

ARAPAHO CHIEFS AND HOW SELECTED

Let's see--I named Saul Birdshead and Henry Bates and Arthur Sutton, Bill Sutton (Willie Sutton), and Warren G. Sankey and Ralph Little Raven. Those are at Canton. And there's one we call Spotted Wolf--what's his name--Alvin? He lives at Wichita, Kansas. Alvin Washee. He's a tribal chief. And we got Willie Hail and Clarence Tallbull and Jesse Rowledge, myself, and Eugene Woolworth--he's dead now, and same for Glen Lumpmouth--he's dead. They've become vacancies and we got to fill them out pretty quick now. And down at Colony we got Max Watan, the old man, and Herman Haury--yeah, he used to be a rancher. He's retired, now. He was a big farmer and a big rancher. And John Blackman.

(How will you select replacements for those who have died?) That generally happens at Barefoot Park Powwow. I tell you how we do this--before we pick out a chief, we size them up. Observe them and have observation on them for about two years. See how he lives and how he carries on--and what he does for people, way he helps and all that. Then the chiefs get together and they bring these men out. Then when the time comes along to pick out so many chiefs--we have to ask them. They have to accept it, first. If they accept, well, in a big arena, where all the people--all the Arapahoes are gathered--they take these men around. They take them around in a circle. The tribe approves them. The whole tribe. If somebody walks out in front of them, they can't be in there. They make the complete circle around. And really, the tribe approves them. We just pick them out and show them to the people that this is a man we think will make a good chief. And they approve. The tribe approves. (Have you ever known of a case where a man was picked out and where someone did walk in front of them?)

No. The chiefs do a pretty thorough job on them. They had about two years to be sure that they're qualified to be on there. Yeah, but it could happen. If somebody don't think they'll make a chief, they just walk right in front of him. They go out.

(When were you selected?)