

Ioway Ethnohistory: A Review Part II

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This is the second, and final, part of an article that traces Ioway ethnohistory through three distinct periods. Part I, published in the Spring 1973 issue (Vol. 41, No. 8), dealt with the emergence of the "Aiaoua" tribe from a portion of the prehistoric Oneota manifestation, located primarily in the state of Iowa, and with early historic accounts of the Ioway.

Part II deals with the reservation period, during which, under terms of a treaty negotiated in 1836, the Ioway were on a reserve in northwestern Kansas and southeastern Nebraska. After subsequent land losses, a portion of the tribe moved to Indian Territory where they were ultimately settled on another reservation. This study concludes with the year 1929 when the Oklahoma Ioway's request for additional compensation for their ceded lands met with favorable consideration by the federal government.

IOWAY TO IOWA (1836-1929)

FOLLOWING THE "PLATTE PURCHASE" of 1836, the Ioway, Sac and Fox began moving into the area between Fort Leavenworth and the Great Nemaha River along the Nebraska-Kansas border. From this point onward, Ioway ethnohistory is marked by a gradual increase in documentation owing to governmental reports and the records left by missionaries, visitors, travelers and the like. Unfortunately these documents, particularly those prepared by governmental officials, contain much more information about the size of buildings built for the Indians, the number of hogs and cattle, and the restrictions placed on them than they do actual Indian life and

custom.⁴⁸ It is not nearly as easy to trace the lives of the Iowa themselves as it is to trace what the United States Government did to them. Fortunately there are some hints of Iowa life and culture scattered throughout this period.

Pryor Plank reports that Reverend Samuel M. Irvin actually joined the Iowa on April 10, 1837 in the Platte Purchase country.⁴⁹ Plank was an early Doniphan County, Kansas settler who knew Irvin from 1855 until his death in 1887. He used Irvin's original notes along with personal interview in writing his account of the Iowa, Sac and Fox Mission (1908).



Courtesy of Author

"Platte Purchase" area or the
Half-breed Tract ceded by
Treaty of 1836

Plank quotes Irvin's remarks regarding the condition of the Indians he encountered in the area east of the Missouri:

They numbered in all 830. They were a wild, warlike, roving people, and in a most wretched condition, depending mainly on the chase for a subsistence. Their habitations were of the most frail and temporary kind. They were shelters in the form of huts or houses made of the bark of trees stretched over slender poles and tied together with bark strings, or they were tents or lodges made of the skins of the buffalo or elk, and sewed together with the sinews of these animals. These bark houses were mainly for summer shelter, and would in a few years yield to the wear of time, when they would be abandoned and a new location sought. The skin tents were carried with them, and made their habitations wherever they chanced to stop. They were strictly a migratory and unsettled people.

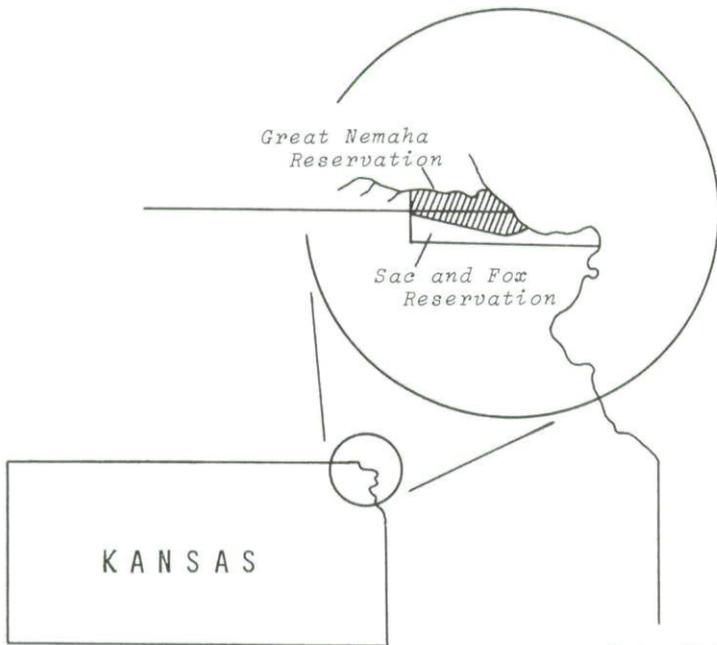
Domestic animals, excepting ponies and dogs were not among them. Indeed, to some of them, such things as cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry were almost unknown, and did such animals happen their way they would pounce upon them for present food as quickly as upon a buffalo or wild turkey.

⁴⁸ For a good summary see Roy W. Meyer, "The Iowa Indians, 1836-1885," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Topeka, 1962), Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 273-300.

⁴⁹ Pryor Plank, "The Iowa, Sac and Fox Indian Mission and its Missionaries, Rev. Samuel M. Irvin and Wife," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society*, (Topeka, 1908), Vol. 10, p. 312.

Their farming utensils were a squaw-ax . . . and a heavy hoe just introduced by the traders.

