

O-ga-xpa Ma-zhoⁿ

Quapaw Country

Bandy

This paper is meant to provide background information about the homelands (or ancestral area of interest) of the Quapaw Nation through time. The intended purpose is for additional information which may be useful in the Section 106 process. Examples of potential use would be for an archeologist requesting additional background information to include in a CRS or an ethnographer to include in a Heritage Study; with other related applications being possible.

Throughout history the homeland of the Quapaw Nation has changed. Oral history indicates a tribal origin along the Atlantic Ocean. After some time, the tribe began to move west, and eventually settled in the lower Ohio River Valley (*the southwestern portion of the highlighted river*). At this point in history, what would become the Omaha, Ponca, Osage, Kaw and Quapaw were all living together as one tribal nation. In the late 1800's an anthropologist named James Owen Dorsey (Dorsey) would later give this group the name "Dhegiha Sioux" or simply "Dhegiha". He derived this word from the Omaha word "The'giha" meaning "this group" or "on this side". Fletcher and La Flesche note oral history among the shared group which indicates that these tribes referred to themselves collectively as "Haⁿ-ka/Huⁿ-ka" during this time in history. ^[8]

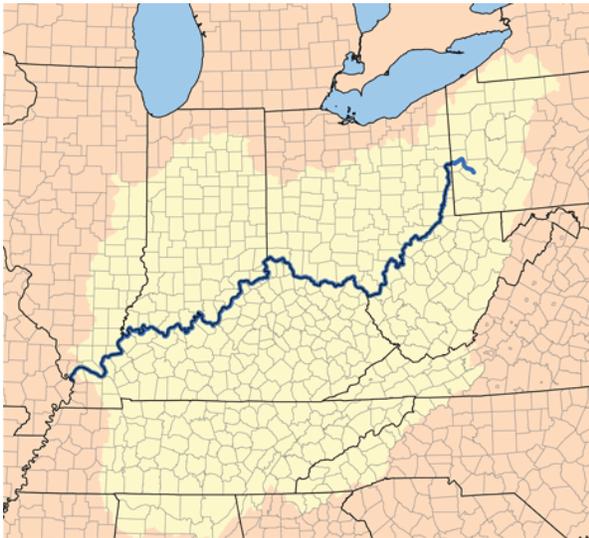


Figure 1 Ohio River Valley

Eventually, the Dhegiha migrated a small distance northwest to the American Bottom area, where they lived in the vicinity of St. Louis and Cahokia. This likely would have occurred in the time frame referred to by Archeologists as the late Woodland Period, 500 to 1000 CE. It is not known why this occurred, but it was likely driven by trade and technology. In 1886, Dorsey supposed that the Quapaw left for Arkansas *prior to the Dhegiha migrating to the American Bottom*. If Dorsey were correct, this would mean the Quapaw left for Arkansas between 500 and 1000 CE. This is not supported by linguistic and archeological evidence; however, this data would not have been available to Dorsey in the 1880s. ^[8, 9]

During the Woodland period vast trade networks developed and there were many improvements in technology, such as in the creation of higher quality pottery, as well as increasingly large settlements. Cahokia of course developed in this area during the time frame (~600–1300 CE) and became a major trade center. At one-point Cahokia was the largest urban center north of the large Mesoamerican centers in Mexico.

There is evidence that corn was being grown at the American Bottom by 200 CE, with corn becoming the dominant crop in many locations after 800 CE. Linguistic evidence confirms

that the Dhegiha were still living as one group at the time of the introduction of corn. Although there are variations of some later corn terms the Omaha, Osage, Kaw and Quapaw all share documented and extremely close variations of the words for “Corn”, “Corn Field”, “Hominy” and other corn terms. ^[14, 19] Coupled with the available data it is extremely likely that the Dhegiha were still living as one group in the American Bottom during this time frame.

