

Introduction

In 1915, a local artifact collector wrote James Thoburn, the state historian of Oklahoma, to report a site near the border with Kansas where “Indian mounds” and “pieces of flint lock guns” could be found (Bell 2004:5). Since that time, generations of archaeologists, historians, and journalists have imagined what the Deer Creek site (34KA3) might reveal about Native–French fur trade relations in the southern Great Plains of North America. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French cartographers depicted one village located at the confluence of an unnamed tributary (today, Deer Creek) and the “Rivières des Arkansas,” paired with a second village to the north (Wedel 1981:25) (Figures 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3). Surface collections made by visitors included an intriguing assortment of Indigenous stone tools, alongside gun parts, iron and copper fragments, and glass beads, all presumably manufactured in Europe (Sudbury 1976). Aerial photographs taken in 1938 by Oklahoma’s agricultural conservation society showed a circular anomaly, likely a fortification, in an unplowed portion of its pasture. Forty years later, limited remote

sensing lent credence to the existence of this structure (Corbyn 1976). Yet, for all these discoveries, the site itself remained off-limits to formal archaeological excavation, initially owing to the refusal of landowners; later to the conservation policies implemented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers following the agency’s acquisition of the land in the 1970s (Wyckoff 2008). Denied access to Deer Creek, past and present archaeologists instead turned their efforts to Deer Creek’s contemporaneous sister-site, Bryson-Paddock (34KA5), located 3 km to the north (Drass et al. 2018a; Vehik et al. 2021).

A century after Deer Creek’s discovery, the present monograph reports and builds on the results of a successful “Challenge Partnership Agreement” established in 2014 between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, and state archaeologists. This working plan led to reclamation efforts for a portion of the Deer Creek site damaged by encroaching vegetation. Grinding down trees and dense brush understory, heavy



Figure 1.1. Nicolas de Fer, *Partie Meridionale de la Rivière de Missisipi*. Courtesy of the Birmingham Public Library.

