

of Cherokees were selected to go investigate and explore the area just west of the Illinois River, near the Walkingstick Springs. Tribal leaders had heard of the area, and had instructed the investigating party to select a site suitable for a capitol. Members of the party were to meet at a large springs about a mile west of the river at a certain time. When the day arrived, only two of the party showed up. After waiting another day no one else arrived, so the two men present finally said "ta-le-qua", or two (men) are enough. The statement also sounded like it would be fitting to so name the place. And so it became, Tablequah, capitol of the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory. Work was started immediately on the construction of the building. 127 years later, the Capitol of the Cherokee Nation stands as a proud monument to an even prouder people. For 65 years this historic building witnessed the activities of the Cherokee people, with their own constitution and laws, their courts and justice, and the progress of a race of people whose accomplishments, even measured in so few years, stand unequaled in the history of mankind. It would stagger the imagination to know what the future might have been for the Cherokee Nation, had not statehood and the invasion of whiteman come. To-day the Cherokee Nation exists in name only. No record is immediately available, but it is estimated by many that only some five percent of the Cherokee Nation, as it is sometimes called, is owned by Indians. Possibly before another generation comes, the Indian and what little he now has will pass on to become another forgotten era in the history of the United States of America. To add insult to injury, a pitiful few Cherokees work for the whiteman in any of the offices of what is now the Cherokee County Courthouse. The act enacted episode in the history of the North American continent, where might was unquestionably right, does not omit the acquisition of the Cherokee Nation Capitol by the whiteman who use it today without recompense.

Rev. Johnson Spade, a full blood Cherokee minister who preached in the Rabbit Trap country was perhaps one of the fortunate ones to have lived in an earlier day. This old Indian preacher would turn over in his grave if he saw the Cherokee Nation to-day. Eighty and more years ago this servant of God preached to saint and sinner alike. His efforts, among others, must have left their mark as one meets the many Indian preachers and sees the many Indian churches throughout northeast Oklahoma to-day. In Rev. Spade's memory is the Spade Mountain Mission Church and Cemetery in Rabbit Trap Community.

Wiley tells that in the days of his grandfather the Cherokees had built a lookout tower on Spade Mountain for the sole purpose of watching for white men. Whitemen in those days did not enjoy the best of popularity and love of the Indians. In some areas this attitude is hardly unchanged to-day. The lookout tower is gone now, but some feelings remain.

Mr. Wolf has known many people of the old days. One day he and some other Indians were on a hunting trip and camped for the night near Biting Springs. During the night someone came by and told them that the U. S. Marshals were in the area hunting for Ned Christie. The next day there was much shooting around a hill just to the north of their camp. The shooting moved down in their direction. Ned Christie was running from the whitemen law, but he only made it to a little persimmon grove near the springs. A bullet struck him just back of the left ear cutting a deep wound, killing him instantly. Poor Ned fell face down, his body lodging between two small persimmon trees. Wiley saw this happen to one of his fellowmen, who had been driven to a way of life Ned Christie did not want, but was forced to follow.