With the men, war was the chief employment and great delight. The women also entered considerably into the war spirit. They took a large part in the war-dance. The more honored in the circle would carry a shrub or branch of a tree as large as could be carried pendent from which were mutilated parts of the bodies of their enemies, such as fingers and toes and even feet and hands.⁵⁰



Courtesy of Author

Map 5. Great Nemaha Reservation established by Treaty of 1836 and adjacent Sac and Fox Reservation.⁵¹

Andrew S. Hughes, subagent of the Greater Nemaha Subagency (see Map 5) offered another description of the state of affairs in his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

There is nothing that could properly be called farms in cultivation.
No agricultural implements or other things have been received

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 312-13.

⁵¹ Charles C. Royce, "Indian Land Cessions in the United States," *18th Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, (Washington, 1899), Part 2, Kansas Map 2, pl. CXXXIV.

for the present year. According to the best count I can make, the Iowas consist of 992 souls

It is not in my power to give the number engaged in agriculture or the chase, as nothing worth notice has been done during the present year, owing to the scattered condition of the Indians.

The game has nearly all disappeared, and none worth pursuit is to be found on their lands. The Indians that have emigrated all seem to be content and highly pleased with their situation, and I feel confident that next year will present a very different view of their agricultural and domestic prosperity.

The Sacs and Iowa are located on the west bank of the Missouri River, immediately above the mouth of the Wolf River. A square four miles will include both tribes; within this square the sites for the buildings and other improvements [stipulated by treaty] have been designated and reported.⁵²

The year after the Iowa moved to their new homes, the government built five double-log houses with shingle roofs, glass windows, floors and doors and with good stone chimneys. This was in accordance with the Treaty of 1836.⁵³ In addition, 200 acres were fenced and broken in ten-acre lots. However, the rails were soon used for campfires and, although some of the houses were occupied for a short time, all were eventually abandoned. Everything of value was sold for whisky and trinkets and the logs burned. Within a few years even the fields could not be distinguished.⁵⁴

Also under Treaty the Iowas got 100 head of milk cows, 100 head of stock hogs and a number of farm tools. The stock was eaten for food and the tools traded for whiskey and a government mill costing \$2,800 was burned. Following that, Irvin reported that "drunkenness prevailed to a fearful extent."⁵⁵

The first mission was a log structure located north of the road between Highland and Highland Station on the Iowa side of the Iowa and Sac-Fox boundary.⁵⁶ The Great Nemaha Agency was established about a mile southwest of the mission on Sac lands and, like the mission, it was made of logs.⁵⁷

Government documents do not reveal much of the true condition that existed among the Indians in the early period of

⁵² Andrew S. Hughes, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1837), p. 32.

⁵³ Charles J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (Washington, 1904), Vol. 2, p. 468.

⁵⁴ Plank, *op cit.*, p. 314.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

reservation life. The reports are generally positive in nature with emphasis on "progress" toward acculturation. Plank, however, offers some quotes from Irvin's diary written in 1853 in which he recalls events that took place around 1837:

Fifteen years ago [ca. 1837] I traveled this very path with the chiefs and braves of the Iowas to make peace with the Omahas. We camped near this spot [en route to the Omaha Mission in Nebraska]. The Indians then pointed out a spot on a ridge a little south where the Iowas but a short time before had murdered and scalped nine Pawnees.

In the afternoon [1853] we reached a point on the Missouri River which is now called Peru, a small village or landing. I presume the inhabitants were quite ignorant of a tragedy which happened years ago [ca. 1837] at the foot of their main street or where the landing is. A party of Sioux attempted to invade the Iowas and Otoes, to get horses and scalps. The latter tribes combined proved too strong for the Sioux and they were put to flight. Being hard pressed, four of the retreating party took shelter in a small piece of tall grass that remained unburnt where Peru landing now is. The Iowas and Otoes surrounded the grass on all sides excepting towards the river and then set fire to the grass. Two of the Sioux were killed in attempting to escape through the fire—two took to the river and shared the same fate in the water.⁵⁸

When the Iowas first came to Kansas, White Cloud (Mo-has-ka or Mo-hos-ka) was their chief.⁵⁹ This is apparently the same individual referred to by McKinney and Hall as Mohaskah.⁶⁰ His wife, Female Flying Pigeon, is also featured.⁶¹

During the early years of reservation life, both the government and the Irvins made very little progress with the Iowas. Irvin was joined by Reverend William Hamilton and his wife on December 29, 1837.⁶² Together they appear to have accomplished more in the area of general education than bringing in Christianity. At first instruction was done in English, but in 1843 Irvin and Hamilton began preparing books written in Iowa. Eventually they published a 101-page children's catechism, a 150-page grammar, a book of 50 hymns and 16 pages of Matthew's Gospel.⁶³

The attendance at school was spotty and the results practically negligible. The teachers had to go out and collect students in the

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 319-20.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 323.

