

T-346

December 10, 1969

Index side A, recording time 22 min.; interview time one hour.

Informant: William Human, 71-year-old Cherokee,
Chouteau, Mayes County, Okla.

Subject: Muskogee County places, events, and people.

Mr. Human was born and raised in Muskogee County and has spent nearly all of his life in that area. Within the last few years he has retired from public work and now lives at Chouteau. Opal Human, his wife, is also of Cherokee blood ~~and is of Cherokee blood~~ and is also a native of Muskogee County. She contributes to this interview.

He relates how his surname comes. In the early days of his ancestors in Georgia, the parents of some of his people were killed by whitemen, and two little boys were left at their home. The little boys left their home and were found by an Indian family. Their rescuers could learn very little about the boys, except that "white man kill mama and papa", and they could not find out their names. The Indian family talked among themselves and decided 'well, they are human', so we will give them the name Human.

The Frozen Rock community of Muskogee County is where this couple grew up and it is that part of the country they know best. Frozen Rock came by its name before the Civil War. Long ago there used to be a ferry on the Arkansas River. Just downstream of the ferry on the east side of the river was a high rocky bluff. During the cold months water would run down the bluff and freeze. Because of the ice covered rock bluff someone came up with the name Frozen Rock Ferry, and various places have been known by this name to-day. The ferry was in use even before the Civil War, and a Frozen Rock School near the river was in existence just after the War. In that area Mr. Human tells that there was a battle during the Civil War, and as a boy he and others used to visit a spot and pick up lead bullets and other relics of that day. Also, he tells that just up the river north of the ferry location there was a big log house that was used by one of the Army forces as a hospital. Much has changed over the years, and the only connection with Frozen Rock of yesteryear is a cemetery, and it is now nearly forgotten and abandoned, even though 200 or more graves are there. Best remembered by Mr. Human was Frozen Rock school. It was first located down near the river, then later moved up on the hill west. Later again it was moved a mile or so on west. School as finally discontinued there, and the building became Frozen Rock Chapel. The Chapel is gone now also.

Near where the Human's had their farm home there used to be an iron post with a marker designating the Cherokee-Creek Nation boundary line. About half of the present Muskogee County was in the Creek Nation. He recalls that the boundary line did not mean much to the Indians of long ago, as they lived where they wanted to, and members of oth tribes could be found on either side of the line. As the years went by the Creek Indians migrated on west to where the bulk of their tribe lived in Okmulgee and Ofuskee Counties.