

In conclusion, I would state that for the adult members of the tribe encouragement to labor in agricultural pursuits, care of stock, and a better and more healthful mode of living for the children; the establishment of schools, both manual-labor and day, so that all those of school age can attend; then this question of civilization, which is the work of an age, can approach solution in a generation.

Very respectfully,

SAML. S. ELY,
Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

PONCA INDIAN AGENCY, INDIAN TERRITORY,
August 31, 1878.

SIR: I have the honor to submit my annual report of the condition of matters at this agency, and of the progress made toward the settlement of the Ponca Indians on their new reservation in the Indian Territory. As I have been but two months in charge of the agency, and as during the most of that time, as for a year previous, the Indians have been in transit (having been but temporarily located on the Quapaw Reservation), my report will necessarily be brief.

I took charge of the Ponca Agency on the 3d day of July, A. D. 1878, relieving A. G. Boone. It was with much diffidence and some reluctance that I entered upon the discharge of my duties as agent for the Poncas. As my predecessor was a gentleman of long experience in the Indian service, and as many men of experience had preceded him—none remaining with the tribe but a short time—the Poncas had come to be regarded as a tribe difficult to govern. Therefore it was with but little confidence in my own ability to succeed that I commenced my duties.

The order to me from the department to take charge of the agency also directed me to immediately move the agency and the Indians to the new location selected for them, west of the Arkansas River. I immediately commenced active preparations for the removal. I had a large amount of freight, consisting of supplies, agricultural implements, camp equipage, &c., to transport, and was also encumbered with a number of sick Indians and many that were old and decrepit. I left the old location south of Baxter Springs, Kansas, with the freight, agency employes, and Indians on the 21st day of July, 1878, and arrived at this, the new Ponca Reservation, on the 29th day of July, 1878, having been eight days on the road. The distance traveled was, as the roads run, about 185 miles. The heat during all the time we were en route was intense, the thermometer ranging from 95° to 100° every day. The removal was accomplished with no loss of government property but one horse, which died within a short distance from Arkansas City from the effects of fatigue and heat, though all the stock, as well as every person who made the trip, was very much jaded and exhausted when we arrived here. I think, considering the severity of the weather, we were very fortunate in not suffering greater loss.

The agency is located on the Salt Fork River, in the large bend formed by that river, and about two miles west of its confluence with the Arkansas River. The agency was located by Indian Inspector General John McNeill, and so well located in point of health, beauty, and convenience to wood and water as to reflect great credit on that distinguished officer's good taste and judgment. The soil is of a sandy nature, but its appearance and the heavy growth of grass upon it indicate that when cultivated it will be very productive. The grass is mostly sage, interspersed with buffalo grass, and cattle herded upon it are said to do well all winter without being fed any other food. We have a bountiful supply of water, cool and sweet, furnished by the many springs which run out along the river bluffs. The timber on the reservation is chiefly cottonwood, oak, walnut, and pecan. There is an abundance of it for fuel, but trees suitable for lumber or rail timber are not so plentiful, though there is sufficient for all practical purposes for many years to come, if too lavish a use is not made of it.

There is but one building on the reservation—a commissary building, 24 by 70 feet, containing two small office rooms, which was built by the government during the past summer. We are sadly in need of residences for the agent and agency employes. I sincerely hope they will soon be provided for us, as cold weather is rapidly approaching, and the idea of having to winter in tents is not a very pleasant one to contemplate.

The Indians are all living in tents, congregated in one large village. This I am endeavoring to change. I have been urging them to break up into bands at least, if not in families, and select the land they wish to make their homes upon and move out upon it, away from the village. My efforts in this direction have met with some success. The half-breed band have promised me to move very soon to the mouth of the Chikaskie, about 8 miles from the agency, and others, I think, are considering the matter very favorably. In my opinion the tribal village is one great source of trouble

at an agency. It is there that the mischief-makers sow the seeds of discontent, which cause an agent much trouble to eradicate.

No attempt has been made at raising a crop of any kind this year, because of the fact that we did not arrive here until it was too late in the season to do so. Therefore the Indians will have to depend entirely upon the government for subsistence; but they express a desire to work and help support themselves, and I expect at the end of another year to be able to make a favorable report of their ability and inclination to do so.

The reason thus far since our arrival here has been a very sickly one. The Poncas have suffered severely from chills and fevers and intermittent fevers. Coming from a northern latitude, where such diseases were unknown, with their systems unacclimated, the malaria has been peculiarly fatal to them, and many deaths have resulted. The Poncas now number 637 people, which by comparison with the annual report of 1877 from this agency shows a decrease of 45.

Their sufferings have greatly discouraged and made them dissatisfied with this location, and they express a strong desire to go back to their old reservation in Dakota. However, I am of the opinion that if the government will fully and promptly fulfill all the promises made to them to induce them to leave Dakota and take up their home on this reservation they will cheerfully accept the situation and settle down with a determined feeling pervading the whole tribe. At present there is a restless, discontented feeling pervading the whole tribe. They seem to have lost faith in the promises of the government, and often say the "Great Father" has forgotten them; by the time he again remembers them none will be left to receive what he has promised them. The chiefs are very anxious to visit Washington and have a talk with the President for the purpose of having the size and boundaries of their reservation determined and definitely settled by treaty stipulations. I would earnestly recommend that they be allowed to do so some time during the coming winter. I think it would contribute greatly toward a restoration of good feeling, and to remove the spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction which now pervades their minds.

The Poncas are good Indians. In mental endowment, moral character, physical strength, and cleanness of person they are superior to any tribe I have ever met. I beg for them the prompt and generous consideration of the government, whose fast and warm friends they have ever been.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. H. WHITEMAN,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Quapaw Agency, Indian Territory, August 30, 1878.

SIR: In compliance with instructions of July 1, I submit herewith my seventh annual report of the condition of this agency.

This agency is situated in the northeast corner of the Indian Territory, and contains 202,295 acres, one-half of which is rich, arable land, and the remainder is unsurpassed for grazing purposes. Probably one-third is timbered land, covered with a luxuriant growth of nutritious native grasses. The timber, as a rule, is not valuable, except for rails and house-logs, very little of it being suitable for working into lumber. The agency is well watered by the Neosho and Grand Rivers on the western boundary, Spring River through the center of the northern part, and Cowakin through the southern portion, as well as by numerous creeks and branches supplied by living springs of clear, cold water, which flow through almost every section. The tillable land, except the alluvial soils along the margins of the streams, is generally high, rolling prairie, with a rich, black, loamy soil. The timbered land, except on creek and river bottoms, is high, broken, and rocky, and is supposed to contain minerals, as the formation is volcanic, and is identical with the mineral-bearing lands of Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas.

The tribes constituting the agency are the Quapaws, Confederate Peorias and Miami, Ottawas, Eastern Shawnees, Wyandotts, Senecas, Modocs, and, since the 21st of July last, Joseph's band of Nez Percés. In addition to these there are a number of Black Bob Shawnees and citizen Pottawatomies who properly belong elsewhere, but are temporarily residing here.

The Quapaw number about 235, and hold a tract of 50,685 acres in the northeast corner of the agency. A large majority of the tribe have long desired to remove to the Osage country and become incorporated with that tribe. This desire, together with the demoralization incident to their proximity to the vicious, intermeddling whites usually found on our border, has materially retarded their progress. The principal chief and nearly two-thirds of his people are with the Osages. Those remaining

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