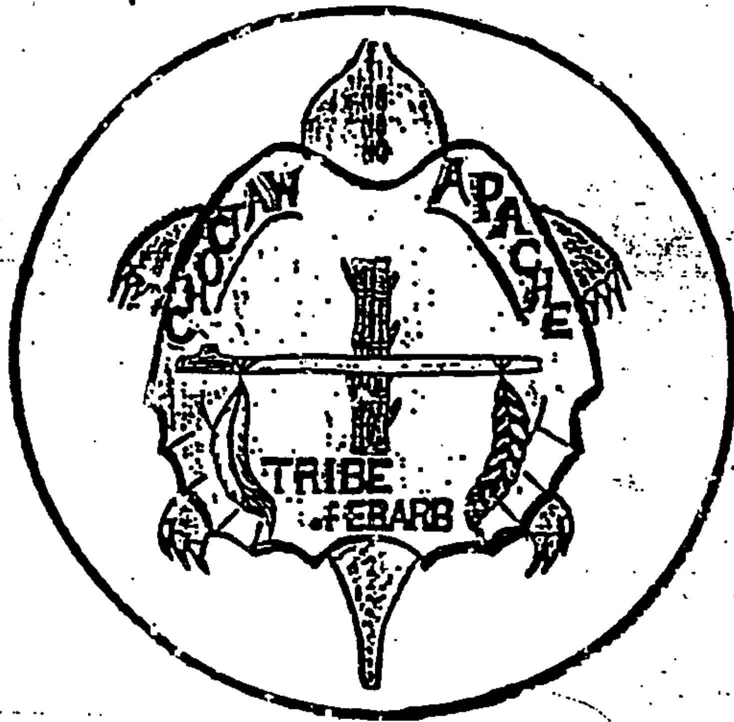


CULTURAL-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE CHOCTAW-APACHE TRIBE OF EBARB, LOUISIANA

SPC
976.3
Cul

CULTURAL-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

FOR THE

CHOCTAW-APACHE OF EBARB

A compilation of the works of:

Dayna Bowker Lee (1990)
M. Van Rheenen (1985)
J. Shoemaker (1985)

Printing compliments of Twin Valley RC&D Area, Inc.
1402 Hawn Avenue
Shreveport, Louisiana

THE CHOCTAW-APACHE OF SABINE PARISH, LOUISIANA

The Sabine River area in northwestern Louisiana has been the site of intense multi-cultural interaction since Europeans first arrived there in the early eighteenth century. Inhabited prehistorically by the Caddoan confederacies (the Hasinai, Cadohadacho, and Natchitoches), this area became a contested zone first between the French outpost at Natchitoches and the Spanish capital at Los Adaes, then later between Spanish Texas and the United States.

French and Spanish citizens, as well as immigrant tribes of Indians, preceded Anglo-American settlers into the area, eventually melding together to form the ethnically distinct group of people known today as the Apache-Choctaw community of Ebarb. Incorporated by the State of Louisiana in 1977, the Apache-Choctaw still suffer from misconceptions by outsiders. The tribal organization seeks to promote the cultural heritage and the welfare of the members through various socio-economic and educational programs. Having survived social and economic hardships since the eighteenth century, the Apache-Choctaw have remained an almost endogamous rural enclave (Gregory 1983: 54) recognized by anthropologists as ethnically Indian or Indo-Hispanic (Medford 1989:30; Faine and Gregory 1986). "The Lipan Apaches came to the area as slaves . . . and many of their descendants continue to live near Y'Barb [sic], Louisiana" (Corbin 1980: 8). The history of the Apache-Choctaw people of Ebarb - how they came to be - is the focus of this research conducted pursuant to their application for federal recognition.

EARLY HISTORY: THE LIPAN APACHE

The Lipan Apache, a division of the eastern Apache of the southern plains, were a nomadic people who ranged from the lower Rio Grande River valley in southern New Mexico and northern Mexico eastward through Texas and the Gulf Coast (Hodge 1907, I: 768-769). Caught in a vise between their longtime enemies, the Comanche and the Wichita, then later between the French and the Spanish colonials, the Lipan were chronic victims of Indian and European slave raids. French governor, Kerelec noted in 1763 that most Indian slaves in Louisiana at that time were of Apache origin (Magnaghi 1981: 424).

The basic social unit among the Lipan was the extended family, with grandparents in the role of teachers. Often several families banded together, but political organization

rarely exceeded the band level. This absence of tribal feeling contributed to the inability of the Apache to join against their enemies and allowed them to be persistently raided for slaves throughout the colonial period (Newcomb 1961: 103-131). In 1716 Spanish Father Hidalgo wrote to the viceroy in Mexico that Apache slaves were being sold to the French by the Wichita (Hatcher 1927: 60), and Indian slaves were an important trade item among the Comanche and Caddo as well (Lee 1989: 70-71).

Although Indian slavery was banned in all Spanish possessions in 1542, Spanish citizens enslaved Indian people throughout the eighteenth century (Lauber 1913: 58). Although these late acquisitions of Lipan slaves were connected with ostensibly retaliatory actions, it has been suggested that several raids by Spanish militia were made almost solely for the purpose of gathering slaves to be used in Spanish settlements (Dunn 1911: 207-211; Dunn 1914: 407-410; John 1975: 416). This activity persisted well into the eighteenth century, and Lipan Apache slaves married and produced children with colonial Europeans throughout the eighteenth century (Lee 1989: 100-101).

Indian slavery was common in French colonial Natchitoches, as well as at the Spanish capital of Los Adaes just eighteen miles away (Lee 1989: 103-107; Gregory 1974: 262). Although African slaves were also present at these posts - and slaves of African heritage outnumbered Indian slaves in all censuses taken in colonial Natchitoches - evidence confirms that the use of Indian slaves persisted until the end of the eighteenth century (Mills 1981: 8, 14, 32-33; Bolton 1914: I, 120-121).

Lipan slaves were also present at Los Adaes, the capital of Spanish Texas from 1729 to 1773 (McCorkle 1984: 3; Gregory 1974: 262). With African slaves so prevalent in the New World, the question arises as to why a small but thriving Indian slave trade would continue. There are several reasons for maintaining a trade in Indian slaves throughout the colonial period, but the most obvious factor must be the need for women on the frontier. Both Spanish Los Adaes and the French post at Natchitoches were established primarily by soldiers who came to these outposts unmarried. Although marriage with black slaves was forbidden under European laws, a female Indian could be taken as a wife or concubine, mother half-European children, and help to found a settlement (Lee 1989: 3031; Gregory 1974: 262-264; Usner 1989: 106-107).

The Spanish Presidio Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Los Adaes, established in 1721 in response to French establishment of the post of St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches, remained a pivotal Spanish post until the Spanish acquired Louisiana in 1763. Located within the present political boundaries of

Louisiana, Los Adaes was populated primarily by mestizo (Spanish/Indian) soldiers and their families who have come to be known as the Adaesenos (Gregory 1983: 54). Census records taken in Nacogdoches, where many Adaesenos later settled, indicate a mixed Indo-Hispanic population inhabited the post. Spanish-born ranking officers and their mestizo soldiers intermarried with French settlers and local Indians (Adaes, Maes, Tonkawa, Bidai, Caddo, etc.), as well as Lipan slaves held by both the French and the Spanish. The Apache-Choctaw of Ebarb are descended, for the most part, from this group.

After the Spanish gained control of Louisiana in 1763, justification for maintenance of posts like Los Adaes became difficult. The French no longer threatened, and the location of Los Adaes, far from the major Spanish settlements of San Antonio de Bexar and Saltillo, made continuation of this presidio both costly and difficult to administer. In 1772, the post at Los Adaes was ordered closed and the Spanish residents instructed to remove to San Antonio in five days time. Under the direction of Lieutenant Jose Gonzalez, later replaced by Adaeseno Gil Ybarbo, the settlers prepared to leave what most considered to be their homeland to begin a forced march some five hundred miles to San Antonio. A number of Adaesenos fled to the surrounding hills or to Natchitoches in order to avoid removal. Subsequent to their relocation to San Antonio, the Adaesenos petitioned to return to east Texas, eventually settling at the abandoned Ais Indian mission at Nacogdoches (Bolton 1921: 114-115). These people re-established ties with those Adaesenos who had refused to leave, eventually settling with former Apache slaves, immigrant Choctaws, and mixed French and Indian families in present day northwestern Louisiana (Gregory 1983: 54; Bolton 1921: 114-115).

Although Indian slavery was banned in Spanish possessions under the so-called New Laws of 1542, and again under Spanish Governor Alejandro O'Reilly in 1769, no real attempt was made by Spanish administrators to eliminate the use of Indian slaves in the colonies (Webre 1984: 117-122). United States Indian Agent John Sibley wrote about the Lipan Apache, called Canneci or Cances by the French (Hodge 1907, I: 769). In his 1805 monograph on the Indians who frequented the post at Natchitoches (Sibley 1805, A.S.P. Indian Affairs, I: 724-725) he noted:

> Cances, are a very numerous nation, consisting of a great many different tribes, occupying different parts of the country, from the bay of St. Bernard, across River Grande, towards La Vera Cruz. They are not friendly to the Spaniards, and generally kill them when they have an opportunity. They are attached to the French; are good hunters, principally using the bow . . . No estimate can be made of their number.

> Thirty or forty years ago, the Spaniards used to make slaves of them when they could take them; a considerable number of them were brought to Natchitoches, and sold amongst the French inhabitants, at forty or fifty dollars a head, and a number of them are still living here, but are now free. About twenty years ago, an order came from the King of Spain that no more Indians should be made slaves, and those that were enslaved should be emancipated; after which, some of the women, who had been servants in good families, and taught spinning, sewing, etc. as well as managing household affairs, married natives of the country, and became respectable, well behaved women, and have now, grown up decent families of children, have a language peculiar to themselves, and are understood by signs by all others . . . .

It is questionable whether there ever was a general or formal manumission of Indian slaves by the Spanish. In 1787 Governor Esteban Rodriguez Miro republished Governor O'Reilly's directives on Indian slavery, first issued in 1769, in which O'Reilly had forbid the sale or trade of Indian slaves. Under Spanish law, Indian slaves were guaranteed the right to sue for their freedom, which they began to do in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In response to suits initiated by Indian slaves, several Louisiana planters petitioned Spanish Governor Carondelet in 1794, to end the liberation of Indian slaves. When Carondelet referred this matter to the Council of the Indies, it was discovered the O'Reilly's decree had never been submitted for approval. No action was taken and no royal response ever came (Weber 1984: 130-133).

It appears then, that the Spanish in effect simply let the issue of Indian slavery die a natural death. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, most tribal people under Spanish dominion were either missionized or were considered allies, and the illegal practice of trafficking in Indian slaves was virtually eliminated.

By the wane of the eighteenth century, then, the Franco-Hispanic frontier of eastern Texas and western Louisiana was largely comprised of an ethnically mixed population with a sizeable number of Apachean people. "This growing Indian and mixed-blood population was developing a large pan-tribal community . . . . Spanish, heavily laced with the old Aztec

language, Nahuatl, seems to have been in use as a lingua franca [trade language] and likely replaced Lipan and other languages among the children of slaves or ex-slaves" (Faine and Gregory 1986: 14-15). Several Nahuatl words survive in the Apache-Choctaw community today (Gregory 1989: Personal communication). Although Indian identity in these circumstances was complicated, it did persist, even among

highly assimilated Apachean people (Faine and Gregory 1986: 15).

