

1-382
March 18, 1969

Index side B, third part, recording time 15 min. Interview time 1 hour.

Informant: Ezekiel Postoak, 62-year old Cherokee of
Kansas Community, Delaware County, Oklahoma.

Subject: His friends know him as Rev. Ike Postoak. This dedicated Indian has served as a religious leader of the Long Prairie Church for many years. Ike is not a native to the Little Kansas area. He was born near Ardmore and orphaned at a young age. He says he was raised at Bacone College, attending all grades from one thru twelve. It was at Bacone that he studied for the ministry. Mrs. Postoak is also a full blood Cherokee and is a native of the Oaks area.

Mrs. Postoak attended Chilocco Indian School nearly forty years ago. Together they have known many Indians from all parts of the country. As we visit they recall names of many Indian students from both Bacone and Chilocco. It is interesting to know where these people are now and what achievements they have made. Some of those mentioned are: James Sevenstar, now Rev. Sevenstar at Muldrow, Spade Buckhorn, Stilwell; Agnes Morris, now Mrs. William Glory, Tahlequah; Milton Perry, Turkeyfoot, working among the Senecas; and Ella Canoe, believed employed at Sequoyah Indian School.

Mrs. Postoak was Ella Oldfield when she attended Chilocco Indian School in the late 1920s. She recalls that the experiences she had there has made her more appreciative of her position to-day. She remembers "Going to Town" Day at Chilocco. Students who had sufficient funds were allowed to go to Arkansas City, Kansas once a month. Ella did not always get to go to town, because money did not come easy to most of the Indian children in that day. Some boys and girls arrived at that Indian School with nothing except what they wore, not even possessing a pasteboard suitcase. Thankful they were for the Government issue of clothing from the skin out, water gravy and hardtack, and a roof over their heads. This beginning built some substantial Indian citizens, and to name a few: Pipestem, Leader, Gourd, Hyder, Sunday, Crittenden, Spade, Quinton, McLain, Skeeter, Locust, Raven, and Felleef, and the list could go on and on.

No one seems to know just how or when the town of Kansas came about. One said it was named after the State, and another says it was named for the Kansas Tribe of Indians. It probably started about the middle of the 1890s, as the first postoffice there was established in May, 1896. To most people of northeast Oklahoma the town is referred to as Little Kansas.

The Kansas, Oaks, Leach area has a heavy Indian population. There are good schools for the children, and the community life of the Indians centers around their churches. At one time Indians had an active part in the Kansas public School, with being represented on the school board, employed in the garage and cafeteria, and as teachers. The situation has changed in recent years, and few Indians are employed at the school. It seems that some whiteman has invaded the town and taken over the power. Postoak says "you cant fight money" which is true, but even worse is when you cant join with it.