



Tribal Histories

Wichita and Affiliated Tribes Research Report

November 2021

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Introduction

The TxDOT Tribal Histories Project involves creating a set of geographic historical narratives of tribal presence in Texas through collaboration with participating Tribes. Taking a statewide approach, these histories will serve as resources to inform future statewide transportation planning, project development, tribal consultation activities, and public engagement by TxDOT.

The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes today is comprised of descendants from many different bands. Thus, the following narrative is inclusive of all historical and extant bands, including Guichita, Iscani/Yscani, Jumano/Jumana (Wedel 1988), Keechi, Kichai, Pani Pique, Quivira, Taovaya/Tawehash (Vehik 1992), Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita. The Wichita call themselves Kitikiti'sh (Elam 2008) and speak Wichita, which is a Caddoan language (Newcomb 2001). The following research report focuses on the physical locations and specific time periods during which the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes were present in Texas.

Ethnographic archival and documentary research for this broad overview focuses on providing background context and setting for Wichita peoples, tribes, and cultures associated with the region encompassing Texas. The following research report is organized chronologically and was compiled in consultation with the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' Historic Preservation Office from both historic works and contemporary sources. Works consulted include ethnohistories, linguistic studies, tribal history compendiums, and folklore from both twentieth-century and contemporary contexts.

This history reflects the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' perspectives because the historical and archeological data sources used to construct it were recommended and/or approved by Robin Williams, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' Historic Preservation Officer and Tribal History Center Director. Ms. Williams and Cultural Program Planner Gary McAdams also provided comments on the draft report that are addressed here in the final report. Travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic precluded the research team from visiting the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' offices, as planned in the research design.

This research report was designed to facilitate the extraction of geographic data, along with calendar and event information, to populate a GIS dataset for use by transportation planners and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes (Appendix). Information from the narrative and GIS dataset (to the extent permissible by the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes) is also intended to be readily adapted for use in archeology reports and for educational outreach materials.

Wichita and Affiliated Tribes Land Use in Texas

Pre-Contact

People ancestral to the Wichita moved onto the central plains from the Southeast Woodlands during the Archaic period (3000 to 10,000 years before present [B.P.]). By about A.D. 1500, Wichita ancestors occupied the Arkansas River and neighboring drainages in Kansas and Oklahoma. Some may also have settled the upper Canadian River in the Texas panhandle in these times (Gelo and Pate 2003:27-28). Ancestors of the Wichita settled at least 800 years ago along the Washita River in central and western Oklahoma, according to archeologists.

These people resided in small villages of rectangular, mud-plastered houses that were arranged in fertile valleys. Near each home was a small garden where women tilled and weeded corn, beans, and squash using hoes fashioned from bison leg and shoulder bones. The corn provided a structure for the beans to climb, and the beans gave nitrogen to the soil to fertilize corn and squash. Wichita women grew a variety of squash, including pumpkins (**Figure 1**) and gourds for containers. The Wichita preserved the dried flesh of the squash by braiding strips of the dried squash into a mat-like form.



Figure 1. Wichita woman peeling pumpkins (Edward S. Curtis photographer, from *The North American Indian*. Portfolio 19, facing page 50. Courtesy of the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives, Northwestern University Libraries).

Men hunted bison, elk, deer, and small game. Women collected wild plants as food or medicine and used them for rituals. Tools were made by both men and women from readily available stone, wood, bone, and antler. Between A.D. 1350 and 1450, some Washita River people began to build larger villages comprised of circular grass houses (**Figure 2**).



Figure 2. Wichita grass house (Edward S. Curtis photographer, n.d., NAA.2010-28, Item ESC19.28, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution).

Wichita grass houses were constructed of forked wooden posts stabilized horizontally with logs and covered with grass. They were 16 to 33 feet (ft) (5 to 10 meters [m]) in diameter with a conical shape like a hive (Odell 2008:480). Raised beds lined the walls of a house, with a fire pit in the center, and a hole in the roof for ventilation. Dwellings were spaced at about 20 m intervals (Newcomb 1961:255; Smith 2000:4), and at least some of the houses were semisubterranean or built over a basin-shaped depression (Odell 2008:480).

Early Wichita sites in Texas include 41HC241, which is an Antelope Creek-era (A.D. 1200 to 1450) site with a circular pebble and earthen embankment measuring 17 by 13 m. Site 41HC241 is situated in Hutchison County within the Antelope Creek National Register Archeological District along with sites 41HC23, 41HC24, 41HC25, 41HC26, 41HC27, 41HC28, and 41HC29.

Some Wichita villages were fortified. Archeological investigations have revealed that Wichita groups were constructing forts in the plains of Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma as early as A.D.

1450 (Drass 2020). Other Washita River people apparently moved northward to the Great Bend of the Arkansas River in present-day Kansas, a land known to sixteenth-century Spanish explorers as Quivira.

Sites Edwards I (34BK2) and Duncan (34WA2) are two fortified Wichita villages in west-central Oklahoma, both dating to between A.D. 1450 and A.D. 1500. Aerial photography and a magnetic survey (1981) were employed at the Edwards I fort, revealing a 50-meter diameter circular ditch. Inside the ditch were ramparts that had been created using the back dirt. The ditch was 1 to 1.5 m deep by 3.4 m wide and had been filled with bison bone.

Aerial photography and a magnetic survey (1981) at the Duncan fort revealed a 50-m diameter ditch that was 1 m deep and 3 m wide. Features encountered included post molds, hearths, and shallow roasting pits. The Duncan site has been interpreted as a fall bison hunting camp and trade center, based on the presence of southwestern pottery sherds. A magnetometer survey in 2015 revealed two arc-shaped ditches that formed three entryways, including a protected passageway that was created by a third ditch (**Figure 3**). A dark stain to the south was interpreted as a stockaded entryway. Edwards I and Duncan sites are devoid of European artifacts, dating both exclusively to the pre-contact era.

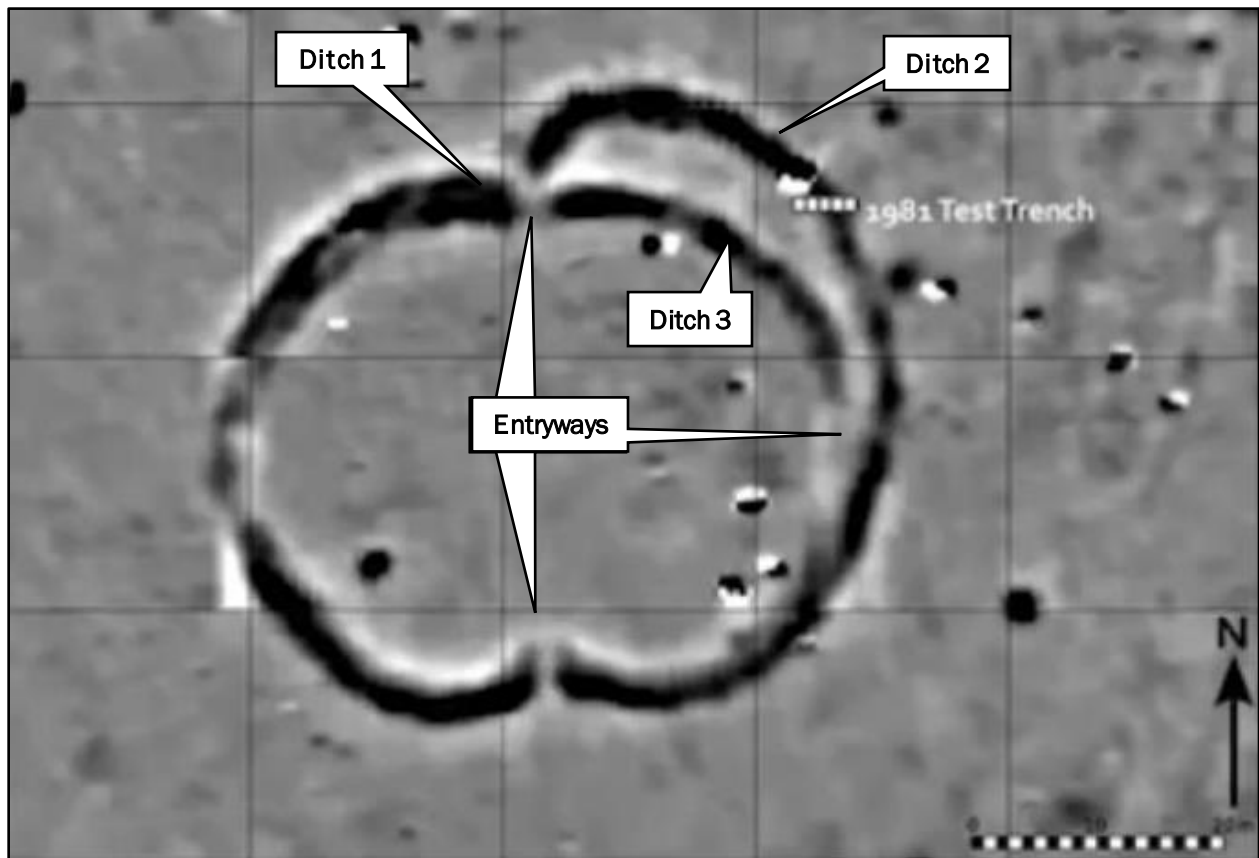


Figure 3. Results of 2015 magnetic survey at Duncan fort (Drass 2020).

