

He was of striking appearance and lived much to himself, but could always be counted on being present at meetings and court trials.

Zeke was of that pioneer breed whose attire included a rifle or pistol.

Ezekiel Proctor was born in Georgia on July 4, 1831 and came to the Cherokee Nation in the forced removal. The treatment of the Cherokees he had witnessed in his youth left some bitter feelings with him which he harbored all his life. It has been related that at one time he was a lawman, and in his own way he served as judge, jury and executioner of whitemen he caught. One time his temper led him on a vengeful mission, when he heard that he was blamed for some cattle being stolen from a Kesterson who operated a grist mill on Flint Creek. Arriving at the mill Kesterson and his wife Lucy (a cousin of Zeke) were out in front of the mill, and Zeke opened fire on Kesterson. He missed him but killed Lucy instead. Zeke left not realizing he had killed Lucy instead of Kesterson. Zeke was formally accused of the killing and the trial was postponed several times. The Kesterons and their relatives, the Becks, finally induced the court to take action. The Federal Court violated the treaty when they sent two marshalls to bring Zeke to Ft. Smith. Zeke had then agreed beforehand to stand trial at the Goingsnake District Court. It was learned that the U.S. Marshalls and the Kesterson faction were on their way to take Zeke from the Cherokee Court. Zeke and his friends were permitted to carry guns during the trial at Strawberry Springs. When the Marshalls and posse arrived at the Indian Court they were immediately met with blazing guns. When the smoke of the battle cleared eleven or twelve men lay dead on the Courthouse grounds, and several wounded. Zeke was slightly wounded. The U.S. Government refused to prosecute him because of the stipulations in the treaty between the Cherokees and the United States. Again it was the same old story, the white man just could