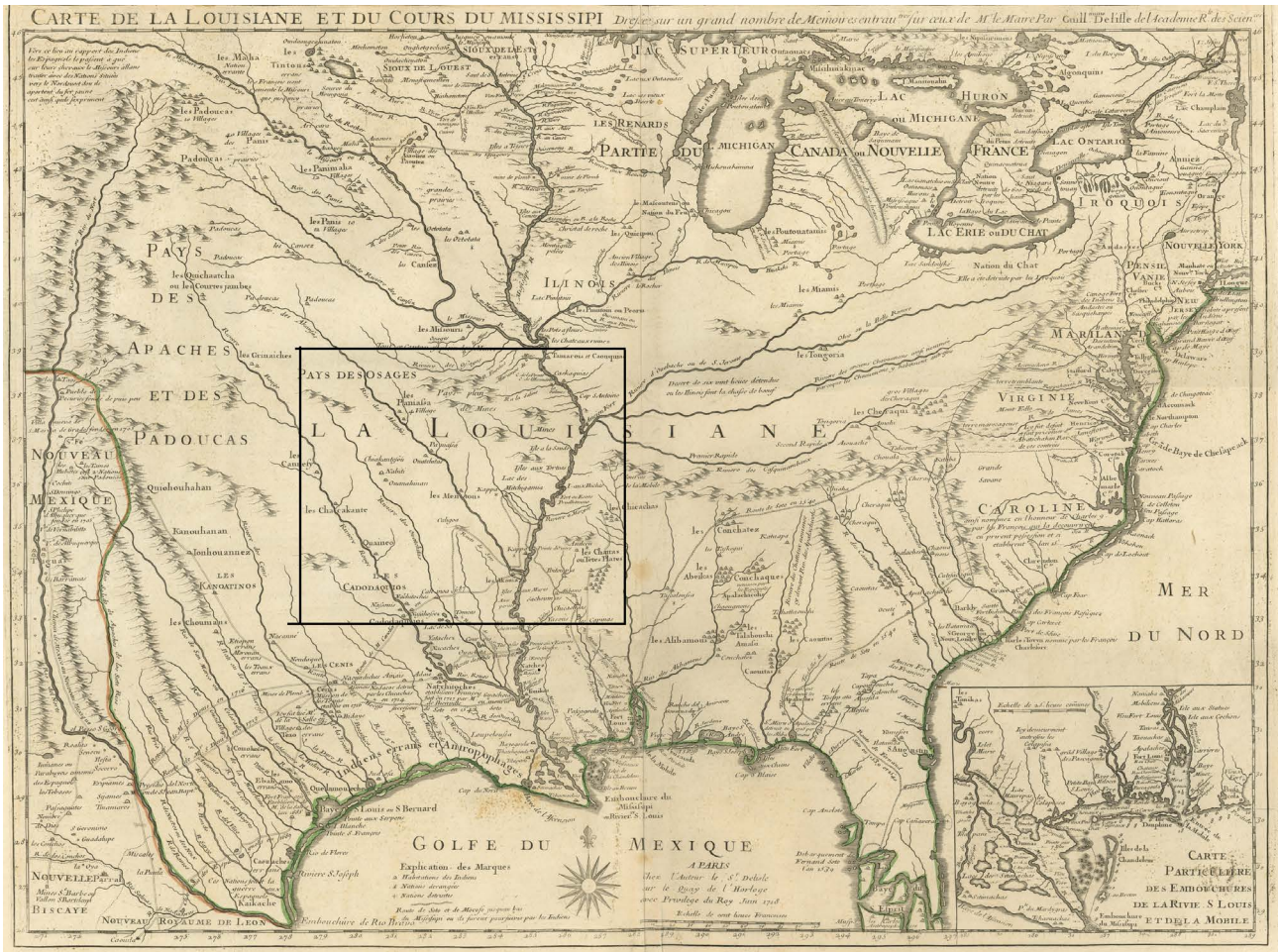


Figure 1.2. Guillaume Delisle, *Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Mississipi*. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Louisiana: European Explorations and the Louisiana Purchase.

equipment operators cleared an approximately 40 x 150 m area centered on the hypothesized fortification (Figure 1.4). Geophysical specialists from the Oklahoma Archeological Survey then conducted near-surface surveys (gradiometer, ground-penetrating radar, and electrical resistivity) of the cleared area to confirm and improve upon the initial geophysical survey (Corbyn 1976). These activities facilitated formal archaeological excavations undertaken in the summers of 2016 and 2017 (Figures 1.5 and 1.6). Having completed the analyses of cultural materials excavated from Deer Creek and augmented by earlier published findings from Bryson-Paddock, the present volume will address significant issues regarding the role of the Wichita during the colonial era in the southern Great Plains of the United States.

1.1. The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

Archaeological and historical information confirm Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock were inhabited by peoples whose ancestors occupied the southern Plains for millennia. Known today as the “Wichita and Affiliated Tribes,” their language shares close relations with the Caddo to the east, and with the Pawnee and Arikara of the central and northern Plains (Figure 1.5). As elsewhere, Southern Plains archaeologists aggregate and classify

archaeological sites and associated material culture into discrete taxonomic units based on temporal and areal continuity, and other criteria. After approximately 1450 CE taxonomies involving ancestral Wichita peoples include the Great Bend aspect with two foci, the Little River complex and Lower Walnut complex, both in southern Kansas (Wedel 1959; Drass 1998; Vehik 2006); the Wheeler phase in western Oklahoma (Drass and Baugh 1997); the Garza complex located in northwestern Texas (Cruse 2023); and the Henrietta complex “in the upper Red River and Brazos River valleys” (Drass 1998:434). After initial contact by the Spanish in the sixteenth century, these dispersed settlements appear to have coalesced into larger villages in northern Oklahoma and Texas, including the sites under examination in this study.

Based on early Contact-Period European accounts, these geographically dispersed populations did not necessarily share a single identity, as their modern appellation—Affiliated Tribes—indicates. The use of the generalized term “Wichita” resulted from the name’s codification in the United States’ Treaty of Camp Holmes in 1835 (Newcomb 2001:551; Smith 2000:xi–xii, 133n.62) becoming normalized over the twentieth century. In earlier centuries, households likely used residence, birth, and marriage to distinguish between one or more named bands,

