

T-209

Informant: John Armstrong, Cherokee  
Interviewed by: J. W. Tyner, March 14, 1968  
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BRIEF INTRODUCTION

(This is March 14, 1968. We are visiting with Mr. John Armstrong, an 80 year old Cherokee of Pryor, Oklahoma. Mr. Armstrong has spent all of his life in the Indian Nation. And today, relates many personal experiences of his early life with the Cherokees.)

INDIAN WOOD CRAFTSMANSHIP - KINDS OF WOOD USED FOR CERTAIN THINGS - TOOLS  
USED FOR VARIOUS ITEMS

He began this interview telling of Indian wood craftsmanship.

(--craftsman that worked in wood wasn't there? What were some of the things that they made? And how they used wood?)

Well, now you take the spinning wheel. Let's take the spinning wheel for instance. It has a bass about that wide at the bottom and comes off to about that much at the top end. That's six feet long. They take a broad axe and hew that out. And then they take that stand that the wheel fits on and they carve that out. Make the stand. Bore the holes for the shaft to go in there. Fasten it for the wheel to go on, you know. Then at the other end they whittle out a piece, make it fit. They just whittle that out of native wood, you know. Just right out of the woods. Go out and cut a tree down and work it up.

(What kind of wood did they use in making spinning wheels?)

Mostly oak.

(Oak?)

Uh-huh. Burr oak at that. It's hardest timber, I believe, of the oak timber there is whenever it gets seasoned. I know, because I've tried to work with some of it that was seasoned. Tried to drive nails when I tried to nail lattice up and that's Fred's house out there--the old house.