The Iowas, Sacs and Foxes of Kansas

Of the Indian lands still remaining in Kansas, the reservation of the Iowas, Sacs and Foxes is the smallest in physical area, and the smallest in population. An official count in 1960 showed only seventy Iowas living on 969 acres of the reserve in Kansas, and forty-one living on 496 acres in Nebraska. (According to the *Topeka Daily Capital* of January 5, 1958, there were no Iowa full-bloods at all.) There were no Sacs and Foxes living on the reservation in 1960, although 323 acres still were held in trust for them by the federal government.

Neither group, the Iowas nor the Sacs and Foxes, maintained its language much past 1900. The people have used English almost entirely since the beginning of the twentieth century; however, some of the bilingual Indians of these groups can communicate in Potawatomi.

Of the Indian groups remaining in Kansas after the turn of the century, the Iowas, Sacs and Foxes have become the most assimilated into the white culture. They have adopted the white man's ways and have given up their own ways to a greater extent than have the other Indians owning reservation lands in Kansas — the Potawatomies and the Kickapoos.

In order to discover anything distinctive about these tribes, therefore, one must go back many many years. One must go back to the time when these people were independent, when they maintained their identity as Indian tribes.

THE IOWAS

The Iowas were first seen by the white man in the seventeenth century in the region of the Great Lakes. One of the earliest white men to mention them was Father Louis André, a French priest who was at Green Bay, Wisconsin, from 1671 to 1681. He reported the Iowas as living about 200 leagues (around 600 miles) from Green Bay in 1676.

Linguistically, the Iowas are related to the Oto, Missouri, Omaha, Ponca, and Winnebago Indians. All belong to the Chi-

were branch of the great Siouan language family. In fact, the Winnebago tribe may have been the mother tribe of the Iowas, Otos, and Missouris, and possibly of the Poncas and Omahas, too. Their own traditions recount a split from the Winnebagos at some time in the distant past, and the very close similarity in the languages certainly supports such a common ancestry.

The Iowas, apparently, were a comparatively small tribe. In 1702, one visitor estimated that the tribe had around 300 able-bodied braves; in 1760, the total population of the tribe was estimated at 1100. Lewis and Clark in 1804 gave a total population of 800, with 200 warriors. An Indian Bureau count in 1952 showed 580 Iowas in Kansas and Nebraska (only twenty of whom were fullbloods), and 112 in Oklahoma.

This group, originally coming from east of the Mississippi, were winter hunters and summer farmers, living in skin-covered lodges which were easily carried about during the hunting seasons, and in bark-covered lodges during the sedentary summer season. It was not at all unusual for them to travel away from their summer villages two or three hundred miles on their hunting expeditions. After planting their small crops of corn, beans, squashes, and such, many of the men and some of the women would leave for a summer hunt, especially searching for buffalo. By 1824, however, buffalo were becoming harder and harder to find. As the white man moved farther west, and more and more whites came into the country, the Iowas began to give up their agricultural pursuits. They turned, instead, to hunting for fur-animals to trade with the white man. Beaver was a very popular fur-bearing animal with the whites, as were buffalo and deer. They also traded other skins, such as otter, raccoon, and bear.

In 1815, the Iowas signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the United States (after they had fought with the British in the War of 1812):

> The parties being desirous of re-establishing peace and friendship between the United States and the said tribe or nation, and of being placed in all things, and in every respect, on the same footing upon which they stood before the war, have agreed to the following articles:
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> **Article 1.** Every injury, or act of hostility, by one or either of the contracting parties against the other shall be mutually forgiven and forgot.
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> **Article 2.** There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between all the citizens of the United States and all the individuals composing the said Ioway tribe or nation.

Article 3. The contracting parties do hereby agree, promise, and oblige themselves, reciprocally to deliver up all the prisoners now in their hands, (by what means soever the same may have come into their possession,) to the officer commanding at St. Louis, to be by him restored to their respective nations, as soon as it may be practicable. . . .

