

Tape #341 (side 1)  
NAVAJO  
Bob Manuelito  
February, 1969  
Tohatchi, New Mexico  
Interviewer - Tom Ration

STORY OF HIS FATHER AND THE  
GREAT JESUS ARVISO IN  
EARLY DAYS OF THE LONG  
WALK AND OTHER HISTORY

This is a story that I'm still continuing on Manuelito story, Bob Manuelito, he's still living near Tohatchi. His father is the one that is standing in Gallup, New Mexico. His father has a statue in Gallup, so he is still on the record telling us how his father used to be in the earliest days of his time. I was on the record of my father and the great Arviso. Here the time in Fort Sumners, Jesus Arviso was then in the bunch of the Navajo people and people talk about the Navajo people in the camp of Fort Sumners gathered up mostly every other day talking about how they could go back to their own homeland. Then one day they decided to talk to the general about it. So the first man that went and talk to the general was a man to be sent over there to see what he could tell the people what they think. So, one morning he went over there and talked to the general about going back to his homeland. Here the first thing the general says that you been a very good behavior for about three years and I think it over yet. But the government says that you should be transferred to Oklahoma. But the people find out they were going to be moved on to Oklahoma, but they didn't like Oklahoma. Parecito came back from the of-

face of the general and he gathered his people again. He told them that what the general thinks and what the general says that we are not going to be sent back to the Navajo reservation, to our homeland. We was going to be sent to Oklahoma and they didn't like it. So they talk about it again. Mr. Jesus Arviso was during the interpretation between the government and the Navajo. Here, the Navajo discuss about all problem that must be a way that the government can send us back to our homeland. So they keep on talking for at least about two weeks or a little over. Mr. Parecito was being sent to the general back and forth. Everytime the meeting was made. This was the way they been doing it for about a little better than 3 weeks and the general says he is going to write to Washington and see what he could find out from Washington. In these days there were not any fast telegraph or telephone. You just have to write letters and they had..... that could take days to reach Washington. This was things was going on and the message took about a month to come back and they found out it was up to the general, what he decided would be the best thing to be done. This was the way the letter came back. The government says it is best either way; sent them to Oklahoma or send them back to their homeland. But most of the talk was the homeland would be much better than sending them to Oklahoma. If we do

send them to Oklahoma they will get worse, so it is best for the government to send the Navajo back to their own country because they know the country themselves, where to go. But the general kept this in mind, he wants them to make them think that..... and teach them that they will never do anything wrong again when they get back home. So he just told them that, that the government wants them to be sent into Oklahoma. For four days, the leader was talking with the general at Fort Sumners. There were alot of questions, came words that is been put into the Navajo people. They should behave more better than they are at Fort Sumners. This is the only way you can be sent back to your own homeland. If you don't there will be more blue coats and red coats to gather you up. This time we will go right straight to Oklahoma not to Fort Sumners. This is the way the General Sherman has said to the Navajo people. So, the Navajo people thought that they don't want to leave their home country land because they been born there and they love their country. So, they told the general that he shall never hear about them of going wrong again. They shall keep their promise what they said to the general, that there will be no more fighting, no more stealing, they shall keep the promise all along. The general told them that education is a better way for the Navajo people. We shall put up schools in the Navajo

reservation. I want for every child that is born from today on, to be sent to school. There, they can learn more better way of living and behavior. This is all brought to the Navajo people. They shall never steal anymore, and they shall never kill anymore people. They shall send their children to school. There will be school, boarding school be set up in the Navajo country. So this was what happened then and they started back. The agreement was made in May, 1868. And then that night the Navajo people had never did sleep at all. They had a big pow wow all night long, happy, so happy that they don't even know what to do with themselves. And then the next morning they were set to go, wagons.... ..were on. And then the Navajo said that the old wooden wagon wheel was the only one that was known to roll around and there was some..... that are known in these early days like teams, horses would be sent to Fort Sumners and they started out in the morning. They went as far as close to Manzano Mountains. They stayed there that night. The Navajo people sure had a very lovely time coming back. They were so happy that they been singing right along, old squaw dance song. There are some of them still remembers yet, the one that they sing. I would sing it to you but then it's my sacred song, we let that go at that. There were quite a few squaw dance song that sang until the time the moving back to Fort Sum-