FROM LOS ADAES TO NACOGDOCHES

After the French established the post at Natchitoches in 1714, the Spanish responded by laying claim to east Texas. To this end, six Spanish missions were established among the Texas tribes, with the Mission San Miguel De Linares de los Adaes established in 1717. This mission was abandoned after a half-hearted attack by Natchitoches militia led by French Commandant Phillipe Blondel in 1719 during the War of Spanish Succession (Hardin 1937: 53-54).

By 1720 France and Spain shared peaceful relations once again and plans were made to re-occupy the Texas missions. The Marquis de San Miguel de Aguayo was appointed governor of Texas and Coahuila, and began to gather resources for an expedition designed to reintroduce the Spanish presence into east Texas. Six missions and accompanying presidios were established on the Aguayo expedition.

Early on, the soldiers of Los Adaes were primarily mixed Indo-Hispanic. Of the one hundred and ten recruits gathered from Zelaya, for example, seventeen were mestizos, twenty-one were coyotes, thirty-one were mulattos, forty-four were Spanish, two were castizo, one black, one Indian, and one lobo (Buckley 1911: 27). Only twenty-seven of these men were married. The mestizo, coyote, castizo and probably lobo indicate degrees of mixed Indian and European heritage. A description of the new presidio, Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Los Adaes, dated November 4, 1721, indicates that of the hundred men placed there, only twenty-eight were married (Hardin 1937: 61).

Throughout the period of Spanish occupation of Los Adaes (1721-1773), Apachean slaves were being taken by both the French and Spanish in Texas and Louisiana. One of the reasons for this practice must naturally have been the need for women on the frontier. Apache slaves, mostly women and children, were baptized and given godparents, eventually marrying their European owners (Gregory 1974: 262-263). Although Los Adaes was the capital of Spanish Texas from 1729 to 1773, its placement so far from Mexico City, and its relative safety from Apache raids, caused calvary troops to be reduced there from one hundred to sixty in 1729 (McCorkle 1984: 3). Officers and men were rarely sent to Los Adaes, and came alone if sent. With the majority of troops at the presidio already of mixed Spanish and Indian blood and the single men marrying local Indians or slaves, the post at its closure was inhabited primarily by mestizos. Travelling to Nacogdoches in 1767, Pierre Vicomte de Pages commented on

the soldiers at Los Adaes, calling them "Spanish half-savages". Many of the families whose descendants are the Apache-Choctaw of today are noted in the Nacogdoches censuses as being native to Los Adaes and of mixed Spanish and Indian blood.

Europeans on the Louisiana-Texas frontier were by needs acculturated to Indian lifestyles. They married Indians and their mixed-blood children married Indians or other mestizos. It is only natural that, for most of the colonial period at least, the Indian blood grew stronger and these settlers became ethnically more Indian than European. De Pages said after visiting Los Adaes in 1757:

> The inhabitants of this settlement are almost all calvary soldiers . . . The horsemen . . . are always ready to render service and are humane, compassionate, and brave; they are very hospitable and even if pressed by hunger, they share their last piece of bread with the first to ask for it. At the same time, they are haughty, liars, and thieves either from need or from curiosity. I have noted that this inclination to steal is common to the majority of savages. I find no other source for this inclination than Nature's first impulse to satisfy one's desires and needs.

De Pages describes the Adaesenos alternately as "savages" and "half-savages". As this journal has been translated from French to English, it should be noted that sauvage can be translated as either "Indian" or "savage".

As Anglo-American settlers entered the area in the early nineteenth century, these mixed-blood communities pulled together, separating themselves from the later arrivals. In isolating themselves into practically endogamous enclaves, these groups were able to retain their unique ethnicity.

The soldiers at Los Adaes developed a constant trade with the French post at Natchitoches throughout the life of the presidio. They also settled the surrounding countryside where they established ranches and farms (Bolton 1962: 38-39; 114). Many of those who were ordered to remove to San Antonio in 1773 had been born in Los Adaes, and most considered this land to be their home. They were, therefore, unwilling to leave Los Adaes when the presidio was ordered to be abandoned, and its inhabitants relocated to San Antonio.

With Spanish acquisition of Louisiana, defensive presidios in east Texas became unnecessary. The decision to abandon these costly missions was made in Mexico, and Governor Baron de Ripperda was ordered to implement this upheaval. Ripperda assigned an aged lieutenant, Jose Gonzales, to

command on this forced march. Gonzales died shortly after beginning the expedition and command was assumed by Antonio Gil y Barbo, an Adaeseno with a mestizo wife (Bolton 1905: 80-85; Bexar Archives: 1793 census). Y Barbo was about forty-four years old in 1773, and a native of Los Adaes who would eventually become commandant at Nacogdoches. He was an Indian trader and owned a large ranch called El Lobanillo near the Sabine River. Before their removal to San Antonio, several Adaesenos escaped to the surrounding countryside (Bolton 1962: 84-85). Twenty-four of the Adaesenos, including Gil Y Barbo's son, Emmanuel, stayed behind by pleading illness. Emmanuel's son, Alcario, is considered by locals to be the founder of the present community.

Leaving Los Adaes in the summer of 1773, the Adaesenos made the difficult journey to San Antonio. Immediately thereafter Y Barbo and Gil Flores, another Adaeseno journeyed to Mexico City to petition the viceroy for permission to return to east Texas. Because of indecision among the Spanish administrators concerning the total abandonment of east Texas, the Adaesenos were allowed to settle in Bucareli on the Trinity River. Prompted by Comanche raids and severe flooding, the settlers relocated in 1779 to the former mission site of Guadalupe, founding their permanent settlement at Nacogdoches (Bolton 1905: 82-137). Y Barbo's ranch was located nearby, the relatives the Adaesenos had left behind came and went across the Sabine River, and Nacogdoches developed into a multi-ethnic trade center. Many of the present-day Apache-Choctaw can remember when Nacogdoches was a place where many of their relatives lived, and visiting back and forth was common.

Nacogdoches became a thriving frontier trade center, and census information taken there included citizens on Bayou Scie [Zwolle], and Bayou Pierre, as well as in the outpost itself. Censuses taken in 1793, 1799, and 1805 are very revealing, and reflect the problem of changing ethnicity. Mixed-blood designations decline, while those noted as "Spaniards" increase. For example, Martin Y Barbo is censused in 1793 as mestizo, but in 1799 was noted as Spanish. The caste system measured degrees of Spanish blood, and the recording of ethnicity depended on the recorder. Apparently as the years passed, those of mixed blood became officially more Spanish, elevating their status within the Hispanic community. Upon Anglo-American arrival in the nineteenth century, however, Spanish blood became as much of a social liability as Indian, and the descendants of the soldiers of Los Adaes were more often called Mexicans than either Indian or Spanish (Lamar 1922, II: 219). Even today, many outsiders mistakenly label the Apache-Choctaw as Mexicans.

THE CHOCTAWS

About the time that Nacogdoches was settled, the Spanish government invited the Choctaw and other eastern tribes to cross the Mississippi River and settle in Louisiana. The Spanish issued this invitation in order to coax these tribes away from English influence east of the Mississippi River (Kinnaird and Kinnaird 1980: 349-351). By the 1780's parties of Choctaws were passing through the Sabine River area, raiding and hunting, sometimes even settling down to form communities; and by the American period they were well-established in the area. "As early as 1789 a village, under a "chief" named Apeatchee, was noted on the Red River and the commandant of the Rapides district, Layssard, censused sixty-one Chocta [Choctaw] on Red River" (Faine and Gregory 1986: 16). This same group later attacked a group of Ais and Adaes Indians near Los Adaes.

The Choctaws were an unwelcome addition to the population when they first arrived. The Caddo were constantly harassed by roving bands of Choctaw, registering their complaints with U.S. Agent John Sibley (Abel 1922: 22-24). Even during the Spanish administration of Louisiana, Natchitoches commandant Louis de Blanc complained to Governor Miro that the Choctaw were ravaging the once peaceful countryside around his post (Kinnaird 1945: 408-409). In 1800 the Choctaws attacked a group of Caddos near Natchitoches, and that same year killed two Ais Indians on the land of Jose Y Barbo (Castanada 1950: 224-225). Later, a group of Choctaws settled on the Sabine River with a group of Taensas, used by the Spanish to form a defensive cordon (Castanada 1950: 321-323).

After American acquisition of the Louisiana Territory in 1802, tension between the United States and Spain escalated in the Sabine River area. The true western boundary of Louisiana was vague, at best. The territory surrounding the northern Sabine River area was claimed by both the United States and Spain, and the situation came to a head in the fall of 1806 when American and Spanish troops confronted each other near Bayou Pierre. Peace was maintained, however, and a "Neutral Strip" was established between the Rio Hondo, near Los Adaes, and the Sabine River (Purser 1961: 41-42). This area became a kind of "no man's land", inhabited by outlaws, runaway slaves, honest farmers, and Indians attempting to avoid Anglo-American encroachment. Many bands of Choctaws came into the area during this time.

In 1807, American Indian Agent John Sibley, stationed at Natchitoches, granted permission to a Choctaw Indian named Captain Sam, along with seven other men and seven women, to settle near the old presidio of Los Adaes (Abel 1922: 16-17).

Another group under the leadership of an Indian named "White Meat" lived on the Yan Cooko [Anacoco] prairie near present-day DeRidder and Leesville. The Choctaws formed many communities in the Sabine region, becoming permanent settlers in the area, later mixing with the local population. Daniel Clark noted in 1803 that there were four to five hundred Choctaws west of the Mississippi, including bands on the Red River as far as Natchitoches (Carter 1940, IX: 63). Jean Berlandier, surveying the Spanish/American boundary in the early nineteenth century, noted a settlement on the Sabine composed of ten to twelve Choctaw families. Berlandier noted that these Indians spoke French and/or Spanish, and lived in Anglo-style log houses in a dispersed settlement pattern. The Choctaw maintained a distinct presence in the area, even playing an exhibition stickball game against the Pascagoula in Natchitoches in 1807. Sibley noted the rough nature of the game; some players were even killed (Abel 1922: 29-30). Older Apache-Choctaws can remember these games, and the passing of the Indians to and from their ballfields.

The birth of an English child of Edmond Quirk, a settler in the Sabine region (Ericson 1981: 32), was recorded in 1796 at Natchitoches. This child was noted as having bee born "at the Choctaws", probably at one of the Sabine villages (Mills 1977: 262). In 1821, the baptism of a child, the daughter of the Choctaw Indian, Frosine, was recorded at Natchitoches, as was the birth of the daughter of the Choctaw couple, Louis and Amiyaese, in 1922 (Mills 1980: 206, 247). Some of the Choctaw left the area with the Caddo in 1835, but many families stayed, either isolating themselves in the woods (Medford 1989: 2), or coalescing with other Indian or mixed Indo-Franco-Hispanic communities. As late as the 1850's Choctaw babies from Bayou Pierre were being baptized at Natchitoches (Faine and Gregory 1986: 16-17).

These Choctaw are still referred to as "wild Indians" by older inhabitants of Ebarb, who can remember stickball games, Indian trails, and the kidnapping of small children by these mecos [wild Indians]. The same term, mecos, was applied by the mixed-blood inhabitants of Los Adaes to local, tribal Indians. One local family, the Tobys [from the Choctaw word tubbee meaning "white"], retained a form of their traditional Choctaw name. These Choctaw, along with local tribal people and Apachean people, remained an identifiable Indian element all along the Sabine in the nineteenth century. One elderly Apache-Choctaw lady recalled that her family had been encartados or mixed-blood "vassals of the crown" (Gregory 1989: Personal Communication), and many of the elderly citizens today can name their tribal affiliation.

