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The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee

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INDIAN TRAIL TREES

Our friend Don Wells and the Mountain Stewards of Georgia have been very busy since their visit here in August of 2008. At that time they had documented 1600 trees, and now that number stands at 1,714, with 15-20 more to be added in the near future.

In our April 2009 Language Newsletter we talked about their noble quest and how they were discovering many mysteries of our early ancestors. They have a web site at www.mountainstewards.org and they also have a quarterly online newsletter that is sent out. We always enjoy reading about their latest accomplishments when their newsletter comes in our e-mail.

We invite you to go online and read about this unique group of people and the many interesting trees they have documented and attributed to our native ancestors all over the country.

(Editor: More excerpts from *'Neath August Sun, 1901'*)

SACAJAWEA

by Edith Connelley Clift, page 198

Sacajawea was one of the wives of Charbonneau, interpreter for Lewis and Clark. She was a Snake or Sho-sho-ne Indian girl of perhaps sixteen years. She was of unusual intelligence and appeal.

After a time of wandering (after the disbandment of the Lewis & Clark Expedition), Sacajawea joined the Comanche Indians, a related tribe of the Sho-sho-ne who lived on the Canadian River north of the present Amarillo, Texas.

Dr. Grace Raymond Hebard, who published a book titled "Sacajawea" wrote: ...the language of these people she could understand and they in turn could understand her, for they were in fact a branch of the Sho-sho-nes... Here in the course of time Sacajawea married a member of this tribe, by the name of Jerk Meat. With this husband she lived harmoniously for a number of years, giving birth to five children, only two of whom survived.

One of these was a son called Ticannaf* and the other, the youngest of the five, a daughter named Yakee Wosi*, or Crying Basket.

Shortly after the birth of this child, Jerk Meat was killed in battle. From this time Sacajawea was 'not in harmony with her husband's people' and decided to leave the Comanches and seek her own tribe....she so completely disappeared that her whereabouts was unknown for many years and the Comanche thereafter spoke of her as Watsi Wai?ipu, or Lost Woman.

When she left the Comanche she carried with her, her small daughter. Her Comanche son, Ticannaf, left behind, searched for her long and unsuccessfully.

The daughter of Sacajawea's son, Ticannaf, was Tah-cu-tine*, or Ta-soon-da-hipe, translated to "Take Pity On." She resided within a few miles of Lawton, Oklahoma, for many years and was the wife at the time of her death of Pah-we-tipe, who lived near Indianahoma.

A Dr. Alexander Eastman was detailed to Lawton to talk with many of the aged Comanches to corroborate and verify the details of the life of Sacajawea. Comanches commonly seen on the streets of Lawton are quoted at length in these reports. A few of these are We-sa-poie, mother of Tah-cu-tine's last husband; Mum-su-kih*, brother of Tah-cu-tine's first husband; George Ki-we-na*, Tah-cu-tine's nephew; He-we-nah*, first cousin to Tah-cu-tine; and Wm. Karty, nephew of Hi-we-nah*. There are others among the Comanche who bear blood relationship to Sacajawea.

(*Editor's Note: I spent some time researching the above information and could find no mention of either Ticannaf or Yakee Wosi in the early Comanche census records.

Tah-cu-tine (or Tah-su-tine) also known as Ta-soon-da-hipe, was married to Ase-naw at one time. She was also married to Pah-we-tipe, whose father was Pe-sah-mock-ah and mother was We-sah-poie, a Mexican Captive of the Comanches. We-sah-poie was the daughter of Si-ah-cheen-e-kah (Straight Feather).

(An interesting note: the home of Straight Feather still stands south of the Lake Ellsworth Dam, about ¼ mile south of the Highway, back in the timber, and can be seen from the road. The house is made of blocks and no longer has a roof or windows.)

We-sa-poie was also the mother of Ter-che-sy (also known as Pi-bitter). I found no information on Mum-su-kih. I

wondered if Kiwena was actually Koweno, and if Hi-we-nah and He-we-nah were the same name and could be a Comanche named Hi-we-ni, whom I found in old census records.)

