

In the early days of the 20th century this area supported many people. Every section of land had from two to five houses on it at one time. Another more pleasant and happier community would be hard to find back in the horse and buggy days. The many people who lived here at one time is best told when Eureka School was built. Just about a mile northwest of Pheasant Hill Schoolhouse the people of the community built another schoolhouse. Eureka School was built due to the increase in children and probably more because there were too many times that children going to Pheasant Hill School could not get across Cabin Creek.

As evidence of the growth and population in this rural area at one time an old-timer once said he could stand on a certain hill and see seven different school houses on a clear day. Someone else had told that he believed those school houses would have been West Point, Union, Miles, West Cabin, Shanahan, Wolfe, and Pheasant Hill. Naturally Eureka would not be in the list as it was sitting down in the creek bottom. In the march of time it seems such a cruel blow to see all these schools close and the peoples fade away. Most of the old timers, or those who lived two or so generations ago find nothing or very little of to-days existence to favorably compare with what they knew. To them it is not the same world.

Ralph got his education at Pheasant Hill school and at the Cherokee Male Seminary at Tablequah. After his schooling he returned to his home and has spent nearly all of his life there. From his boyhood he has loved this little place in the Creation, and has lived to see so many changes come to this country in his some 80 years. He recalls that in his early days there was very little big timber. The creek bottoms and some of the hillsides were covered mostly with brush of all kinds. There seemed to be plenty of water most of the time. Climate matched the seasons as it was sometimes hot and dry in the summer, and some of the winters were really dillies - cold, wind, and snow knee deep.

But Ralph liked everyday of it. He looked forward to the summers when it was fishing and swimming time in Big Cabin Creek. He also looked forward to fall and winter as that was the season for trapping the fur bearing animals. Many-a-time he says he has traded skunk and 'possum hides for shotgun shells and 22 'katarges', at Woodley Store. Never to be seen again were the great flocks of geese and ducks that came to this prairie country, and Ralph says he never expected to live to see the day when they were no longer there. But it came to pass. Prairie chicken and quail were so plentiful that they were hunted for the market and from the railway depot at Vinita they would be shipped out by the bag fulls to St. Louis, Kansas City, and other markets. Ralph remembers when the green-head flies would get so bad in the summer horses and cows would nearly go crazy. He has seen those flies chase deer into the brush thickets in the creek bottoms.

It was a rare treat for boys in that olden time to head for Woodley's Store when they had accumulated a nickel or a few pennies. The candy of the day was licorice stick. He tells that Woodley store was a building made of rough sawed lumber with clapboard shingles on the roof, and was located about a mile north and a little west of Pheasant Hill School, and not over a quarter from the creek. The store carried only the bare essentials for the trade, which was sufficient for the pioneer