NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

REPORTS FROM FORT GIBSON, 1835 TO 1839

In her many years of research and writing on Oklahoma historical subject, Carolyn Thomas Foreman recently made the discovery that Brig. Gen. John E. Wool, U.S.A., was once stationed at Fort Gibson. Mrs. Foreman has contributed to The Chronicles the following interesting notes along with General Wool's report of 1839 and other early reports from Fort Gibson:

The Army and Navy Chronicle was a well edited publication which served a large area of the United States and kept the people in touch with the scattered army posts and events transpiring in them. Movements of troops were reported, promotions of officers were circulated, marriages and deaths chronicled.

This magazine painted gloomy pictures of Fort Gibson in the early days and displayed great resentment because regiments were held many years on this frontier. Most of the officers were young men and recently out of West Point and not accustomed to the extreme hardships they encountered.

Recruiting officers were kept in the East and it was necessary to replace personnel frequently because of the high death rate. Fevers of various kinds carried off hundreds of young men and more died from hard drinking than were killed in fighting.

On June 24, 1835 Lieutenant William W. Mather was ordered to accompany G. W. Featherstonbaugh on his geological tour in the Northwest, beyond the Upper Mississippi. On his return he was to join his company of the Seventh Infantry by December thirty-first.

The Lieutenant reached Fort Gibson ten days ahead of his schedule and on the Twenty-second he wrote the following letter:

"I arrived here yesterday in safety and in health, after a fatiguing journey of 460 miles across the country from St. Louis. During the route I have not seen a bridge of any kind, but have forded all the streams. Several of them are of the size of the Quinebaugh [Connecticut] some larger, and many are smaller. Two of them I forded eight times each and several two or three times. Many of them are very rapid and once my pack horse came near being washed away.

"I carried an Indian rubber cloth for camping out, by which I could be perfectly protected from the wet ground and rain, and which I could in a few minutes make into a boat for crossing rivers when they were too deep to ford. I did not have occasion to use it. It has been pleasant weather all the time . . . . I was on my journey . . . .

1 William Williams Mather of Connecticut entered West Point July 1, 1823; he became a second lieutenant in the Seventh Infantry July 1, 1828; first lieutenant December 4, 1834 and he resigned August 31, 1836. He died February 27, 1859.

2 G. W. Featherstonbaugh, A Canoe Voyage up the Minnay Sotor (London, 1847). "July 8, 1835 — This morning we all embarked upon the canal at George Town, near Washington, in a commodious iron boat, eighty-five feet long." On the return journey the party arrived at St. Louis on June 19, 1836.
"I shall say nothing of this place until I know more of it. . . . The mail arrives and departs weekly. Phillips and Tillinghast and young Arden are here, and a great many that I know. Two officers have lately died and another is not expected to recover from fever contracted during the expedition in the prairies last summer."

Mather's next letter was dated January 13, 1836, when he had learned more about Fort Gibson. He wrote:

". . . . I have been constantly engrossed on duties connected with my company. I have the honor to command the worst company of the Seventh Regiment, so you may conceive the pleasure of my duties. The company books, papers and accounts are in the most perfect confusion, and a long time will be required to put them in order. It has had no permanent commander for several years, and the necessary consequence has followed that the men are not ambitious, and are a ragged, dirty, drunken set of fellows. Forty-two men are crowded into a room about the size of my father's dining room and kitchen. The other companies are scarcely better accommodated. . . ."

"Fort Gibson is not an unpleasant place at this season of the year. There is a hoar frost nights, and warm, pleasant days like October in New England. The Fort, as it is called, is a picketed enclosure of 90 by 95 yards, with long blocks of log cabins within. . . ."

"The two squares on the corners represent block-houses for the purpose of defending the large square. There is a small village around of houses, stores, kitchens, hospital, tavern, mess-house, and the various buildings necessary for the various wants of such a community. The Neosho or Grand River flows about 100 yards from the Fort, and the water sometimes almost comes into it.

"The ground gradually ascends to the northeast one-half mile, where the country opens as a prairie several miles in extent. East, southwest and northwest is an extensive low ground filled with stagnant, putrid lagoons in the lower parts, and a large part of the remainder is a cane-brake, most of which is impenetrable on account of the size of the canes, which stand like stalks in a wheat field and 20 feet high.