NOTED INDIANS OF COMANCHE COUNTY

by Elizabeth Williamson, p.206

Oklahoma, the land of the Red Man, is rich in Indian lore. Eighty different tribes of Indians have lived in Oklahoma. Some of the noted Indians of the past and present have lived in Comanche County, near Lawton.

Per-mun-ske, the noted Comanche Scout, was born in 1851 in a teepee on the banks of the Canadian River, near the Antelope Mountains. When he was about ten years old his parents moved to the Wichita Mountains, where Per-mun-ske lived until his death. At the age of nineteen, the very year that Sheridan established Fort Sill in the heart of the Comanche Country, Per-mun-ske, whose name means "The Hairy One," took to the warpath against the white man.

One year later he realized that it was hopeless for the Indians to fight against the advance of the white man. He cut off his braids, cast aside his blanket and on December 1, 1874, enlisted for two months service with the Indian Scout Detachment. Was discharged with "Good" character on February, 1875.

He immediately reenlisted as head of the Scout Detachment taking part in the Kiowa-Comanche-Cheyenne campaign of 1875. It was during his enlistment that the Fort Sill garrison was sent out after bands of Indians who were keeping the whites in constant terror.

The Indians were hidden in the Wichita Mountains where they knew every rock and tree. The white soldiers

would have been entirely at their mercy but the Indian Scouts, under Per-mun-ske, led the way to their retreat. The scouts located the Indian camp and returned with their report. The soldiers had hardly pitched camp when the battle began with a volley from the Indians. The fight was on. Gradually the firing from the Indian camp died. The soldiers advanced and found one small boy, the only survivor, crawling from behind the rocks and making his escape. The Indian scout hurried forward to look in the faces of those who had fallen. The faces were those of his own relatives and friends who had been his comrades on the war path before he joined the army of the United States. There lay Ter-ak-a-nee-cut, his father-in-law, and Pah-po-ter-a-pet, his uncle, and Pe-ah-ter-who-noovy, leader of the band, and seven more of his best friends. His face showed no emotion, finally he raised his head and said, "We cannot help it, I did my duty." He returned later to his people and was chief for thirteen years. *(Editor: I did some research and could not verify that he was known as Chief of the Comanches.)*

Quanah Parker was chosen Chief after Per-mun-ske. He was chief at the opening of the Kiowa-Comanche country in 1901. Both Quanah and his mother are buried in the Post Oak Cemetery near Cache. *(Editor's Note: They were both later moved to the Fort Sill Post Cemetery.)*

ANOTHER STORY OF NOTED INDIANS OF COMANCHE COUNTY

by Mrs. Jeanette Rowell, p.207

In June, 1900, Mrs. Jeanette Rowell of Kansas and Dr. Rowell of Connecticut drove from Anadarko to Mt Scott. They were looking for a trading post which was located on what is now known as

the Bert Bear place. The country was very primitive, very few white people here. Anadarko was the nearest railroad so lumber and supplies were freighted from there. Her story:

"The Indians were camped that winter on Medicine Creek, about a mile from the store. Smallpox broke out among them and they, finding out I was afraid, would come in the store and say, "Indian coming, smallpox," and of course I disappeared in a hurry which amused them very much. Many funny things happened. I had been told I must not laugh at them, but they can see a joke as well as anyone and laugh as hearty.

One day an old Indian came to the store. He never wore the white man's clothes, but that day he had gotten a shirt and was trying to put it on. The store was full of Indians and all looked on but never a word or smile. I laughed harder than I ever did in my life. The women looked first at me and then at the Indian (poor old Ha-vaht) and the roar of laughter that those Indians gave sure was hearty.

One day a white man drove to the store, wanting to be seen and heard. The Indian, Stumbling Bear, was in the store, a large fine-looking Indian. The fellow in a loud tone said, "Hello, John, how are you, John?" The Indian turned around and said, "I'm John, I'm mad, I kill." Well, the white man did not stay to find out who the Indian wanted to kill, but left the store in a hurry.