Cahokia was abandoned by 1300, prior to this Cahokia was experiencing numerous issues such as overpopulation creating food shortage, flooding and probable invasions. The exact reason for the failure of Cahokia is not known but it was likely affected by all these issues. Similarly, the exact reason for the Dhegiha leaving the area is not known, but likely was affected by these issues and the overall decline of Cahokia. ^[4, 8, 9]

Quapaw oral history indicates that as the Dhegiha people were moving they came upon the river; however, a dense fog had arisen. The people created a rope by braiding a grapevine and while crossing the river, the vine snapped. The Omaha people continued against the current, which is the origin of their name. The Quapaw believe our people were at the end of the rope and we floated down the river after it broke, separating our people from the group. This is the origin of the tribal name “O-ga-xpa/O-ka-xpa” which can be translated as “Downstream People”. ^[13]



Figure 2 American Bottom [3]

The exact date that this separation occurred is the subject of much debate. Some archeologists in Arkansas have even termed the phrase “Quapaw paradox” in reference to their difficulty in pin pointing this time frame. The primary issue is the timing of Quapaw arrival into what is now the state of Arkansas, a major point being whether the Quapaw would have been present at the time of the De Soto expedition (1541 CE). Varying interpretations place the Quapaw arriving at greatly different time frames from as late as perhaps a decade before French arrival in the later part of the 1600’s, to the possibility of being entirely established in Arkansas well before De Soto arrived in the mid 1500’s. Significant Quapaw affiliated sites in Arkansas have in recent decades been challenged by Arkansas archeologists. Currently, archeological work in Arkansas is being interpreted in favor of a late Quapaw arrival; some studies even go so far as to support the conclusion that the Quapaw could not have been present prior to the late 1600’s. ^[9, 10]

This discrediting of Quapaw affiliation to earlier sites in the state is not consistent with the standpoint of the Quapaw Nation, and is perceived to be academically biased. The basis of these challenges is the subject of much academic debate and entire theses have been written

addressing aspects of this debate. Virtually none of the Arkansas Archeologists and scholars who have performed research in this field have incorporated information from the Quapaw Nation. Many of these scholars have inaccurately misappropriated Quapaw history, most egregiously by taking recorded stories out of context, lacking a tribal foundation of understanding that could be easily be incorporated with tribal consultation. Furthermore, a strong Caddoan bias exists contributing to this recent change in interpretation. Issues such as larger temper being used in pottery post French contact, as well as variations in archeological remains of structures at sites have been cited as “proof” of a late (mid 1600s) Quapaw arrival in Arkansas.^[6, 10] Beyond these issues there are numerous linguistic and archeological studies (outside of Arkansas) that conclude the Quapaws traveled south earlier than scholars in the state assume.^[9]

Relying on oral tradition and bolstering it with both archeological and linguistic evidence, the Quapaw Nation has consistently taken the stance that the Quapaw people arrived in Arkansas *before* 1600. The Quapaw Nation further believes that this migration took place prior to the De Soto Expedition in 1541. There is a wealth of supporting evidence concluding that the Dhegiha separation occurred prior to 1540. It has been strongly established that when the modern Omaha/Ponca traveled north, the Quapaw had already separated and fully moved to their own territory. The Omaha/Ponca established a settlement known as Blood Run, not far from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. This site has been carbon dated to 1500 CE, providing firm confirmation that the Dhegiha were fully separated and migrated to new locations by this date. In addition to the carbon dating of Blood Run, “timing of the Dhegihan-speakers’ fissions has been researched intensively... employing the principles of glottochronology. Hoffman cites several glottochronological efforts suggesting that the Quapaw separated from the other Dhegiha at times ranging *from AD 950 to as late as AD 1513*”^[9] Of significance, linguistic study of Dhegiha languages reveals the Dhegiha languages are clearly related dialects with some marked differences. One marked difference is the word for horse, *which is different in every dialect of Dhegiha*, confirming the introduction of the horse occurred post separation. Although the exact date of the spread of horse throughout the entire Mississippi Valley has not been confirmed; it is established that the De Soto introduced the horse in 1541.

