

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CADDOS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Having become acquainted with the Caddoes under their ancient name of "Caddoquaquois", having seen them as chief of the Four Nations, and having learned something of the history of their region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, ~~we will now follow up the story of these and their locations in later times,~~ ^{but} without any pretense of tracing out their full later history.

In earlier years, the term "Caddoquaquois" might refer either to a single village — the "mother-tribe" — of the Four Nations, or to the four collectively; but this name, and especially its shorter forms, "Cadoques", "Caddoes", etc., came to be more and more applied in the collective sense, and at length the Four Nations became merged and, taking the name of the mother-tribe, were all known as "Caddoes."

At certain later periods also, while one or more of the nations, Keechi, Anadarko, Ioni, etc., or rather parts of these nations, villaged with the merged Caddoes, the name "Caddoes" was commonly applied to this still more comprehensive association. This was the case, for example, in 1847 and thereabout, when, as we shall later find, Anadarkoes and Iones were living with Caddoes in a so-called "Caddo village" whose chief was an Anadarko.

We have seen that the French abandoned their fort and settlement at the Caddo Old Towns in or about 1767, but that the Caddoes did not leave that vicinity ~~until~~ later; that, about the year 1791, these Indians removed down Red River and villaged on its bank at a spot of low ground subject to overflow; and that, in or about 1800, a flood there induced them to abandon that locality also and to establish themselves on Sod Bayou, 30 or 35 miles farther west. We learn from a published letter ^{Peter} of Mr. A. Custis*, dated Natchitoches, June 1st,

^{1. 33} ~~for a copy of this letter, which~~ For a copy of this letter, which apparently was published in some British journal, the writer is indebted to the kindness of the well-known Colorado pioneer, engineer, and historical student, Mr. E. L. Berthoud.

1806, that the second and lower site of Caddo villages on Red River was the same as that occupied soon afterward by the Conshatay Indian village found in June of that year, on the east bank of the river, at latitude $32^{\circ} 47'$, about 20 miles above the "Great Raft", by the Red River Exploring Expedition, farther mentioned below. Of the Caddoos and their village here, Baudry des Losières wrote, from notes taken in 1794-'98, as follows translated: "The Cadodakies, the Nessonites, the Hatchitouches or Matschos, and the Quitchiaches. These four nations constitute only a single village at eighty leagues from the Hatchitouches, that is to say, at 150 leagues up the Red River. They make war on the Cannesis [Apaches], allies of the Spaniards. They make use of horses, are feared by their enemies. They have few firearms, and they were formerly five or six hundred."*

Notes

*Voyage à la Louisiane, et sur le Continent de l'Amérique Septentrionale fait dans les années 1794 à 1798;" etc., p. 250. As between the data given by Doctor Sibley in 1805, according to which the removal of the Caddoos from Red River to Sodo Bayou was in 1800, and the data given in Mr. Custis' letter of June 1, 1806, according to which that removal was ~~about~~ "9 years ago", i.e., in 1797, the statement by P. des Losières favors the former; for it seems to indicate that the Caddoos were still on Red River proper in 1798.

At the locality on Sodo Bayou, the Caddoos were living in 1805, when Doctor Sibley wrote of them as follows:

"CADDOCUES. They live about 35 miles west of the main branch of Red river, on a bayou or creek called by them Sodo, which is navigable for piroques only within about six miles of their village, and that only in the rainy season." They ~~are~~ are distant from

"Geodo", or "Sodo"—often corrupted to "Soda"—was the aboriginal name of a body of water, some time bayou, sometime lake, formed chiefly from the overflow of Red River, though in part also from the flow of the sources of Cypress Bayou, in the ~~Adams~~ lower valley of that bayou, northwest of Shreveport. It was formerly much larger than the Sodo Lake of recent years; and in 1838-'9 it occupied not only its present site and outlet but also most of the now more or less cultivated area between these and Red River. At its northwestern extremity it ~~was~~ connected with the body of water which, since the Caddo Indians gave place to white settlers, has been called "Caddo Lake", and otherwise "Ferry Lake", (the name "Ferry" being sometimes corrupted to "Fairy"), by a nearly east-west channel, as it is today; but the site of the present Willow Pass Rapids and Islands was then submerged beneath the western border of Sodo Lake. At its northwestern extremity also, just north of its connection with Caddo Lake, Sodo Lake was narrowly connected with a balloon-contoured expanse of water known as Clear Lake, which was east of the southern part of the northern or James Bayou arm of Caddo Lake. Clear Lake is now dry, save for a few narrow channels and sloughs of the Black Bayou drainage in what is known as the Pine Island District of the Caddo Oil and Gas field, described recently by Dr. G. D. Harris in Bulletin 429 of the United States Geological Survey. During the greater part of the time since this lake region was settled, Sodo Lake, Caddo Lake, and connecting bayous have afforded a navigable route for steamboats from Red River, at Shreveport, to Jefferson, which latter town has owed its devel-