BORDER UNREST - THE AGE OF THE NEUTRAL STRIP

Other people's politics had pushed the Choctaws west through Louisiana and blocked the Hispanic settlers' official return to East Texas. Grand schemes by the powers-that-be continued to meddle in the lives of the people along this Sabine border region.

After a series of diplomatic maneuvers, the United States purchased Louisiana from the French in 1803. The French had deliberately left the exact size of this area very vague. Quarrels over the boundary between Louisiana and Texas date back to the very founding of Los Adaes. Some United States officials tried to capitalize on both of these facts by claiming land all the way to the Rio Grande, even though the line between French and Spanish settlement had always run somewhere east of the Sabine River.

A number of people associated with Spanish Texas still lived on this side of the river. Records refer to at least three definite settlements. In 1795, for instance, priests from Texas visited the settlement of Vallecillo, located where Bayou Scie and Bayou San Miguel joined. This settlement appears to have been near the old cemetery south of Zwolle.

A settlement also seems to have continued at the Adaes. Bishop Felician Marrio of New Leon visited the old mission in 1805 and baptized 200 children. This seemingly large figure probably included many older children since the area does not seem to have been regularly visited by clergy. Other children from the wide surrounding area would have been included, like those from the settlement on Bayou Pierre. In 1803, John Sibley of Natchitoches wrote that Bayou Pierre on the Red River had "twenty or thirty good families".

Census records confirm this. According to records of the Nacogdoches district, in 1805 twenty-eight families under Spanish jurisdiction lived east of the Sabine River. The loosely strung settlements at Vallecillo, the village of the Adaes, and along Bayou Pierre were considered Texas territory.

European settlements in Texas had not increased much since the days of the greatest Lipan threat. As John Sibley wrote in 1803 to the governor of Mississippi and Louisiana, Bayou Pierre was under Texas jurisdiction though 140 miles from Nacogdoches with "no settlements between except a few families on the Sabine". In his opinion, the area drained by the Sabine had "no settlements on it except a few families on and near where the Great Road (El Camino Real) crosses it . . .".

As far as the rest of Texas, John Sibley said, "In all this extensive country there is no settlements, except about 100 families in and about Natchidoches [Nacogdoches], two or three hundred at St. Antoine . . ." and some Christianized Indians south of that city. Though Dr. John Sibley may not have been entirely correct, he did capture the essence of the facts: Spain still had a very thin hold on Texas.

Having the restless Anglo-Americans as neighbors worried the Spanish officials in Texas just as they had been previously concerned in Louisiana. People living in Louisiana were not uniformly pleased about the take-over, either. According to the American commander who arrived in Natchitoches in 1804, nineteen out of very twenty people there preferred the Spanish government and did not support the United States.

For a brief period, the governor of Texas was instructed to allow the Spanish in Louisiana to move to Texas. This would aid these Spanish citizens while increasing Spanish presence in Texas. The Spanish commander at Nacogdoches actively encouraged people to move west of Nacogdoches, farther from the American border. It is possible that people from Vallecillo and Adaes left those settlements at this time.

As these measures indicate, both the United States and Spain feared a war over this boundary dispute. The number of troops along the border region increased. Spanish officials fortified settlements on this side of the Sabine like the village at Adaes. In February of 1806, an American captain leading sixty men reportedly forced the people living there to move across the river.

In view of these mounting tensions, Spanish agents urged Native Americans to move into Spanish territory as a buffer between Spanish settlements and the Americans. The Pascagoulas, for instance, settled along the Sabine in early 1806. A number of Choctaw, as we have seen, also moved closer to the more sympathetic Hispanics. The Spanish actively attempted to woo a band of Choctaw from as far away as Bayou Chico to their side.

The commanders of the two opposing armies stationed at Nacogdoches and Natchitoches managed to avoid an open confrontation, in spite of the difficult situation along the border. In the fall of 1806 Colonel Herra and General Wilkerson reached a working agreement. Spanish troops would not cross the Sabine, and American troops would not cross the Arroy Hondo, a small stream west of Natchitoches.

The territory within this "neutral strip" included southeast DeSoto Parish, all of Sabine Parish, the western half of Natchitoches, and parts of surrounding parishes in present-day Louisiana. (Portions of Rapides, Vernon, Beauregard, Allen, Evangeline, Calcasieu, Jefferson, and Cameron

Parishes also fell within the neutral territory.) Though troops could not enter the area, citizens from either side could cross it - if they had a passport.

Spain retained Bayou Pierre on this side of the Sabine. Families associated with this settlement included Procellas, Laffitts, Valentines, DeSotos, Rambins, Ybarbos, and McDonalds. In addition, the Spanish citizen Miguel Crow was allowed to stay on his ranch, purchased from Vincente Michelli in 1797, which lay on either side of the El Camino Real as it crossed the Sabine. Other than that, no one was supposed to live in the Neutral Strip. It would appear that the Hispanic settlements at the Adaes and Vallecillo were at least temporarily abandoned. These people presumably moved closer to their kinspeople around Nacogdoches.

These settlement restrictions excluded Native Americans. They had already been cultivating and hunting in this region through several rounds of European power struggles. The established Indian villages in the Neutral Strip provided a profitable trade. The firm of Barr and Davenport had been operating in this area since the late 1700's. Among the Indian traders working for them were Vicenti Micheli and Jacinto Mora. The Spanish government tried to establish a trading post in Bayou Pierre in 1809, but inexperience and competition from the firm of Barr and Davenport hindered their success. The traders did what they could to aid the Spanish cause, however, by encouraging friendly Indians to move to Spanish territory.

Meanwhile, others were illegally settling in the neutral territory. Though legends still circulate about robbers and bandit organizations, many people were simply settlers who later petitioned for legal title to their lands. It would appear that the place known as Las Ormigas or The Anthills, located north of present-day Zwolle at a crossing of the Sabine, was occupied at this time. This area was originally associated with Mora, Irwin, and Laffitte families. The Spanish government granted land to Paul Bonet Laffitte in 1800 or 1799. His sons Louis and Caesar later sold it to Joseph Irwin. The land lay between the river and Bayou San Patrice.

These settlers, harmless or not, worried both governments. As early as 1807, John Sibley, United States Indian Agent at Natchitoches, reported that:

> A banditti of thieves etc. assembled together and formed a camp between the Rio Hondo and Sabine, for the purpose of commiting outrage with impunity.

According to U.S. Indian Agent, John Sibley these people had taken a horse from an Indian by force. He went on to say:

> The Indians complained to me and said if I would do nothing, they would go out and kill them.

In 1810, Spanish officials feared that foreigners at the Crow's ranch were really cattle smugglers. (Smuggling, it seems, had not gone out of style along the border.) Spanish citizens crossing the strip to trade with Bayou Pierre were also attacked. Some settlers on the Texas side of the Neutral Strip moved to Nacogdoches for protection.

Finally, in 1810, authorities on both sides had had enough. They launched a joint expedition of fifteen Spanish and fifteen American troops to drive out all unauthorized settlers. All houses and buildings other than Miguel Crow's were razed or burned to the ground. Spanish settlers surrendered to the Spanish troops, Americans to the United States forces. Hispanic settlers who wished to move to Texas had to apply to the Spanish counsul in New Orleans for a passport.

Though this was a major set-back for the small farmers who had cleared land and built cabins in the area, the bandits continued plaguing people. In 1812, Samuel Davenport complained, "The Neutral Ground is still infested by gangs of bandits, and it is impossible to carry on business".

Once again troops were sent in to clear out the area. In March of 1812, American forces burned or confiscated everything they found, drove out the settlers, and took sixteen men captive. The Spanish followed shortly with a raid of their own.

While this once again disrupted the people who may have returned to the homes in the Neutral Strip, even more turmoil was in store for those who lived on either side of the disputed area. Some time before this last clean-up, trouble began percolating up from Mexico. After conquering Spain in 1808, our friend Napoleon put his brother Joseph on the throne. People in Spain and the Spanish colonies revolted.

Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla led the uprising in Mexico. He sent Don Jose Bernardo Maximiliano Gutierrez ed Lara to the United States to seek aid. Together with Captain Jose Menchaca, Gutierrez made his way across Texas in the summer of 1811.

Captain Menchaca had been the commanding officer at San Fernando and in May seemed to support the Royalists (those loyal to the king in Spain) from Chihuahua who visited him there. Perhaps he was just misleading them, however, for in September he was assisting Gutierrez across the Neutral Strip. Royalists attacked them in Bayou Pierre. The two revolutionaries fled to Natchitoches.

There, Gutierrez and Menchaca parted company. Menchaca was to organize the bandits and others in the Neutral Strip and attack San Antonio. Gutierrez was to arrange for supplies and support from Louisiana and Washington, D.C.

The people of Louisiana seemed willing to join the venture. Judge Carr, United States district judge, wrote federal officials that there did not seem to be any gathering east of the Sabine (which would damage the United States' diplomatic position with Spain), but that:

> Young men in groups of two, five, or fifteen arrive here in Natchitoches every day, many are from our immediate local area, they are mild-mannered and quiet and cause no disturbances . . . when questioned about the destination, they declare that they are going on a hunting trip.

Gutierrez sent additional "hunters" down from Tennessee and Kentucky.

Captain Menchaca, meanwhile, had lead his American "volunteers" into Texas, then instructed them to scatter back to Natchitoches. He then appeared to have gone over to the Royalist side. It is not known whether he was bribed by the governor of Texas, merely had a change of heart, or went off on a mission of his own. Gutierrez, for his part, refused to believe that Menchaca had turned traitor. He maintained that, "Menchaca was a man of integrity and that it was not possible for him to behave thus . . .".

The Royalists seemed to share his views. Jose Menchaca was arrested in Bexar where letters from Father Hidalgo and other revolutionary leaders were found in his possession. He died in chains in Chihuahua that same year. Contemporary observers described him as:

> A brave, and a violent man, much distinguished for his firmness; and when drinking would lose sight of all prudence and fight priests, alcaldes or captains as it came in the way.

Gutierrez returned to Natchitoches and enlisted Colonel Magee, an American officer who had recently fought against the Neutral Strip bandits in the clean-up operation of March, 1812. Magee crossed the Sabine and headed toward Nacogdoches with 130 "effective" men on August 8, 1812. He and Gutierrez believed the United States government would give them at least clandestine assistance.

Leaders from Texas like Juan Galvar and Miguel Menchaca, cousin of Jose and former commandant of the garrison at Nacogdoches, swelled the ranks of the expedition. It is not clear how many local people joined the revolutionary party.

Documents do record that the people of Nacogdoches "met the liberators with a procession".

When Texas governor Manuel de Salcedo attempted to organize a defense of the city, he found a spirit of calm and rejoicing in Nacogdoches rather than the panic of an impending invasion. The people urged him to leave, apparently to avoid harm. About fifty of the Spanish troops under his command decided to stay. At least 190 townspeople also took up arms with the revolutionaries. These, with the various revolutionary refugees from Mexico and the American adventurers brought the Gutierrez-Magee forces up to 450 men.

Observers noted that, "Every able-bodied man east of the Trinity, including a number of Indians, had followed Magee". By the time they left Nacogdoches in September, Magee commanded a force of 700. Other Mexican provinces were also in revolt. The people of La Bahia (Goliad) welcomed the revolutionary force on November 7. The road to the Texas capitol looked clear.