In addition to the previously discussed oral history describing how the Dhegiha split occurred, and the debate about when; the issue of *why* Quapaw ancestors decided to go to Arkansas in the first place remains. In southeastern Missouri and northeastern Arkansas, contemporaneous to Cahokia, settlements such as the Parkin Site, in Parkin, Arkansas (~1000 – 1500 CE) developed and rose in size. Trade was extremely important with these settlements; and was the basis of economy. A great deal of trade between these sites near the St. Francis River and Cahokia is thought to have occurred. Therefore, the Dhegiha, and subsequently the Quapaw knew this region, and had cultivated relationships in this area. After the Dhegiha separation the Quapaw traveled down the Mississippi and eventually settled in the Mississippi Delta near the St. Francis River; in a land they were likely already very familiar with.

The ethnogenesis, or real formation of the Quapaw Nation begins here, in the Mississippi Delta. Over the course of many years the Quapaw established themselves and grew, developing multiple bands and villages and expanding their territory. This also resulted in the amalgamation

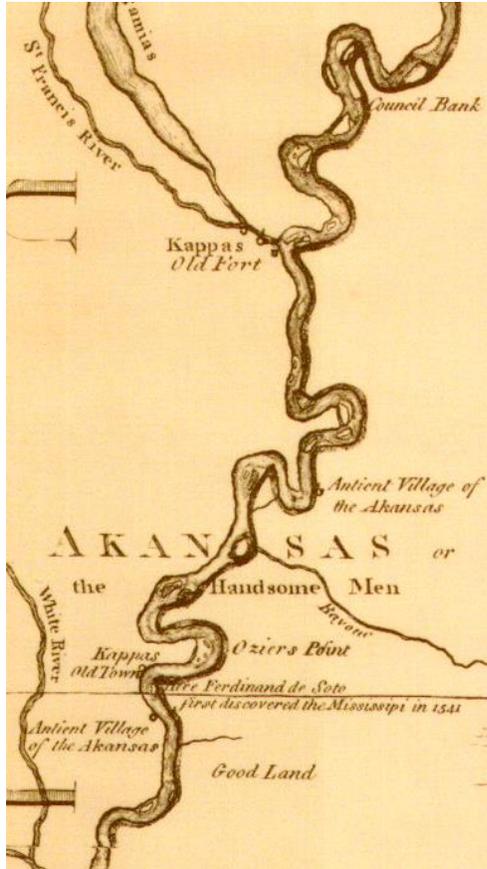


Figure 3 Map published in 1765 denoting Quapaw Villages, including older abandoned villages located north of the White River and along the St. Francis River, substantiating previous Quapaw occupation of this region. [5]

masters of this Country. The Osages alone have made war on us; but we have always beaten and driven them beyond the Canadian River”. [5, 11]

The Quapaw developed 5 autonomous bands or villages. These were later recorded by Europeans, though they were often spelled with great variety. The 5 bands were Okáxpaxti or “Quapaw” (spelled *Kappa*, *Cappa*, *Gappa*, *Cappaha*, etc.), Tąwą žika – or “Small Town” (spelled *Tongigua*, *Doginga*, etc.), Ozó tiowé – “Bottom land with trees” (spelled *Osotouy*, *Osotory*, *Ouzovtovoir* etc.), Ttíoádima – (no translation) (spelled *Toriman* or *Thoriman*), and Imąha – “Up River” (*Imaham*, *Imahao*). [15, 16]

These villages were located on both sides of the Mississippi River. The rivers could be considered the highways of that time; therefore, control of both sides of this portion of the Mississippi provided the Quapaw with economic and military security. With access to the numerous tributaries of the Mississippi in this region, such as the Arkansas, White and St. Francis Rivers, the Quapaw were able to establish a large trade network. For generations the Quapaw lived by seasons, annually planting, hunting, harvesting and trading. Particularly fine

