

January 15, 1969

T-371

Index side A, recording time 45 minutes; interview time two hours.

Informant: George Barker, 88-year-old Delaware, of
Welch, Craig County, Oklahoma

Subject: George Barker, son of John Barker and Anna Wolf Barker, both Delawares, was born in January, 1881, four miles west of what is now the little town of Welch. Of nine boys and two girls George is now the only living member of his family. He does not know when his folks settled on this wide plains country, but does recall hearing his grandfather, Anson Wolf, tell of hunting in this country in his own young days.

The group of Delawares from which George descended lived at one time at an Indian village called Wanoca, in east central Kansas country. As the country settled there by whitemen, they were so oppressed some of them migrated into Indian Territory. He mentions that in early days a few Delawares lived in the area of Oswego, Kansas, but most have all left there now.

George and his people took their Indian land allotments west of Welch in what was later known as the Walker Community. Eli Walker was a Delaware, and the Indian cemetery there was named after him. It is here that many of the early day Delawares were buried.

He likes to recall his young days in the 1890s when he and other Delawares would go to the Osage Hills to hunt deer. Their trips would last two weeks. Going by wagon and horseback they would travel across country fording Big Creek and the Verdigris River west of what is now Centralia, going on southwest by Oologah then west. Their best hunting time was in the first two weeks of October, and before the snow storms came. He recalls one year they found many deer, and the several hunters killed 26 deer. This was enough meat to last well into the winter. The hunters usually hunted on horseback. He remembers his father carried a 45-60 Winchester, he used one of the new .30-30 Winchesters, and others had Model 1873 .45-70 single shot carbines, 40-60 Marlin, .38-55 high-wall Winchester single shot rifles, and other guns common to that day. Their horses were trained to stop when they saw or could smell deer and other game. The hunters would then dismount and snoot or stalk the game. Until statehood came and whiteman laws changed many ways of the Indian's life, he recalls those days as some of the best he has lived.

In the old days George says the Indians had and observed their own game laws. For example, November was the month in which deer were "rutting" or breeding, and the Indians of his knowledge did not hunt them at this time for two reasons, one to allow for the propagation and continuance of the deer herds, and second the meat of the deer during this time was strong and musky. Also when turkey, prairie chicken and quail were mating and nesting they were not to be bothered.