

# THE American Scene

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## Forts, Soldiers--Missions and Missionaries

*The American frontier was won, as Teddy Roosevelt would have said—but not just with soldiers and fortifications. Trappers and traders led the way into uncharted areas—but often the missionary was close at hand, establishing missions among the Indians to help them adjust to the “white man’s ways.”*

*This issue of THE AMERICAN SCENE is devoted to the trader, to the frontier soldier of the last century and to the fearless missionaries who sincerely wanted to aid their “Red Brothers.”*

### FORT GIBSON OUTPOST OF CIVILIZATION

The most important geographic location in Indian Territory was the Three Forks region where the city of Muskogee, Oklahoma, now stands. It was the meeting place of three rivers and therefore also the meeting place of travelers and traders when the country was yet wild, primitive and unsettled. The earliest white inhabitants of this wooded prairie country, where the Verdigris and Grand Rivers come down out of the north to join the Arkansas River, were fur trappers. At the beginning of the nineteenth century this country was also hunting grounds for the Osage Indians; before many years, however, the first of a series of migrations began when Indians of the South searched out new homelands across the Mississippi River. By 1817 Cherokees began to appear and to settle here. In anticipation of the Indian removals the government established Fort Smith on the western border of Arkansas Territory in 1817. At this time the greater portion of the United States east of the Mississippi River was still sparsely settled frontier country.

Seven years later a detachment of men of the Seventh Infantry, commanded by Colonel Matthew Arbuckle, traveled up the Arkansas River from Ft. Smith to Three Forks and selected a site on the east bank of the Grand River for a new military post to be known as Fort Gibson. This fort was destined to serve for many years as the most important military station in the greater south-

western frontier. Its importance was due to its strategic location at the very edge of civilization in a region which was long to remain wilderness and frontier. To the west lay the Great Plains inhabited by Comanches and other wild tribes and beyond were the Mexican provinces of what is now New Mexico, Arizona and California. Ft. Gibson was thus the jumping off place; the place where expeditions assembled and prepared for journeys into strange and uncertain lands. It was also the center for gov-

ernment authority and offered protection for the large Indian population of the civilized tribes which moved into the country between 1828 and 1842 to form the basic element of the civilization that was to become eastern Oklahoma.

When Colonel Matthew Arbuckle built his stockade on the Grand he was erecting the U.S. Army’s most westerly outpost and when Ft. Gibson was permanently deactivated in 1890 the entire West had been explored, conquered and settled and the



“MOUNTED DRAGOONS—1834”

Gilcrease Collections

GEORGE CATLIN

frontier was at an end; therefore, the life of Ft. Gibson spanned the period of the Frontier West. The event which led to the founding of Ft. Gibson was a raid into the Red River country conducted by the Osage chief, Skiatok, in which there was fighting between Osages and Cherokees. General Winfield Scott, in light of his hostility, decided that a base of operations was needed at Three Forks to preserve the peace between the tribes. As the scene developed the fort soon became an important link in a chain of military posts which extended down the west side of the Mississippi River and included Fort Snelling in Minnesota, Fort Leavenworth in Kansas and Fort Jesup in Louisiana.

When established, Ft. Gibson consisted of a few crude buildings that supplied the need for barracks, commissary, guard house and store room. A wooden stockade with two block-houses surrounded the buildings which occupied a site very near the river in an unsalubrious location overlooked by hills that made it difficult to afford protection. Many years later General Arbuckle wrote the Secretary of War that he chose the site because he had been unable to reach water at the superior location on the hill nearby. It is conceivable to state that the fort was completed in 1826; however, necessary additions and repairs to this frontier outpost delayed matters until it was 1830 before adequate quarters had been established. One of the difficulties that faced the Army was the remoteness of Ft. Gibson from civilization. Two keel boats which left St. Louis with supplies for the fort on August 14, 1828, did not reach the post until September 28th and the last 10 days had been spent moving some sixty miles up the Arkansas River from Ft. Smith.

In February, 1828, the first large band of Indians from the South arrived at Three Forks. These were McIntosh Creeks who came from Georgia to settle along the north bank of the Arkansas River. In 1829 the first large group of Cherokees came to settle along the Illinois River; in the same year Sam Houston arrived. He had just resigned as governor of Tennessee and had elected to live with the Cherokees. Before long he established a trading post three miles up the river which he called Wigwam Neosho. In 1831 began the migration of the Choctaws who settled in the southeast near the Red River and in 1838 came some 20,000 Cherokees led by the resolute and valiant John Ross. The Seminoles arrived in 1842 to complete the Greater Trail of Tears Migration that

witnessed the greatest movement of displaced people in American history. In twenty years, Ft. Gibson had become a strategic base and an important center of population.

In 1832 and 1834 there occurred two famous journeys that started from Ft. Gibson. In the fall of 1832 Washington Irving accepted the invitation of Henry Ellsworth to accompany him on a "tour of the prairies." The party traveled up the Arkansas and Cimarron Rivers to a point near the present city of Stillwater, they then turned south, passing near Norman and eventually returned to Ft. Gibson. Two years later General Henry Leavenworth led an expedition into the Comanche country near the Wichita Mountains to treat with the wild tribes. George Catlin, the artist, accompanied this expedition and executed many sketches and paintings while in the country. (See Catlin's "Mounted Dragoons" in this issue.) On this trip Leavenworth died and Catlin himself became gravely ill.

Ft. Gibson was always an unhealthy place; many people believed that this was due to its location so near the river. The **Niles Register**, the **Time**

days while enroute to Texas. In this regiment were such men as Robert E. Lee, George H. Thomas, Edmund Kirby Smith and John B. Hood, all to distinguish themselves as officers during the Civil War. Other prominent men who were associated with Ft. Gibson include: John Howard Payne, Josiah Gregg, Jefferson Davis, Zachary Taylor, Stephen Kearny, Randolph Marcy, B.L.E. Bonneville and James G. Blaine.

Ft. Gibson was deactivated in 1857 but it again became an important post when the government added stone structures and opened it under the name of Ft. Blunt in 1863. During the war some 6,000 Federal troops were encamped there under the command of General W. A. Phillips. A short distance away and across the river lay a rival post, Fort Davis, built by the Confederates to counter Ft. Blunt. Stand Watie, the colorful Cherokee Confederate general, often raided within sight of the post during the latter part of the war.

Life at Ft. Gibson after the war was typical of the lusty settlements on the booming frontier. The Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad built



"FORT GIBSON — 1867"

Gilcrease Foundation

VINCENT COLYER

**Magazine** of that day, in its issue of January 14, 1837, called Ft. Gibson "the graveyard of the army." During the fort's first ten years of existence 570 officers and men died while stationed there.

Ft. Gibson's history during the two decades before the Civil War is concerned with the governing of the local Indians, the exploration and survey of the West and the settlement of Texas. Since the fort was located on the Texas Road thousands of settlers stopped for supplies and rest on their way South. In 1853 Colonel Pitcairn Morrison left Ft. Gibson with 235 men to travel 700 miles across Kansas to Bent's Fort in an effort to reduce Indian harassment of travelers along the Santa Fe Trail. At another time Albert Sydney Johnston quartered his regiment at Ft. Gibson for a few

through Three Forks in 1871-72. Ft. Gibson was now an important supply depot for the government's southwestern posts in Texas and New Mexico and it was also on the stage line to Southern California. The last significant military event involving the post was a minor role in which the army took police action in the "Green Peach War" of 1882, a factional fight between rival Creek groups struggling for domination within the nation. A few years later, on October 1, 1890, the post was abandoned by the U. S. Army forever. During its long history Ft. Gibson served many important capacities and many colorful and dramatic events were enacted within its periphery of influence. Some day it will receive a full length historical study, as it well deserves.