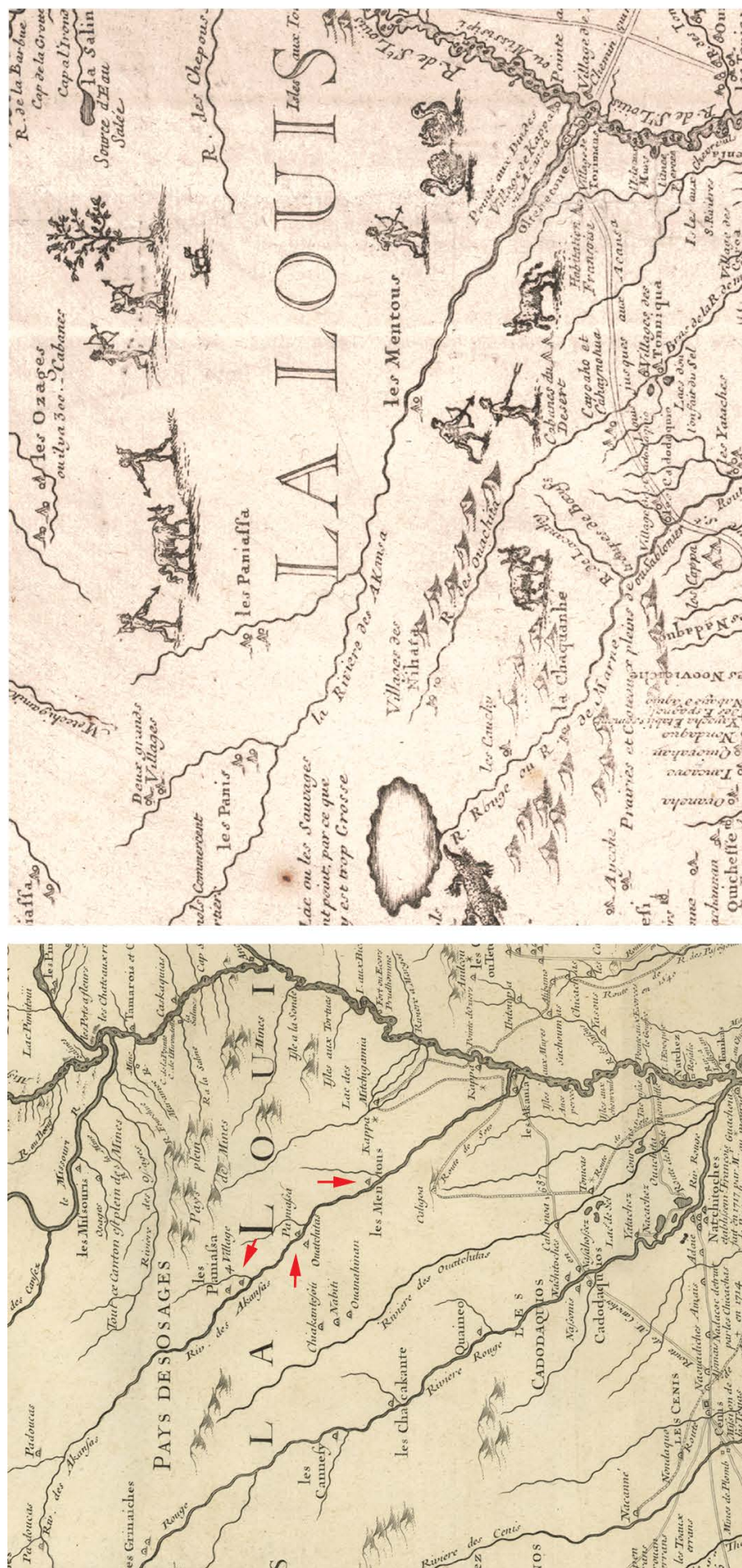


Figure 1.3. Magnified portions of the Fer (right) and Delisle (left) maps highlighting ancestral Wichita village locations along the Arkansas River and tributaries.



Figure 1.4. Tree clearing at the Deer Creek site.

or subgroups: Taovaya, Wichita, Tawakoni, Waco, Iscani, and perhaps others (Newcomb 2001). In fact, throughout the European contact era, the Taovaya band figured very prominently in the archival record. Eighteenth-century French accounts describe the occupants of Deer Creek as Taovaya, while the inhabitants of nearby Bryson-Paddock were recognized as the Wichita subgroup (Vehik 1992).

By approximately 1000 CE these ancestral Wichita groups on the southern Plains engaged in a multifocal subsistence economy dominated by agriculture, hunting, and gathering (Drass 2008; Drass and Flynn 1990). At present, the earliest direct evidence of domesticated maize in the region comes from northwestern Oklahoma and dates to 900–920 CE (McKay et al. 2004). Over time, maize cultivation continued to “intensify in both tall and short grass prairie settings,” becoming the most important cultigen on the southern Plains (Drass 2008:16). By the early seventeenth century, Spanish accounts describe cornfields surrounding settlements, with even the space between houses under cultivation (Hammond and Rey 1953:754–755, 858). By the eighteenth century, Europeans reported Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock well stocked with maize and beans (Hackett 1941:317, 322, 327; Wedel 1981:72–73). As a legume, beans complemented maize to provide a complete protein, while squash, marshelder, and other domesticates

were also grown and consumed. Finally, a variety of tobacco indigenous to North America, *Nicotiana rustica*, was cultivated (Drass 2008:20–25).

The benefits and demands involved in agriculture were reflected in “thousands of villages” of variable permanence documented by archaeologists in the southern Plains (Drass 1998:415). Still, as occupants of one of the richest terrestrial hunting grounds in North America, the ancestral Wichita actively hunted *Bison bison* in the fall and spring as a major staple of their daily diet, and as a resource for interregional and, later, international trade (Baugh 1991; Creel 1991; Vehik et al. 2010). After a period of scarcity, bison herds increased substantially in the southern Plains around 1300 CE, owing to persistent drought and xeric environmental conditions conducive to the eastward expansion of the short grass biome favored by them (Baugh 1991:121). Bison remained plentiful until their near eradication by Euromericans in the last half of the 1800s (Creel 1991:42).

As bison proliferated, the Wichita developed an interregional exchange strategy in the trade of meat, hides, tanned robes, and other bison byproducts to adjacent societies in the Southeast and Southwest (Smith 2000; Trabert and Bethke 2021). Southeastern peoples sought