Spanish Provinces of Texas and Nuevo Santander

Sixteenth Century

When first encountered by Francisco Vázquez de Coronado in 1541, the Quiviran ancestors of the Wichita were following a way of life that would continue into the eighteenth century. Near their large grass house villages (**Figure 4**), women tilled their gardens while the men hunted bison and other game. Trade was extensive and included commodities such as glazed and painted pottery, turquoise pendants, shell beads from the Pueblo villages of New Mexico, as well as bois d'arc wood for bows and engraved pottery from the Caddo settlements of northeastern Texas.



Figure 4. Wichita women finishing the roof of a grass house in 1898 (James Mooney photographer, BAE GN 01348a 06256400, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution).

Coronado encountered an estimated 200,000 Wichita people in the central Arkansas River valley in present-day Kansas, calling them Quiviras (**Figure 5**) (Newcomb 1993:9-11; Smith 2008:407). The Spanish noted that the Wichita had extensive tattooing on the face and body, a custom practiced by both men and women (Newcomb 1961:250-251). Their villages of grass houses and agricultural fields extended for miles along the area's rivers and streams, reportedly taking the Spanish four to five days to traverse on horseback (Perkins and Baugh 2008:387).

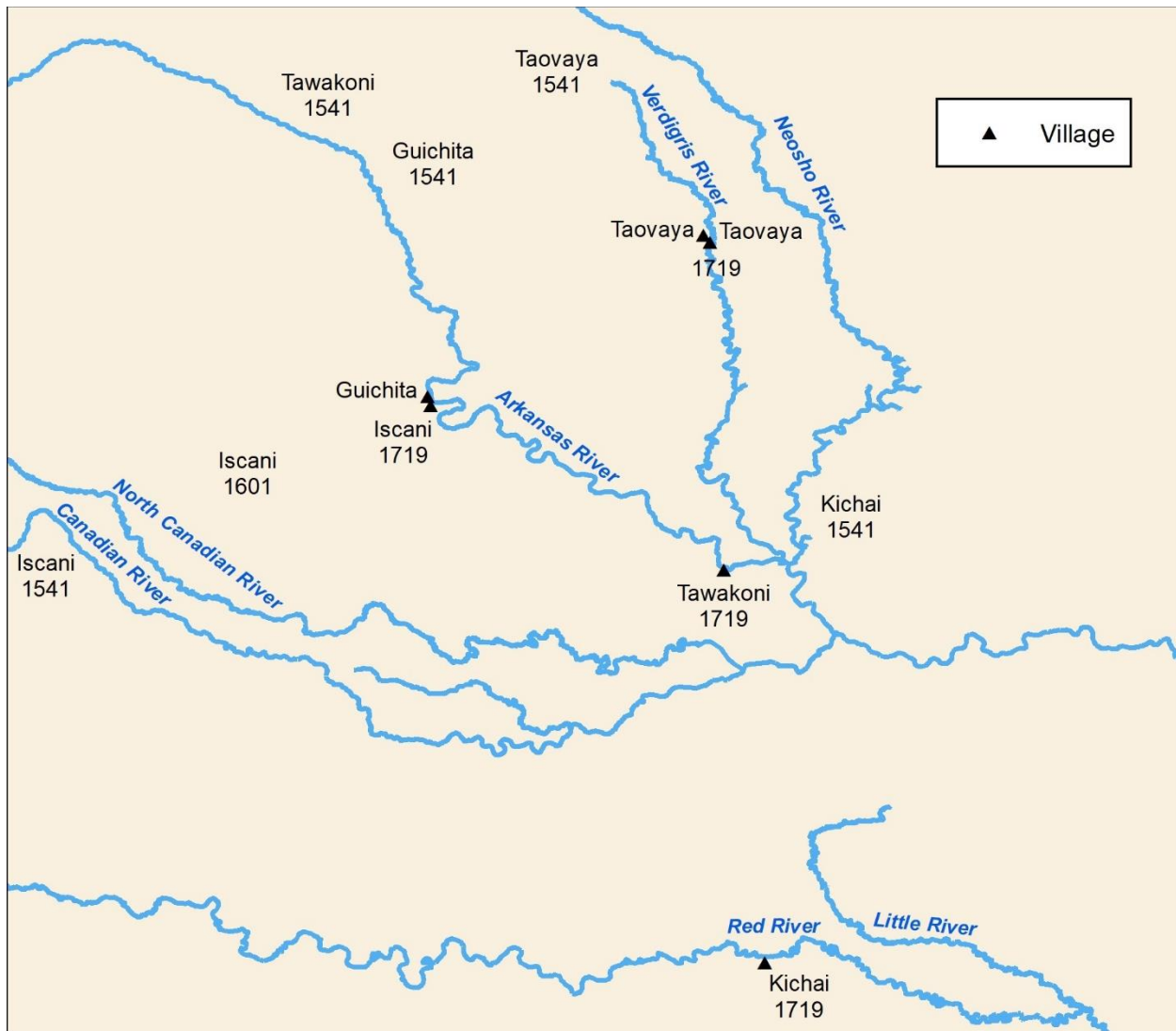


Figure 5. Wichita villages during the mid-sixteenth to early-eighteenth centuries (adapted from Smith 2000:10).

Near each grass house was usually an arbor with open sides and a raised floor where the family rested or worked in the heat of the day (Newcomb 1961:256). Another smaller arbor was used to dry and store meat and vegetables. The Wichita people were situated at an ecotone with access to both the bison on the Great Plains and the timber resources of the Eastern Woodlands (Newcomb 1993:9-11; Smith 2008:407). Coronado noted that the Iscani were living along the Canadian River near the headwaters of the Washita River and the Texas panhandle (see **Figure 5**) (Smith 2000:10).

Timothy G. Baugh (1986:167) argues that the Wheeler phase (A.D. 1500 to 1750) in southwestern Oklahoma is similar enough to the Garza complex in the Panhandle-Plains region of Texas to consider Garza the western extension of the Wheeler phase. Fortified

Wichita village sites include the Bridwell Site (41CB27) in the southern Texas panhandle, and site 41ML38 on the Brazos River, both dating to the Wheeler phase/Garza complex (Drass 2020) (**Figure 6**). A magnetic survey and excavations in 1968 at the Bridwell Site revealed features inside a perimeter ditch (Drass 2020).

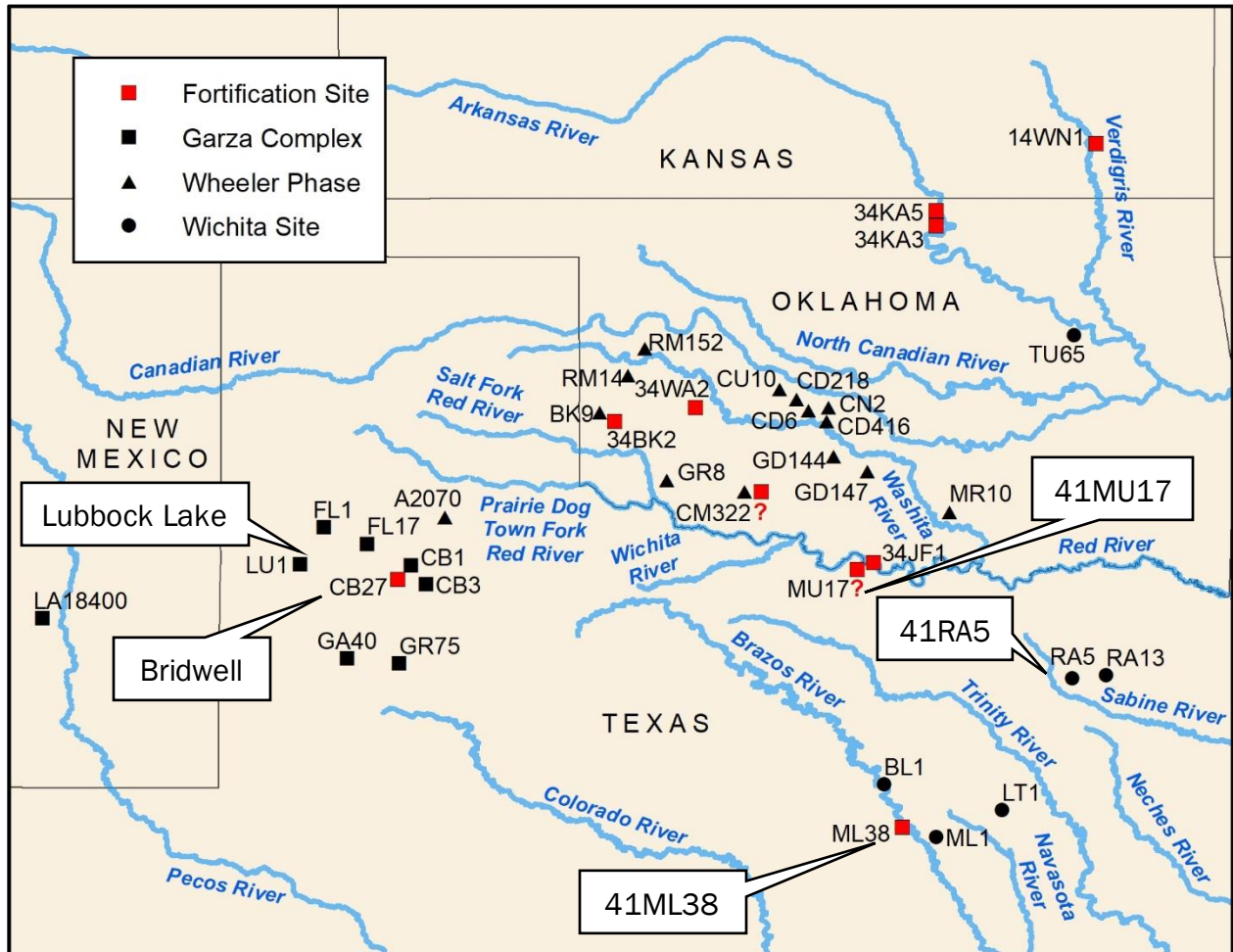


Figure 6. The Bridwell Site (41CB27) in the southern Texas panhandle and site 41ML38 on the Brazos River were fortified Wichita villages (adapted from Drass 2020). Wheeler phase and Garza complex sites are depicted along with other Wichita sites.