or displacement of other tribal groups in the region. Over time the Quapaw also established settlements further south along the confluences of the Arkansas, White and Mississippi Rivers. This gradual move southward is supported by oral history and is even indicated on historic maps. An example of recorded oral history supporting this was recorded by George Izard in 1827, from Baptiste Imbeau, a Quapaw/French creole who heard the story from the grandfather of Chief Heckaton. He describes a group which headed down the Mississippi due to scarcity of game: “After our separation, our Party followed the course of the Ny-Tonka (Mississippi). The first Red-Skins whom we met with were settled some way below the Ny-Tachoutteh-jinka (the little muddy river, or the St. Francis); they were called TonNika. We attacked and put them to flight. Sometime afterwards we entered this river, which we called Ny-jitteh (Red-River, now the Arkansas). We soon discovered that there were other Red-Skins (Indians) in the country. Parties were sent out to look for them. They were found encamped in the great Prairie (between the Port of Arkansas and the Town of Little Rock). We attacked them; they made a valiant resistance, but we beat them and drove them away. This nation called itself InToŭka; the Whites of this period gave them the name of Illinois. Then we were left entire

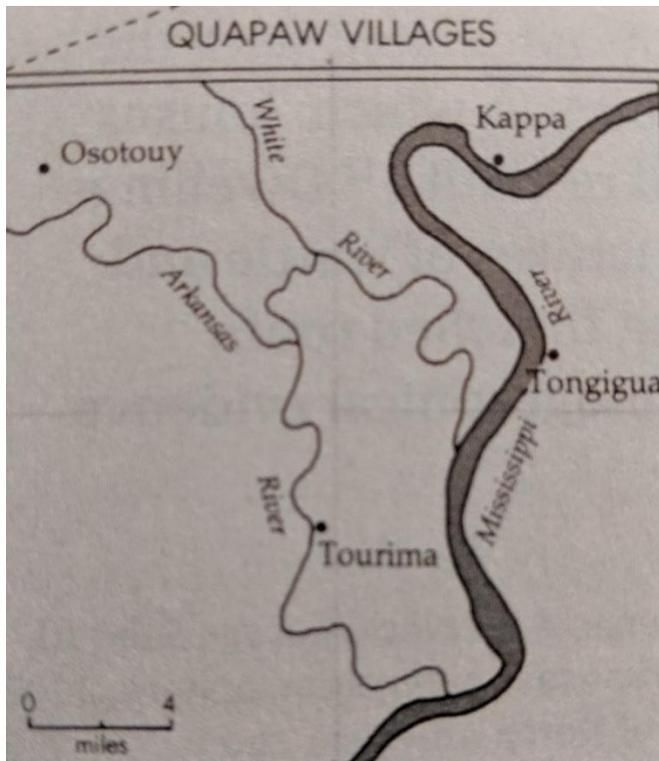


Figure 4 Map depicting approximate locations of Quapaw Villages

examples of pottery, painted buffalo robes and canoes were noted as important Quapaw trade items by the French.

French contact marked the beginning of many changes for the Quapaw Nation. Marquette & Jolliet encountered the Quapaw in 1673, and La Salle & de Tonti in 1682. It is estimated that the Quapaw Nation had a population over 5,000 around 1670. Eventually in 1686, the Arkansas Post was founded by De Tonti. The Arkansas Post was the first European Settlement in the lower Mississippi River Valley, and was an important trading settlement, where the French (and later the Spanish) would trade with the Quapaw for many years. It was protected by a fort and moved several times throughout the course of its existence. [1, 2, 7, 12]

This settlement brought the Quapaw into a close relationship with Europeans, which had several effects on the tribe. One of the marked effects was exposure to smallpox. Smallpox epidemics afflicted the tribe, including an epidemic in 1697 which is believed to have killed well over half of the tribe. Father St. Cosme described that in the Village of Kappa “not a 100 men were left, all the children had died, and a great many women”. By 1750 the total Quapaw population is estimated to have been around 1,600; this equates to an estimated population loss of nearly 70% of the tribe in less than 100 years. Additionally, the Quapaw began to become reliant on European trade goods; coupled with population loss, this led to a decrease in the quality of Quapaw goods. This is reflected in the temper used in examples of historic Quapaw pottery, which is more coarse than older examples. Additionally, the settlement patterns of the Quapaw villages began to change after contact. The villages began to move closer to each other and eventually consolidated on the western side of the Mississippi River, likely for defensive purposes. [1, 2, 7, 10, 12]

