

AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH PROJECT

University of New Mexico

Tape Number: # 470 Side 1

Tribe: Navajo

Informant: Billy Touchin (50 + years of age)

Informant's home address: Torreon Trading Post area, New Mexico

Band or Clan:

Date and location of interview: Informant's home, Torreon area, 2-26-70

Field Worker: M.B. Husband

Date of transcription: 7-20-70

Contents:

Misc. area economic notes; chapter meetings; area trading history; misc. personal history.

(In English and Navajo)

Evaluation of Interview:

Informant is quite reticent, but further interviews might prove both practical and productive.

Future Prospects:

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Tape #470

Billy Touchin

Navajo

Interviewer - Michael Husband

February 26, 1970

Side one

Translator - Ray Yazzie

Q. How long ago was Grand in there?

A. Oh, I don't know about that. I think it was in 1943.

Q. 43, huh? He was here quite a while then wasn't he, pretty long time?

A. One time he took us down to California, close to Barstow....

Q. Yeah, Barstow....

A. He sent us on a railroad, at that time, 43 I think....

Q. You were working on the railroad then?

A. Yes, that was the first time.

Q. How long did you work on the railroad? For quite a while?

A. No, it takes about, only two months and then they sent us back to down in Arizona. Dump us over there in Gallup.

Q. But you worked for the railroad then? Did people like Gib Grand here, is he a pretty good trader?

A. Yeah some of them do, they loan them some sheep, folks get along, so I just know about that.

Q. Do you have sheep?

A. No.

Q. Horses?

A. No horses...

Q. Did you used to have some?

A. Used to be.

Q. Long time ago huh?

A. Yeah, long time ago.

- Q. Did the government tell you to stop having sheep or tell you to get rid of your sheep? Or what did they do?
- A. No, some of them....oh about two years ago, there were a whole bunch of them around here, and then some of those wild dogs, they catch them and fox around.....
- Q. Just gradually lost them all huh? What about the missionaries, how long have they been around here? Do you remember?
- A. No.
- Q. Pretty long time?
- A. Let me think for awhile....oh for 8 or 9 years.
- Q. You mean the missionaries over at Torreon?
- A. No, the closest around here is up there....
- Q. At the Torreon.....? Up by the pipe line. Do you go up there sometimes to that mission?
- A. Yeah. But once in a while...
- Q. Just sometimes, huh?
- A. We like to go up there sometimes when...
- Q. When the doctor comes in huh? Will the missionaries come and give you a ride, or do you have a car?
- A. No.....he comes about 11, what time do you have?
- Q. Ten o'clock. He comes in about 11 huh? The doctor from Crownpoint huh?

Navajo language

- A. It's a new doctor. The other doctor is gone.
- Q. Oh he is?
- A. A government doctor. He's a good doctor this other one comes every week here?
- Q. Does he...?
- A. Every thursday. I don't know this doctors name.
- Q. People like him though?

- A. The other one way long hair, big black...
- Q. Is he the one that comes or is he gone now?
- A. He is just living there.
- Q. From Crownpoint huh? Do the people around here seem to get enough money, enough food stamps, do they need more, what do they need around here? Food stamps, checks,.... get enough?
- A. Well, we just have a few, sometimes we just get \$12, \$15....for one week we just get our food on that.
- Q. It's not enough huh?
- A. Yeah...
- Q. How many in your family?
- A. There is just five.
- Q. Five? You get your stamps and you get a check too? You get money from the government or from the tribe?
- A. No.
- Q. Just the food stamps?
- A. Just the food stamps.
- Q. Do you buy your food down at the Torreon posts?
- A. Sometimes...not very often...
- Q. But usually you go to Cuba to buy it huh? Better prices?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Go to Freeloves? Safeway?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. You have a Safeway in Cuba.
- A. I think one over there... Cosmo;.....
- Q. Cosmo?
- A. Big man...

- A. Safeway.
- Q. Well do a lot of people buy their food at the trading here?
- A. I think some of them get their checks from the welfare...
- Q. And they cash them there, huh?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Do you go to the chapter meetings here?
- A. When they have meetings.
- Q. Yeah, well you are right next to it aren't you? When do they meet, every two weeks or...?
- A. Oh I think, every..... I don't know.
- Q. Every week?
- A. No. We are going to have it this sunday, but I don't know....
- Q. What kind of things do they talk about at the chapter meetings?
- A. They talk about, just the school.....they talk about food stamps.....in a grocery up here, but I haven't heard yet.
- Q. Oh, you mean they want to build a new store? Grocery store or...?
- A. I don't know why they are going to fix it...I think they are going to try. Charlie said that they are going to put hogans there, I don't know how they are going make it...
- Q. You mean the chapter house here?
- A. No, not the chapter house, just close by there...
- Q. You mean they are going to put a food store there....
- A. No, not a regular food store but they are going to bring it from I don't know what place...
- Q. And it is going to have groceries....and you can buy them there, buy it cheaper, buy from the chapter? That will be pretty good huh?
- A. Yes...
- Q. Do they talk about jobs too? Jobs for the people?