James Murry of the Bureau of Ethnology and his wife were doing research work the summer of 1901 with the assistance of the Indians. They made replicas of the tents and shields of the different tribes of Oklahoma. Their work was mighty interesting.

There are many places of historical interest near Lawton, and many noted

Indians were living around Mt. Scott at that time.”

ANOTHER STORY...

by E.W. Livingston, p. 208

I came here in 1901 and worked as an Indian trader until September, 1911, a mile north of the Indian School, until all the Indian traders had to move off the reservation.

From the time I went to work in the Indian Trade store to the last day, the Indians and their ways have been a very interesting study. Their way of living and their ideas were so different from those of the white people – more like the people of thousands of years ago, living close to nature.

Quannah Parker was chief of the Comanches at that time and a very interesting man to talk to. He enjoyed talking of his trips to Washington, and the different things that had happened in his life, a very smart Indian.

Most of the Indian trade at the post was with the Comanche Indians, and many peculiar happenings took place during the nine or ten years I was there. One Indian came in one day and wanted to know of the bookkeeper what his account was. The bookkeeper looked it up and said it was \$285. “My,” said the Indian, “that’s a lot of money,” then studied and said “but I not scared, are you?” The old Indians as a general rule were pretty honest and would pay their debts.

A man named Sam Strauss was an Indian trader until after the country opened, then sold his business to A.D. Lawrence and Son. Ker-che was Sam’s customer and the Indian usually traded only with one man, there being few white men in whom he could place his trust. Having been acquainted with Ker-che, I endeavored to persuade him to

trade with us in the future instead of the new trader, and he did.

Among the first things which he wanted to buy was a wagon and harness, which I sold him. When he came for his wagon he brought another almost brand new wagon with him. I asked him what he was going to do with the other wagon. “Want to buy it?” I told him I had no use for it, but if he left the wagon I would try to sell it for him. I asked him why he wanted to sell that wagon and buy a new one, and he said the wagon belonged to his wife and she was dead. That was an Indian custom, never to keep anything that had belonged to a member of the family who had died. He sold me that wagon for \$10 or \$12. I didn’t want it, but he wanted to get rid of it.

(Editor’s Note: This next part of Livingston’s story is a little far-fetched, but it does make for an interesting read. Draw your own conclusions. Maybe family members living today can verify the story.)

Post Oak Jim still lives around Cache. At the time of the early days he was a policeman at the Fort Sill sub-agency. One day he went over to Cache and got...in a fight. He was shot in the mouth with a .41 caliber pistol, knocking his two front teeth out. That, of course, broke the force of the bullet, but it plowed on until it lodged in his throat, and knocked him down. He got up and cleaned out the saloon. Then he started for the agency and the story is that he ran all the way and yelled every jump. A man named Isom was agent there. When he got up and saw how he was shot, he figured he was in a dying condition and took him over to Fort Sill, arriving there about sunup the next morning. After an examination, the doctor said, “Jim, I can’t do anything for you.” Jim lay around under the arbor as was the custom for a few days, then got

hold of his knife and a mirror, lay flat on his back and picked that bullet out of his own neck, and is still living today.

OLD COMANCHE NAMES

The Treaties signed in the 1800s with various tribes listed the names of the men who signed, along with a translation of their name.

I have extracted the names of the Comanche signers, along with the translation given, and will list them here. The spelling is the way it was shown on the original document.

Treaty of 1835 Comanche signers:

Ishacoly (the Wolf)
Queenashano (War Eagle)
Tabaqueena (Big Eagle)
Pohowetowshah (Brass Man)
Shabbakasha (Roving Wolf)
Neraquassi (Yellow Horse)
Toshapappy (White Hare)
Pahohsareya (Broken Arm)
Pahkah (Man Who Draws The Bow)
Witsitony (He Who Sucks Quick)
Leahwiddikah (One Who Stirs Up Water)
Esharsotsiki (Sleeping Wolf)
Pahtrisula (The Dog)
Ettah (Gun)
Tennowikah (Boy Who Was Soon A Man)
Kumaquoi (Woman Who cuts Buffalo Meat)
Taquanno (Armorous Man)
Kowa (Stinking Tobacco Box)
Soko (Old Man)