The Quapaw homeland was “traded” so to speak by European powers during the latter half of the 1700s. After losing the Seven Years’ War, France ceded the territory to Britain. Subsequently Britain traded their claim to the area to Spain in 1763. Napoleon then reacquired the area in 1800 and then France sold the territory to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. [1, 2, 7, 12]

After this the United States implemented the Removal Policy and began the process of “removing” tribes in order to make room for settlers. This was a marked difference from the relationship the Quapaw had with the French and Spanish. Although the Quapaw were

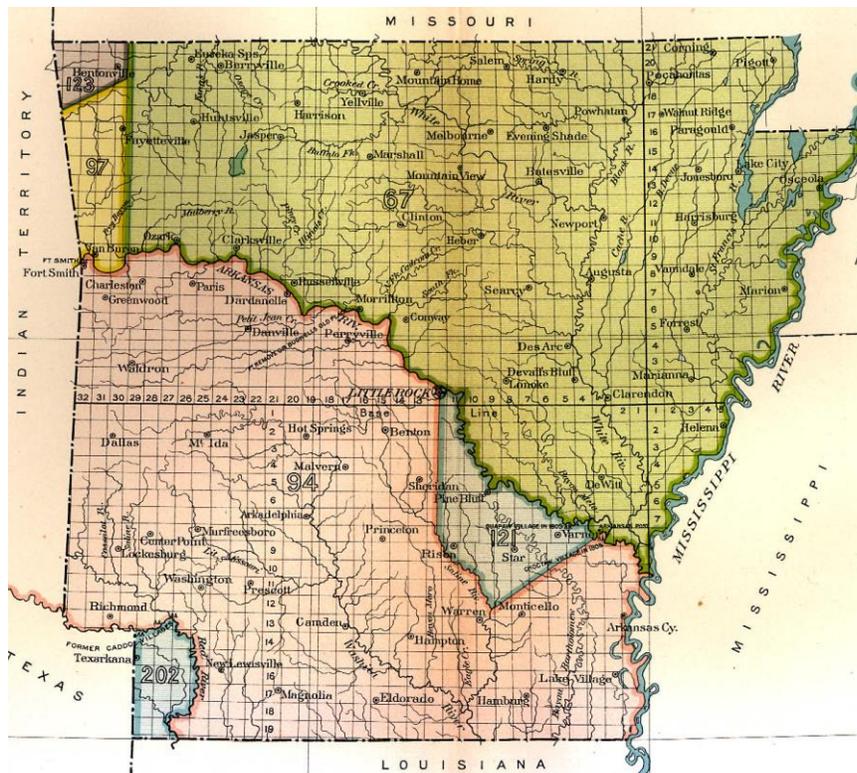


Figure 5 Royce Map, first Quapaw Reservation established in 1818 depicted in light blue. [17]

signatories to numerous treaties, there were three treaties which had very significant effects upon the tribe and the location of the Quapaw homelands. [2, 12]

By 1818, after waves of disease and years of war the Quapaw Nation was down to a population of about 1000. Vastly outnumbered by white settlers, there was a large push for Quapaw lands. Under pressure, the Quapaw agreed to the Treaty of 1818, which ceded Quapaw claim to most of modern day Arkansas, and part of Oklahoma, northern Louisiana and the

Mississippi Delta, roughly 30,000,000 acres in exchange for “goods and merchandise to the value of four thousand dollars” upon execution of the treaty and “goods and merchandise to the value of one thousand dollars” yearly. About one and a half million acres was retained, forming the first Quapaw Reservation, and some hunting rights were also retained. [2, 12, 17]

Despite this surrender, the demand for Quapaw land continued and in 1824 the Quapaw were again pressured into signing a second treaty with the United States. This treaty ceded the remaining land in Arkansas in exchange for a tract of land near the Red River in Louisiana. The Quapaw were made to agree to live among the Caddo Nation in exchange for goods and an annuity payment of \$1,000 for eleven years. [2, 12, 17]

