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WITH THE LAMANITES.

In response to an inquiry regarding his recent mission in the Indian Territory, and the history and condition of the native tribe with which he was best acquainted, Elder Frank B. Woodbury made the following report:

On the morning of the 16th of October, 1891, I boarded the R. G. W. train at Salt Lake City and was soon speeding on my way to the Indian Territory, whither I had been called to bear the message of life and salvation to a portion of the house of Israel. As I crossed the prairies of eastern Colorado and Kansas I longed to see a mountain, or even a hill, this being my first view of such a vast amount of territory without a mountain to obstruct it in any direction. After visiting Pueblo and Kansas City the journey was continued, and on the morning of October 19th I arrived at Fort Gibson, Indian Territory.

This fort was used during the war by the Confederates as a military post, and was for some time the home of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, whose residence is still standing, though it has been considered unsafe as a dwelling for some time.

From Fort Gibson we took stage for Manard, a distance of nine miles, where resides the Hon. Wm. H. Hendricks, with whom the Elders always find a home. When the Elders first went there, having been turned away from many doors through prejudice, Mr. Hendricks and his noble wife took them in and made them welcome. An attempt was made by the Elders in 1891-92 to obtain a tract of land on which to erect a building for Church and school purposes, but they failed in this, and Mr. Hendricks furnished some land and a house was built thereon. This is the only meeting house owned by the Saints in the territory. There they can hold meetings when they choose. Many of the other churches and schoolhouses are closed against them.

On the way from Fort Gibson to Manard the National cemetery is passed. It is enclosed by a rock wall about five feet high. Inside stands a nice stone cottage, where the superintendent, Mr. J. R. Dixon, resides. The cemetery contains a fraction over five acres of land, in which are interred the remains of 2449 soldiers, 2123 of whom are unknown.

The graveled walks are lined with a variety of shade trees and flowers. Among other trees are the box elder, cottonwood, poplar, paula, silver maple and wild locust—all natives of the territory, though not as common as the oak, of which there are about five or six varieties, the hickory, the pecan, etc.

The Indian Territory, which lies west of Arkansas, and between Kansas and Texas, was a portion of the Louisiana purchase, and was set apart for the colonization of peaceful Indian tribes. There is no territorial government, each tribe or nation having the management of its own affairs. Oklahoma is a tract of land which was ceded to the United States by the Creeks and Seminoles in 1866 to be "used as homes for such other civilized Indians as the United States may choose to settle thereon." In 1889 this tract was thrown open for settlement by the whites, and was the signal for a rush of settlers such as had never been previously known. Other tracts have been since thrown open to settlers and added to Oklahoma, until now it is large enough and has a population entitling it to statehood. It was situated in the northern portion of the territory. The five civilized tribes—Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole—occupy the eastern and southern portions of the territory, while the semi-civilized tribes—Osages, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches, Apaches, Pawnees, Kiowas and other smaller tribes occupy the west and north. These tribes have been taken from their former locations and placed here by the United States government.

The first account we have of the Cherokees is that in the year 1620 they were located in Virginia, from which place they were afterwards driven by the Virginians and forced to retreat to the Holsten river. The early Cherokees claimed blood relationship with the Powhattans, and their claim is well grounded, judging from the great similarity in their customs and characteristics. The residence of the Cherokees on the Holsten river was of short duration, for they were attacked by the tribes from the north and driven to the Little Tennessee, where they again settled down and established themselves permanently. The Cherokees are supposed to have been the original inhabitants of the southeastern states, as the other tribes appear to have emigrated from the West at no very early period. It is claimed by

some scientists that these people are the direct descendants of the Mound Builders, and as one proof of this they point to the fact that these mounds are more numerous in that portion of the country once inhabited by the Cherokees than in any other part.

About the year 1700 their nation consisted of sixty-four towns. Those living in the upper towns, situated on the Tellico and the Tennessee rivers, were continually at war with the Northern Indians, while those of the lower towns on the Oconee and Savannah rivers were harassed by the Creeks. Nor did their trouble end with their red brethren, for they were also at war with the French and English at different periods. From these causes and the terrible scourge of smallpox the Cherokee were, in 1740, reduced from seven thousand to five thousand warriors. At this time they had not been brought into contact with the whites to any great extent, and were still in their wild, uncivilized state. Their warriors were in the habit of having their heads shaved, leaving only a small bunch on the back part, which was ornamented with plumes, while their ears were slit and adorned with long pendants and rings. They are a very fine looking people, and indeed they are said to have been the most proud of any of the Indian tribes. This trait was especially exhibited in their early intercourse with the Europeans, the warriors refusing to associate with any but the generals and superior officers of the English and French armies.

The first treaty made by the Cherokees was with the British government, and was consummated at Dover, June 30, 1721, six chiefs appearing before George the Third, and pledging their fealty to his majesty. In 1761 Henry Timberlake, a lieutenant in the British service, in order to cultivate friendly relations with the Cherokees, visited the towns on the Tellico and Tennessee rivers and persuaded three powerful chieftains to accompany him to England. They were presented to George the Third, being introduced at court by Colonel Beamer. Here they exhibited a dignity and bearing in keeping with their rank and influence as representatives of a great nation.

During the war of the Revolution the Cherokees remained faithful and were powerful allies of the British until after the war closed, when they ceased hostilities and agreed to a treaty with the United States government.