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INDIANS OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS

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PREFACE

The following account is written to give the history of the Indians who have at one time inhabited southeast Texas, and of those who still inhabit it. The account begins with the history of each tribe as far back as any facts can be found concerning them and continues through their stay in Texas. Always the advance of the whites made trouble for the Indians, and in almost every case compelled them to give up their land. Time makes a different history each day, but the history of the Indians is an account of their retreat before the oncoming whites, broken promises, and the bitter resistance with which they met these things. In a speech to the United States Senate, Sam Houston said of them:

> As a race they have withered from the land. Their arrows are broken, and their springs are dried up; their cabins are in the dust. Their council fires have long since gone out on the shore, and their war cry is fast dying out to the untrodden west. Slowly and sadly they climb the mountains and read their doom in the setting sun. They are shrinking before the mighty tide which is pressing them away; they must soon hear the roar of the last wave that will settle over them forever. Ages hence, the inquisitive white man, as he stands by some growing city, will ponder on the structure of their disturbed remains and wonder to what manner of person they belonged. They will live only in the songs and chronicles of their exterminator. Let these be faithful to their rude virtues as men, and pay tribute to their unhappy fate as a people.

The facts which the writer has given were obtained in

the libraries of the Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College in Nacogdoches, of the North Texas State Teachers College in Denton, and of the University of Texas in Austin. Other reliable sources were sought through personal interviews with members of the Alabama-Coushatta tribe.

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CHAPTER I

INDIANS WHO ONCE INHABITED SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Of the two hundred and fifty-two tribes of Indians who once inhabited Texas, multitudes of them pitched their tepees in southeast Texas. There were Indians along the shallow bays and inlets of the coast, and in the big timber. They roamed the coast east to the Sabine River. Some tribes were exterminated in the fierce wars. Remnants and scattered detachments of others were pushed into Mexico. Some found a new lease on life on reservations provided by the United States Government. But Texas was the last frontier for a majority of them.

It seems that the aboriginal tribes which occupied Texas came from widely different and distant localities, arriving in different ages, extending back some four centuries. According to Kenney, there is nothing to indicate a common origin but the race, while their language, having no common radical words, shows that their ancestors were aliens in extremely ancient times. Yet all tribes were organized on the same plan.[1]

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[1]M. M. Kenney, "Tribal Society Among Texas Indians," _The Southwestern Historical Quarterly_, I (1897), 26-33.

The Cenis, or Asinais, were in Texas when La Salle came in 1685, and it is recorded that they treated the distracted Frenchmen kindly.[2] They lived near Buffalo Bayou and on the Trinity River, where their chief trading village was located. The center of their empire was not far from Cold Spring in Polk County.[3] They were distinguished for their hospitality and gentleness of disposition. Some of them were comparatively advanced in culture. They wore garments of goatskins, dressed and painted, and used fine earthen vessels and well-wrought baskets of their own manufacture. They more nearly lived a home life than did many of the other tribes. They tied the branches of trees overhead and thatched them with vines and leaves for protection from the rain and the sun. They made beds for themselves, and only two families were allowed to occupy one of the tree-covered houses. They traded their corn with the Comanches for horses.

La Salle was lured northwestward by rumors obtained from the Cenis and other friendly Indians that there were rich silver mines in the interior. In 1687 he left twenty men at Fort St. Louis, took sixteen with him, and departed in search of Canada. He put his baggage on the horses that the Cenis had let him have, wore shoes made of green buffalo hide, followed the tracks of the buffalo, and won the favor of the Indians

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[2]H. Yoakum, _History of Texas_, I, 29.

[3]_Ibid._, p. 36.

as he progressed on his journey.[4] On one of his trips from Fort St. Louis in search of the Mississippi, he became ill and stayed for months in the lodge of a Cenis chief. When Tonti was searching for La Salle, he questioned Indian runners from the south and west as they passed his camp on their hunting raids. At last, when he went southward in quest of him, it was from the friendly Cenis that he learned the fate of the man he loved.

Some historians say that the Cenis disappeared from Texas as if by magic. Others say that they gradually fell back before the oncoming tribes until a battle was fought on the left bank of the Trinity, in which the Cenis Nation was utterly destroyed.[5]

The Karankawa tribe lived along the coast and along the lower Brazos and Colorado Rivers.[6] They were a tribe sometimes called by other names: Coco, Guapite, Cujane, and Copane. They must have been the most ferocious looking of all the Indians. They were giants in stature, measuring six feet in height, and they were stoutly built. Each man carried a bow as long as himself, from which he shot arrows with great force and precision. Their language was the lowest form of

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[4]H. S. Williams, "Bancroft's Account of Marquette, Joliet, and La Salle," *The Historians' History of the World*, XXIII, 71. Louise S. Hasbrouck, *La Salle*, p. 191.

[5]Yoakum, *op. cit.*, I, 36.

[6]Anna Muckleroy, "The Indian Policy of the Republic of Texas," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXV, 229.

human speech.[7] They did not cultivate the soil, but roamed the whole of the Texas coast fishing, hunting, and gathering wild berries, roots, and eggs of sea-fowls.[8]

From the fact that they encountered first the rude shock of the white man, they have been considered even more hostile than they probably were. They were long thought to be cannibals, but no authentic fact has been established concerning this belief.[9] However: "They annoyed La Salle near Matagorda Bay, terrified the early American colonists, and committed many murders among the white settlers."[10] They were a small tribe of only a few hundred warriors, but throughout the years from the time La Salle came until 1847, they troubled the people who came to Texas. La Salle's heart was heavy because he had missed the mouth of the Mississippi. To add to his troubles, the Indians who had swarmed to the coast in great numbers to greet the pale-faced strangers became troublesome. La Salle sent one of his men to negotiate with them, but, not being able to understand them, he seized two of their canoes and some skins, and returned.[11] The Indians immediately killed two of La Salle's men -- probably the first European

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[7]Kenney, op. cit., I, 28.

[8]Muckleroy, op. cit., p. 230.

[9]Yoakum, op. cit., I, 28.

[10]L. W. Newton and H. P. Gambrell, A Social and Political History of Texas, p. 49.

[11]Yoakum, op. cit., I, 21.

blood shed upon Texas soil. After this incident, the Indians hung near where the Frenchmen were working and shot their deadly arrows at them.

When De Leon took charge of Fort St. Louis, the Karankawas were so warlike that the white men were forced to abandon the place. The mission of Espiritu was built among them in 1718, but it proved to be a failure.

In 1719 a French ship bound for the Mississippi drifted near the place where La Salle had landed. Monsieur Belleisle and some of the other men went ashore for recreation. They did not return at the appointed signal, and the captain sailed away without them. They were so much in despair that finally all of them died except Belleisle, who was almost starved from eating worms, insects, and herbs when his lost dog appeared with an opossum which he had killed.[12] Soon after this, Belleisle fell into the hands of the Karankawas. He thought they were going to eat him, but they gave him to an old woman who made him her slave. After living among them for a long time, he escaped to join St. Denis.

When the French tried to recover La Salle's fort in 1721, the Indians threw themselves against them with such fury that they quickly withdrew. When La Fitte went to Galveston Island, a quarrel immediately arose between his men and the Karankawas.[13]

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[12]Ibid., p. 70.

[13]H. B. Crozier, "Texas Indians Survivors of Large Tribes," Dallas News, November 18, 1930.

La Fitte and his men fell upon them at "Three Trees" and practically destroyed them. This increased their hatred for the whites, but they did not bother La Fitte again.

During the years of 1823 and 1824 the Karankawas sought revenge on the whites by attacking the colonists, but they were not successful in their fights.[14] They became tired of this unprofitable warfare in which their numbers were rapidly being diminished, and asked for peace. They proposed to meet Austin at La Bahia to make a treaty. Austin carried one hundred volunteers and met them at the creek four miles east of La Bahia. Peace was made and the Indians agreed that they would not come east of the San Antonio River.[15]

The remnant of the tribe went into Mexico in 1847. Thus the fierce Karankawas, once the terror of the coast and long believed to be cannibals because they resented the encroachment of the whites upon them, melted before the coming of the pale-faces.

The Caddo and the Hasinai, or Tejas Confederacies, are given as two divisions, but it seems that at different periods in their history some tribes might have belonged to different Confederacies. Both were divisions of the Caddoan linguistic stock, were similar in customs, and spoke almost the same language.[16] It is thought that by the time of the Texas Revo-

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[14] N. Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, pp. 20-22.

[15] Yoakum, op. cit., I, 226.

[16] Fred W. Hodge, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, I, 179-181.

lution there was such a small number of each group that the tribes which were left of each had united.[17]

The Hasinai, or Tejas, Confederacy at one time consisted of various tribes, some of which were the Nabedache, Nacogdoche, Neche, Nasoni, Nadacoa, Nacono, Nacachau, and Nechaui.

Tejas is a name that is thought to mean "friends" or "allies". It was given to the whole group by the Spanish when De Leon encountered them while searching for La Salle's colony because he found a number of tribes on friendly terms with each other, and because they were friendly toward him.

The Nabedache tribe possesses the distinction of having had placed in their village by the Texas Historic and Landmarks Association of San Antonio, Texas, the historical marker which is supposed to commemorate the location of the first Spanish mission built in Texas in 1690, known as San Francisco de los Tejas. It is on San Pedro Creek near the rural village of Weches in Houston County, between the towns of Alto and Crockett, and is in the center of the Tejas tribe. A thick forest still surrounds the mission.[18] Although this was the center, their seat of government was near the Bradshaw place some few miles from the mission near the Neches River on the old San Antonio road. Three large mounds remain as evidence.[19]

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[17]Muckleroy, op. cit., p. 232.

[18]Albert Woldert, "The Location of the Tejas Indian Village and the Spanish Missions in Houston County, Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXVIII, 210.

[19]Yoakum, op. cit., I, 70. Information obtained by the writer from a trip to the site.

The location of this mission helps to locate the bounds of the old Confederacy. The surrounding country leads one to believe the statement is true that the Indians cultivated the soil, because it is suitable for anything that they might have planted.

The Nasonites helped Belleisle escape from the Karankawas. Some of them who visited the Karankawas mentioned in Belleisle's hearing that there were men like him in their country. He made ink of soot, wrote on his commission, and privately asked one of them to take it to these people. They carried it to St. Denis at Natchitoches, for which he gave them presents. Then he began to cry. When the Indians asked why he was crying, he told them that he wept for his brother who was in captivity. They promised to get Belleisle to him in two moons. They stole him from the Karankawas and had him with St. Denis at the appointed time.[20]

The Tejas Indians as a whole became distinguished for their kindness to strangers, and it was for them that Texas was named. Although some of them might have joined more hostile tribes, by 1836 the majority of them had passed into oblivion.

The home of the early Caddo Confederacy was along the lower Red River of Louisiana. La Salle encountered some of them in 1687 along the banks of the Sabine, Neches, Trinity,

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[20]Yoakum, _op_. _cit_., I, 70.

Brazos, and Colorado Rivers.[21] Some of the tribes at one time were the Aes, Adaes, Abadarko, and the Abadoche. Numbers of them were in Texas, but not all were in southeast Texas. The Caddos were a distinctive Indian race in no wise related to the Creeks, the Chickasaws, or any other primitive dwellers of the southern area of the American, French, and Spanish possessions.

In 1828 the small tribe known as the Aes lived between the Brazos and the Colorado Rivers. In 1837 they were living in Nacogdoches County and were hostile to the Texans.[22] However, they were soon brought to friendly terms with the whites.

The Bidai, the Orkokisa, and the Athacapa lived along the lower Trinity, Neches, and Sabine Rivers. These tribes were closely associated and were probably related. At one time it was thought they were Caddoan, but this was found to be untrue. They lived on a higher plane than some of the other Indians, but they were so few in numbers that their history in Texas is of little importance.[23]

Some of the immigrant Indian tribes to come into the uninhabited regions of southeast Texas as a result of the whites pushing westward were the Choctaw and Chickasaw, the Creek, the Cherokee, the Alabama, the Coushatta, the Biloxi, and the Muskogee.[24]

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[21] Hodge, *op. cit.*, I, 179-181.

[22] Muckleroy, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 237-241.

The Choctaw tribe came to Texas from southern Mississippi and Georgia. They located on the Sabine and Neches Rivers. A small party of Choctaws and Chickasaws lived in the counties of Nacogdoches and Shelby on the Attoyac and Patroon Rivers.[25]

They were ancient enemies, but they put aside their hostility and lived together in peace in Texas. Here they became very good agriculturists, and remained at peace with the Republic.[26] The Creeks attempted to come to Texas just before the Texas Revolution, but the settlers tried to keep them out. A small remnant was located in eastern Texas soon after the Revolution.[27]

The Cherokees are a branch of the Iroquoian family. They occupied a more prominent place in the affairs and history of the United States than any other tribe, with the possible exception of the Iroquois.[28] They belonged to the so-called Five Civilized Tribes. They formerly occupied all of the mountain region of the present states of West Virginia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. De Soto found some of them living in Alabama and Georgia when he went through that part of the United States in 1540.[29]

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[25]Ibid., p. 238.

[26]Hodge, op. cit., I, 288-290.