ners, or Fort Wingate. The night of the first night where they were going to stay they had a pow wow, a good luck chant song or else what they call a traveling song. After that in early in the morning mostly all the Navajo has a sacred prayer, they grind the white corn which is their sacred magic power of praying. Before the sun comes up, before it gets to be light, just before the first sundown sets up, that's the time they pray. Every last one of them has to pray. The man folks use the white corn, the women uses the yellow corn. This is the way it was been going. They prayed to their good Shell Woman god which they claim that it lives like Jesus in the east, in the west, which they calim that gives the tornado on the ocean. White Shell Woman, they claim that the White Shell Woman gives the tornado. So the first night they dance around and then they went on to the second night, but they still have to go around the point of the mountain. So they travel along, around the mountain. They reach another night near Socorro but they will have a straight cut up towards Los Lunas. This time they are going to cross by Los Lunas. They neared Los Lunas and the Rio Grande River that night. It was about something around three miles west from the Rio Grande River. They had another dance, the same way like they done the first night. Then on, my father said that they sure was happy also. My father used to sing

some good songs that they sang the first night and the second night. They done the same thing in the morning they prayed again. The next morning some of them left early in the morning before sunrise just as soon as they prayed, they left for the river. Some of them already knew how to make the boat, the floating boat which would carry the people across. The river was strong then, because in those days they don't have no irrigation along side the river. But now they have irrigation all the way from San Rafael, San Felipe, on down to Albuquerque. That's why the water is not so strong now. In those days there was no irrigation being, after arroyo. It was done was to push it in the water and put the horses on the wagon or what good they had to take across first. Here, they find a very good place to cross, an easy way. There they cross the river down by Los Lunas and then they strat it right straight to Swanee. The Fort Sumner army had straight trail to go back to Fort Wingate. They were working on crossing the river mostly all day long, the next day. So they stayed by the river the next night. They just went about four miles cause of the crossing of the river. The next morning, that next third night they still are dancing and praying was still on. That was the third night. The leader and Mr. Manuelito was the leader; he was the one that was wanting to have this four night chant, and four night chant

cause it is a very sacred way of doing it. Finally, they put up another chant song that night, the third night again. It started out in the morning from Los Lunas, from the third night. They went on up until they pass Swanee and then up the draw. They said that they just barely reach up a little village where they call Peace of Laguna. They stayed on the fourth night there. They were chanting all the way from Fort Sumner up to the fourth night. Here, Manuelito talk that night. He says that in every thing that counts at four we shall believe it. That means the fourth night or the fourth day, every fourth day we shall keep it sacred. As our Shell Woman wanted us in that way. Four would be our limit in life. What I mean is everything shall be done in four days; like the people has five days a week and then Saturday and Sunday. The Navajo has four days for a week, the white man has more. This was their Sunday a long time ago. So, they have to keep it sacred. On the fourth day everybody shall have celebration or anything. The fourth day, the great celebration was set up east of Laguna. Here they never did sleep until dawn, until morning. From there on, the next morning they still be moving. Everything was done, they are dancing. So this is the way it happened in the earliest days. They went on from Laguna up to McCartys, a little above

McCartys where the volcanoes end, they has another night there but this time no celebration or no dancing. The dancing and the singing and all the other chant was quick. They just had a talk by their leaders, a talk that they usually have at Fort Sumners. They sit around the fire and talk about good things when they get back home. The next morning they started out again. They reached Grants and pass a little ways. Every day a long the evening time the good runners of the Navajo take off ahead while the woman folks are going slow. They usually gather up wood on front of the place where they going to have another night, they would have the fire going already. They stayed at Blue Water again, Blue Water canyon that night. The next morning they have reached the top of the world where they call Thoreau. Right on top they have plenty of wood; they stayed there again. The next morning they went on and they reach Fort Wingate where they started from Fort Sumners. Here the people have a very good time again at Fort Wingate. Word was being sent to Fort Sumners from Fort Wingate. They stayed at Fort Wingate at least a week, says my father. Mostly what things were being done was talking. They are not having plans, but they were talking of good things, good behavior and most of these stuff. They come from the great government which they use to