By the treaty of August 4, 1824, the Iowa tribe ceded all lands they had owned in the State of Missouri for the amount of $500 to be paid in cash or merchandise that year, and $500 annually for a period of ten years succeeding. At that time, the northwestern corner of Missouri, the Little Platte River valley, was not part of Missouri, so this land was not included in the 1824 treaty. In 1825, their joint claim with the Sacs and Foxes to land in Iowa was recognized, but five years later, the Iowas ceded their joint claims there. However, the northwestern corner of now-Missouri was assigned to the tribes living in that area.

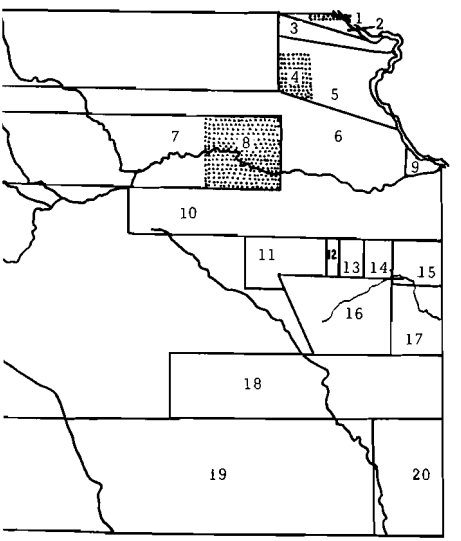
Missouri wanted this land, and submitted a bill to Congress in 1835, requesting the purchase of the land. Congress passed the resolution, but President Jackson opposed it, arguing that it would be in disregard of the guarantees made in the 1830 treaty. However, if the Indians were willing to give up the land, and if no force were used on them to "encourage" concession, Jackson would approve the purchase. In 1836, the Iowas, and the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri (as might have been predicted) agreed to give up all claims east of the Missouri River. They were given a 400 square mile tract on the west bank of the Missouri. This crucial treaty reads, in part:

Article 2. As the said tribes of Ioways and Sacks and Foxes, have applied for a small piece of land, south of the Missouri, for a permanent home, on which they can settle, and request the assistance of the Government of the United States to place them on this land, in a situation at least equal to that they now enjoy on the land ceded by them: Therefore I, William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, do further agree on behalf sections; to be divided between the said Ioways and Missouri band of Sacks and Foxes, the small strip of land on the south side of the Missouri river, lying between the Kickapoo northern boundary line and the Grand Nemahar river, and extending from the Missouri back and westwardly with the said Kickapoo line and the Grand Nemahar, making four hundred sections; to be divided between the said Ioways and Missouri band of Sacks and Foxes, the lower half to the Sacks and Foxes, and the upper half to the Ioways.

On May 17, 1854, the Iowa Indians signed another treaty with the United States ceding much of the land given them by the treaty of 1836.

Article 1. The Ioway tribe of Indians hereby cede, relinquish, and convey to the United States, all their right, title, and interest in and to the country, with the exception hereinafter named, which was assigned to them by the treaty concluded with their tribe and the Missouri band of Sacs and Foxes, by William Clark, superintendent of Indian affairs, on the seventeenth of September, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, being the upper half of the tract described in the second article thereof, as "the small strip and land on the south side of the Missouri River lying between the Kickapoo northern boundary-line and the Grand Nemahaw River, and extending from the Missouri back westwardly with the said Kickapoo line and the Grand Nemahaw, making four hundred sections; to be divided between the said Ioways and Missouri band of Sacs and Foxes; the lower half to the Sacs and Foxes, the upper half to the Ioways. . . .

1 Sacs & Foxes of Missouri, 1854.
2 Iowas, 1837
3 Sacs & Foxes of Missouri, 1837
4 Kickapoos, 1854
5 Kickapoos, 1833
6 Delawares, 1831
7 Kansa Indians, 1825
8 Potawatomies, 1846
9 Wyandottes
10 Shawnees, 1825
11 Sacs & Foxes of Mississippi
12 Chippewas, 1830
13 Ottawas, 1832
14 Peorias & Kaskaskias, 1833
15 Weas & Plankeshaws, 1833
16 Potawatomies, 1837
17 Miamis
18 New York Indians, 1838
19 Osages, 1825
20 Cherokee Neutral Lands



Indian lands in Kansas before 1840, with the later reservations of Kansas' present-day Indians shaded in. The reservation of the Iowas and Sacs and Foxes of Missouri (Nos. 1 and 2) extends on into Nebraska. The Sacs and Foxes of Mississippi (No. 11) were removed around 1869.

