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Article Summary: This article reproduces for the first time a section of Albert Lamborn Green's illustrated 1939 reminiscence, the major pictorial record of Oto and Missouriia life in Nebraska. Green served as a government agent on their Gage County reservation for four years. He took special pride in having successfully negotiated on behalf of the Indians when they sold their land to the government.

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Names: Albert Lamborn Green, Sallie Lightfoot Green, Samuel S Ely, Sallie C Ely, Phoebe Oliver, Battiste Barnaby, Ar-ke-ketah, Jessie W Griest, White Cloud

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Photographs / Images: Albert Lamborn Green and Sallie Lightfoot Green; Battiste Barnaby, Oto interpreter and later agency farmer, with Wah-thah-ka-lu-jay (One Who Eats Raw Food) and Lah-noo-way-yeng-a (Little Pipe); Reminiscence notebook, Albert Lamborn Green papers (Figures 1-8)



Albert Lamborn Green and Sallie Lightfoot Green (both seated), near Philadelphia, 1871. (NSHS-G798-17)

AGENT TO THE OTO: THE RECOLLECTIONS OF ALBERT LAMBORN GREEN

Edited by Richard E. Jensen

INTRODUCTION

Albert Lamborn Green came to Nebraska in 1869 as agent to the Oto and Missouri Indians. Years later, when he was a successful businessman in Beatrice, he published three major articles on the general ethnology, linguistics, and history of the two tribes.¹ Seventy years after becoming an agent he wrote one final reminiscence, which he dedicated to his son, Thomas Lightfoot Green.²

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A portion of this 1939 manuscript is published here for the first time. It deals with events Albert Green witnessed during his years as agent. There is little in this to suggest that his memory had been dimmed by time or softened by romanticism. Unlike the earlier articles where Green is merely an observer, this final account is more personal, and he often casts himself as the central figure. In the concluding pages he assesses his accomplishments as an agent.

The 1939 manuscript included sections dealing with Oto and Missouri history and the translation of Oto

words. These sections have been deleted, since they repeat information Green had published previously. Green's spelling has been left intact, but his tendency to write long compound sentences has made some punctuation corrections necessary.

Green's reminiscence was written in ink in a bold clear hand in an eighty-eight page, leather-covered notebook, 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches long and 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide. Perhaps because the reminiscence was intended for his son, Green decorated the otherwise plain, green-lined pages. Hand-drawn lines of red, blue, or black ink or red or black pencil were added to

all but three pages. Similar lines were added as decorative borders to all of the pages.

Green illustrated the reminiscence with drawings ranging from panoramic views of the village and agency to depictions of specific events. Other drawings by Green were used to illustrate his previously published articles. This collection of drawings is unique, for it comprises the bulk of the pictorial record of Oto and Missouri life in Nebraska.

Green's appointment as agent to the Oto and Missouri must have come as a surprise to the twenty-three-year-old Pennsylvanian.³ His selection was part of a massive reorganization of the Office of Indian Affairs by President-elect Ulysses S. Grant with the encouragement of the Society of Friends. The Quakers were concerned about the Indians' well-being, and a delegation of Friends met with Grant to discuss reforms. In February of 1869 Grant's Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ely S. Parker, asked them for a list of nominees for Indian agents. Within four months Quakers replaced all the agents and most of the supporting staff in the Northern Superintendency of the Office, which included six reservations in Nebraska.⁴ Superintendent H.B. Denman was removed from his office in Omaha, and Samuel M. Janney took his place, while on the Oto and Missouri reservation, Agent John L. Smith was replaced by Albert Green.⁵

It was the responsibility of the Office of Indian Affairs to administer the terms of treaties between the government and the Indian tribes. While some of these agreements were merely assurances of peace and friendship, they often involved cessions of tribal land to the government. In this latter case, tribes were the recipients of government-funded programs plus payments in either cash or goods. These annuities were dispensed by the Office and were intended to assist Indians in making a transition from their traditional life style to one indis-

tinguishable from that of rural white America, for both bureaucrats and humanitarians firmly believed that the Indians' only chance for survival was to become "galvanized whites."

Janney and his fellow Quakers were in complete agreement with this philosophy but were more persistent in pushing the Indians towards "habits of civilized life" than previous administrations had been. The education of Indian children was an important part of their "civilizing" process, but much of its effect would not be seen until the children were grown. For more immediate results, the Quakers attempted to destroy the "village system" and move the Indians out of their earthlodges into frame houses on 160-acre family farms just like their white homestead neighbors. With this move the Quakers expected all traditional Indian customs to be left behind. Janney was especially concerned about the Oto and Missouri, for he believed them to be "less advanced in civilization" than any tribe in his jurisdiction.⁶ It was the agent, however, who had the responsibility for initiating and sustaining specific programs to bring about the broad policies proposed by the Quaker administration.

By 1869 the Oto and Missouri were only a remnant of once powerful tribes. The earliest historic records show that the Oto moved westward across present Iowa, settling near the mouth of the Platte River in the very early 1700s. At this time the Missouri dominated a large area along the Missouri River near the mouth of the Grand, but they were soon decimated by warfare and disease; when the tribe splintered, some of the survivors came to live with the Oto. Together they continued to live in villages on the lower Platte, but their decline continued.⁷ In the 1850s they had a population of about 600, but by 1872 it had dropped to 464.⁸

When Nebraska Territory was opened to white settlement in 1854, the combined tribes had just signed a treaty with the United States relinquishing all claim to lands they for-

merly occupied or claimed. Under the terms of the treaty, they agreed to a 160,000-acre reservation centered in the southern part of present Gage County.⁹ They moved there in July of 1855 and built a village of about thirty earthlodges and ten bark lodges on the east bank of the Big Blue River.¹⁰

The treaty also provided for about \$460,000 in annuity payments over a period of forty years.¹¹ The Indians received some cash, but much of the money was expended by the Office of Indian Affairs in an attempt to "advance them in civilization." Large sums went for such things as farming equipment and schoolhouses as well as for the salaries of farmers, teachers, and other agency staff.¹² Some salaries were paid by the government from the Dennison fund while Quaker benevolent societies provided funds for others.¹³ Green had some difficulty in obtaining funds and filling the positions, but the greatest problem was keeping employees on the reservation for more than a few months.

