

Comments on Kickapoos

One of the earliest eye-witnesses of the Kickapoos when they first came to the Kansas area in 1833 (twenty-one years before Kansas was even made a territory) was their first missionary, Rev. Jerome C. Berryman. Rev. Berryman, a young man of twenty-three, was appointed in 1833 at a Methodist conference to establish a mission and school among the Kickapoo Indians in the neighborhood of Fort Leavenworth. In his reminiscences, written in 1868, Rev. Berryman gives the following account of setting up the mission near Fort Leavenworth:

[After receiving the appointment, I returned home to get my wife], and thence to St. Louis, to purchase a few articles for an outfit for the mission, and shipping these to Fort Leavenworth by the Missouri river, I took my wife by private conveyance up to our new field of labor. We stopped for a few weeks at the Shawnee mission, the home of Brother Thomas Johnson, where we were most kindly entertained by him and his excellent wife until I could get some temporary cabins built at the settlement of the Kickapoos some thirty miles further up the Missouri river. In fact, the Kickapoos could hardly be said to have made a settlement yet in their new home, for they had just that summer been removed to this new location. Having spent the fall in hunting, they were just returning to the vicinity of Fort Leavenworth, and our mission station served as a sort of nucleus for their subsequent settlement.

In another report, he tells about spending a night with the Indians:

On my first visit to them at their village, I was alone and spent a night with them, occupying a wigwam with a large family of Indians. Around the interior of the wigwam were spread on the ground mats made of rushes, of which, also, the wigwam itself was constructed, and these served all the purposes of chairs, tables, and beds. The manner of going to bed I observed was for each person to wrap himself or herself in a blanket and lie down

on these mats. I of course followed the example, and having a large Mackanaw blanket of my own, used it in like manner, without the formality of undressing. But tired nature's sweet restorer refused to visit my wakeful lids, and seemed content to lodge only with my new and very strange companions for that night.

Despite the fact that he didn't get any sleep that first night amongst his new charges, Berryman carried on courageously. His reminiscences continue:

A few days after our arrival in the Indian country I went up to select a site for the Kickapoo mission, and employing some hands I soon had pretty comfortable log cabins ready for occupancy. True they were made of round logs with puncheon floors, clap-board roof and loft of the same, but they were warm, and so were our hearts. We spent two winters happily in this humble home among the savages before we got into better buildings.

The place chosen for the mission was a high bluff overlooking the Missouri river, in full view north of us, and three miles above Fort Leavenworth. This bluff, all along the river was covered by a very heavy growth of walnut, linn, hackberry, oak, elm, and other varieties of timber. To the south of our location was spread out an undulating prairie valley with timber-crowned hills in the distant view. Through this Eden-like valley from southwest to northeast ran a living stream of water. This pretty rivulet was named "Salt creek," I know not why. We occasionally angled successfully for fish in the shaded waters of this stream, for it was bordered by a narrow strip of wood. Never was any spot of rich earth ornamented with more beautiful carpeting of grass and flowers than was this divine but still terrestrial plantation . . . There also plums, grapes, crabapples, and hazelnuts grew in the "roughs," or thickets, found here and there

At this mission, simultaneously with the building of our residence, I put up a schoolhouse of the same material and opened a school for Indian children very shortly after getting my family settled. I was without an assistant, and taught the school myself, my wife and Miss Tucker [Dyza Tucker, a young woman whom they'd brought from Missouri as a helper and companion for Mrs. Berryman] providing dinner for them every day. My school was quickly filled up to the number of ninety. As primitive a set of untaughts certainly as ever entered a schoolhouse. Not one of them

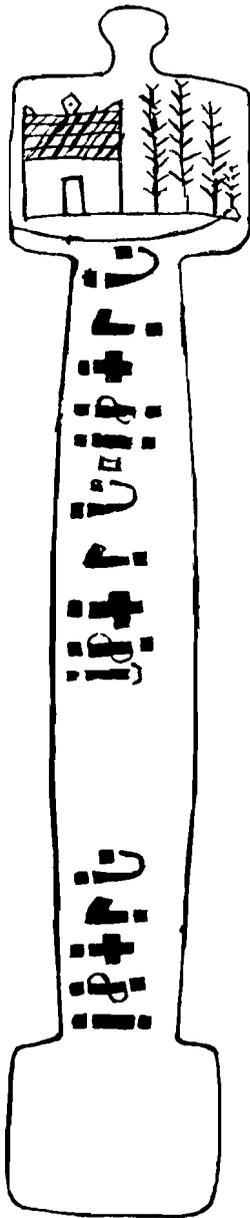
understood a word of English, nor had they ever seen a book, unless by mere accident.