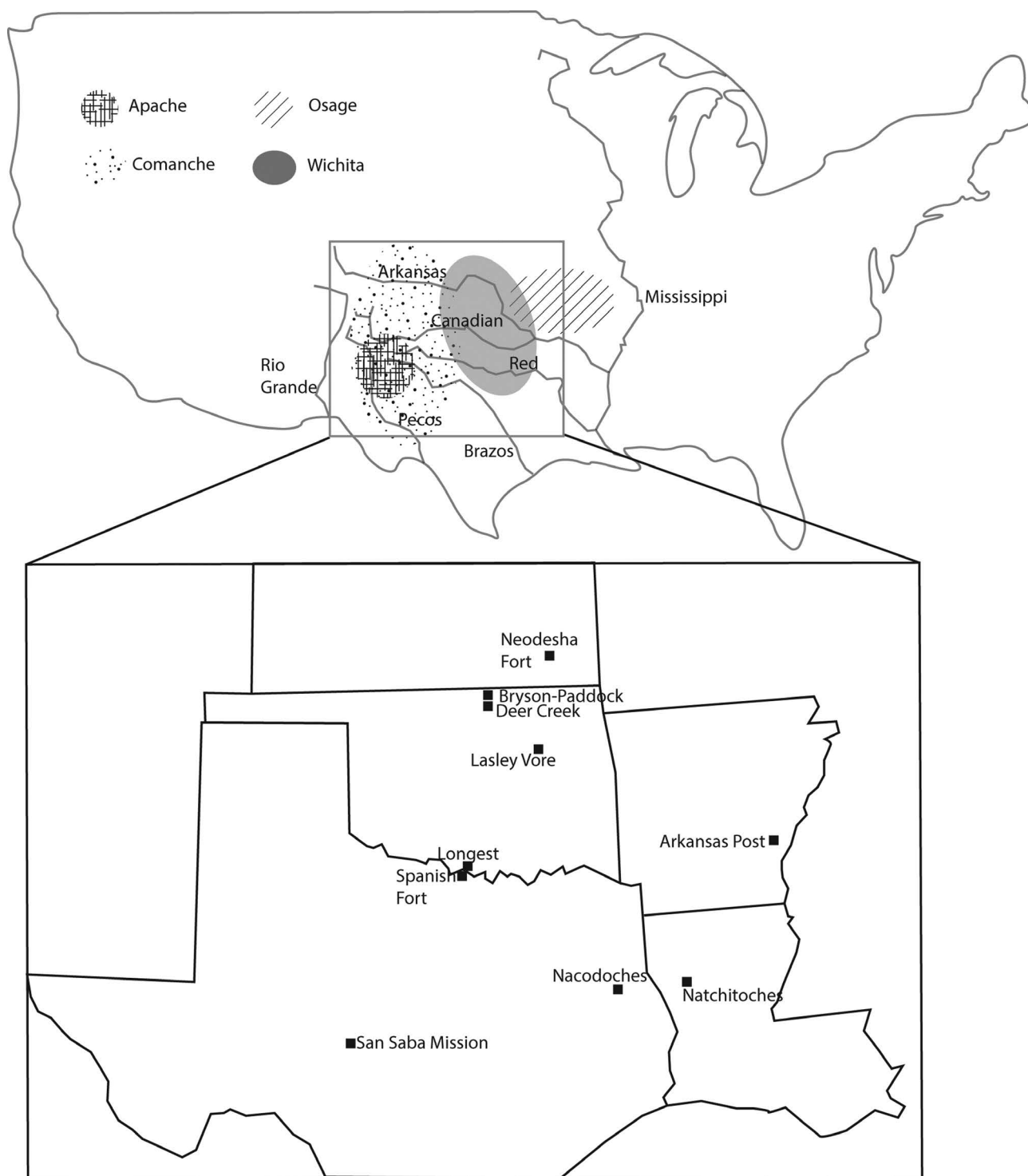


Figure 1.5. Locations of Wichita sites mentioned in text with territorial boundaries (c.1650–1800 CE) for the Wichita and neighboring groups.

bison hides as a thicker, less pliable, but more durable, alternative to deer skins, needed in the manufacture of war shields (Dye 1994:47). Southwestern Puebloan peoples “came to depend quite heavily on Plains bison hides; hides replaced wicker for shields, hide moccasins replaced woven sandals, and Pueblo warriors began wearing bison-hide helmets” (Vehik et al. 2010:151). In exchange, the Wichita acquired non-local items. From the Southwest, obsidian, turquoise, varieties of Pacific *Olivella* shell,

and glazed ceramics all appear in the archaeological record. Exchange with Southeastern societies resulted in the acquisition of pottery, such as Neosho Punctate ceramics, earpools, copper items, natural pigments, non-local high-quality cherts such as Arkansas novaculite, among other goods (Bell 1984; Vehik and Baugh 1994). Other, more perishable objects were likely traded—wooden items, cotton mantas, food stuffs, etc.—yet, they remain underrepresented or completely absent from the