When Green arrived on the reservation on May 30, 1869, he was anxious to begin his work with the Indians, but his first official duty was a meeting with his predecessor, John L. Smith, for the transfer of all agency property.¹⁴ After examining the buildings, Green was of the opinion that they were all in a "delapidated condition."¹⁵ Although they were no more than fourteen years old, problems could be expected since they had been built of green cottonwood.¹⁶ The agent's house was "a one and a half story frame with an ell on the rear, and contained in all six rooms and a large basement. There was a latticed porch in front, and a balcony over the same."¹⁷ Green thought it was badly constructed and estimated that "several hundred dollars will be needed to place it in a condition suitable for comfortable occupancy," but eight months passed before he received some funds for repairs.¹⁸ Near the house was a "large barn and other outbuildings."¹⁹ Other agency buildings included a steam saw and grist

mill, a blacksmith shop, houses for the miller and smith, a smokehouse, a barn, a corncrib, and a storehouse.²⁰ A farmer's house and a toolshed had been destroyed by a storm in 1868.²¹ Most of these buildings were located along Plum Creek about a mile south of the agent's house.²²

The steam-powered mill was to be a part of Green's plan for Indian advancement toward "civilization," yet it proved to be one of his most frustrating problems. He wanted the Indians to abandon their earth and bark lodges, obvious symbols of traditional Indian culture, in favor of frame houses, and the mill was the only feasible source of sawed lumber. Green also wanted the Oto to become more self-sufficient, and the mill was a potential source of income gained by doing custom work for white settlers in the area. Unfortunately, the mill was twelve years old; every agent for the past six years had complained that it needed constant repairs.²³ To make matters worse, the steam engineer and the miller resigned. In an attempt to relieve himself of the problem, Green leased the mill for a year, but he was not satisfied with the lessee, William P. Hess, and revoked the contract. The agent then assigned the operation of the mill to his interpreter and blacksmith, but that arrangement was far from satisfactory since these key members of his staff could devote little time to it.²⁴ Finally, Indian laborers were taught to run the mill, but by then it was operated "only when occasion required."²⁵

While the mill did not live up to Green's hopes, there were some benefits. In his final report Green noted that fifteen frame houses had been built by the Indians, although a year later his successor, Jessie W. Grist, counted only twelve.²⁶ Years later Green wrote that the Indians wanted frame houses, but it seems they were little more than status symbols, for he admitted they spent much of their time living in an adjacent tent.²⁷

Income from the mill was almost non-existent. A few ties may have been



Battiste Barnaby (center), Oto interpreter and later agency farmer, with (at left) Wah-thah-ka-lu-jay ("One Who Eats Raw Food") and Lah-noo-way-yeng-a ("Little Pipe"). (NSHS-I-395-23)

cut for the St. Joseph and Denver Railroad, but the agent's plan to do custom work was never realized.²⁸ In 1870 several water-powered mills were built by settlers near the reservation, and Green admitted it was "useless to compete with these mills for custom work" because of the expense involved in operating his steam mill.²⁹

Agent Green considered the education of Indian children to be a vitally important part of his "civilizing" pro-

cess, and his school did prove to be more successful than the mill. The Presbyterian missionary, Rev. Daniel A. Murdock, opened the first reservation school in June of 1857. Although the missionaries stayed for three years (a Mr. Guthery replaced Murdock in 1858) and built a substantial stone and concrete schoolhouse, the Indians at that time showed almost no interest in education.³⁰ After the missionaries left, the building was sold.³¹ When Green

arrived, the Oto and Missouria were still angry about the mission school. They claimed that \$6,000 of their annuity money had been spent to construct the building, but they received nothing from its sale.³²

In spite of these problems, the Indians had become more amenable to education; they realized it was necessary as their business with white bureaucrats and settlers increased. Almost immediately after arriving, Green set aside one day each week as school day, but he felt this effort was inadequate and asked Superintendent Janney for assistance in getting \$5,000 to build a schoolhouse and dormitory plus funds for a teacher, interpreter, matron, and cook.³³

Green did receive some of the requested aid, but as often happened, he did not get as much as he wanted. Two experienced Quaker teachers, Samuel S. and Sallie C. Ely, came to the reservation from Bucks County, Pennsylvania.³⁴ Mrs. Ely was immediately put on the payroll as a teacher, and classes commenced on March 1, 1870.³⁵ About four months later they received a generous gift from Mary D. Brown, a Philadelphia Quaker, which made possible the construction of a schoolhouse and paid the salary of an assistant teacher, Elizabeth R. Walton.³⁶ The Friends Indian Aid Association provided the school with books, slates, and "proper" clothing for the children.³⁷

Enrollment in the school ranged from forty to as many as ninety-seven, but the daily attendance was much lower.³⁸ (Absenteeism was a constant problem at early reservation schools.) Students were taught English and basic arithmetic. A sewing class was very popular and included some Indian women as well as the girls in the school.³⁹ Overall, Green was pleased with these accomplishments, but he must have been concerned about the rapid staff turnover.⁴⁰ Other teachers during his administration included Maria VanDorn and Nannie H. Armstrong, but all the teachers were

gone before the next agent arrived in April of 1873.⁴¹ Green was unable to fulfill his hope for a boarding school, where students could be kept for weeks at a time insulated from the influences of traditional Indian life.⁴² A boarding school was not built until 1875 at a cost of \$8,000.⁴³

Samuel Ely was hired as a farmer, a position considered important in "civilizing" the Indians.⁴⁴ The agency farmer was supposed to teach Indian men the latest agricultural practices through instruction and example. Traditionally, Indian women tended the patches of corn and beans, and the men were extremely reluctant to undertake "what they considered women's work."⁴⁵ As a result, the farmer was frequently reduced to the status of a plow boy who broke sod and plowed fields for the women. Perhaps Ely fell into the latter role, for he resigned after only a few months and became the licensed trader for the Oto and Missouria.⁴⁶

Despite the importance of the farmer, Green made no attempt to replace Ely. When the Indian Office asked for an explanation, Green said he did not have funds to hire a replacement. The 1854 treaty included the farmer's salary for a period of ten years, but after this provision expired, the Oto were unwilling to use their annuity money for that purpose.⁴⁷ It was not until 1874 that funds for the farmer's salary could be found.⁴⁸

Although Green did not have a farmer after the 1870 season, land under cultivation increased from 210 acres in 1869 to 540 acres in 1871.⁴⁹ The major crop was corn, but potatoes, pumpkins, melons, and beans were also planted. There was a brief experiment with wheat, but it was discontinued after one crop was destroyed by insects. The increase in acreage may have been due to the purchase of forty plows and Green's policy of paying Indian farm laborers \$1 a day out of their own annuity money.⁵⁰ In 1872 and 1873 only 200 acres were cultivated. This marked decrease was probably the result of the

mysterious disappearance of the plows and the reluctance of men to do "women's work" to produce excess crops.⁵¹ Green must have felt badly about this reversal in one of his foremost programs for Indian improvement.

As a part of his program to make farmers out of the Indians, Green convinced them to buy a few hogs, and when he left the reservation, the tribe owned over 250. The Indians were accustomed to buffalo meat, and perhaps they did not savor pork. The cattle herd did not fare as well, for there were only eight head in 1873. The horse herd increased dramatically, from 300 to 503 or well over one per capita.⁵² At this time Green was complaining that the Oto were squandering their herd as gifts to visiting tribes. Obviously the Oto knew what they were doing.

