

T-257

INFORMANT: PETE BIRDCHIEF, CHEYENNE  
CLINTON, OKLAHOMA  
INTERVIEWED BY: JOE TRIMBLE  
INTERVIEW DATE: MAY 9, 1968  
TRANSCRIBED BY: PRUDA SHANK

SIDE A

#### BRIEF INTRODUCTION

(American Indian Institute... This is Joseph Trimble, interviewer. This is May 9, 1968. We have with us Pete Birdchief, who was born on August 27, 1900, in Canadian County, 'bout two miles north of El Reno. He's a Cheyenne Indian who was interviewed at his home in Clinton, Oklahoma.

#### GRANDFATHER BECOMES CHIEF

(Pete, could you tell us some of the stories we were talking about this morning, about your grandfather and how he, as, how he became chief of the Cheyenne. Do you remember much about this?)

Well, to qualify for chief, you have to have, how you say, personality, how brave you are in battle. You have to have all that, you have to pass all that, before. Then the bigger, older chief would come and get you. See, you couldn't just go around volunteering to be a chief. It was a pretty rough road. They were like what you call hand-picked men. But first they must qualify to be a chief. Starts way back there, before you come here, ancestors and all that kind of people, way back on down the line, that's what they want to be a chief.

(So you didn't really have to be a son of a chief to become a chief...)

No sir. If you qualify, you could be a chief.

(What was your grandfather's name?)

He was named Birdchief.

(Did he have a first name?)