Reuben Ross, another former American military man, had been sent back to Nacogdoches to gather more recruits - Native as well as Anglo-American. Though the Choctaw, Alabama, Coushatta, and Attapaws followed the Caddo chief in refusing to fight under any non American flag, Ross returned with nearly 200 Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo recruits.

Such circumstantial evidence suggests that forebearers of the current Ebarb community would have been involved in what looked like a promising venture. The revolutionaries had taken San Antonio without a fight on April 1, 1813. Gutierrez promptly formed a provisional government. All was not well, however. Magee had died of illness, and a man named Samuel Kemper took over his position. Manuel de Salcedo along with thirteen other influential Royalists who had surrendered were similarly shot. The powerful Menchaca family gained their revenge, but this action alienated the Anglo-American officers. The American volunteers grew dissatisfied with the government Gutierrez established.

Meanwhile, Royalist troops gathered on the Medina River. They managed to draw the revolutionary army out into battle on August 18, 1813. Captains Miguel Menchaca and Samuel Kemper refused to retreat to safety. Menchaca died that same day of wounds received in battle. The revolutionary army fell apart.

The people of East Texas who had received the revolutionaries so warmly fled from the Royalists. More than 1,200 refugees escaped to Louisiana. Others, like a group of Lipans numbering 500 warriors, moved nearer to the Sabine River for protection. Approximately 300 men, women,

and children sought refuge near Natchitoches and Bayou Pierre.

Though in October of 1813 the Spanish government proclaimed a pardon to any refugees who appeared at Nacogdoches, Trinidad, or Bexar (San Antonio) within forty days, at least some of these people remained east of the Sabine. A number of Texas emigres demanded permission to live on the land of Imanuel Prudhomme in and around the village of Adais. The possibility is strong that these would have been the same people run out of the area nearly ten years earlier when the Neutral Strip was first established. Prudhomme agreed to let the refugees stay if they agreed to deed him all their improvements and horses when they left. In 1824 these people were still farming there.

Other refugees, reportedly close to four hundred, waited in Natchitoches for another chance to fight. Early in 1814 another attempt was organized by a young American named Robinson, a former French Revolutionary named General Humbert, and Toledo, a questionable adventurer who had taken over Gutierrez's position in San Antonio during the first expedition.

While these visionary opportunists jockeyed among themselves for leadership, conditions in East Texas worsened. A Natchitoches physician noted in March of 1814:

> The situation of the Spanish Provinces is terrible. The Royalists rob and murder those whom they find of the Natives because they are suspected of defection to loyalty. Our Americans go over the Sabine and murder and rob the poor Natives whom they call Quotchipino . . . . Robbers and murderers disgrace the causes - there is no law to restrain them.

The causes - revolutionary or Royalist - had not accomplished much by July. The same observer predicted dire results if this expedition just fizzled out: "These Revolutionists being disappointed in their grand object will become Brigands of the whole interior". Apparently that is precisely what happened. Sources indicate more refugees from San Antonio and Nacogdoches fled to the neutral ground after 1815.

The much invaded and little protected people of the area seemed eager to move in any direction. In March of 1815, for instance, Paul Laffitte, his children, and a nephew petitioned to move from Bayou Pierre further into Spanish territory. Since Texas officials wanted to limit contact with Louisiana and hinder "rebels of the neutral ground and those who are with Indian tribes" from gaining any information, they offered to help the Laffittes and their companions move to Monterray. However, these people could

not bring along any Louisiana trade goods or move back to the frontier. The Laffittes decided against this offer and remained on the precarious Texas-Louisiana border where the Indians were restive, the settlers smuggled, and the ambitious (if somewhat unscrupulous) men plotted invasions of Texas.

Later that year Gutierrez and Toledo planned to invade Texas by sea. General recruiting went on in Natchitoches, and people from Adaes were also in league with the "insurgents". This venture was also unsuccessful.

A final invasion attempt occurred in 1819. That same year the Adam-Onis Treaty had peaceably established the boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase. The Neutral Strip was gone, but the revolutionary schemes that bred along it continued. Many Anglo-Americans in adjoining areas, however, felt the treaty gave away land that was rightfully theirs. These joined the old Texas revolutionaries in hopes of making Texas a republic.

Gutierrez, of course, was one of the ring leaders while James Long, a young American Army surgeon, commanded the troops. On June 21, 1819, the people of Nacogdoches once again gave up their city without a fight.

The revolutionaries formed a civil government ruled by an elected Supreme Council of twenty-one. Among the council members were John Sibley (Indian agent and government dabbler from Natchitoches), S. Davenport (of the neutral strip firm of Barr and Davenport), Pedro Procella, and Gutierrez (of course). "General" Long was chosen president.

Since this new government did not have any supplies of its own, Long ordered his troops to scatter out and live off the land. When Spanish forces led by Colonel Perez cam up out of San Antonio in October, Long's army had dispersed too widely to reunite and fight. The entire city of Nacogdoches once again fled before the Royalists.

Spanish troops swept down the Sharbino and Ormigas Roads, the only two that led to the Sabine River. American troops from Ft. Jessup prevented them from pursuing the revolutionaries on across the river. Perez's men then turned back and, following instructions, laid waste the land between Sharbino Road and Nacogdoches. His lieutenant, Fernando Rodrigus did the same on the Ormigas Road. They burned thirty houses in all. Spanish troops continued mopping up for another month.

Eight years of such repeated invasion and flight had had a devastating effect on this area. When Stephen F. Austin passed through in 1821 to establish his famous colony, he noted that "the country around Nacogdoches was totally

destroyed and abandoned". A report in 1821 by Spanish-speaking Texans on conditions there stated that since 1813 the province "advanced at an amazing rate, toward ruin and destruction".

Mexico finally became an independent republic in 1821. At that time, the people in Nacogdoches who had "been driven from their country by fear" were invited to come home. They received the news with rejoicing.

Others, however, decided to remain on this side of the Sabine. Among them were some of the forebearers of the present Ebarb community. In 1824 the register and receiver of the United States' Southwestern Land District gave people living in the former Neutral Strip a chance to get legal title to the land they had been living on.

The land commissioners called upon reliable witnesses to learn about land laws in Spanish Texas and the extent of the neutral territory. Those called include several familiar names: Samuel Davenport who had lived in Nacogdoches from 1798 to 1813 as a citizen, Jose M. Mora who had been born in the jurisdiction of Nacogdoches, Jose Flores who had served a public office in Nacogdoches, Gregorio Mora, John (Juan) Cortes, and non-other-than Jose Bernardo Gutierrez. All agreed that the Spanish land records had been carried off by the Royalists in 1812.

According to the testimony that the land commission accepted, the three Hispanic settlements mentioned earlier were all re-established by 1819. A number of claims mention the settlement of Bayou Pierre, streets of a Spanish village near Bayou Scie (Vallecillo), and a village at the Adaes. While all valid claims had to demonstrate at least five years' residence on the land (beginning then, at least in 1819) as well as improvements made there, many of the people could demonstrate a much greater length of occupancy.

Other Hispanic settlers remained in or returned to Texas. Unfortunately, Mexican independence did not bring the province of Texas as much peace and prosperity as might be hoped for. In 1822 the alcalde of Nacogdoches complained to the governor of Texas about people settling between Nacogdoches and the Sabine.

A report on the protection of Texas filed a year later further accused the Anglo settlers of stirring up the Indians to depopulate Texas and take it over for themselves. This report contained a fair amount of truth.

The Mexican government had decided to try to hold Texas by allowing select Americans to settle there under the impresario system. An impresario would recruit a number of reputable Catholic settlers for a certain tract of land.

Stephen F. Austin's colony is probably the best-known example of this. In 1825 Hayden Edwards received such a grant to colonize East Texas.

Hayden Edwards began badly by announcing that anyone with land claims in the Nacogdoches region should report to him with proof of title. Though he simply wanted to know which acres would be free to his colonists, he threw most of the older settlers into a panic. Spanish-speaking people there had claimed certain tracts of land for generations with no title other than a former alcalde or governor's spoken grant. An illegal but firmly established Anglo-American settlement in the Ayish Bayou District was also threatened.

In the election of April 1827 the older settlers elected candidates clearly on their side: Jose Antonio Sepulvado as captain of the militia and Sam Norris as alcalde. This turn of events coupled with trouble in the Ayish Bayou District proved to be too much for Edwards.

Edwards allied himself with the Indian nations who had resettled to the north. Together, they set up the Fredonia Republic with a red and white flag to symbolize the union between the two people. Edwards arrested Sepulvado and took over Nacogdoches. After a brief fight, Sam Norris and his supporters followed the familiar path across the Sabine to safety.

Native American leaders refused to commit themselves to Edwards' rash venture, however. The whole thing ended in a general amnesty for the parties involved.

The ill-fated Fredonian Rebellion hinted at greater tensions between old settlers and the restless newcomers. Alarmed by the increasing numbers of Anglos, the Mexican government ended the impresario system in 1830. Texas was divided into three districts (Nacogdoches, Brazoria, and Bexar) with a pair of forts settled by Mexican colonists planned for each. Nacogdoches and Anahuac on the Gulf Coast were selected in the Nacogdoches district.

These Hispanic outposts were soon inundated by Anglo-American settlers. In Nacogdoches itself the original settlers came to be outnumbered and pushed to the bottom of the social scale by the newcomers. Anglo-Americans would soon control the area completely.

CREATION OF THE CURRENT COMMUNITY - TEXAS REVOLUTION TO THE GREAT DEPRESSION

After a generation of turmoil, the lost Adaisanos, captive Lipanes, exiled Choctaws, and expatriated French found a permanent home in the woods just east of the Sabine River.

Community members of part-French extraction appear to have remained or re-established themselves in Louisiana at least from 1819 on. Sharnack (Ezernacks), Laroux, and Bebee families located on Bayou Scie near present day Zwolle. Families that married in - Laffitte, Bison, and Valentine - lived further north around Bayou Pierre towards present day Mansfield.

As has been noted in earlier sections, the Spanish-speaking people of East Texas had been using the territory along the Sabine as a refuge for some time. By the 1840's and 1850's, all major community families are censused in this part of Louisiana. Surviving oral tradition reflects the troubled times that brought these people here.

The Martinez appear to be among the first to finally settle in the area known as Ebarb today. According to family tradition, four brothers came here to escape some trouble in Spanish territory, perhaps related to the Cordova Rebellion. Four of the brothers are listed in the 1840 Louisiana census returns. In 1838, Juan, Jose, and Cayetano had been indited for treason in connection with the Cordova Rebellion.

The Ebarb family also came from Texas "when the war ended". The first Ebarb camped along a branch of water one night, the story goes, and heard a rooster crow the next morning. He knew then that he wasn't alone, and since he liked the place he decided to stay. The rooster belonged to the Martinez's. By the 1850 census, Manuel Ebarb and his children (including those listed as being indited during the Cordova Rebellion) are censused in Sabine Parish.

Likewise, the Garcias (Garcies) came "when they had wars over here" and "they were fighting one another". The Garcias had to swim the Sabine River to reach safety. Jose Antonio Sepulvado and his family also came here to stay. "He crossed the Sabine River where the water was about two foot high riding a horse. Never did go back (to Nacogdoches, Texas)".

