

COLLINS, JOSEPH

INTERVIEW

7085

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Caddo Indians

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Pete W. Cole,  
Interviewer.  
August 9, 1937.

An Interview With Joseph Collins  
Of Atoka, Oklahoma, an old Choctaw  
Indian. Age seventy years old.

#### THE OLD INDIAN DAYS.

The south and east part of what is now the state of Oklahoma, known as Indian Territory was inhabited by a class of Indians known as the wild Indians. It is not known that these Indians were wild or considered as savages as credited to them by some historians. Nevertheless the so-called wild tribes shifted from place to place through out Oklahoma and Indian Territory. Their occupation or their modes of living were different than other tribes. Take the Caddo Indians for instance, they inhabited a certain portion of land on the northern part of Bryan County or on the southeastern part of Indian Territory, where the present town of Caddo, Oklahoma, is located. It was named after these Indians that once lived and hunted here. The Caddo Hills and prairies to Blue River extending down to South Boggy, and all the land that lies between the Frisco and the M. K. & T. Railroads was where they were located.

The Comanche Tribe of Indians on their visit here were located from South Boggy northeast and west of boundary

lines of Atoka County extending into Pushmataha County in the early days. The Osages inhabited from near the line of Comanche north to the North Canadian River east and west. The Utes, though few in number, inhabited the northern part of the state, now the Cherokee country.

Their camps were along ~~the~~ both sides of the M. K. & T. track near prairies on the east and mountains and large trees on the west where they were located. In their hunting antelopes, buffalo, and other game they hunted west from the camp grounds. For deer, turkeys, and smaller game they hunted east from the camp grounds. It was always customary that they established their camps near some live streams of water and everlasting springs. Springs where they camped are still in existence and flowing plenty of water.

In gathering their flint or stone for flint arrowheads the different parts of mountains or country along streams which had limestone, flint, trinity sands, or Talihina knife blade shale in different shapes were used. The deposits for this purpose were plentiful. In the manufacture of arrowheads, they always used cold spring water.

It seems that each tribe was well organized in its primitive life in gathering food and flint for the manufacture

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of bows and arrows. Arrows used in defense and in killing their game. In manufacturing their bows and arrows they had different sizes of heads used for different purposes.

The Caddo Tribes were real farmers or rather more interested in farming in their early wild days. The Comanche Tribes were as a class, a roaming tribe of Indians and when in need of something to eat they traded with the Caddo Tribes. The Osages were or seemed to be more civilized than the Comanches but they were not a thrifty class of people, nor as industrious as the Comanches. When one tribe infringed on their hunting ground they usually had trouble. The United States Government in making treaties with the Five Civilized Tribes granted them the privilege of settling in this new country of what is now the State of Oklahoma. The Government also ordered the various other tribes of Indians to move out further west now that this land belonged to the Five Tribes. Yet the Caddo Tribes remained and their settlement was in the southeastern part of Indian Territory. Here they lived for several years until after the Choctaw Tribes were moved from the State of Mississippi to this country and settled in this country. The Caddo and Choctaws had several troubles over their

hunting grounds. The Choctaws in later years had banded together and armed themselves to rout out the small band of Caddo Indians that were located in what is now Choctaw and Bryan Counties.

The United States Government learned of the fact, and ordered soldiers into this part of the country. They moved the Caddo Tribes west out of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Territory, which probably prevented a bloody battle between the Choctaw and the Caddo Indians.

The Comanches, Chickasaws, and the Choctaws were always on good terms, and friendly, and they were not enemies. In later years, during the hard drouth in the western country when game was scarce they would organize hunting bands and send them in the eastern hills of Choctaw Nation. They would make an agreement with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians to hunt on certain grounds and streams located east and north of Atoka, Indian Territory.

In this agreement they designated certain boundary lines for them to hunt on, and certain periods of time for hunting. The time designated was usually in the fall of the year or rather in the months of October, November, and December, when day and night huntings usually took place

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within the ninety days. They would kill and prepare their meat and transport it back to their reservations using ponies as the only means of transportation in their hunting. For hunting they used bows and arrows.