From the Indians' point of view, the agency blacksmith was the most important employee, for no one else, not even the agent, could fix a broken gun or patch a cracked cooking pot. John W. Tignor held the position for many years and served the Oto well. He resigned in 1870 but was re-hired six months later at the request of the tribal leaders with a substantial increase in salary. He then received \$900 a year, second only to the agent's \$1,500 annual salary.⁵³

For the agent, the most important employee was the interpreter, for one misquote by him could destroy an agent's credibility with the tribe. Baptiste Barnaby had been the interpreter for several years, but Green was suspicious of his intemperate habits and his loyalty.⁵⁴ In the summer of 1869 Barnaby was given the job of agency farmer with a \$200-a-year increase in salary to \$600, but the transfer was seen as a definite demotion in terms of prestige.⁵⁵ Unlike interpreters, farmers did not get free trips to Washington nor were they a part of the highest level of policy making on the reservation. In less than a year Samuel Ely replaced Barnaby, and the former interpreter became one of Green's severest critics.⁵⁶ Baptiste Deroin became the

interpreter, and apparently his services were satisfactory, for he held the position for many years.⁵⁷

Medical care for the Oto and Missouri was another of the agent's concerns. Just prior to Green's arrival on the reservation, forty-eight Indian children had died.⁵⁸ Green attributed the deaths to a general "ignorance of the laws of health,"⁵⁹ but a newspaper reporter who visited the reservation that summer was more specific. The reporter said the fatalities were caused by living in earthlodges.⁶⁰ It would have been heresy to suggest that the Oto had contracted a white man's disease for which they had no natural immunity.

In the absence of a doctor, Green did what he could for the Indians. Two hundred were vaccinated for smallpox, but only about one half of the immunizations were successful, leaving over 300 still exposed to this potentially deadly disease.⁶¹ In late summer of 1870 Dr. Phoebe Oliver, a recent graduate of Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, began a practice on the reservation.⁶² Her salary and the cost of medicines were paid by Quaker donations.⁶³ After about a year and a half, Dr. Oliver left the reservation, leaving Green to attend to the Indians' medical needs as best he could.⁶⁴

The Indians' livelihood depended largely upon their biannual buffalo hunts, which began in May and October and lasted several weeks. Nearly the entire tribe trekked fifty to 300 miles west to the buffalo range in the Republican River basin. The Quakers were opposed to these hunts, considering them to be "a great obstacle in the way of their civilization" because "of the loss of their crops through neglect" and "the demoralizing effect of their unrestrained actions on the extreme frontier."⁶⁵ While Green shared this view he did not oppose the practice, for he realized that buffalo hunting was still necessary to the Indians' survival. In the fall of 1869 and again in the spring of 1870, he accompanied the Indians to the edge of the buffalo range to assure them safe passage through

the white settlements west of the reservation.⁶⁶

Agent Green was openly opposed to pipe dancing, another traditional Indian activity. Held to honor a visiting tribe, these ceremonies lasted several days and included giving large numbers of horses to the visitors. The pipe dance reaffirmed friendships between tribes, but to Green it was only a "nuisance" by which the Indians were "impoverishing themselves by feasting and wasting time."⁶⁷ His attempts to stop the practice had little effect, for in 1873 the Oto and Missouri still "had numerous visitors from other tribes, and have largely returned their visits."⁶⁸

Perhaps the most difficult problem faced by Green and by the Oto and Missouri was the sale of the reservation. When the Indians first came to the reservation, there were few whites in the area; a decade later settlers encircled the Indian land. The whites took lumber from this land, stole Indian horses, and on one occasion killed an Indian family.⁶⁹ By the late 1860s Indian enemies of the Oto and Missouri controlled the shrinking buffalo range, making hunting a dangerous and sometimes futile occupation.⁷⁰ Then in 1867, Oto annuity funds were reduced from \$13,000 to \$9,000 a year in accordance with the 1854 treaty.⁷¹ The impact of these developments gave the Indians more than sufficient reason to consider the sale of their land in Nebraska. Green's predecessor had favored the sale and took a delegation of tribal leaders to Washington, where on February 13, 1869, they signed an agreement to sell the western three-fifths of the reservation for \$1.25 an acre.⁷² Green, however, estimated the reservation's value at \$2 per acre for the poorest land and \$5 for the best acres.⁷³ He convinced the Indians to reconsider, and 120 of them signed a petition to Washington asking that the agreement be voided.⁷⁴ Since it had not been ratified by the U.S. Senate as required by law, the Indian Office consented to the petition.

Green persistently recommended the sale of the unoccupied western half of the reservation at a fair price. He believed the proceeds could be used to establish family farms, build schools, and in general promote "civilization" among the Indians.⁷⁵ On June 10, 1872, Congress passed an act authorizing the sale but only with the consent of tribal members, who became sharply divided on the issue.⁷⁶ One faction supported Green, but there was a growing opposition party which wanted to sell all of the land and move to Indian Territory in present Oklahoma.⁷⁷ A leader of the latter group was the former interpreter, Battiste Barnaby, an adopted but influential member of the tribe.⁷⁸ He talked so vehemently against Green that the agent feared for his life.⁷⁹ Opposition also came from Ar-ke-ke-tah, the leading hereditary chief until 1871, when Green deposed him for refusing to serve as Green's progressive example to the tribe by abandoning his earthlodge and beginning farming.⁸⁰ By the end of 1872 Green was facing additional opposition from many whites. Seventy-two residents adjoining the reservation signed a petition claiming that the Indians were overwhelmingly in favor of moving to Indian Territory and charging that Green had concealed this fact from his superiors.⁸¹ In November, Senator Phineas W. Hitchcock introduced a bill in Congress to remove the Oto which Nebraska Governor Robert Furnas supported.⁸² And Superintendent Barclay White had announced in September his support of Oto removal to Oklahoma.⁸³

These events certainly weighed heavily on the agent's mind throughout the winter of 1872-73. Though he retained the support of the Office of Indian Affairs, he submitted his resignation, effective March 30, 1873.⁸⁴ Green remained on the reservation for three more weeks to conclude the transfer of the agency to his successor, Jessie W. Griest.⁸⁵

