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White deer, of which an occasional specimen was sometimes seen, were objects of superstitious belief to considerable extent. By some, such deer were regarded as a portent of misfortune, and they were seldom molested in the olden times. In later periods when firearms came into use and some of the people saw no particular reason why the white deer should not be slain, the belief widely prevailed that the animals could not be brought down with an ordinary leaden bullet, a bullet composed of silver was declared to be the proper missile to be used. Consequently, some of the most expert marksmen among the hunters carried at least one silver bullet in their pouch.

In the old nation east of the Mississippi River deer were numerous during a very long period but after the arrival of colonists the animals grew less in number each year and long before the removal to Indian Territory in 1838-39, deer were scarce in the greater portion of the original Cherokee country. But in Indian Territory the deer were plentiful, especially in the rugged region known even yet as the Cherokee Hills. Among the herds which ranged among the valleys were a few white deer

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(albinos) concerning which much talk resulted. The animals were beautiful and were conspicuous among the usual tawny-hued members of the species. The last white deer reported having been seen in the hill country south of Tahlequah was often mentioned some few years before Indian Territory became a part of the state of Oklahoma. The animal was reported on a number of occasions as having been seen in what are now usually referred to as the Cookson Hills. At the time there were persons who spoke of using silver bullets in case they saw and fired upon the white deer, but no one has seen such a deer since the close of the Indian Territory days.