

Indian Institute  
University of Oklahoma

T-239  
JESS ROWLDGE, ARAPAHO  
INTERVIEWED BY: JULIA A. JORDAN  
TRANSCRIBED BY: JULIA A. JORDAN  
INTERVIEWED: 4-16-68

BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT:

Jess Rowldge is between 82 and 84 years old and is a well-known and respected leader among the Arapahoes. He is fairly well educated and articulate, and has traveled extensively on tribal business, having visited Washington, D.C. a number of times. He has been active in tribal politics for many years and has helped the Arapahoes in pressing their claims cases against the government. Nevertheless, Jess is well-versed in the traditional culture of his tribe and anxious for at least some parts of it to be preserved. He is one of the two surviving members of the Star-Hawk Society, one of the old age-grade warrior societies. And has often expressed hope that this organization would be revived in modern times. He is a peyotist, as well as a member of the Baptist Church, and feels that the peyote ceremony has given him some of his greatest personal fulfillment as well as inspiration. Jess is no stranger to the role of teacher-informant in communicating knowledge about Arapaho culture. He has known and worked with such people as A.L. Kroeber, James Mooney, Morris Smith, Sister Inez Hilger, and Fred Eggan. He was born in 1884.

GENERAL SUBJECT: POLITICAL ORGANIZATION INCLUDING MATERIALS ON PRESENT CONSTITUTION AND TRIBAL COUNCIL AND TRADITIONAL AND MODERN CHIEFS

PARTICULAR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

- TRIBAL COUNCIL: PAYMENT OF MEMBERS AND ELECTIONS: DRUNKS VOTING
- JESS'S INVOLVEMENT IN TRIBAL POLITICS
- OKLAHOMA WELFARE ACT AND WRITING OF CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO CONSTITUTION
- DECISION OF CHEYENNE-ARAPAHOS NOT TO ADOPT A CHARTER
- PERSONS WHO HELPED IN DRAFTING CONSTITUTION
- JESS'S DEFENSE OF CONSTITUTION
- ATTEMPTS TO DO AWAY WITH CONSTITUTION
- OLD PEOPLE WHOSE OPINIONS WENT INTO CONSTITUTION
- PRESENT DAY CHIEFS: MANNER OF SELECTION, ETC.
- SUSPENSION OF CHIEFS FOR NOT PERFORMING THEIR DUTIES: CASES OF YOUNG BEAR AND SAGE
- OLDER CHIEFS: LEFT HAND, LITTLE RAVEN, AND SOME OTHERS
- POWER OF LITTLE RAVEN AS POLITICAL AND CEREMONIAL LEADER
- TRADITIONAL CHIEFS: DUTIES
- POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: GENERAL COUNCIL AND CHIEFS
- DUTIES OF CHIEFS
- QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHIEFS AND PUBLIC CEREMONY FOR NEWLY ELECTED CHIEF
- REFUSING TO BE CHIEF
- GIVING NEW NAME TO NEW CHIEF
- DISPOSITION OF NEW CHIEF'S OLD NAME
- JESS'S EXPERIENCE IN BEING SELECTED AS A CHIEF: GIVEAWAY IN HONOR OF NEW CHIEF

(This interview is continued on T-240.)