I soon discovered that to teach so large a number one by one would be an almost endless job, so taxing my inventive faculties a little, I constructed a machine by which they might at least be aided in learning the alphabet. [The "machine" was a wooden box with sliding letters.] In two days' time I think every one knew any letter at sight. I also taught them to spell words of one syllable in the same way.

Our greatest difficulty in teaching Indian children was in getting them to understand the meaning of words after they had learned to spell them. And to overcome this difficulty we at last had to adopt the plan of taking them from their homes and into our mission families. This finally resulted in the building up of one large mission-school establishment known as the Shawnee Manual Labor School for some half-dozen neighboring tribes. This institution was located in the Shawnee nation, six miles southwest of where Kansas City now stands. It was commenced in the year 1839 . . . [Rev. Berryman was appointed superintendent of the Shawnee Mission School in 1841, and stayed in that capacity until 1847.]

Many incidents transpired during the eight years I was at the Kickapoo mission that would be interesting to relate, but I must here content myself with the recital of a few leading facts. When I went to that people I found among them a man of their own tribe by the name of Ke-en-e-kuk who exercised unlimited sway over the larger portion of the tribe, but the rest despised him. These last named, however, were opposed to any innovations upon their savage habits, and consequently opposed to missions and schools. Ke-en-e-kuk and his party were in favor of both, and gave us apparently a hearty welcome. Ke-en-e-kuk himself meant no such welcome, only as he might be able clandestinely to use us to accomplish his own ambitious ends, as we learned to our mortification after a while, but did not suspect at first. He had been preaching to his people for several years before they left Illinois to come west, and had made some of our preachers there believe he was a Christian.

A presiding elder there had actually given him a written license to preach. His endorsements were so satisfactory that we received him as a local preacher, and Brother Thomas Johnson, who was superintendent of our missions, employed him with



Kickapoo "Medicine Stick." (Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)

a salary of two hundred dollars as a helper in our work. I had not been a great while among the Kickapoos until I baptized about four hundred of them, including Ke-en-e-kuk, the preacher, or prophet, as he was familiarly called. So far as he was concerned it was all a blind, and answered his purpose for a time. It should be stated here that this man had procured in the recent treaty his tribe had made with the government a stipulation for the building of a church house for his benefit, which stipulation was carried out by the government after our mission was established. In this house he would rarely allow us to officiate at all, pleading as an excuse that his people were yet too ignorant to be benefited by us, and promising that he would gently lead them along into our ways.

He had inaugurated a peculiar mode of worship in which they were all perfectly trained, and certainly they gave strong evidence of sincerity. He had appointed men as flagellators, who carried their long, keen rods with them wherever they went. These officers whipped not only the children who violated the prophet's rules, but men and women as well. I have often seen both men and women at their public meetings for worship come forward and receive a number of lashes on their bare backs, so well laid on as to cause the blood to run freely. Many of them bore visible scars on their backs, caused by former flagellations. We found out finally that this presumptuous man claimed to be the Son of God come again in the flesh, and that the Father had sent him to the red people this time as he did to the white people before! His followers were taught and they believed that this punishment which they received from the whippings was an atonement for their sins, and that the blood

they shed was expiatory in its effects, hence their willing submission to the lash.

Indians generally are very much controlled by their chiefs, not so much by their hereditary or civil chiefs as by another class. These latter are aspirants, endowed by nature with somewhat more than ordinary intellect, readily perceiving and feeling their superiority. The pretensions of these savage politicians are supported in the main by appeals to the credulity of the ignorant masses. The pretenders have performed some wonderful deed, seen some dazzling vision, or received some startling revelation from the Great Spirit, all of which is received upon the bare assertion of the deceiver with a willingness proportionate to his audacity and the stupidity of his dupes. This is the way that the great leaders among savages rise to place and power. There may be now and then an honorable exception. It is the fruitful source of the miseries that have fallen upon the savage tribes of America, and would to God it were true alone of these Our own distracted country is cursed with too many Ke-en-e-kuks today. [This last paragraph from the pen of a Methodist missionary!]