While no doubt conflict in Texas drove these people to sanctuary in Louisiana, the greater majority - like the Garcias and Ebarbs - do not appear in the Louisiana census immediately after the Cordova trouble as one might expect. Since the Republic of Texas did not take a census in 1840, it is difficult to determine whether or not the people

remained in Texas then. Yet it seems unlikely that they would have weathered the rebellion and court cases, and then left for Louisiana some five or ten years later.

There are several possible explanations for the lack of Bermeas (Malmay), Michelis (Meshells), Leones, Ybarbos, and Morales in the 1840 Louisiana census returns. Census takers may simply have missed these people in 1840. Major portions of this territory were not readily accessible, and after their experiences, the people would not have been eager to entertain government officials in any case. If they were found, French-speaking census takers may also have mutilated these Spanish names beyond recognition.

Another possible explanation is that the people moved down here from some area further north. This would corroborate with another strong thread running through local oral tradition. Many people have stories of one or more ancestors "coming down from Oklahoma". Jose Meregildo Rameriz (Hosie/Hildo Remedies), for instance, shows up in Nacogdoches records in the 1830's, but is repeatedly said to have come from Oklahoma "where all the Indians are". In local lore, Oklahoma refers to any northern territory primarily populated by Indians. Indian allies from the north did join Cordova's men, and some of the rebels disappeared north "in the vicinity of Shreveport". Jose Meregildo himself is always referred to as an Indian. Ebarb's founders, all previously censused as at least part-Indian, may very well have sought refuge in settlements of their Indian kinspeople and comrades.

The Procells have a similar story of coming down from "Oklahoma", crossing the river to hunt, and staying. Jesus Morales, another community member recognized as full-blood or nearly so, likewise came down from "Oklahoma", or at least some point north of here. His father Andres had been involved in the Cordova Rebellion.

Whether these rebels rode out the rough times in Native American communities to the north or not, once settled in Louisiana they continue their association with people who maintained a distinct Indian identity. In addition to the community members mentioned above, Louis Parrie and his wife Felipa Quintero are invariably referred to as full-bloods. Louis was raised by Candido Sanchez whose son Candelario also married a Quintero woman.

Quinteros initially appear in Nacogdoches, but also moved to Louisiana. They are among the families linked to a Choctaw settlement in the forks of Choctaw or Alice and Hurricane Creeks. Other family names connected with this village include Carmona, Gumboya, Dawson, at least one Procell or Purcell, and Toby. Another Choctaw village lay in the forks of San Miguel and Bayou Scie.

Ties with these villages and the clusters of settlement closer to Ebarb were strengthened through intermarriage. Vincente Meshelli's marriage to one of the Choctaw women (Maria Bibiana Carmona) reputedly improved his claim to land here in Louisiana. Antonio Laroux also married a Carmona, Martina. Though documentation on Warrick Ferguson's wife Mary Ganier has not yet been uncovered, she is said to be another Indian woman. After Candelario Sanchez's death, his young son John was raised among his mother's Indian people. The customs he observed reflect what is known of Choctaw culture in Oklahoma and Mississippi.

In addition to Choctaw or perhaps Mobilian, the people of these villages could converse with their more Hispanicized neighbors in Spanish and also professed the Catholic faith. Oral history sources also speak of "regular wild Indians". Stories survive of these Indians kidnapping two boys during the 1860's. Joe Emanus was rescued by area men who traded beads and trinkets with the Indians. After gaining the Indian's confidence, they managed to be alone with the boy long enough to escape with him. Paul Malmay escaped himself as a grown man. A contemporary family member related the story as follows:

> He was twelve years old. He was playing out there, out in the yard. The Indians would ride horses. You know, ride through the woods on horses. The Indians captured Uncle Paul. Grandpa, (Simon Malmay) never did see him no more until he was grown. He come back to Grandpa's yard gate. He had a big, full beard. He asked, "Can I come in?" "I don't know, I don't know you", Grandpa said like that. Real rough. "Okay", he cracked a smile. "You can't be Paul". "I am". That was my Grandpa's brother. When he got old enough, he got away from those Indians . . . . Grandpa hugged him. Oh, he was so glad to see him.

These Indians, whoever they were, were also rumored to have killed and eaten their captives.

Indians of some sort also had a camp near B & B Grocery Store along the present Ebarb Road. They used a large corral near Jose E. Sepulvado's cabin when they rounded up their horses. Others camped along the river bottom. Ebarb community members had some dealings with these people, too.

> Grandpa Ebarb (Alcario) was riding down in the bottom and a bunch of Indians asked him to eat with them. They had a big horse leg hanging in a tree. Blood was coming out of the corners of their mouths as they were eating that meat. Grandpa could speak Indian. He told them he was full up (to his neck). Then he put a switch to his horse and got out of there.

Alcarios's nephew Marcelline Ebarb could also converse with the Indians. His descendants even recall a few words of Choctaw or Mobelian. According to them, Marcelline hunted and rode into Texas with these Indians during the Civil War. These Indians were likely his Cathölic kinsmen rather than "regular wild" ones.

The residents of Ebarb had scarcely a generation to enjoy relative peace before the American Civil War ripped through the South disrupting their lives as well. Even though this area saw no major military engagement until relatively late in the war, they were deeply affected by the Confederacy's shortages in foodstuffs, manufactured goods, and manpower.

In the beginning, when Southern patriots were sure of a short, successful war, Confederate forces received more volunteers than they could outfit. Recruits slacked off as a more realistic view of the conflict ahead spread. The Confederacy had to resort to conscription.

Conscription, never a particularly popular measure anywhere, did not receive widespread support in areas like Sabine Parish. The small independent farmers or woodsmen who lived here had no great stake in the slave economy and nothing to gain by fighting or dying for it. After having been involved in or victimized by civil war and unrest in Texas for decades, the people were not eager to become entangled in another war here. As one of Jose E. Sepulvado's descendants put it, "Poor man, he didn't have no slaves. He was just scratching the dirt hi(m)self". Stories of escaping from recruiters are understandably common.

Men would take refuge in the woods along the river bottom. Their women brought them foodstuffs, or arranged signals for them to come up to the house. Alcario Ebarb appears to have been some sort of leader, as illustrated in this dramatic story:

> And they had to go up to Shreveport to register or whatever for the war. He (Alcario) was so wise. They would have to use lamps for light. And he said to the men he was with, "I'll tell ya. We gonna get away. When they call us, all keep our hands caught and I'll put the lamp out and we'll get away". And they got away because it was night and when he put the lamp out it was dark. And he said they swam down the Sabine River till they got back here and they lived in a big old hollowed out tree for three years hidin' out from the war. Alcario's wife would cook stuff and carry it out there for them to eat. And they lived there til the war was over. They never did catch him. How they did that, I don't know.

Though the particulars of this story may have been embellished through 120 years of retelling, the essence of it is true. There is no conclusive evidence that Alcario or anyone else ever went all the way up to Shreveport to register, but they did manage to evade conscription officials for the better part of the war.

This same source recounts how Alcario helped one of his neighbors escape from a recruiting team:

> One time they come up on big old horses and they come up and tie their horses to the front of his house . . . Alcario come up and saw those horses and thought, poor man, he didn't know they was gonna catch him . . . His neighbor and his wife come out of the fields each with a watermelon under his arm and Alcario rode up and didn't even stop and yelled, "Soldiers at the house"! And he went on. That man dropped his watermelon and turned and ran, hit the woods. They was gonna catch him. He said he was runnin' and he could hear just a roarin' of horses' feet. He (Alcario) had to get out of the way. They came and found out he was gone. No tellin' what they would have done.

Another source tells how a man hid in the loft while soldiers searched the cabin beneath him. The man's toe was sticking out of the loft opening, but he didn't dare move it for fear of attracting the soldiers' attention. They left without discovering him.

Not everyone was as fortunate. Manuel Garcie, the father of Jim, C.C., and Dick (Paulo), was forcibly recruited. "The war was going all through this country here, and they grabbed his (Jim's) daddy off. His mama stayed with the kids . . . He (Jim) said the soldiers was all around the house all the time. They took any mans they could find, carried 'em off. Married men, too. they didn't care if they had a family". Erculano, father of William (Billy) Sepulvado, met a similar fate.

Erculano was carried off during the war, leaving his wife pregnant with their only child. He had come in from hiding to get food and clothing when he was captured. The soldiers caught two men and slung them over their horses like sacks. After they crossed the creek, the people heard two shots. According to the story, these men were never seen again.

Throughout the war, the Confederate and state governments continued passing new, refined conscription laws. The state of Louisiana passed a new militia or guard law in February 1864 which was supposed to include all male citizens ages 15 through 50. It is not clear whether this new law was significantly more effective than the others or whether the men in the Sabine River bottom had finally been found out.

At any rate, in July and August of 1864 seven men, among them Alcario Ebarb, were enrolled in Natchitoches Parish. At least one man, Vivian Sepulvado, was ordered sent to the "camp of instruction" (boot camp) under guard. Whether any of these others actually served is in grave doubt. Of the ones enrolled, only Vivian and Jose Gumboya later filed for Confederate Pensions.

A large number of community men or their widows applied for Confederate pensions. Indeed, at least as many men volunteered to serve for the duration of the war as attempted to avoid it altogether. Curiously enough, the men who enlisted in the first year of the war were from the territory north of San Patricio Creek towards the Ormigas and Mansfield. According to pension applications and existing muster rolls, men below San Patricio Creek and closer to Zwolle generally enrolled a year or more later.

While available records do not give enrollment dates for all community men, enough information exists to offer an explanation for this pattern. People with ties toward the larger settlement of Mansfield would have been more exposed to the issues, events, and general propaganda surrounding the Rebel cause. They may also have been more involved in the dominate, plantation-aspiring Southern culture and been subject to more pressures to join it. News and sentiment would have drifted down to the isolated village of Bayou Scie more slowly where communication and law enforcement from the outside world were weaker. Both of these forces would have even less effect on people living further out, along the Sabine River bottom. After all, they had gained little or nothing from the Southern Anglos and would not feel compelled to offer anything in return.

The men who did choose to become involved appear to have acquitted themselves well. Incarnacion (known also as Shone or John) Castillo, for example served all four years of the war, was wounded in the Battle of Shiloh, and is credited with keeping his comrades in arms from starvation. One time when they were pinned down, short of rations, and unable to go for food, he slipped out. He was gone so long his companions were certain he had been killed, but presently he returned, touching each in turn and giving them a piece of bread he had somehow procured. It wasn't much, but it proved enough to keep them going.

A description of the man helps explain his ability to pass through the line undetected: "(H)e could travel right by you at night and you wouldn't even hear or see him. He was light-footed . . . anything would move, well, he'd stop and check it out first".

Incarnacion, universally recognized as an Indian, may be among the ones referred to in the following story:

> My mama used to talk about how her daddy (Jose E. Sepulvado) was in the war. They were with the Indians. They'd camp out with him. She used to say they'd get so hungry and the Indian men would go out and get turtles and bring them back and roast them over the fire and eat them. That was when they was havin' a war.

This same source identified "Old man Shone Castie" as one of Jose E.'s comrades.

Incarnacion Castillo did not return to his DeSoto Parish home after the war, but moved down and eventually married into the Ebarb community. As one oral history source explained, "He got in with some of the Ebarb boys that went to fight, they was drafted or whatever. Then he followed them on home . . .". He was not the only recognized Indian to become involved with the Ebarb people during the war.

Alcario Ebarb met up with Indians also dodging the war. They hid in caves near the John Brown Curve on the present Ebarb Road and reportedly carried wallets of gold over their shoulders. Some time during the course of the war these men were killed and buried there, presumably for their gold. The stretch of road near there is known as a "ghostly place" yet today.