In the treaty of March 6, 1861, the Iowas entered into a further agreement with the Sacs and Foxes, and the federal government:

Article 3. The Iowa tribe of Indians, parties to this agreement, hereby cede, relinquish, and convey to the United States, for the use and benefit of the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri, for their permanent home, all that part of their present reservation lying and being west of Nohearts Creek, and bounded as follows, viz: Beginning at a point where the southern line of the present Iowa reserve crosses Nohearts Creek; thence with said line to

the south fork of the Nemaha, (commonly known as Walnut Creek;) thence down the middle of said south fork, with the meanders thereof, to its mouth, and to a point in the middle of the Great Nemaha River; thence down the middle of said river to a point opposite the mouth of Nohearts Creek; and thence, in a southerly direction with the middle of said Nohearts Creek, to the place of beginning. And it is hereby understood and agreed that, in full consideration for said cession, the United States shall hold in trust, for the use and benefit of the Iowas, the one half of the net proceeds of the sales of the lands described in the second article of this agreement, and interest thereon, at the rate of five per centum per annum, shall be paid to the Iowa tribe in the same manner as their annuities are paid under the treaty of May 17, 1854. The reservation herein described shall be surveyed and set apart for the exclusive use and benefit of the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri, and the remainder of the Iowa lands shall be the tribal reserve of said Iowa Indians for their exclusive use and benefit. . . .

Article 5. In order to encourage education among the aforesaid tribes of Indians, it is hereby agreed that the United States shall expend the sum of one thousand dollars for the erection of a suitable school-house, and dwelling-house for the school teacher, for the benefit of the Sacs and Foxes, and also the additional sum of two hundred dollars per annum for school purposes, so long as the President of the United States may deem advisable. And for the benefit of the Iowa tribe of Indians there shall be expended, in like manner, at the discretion of the President, the sum of three hundred dollars per annum, for school purposes, which two last-mentioned sums shall be paid out of the funds to be appropriated for the civilization of Indians.

This latest treaty left the two tribes with about twenty-five square miles of land each — and this treaty, at last, held good.

After 1854, the Iowas seemed to settle down. They began farming in earnest. The old villages were broken up, and their families took up small tracts for agriculture. In 1862, it was reported that there were only five houses on the Iowa reserve; in 1863, there were sixteen completed or nearly completed. By 1868, the Indians were farming and supporting themselves quite successfully, and were sincerely striving to improve their conditions as far as drunkenness and poor living conditions were concerned.

However, the educational attempts on the reservation were not successful. The teacher hired in 1867 said that the children understood no English, so that an interpreter was needed. Perhaps the lack of school attendance was due partly to the continuing decrease in the tribe's numbers. By 1861, there were only 305 Iowas. In 1867, the population report of 254 Iowas showed a decline of 49; in 1870, there were only 214; in 1880, 171. Many of the people

had migrated to Indian Territory, and there was an excess of deaths over births during these years.

The Civil War had some effect on the Iowas. Of seventy-eight eligible Iowa men, forty-three saw service. When the ex-servicemen returned again to the reservation after the war, they were able to speak English. The process of acculturation speeded up after the war, and especially after 1869, at which time the Society of Friends began to take a very active interest in the tribe and its education.

On March 3, 1885, Congress passed an act authorizing the appraisal and sale of the lands of the Iowa, Sac and Fox in Kansas and Nebraska. In 1887, an amendment provided for allotments for those Indians who wished to remain. Allotment began in 1892; by 1908, all the land had been allotted, and much of it had been taken over by the white man.

Left, Mokohoko, Sac and Fox chief, who was a strong anti-white-man leader of the group that lived on the Marais des Cygnes. When the removal of the Sacs and Foxes from Kansas took place in 1869, Mokohoko and some 200 followers refused to go. He died around 1880. **Right,** Wah-com-mo, a Sac and Fox chief who strongly opposed the white man's demands on his people in the 1880's. (Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)

THE SACS AND FOXES

The Sacs and the Foxes were at one time two separate and distinct tribes, though linguistically closely related. (These two tribes and the Kickapoos come from the same subdivision of the great Algonquian linguistic stock.) Nowadays, of course, they are considered as one tribe.