M.W.



# Lost Pages of History

## A Soldier's Journal . . . Life in Indian Territory in 1851

Rodney Glisan received his commission of Assistant Surgeon in the United States Army on May 2, 1850. He spent the next nine years at various frontier Army posts and, fortunately, kept a detailed private journal. It was from this journal that he wrote *JOURNAL OF ARMY LIFE*, published in 1874.

As a medical officer, Glisan was sent in the autumn of 1850 to Indian Territory to help establish Fort Arbuckle. However, the following account was written while the troops were quartered at a temporary camp approximately twenty-five miles north of the permanent site of Fort Arbuckle on Wild Horse Creek. Herein are first hand accounts of life on the frontier of the Southwest—of hunting trips in an almost virginal land, of a narrow escape from Comanches, of a wild and awesome prairie fire—of the routine life of the frontier soldier.

Camp Arbuckle, Indian Territory, April 2nd, 1851.

We are still at the camp established last autumn, one mile south of the main branch of the Canadian River, but anticipate removing to a new site on Wild Horse Creek, a tributary

of the False Washita River, in the later part of this month.

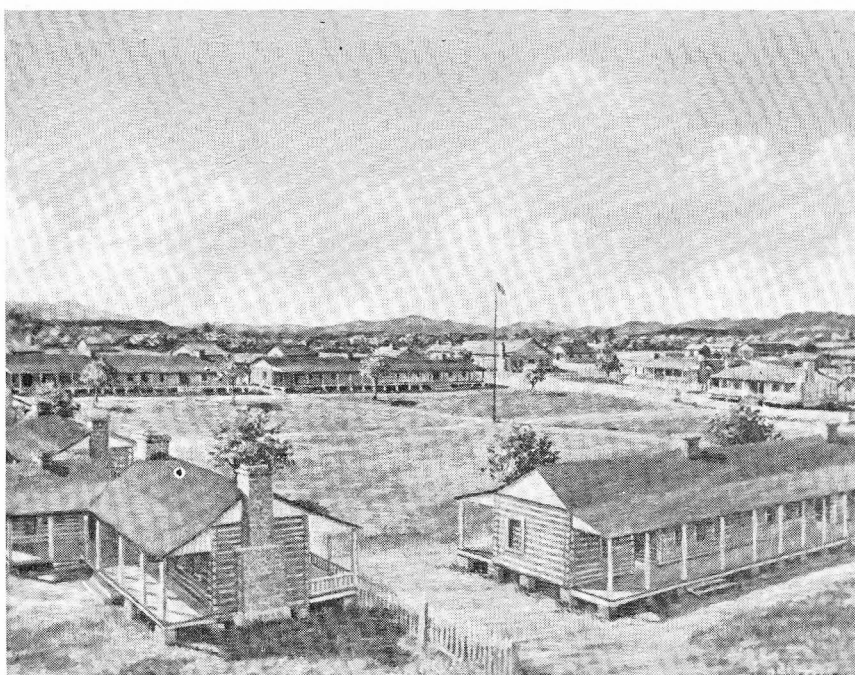
Our command, consisting of Company D, fifth infantry, lived in tents until last December, when the expected orders for changing our location not having arrived, we hastily constructed rude log cabins for winter quarters. These are one story high, with floors of puncheons, and roofs of clapboards, in lieu of shingles. The chinks, or spaces between the logs, are filled in with strips of wood, on which is spread, both within and without, mud mixed with straw. Our chimneys are constructed of short pieces of puncheons, and are well plastered inside and out with a kind of clayey loam. The men occupy a long building about twenty-five by two hundred feet, divided into about four rooms, besides the kitchen. They sleep on rude bunks, made of split logs and clapboards, placed two and a half feet from the floor. There are four of these log huts for the commissioned officers. A double one for the commanding officer, Captain Marcy, and a single one, or cabins with only one room, for each of the Lieutenants—Frederick Myers and Joseph Updergraff—and myself.

We all mess together at Captain Marcy's quarters; where our meals are superintended by that jewel of a lady

—his wife. She has been with us only a few months, and expects soon to take her departure east; as the wild and isolated country whither we are ordered, would be too uncomfortable for even such a veteran as herself. Being reared in ease, elegance, and social refinement, she had many hardships to contend with in early married life, whilst accompanying her gallant husband in frontier service . . .

It is fortunate that there is at this camp another officer, besides myself, who likes this species of amusement (hunting)—Captain Marcy. We occasionally go out together, but as the game of this country—deer, wild turkeys, geese, ducks, grouse, and bears—are more easily reached by the light and cautious approach of a single sportsman, than by the almost inevitable noise of two or more hunters in company, we have mostly gone out alone. We keep the mess supplied with game. Hunting parties of the wild Indians, as well as of the partially civilized Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Creeks, Seminoles, Delawares, and Kickapoos, have roamed over this section of the Choctaw country so frequently, that the larger species of game, particularly deer, have become very scarce. So much so indeed that Captain Marcy, as experienced as he is, began to despair of securing by his own efforts one of these animals for the table. In fact, a lucky chance gave me the opportunity of carrying off the palm in this respect. I made my arrangements, by an early sick call at the hospital, to leave garrison one morning at daylight for a stream some seven miles from camp, where it was highly probable abundance of those delicious ducks, called mallards, could be found.

The lowering clouds gave strong indications of a storm at the hour of starting, but my feverish eagerness for a few good shots at these wild birds, made me heedless of all else except my game. So mounting my fine Comanche hunter, I galloped to within a convenient distance of the hunting ground, then dismounting and approaching the creek on foot, was greatly excited by the quacking of hundreds of ducks. In the meantime the rain began pouring down in



"FORT ARBUCKLE"

Gilcrease Collections

VINSON LACKEY

torrents—fortunately I succeeded in keeping my ammunition dry—and, under cover of trees, managed to get within good range of my game. Discharging one barrel at the ducks whilst thickly huddled together in an eddy of the stream, and the other as they arose in a mass so dense that it seemed impossible for a single shot to go astray. I was delighted to find the water was covered with trophies of my hunt. Whilst rapidly reloading I beheld, a few hundred yards up the creek, a deer, stalking deliberately, but carefully, down the current. Fearing that he might not continue his course so as to come within shooting distance, I cautiously changed my position a hundred paces nearer him; and, standing behind an oak tree, watched my opportunity to fire just as he moved clear of a bluff bank, which screened me from his keen gaze. He scented me, but as I was to his leeward, and he was sniffing the breeze to the windward, I had a fine opportunity to plunge a whole charge of duck shot into his side, over the region of the heart.

He made a few leaps on three legs for the bank on the other side of the creek, when a discharge from the second barrel brought him quickly to the ground. I crossed over; and after cutting the body in two without severing the skin, endeavored to throw him in a mill-bag style across my saddle—but being a very large buck, his weight baffled my efforts. Putting one of my feet into the stirrup, so as to make a fulcrum out of my knee, I managed to draw each half, in regular succession, up high enough to be tied to the front rings of the saddle—a half on each side of the horse. In the meantime I could distinctly hear the yelping of dogs, the sharp cracks of rifles, and the yelling of Indians, in the timber a short distance up the creek. The deer that I had just killed had evidently been pursued by them; and had taken to the water to elude the scent of their dogs. In fact there was a slight and recent flesh-wound in one of his hips made by a rifle ball or an arrow.