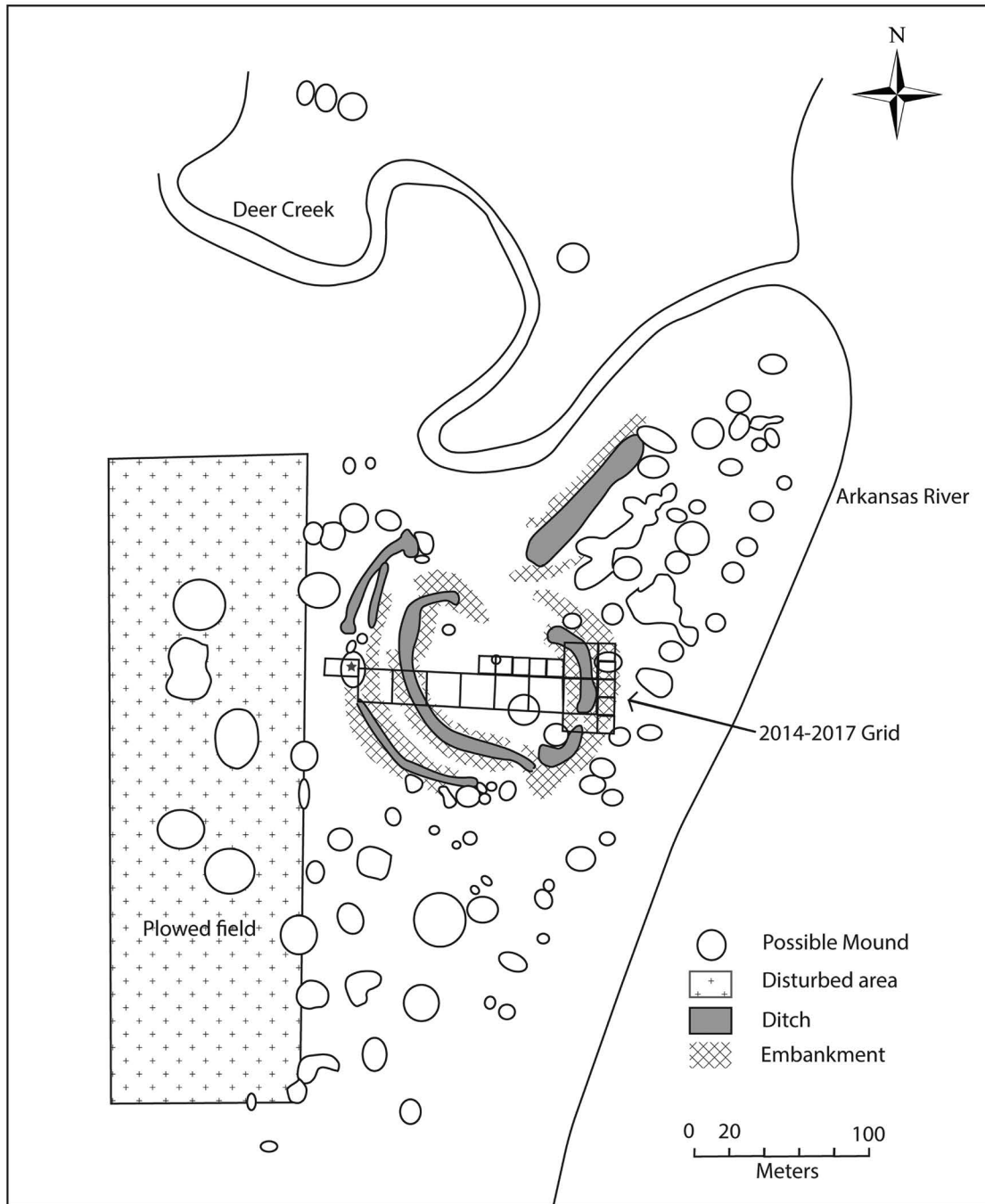


Figure 1.6. Map of the Deer Creek site (base map adapted from Corbyn 1976:fig. 4, with our geophysics grid overlaid).

archaeological record. Thus, by the time the Taovaya and Wichita founded the villages of Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock their ancestors had been heavily engaged in interregional trade for at least three centuries.

To facilitate trade, ancestral Wichita groups often settled, seasonally or more permanently, in areas adjacent to other Indigenous peoples. In these frontier settings, archaeological evidence reveals the precautions they took to protect their villages and trade goods from potentially hostile incursions by outsiders. Using improved intrasite settlement data, including geophysical images, archaeologists have now identified a long history of fortification construction within ancestral Wichita villages.

At present, the earliest data come from the late-fifteenth- to sixteenth-century Wheeler phase sites of Duncan (34WA2) and Edwards I (34BK2) in western Oklahoma, and at the Garza complex site of Bridwell (41CB27) in northwestern Texas, south of the Texas Panhandle (Baugh 1986:175–178; Drass et al. 2019). Geophysical images at the Duncan site, in particular, reveal how the palisade included an overlapping, or “baffled,” entryway for defensive purposes (Drass et al. 2019:568–569).

As will be discussed in the next chapter, these fortifications became larger and more complex in the eighteenth century. Ancestral Wichita Villages acted as trading posts as French *coureurs de bois* (unofficial, independent

traders) or *voyaguers* (licensed traders) moved up and down the Arkansas River trading for bison hides, meat, horses, and possibly slaves (Drass et al. 2018a; Barr 2005; Trabert and Bethke 2021). Many groups recentered their social networks and economic pursuits by changing where they established villages to better accommodate trade with the French. They adjusted household labor allocation to concentrate more on trade-good production, and possibly even changed established societal practices, such as how many wives a man might marry in order to increase household labor (Perkins et al. 2008). Their reorientation to European trade, in turn, may have led to heightened inequality in individual household wealth and prestige, though archaeological data on this last point are hard to identify. Drass et al. (2018a) argue that these decisions caused the Wichita on the Arkansas River to move from a rather minor player in French trade to key intermediaries in an escalating market in bison products for European goods. However, from evidence presented in the upcoming chapters, Wichita groups also continued to produce traditional lithic, ground stone, and ceramic objects even after European equivalents were introduced.