live with, that they were not going to do no more wicked things. This is all the talk that they had, every place they stayed for night. Finally they had to move on. They started from Wingate and they went on to, between Gallup and Rough Rock. They passed Rough Rock and on. There's a little saying that stayed right against that canyon. The little canyon was called a good luck canyon. Here is where they stayed that night. The next day, that night they had the same talk, the leadership talk, the leaders. They went on, they have reached Fort Defiance the next day and they set up camps that night, but still the leader is yet known that they are leaders. Here the first night there was nobody to go out until order was being set by the general. So they followed their order until the last day of the time when they got back to Fort Defiance. The next morning everybody was gathered up. Finally the general that brought them back from Fort Sumners told them, whoever wants to go and leave to their home country, they are welcome. But first, we like to give out some food and some need of things that you people want. And so some of the people, the ones that wanted to go away yet back to their homeland, they were told that they shall come a certain date again for some other stuff to take home. As they were doing it at Fort Sumners they were going to be some meat being issued out. And then another week was set

up for them to come back. There was quite a few of them had left the camp then. Some of them stayed, I don't know which kind. But I though I could leave, ....says my father, so he left to see what Tohatchi is looking like now, today. Manuelito has found that the old country was getting rich with animals, wild animals, antelopes, or whatever you call it. The animals that is so high like goat, they were around, most of them were around Mexican Spring. There were lots of water coming out from the mountain, from Mexican Spring and from Tohatchi Mountain. So that was the place that Manuelito was supposed to be born, Bob Manuelito. The father went back to the place where they used to live; he found everything in good shape; the old home that he left during the time of his chasing around from other Indians. He had to rebuilt it with mud and things, so as to make it warm. The day came, the time that the general wanted them to come back. It was about a week later and then there was some more things came in from Fort Wingate. Here was given out to them again, shovels, axes, hoes and other needs, coffee, sugar and flour and some bacon. Anything that is in use for food was being issued out again to the Navajo people. There the great general set up another date which, was to be about two weeks. During this time the railway was beyond Mt. Taylor, coming around Mt.

Taylor. So, another two weeks was set up for them to gather up again. So finally another two weeks has passed for them to come. Most them were in again. There they receive some sheep and goats that was given to them. If they leave it they are not going to get another one. So they take good care of it. One Indian receive one goat and one sheep. After various ..... the one that has big family, like seven or eight family, they the one has eight or seven head of sheep. This is the way things went on. The government has a control on the Navajo yet. And the government call my father again cause he was the leader of the Navajo people. They wanted him to come back again about another week. Here, my father said he was working among his own place for another week and then another week had came for him to go to meet the railroad down at Grants. The army and some head man of the railroad wanted for him to know that the railroad was going to go through his territory because during the time of the treaty at Fort Wingate, Fort Sumner he is supposed to be, first one to be known. The four leaders that signed the treaty were supposed to know what the government has to do through the reservation. So, all the four of them were gathered up again and they took them to Fort Wingate, and from Fort Wingate they went on down to meet the railroad company at Grants. And they just talked to these

to discuss this over. Manuelito was a leader. He told the government, the general, that let it be. Let the railroad go through his country. The railroad was going to, through, the railroad, on the Ice Cave over, through the Ice Cave and then on down to Inscription Rock, on down to Zuni and up to St. John. Manuelito says that it would be the best place to follow the big canyon all the way down to the west which is Gallup, Thoreau, Wingate. Cause the reason why is that the fort that they got at Fort Wingate has to do something about it also, so the agreement for the railroad to go through Gallup. They needed some labors. So the big bosses went back to Fort Defiance and told quite a number of the Navajo people that railroad workers were needed. So they had to send some Navajo people, workers on the railroad. So since then, the railroad workers were hired at 50¢ a day, pick and shovel. Now, this was around, I should say about 15..... 1880 or 1869 or 1870. That was the time that the first Navajo people was hired to the railroad company. From there on, they set up the railroad to the Navajo territory. Quite a number of Navajo people were surprised that a big old horse was running by itself, was run by a fire. And wood was needed along by the highway. The job was mostly open on through the railroad company but wages were not so high. Finally the wages was coming up to a dollar a

day and on to \$1.50 a day. They adding it up just according to, I think it was how they work or what they were doing or something like that. It took about half a year from Grants to Gallup, from Gallup to Holbrook, it takes the same amount of time. From Holbrook to Ashfork done the same thing. In 1903 or 1904, the railroad went through Gallup and on down to the west. From here on, the time went on. Things were picking up different ways. Things that are being made in the East was being brought out to the west, to the California coast and San Francisco. Things were getting more better and better every year. Peoples been working on railroad day and night. There was just only one track for quite a number of years says my father. He used to remember that he says. After about two year's time I was born. Two years after the Fort Sumners return I was born in a little canyon near Tohatchi sassy, my mother..... And this is the way things has came up during their time of the earliest days. From here, the Navajo people getting to realize that living the way of good way in peace was the way of they been taught at Fort Sumners. A free way of living the peaceful way of living, talk to people in a kindly way and try to help each other. This was the problem among the Navajo people all through the reservation. Time went on, years after years, things are getting more better than it was before. And quite a

