

PRATT, C. h.

DEPOSITION OF BILLIE WILSON

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THIS IS A DEPOSITION OF BILLIE WILSON, GOVERNMENT SCOUT AND CADDO INDIAN. THIS DEPOSITION WAS TAKEN IN SEPTEMBER 1927, AT ANADARKO OKLAHOMA. THIS DEPOSITION WAS RECEIVED FROM C. H. PRATT, HIS REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE WICHITAS AND AFFILIATED BANDS. THIS DEPOSITION WAS TAKEN IN A CERTAIN CAUSE NOW PENDING IN THE COURT OF CLAIMS, WHEREIN THE WICHITA AND AFFILIATED BANDS OF INDIANS ARE PETITIONERS AND THE UNITED STATES IS DEFENDANT.

Chester A. Lamb,
Interviewer.

The examiners: C. Ross Hume for the Caddo Tribe.
Chas H. Merillat for the Plaintiff.
Dan M. Jackson for the Defendant.

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Willie Wilson, being sworn as an interpreter, and Billy Wilson, called as a witness on behalf of the intervenors and, having been first duly sworn, testifies as follows:

Direct Examination by C. Ross Hume:

Q. What is your name?

A. Billie Wilson.

Q. What tribe do you belong?

A. Caddo.

Q. How old are you?

A. I don't know my age, but the records over here show somewhere in the neighborhood of 80 or 85, between 80 and 90.

Q. Do you receive a pension from the Government?

A. Yes sir.

Q. As a soldier or scout?

A. I was a member of the scouts twice.

Q. Where were you born?

A. I don't know exactly where I was born. The fact is a person doesn't know where he is born.

When I was grown up so that I first knew anything it was off down southeast somewhere, I couldn't tell you exactly where.

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Q. Where did your people tell you you were born?

A. My folks told me I was born down south, but I have forgotten the name of the place that I was born.

Q. Was it on the north side or the south side of Red River?

A. South of Red River.

Q. When did you first come to this country?

A. I was just about grown into manhood when I first got into this country.

Q. Were there very many that came at the same time?

A. Quite a number of people came up here at the same time.

Q. Did they come with any white people?

A. Quite a number of white people were along.

Q. Any soldiers with them?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Did they have an agent with them?

A. A man by the name of Nabors.

Q. What tribes came up at that time?

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A. The Caddos, the Wichitas, the Wacos, Delawares, Shawnees, and the Comanches, Pene-take Comanches, and Tonkawas.

Q. Now, where did they come to in this country?

A. They brought the people down here to the mouth of Delaware Creek. (Delaware Creek is South of Anadarko).

Q. Did they find any Indians here when they got here?

A. I don't think that there was anybody here at the time that they arrived, but when they brought a bunch down here to the mouth of Delaware Creek they moved them over to where this Rock Island Railroad crossing is and it was that time that the agent or whoever was in charge of the Indians told them that this was their country and for them to select their locations where they wanted to settle, to go ahead and settle. The Caddo Chief selected across the river, and there was the Comanche Chief selected over there by the river, and the Wichitas selected over across the river on the Sugar Creek bottom there, and the Delawares selected back south of the Mission, and the Shawnees selected the foot of these hills up here.

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(Note: all locations referred to the ^{precedin} page are
in the vicinity of Anadarko Oklahoma)

Q. Now, did Major Nabors tell them where their land
was to be?

A. As far as I can remember, I understood that the
boundary was six miles west of the Antelope Hills, as
far south as the Red River, and then east over to
around Chickasha, and then as far north as the Can-
adian River.

Q. Now, did the Indians stay here during the war, the
Civil War?

A. During the Civil War, of course, these Indians had
to go to some place of safety. They disbanded and went
to Kansas. Of course, they came back when the trouble
was over with.

Q. Where did the Caddos go during the war?

A. The Caddos at that time went west over around about
the neighborhood of the Antelope Hills, and at times
there was a bunch of white people over here, a man by
the name of William Shirley accompanied by certain

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number of white people, overtook them Indians and told them it wasn't necessary for them to go off and leave this land here, that it would be a good plan for them to come back to this place here, to their home. During the evening we held a council there, and three of the Caddo Chiefs agreed to go back here and one Chief went on up north with his band. After they came back here a chief by the name of Washington located his band down around Pauls Valley. Of course oftentimes he would come up around in this neighborhood to look over this land. This young man's father here, was with the Caddos when they left this country to go up into Kansas, and there was another man with John's father here. (Note: The deposition does not state fully who he was referring to in the last sentence).

Q. After the war did all these various tribes come back to this country?

A. Yes sir; the people came back. While the people were up around the neighborhood of Kansas they were informed they were to have a council and they were informed at the

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council that the war was over with and it wasn't necessary for those people to be up there any longer, so they agreed during the council to come back to this country, which they did. Of course that is the substance of it.