Garza complex sites are associated with the Wichita and have been recorded along the tributaries and main branches of the upper forks of the Brazos River, in the vicinity of Lubbock, Texas. Six radiocarbon dates have been obtained from Garza components at the Lubbock Lake site (41LU1) (see **Figure 6**) (Holliday et al. 1983). These dates suggest that the Garza components were occupied between circa A.D. 1450 to 1650 (Habicht-Mauche 1992:253). Other Garza complex sites include 41CB1, 41CB3, 41FL1, 41FL17, 41GA40, and 41GR75 (Drass 2020) (see **Figure 6**).

The Bridwell Site consists of a circular parapet with a 50-m diameter that is 61 cm high in cross section. Further work is needed to determine if post molds are present, which would indicate a stockade, and to identify a ditch and entryways. Other known Wichita sites in Texas include site 41MU17 (see **Figure 6**), which is the best investigated of the Spanish Fort sites. These sites are across the Red River from the Longest Site (34JF1).

Seventeenth Century

After Coronado found no minerals to exploit, Spain did not try to colonize in the Wichita's territory. Juan de Oñate, colonizer of New Mexico, would be the next to visit 60 years later in 1601. The villages that Coronado documented as Quivira are depicted in a 1718 map by Guillaume Delisle of the eastern two-thirds of North America. Delisle's map also depicted the villages that Oñate visited (Elam 2008:8-9), illustrating that the two areas were occupied by the Wichita contemporaneously and throughout a long period of time. Oñate explored to the south and east and in the vicinity of present-day Wichita, Kansas, he found numerous villages whose inhabitants had characteristics like those Coronado had met (Elam 2008:6). The Wichita's territory extended as far south as present-day Tulsa, Oklahoma for the next 100 years.

After Spanish settlement began in New Mexico in the seventeen century and the later arrival of French hunters and traders in the Mississippi Valley in the eighteenth century, the lives of the Wichita were profoundly altered. The Wichita eventually acquired horses from the Spanish, allowing them to follow bison herds over a much wider range, and to be more efficient hunters and transporters of the commodity.

In 1606, a Wichita chief and 600 warriors arrived at Santa Fe, requesting Spanish help against their enemies. None was apparently provided as it would be nearly a century before the Wichita appeared again in the Spanish record when Apache warriors raided and burned a Wichita village in 1692. The Apache took Wichita prisoners to New Mexico to trade with the Spanish for horses and weapons (Hoig 1993:53). Two years later, the Apache brought a large group of Wichita children to trade, but the Spanish refused.

Eighteenth Century

By the 1700s, the five main groups of Wichita people (Guichita, Iscani, Kichai, Taovaya, and Tawakoni) had suffered significant population losses from diseases and warfare, motivating them to move southward as far as central Texas and to construct more compact and defensible villages with access to water, timber, and good soil (**Figure 7**) (Smith 2008:407). Bénard de la Harpe, head of a trading post near present-day Texarkana, noted in 1719 that the Wichita in Oklahoma had horses and resided in their grass-house villages until October, when they moved to the plains to hunt bison while living in tepees. They returned to their villages in March to plant maize, beans, and pumpkins (Hoig 1993:17). The Kichai lived along the Red River in 1719, near the mouth of the Washita River (Smith 2000:10) (see **Figure 5**). They were strategically settled to facilitate trade between the Comanche and the French.

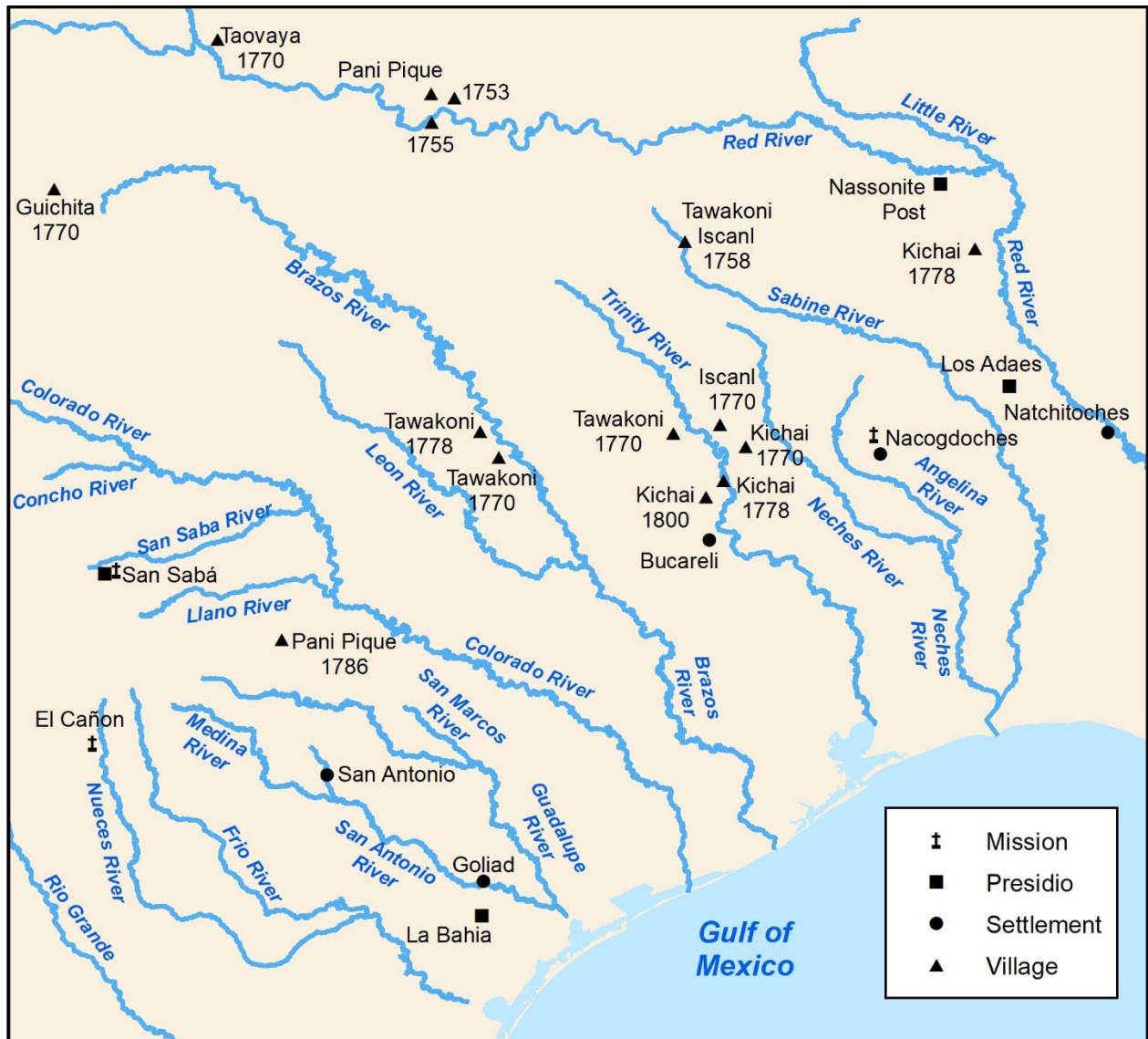


Figure 7. Wichita villages during the eighteenth century (adapted from Smith 2000:29).

Bénard de la Harpe received a grand reception at a Tawakoni village in 1719. The chief honored him by gifting a crown of eagle feathers that was decorated with feathers from small colorful birds, and two calumets (ceremonial pipes) with feathers, one for war and the other for peace (Barr 2007:54-55). Ritual exchange continued the next day when the warriors painted Bénard de la Harpe’s face ultramarine blue and gave him multiple bison robes.

During the 1720s, about 20,000 Wichita formed an alliance with the French after they established the colony of Louisiana. The Wichita acquired metal hoes, buckets, guns, and ammunition from the French. Some of these goods were used by the Wichita people in their

own daily tasks; however, many others were used to maintain or establish allegiance and trading ties with the Comanche (Smith 2008:407).

