And they would hoist the flag, they had a boy, if I remember his name was Jose Barre1
he was T'Ohono Odham, or Papago student and he was sort of a handicapped boy, and he
walked with sort of a cripple like so he was given that honor to raise the flag up every
day and to and at retreat time in the evening when they brought down the flag he also did
that and while the flag was being raised up the Indian school band would be playing the
star Spangled Banner and they would slowly play they would play until it reached the top
of the pole there and they the band would stop then after that a drum major which was an
Indian boy too and he would give commands out to the whole company so that were there
and so we all executed that command and it was a it must have been a beautiful, beautiful
sight because after we learned how to do this we, we learn we executed those commands
like the regular army group would do and then the next thing they did was, the drum
major would give off the commands and we would face right, right face and then he
would say give a command, forward march when he said march then the band start
playing, leading all the companies and we would keep in step with that with that band
and they taught us that you keep in step with the drum the bass drum that is booming
away so that way you keep in step all the way and the band would play up to the dining
hall entrance and there they would stop and they would face the east side facing the boys
that were coming in from the east and also the girls were they went through the same
thing too, under the same command, that everybody all the companies boys and girls
moved out under this command and they would be marching in from the south side and
then the band would continue to play all that time until the last company, the last boy
entered into the dining hall and then they would stop and come in and the first thing that
we would do we stand at a stillness a silence and then they had a bell there and they rang
the first bell and then everything was kept silent, extra silent then for maybe about twenty
thirty minutes and then after that they tapped the bell again and that's when we recite the
a certain song in the bible, and when we got through with that we stood there then they
dropped the third bell again the sound of the third bell meant to be seated and we sat
down in a military way. Sitting at attention with the corporal and sergeant at each end of
the table, watching all the boys that are that they do not get out of line, things like that, just exactly like they do in the army, we sit there at attention and then the fourth bell rang and that's when we when we ate then after that we I think they give us about half an hour to eat the whole student body and then again we marched out by company moved out by companies and tables and by this time the band did not play we marched back out under our own commands without the band. When we get to our area then we were dismissed then the next thing we have to do to get ready for school or sometime you go to work we were given the days we work half a day, go to school half a day then this was the way we working for our board and room and that's what we do, get to the get to the building that we get ourselves ready to go to school, then again the bugle is blown again, like the first second and then assembly called and we were right in line, ready to march to school. We did not walk over to school like they do now days, but we had to march step by step again without the band playing this time we would march up past the dining hall and we go south to the school house to where we enter in and we go to our assigned room and we had we learn a lot of subjects that they taught us and it was not a very good system of teaching us because they did not have any professional teachers at that time as I understood. And there I was, like I say, I was having a hard time, I was having hard time getting used to the system, the school and to everything. I was at a loss like the first night I went there I was away from home and I cried myself to sleep for about almost a week because I, because I was suddenly taken away from all that happiness that I had at home but then I had to bear out and somehow I did it and I made it, like I said it was the teaching of the grandfather that had made me stand up against these things and be counted right it was so hard that some of the school children, I understand that committed suicide it was so cruel and so hard a life to live a changed life all of a sudden, that's what happened. And I know for myself that I the stress was so, so hard but yet like I said, I took it I could stand it but it was the physical overloading on my young body, ten years old we were made to work for the school. Like one day they were making an addition to the dining hall and I had to carry, I was working in the masonry department and I had to carry bricks, it was easy at first to pick it up and lay it down on the bottom brick then I said it grew higher, and higher, and higher until we got about half a story high and I had to climb a ladder with that load of bricks on my shoulders and that was very, very cruel