I hurriedly recrossed the stream, and after securing such of my ducks as had not been carried down the current, galloped towards the garrison, glancing back repeatedly to see if I was pursued; for the Indians must have been almost in sight when I started. I presume, from the fact of their using rifles, that they were what is known as partially civilized Indians. Could I have been certain of that, of

course there would have been but little occasion for alarm—but some of the hostile Indians use guns also.

On reaching the Canadian river, I found that it had risen several feet, and would undoubtedly swim my horse, who, being so heavily packed with game, would have a severe struggle to reach the opposite bank. To have cut loose the ducks and deer would have rendered his crossing over an easy matter. But then the Indians or the wolves would have glutted over my misfortune; and my companions in camp might have been a little incredulous concerning the killing of so much game. So I resolved to take the chances, and plunged into the swift and whirling current, holding my horse's head well up stream, and guiding him more by my hand than the bridle. Comanche brought me out on the opposite side some distance below where I aimed to reach. The gallant brute had evidently swam many a stream whilst in the possession of his savage master, from whom I purchased him, or he could not have struggled across the Canadian with such a load as I had upon him. Vive la Comanche. I marched into garrison as proudly as an Indian warrior with his dozen scalps dangling to the breeze . . .

Last summer, whilst returning from a hunting trip up the almost dry bed of the Canadian river, my horse suddenly pricked up his ears and dashed off in an excited manner. On looking around to discover the cause of his excitement, I beheld two

mounted Indians approaching from the opposite bank of the river at full speed, and endeavoring, as I thought, to cut off my retreat to the garrison by the only trail near by. They were naked, with the exception of moccasins, leggins and breech-cloth; and painted in the most hideous colors; being also well armed with bows and arrows. They were so suddenly upon me that I saw at a glance that there was more danger in running than fighting. So cocking my rifle—one of Hall's breech-loaders—I kept steadily on my course. My rifle was very hard on the trigger or I would not have cocked it, because there would have been danger of a premature discharge by the jolting of the horse.

As I reached the trail leading from the river to the garrison, the two Indians halted ahead of me, and set up a most fearful whoop. To state that I was not alarmed would be untrue; but I acted far more coolly than I ever thought possible under the circumstances—feeling determined if they attacked me, to get at least one good shot at them. They inquired, by gestures or pantomime, the distance to garrison, and then beckoned me to go ahead. I made motions for one of them to take the lead, which was finally reluctantly done. Under pretense of a friendly chat—in signs of course—I kept my eyes on both of them. I saw, by an exchange of significant glances, that they knew my rifle was ready for action if necessary. After thus marching along in single file for a few hundred yards, my



"BLACKBEAVER"

JOHN WOODHOUSE AUDIBON

Gilcrease Collections



stranger friends suddenly galloped off into the thicket, without even bidding me adieu.

On returning to garrison, I related the occurrence to Black Beaver, a famous Delaware guide, who chanced to be there on a visit. From my description he recognized the Indians as belonging to a band of hostile Comanches, at that time roaming in the vicinity, and said that I had made a narrow escape . . .

Although hunting was our chief amusement, yet when young officers from neighboring posts visited our camp, we would occasionally mount our fleetest horses, and try their speed over the prairies; and, sometimes, attempt to run down wolves when we chanced to meet them far from ravines or woods. These contests were rarely premeditated, but gotten up on the spur of the moment. Yet occasionally we would have a regular race, except that there was no betting—at least none by myself. It might be inferred from my remarks about hunting, that our mess table was kept well supplied with fresh game, however much we lacked many of the delicacies to be found in a large city market.

On last Christmas we had on our bill of fare, bear meat, buffalo tongue, prairie hen or grouse, venison, wild turkey, duck, goose, quail, and pigeons. Usually, however, we have only one or two kinds of game at a time. Pigeons are rarely to be found in this vicinity; but occasionally make their appearance in vast flocks, as was the case for a few days in the latter part of last December. They were attracted hither by the mast or post-oak acorns, to be found in the oak groves in this country . . .

We have not yet received many calls from the wild Indians of the prairies, but frequently see small parties of Delawares, Kickapoos, Osages, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Seminoles and Creeks. A large band of the latter tribe passed our camp on the twenty-third of last October, having in custody some sixty colored slaves, who had run away from their masters, the Creeks, and followed Wild Cat, a Seminole chief of Floridian notoriety, through the wild Indian country toward Mexico. When their masters found them they were prisoners of the Comanches, who demanded, and received, a ransom for giving them up. The darkeys, on being redeemed from capture, declined to return with their masters in a peaceable manner, and made an abortive attempt to escape. Their obstinacy provoked a bloody encounter with the

Creeks, as was evinced by the number of wounded I saw among the negroes.

The Creeks and Seminoles are our nearest neighbors, yet have no settlement in the immediate vicinity of the garrison. Most of the latter tribe have left the hammocks and swamps of Florida, where they cost the government so many valuable lives and millions of money, and are living in a country just south of that lately set apart for the Creeks, who are, in their turn, south of the Cherokees . . .

The band of Creeks, which passed our camp last October, fired the prairie near by. The government, and officers, myself among the number, having a large supply of hay endangered by the fire, Lieutenant Updegraff was ordered by Captain Marcy to take a few men and fire a broad circle around the hay, so as to prevent its burning up. He was strictly enjoined to be cautious to keep the fire, to be made by his party, well under command; and in order to do so, it was suggested to him to burn very small patches at a time. The Lieutenant desired to know if the commanding officer thought that he, who had been raised in the west, and read Shakespeare all his life, was devoid of common practical sense.

The upshot of the whole matter was, that owing to a sudden change in the wind, and the grass not being very dry, the prairie fire did not come near the ricks of hay, but Updegraff's fire did, and consumed them all. After the incident, if one happened, in conversation with the Lieutenant, to use the interjection *hey!* he would boil over in a moment.

After witnessing the feeble flickering of the prairie fire just mentioned, I began to suspect that travelers had drawn largely on their imaginations to call such conflagrations sublime. I did not make sufficient allowance for the greenness of the grass, the absence of strong winds, and the presence of daylight. A few weeks subsequently, when the grass had become withered and parched, the surrounding prairies caught fire in various places. The strong wind prevailing at the time was soon accelerated by the heat into a hurricane—thus causing the fiery element to spread with amazing rapidity, forming almost an unbroken circle around the camp as a common focus. It being a dark and cloudy night, the sea of fire illuminated the heavens with a reddish yellow glare, as though the very elements were about to melt in fervent heat . . .

To add to the wildness of the scene, on the night in question, vast flocks of white cranes, of swan, and wild geese,

flew to and fro over the lurid flames in utter bewilderment and consternation. Although these fires are sometimes started by accident, yet they are more frequently kindled to afford easier traveling for the Indians, and to secure a fresh crop of grass for their horses.

Before the commanding officer could decide definitely the exact location of the new post to be established on Wild Horse Creek, a tributary of the false Washita river—some twenty-five miles in a direct line south of our present camp—it became necessary for me, as medical officer, to report upon its medical topography, and probable healthfulness.

Accordingly Updegraff and I made the trip there and back, without even seeing a wild Indian, although it was apprehended at the time of our starting that we might be ambushed by roaming bands of Comanches.

Every officer, private soldier, and other employee of the government, with the exception of myself, at this camp, have had a spell of some form of malarious fever, during our short sojourn at this place. Of course, they were not all sick at the same time; although at one period last autumn there were hardly well ones enough to carry on the regular routine of garrison duties . . .

