

Mr. Trout has a vivid recollection of the Wickliff Brothers incident in Indian Territory days. He was a friend of these Indian boys and tells their story. John, Charley, and Tom Wickliff were the Indian bothers that became involved with a U. S. Marshall named Cap White, a deputy marshall by the name of Tom Gildersleeve, and another deputy, whose name he does not remember. Trouble started when officers suspected the Wickliff boys of having some whisky and the officers pistol whipped the old parents of the Wickliff boys in an attempt to get information. A gun fight ensued and Gildersleeve was killed. From then on the boys were hunted. It is believed that Charley finally went to Old Mexico. John was sent to prison for a while, and Tom was eventually cleared of charges and lived out his life in the Spavinaw Mills. The old Wickliff home site was at the south edge of the present Spavinaw town.

He recalls the Indian Nation Court House at Zena (in Delaware County) for the Coe-wee-scoe-wee District. Court trials, Indian land and business matters, punishment of some offenders of Cherokee Nation laws, and related matters were handled here. At one time Zena was a prosperous town, having several stores, a cotton gin, a mill, a large school, and three churches. Little remains to-day of this community except for an old cemetery and two little stores.

Henry got his education in the small country schools in the area, and was a student at the Cherokee Male Seminary from 1899 to 1904.

In pre-statehood days Mr. Trout herded cattle and worked in the roundups. It was open range country and sometimes the cattle would become very wild. He recalls hunting cattle over the country and driving them back to Spavinaw.

Before the Spavinaw Lake came, Mr. Trout recalls the existence of one of the largest caves in the area. He says it was located in Spavinaw Valley and had nearly eight miles of passageways. It is all under water now.

Mr. Trout tells that his father served in the Confederate Army under Gen. Stan Watie during the Civil war. He was in the Battle of Cabin Creek and the Battle of Pea Ridge. George Trout and another Cherokee by the name of Dave McGhee were personal aides of Gen. Watie. He tells that there used to be a large double log house on Cabin Creek which at one time was used as headquarters by Gen. Watie. On one occasion there was a gun battle at this house and several men were killed in the building. In later years when wet weather came the blood stains would show up. This was a historic place in early days, but a white man bought the land and tore the building down.

(NOTE: Mr. Trout's reference to Spanish traders at early Spavinaw were French traders instead.)