

T-680

JIM WARDEN, ARAPAHO

INTERVIEWED BY: JULIA A. JORDAN

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DATE OF INTERVIEW: 3-1-72

GENERAL SUBJECT: ARAPAHO SUN DANCE AND MODERN STARHAWK ORGANIZATION

PARTICULAR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

REMOVING OFFERINGS FROM THE SUN DANCE LODGE  
ARAPAHO SOCIETIES  
DANCERS AND THEIR CEREMONIAL GRANDFATHERS  
REASONS FOR VOWING TO DANCE  
BAD LUCK AND UNFULFILLED VOWS  
MODERN ARAPAHO STARHAWK SOCIETY AND ARAPAHO TERMS FOR  
"STARHAWK"  
ORGANIZING MODERN STARHAWK SOCIETY  
CHEYENNE BOWSTRING SOCIETY AND GOURD DANCE GROUP  
PART OF ELDERS IN ORGANIZING DANCE GROUP AND PROBLEMS OF  
ORGANIZING  
RIVALRY BETWEEN DANCE GROUPS

BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT:

James Warden was born July 2, 1908 at Carleton, Oklahoma in Blaine County, and has been a resident of the Canton area all of his life. His father was Cleaver Warden (Gros Ventre Man), a noted peyote man and singer. Cleaver Warden also worked with the first anthropologists, A. L. Kroeber and James Mooney, as a translator. James Warden's mother was Traveller, who was from the Canton district. Cleaver Warden was from the Geary district. James went to school at Cantonment Boarding School in 1918, 1919, and 1921. In 1921 he began to learn Indian singing, and today is the best-known Arapaho singer in Oklahoma. He is head singer at many pow-wows, and knows a great deal about the techniques of drumming and singing. He knows many traditional Arapaho songs and songs of other tribes, and composes songs, also. He speaks Arapaho fluently, and often visits the Wyoming Arapahoes and sings at the Sun Dance and pow-wows of the northern Arapahoes.

NOTE: This interview was begun on T-679.

REMOVING OFFERINGS ON SUN DANCE LODGE

(--started helping themselves to some of that material up there hanging from those rafter poles--)

They do. Yeah, that's been going on now for the last 20 years. After the Sun Dance was over with, maybe eleven, twelve or one o'clock at night boys just climb up there and git all of that. And they have sacred feathers up there hanging there. You probably seen them. They have pulled them off, too. It's awful.