Q. What tribe came back to this country, after the war was over, from Kansas?

A. The Caecos, Wichita, and Delawares, and some Shawnees.

Q. Did the Pene takas and Tonkawas come back with them?

A. Yes sir.

Q. With these Indians?

A. No, sir; during the war the Tonkawas went south; the Pene-takas went south or west.

Q. After these Indians came back after the war were there other Indians that were brought in here?

A. After everything was over with they brought the Kiowas and Comanches and Apaches in here.

Q. What about the Cheyennes and Arapahoes?

A. They brought them in and located them back over where they are now.

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Q. Did they ask these Indians that were here if they wanted the Cheyennes and Arapahoes and Kiowas and Comanches brought in?

A. No sir. During the council up north here Towacony Jim got up during the council and told the people that he was wondering why it was that these people were brought in here, meaning the Kiowas and Comanches and other tribes. At that time, of course, from that time to the present day, I'm not recognized as a chief or anything like that; therefore, I couldn't testify and tell as to whether the Government had the consent from the leading men or not in bringing these people in.

Q. How did the Caddos make their living during these early times?

A. They obtained their provisions by going out and getting wild game.

Q. Where did they hunt?

A. Right close.

Q. How far did they hunt?

A. They hunted as far north as Arkansas River.

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Q. How far south?

A. Of course they might have been off down south, but I am talking about myself. My ranges was up north and in through here. Of course there might have been people going on hunting expeditions down south.

Q. How far east and west?

A. The people hunted in all directions as far as the hunting was concerned, but I am talking about myself. I went up north mostly, and a few times went down in the mountains. The people hunted mostly though here.

Q. How far west did any of them tell you they hunted?

A. They hunted out west, but then not a great distance, although they hunted all over this country in different directions, but then not very far out.

Q. After they came back after the war did the Wichitas, Caddos, Delawares and these other tribes have their villages over this country?

A. Yes sir; they came back and settle over the country in villages.

Q. When they had councils, did the Wichitas and Caddos

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and Delawares all take part in these councils?

A. Yes sir. After the Agency was established anything that came up with the Indian Office concerning the people they had always held a council together.

Q. When the Jerome treaty was made in 1891 did the Caddos, Wichitas, and Delawares and other tribes all take part in that council.

A. Yes sir; they did.

Q. Did they all get allotments in the reservation after that treaty?

A. Yes sir.

Q. When was the last council when all the tribes took part in it, as you remember?

A. The last council that I remember is during the time, it was on this 1891 treaty.

Q. The Wichitas and Caddos and Delawares and Wacos and Keechis and Towanonies have been called the Wichitas and affiliated bands?

A. Yes sir.

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Examination by Mr. Merillat:

Q. Did you know an agent named Leeper?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where did Leeper come from?

A. I couldn't say where he came from but he is a Government man.

Q. Was he with them in Texas?

A. Yes sir.

Q. When the Civil War broke out which side did Leeper go with?

A. I don't know where Leeper went during the Civil War.

Q. Did he go with you into Kansas?

A. I don't know whether Leeper went up there or not.

Q. Did Leeper bring any of the Indians from Texas when he came over into Oklahoma?

A. I can't remember exactly that far back, but I think that Leeper came on after the people were moved into this country.

Q. Where did the Tonkawas go when the Civil War broke out?

A. They went south.

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Q. Where did the Pene-taka Comanches go?

A. They went out west, out on the plains.

Q. Was there a fight between those Indians who later went north to Kansas, the Wichitas and the others, and the Tonkawas? Did they have a fight?

A. No sir.

Q. Were the Pene-takas affiliated with the Wichitas or Delawares or Caddos?

A. I couldn't say exactly whether they were affiliated with our people or not; at the same time several came along with these Texas Indians. The Government moved them as well as us people.

Q. Were the band of these wild Comanches far out west?

A. There was a band of these prairie Comanches.

Q. When the Civil war broke out did they join these other Comanches?

A. Yes sir; they went west. Of course, after the war was over they came back and settled in here with the rest of these Indians.

Q. Where were the Comanches living when the Civil War

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broke out, not the Pen-takas but the other Comanches?

Q. They probably went out west. They were called the Western Indians.

Q. And the Kiowas, where were they?

A. They were all out west.

Q. After the Caddos were brought up into this country did they learn that there had been Wichitas living here before them?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Were the Tonkawas affiliated with the Wichitas and the Caddos and the Delawares?

A. I couldn't say whether the Tonkawas were affiliated with these tribes but the Government moved them out of Texas with the rest of us.

Q. Were there only a few Tonkawas?

A. There was quite a few of them.

Q. Weren't there only a small number of Pene-takas also?

A. Just a small band.

Q. Only a small band of Towaconies that were moved over to Oklahoma?

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A. Yes sir.

Q. Weren't these Tonkawas killed during the Civil War by the other Indians ?

A. Yes sir; the Tonkawas were killed.

Q. Which of the Indians killed them?

A. The Shawnees.

Q. Did the Indians, after they came into Oklahoma, go to the Cross Timbers to get their persimmons and berries and fruits?