[27]Ibid., pp. 961-963.

[28]V. O. King, "The Cherokee Nation of Indians," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, II (1898), 58.

[29]Ibid., p. 58. M. V. O'Shea, "Cherokee," The World Book, II, 1299.

The tribal name means "cave people", in allusion to the numerous caves in the mountain country where they once lived. They made a treaty with the United States in 1785 in which the title to the lands they occupied was confirmed. From that time the tribe made rapid progress in civilization. Sequoya invented an alphabet which soon enabled them to read in their own language.[30] In 1827 they established the first Indian printing press in the United States.

In 1834, at the height of their prosperity, gold was discovered in Georgia, within the limits of the Cherokee Nation, and at once a powerful agitation was begun for the removal of the Cherokees. They had adopted a tribal constitution and engaged in the pursuit of peace and industry. They claimed exemption from the jurisdiction of the state, and appealed to the Supreme Court for the protection of their rights. In Jackson's first annual message he had a great deal to say about the Indians, and he suggested setting aside land west of the Mississippi River for them to inhabit.[31] In his third annual message in 1831 Jackson said:

> At the request of the authorities of Georgia the registration of Cherokee Indians for emigration has been resumed, and it is confidently expected that one-half, if not two-thirds, of that tribe will follow the wise example of their more westernly brethren.[32]

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[30]Excerpt from the Handbook of American Indians, Bulletin 30, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1910, p. 4475.

[31]James D. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, II, 1021.

[32]Ibid., p. 1117.

Jackson was in favor of removing the Indians all the time, and even after the Supreme Court had decided in their favor, they were gradually pushed out of Georgia. After years of hopeless struggle under the leadership of John Ross, they submitted to the inevitable and went beyond the Mississippi into Oklahoma.[33]

In the meantime, in 1822, some had gone into Arkansas and Texas. Before any colony contract had been made in Texas, they established a village north of the present town of Nacogdoches.[34] Some of them went to Mexico in that same year to make a treaty with Iturbide authorizing the permanent settlement of their tribe where it was then located. Free and peaceful rights to cultivate their crops and the privileges of natives having been guaranteed to them, they returned from Mexico satisfied with their agreement. An order was sent by the supreme government of Mexico in 1831 to the political chief of Bexar directing a compliance with the promises made by the supreme government to the Cherokees. They were told by the political chief that "for the preservation of peace with the agricultural tribes, he had offered them their establishment on a fixed tract of land."[35]

For the fourteen years preceding Texas independence the

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[33]Excerpt from the Handbook of American Indians, Bulletin 30, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1910, p. 4475.

[34]Yoakum, *op. cit.*, II, 264.

[35]*Ibid.*, p. 265.

Cherokees occupied the land in peace. No person had questioned their rights to it. They had not pushed the whites out, for the Indians were there first. By 1836 they were occupying that part of Texas which is bounded on the east by the Angelina River, on the west by the Neches River, on the south by the old San Antonio road, and on the north by the Sabine River.[36]

When the war clouds of the Texas Revolution were hovering over Texas, it was of vast importance to the Texans that they should have the friendship of the Cherokees. More than a thousand warriors had emigrated from the United States to the eastern frontier in Texas. These had only to turn their savage arms upon Texas to decide the contest in favor of Mexico.[37] The people of Nacogdoches and San Augustine feared much from them. The Cherokees were interested in keeping their land, and their movements caused the Texans to become anxious. Chief Bowles and Big Mush went to Nacogdoches in 1835 in the interest of the territory they occupied. The political chief of Nacogdoches wrote:

> The supreme government of the State, satisfied with the intentions of the Cherokees, Cooshattis, and other Indians, will not permit them to be disturbed in the lands which they now occupy until the supreme government shall determine upon the matter.[38]

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[36]John H. Reagan, "The Expulsion of the Cherokees from East Texas," _The Southwestern Historical Quarterly_, I (1897), 38.

[37]Yoakum, _op. cit._, I, 358.

[38]E. W. Winkler, "The Cherokee Indians in Texas," _The Southwestern Historical Quarterly_, VII (1903), 153.

The Consultation of 1835 made the following very solemn pledge to the Cherokees:

> We solemnly declare that we will guaranty to them the peaceable enjoyment of their rights to their lands as we do our own. We solemnly declare that all grants, surveys, or location of lands, within the bounds hereinbefore mentioned, made after the settlement of the said Indians, are, and of right ought to be utterly null and void.[39]

Each member of the Consultation signed his name, setting forth that the Cherokee Indians had derived their just claims from the government of Mexico to the lands lying north of the San Antonio road and the Neches, and west of the Angelina and Sabine Rivers. This seemed necessary to declare, because emissaries of Mexico were already among these Indians striving to obtain their aid against the American settlers in Texas.[40]

Throughout the war the people of eastern Texas felt that danger was near. The movements of the Indians did not please them, and when C. H. and William Sims were sent to get information from the Cherokees, they reported them to be hostile, and already making preparations for war. They said that a large body of Indians composed of Caddos, Keechies, Ionies, Wacoes, and Comanches were expected to attack the settlers, and that the Cherokees gave every indication of joining them.[41]

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[39] Yoakum, *op. cit.*, II, 266.

[40] *Ibid.*, I, 63.

[41] *Ibid.*, II, 127.

However, it is to the credit of the Cherokees that they took no part in the Texas Revolution. They hoped to hold their land if Texas won the encounter.

Because they were located in a desirable part of Texas, surveyors, soon after the Texas Revolution, went into their forests. Commissioners tried to bring about a peaceable removal of the Indians. When the new government of Texas refused them a title to their lands, the Cherokees made numerous raids upon the whites. Chief Bowles contended that many of the thefts and murders were committed by tribes going through the country, but the Cherokees were undeniably guilty of the massacre of the Killough, Wood, and Williams families. These were the most horrible of all East Texas Indian tragedies, and brought about an immediate expulsion of the Cherokees.[42]

Sam Houston liked Indians, and his policy of conciliation proved successful in most cases. He especially had a kind feeling for the Cherokees, because it had been to them in Arkansas that he went when his first marriage was broken up. However, he was not able to hold their land for them. During the administration of Lamar, whose policy was opposite to that of Houston, the friction between the Cherokees and the whites reached a climax. In June, 1839, Indian Agent Martin Lacy, accompanied by John H. Reagan, was sent to Chief Bowles to announce that the Cherokees must remove beyond Red River,

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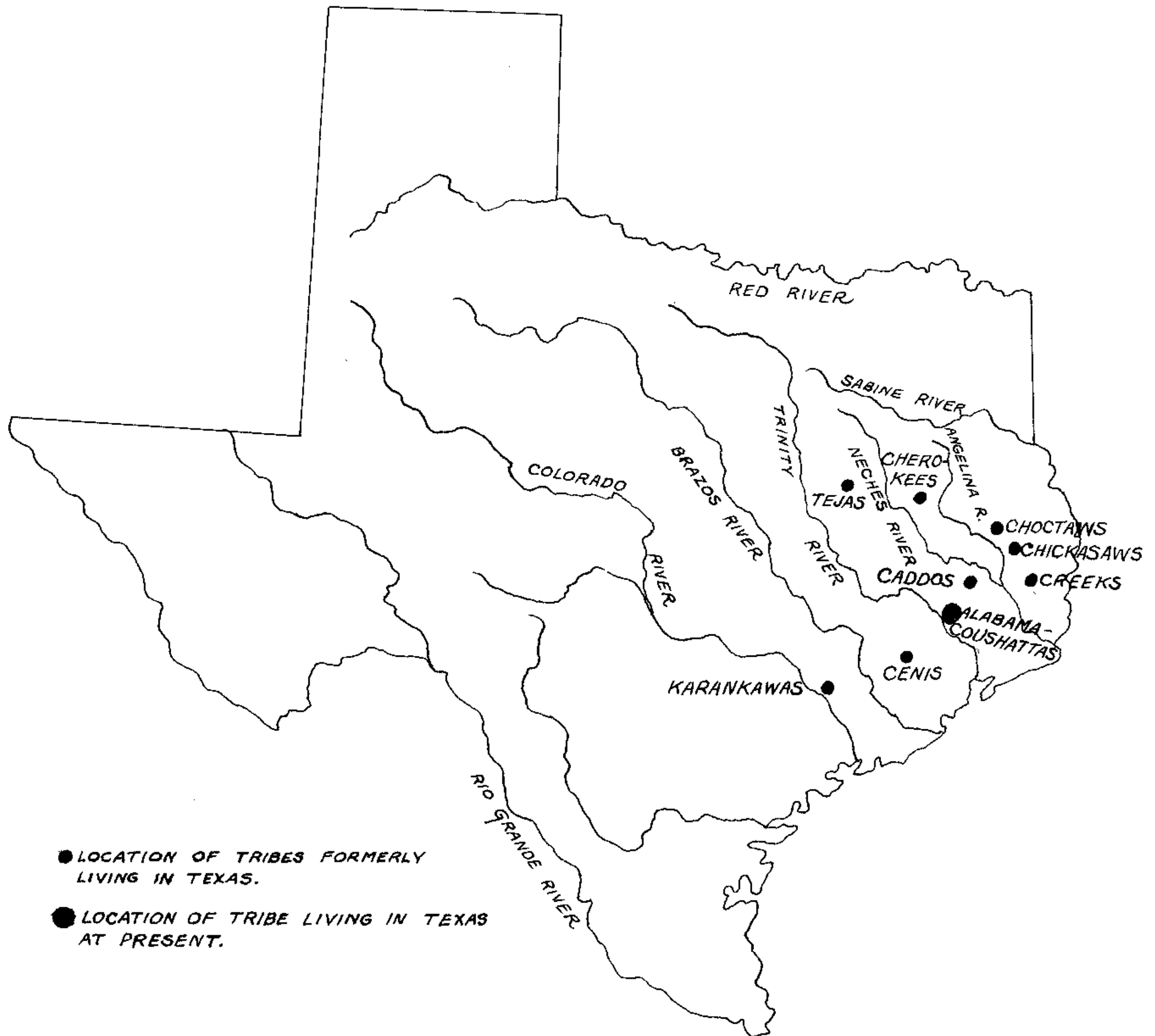
[42]Hattie J. Roach, _A History of Cherokee County_, p. 6.



MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE VARIOUS TRIBES OF INDIANS INHABITING SOUTHEAST TEXAS IN THE PAST AND AT THE PRESENT TIME.

peaceably if they would, forcibly if need be; that if they chose to go peaceably they might take their removable property and would be paid for the improvements on the land at a fair price to be fixed by a commission.[43]

Chief Bowles seated his visitors on a log by a spring near his house, and listened to the half-breed Codra interpret the President's indictment of his people. Bravely he replied in their defense, asking for time to consult his men. Ten days later at the same place, which was at the village of Redlawn about three miles from the present town of Alto, the chief sorrowfully reported that his council had voted war. His speech was concluded with the following words:

> I am an old man. I shall not live much longer. If I fight the white man will kill me. If I refuse to fight my people will kill me. But for a long time I have led my people and I must still stand by them.[44]

War came quickly, and Chief Bowles was killed; the victorious Texans encamped on one side of the battlefield, and all through the night heard the wailing voices of an Indian chant for their beloved chief. The words given represent merely the sound of the chant as recalled by Mrs. Fannie Moore of Tyler. They are as follows:

> Go shee peevie as she prom o long,
> Go shee peevie as she prom o long,
> She neerinee, she neeshe gayshee,
> Palogoshe peevie as she prom o long.[45]

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[43]*Ibid.*, p. 12. [44]*Ibid.*, p. 1. [45]*Ibid.*

The Cherokees retreated to the Neches River bottom, and in time the scattered remnants of the tribe quit the country and went to Oklahoma.[46] In 1889 they gave up their tribal government and became citizens of the United States, the Dawes Act of 1887 permitting them to do so. Many of the tribe are now among the most prosperous, influential, and cultured citizens of Oklahoma.

Article nineteen of the state colonization law of 1825 provided that the Indians should be allowed to take up land in any of the settlements on the same terms offered to the white colonists.[47] However, it is believed that no legal title was ever given to the Cherokees by the Mexicans or the Texans.[48]

The Coushattas and the Alabamas were not generally known in Texas until long after Texas had been the home of the white man. Allied with the Alabamas were the Biloxi, a small tribe originally from southern Mississippi. A few of the Muskogee tribe wandered to Texas about 1834 and became associated with the Alabama, Coushatta, and Biloxi tribes.[49]

Both native and immigrant tribes played an important part in the history of southeast Texas. All of them, with the exception of the Alabama-Coushatta tribe, became smaller in number and were removed from the state. The population of

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[46]Yoakum, _op_. _cit_., II, 270.

[47]H. P. Gammel, _Laws of Texas_, I, 96-106.

