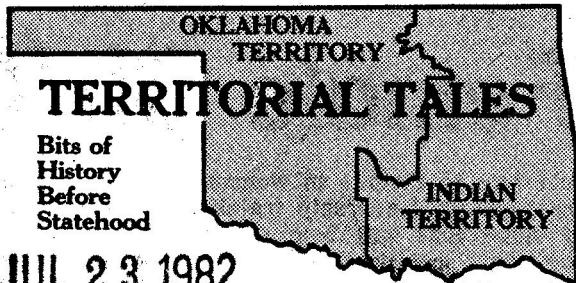


# White Men Did Little For Indians

Bits of  
History  
Before  
Statehood

JUL 23 1982



Indians of the tribes of the Southern Great Plains, including the Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Cheyennes and Arapahoes ranged over the region from the Colorado and Pecos Rivers of Texas to the Republican and Platte Rivers in the north.

In 1896, they were ordered to take up residence on reservations. Except for a few hostile bands, they did so. They were permitted to leave their reservations only at stated times to hunt for meat and skins. Each time they went in search of buffalo they found fewer of them, but more white hunters.

Added to this, white

men — fugitives from justice, gamblers, horse thieves, whiskey smugglers — skulked around the reservations to ply their nefarious avocations and spread the vices of civilization without dispersing its virtues among the Indians.

Many white settlers and some public officials recognized these adverse conditions. A commissioner of Indian affairs report for 1868 summed up "The Indian Question" in these words:

"Naturally, the Indian has many noble qualities. He is the very embodiment of

courage. Indeed, at times he seems insensible of fear. If he is cruel and revengeful, it is because he is outlawed and his companion is the wild beast.

"Let civilized man be his companion and the association warms into life virtues of the rarest worth. Civilization has driven him back from the home he loved. It has often tortured and killed him, but it never could make him a slave. As we have so little respect for those we did enslave, to be consistent, this element of Indian character should challenge some admiration."