⁶⁰ Thomas L. McKinney and James Hall, *Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of Ninety-five of 120 Principal Chiefs from the Indian Tribes of North America* (Philadelphia, T. K. and P. G. Colling, Printers, 1938), p. 141.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁶² Plank, *op cit.*, p. 319.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 315 and 320.

village. Often young men would leave school "choosing rather to paint and strut about the village . . ." ⁶⁴

Subagent Richardson, along with Irvin and Hamilton, felt a need for a manual training school and convinced the Iowas to donate their school and smith fund in 1844 toward the cause. It consisted of \$1,400. ⁶⁵ The school opened in the fall of 1846 and with only eight children in attendance—six of whom were Iowas. The total gradually worked up to thirty or forty in January and an average of thirty was maintained until 1850. ⁶⁶

The chief at this time was Nau-che-mie-ga. ⁶⁷ According to Barry ⁶⁸ Na-che-ning-a or No-heart-of-fear was actually the second ranking chief at this time and it was probably through his cooperation that money was donated for the school. He was said to have been a fine man with concern for the welfare of his people, "a friend to the whites" and "very friendly to education." Further "the school and mission owe much to him." ⁶⁹

The school fund was donated in spite of recent crop loss and the government's withholding of annuity pay for cattle killed years earlier. Perhaps this donation would not have been made if head chief White Cloud and third ranking Walking Rain had been present, but they and twelve others had departed for a trip abroad late in 1843. Barry gives the following account:

. . . Fourteen Iowa Indians, and their interpreter (mulatto Jeffrey Dorney), went abroad on an expedition tour, under the conductorship of George H. C. Melody. Frank White Cloud (Makaska), first chief of the nation, Walking Rain (Neumonya), third ranking chief, five warriors, one youth, four women, one girl and one infant were in the party.

The Iowas had left their reserve in (or by) December, 1843 (they were in St. Louis on December 25). Part of the winter of 1843-1844 was spent in New Orleans. They set out across the Atlantic in the summer of 1844 (from New York?) and reached London in mid-July. Artist George Catlin and Melody joined forces to exhibit Indian paintings and the Iowas. While in England the Iowas met some of the Royal family; and were once entertained at breakfast by Disraeli. They appeared in Scotland in February, 1845; and in Ireland in

⁶⁴ 28th Cong., 1st Sess., *Sen. Doc. 1* (Serial 431), p. 315.

⁶⁵ 28th Cong., 2d Sess., *Sen. Doc. 1* (Serial 449), pp. 363-64.

⁶⁶ Meyer, *op cit.*, p. 279.

⁶⁷ 28th Cong., 2d Sess., *Sen. Doc. 1* (Serial 449), pp. 363-64.

⁶⁸ Louise Barry (compiler), "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Topeka, 1965), Vol. 31, No. 2, p. 143.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

March. On April 21, in France, they were received by King Louis Philippe. Three of the group died abroad--Roman Nose, and the infant "Corsair" in England; O-kee-we-me (wife of Little Wolf), in France.

Eleven Iowas arrived in Boston aboard the *Versailles* on August 27, 1845; they remained there in the East for over two months; finally reached their "Kansas" homes (present Doniphan County) in mid-November.⁷⁰

George Catlin included additional information regarding the experiences of the Iowas abroad in his volume covering this and some of his other expeditions.⁷¹ The Iowas created a mild sensation abroad and the trip must have made quite an impression on them.

During this same period a group of 150 Iowas called the "Upper Iowa" or "Pouting Party" were camped with the Pottawattamie near the present location of Council Bluffs, Iowa. They were encountered in September of 1840 by Colonel Stephen W. Kearny and his men from Fort Leavenworth when they marched up to supervise the payment of annuities to the Pottawattamie. At that time the Pottawattamie requested that the Iowas not be forced to move.⁷² It is not known for certain how long the Iowas remained in the Council Bluffs area, but it appears that most returned in 1845. This disrupted progress among their own people upon their return and added to the difficulties of the already troubled times.⁷³

When James K. Polk was elected President there was the usual turn over of governmental officials and a new agent was appointed for the Iowas to replace Richardson. This situation was objectionable to the Indians and missionaries alike. The result was a general worsening of Indian conditions.⁷⁴ According to reports, agricultural pursuits improved, but the rate was slow and there were frequent setbacks. At times there was a surplus.⁷⁵

W. E. Rucker replaced Richardson in 1846, followed by Alfred J. Vaughan in 1848, then the Whigs regained the Presidency and Richardson was returned in 1849. When the Democrats took office,

⁷⁰ Louise Barry (compiler), "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Topeka, 1964), Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 78.

⁷¹ George Catlin, *Notes of Eight Years' Travels and Residence in Europe*, (New York, 1848), Vol. 1, p. 294; Vol. 2, pp. 1-275; 327-28.

⁷² Louise Barry (compiler), "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Topeka, 1963), Vol. 29, No. 3, p. 335 and 338; Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 445.