number of the good Navajo leader was working what they have taught during the time of their returning. My father was one of them and then one day, it was along 1875 between 1875 and 1880, he was called up to Gallup to come. Here, they wanted his statue to be built, the looks of him. He stayed with the Keller Company in Gallup for about a month. His statue was being built in the East someplace. The looks of the great leader of the Navajo. His statue was been brought from the East and he was told that you shall be standing in Gallup for the coming generation. You shall show your people that you was the one that made the treaty among the Navajo people. You shall tell them.... you shall remind the people that once he was the first man to make the treaty between the government and the Indians. This is what he been told and he said that it's alright for his statue to be set up. Time went on and on. Finally I grew up to my age of 12 years of age. Here I started to know that, find out that my father was one of the greatest Navajo leader in earliest days. This is the way I took up life myself, that I don't want to disturb anything what my father is. He got his statue in Gallup and he's got his name in Washington D.C., he is well known. I'm not going to destroy it, I'll keep it the way my father has made it. When I was about the age of, a little past 40, my father had died and that was the end of his life. The

time when he came back from Fort Sumners there is another little story about him. During the time of his move from Fort Sumners there is where he liked the white people. He liked the way that they discussed things. So he liked to be close around the blue coats and red coats, the soldiers. So, he went down the line and lived about 20 miles down the track towards Lupton where they now call Manuelito. He used to live by the railroad there and the place was named for him, Manuelito. The little section station used to be there, but not now. He stayed there for numbers of years and that is why they call the little place Manuelito. The first time it was called a ugly house. Today is a good house. During the time of Manuelito's time that little place used to be called ugly house but they named it to his name, Manuelito. Today the place is called Manuelito, New Mexico. Here quite a few of the Navajo usually gather during the time of his meeting call. He used to call off meeting about twice a month. Meeting and pow wow, like the way they done in Fort Sumners. This is the way things went on with Manuelito. He has all kinds of stories in his time, but I'll be still telling you what he told me in his.... in his earliest days. And finally, he decided to move up to Coyote Canyon. There is another place that is named by him, to his name. So he is getting older, he was getting older then and I

was getting stout. During my time, my father had taught his people. He wanted me to be strong and tough like he is, he was in his young days. Then the morning time, summer or winter he wanted for me to exercise early in the morning, breathe good fresh air and run as long as you want to. This will give you good life. That was what I was doing, I was so healthy that I like to do something to work. Time came on from years after years, I wanted to be a leader myself, but I didn't made it. I was not a good leader like my father, but I had, learned how to be a farmer and a stockman, that was what my trade was. So, I speak to my livestock mostly. Earliest days, my father used to say that sheep didn't have no market until 15 years later, there was a market came up by the Keller Company which is not still in Gallup, New Mexico. Sheep brought up, she came out as a trader, flour goods, canned good of all kinds, blankets, anything that we wish for today, it came in Gallup. From here on help was needed, so we had to save all the pelts that we can. Our stock that was given to us started to increase every year. Finally the Navajo people have grown into a better way of living by explaining things to each other, by their leaders and some other new ones came in. Things were picking up here and there. People had grown into a better livestock, good horses, some cattle came in. Cattle was not so high then. The highest cattle that we bought was \$25,

up to \$20. This is the way it started out. Little calf was about 2½. Money was so valuable in these days. If you had a dollar you buy a whole lot of things. Sugar was 10¢ a pound; coffee was the same way; 25 lb. flour was 25¢. There were 5¢ a yard of goods, dry goods; the time I remember how it was, it took place. Alot of things of all kinds has been brought up. They were so cheap that if you have a dollar it will pretty near buy out the whole store. But labor was, job was so cheap then. Man started with 50¢ a day, \$1.00 a day. The various good job was \$1.50 a day, so that mean money to us. Some of you younger generation if I tell you something like this, you will never believe it. You will think that I'm just a lying old Indian; but I'm not. And I sure do know quite a bit of life of my own. I will tell you that later. This is the story of my father, how he came about. During the time of his old age when he was about 80 years of age he used to still ride a horse around. He used to still talk as a leader but he is still a leader when he was 80 years of age. He still talk to his people, in a kind way, in a good living way too. Quite a number of Navajo people that he work with had done good for people. He was one of the greatest leader of old days that is why they put up his statue in Gallup. Today he is still known as Manuelito the great leader. Not too long ago,