During the 1720s, other Wichita people moved southeasterly into present-day Oklahoma (Smith 2008:407-408). By the 1730s, the Wichita were moving further south to avoid their Osage enemies, and closer to the French trading posts on the Red River. The Kichai moved from the Arkansas River valley to a village in present-day Lamar County, Texas (41LR1). The Tawakoni finally left the Arkansas River valley about 1740, settling near the Kichai on the Red River (Blaine 1979; Smith 2008:408).

Meanwhile, the Taovaya joined the Guichita and Iscani at Deer Creek in present-day Kay County, Oklahoma. From this vantage point, the Taovaya, Guichita and Iscani (jointly known as the Pani Pique by the French) had established themselves as middlemen in the lucrative trade between the Comanche and the French by 1746 (Wedel 1988:38-45; Hoig 1993:62). Soon after 1740, the Pani Pique people began acquiring weapons and ammunition from the French (Newcomb 1961:108). The situation in Oklahoma was short-lived, however, because by the mid-1750s the Pani Pique moved south to the Red River to join the Tawakoni and Kichai (Smith 2008:408).

A smallpox and measles outbreak in 1751 ravaged the Guichita and Iscani populations, greatly reducing their overall status. Joining the Taovaya, they chose a site on the Red River just west of the Western Cross Timber ecoregion (present-day Wichita County, Texas), the farthest extension of the Eastern Woodlands (Smith 2008:408). There was a broad flood plain with rich soil for crops. Their new villages were also situated at the easternmost range of the Comanche and the farthest point upstream that could be reached by French boats. Thus, they were guaranteed to retain the middleman role they had established at Deer Creek (Bolton 1914b:201-203; Smith 2008:408). The move had put some distance between the Pani Pique and the Osage, but it had brought them closer to another enemy, the Lipan Apache.

The Taovaya constructed an impressive Wichita fort using pairs of thick posts stuck in the ground, resembling scissor blades, each standing about 3.7 m (12 ft). Enough space to accommodate weapons was left between every two pairs of posts, making the village easier to defend. A spring within the fort's walls and plenty of stored food made them well prepared for a lengthy siege, if necessary (Smith 2008:408). The Guichita and the Iscani each constructed their villages near the Taovaya (John 1975, 1992; Smith 2000:27-28, 167). Together they were relatively safe from the Osage, who continued to attack the Tawakoni and Kichai people situated about 100 miles (160 kilometers) eastward (Smith 2008:409).

In 1757, Athanase de Mézières visited two Wichita settlements along the Red River on behalf of the Spanish Crown. De Mézières provided the best and most detailed descriptions of the Taovaya (Jelks 2021a; Baugh 2008). He referred to their villages as San Bernardo and San Teodoro (Newcomb 1961:249-250). Today they are known as the Longest Site (34JF1) in Jefferson County, Oklahoma and the Spanish Fort sites in Montague County, Texas, respectively (see **Figure 6**).

Site 41MU60 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Spanish Fort site; however, it is more accurate to speak of the “Spanish Fort sites,” which are a series of Late Prehistoric- to Historic-era archeological sites, stretching for more than 20 miles along the Red River in Montague County, Texas. These include the three sites investigated in the mid-1960s (41MU17, 41MU24, and 41MU28) (Bell et al. 1967), and sites 41MU8, 41MU11, 41MU12, 41MU16, 41MU18, 41MU19, 41MU20, 41MU21, 41MU22, 41MU23, 41MU26, 41MU33, 41MU34, and 41MU64. Edward B. Jelks and J. N. Woodall conducted the only controlled excavations at the fortified Texas sites in 1965 and 1966 (Bell et al. 1967). In limited testing, they found five house pits, four cache pits, and artifacts, including typical French trade goods, and Wichita potsherds, clay and stone pipes, and clay figurines (of people, animals, and birds). Similar artifacts and features were found in the Longest Site components during test excavations between 1965 and 1967 (Jelks 2021b). Other possible Wichita sites like 41MU52 and 41YN1 (Harrell Site) are along the Brazos River.

De Mézières noted that the village on the northern bank contained 37 grass houses, while the other had 123 (Hoig 1993:69). He found them cultivating large fields of corn, beans, melons, gourds, and tobacco (Bell et al. 1967). Each house was well-stocked with food and tobacco, while a nearby quarry supplied them with metates for grinding corn and stones for crafting lances and arrow points. He noted that they raised enough surplus crops to carry on extensive trade with the Comanche, who exchanged horses and captive people for the agricultural products (Jelks 2021a).

The Tawakoni moved during the late 1750s to a meadow at the headwaters of the Sabine River in present-day Rains County, Texas, where they were joined by some Iscani people from their village by the Taovaya fort (Smith 2008:409). They built adjacent well-ordered towns that were separated by a narrow lane. The meadow provided grass for their horses and rich soil for their corn, beans, and squash. The Tawakoni and Iscani constructed fortifications and underground shelters (Smith 2008:409). These villages probably correspond to sites 41RA5 and 41RA13 (see **Figure 6**).

The Kichai people also chose a meadow for their new village between the Neches and Trinity rivers near present-day Palestine in Anderson County, and about 68 miles (110 kilometers) south of the Tawakoni and Iscani’s new home (Smith 2008:409). Both Wichita settlements remained accessible to the French traders from Natchitoches and were situated along the western edge of the Eastern Woodlands (Bolton 1914a:285-286).

The Wichita participated in a raid on the Misión Santa Cruz de San Sabá (41MN23) in 1758 and successfully defended their Red River village against the retaliatory expedition led by Diego Ortiz Parrilla in 1759 (Jelks 2021a). More than 2,000 Comanche, Wichita, Taovaya, Caddo, and other allied northern tribes (*Norteños* to the Spanish) descended on the San Sabá settlement armed with French guns (Hoig 1993:63; Gelo and Pate 2003:97). They were united against the Apache, for whom the mission had been established. The *Norteños* surrounded the mission, sacked it, and then burned it, killing six men (including two Franciscan missionaries) during three days of ransacking and demolition (Barr 2007:183).

The raid is commonly blamed on the Comanche, but most of the attackers were Caddo, Wichita, and Tonkawa warriors (Gelo and Pate 2003:97). They systematically destroyed the mission and its supplies, burning bales of tobacco, boxes of chocolate, barrels of flour, and boxes of soap (Barr 2007:183). The Norteños took little loot and made no effort to locate about 30 Spaniards and Apache people hiding in one of the buildings. That structure was the only one not burned by them. Although the warriors had French guns, they used them sparingly, preferring to punish the Spanish with their fists, knives, and the handles of their lances. The warriors seemed to reject taking any battle trophies (Barr 2007:184-185). They scalped only the mission steward who did not escape with the others.

In October of 1759, the Taovaya people at the Spanish Fort sites withstood a four-hour attack from the Spanish, including 11 rounds of shot from two cannons. The Spanish abandoned the ineffective cannons when they retreated (Gelo and Pate 2003:143). The Wichita village attacked by Diego Ortiz Parrilla reportedly had a Comanche camp nearby. The village was protected by a stockade that was surrounded by a ditch with an enclosed entrance that zig-zagged down slope to the Red River (Drass 2020). This village is also known as the Longest Site (34JF1) (see **Figure 6**), and it is situated on a high terrace on the Oklahoma side of the Red River. Initially identified in a 1967 aerial photograph as a white oval-shaped anomaly, it is the first archeologically confirmed, fortified Wichita village site (Drass 2020). The ditch measured 80 by 120 m, 1.2 m deep, and 3.8 m wide. It had been filled with bison bones, explaining the white anomaly in the aerial photograph. A recent magnetometer survey at the Longest Site revealed a series of three ditches with subterranean structures situated inside the innermost ditch (Drass 2020). There is also an outer moat-like ditch measuring 7 m wide. Features such as these at fortified Wichita villages get increasingly complex before disappearing by the 1850s.

Fray José Francisco Calahorra y Saenz visited the Iscani in northern Texas in 1760 (possibly at sites 41RA5 and 41RA13) (see **Figure 6**) and made an unsuccessful attempt to establish a mission for them (Krieger 2021a). Spain acquired Louisiana in 1763 after the Seven Years' War, which ended the Wichita alliance and trading relationship with the French. Deprived of trade during the transition to Spanish rule—and having suffered a significant loss of population since 1700—the Wichita were unable to defend themselves against the Osage (Smith 2008:409). About 500 Kichai people remained in the village west of the Neches River, but the Tawakoni-Iscani village on the Sabine River broke into several separate settlements further west of this Kichai group.

About 500 Iscani people settled on the east bank of the Trinity River about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from the Kichai (see **Figure 7**). The Iscani chose to live on scattered farms, instead of a single unified village, while the 1,500 Tawakoni people split into two villages. One was situated in an extremely well-chosen, defensive position on a peninsula about 20 miles (30 kilometers) from the Kichai.

The other Tawakoni group settled along the Brazos River in McLennan County (possibly at sites 41ML1 and 41ML38). They were joined along the Brazos River by Guichita people from the Red River who moved about 200 miles (320 kilometers) northwest into present-day

Stonewall County. The Taovaya people abandoned their Red River fort, moving northwest (upstream) about 100 miles (160 kilometers) (Bolton 1914a:284-294; Elam 2008; Smith 2000:46, 169-170; Smith 2008:409).