Although the treaty was signed in 1824, the removal to the Red River did not begin until January of 1826. The removal was completed in multiple groups and was overseen by Antione Barraque, who kept notes of the journey. By late February of 1826 all the Quapaw’s had reached the Red River, but they did not cross the river until March 1st. The Quapaw’s were not well received by the Caddo’s, however they eventually settled on the south side of the Red River near Bayou Treache, on the Caddo Prairie, around thirty miles northwest of present-day Shreveport; establishing three villages corresponding to previous settlement patterns. [2, 12, 20]

In the spring of 1827, the Red River flooded on multiple occasions destroying the fields which the Quapaw had planted. Coupled with disease, many in the tribe perished and that same year in an act of desperation Saracen led roughly one-third of the remaining members of the tribe

back to the Arkansas River. By 1830 the majority of the tribe followed Heckaton and joined them. Saracen along with other tribal leaders petitioned the government to allow them to use their annuity payment to purchase land and be able to again live on their own homeland by letting them become citizens of the United States. ^[2, 12]

The government did not listen to the pleas of the tribe, and by 1833 the situation had grown desperate. Annuity payments continued to be delayed, settlers continued to move into the area and push out tribal members. Tribal members struggled to obtain income or food. Territorial governor John Pope supported the Quapaw effort to buy land, however the federal government instead decided to negotiate another removal. Without any options left, the Quapaw again signed a new treaty with the United States. ^[2, 12]

The Treaty of 1833 relinquished Quapaw claim to their land on the Red River in exchange for 150 sections of land “west of the state line of Missouri”, in Indian Territory, which would become modern day Oklahoma and Kansas. A month after signing a treaty in May of 1833 agreeing to remove to Indian Territory, approximately 300 Quapaws traveled back to the Red River in June of 1833. They had heard from the small group of Quapaws who stayed at the Red River that an annuity payment was finally going to be distributed. Saracen is believed to have traveled with them. In 1834, around 179 Quapaws had been removed to the reservation in Indian Territory. Saracen and the 300 Quapaw who traveled to the Red River were not with this group. In 1835, fifty of the Quapaw who followed Saracen to the Red River joined the rest of the tribe in Indian Territory. The remaining 250 refused to rejoin the rest of the tribe and took up residence temporarily with the Cherokees in Texas or the Choctaws just north of the Red River in Indian Territory. It is believed that most of these stragglers later became what was referred to as the “Canadian Band of Quapaws” who are discussed below. ^[2, 12]

As mentioned, in 1835 fifty of the Quapaws who were loyal to Saracen joined the group on the new reservation adding to the approximately 179 who were present on the reservation growing this band. However, in 1838 after being settled into their new homes, it was discovered that due to a survey error many had established their homes on land given to the Seneca. Out of exasperation, distrust and political division, many of the tribe wandered and for a time lived separately. Some had even left before being removed and others left after arriving in Indian Territory. This resulted in the Quapaw geographically dispersing even further, with Quapaw settlements scattered through what is now the states of Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and even a small number on the Red River bordering Texas. ^[2, 12, 16]

One band of the tribe remained on the reservation, often referred to during the time as the “Home Band”. This band moved further north, near Baxter Springs and was relatively small. The Indian Agent assigned to the Quapaw Agency communicated that the government required the tribe to no longer live communally, therefore the individuals in this band lived in log cabins (although this group maintained communal camps during ceremonial events and dances, much like today). This band maintained continual residence on the Quapaw Reservation, except for a brief exodus during the Civil War when much of the tribe was forced into Kansas. During this exodus refuge was found amongst the Ottawa Tribe, who was then living around Ottawa, KS. Members of the Home Band were able to secure grazing and farming leases, which provided

meat, food and modest income. Grazing was lucrative in part due to natural water and tallgrass resources and cattle trails that came through the area. Additionally, the railroad came to the area in 1870 so that grazing grew and formed the basis of local economy prior to the mining that occurred after allotment. [2, 12, 16]