[48]Muckleroy, _op_. _cit_., p. 247. [49]_Ibid_., p. 238.

some of these tribes about 1836 is given as follows:

Alabamas........................	250
Coushattas......................	350
Cherokees and some other civilized tribes..................	8,000
Some small tribes (probably Caddos).......................	500[50]

In 1936 the total Indian population of Texas was given as follows: Alabama-Coushattas, 321.[51]

Texans worked slowly and unrelentingly until few Indians were longer on Texas soil. Then they went to work with their agriculture, their commerce, and with the making of their laws. When they thought of Indians, they thought of murder, stealing, and plundering. There is little left today to remind us of them except one reservation, and the names that they bestowed upon the state -- some streams, some counties, and some towns of the state. Of all of the Indians that once roamed over Texas, there is now within her boundaries a pathetic remnant of only the two tribes of Alabama and Coushatta Indians.

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[50] Ibid., p.241. Yoakum, op. cit., I, 197.

[51] "Polk County Indians Plan for Festival," Dallas News, June 22, 1938.

CHAPTER II

EARLY HISTORY OF THE ALABAMAS AND COUSHATTAS

Indian Village, as the present home of the Alabamas and Coushattas is called, is approximately ninety miles northeast of Houston, sixty miles northwest of Beaumont, and fifteen miles east of Livingston in Polk County.

The road connecting the reservation with the outside world was for many years almost impassable, but it was designated as part of the state highway system in 1930, and, despite the fact that it is not hard-surfaced, it has been greatly improved so that Indian Village is easily reached by automobile.

Here the Indians live quietly by themselves surrounded by the beautiful pine forests and moss-covered oaks of southeast Texas. Their houses are scattered throughout the forests of their reservation, with a few acres of land cleared around each house for the raising of their beans, squash, and corn. The Coushattas, living close to the Alabamas, soon moved with them, and both tribes have intermingled so that their names have become synonymous.[1] These Indians are in

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[1]Fred L. Verity, "I. E. C. W. on the Alabama and Coushatta Indian Reservation," Indians at Work, June 15, 1936, p. 24.

Texas now because, as Chief Sun-Kee explained it, "Sam Houston say stay, we stay."[2]

The Alabamas are a tribe whose history has a tinge of mystery and romance. Their fathers and grandfathers acted as scouts for Andrew Jackson, Chief Sun-Kee's brother Bob acted as a scout for Lee in the Civil War, and their people were friends of the Texans during the Texas Revolution.[3] The two tribes of Alibamu and Koasati Indians, which are commonly spoken of as the Alabamas and Coushattas, are related. They are of the Muskhogean stock, and both were members of the upper Creek Confederacy.[4]

The Alabamas appear in history for the first time upon the coming of De Soto. In an account of their trip, Biedma, one of the writers for the expedition, says that after leaving Mavila or Maubila, they marched to the northwest until they reached the province of the Alibamo,[5] which was probably in the present state of Mississippi.[6] They went out to search for corn and found that the Alabamas had built a stockade at

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[2]"Texas' Only Indian Reservation," Huntington Weekly News, October 15, 1935.

[3]Ibid. "Report of Committee to Investigate Surroundings of Alabama Indians in Polk County, Texas," Texas Senate Journal, February 15, 1929, p. 792.

[4]Hodge, op. cit., I, 719-720.

[5]Edward G. Bourne, Narrative of the Career of Hernando De Soto in the Conquest of Florida, II, 24.

[6]Harriet Smither, "The Alabama Indians of Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXVI, 83.

a strategic point to keep the Spaniards back. De Soto took the fort, but it was after a considerable loss of men. Another one of the writers calls the place Fort Alibamo, and says that they went on to an island village, Costeche, which was, perhaps, the upper village of the Coushattas.[7]

Dabney White says that from his research while dwelling among the Alabamas, he is convinced that the name of the tribe means "people that gather mulberries". This tribe's distinction was that they gathered mulberries and held a thanksgiving feast before eating them. Some have thought that the word "Alabama" means "here we rest" because they escaped from a forest fire, and just as they made their way across a river from the fire the captain kissed the ground and shouted, "Alabama," or "Here we rest."[8] Coushatta, or Koasati, is a name which appears to contain the word "cane" or "reed", and it has been suggested that it may signify "white cane".[9]

During the course of a century the Alabamas and Coushattas pushed eastward and lived below the confluence of the Coosa and Talapoosa Rivers.[10] Here they joined with the neighboring Indians and traded with the Spanish at Pensacola and with the English of Caroline, exchanging their peltries for lemburg

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[7] Ibid., p. 84.

[8] Dabney White, "Alabama Indians, First Finders of Oil in East Texas, Are Living Penniless But Contented Lives," Dallas News, February 7, 1926.

[9] Hodge, op. cit., I, 719-720.

[10] Ibid.

cloth and blankets of white wool.[11] Iberville, of Louisiana, was quick to see that this Indian trade was valuable, and that it would help to hold the province for France. As a result, he established Fort Louis in 1702, which was the first site of the present city of Mobile.[12] Soon Mobilians, Choctaws, and many other tribes were friends of the French, but the Alabamas were not so easily won. In 1702, 1704, and 1708, they were at war with the French, and it is thought that the English may have influenced them to war against the French soldiers and colonists. While the War of the Spanish Succession was in progress, the Creeks, Cherokees, Catawbas, and Alabamas in 1708 descended the river against the French at Mobile. But the Indians merely burned the huts of the Mobilians above Fort Louis, and went back home.[13]

The English won in the War of the Spanish Succession, but their friendship among the Southern Indians steadily declined. The chief of the Alabamas and some of the chiefs of the other tribes went to Mobile in 1714 and proposed that the whites establish a fort among the Indian nations. The French felt that the Indians' friendship would be valuable to them, and the fort was constructed immediately. It is generally known as Fort Toulouse, but was sometimes called "Aux Alibamous".[14] Here Jesuit missionaries ministered to the spiritual needs of the

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[11]Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders, _Mississippi Provincial Archives_, I, 260-263.

[12]Smither, _op. cit._, p. 83-84. [13]_Ibid._, p. 85.

[14]_Ibid._

Indians, and traders traded with them. According to the diary of a French officer, the Indians brought fruits, other farm products, and furs to trade with them. In the fifty years of their trade with the French a strong friendship was established.[15]

According to the Peace of Paris, 1763, France gave up her claim to land on the North American continent. The country of the Alabamas passed into the hands of the English. The French soldiers knew that it would grieve the Indians for them to leave Fort Toulouse, so they agreed to go quietly in the night. The Alabamas were under the impression that the English sought not only to secure their lands but to stamp out the race. When they learned that the French had left and that the British were coming to Fort Toulouse, they burned their huts, destroyed their crops, gathered their families together, and followed the French down to Mobile.[16] Their chief, Tomath-le-Mingo, was very sad over the homeless condition of his people, and he soon died with these words on his lips: "I have lived like a man, and I am going to die like one."[17]

Some of the Alabamas soon moved to a village about one hundred miles north of New Orleans in Louisiana. A small village was established two miles above Manchac on the Mississippi, another at El Rapide on Red River, and a larger number pushed

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[15]Patsy Garner, "The Alabama Indians," _Texas History Teachers' Bulletin_, October 22, 1924, p. 102.

[16]"A Visit with the Red Man of the Big Thicket," _East Texas_, December, 1927, p. 28.

[17]Smither, _op. cit._, p. 86.

farther westward and settled on the Sabine River. A traveler through the country in 1777 wrote:

> Two miles above Manchac we put ashore at Alabama; this Indian Village is delightfully situated on several swelling green hills, gradually ascending from the verge of the river; the people are a remnant of the ancient Alabama nation, who inhabited the east arm of the great Mobile River, which bears their name to this day.[18]

The Indians cultivated corn, raised hogs, horses, and cattle, and the men acted as boatmen on the rivers. They made reed baskets and earthenware, and the women and children gathered cotton. They were considered harmless and quiet people.[19]

The Coushattas are mentioned very little in the chronicles during the period of French rule due to the fact that the French applied the name "Alibamons" to many tribes living near Fort Toulouse; but in 1790 a large number of the Coushattas followed the Alabamas westward.[20] They established themselves in two villages, one on the Red River, and another on the east bank of the Sabine River, eighty miles south of Natchitoches. In 1812 the Coushattas in the latter village numbered about six hundred.[21]

The United States bought the Louisiana Territory, and the Alabamas and Coushattas found themselves in territory owned by

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[18]William Bartram, The Travels of William Bartram, p. 342.

[19]Smither, op. cit., p. 87.

[20]Hodge, op. cit., I, 362-363, 719.

[21]Ibid., pp. 719-720.

Americans. The Americans tried to maintain friendly terms with the Indians because they realized that it would be to their interest to do so. William Claiborne, governor, and Dr. John Sibley, Indian agent for Orleans Territory, were very careful to keep peace with them.[22] Natchitoches, Louisiana, which was established as a French trading post by St. Denis in 1714,[23] became the chief Indian post, and here the Alabamas and Coushattas traded their bear oil and deerskins for provisions and blankets.[24]

All went well until four Alabama warriors were charged with the murder of a citizen of Opelousas and were sentenced to death. The murderers were promptly given over to the territorial governor, but the Indians were upset because a Choctaw had recently been killed by a white man who had not been brought to trial. Claiborne, in order to show them that the United States would try to be just, pardoned two of the Alabamas.[25]

The Coushattas also had trouble with the whites. Tom, brother of Red Shoes, one of the chiefs of the tribe, was killed by a white man at the salt works near Natchitoches, and all efforts for his arrest failed. Dr. Sibley gave the

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[22]Smither, _op. cit._, p. 87.

[23]Newton and Gambrell, _op. cit._, p. 18.

[24]Smither, _op. cit._, p. 87.

[25]_Ibid._, p. 88.

chiefs presents of provisions and thought they were satisfied. But in a few days the two chiefs of the tribe, with thirty-three men from the Sabine village, appeared at Natchitoches and demanded something else, Red Shoes saying that he could not think of losing his brother for nothing. Dr. Sibley, although resenting it, responded to the demand by giving him some clothes. Soon after this a young Coushatta killed a white man.[26]

Immediately after the murder, in 1807, the Coushattas in the lower village cut their corn and moved across the Sabine to the Trinity River. The Alabamas moved across the Sabine into Texas in the early part of the nineteenth century also. At first, they came to fish and hunt. Each time they stayed a little longer until finally they built a village on what is called "Horsepen Creek" in the present county of Tyler. Here they came to be known as friendly and peaceful Indians, and Austin thought their assistance and that of the Coushattas would be useful in protecting the frontier.[27]

In 1831 the Coushattas lived in two villages on the east bank of the Trinity, not far apart and about forty miles from the mouth. The lower village consisted of fifty-six families, fifty-seven single men, sixty-four single women, and thirty or forty houses. The upper village consisted of sixty-four

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[26] _Ibid._, p. 89.

[27] Emily Sylvestine, "Predicament of Alabama Indians Told by Native Girl," _Frontier Times_, April, 1932, p. 301. Yoakum, _op. cit._, I, 140.

families, thirty-one single men, forty single women, and twenty-five houses of wood. They numbered four hundred and twenty-six in the two villages. Long King was the principal chief of the tribe, and there were two sub-chiefs, Nekima and Keleite.[28]

The Alabamas had been driven from Horsepen Creek by the whites, and they had settled on the west bank of the Neches in three small villages, the principal one being what is known as the old Peach-tree Village.[29] There were one hundred and three families, one hundred single men, sixty-four single women, children not counted, and sixty-nine well-constructed houses. Their chiefs were Tallustah and Oppaya.[30]

Both tribes had horses, cattle and hogs. They planted corn, sweet potatoes, and beans and peas. During the hunting season they procured bear meat and venison for the winter months.[31]

During the Texas Revolution in 1836 it was important that Sam Houston win the favor of the Indians on the lower Trinity River. Houston engaged Hubert and Rankin, Indian agents, to find out how the Coushattas felt on the question of giving the Texans aid. They promised to furnish ninety warriors. Just before the army set out for Harrisburg, Houston sent

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[28]Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 90.

[29]Sylvestine, _op_. _cit_., p. 301.

[30]Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 91. [31]_Ibid_.

Captain Jacob H. Sheppard with a "talk" to the Indians.[32] It is said that Sam Houston himself had earlier camped with the Alabamas, held a council with them, told them about the trouble with Mexico, and advised them to leave Texas. About the time of the "runaway scrape" the Alabamas fell back across the Sabine River, some say to Louisiana, and some to Alabama.[33]

It seems that the Coushattas, or part of them, stayed in Texas. Accounts state that Chief Colita acted as Houston's messenger and scout. When the Texans were escaping from Santa Anna's army, Houston sent word to Colita to kill beeves and feed the refugees. He rendered invaluable assistance to Houston in many ways.[34] Mrs. C. W. Chambers, missionary, gives the following account of their behavior at this time:

> Heavy rains upstream had made the Trinity almost a mile wide at the point where the whites were to cross, and there was only one ferry boat. Wagons bogged down in the mud and oxen foundered in the deep mire, and there was much suffering. When the cavalcade was safely on the east bank, partaking of the bounty of the Coushattas, it was learned that a child had been left on the other side, and Colita swam across on his horse and brought the youngster back to its mother.
>
> After the battle of San Jacinto had terminated so successfully for the Texans, General Houston sent word to Colita to overtake the refugees and tell them to return to their homes. The Coushatta chief almost rode his fine horse to death in carrying the good news.[35]

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[32]Yoakum, _op_. _cit_., II, 132.

