

T-578

7 JOHN WILLIAMS, PONCA

INTERVIEWED BY: LEONARD MAKER

INTERVIEW DATE: JUNE 3, 1970

TRANSCRIBED BY: MONETTE COOMBES

TRANSCRIPTION CHECKED BY: MONETTE COOMBES

GENERAL SUBJECT: EARLY HISTORY MATERIALS; FAMILY HISTORY; EDUCATION;
EXPERIENCE IN SCHOOLS; CUSTOMS; HISTORY OF PONCAS

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

INTRODUCTION BY FIELD WORKER
BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION
MILITARY RULES AND DISCIPLINE AT CHILOCCO
JOHN'S FAMILY FAVORED EDUCATION
RATIONS WITHHELD IF CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOLS
HARSH TREATMENT BY SOLDIERS
COMMISSIONER JOHN COLLIER BELIEVED INDIANS PROGRESSIVE
PONCAS CAME TO OKLAHOMA FROM NEBRASKA
FIRST CONTACT WITH WHITE MAN IN 1612 - NAMING OF OHIO RIVER
MIGRATION OF FOUR TRIBES
TRIBAL GOVERNMENT - NUMBERS FOUR AND SEVEN IMPORTANT
CHIEFTANSHIP INHERITED - SEVEN CLANS OF THE PONCAS
PONCA STORY - THE FOUR GIFTS OF GOD - INDIANS ALL ONE FAMILY
STORIES AND TRADITIONS NOT PASSED ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS
MIGRATION TO THIS COUNTRY - STORIES TOLD BY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER
INDIAN BELIEFS
MEDICINE BAGS
PIPE DANCE RETAINED BY PONCAS
INDIAN BELIEFS IDENTICAL TO BIBLE
INDIAN STORY (FABLE) STORY OF TURTLE AND CROW
IMPORTANCE OF MEDICINE MAN - MUCH KNOWLEDGE KEPT SECRET
SPIRITUAL BELIEFS
DEATH NOT FEARED BY INDIANS
GOOD HUNTERS IMPORTANT PEOPLE
HOW PONCAS AND COMANCHES BECAME FRIENDS

BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT:

John Williams was born in 1915 on the Ponca Indian Reservation. He attended the local school (Ryan) until 10 years of age at which time he went to Chilocco Indian School where he graduated in 1936. John remembers many stories told to him by his father and grandfather and retains many of the old tribal customs and traditions. At the present time he is Chairman of the Ponca Tribe, known as the Ponca Business Committee. His father was James P. Williams, one of the Chiefs of the Ponca Tribe.