With their villages located near accessible locations for overland or river commerce, ancestral Wichita groups also had to worry about defense. After the seventeenth century, the presence of horses and European trade goods (e.g., firearms, ammunition, beads, and knives) made their villages targets for raiding by enemy groups, such as the Osage to the northeast, and the Apache and Comanche from the west. Archaeological excavations at the Bryson-Paddock and Deer Creek sites demonstrate the existence of even more extensive defensive features than evident in earlier structures, including ditches, embankments, and covered interior shelters for noncombatants, paired with the same type of baffled entryways seen in earlier structures (Drass et al. 2019; Drass et al. 2018a; Trabert 2019). Historic descriptions of the fortification at the late-eighteenth-century Longest (34JF1) site describe how archers and gunmen within the fortification's palisade fired at incoming enemies (John 1992:202). Like earlier fifteenth- and sixteenth-century fortifications, these larger and more structurally complex Wichita forts did not encircle the entire village. Rather, inhabitants built the palisade near the village center, with grass lodges constructed nearby, beyond the exterior ditches of the fortification. These fortified areas gave villagers a place to hide, and an excellent position to fire upon enemy forces (Drass et al. 2019).

The historical record suggests continuous raiding by the Osage occurred during the early to late eighteenth century. Osage raiders targeted horses, supplies, and people, seeking ultimately to drive their Wichita competitors from the region as Osage dominance grew (John 1975:338; DuVal 2006:104–105). By the mid-eighteenth century, systemic conflict and population loss from disease led most northern Wichita bands to gradually abandon the Arkansas River valley, moving south to join other bands living along the Red River (Vehik 2006:218; Vehik 2018).

This southern migration was historically confirmed in 1808 by a Taovaya chief named Awahakei who told American visitor Anthony Glass that he was born in a village along the Arkansas River to the north (likely Deer Creek). According to Awahakei, the Taovaya abandoned the area in the mid-1750s due to Osage hostilities (Flores 1985:48).

After arriving at the Red River, the Taovaya established a new village and constructed another fortification in a place recognized by archaeologists as the Longest site (Drass et al. 2018b). Antonio Treviño, a Spanish soldier captured by the Taovaya in 1765, provided a detailed description of the Longest site's fortified attributes, including a circular split-log palisade with an earthen rampart approximately a meter high; a dry exterior ditch four paces out from the rampart and surrounding the entire fortification to thwart horse-mounted raiders; and within the palisade, four underground refuges dug to protect non-combatants (summarized in Drass et al. 2018b:7). As we discuss next, and in Chapter 2, these historically reported defensive structures also existed in each of the northern settlements, as confirmed by our investigations of the Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock sites.

1.2. The Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock Archaeological Sites

The Deer Creek site is 3 km southwest of Bryson-Paddock. Both sites are on the west side of the Arkansas River (Figures 1.5 and 1.6). Deer Creek sits on a low terrace at the mouth of the small tributary for which it is named. From this riverside location, Taovaya inhabitants could monitor river traffic, identifying enemies or greeting any French *coureurs de bois* or *voyageurs* coming upstream in pirogues. Most of the Deer Creek archaeological site has never been plowed or disturbed by Euroamerican activities; indeed, early landowners maintained the site by preventing the encroachment of vegetation. As mentioned, over the last fifty years or so, the transfer of ownership to the U.S. Corps of Engineers led to the growth of heavy foliage covering a large portion of the central area, before the present investigation led to a cooperative effort to remove it. But even with forest growth, its fortification system remains the least disturbed example of these structures in Oklahoma.

Deer Creek's sister site, Bryson-Paddock covered at least 14 ha spread across a high bluff overlooking the Arkansas River. This location gave Wichita inhabitants a wide field of vision to survey both sides of the river and the surrounding plains landscape. It afforded a better defensive posture than the lower elevation of Deer Creek. But by working together, the two villages offered both riverine access and defensive advantages beneficial for all.

For additional protection, community members in each settlement—or working collectively—constructed two circular fortifications, each one on the eastern side of the village, near the Arkansas River (see Chapter 2).

Measuring approximately 100 m in diameter, they served as a refuge surrounded by houses, ramadas, and other domestic structures. Employing common fortification techniques (e.g., external ditches, baffled entryways, soil ramparts, and timber palisades), they offered villagers a well-protected retreat for use in firing arrows or bullets upon hostile raiders, storing valuable goods, and protecting dependents (Drass et al. 2019).

As historical evidence indicates, these villages were unquestionably occupied by the mid-eighteenth century (i.e., 1740s), but dating the earliest occupation of each site remains challenging. From an archaeological standpoint, dates provided by radiocarbon samples and artifact inventories lack the precision desired. As discussed in Chapter 9, two radiocarbon dates from the 2017 excavations at Deer Creek range from 1730 to 1785 CE (2-sigma accuracy, or 95% accuracy). Previous attempts to use radiocarbon dating from Bryson-Paddock failed to produce satisfactory results (Drass et al. 2004). Of course, even with greater precision, the objects dated would still lack any inherent connection to the villages' date(s) of settlement. Similar issues hinder dated fragments of European commodities recovered in archaeological surveys or excavations from Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock (Leith 2008; see Chapter 8; Sudbury 1976). Artifacts include glass trade beads, French smoothbore flintlock muskets, and other commodities made of iron or copper. No commodity has a length of manufacture spanning less than 90 years (Leith 2008:222–223). While the earliest date of manufacture of certain commodities (e.g., gun parts, beads, knives) began in the late 1600s, all items continued to be manufactured well into the eighteenth century. Moreover, like carbonized objects, no evidence exists of when a particular European item actually arrived at the villages.