⁷³ 29th Cong., 1st Sess., Doc. 1 (Serial 470), p. 605.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 605-06.

⁷⁵ 30th Cong., 1st Sess., *Sen. Exec. Doc. 1* (Serial 503), p. 937.

Richardson was again replaced, this time by Daniel Vanderslice in 1852. There is little question that these changes had less than a stabilizing effect on Indian-white relationships.

In 1851 the Great Nemaha subagency became a full agency. Three years later, due to pressure from eager settlers, a treaty was negotiated by which the Iowas ceded a large portion of their reservation.⁷⁶ After this, the Indians went north to the Great Nemaha River area between White Cloud and Rulo, Nebraska and a better agency building was erected.⁷⁷ Under the treaty the Iowas retained a 14,080 acre reserve and 94,450 acres were held in trust and later sold.⁷⁸ The treaty did not solve the problem of continuing hostility on the part of white settlers who wanted still more land. At the same time, the Indians resented the occupation of their former lands.

Meyer, utilizing Commissioner of Indian Affairs reports, discusses the problems stemming from a group of Winnebago who settled among the Iowas around 1850.⁷⁹ They came following removal from their reservation in northeastern Iowa to central Minnesota. The tribe became scattered during removal and approximately 300 camped on Iowa land on the Nemaha River. They raised crops, intermarried with the Iowas and wanted to remain with them. Most were induced to leave by 1860, by the government, due to their dependency upon the Iowas. Fifty-seven remained and more came during the next four years. In 1868 there was apparently a quarrel between the tribes and the remainder of the Winnebago were expelled.

The Civil War had an effect on the Iowas during the 1860s according to Meyer.⁸⁰ In all, forty-three Iowas saw service. Those who served learned English, but at home the school suffered the loss of \$15,000—interest on money invested in banks in the South. During this period [in 1863] the Iowa and Sac Mission “ceased to exist” according to Plank.⁸¹ Actually, as Meyer notes, it was perpetuated until 1866, and for the last six years it was used as a

⁷⁶ Kappler, *op cit.*, pp. 466-67.

⁷⁷ Plank, *op cit.*, p. 318.

⁷⁸ William F. Zornow, *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 92.

⁷⁹ Meyer, *op cit.*, p. 290.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁸¹ Plank, *op cit.*, p. 320.

boarding school for orphans.⁸² During this time Irvin had been conducting school in the basement of his church in Highland. In the words of Plank:

Mr. Irvin and his wife had spent twenty-six of the best years of their lives in a noble effort to civilize and Christianize a wild and warlike people whose chief occupation had been war and rapine from time immemorial.⁸³

Another problem the Iowas shared with virtually all other reservation groups was that of corruption of governmental officials. According to White, Lewis Henry Morgan stopped at Iowa Point in 1862 and visited Irvin at Highland.⁸⁴ Irvin and his assistant reported that the census rolls were greatly inflated by the agents and traders. This was done in order to help the Indians pay their debts since it allowed them to collect more annuities. At one time, the trader was the brother of the agent and, therefore, he always knew in advance when payment would be made and for how much. The trader would then allow Indians to get into debt up to the amount of their payment and the Indians never had to be bothered with the money—it went directly to the trader!

One agent (Vanderslice) obtained the agency farm when it was sold by waiting until the end of his term and “advertising” it very selectively. A friend bought it for \$1,500 and then consigned it back to him for \$500 profit. Morgan pointed out, however, that Vanderslice was one of the best agents the Iowas ever had.⁸⁵

Judging from population figures, Vaughn was a ranking agent in terms of corruption. His figures almost doubled agents who served before and after him.⁸⁶ Meyer, however, tries to explain this discrepancy in terms of increase in the death rate and incidence of disease. Both of these factors were probably of lesser importance than graft in explaining the population figures. Disease was always a factor and the figures move up sharply when Vaughn came into office and dropped off sharply when he was replaced.

In 1869 Thomas Lightfoot, a Quaker, was appointed agent, and the Society of Friends began taking an interest in the Indians’

⁸² Meyer, *op cit.*, p. 287.

⁸³ Plank, *op cit.*, p. 320.

⁸⁴ L. A. White (ed.), *Lewis Henry Morgan, The Indian Journals* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1959), pp. 137-39.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁸⁶ Meyer, *op cit.*, pp. 283-84.

well-being. This was done during the Grant administration when religious groups were given responsibility for several of the reservations.

Soon after taking over, Lightfoot began to make requests for an industrial home and a government farmer. Mary B. Lightfoot, his daughter, took over at the existing school as teacher. She was successful in attracting students by offering noon lunch and clothing. An agency store was set up, carrying necessities at low cost and run by a man with a fixed salary. The store was said to be flourishing in 1871, according to Lightfoot,⁸⁷ but little mention of it is made in the years that followed.