[33]Sylvestine, _op_. _cit_., p. 301.

[34]"Report of Committee to Investigate the Conditions and Surroundings of the Indians in Polk County, Texas," _Texas Senate Journal_, February 15, 1929, p. 790.

[35]"Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," _Dallas News_, January 22, 1928.

Soon after the war most of the Alabamas and Coushattas brought their possessions and got together again at what was called Fenced-in-village between the present Indian Village and Woodville in Tyler County.[36] Trouble arose with other tribes of Indians in southeast Texas, but the Alabamas and Coushattas lived quietly in their villages. Although Lamar's Indian policy was not conciliatory, he was opposed to having them moved out of the Republic. In his message of November 12, 1839, he stated:

> To the Coushattas and Alabamas, who seem to have some equitable claim upon the country for the protection of their property and persons, the hand of friendship has been extended with a promise that they shall not be interrupted in the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions, so long as they continue the same amicable relations towards the Govt. which they have hitherto preserved.[37]

The Alabamas and Coushattas have had trouble in keeping land in southeast Texas, and other difficulties have at times disrupted friendly relationships with the whites, but this section of the country nevertheless has become their final stopping place.

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[36]Smither, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[37]*Ibid.*

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT AID TO THE ALABAMAS AND COUSHATTAS

One of the first records that the Alabama or Coushatta Indians asked for help from the government in any way is a "talk" sent to President Lamar by the hundred-year-old counsellor of the Coushatta tribe when he became alarmed for the safety of his people. It is as follows:

> Tell the Big Captain of your nation I am a Friend to the White Man and have been so always; but the Indians are mad, five of the Coushattas are killed, and the balance of the Baptist Indians are now seeking safety among the Brush and trying to collect some of their horses and cows in order to retreat to some strong Nation or Town -- The White Man accuses the Indians of stealing their Horses for an excuse to murder & Rob the Indians -- This is not right and it will if persisted in cause a wound never to be heal'd, I'm now over one hundred years old. I can't take my rifle and Tomahawk and go to War, nor do I want to do so -- I am the White Man's friend, but will not accuse my nation wrongfully.
>
> I have given the White Man my Lands --
>
> I have given them bread -- and the former Big Captain told me that the White man should be my Friends. The white man lies, they are doing evil for good; I am for Peace and all my Indians are for peace, and if your Big Captain is determined to murder us and destroy our property we will be compelled to surrender and die like a Brave Nation should do.
>
> Time was, when we could have driven the White man off -- but we were their Friends and did not want to hurt the White man.
>
> . . . .

> I will live here till I die which cannot be long and I want to know what is to become of my people --[1]

Lamar upheld the Indians because he thought it would be wrong to punish the whole tribe for the wrongs committed by a few.

The Coushattas who had left their home on the Trinity became troublesome and involved in Indian raids. Captain Joseph Sowell with a company of rangers went to put down this trouble in 1841, and he lost his life in doing so.[2]

In 1840, while Texas was still a Republic, the Alabamas and Coushattas sent a petition to Congress for lands somewhere between the Neches and the Trinity Rivers. The Alabamas wanted lant around the Fenced-in-village, and the Coushattas at some place on the Trinity River, preferably at the Baptiste village.[3]

The fourth Congress raised the question and passed a relief act for these Indians, and granted them a reserve for their own. Two leagues, including the Fenced-in-village, were granted to the Alabamas, and two leagues were given to the Coushattas, which took in the Baptiste and Keleite villages. The government was to have jurisdiction over the Indians, and an agent was to be appointed for the two tribes. The act also provided for creating a reserve thirty miles square on the frontier, and all friendly Indians within the Republic should

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[1] Smither, op. cit., p. 96. [2] Ibid., p. 97.

[3] Gammel, op. cit., II, 371.

be removed there as soon as possible.[4] Thomas G. Stubblefield was appointed agent, and Ebenezer Jewell was the surveyor.[5]

Joseph L. Ellis, who was appointed agent for the two tribes after Stubblefield, found in 1844 that Hamilton Washington claimed the lower league of the Coushatta reservation. Washington was willing for them to stay, and the Indian Bureau sent them some farm tools which satisfied them for a while. Ellis found the upper league of the Coushatta reservation completely occupied by whites who refused to give up any part of the land, and these Indians went back to the Indians on Red River. This left about one hundred and forty of the Coushattas in Texas.[6]

Ellis went to the Alabama village and found it in possession of the whites. He learned that when the surveyor went there the Indians thought he was laying out the land for the whites, and, without a word of explanation, they left, some of them going as far as Opelousas. Later they returned, but found their land in the possession of the whites. They settled on the Neches River in Liberty County, cultivated land, and built thirty or more houses. Soon after this, perhaps about 1846, they were forced to leave this land.[7]

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[4] _Ibid_.

[5] Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 94.

[6] _Ibid_., p. 95.

[7] _Ibid_.

When Texas was annexed, the United States assumed responsibility for the Indians within the state, but, for some reason, the Alabamas and Coushattas remained under the protection of the state. In 1853, at the suggestion of Sam Houston, a council was held with their white neighbors at the home of Samuel Rowe in Polk County. Billy Blount, a Muskogee, and Billy John acted as interpreters. The Indians told how the land which Congress granted them in 1840 had been taken by the whites, that it was the desire of the chiefs to bring to this land the whole tribe to live and die. Then the Indians petitioned the Legislature for 1,280 acres of land.[8] As a result of this petition, the state in 1854 purchased the amount of land in Polk County for the Alabamas at a cost of two dollars per acre.[9] In the possession of the tribe is a deed dated in 1854, conveying this title in the name of John Scott. It was secured through the influence of Houston, who impressed upon the Indians that they should keep it forever within the tribe, allowing no white man to build thereon.[10] This homeless tribe was thus rewarded for their friendship to Texas during the Texas Revolution.

The petition that the Coushattas sent to the Legislature got for them a tract of six hundred and forty acres of land.

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[8] _Ibid._, p. 97.

[9] Gammel, _op. cit._, IV, 68.

[10] Verity, _op. cit._, p. 24.

The provisions for purchasing it are given as follows:

> Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas, that six hundred and forty acres of vacant and unappropriated land situated in Liberty, Polk, or Tyler Counties; or any of them, to be selected by the Chiefs of the Coshattee tribe of Indians and the Commissioners hereinafter named, and the same is hereby set apart for the sole use and benefit of, and as a home for the said tribe of Indians.[11]

The land, however, was never located, and the tribe became scattered in Polk and Liberty Counties.

An act of 1858 provided for the removal of the Indians to a reserve on the upper Brazos which had been set aside for the Choctaws and Chickasaws.[12] The law provided that they should leave only with the consent of the chiefs, and James Barclay was appointed agent to get their consent.

Both tribes felt at home near the Big Thicket and did not care about the Indians of the plains. Barclay, accompanied by some Indians and whites, investigated conditions on the upper Brazos and decided that they would be mistreating the Indians to remove them there.[13] The Alabamas continued to live on their own land, and Barclay persuaded some of the Coushattas to join them. The rest lived where they could find vacant lands in Polk and Liberty Counties. All of the Indians seemingly got along together, but the fear that they might be removed caused the Alabamas to send the following letter to

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[11]Gammel, _op_. _cit_., IV, 503. [12]_Ibid_., p. 1154.

[13]Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 101.

Governor Sam Houston in 1859:

> The undersigned Antone head chief, and Cilistine Thompson, and John Scott inferior chiefs wish to say to Sam Houston, that they know him, that he is a great and good man, a friend to the Indians and that they love and respect him more than any other white man living -- They are glad that he is governor, and wish that he could always be governor.
>
> They wish to say that they are now comfortably living on land given them by the state. They have made plenty of corn and potatoes and have many hogs, and cattle, and horses. The white people do not beat, nor rob them, nor steal anything of much value from them. All they desire is to be allowed to live where they now are and to cultivate their fields in peace. Many of the Coushattas have come to live with the Alabamas on their land. There are about five hundred Alabamas old men, women, and children included, and two or three hundred Coushattas including all. There ought to be some more land given for the Coshattis. They further say that Jim Barclay has been their agent for nearly two years. They believe that he does not wish them driven off, and that he is now a friend to them. And if they have the power to choose an agent, they would choose him, because they fear that they might otherwise get an agent who would consent to their removal.[14]

This land of the Alabamas is poor sandy soil, but it was given to them because it was near the Big Thicket where there was plenty of game. According to an account which was taken from the _Texas Almanac_, in 1860 there were four hundred Indians living near the Trinity River who were happy and hospitable. Three hundred and thirty were Alabamas. For their homes they had log cabins. They planted fruit trees, raised corn and potatoes, killed their hogs for some of their meat, and the other they got from the Big Thicket.[15] R. R. Neyland,

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[14]_Ibid._, pp. 102-103.

[15]W. Richardson, "Friendly Indians of the Trinity River," _Frontier Times_, June, 1925, p. 5.

who was made agent under Houston, estimated the value of their property in 1861, real and personal, at $30,000, and their number as one hundred thirteen males and one hundred females.[16]

The statute books show that in 1861, 1863, 1864, and 1866, laws were passed for keeping agents with these Indians.[17] The Legislature of Texas created the office of Indian Agent of the Alabama and Coushatta Indians in 1861. The agent was allowed up to twelve hundred dollars for salary and expenses. He was to visit them often, learn their necessities, protect them from mischievous whites, and encourage and promote agriculture. The act of 1863 stated that the agent should make quarterly reports to the governor of the state showing the condition of the Indians. If he failed to do so, he should be removed from office. The act of 1866 extended the same rights to the Muskogees that the Alabamas and Coushattas possessed. Some land was granted to them, but it was never found. The salary of the agent was raised, and the Indians were as fully protected by law as if they were citizens.

The Civil War impoverished the Alabamas to some extent, but by 1880 they were in a prosperous state again. With the exception of an appropriation of $5,000 for a school building made by Congress in 1918 upon the recommendation of the

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[16] Smither, op. cit., p. 103.

[17] Gammel, op. cit., V, 541, 696, 719, 1047, 1048.

Secretary of the Interior, and an additional $2,000 for educational purposes, almost nalf a century went by without any official relations with these first inhabitants of Texas. The <u>San Antonio Express</u> contained a short account of them in 1922, which shows that people at that time were beginning to take note of them. Mrs. Hal Sevier, State Chairman of Indian Welfare of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, wrote to Mrs. Lee Joseph of San Antonio, State President, and told of their economic condition, which was nothing short of slow starvation, and stated that something should be done for them. She gave the population as 175 in 1900, 251 in 1920, and 225 in 1922.[18]

The <u>Texas Almanac</u> of 1926 merely mentioned the presence of the Alabamas on the Neches.[19] About this time the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Clubs named Mrs. Earl Cogdell of Granbury as State Chairman for Indian Welfare. Being absolutely ignorant of the existence of such Indians in Texas, Mrs. Cogdell began to find out something about them and soon became an enthusiastic worker in their behalf. She found that all they were receiving from the State of Texas was the apportionment of school money which gave them about six months of school with one teacher.[20] Through the efforts of Hon. Clay Stone Briggs, Congressman, an appropriation of $40,000 was

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[18]"Woman Finds Texas Indians Near Extinction," <u>San Antonio Express</u>, December 10, 1922.

[19]H. B. Crozier, "Alabama Tribe Long Resident in Polk County," <u>Dallas News</u>, November 20, 1930.

[20]<u>Ibid</u>.

made by the United States in 1928 to purchase approximately 3,071 acres of new land in Polk County, as well as a certain amount of livestock and agricultural equipment for the Alabama and Coushatta Indians.[21] This land is adjacent to the land given them in 1854.

Much information is given in the remarks made by Mr. Briggs in the House of Representatives:

> Through the enlarged reservation a new, broad State highway is being constructed which will give to this Indian tribe easy and convenient access to Livingston, the county seat of Polk County, as well as other centers of population.
>
> The action of the Federal Government in granting a $40,000 appropriation for these Indians, and the educational aid which has been provided for several years past in the sum of $3,500 annually, and an awakened public interest have resulted in the State of Texas also providing substantial appropriations to the extent of $47,900 for housing and improvements upon the enlarged reservation, and for medical, dental, and nursing aid, as well as for other assistance in addition to the per capita scholastic appropriation which the State has been accustomed to provide for about 60 of the Indian children.
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> The recent State Legislation, pages 484-85, General Laws of the Third Called Session of the Forty-first Legislature of the State of Texas, took the form of the following provisions:

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[21] C. S. Briggs, "The Alabama and Coushatta Indians in Texas," Congressional Record, December 11, 1929, p. 513.

ALABAMA AND COUSHATTA INDIANS IN POLK COUNTY, TEXAS

	For the Years Ending	
	August 31, 1930	August 31, 1931
Salaries of:		
1 agent (one-half salary to be paid by Federal Government)...........	$1,500.00	$1,500.00
1 nurse (to be appointed by and under the supervision of State Board of Health..........	1,500.00	1,500.00
Dental work..........	1,000.00	1,000.00
Medical..............	1,200.00	1,200.00
Total salaries..	5,200.00	5,200.00
Improvements:		
50 homes for inmates.	15,000.00	15,000.00
26 miles of fencing..	7,500.00	...
Total improvements.........	22,500.00	15,000.00
Grand total.....	27,700.00	20,200.00

It is provided that all employees, except as otherwise provided, shall be appointed by and be under the supervision of the board of control.