opment largely to its position at the head of navigation on Big Cypress Bayou, 4 miles above the latter's entrance into Caddo Lake. Sodo Lake is but one of a considerable number of lakes which have owed their present or former existence in greater or less part to the "Great Raft of Red River", and whose history has been so well described by Mr. A.C. Veatch in Professional Paper No. 46 of the United States Geological Survey. These lakes, which "occurred in the lower part of each of the streams tributary to Red River between Alexandria and the Arkansas-Louisiana State line" (see map,) are all believed to have been formed since the 15th century. Mr. Veatch's account of the 'Great Raft' and its relation to these lakes, is as follows:

"The 'Great Raft' commenced to form on the old course of Red River along Bayous Boeuf and Teche, and its head reached a point in the flood plain near Alexandria in the latter part of the fifteenth century. This 'Great Raft', which was more properly a complex series of log jams, each completely filling the river, started with a more or less accidental jamming of floating trees and driftwood. The effect of this initial jam was to pond the water immediately above it and force the river to form a new outlet in a low place in the bank above the jam and flow off through the adjoining timbered bottom lands. Drift wood quickly accumulated about this new outlet and formed another jam, separated from the older by a greater or less space, and in this manner the great raft gradually moved up the river. After a time, which, to judge from the total length of the raft and the average rate of advance, must have been about two hundred years, the lower portion had so decayed that it was carried down the partly blocked channel. Thus the raft moved up the river as a great, irregular accumulation of log jams and open water about 160 miles in length. Its average rate of advance in the period between 1820 and 1872 was four-fifths of a mile per year, though in two instances accumulations of over 5 miles are recorded during extreme freshets.

"As the raft advanced, it blocked the outlets of the tributary streams and the channels draining the lowlands between the higher front lands and the bordering hills, and by preventing the discharge of the water from them at a level equal to the original low water of the main channel, produced a series of lakes. The timber in these flooded areas soon died and the exposed portions decayed, leaving the stumps as silent witnesses of their former condition.

"Of the formation of these lakes in the lower part of the valley there is naturally no historic account, for the foot of the raft, at the time of the early settlements, was near the present site of Natchitoches, and was one of the important factors in determining the location of that town, which was thus placed at the head of ordinary navigation." [In 1767 M. de Pages found the lower end of the "grand embarras"—consisting of heaps of great trees which, having become crossed and accumulated, had barred the passage or formed islets—at a short league ("petite lieue"), probably little more than a mile) below Natchitoches; but this decadent lower end of the raft was not so formidable but that ~~the~~ boatmen could force a passage through it with the aid of an axe. See De Pages' Voyage Autour de Monde, I, 46.] The successive dates of the formation of these lakes can, however, be closely approximated by the known rate of growth of the raft. Of the formation of the lakes in the upper part of the valley there are ~~more or less~~ more or less complete records. The group near Shreveport—Cross, Ferry, and Sodo lakes in Caddo Parish and Lake Bœuf in Bossier Parish, which were formed near the close of the eighteenth century—are described in a number of reports from various sources as prairies or bottom lands which were suddenly covered with water.

"Before the final removal of the raft, in 1873, its head advanced from Carolina Bluffs, where Shreve found it in 1838, to a point within 3 miles of the Arkansas-Louisiana State line, and in this advance it blocked the outlet of a bayou draining a large area of bottom land on the east side of Red River just above Miller's Bluff and produced the last of the Red River lakes—Poston Lake—through which, for a time, steamboats passed on their way to upper Red River.

"Since the removal of the raft and the adoption of measures to prevent its re-formation this region has been gradually returning to its former condition." (Professional Paper 46, pp. 60 and 61. See ~~and~~ De Pages ~~for~~ for farther discussion, illustrations, and references to authorities.)

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Large was on what is now called Lake, which is in the same basin as the lake of the same name in the state of Oregon. This lake was situated in the valley of the Columbia River, and was about 1841, when Captain Gray, of the British navy, discovered it, and named it after the then president of the United States, James K. Polk.

Natchitoches about 120 miles, the nearest route by land, and in nearly a northwest direction. They have lived where they now do only five years. The first year they moved there the small-pox got amongst them and destroyed nearly one half of them; it was in the winter season, and they practised plunging into the creek on the first appearance of the eruption, and died in a few hours. Two years ago they had the measles, of which several more of them died.

"The whole number of what they call ~~the~~ warriors of the ancient Caddo nation, is now reduced to about 100, who are looked upon somewhat like knights of Malta, or some distinguished military order. They are brave, despise danger or death, and boast that they have never shed white man's blood. Besides these, there are of old men and strangers who live among them, nearly the same number; but there are 40 or 50 more women than men. This nation has great influence over the Yat-tasses, Mandakoes, Nabadaches, Inies or Yachies, Nagogdoches, Keycchies, Adaize and Natchitoches, who all speak the Caddo language, look up to them as their fathers, visit and intermarry among them, and

join them in all their wars.