One band of the tribe eventually established a village near Holdenville, OK along the Canadian River. During this period, they were referred to as the “Canadian Band of Quapaws” due to living along this river, or sometimes as the “Creek Band of Quapaws”, as they were living on the edge of the Muscogee Creek Nation’s territory. This band is believed to have been comprised of two groups. Some of the Quapaws who stayed on the Red River following the 1824 removal, and later moved into Oklahoma separately from the main group, as well as some of the Quapaw who discovered they were living on Seneca land due to a survey error. Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock reported this band to be approximately 250. Despite this band’s geographic separation, contact with the remainder of the tribe continued and this band continued to be present for ceremonial events and annuity payments. During the Civil War this band reunited with the remainder of the tribe and fled into Kansas. It appears that following the war, this band no longer maintained itself as an autonomous and geographically separate group. It should also be mentioned that there were reported smaller Quapaw settlements in both the Choctaw and Cherokee Nation and on the Red River. It appears that while many of the Quapaw on the Red River moved into Indian Territory, at least some of the Quapaw stayed on the Red River in Louisiana and didn’t move until much later. From the little information available today it appears that most of the Quapaw living on Choctaw lands and on the Red River eventually joined with the Canadian Band and largely rejoined the rest of the tribe. [2, 12, 16]

A separate band moved into southern Kansas, near Chetopa and later moved near modern-day Skiatook, OK. This band was led by Chief Kakika Tteda, who was also called “Lame Chief”. During this time frame this group seems to have been the largest in terms of population. This group maintained a more traditional existence, which is one reason they moved into Kansas and lived near the Osage. If they had remained on the Quapaw reservation the Indian Agent would have attempted to force them to live in log cabins in a non-communal fashion. Additionally, the Osage were still largely living in a traditional fashion in Kansas, which allowed this group to ally with them and live in a similar fashion. This group named the settlement in Kansas “Huchapa Tawa”. During the allotment period they would be referred to as the “Osage band of Quapaws”. Prior to allotment, there was fear that the reservation could be lost due to not enough Quapaws living there. Three separate delegations were sent by the Home Band to this band requesting them to rejoin those on the reservation. Despite their pleas these three requests were denied. Later during land allotment, most of this band choose to finally rejoin the remainder of the tribe in modern day Quapaw, OK in order to also receive a land allotment. Many stayed after allotment, and a portion returned to Osage County. [2, 12, 16]

Some of the Quapaw/French mixed bloods had received land titles which were recognized in the previous treaties that had been signed by the tribe. As evidenced by Hitchcock, at least some of this group came to Indian Territory, however later returned to Pine Bluff after the survey error was discovered. Interviews of tribal elders at the turn of the century, as well as

historic Arkansas newspaper articles from the same time period describe at least some visitation between this band and the remainder of the tribe. At the direction of Chief Charley Quapaw the home band sent a delegation to this band consisting of Alphonsus Valliere and Louis Hadley in 1883 to ask them to rejoin the remainder of the tribe. The journey lasted approximately a month (July 21st, to September 20th). In response to this request the majority of those who remained in Pine Bluff rejoined the remainder of the tribe in Quapaw, OK in 1885. An article from the Arkansas Democrat in 1905 describes:

“About twelve years ago many families allied by blood to the Quapaws left the vicinity of Pine Bluff to take up their allotment of land in the northeast corner of the Indian Territory. Almost Every year some would return. Like Saracen, their hearts seemed to be in their old home. Many have come in two-horse wagons from the territory just to see their old home in Arkansas. They felt sick and thought that they would be revived by the air of their olden home. After a time spent here, they made the toilsome journey back”.