The Industrial School was established at the Great Nemaha Agency under the auspices of the Society of Friends in 1871. It was improved and enrolled thirty to forty pupils in the middle 1870s. In addition, Lightfoot reported that health conditions were improving and that they were exempt from epidemics and contagious diseases.⁸⁸

Disease apparently was a factor in earlier times; W. J. McGee reported that in 1848 the Iowas lost 100 warriors and an uncounted number of women and children due to smallpox.⁸⁹ Again in 1849 the St. Joseph, Missouri *Gazette* reported that fifteen Iowas had died at the Presbyterian Mission of cholera.⁹⁰

Lightfoot further notes that intemperance was less prevalent and conduct improved.⁹¹ He speaks of their interest in house building and agriculture as being "truly gratifying":

Individuals who have spent their lives in wretched lodges are now anxious to have houses erected, and contribute thereto by drawing logs and other material. Four new houses have been built and many dilapidated ones thoroughly repaired. Heretofore it has been customary with these people to live in tents during the winter season⁹²

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs also praised the achievements of

⁸⁷ Thomas Lightfoot, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1871), p. 458.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

⁸⁹ W. J. McGee, "The Siouan Indians," *15th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, (Washington, 1897), pp. 157-204.

⁹⁰ Louise Barry (compiler), "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, (Topeka, 1965), Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 308-09.

⁹¹ Lightfoot, *op cit.*, p. 457.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 457.

the Iowas in 1872:

They belong to a much better class of Indians than their neighbors, the Sacs and Foxes, being temperate, frugal, industrious, and interested in the education of their children. They were thoroughly loyal during the late rebellion and furnished a number of soldiers to the Union Army. Many of them are good farmers, and as a tribe they are generally extending their agricultural operations, improving their dwellings, and adding in their comforts.⁹³

In 1874 C. H. Roberts reported that the Iowa had adopted a code of laws with good results and that intemperance was almost entirely suppressed.⁹⁴ Kent also emphasized the civilized side of Iowa life, noting Indians who lived in houses and imitated whites, using stoves, tables, chairs and household furniture.⁹⁵ Men wore "citizens dress" and were generally neater in physical appearance than the women who occasionally "wore the blanket."⁹⁶ Others continued to adjust and two Iowa women were said to have had sewing machines.⁹⁷

In 1877 M. B. Kent complained that visitation by other tribes was having a demoralizing effect on his people by "perpetuating injurious traditions which should be buried in complete oblivion."⁹⁸

The unsettled and more traditional element began drifting south into Indian Territory in 1876 in protest against government pressure for allotments of their reservation. Realizing the problem, Kent urged that the reservation be surveyed in order that those who desired to remain would have a means of designating the boundaries of their claims.⁹⁹ During 1879 and 1880 an additional 30 Iowas moved south¹⁰⁰ followed by 47 the following year.¹⁰¹ They were,

⁹³ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Reports*, 1872, p. 29.

⁹⁴ C. H. Roberts, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1874), p. 202.

⁹⁵ M. B. Kent, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1875), p. 316.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁹⁷ M. B. Kent, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1876), p. 95.

⁹⁸ M. B. Kent, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1877), p. 143.

⁹⁹ M. B. Kent, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1879), p. 101.

¹⁰⁰ M. B. Kent, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1880), p. 116.

¹⁰¹ Augustus Brosius, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1881), p. 123.

according to agent Augustus Brosius:

. . . those rambling, discontented dispositions who would do very little good while here themselves, and endeavor to infuse into others the same spirit of unrest that has caused them to throw away the golden opportunities afforded of bettering their condition . . .¹⁰²

Of those who remained in the Nebraska-Kansas area, Brosius reported: "they mostly conform to the usages of the whites in their manner of dress."¹⁰³ From this point onward, records were kept by agents at the Sac and Fox Agency in Indian Territory as well as at the Great Nemaha Agency.

The Iowas were not a welcome addition to Indian Territory according to agent John S. Shorb.¹⁰⁴ They were reportedly very poor and a source of great annoyance to himself and the other Indians under his charge. They had no money and were objects of charity. He felt that they should be sent back but noted that they were determined to stay.¹⁰⁵ They were enrolled by order of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1879 and received their annuity payment at that time, but they were not paid again until after 1881.

In 1883 J. Q. Tufts, Sac and Fox Agent, reported that the Iowas were living in an area adjoining the north western part of the Sac and Fox reservation and numbered eighty "souls." He further states that "these people have constantly retrograded since coming to this country."¹⁰⁶

Due to lack of money they wore out their clothing and went back to the blanket. They often stopped speaking English and lived in tents and bark houses and had no stock except for a few ponies. Of twenty school-age children only two attended.¹⁰⁷ The situation was alleviated to a degree when the Iowas were given a new reservation (Map 6):

By executive order dated August 15, 1883, the following lands were set apart for occupancy by the Iowas and other Indians, bounded as follows to wit; By the Sac and Fox lands on the east, the Cimarron River on the north, the Indian meridian on the west, and the Deep

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁴ John S. Shorb, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1881), p. 102.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁶ J. Q. Tufts, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1883), p. 86.