Treaty of 1846 Comanche signers:

Pah-ha-u-ca (Amorous Man)
Mo-pe-chu-co-pe (Old Owl)
Cush-un-a-rah-ah (Ravisher)
Ka-bah-ha-moo (Won't Smoke)
O-ka-art-su (Rope Cutter)
Moo-ra-que-top (Nasty Mule)
Ta-bup-pua-ta (Winner)
Kai-tia-tah (Little)
Kai-he-na-mou-rah (Blind Man)
Ho-chu-cah (Bird's House)

Pah-moo-wah-tah (No Tobacco)
Mon-ne-con-nah-heh (Ring)
Po-che-na-qua-heip (Buffalo Hump)
Santa Anna, Sa-ba-heit (Small Wolf)
Quarah-ha-po-e (Antelope Road)
Ka-nah-u-mah-ka (Nearly Dead)
Ish-a-me-a-qui (Traveling Wolf)
Mo-he-ka (Pole Cat)
A-ka-chu-a-ta (No Horn)
Ka-he-na-bo-ne (Blind Man)
Ma-war-ra (Lost)
Ke-wid-da-wip-pa (Tall Woman)
Pa-na-che (Mistletoe)

Treaty of 1853 Comanche signers:

To-che-ra-nah-boo (Shaved Head)
Wa-ya-ba-to-sa (White Eagle)
Hai-nick-seu (Crow)
Ty-har-re-ty (One Who Runs After Women)
Para-sar-a man-no (Ten Bears)
Wulea-boo (Shaved Head)
Ka-ne-re-tah (One That Rides The Clouds)

Treaty of 1865 Comanche signers:

Tab-e-nan-i-kay (Rising Sun)
Paddy-wah-say-mer
Ho-to-yo-koh-wat
Esh-tave-prah (Female Infant)
A-sha-hav-beet (Milky Way)
Co-che-te-ka
Queen-ah-e-vah (Eagle Drinking)
Ta-ha-yer-quoip (Horse's Back)
Pocka-naw-quoip (Buffalo Hump)
Ho-to-yo-koh-wot (Over the Buttes)
Parry-wah-say-mer (Ten Bears)
Bo-yah-wah-to-yeh-be (Iron Mountain)
Bo-wah-quas-suh (Iron Shirt)
To-sa-wi (Silver Brooch)

Treaty of 1867 Comanche signers:

Parry-wah-say-men (Ten Bears)
Tep-pe-navon (Painted Lips)
To-she-wi (Silver Brooch)
Cear-chi-neka (Standing Feather)
Ho-we-ar (Gap In The Woods)
Tir-ha-yah-gua-hip (Horse's Back)
Es-a-man-a-ca (Wolf's Name)
Ah-te-es-ta (Little Horn)

Pooh-yah-to-yeh-be (Iron Mountain)
Sad-dy-yo (Dog Fat)

Comanche Bands

The Treaty of 1865 also listed Band names for some of the Comanches. They were:

Tabenanihah, Yaparuka/Root Eater;
Paddywahsaymer, Yaparuka;
Hotoyokohwat, Yaparuka Band;
Eshetaveparah, Yaparuka Band;
Ashahabbeet, Penatuka/Sugar Eater;
Cocheteka, Kutsutuka/ Buffalo Eater;
Queenahcvah, Nokoni/Go-About Band;
Tahayerquoip, Nokoni Band;
Pochanawquiop, Penatuka Band;
Hotoyokohwot, Yaparuka Band;
Parrywahsaymer, Yaparuka Band;
Bowahquassuh, Taninuu / Liver Eater Band;
Tosawi, Penatuka Band.

I challenge some of our students of the Comanche language to try to put these names into the “modern” name that it is known today, hopefully using the official spelling system, and to see if the translation is correct.