At the insistence of the local Indian Agent, the tribe had to formally adopt each member back into the tribe in writing and receive approval from the Secretary of the Interior. This unusual step was likely insisted upon by the Indian Agent because these individuals had lived in Arkansas for more than 40 years and were at that point generally considered citizens. At the time, tribal citizenship and American citizenship were mutually exclusive. This required the tribe to jump through some hoops, however the Secretary of Interior’s written approval was finally received in March 1887; after receiving help from Arkansas Congressman Clifton Breckenridge. [2, 12, 16, 18]

In addition to the four previously mentioned Quapaw groups, in the 1890s the Home Band had worked to round up as much of the dispersed Quapaw population as possible so that the Quapaw land base would not be lost. Despite this effort, there was still not enough Quapaws present, and non-blood Quapaws were adopted into the tribe. These included Indians from other tribes, spouses of Quapaws and non-Indians. This would later create internal issues for the tribe and in the 1950s all tribal members who were not Quapaw by blood were disenrolled prior to the remaining blood Quapaw tribal members receiving a settlement. [2, 12, 16]

During the 1890s the Quapaw planned their own allotment, with the help of a man named Abner Abrams. To our knowledge no other tribe took such an unusual step. It was undertaken, not because allotment was desired, but because the tribe knew it was coming and no other option was available. By following this plan, Quapaw tribal land was allotted without a “surplus” to be given away for settlers. This wouldn’t last however; as lead and zinc mining would develop vast sums of money for certain tribal members; leading to the defrauding of many Quapaws and loss of a percentage of tribal lands. [2, 12, 16]

Following allotment, the Quapaw Nation has maintained a land base in Northeastern Oklahoma. To some extent Quapaw tribal members have dispersed across the country. Despite this, the homeland and center of the Quapaw Nation has remained geographically similar since allotment.

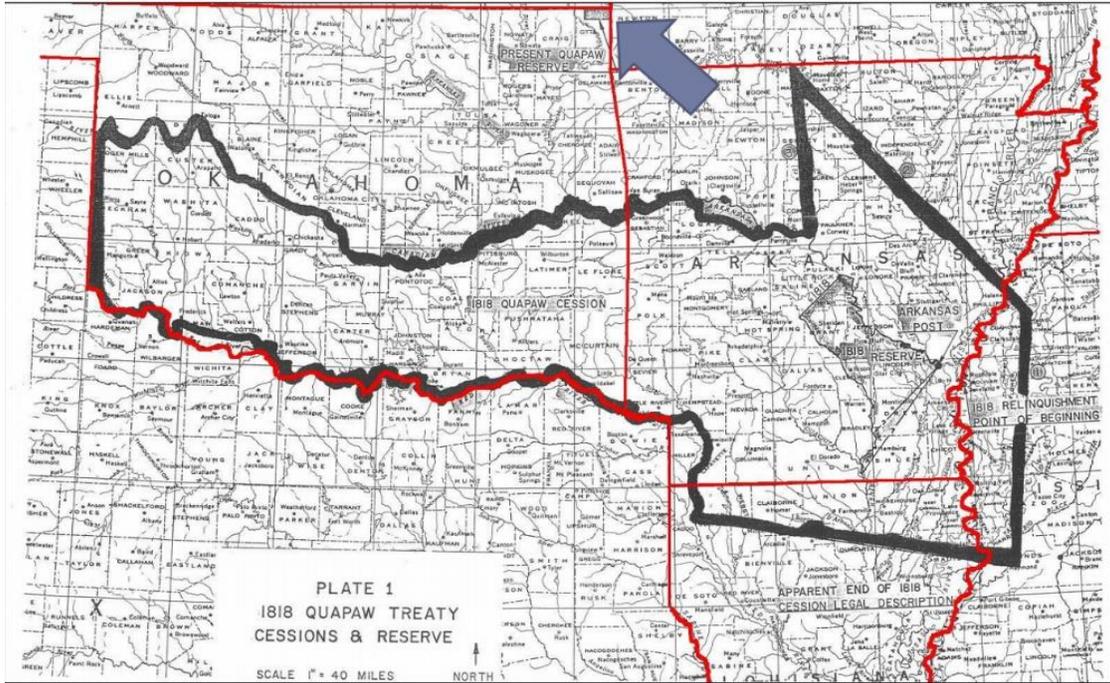


Figure 6 Map depicting the 1818 Quapaw land cession, the first Quapaw reservation in Arkansas, and the subsequent Quapaw reservation in northeastern Oklahoma.

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