the rushing wind and the quiet breeze. The moonlight, the driving rain and the passing shower. I cannot give you the land without giving you these and the sound of the whipperwill. [L][SEP]"I am Nettlecarrier I am Chief I Speak[SEP]"When Joe Copeland took my daughter for a wife, I gave him all the land he could walk around in a day. He too has the white man's love for owning land. My children will be white are now chiefs of many lands called Tennessee. My father Obed before me was chief of many lands. Of my lands here my brother Doublehead's land where the warotia [Indian name for Cumberland River] flows and others. We are the children of the forest. The land is our mother, we loved it and took care of it. The white man knows many things but he does not know how to love the land like the red man loves it or how to make it help him. If the white man knew what the red man knows he could shoe his horses with silver. The red man keeps these secrets, he does not know the greed of the white man for such things nor does he want to learn. I take my people to a quiet land where there is room to hunt. They can find gold in the sunset, silver in the beams of the moonlight and diamonds in the dew of the morning.[L][SEP]"Nolichucky Jack, I believe you will love the land. I hear that your tribe has been oppressed and I have hopes you can see the pain for the red man as his life changes. If the white man does not take care of the land, it will fail him and he too will pass as the red man and the people before them. [L][SEP]"I am Nettlecarrier I have spoken"