

T-518

Sept. 1, 1969

Index side A, recording time 45 minutes; interview time 1½ hours.

Informant: Sunday Bark, 74-year-old full blood Cherokee,
New Jordan Community, Delaware County, Oklahoma

Subject: Some history of communities of Kenwood, Standing Rock, New
Jordan, its peoples and events.

When a young boy Sunday Bark attended the little log school house known as Standing Rock School located on Saline Creek some three miles from his home. He tells that in those days all school children walked to school, some from distances of four and five miles. The schooling he got at Standing Rock was all that he received. At that time his family lived on the west bank of Grand River, and he remembers that Dave Downing provided a boat for the children to cross the river, and nearly always was there to see them safely across.

In early days the Indians gathered often for meetings and church services at one of the school houses, usually at Standing Rock or Brewer School. Sunday remembers that Mose Ridge was a devoted minister and preached throughout that part of the old Cherokee Nation. Rev. Ridge lived up on what was then known as Most Ridge Prairie, later a settlement there became Choeta. The settlement now is usually called Topsis, named for a dog when the first post office was established there. Rev. Ridge nearly always walked to his church services, and the Standing Rock church was some seventeen miles from his home. This old minister lived to be very old and died at his later home near old Eucna and was buried there. In recent years when the Upper Spavinaw, or Eucna Lake was formed the Cemetery at Old Eucna was moved up on the hill, and there Rev. Mose Ridge now rests.

When he was a young boy he remembers that the Cherokee leaders of his home community were Dave Muskrat, Jess Grass, Andrew Bark, and Jim Buckskin. Rev. Andrew Bark was his father. To make up for some of the things he missed in school, his father spent long hours teaching him and the other children of the family.

The Indians of the Saline Creek area have always been a very close knit people, supporting their schools and churches, community activities, and deeply concerned about one another. In the days of long ago the meeting places in this area were at Kenwood, Standing Rock, and New Jordan. With the coming of Markham Ferry Dam the Standing Rock church and community was destroyed. Being moved, having their lands taken, and forced to ways against their will are old stories to the Cherokees. The groups that was at Standing Rock reorganized and started anew, and now continue as the Little Rock Community and Church. Other old landmarks, homes, schools, churches, and cemeteries have disappeared in the wake of whiteman progress, and some see in the future the taking of some of these places they cherish today.