Goods of any kind, whether gold, leather, or simply foodstuffs, became increasingly scarce as the war went on. One woman described how her grandmothers common-law husband had been caught and carried off to the war leaving her grandmother, a mere sixteen-year-old, with a newborn baby. "She didn't have nothin', no way to get clothes. They lived on the ground. They blocked off everything during the Civil War, and the baby died 'cause she couldn't get nothin' to eat". This source went on to tell how Hispanic widows and other women who had been abandoned took up with the Indian men in the area as a matter of survival. "They were starvin'. They had to get something to eat".

By all accounts, the people were starving. In addition to the northern blockade of southern ports and the general disruption of economic activity, troops passing through took everything. People were reduced to eating horse meat.

Civilians, whether they were dodging the war or not, were afraid of soldiers. One woman handed down a graphic account of hiding her own children under the bed and feeding them sugar to keep them quiet. According to the story, soldiers came in along the river, killing everyone. The old woman remembered seeing them shoot each other off horses. This, like the story below, was linked with Indians or Indianness.

According to local legend, the church located near the old Catholic cemetery south of Zwolle used to have a gold bell. Sources variously say Indians had the bell stolen from their church, Indians stole the bell from the church, or ordinary outlaws took it and dropped it in some deep body of water - either a well or the fork of San Miguel and Bayou Scie. The most likely variant of the tale says the priest heard the Yankees were coming from around Mansfield, feared for the church's gold and silver, and had the bell cut down and hidden in the well.

Stories of Indians and the Civil War are often connected. For instance, the woman who hid her children under the bed also took her grandchildren to see graves of Indians killed during the Civil War. She carefully instructed them not to tell anyone what they had seen.

Numerous oral history sources speak of the Indians being "run out by the Americans" during the Civil War or simply leaving. Somehow, possibly through the intervention of persons perceived to be white, a few Indians managed to remain. One detailed account tells how the Indians hid in cane brakes and hollow trees. Twelve men escaped. The others were run out by the army and slaughtered somewhere further north. According to this source, Steve Martinez gave the Indians refuge. Yet another of his descendants claims Steve Martinez merely allowed the Indians to locate their village on his land. This village, the second source admitted, later left.

It is difficult to determine exactly what these accounts refer to. Since oral tradition rarely hands down stories in strict chronological order, it is possible that the war between the states has become tangled up with other civil disturbances like the Cordova Rebellion or the decade of revolution and civil was in Texas that preceded Mexican independence when whites (Spaniards, Anglo-Texans) ran Ebarb's forebearers (Indians and mixed-bloods) out of Texas. It is also highly possible that some acts of violence were committed in the full-blood community during or in the turmoil shortly after the United States' War of Rebellion. This may have been the same sort of harassment and forced conscription the entire Ebarb community seemed to have been subject to, regardless of degree of Indian blood. Since Emanuel Martinez and his son Steven belonged to the local militia, it is possible they intervened to protect the village.

Whether something of the sort occurred during the 1860's or not, contacts with other full-bloods continued after the war. People like Jesus Morales hunted and danced with the Indians. Indians from a village somewhere to the north used to pass his cabin (located near James Sepulvado's present home on the Sepulvado Loop) on the way to and from ball

games. Jesus would cook food for them in a big iron pot which still hangs in his great-great grandson's yard. He and his daughter Emma conversed with their guests in their Native American language.

According to one source, the Indians had a stick ball playing in the field on a high hill near John Sepulvado's. Indians must have continued passing through to play stick ball at least as late as 1890 when Jesus's daughter remembered hearing them whoop on down the trail. H. M., part Indian himself and well known for his herbal medicine, learned his cures from the Indians.

Jesus Morales and his family were not the only ones to associate with Indians. Alcario Ebarb and his son William (Bill) crossed the river to visit and hunt with Native Americans. If the Ebarbs had repeated their trip, Bill might have married one of the women he met there. Alcario, several of his sons, his sisters Vehea and Brigida, and his nephew Marcelline could all reportedly speak an Indian language. Who were these Indians? The words which Marcelline Ebarb's descendants remember and which appear in the community in the form of nicknames are either Choctaw or Mobilian, a trade language based on Choctaw and other Southeastern languages.

Other indirect evidence of this Choctaw connection can be found in John Sanchez's recollections. The Indians who raised him (Quinteros, Carmonas) followed "tough laws" similar to those found among the Choctaw before removal and in the Choctaw Republic. When a member of Sanchez's group was found dead by the railroad tracks, the "captain" or chief called all the men before him. Each man had to lay his hand on the leader's table and state whether he had been the killer. The Indians would not lie; the murderer knew he must answer yes.

After confessing, the guilty party was given a year to put his personal affairs in order. At the end of this time he appeared at the appointed place, hung his hat on the execution pole, placed a paper sack beside it, and waited to be shot. This high sense of honor and honesty have been traditional Choctaw traits.

In addition to John Sanchez and his relatives and the Ebarb's excursions, there were other connections with Choctaws. Sometime before 1875, Alice Toby and her parents moved back to Louisiana from Oklahoma. The Tobys followed the Red River down to Grand Ecore, settled there for a time, then moved on down Bayou Pierre and Lanan Creek to eventually settle on Choctaw Creek.

Throughout the 1800's the Choctaw Republic in Oklahoma continued to encourage Choctaws remaining in Louisiana and

Mississippi to join them. Alice and her family must have gone and enrolled because her children later learned they were entitled to land - with oil under it - in Oklahoma. Unfortunately, dishonest dealings deprived them of it.

The Tobys were not the only ones to journey up to Oklahoma. During the 1930's when the government was settling the claims of orphans and children of enrolled Choctaws, Hildo (Tibucio) Remedies, his brother Bill, and an Ezernack man who had been their schoolmate at Grady Hill each received certificates stating they were seven-eighths Choctaw and entitled to land in Oklahoma.

Since they would reportedly need $100 to pay back taxes, none of these individuals ever received land. The certificate with its specific blood quantum, however, indicates that the Remedies' parents, Tibucio Remedies and Innocentia Carmona, must have traveled to and been enrolled in Oklahoma some time after their marriage in 1878.

As these stories indicate, a sort of second Indian removal occurred in southern states like Louisiana during the later part of the 1800's. On the one hand, Indian republics including the Choctaws wanted to give land to their fellow tribesmen before their territory filled up with white settlers and their tribal governments were dissolved to make way for Oklahoma statehood. On the other hand, the federal government wanted to do something for the Indians who had remained behind during the first removal, only to be neglected and disenfranchised. Choctaws in Mississippi and Louisiana were encouraged to migrate to Oklahoma, particularly during the twenty years preceding Oklahoma's statehood in 1907. Many of the Mississippi Choctaw looked on the process with extreme suspicion and refused to have anything to do with the government officials who had come to "help" them.

At least one Choctaw from the Ebarb area never had a chance to reach Oklahoma. In 1893 Paul Dawson (also remembered as Dorsey, Lawsom, and Darcie) married Jim Garcie's sister Delores. Sometime during this second removal period "when they were trying to get rid of the Indians", Paul got into an argument at his brother-in-law's house during a dance. Whether he announced he was going to Oklahoma and taking Jim's sister with him, tried to convince Jim he would have to leave for Oklahoma, too, or was threatened with removal by Jim remains unclear. It is not even clear who Paul Dawson began to fight with, but all accounts agree that he did not leave that yard, let alone the state, alive.

Some Indians - like Paul Dawson or his in-laws - viewed this second removal as a definite threat. This may be what many oral history sources refer to when the say the Indians were pushed out, "went off from here", or were rounded up. At

least one family, Jose (Hosie Puncheon) Procell and his parents, did not choose to go, but were sent. Jose and his brother became dissatisfied with the new place and, after weeks of walking back, stopped at the Ormegas north of Ebarb.

While people were moving back and forth in search of land, peculiar things were happening to land titles in Sabine Parish, too. Sometime after the Civil War, the Ezernacks lost a large tract of land to back taxes. This story would be repeated by many families well into the twentieth century. Others had never received formal title to their lands or had their ancient Spanish land claims recorded by the United States government. Whatever the case, the people generally had a more casual attitude about land ownership than mainstream American culture. Consequently, when lumber companies moved into the area in the 1890's. it was an easy matter for them to pay back taxes on the land, acquire a proper title to a squatter's place, or induce people to sign away their claims.

A clear instance of this happened in the community across San Patricio Creek and west of Noble. The lumber companies hired a man from Converse to persuade the people to sign a land lease in exchange for promise of work. One man in the Paddie, Joe Foster, tried to show his kinspeople that they were falling into a trap. When the agent promised him thirty acres and a deed, he decided to sign along with the rest of them. He never saw the deed.

As one community member stated, "They did have timber work and they did run those little trains (tram lines) in here. But they signed their rights away". Longoria, Manshack, Paddie, and Procell families signed. Their descendants still pay the companies a nominal rent to live on their parents' and grandparents' land. This oral history source concluded, "The companies got the cream". Another recalling how her father later wished he had realized his legal right to file a homestead claim, concurred: "He just went to sleep on his rights".

In addition to the large-scale logging and the building of the first sawmills other important changes came to the area in this era. In 1896, the Kansas City Southern Railway cut across the parish. The settlement of Vallecillo or Bayou Scie relocated a mile or so north along the railway line. The name of the community was also changed to Zwolle - on the whim of a Dutch investor. Mainstream American civilization made other inroads into the Spanish-speaking community during this time.

Though many of their forebearers in Texas had been literate, the hard work and isolation of the Louisiana piney woods left little opportunity for community members to learn to

more did not. A woman who had helped her widowed mother eke out a living by washing for the people in town expressed it like this: "We were equalized like . . . a Negro. That's what we was. They called us "Mexican" and we wasn't".

With the increasing number of outsiders the people had to deal with, and their dissimilar social system, community members found themselves relegated to second-class status. Leaders who provided a buffer between the people and this alien Anglo world largely came from the more acculturated families mentioned above. J.E. Sepulvado (1829-1920?), for example, served as mail carrier, was one of the sub-directors of schools in Ward 5, took care of business for his brothers and sisters, and appeared as under-tutor, appraiser, or a member of the family meetings on succession matters for a surprising number of people. T. Laroux (1870-1949) conducted business for his family, became a notary public, donated land for the Zwolle train depot, served as census taker, and also figures prominently in the people's legal transactions like succession records. S. Martinez (1875-1944) who owned a store in town and became justice of the peace, held a similar position in the community; fulfilled a similar function. George Leone (1857-1941), John Ezernack (1840-1921), Paul Ybarbo (1891-1964?), and others scattered through the community were people to turn to in lean times for credit or extra work, to help care for homeless children, or find a path through the labyrinth of the outside world's judicial system.

The people themselves continued to sustain one another as a functioning community. The people's strong faith and the establishment of a Catholic church in Zwolle proved to be a unifying factor. Localities within the larger Spanish-speaking community had their own supporting frameworks of curares or faith doctors, midwives, family heads, and community leaders. The community continued to offer mutual aid. Orphans were cared for by relatives or childless couples. For example, the midwife Emma Morales and her husband George Procell raised at least five children, though they had none of their own. Likewise, if someone became too ill to work their own farm, neighbors frequently showed up en masse to work the fields and donate foodstuffs. The same cooperative spirit held over into logrollings, quilting, and house and chimney building.

