

Mr. Walker assisted in the removal of the old West Cemetery to what is now known as the Spavinaw Cemetery. Mr. Walker served as Inspector in that removal. Unusual in the mechanics of lake and dam construction in the white man's world, the builders of Spavinaw Dam included the removal of the old cemetery in their plans, but for some reason they failed to obtain or secure permission to move four of the graves of the old Thompson family. These four graves still remain in one of the park-like picnic areas at the edge of the lake, and are maintained by the lake park department.

Mr. Walker remembers when the old town of Spavinaw was on the bank of the clear waters of the creek, and the bluff rose majestically on the west side. He remembers when there was only a grist mill, one store, and a post office at the old town site. A part Indian by name of Abe Baumgarner operated the store at that time, and his wife, who was a full blood Cherokee, was the postmistress. He recalls the next postmaster was a man known as Colonel Dye. While Spavinaw was in its original location, Mr. Walker had a little store there, and when the town was moved he also moved his store and operated it for many years until he retired.

At one time there was another village some sixteen miles up the creek from Spavinaw known as Eucha, which Mr. Walker says was just a small place somewhat like his town. He had been there many times, before it too was removed by whiteman's development and progress. Eucha village was re-established about four miles east up on the mountain, but it in no way brought any of its beauty and tranquility. New Eucha, as it is generally called now, sits a couple of miles south of Highway 20 on the very dry and unattractive plateau. Probably the most important feature of things preserved by the Cherokees in the continued pushing and taking by whiteman is the Round Springs Indian Church. This old church building was moved intact up to New Eucha, now well preserved and cared for, stands as a monument to a great and progressive people and race.

Those native to the Spavinaw Hill country speak with pride in having known the Wickliff family. The story of the Wickliffs is another in the many personal tragedies of the Indians. Mr. Walker tells that he had visited the Wickliff family home many times and personally knew the old couple and two of the sons, Tom and John. The other son, Charley, he says, was reserved and not easy to approach. The attitude of supremacy, overbearance, and arrogance of white lawmen (Gilstrap and White in particular) eventually drove them to become hunted men. Their story is long and has oft been repeated, but it ended in a more pleasant tone, for Tom and John were finally absolved of their alledged offences and set free. Charley was either killed, or disappeared into Mexico - accounts differ.

Mr. Walker relates a story of old Spavinaw: John Cunningham, a bachelor, worked for the Baumgarner at their store, and lived in a little cabin near the Baumgarner home. One night some Indians were 'living it up', fighting and enjoying themselves on the one main street of Old Spavinaw. Some of those Indians came up to the Baumgarner home, wanting the store opened so they could buy some ammunition. Mr. Baumgarner was gone from home at the time, and Mrs. Baumgarner was afraid to go open the store by herself, so she got Cunningham to go with her. The Indians bought their necessities and left the storekeeper and her hired man to return to their home. Cunningham told Mr. Walker that there was fighting and shooting all night, and the next morning there were eleven dead Indians on the street. Terrible? No, for this activity is only an extenuation of custom and heritage of their forefathers. Woodward relates in "THE CHEROKEES", that war and the skills of fighting were foremost