The Gilbert Site (41RA13) (see **Figure 6**) is another major archeological site affiliated with the Norteño Focus (or Phase), the technical designation for archeological remains of the historic Wichita tribes (Jelks 2021c). It dates from 1750 to 1775 and probably was a Tawakoni, Kichai, or Yscani village. Sixteen features—two small pits and 14 oval middens—were excavated at the Gilbert Site in 1962 by members of the Texas Archeological Society under the direction of Edward B. Jelks. Numerous artifacts of both European and Indian origin were found. The European items were mostly French trade goods: knives, axes, scissors, gun parts, hawkbells, kettle brass, metal buttons, glass beads, and glass bottle fragments. Among the Wichita-made artifacts were hundreds of potsherds, bone tools, sandstone abraders, and chipped-stone scrapers, arrow points, knives, gravers, and drills (Jelks 2021c).

Following the destruction of Misión Santa Cruz de San Sabá in March 1758, efforts to establish a new mission for the Lipan Apache centered on the upper Nueces River. Between 1762 and 1766, Wichita warriors joined their Comanche, Caddo, and Tonkawa allies in attacking the Apache *rancherías* (settlements) in the hill country west of San Antonio (Barr 2007:191). In 1766, they turned their attention to the two missions that the Spanish had recently established for the Apache: San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz in present-day Camp Wood, Real County, and Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Cañon in present-day Montell in northwestern Uvalde County.

About 300 warriors attacked San Lorenzo in October 1766 before being repelled by cannon fire (Barr 2007:191). They left with a herd of Spanish mares. The following month, the warriors returned when many of the Apache men were gone. The lieutenant in charge directed the Apache women to don soldiers' overcoats and hats and line the mission's walls holding guns. The ruse worked, but Comanche warriors returned in December and tracked an Apache bison hunting party. After capturing more than 30 Apache women and children, and a herd of 1,000 horses, the Comanche paraded their spoils past the mission as they left the canyon (Barr 2007:191-192).

Athanaze de Mézières was appointed by the Spanish in 1769 as their agent at Natchitoches, Louisiana, with purview over northern Texas. In 1770, he signed peace treaties with chiefs of the Taovaya, Tawakoni, Yscani, and Kichai people at a council held near present-day Texarkana, Texas (Hoig 1993:68). Wichita leaders then traveled from the upper Red River to Natchitoches, Louisiana, to sign a treaty between with the Spanish governors of Louisiana and Texas in late 1771 (Handbook of Texas Online [Handbook] 2021a). After peace was established with the Spanish, the Taovaya and Guichita each returned to the Red River in 1772.

The Taovaya chose the south bank for a new fort and village in present-day Montague County, Texas, while the Guichita settled on the opposite bank (Smith 2008:409). The Taovaya's new fort was not as elaborate as their first but was still impressive enough that nineteenth-century

Anglo settlers thought Europeans had built it, naming it “Spanish Fort” (Bolton 1914b:85, 194-195; John 1975, 1992:204-208). By 1809 when it was visited by Spanish military, the fort had been abandoned and was in ruins, allegedly destroyed by the Osage (Hoig 1993:71).

Around 1772 the Wichita people built a trading village at Double Mesa in Archer County to increase commerce with the Europeans. French trader Jean Baptiste Lowasard traded at the post, and J. Gaignard of Opelousas, Louisiana, visited in 1774. The trading village was situated about three miles west of present-day Archer City, in what is now the John W Harris subdivision that is traversed by the Middle Fork of the Little Wichita River (Handbook 2021b). It has not been archeologically identified.

Athanase de Mézières visited the Tawakoni villages in 1772, 1778, and 1779 (Krieger 2021b). The Wichita reorganized their villages for the final time during the late 1770s (see **Figure 7**). Deadly epidemics of the bubonic plague and typhus struck the Spanish at Bucareli on the Trinity River in 1777 before spreading to the nearby settlements of the Tawakoni, Iscani, and Kichai. Disease even spread to the Wichita villages remaining on the Red River (Smith 2008:410). Smallpox epidemics followed in 1780-1781, 1800-1802, and 1815-1816 (Elam 2008:105).

The Kichai were closest to Bucareli and lost about 100 tribe members to the epidemic before splitting into two groups. About 200 people moved to the Red River and settled about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Natchitoches. Another 100 Kichai people relocated slightly westward and settled just east of the Trinity River in present-day Houston County (Smith 2008:410). They were situated about 50 miles (80 kilometers) west of the newly established Spanish community at Nacogdoches. The Kichai selected a fertile valley with many salt deposits, which presented lucrative trading opportunities with the Spanish.

Juan Agustín Morfi visited the Tawakoni people in a village called Quiscat on the west bank of the Brazos River in 1781 (Krieger 2021b). In January 1786, a party of Taovaya and Wichita leaders went to San Antonio to complain to Governor Cabello about Osage raids. They reported moving to the Pedernales River to be closer to the Tawakoni and Yscani villages, and to be safe from the Osage (Elam 2008:114). In 1789, 700 Wichita warriors attacked the Osage (Elam 2008:123).

Spanish forces led by Juan de Ugalde, Governor of Spain’s province of Coahuila, allied themselves in 1790 with Comanche and Wichita warriors to defeat the Apache west of San Antonio on the Sabinal River near present-day Utopia (Hoig 1993:88). The river forms Uvalde Canyon, which was named for Ugalde, and was the southern boundary of vital bison-hunting territory (Gelo and Pate 2003:115-116). In 1796 the Tawakoni people asked for a mission, but the Spanish refused.

Nineteenth Century

After the Kichai were attacked by the Osage and Choctaw around 1800, they joined other Kichai on the Trinity River (Smith 2008:410). The reunited Kichai, numbering about 300, then moved to the opposite bank of the river to a heavily wooded site in present-day Leon County,

Texas on Keechi Creek. They resided here until about 1835 (Bolton 1914b:191; Smith 2000:65-66, 86-87; Smith 2008:410).

In 1807 a delegation of Comanche, Taovaya and Wichita leaders visited U.S. agent Dr. John Sibley in Natchitoches, Louisiana (Hoig 1993:89). They were able to secure only a fraction of the weapons they sought.

Anthony Glass reported in 1808 that some Tawakoni people still resided in Texas along the Brazos River (Hoig 1993:70). That year Glass was traveling with the Wichita or the Comanche who took him atop Boys Peak (north of present-day Lampasas, Texas) where they showed him a natural cistern full of water at the top of the hill (Gelo and Pate 2003:145-146). By 1819, the Wichita people had abandoned the Red River settlements and moved to the upper Brazos River to avoid the Osage. Soon after, they returned to the Red River, settling west of the Wichita Mountains (Hoig 1993:72).

The one-third of the Taovaya and Guichita population of who lived on opposite banks of the Red River died between 1772 and 1778. A group of Iscani rejoined the Pani Pique and together they settled on the north bank of the Red River (Bolton 1914b:181, 195, 201-202; Smith 2000; Smith 2008:410). The landmark villages of the Pani Pique along the Red River were abandoned by 1811 after suffering encroachment from Anglo squatters and continued Osage attacks. The Taovaya absorbed the Guichita and moved west, establishing four villages. Two were near the confluence of the Red and Wichita rivers, while the others were to the south on the Brazos River (Garrett 1945:403; Morse 1822:258-259; Smith 2008:410). By 1820, the once populous Wichita, Waco, Tawakoni, Taovaya and Kichai were estimated at no more than 1,400 persons total.

Mexican Province of Coahuila y Texas (1824-1836)

In 1824, Thomas Duke counted 60 large grass houses, which would have housed several hundred people at present-day Waco, Texas (Gelo and Pate 2003:47). The Waco settlement had 400 acres under cultivation surrounding it. The Waco people fortified their town for protection by building earthworks around it, along with five underground rooms within these walls where people could hide when under attack. Despite these fortifications, the Cherokee moved into the area around 1830, forcing the Waco to abandon their homes.

A downward population trend continued even after the signing of the first treaty between the United States and the Comanche, Wichita, and Plains Apache groups at Camp Holmes in 1835 (Hoig 1993:142-143). The Wichita persuaded their Comanche allies to attend and sign this agreement that recognized their right to their traditional homeland. This treaty also contains the first official usage of the name “Wichita” for the Wichita, Waco, and Tawakoni people. After the Texas Republic was established in 1836, the Wichita were forced to defend their lands against the intrusions of white settlers. Between 1821 and 1836, the Wichita people lived in villages on the Red River (Taovaya), along much of the Brazos River (Taovaya, Tawakoni, and Waco), and on the Trinity River (Kichai) (**Figure 8**). At least six Indian tribes lived in Texas in 1832, according to James Mooney (**Figure 9**). These included three bands each of

Apache (Kiowa/Plains, Mescalero, and Lipan) and Wichita (Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita), Caddo, Comanche, Tonkawa, and the coastal Karankawa.



Figure 8. Wichita villages 1821-1833 (adapted from Smith 2000:113).



Figure 9. Indian groups in Texas circa 1832 (James Mooney, adapted from Hoig 1993:11).