Fortunately, French maps drafted in the early eighteenth century offer much better chronological control. A number of maps depict the lower Mississippi River drainage, including the southern Plains. Nicolas de Fer, a renowned Parisian cartographer patronized by the Bourbon royal families of France and Spain, created a map entitled *Partie de Meridionale de la Rivière de Missisipi* in 1718 (Figure 1.1). In it, he clearly depicts two sets of paired villages, labeled “les Panis” and “le Paniassa,” respectively, along with a small illustration of two Natives hunting a bison nearby (Figure 1.3). Also in 1718, Claude and Guillaume Delisle, father and son cartographers, produced what many scholars consider to be the most detailed and accurate map of its time (Jackson and De Ville 1990). Attributed to Guillaume Delisle, the *Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Mississipi* has greater accuracy and fewer artistic flourishes than Fer's map (Figure 1.2). Like Fer's creation, it also portrays two sets of paired villages, three attributed to the “Paniassas” and one to the “Ouatchitas” (French terms for Wichita groups). On Delisle's map (Figure 1.3) all four villages are situated in locations where unnamed tributaries empty into the middle course of the Arkansas River (Sudbury 1976:80; Wedel 1981:23).

Significantly, both Fer and Delisle resided in Paris and had to rely on French colonists for information. Their single most important informant was François Le Maire, a map-making priest who sent a series of letters and maps back to colleagues in France (Jackson and De Ville 1990; Weddle 1991). Arriving in Louisiana in June of 1706, Le Maire had extended religious postings in early Gulf Coast settlements (e.g., Fort Louis de la Mobile; Dauphine Island; Pensacola in Spanish Florida) until returning to France in 1719. During his time on the Gulf Coast, he gathered a wide array of knowledge about the Trans-Mississippi region from reports and interaction with colonists, including explorers like Louis Saint-Denis who travelled north and west from the Gulf, eventually reaching the Rio Grande in 1714. Thanks to his informants “Le Maire . . . was up to date on the moves of various Indian tribes; hence, he was the main source for locating them” (Weddle 1991:323). Le Maire may also have learned about Native settlements through French *coureurs de bois*. These trappers and traders often departed from the Arkansas Post, established in 1686 by Henri Tonti, near the confluence of the Arkansas and Mississippi Rivers. However, if *coureurs de bois* did reach Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock from the Arkansas Post in the 1680s, and Le Maire learned of their trips, no documentation has ever been found to prove it.

For dating purposes, the earliest European reports about the existence of Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock seem to have been received by Le Maire sometime between 1706 and 1718 (most likely, sometime after 1710). This information came to be widely disseminated with the production of the maps by Delisle and Fer in 1718. No empirical evidence in the archaeological or archival record exists to demonstrate the villages' foundation earlier, just as no evidence exists to rule out an earlier date. But one possibility does exist: the knowledge contained in the widely disseminated prints of Delisle and Fer may well have instigated early trading expeditions by *coureurs de bois* in search of these graphically depicted “Paniassa” and “Ouatchitas” villages.

Beyond chronological rigor, accurately dating the settlement of Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock also assists in better hypothesizing the inhabitants' motivation to settle there, including what influence, if any, French colonials had in the decision. Some past historians have overemphasized European involvement to the detriment of Native agency (cf. Wunder and Hämäläinen 1999). Prior to 1718, while the Wichita and Taovaya likely learned of French activities from allies further to the south, no evidence indicates contact predating the settlement of Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock. French explorers for their part were hardly knowledgeable enough to offer advice on where to settle for best trading opportunities. Rather, in deciding where to settle, ancestral Wichita peoples had to consider hostile Indigenous competitors, the Quapaws to the southeast, and especially the Osage to the north and east, both of whom had greater access to the French (John 1975; DuVal 2006). Continual conflict with the Osage would eventually contribute to the abandonment of the

two villages by 1757. The Taovaya and Wichita left the Arkansas River Valley, relocating south to the Red River where they remained throughout the rest of the eighteenth century. The move increased their distance from the hostile Osage and promoted more reliable interaction with French traders to the southeast (Trabert and Bethke 2021:269).

1.3. Theorizing the Colonial Era

For much of the twentieth century, historians have been the sole narrators of the colonial encounter in studying French and Spanish activities in the Southwest and Southeast regions of the United States. Relying exclusively on European and Euromerican documents, historians dismissed, diminished, or ignored North America's Indigenous societies in shaping the colonial era (e.g., Bannon 1974; Weber 1992). More recently, revisionist histories identify, and seek to correct, Eurocentric biases to understand the activities and agency of Indigenous peoples (e.g., Hämäläinen 2008, 2022; Rivaya-Martínez 2023). Removed from direct or indirect colonial rule, settings such as Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock generate a great deal of material culture, but few European records; those documents that do exist provide only cursory descriptions of the villages. Nothing explains the deliberations or decisions made by Native peoples or describes the social consequences arising from European contact. As Taovaya and Wichita ties with French traders intensified, what changes, if any, occurred in their economic activities, Indigenous social organization, social relations with adjacent Indigenous groups, and so forth? The mere presence of French material culture at these sites requires careful investigation and interpretation.