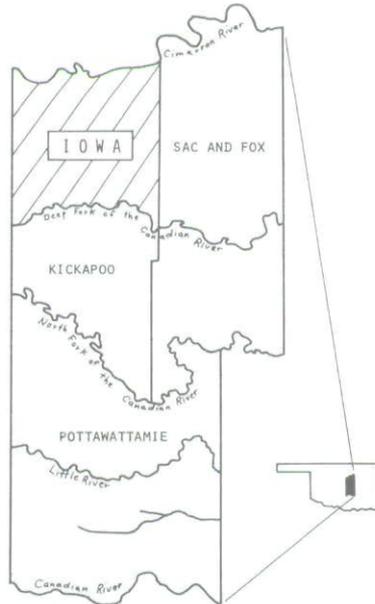
¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Fork Canadian on the south, containing 320 square miles.¹⁰⁸

Things were complicated somewhat for Iowas living in the Kansas-Nebraska area in that the group living in Indian Territory was:

. . . very desirous that their lands in Nebraska and Kansas be sold and the proceeds of the sale thereof be placed in charge of the United States Treasury on interest, the interest to be paid to them as annuity annually¹⁰⁹

Meanwhile, Augustus Brosius, agent at the Great Nemaha Agency, reported that the idea of going to Indian Territory was having a detrimental effect on his people. They did not want to improve their land for fear of mandatory removal.¹¹⁰ The Great Nemaha Agency was consolidated with the Pottawattamie Agency on October 1, 1882.¹¹¹ The new agent reported that the Iowas, unlike the Sac and Fox, were a prosperous tribe with "white blood predominating to a more or less degree."¹¹³ Linn



Courtesy of Author

Map 6. Location of Iowa Reservation in Indian Territory established by Executive Order of 1883.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Isaac A. Taylor, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1884), p. 94.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹¹⁰ Augustus Brosius, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1882), p. 94.

¹¹¹ H. C. Linn, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1883), p. 92.

¹¹² John W. Morris and Edwin C. McReynolds, *Historical Atlas of Oklahoma* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), Maps 44 and 46; Arrell M. Gibson, *Oklahoma: A History of Five Centuries* (Norman, Harlow Publishing Co., 1965), Map 244.

¹¹³ Linn, *op cit.*, p. 92.

also stated that "if it was not for the use of intoxicating drink [they] would be an exemplary tribe."¹¹⁴

In spite of all the good things Linn and other agents had to say for the Iowas, the condition was at best unsettled. A delegation of two Indians came up from Indian Territory in 1883 to explain the benefits of removal and a large majority expressed a desire to join the others.¹¹⁵

An act of March 3, 1885 authorized the appraisement and sale of the reservations of the Sac and Fox (of the Missouri) and Iowa tribes with the consent of the majority of the chiefs, headmen and male adults of each tribe, expressed in open council. A separate council was held for the Kansas-Nebraska Iowas and the group in Indian Territory. All twenty-six of the Iowas in Indian Territory who were in attendance voted in favor of the sale. Eleven of the Kansas-Nebraska group voted for sale and removal and twelve voted to stay. Therefore, of fifty-eight chiefs, headmen and male adults, thirty-seven were in favor of removal to Indian Territory.¹¹⁶ The decision to move to Indian Territory was somewhat biased as far as the Kansas-Nebraska Iowas were concerned since twenty-six of the thirty-seven who voted to go were already there. The act did not provide for individuals who had improved their land and desired to stay.

Agent I. W. Patrick was disturbed over the act of 1885 and reported the state of affairs that resulted on his reserve. Nearly all areas at that time were fenced for farming and grazing and the area was further improved by neat dwellings, barns and orchards.¹¹⁷ Further:

. . . these people [with the exception of about ten families] have adopted all the habits of practical civilization, and should not be subjected to the hardships and demoralizing influences incident upon making new homes in the Indian Territory. Yet in view of the legislation upon the subject of their removal made by Congress last winter it is likely that their transfer will be accomplished, and the

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹¹⁶ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Reports*, 1885, pp. LXVI-LXV.

¹¹⁷ I. W. Patrick, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1885), p. 112.

routine work of education and civilization among them will still be in process twenty years hence. At a recent vote taken by these people, in reference to moving south, twelve persons voted to go. These represent about one fourth of the Iowas belonging in Kansas and constitute the blanket [or traditional] portion of the tribe.¹¹⁸

In 1887 a bill was passed amending the act of March 3, 1885. It provided for Iowas who wished to remain on the Kansas-Nebraska reservation area.¹¹⁹ In 1889 agent John Blair reported a large number of Iowas under the Pottawattamie and Great Nemaha Agency wanted allotments of land under the special act of Congress, but some of the people were:

. . . very suspicious about the matter, and I have recommended that allotments be made to them at as early a date as practicable. If this duty was commenced, those not desiring allotments could go to the Territory and join the Iowas there, and it could be shortly determined what amount of the reservation might be sold.¹²⁰

