

His grandfather built one of the first log houses in Gooseneck Bend. In those days very few homes had glass for windows, as they usually used a kind of oil paper. Grandfather Harnage elevated his standard in homes by getting some window glass from a boat that had been partly sunken and abandoned on the river.

As was the custom in the early days of the country, each family had its own little cemetery. In his community were the Harnage, Harris, Hammer, and Lowrey Cemeteries. The burial place used by the public was over toward Muskogee and known as the Frozen Rock Cemetery. All of these cemeteries border on Abandonment. Richard tells that the Lowrey, or Barker Cemetery as it was first called, was large in comparison as he recalls. He remembers that in it were buried Negro slaves, Mexicans, Indians and whites. The Lowrey cemetery fell into disuse some fifty years ago and cattle have ruined it. Five headstones can still be found scattered around there, or at least they were still there a year ago.

He recalls some experiences when he was a young fellow going to school at Tahlequah. As opportunities would permit he would go visit a girl at the Boudinot family. The family were musicians and every night they would entertain themselves with piano playing, string instruments, and singing. He recalls that many of the older homes in the early days had the kitchen in a separate little building a short distance from the main house. The Boudinot family also had this housing arrangement.

In his time Mr. Harnage has known personally, the Cherokee Chiefs, Buffington, Mayes, Bushyhead, Harris, and Milam. He remembers each of them as being fine men and good leaders of the Cherokees.

Church buildings as we know them did not come into existence until later years, as what religious service they had was usually held in school houses. The first church building he remembers in their community was one they called the Tabernacle, built on Brushy Mountain. In the summer there would be a three-weeks meeting and a large crowd always attended.

About where White School used to be, there was at one time a place known as A.H.T.A. Hall. Here men of the country used to gather regularly to conduct business of the Anti-Horse Thief Association.

Perhaps only three or four of the olden day families are still represented in the Gooseneck Bend country today. But at one time there were the families of Harnage, Harris, Vann, Smith, Williams, Lowrey, Adams, Oakley, Nichols, Head, Hill, Fite, Baldrige, Reese, Wilson, Davis, and Tennyson.

When he was a boy all able-bodied members of the families worked in the fields. He recalls not all was work and no play. During cotton picking time it was quite a trick for the boys to cut a hole in the cotton sack the girls were dragging and watch the cotton fall out.