Although Green's resignation letter has been lost, in his 1939 reminiscence

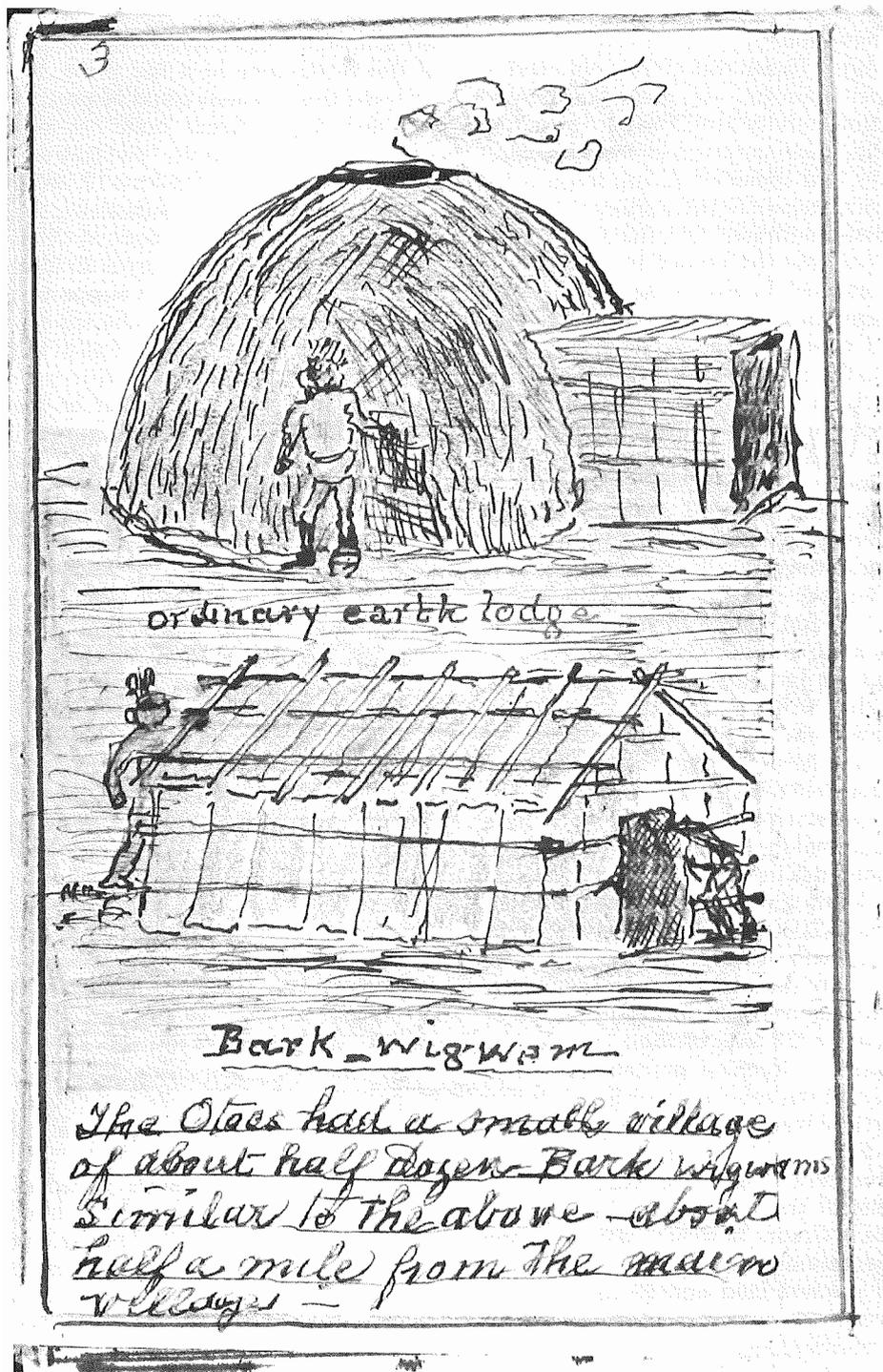


Figure 1. Reminiscence notebook, Albert Lamborn Green papers, MS 2800, State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society (hereafter Green notebook).

he cited concerns about his family as his reason for resigning. He had married Sallie Lightfoot on January 10, 1871. She was the daughter of Thomas Lightfoot, agent at the neighboring Iowa, Sac, and Fox reservation. The Greens' first child, Mary, was born while they were still with the Oto and Missouri.⁸⁶ In 1939 Green wrote that he resigned "chiefly on our daughter's account" because of the "lack of companionship" for her on the reservation.⁸⁷

The young family moved to Philadelphia, but in the fall Green was in Washington, D.C. to witness treaty proceedings concerning the sale of the western half of the Oto reservation.⁸⁸ There would be more meetings and negotiations, and it was not until 1881 that the sale of all of the reservation was completed and the Oto and Missouri left Nebraska for Indian Territory. The Greens may have remained in the East until about this time, but they were living in Beatrice when their son, Thomas, was born February 1, 1884.⁸⁹ Green was then in the real estate business and maintained an office in Beatrice until his death in 1947.⁹⁰

GREEN'S ACCOUNT

On my taking charge of the Otoes and Missouris in the spring of 1869, they consisted wholly of Blanket Indians dependent chiefly upon the buffalo hunt for subsistence, a summer hunt and a winter hunt each occupying several weeks. The tribe had hundreds of ponies but no cows or other cattle and lived in wigwams [earthlodges] during the summer and in teepees during the winter, the latter pitched in timber, the former in a large village and of a type common to wild tribes of the North. Bark lodges were sometimes built. [Figure 1]

The earthlodges usually were occupied all the year except during the winter and during the summer hunt. They are too cold to live in during the winter as they cannot be heated,

whereas the teepees . . . [Figure 2] can be pitched in the timber where fuel is at hand and (altho made of cotton cloth) are very comfortable as compared with the earth lodges even in zero weather.

Every large village has a play ground kept very smooth and well cared for whereon competitive athletic games are almost daily played, this being the chief occupation of the young braves and of great interest to spectators, they as well as the players, risking ponies, blankets, and valuables as stakes on the success of favorite players, for that is more dependent on skill than on chance and requires daily practice to insure success.⁹¹ [Figure 3]

Nearly all difficul[t] labor was performed by the women, all cultivation of the soil, all procuring of fuel, all gathering and drying of corn and curing of buffalo meat, supplying fuel from fallen trees, and in fact all hard work, it being man's place to kill game, catch fish, and care for the ponies. Even on the buffalo hunt, women did all the hard work in skinning and drying the hides and cutting the meat from carcasses and loading on the ponies for conveyance to a camp in near-by timber, where heat and smoke killed flies and prepared the flesh for packages suitable to transport on ponies when the hunt was over and the long procession started on its hom[e]ward trip. [Figures 4 and 5] On most occasions, owing to danger from hostile Indians, I had found it necessary to have a company of Cavalry accompany them on a hunt on such occasions. The procession of hunters, ponies, and soldiers would be very lengthy. On the settlers' account, I had to have a U.S. flag carried at the head of this line as the dread of the hostile Indians was very prevalent on the frontier.⁹²

As late as 1869, when the writer of these lines assume[d] the care and oversight of what remained of two bands of what had constituted the Otter Nation, the old men of these three bands entertained the younger people with many wonderful tales of bravery, som[e]times attested to by a

