

Before there was any trading post established at Welch, Mr. Barker says his father would go to Chetopa, Kansas, in a wagon to get their supplies, have corn and wheat ground, and to sell hogs and cattle.

In his part of the country as well as throughout the grass plains, prairie fires were feared. While he saw many prairie fires in his country they were fortunate in not having lost anything. He does recall one time they were hunting in the Osage country, and an Indian on horseback came by and warned them that a prairie fire was coming in their direction. They loaded up their wagon and got out of there, and the wind was changing and they did not know which way the fire would travel.

Four and five-foot snows in northeast Oklahoma are hard to believe by the present generation, but Mr. Barker says they did have them. He says the weather has changed so much in his time, and a six-inch snow to-day would be a big snow. Cold temperatures were sometimes extreme in the old days, as well as heavy rainfall and floodings. Yet it was not all adverse, as there was always plenty of moisture contained in the ground and resulted in good crops. Of course, he says the ground was new and not worn out as it is to-day.

Mr. Barker has seen many things in his time, and this one merits recording. One time many years ago he was riding horseback across the country on his way to Lenapah over in Nowata country to visit some Delawares. While riding along he saw an eagle try to catch a wild goose from a flock that was about to light on a pond. The Eagle grabbed a goose in the air and tried to whip him down with his wings, but the goose would not go down. The goose headed for another pond a half mile away and went down in the water and the eagle had to turn him loose.

While the Delawares were widely scattered across northeast Oklahoma, they visited one another often. Mr. Barker recalls Indians from his area going to the Alluwe country, to the Lenapah area, and to the district around northern Washington county to attend meetings and stomp dances. One time when he was attending a ceremonial dance near Dewey, he tells of a game the Indians played with turtle shells. A group of the men would sit around a fire. Turtle shells would be passed around the circle and on a command each would shake his shell. One of the shells contained some pebbles and the one whose shell rattled was out of the game. This continued until the last two men were left, as each man who has left the game took a silent shell.

He remembers when lots of Indian corn, colored squaw corn, and hickory cane corn was raised among the Indians. This product of Indian cultivation has now almost vanished, along with other culture and industry common to the Indian way of life.