

October 3, 1968.

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Recording time: 30 minutes

Informant: Samuel Cummins, 68-year-old full blood Cherokee,  
Rocky Ford Community, northern Cherokee County, Okla.

Subject: Mr. Cummins, now the pastor of New Mission Indian Church,  
at Rocky Ford, was born and has spent most of his life  
in this area. He is the son of Joseph Cummins, an early  
day preacher at Rocky Ford.

This interview begins with Mr. Cummins reading from the  
New Mission Indian Church minute book which is all written  
in the Cherokee language. The first entry deals with the  
organization of the church and is dated Sept. 10, 1905.  
Recorded is the procedures of business and the names of  
some 24 Indians present. Mr. Cummins was unable to  
translate some of the names. His father was elected to  
be the first pastor of this new church. Prior to this  
time the Indians had a church building made of logs and  
located about a quarter mile up the creek from the present  
location. This old church building burned about 1903 or  
1904.

He recalls that he first attended school in a log building  
then located just back of his present home. He attended  
Sequoyah training school for three months, but got lonesome  
and run off and came home. He then attended the Indian  
School at Oaks and Little Kansas. Afterwards he spent three  
years at Concho Indian School.

At one time all of the land around Rocky Ford was owned by  
Indians. Now he says that the white man has got most of the  
land, and the Indians are living on small one- to 20-acre  
tracts.

Mr. Cummins works with his people not only attending their  
spiritual and religious needs, but helps with their Community  
Center work.

He is acquainted with the Wighthawk Clan which is quite active  
in the Chewey District. They worship according to the fire  
ritual. They are against whiteman invasion and buying Indian  
land. Some of them have refused to take any Government money,  
whether due, as they do not want to be obligated to the  
Government. They believe the Government is bent on getting  
what little land they have left.