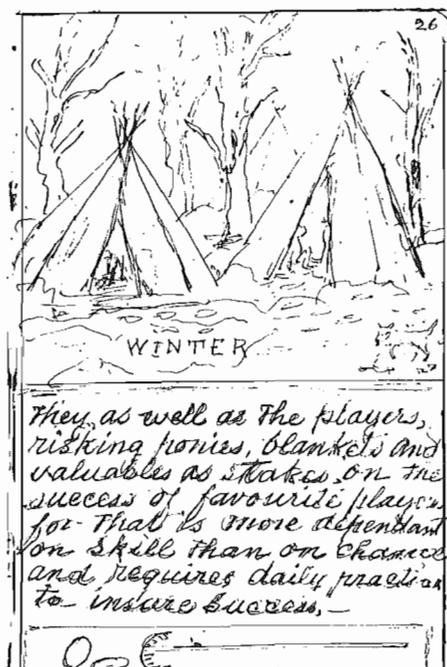


Figure 2. Green notebook.

display of or reference to ancient "medicine bags" to which scalps were attached that appeared to be of great antiquity. It had been about thirty years since any attempt had been made to establish a school among them, and it had utterly failed⁹³ so that tribal and living conditions were almost wholly aboriginal and not unlike what they had been during centuries of the past — no hats, coats, or pantaloons worn — a man's raiment in winter consisting of a britch cloth, a calico shirt, blanket and pair of leggins, and mocassins. Hats were not wanted, for a scalp lock and a few eagle feathers were greatly preferred. Men's faces were often coated with vermilion and other coloring matter. A semi annual buffalo hunt, with fishing and hunting, was man's contribution, while women raised corn, pumpkins, and squashes, which were carefully dried and stored in caches beneath the ground. In fact, too much cannot be said in favor of the Indian women, for the very lives of all depended upon their industry and faithful-ness to duty. Polygamy was encouraged by the fact that marriage to a woman

who had a marriagable sister and who needed her services to aid in the care of her children, such sister could be taken as a second wife without a payment of ponies to her parents, and both could have the same husband. Most plural marriages among them were of this character. Young Indian men sometimes became very foppish, spending much of their time in plucking beard[s], painting faces, and decorating, their ears loaded with metal bobs suspen-de[d] from many large holes around the edge or rim of each ear, and a small looking-glass [was] either carried in the hand or suspended from a belt. These young men were very skillful in making flutes which were much used in courtship, and the sound of such flutes was a feature of night in an Otoe village most common.

During several years of close association with and among these Indians, the writer had opportunities of learning much concerning their attitude of mind and lines of thought toward all that pertains to Divinity and the spirit world — the universality of spiritual life, among the brute creation as well as the human, and the presence of evil spirits who opposed all that was good, hindered or prevented healing of sores and wounds &c. As illustrative of this, the writer had a horse badly injured which an Otoe medicine man undertook to cure. I noticed that he kept the animal blanketed but changed the blanket, taking a different colored one after every treatment. Seeing this change of blanket to a different colored one after each treatment, I finally inquired why it was done, and he explained it by informing me that an evil spirit had watched him and would later return to counter-act or destroy the good effect of the medicine and would look for a horse wearing the same colored blanket . . . [as] the one wore that he saw doctored and failing to find such a one, would leave and allow the medicine to act. Whether such a theory was correct or not, the horse recovered.

I never knew of an Indian male doctor who treated a human patient. They

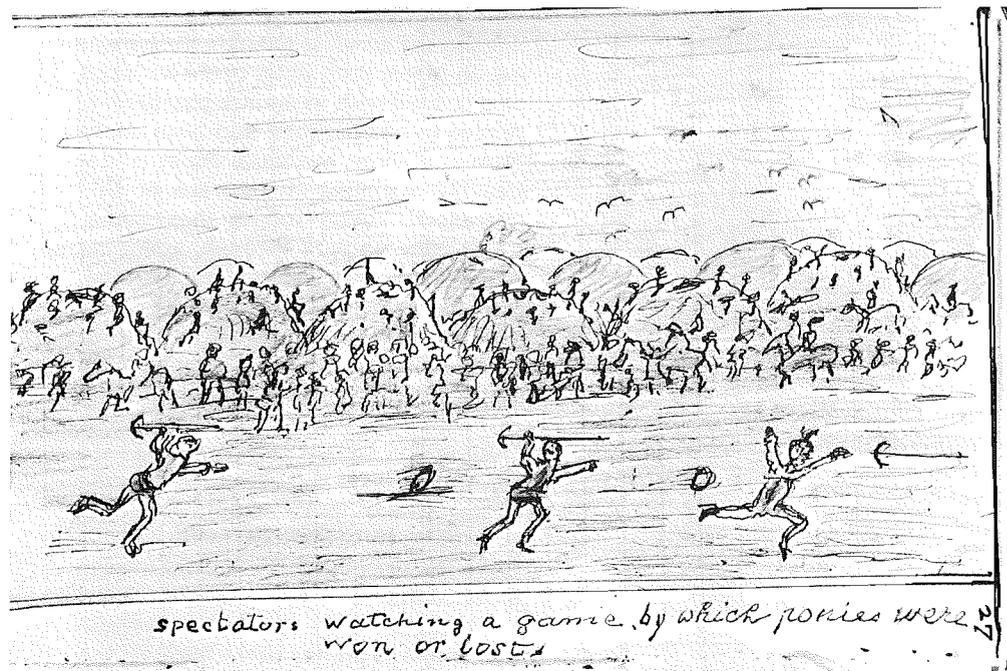


Figure 3. Green notebook.

were usually snake doctors or treated dumb animals. Women were the only doctors that treated human beings. In case of a patient's death, the doctor dug the grave and conducted all obsequies, taking all personal property of the dead as compensation for services as physician and undertaker, it being the woman doctor's duty to bury the body of her patients . . . or if [the] ground [was] frozen to deposit it in a tree enclosed [in a] robe or blanket and bark. [Figures 6 and 7]

The Otoes had been accustomed to go on a hunt twice a year, a summer hunt and a winter hunt, each lasting several weeks. On several occasions when a hostile tribe was on the war-path, I found it necessary to take a company of U.S. cavalry along, and on such occasions, including the military equipment of wagons &c, our cavalcade was usually about a mile in length. My Indians had no wagons or wheeled vehicles of any kind and a great number of ponies were used as beasts of burden on a buffalo hunt.

The tribal problems that confronted

a U.S. Indian Agent were mainly of two wholly different kinds, one resulting from animosity, the other from excess of friendliness between two tribes. The writer's experience included both.

It seems that a state of enmity had existed between the Otoes and the Osages from time immemorial, and quite recently a small war party of Osages had killed a number of Otoe women whom they found at work in the timber at some distance from the village. The Otoes had placed a valuation in council of not less than forty head of ponies on the women killed, and sent a war party of forty men to smoke a pipe and demand forty ponies in settlement of the claim. The Osages received and smoked the pipe [but] refused to give more than 20 head of ponies. The Otoe party was ashamed to return home without the number of horses demanded and encamped at some distance from the Osage reservation while a part of their number made a night raid on the Osage corralls and selected twenty more of the choicest animals that were to be found, and their

return home was a triumph announced with war-whoops and loud acclaim of drum beats. It was at about this time that the writer arrived and took possession of the situation as United States Indian Agent and Representative of the Great Father at Washington. The Otoes were in nightly expectation of an Osage raid, and all ponies were corralled in front of the lodges in pole built pens, under guard all night long.