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3 Joseph Augustus Phillips, a native of New Jersey, was appointed to the Military Academy September 30, 1818. He became a second lieutenant of the Seventh Infantry July 1, 1823; first lieutenant June 30, 1828. He was made regimental adjutant May 16, 1825 and served until May 31, 1830 in that capacity. He received his captaincy May 4, 1835 and was transferred to the Eighth Infantry July 7, 1838; he resigned from the service September 30, 1840 and died January 4, 1846 (Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army [Washington, 1903], Vol. I, p. 789).

4 Nicholas Tillinghast was born in Massachusetts and received his appointment to West Point from his native state. He entered the Academy July 1, 1820 and became a second lieutenant in the Seventh Infantry four years later; a first lieutenant June 30, 1830; captain June 1, 1835; resigned July 31, 1836. He passed away April 9, 1856 (Heitman, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 962).

4a Thomas Boyle Arden of New York finished at West Point in 1835 and he must have gone directly to Fort Gibson. He resigned December 31, 1842 and died August 13, 1896. According to Cullum's Register of Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy, Arden served at Fort Gibson during 1835-36; at Camp Desire, near Fort Tecumseh, 1836 and again at Fort Gibson 1836-37.

5 For an account of conditions at Fort Gibson at this period, see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Military Discipline in Early Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June, 1928), pp. 140-44.
"There are several New England ladies here and they enjoy pretty good health, but expect a regular fever every summer. Among the men at this Fort, about 400, there are about 12 to 14 hundred cases of sickness reported by the surgeon annually, but most of it is to be attributed to the irregular habits of the men and the trips on the prairies. Few officers or men return from those trips without a broken constitution, and they are considered almost as a death warrant by most of the men. Tillinghast and Phillips are here and are my next door neighbors. We live in three contiguous rooms, and one waiter serves us all. We are together most of the time. . . . But for Tillinghast and Phillips, who are like brothers, I should be very lonely when not occupied with my duties. . . . I should not like to have my family here. The place is the charnel house of the Army. More deaths occur here annually than in the whole of the rest of the Army, as it is said.

"I am willing to run any risk as long as I can serve my country, and no consideration of personal safety shall weigh, where I think my services can be useful. . . . I have fortunately come here at the right season to become acclimated without injury. I enjoy perfect health and hope by care and temperance in everything to continue to be blessed with it."\(^6\)

Mather wrote on March 15, 1836 that there were rumors that the Seventh regiment would be sent to Jefferson Barracks as soon as the Texian difficulties were settled.

The following unsigned letter was sent to a friend with the request that it be forwarded to the National Intelligencer. It appeared in the pages of the Army and Navy Chronicle, April 13, 1837:


"Messrs. Gales & Seaton:—There has been at this place for the last few days considerable excitement, showing the strongest evidence, in the judgment of many very intelligent persons, that a garrison should not be stationed in an Indian country.

"The regiment of volunteers furnished by Arkansas was ordered by the commanding General of this place to rendezvous at this garrison. After remaining for some time, the principal part of them were discharged; the remainder, some three companies, were retained in the service, and were quartered about four miles from this place in the Cherokee country. A "frolic" of the Indian kind was made, and, during their amusements, as is always the case where spirituous liquors are freely used, a fight took place, in which two or three of the volunteers were handled "with gloves off" by the red gentlemen, which rendered them unable for duty the next day. This excited the remainder of the companies, and induced them to take vengeance on all Cherokees found in the neighborhood where the "frolic was held, by inflicting on them the most brutal punishment."

"The moment this was ascertained by the Cherokees, the Captains of several of their companies called out their men, and marched to the place where the scene of punishment was inflicted. But fortunately, the General had been informed by the principal chief, Major [John] Jolly, that his young men were beyond his control, and determined to have revenge. This intelligence induced the General to order the volunteers within the reserve, and near the garrison, where they now remain.

"On the arrival of the Cherokee companies at the place where the act was committed, they found that the volunteers had withdrawn. This pre-

vented a second scene of collision, which would have been of the most serious nature. One of the Captains commanding the Cherokees, finding the party which had committed the punishment on his countrymen had left here, adopted the usual custom among Indians, when the Indian ladies had been over-kind to the white man, and punished them by whipping until the blood was seen trickling on their heels! and, not satisfied with this, cut off their hair, and left them to reflect on their folly.

