

(THIS MATERIAL IS FROM VER BATUM NOTES TAKEN WHILE IN CONVERSATION WITH MR. BLANCHARD)

Maybe you should talk to him. That's the chief--Little Jim. Web Little Jim. His grandfather was Big Jim, but we making Little Jim our chief now. Big Him was the one that brought the Absentee Shawnee down in here where we are now. He told the government that he been pushed enough so if they would give him and his people the worst land in Oklahoma, then no white man would want it anymore. So here we are on sand hills, red dirt, and still they put in that Thunderbird Lake and take our land. I live on  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of land. I used to have 160 acres but its all under water now, and the government give me \$40 an acre. Real generous of them.  
(sarcastically said)

Them other bunches of Shawnee are well known. The White Turkey Band, the Cherokee Shawnee, and the Eastern Shawnee, but we are the Absentee Shawnee, and not well known. They call us that --Absentee Shawnee, because we always absent from meetings. All them other bunches have respresentivites that go to W<sup>h</sup>ashing-<sup>n</sup>ton, but us, we are government of a people. We talk it over among ourselves and then tell our chief so he can pass on it. He goes right staraight to Washington when we got something to say--don't go through all those representitives. They are going to cheat us if we do. We are like mules, I guess you'd say. We stick to them old ways and those other pull us by out legs but we hard bunch to move. Just let us alone is all we want. W<sup>e</sup> follow old ways as best we we can and that keeps us together. We may be Absent all the time but we got a government by our people. Everybody has to agree. Nobody gets mad about anything, because we have to stick together.

I like talking to you now, like conversation, but I can't tell you nothing about my peoples until I check with others. I might say something wrong, or get it down in the wrong way. I only have four years of school and I'm not to good with English. There's a lot of Shawnee like me who want the A<sup>b</sup>sentee Shawnee to be brought out, want to have lhistory published--maybe thag can give us a boast up. All those other groups just sell their ways away but we hald onto ours. We don't sell them and don't get nothing for them. We still have old ceremonies