I am informed that an excellent teacher of vocational agriculture and manual training has been engaged to supplement the other educational instruction given on the reservation. To provide the Indians with the necessary means to accomplish urgently needed educational and agricultural and industrial training an increased appro-

> priation was absolutely necessary; and I am happy to state that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Director of the Budget, and the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives have granted an increase of $1,000 in the educational appropriation for the next fiscal year, so that the amount carried in the pending bills is $4,500 instead of $3,500 as formerly.
>
> . . . .
>
> The Governor of Texas has appointed Mr. Clem F. Fain, jr., of Livingston, Tex., as Indian agent under a plan of cooperation proposed by the State, to which the Federal Government should respond.....[22]

A special committee report was made to Hon. Barry Miller, President of the Texas Senate, January 16, 1929, after the committee had investigated the conditions and surroundings of the Alabama Indians by visiting them in 1927 and again in 1928.[23] This committee found the Indians living in poorly ventilated log huts, sleeping on the floor, and cooking over open fires near their huts. They were in a wretched state of poverty, some of them lacking the bare necessities of life and all of them in dire need of assistance. They found the reputation of the tribe to be above reproach among the citizens of Polk County. They were full-blood American Indians, loyal to the white people of that section. The investigation revealed that the Alabama and Coushatta Indians had a peculiar relationship to the State and Federal Governments in that they were the only Indians in Texas and also the last of the Indians who were

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[22] Ibid., p. 514.

[23] "Report of Committee to Investigate the Conditions and Surroundings of the Alabama Indians in Polk County, Texas," Texas Senate Journal, February 15, 1929, pp. 790-795.

wards of the Republic of Texas.[24]

The following letter was produced to show what was being done for the education of the Indian children:

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
Austin, Texas, Jan. 16, 1929

Indian Village School District No. 17,
Pinckney, Polk County, Texas

The school at Indian Village has received the State apportionment based on the scholastic census through the years. Since this school district did not levy a tax, it was not eligible for rural aid until last year. The Fortieth Legislature placed an exemption clause in the rural aid bill which exempted this district from taxation and made it eligible to receive aid. For the school year 1927-28 this district received aid as follows:

Teachers' Salaries...............	$500.00
Industrial aid...................	256.00
High School Tuition..............	90.00

For the school year 1927-28 sixty-nine scholastics received State apportionment. The records in this department show that $1,035.00 State apportionment and $101.43 county apportionment were received by them. The Fortieth Legislature also set aside $1,000 as a special appropriation for the education of these Indian children.

(Signed) S. M. N. Marrs,
State Superintendent[25]

Senator I. D. Fairchild of Lufkin and Senator Triplett, members of the committee, died before the investigation was completed, but both of them were deeply concerned about the welfare of the Indians. P. B. Ward, Mrs. Earl Cogdell, Mrs. L. R. Cade, Mrs. D. P. Rock, H. L. Lewis, and Mrs. John A.

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[24]Ibid., pp. 790-792.

[25]Ibid., pp. 793-794.

Glen were the others on the committee.[26]

Soon after Governor Dan Moody went into office, he requested Dr. J. C. Anderson, State Health Officer, to make an investigation of conditions at Indian Village. On the 19th of November, 1928, therefore, Dr. Anderson, accompanied by Miss Katherine Harquist, state supervisory nurse, and Miss Celia Moore, state itinerary nurse, went to Livingston.[27] This was the first time the State Department of Health had ever attempted to aid the Indians. The nurses, doctors, the Livingston Chamber of Commerce, and the adopted white chief of the tribe assisted in the investigation. Chief Thompson, who was then sixty-eight years old, was master of ceremonies. He marshalled his people about to be examined, encouraged the indifferent ones, and arranged a simple picnic dinner for the occasion. The total number examined was 179, although there were about 250 in the tribe. The examination revealed evidences of malaria, tuberculosis, and hookworm disease. It was found that the bad teeth was due to the lack of milk. Upon looking into the mouth of the oldest member of the tribe, Celecia Henry, the dentist exclaimed, "Here is the first perfect mouth I have found. Not a tooth in her head!"[28]

In November, 1930, United States Senator Lynn Frazier of

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[26]Ibid., p. 795.

[27]Ella G. White, "The Last Alabamas Come Into Their Own," Dallas News, May 19, 1929.

[28]Ibid.

North Dakota, chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee of the United States Senate, shook the hand of Chief Sun-Kee and said, "I am certain the committee will recommend more money for you." "Big man from Washington going to help us!" the chief exclaimed. "Like him?" the chief was asked. "Fine man!" Chief Sun-Kee answered.[29] Chief Sun-Kee had been to Washington in 1928, and Senator Frazier had come to make an investigation at Indian Village. Claud B. Teer, chairman of the state board of control, and Ed T. Murphy of Livingston, state representative, were there as the official spokesmen of Governor Moody and the state. Other officials and private citizens were there. McConico Battise was interpreter.

Many testified as to the intelligence, needs, and dependability of these Indians. Mrs. Carl Sory of Livingston told the committee that of the three girls she had kept in her home, one of them made the only 100 per cent grade in English, and another, in a class of seventeen girls, made the only 100 per cent grade in English and Spanish.[30] Indian witnesses and their white neighbors alike testified to the belief that if the Indians at Indian Village were given the proper materials, supplies, and leadership, they could become self-supporting. The Reverend Paul Leeds, veteran Congregationalist missionary, and J. H. Rogers, sawmill operator, testified as

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[29]Ed Rider, "250 Indians of Tribe in Texas Are Looking Forward to Better Times," Houston Chronicle, November 10, 1930.

[30]Ibid.

to their willingness to work. Mr. Fain, who preceded Hobby Galloway as State Indian Agent, stated that they were worthy of assistance.[31]

Stories to the effect that the Indians were refusing to live in the houses that had recently been built for them were exploded. It was discovered that they could not buy stoves, and they had no other place to cook. Other information was interesting as well as valuable. The following came from Chief Sun-Kee when Senator Frazier asked him about the financial condition of the village:

> "Lived here all my life -- ain't got nothing!" he answered.
> "About those 38 horses the government bought for you last year," the senator asked.
> "Some died last winter -- no feed. No good. Need Texas horse. Eat too much," the chief replied.[32]

It was brought out that the government had sent them large horses which were unfitted to the light work of the Indians.

In 1930, worthy and capable members of the Alabama and Coushatta Indian tribe were given the right to enter Government Indian Schools, including Haskell Institute at Lawrence, Kansas. The pupils must meet requirements as to degree of blood, and absence of available local school facilities.[33]

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[31]H. B. Crozier, "Senate Body Pays Visit to Indian Village," Dallas News, November 9, 1930.

[32]Rider, op. cit., November 10, 1930.

[33]"Will Educate Texas Indians," Dallas News, Debruary 15, 1930.

A report was given June 15, 1936, concerning the Indian Emergency Conservation Work which had been begun in 1934.[34] This work solved a grave economic problem for the Indians, since the question of individual support was left to the Indian to work out as best he could for himself and family. It provided an income for sixty-five families who used their money to buy food, wash tubs, knives and forks, and other things they never before had owned. They made contributions for a piano for the church, and for a casket for Chief Charlie Thompson (Sun-Kee). The amount that the Indians received depended upon their earnings. The forest stand improvement project removed undergrowth and undesirable dead timber. The Indians cleaned out the creek channels, and contributed to mosquito control. This work in addition to help which was already being given by the State and Federal Governments gave the Indians a new lease on life.[35]

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[34] Verity, _op_. _cit_., p. 37.

[35] _Ibid_.

CHAPTER IV

CHIEF SUN-KEE'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

Sun-Kee Mikko, or Charlie Thompson, who was chief of the Alabama-Coushattas, Mikko See, or Clem F. Fain, Jr., their second and probably the only duly elected white chief of an Indian tribe in the United States, and McConico Battise, the interpreter and an influential man of the tribe, went to Washington in February, 1928, to see President Calvin Coolidge.

Leaving Livingston, Texas, they went by way of Houston, New Orleans, and Chattanooga. This was the first time for the Indians to sleep in a Pullman and eat in a diner, but they slept well and ate heartily.[1] They were interviewed by newspaper reporters in New Orleans, and in Virginia they met Senator George of Georgia.

Congressman Clay Stone Briggs of Galveston met them at the station in Washington and escorted them to their rooms in the National Hotel. In the morning they went to the House of Representatives and heard Washington's farewell address read, the day being Washington's birthday. Later they visited various Congressmen and Senators in their offices and explained

[1] Clem F. Fain, "White Chief's Tepee," East Texas, April, 1928, p. 28.

informally the purpose of their mission. They received many pledges of support and expressions of interest in the Alabama-Coushattas. Congressman Hastings of Oklahoma promised Mr. Briggs that he would support a bill to increase the educational appropriations for the Indians of Texas.

They visited the Smithsonian Institute to see the relics of American Indians. Chief Sun-Kee was intensely interested in the bows and arrows. He appraised some as good and some as bad. He was the arrow-maker of his tribe and could not be surpassed in this work. They called upon Dr. John R. Swanton, head of Indian Research of Smithsonian Institute, who had spent several weeks in the Alabama village in 1912, and Chief Sun-Kee and he spent a happy hour together.

They appeared before the Committee on Indian Affairs, whose chairman, Hon. Scott Leavitt, called the meeting to order. Chief Sun-Kee of the Last Tribe of the Big Thicket spoke in his native tongue before the committee, and McConico Battise did the interpreting. "Each was dressed in the white man's clothing, but with a black silk shawl fastened around his shoulders with an ancient silver brooch, and a feather headdress instead of a hat."[2] The extra apparel came to be treasured highly by the chief.[3] Sun-Kee's appeal for his

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[2] Ibid.

[3] The writer is indebted to Chief Sun-Kee personally for this fact and for other information used in this chapter. This information was obtained in a series of informal interviews with the chief.

people that day may well go down in history as a classic among the orations of the American Indians. It was as follows:

> I come a long way from Texas to see Great White Chiefs and Great White Father. I come to ask help for my people. Many days my people hungry. Widows have no food. I come to you, Great Chiefs of Plenty, to ask help for my starving people. Many years the crops are little and corn does not last from harvest to harvest. I do not ask for wealth. I ask only for a chance to live. And I do not ask for me. I am old; soon I join my fathers. But my people and their children and their children's children will be here forever.
>
> Hear me, White Chiefs, relieve our burden. I bring you friendship of my people. I bring you thanks for Indian school. I bring message from starving people. Hear me.[4]

With this pathetic appeal, Sun-Kee, or Bay-Ha, the Arrow-Maker, as his people loved to call him, concluded. His message was followed by a description of life in Indian Village. He told of the rude and barren cabins scattered among the pines, of the Indians' simple and scanty fare, and of their living conditions in general. Others who spoke were Clem F. Fain, Jr., and Congressman Clay Stone Briggs of Galveston, who was the author of the bill to appropriate funds "to buy the Alabamas additional land and farming implements."[5]

Since 1854 the Alabamas had lived on the sandy, pine-covered land in eastern Polk County deeded to them by the State of Texas through the influence of Sam Houston, but this was not enough for them. Up to 1928 only a small annual ap-

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[4]Fain, _op_. _cit_., p. 28.

[5]"Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," _Dallas News_, January 22, 1928.

propriation had been given by the Federal Government, and this went part of the way toward maintaining the village school.

Mr. Newtson of Minnesota asked Mr. Briggs what obligation the Federal Government owed the Alabamas. Mr. Briggs explained that they were Indians, and read the Supreme Court decision stating that the government owes all Indians ample provision for life.

Mr. Fain told the committee of the long peaceable record of the Alabamas, of their friendship for the whites and the services they had rendered as scouts in some of the Indian wars, and of how twenty young men of the tribe volunteered for World War service, but were rejected on the grounds that they were not citizens. He pointed out that this was a large per cent of the tribe, because at that time the tribe numbered 192 men, women, and children, the total population of the village.

Senator Earl B. Mayfield, Mrs. Abrams, national vice-president of the Federation of Women's Clubs, and L. E. Lindley, financial secretary of the Indians' Rights Association, appeared before the committee in the interest of the bill (H. R. 5479) which Mr. Briggs had read providing for an appropriation for the Alabamas. Various Congressmen expressed their opinions. Congressmen Blanton and Black of Texas, and Congressman Howard of Oklahoma talked in favor of the bill. Congressman Newtson, at first opposed to granting the appro-

priation, was willing to approve the measure when he was convinced that the Indians deserved help. It was expected that Congressman Merritt, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs, would be opposed to helping the Indians, but he declared: "It is my opinion that if the American Government owes anything to any Indians, it owes it to the Alabama and Coushatta Indians of Texas."[6]

Although a cut had been expected in the appropriation of $100,000 for the purchase of land, the sub-committee made its report the next day, asking for a total of $125,000, the additional fund being for the purchase of agricultural implements and livestock. An amendment was added, "making the amount reimbursable and holding the title of land and property to be acquired in the government."[7] All Indian bills are made reimbursable because they are enacted more readily if this is the case. However, the government has never asked that one be paid.