People maintained ties with the Spanish Lake community north of Robeline and relatives near Nacogdoches, Texas, as well. Theodora Garcie, for instance, met his wife while visiting his uncles in Nacogdoches. The couple married around 1890 and stayed in Nacogdoches five years before returning to Louisiana. Tom Meshell's mother Eloya Santos Coy married Jesus Michelle from Ebarb in 1859, but raised her children among her own kinspeople at Spanish Lake. After her death,

however, all four children moved to the Ebarb area and married there.

Joe Rivers, like several others, moved to Nacogdoches for a time to work in the timber industry there. His oldest son was born there in 1900 and called Severiano or Con after Joe's co-worker and fellow Louisianaian Con Procell. Others, like Cornelio Santos and his five sons moved from Nacogdoches to Sabine Parish sometime before the turn of the century.

People moved in search of land, work, and better times. The opening decades of the twentieth century brought both ease and hardship. The coming of the lumber companies and the railroads introduced new employment opportunities while limiting the woodsmen's traditional self-sufficiency; the influenza epidemic of 1918 as well as World War I permanently removed people from the community; the opening of the Zwolle oilfields brought more paying jobs, more rough and restless outsiders, more con men eager to take someone's land. Finally, the stock market crash of 1929 and resulting Depression threw the people back to their traditional self-sufficient resources and community togetherness. It also eventually forced many to seek work in metropolitan areas like Shreveport, Houston, Baton Rouge. The story of those changes and the people's accompanying adaptation follows.

THE COMING OF THE ANGLO-AMERICANS

The United States took possession of the Louisiana territory in 1803, and shortly thereafter the boundary between Louisiana and New Spain became an issue. A confrontation between Spanish and American troops at Bayou Pierre in 1806 was avoided when the principals involved decided to established a demilitarized zone between the two possessions. The area between the Rio Hondo, near present day Natchitoches, and the Sabine River came to be called the Neutral Strip. This area became inhabited by people of diverse backgrounds - honest settlers, outlaws, Indians, runaway slaves, misfits - who came to take advantage of this unadministered area (Purser 1961: 41-42).

The area proved to be unstable for honest farmers and settlers until after coming under American dominion in 1819. Revolts against the Mexican government, filibuster attempts, and Indian invasions combined to make life along both sides of the Sabine River difficult, as the Indo-Hispanic communities broke up and fled from west to east (Haggard 1945: 1051). By 1819 permanent Indo-Hispanic settlements were established at Bayou Pierre, Bayou Scie [Vallecillo, presently Zwolle], and old Los Adaes. Among the predecessors of the Apache-Choctaw claiming land between the

Rio Hondo and Sabine River in 1825 were Jose Mora, Jose Flores, Gregorio Mora, Juan Cortes, and Louis Procello. Procello later settled in present day DeSoto parish (Espey 1983: 32).

Gil Y Barbo's son-in-law, Jacinto Mora, claimed the vast Las Ormigas grant (Figure 1) in 1795, staking his possession in the presence of the syndic from Nacogdoches, a practice remembered by elderly informants in the 1980's. This grant was later acquired by the trading house of Davenport and Barr. Isaac Crow purchased two square leagues (Figure 2) from Vincente Michelli's 1797 Spanish land grant on the east side of the Sabine (L'Herrisson 1981: 102-106).

After the 1830's, American immigrants came to dominate the cultural groups located in the Sabine River area. Indian, and even Spanish, heritage came to indicate lower status, and many mixed-blood and Indian communities withdrew and isolated themselves to avoid as much contact as possible. In 1838 many of these people joined with the mestizo, Vincente Cordova, to rebel against the dominant Anglos in East Texas. Cordova's rebellion failed, and those who had participated scattered to Mexico or rejoined their relatives east of the Sabine (Lamar 1922, II: 208). Indo-Hispanic communities coalesced in the backwoods areas around Bayou Pierre, Bayou Scie [Zwolle], Spanish Lake, and Ebarb to escape Anglo-American incursion.

These mixed communities followed a pattern of Indian isolationism as a response to Anglo expansionism, typical of many Indian groups in the Southeast. Located in the swamps and backwoods, these communities did not really compete with Anglo immigrants for arable lands, engaging instead in free-ranging cattle, hunting, fishing, and gathering, supplementing their subsistence with small farms (Faine and Gregory 1986: 19).

Writing to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in 1857, Bishop August Marie from Natchitoches described the Sabine or Indo-Hispanic communities to his superiors (Marie 1857):

> For the last three years, I had asked God's aid to save the Mexican populations of my cese from perdition; they are scattered between Natchitoches and the Sabine . . . Descendants of the union of the conquerors of Mexico with the women of the conquered tribes, these separated people mix very little with the whites who consider them an inferior race. They are of small stature - their complexion very dark - their hair invariably black and straight like the Indians whose features dominate in them . . . They speak almost only Spanish and are in extreme poverty. Misery and illness have, for the last twenty years or so, considerably reduced

> their number. They were counted at one time in the thousands but there are barely twelve or fifteen hundred left.

These communities were able to maintain their separateness until the twentieth century, when the lumber and railroad industries heavily impacted the area. An influx of Mexican laborers were associated by Anglos with these communities, however mistakenly, and the mixed communities began to suffer sever social conflicts with their white neighbors. Names became somewhat anglicized, and the use of Spanish or French as a first language began to decline. Swiss linguist Albert Gatschet, who studied the Chitimacha language in southern Louisiana, wrote a local minister trying to gather information on the local Indo-Hispanic people, probably intending to study their archaic language. Unfortunately, the minister never wrote Gatschet back and the study was never performed (Faine and Gregory 1986: 20).

Studies on the language are currently being conducted by Hiram F. Gregory from Northwestern State University and Sam Armistead from the University of California at Davis. Many of the elderly residents still speak fluent Spanish, and less often, French, and use terms of Nahuatl or Choctaw origin. Family designations such as "Bear" for one division of the Ebarb family may indicate a former clan name, and the Mintis, a division of the Sepulvado family probably comes from the Choctaw "Ho Minti", meaning to come, or "come here".

THE APACHE-CHOCTAW TRIBE

The Apache-Choctaw of the Ebarb, Louisiana area did as many Indian groups did - they isolated themselves to reduce social stigma by whites. Their ethnicity and heritage was hidden from outsiders, and the younger people were often not told the details of their lineage in an attempt to protect them from local prejudices. This pattern of isolationism continued to at least the 1970's, when studies were performed to determine the needs of elderly Indian people in Louisiana.. Researchers noted at that time "Indians were fearful of the census, even when it was conducted by another Indian. In some sections of Louisiana, persons who are Indians will not admit to being Indians and will claim another race". Joan Roche, in her study on diabetes in the Apache-Choctaw community (1982) also noted problems with census and identification, commenting on the relative "invisibility" of Indian people in Sabine Parish. An assessment of needs made by the state in 1973 identified only twelve Indians in Sabine Parish, totally misidentified as Houma Indians (Roche 1982: 65). By 1985, however there were an estimated 950 members of the Apache-Choctaw

Community of Ebarb with one or both heads of household having Indian blood (Faine and Gregory 1986: 33). With a growing awareness outside their community, and a renewal of ethnic pride, it is no longer necessary for community members to deny their heritage.

In the 1960s, regional anthropologist Hiram Gregory began to direct studies by students from the Ebarb communities who identified both Choctaw and Apache descendents within the area. The mixed-blood communities became aware that a lack of racial purity did not prevent their identification as Indian people, and a new interest and pride developed among these people.

Community leader Raymond Ebarb began to organize the Apache-Choctaw of Ebarb, later becoming the first tribal chairman. A set of by-laws were written, and in 1977 the Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb was incorporated. Subsequently this group was granted legislative recognition as an Indian community. However, fearful of land claims, the State of Louisiana refused recommendation for federal recognition for the tribe. The Apache-Choctaw Community of Ebarb, Inc. still was the first self-determined, organized tribal government of Indo-Hispanic people in northwestern Louisiana. The tribal government with their chairperson, Hester Escott, has initiated many economic and educational programs, and the Ebarb community public school is one of the only "Indian" schools in Louisiana (Faine and Gregory 1986).

The Apache-Choctaw retain a distinct ethnicity within the area of northwestern Louisiana. Anthropologist and other researchers are beginning to use this region and its people as an area of study. Sepulvado (1975) documented folk curing among community members. The use of herbal remedies, as well as witchcraft and other folk syndromes were discussed. Sepulvado identified "a mixed Spanish-Choctaw Indian woman" as one of the most powerful Malojos (one with the power to harm another by looking at him - evil eye) within the present community (Sepulvado 1975: 11). Discussing the folk disease, Envidia, witchcraft associated with envy of another, "an old Lipan Apache" told of an instance he had witnessed (Sepulvado 1975: 24). Witchcraft and curing are common among Indians communities, and many who Sepulvado interviewed identified themselves as Choctaw or Apache people. Midwifery and curing were strong in the Apache-Choctaw communities until after World War II, and a strong herbal tradition is still prevalent.

Joan Roche's 1982 study dealt with the socio-cultural aspects of diabetes in the Apache-Choctaw community. She noted the presence of a strong heritage of traditional medicine, and a high percentage of rate of diabetes incidents within the community (Roche 1982: 125). She also

verified that the present community is an endogamous one (Roche 1982: 66-67).

In the 1986 assessment of the status of the Apache-Choctaw tribe, Faine and Gregory studied 107 out of 308 identified households. They noted that sixty-one per cent of household members met the one-quarter or more blood standard imposed by many tribes (Faine and Gregory 1986: 3). "Of the 331 household members contained in the 107 households, eight per cent of the members had no "Indian blood".

Since the 1970's, the Apache-Choctaw have been identified as a tribe, distinct from other tribes. Felix Cohen, in his work on Indian law (Cohen 1942), notes that there is no universal legal definition of the term, tribe (Cohen 1942: 3). He notes that, defined anthropologically, a tribe is any socially distinct group of people with similar ancestry, common leadership, political independence, and economic autonomy. Legally, the burden of proof lies within the tribe (Cohen 1942: 3-4). However, he goes further to say the "the definition of tribe, like many other such generic terms, will depend in part on the context and the purposes for which the term is used" (Cohen 1942: 3). A tribe which is composed of members of mixed heritage (i.e., Apache and Choctaw) presents another problem, but Cohen notes the "Congress has created "consolidated" or "confederated" tribes consisting of several ethnological tribes, sometimes speaking different languages . . . These . . . consolidated or confederated groups have been treated politically as single tribes" (Cohen 1942: 5-6).