I was around a meeting over in Fort Defiance in Window Rock. I think it was about around 10 or 12 years ago. I used to hear what the people says about him; that the Window Rock area was going to be called or named to his name in he first place, but they thought it would not be better cause there were alot of things that are called Manuelito. The little place on side of the railroad, that's his name; and the place down around Coyote Canyon, the place is named his name. So they thought it would be best to call it a different name. This is what I know about my father in his earliest days. During the time of the surrendering of the Apache people, the great Cochise, the great Geronimo was ruling the Apache country. The United States Army wanted to capture some way, but the old great Cochise got too many friends among the Navajo people. He don't want to fight the Navajo because the Navajo is the same relation to him. They talk as brother to brother and they claim that they used to be once a Navajo people. So, that's why they don't want to fight against the Navajo people. But he fought the Anglos though during the time of his capture. He fought them in where they call Apache Pass. Here, he was hard to pull out, there were quite a number of soldiers being killed in Apache Pass. I don't know how he done it, but he done it. So, finally Navajo people were hired to go against Cochise and Geronimo out of Fort Wingate.

There was some good old people who were his friends were hired to capture him. They don't hate him, but they want him to live in a better way and live up to his old age; they just want to tell him that the government, the white people are saying the right thing; trying to help him to do his good parts of living so that's the only reason they have joined the, they have volunteered to join the army against them. So, they were hired and they were trained to go and hunt them up, hunt them down. The Navajo people were sent to him and there was about at least 20 Navajo people that were very kind to him. So they just sent nothing but Navajos out to talk to him. They don't want to send no more whites army; they left them behind, but still on the watch out. So, Manuelito was one of them to go to see him. My father used to say that he used to talk with Geronimo and Cochise like a straight friends. He was very close relation in the old days, so he told Geronimo, talk to him as a brother. He says, one day he met two great man, they talk in peace with tobacco. Finally one day, he says that he give up, but he told Manuelito to stand by. Whatever they do to him, you are my good friend, so I want to ask you to stand as a body guard till they get through with me. So, the agreement was made by Manuelito, but he told the great Apache leader that it would be best for him to learn more behavior like they

done. It is not good to keep on in the bad way of living. So I think that's the way the great Geronimo and his friends decided to surrender. He went to the two parties about three times to talk to him. Finally, they had to decide and be surrendered. He took their guns and their knife as an army, and some of his other good friends told him the same thing, we done it ourself in the earliest days but there's nothing that we had done when we was fighting, everything was bad. This is what they told the great Cochise and Geronimo. They been talking among themself for many days and finally they made agreement to be surrendered. This is the way the great Cochise and great Geronimo was captured by their Navajo friends. They don't want to fight their relationships, so they gave up, and the government got a hold of them. They didn't took long, they were not sent to Fort Wingate, Fort Sumners, but the great leader was the only one that he could blame because they younger generation and the other people is not the one to blame, he was the one to blame the worst thing of all; that is what he's saying, his talk that done all these damage among the army. So that's why he went as far as Oklahoma; he went through jail, he went through his trial; that's the way the white people wants a man, wants to be trialed according to the regulations of law. So, that's what he done, not his people, his

people was not the one to blame because he was the one that was putting up all the ideas of what it should be done. So that is, he is the only one that was held back during of his trial. So, I don't know much more about Cochise and Geronimo, how it is punishment; all I know is that he left to Oklahoma for his trial. And I have a little story about the great Billy the Kid too, but I'll tell you that later in my next record. I have all kinds of stories of old times, what I have known and seen with my own eyes, but I'll tell you that later. So this is my story about the great Jesus Arviso and my father and the great Cochise and that the moving actor has in their party mostly all over. Some of them are just made up stories. The real one I have seen myself and my father used to tell me how great he was in his earliest days. Most of these stories that I'm telling you is the true story for my father, so I am still living today. I am about 99 years of age, another year I'll be 100. So, praise the Lord I have lived this long. I have thanked my Believer who made me, whoever made me was very kind to me, of life. So, I'll tell you a little bit more about what I know about old time people. So, I am kind of a tired up and I wanted to lie down for the noon or half day, I'll call the man again for my next record. It takes up time to tell, you have to remember alot of things, that is all my friend, I thank you.

END OF TAPE