and hard, I struggled under it but somehow I made it, and the worst part of it, I still remember to this day is that it was the middle of winter time and it was cold and they didn't furnish us no gloves or nothing we grabbed those bricks with our bare hands, it seemed like I left part to of my skin on those bricks, because it was so cold and yet they didn't have no pity on us and we had to make it that way until our hands, just got hardened up like a full grown man that had worked all his life. That's what made me fall under, I got sick, I was hit with a double pneumonia and I almost died from it, I was out for about two or three days and I came back to again and then I they sent me to a rehabilitation place at the what they called the east farm, those days its by the way from the school east and that's where they kept me and there I was treated very nice, no more of this stress like that I had to go through one of the main characters there was a man named Doctor Wheeler, Arthur Jay Wheeler, which means a lot to me to my life yet because those days I was still confined in the infirmary for thirty days and he would come in, the doctor would come in and he was a quiet, kind looking man and he just did something to me, he helped me sometimes this very quiet man he don't hardly talk sometimes he would stop by your bed and give you a few encouraging words and then he would go on and I think that was the greatest part of his appearance. In that hospital, that started to make me pick up and in ten months I was considered well and I left that hospital and I came and the food was excellent there, we ate three times a day and we and I forgot to mention too that the east farm as I mentioned is the site of the present Phoenix Medical center on 16th street and that's where I found my health and I went home for that summer and I exercised a lot, I learned how to ride horses and by that time I was grown up so I learned how to ride horses and I exercised all that summer and I think that helped me to grow stronger so I returned back to the Indian school and I carried on there by that time, I was, I was groing up and I used to learn to help my parents on the farm when I was a young child and my father and mother laid the example for me because everyday they go out and they work and after awhile I wanted to do that so I got in and I helped them. I remember I used to go when my father would go after wood I would jump in the wagon and we would go and get wood and I gather small sticks and throw them in the wagon and bring them home and I didn't know I was doing something useful, I thought I wasn't doing anything worthwhile but I found out later that my mother used it to start to
use it for kindling to start the fire for cooking of the meals and so I did that and then when I grew older I went out in the fields and helped my father on the farm, plowing or discing or haring the ground out there I did that, I helped him I was already learning to use like the shovel, the rake, the hoe, all those little basic tools that one learns one needs to learn at a very early age. I learned how to handle those things so that helped me that helped me and like I said awhile ago I went to the when I was at the school, I got to learn to get around like I said awhile ago learn how to get around. I saw a lot of the older boys going to work, they were given those that remained on the good side of the school system, they were given the privilege to work out for someone else. A lot of them went out to do yard work and other things and they make money for themselves and so, I wanted to do that too but I was not of age yet and I was not eligible yet to receive an outing card so Saturday's when I learned to follow the rules and the regulations of the school, I got by and I had free days on Saturday afternoon and also Sunday. And on the Saturday morning I would take off about around about around eight o clock in the morning and I would go down to the, where the homes are, where the non-Indians lived, they had beautiful gardens, beautiful flower beds and all those and I know that they needed work there to be done on it so I used to go down there and try to look for work but I was so shy that I could not speak up or ask for it and I just walked back and forth along there but they knew what I wanted and some of those old ladies were needed help. So, I got started there and worked a few places then I found another place between third street and central avenue, on Osborne road and that's where I found my first permanent job. And I went there every Saturday, because like I've said, I've learned to use the garden tools when I was really young at home and so when I worked I thought I did a good job but some of those elderly ladies are really particular about everything you have to do it just so-so, that was a lesson to me and to this day, I like to perfect my the job that I do and that is the way I learn on my job and my latter life and when I did something I want to make it as perfect as I can, I got a great help out of those elderly ladies, and they pay me twenty five cents an hour so I worked about five hours and made about a dollar and a quarter, all for myself, spending money and then I would, like I said, the streetcar was running and it cost only a nickel I could have rode on that but I rather walk cause that was the way of life, we enjoyed walking, running do things like that, so I used to walk
from near the Indian school which was about three miles away to Phoenix and there I would go and meet sometimes I would meet my grandfather and sometimes I would find him there and I would take him and I would take him around town but I would take him the first place that we went there was the train station, the Sun Pacific Railway station, the Union Station they call it and to this day it still stays there, its still there and I used to take him there and I explain we in fact a lot of people a lot of out of town people they take there children there to see those steam driven locomotives and that was a wonderful sight to watch to see the engineer sit on there and bring the trains here or take it out and we would sit there on the long bench under the shed, the long shed there and I would explain to my grandfather just what little I learned about the train system on the passenger train system and also the freight train system I would explain it to him as much as I knew and then I would take him to carpenter shops and by that time already was I had a little learning of carpentry and like I said masonry and a lot of other jobs, training that I went through, electrician, I used to take him down to the power house right next to the train station there and I told him what little I know about it and it was really exciting to me and happy and then towards evening, afternoon we would come back to town and I would come on home to back to the school and he