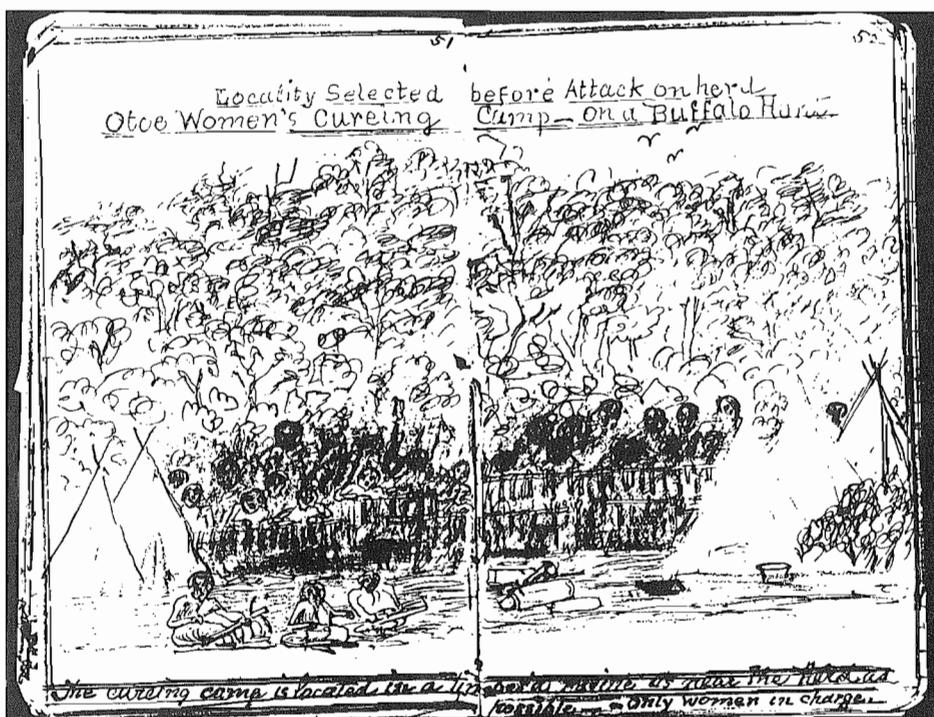
Such were conditions at day-break one morning when the writer was awakened by a long succession of terrific war whoops, and [as he was] stepping out on a second story porch that overlooked the entire Indian village, a rare sight of savage warfare presented itself. On the open prairie more than half a mile away, could be distinctly seen a party of Otoe horsemen in hot pursuit of another party composed of thirty naked horsemen, both parties soon disappearing in the distance. Of course we naturally supposed that the party of thirty were Osages. It was not until noon that my Indian police⁹⁴ returned with the captured thieves and all appeared before me in the council room, and proved to be not Osages but Omahas. From a statement made by their leader, thirty ponies stolen from them had been trailed to the Otoe reservation, and they had hidden in the wild sunflowers and other tall weeds about the village until after day-break and the Otoe watchmen had gone into their lodges. Then cutting the bark lashings that held the poles together, each [Omaha] had seized a poney and galloped off. I gave the thirty nearly naked Omaha prisoners a fair hearing. My Otoes accounted for the trail they had followed to the fact that a band of Pottowattomies, a day or two before, had crossed our reservation. As the Omaha prisoners were nearly starved, I directed the Otoes to feed them and treat them well and allow them to depart peacefully and I would send a full account of the affair to the U.S. Agent in charge of Omaha Indians to deal with them as he saw fit.⁹⁵

This affair with the Omahas left the

“war-path” between the Osages and Otoes untouched and as dangerous as ever. Every night from sunset to sunrise an armed force kept watch over the corralled horses, a condition of danger that showed no signs of abating. When after several weeks I decided to take the matter into my own hands, at a council I informed my Otoe chiefs that I had decided to put a stop to a condition of Indian warfare that had existed between them and the Osages for ages, resulting not only in horse stealing, but in cowardly bloodshed from time to time and constant fear and unrest. I had decided with my chiefs’ consent to write to their U.S. Agent,⁹⁶ whose religious views coincided with my own, and propose that an effort be made to have the head men of both tribes meet together at the Otoe Agency and make a settlement of differences, good for all time. To this my chiefs objected on the ground that it might cost the Otoes a great many horses that had once belonged to the Osages, but many of which were no longer in their possession, having been given to the Iowas at a pipe-dance. I replied that if such was the case that would make no difference as they could substitute horses of their own. It required a long debate and many speeches before a reluctant agreement to my treaty proposition was obtained and a date was set for a tribal meeting of Chiefs and head men, which was anxiously awaited by both tribes. On the day set, the Osage chiefs and principal men of that tribe, to the number of perhaps thirty or more, appeared in all the grandeur of ancient Indian savagery — painted faces, eagle feather head bands, bear-claw necklaces, leggins gaily bedecked with bead and porcupine quill work of skillful squaws, and bearing a decorated peace-pipe of perhaps great antiquity. Speeches were twice interpreted, first from Osage into Otoe, and from Otoe into English, and the peace pipe was passed from chief and from man to man. I believe that more than thirty good horses were finally allowed the Osage and nothing was said about the



Figure 4. Green notebook . . . (below) Figure 5. Green notebook.