Their third day in Washington, Chief Sun-Kee and his companions visited President Coolidge at the White House. Mr. Briggs went with them to explain their case to the President, who received them graciously and promised to give the matter his sympathetic consideration.

While in Washington, Sun-Kee and his party visited such notable places as the Capitol, Washington Monument, Lincoln

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[6]Fain, op. cit., p. 29. [7]Ibid.

Monument, and Arlington Cemetery. When Sun-Kee first saw the Capitol, he exclaimed: "Big house! Big house! White Chief's tepee?"[8]

It is of interest to note that when the Indians met the President and members of the Cabinet, they did not remove their feather headdress, but when they stopped at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, they uncovered their heads. During their stay they also visited Mount Vernon and old Christ's Church at Alexandria. Since Sun-Kee's brother had been a soldier under Robert E. Lee, the chief was interested in both the statue of Lee and the church where he worshipped.

As they were leaving for Texas the interpreter said: "Now we go home. Many days we have plenty to eat. Now we leave great city. Be hungry when we get home."[9] Upon his return to Indian Village, Sun-Kee spoke some words concerning his own house which express the sentiment of the human race:

> I see many houses in Washington. Pretty houses. My house -- poor, ugly. My people here. All right. Fine houses good -- my house good. My house keep me dry -- keep me warm. Log, not stone -- my house.[10]

The people of Texas had made it possible for these Indians to make the trip to Washington. The State Federation of Women's Clubs and the big dailies of Houston and Dallas gave much aid. However, much credit is given to the Polk County Chamber of Commerce for starting the move.

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[8] Ibid. [9] Ibid. [10] Ibid.

This trip to Washington on behalf of the Texas Indians proved to be of great significance to the people at Indian Village. Sun-Kee's plea for help for his people aroused the interest of the government in them, and was responsible for obtaining much of the aid which is discussed in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER V

CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ALABAMAS AND COUSHATTAS

One of the most outstanding characteristics of the Indians who live in Texas today is that of gratitude. They are grateful for the houses and land that have been given them recently. They appreciate their church and school.[1] Gratitude for the fact that Sam Houston helped to make it possible for them to have 1,280 acres of land for their very own has been passed from one generation to another.[2] The older generations talked it, and the younger generation is writing it. The spirit of gratefulness is instilled into each generation.

The manner of the individual Indian is not that of a man who has suffered failure and defeat until he is made to realize that he is helpless, but it is that of an innocent child who has no thought of doing wrong. They speak in a low, soft voice, and they are not boisterous.

The Alabama-Coushattas still possess the taciturnity and the reserve which characterize Indians, and many times the missionaries are powerless to interfere with their affairs. On an occasion when Governor Dan Moody was sending some health

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[1]Information obtained by the writer from Chief Sun-Kee.

[2]Sylvestine, op. cit., p. 302.

officials there, the Indians had been asked to meet at the school for physical examinations. On the day preceding the examinations a child had died. The teacher had stayed up overnight making a rude coffin of pine. A doctor had not been called until the sickness had entered into a very advanced stage. They went to meet the officials because White Chief Fain had asked them to do so, but they showed very little interest in the proceedings. The funeral for the child was held on the day following that of the physical examinations.[3]

The Indians are still crafty. Chief Charlie Thompson (Sun-Kee) arranged a picnic dinner at the community meeting place on an occasion when some whites visited them. They made their appearance from different foot trails leading off through the woods. When it was time to eat, the whites were grouped at one end of the table, the Indians at the other. It was observed that each woman brought with her to the table a sugar sack, the purpose of which aroused the curiosity of the visitors. It soon became clear that the sugar sacks were not intended for use in handling the things on the table. During the progress of the meal the dexterous hands of the women now and then conveyed food from the table to the sacks. When dinner was over, there was not a crumb of anything left on the table.[4]

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[3]Ella G. White, "The Last Alabamas Come into Their Own," Dallas News, May 19, 1929.

[4]Ibid.

A characteristic peculiar to their race of people is that when they leave the village they do not thrive. This has been explained by the fact that they do not mix with the Mexicans or Negroes, and, although the whites treat them kindly, they do not seem to be happy away from the reservation.[5]

That they are an honest race of people is attested by several such instances as the following:

> Two of the brightest girls were sent by the Presbyterian church to an Oklahoma Indian school, and each was presented with a fountain pen on their departure. Shortly afterward one of them wrote back, having used a lead pencil. When she was asked why she had not used her pen she explained in the next letter that one of the pens was lost, and since they did not know to which the remaining pen belonged, neither she nor her companion felt free to use it.[6]

It is said that when the men pick cotton for the white farmers who hire them, they are seldom checked by them. They are allowed to weigh and total their own cotton, and they are usually paid on the basis of their own figures.[7]

In addition to loving honesty, they love peace. They have lived in peace for many years under very unfavorable conditions. They have so conducted themselves, both in their relations with white people and with each other, that there

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[5]"Woman Finds Indians Near Extinction," San Antonio Express, December 10, 1922.

[6]T. C. Richardson, "Texas' Oldest Citizens in Polk County," Farm and Ranch, July 4, 1925, p. 11.

[7]"Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," Dallas News, January 22, 1928.

have been few infractions of the law.[8] A visitor attempted to find out, during a stay at the village, how they settled their disputes by asking the following questions:

> "Suppose Charley Thompson has a bad horse and he breaks into your field. You tell Charley you want him to pay for the corn the horse eats. Charley says you have bad fence and he will not pay you. How do you settle that?"
>
> "Charley Thompson no got bad horse. Me no got bad fence," was the reply.
>
> "Suppose your hogs go off into the bottoms and get with Charley Thompson's hogs. Charley maybe claim all hogs. How do you settle that?"
>
> "Me know my hogs. Charley know his hogs," the Indian replied.
>
> "Well, maybe Charley don't know his hogs. What would you do?"
>
> "Me give hogs to Charley," was the answer that came quickly.[9]

That settled the matter. The visitor found out that they would do all that they could to keep peace.

They have a high sense of social responsibility. They serve in the village by helping with the school business, by being deacons in their church, helping with the singing, and teaching Sunday School classes. At a sort of tribal council which was called to consider offers of lumber mills to buy some of their timber, they decided they would not sell any. They said, "If we sell and allow the trees to be cut, wherewith will our children build houses?"[10]

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[8]"$125,000 Asked to Buy Land, Live Stock, and Agricultural Tools for Indians in Texas," Dallas News, March 28, 1926.

[9]C. D. Waide, "Indians in Texas," The Red Man, November, 1916, p. 106.

[10]T. C. Richardson, op. cit., p. 12.

Reports to the effect that the Indians were so peculiar that they would not move into the houses that the government had built for them have been exploded. It was learned that when the State of Texas had spent $14,600 on the houses for them to live in, the State Board of Control had no money left for furnishings. Because the Indians did not complain nor explain that they had no stoves, the whites thought they did not want to live in a good house.[11] Up to this time, their houses had been uncomfortable log structures. Two years later, in 1932, after the government bought stoves for them, Emily Sylvestine wrote:

> The government has provided us with buildings and many acres of land, also new farm implements. Every one of us moved into our new houses which are nice and warm in winter time -- so much better to live in than the big cabins.[12]

For some time the Indians have been learning to speak English, but they are very peculiar about their own language. They have a trade dialect that is commonly used in the presence of whites instead of the Alabama language. Mrs. Dorothy Chambers Schotter, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Chambers, long-time missionaries in the village, stayed in the homes of the Indians a great deal when she was a child. They gave

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[11]H. B. Crozier, "Senate Body Pays Visit to Indian Village," Dallas News, November 9, 1930.

[12]Emily Sylvestine, "Predicament of the Alabama Indians Told by Native Girl," Frontier Times, April, 1932, p. 303.

her pet names, liked her, and accepted her as one of them. It is said that she is the only white person who can speak their true language.[13] Other white adults have learned their trade dialect only. They have no written language of their own.[14]

A summary of their characteristics is given by one of them as follows:

> Among the chief characteristics of this tribe are their love of peace, chastity and virtue of their race. During the past century their record as a citizen has been almost unblemished. They have an aversion for being classed with people of low order.[15]

Mrs. Clara Driscoll, chairman of the Indian Welfare Committee, said of them in 1922:

> As it is, the Indians neither steal nor beg, but live out their Christianity in a most impressive way. They are kind and neighborly among each other. They simply keep their mouths shut and starve to death rather than steal or raise an outcry against their condition.[16]

The Coushattas do not have a record as clean as that of the Alabamas, but both tribes, with few exceptions, have been considered honest, industrious, and peaceful.[17]

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[13] *Ibid.*, p. 304.

[14] "Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," *Dallas News*, January 22, 1928.

[15] Sylvestine, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

[16] "Woman Finds Texas Indians Near Extinction," *San Antonio Express*, December 10, 1922.

[17] Muckleroy, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

They continued to practice their heathenish customs until after 1881.

> There was a large house in each village devoted to their religious cult. Here the Indians assembled each year to sanctify the mulberries and other ripening fruits and grains and present them as a thank-offering to their gods, which they said was according to their ancient custom. The celebration and rejoicing lasted several days, after which time they ate of the fruits they had presented. Failure to abstain from the fruits until after the offering was punished by a fine of one deerskin or more according to the offence. This ceremony of sanctifying the first fruits was called the busk, from "poskita" or "boskita", meaning a fast.[18]

In the olden days, the Alabama-Coushattas worshipped not only Abba-Mingo, the Great Spirit, but also Ha-See-Ah-Pah, the New Moon. When they saw the new moon, they would cover their faces with their hands and say:

> Oh Ha-See-Ah-Pah make Indian good! Make Indian brave! Let Indian kill deer![19]

Some of the old Indians said that Ha-See-Ah-Pah smiled upon Feagin Sylestine, a cousin of Chief Ti-ca-i-che, because a small deer walked by him when he was out hunting and he killed him with one shot.

The Indians wore their hair in three plaits and danced to Abba-Mingo. They buried their dead with a hatchet or a knife in their hands, wrapped them in a blanket, and put in

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[18]Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 91.

[19]Rev. J. W. E. Airey, "Big Medicine Being Made as Alabama-Coushattas Prepare for Chief's Day," _Houston Chronicle_, December 29, 1935.

used charms to keep Tick-Ben-Choba, the devil, away.[20]

They were particularly skillful in a game of ball which they have now forgotten how to play. It was played on certain bounds and with fixed rules governing the passing of the ball, which was never allowed to be touched by the hand in the course of the game. The sticks with which the game was played have been preserved.[21] It is thought that this game came to them from the French game of "racquette".

Many symbols and decorations in weaving, many games, and many customs have been given up because they are too closely interwoven with paganism. The making of arrows is not considered a pagan custom, and McConico Battise still makes them. He makes bows from "ironwood and logwood" and arrows from "possum haw". Feather tips are fastened with deer sinew as they were by other bow-and-arrow makers a thousand years ago.[22]

It was formerly the custom that when a couple decided to marry, the man built a house on a spot designated by his elders. He and his bride then went to the house and announced to the rest of the tribe that they were married.[23] Now a majority of the couples go the missionary and ask him to marry them, and he performs the ceremony without a license having been issued. Modern ideas of divorce have not yet reached

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[20]*Ibid*.

[21]"A Visit with the Red Men of the Big Thicket," *East Texas*, December, 1927, p. 28.

[22]Airey, *op. cit*.

[23]Waide, *op. cit*., p. 108.

them, and they do not intermarry with other races. It has been an unwritten law until recent years that the birth of a child of any other than full Indian parentage meant death to its mother.[24] This rule has kept the village free of mixed breeds of any nationality, and, although the law is not now in force, there seem to be no violations of its spirit. The women are treated well. The men do not expect them to work in the fields, but they often do it to help with the tasks and to be out in the open.

The graves of their dead are on a plot of ground in a circle with the church, the school, and the hospital. They do not allow any grass, bushes, or weeds to grow there. On the graves are such articles as drinking cups, colored glass, combs, lamps, glass necklaces, and toys. The articles vary according to the age and sex of the deceased. Perhaps some of them are the things the dead prized highly.[25]

For many years it was their custom never to let the sun set with a white man on their territory, because Sam Houston had told them to adhere to this principle.[26] They offered to make an exception to this rule when the home of Rev. Chambers burned by asking him to rebuild on their land. After assuring them that he appreciated the offer, he told them that he would live just off of their land where he had been living.

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[24] _Ibid_., p. 108.

[25] Smither, _op_. _cit_., p. 94.

[26] _Ibid_., and information obtained by the writer on a visit to Indian Village.

They have recently permitted the teachers, the public health nurse, and other workers to live in the houses that the government has built in the community center.

Up until the twentieth century it was the custom for the chieftancy to pass from father to son. Now they use the white man's method of holding an election.[27] John Scott was the last of the chiefs to get his office in the old way. A chief is still maintained, but he is merely the acknowledged leader in a social way. Although these Indians are not given full recognition as citizens, they are subject to state and national laws.