Over the past twenty-five years or so, a substantial number of North American archaeologists have used the archaeological record to investigate the diversity of Indigenous–European interactions. Archaeologists have also introduced a variety of concepts and theories to explain and model the complexity of colonial relations, especially where Native peoples, such as the ancestral Wichita, maintained political and economic independence adjacent to, but outside of fully colonized zones such as missions, colonial enterprises (e.g., plantations), or settlements (Perkins and Baugh 2008; Scheiber and Mitchell 2010; Trabert and Bethke 2021).

The approach adopted in this examination will be to modify an older historical construct, originally introduced in this same geographic region by Herbert E. Bolton in 1921, in what he termed the “Spanish Borderlands” (see Perkins et al. 2016 for further explanation). The objective here will be to “decolonize” Bolton's borderland to better explain the Native–European relations involved in locations such as Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock. The archaeological record left by the Taovaya, Wichita, and French traders permits opportunities to investigate a variety of social relations “by foregrounding questions about Indigenous agency rather than those emphasizing the agency of colonizers” (Hart et al. 2012:5). We will

avoid overemphasizing the power of the French whose settlements were located far from these Indigenous villages. Why should relatively isolated, nascent European outposts, such as New Orleans, be assumed to unilaterally dictate events in the borderland? Instead, we will examine how multiple agendas, reflecting both Native and European groups, collectively shaped the history of the southern Plains borderland.

The term “borderland,” whether denoting a place, a process, or simply a “metaphor for areas of cross-cultural interaction” (Hämäläinen and Truett 2011:343) has been reinvigorated by social scientists around the globe. In various regions of the world, anthropological ethnographers use it to conceptualize and explain social phenomena that surpass state-imposed borders and idealized national identities. Ethnographers examine the impact of state borders on the ethnogenesis of ethnic, minority, or creole identities, nationalist discourses of inclusion or exclusion, transnational processes, and other topics (e.g., Gellner 2013; Horstmann and Wadley 2006; Readman et al. 2014). Historians, much like ethnographers, currently investigate similar issues in locations far removed from Bolton's original application in the Southwest and the Great Plains of the United States.

A borderland implies the presence of “borders” or “frontiers” encompassed within it (Parker 2006). In studies of contemporary borderlands, social processes involving national borders frequently constitute the central issue, such as those along the U.S.–Mexican border (Alvarez 1995). In contrast, “frontiers,” less rigidly defined, or even overlapping spaces, can be found in earlier borderlands. A frontier may involve land claims by one population not recognized by another group. Frontiers thus remain more fluid and less universally recognized than borders, more open to unimpeded interaction, dispute, and violence. “Some archaeologists are beginning to consider frontiers, not as cultural borders that largely inhibit and constrain intercultural relationships, but as interaction zones where encounters take place between peoples from diverse homelands” (Lightfoot and Martínez 1995:473).

The archaeological record holds the possibility of discerning observable changes and persisting continuities (i.e., “traditions”) in artifacts, settlement patterns, architecture, subsistence, and a multitude of other archaeological data. The material record of daily life can reveal changes and continuities potentially reflective of long-term Indigenous strategies prior to, and after the development of the borderland. In fact, without earlier data, no basis exists on which to make comparisons. To demonstrate our approach, we reconstruct Wichita frontier strategies as evident at Deer Creek and Bryson-Paddock. Material culture recovered can be paired with archaeological evidence from earlier periods to reveal how practices predating the arrival of Europeans persisted or changed after contact. As we will argue, while conventional wisdom suggests the arrival of the French and European commodities greatly impacted their society, the arrival of other Indigenous peoples,

such as the Osage and Comanche likely had just as much salience for eighteenth-century life. Within multiple fields of interaction, and without any one group in complete control, the borderland's history developed.

By conceiving the wider borderland's interregional interaction as an outcome of the actions and agency by Native and European interests leads to further questions about how southern Plains Indians chose to engage Europeans. How did they consciously preserve or alter their society (e.g., village locations, daily practices, division of labor, production, and exchange decisions)? How did they build upon existing practices, or adopt new ones? Discernible material evidence will be used to address these and other questions.

1.4. Overview of Chapters

This volume is structured as a field report with the next chapter detailing our field methods and excavation results. This discussion is followed by Chapters 3 through 8 which cover the analysis of ceramics, chipped stone, ground stone, faunal remains, plant remains, and European objects recovered from the site. Chapter 9 includes summaries of the specialized analyses we have conducted as part of this work such as Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon dating, residue analyses, and genetics analyses of animal remains. The final chapter summarizes our results contextualizing them within the broader research questions introduced in the present chapter. Our excavations were approved, in large part, so that we could evaluate any impacts the current vegetative cover has on the site's integrity. Given how rarely considerations of vegetative cover are published in North America, we have included our recommendations for managing the site in Appendix A.