"Gentlemen, you must suppose, when you are informed that there are not more than two hundred and fifty regulars fit for duty at this place, what a contempt the Indians must have for the military strength of the United States, especially when ten times this number of Cherokee warriors are between this garrison and the white population.

"It is time for our Government to act, and act wisely, or there will be another Seminole business of the most destructive kind. This shows, conclusively, that the line of posts should be located within the borders of the State, where the white as well as the "red men" could be protected.

"The Government under treaty stipulation is bound to protect the Indians located here against the wild Indians, and the cavalry are the proper troops to give this protection. Let them be stationed in The Indian country, and at all times they will be ready to move with rapidity to any given point, should any difficulty occur."

The *Baltimore Patriot* published a communication from Fort Gibson which was copied in the April 27, 1837 edition of the *Army and Navy Chronicle*:

"Near Fort Gibson, March 14, 1837."

"There is great doubt whether or not the Dragoons will make an early campaign this summer; we hope to go to Leavenworth, and turn over our quarters to the 2d Regiment. We have had a long enough siege in this warm and sickly climate. Some of the officers think we go on to Grand Prairie, as soon as the grass will admit, as the Pawnees and Comanches have been committing some depredations. Of our movements I will acquaint you. The companies of Dragoons at this post are far from being full, although there has been an arrival of fifty recruits, principally from the Eastern States but the Yankees won't stay; a great number have deserted.

"The 7th Infantry is but the shadow of a regiment—this spring nearly seven-eighths will be discharged—it now musters but 160. The volunteer regiment of mounted men are still encamped here, but will be discharged as soon as the paymaster arrives.

"We are swarmed with Florida Seminoles; poor squalid wretches. Many have emigrated to the Creek Nation, and gone under the protection of the McIntoshes."

A long letter copied from the *National Intelligencer* appeared in the *Army and Navy Journal* on June 15, 1837:

"Fort Gibson, May 10, 1837."

"Messrs. Editors: Just three years ago a writer in the Military and Naval Magazine gave a summary of the condition of the dragoons. He showed that they were then well nigh victims to ignorance or gross mismanagement in some quarter, having been marched in December, naked and undisciplined, from good winter quarters, 500 miles to this point, where they found no quarters, or stables, or food for horses; they were then detained here until Farenheit, which had sunk 40 degrees below freezing
point, rose to 105 degrees in June; then marched south over leafless prairies, or rather in the great American Desert. Some of them returned, and again found no shelter. Ere the year closed, the death of a third of the whole number remained a recorded memorial of that season—of that murderous treatment.

"Three companies of the First Dragoons are still stationed at this "Forlorn Hope" of advanced posts. If the danger of exposure, without defence, to the mercy of an overwhelming force of Indians, does not give it the title, view you hill, like a ploughed field, where every clod rests over the remains of a youthful victim to the exposure of unnecessary marches, of unhealthy huts! * *

"But I have again digressed. There are some signs of this better policy—of the union of regiments, and greater concentration of forces where they seem almost only needed, between the Missouri and Red rivers—having forced itself upon the perceptions of the powers that be. But much can only be expected from a new Secretary, from whom the subject must attract due consideration. The Administration of the Army presents him a wide field for improvement and industrious reform. May we never again see long lists of officers publicly ordered like delinquents to their posts in the field—by the President, too—and by the next mail receiving private orders from his subordinates to remain where they were. From a new Secretary, the Army, often disappointed, must hope all things.

"Between Red river and the upper Mississippi, in addition to their old inhabitants, a small portion of which could raise a "Black Hawk war," have been located all the emigrating tribes; a kind of emigration that might well receive another name. Half conquered, they have been forced here by the ten thousand; some of them in chains. The iron enters into the soul of the Indian, whose sole birthright is to be untameably free. Between these two points of the frontier, distant about a thousand miles, are now stationed at Fort Gibson, about 200 infantry, (the skeleton of 9 companies.) It follows that the First Regiment of Dragoons, occupying a line of operation of about 700 miles from that post to Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi, must have some very important function. It must be acknowledged that a judicious disposition has been made, as if in anticipation of a general rising of the enemy, (which to us on the spot is out of the range of probability; of supposition at the least.) The centre of this great line of operations on a turbulent river; the right flank rests with equal strength upon the Mississippi at Des Moines; the left flank, or wing of this mighty front, is covered by the Arkansas at Fort Gibson. Too high praise cannot be bestowed upon the judgment displayed in this disposition, sanctioned by all the experience and maxims of war, which so strongly posts the centre, and rests the flanks on obstacles creating a natural defense.