A fort established by the Dragoons, several years ago, on the Canadian river, between here and Fort Gibson, had soon to be abandoned on account of the extreme prevalence of malarial fevers. How we shall fare in this respect at our new camp remains to be seen. We receive the mail here, by an expressman sent to Fort Washita, every two weeks. Only those persons exiled as we are, from society, friends, home and the daily activity of the great world, can fully realize the intense interest we all take in the arrival of the mail-carrier. After reading our letters, and perusing the leading newspapers, and magazines, of the day, we feel as though there are many things in this great world of more importance than hunting; or standing guard on the frontier, to prevent encroachments of a lot of naked and wild savages against others of their race, removed only a few degrees higher in the scale of civilization—such as the partially civilized Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Cherokees . . .

In the latter part of April, 1851, the temporary garrison was moved to the permanent site of Fort Arbuckle. It is interesting to note that "two years residence in this country with little else to eat besides game, has changed my enthusiasm a great deal in this respect, and I now almost loathe wild ducks, geese, turkeys, grouse, etc."



The Mountain Men, those of the reckless breed who used trapping more as an excuse for braving the untamed West of the 1820's and 30's than as a means of seeking fortune, caused the building of several of the notable outposts along the frontier. In 1834, two of the famed forts of the West were being built or had just been completed. Ironically, they were both called Fort William but were operated by competing fur trade companies. One of these was Fort William on the upper Missouri and was built by William Sublette and Robert Campbell. (This fort was also called Fort Laramie; see *The American Scene*, Volume 2, No. 4.) In 1833, construction was begun on a Fort William on the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail along the north bank of the Arkansas River just a few miles up stream from the mouth of White Horse Creek. This fort was decidedly different from its namesake in the north, for while the Missouri River fort was of sawed planks, Fort William on the Arkansas, known as Bent's Fort, was carefully constructed of dried mud bricks or adobe with a plaster of mud overall. Both forts served a similar purpose, standing as bulwarks on the frontier—supplying trappers and traders, providing a gathering place for both friendly and unfriendly Indians as well as a resting place and a refuge for weary travelers and certainly as vanguards for the continuing press of the white man in his eager conquest of the American continent.

The trappers, whether independent bands or organized companies in the employ of one of the larger trading organizations, needed a source of supply for trade goods and a market place for their pelts and hides. The "rendezvous," the yearly meeting at a given place and at a given time, was sometimes used for the above purpose. This meeting of Mountain Men, traders and friendly Indians was a combination bazaar and festival with trading and merry making, horseback races, rifle matches, brawling and late

evening tale swapping about huge open fires. For strong men who had been on the trail for more than a year with only limited companionship and none of the comforts of life, the "rendezvous" was by nature wild and lusty. All too often the sated trapper left the scene of the week's revelry with little more than the trappings with which he had come—and without his catch of pelts. The trading fort, because of its year round activities, was perhaps a more stable, more conservative establishment; therefore, as the trade in beaver pelts and buffalo hides flourished in the South and in the North, Fort William and Bent's Fort stood with the other outposts to strengthen the role of the free and the company trappers as they defied the elements, the Indians, and misfortune to open the West for trade . . . and then settlement.

Bent's Fort was built by the Bent brothers, Charles and William, and their partner, Ceran St. Vrain. The construction was begun in 1833, and the fort was in business early the following year. This was the first fort in the Rocky Mountain region to be built entirely of adobe brick. It stood as an imposing, old-world-like fortress with the sand hills and plains of the Arkansas valley on the east and a colorful backdrop of the foothills and peaks of the Rockies to the west. The fort was a trading center for the Ute, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche and scattered bands of Apache Indians; it served trappers and traders and bridged the Americans with the Spanish in the Santa Fe and Taos settlements in Mexico territory. One of the best descriptions of the fort was given by Lt. J. W. Abert after his visit there in 1845.

"The fort is composed of a series of rooms resembling casemates, and forming a hollow square, the entrance on the east side. A round tower on the left, as you enter, and another diagonally opposite, constitute the flanking arrangements. The outer walls, which are nearly two feet in thickness, intersect in the axis of the towers, thus

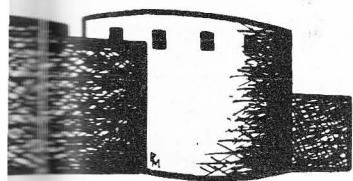
permitting their faces to be completely enfiladed; the outside walls of the **enceinte** and towers, pierced with loop holes, are continued four feet above the flat roofs which serve for the banquette, which being composed of clay cannot be fired by inflammable substances that might be cast upon it; the whole is built of "adobes," sun-burnt brick, formed of clay and cut straw, in size about four times as large as our common bricks."

The founders of this post had all served apprenticeship in the Southwest or in the Rockies as traders or trappers. Young St. Vrain was in Taos as early as 1825. Santa Fe and the entire Spanish territory had been closed officially to American traders until the successful Mexican revolution, but by 1822 the Americans were being welcomed into the region. St. Vrain went with the Sylvestre Pratte party in 1827 on the trail of beaver into the Rockies and after Pratte's death Ceran led the Mountain Men successfully through a series of adventures and a profitable year of trapping. Charles Bent had served with the Missouri Fur Company, while his younger brother William was one of the earliest white settlers in what is now Colorado.

Bent's Fort was established at what appeared to be the peak of the Rocky Mountain beaver trade but a change of style in men's hats cut the price of the pelts in 1835-36 and by the early 1840's the emphasis of trade had shifted to buffalo hides. The fort was well supplied with trade goods: brass, knives, blankets, tobacco, cloth, beads, Abalone shells, powder and such food stuffs as coffee, sugar and flour. At the height of the trading season an estimated 20,000 Indians camped in the vicinity of the post to do business with the trading firm.

Indians normally were not admitted to the post but the fort extended open and friendly hospitality to all else who passed that way. Two hundred people could be, if necessary, billeted inside the adobe walls. The small Spanish type open fire places built in





the corners of the rooms, warmed the occupants and provided them with cooking facilities. Easterners tasted for the first time Mexican dishes, highly spiced but delicious, and were especially delighted with **comal** which was fried on thin sheets of metal placed over the fire. But the fort's kitchen was ruled over by a wonderful Negress cook, who brought the best of Southern dishes to this frontier outpost.

Fandangos were held in the fort's compound with feasting and dancing—gay, stepping, to music supplied by stringed instruments and an Indian drum supported by the cadence hand clapping of the onlookers. A strong drink, pale but potent, called **aguardiente** was consumed as was the more familiar Kentucky whiskey. Travelers