RAISING BILINGUAL KIDS

(*The following article appeared in the Lawton Constitution on August 7, 2011, written by Rasha Madkour from the Associated Press. *In our efforts to encourage and promote use of the Comanche language, I thought parts of this article were worth re-printing for you. Although it speaks of world languages, I have taken the liberty of inserting Comanche language when appropriate.*)

“According to the U.S. Census, in 1980 just 11 percent of Americans lived in homes where languages other than

English were spoken. By 2007, the percentage had nearly doubled to 20 percent.

While past generations sometimes encouraged children (or in the case of native children – were forced) to abandon mother tongues in order to assimilate faster, today’s parents see the benefits of being fluent in more than one language, and they look for ways to encourage it.

Not only does speaking more than one language preserve cultural ties and perhaps open up future career opportunities in an increasingly global economy, but scientific research suggests that bilingualism is good for you, making the brain more flexible. One study found that speaking more than one language may even slow the onset of Alzheimer’s.

Experts say it’s difficult to re-learn a language properly once you’ve learned it incorrectly from a non-native speaker.

One school of thought says people’s brains assign a certain language to each person. So if your mother always speaks to you in (Comanche), when you hear her voice your brain switches to (Comanche) mode and it takes a concerted effort to speak to her in any other language.

There are numerous benefits of bilingualism – higher scores on IQ tests, better problem-solving skills, heightened language development, increased math ability, more cultural sensitivity and bigger earnings potential.”

(*Editor: Now, isn’t that something we all want for our Comanche children and grandchildren? Higher IQ scores, better problem-solving skills -- well, you can read the other benefits above. So why don’t we make a concerted effort to involve our children in language classes and expose them not only to the language, but our culture, too?

According to the article, language and culture go hand in hand.)

COMANCHE LANGUAGE CLASSES

Community classes began on August 27th with the first class offered in **Oklahoma City** at the Comanche Outreach office. Jonathan Poahway led the class, introducing the Comanche Alphabet and Sound and Spelling System to those in attendance.

The next class was held September 17th in **Cache**, at the Cache Senior Center, with 21 people signing in. We were honored to have five of our fluent elder speakers join us, as they always offer help when we need it and give us encouragement.

We have made tentative plans for classes in surrounding communities:

Anadarko Outreach Office on October 15th for a class from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with a pot luck at noon.

Cyril Senior Nutrition Center on October 22nd. Again, the hours will be from 11 to 4, with a pot luck lunch at noon.

Walters Community Center on Saturday, October 29th. It will begin at 11:00 a.m. and end around 4:00 p.m. We will have a pot luck lunch at noon.

The Little Washita Church near **Fletcher** will host the November 12th class. We will be there from 11:00 to 4:00, with a pot luck lunch at noon.

Everyone attending is encouraged to bring a covered dish to share at the noon meal.

We hope you will make plans to join us on one or all of the above listed classes. Repetition helps us to remember what we hear, and that will go far in language learning.

We will place announcements in the area town's newspapers. For more information call 580-492-5126.

On Saturday, October 8th, the Language Committee will meet with the elder speakers at the Lawton Library to work on more material for children. Billie Kreger will be the facilitator

FACEBOOK

Well, it appears everyone is on Facebook these days. If you haven't heard of Facebook, then you probably don't own a computer.

The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee has a Facebook page where we put announcements, answer questions, promote language learning and distribute language material, plus add old photos and other things of interest.

Other pages concerning Comanches have appeared in recent months on Facebook. One of particular interest is the "**Comanche Word of the Day**" page. Administered by tribal member Jonathan Poahway, it exploded with new members in its first days of being online. What I especially like is that the younger generation is getting involved in learning, and therefore preserving, our language.

At first it was just the written word, then it evolved to Jonathan giving short videos of the Word of the Day, along with pronunciation. That seems to have helped a lot of new learners. He has many more ideas he wants to try

Who knows where this could lead with the new technology available? Perhaps more Comanches wanting to learn the Comanche language? Wouldn't that be wonderful?

Please visit the Comanche Word of the Day page if you haven't already, and be sure and drop in to the Comanche Language page on Facebook, too.

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