"But I fear too much is left to depend upon the genius of the commander, very properly posted in the van; for though his mounted troops possess great power of locomotion, there may happen contingencies in which his resources will be too greatly taxed. A Tecumseh or an Osceola may stumble upon the great manoeuvre of Napoleon, of forcing a weak point of the line, by a powerfully concentrated effort; then, having no reserve, and the line of operations being too extended for reinforcements to repair the evil, the battle will be with the strong. But now will be discovered a great advantage in the great corps being posted on rivers leading to the interior; it is at once evident that they can retreat with facility, until opportunities offer of establishing a new line of operations of defence. There is no objection, too; the left wing is opposed to by far greater strength of the enemy; and when it is remembered that the Arkansas is generally scarcely navigable, it will be admitted that they are greatly and unfairly exposed. But, perhaps, all the defects of the present dis-
position might be remedied by a strong corps de reserve, say of 10,000 men, posted somewhere in the rear of the line; Jefferson barracks would be a central point.

"It is difficult to treat the subject seriously. The 1st regiment of dragoons is divided by seven hundred miles, under circumstances which have scarcely been exaggerated. Never having served together, and under a press of duties since its establishment, no opportunity has been offered to revive, to a great degree, a practical knowledge of that important arm; of the service of cavalry, almost lost in the United States. Scattered in huts and sheds of stables, which they have sometimes to build themselves; constantly detached in new patrols, to correct petty disorders among the Indians, they can thus only serve to irritate, and expose numerical weakness.

"The time will come, though perhaps rather late, when 2,500 men will be stationed in this vicinity; and when by adequate pay and bounties, (perhaps of land,) good men will be induced to enlist. There is a very great failing off in the character of the recruits this year for the dragoons; and although the same men will not enlist for five years, that will for three, without greater inducements, this last term is much too short for that service.

"A SUBSCRIBER."

Officers and men of the army were not only persons who suffered illness and death at Fort Gibson. George Catlin was desperately ill while there and Beyrich, the Prussian botanist, and his servant both passed away after their return to the post from the West.

Fevers of several sorts carried off hundreds of men as well as wives and young children of officers and it was many years before the danger from the bites of musquitoes were proven as the cause of malaria and other diseases. The Grand River was a favorite swimming place and many soldiers lost their lives below its waters.

Altogether it took a hardy man to survive the many dangers although no fights with Indians took place in the vicinity there were some bloody encounters with desperate outlaws who took advantage of the lack of laws to carry on their nefarious attempts against both red and white men.

That conditions were still in a deplorable condition in 1839 was confirmed by a report made by the famous General Wool7 to adjutant General R. Jones from New Orleans May 6, 1839:

I have just arrived from visiting the forts on the Red and Arkansas rivers, when I received your letter of the 22d ultimo. As soon as I have inspected the Arsenal at Baton Rouge I will proceed to execute the duties assigned me by order 25.

"I have only time to add that we never will have well disciplined Regiments or Companies until colonels are compelled to command their regiments and Captains their companies. Of the Dragoons, four Companies at Gibson, two Captains were absent and only one fit for Duty—No field

7 John Ellis Wool, a native of Newburg, New York, was born February 20, 1784 and appointed from that state to the United States Army as a captain of the Thirteenth Infantry on April 14, 1812. He became a major of the Twenty-ninth Infantry a year later and served a year in the Sixth Infantry, before he was commissioned a colonel of the Inspector General Department where he remained from April 29, 1816 to June 25, 1841. He later became brigadier and major general and made such a gallant fight in the battle of Buena Vista on February 23, 1847 that he received the thanks of Congress in January, 1854.
officers with the Command. Of the 4th Infantry several Companies were commanded at the time of inspection by sergeants—The Colonel had arrived but had not yet assumed the Command of his Regiment. I observed the same deficiency of officers in the 3d Infantry.

"I am very respectfully, Your Obdt. Servt.

"John E. Wool
Brig. Genl. U.S.A."®

—Carolyn Thomas Foreman.

