

Apache Ben Chaletsin, Life History Matls.

Rose Chaletsin, Kiowa-Apache  
6-30-64

(Notes taken by John Mead)

I didn't know much about him before I married him. But I know him when I married him. I live with him about 20 some years, 1932-1956. I know him well between then. I know him before that just here and there. He's been in business long time. When I was a little girl, we got his picture here at the old agency, when he worked as Indian police. He's a big man, tall, 6'1".

His mother was Apache, but his father was Lipan and Mexican. I don't know what part of Old Mexico. Them Lipan lived in Old Mexico, and then came to New Mexico. They like them mountains, them people. Sometime he talks about way back. He don't hardly talk about his people. I tried to find out how his father married into the tribe. These people way back, they go back and forth. The Apaches were in the Black Hills, and then they drifted down to somewheres in Nebraska. The Apache go back and forth, the warpath, you see. That's where his folks come down over here. His father was just a young boy. Nebraska is where his folks married, his old man married an Apache woman. His (Ben's father) folks left him, and he got into this tribe. He said it was in Nebraska. They keep coming down this way. After the Treaty of Medicine Lodge they drifted into Oklahoma.

This old man, Apache Ben's father, he was left there with the tribe. Then he married this Apache woman, after the Medicine Lodge Treaty. That's what he (Ben) said. Then they come back to Kansas. He (Ben) was a little boy. He didn't know nothing till he come back to Oklahoma. He was a good sized man when he got to work with the office as Indian police. He was about 35, a good grown man. But he wasn't married yet. But his sister was older than him. I think he's got 4-5 of them and his brother, younger brother.

His father, they called him Klodie, this office. In the white man name was Apache Black. His Indian name was ~~1661gii~~. That is a Lipan Apache word. It means like you going to hide somebody somewhere in the woods, in the timber somewhere, in the grass, he always does that. He died--let me think--I was there when he died. 1904, if I am not mistaken. He was over 100 years old. They said he used to be a big fellow, but he just shrunk up. He is buried at the ~~Crete Creek~~ Mission cemetery, but not where Ben is buried.

His mother, she's called ~~6a'koo~~ for short, or ~~6a'koo'Inii~~ in the long way. It's like you're telling a story about somebody, that's the meaning of x that word. She was full blood Apache. I don't know who her father was.

The old man got some brothers this other way. Klodie, Apache Black, got some brothers live at Mescalero, and a sister. They're dead. But they got some grandkids that are living in Mescalero (those pronounce Mescalero as 'Mescalero'), and got no blood relations. But Ben's sister's grandkids are living. Ben ain't got no children.

Ben's mother died in 1908, before the old man. Just right after allotment. It's right in there some place. He (Ben) don't make interest in this case, but it's early after allotment. Oh, I don't know how old, but it's pretty old. I was too small. I saw the old man, but I didn't know the old lady. They was living at Cerast. They all live there where the town is now. When the old man's wife died, they brought him over here to his granddaughter. They take care of him. That's where he died.