Republic of Texas (1836-1845)

The Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita people were living in villages along the Red River, Wichita Creek, the West Fork of the Trinity River, Village Creek, and the Brazos River during the Republic of Texas period (**Figure 10**) (Smith 2000:137). Kichai people joined them on the Brazos River. All their settlements were upstream from major trading posts, including Coffee's Station, Bird's Fort, and Torrey's Trading Post.

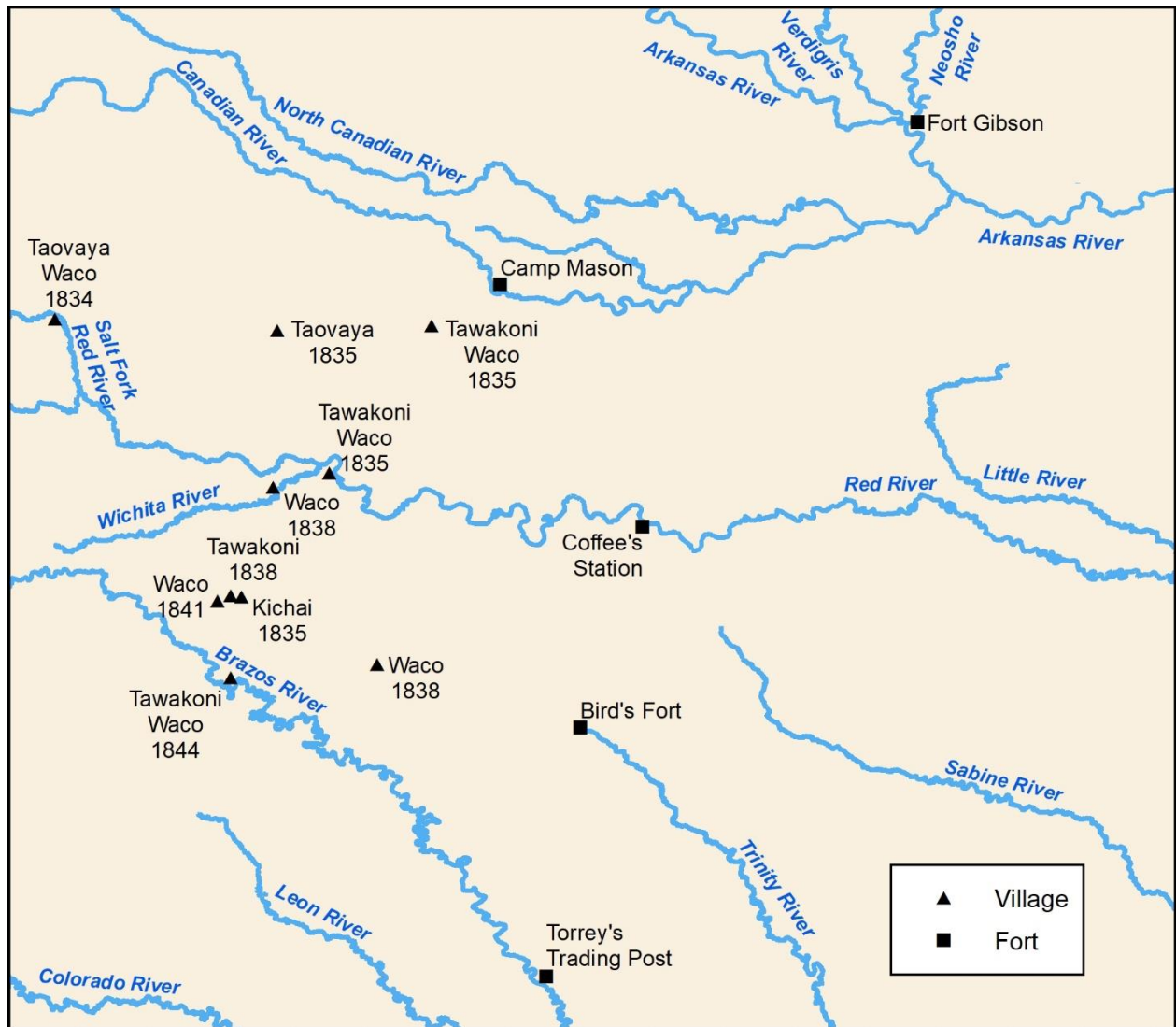


Figure 10. Wichita villages 1834-1845 (adapted from Smith 2000:137).

In the 1830s, the Tawakoni people were associated with the springs in Salado (Gelo and Pate 2003:94). Between 1834 and 1845, the Kichai, Waco, and Tawakoni established grass-house villages at the confluence of Wichita Creek and the Red River (present-day Wichita Falls, Texas), and along the Trinity and Brazos rivers west of the present-day Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex (Gelo and Pate 2003:121). The Tawakoni Indians were included in treaties made by the United States in 1837 and 1856, which established their reservation in present-day Oklahoma (Hodge 1907:704), and those made by the Republic of Texas in 1843 (Krieger 2021b).

A smallpox epidemic in 1837 hit the Wichita especially hard (Newcomb 1961:355). The Tawakoni and Iscani people living near Bucareli also suffered greatly from the epidemic. Escaping disease and the Osage, they banded together and formed a village along the Brazos River about 20 miles (30 kilometers) upstream from the other Tawakoni town (Figure 11). Their combined population along the river was about 1,500 people (Smith 2008:410).

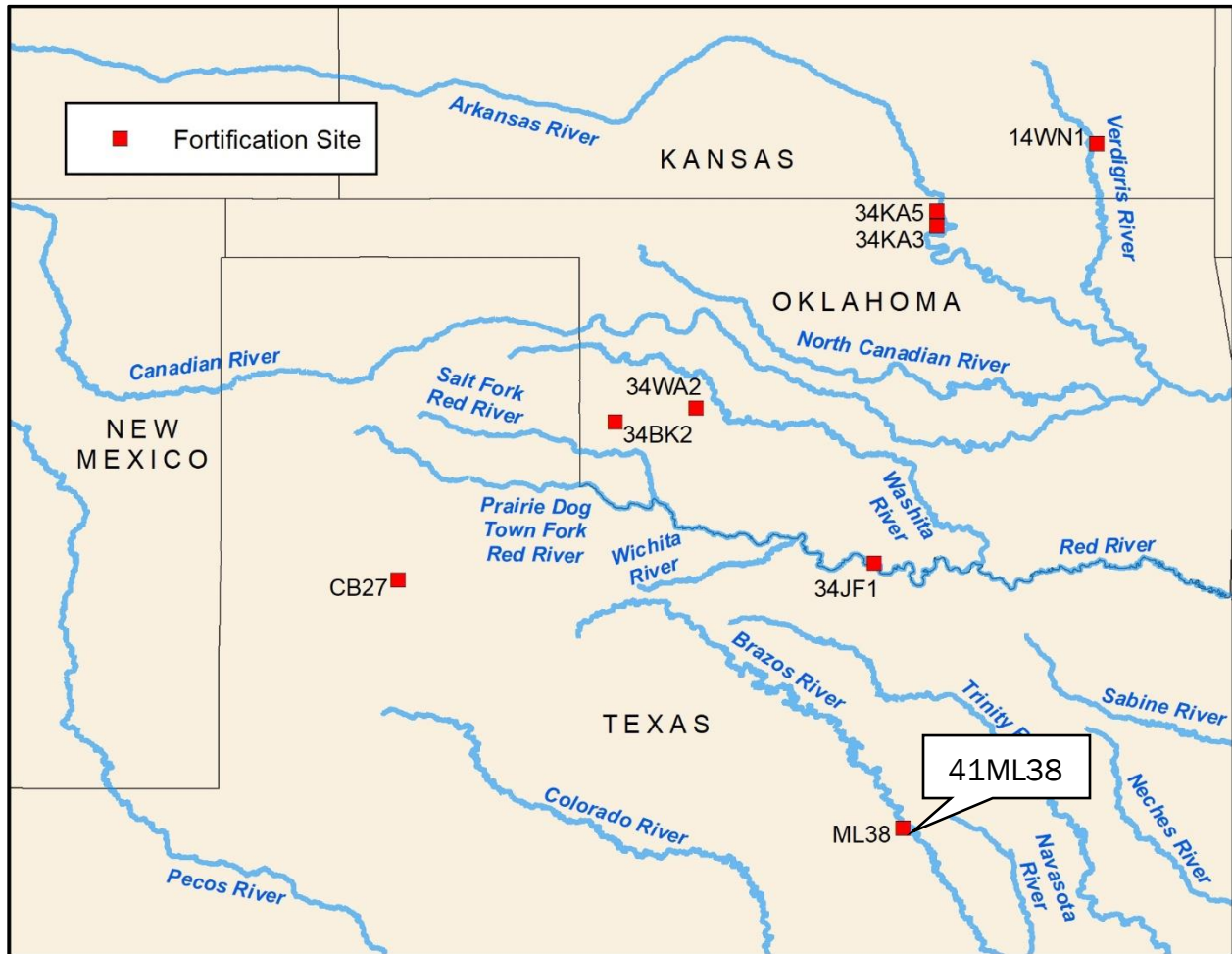


Figure 11. Wichita fortified sites, including nineteenth-century 41ML38 at Waco (adapted from Drass 2020).