Later, discussing the definition of the term "Indian", Cohen notes that racial composition is not always the most important factor in determining who is an Indian (Cohen 1942: 20-21):

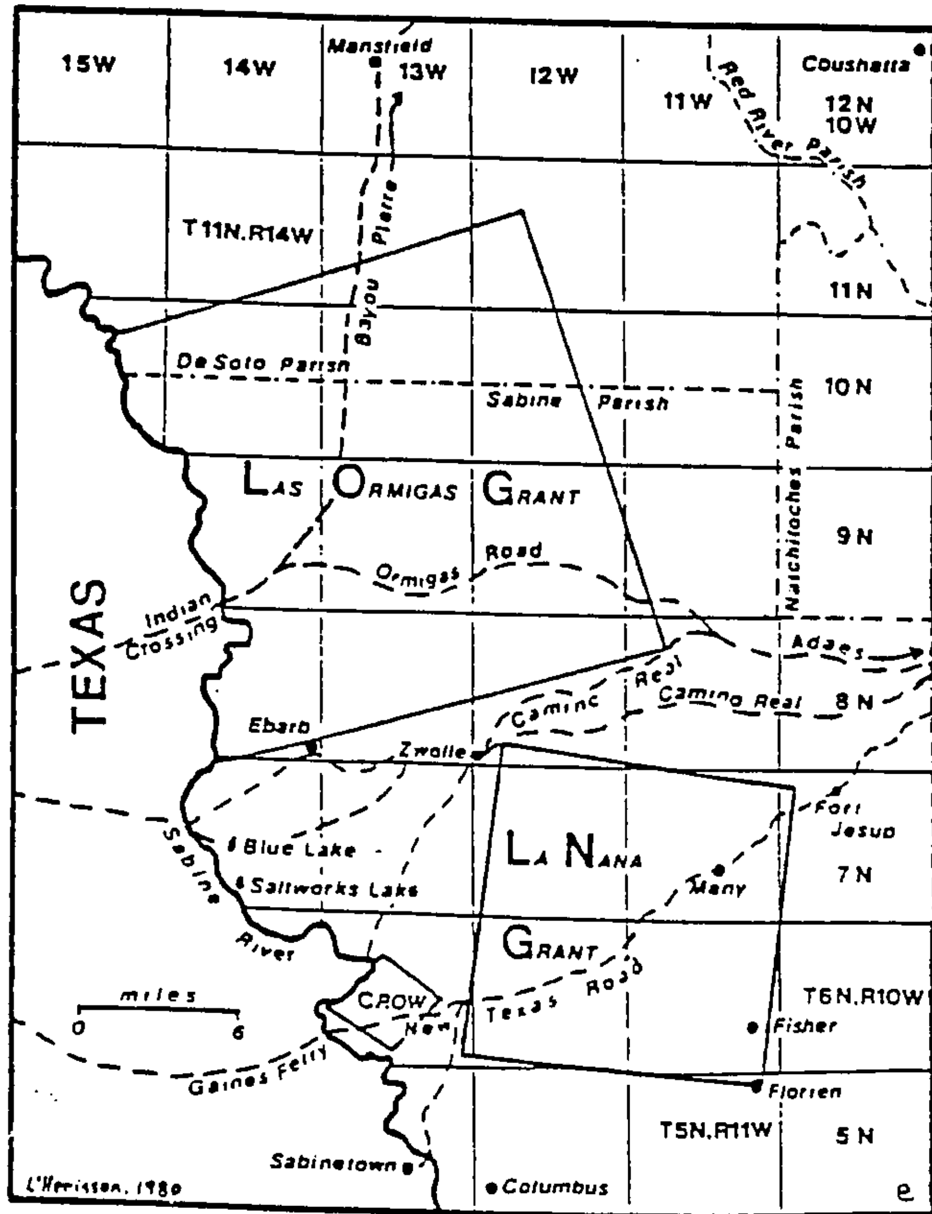
> Recognizing the diversity included in the definition of Indian, there is nevertheless some practical value for legal purposes in a definition of Indian as a person meeting two qualifications: (a) that some of the individual's ancestors lived in what is now the United States before its discovery by Europeans, and (b) that the individual is recognized as an Indian by his or her tribe or community.

Clearly, the Apache-Choctaw people meet these qualifications.

CONCLUSIONS

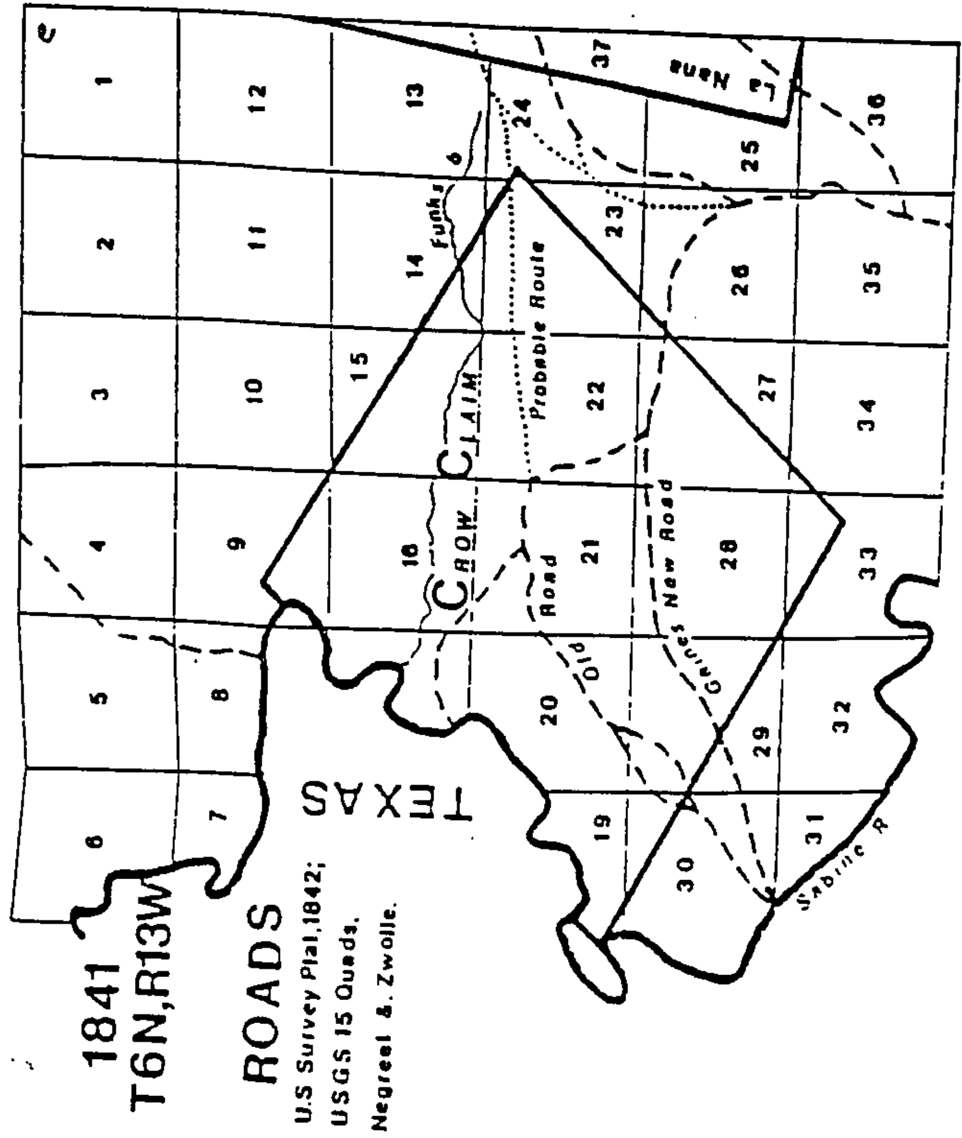
The Apache-Choctaw of Sabine Parish (Figure 3) are comprised of descendants of primarily Lipan Apache, Choctaw, and Spanish settlers of the area. These three major groups combined to a lesser degree with those of French and local Indian descent. From the eighteenth century to the present, this group has represented an endogamous cultural enclave, with knowledge of their Indian identity. Isolating themselves to avoid potential conflict with their white neighbors, these people of diverse origins formed a distinct cultural group known today as the Apache-Choctaw tribe, recognized by the State of Louisiana and by other Indian tribes as ethnically Indian.

FIGURE 1



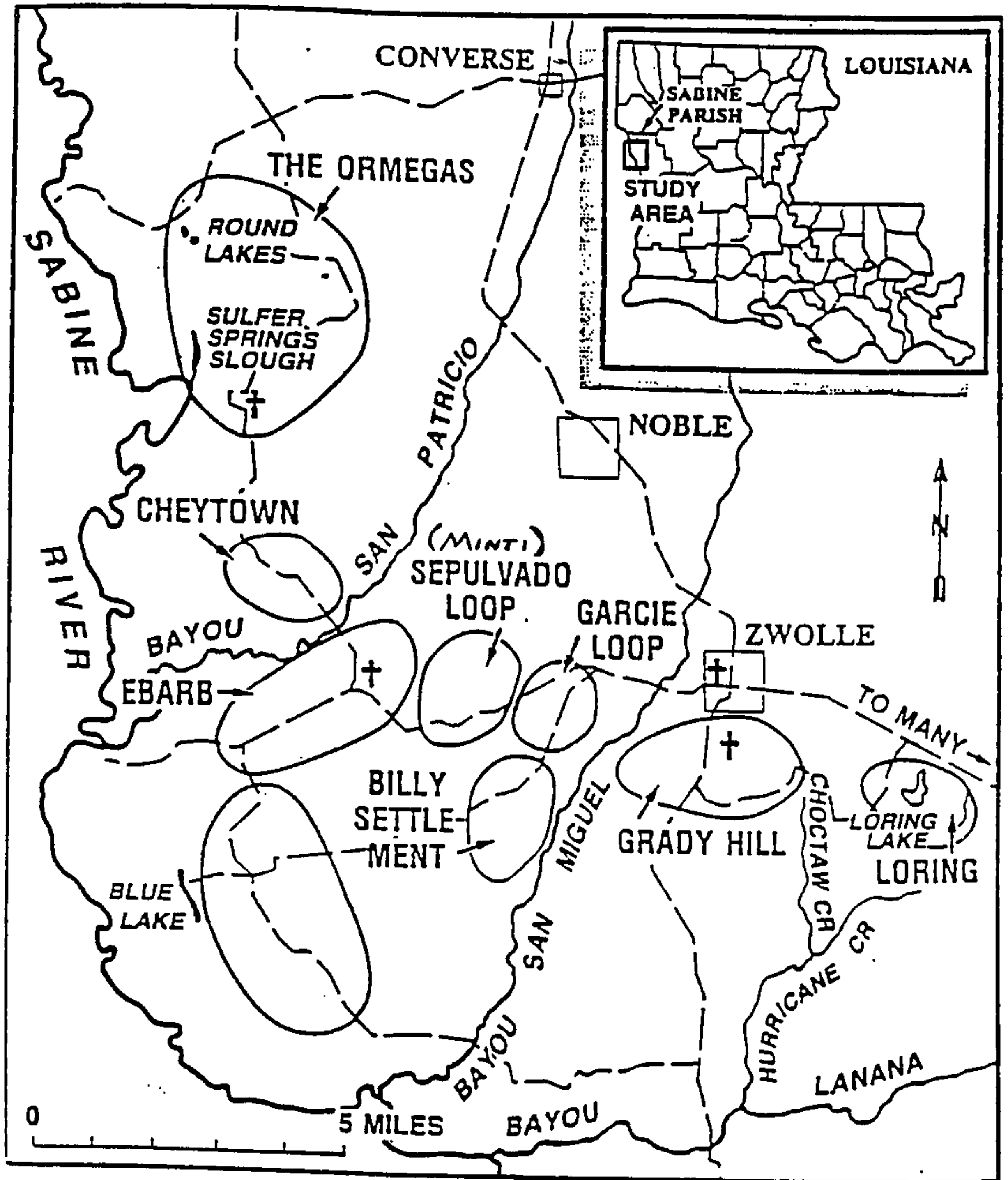
From: L'Herrisson (1981: 103)

FIGURE 2



From L'Herrisson (1981: 107).

FIGURE 3



THE HISPANIC-INDIAN COMMUNITY
OF SABINE PARISH BEFORE THE LAKE

From Van Rheenen (1987: 29)