

not, I think, because he felt any close affinity to me but because I represented the great white father and I was supposed to look after him. It was a type of paternalism that was to be exercised only when he really needed it. Ben, like many Indians had a propensity to either die young or just live and live and live. Seems like once they got started they can't stop. Also realize, I don't know how old Ben was when he died. Once an Indian gets past eighty he tends to get two years older every year. Every one attaches such importance to ~~surviving~~ living past one hundred that an Indian tends to get to be a hundred quicker than a white man. Big Ben was probably in his nineties when he died. He claimed to be one hundred when he died, but I don't think so.

(Do you know anything about how he happened to marry Rose Chalayah? Ben traded eighty acres of land for Rose. That was in fairly recent years, I guess 25 or thirty years. He took a fancy to her and offered her husband eighty acres for her. Her husband thought that was a pretty good deal. (Did Ben tell you this?) No. That story was common knowledge around here for a long time, but I asked Mary Lacer about it. She knows every Indian around here and all their history. She said that was the way she'd hear it, too. Rose was present when I made out Ben's will for him. Normally we exclude any relative or beneficiary named in a will from the room, but Ben in each instance insisted that she remain.

Indians tend to use their will as a means of revenge. A parent will get mad at a child and just say, "I'll fix you." Then he'll come up here and make a will. Most Indians, regardless of the number of wills they've already made, when they know they're going to die, they'll invariably make a new will. We do go out to the hospital or to their homes to make wills