"The Caddoques complain of the Choctaws encroaching upon their country; call them lazy, thievish, etc. There has been a misunderstanding between them for several years, and small hunting parties kill one another when they meet.

"The Caddoes raise corn, beans, pumpkins, etc.; but the land on which they now live is prairie, ^[The still so-called "Caddo Prairie".] of a white clay soil, very flat; their crops are subject to injury, either by too wet or too dry a season. They have horses, but few of any other domestic animals, except dogs; most of them have guns, and some have rifles; they, and all other Indians that we have any knowledge of, are at war with the Osages.

"The country generally, round the Caddoes, is hilly, not very rich; growth in mixture of oak, hickory and pine, interspersed with prairies, which are very rich generally and fit for cultivation. There are creeks and springs of good water frequent".

In connection with his account of the ~~Metacomm~~ Yattasseses, ~~whose village~~
~~was situated on Bayou Pierre,~~ ^{"In a large prairie about half way between the Caddoes and Natchitoches,"} surrounded by a settlement of French families", over which at that time ~~the~~ Spain exercised jurisdiction and maintained "a guard of a non-commissioned officer and eight soldiers". Doctor Sibley, in his communication ^{dated Natchitoches, April 5,} 1805, to General Dearborn, gave the following anecdote illustrative of the bravery of the Caddoes:

"A few months ago, the Caddo chief with a few of his young men was coming to this place to trade, and came by ~~way~~ that way [of the Yattassee village], which is the usual road. The Spanish officer of the guard threatened to stop them from trading with the Americans, and told the chief if he returned that way with the goods, he should take them from him; the chief and his party were angry, and threatened to kill the whole guard, and told them that road had been always theirs, and that if the Spaniards attempted to prevent their using it as their ancestors had always done, he would soon make it a bloody road. He came here, purchased the goods he wanted, and might have returned another way and avoided the Spanish guard, and was advised to do so; but he said he would pass by them, and let them attempt to stop him if they dared. The guard said nothing to him as he returned".

In the summer of 1806, the United States government sent Capt. ~~Richard~~ ^{John} Sparks, ~~Memphis~~ ^{Franklin} Mr. ~~A~~ ^{Franklin} Freeman, Lieut. ~~A~~ ^{Franklin} Humphrey and Dr. Peter Custis, with an escort of about 20 soldiers, from St. Catharine's Landing, near Natchez, to explore Red River. ~~They~~ ^{Their escort was increased by} ~~they~~ ^{an additional company of twenty soldiers under Lieut.} John Joseph Duforest, from the garrison at Natchitoches. At the village of the Coushattas*, which was estimated to be in latitude $32^{\circ} 47'$ ~~and~~ and about 20 miles above the Great Raft of Red River, Capt. Sparks received information by express from the chief of the principal village of the Cadoes, which is ~~thirty~~ ³⁰ miles farther to the west, that about 300 Spanish dragoons, with 400 or 500 horses and mules were encamped near that village with the design to prevent the further advance of the Americans.* The Coashatay and Cado Indians of this part of Red river are agricultural and half-civilized, like the ~~Mountain~~ Cherokee. ^{The Spanish force was commanded by one Capt. Viana. F.W.C.}

"On the 1st of July, a messenger arrived at the encampment of the party, near the Coashatay village, giving information of the near approach of the Gado chief, with 40 young men and warriors of his village. About noon they made their appearance on the opposite bank of the river, and kept up for a few minutes an irregular firing by way of salute. This was returned both from the camp and the village in a manner highly gratifying to the Gado party. The customary ceremonies used in meeting Indians being past, an exchange of complimentary speeches followed.

The Cado chief expressed great uneasiness on account of the Spaniards who were encamped near his village. Their commandant had been to see him, had taken him by the hand, and asked him if he loved the Americans; he ~~had~~ answered, he did not know what to say, but if the Spaniards wished to fight the Americans, they might go down to Natchitoches, and fight them there, but they should not shed blood in his territories. He said he was pleased with what he had heard respecting the designs of the exploring party, he wished them to go on and see all his country, and all his neighbors. 'You have far to go, and will meet with many difficulties, but I wish you to go on. My friends the Pawnees [Pani Pique, or "Freckled Pawnees", or Towyash, known now, with other merged tribes, as the Wichitas, whose two villages were in 1806 on Red river west of the Cross Timbers], will be glad to see you, and will take you by the hand. If you meet with any of the Huzzas (Osages) and kill them, I will dance for a month. If they kill any of your party, I will go with my young men and warriors, and we will be avenged for you'. The soldiers belonging to the ex-