

T-589

June 8, 1970

Index side B, recording time 27 min.; interview time one hour.

Informant: Miss Grace Lane, 85-year-old Delaware,
Claremore, Rogers County, Oklahoma

Subject: Indians of the Upper Verdigris River Valley.

At the southern edge of the old Delaware Nation of western Nowata County and the northern edge of Rogers County, Miss Lane was born and grew up. At various times she has lived at Alluwe, Chelsea, and Claremore. In her autumn years she enjoys reliving the events of the past and recalling the many people she has known.

Of her early recollections were the times when the Delaware Indians would go to Alluwe, the unofficial capital of the Delaware Indian Nation, to receive government payments. She remembers seeing the patriarch of the Delawares, Chief Charles Journeycake, one of the most loved Indians of his time. Early day Alluwe was only a trading post run by the Campbells, and a few houses scattered about. After receiving their government payments, many of the Indians journeyed on to Nowata for hotel accommodations and to do their trading. She recalls what long journeys they were by horse and buggy and by team and wagon on dirt roads that wound thru the hill and river bottom wilderness and across the lonesome prairies.

Much of her early life was spent in the Oowala district of northern Rogers County where many Delawares and Cherokees lived, and it is of this area that she speaks of frequently. She attended school at Alluwe, Chelsea, Oowala, and graduated from the Cherokee Female Seminary with the class of 1903. Miss Lane has been a school teacher, welfare and Red Cross worker, and worked at several county and city jobs in her country.

The Delaware Indian of to-day are few in number and widely scattered. Yet there was a time when the Delaware were one of the largest and most powerful Indian tribes in North America. History records that early in the 1600s the Dutch explorers sailed up the Hudson River and found these Indians occupying all of the Delaware River Valley. Their hunting grounds embraced all of what is now the states of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Their long and bitter history started when the white men set foot on the eastern seaboard. From a great Nation, they are now reduced to a pitiful few. One of the greatest blows the Delawares suffered in losing their lands was at the hands of Pennsylvania officials in 1737 in the infamous "Walking Treaty", and in the years to follow similar treaties helped complete the whitemans' goals.

Throughout the Verdigris River Valley running thru Nowata and Rogers Counties, Miss Lane has known most of the Indian families in her time, both Delawares and Cherokees, as well as some Shawnees. Speaking at random as events of old and the names of people come to her, she tells that the Musgrove family of Rogers County was one of the early settlers and very prominent. The family originally settled up on Caney River in the northwestern corner of the County, and later some of them moved into the Claremore district. The Musgrove family tree is interesting: William A. Musgrove and Robert Rogers both came to Indian Territory with the removal of the Cherokees from the east in 1839. Both men settled on farms a few miles north of Westville in Adair County. Robert Rogers was killed about 1844, leaving a young widow with two children. W. A. Musgrove married Rogers' widow. One of the children was Clem Rogers, the father of Will Rogers (Oklahoma's favorite son.) Descendants of the half brothers,