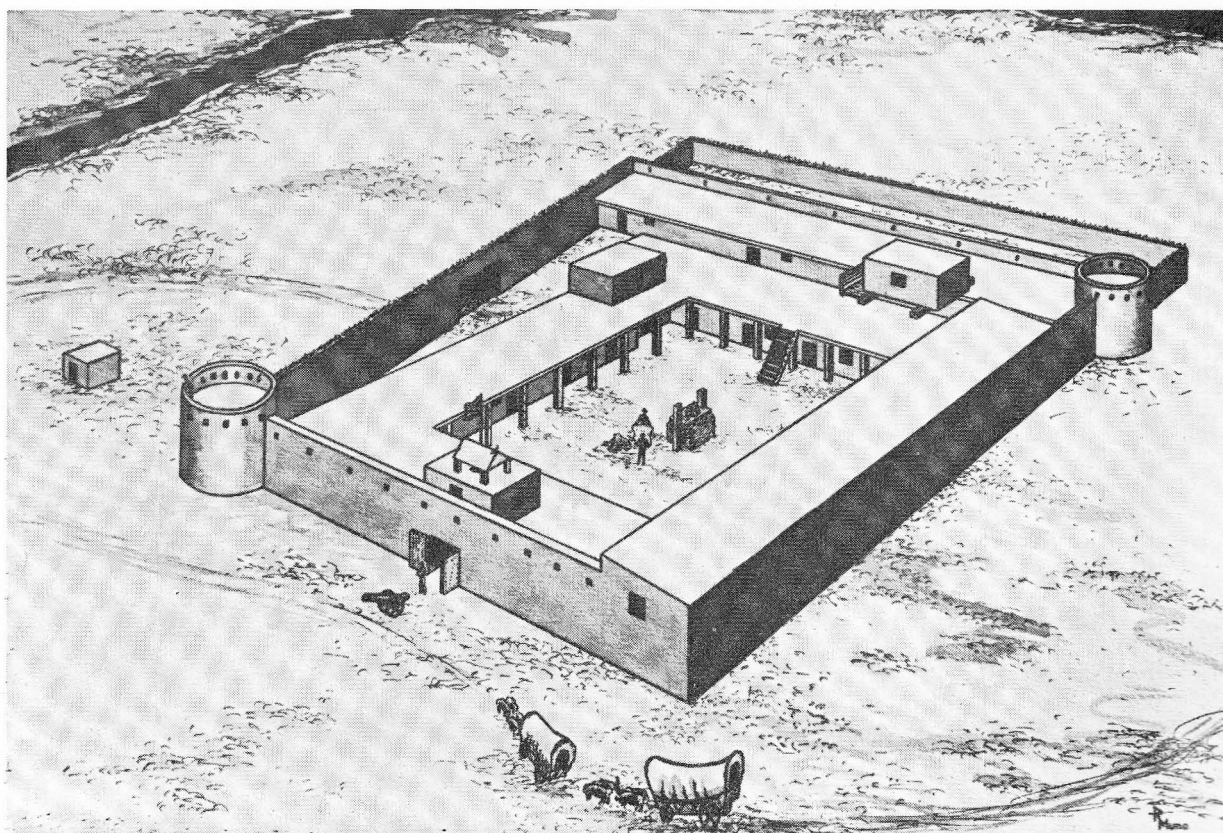
found Bent's Fort a haven for the weary and a place of comfort in what was an otherwise inhospitable and comfortless area. When Francis Parkman stopped by in 1846 he was delighted with the good food and the neatness of the table which was laid with white cloth and good service. Visitors were surprised to see colorful cactus blooming along the outer walls of the structure and even more amazed at the number of gaily plumed birds and fowl which fluttered and strutted about the patio or on the flat roof tops. A billiard hall was provided in a small apartment spanning the roof of two sections of the interior. It was no wonder that travelers and military personnel called this "home."

The fort was visited by many well known personages of the day, including: Kit Carson, Uncle Dick Wootten, John C. Fremont (1844 and 1845), Col. Stephen W. Kearny (1845 and 1846). Kearny was enroute to Santa Fe but he stopped long enough to convert the fort into a temporary military storehouse and hospital. The war with Mexico brought many soldiers into the area and troops were still occupying the fort in 1847 and apparently the Bents' hospitality was accepted by the government willingly but without pay-

ment until several requisitions and urgent requests had been submitted.

There can be no question as to the influence exerted on the entire region by this strong point, yet because of the decline of buffalo hide trading by 1844 and the lack of support for the fort by the government the Bent-St. Vrain Company entered upon bad years. In 1849 it appears that one of the partners offered the fort to the U.S. Army with the suggestion that it become a military outpost in a region where over 4,000 Indians of different tribes were often openly hostile to white settlement. The Army declined the offer. The fort's prestige had waned, its cannon no longer roared with the same defiance as it had in the 1830's. William Bent, disgusted with the Army and with the Indian horsethieves who had become more daring, abandoned the fort in August of 1849. Speculation as to the destruction of the fort has continued to this day. The strongest evidence, however, indicates that Bent left gun powder, perhaps unwittingly, in one room of the east section of the fort. When the owner pulled out with most of his equipment and supplies for a site known as Big Timbers, hostile Indians entered the fort, set fire to it and an explosion

Cont. p. 12



"BENT'S OLD FORT

RICHARD MUNO

# Wealaka Boarding School--

## Indian Territory

By Fannie Brownlee Misch

The Civil War ended late in Indian Territory. General Stand Watie, a Cherokee Indian, did not surrender his Confederate troops until June 23rd, 1865. Many of the Territory Indians, especially the Creeks, were divided in their sympathies. In 1861 parties of Federals fled to Kansas during the bitter cold of the winter; in their flight there belongings were abandoned and several starved or froze to death as they traveled on foot. Women and children of both sides who remained fled to Fort Gibson and camped there in temporary shacks.

Quantrell and his guerillas headed south through the Indian Territory in the fall of 1863, spreading destruction and killing Federal Indians and Negroes. Livestock was stolen by predatory bands to be sold to soldiers or driven to Kansas. When the Creeks returned to their homes in the late '60's a chimney projecting above the post oak and pecan thicket was mute evidence of a former residence. Saddle-high blue stem grasses obscured the few stake and rider fences left standing. The people often stole silently into the thickets at night to sleep in relative safety.

Slowly the Indians returned in small bands to the desolation which had been their homes, but those who had formerly farmed in the Choska bottoms could no longer make a living without the help of their slaves. Many moved farther west up the Arkansas River to the Broken Arrow region.

Five years after the flight of teachers and missionaries during the war, Dr. Robert M. Loughridge, who had built the Coweta and Tullahassee schools years earlier, was asked to supervise the construction of a new and the largest manual labor boarding school yet to be built in the Creek Nation. Unfortunately the precious books which had been translated into the Muskogee or Creek language were now gone. The area was devoid of tools, beds, cookstoves or the utensils needed to re-establish normal settlement.

Disagreement arose as to the location of the proposed school. The Robertsons, former teachers, hoped that it would be built at the site of Tullahassee. The Creeks wanted it to be

located farther west, closer to their new settlements and the new Council House in Okmulgee. They wanted the school south of the Arkansas River so that their children would not need to cross the stream. Walter Lowrie of the Foreign Mission Board and Dr. Loughridge also agreed that the new school should be near the Wealaka Church Station, which embraced all members throughout the Arkansas district west. Dr. Loughridge in his earlier experiences had learned that the manual labor boarding schools were best suited for teaching the boys and girls farming and housekeeping and a Christian routine with educational fundamentals. The parents, it was realized, would be influenced by their children.

Fifteen trustees were appointed to make appropriations for the new building and to choose the site. W. L. Perryman and Judge N. B. Moons purchased the site in 1881 from W. L. Davis who ran the trading post and the Wealaka Post Office. The site was a commanding one amidst fertile valleys and was surrounded by 40 acres of peach and apple orchards, with the Conchartry Mountains in view in the South. The Sampson Chisholm Trail paralleled the northern edge and led west past the Wealaka graveyard to

Goob Childers' Ferry, which was the only crossing west of Muskogee forty miles away. (Wealaka was located a few miles east of what is now Bixby, Oklahoma.)

In planning for the new school building the parents wanted the boys and girls to enter the chapel and dining rooms by separate doors. This was kept in mind for the plan of the building which was 120 feet long, 24 feet wide and three stories high. The back wing was 40 x 20 feet, two stories high and made of brick. This building would accommodate 100 pupils, teachers and the superintendent. Materials had to be hauled great distances by ox or mule teams and it required considerable time to complete the structure since skilled laborers were extremely scarce.

In the summer of 1882 Dr. Loughridge and his wife moved to Wealaka and he assumed his duties as superintendent of the school. He reported to Chief Samuel Checote in October, 1882, that teachers had been appointed, tables, beds, desks and other furnishings had been built and supplies such as sugar and salt were ordered. A large cistern had been built between the kitchen and the laundry and sorghum was being raised.

