

CHIEF LEFT HAND AND OTHER ARAPAHO CHIEFS

They are going to level more of this land all around here-- bigger--going to haul dirt and level it. But the way it is now you got to walk up there. It's just a small mound there. But they're going to spread (dirt).

(We're out here at Jesse Chisholm's grave. And this used to be Chief Left Hand's allotment.)

Yeah. It's still owned by his heirs. I heard them tell about the time they used to have camps down here in the timber in the wintertime. That's where I was elected chief--down here in 1903. He performed that election of me. Elected me as a chief. I was about sixteen years old.

(How did he do that?)

Well, they elect chiefs according poise, a young man's public spiritedness. I used to go around and help the old folks harness up their teams and get water for them or chop wood for them. And do a lot of errands--just voluntarily. And of course the other chiefs told about it. He knew it. See, our home was over there two and a half miles west of here. So in April of 1903 they had a camp there, and they came in. Him and Black Coyote, that the town of Watonga is named after, and White Antelope from over here at Greenfield, and White Buffalo from south of Geary. The tribal chiefs that went to Washington to sign that agreement, they all camped here and elected me. One of them stood in front of me and lectured me. Chief Left Hand was one of them, and Black Coyote, and White Antelope, and my father--all of them advised me of a chief's life and his duties at that time. And Little Raven was the one that elected Chief Left Hand back years