

David W. Baird. *The Quapaw Indians: A History of the Downstream People*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980) x, 290 pp., \$19.95.

Baird, in a highly engaging book, examines the history of a little known Indian tribe. Originally inhabitants of the Ohio Valley, the Quapaws, by 1773, had migrated to the area around the Arkansas and Mississippi Rivers where they were first encountered by the French. Considered important allies by the French and later the Spanish, the Quapaws served as a buffer against the British and British-allied Indians. The results of contacts with Europeans, however, were soon felt by the Quapaws; by 1763 their population had dropped to seven hundred from an estimated six to fifteen thousand in 1682.

The United States initially considered the Quapaws to be allies following the purchase of Louisiana. However, as whites entered the area, the federal government viewed the tribe as an impediment to development and moved the Quapaws to Indian Territory. Removal from their homeland further reduced the population, disrupted cultural patterns, and contributed to a reduction in tribal identity. By 1888 most of the Quapaws had adopted the trappings of white culture. Tribal cohesion was further weakened by the discovery of large zinc and lead deposits on the reservation and tribal allotments. Assimilation continued almost unabated until the early 1950s. However, in 1954, the Indian Claims Commission recognized the Tribe's claims and as a result, interest in Quapaw culture and history, especially among younger members of the tribe, greatly increased.

Through painstaking research, Baird has thoroughly documented Quapaw history and clearly identified the results of European and American contact. The book includes an excellent bibliography covering both published and primary sources, is well indexed and offers numerous maps and photographs.

The Quapaw Indians represents a significant effort to preserve the history of a people whose cultural identity had been all but destroyed, but who refused to disappear and who serve as proof to all of the importance and strength of a culture.

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