The Creek Council appropriated

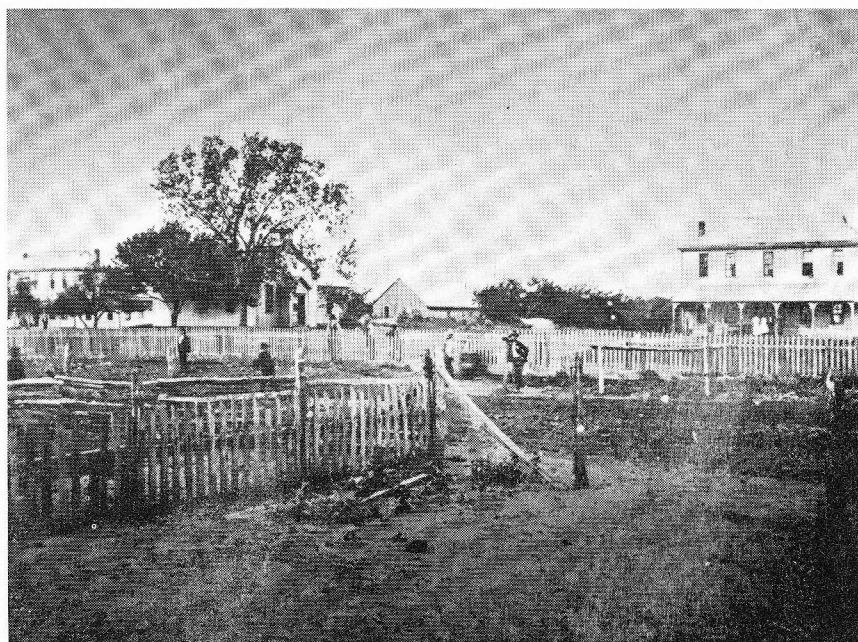


PHOTO OF NEW WEALAKA MISSION, C. 1900

MISCH COLLECTION



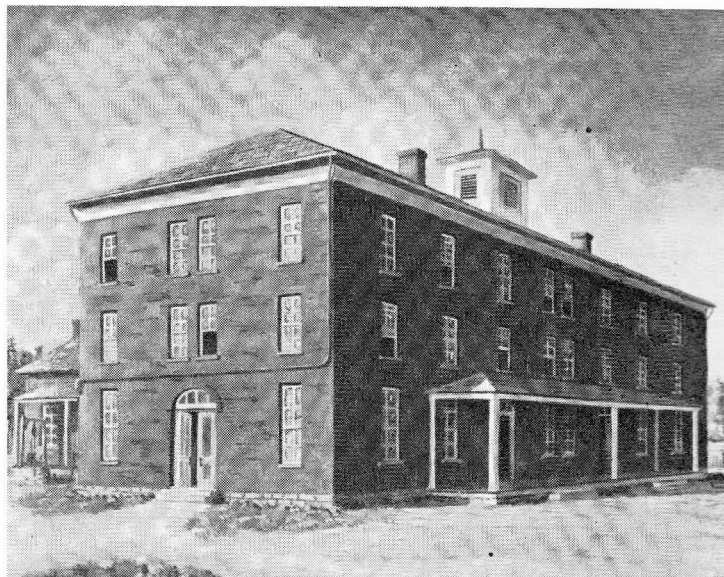
\$7,000 to operate the school for the year but the opening was postponed until November because of a smallpox epidemic. On opening day parents arrived in wagons, on foot and on horseback to bring their children, about 200 in all, to school. The trustees choose 100 pupils—50 boys and 50 girls, with 22 alternates in case of vacancies. This large new school had many full-bloods with no schooling and many mixed-bloods, formerly of Tullahassee school, who were advanced in their studies. The older students helped the younger ones with various duties from translations to Saturday night baths. The little full-bloods were required to speak only English which was difficult for them. The penalty for asking for food or anything else in Creek was to scrub the floor on their hands and knees.

Dr. Loughridge has described a typical day's routine at the school: "... to rise at early dawn at ringing of bell, wash, comb and get ready for breakfast. At six thirty o'clock prayers and scripture reading at breakfast table. Then the scholars are employed variously until nine o'clock. The boys chopping wood, carrying water in winter, working in garden and on farm in spring and summer. The girls ironing their clothes, dusting in dining hall and kitchen and sewing. From nine thirty p.m. except one and a half hours for dinner and recreation all are required to be in school. Work again after school as in the morning." Breakfast consisted of lightbread that had been baked in the big brick oven and butter, sorghum and gravy. Pie was a Saturday night treat.

For the Creek girls of that day getting ready to enter school usually meant buying two dress lengths of calico for dresses and two of checked gingham for aprons—and maybe a pair of shoes. The older children made the dresses after school, starting with patterns ordered from one of the catalog companies.

The first floor of the Wealaka school building was occupied by the superintendent and teachers. Classrooms and chapel were on the second floor; the dormitories for boys and girls were located at either end of the third floor. A teacher was assigned to each dorm where the children slept in double beds.

Progress was slow during the first school year. Children became homesick and ran away. Attendance was interrupted by various illnesses. However, at the end of the school year when the time for public examinations arrived and the big dinner was held for parents, a good showing was



"WEALAKA MISSION" (1880's)

Gilcrease Collections

VINSON LACKEY

made. The children loved to sing in both languages, accompanied by music from the organ—but they were also eager to demonstrate their progress in learning the white man's teachings.

After two years, Dr. Loughridge resigned as superintendent to devote his time to preaching and to translating books into the Creek language. He was succeeded by the principal teacher, J. P. Whitehead, who served until the fall of 1887. At the end of his tenure Mr. Whitehead reported that good progress had been made during the time he was superintendent. He was succeeded by Dr. Robert Colman. In December of the same year the school was transferred to the Home Mission Board.

In the spring of 1890 the school building caught fire from a defective flue near the roof and burned. It happened early in the evening and the boys hurried to the third floor and brought down some of their trunks. Tables and furniture were carried from the dining room. Down the valley parents saw the flames and rushed to the school of their children. Teachers and farm hands saved the laundry house by a bucket brigade. The decision to rebuild the school was delayed and the superintendent, Mr. W. E. Adams, moved to Kansas. At the time of the fire 120 pupils were enrolled, including some who were orphans.

The new mission school, when built, adopted the cottage plan, composed of frame buildings two stories high. (See photo.) The main building was used for school rooms. To the north was the boy's dormitory, to the south stood the girl's dormitory and to the

east of the school building a chapel was built. In November, 1892, S. B. Callahan reported to the board of education that the school was in a prosperous condition and that the health of the children was good. The school was teaching grammar, geography, arithmetic, history, orthography, penmanship and Bible. By 1897 attendance at Wealaka dropped to 56. Nevertheless, two years later a dining room was added and other remodeling was done under the superintendency of E. E. Hardridge.

The dissolution of the tribal government of the Creek Nation under the Curtis Act in 1898 forecast the end of Wealaka as a mission school. John Early Reasoner, who was appointed in 1904, was probably the last superintendent; the coming of public schools, when Oklahoma became a state in 1907, led to the closing of the mission schools. Our last record of Wealaka school is a report from Moty Tiger, Principal Chief of the Creeks, in which it was stated that the school property had been appraised and sold and a deed executed in favor of Wagoner County. Later the property was sold to a private individual. Such was the end of Wealaka, a mission school devoted to the Christian training of young Creek Indians in Indian Territory.