. . . In preaching through an interpreter, much depends upon his qualifications. For instance, on one occasion I took for a text, "The Lord is my sun and shield." When my interpreter undertook to translate the passage he used the word "*no-que-thah*," which in his native tongue meant son, or male child. Thus my text became "The Lord is my male child." Had I not understood enough of his language to detect the error, what a sermon those Indians would have heard that morning! It is of vast importance, too, that the interpreter be in sympathy with the preacher in his mission, for if not, the very intonations of the interpreter's voice, and manner of delivery, may spoil the effect upon those who hear. We had both these disadvantages to overcome in the beginning of our labors among the Kickapoos

Another reporter about the Kickapoos in 1833 was John Treat Irving, Jr., a twenty-one year old nephew of Washington Irving (whose own travels in the West no doubt inspired the young man). He accompanied Indian Treaty Commissioner Henry L. Ellsworth on an official trip to examine the country being issued to emigrating Indians; from his experiences came "Indian Sketches, Taken during an Expedition to the Pawnee Tribes" (Philadelphia, 1835).

One day while staying at Fort Leavenworth, he and a few

friends chanced to witness a horse race near the Kickapoo village (which was at that time near the fort):

In the edge of [a forest] stood the village of the Kickapoos. It fronted upon the variegated green. It was a retired, rural spot, shut out from the world, and looked as if it might have been free from its cares also.

As we stood upon the bluff, a small party of inhabitants from the village moved towards a tree growing alone in the prairie, about a quarter of a mile from the town, and collected together beneath its shade. Presently, two young Indians made their appearance, mounted on horseback. Suspecting that there was to be a race of some description, we left the bluff, dashed through the brook at the bottom of the hill, and in a few moments were under the tree where the group had assembled. They received us in their usual calm manner, and we were satisfied; for the welcome of an Indian is shown more by actions than words. There is no superfluous expression of feelings which he never had — he never makes use of hypocrisy — he receives you with a good will, or not at all.

By the time we reached the spot, the preparations were finished. A little, hard headed, old Indian was appointed umpire, and the two riders were at their posts. They were both young men, dressed in hunting shirts and cloth leggings. Their horses were not of the class, that might strictly be denominated racers. One was black, the other cream colored. The black one had fierce little eyes glittering like fire, beneath a long shaggy forelock, which reached nearly to his nose. The eyes of the other were water coloured, and had a sneaking slyness about them — an air which seemed to insinuate that their owner "knew a thing or two." Both horses were round bodied, bull necked, and the thick legs of both were garnished with fetlocks of matted hair, extending from the knee joint down to the hoof, and trailing on the ground as they walked. There was not much show of spirit about them. They appeared but little ambitious of distinguishing themselves in the coming contest, and if their own inclinations had been consulted, it is probable would have declined it altogether. Not so their riders; they sat as eager as grey hounds in the leash. Their eyes were intently fixed upon the umpire, who seemed to take the matter with wonderful coolness. At last he gave the signal — there was a hard, quick thumping of heels against the ribs of the horses — the

next moment they had vanished from their posts. There was a great clattering over the hard course — their bounds were short but rapid. At last the legs grew invisible, and the bodies looked like two balls, moving through the air. The riders whooped and screamed, and the band of lookers-on shouted as loud as either.

The little cream coloured pony was working wonderfully hard, but the black was gaining ground. There was a tree at some distance, which they were to pass round, and return to the starting place. They reached it — the black taking the lead by a length — his legs were invisible as he turned, but the cream coloured pony pushed him hard. They now approached the goal

Both riders exerted themselves to the utmost. They flew over the ground like lightning. The black still kept the lead, but both horses seemed to be eaten up with fury, at being driven at such a rate. They rushed snorting in — the crowd shouted, and opened a passage for them — they dashed through, running nearly a hundred yards beyond the mark, before they could check their speed. The black pony had won, but he appeared too angry to enjoy his victory. I looked at the other. *There he stood — there was that self-satisfied, water coloured eye, which said, "I may have been beaten, but still I know a thing or two."*

When the race was finished, we rode on and entered the town. About thirty huts constructed of bark, compose the village. It is impossible to describe their architecture, for no two were built alike, and as far as I was able to judge, they had no particular shape. A strong gale of wind would have prostrated even the best of them, had it not been for the shelter of the forest in which they were built.