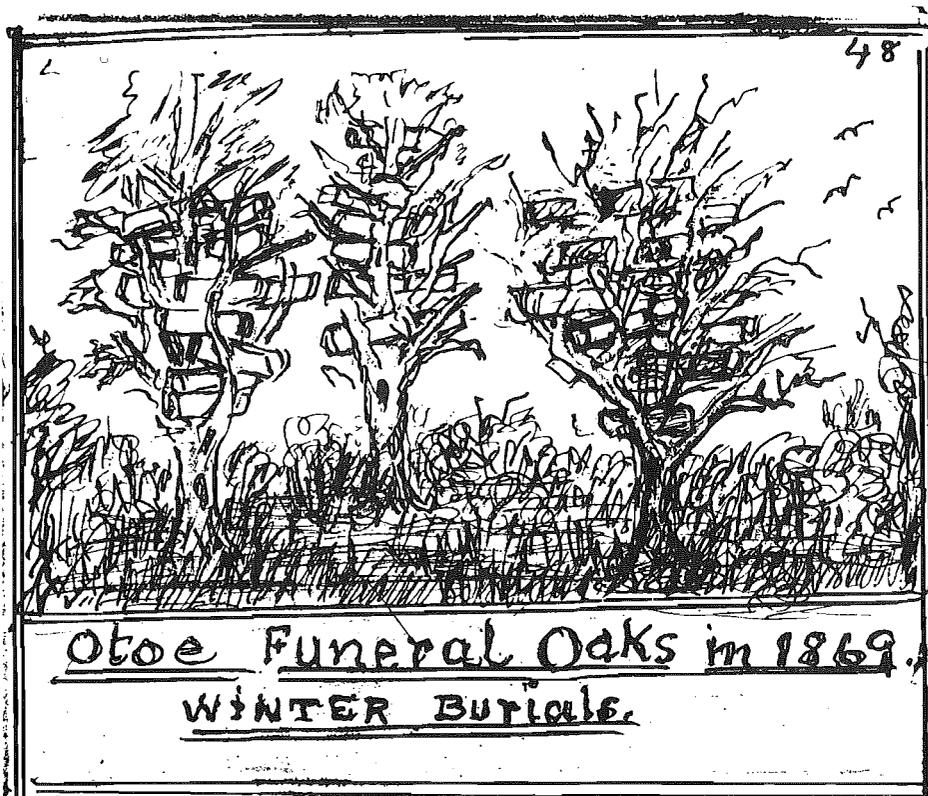


Figure 6. Green notebook.

women killed as that would not have been at all conducive to a peaceful settlement of a century old antagonism.

After this settlement with the Otoes' worst enemy, a very different atmosphere of social existence prevailed among the Otoes. Fear no longer conjured nightly danger, sentinels no longer held vigils in timbered hiding places, and I noticed that my stable was no longer guarded as it had been.

Neither time nor space will permit any mention of innumerable events that seemed to be either fraught with danger, or to require great wisdom in their proper management during my four years occupied in the care and labors on behalf of these uncivilized, buffalo hunting Indians — labors so fruitful in results that when, after four years of service in the management of affairs, I informed Samuel M. Jann[e]y, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, of my

desire to be relieved from further service on my family's account, he offered me the position as Agent for the Winnebagoes,⁹⁷ a much larger tribe having a greater number of white employees. But my wife and little daughter really needed other surrounding[s] and thus it was that we bid our red friends a final adieu.

Results Accomplished, 1st

The defeat of the ratification of a treaty that the chiefs had made by which the entire of 160,000 acres was to be sold at a price of \$1.50 per acre, a sale that I was instrumental in defeating by preventing the ratification of the same, thus saving the Indians an enormous sum, for the land was afterward sold by them for many times the amount they would have realized had such treaty been ratified.⁹⁸

[Results Accomplished], 2nd

The employment of Indian labor in many ways, especially in performing work in farming and cutting timber and other work that Otoe women had been accustomed to do, having employed capable men to oversee and lead in such work. Having a steam saw-mill, much lumber was sawed and houses were built under the supervision of a carpenter employe, Indian men cutting the trees and hauling the logs to an Agency saw-mill by Agency oxen. I found that while the men liked to own a house, they were inclined to pitch a teepee or tent just outside and live in that much of the time. One year on the agency farm we raised about one hundred acres of wheat, but it seemed impossible for the men to bind it into sheaves. Besides, the sand burrs got into their moccasins and caused great trouble, and we had to hire a batch of white homesteaders to do the binding.

[Results Accomplished], 3rd

The building of a schoolhouse for seating of upwards of 100 pupils, not one of whom had ever attended a school, all built of lumber made and handled solely by Indian labor, which I regarded as a great achievement. I was very fortunate in securing several very suitable lady teachers and also a lady physician of rare merit, a graduate of the Womens Medical College of Philadelphia. About 100 pupils of proper age were, with the assistance of our Otoe police, gathered and registered, but [because of] the fact that none of them had a family name (any more than so many cats and dogs would have), the teachers thought it necessary to distribute family names among them, which accounts for there now being among the Otoes, as well as among the Iowas, many good Quaker families (so far as names are concerned), such as Greens, Lightfoots, Janneys &c, all full blooded Otoes.⁹⁹ An Otoe (Full Blooded) by name of Albert Green became head chief of the tribe and is

said to have been the best head chief that the tribe ever had.¹⁰⁰ Some time ago I was invited to attend a sort of a radio gathering of Indians at the Iowa reservation at which Otoes from Oklahoma were expected to participate. I accepted the invitation and believe that I met Greens, Lightfoots, and other familiar cognomens that I might have met at a quarterly meeting back in dear old Delaware County, Penna., but these chaps were better at horse-racing than any Friends usually are.

I met with Chief White Cloud, then chief of the Iowas, and had a pleasant visit with him. I found him living in a canvas teepee, altho he has a good frame dwelling close beside it. He is a farmer and took me around to look at his farm and crops, all of which indicated a total lack of cultivation; more weeds than corn. He comes, I suppose, from a long line of Iowa Chiefs, each named "White Cloud," and that may account for his laziness as a farmer.¹⁰¹ I met some very nice looking women and girls, not one of which had a "kruheh mark"¹⁰² between her eyes, but on the older ones a scar told the story of a surgical operation. What would their fathers think of their total disregard of the honor that his good reputation had bestowed upon them as evidenced by a bundle of painted sticks, every one of which indicated a horse given away, that hung in his lodge and of which he was proud? [Figure 8]

On page 56 of this manuscript I have mentioned a tribal problem that was a source of much trouble and annoyance to the government agents, as well as harmful to the welfare of the Indians, and that tribal visitations and "Pipe Dancing" . . . [were] a source of much trouble, the visited tribe usually giving away more than fifty head of horses and improvershing themselves by feasting and wasting time. It was to abate this nuisance that a number of Indian Agents representing all the different Indian tribes in the Northern Superintendency held a conference at Omaha¹⁰³ and jointly