\*Mrs. Fannie Misch is a student of Oklahoma history and particularly interested in the history of Eastern Oklahoma. A long time resident of the State, she has written numerous articles for newspapers and magazines on her chief areas of interest.

# Father De Smet

## and the Flatheads

Just four years before Meriwether Lewis and William Clark became the first white men to cross the area that later became western Montana, an event occurred in a small European village that was to have tremendous influence upon the lives of the mysterious, strangely light skinned natives who inhabited this remote and beautiful country.

The event was recorded in a single entry in the baptismal record of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Termonde, Belgium: "In the year 1801 on the 30th day of the month of January, I baptised Pierre-Jean, born this morning about five o'clock, and Coleta Aldegunda, born at a quarter after five, twin children of Judocus De Smet of this parish and Joanna Maria Buydens, of this parish, his wife . . ."

The De Smets were a highly respectable and prosperous family. Pierre-Jean was sent to the Seminary of Malines where he was a distinguished student and athlete. He had already decided to follow a religious life and become a missionary when Father Charles Nerinckx appeared in Belgium in quest of funds and recruits for his work in the New World. Father Nerinckx's fervent appeal for workers roused the enthusiasm of the students at Malines and six young men, among them De Smet, volunteered.

This decision to give up the comforts and pleasures of civilization in exchange for a life among "barbarous people" did not meet with parental approval. The boys hid in an apothecary shop; then, disguised as peasants, they made their way into Holland, pawning their personal belongings to raise the necessary funds for the journey. Finally, in July of 1821, they boarded the brig *Columbus* at the Island of Trexel and sailed for America; forty days later the ship reached Philadelphia. After visiting Baltimore, Washington and Georgetown the young students spent two years as Jesuit novitiates at White-marsh in Maryland.

On April 11, 1823, De Smet was one of a party of twelve who set out on the long journey from the Chesapeake to St. Louis to build a mission and found a university. The young

missionaries, having left the well-settled and highly-civilized country of the eastern cities, were now for the first time to see something of the hardships of frontier life. On a tract of land near the western shore of the Mississippi River just above St. Louis they started laying the foundation for what was to become a great institution and an important facet of the religious and educational growth of the country. Living in a crude log structure, sleeping crowded together on pallets of straw in a single room, the missionaries cut logs and erected the buildings that were to house the St. Louis University.

Father De Smet might have envisioned the importance of this humble beginning for an important institution, but whether he did or not, his own great physical strength and boundless energy furthered the cause. It was said that he accomplished three times as much work in a given time as any of his associates. Not only did he possess unusual physical ability but his natural buoyance, his good humor and the dignity of his appearance gave him great personal attractiveness.

The zealous young missionary had not yet achieved his ambition to work among the red savages. Not until 1838, after he had spent two years in Europe procuring funds and recruits for the missions and equipment for the new university, was he finally permitted to take up in earnest the great work of his life. He was sent, with Father Verrydt and two lay brothers, to found a mission among the Potawatomes near where Council Bluffs, Iowa, now stands. Here they established St. Joseph's Mission (often referred to as St. Mary's,) and though this was considered an inviting and an important field of labor the undertaking was discouraging from its inception. The Indians were wholly indifferent. The American Fur Company traded whiskey and guns to the Potawatomes for furs. The effect of drinking upon the natives was spectacular. They mutilated and murdered each other with clubs and knives, rode their horses to death or cut them up alive. The Government prohibited the sale of whiskey but there was little enforcement. The fur traders shipped liquor up the river some-

times concealed but often openly. A letter written by Father De Smet in December, 1839, gives a vivid description of the liquor traffic and its effects upon the natives: "A war of extermination appears preparing around the poor Potawatomes. Fifty large cannons have been landed ready charged with the most murderous grape shot, each containing thirty gallons of whiskey, brandy, rum or alcohol. The boat was not as yet out of sight when the skirmishing commenced. After the fourth, fifth, and sixth rounds the confusion became great and appalling. In all directions, men, women, and children were seen tottering and falling; the war whoop, the merry Indian song, cries, savage roarings formed a hideous medley. Quarrel succeeded quarrel; blow followed blow. The club, the tomahawk, spears, butcher knives, brandished together in the air. Strange! Astonishing! Only one man, in this dreadful affray, was lost—drowned in the Missouri. Another was severely stabbed and several noses were lost."

Father DeSmet continued to work with the Potawatomie tribe, going occasionally into Sioux territory to attempt to bring about peace between the tribes. He loved the Indians with an unsurpassed devotion and still dreamed of establishing among the Red Men a Kingdom of God that would be isolated from the corrupting influences of the white trader and gold seeker.

It was probably in 1835 that Father De Smet first heard of the strange and legendary people who inhabited the country of the far Northwest. These were the Flatheads (whose heads were not flat) and the Nez Perces (whose noses were not pierced) who roamed between the Bitter Root Mountains and Puget Sound and twice each year went into the Black-foot country east of the mountains to hunt buffalo.

Even the earliest hunters could not discover why these tribes were so called. The Flatheads did not flatten the heads of their infants as did some of the tribes along the lower Columbia River and the Nez Perces did not pierce their noses. They were described by an early explorer as being "Comparatively very fair . . . their



complexions a shade lighter than the palest copper after being freshly rubbed. They are remarkably well made, rather slender and very seldom corpulent." With the exception of the almost unbelievably savage treatment of their captives taken during the semi-annual wars with the Blackfeet, the Flatheads had perhaps fewer failings than other tribes. They were honest in their dealing with the fur traders, brave in the field and fond of cleanliness. Their moral laws were strict and well-observed.

As early as 1811 or 1812 the traders of the Northwest and Pacific Fur Companies were among the Flatheads. Most of the traders were Canadian-Iroquois half-breeds who were staunch Roman Catholics. They told these tribes of the priests of Canada, the famous black-gowns. These accounts made a deep impression upon the Flatheads who yearned for further knowledge of the Church and even learned such of the religious rites and customs as the unlearned traders could communicate. They had a deep desire to have instruction directly from the black-gowns. The Flatheads knew that every year the caravans of traders came from St. Louis to the borders of their country. Furthermore, William Clark, who had come to their country as one of the captains of the Lewis and Clark expedition, still lived in St. Louis and they were sure he would help them if their petition could only be laid before him.

The first deputation to make this journey was in 1831 when four Indians of the Flathead tribe made the long trip and called upon General Clark and visited the Catholic church. Two of the Indians died in St. Louis and the other two returned to their homeland the following spring. The Jesuits in St. Louis had few recruits and all were needed in the work incident to founding the university; therefore, it was considered impossible to spare workers to send to the Flathead country.

In 1835 and 1837 a second and third deputation visited St. Louis, but still the Jesuits were unable to answer the call of the Flatheads. The fourth and finally successful petition was presented in 1839 by two representatives of the tribe, Young Ignace and Pierre Gaucher. They talked with Father DeSmet at St. Joseph's Mission on their way down the Missouri River to St. Louis; he wrote a letter of recommendation to the Reverend Father Superior who subsequently promised to send a priest the following spring. Young Ignace remained in St. Louis to accompany the mis-

sionary who would be sent out, while Pierre Gaucher returned home to announce to his people that a black-gown was finally coming. Father De Smet volunteered to make a survey and report whether it would be worthwhile to set up a permanent mission in the far distant land. Early in the spring of 1840 he set out on the long journey up the river by steamboat as far as Westport (Kansas City). There he joined the annual American Fur Company expedition. They followed the general route of the Oregon Trail and two months later reached the annual rendezvous on the Green River.

