

Way back to the southwest somewhere on the side of the mountain, Jeff tells that he remembers the To-lah (or Dollar as it was later called) place. A family lived there by that name long before his time. He recalls seeing the large cemetery there when he was a small boy, and tells that some of the markers were then 75 years old. (That would place some of the older burials in the 1830s). There is no way to reach this place except by foot, and it is about two miles from the nearest road.

When Jeff was growing up the family lived up on the flatland southeast of what is now Echota Church. His old family home still stands, as well as others that were built before the Civil War. Some of those early families that originally settled in that area were the Squirrel, Adair, Batt, White, Coon, Smith, and Mankiller. He remembers that some sixty years ago he used to visit some of those old abandoned homes and hunt for coins. Now and then he would find a piece of money.

As we enter Caney Creek valley, Jeff tells that on the the creek was the dividing line between the Flint District and the Goingsnake District of Indian Territory days. On the Flint District side in that immediate area was the stronghold of the Nighthawks, an organization of Cherokees bitterly opposed to whitemen coming into or having anything to do with the Cherokee Nation, especially in the matter of marrying Indian women and getting their hands on Indian lands. Lacie and Jack Wolfe, Bill, Watt, and Jack Christie, John Greese, Charley Young, were among the members of this faction of the elder Cherokees. Scott Wolfe and Arch Wolfe were also members,

Indian differences among themselves on political and tribal matters sometimes had tragic results. Jeff pointed out the trail where where Lincoln and Jim Wolf shot and killed old man Dick Wolfe. The families were not related. Talk became an all-night meeting over a jug of whiskey in the discussion and argument of Indian matters. In the old days disputes were sometimes settled by killing one another. There is strong suspicion that other killings of later years were related to this first incident. Probably not so when Deputy Dan Smith (a full blood Cherokee) killed Lincoln Wolf. That shooting took place at an Indian picnic and meeting, when Lincoln arrived drunk and was going to break up the meeting. Lincoln should have left but he made the mistake of going for his gun and Smith beat him to the draw. Other places in the old Cherokee Nation had their troubles also. George Hummingbird had related to Jeff about a gun fight at Goingsnake Courthouse, on one occasion when they were going to try the case against Zeke Proctor. George's uncle, Dan Hummingbird was one of the U. S. Marshalls. A shooting broke out and four or five men were killed there in the courthouse yard. Friend and foe alike were not safe, for even the judge was shot at that time, and a woman was also killed accidentally. Jeff says while the old Cherokee Law was strict, it was the best this country has ever had. The courts and officials went by the book of laws in them days. Horse thieves? Jeff says he can show where they hung them over by Echota. As times changed the lawmen now has a very hard time doing his job. Since statehood things have become worse. He mentions that when Sheriff Jim Sanders was trying to stop a car of suspected robbers, one of them got shot. The mechanics of the new laws turned against Sanders, and he almost got hung for murder.