As we rode along, the troops of naked children who followed at our heels, convinced us, that among the sundry and manifold cares of the world, this tribe had not forgotten to perpetuate their race

In the centre of the town is a small log house, the residence of the agent, appointed by the United States to reside with the tribe, and attend to the payment of the annuities forwarded by the government to this nation. We were cordially welcomed by him. We found the chief [Jumping Fish?] and prophet [Kennekuk] of the tribe with him. The former was a corpulent man, and in his youth must have been peculiarly handsome. The prophet was a tall bony Indian, with a keen black eye, and a face beaming with intelligence. He was leaning upon the muzzle of a long rifle when



The bark wickiup of Wass-che-wen, taken on the reservation probably in the 1930's. Notice how the large strips of elm bark are overlapped in shingle fashion. They are about four feet long and two to three feet in width. (Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)

we entered. This he laid aside, and with the assistance of an interpreter, commenced a conversation with us. It was something unusual for him, as he generally kept aloof from intercourse with the whites. He had been converted to Christianity, and on Sundays delivered addresses upon this subject to the tribe.

There is an energy of character about him, which gives much weight to his words, and has created for him an influence greater than that of any Indian in the town. From the little we saw it was evident that the chief yielded to him, and listened to his remarks with the deference of one who acknowledged his superiority. There was however no appearance of jealousy or heart burning between them

In 1848, the agent at the Fort Leavenworth agency, Richard W. Cummins, had under his charge Kickapoos, Stockbridges, Delawares and Munsees, Christian Indians and Shawnees, and the united tribes of the Potawatomies. In his report in the spring of 1848, he made mention of a fight involving some of "his" Indians:

. . . I may as well allude to a rather untoward event which took place last summer—July. It seems that a small party of Potawatomies . . . together with a like number of Kickapoos and Sacs, went on an excursion to the plains to kill buffalo. In the course of their journey westward they fell in with the main body of the Kanza Indians, who were then on the summer hunt, and camped in their vicinity. It happened that the Pawnees, roving that way, came upon the parties named, but probably ascertaining their numerical strength, were of necessity disposed to be friendly. The Pawnees despatched a messenger to the camps of the Potawatomies, Kickapoos and Sacs, with assurances of friendship and an invitation to smoke. The message was well received, but as the herald was returning he was fired upon and killed by a young Kansas Indian.

The main body of Pawnees, who were in sight, seeing the fate of their messenger, made an attack on the four camps. An engagement ensued, which resulted in the death of five Pawnees, whose scalps were brought in by the Potawatomies and Kickapoos. I am inclined to think that blame in this matter ought not to be attached to the Pottawatomies or Kickapoos. That they fought in self-defense is evident; but it is in every way unfortunate, as it has led to reprisals and may end in further bloodshed, for since the above collision took place the Pawnees have lifted forty horses from the Potawatomi settlements on Kansas river

Frank A. Root, an Atchison newspaperman, wrote up an account of a Kickapoo-Potawatomie pow-wow (a social get-together) that he attended in 1867, which sheds a little light on the Indian customs of that day. The pow-wow was "gotten up on quite an elaborate scale" on the Kickapoo Reservation in Brown County. There were about a hundred Potawatomies, two hundred Kickapoos, and half a dozen white guests. The pow-wow was an annual affair, each tribe acting as host on alternate years. Particularly interesting is Mr. Root's report of the gift exchange.