De Smet was astonished and delighted to find that Pierre Gaucher had sent a deputation of ten Flathead Indians to Green River to meet him. The Sunday following their arrival a formal mass was celebrated—the first ceremony of its kind to be held in the Rocky Mountains north of the Mexican possessions.

After a few days rest, De Smet and the Indians started out to join the main camp of the Flatheads. Their route led through Jackson Hole, across the magnificent Teton range and into the valley of Pierre's Hole where some 1600 members of the tribe had camped to welcome the long-awaited black-gown. They had set up his tent and when he arrived there was a great demonstration of welcome. A few days later they all moved on up the Jefferson River and camped near the Three Forks of the Missouri. Here Christianity was first preached and the first Catholic mass was held in Montana. (It was probably this scene that was the subject for the painting, "Father De Smet's First

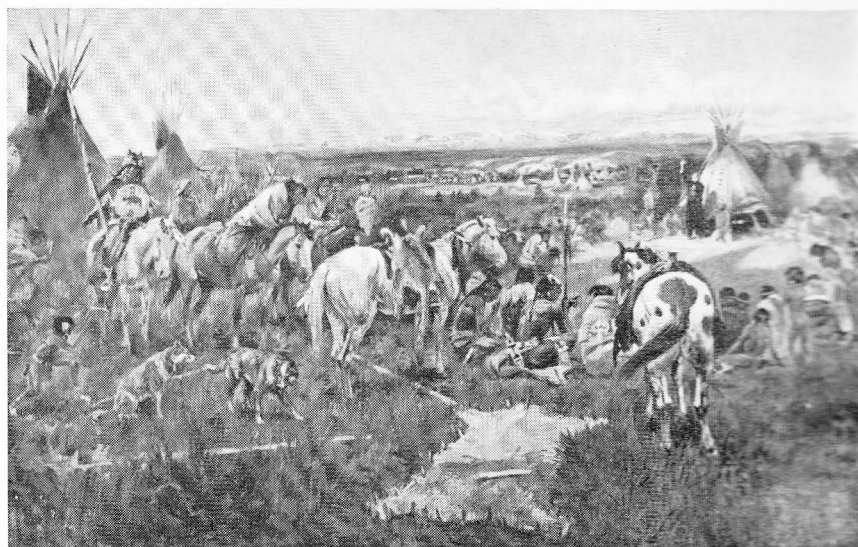
Meeting with the Flathead Indians" by Charles M. Russell, illustrated on this page.)

After spending a month with the Flatheads, instructing them and studying the prospects of missionary work among them, the priest was convinced that here was a field of genuine promise. Here was the long dreamed of opportunity to establish a true Christian community among the Red Men. Promising his Indian friends that he would be back with them the following summer, De Smet returned to St. Louis full of enthusiasm and recommended to his superior that a permanent mission be established.

De Smet was not prepared for the disappointment that awaited him in St. Louis. He wrote, "... you will easily believe me when I tell you that my heart sank within me on learning that funds... for missionary purposes would afford scarcely half of what was necessary for the outfit and other expenses of an expedition. The thought that the undertaking would have to be given up, that I would not be able to redeem my promise to the poor Indians filled me with deepest sorrow..."

The mission could not be abandoned now. De Smet took the matter of funds into his own capable hands, went to New Orleans and in a few months succeeded in raising the necessary money. On his second long trip westward, the good missionary was accompanied by two more priests and three lay brothers. The Flatheads met them and conducted them to the lovely and picturesque Bitter Root Valley, the site they had chosen for their

Cont. P. 12



"FATHER DE SMET'S FIRST MEETING WITH THE FLATHEADS"  
(LAST PAINTING BY CHARLES RUSSELL)

Gilcrease Collections

## BENT'S FORT—Con't

occured. (In 1954 the State Historical Society of Colorado assumed ownership of the site of Bent's Fort and the author, then Curator of State Museums for the Society, was able to have the site excavated. Herbert Dick, anthropologist with Trinidad Junior College, carried out the excavation. This work brought to light the exact outline and location of the fort, since almost all the foundation was discernable. The interior walls of most of the rooms, the remains of the small fire places, some sections of white washed, plastered walls and one of the circular towers were uncovered. In the northeast tower a considerable amount of charred material was found; additional burned and charred timbers were found in the east wall. This latter evidence seems to bear out the contemporary stories that fire and explosion partly destroyed Bent's Fort in 1849.)

In 1853 Lieutenant E. G. Beckwith visited the fort and entered in his journal: "Its adobe walls still stand in part only with, here and there, a tower and chimney." Another visitor in the area in the same year recorded that the fort was roofless. Certainly the waters of the shifting Arkansas endangered the walls during flood periods.

William Bent (the Bent-St. Vrain Co. was dissolved in the early part of 1849) built a new trading post 35 miles down the river at Big Timbers. The first structures were of log but within a short time Bent had constructed a new fort—this one of stone. In 1860 William leased New Bent's Fort to the United States Government to be used in conjunction with Fort Lyon (Fort Wise).

Bent's Old Fort was, however, not finished, for even though it had stood without care, which adobe cannot long suffer, it was in suitable condition to be rebuilt and strengthened in 1861 for use as a stage station for the Barlow-Sanderson Overland Stage, Mail and Express Company. The walls of the fort were reduced to 12 feet but sections of the towers still stood and for the next 20 years Bent's Fort, once a symbol of authority on the road to Santa Fe,

served as a stopping place for travelers on their way West and Southwest. By 1884 the again unattended walls began to crumble; settlers in the area carried away the adobe bricks by the wagon load for their own structures and eventually the wind and the rain reduced the remaining walls to soil. By 1954 when the site was excavated nothing remained above ground and even the pioneers in the area had forgotten whether the fort had faced north or east. The site is now a Federal Government Monument and one day Bent's Fort may rise again to reflect some of the glory and the history of the opening of the Southwest. J. T. F.

## Book Review

THE FIRST COMERS by Alice Marriott

Longmans, Green & Co., 1960, \$4.50

In her forward Miss Marriott states that this is not a book written for archaeologists, it is not a history of the American Indians nor a text in anthropology, and it is not a do-it-yourself book about digging. Her stated purpose is to extend to the reader the excitement she has felt in working with objects from the past, and the satisfaction that comes through understanding the heritage of other cultures as well as our own. In the process of doing this Miss Marriott gives the reader a glimpse of everything from the concept of culture to the process of tree ring dating in such easily and pleasantly assimilated doses that the reader is apt to learn a good deal about archaeology without being aware of it. In short, it is a very general but very readable introduction to the basic concepts of the science of archaeology, with a strong emphasis on North America. Contrary to a statement on the jacket, the book would seem to be designed for approximately junior high age readers, although they will be able to tell many of their elders what it takes to make a useful and constructive hobby archaeologist if they absorb the message of the book. C.C.P.

## FATHER DE SMET—Con't

permanent home. Here the missionaries and the Indians set to work to establish St. Mary's Mission.

So at last Pierre-Jean De Smet had traveled the long journey from Termonde, Belgium, across desert and over mountains, far beyond the last white trader's hut, to the beautiful Bitter Root Valley, which he was sure would never be touched by European civilization. He now looked forward to the fulfillment of his dream of establishing a Christian culture among these Indians, a culture which could be maintained in the isolated valleys between the Rockies and the Cascades. The Flatheads might take their furs north to Fort Colville or south to Fort Hall for trade, but the white man would never cross the almost impassable ranges of the Rocky Mountains or the Cascades to bring liquor and disease to the Indians. Of that he was sure.

\* \* \* \*

In less than ten years Bitter Root Valley had been literally taken over by the trappers and fur traders and in the spring of 1850 St. Mary's Mission was abandoned. V.Y.H.

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