would go back home and that went on like that and that was my, my first job that I ever did. And after that I found another job I had two jobs, the other the last one I had was much closer to the school on Central Avenue and I worked at both places. Like I said, I worked till about one o clock at the first job and then I would come over and work there, maybe just a couple of hours I go there to mainly rake up the leaves and stuff like that another couple of hours. So, I kept busy and I did not have any kind of penalties against me because that's what I did and I tried my best to try and give them good service and then I would we got like I start going to school in our classrooms and then I had a good teacher there I found some good teachers there and they helped us they had pity on us because they knew how we were treated and how we felt and some of those some of those employees teachers were really nice to us and they encouraged us and strengthened us and to like this day I still remember them I still honor them and I still feel that I am doing what they had wanted me to do is to learn to live an overcoming life and I have the satisfaction of like repaying them back this way. And there were many of them there was about eight or
nine of them employees men and women that I have had helped from so today it is like I said awhile ago that I still when I go through hard times, depressions, sicknesses or any sorrows I think about those people and it is still a help although they are gone many years ago but their name is still printed down deep in my heart and so, so I so that's how I get my strength now and also when I was young here in my own community I had relatives, old ladies, old men come to me and counsel to me and talk to me they encourage me, strengthen me and I still honor those people and most of all is that I live on my own, own community where I was born and raised here and during the day I would drive down the road and I knew just who those old people that were allotted certain lands there and I still remember them, the old men the people that encouraged me and also my grandfather, my uncle, my father's allotment and my uncle's allotment when I passed by there I feel honored I feel strengthened to know that there were people there that were that cared a lot about me and driven my life in the right direction and I finally found that then I live this half a life now and I can I feel proud of myself and for them also that wherever they are but they made to me they know that this is a great change that they wanted me to live is to live an overcoming, happy, joyful life. Of course they told us that we were going to go through a lot of hardships, sorrows, loss of loved ones, all those things but like I said the foundation that they have given us is what keeps us going on and on and on and so that was the way it was. Like I said awhile ago those school teachers were the same way but I went to school then and as the years went by I learned the ways around to get by and then at first I hated the system so much that I liked to go to school but the system was so bad I used to run away from there run away from school, they would, I would come home but they always send the Indian policemen out here to catch us. So when I knew that the last time I came down I rolled my bedding up, picked up my bedding gear in the community and I walked across the river up to up to a certain place there, East of Tolleson Arizona, there was a work camp there, they were calling for workers on the Salt River Valley user's association to work there and they were paying a dollar a day and board and room and all I needed to take was my bedding and like I said the food was excellent there too and I would be like I said I already knew how to handle tools and I knew how to work already so for my age I was just like a grown man so and besides they did not have no work laws that would not permit you to work at a young age but it was all open so I
wanted to work there and so forth, then they finally caught me then and they took me to Riverside California in Nineteen Hundred and Thirty Two I believe and the government took me up there on a government transportation, I went on a government pickup the farm agent loaded us up, seven of us boys were sent up there and we rode on this pick-up early in the morning and there were some men that came around and bid us farewell before we left and that's how concerned the old people were to us and I remember as we drove there were no crossings along the river then and the river was always deep enough where no cars can cross so we went right straight up on baseline to Central Avenue and we turned north and then just as you go to the Salt River bridge the sun had just come up and I remember that to this day and from then on we went on till we hit the buckeye road and then from then on we went on. And it was a threatening, rainy day that day and so when we got to pass Buckeye out in the desert area there it started to rain and it held us up for quite a while all the washes and the dips were full of water so all the cars were stranded there and we had to push our vehicle across or either have someone pull us across and we did that and it slowed us up till Gila Bend and after Gila Bend that we had clear going and we went from there on the first day, first evening, in the evening we stopped at Yuma and we ate our meal there, our supper there and then we drove on another hour and a half to El Centro and that's the first time I ever slept in a motel there we all slept in that one motel there and early the next morning we got into the truck and we went along the old highway along the coast of California, I think I forgot the name of that coast highway and we went through there and we got to the school, Sherman Institute about three o clock in the afternoon and there we went through the same thing again we were assigned beds, assigned clothing and all there and besides the school was much easier, it was a better school than the Phoenix school here.