The Indians had assembled on the premises a short time before I reached there, having come from almost every direction. In a few minutes, dividing up into four parties, they were each arranged in a different position on the ground they had selected for the exercises. Beginning their program, a party of between thirty and forty Potawatomies on foot were stationed on the west

side. They began by hopping and jumping several feet above the ground, at the same time hooting and yelling at the tops of their voices at every jump. At the same time they chanted a number of their peculiar tribal songs, to the strains of the most outlandish sounding music, their orchestra comprising a sort of drum that had been gotten up for the occasion by stretching the skin of some animal over the top of an old paint keg. I listened, of course, to the music, but the discordant sounds that came from this improvised instrument were little less than torturing to all the pale-face guests. The drum was placed on the ground and surrounding it were seated as many squaws and bucks as could comfortably get around it, each being provided with a set of sticks. These musicians thumped away industriously on their instrument, at the same time chanting some of their [songs]. It was a rum-dum, rum-dum, rum-dum, for several hours, and nothing I had ever before heard was so monotonous.

While this musical part of the program was being gone over, a dozen or more of the bucks were out in front dancing, while another band was singing and dancing near by. During this part of the exercises a number of the braves were flourishing above their heads scalping knives, tomahawks, and several other promiscuous war trophies they were in possession of. On the south side of the inclosure was another delegation of Potawatomes — mostly squaws, boys and papooses. The squaws and boys were left in charge of the ponies belonging to that tribe. On the north side was still another delegation on foot, but to which tribe they belonged I did not learn, for nearly all the Indians looked alike though dressed differently. Stationed at the east end and nearest the wigwams were the Kickapoos, the whole number, as arranged on the grounds, representing three sides of a rectangle, or perhaps more properly, a sort of oblong square. The most of the Kickapoos engaged in these exercises were mounted upon their fleetest ponies

The plan for distributing the presents was an interesting feature and this part of the exercises I also enjoyed. A short time after the arrival of our pale-face party on the premises, one of the Kickapoos, mounted upon a fine horse and dressed in an elaborate costume, galloped around the band of Potawatomes stationed on the west side of the "square," at the same time going through all manner of gestures known to but few besides the members of the two tribes, finally returning to the spot from whence he started.

A young man — John C. Anderson — a fine-looking half-breed who had been educated and spoke English fluently, was employed as the Kickapoo interpreter. He informed the writer that the exercises I had just witnessed was the first "sign." It signified that a pony was to be donated by the fellow mounted on the fine horse to one of the Potawatomi visitors. In the various exercises that followed at intervals of a few minutes, some thirty Kickapoos rode around the band stationed at the west end, each giving away a pony at the conclusion of the ride. A number rode up to within a few feet of the Potawatomie line and returned without going outside and around to the rear of the dusky visitors. This was a "sign" that the gifts they were about to bestow upon their guests were of another nature, intrinsically worth considerably less than the price of a pony.

In going through the various exercises out on the open prairie where the delegations formed the hollow square the time consumed was less than an hour. Following these the leader of the band of Kickapoos — Ke-o-Quack — rode forward on his fine horse and, in his native tongue, made a brief speech to his men. At the conclusion of his remarks all of the Indians then repaired to the wigwams which had been neatly arranged in the Walnut creek bottom, where they seated themselves, some on the fence, some on benches, stools, boxes, barrels, logs, etc., while a number were squatted around promiscuously on the grass. It seemed that there was not a breath of air stirring at one time and the heat from the broiling sun became oppressive. Repairing to one of the wigwams close by was a relief to me, for there I was out of the intense heat and was able for several hours to watch the exercises that followed with a far greater degree of comfort than at any time before.

Ali-co-the—one of the prominent Kickapoos — made a neat little speech in his native tongue. In his talk he took occasion to remind his brethren not to forget to be liberal in the donations to their visitors; at the same time he also reminded them that the time would swiftly pass when they would next become the guests of the Potawatomi visitors. At the conclusion of his remarks another and not less interesting part of the program followed, that of "smoking" for the presents. This feature of the exercises was done in the following manner: A Kickapoo with a pipe — the stem of which is at least three feet long — desires to present a favorite small Potawatomi boy with a substantial gift. Walking over to the