CAPTAIN EUSTACE TRENOR: A CORRECTION

Attention is called to an important correction: The name of Captain Eustace Trenor, First Dragoons, is inadvertently given as "Captain Eustis Turner" in the article, "The March of the First Dragoons from Jefferson Barracks, " by Hamilton Gardner appearing in the Spring number (1953) of The Chronicles, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, pp. 33, 34, 36.

Captain Eustace Trenor accompanied the noted Dragoon Expedition (Leavenworth Expedition) organized at Fort Gibson by General Henry Leavenworth to visit the Plains Indians of Western Oklahoma in 1834.© Commissioned Captain, First Dragoons, March 4, 1833, he had an important part in early history of Oklahoma as seen by his military record which included the following service on the Western Frontier: "Ft. Gibson, I. T., 1834,—Expedition to the Canadian River, 1835,—Ft. Gibson, I.T., 1835-36,—Necogdoches, Tex., 1836,—Ft. Gibson, I.T., 1837-39; . . . . on frontier duty at Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., 1840-41, 1842,—Ft. Gibson, I.T., 1842,—and Ft. Leavenworth, Kan." He was commissioned Major, First Dragoons, on June 30, 1846.® A native of New York and graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (July 1, 1822), Major Eustace Trenor died on February 16, 1847, at New York City, aged forty-four.

®National Archives, Office of the Adjutant General 145-W-1839. In many years of research this is the first mention of General Wool being at Fort Gibson ever discovered by the writer.

©George H. Shirk, "Peace on the Plains," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1950), pp. 15, 41. Captain Trenor remained in command of Camp Leavenworth (July 7, 1834) near the present site of Kingston, Oklahoma, where many of the men were sick including General Henry Leavenworth who died on July 21, 1834.


See also, "Eustace Trenor" in Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register (Washington, 1903), Vol. I, p. 970.
SAM HOUSTON: INTERPRETER OF INDIAN STRATEGY

James W. Covington, Professor of History, University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, has contributed the following notes with copy of a letter signed by the noted Sam Houston soon after he had left the Indian Territory for Texas:

The fame of Sam Houston as the “George Washington of Texas” has overshadowed the fact that Houston had a vast store of knowledge concerning the life and philosophy of the American Indian. He probably knew as much about the Indians as any man of the Nineteenth Century. This informal education was begun in his “teens” when he ran away from home, and his brothers found him among the Cherokees on the banks of the Tennessee River. Sam was happy in this primitive way of life and was found lying under a tree reading Pope’s translation of the Iliad. The brothers were not able to return with the young fugitive, and he visited his white family at infrequent intervals. Chief Oo-loo-te-ka of the Cherokees adopted him and gave Sam the Indian of Raven.11

This admiration of the Indians lasted throughout Houston’s life. He lived with the Cherokees at various times in Tennessee and Oklahoma until he left for Texas and destiny in 1832. The camp of Oo-loo-te-ka’s band near Ft. Gibson, Oklahoma served as the home of Sam Houston during most of this period. Federal officials regarded Sam Houston as one who knew the Indian situation thoroughly. The following letter illustrates Houston’s knowledge of the Plains Indians and how they maintained a delicate relationship between the British, the Americans, and the neighboring Indian tribes:

“The undersigned have the honor to reply to the note of Gov. Cass, of the 6th Instant, on the subject of Mr. Abbay’s captivity among the Indians of the S. W. Prairies.12

“From the best general information, on the subject of the Indians who roam these immense plains, we think it certain that Mr. Abbay13 was captured by the Pawnees14 of the plains. They are in the habit of constant warfare with the Osages and regard all persons, who approach their country from the East of Red River, as enemies and are ready at all times

