

March 10, 1969

T-382

Index side A, third part, recording time 20 min. Interview time 1 hour.

Informant: John Armstrong, 84-year-old Cherokee,
Pryor, Oklahoma

Subject: Mr. Armstrong has been interviewed on a prior occasion and has always been able to bring out some interesting fact of early day Cherokee Nation and Oklahoma.

About a mile north of Timpson Chapel was the home of the Woodalls, in the days before statehood. In earlier days this little farm and home had been settled by a Shawnee family by the name of Fox, who had come into the Indian Territory from a place near Kansas City. The Woodalls bought the place from the Fox's and lived there many years, finally selling out to Henry Fallin, a Cherokee, and Mr. Armstrong's uncle. While the Woodalls lived there an Indian burial ground was started about 150 steps straight south of the Woodall home. In those early days it was known as the Woodall Cemetery. Mr. Armstrong can not remember the names of members of the Woodall family, or others, who were buried there, but does remember seeing nine or ten graves there. An attempt to locate this old graveyard in recent years was disappointing. The land has been owned by whitemen for many years now. A portion of the old Woodall house still stands, but all around it has been plowed up and winter wheat grows over the burial ground. It is not known what became of the markers and headstones.

Mr. Armstrong is a student of the Bible. In attempts to trace the origin of the American Indian, he says that he firmly believes that during ancient Biblical times in the day of Elijah, the Indian did come to the American continent. To support his study, he begins with the period during which there was no rain for three years and six months. By including other activities and movements of the twelve tribes, he concludes an interesting theory, very possibly pointing to the beginnings of the Indian on this continent.

Long before there might have been domesticated grains in the early history of the Indian, Mr. Armstrong recalls his grandmother telling of people long before her time who gathered seeds to grind and make meal and flour for their bread. He does not know what wild plants might have furnished the seed, but mentions this as an example of a gift of knowledge common to the Indians.

Speaking again on the origin of the Indian Mr. Armstrong tells that in his studies he believes that there were a 111 different groups of people, who were to become Indians, that migrated to the American continent when all the water dried up on the earth. Also, he says this could account for the many different Indian languages. He takes issue with historians in declaring that "Columbus discovered America", when the fact is that the American Indians discovered this land, and were here when Columbus came trespassing.