

He saw the town of Skiatook grow to its present size and population. But he can remember when there only twenty families in the whole country for miles any direction. Original Skiatook was located two miles north of the present town on the bank of Bird Creek. It started as a trading post and was operated by Chief William C. Rogers. Near the post was a blacksmith shop run by an Indian known only as Ski-tu-ki, from whence came the name Skiatook. Skituki was a strange and distant Indian, and sometimes he would close his shop and disappear for weeks at a time. No one knew where he would go or what he did. When the railroad came thru in the late 1880s the town moved down by the tracks as all foresaw the growth and promise. It is said that when Chief Rogers moved his trading post and merchandise to the new location he continued trading and selling right off his wagons all the time while moving.

The Bradshaws had a farm just north of Skiatook and raised mules, hogs and small grain. He remembers when they only got three cents a pound for hogs. Of course the hogs ran out on open range and in the fall of the year would get fat on pecans and acorns. This part of Bird Creek Valley is now a rich pecan producing area. But in early days, he says, when they wanted a few pecans they would just go out and cut a tree down and gather what nuts they wanted. His father raised lots of mules and tended them much like a herd of cattle. They were driven or shipped to market at Coffeyville and other places. The pecan industry has been developed to a highly specialized business to-day and the grove owners zealously guard and care for this trees.

He remembers the first telephone line to be put in the community. At first the barbed wire along the fences were used as conductors. This was not the best system but it sufficed until improvements were made. He saw electricity, treated water, and natural gas come into use. Now retired from the Post Office Department at Skiatook, Mr. Bradshaw has seen the town grow up. In his retirement years he keeps busy hunting, fishing and walking thru the hills and woods.

On the eastern slope of a hill five miles north of Skiatook is the site of the old Hillside Indian Mission which served the educational needs of many Indian children from 1882 until it closed just after statehood. It was here that Mr. Bradshaw went to school in 1904 and 1905. Prior to that time he attended a little country school called Sunny Slope which was just west of Skiatook. Much has been written about this early day mission of the Friends Society started by Rev. John Murdock, but there are not many living to-day who went to school there. Only one old photograph has been seen of the old mission, but perhaps others will show up someday if they do exist. From memory Scott has had an artist make a pen and ink drawing of the old mission as he knew it and which now hangs in his living room. The Mission was a three-story frame building facing east, and built of lumber hauled by wagon from Coffeyville in 1880. It took about two years to build it and it opened for school in 1882. At the southeast corner of the mission was a small building that housed the laundry, shop, and storage rooms. Today Hillside Community Church stands where the old mission was, and a part of the basement was used as the foundation of the present structure.

Just east of the old mission site a couple hundred feet is Hillside Cemetery, established at the beginning of the school. Because it was the only established cemetery for miles around it is a large place for one so removed from towns. It is well tended and kept and in use today. Near the center of the graveyard is the large marble tombstone marking the resting place of William C. Rogers last