Shifting back to the scene in Indian Territory in 1886, agent Moses Neal offered the following account of conditions:

. . . 90% of the Iowas are blanket Indians, having only small patches of corn, potatoes and other vegetables. They are inclined to roam around, visiting other tribes and hunting; therefore mainly live in tepees, though some have nice comfortable log houses with good cribs and stables. Should the remainder of the tribe, now residing in Kansas and Nebraska, be moved to the reservation, blacksmith shop and school established, there is no doubt but that they would settle down to work and discontinue their promiscuous visits.¹²¹

Again in 1887 Neal reported that all the Iowas were anxious to see the Kansas-Nebraska lands sold and have the remainder of their tribe join them so they could have such things as a blacksmith, school and medical attention.¹²² One can not help but wonder if this were not more Neal's wish than that of the Iowas. This seems to be the very sort of life they were trying to escape when they came to Indian Territory in the first place! On the other hand, it is easy to see how Neal's job would have been easier with the addition of some

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹¹⁹ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Reports*, 1887, p. LXVI.

¹²⁰ John Blair, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1889), p. 217.

¹²¹ Moses Neal, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1886), p. 144.

¹²² Moses Neal, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1887), p. 96.

of the rudiments of civilization.

Meyer's well-documented study (1962) of the Iowas from 1836-1885 tends to dismiss the Iowas as "acculturated" by the year 1885:

Acculturation was not complete by that date, [1885] but it was so far advanced that its completion within a relatively short time was inevitable. Living and dressing like white men (even to the extent of using sewing machines) and making their living in the same fashion as their white neighbors, the Iowas were justly called "civilized" by their agents.¹²³

On the contrary, Iowas in Nebraska and Kansas were far from being acculturated in 1885 even though most had "look alike" features that they shared with the whites. A letter to the editor of *The Nationalist* (Manhattan, Kansas newspaper) by L. J. White, written in 1883, attests to this fact. The letter describes dress and custom at an Iowas wedding ceremony in which the Sac and Winnebago participated:

The most fashionable costume was moccasins, leggings with fringes, some to the knee, others to the thigh, a breech cloth, loose shirt trimmed with silver breast-plates, and bead garters, silver bracelets, armlets, head bands, bear claw collars, and all the beads they could carry, belts, and ribbons tied in their hair. One had a string of sleighbells down each leg and a long string from his back down to the ground. Horse tails down the back was also quite in fashion.

All this, surrounded by whites, between two thriving towns, White Cloud and Rulo, by men who wear white men's dress and speak English. One would never imagine, to be in the boarding house with the children around us, with their bright faces and English speech and manners, that they were used to such a life, or that it had any attraction for them—and, indeed, some of them know little of it—as many cannot speak Indian, although they can understand it. It is a little world by itself; every day full of something to occupy your attention, and the rest of the world goes on without even a ripple of interest, and you hardly know where the time goes. Nohart, Nebraska, May 20, 1883¹²⁴

If the Kansas-Nebraska Iowas were far from acculturation, the Oklahoma group were even farther. They resented their "half-breed" relatives¹²⁵ and carried on life in traditional fashion. W. S.

¹²³ Meyer, *op cit.*, p. 297.

¹²⁴ L. J. White, Letter to Editor, *The Nationalist*, June 8, 1883, quoted in "Bypaths of Kansas History," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* (Topeka, 1966), Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 149.

¹²⁵ Taylor, *op cit.*, p. 94.

Prettyman, an early photographer, provides a glimpse of Iowa life in Indian Territory in a picture taken in 1885.¹²⁶ It shows David Tohee (Iowa chief and later informant of Alanson Skinner) standing in front of a canvas tipi and wearing a blanket. A drum, dog, horse, remada and another tipi was shown in the photograph.

Life in Indian Territory retained its aboriginal flavor for quite some time. In 1890 the United State Government sent three commissioners to the Iowa village to persuade them to relinquish title to their reservation, given them by Executive Order in 1883. The account offered by the three commissioners regarding the behavior of the Iowas during their stay is most illuminating:

. . . a grotesque dance to the music of a bass drum accompanied by sleigh-bells [was held on the night of their arrival]

This exercise was said to be for the purpose of invoking aid from on high to guide them in their negotiations

The dancing was continued the next day and parts of other days during their stay.

. . . the Iowa are but little advanced in civilization and the older men are especially adverse to adopting or even approaching the ways of the white man. They seem unwilling to have their children educated and seem afraid of contact with whites, therefore, in the contract we have adopted the plan embraced in the general allotment act of congress, that the United States shall hold title in trust in their lands for a period of twenty-five years. These Indians are poor indeed.

