

~~URCELL, JOE~~

~~INTERVIEW.~~

#7208

313

Cheyennes

An interview with Joe Purcell, age 38,  
Cheyenne Tribe, Anadarko, Okla.

Billie Byrd, Field Worker  
Indian-pioneer History  
8-16-37

I have heard talk among and from the older Indians that when the Cheyennes were moved from their older homes in Wyoming that they had as great and much trouble, hardships, sickness and death in their travels to what is now Oklahoma.

Some of the Indians were loyal to the government and wanted to do what was ordered of them. They were willing to move and settle in the new country but some of the others didn't want to leave their homes. Some of them, while on the way to the new country, escaped and returned to their old homes. It was often the case that these fleeing Indians would be overtaken and shot down. This seemed to cause a lot of trouble for the white men who had to make a return trip to the old country and bring the Indians back to the new country.

P. 2.

While the escaped Cheyennes were causing all the trouble, battles and deaths, those that were obedient to orders had willingly taken the new country as their homes where they had selected their camping sites and located their favorite hunting grounds. They had already become used to the new lands. This was among the more peace-loving Cheyennes.

It was while in their weakness and while seeking safety from the winter snow and cold that fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and children were massacred in the Washita valley in their country by General Custer and his troops who swooped down on them and wiped the camp out. This was caused by some of the disobedient Cheyennes and by their rebellious acts.

As a revenge, the Cheyennes were successful in Wyoming in surrounding Custer and his troops where he had gone to return the escaped Cheyennes.

Note

This manuscript has not been edited for phraseology since it appears a part of its value lies in the field worker's interpretation of the Indian manner of speech.

Ed.