A. I don't remember it.

Q. Did the Indians move their villages after they came to Oklahoma from one place to another whenever they get ready?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Then what district of the country would they move their villages in, what line?

A. They moved about in through this country from one place to another.

Q. Did they sometimes move up toward the Canadian?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where did you scout?

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A. Down South.

Q. Any Wichitas go out to scout, too?

A. Yes sir.

Q. And some Delawares would go scouting, too?

A. Yes sir; I remember ^{one} Delaware.

Q. Who were you scouting for?

A. Scouting for Uncle Sam.

Q. What did Uncle Sam want you to do?

A. We were scouting for Uncle Sam under who was known as Captain Pratt, and our work was to round up these wild Indians .

Q. What wild Indians were you to round up?

A. The Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches.

Q. Did you locate these Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where did you find them?

A. West.

Q. How far west?

A. West of these mountains, the Wichita Mountains.

Q. Was it beyond the Antelope Hills.

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A. No sir; it wasn't beyond the Antelope Hills.

Q. Was Soh-hoh one of those scouts?

A. I don't remember him. I didn't hear that name, but that person might have been scouting with me.

Q. Was Lieutenant Pratt the man commanding the scouts?

A. Yes sir.

Q. And when you found the Kiowas and Comanches and Apaches what did you do?

A. We didn't do anything. We brought them in.

Q. Who brought them in?

A. I didn't help bring these Indians in. They appointed me a messenger to come down to this agency, to bring in the message that these Indians were captured, and three of us scouts came back, and I don't know how they brought these Indians back. Three of us were appointed to bring this message, I, for one, and a Wichita by the name of Ne-ah-wah, and another one, Chester Warden.

Q. Was the message that the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches had been captured?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Who had captured them?

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A. Soldiers. Of course we scouts were under Lieutenant Pratt at that time, and we were with these white soldiers.

Q. After the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches were captured, what did the soldiers do with them?

A. They brought them into Fort Sill.

Q. How long had the Caddos and the Wichitas and the affiliated bands been living in this country before then?

A. I couldn't tell you the length of time that these people were in here before these people were captured. We Indians have no way of remembering anything, only to hear. You people have a paper and pencil to keep records of times and dates like that and we haven't.

Q. Were the Kiowas and Comanches and Apaches glad to come in, or did they have to come in?

A. Yes sir; probably they were glad. They came right on. Never laid a hand on their firearms or anything like that. Just gave up and came right on.

Q. After they were brought in, what happened to them?

A. They brought these Indians in over here at Fort Sill and they were locked up, the leading men, for some length

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of time, and then they turned them loose and they have been here ever since.

Q. Were they then given land after these leading men had been locked up?

A. After everything was settle they probably were given a piece of land to live on. Of course I don't know anything about that transaction at all. That's where I have testified before, where Tomaconie Jim was wondering why these people were settled over there.

Q. Did they ask his consent to settle them?

A. I haven't seen or heard anything about getting our people's consent.

Q. Had these Kiowas and Comanches and Apaches lived on the Wichita and affiliated tribes' lands before the soldiers went out and brought them in?

A. No sir; they were away out on the plains.

Q. Were they what were known as wild Indians?

A. Wild Indians: Plains Indians.

Q. Were they friends of the Wichitas and Caddos and affiliated tribes before they were brought in?

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A. They had been friendly.

Q. Were they friends before they were brought in, or did they sometimes raid these Indians?

A. They were enemies.

Q. Didn't they come in here and raid them and kill the Wichita and other Indians?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Where were the Osages living when they were first brought over here?

A. They were up right about where they are now.

Q. Were there any Choctaws and Chickasaws living here where the Wichita were living when you were brought over?

A. No sir.

Cross examination by Mr. Jackson:

Q. Were you born near a lake or river or in the mountains or on the plains?

A. No sir; I couldn't tell you.

Q. Did you ever hear that you were born near a big lake?

A. No sir.

Q. Do you know where Mexico is?

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A. No sir.

Q. Did you ever see any Mexican Indians?

A. No sir.

Q. Did you ever know any of the Cade Tribe to go to Mexico?

A. I learn that a few people had been into Mexico and had come back from Mexico. At the time these people came back from Mexico is at the time I have been informed where I was born.

Q. Did you work after your tribe had come back from Mexico?

A. Do you know where the Ouachita River is?

Mr. Merillat: Objected to because the Indian can not understand spelling and it may confuse him, two different streams, the one here and the one that is spelled Ouachita River.

Q. Do you know where the Ouachita River is in the State of Arkansas?

A. No sir.

Q. Did you ever know of any hot springs east away beyond?

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Cross Timbers?

A. No sir.

Q. Did any of the Caddo Tribes speak Spanish when you were a little boy?

A. There was a few that could speak a few words of Spanish, but not to converse with anybody for any length of time. Just a word or two.

(Excused)