The most intelligent among them inform us that they may have no regular meals or meal time, but cook and eat whenever they have anything to cook and eat, whether it is twice in one day or once in two days. With a large reservation of much very good land a great majority of them could not or would not live without annuities from the government. They live in bark houses, admirably adapted to summer use while rains are not upon them. There seems to be now no incentive to energy; to exist is all that is required—a realization of the communist's dream—much property held in common, with greater poverty the common lot of all.¹²⁷

At the time the agreement to cede the reservation was made, the Iowas (eighty-six in number) had 228,418 acres of land. They were offered individual allotments of eighty acres each plus school and church plots totalling 6,890 acres. The so called "residue" of 221,528 acres became the property of the United States. The Iowas wanted 160 acres per person and \$1.25 per acre for land taken from

¹²⁶ Robert E. Cunningham, *Indian Territory: A Frontier Photographic Record by W. S. Prettyman* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 69.

¹²⁷ 51st Cong., 1st Sess., *Sen. Exec. Doc. 171* (Serial 2688), pp. 6-7.

them, but the commissioners talked them out of it saying that they did not really have absolute title.¹²⁸

The chief in Indian Territory at this time was William Tohee. He was blind and helpless, requiring the constant attention of his wife, Maggie. The final settlement included an additional \$350 which was provided for his care.

It soon became evident to the Iowas living in Oklahoma that they had not received nearly as much compensation for their land as their neighbors (Sac and Fox, Kickapoo and Pawnee) for comparable lands. The Iowas, therefore, asked for further compensation from the government. After many years of argumentation in the courts, the Iowas were finally awarded \$254,632.50 in 1929. Of this, the attorneys got \$25,000 which left each of the 104 members of the tribe with approximately \$2,208.¹²⁹

During the years between the time when the reservation was relinquished in 1890 and compensation granted in 1929, Indian culture was gradually changing. Fortunately, it was during this time that ethnologist Alanson Skinner visited the Iowas and made detailed studies of their surviving aboriginal culture.¹³⁰ He visited the Oklahoma band in 1914 and both groups in 1922 and 1923. William Harvey Miner,¹³¹ Samuel M. Irvin¹³² and Pryor Plank¹³³ have also contributed significantly to Iowa ethnology.

It is surprising the extent to which native culture patterns were remembered at the time of Skinner's study in 1914. Informants David Tohee and Joe Springer, who provided most of the information, were both dead by 1926.¹³⁴ Skinner's studies offer a rich

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹²⁹ 63d Cong., 2d Sess., *House Report 484* (Serial 6559), pp. 2-4; 71st Cong., 2d Sess., *Senate Report 496* (Serial 9186), p. 2.

¹³⁰ Alanson Skinner, *Societies of the Iowa, Kansa, and Ponca Indians* (New York, American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, 1915), Vol. 11, Part 9, pp. 679-740; *Medicine Ceremony of the Menonini, Iowa and Wahpeton Dakota Indians* (New York, Indian Notes and Monographs, Museum of the American Indian, 1920), Vol. 4, pp. 189-261; *Ethnology of the Iowa Indians* (Milwaukee, Bulletin of the Milwaukee Public Museum, 1926), Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 181-354.

¹³¹ William Harvey Miner, *The Iowa* (Cedar Rapids, Torch Press, 1911).

¹³² Samuel M. Irvin, *The Waw-Ru-Haw-a, The Decline and Fall of Indian Superstitions* (Philadelphia, Alfred Martein, 1871).

¹³³ Plank, *op cit.*, pp. 312-25.

¹³⁴ Skinner, *Ethnology, op. cit.*, (1926), p. 208.

dimension of the Iowas' culture pattern that is only hinted at during the course of their recorded history. Details regarding social, political and ceremonial organization were exhaustively recorded by Skinner as well as a great deal of information on material culture. Taken together, the ethnographic data does much to complete the picture of the Ioway ethnohistory as well as aiding studies aimed at interpreting archaeological materials associated with the Oneota manifestation.

In 1926 Skinner admitted that acculturation was far advanced:

Practically speaking, Ioway native culture, in all its branches, is dead. Of the seventy-nine survivors of the tribe in Oklahoma or the one hundred sixty-two less primitive members in Kansas and Nebraska on the Nemaha Reservation, not one today keeps up the ancient rites, or even believes in them. The last pagan was the late Chief David Tohee, who died during the great influenza epidemic a few years ago. The rest of the tribe are either Peyote devotees or Christians. At the present writing, hardly an object of native manufacture remains in their hands, and the data presented in this paper have been gleaned from the memories of the older men and women of this once important tribe¹³⁵

Important events have continued to affect the Iowas in both the Kansas-Nebraska and Oklahoma areas. For the sake of convenience the present study concludes with the year 1929; it was then when the Federal Government finally granted compensation to the Oklahoma Iowas for lands ceded in 1890. In the time since 1929 the Iowas have, for the most part, been left to fend for themselves.¹³⁶ While it can be said that most of Ioway culture is now lost, there remain two small groups of geographically separated peoples who identify themselves as Ioway Indians.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹³⁶ For an appraisal of competence see 83d Cong., 2d Sess., *House Report 2680* (Serial 11747), pp. 80-81.

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