

As it was in early days of settlement, the country around Afton is still one of the finest for 'cultivation farming,' and probably as much grain is grown here than any other place in northeast Oklahoma. Back in his boyhood Mr. Reed tells that he has worked at all kinds of farm work and even driven a four-mule team for \$3.00 a day wages.

He mentions that Success School and Prairie Chapel School were two other places that came into existence when he was still going to school at Duncan Chapel. Prairie fires used to be the dread of the people in early days, and he says many was the time that all the boys big enough would be taken out of school to fight fires. Sometimes they would go all night long and he says that is the hardest work he has ever done. He recalls one fire that raged down around Prairie Chapel that caused the death of a couple of small children.

He tells that in the summer lots of hay was cut and baled and shipped from Afton. Some places two and three ton of hay from an acre was not uncommon. This kind of hay country disappeared long ago. Much of what was hay prairie is now nearly barren land, as cattle have been pastured so heavily that little grass remains.

He recalls when there were practically no trees out on the prairie, as compared to the scene now. Rabbit, quail, and prairie chicken were plentiful out on the grasslands, but their numbers have been reduced to just occasionally sight of them. Something that has come in the last few years is that foxes, 'possums, and skunks are found on the prairies where they were seldom seen when he was a boy. Jackrabbits have almost disappeared, when at one time they could be seen most anywhere. Unknown to most observers, is the revelation that there were two different kinds of jackrabbits - a bluetail and a whitetail.

He talks about Afton town, and recalls his father telling him that he came thru here in about 1890 when there was only one little store and a livery barn. He figures that Afton probably came into being in the late 1880s.

When he was a young fellow going to school, he recalls that some of the Ballard boys who lived close by were downright mean, and Arch Ballard was the meanest of the bunch. Most of them grew up to be good citizens, altho Arch had to shoot one of his boys. In the history of the Cherokees the Ballards have contributed much to the betterment of a nation.

Another of the pioneer Indian families that have helped greatly in the progress of this little area were the Countrymans. Others that have done their share to make a better place were the Flemings, Jennings, Fields, Welchs, Bunch, Hilderbrands, Dillingers, and Brewers.