As late as 1928 they ground their corn in primitive wooden gristmills which were fashioned with axe and fire from the stump of a tree. This kind of a gristmill was called a "kehk-cho", and the grinding was done with a heavy pestle of hickory that was called a "kehk-stoppee".

In the *Texas Almanac* for 1860, W. Richardson gave an account of the Alabama-Coushattas in which he listed their gravest habit as that of becoming intoxicated.[28] Nevertheless, it is rare to find habitual drunkards among them. They formerly used a wild, irregular code of duelling of their own. They did not seem to dread death, and they spoke of it as any other future event.[29] Yet they regarded the suicide as a cow-

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[27] Airey, *op. cit.*

[28] W. Richardson, "Friendly Indians of the Trinity River," *Frontier Times*, June, 1925, p. 6.

[29] *Ibid.*

ard and denied him the rite of interment.[30]

It is a custom of the Indians to name each of their children for a white person whom they like. Two of the Indians call themselves "Jim Feagin", while another member of the tribe is "Jo Rice". That they now have American names is explained by this custom, and by the added fact that they soon leave off their own name and take up the American name altogether.[31]

The customs of the Alabama-Coushattas may be summed up by saying that they now live very much the same as other rural people who have little connection with the outside world. They worship as white people do, live in the same kind of houses, go to a public school, use a medical doctor when they are ill, bury their dead in the village cemetery, have their rural entertainments, and try to make a living by working in their fields.

Emily Sylvestine, who made a plea for her people to be taught how to live in the white man's civilization, has taken a far step from the Indians who followed the French down the Mississippi. Such a wide gulf has been fixed between their new and old ways of living that they can never return to the old.

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[30] Smither, op. cit., p. 99.

[31] Waide, op. cit., p. 107.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AND EDUCATION OF THE ALABAMAS AND COUSHATTAS

For twenty-five years before the missionaries came, the Alabama-Coushattas went about over the land that was deeded to Chief John Scott, unmindful of many of the ways of civilization. They dressed in typical Indian fashion, hunted, fished, trapped, and worked small patches of corn and vegetables. They found plenty of wild game, and the land yielded a fair return for their labor.

Although the moral sense of the tribe was highly developed, they were heathenish in their religious belief. A native girl of the village speaks of their religion as follows:

> Until 1881 they were practically heathens; they believed in spirits both good and evil, with "Abba-Mingo" the chief in the sky above them all. They had witches and medicine men and women. Two were put to death about fifty years ago when the tribe became convinced their mumbled superstitious rites did not prevent evil. They kept up their dances and other religious festivals until after the coming of the missionaries, and believed that discontinuance of the Green Corn dance would result in crop failure. We find that some of the most enlightened people still believe in ridiculous superstitions. We know that the white people with five centuries of civilization behind them are foolish about things.[1]

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[1]Sylvestine, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

The Presbyterian church began some work among the Indians at Indian Village when in 1881 they sent Rev. and Mrs. L. W. Currie to minister to them. Credit for this move is given to Dr. Samuel Fisher Tenney.[2] Mr. Dabney White visited these Indians during his youth when his father, Dr. T. Ward White, preached the first protestant sermon heard in their village. His sermons were translated by the tribe's interpreter. At this time plans were made for a Christmas tree for the entire tribe, and gifts were contributed by people throughout the United States. It was this act that won the friendship of the Indians.[3]

When Rev. and Mrs. Currie came, they found one Bible in the village, but no one could read it. The Indians received them kindly, but were still more interested in their dances and pagan ceremonies than in the new religion. In spite of this attitude, a church with fourteen Indian members was organized, and a rough church house was built.[4]

It was harder for the missionaries to deal with some of the white people living near-by than with the Indians. Because they were not in sympathy with the work of the missionaries, these low whites wtole the Indians' cattle, burned the church, and interrupted work in general. Rev. Currie soon

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[2]Smither, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

[3]Dabney White, "Alabama Indians, First Finders of Oil in East Texas, Are Living Penniless but Contented Lives," *Dallas News*, January 22, 1928.

[4]Smither, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

left because of ill health, but after his death in the mission field in Alaska, Mrs. Currie returned to the Alabama Indians and remained with them until 1900.

At the dawn of the twentieth century Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Chambers began their work at Indian Village. Rev. Chambers said the Indians showed good native ability, and that their mental status was satisfactory, but they had never come in contact with enough white people to be acquainted with the ways of modern civilization. They were suspicious of him and hid among the pines when he went near them.[5] This condition gradually changed. They learned that he could be trusted and placed much confidence in his advice and counsel.

The church that Rev. and Mrs. Chambers worked in for eleven years was a log cabin which had been built by previous missionaries. Then the Assembly Home Mission made provisions for a church which was used for a long time.[6]

Within a short period of time a large number of Indians joined the church. They wanted to give their council grounds to the church and abandon all of their pagan dances, games, and other ceremonies. The missionaries accepted the grounds and have since tried to make them the center of community life, having the tribe's Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas festivities, and school and church programs there.

The Indians have come to have a great reverence for the

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[5]Ella G. White, "The Last Alabamas Come into Their Own," Dallas News, May 29, 1929.

[6]Ibid.

church, and give liberally to its program of work. It is said that men who are working at farms or mills at a distance of ten miles will walk in order to attend the services, and that any time the missionary rings the bell the Indians will soon come from the depths of the forest where their homes are hidden.[7] An appreciation of their church is expressed by a member of their own tribe as follows:

> Mrs. Chambers used to say, "I'd like to see a big white church donated by the Women's Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church before I die." She is teaching Sunday School in a big white church. We are all so proud of it. We have Christian Endeavor every Sunday evening. The attendance in Endeavor is between 25 and 30 young and old ones.
>
> Now the Sunday School attendance is more than 150 every Sunday. We have preaching only once a month. One of the men is an organist. Although he has never taken music lessons he plays well.[8]

Their reverence for the church is being undermined by white visitors, many of whom, when they go to the church services, allow their curiosity to take away their spirit of worship. Their services are very much as one would see in any other church, and although some of the older ones seem too shy to speak, or to take the lead, there are Indian leaders who take charge, carry on the services, and treat visitors as they would be treated in any church of polite society.[9]

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[7]Information obtained by the writer while visiting there.

[8]Sylvestine, op. cit., p. 303.

[9]Personal observation of the writer while visiting Indian Village.

A visitor to the village during 1925 was told that nearly the whole population had come to the church services. At this comment, the visitor asked why the others were not there, and the answer was that some had stayed at home to guard their few belongings from thieving whites.[10] An account is told that Rev. and Mrs. Chambers took one of their deacons to a church gathering of whites. A woman was so curious about the deacon that she asked many unkind questions. At last she asked, "Are you civilized?", to which the deacon calmly replied, "I don't know; are you?"[11]

For years the Indians have been Christians and have lived the white man's ways. Many residents of Livingston can remember when the Alabamas might be seen picking cotton around the county seat dressed in all their native splendor of buckskin, beads, and feathers. Now they have only a little of their tribal raiment to be used in special ceremonies.[12]

When Rev. and Mrs. Currie went to Indian Village in 1881, Mrs. Currie tried to conduct a school for the children. For this work she was paid by the state from the public school fund. When she went there the second time, following Rev. Currie's death, she conducted a school and a Sunday School.[13] Mrs. Chambers began teaching a little mission school in 1889

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[10] T. C. Richardson, _op. cit._, p. 12. [11] _Ibid._

[12] "Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," _Dallas News_, January 22, 1928.

[13] Sylvestine, _op. cit._, p. 303.

which was supported partly by the church and partly by a public school fund. Up until 1916 all of the teaching was done by Mrs. Chambers during six months of each year.

When Cato Sells, United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs, visited these Indians, he was impressed with the high standard of morality and citizenship existing in the community and said that he thought they deserved government aid. He urged an appropriation to build and equip a modern school to replace the shack in which Mrs. Chambers had taught the younger generation for so long.[14]

The Indians were anxious to learn, and they wanted to know when they were asking for aid that they were not asking for charity. They said civilization had been forced upon them, but they had not learned how to live in the white man's civilization. Just how anxious they have been to learn is told in the following paragraphs:

> We are eager to learn and although the missionaries were often discouraged with many difficulties continually arising, we had the ability to learn. We were interested and wanted to learn.
>
> The school is better attended (1932) than any other school in the country and perhaps in the state. There were 60 scholastics enumerated in 1924-25 and over 50 average daily attendance for the year.
>
> Every person between nine and forty can read and write, and most of them can work arithmetic.
>
> I am hoping I can continue my education.[15]

By 1928 two small frame buildings comprised the village

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[14]T. C. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[15]Sylvestine, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

school. One of these was for the primary grades, and the other for the more advanced pupils. There was also a small manual training shop for the boys, and the girls were taught how to do things in the home. Teachers in the school were Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Wilbanks and Mrs. C. W. Chambers.[16]

Both state and federal aid has been given them since this time. An attempt has been made recently to revive leather work, bead work, the making of baskets, and weaving. Mrs. Tom Coleman and Mrs. A. C. Turner have helped in this attempt. Mrs. Chambers made an attempt to get the Indians interested in folklore. Sometimes the Indian children have told some Indian story peculiar to their race before they realized just what they were telling, but it is usually hard to get them to tell many of the things they hear in their homes.

The agents of the Indian Emergency Conservation Work have helped in the education of these people.[17] Mr. Farley carried a group of them to the Farmers' Short Course at A. and M. College, a Home Demonstration Club was organized for the women, different kinds of shops have been installed, syrup mills have been placed there, and the streams and the one lake on the reservation have been stocked with fish. A silent moving picture machine was bought to show educational films. Mr. Farley, the agent, also got admission for Chief Bronson Cooper Syles-

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[16]"Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," Dallas News, January 22, 1928.

[17]Verity, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-28.

tine's daughter to the nurse's training school of the Indian hospital in Lawton, Oklahoma.

Much progress has been made since the first white missionaries and teachers went to Indian Village. The present religious and educational condition that exists there has given them a hope they have not had since they first realized that they must live the ways of modern civilization.

CHAPTER VII

SPECIAL DAYS AT INDIAN VILLAGE WITHIN RECENT YEARS

The present chief of the Alabama-Coushattas was installed January 1, 1936. To the Indians it was chief's day, but to the three thousand white people who joined in the celebration it was an occasion far more significant. They knew that in 1836, a century ago, the same tribe was their friends in the struggle for independence. For this reason the installation of Bronson Cooper Sylestine took on a double meaning for the whites.

The morning program began with a game of "La-cros" played by the Indian boys with peculiar spoon-shaped rackets and a small ball. Later began their tribal dances, among which the "horse dance" was one of the most important. Horse tails for the dance were furnished by Hans Nagel, Houston zoo-keeper, who saved tails from horses fed to the Hermann Park lions. Willie Willis, a big game hunter of Houston, cured them.

Shortly before noon the Mikko-Choba's headdress of eagle feathers and wrought silver, the ceremonial tomahawk, and other emblems of the office were presented to the new chief at the stump of an old tree in what has been the council grounds of the village. Here all chiefs have been installed since

these Indians have been in East Texas.

The six-year-old great-great-granddaughter of Sam Houston, Madge Houston Thornall of Houston, Texas, assisted at the chief's coronation. She was officially adopted into the nation by the Alabama-Coushattas before the installation ceremony. Clem Fain Sylestine, eight-year-old son of Chief Sylestine, also took part in the ceremony.

Greetings from the vice-president of the United States, John Nance Garner, and from the president of the National Frontiersman Association, Major Gordon W. Lillie, were read. Congressman Nat Patton of Crockett spoke. Mr. Clem Fain, Jr., was master of ceremonies. A bronze medal, which the Legislature had ordered to be made, was presented to the new Mikko-Choba, commemorating a century of peace between these Indians and the Texans. The medal was cast by the Southern Brass Manufacturing and Plating Company from a design by Mr. Fain.

The Livingston Chamber of Commerce served a barbecue dinner, after which a service was held at the Presbyterian Indian Church. Dr. C. W. Chambers, 83-year-old missionary, was in charge, and the cornerstone of the church was dedicated.

Jesse H. Jones, chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was present after a unique invitation had been extended to him. The buckskin invitation, signed by Bronson Cooper Sylestine, had been formally presented to him at Hous-

ton, December 28, 1935, by McConico Battise, speaker chief of the Alabama tribe. It contained the following words:

> Jesse Jones, big money chief:
> Like for you to come to Indian Village January 1, 1936.[1]

Battise had supplemented the written invitation with a brief speech in the language of the tribe which had been translated by Mr. Fain.

The whites who helped in the preparations for the day knew that the visitors would want souvenirs. So floor mats, saddle blankets, baskets, and pin trays that were made of pine needles and split cane reeds; all sorts of crafts work that could be made by the girls at school; and various articles that the boys made at school, were offered for sale. This gave the whites what they wanted, and it gave the Indians a chance to earn a little extra money.

Another day of interest was that proclaimed by Governor James V. Allred in 1938 as Texas Indian Day. For this reason there was much stir at Indian Village getting ready for June 23.