little fellow he places the pipe to the lad's lips for a few seconds; then taking it away, he repairs a short distance to one side. In a minute or two he returns, leading a handsome pony which the young aborigine accepts, without even a smile — no expression on his face indicating the least sign of gratification by the gift. The next "smoking" was done by an Indian clad in his favorite (though not very becoming) suit — a breechclout — his entire covering being little more than enough to wad an old flint-lock musket. In his practically-naked condition the Indian was presented with a gunny sack filled with clothing — under the circumstances quite an appropriate gift. A young squaw put the pipe to the lips of one of her female visitors and presented her with a piece of calico. She next unhooked and took off her skirt and gave *that* to her also. One old gray-headed, gray-bearded man — Mo-she-no [the Elk Horns] — whose make-up appeared to be about three-quarters French and one-quarter Potawatomi, was a rather conspicuous and somewhat prominent character on the scene. He was present bare-headed, with nothing but a calico shirt on his back and a pair of moccasins on his feet. After smoking a whiff or two he was presented with a skunk's skin stuffed with tobacco, something doubtlessly relished by the thinly-clad recipient. In addition to the various ponies presented there were a goodly number of other gifts bestowed; still the greater portion of them were of slight value.

At the conclusion of the presentation of gifts by the "smoking" plan, the next exercises consisted of dancing. An Indian carpet made of rushes and flag (or iris) leaves was spread out on the ground near the host's home and in front of the large wigwams the drum was placed. A half dozen or more Indians at once seated themselves around this instrument of torture and soon there was "music" in earnest. A few taps on the "drum" was the signal, and those seated around it at once began to render another selection of vocal and instrumental music in true oboriginal style. Almost instantly a dozen or more Prairie Potawatomes jumped up and began dancing around the musicians. . . .

Ninety-five years later, in 1962, Lyle Grewing, a senior at KSTC at the time, visited a similar get-together on June 30. Although the elaborate gift-giving ceremony was lacking, Mr. Grewing's account of his visit gives some other interesting information about the annual affair.



Kickapoo women playing the squaw game, Horton, 1940. (Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)

The Indian Fair took place June 29 through July 1, eight miles west and one-half miles south of Horton on the Kickapoo Reservation. It was the first time in twenty years that the event had been held on the Kickapoo's own ground; usually it was held in Horton. This year the Kickapoos asked for no assistance from the outside to put on their show. They discarded the name "pow-wow," and called the get-together, instead, the "Kickapoo Indian Fair and Ceremonial."

I can truthfully say I have never seen anything like that dancing before. George Allen, of McLouth, is known as the National Indian Dancing Champion, and I can see how he earned that title. Watching him dance was like seeing time pushed back two hundred years; it was like viewing an ancient tribal dance ceremony. The rhythm and the movement were magnificent! He danced the entire evening, and I didn't see one drop of perspiration on him.

I learned a number of interesting things by talking to different Indians, and by observing various happenings. Each family of the tribe contributed its share to the Fair. Each family had old tribal relics displayed in front of its tent. Each helped in the expense of clearing the ceremonial site and in furnishing food for the visiting tribes (Potawatomi, Cherokee, Winnebago, Sioux, Iowa, and probably some others). When participating in the dances, each

tribe forms a line of its own and does its own version. The older Indians knew the rhythms and chants of the dances much better than did the younger ones.



Kickapoo bark wickiup constructed for the Kickapoo Indian Fair and Ceremonial held on the reservation June 29 through July 1, 1962. (Courtesy of Lyle Grewing)

Several tepees and bark huts had been set up in the old way for the Fair. The construction of both dwelling types was fascinating to me because they seemed as though they would be rather flimsy; instead, I found out that they were very strong — as solid as a wooden house is today. The fence around the dancing ground was made of tree limbs lashed together with narrow strips of bark, and it, too, was more sturdy than I expected. Children were playing in and around the tepees and wickiups, and they and adults were climbing over the fence all the time I was there, and none of the structures moved a bit.

I have often heard that when Indians get together, they just let the children play where they will, and everyone watches everyone else's kids. This certainly seemed to be true. At least, it

seemed impossible to tell which children belonged to which adults. After the afternoon dances, the children all ran out to play in the powdered dust of the dance ground. An older girl came out and took one of the little boys somewhere; pretty soon he came out again to play. When he started to cry in a little while, a different girl came out and picked him up, and took him someplace else. This sort of thing happened time and time again as I watched for the rest of the afternoon.

