

SOURCE SET 4 - INDIAN TERRITORY RESETTLEMENT

SOURCE 4A

Indian Territory

Gannett, Henry

46 pages, published 1881, New York, C. Scribner's sons

<http://archive.org/details/indianterritory00gann>

SOURCE 4B

“Indian Territory”

Gannett, Henry

Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1895), pp. 272-276

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/197313>

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Observe

- What type of text is this (letter, newspaper article, report, advertisement, legal document, etc.)?
- Are there any headers, headlines or other formatting options that call out specific parts of the text?
- What does the text describe or explain?
- How does the text portray the Native Americans and the U.S. government?

Reflect

- Why do you think this text was made? What might have been the creator’s purpose? What evidence supports your theory?
- Why do you think the author chose to include these specific details of description or explanation? What information might have been left out of the text?
- What do you think the author might have wanted the audience to think or feel? Does the arrangement or presentation of words, illustrations, or both affect how the audience might think or feel? How?
- What do you feel when reading this text?
- Does this text show clear bias? If so, towards what or whom? What evidence supports your conclusion?
- What did you learn from examining this text? Does any new information you learned contradict or support your prior knowledge about the topic of this text?

Compare & Contrast

- What was the tone of each text? How did the author portray the Native Americans and the U.S. government in the text from 1881 versus the text from 1895? What do you think accounts for the similarities or differences in the portrayals?

SOURCE 4A, PAGE 1

Inhabitants.—Besides the Indians who originally inhabited this territory, the United States Government has from time to time moved thither entire tribes, or parts of tribes, from more or less distant portions of the country, assigning to each tribe a definite area or “reservation.” The immigrants now outnumber very largely the

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SOURCE 4A, PAGE 2

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SOURCE 4A, PAGE 3

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SOURCE 4A, PAGE 4

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SOURCE 4B EXCERPT

The form of the government of the tribes is quite similar to that of States. They elect a Governor and other executive officers, a legislature consisting of two houses, and they have a judiciary, with the other machinery of the law. The government, however, is very feeble, especially in matters affecting the white residents of the Territory, and most of the administration of law is carried on by the United States authorities.

In accordance with the treaties made with the United States, the lands of these tribes are held in common. They cannot be disposed of by the tribes to any party except the United States. Under their laws, any member of the tribe may take up and use any unoccupied land which he desires. This holding, however, is subject to the will of the tribe, which retains ownership of the land. In this way the Indians have located themselves mainly upon little farms, away from the railroads and white settlements. The whites who have become members of the tribe by intermarriage, on the contrary, with their wide-awake Anglo-Saxon enterprise, have seized upon the cream of the country. They hold the town sites, the coal lands and the finest of the agricultural and grazing lands. Most of these lands they have rented to other white men, paying a small portion of the rental to the nation. Thus we have before us a practical illustration of the workings of Henry George's theory of holding land in common, and it can scarcely be said to be a success. The number of land-grabbers being limited, land-grabbing has gone to a far greater extreme than in any other part of the country. For instance, it is said that the entire reservation of the Seminoles is in the hands of one man, the chief, and that the Indians are practically serfs, and the same is the case in less degree in other nations. Another evil follows closely upon this: owing to the extreme uncertainty of all land titles, or rather to the utter absence of them, few settlers dare to make more than the most temporary sort of improvements. Most of the buildings in the towns are of the most flimsy, temporary character. The policy, naturally, is to skim the cream as quickly as possible and throw away the skimmed milk to sour.

With the large number of whites in the Territory not connected with the tribes, but dependent for their leases, and for the improve-

SOURCE 4B EXCERPT, PAGE 1*Indian Territory.*

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ments they have made, upon the will of the Indians, it will be surprising if the present condition of things lasts much longer. As their numbers increase relative to the Indian population, they will certainly take possession of the civil authority sooner or later, and of their holdings. Such a revolution seems near at hand. It can probably be effected without material trouble, since the Indian population will be greatly outnumbered.

Foreseeing this possible result, the United States has been, for some time past, attempting to negotiate with these Indians with a view of giving up the tribal governments, divide their lands in severalty, and thus make it possible for the whites to obtain deeds to whatever land the Indians do not actually require. A Commission is at present in the Territory attempting to treat with the Indians, but the latter, influenced probably by the whites who are members of the tribe, and who have every reason to be satisfied with the present arrangement, refuse to treat with them in any way. Indeed, under the circumstances it seems to be a very difficult situation. The only easy solution would seem to be to give every one connected with the tribe whatever he claims, which would result naturally enough, in giving the Indians proper very little and the white men who have married into the tribes the lion's share. On that basis, it is altogether probable that there will be no trouble in coming to an understanding and agreement with the Indians, owing to the influence which these white men among them have over them.

As a preliminary to the allotment of lands among the Indians the United States Government has commenced the subdivision of these lands into townships, sections and quarter-sections. An appropriation of \$200,000 was made by the last Congress for this purpose, being the amount estimated to be necessary for subdividing half of the Territory, with the exception of the Chickasaw Nation, which has already been subdivided. This work was, under the appropriation act, placed in the hands of the Director of the U. S. Geological Survey, to be executed by the Topographic force connected with this Bureau. The work was commenced in April, 1895, and is being rapidly pushed forward, and by the end of the year 1896, providing Congress continues to support it, the subdivision of the Territory will be completed.