- A. Well, maybe this Sunday, I don't know. I think they are slow over here, going slow that is why they don't have it.
- Q. What did they do, build the road...fix the road.
- A. No, the state builds the road. R.W. he's the boss.
- Q. From the state huh?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Oh, yeah, I saw him when I came by. Do you have to buy your wood and your water?
- A. Yeah, we just pay, see we don't have nothing to bring the water here. No team, no wagon....
- Q. No truck?
- A. No truck, our friends sometimes, they help us...sometimes we just don't....
- Q. But your friends help you out though? Friends help each other with the wood?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. How long have you lived here, a long time?
- A. Oh long time, we just living here. We used to live down below here but there was no one to help me so we just move up here.
- Q. Better place?
- A. Better place, to move around all over the place....
- Q. You have an allotment here or....?
- A. No, one of our grandmother have an allotment down below here. It is way down below here, there is no way to go down below. Water washes around there everyplace, beaches.
- Q. Bad place for a hogan huh?
- Navajo language
- A. 25 already pass right?
- Q. Yeah today is the 26th.
- A. March.....

Q. Is this the welfare?

A. No.

Q. BIA? What does BIA do when they come around?

A. Try to help... I don't know. I didn't talk with them.

Q. Help to build new houses? Do they ever talk to you about building a new house?

A. No.

Q. Or helping you with a new house.

A. Yesterday, it was just noon time that he was here and I think one of those old men were from social security I'm not sure...they were going to send around money to the Navajo I think.

Q. And they come up here to give them money...Did you ever live on the reservation?

A. Just around here.

Q. Just here, you didn't live on mission.... Do you go over to Crownpoint sometimes? Did you ever go to the hospital there?

A. Yeah, we took my neighbor there, he has been in the hospital for 15 years....

Q. Yeah? Is the hospital pretty good over there?

A. Yeah, I think that they were talking about a hospital in Crownpoint to be opened this year, but I am not sure, we have not been over to Crownpoint. For about two years... we have just been to Gallup and Albuquerque.

Q. Do you go to the hospitals in Albuquerque?

A. Yeah, I have been in the hospital quite a few times....

Q. Which hospital, the Indian Hospital there?

A. Yeah, county hospital....

Q. They treat you pretty good there, is it a pretty good hospital?

A. Yeah, sure is, that time I just sent my lady over.

Q. And you have been to Gallup too then?

A. Dress up my leg there.....and I have just been on a visit up there.

- Q. Got a hospital in Gallup too.
- A. I understand that they are building a new hospital there too?
- Q. Yes...and they are building a new jail in Gallup too.....they have to. A lot of trouble up there. I guess a lot of drinking.....
- A. Those guys were in jail for how long, Bob?
- Q. Well the jail is only big enough for 60 people.
- A. They just put on too many in there.
- Q. I understand that they are going to build a new jail....that is pretty good...
- A. How about down in Albuquerque?
- Q. They have already got a new one down there.....Can you get electricity in your home, hogan here? The electric line? Are you too far away?
- A. No.
- Q. A half mile maybe.....would it cost a lot to have that?
- A. I don't know, it cost money.....
- Q. Some people have it here, though?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Where are they getting the money, is the government helping them pay for that? Welfare?
- A. The welfare is.....
- Q. The State...
- A. Bob, what is that thing....welfare....?
- Q. I don't know.... You mean the state....?
- A. I mean social workers.
- Q. I haven't seen any is he suppose to come up here?
- A. No.
- Q. What do they do when they stop by?

- A. I never see anyone, I think that they have got some in Crownpoint.....
- Q. Did you ever hear that they had any trouble with the traders down here?
At the trading post, ever been any trouble down there?
- A. Here in the store?
- Q. Yeah.
- A. No.
- Q. People get along all right there, huh?
- A. I guess.
- Q. Good prices?

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- Q. They have a mission up at Tinian too.
- A. A Mormon mission.....
- Q. Oh yeah.
- A. They have a big church there.....I don't know, I never see them around here.
- Q. They don't come around here?
- A. I don't see them.... I don't know what happened.
- Q. The other missionaries from Torreon come up here don't they?
- A. They do sometimes.
- Q. Give you rides sometimes?

Navajo language

- Q. You went to school with him, huh? Where?
- A. Albuquerque.
- Q. Boarding school, Indian school....
- A. Yeah.
- Q. How old is he?
- A. Oh, I don't know.

Q. So something?

A. He used to run fast too.

Q. But you have known him a long time huh?

A. Yes, but this man....

END OF TAPE