

January 7, 1969

F 369

Index side #2, recording time 15 minutes.

Informant: Scott Bradshaw, 76-year-old half breed Osage,  
Skiatook, Oklahoma

Subject: Mr. Bradshaw was born in the Skiatook area and has spent all of his life here. He is one of twelve children of an Osage mother and a French father.

Before that group of Osages containing his ancestors were removed to Indian Territory they were located in the area around what is now Yates Center, Kansas. His maternal grandparents were in that removal. After coming to Indian Territory his grandfather was interpreter on behalf of the Osages for many years. Chief Black Hawk was with the Osages when they were forced to leave their homeland. He was a big man standing over six feet tall. As a rule the Osages were of large stature compared to Indians of other tribes. After settling in the Osage Nation, Chief Black Hawk traveled much of the Indian Territory on missions of good will and peace among the neighbor tribes. Some Osages were, however, in the Indian Territory as early as the 1820s. It is believed they came down into the Osage Hills because of the excellent hunting grounds and many stayed there rather than go back to their homeland in Kansas.

His mother was from the Mosier family. She spoke Osage, French, and English. Although exposed to the other languages while he was growing up, he never tried to learn any other than English, which he now regrets. His mother was looked to as one well versed in Indian medicines and knew how to care for the sick. He remembers many nights Osages would come after her to go to their home to deliver a baby. His grandmother was also a full blood Osage, and from the Perrier family, and she too was respected for her knowledge of Indian medicines and treatment of the sick and injured. He remembers many times seeing either his mother or grandmother take their deer skin medicine pouches and walk away to some Indian village or home and be gone four or five days. He tells of a time when an older brother had a sickness that swelled his body to the point where the skin broke open on his face, arms and legs. White doctors had come to look at the boy and told the parents they could do nothing for him. His grandmother at once sent one of the folks down to the creek to gather two sacks of flannel mullin. She boiled the herb in a big pot. She put the boy in a tub and when the juice from the herb was cool enough began to pour it over the boy, rubbing and bathing him all the while. Also she had the boy drink lots of the juice. In a few days the boy showed improvement, and continued to recover from his sickness. He fully recovered and lived a full life. He mentions seeing his old folks gather and prepare root of black locust and blackberry, leaves and fruit of the cocklebur, and the bark from hickory and slippery elm for medicines, but he never learned what they were used for. His grandmother could not read nor write, but she knew when any condition or phase of the moon would occur, the time, and when it would rise or set, and the many meanings of the moon signs.