

T-669

JOE WHEELER: WICHITA

INTERVIEWED BY: WILLIAM E. BITTLE

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DATE OF INTERVIEW: 7-9-68

GENERAL SUBJECT: WICHITA DIVISIONS AND HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

PARTICULAR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

PIPE DANCE

DOCTOR DANCE

OTHER DANCES

WICHITA DIVISIONS AND FORMER LOCATION

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AND WICHITA VIEW OF HISTORY

WICHITA TRIBAL ORGANIZATION TODAY AND MODERN DANCES

HOUSING PROBLEMS

BUSINESS COMMITTEE AND PERSONAL FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

HEIRSHIP PROBLEMS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

RELOCATION PROGRAM

BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT:

Joseph Wheeler was born in 1902. He and his wife, Ethel, live on Ethel's allotment some five miles west of Fort Cobb and one and one-half miles north of State Highway 9. Both are relatively traditional in their outlook, and both are active participants in Wichita affairs. Ethel's brother, Louis Sadoka, is currently chairman of the Wichita Tribal Council. The house in which they live was built in the early twenties and is a typical rural Indian home, in poor repair, but neatly furnished and well-kept. Although there are several out-buildings close to the house, none but the latrine are in use. Ethel maintains a small garden (about an acre) south of the house in which she grows corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans and Indian pumpkin. Joseph Wheeler has had acute diabetes for many years, and as a result has lost both legs by amputation and is confined to a wheelchair. He is quite deaf (again with the result of diabetes) and has some difficulty in seeing. Both are extremely affable and responsive, and both are interested in talking with interviewers. They are not at all secretive about Wichita culture and affairs, and deal freely with almost any subject which is raised.--W. E. Bittle.

NOTE: This interview took place in Joe Wheeler's home and Ethel, his wife, participates a little in the discussion.

PIPE DANCE

You know, those dances we was talking about, or maybe it was something. There's some dances, I didn't...you know...that's what so hard about it. Maybe it's the pipe dance. I never did see it, though.

(Have you ever heard about it?)