Sam Houston was re-elected President of the Republic of Texas in 1841 and renewed efforts to establish peace with the tribes. He arranged a meeting at Council Springs along Tehuacana Creek about 8 miles (13 kilometers) upstream from Torrey's Trading Post on the Brazos River (Hoig 1993:162). "Tehuacana" is the Spanish rendition of, "Tawakoni" (Gelo and Pate 2003:48-50). Houston invited Caddo, Delaware, Shawnee, Anadarko, Tawakoni, Waco, Wichita, and Kichai representatives. These leaders agreed to stop warfare and trade peacefully at Torrey's Trading Post, but the Comanche were conspicuously absent.

Creek Indian Agent James Logan wrote to Sam Houston in 1842, relating that Principal Chief of the Creek Nation Roley McIntosh had assembled a meeting of representatives from 18 tribes at Fort Gibson. Among the attendees were three chiefs from tribes on the prairies bordering the Republic of Texas, including Nownohichtowe from the Keechi (Kichai), Kikiseerookah of the Wichita, and Sarpowe of the Tawakoni. The assembled tribes expressed a desire for peace among the attendees, as well as between the tribes and the Republic of Texas (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]:135-136).

In 1843, an Indian council was held along Tehuacana Creek that included representatives of the Delaware, Shawnee, Caddo, Ioni, Anadarko, Tawakoni, Waco, Wichita and Keechi people. This was the first in a series of historic meetings between Indian leaders and Texas officials along this waterway. The Treaty of Tehuacana Creek promised peace, free trade, and a future council meeting where the exchange of prisoners would be arranged. Chief Acaquash signed the treaty, representing the Tawakoni, Waco, Wichita, and Keechi people (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]:156-159).

The Tawakoni were living in a village along the Trinity River in 1843 when their chief and a Waco chief advised Indian Agent J. C. Eldredge that the Comanche, Kiowa, and Wichita leaders would probably not attend a council meeting if it were held as planned at nearby Bird's Fort, but they would attend one on the Red River (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]:214-216). The Tawakoni village overlooked the river and was surrounded by about 100 acres of agricultural fields planted with corn, beans, melons, and pumpkins. The large village was situated on a high hill that was extremely difficult to access with the fields at the foot of it (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]:257). In 1843, at Bird's Fort on the Trinity River, a peace treaty was concluded between the Republic of Texas and several Indian tribes, including the Wichita (Newcomb 1961:348).

Another Indian council was held along Tehuacana Creek in 1845 to reaffirm the treaty among leaders of the Tawakoni, Waco, Wichita, and Keechi people. The treaty was signed by Tawakoni Chief Kechikaroqua, Waco Chiefs Acaquash and Satzatzkaha, Wichita Chief Saatzarwaritz, Keechi Chief Saatzarook, Keechi War Chief Acowheda, and Keechi Captain Tchetowa (Winfrey and Day 1995[2]:405-406).

State of Texas (1845-present)

In 1846, U.S. Commissioners Pierce M. Butler and M. G. Lewis organized a meeting with 24 southern Comanche leaders at Council Springs near present-day Waco, Texas. The Keechi, Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita people sent 28 representatives who signed an agreement with the United States government along with their Comanche allies, promising to surrender all captives and to remain at peace (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]:xii). Other signatories included representatives from the Ioni, Anadarko, Caddo, Lipan Apache, and Longwa (Tonkawa) people (Winfrey and Day 1995[3]:43).

In 1849, an estimated 1,300 Keechi, Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita people lived in Texas, out of a total of about 30,000 Native Americans. The Comanche with a population of 20,000 were the most numerous tribe (Winfrey and Day 1995[3]:108-109). The Wichita were blamed for

stealing horses in Denton County in 1849 (Winfrey and Day 1995[5]:41), and for murdering citizens of Castroville in Medina County the following year (Winfrey and Day 1995[5]:69). Wichita warriors were again accused of stealing horses and Keechi warriors were reportedly among an inter-tribal group that was poised on the Canadian River, ready to foray into Texas in 1858 (Winfrey and Day 1995[5]:266). Keechi warriors were blamed in 1859 for stealing horses in northern Texas and disappearing into the Wichita Mountains in Oklahoma (Winfrey and Day 1995[5]:322).

By 1858, the Wichita had settled along Rush Creek near present-day Rush Springs, Oklahoma. U.S. agents persuaded the Wichita to convince the Comanche to attend a peace council at Fort Arbuckle. While making the rounds at Comanche camps, the Wichita also invited the Comanche to a feast. Several hundred Comanche families arrived at the Wichita village in September 1858 (Hoig 1993:178). Major Earl Van Dorn of the Second Regiment of U.S. Cavalry found out about the Comanche presence and organized a surprise attack at dawn. The Comanche lost about 60 people, 120 homes, and their entire horse herd. Only two Wichita warriors were killed, but their alliance with the Comanche was fractured. Van Dorn retaliated by confiscating the Wichita's corn supply and killing their dogs and chickens (Hoig 1993:177-179). Afterwards, nearly 650 Wichita and Kichai people sought refuge at Fort Arbuckle where food was scarce.

Reservation Life

Brazos Reservation

A reservation for the Wichita was established on the Brazos River in 1855 (**Figure 12**), ten years after Texas had joined the United States. Capt. Randolph B. Marcy and Agent Robert S. Neighbors selected 12 leagues (88,568 acres) of land in north-central Texas for Indian reservations. They assigned four leagues (17,714 acres) near Fort Belknap to the Caddo, Wichita, Anadarko, and Waco people, while southern Comanche bands settled approximately 40 miles (64 kilometers) to the southwest on the Clear Fork of the Brazos (Winfrey and Day 1995[1]: xiii). The remaining four leagues were intended for Mescalero and Lipan Apaches, but these groups remained far to the west and probably never became aware of the land claim.

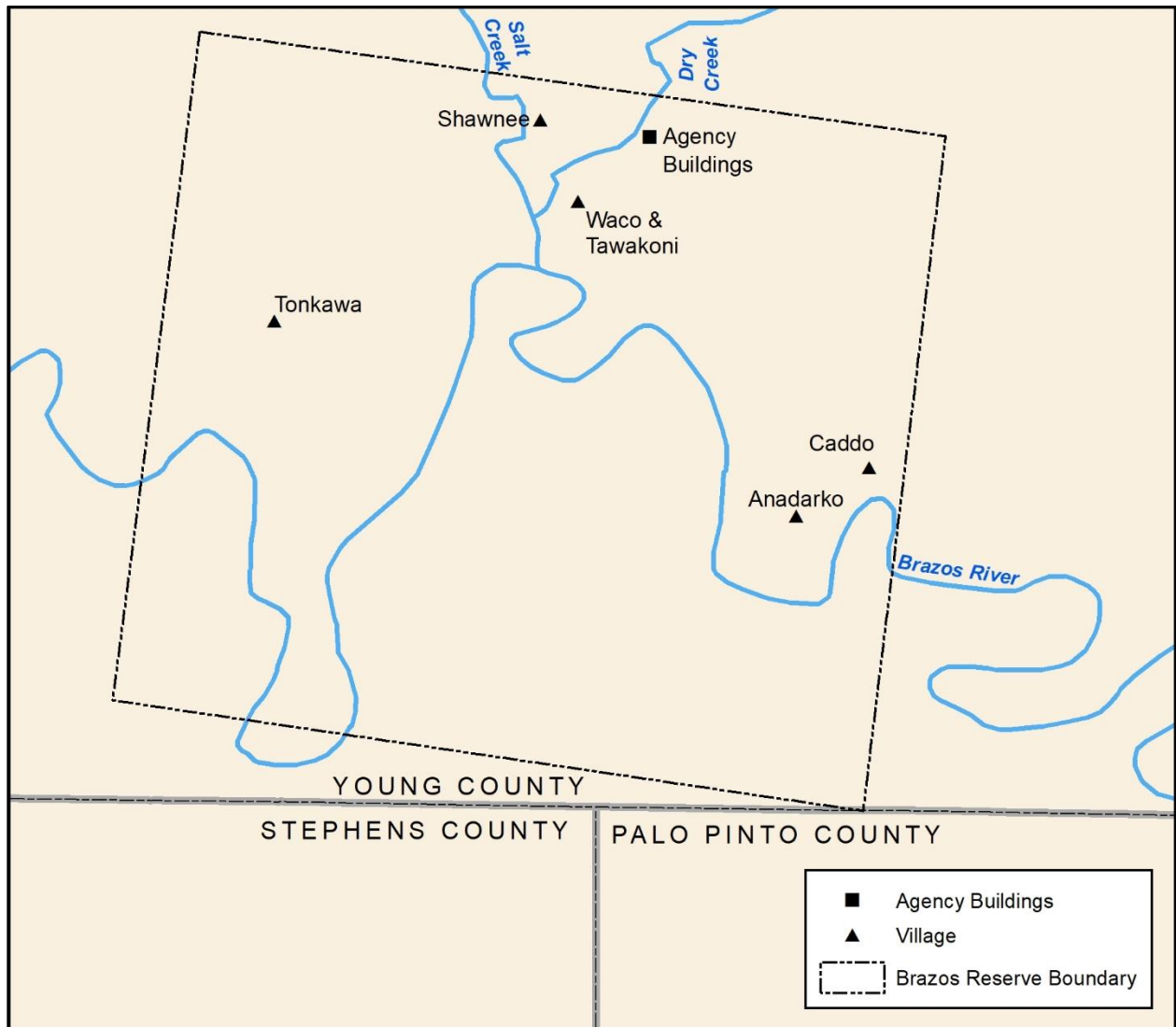


Figure 12. Wichita and other villages on the Brazos Reservation (adapted from Elam 2008:323).

