

Mr. West came to the Talala country when quite young. He was born near Westville, and was raised in that area and in the Summers, Ark. area. During the Civil War days his grandfather, Ewing West, was killed by 'pin Indians'.

He remembers the days long ago when there was lots of fruit grown in northeast Oklahoma. He tells that he can remember when spraying fruit trees was something yet to come. Fine fruit was raised then and bugs and worms did not bother it - a far cry from the situation to-day. In fact treating plants and crops is a procedure of recent origin to this country coming with man and his progress. Apparently progress is not all the milk and honey some would exult it.

In early day Talala the town at one time did have a city government, complete with mayor and city council. He recalls that E. L. Merritt was Mayor for many years.

Of the many Indian families that used to live in the area long ago the Hannahs were one of the largest. Among the family they held nine land allotments. The Bible and the Adair family also were large land owners and farmers. The Sanders, Wards, Earlys, Vanns, Bushyheads, and Foremans were other families that lived in the area, that were of Indian ancestry.

As with most of the early day communities there was always someone to break the peace and quiet. One, Elmer Tate, and a gang of outlaws lived in the thinly settled river bottom country, but he does not recall them ever coming around Talala town. It was said they were connected with the Dalton gang, whose activities were known in many places. Even to-day some parts of the river bottom are a wilderness where one not wise to the outdoors could be lost for days.

Mr. West describes the damage from a cyclone that came near his place several years ago. Along the creek by his place the storm windrowed a quarter mile of large trees, and he watched a neighbor's barn 'explode', leaving nothing but the foundation.

As we drive around the Talala country Mr. West points out old homes, places where business houses stood, and other features of early days that he knew. On that corner was the bank, down there were stores, over across the street was the drug store. Down on the corner was a barber shop - one day the barber shot his own head off. We pass the Talala depot and elevator, and Mr. West points to them with a bit of pride. Down toward the river, he points out different places that he has known. Observant to nearly all things, he slows down to pass a dog going down the road, and remarks "There's a dog that wants to go with us."