Perhaps their first serious merging (during historic times, at least) occurred during the first half of the 1700's. After an especially effective attack by the French, the Foxes sought refuge with their good friends and allies, the Sacs. The two tribes became even closer when the French tried to vent their wrath on both tribes because the Sacs refused to surrender the refugees.

Around 1800, the two tribes were again living separately in villages along the Mississippi River in what is now northern Illinois. In 1804, a band of Sacs were camping on the Missouri River near St. Louis. The leaders of this small group were "drawn into negotiations" with the United States government, and ended up ceding all the Sac territories in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Missouri. This small group, of course, did not have the authority to sign away the lands belonging to the whole tribe. It is generally thought that the white men got the Indians drunk before dealing with them, because the Indians came away, bedecked in much finery, without knowing what had happened "at the party." Moreover, they were unaware of the seriousness and the extent of the treaty they had signed.

Naturally the treaty, when it was made known to the majority of the tribe still living in their villages on the Mississippi, caused great anger and indignation. They refused to move from their lands, refused to recognize the legality of such a treaty about which they had not even been consulted. The band near St. Louis never returned to the rest, who held for them only hatred and disgust. They received independent recognition thereafter as the Missouri River Sacs, and it was this group who later moved to the reservation on the northeast edge of what is now Kansas.

The federal government began other negotiations with the rest of the tribe, but made virtually no headway. The Foxes withdrew from their old allies sometime early in the nineteenth century and moved to Iowa. The year 1832 brought the Indian outbreak led by the famous Sac warrior Black Hawk, and now known as the Black Hawk War. As a result of the conflict, the Sacs aban-

doned their old homelands east of the Mississippi and took refuge with the Foxes in Iowa.

In 1842, the Sacs and Foxes sold the lands in Iowa and were given an area in Kansas, extending over parts of what are now the counties of Franklin, Osage, and Lyon. By 1846, all the Sacs (under the leadership of the famed pro-United States government chief, Keokuk) and about a fifth of the Foxes had gathered in this area. Most of the other Foxes had stopped in Iowa with their old friends, the Potawatomies.

In Kansas, the Sacs and Foxes maintained separate villages—both in the northeastern reserve, and in the reserve at the headwaters of the Marais des Cygnes. Sometime in the late 1850's, the Foxes returned from a buffalo hunt to find that the Sacs had made a treaty for both their own tribe and the Fox tribe. They had agreed that both tribes would accept individual land allotments rather than keep reservation lands to be held in common by each tribe as a whole. (The whole treaty had been engineered by greedy whites who wanted the Indian lands, and who knew it was much easier to deal with single land owners than with a tribal organization.)

The Foxes refused to recognize the validity of the treaty, so the agent deposed the Fox chief of his authority. The chief and most of his tribe left for Iowa. There they bought over 3000 acres on the Iowa River, and maintained a reservation well into the twentieth century. In 1867, the Sacs and Foxes remaining in the Marais des Cygnes area were moved to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

The history of the Iowas, the Sacs, and the Foxes shows that they went through various degrees of amity and confederation over the years. The Iowas, and the Sacs and Foxes of Missouri, though put on virtually the same reservation in 1837, have maintained separate identities through the years. The majority of both groups had moved out of Kansas by the 1870's. The treaty of 1867 did away with the lands of the Mississippi group of Sacs and and Foxes which had been located around the Marais des Cygnes, and this group removed to a new reservation in Oklahoma. According to 1885 population counts, there were a mere 138 Iowas on the northeastern Kansas reservation, and eighty-seven Sacs and Foxes. As has already been pointed out, the 1960 count showed only seventy Iowas, and no Sacs and Foxes living on the Kansas reservation.

Moses Keokuk, son of the first famous Keokuk who died in 1848. He was like his father in that he was willing to compromise with the whites and to accommodate them in their demands. He died in 1903. (Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)