Chief Sylestine and McConico Battise dressed in tribal headdress and jackets and visited Governor Allred to invite him to the Indian powwow. Ramon Poncho, a young Indian, and Mr. Fain went with them. This was the first time in ninety

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[1] "Alabama Indians Invite Big Money Chief to Attend Coronation of Their New Chief," Houston Chronicle, December 28, 1935.

years that such a meeting had occurred between the chief of the Alabama Indians and the Governor of the State of Texas.[2]

The governor sat on the floor in a circle with the Indians while the chief presented him with a charm to assure his safety on the trip. It was a beaded piece that they had made symbolizing a rabbit's foot.

Many of the old customs were revived for this occasion because the whites wished to see them. Old men who were too old to take part in any of the whoops of the dances sat around directing the younger ones in their practice for the celebration.

When the day came, big puffs of smoke from a long-stemmed pipe of peace rose into the air as the Governor of Texas and the chief of the Alabama-Coushattas agreed to put aside their guns and arrows for another generation.[3] This was the first time a Texas Governor had met with the Indians since Sam Houston had told them to remain at Indian Village. The pipe made the rounds of the circle, which included Indians and Texas Rangers. The Rangers laid aside their guns as the Indians cracked their large bows signifying that none of the group would ever harm each other.

Music was furnished by a band from Nacogdoches, the

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[2]"Indians Ask Allred to Go to Powwow," Dallas News, June 15, 1938.

[3]"Allred Smokes Pipe of Peace with Indians," Dallas News, June 24, 1938.

Green Corn Festival was put on by the Indians, handwork was on display, and the first tribal wedding ever to be performed in public took place.

The Governor and his son, David Crockett, became brothers in the tribe by adoption ceremonies. David Crockett, a slender youngster in the grammar school grades, became White Cloud. The Governor was not given an Indian name, but he was presented with all the charms and mementoes necessary to invest one with the eligibility to sit with the Indians at any time.

The Alabama-Coushattas held their second All-Indian Fair at their village on October 27-29, 1938.[4] They spent weeks getting ready for the occasion. There were baskets, blankets, and door-mats. The display of native arts and crafts work, agricultural and livestock products, and Indian school projects, together with historical items, offered a wide variety of interesting sights to the visitors. Agent J. E. Farley assisted in this work.

Visitors were welcome. Chief Sylestine and the village council of seven provided for ample camping ground for white visitors who wished to spend the night, and meals were served at a nominal cost.

The Indians were glad of the opportunity to sell their wares, and Mr. Farley welcomed this opportunity of increasing

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[4] "Three-Day All-Indian Fair Opened by Indians in Big Thicket," <u>Houston Chronicle</u>, October 30, 1938.

the Indians' pride in agriculture and crafts work.

Among the entertainment offered visitors was a concert by the Livingston High School Band in the afternoon and native Indian dances at night. A six-man football squad played the Hemphill High School sextet, and games of Indian handball were played at different times throughout the duration of the fair.

These special days at Indian Village have been educational for the Indians, they have provided a sort of entertainment for them, and they have helped to bring about a better understanding between the Indians and the whites.

CHAPTER VIII

WHO'S WHO OF INDIAN VILLAGE

There are many people who do things that are worthwhile. Some of these people are written about, some are talked about, and some are never mentioned in any way. An attempt has been made in this closing chapter to tell a little about some of the Indians and whites who have helped to make it possible for the Alabama-Coushattas to survive the panics, wars, booms, and slumps of Texas.

Chief Colita of the Coushattas guided his people during the period of the Texas Revolution. He kept them at peace with the whites, and aided the refugees who were escaping from Santa Anna's army.[1] There was only one ferry boat across the Trinity River. When the Texans attempted to cross in their wagons, they often bogged down and Colita helped them. How he helped them in many other ways has already been recounted. Had he not persuaded the Coushattas to remain neutral, not one of them might exist today to tell the story.

Chief Antone was the leader of these Indians in 1848. Very little is recorded about him, although it is known that

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[1] "Alabamas in Texas Living in Poverty," Dallas News, January 22, 1928.

he helped his people by calling on Governor George T. Wood for aid in preventing white settlers in the vicinity of the Indians from stealing their livestock.[2]

Chief Sylestine, or Colebe (Ko-la-bay), was in charge of the tribe about 1854. While he was chief, Sam Houston used his influence to enable the Indians to get their original reservation grant. He was director of the affairs of the tribe until about 1873. It is said that he spoke French, English, and at least two Indian languages. He was the first of the Alabamas to establish a farm in the region near Big Thicket. The white people had much respect for him.[3]

A native of the village says that John Scott was chief for forty years. He died March 3, 1913, at the age of 107 years, and was buried in the cemetery at Indian Village. He is spoken of by a member of his own tribe as being a man of sterling character. One of the things that he tried to impress upon the tribe was to live in peace and harmony with each other. A son, John Ryan Scott, and several grandchildren survived him. Up to this time the tribal rule had been kept intact.[4] He was the last of the old line of chiefs, and the place was not filled until 1927.[5]

Princess Cylissia, or Celisia Henry, had a part in the history of these Indians. Her father was Colebe. She could

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[2]"Indians Ask Allred to Go to Powwow," Dallas News, June 15, 1938.

[3]Airey, op. cit.

[4]Sylvestine, op. cit., p. 302.

[5]"New Church to Be Built for Texas' Only Tribe of Indians," San Antonio Express, March 16, 1928.

recall the days when Antone and Colebe asked for aid for their people.[6] Among the relics that she treasured were two coins which Sam Houston gave her when he visited the reservation.[7] She aided Chief Sun-Kee in his efforts in 1928 to hold their land.[8] She was at that time the oldest member of the tribe and next in royal rank to Chief Sun-Kee. She was skilled in basketry and bead work and versed in folklore. Many went to her because she was wise in the herbs that the red man uses for healing. Perhaps she used her skill in keeping her own body healthy, for she reached the age of 107 years.[9]

Chief Sun-Kee, whose English name was Charlie Thompson, was elected in 1927.[10] He disliked being classed with people of low order and believed that his people should keep their clean civic and moral record. He was pleasing, polite, sociable, and unselfish. A faint, far-off smile came over his face, and a brightness came to his eyes as the writer heard him relate the story of his stay in Washington.[11] In order to enable the writer and her party of Huntington school children to understand just how he looked when he appeared before President Coolidge, he took them to his home, put on the same clothes that he had worn when he made his speech, and walked

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[6] "A Princess of Texas Passes Away," Dallas News, September 8, 1929.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Steve Stevenson, "Texas Indians May Lose Reservation," American Statesman Magazine, May 27, 1928.

[9] Dallas News, September 8, 1929. [10] Sylvestine, op. cit., 302.

[11] Writer's personal interview with Chief Sun-Kee.

about the room so that they might inspect his regalia. He explained to the party that he wore this costume only on very special occasions -- a statement which made them feel honored.

It was not on this trip to Washington that he saw his first city. He visited the State Fair of Texas in Dallas in 1927 and stayed in the Adolphus Hotel. He described the hotel as being a cabin of many stories. He explained stories by placing one hand above the other.

After he became chief he continued to make bows and arrows and wooden spoons. Although his home showed signs of poverty and want, it was made fairly comfortable with things that his daughter had made while in school in Livingston, and with what he himself had made.

He died September 8, 1935, at the age of seventy-five, and was buried at Indian Village cemetery. His was the first casket ever used on the reservation. Ordinarily a crude homemade coffin was used. The Indians purchased their chief's casket with money that they themselves contributed.[12]

Bronson Cooper Sylestine, whose Indian name is Ti-ca-i-che, was installed as chief, or Mikko-Choba, January 1, 1936, at the age of fifty-six. He is six feet three inches in his moccasins and is the great-grandson of Chief Colebe.[13]

Ti-ca-i-che is a great lover of the forest, and he likes

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[12]Verity, _op_. _cit_., p. 25.

[13]Airey, _op_. _cit_.

to hunt. When the election for a chief was held November 30, 1935, he was out squirrel hunting and did not know that he had been chosen to lead his people. He is anxious that things be done for his people, and he wants them to be happy.

McConico Battise, whose Indian name is Kai-na, is speaker chief, or interpreter, of the tribe. He has served his people much in the place that he holds, and, as we have seen, accompanied Chief Sun-Kee on his trip to Washington.

Josephine Battise died October 24, 1938, at an age past eighty. She was interested in the public affairs at Indian Village. She never learned to speak English. With her hair in two long braids, her back bent, and her feet so twisted she could hardly wear shoes, she attended public meetings until about six months before her death. She enjoyed watching the young Indians at their sports. She made big baskets and little baskets of various shapes from pine needles and swish-cane. She was recognized as the tribal champion basket weaver, and it was for this that she won distinction.[14]

Sally Poncho is another Indian woman who has won distinction in the history of her tribe. Although she has seen many moons, she can still carry on her work in the Indian art of weaving mats of Spanish moss.[15]

Little is to be found about Pedigo Carson, who died in 1915, except that he bravely shared the hardships of his race

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[14]"Aged Coushatta Basket Weaver Taken by Death," Houston Chronicle, October 28, 1938.

[15]"Indian Art Shown at Fair," Houston Chronicle, October 30, 1938.

at Indian Village. He was the last man of his tribe to wear long hair.[16]

Among the young people of the tribe are Lizzie Battise, Ina Battise, Elvina Sylvestine, Emily Sylvestine, Lutie Thompson, Raymon Poncho, Ammie Alex, Lilly Walker, Dorothy Poncho, and Eddie Celestine.[17] The Presbyterian church sent Lizzie and Elvina to Oklahoma Presbyterian College at Durant, Oklahoma, in 1922. After two years they were put in school in Livingston, Texas, where they worked in homes for their expenses. Elvina became dissatisfied and went home. Lizzie continued her work, graduated from high school, went to Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, and returned to her native village to work among her people. Mrs. A. W. Bulay of Livingston put Iva in high school. She graduated from there and went to Sam Houston State Teachers College in 1932. Lutie is the daughter of Chief Sun-Kee.[18] She is quite skilled with her hands. She can make beautiful pine-needle baskets, and useful things for her home. She learned many practical things while she was in school in Livingston. Emily Sylvestine attended Livingston High School, where she learned to write in a simple, clear style. A short account of her people which she wrote appeared in the Frontier Times, April, 1932. She wanted to learn to live in the white man's civilization. Am-

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[16]Airey, op. cit.

[17]Sylvestine, op. cit., p. 303. "Indians Ask Allred to Go to Powwow," Dallas News, June 15, 1938.

[18]Sylvestine, op. cit., p. 303.

mie Alex went to school in Livingston. Among the things that she learned to like are algebra and the make-up of white girls. Lilly Walker and Dorothy Poncho weave baskets of pine needles, Eddie Celestine can beat a rawhide drum, and Ramon Poncho is a brave who gets to go with the older men on such trips as the one to Austin to invite the Governor to their village.[19]

Many whites have aided the Alabama-Coushattas in different ways. The whites whom they trust they consider their friends, and will follow their advice. Among the more important of these white friends were Sam Houston, Rev. and Mrs. L. W. Currie, Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Chambers and daughter, Dorothy, E. T. Murphy of Livingston, T. B. Baldwin of Dallas, Clem F. Fain, Jr., of Livingston, Jim Barclay, Representative Clay Stone Briggs of the Galveston district, President Calvin Coolidge, Mrs. Carl Sory, Mrs. A. W. Bulay, United States Senator Lynn Frazier of North Dakota, Mrs. Earl Cogdell of Granbury, J. E. Farley, United States Indian agent, Hobby Galloway, Indian agent, and I. D. Fairchild of Lufkin.

In addition to these are teachers, trustees, doctors, and nurses who have given much of their time that the Indians might be a happier people. Some of these friends are Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Willbanks, Dr. W. W. Flowers, Dr. J. C. Anderson, Dr. C. S. Murphy, Dr. J. E. Norwood, Miss Jean Dunnit, E. T.

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[19] "Three-Day All-Indian Fair Opened by Indians in Big Thicket," Houston Chronicle, October 30, 1938.

Murphy, Mrs. J. W. Leggett, Phil Sanders, and A. C. Turner.[20]

Rev. and Mrs. Chambers preached, taught, and doctored at Indian Village for many years. Mr. Willbanks said of Rev. Chambers: "He is the most unselfish man I ever knew."[21] Austin College, Sherman, awarded Rev. Chambers the degree of doctor of divinity because of his years of faithful service among the Indians.

Mrs. Earl Cogdell, a friend to the Alabama-Coushattas through the years, has expressed her deep interest in these Indians in the following manner:

> A man once said that the only good Indian was a dead Indian. That man may have been sincere and he may have known many Indians, but he did not know the members of the Alabama tribe of Indians who came to Texas over a hundred years ago and have lived quietly, peacefully and obscurely ever since.....[22]

No more timely tribute could be paid to the small band of Indians who still reside in the pine forests of southeast Texas.

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[20] "Report of Committee to Investigate the Conditions and Surroundings of the Alabama Indians in Polk County, Texas," _Texas Senate Journal_, February 15, 1929. Ella G. White, "The Last Alabamas Come into Their Own," _Dallas News_, May 29, 1929.

[21] Ella G. White, _op. cit._

[22] "$125,000 Asked to Buy Land, Live Stock, and Agricultural Tools for Indians in Texas," _Dallas News_, March 28, 1926.

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