

## MISCELLEANOUS

### LIII. A KAY COUNTY VILLAGE SITE

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Situated on the low bluff which forms the western bank of the Arkansas River and immediately south of a small affluent called Deer Creek, five miles east and a mile and a half north from Newkirk, Kay County, Oklahoma, is an Indian village site which covers about twenty acres of land. Scattered over this village site are the ruins of sixty-five timber-framed, dome-shaped, earth-covered domiciles, forty of which are in the form of low circular mounds, while the remainder show depressions in the center, indicating that there had been an excavation of the interior or floor circle. The mound ruins are identical with those which are so numerous in eastern Oklahoma. A few of the larger mounds are in a field that is in cultivation and the rest are in a pasture and have not been disturbed as yet. A very fine spring of water falls into Deer Creek from the south bank, a few rods above the village site.

Scattered over this village site may be found implements, and weapons, pieces of glass, copper, brass and other items which are suggestive of the presence of white traders. The design of the small clay tobacco pipes, the shape of the grain grinder (mortar or metate) and of the double-bitted stone hoe all bear evidence of the kinship or descent of this culture from that of the earth-house people who lived in eastern Oklahoma and adjacent states some four or five centuries earlier. The potsherds and ceramic fragments are so much cruder, however, that one is forced to the conclusion that the culture had undergone a very marked deterioration in the intervening period.

One surprising feature is the unusually large number of "turtle-back" or "snub-nose" skin-dressing picks or scrapers which may be found on this village site. And yet the reason is apparent; a horse-shoe-shaped trench, approximately 250 feet in diameter, near one extremity of the village site, is believed to mark the site of a French trading outpost, dating from the first half of the 18 century. These traders seem to have induced a band of Pawnee or one of Wichita, or, what seems more likely, a small band of the people of both tribes, to settle there for a time, the men to kill buffalo and the women to dress the skins and finish them as

rebes. The wide, bayou-like mouth of Deer Creek afforded a safe and convenient mooring place for bateaux and canoes and could even be used for the launching of a small raft.

Historically, much remains to be worked out in regard to this village and trading post site and it is not impossible that documents in the French National Library might throw considerable light upon the subject from that angle. From a scientific viewpoint, aside from the amount and variety of the implements, tools and weapons to be found scattered over the village site, its chief interest lies in the fact that it serves as a link to connect the earth-house culture of eastern Oklahoma and adjacent states with the Caddoan culture of more recent times. It is also of interest as presenting an instructive instance of the primary contact between European culture and that of a primitive people on the edge of the Great Plains.