12 Sam Houston and Andrew Hughes to Secretary of War Lewis Cass, March 12, 1834, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives, Pawnee, 1834. A copy of the letter from Cass to Houston was not available in the National Archives. Letter of Richard G. Wood to James W. Covington, January 23, 1953. Lewis Cass was previously governor of Michigan Territory.
13 George B. Abbay, member of a company of Rangers under the command of Lieut. Col. James B. Many on patrol north of Red River, was killed in attack by Plains Indians (Grant Foreman, Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest [Cleveland, 1926]).—Ed.
14 The term “Pawnee” was loosely used in referring to the Southern Plains tribes in the 1830’s, a general term for the allied Comanche, Kiowa and Wichita in their wars against the Osage. The Comanches, of the three allied tribes, were notoriously the most formidable and usually implicated in any trouble on the frontier (Rupert N. Richardson, The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement [Glen- dale, 1933]). Abbay was reported captured by the “Pawnee Peak,” misspelling of “Pani Pique” (Tattooed Pawnee”), the early name for the Wichita. While the Wichita are related to the Pawnee proper (Caddoan stock), the Pawnee proper were not connected with the capture and death of Abbay, for at that time they ranged far north on their lands in the Platte River region of Nebraska (Muriel H. Wright, A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma [Norman, 1951]).—Ed.
to steal their horses or to make battle with them. The information of the Pawnees in relation to the Indian Tribes on [the] Arkansas [River] as well as to the relations which these tribes bear to the U. States is very imperfect—[we are] aware however that they are in amity with the U. States and that they derive supplies from them. This fact has doubtless an influence in rendering these Indians hostile to citizens of the U. States. It is conceded that the warriors of the Pawnees amount to at least three thousand in number! They are proud, confident of their strength and sagacious, while all of their movements are executed with great celerity. This policy is to retain the control of the Prairies, in such manner, as will enable them to keep up a correspondence with the British traders of the North West from whom they derive many articles of great use to them. To accomplish this object, intelligence relative to the whites and Indians on [the] Arkansas, is of primary importance to them. In the absence of all friendly intercourse with either, their only source of information is to take prisoners from both, whenever it is in their power—retain them as slaves, and as soon as they can learn the language of the Pawnees, to make interpreters of them. We are therefore led to the conclusion that Mr. Abbay is yet a prisoner among them as it will be their policy to preserve his life.

"To ascertain whether or not, Mr. Abbay yet lives or by whom he was really captured if by those Indians, it will be indispensably necessary to open a communication with them by the most safe and direct mode."

"This can never be done by the employment of a military force! It is a custom, with all Indians with whom we are acquainted, when they hold a prisoner, and are invaded, or apprehend serious danger, to put their captives to death, that they can boast the first trophy and influence the superstition of their warriors by claiming the first victim, as a good omen; as well as to influence their fierce passions by the exhibition of a bloody spectacle! Furthermore there is no force than can be sent against the Indians with any prospect of success. The display of a force on the Prairies would unit all the Indians that inhabit them and overwhelm it at once. Besides if the Pawnees alone could succeed in decoying a force to a proper distance in the Prairies, they would steal their horses, and defeat would be the certain consequence. The conviction that any warlike display would prove prejudicial to the object to be attained if it did not prove fatal to the life of Mr. Abbay.

"We therefore take leave to suggest, as the most feasible plan which presents itself to us, is to appoint some two or three men, well acquainted with Indian character, possessing courage, sagacity and skill as woodmen, with a few others; as they might think proper: by not more than ten or twelve in number and dispatch them to the Pawnee nation, accompanied by such presents as might be thought fit to send to the Indians. If they should not loose [sic] their scalp and find out Mr. Abbay—the presumption is that they could succeed in procuring his release: if not they could at least succeed in contacting the Indians and induce some of their chiefs to visit the frontier Posts of the U. States: which would inevitably lead to a treaty and the release of Mr. Abbay.

15 This would be from Arkansas and Louisiana.
16 Other Indian tribes attempted to serve as "middle men" between the whites and more remote tribes and thus pass on their worn out metal goods at a profit to the former user.
17 James O. Pattie and his friends attempted to rescue four or five Spanish women from the Comanches, but only two escaped. At the first alarm, the Indians killed the others. Robert G. Cleland, This Reckless Breed of Men (New York, 1950), p. 168.
"If a treaty is once concluded with those Indians; their interest, as well as their conveniences, would induce them to remain on good terms with the citizens of the U. States.

"We beg leave to present to the consideration of Gov. Cass, the plan of directing the persons [unreadable] (if any should be) to proceed by way of the West of Red River, and approach the Indians by way of the Old Pawnee village in the mountains of Texas; or to pass up the Brazos, where they will meet the Comanches, who are friendly with the Americans in Texas, and on good terms with the Pawnees, after hunting and camping with them. Should any plan be adopted and that by the route of the Old village be thought best, we would remark that it may be greatly proper to take some of the most trusty of the Caddo tribe along as they are said to keep up a regular intercourse with the Pawnees and are charged in many instances, of uniting with them, in war parties, in horse stealing."

