

WHITE, ARTEN.

INTERVIEW

13739

101

WHITE, ARTEN

INTERVIEW

13739

Pete W. Cole,  
Investigator,  
April 28, 1938.

Interview with Arten White,  
Ludlow, Oklahoma.

Rock Creek Indian Church, Inhabitants of  
the Surrounding Country and their Ways and  
Means of Making a Living.

I live near Ludlow, Oklahoma, am a full blood Choctaw Indian, member and minister of the Gospel of my church and am fifty-nine years of age.

Rock Creek (Tulli Bok) Church, a Choctaw dialect is an organized Choctaw Indian Church of several members, though most of them have died. A few in number still live near the old church of their belief. This church is on a ten acre tract bought by members for their church ground surrounded with about five or six camps built of hewn log structure, chimney of rock and wood daubed with red clay and straw mixture as built in the olden days. It was first organized in the year 1896, a short distance south from the present location across Rock Creek, named after this creek, which the name fits well.

There was another church, "Tulli Holita" located a

WHITE, ARTEN

INTERVIEW

13739

-2-

few miles east, where all the people in the community attended until one day, a disagreement over religious element came up when some of the members withdrew from the congregation and organized the Tulli Bok Church under a Cumberland Presbyterian doctrine. Such men as Jesse Wallace, Payson Ludlow, Willis Ludlow, Elias Ward and Arnis Whale and their families played an important role in withdrawing their membership from this church to the new organization which they had planned, although all of these members have since died. Jesse Wallace was the only man out of this list who was an ordained minister, the rest were all members, elders and church campers. Tulli Holita Church was forever discontinued.

A sad incident happened to one of the elders, Arnis Whale, who was living near this place at that time. One day while at dinner with his family, a certain man named Califlin Push, a man of bad character, arrived at the house and was invited to dinner and after dinner he got up from the table, walked around to where this man was seated, pulled out his revolver, shot and killed Mr. Whale,

WHITE, ARTEN

INTERVIEW

13739

-3-

forced the dead man's widow to elope with him and hid around in the neighborhood and out in the mountains for several days until later found by laws at a certain house. They waylaid him the next morning and because he would not surrender he was killed by the laws.

After Mr. Whale was killed, the murderer pulled up a few boards of the floor, placed the corpse under the house and made his escape. The neighbors did not know of the incident until three or four days later, but when it was discovered that Mr. Whale had been brutally murdered, friends and neighbors at once began to search for the murderer until he was brought to justice.

It was Arnis Whale, elder of the Rock Creek Church, who made it possible for the upbuilding and growth of the members of their church as it is today. The widow of the man who was brutally killed is still living.

I still remember when the wild game of the country was plentiful and one did not have to sacrifice himself to kill any game in those days. It has been stated that

WHITE, ARTEN

INTERVIEW

13739

-4-

the Indians are too slow to shoot his game, but hardly ever has he failed to bring down his game. Now and then, he misses his shot but this happened only in a careless way or too hasty. A bear, when shot and wounded will not run but usually sit down and leans against some cliff or tree but is dangerous should anyone venture to come close. Deer, when wounded, usually take to deep water, are hard to find for they usually swim out to the middle of the stream and only their nostrils project out of the water for air and <sup>they</sup> remain there until all danger is past.