

December 11, 1968

T-354

Index side B, third part, 12 minutes

Informant: John Armstrong, 84-year-old Cherokee,  
Pryor, Oklahoma

Subject: Mr. Armstrong has been interviewed on other visits and has contributed much to recording early history of Indian Territory and early Oklahoma.

He is visited to-day to enlist his assistance in verifying some information regarding the all-Indian burial grounds known as Bare Timpson Cemetery in Craig County.

He gives more information on Bare Timpson. This full-blood Cherokee was a Methodist minister among the Indians and traveled considerably away from his home preaching at Tahlequah, Dog Creek area, Honey Creek community, and other settlements of Indians. Mr. Armstrong remembers him best because of his very strong voice and as a good singer. John says he has heard him singing clearly a mile away.

Regarding the Osage Indian, known as Isa-tseh, who was buried in Bare Timpson Cemetery, he tells that this Indian was buried in a sitting position in the grave, as was the custom of the Osages in their early history.

He also reveals that the Shawnees did not believe in using coffins. This belief changed as the years went by, and they permitted burial in coffins provided there were no nails or metal used.

Southwestern Craig County was also home of many Shawnees who settled in the area in the early 1800s. Among those best remembered by Mr. Armstrong were Jake Longtail, John Franklin, Sol Ketchum, Amos Dick, Ben Carpenter, Joe White, Scott Secordine, and Ned Parker. The most prominent of these Shawnees was Jake Longtail. The Jake Longtail Cemetery was the principal burial place of the Shawnees in Indian Territory days in the area. Jake owned the west half of Sec. 3, T-25- R-19 in Craig County at one time, and was a very successful farmer. He also farmed land farther north in the Lemmon community, as well as land in the White Oak area. No one knows what religion Jake followed, but it was said by many that if all men lived like Jake Longtail, the world would see very little trouble. The large two-story house still stands where Mr. Longtail raised twelve children. The Longtail children have all left the area. The old house will soon succumb to the ravages of time, and in its last days, the glassless windows stare out at the changing times, remembering also the wonderful people and happy days of long ago.