"Should the enterprise be undertaken, and men can be procured who are suitable, they will, of course, be left to consult such measures, and adopt such means, as they may deem most proper, to effect the object and meet the wishes of the Government.

"Washington City
Browns' Hotel
12th March 1834

"With great consideration
we have the honor to be
Your Mo Ob. Servants
"Sam Houston
“Andrew Hughes"

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**Plans for a Linguistic Survey of Oklahoma**

The following outline for a survey of Indian tribal languages in Oklahoma is contributed by William E. Bittle, Department of Anthropology, University of Oklahoma:

In recent years, the survey method has come to be exploited more fully as a prerequisite to intensive research in a variety of disciplines. Especially in certain of the social sciences, where the formulation of research problems is often no more difficult than the determination or limitation of the materials which will be utilized in their solution, the survey has provided a method whereby such materials may be investigated and limited so that any research plan is really feasible in terms of time, money and personnel available. The function of the survey has been recognized, perhaps, most clearly in the field of archaeology. In a recent article, Bell has pointed out that archaeological surveys have frequently been stimulated in this, and other, areas by the threat to pre-historic materials represented by plans of the Federal Government to construct reservoirs and inundate large sections of land. Since neither the extent of archaeological deposits nor their relative importance can be effectively anticipated, it is necessary to sample the materials in a systematic way, and to attempt to provide a more or less adequate description of such materials before they are permanently lost.

In many other areas of the United States, surveys in archaeology have for long been recognized as antecedent to informed research, and have been permanently lost.

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18 The Caddo Indians aided the Texans in many scouting parties.  
19 Brown's Indian Queen Hotel was located on Pennsylvania Avenue and often served as Houston's base of operations in Washington.  
organized to sample prehistoric remains and to allow scholars to lay careful plans for systematic excavation. It is, of course, this latter, more deliberate kind of survey which is preferable, since in this case the decision to excavate a particular area rests upon factors internal to the discipline rather than upon such accidental and extraneous factors as are represented by a program of soil and water conservation.

There is, I think, a self-evident analogy between the archaeological survey and the linguistic survey, especially insofar as aim and method are concerned. The linguistic survey, like the similar venture in archaeology, defines as its primary goal the circumscription of the field of study. Moreover, the need for such a survey of the state today is nearly as pressing as for the survey of prehistorical materials. The study of several languages spoken in Oklahoma is imperative, and must be undertaken within the next year or so, if we intend ever having any information whatever on them. In the past, several languages once spoken by a large number of individuals have been described under the difficult condition of utilizing a sole surviving speaker. Tonkawa, for example, is reported to have been described from the speech of one of the last speakers of that language; and it is far from inconceivable that within the next decade, a number of languages now spoken by a dozen or more individuals will be quite extinct.

However, for the great majority of languages the possibility of extinction is not great. But this in no wise minimizes either the value or the need for a survey of such languages, for the very important reasons outlined above. It is the intent, then, of this discussion, to outline the major steps to be taken in the establishment of such a survey.

One of the first steps to be taken by the Survey would be an enumeration of the languages of the state. That is, it would be necessary to determine exactly which languages are still spoken, and by how many individuals. This would not be a separate operation, but rather an adjunct of certain other operations. Of primary interest to the Survey, and to students of linguistics as well, would be a census of native speakers in the state. This information, in part available through individuals who have worked, or are working, with groups in the field, must for the most part come from the Indians themselves, and from the several agencies which serve them. It is tentatively proposed that questionnaires be compiled and sent out both to tribal representatives and to members of the various tribes. The information which will be requested will include estimates, subjective to be sure, of the number of speakers who are relatively fluent in a particular language, along with other information which is regarded as pertinent to the investigation. The personal questionnaires will help provide a check on the materials provided by Tribal Councils, and will also allow for the specifying of native speakers. Thus, in order that the Survey fulfill part of its proposed function, it is desirable that names of individual speakers be maintained on file for purposes of guiding the later program of the Survey.