Oklahoma Reservation

When the Wichita were assigned to a reservation in Indian Territory in 1859, they were joined by some of the Delaware, Caddo, Tawakoni, Waco, and two Comanche bands that had been exiled from Texas. The Wichita settled in the Washita Valley and established fields, gardens, and villages.

By the 1860s, S.A. Blain was appointed U.S. Wichita Agent (Winfrey and Day 1995[4]:25). He was alerted after Indians stole 400 cattle, kidnapped two women, and killed two others in Erath and Bosque Counties in March 1860. The settlers blamed the Indians at the Brazos Reservation for the raid. Continued clashes with immigrating European settlers resulted in the forced removal of the Wichita people from Texas to lands on the Washita River in present-day Oklahoma.

The Wichita, Waco, and Tawakoni people claimed all the land between the Red River and the Canadian River, from the mouth of the False Washita on the Red River (**Figure 13**) to a point due north on the Canadian was the eastern boundary, and it extended as far west as and included the Wichita Mountains, according to Blain (Winfrey and Day 1995[4]:28).



Figure 13. View of the Junction of the Red River and the False Washita in Texas, 1834-1835 (George Catlin, oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison, Jr., 1985.66.345).

Although a reservation and agency were established for them, the Wichita people were not able to remain on this land. In 1863, they were forced by Confederate troops to leave their reservation and flee north to Kansas.

While in Kansas from 1863 to 1867, the Wichita had no land to farm and few allies to help them. Many people died of starvation. Others suffered from smallpox and cholera epidemics that swept through their villages. Only 822 people returned to Indian Territory in 1867. They discovered that in their absence portions of their 1859 reserve had been assigned under the Treaty of Medicine Lodge to the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. In 1872 the U.S. government recognized an area bounded by the Washita and Canadian Rivers as the Wichita reservation. In the 1890s, U.S. government agents tried to destroy their Ghost Dance religion and many other elements of Wichita culture. For example, Wichita children were placed in boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their own language.

During its 1875-1876 session, the U.S. Congress passed a law prohibiting Wichita people from crossing the Red River into Texas. The law provided \$250,000 for food and transportation of the Wichita and six other tribes. The Wichita people were to receive weekly rations, but weapons and ammunition were prohibited for anyone proven to have committed depredations (Winfrey and Day 1995[4]:392).

Led by Tawakoni Jim (**Figures 14 and 15**), the Wichita resisted the breaking up of their communally held lands. Despite their efforts, the reservation was divided in 1900 into allotments of 160 acres per person, including children. Communal land that was not allotted was declared “surplus land” and opened to Anglo settlement. The process of allotment brought about the final destruction of the Wichita grass house villages and their communal way of life.

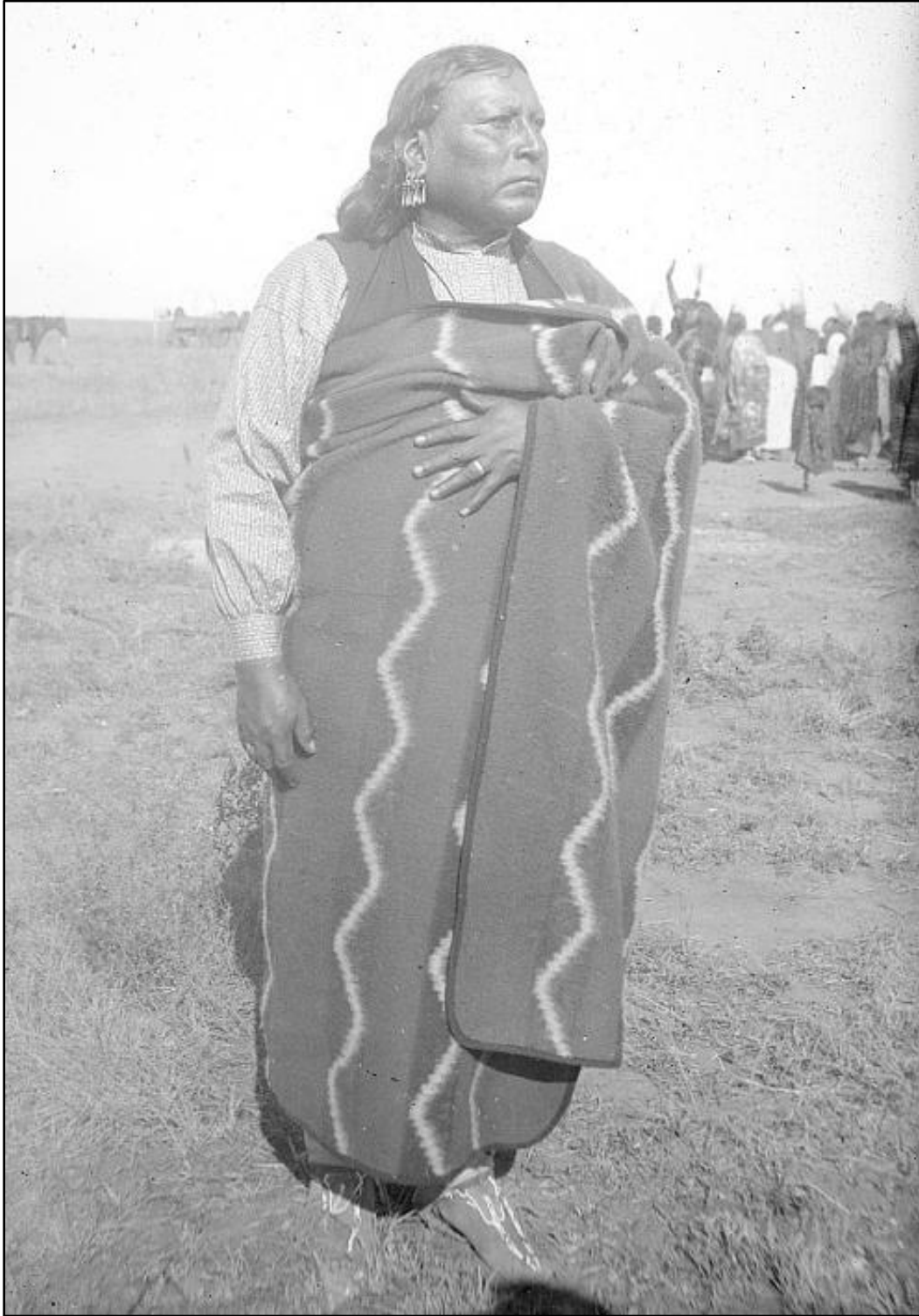


Figure 14. Wichita Chief Tawakoni Jim circa 1885 (James Mooney photographer, BAE GN 01317 06254500, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution).



Figure 15. Tawakoni Jim (left) with his son and grandson circa 1904 (Charles H. Carpenter photographer, OPPS NEG T15058, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution).

Once settled back on the reservation, some Wichita people became members of churches that had been established by Christian missionaries. The Wichita Mission and the Rock Spring Baptist Church continue to have active members who often sing hymns in the Wichita language. Others turned to the Native American Church, which combined elements of traditional and Christian beliefs. Some Wichita people continued the Ghost Dance religion.

The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes' headquarters are located in Anadarko, Oklahoma. The tribal government, established under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, consists of a President and Executive Committee who are elected to four-year terms by about 3,000 enrolled tribal members. The Wichita have also joined with the Caddo and Delaware tribes to form WCD Enterprises, an organization that promotes business development.

Each summer a visitation takes place between the Wichita and Pawnee people. Each tribe alternates as host of the visit, which involves of a two-week encampment. Friendships and family ties are honored through ceremonial exchanges of gifts. Tribe members commemorate the stories and songs of the past and reaffirm the long-standing relationship that has existed between the Wichita and Pawnee people.

Wichita history has been one of endurance and survival despite overwhelming adversity. Although village and communal life was destroyed with the loss of reservation land in 1900 and the grass lodges were replaced by frame houses by the 1930's, the Wichita people have preserved many elements of their culture for the present and future generations. These descendants of the Wichita, Waco, Tawakoni, Taovaya and Kichai people survive today as a group based on their shared memories of the past, common experiences of the present, and their faith in the future.

Geographic Terms

The presence of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes in Texas is acknowledged by a number of place names, waterways, and other geographic features named for them throughout the state, such as Wichita County, the cities of Waco and Wichita Falls, the Wichita River, Lake Tawakoni, and Tehaucana and Kichai creeks. There was a large Wichita village at the site of present-day Wichita Falls as late as 1841 (Handbook 2021c).

Resources Identified as culturally sensitive for future planning

The locations in Texas associated with the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes include villages, farms, campsites, hunting grounds, nutritional and medicinal plant gathering areas, lithic and mineral quarries, battlefields and skirmish sites, cemeteries, and archeological sites that are considered culturally sensitive for future planning purposes.

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