Outside of their ceremonial dress, the younger Indians dress like white kids their own age. They were clean and neat. The old women wore shapeless dresses with no belts, usually some sort of gray material.

At the evening performance the women played a game that the Indians used to play, and still do occasionally. A bench was placed in the center of the grounds to be used for an arch. Each woman had a forked stick about three feet long. The ball resembled a long necklace. The object of the game was to get the ball under the arch. The first team to accomplish a "goal" was the winner. It used to be played as a competitive game when other tribes came to visit.

Another game was stickball. It was a man's game. It was played with a long stick that had a cup-like structure on one end. The object of the game was to toss the ball back and forth, catching and throwing with the "cup" until a goal was made. As many as a hundred players could be on each team. It is sometimes called "baggataway," or "la crosse."

One old gentleman, Charley Leg, who is an eighty year old Kickapoo, told me he could remember seeing as many as ten or twelve skunks hanging outside an Indian home, ready to dress and eat. Indians considered them very good meat. He also said that "most Indians were more honest than most white men." Many times in past years he had seen white men coming back from the reservation with a team of horses or a load of hay that they had "purchased" from an Indian with a bottle of whiskey — "fire water," or "red-water." He said that the "white man stole the Kickapoo blind."

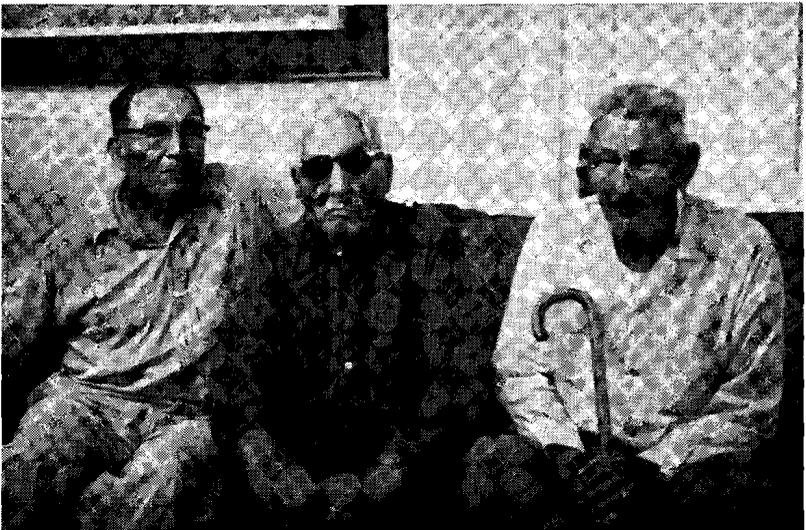
Another older man that I talked to at great length was Frank Dupuis, a Potawatomi "squaw man" (a Kickapoo married to a Potawatomi woman). He told about an old custom of the Kickapoo tribe in connection with burials. He said there used to be a big meal before the burial, and after the meal, the Indians would take

a spoonful of each of the foods, place it in a bucket, and put it on the casket. The food was to be used by the spirit of the dead Indian on its way to the Happy Hunting Ground. Mr. Dupuis related the following story concerning the bucket of food — and when you get to thinking about it, it makes good sense:

"There was a white man at a Kickapoo funeral, and he was curious as to why the Indians buried food with their dead. He asked the Indian in charge when they were going to feed the dead man. The Indian couldn't think of an answer that would be understandable to the white man, so he said nothing.

"Later, this same Indian attended a white man's funeral. He saw all the flowers around the casket, and so he said to the white friend that he had answer to that question his white friend had asked: 'When dead white man smells flowers, dead Indian will eat food.' "

Mr. Dupuis said that maybe some Indian customs seem peculiar or silly to the non-Indian, but to the Indians, some of the customs of the white man seem pretty silly, too. How right he is! My eyes certainly were opened to some of the ideas and prejudices that exist in *all* of us!



Three Kickapoo leaders: Phillip Wewenis, assistant director of the Kickapoo Indian Fair of 1962; William Ben Sacquat, retired ceremonial chief of the annual fair and full-blood Kickapoo; Ben Cadue, retired leader of the Kennekuk religious organization. (Taken at the Potawatomie Area Field Office, Horton, Kansas, September 11, 1962)

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