It need hardly be pointed out that this technique for collecting information is not altogether sound in certain respects. It is, for example, notoriously unsafe to depend too heavily upon estimates made by untrained persons as to self-fluency. A further difficulty lies in the fact that fluency cannot adequately be defined in our questionnaires, with the obvious result that our estimates will cover a range from absolute fluency (perhaps even monolingualism) to something less than fleeting acquaintance with a language. But this problem is at the present time unavoidable. Unfortunately, the Department of the Interior does not maintain census records which provide the information desired. It is clear, however, that these initial estimates will ultimately be checked in the field by trained
The primary job of the estimate, then, will be to provide the Survey with any information on native speakers and their location in the state.

At the same time questionnaires are being distributed and received, the second important task will be carried out. It is, of course, necessary to determine exactly what research has been done, and is available, on the languages of Oklahoma. Certain of the languages are quite well documented; others have never been studied. Thus, Kiowa-Apache, one of the important western Oklahoma languages, has, until recently, been touched upon only indirectly in the course of a larger study of the Apachean languages of the Southwest. Similarly, Kiowa, Comanche and several others, lack complete descriptions in print. In order that work not be unnecessarily duplicated, then, the preparation of an extensive and exhaustive bibliography of Oklahoma languages is indicated. This will involve at least two processes. The first of these will include a compilation of all published materials on the languages spoken within the state. The second process, and one equally important with the first, will be the determination of the extent to which materials on Oklahoma languages have been prepared but not published. There are, for example, a number of persons who have, from time to time, worked intensively with one group or another. Much of this material has either never been analyzed, or at least, has never been published. Where possible, those materials which are still unanalyzed, and which are represented only by collections of field notes, will be duplicated in the files of the Survey. Thus, in certain cases individuals may have collected materials which they do not propose to analyze, and which they may well be willing to transmit to us for analysis. On the other hand, in those instances where materials are now being prepared, record of that fact will be kept and taken into consideration when plans for field work are fully formulated.

These, then, are the preliminaries, necessary in order that information may be collected and a general program of research formulated. A third major source of information is, of course, the people of the state. Just as many of the archaeological sites of importance have been called to the attention of the Department of Anthropology by interested citizens, it is hoped that relevant information will be provided by those living in the state who frequently come into contact with Indian groups, and whose acquaintance with those groups is intimate. In many cases, this information will serve as a partial check on the data furnished by the tribes themselves. In other cases, it will constitute the only information we may have in the Survey on a particular language. All such information received will be maintained in the files, and utilized conjointly with other information in defining particular field problems.

When our information on native languages is more or less complete, and when there are available to us trained individuals who are competent to carry out scientific analysis of language, the major task of the Survey will be undertaken.

The discipline of anthropology has come to realize more and more in recent years that linguistic materials are invaluable aids to the solution of historical and synchronic problems. But before any linguistic material can be utilized in conjunction with these problems, it must be ordered according to well-defined descriptive practices. That is, each language must be analyzed by modern phonemic methods in order that it be useful. Thus, the collection of materials from the various groups throughout the state will constitute the primary task of the Survey. It is hoped that individuals, trained in recording techniques, may be utilized for the collection of this data, which will then either be analyzed by them, or by other persons working with the Survey. The Survey will, in any event,
remain the central agency for information, maintaining at least duplicate copies of all field materials which will be completed as time allows. In addition, it is hoped that these materials may be made available to individuals throughout the state, or in other areas, who are interested in working on particular languages. In short, the primary importance of such an endeavor is to stimulate directed research in linguistic studies, rather than to monopolize it.

In order that the materials which are prepared on the languages of Oklahoma may be presented to a large group of scholars and interested laymen, it is contemplated that a publication series will be established which will provide such a vehicle for the dissemination of information.

As is clearly indicated by the general tenor of the remarks above, the Survey is as yet sub-embronic. A pilot study is, though, now under way which involves the use of some two hundred questionnaires. In a reasonable time, we will be able to evaluate our methods, and to determine what percent response we may expect.

The success of the endeavor will in large part depend, in the initial phases, upon the cooperation of Indians throughout the state, and equally, upon other persons interested in the systematic study of Indian languages. Whether or not the actual field work program will mature in one year of five, further, depends upon a variety of other factors, not the least of which is the availability of trained analysts. In any event, it appears that the collection of information on spoken languages will provide an invaluable guide to further study in the state by our local scholars and those of other regions. Full fruition of the program is to be hoped for; but the preliminaries will be our first consideration.

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