

T-476

June 17, 1969

Index side B, recording time 30 min.; interview time two hours.

Informant: Sam Gourd, 79-year-old full blood Cherokee,
Moody's Community, Cherokee County, Oklahoma

Subject: On Fourteen Mile Creek some three miles west of his home was the old home site and land of his father and grandfather. In those early days the family name was Rattling Gourd, but most of the descendants use the brief form of their surname now. It was on this old homesite of the family that Sam was born and raised, and he has spent all of his life in the Moody's area.

In the very early days of the Cherokee Nation there was an old Indian and his wife who settled at the big springs which for the headwaters of Fourteen Mile Creek. This old Indian was known only by his Indian name, Mu-di. The springs was known as Mu-di Springs, and as the community became settled the name continued. The English spelling of to-day of Moody's continues the basic origin.

In talking about the old places of his community, he mentions that the Gourds had two family cemeteries long ago. One of these has probably disappeared by now he thinks, but the other is still in evidence, although it has not been used for many years. In this latter burial place, many of his ancestors are at rest. He says it is way out in a man's pasture and accessible only by walking. He is not sure if the present whiteman owner would let anyone in to visit the old cemetery.

His uncle, Charlie Gourd, was prominent in Cherokee Nation affairs in Indian Territory days and he too was of the Moody's country. Charlie married a daughter of old man Jim Christie from the Ecnota country and was buried in the Ecnota Cemetery.

His father used to tell him about his people having been forced to leave their homes in North Carolina and in Georgia and brought west to the Indian Territory. He wonders why the story of all the suffering and tragic times are being told now, for profit. It would seem to be an old story. He also has some misgivings about the government payments of money due the Cherokees. He says that in one recent payment the Cherokees only got some \$200 a headright, equal to about a week's salary for lots of whitemen.

Long ago Sam tells that the Cherokees used to have a big gathering at the old Downing convention grounds just west of Moody's on Fourteen Mile Creek on the second Monday each August. This was a three-day meeting and the program included speeches, singing, preaching, games, and a big feast. Near this meeting ground was Bogsucker Springs, named for the Indian who lived nearby.