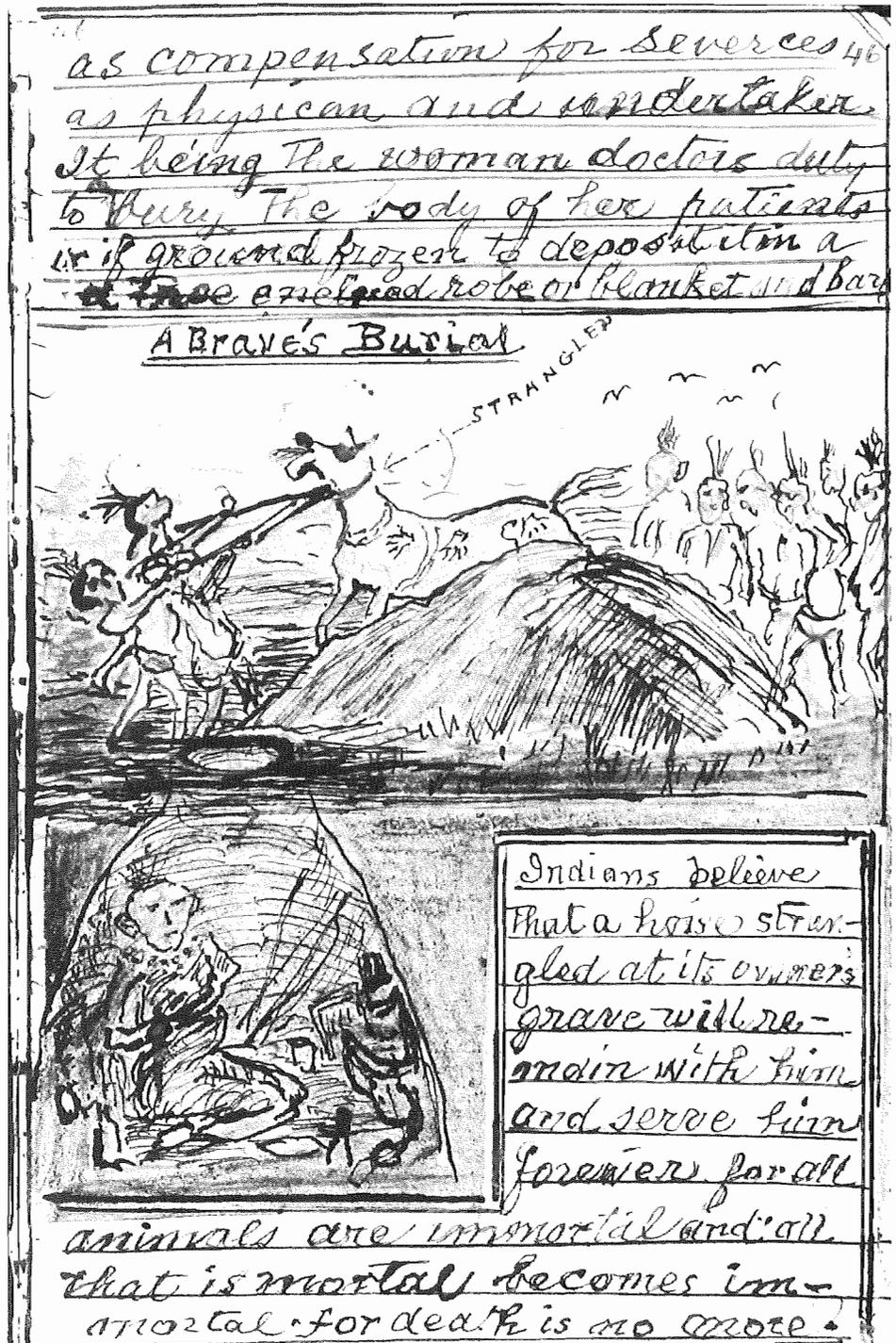


Figure 7. Green notebook.

resolved to break up that harmful but long established Indian custom, which we were finally successful in doing, greatly to the advantage of all Nebraska tribes. One good result achieved being a stop to the practice of tribal visitation and giving away of horses, the latter of which resulted in discrediting the greatly prized "KRAKA" (tattooed) mark, that after years was in many cases removed by a surge[o]n, leaving a deep scar. But this was not the only good that resulted from the abolition of the pipe-dance visitations, neither was the whole sale giving away of ponies, but it was the great waste of time and relaxation from tree-cutting and other agency work required of the young men by the Agent as well as the prolonged and daily game playing for the entertainment of the visitors.

Conclusion

When after about four years had been spent as U.S. Indian Agent (I having in the meantime married the daughter of Thomas Lightfoot, U.S. Agent for the Iowas and Sac & Fox tribes, and having a daughter born), my wife and I, chiefly on our daughter's account, decided to acquaint Samuel M. Janney, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, with our desire on our daughter's account of terminating our connection with Indian affairs. He appeared to be much disappointed that we thought of leaving the Indian service and on learning that it was chiefly on our child's account and lack of white companionship, he suggested that we take charge of the Winnebagoes, a larger tribe and one having more white society in connection with it. But after due consideration, we decided to quit the service although our friendship and regard for our Otoe friends had not lessened.

NOTES

¹Albert L. Green, "Reminiscences of Gage County," *Collection of Nebraska Pioneer Reminiscences*, sponsored by the Nebraska Society, D.A.R. (Coon Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press,

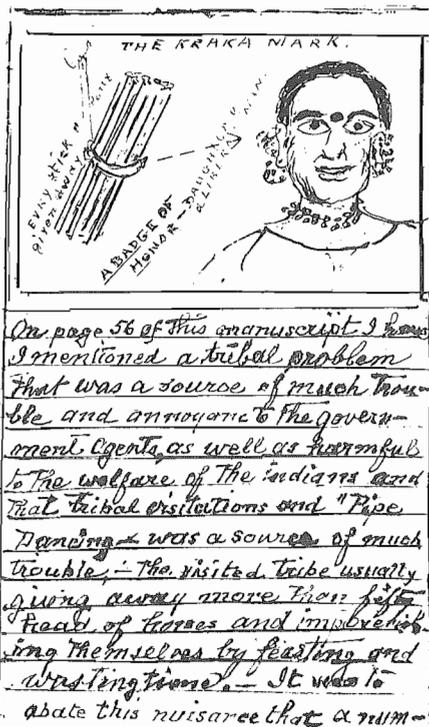


Figure 8. Green notebook.

1916); Albert L. Green, "The Otoe Indians," *Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, 21 (1930). Green also wrote Chapter Twelve in Hugh J. Dobbs, *History of Gage County, Nebraska* (Lincoln: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1918).

²Thomas Lightfoot Green was born at Beatrice, Nebraska, February 1, 1884, and died at Scottsbluff, October 23, 1954. He was a banker and served on the Nebraska State Historical Society's executive board from 1945-54. *Nebraska History* 35 (December, 1954), 241-42.

³Albert L. Green was born July 2, 1845, to Quaker parents at Media, Pennsylvania. Footnote by Addison E. Sheldon in Green, "The Otoe Indians," 175.

⁴Clyde A. Milner, *With Good Intentions* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 14-21; Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 47-49.

⁵Milner, *Good Intentions*, 18. Green was nominated to the position at a Quaker convention on April 17, 1869, and approved by President Grant on April 22. Because of ill health, Janney was replaced as Superintendent by Barclay White in 1871.

⁶*Bucks County (Pennsylvania) Intelligencer*, April 12, 1870.

⁷Indian agent John Dougherty estimated that there were 1,500 Oto and Missouria in 1830, but five years later he counted only 964.

⁸*Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1855*, 86; 1872, 29 (hereafter *Report of the Commissioner*).

⁹Charles J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs, Laws, and Treaties*, 2 (1904), 608-10.

¹⁰*Report of the Commissioner*, 1855, 86; "Quaker Report on Indian Agencies in Nebraska," *Nebraska History*, 54 (Summer, 1973), 169.

¹¹Berlin Basil Chapman, *The Otoes and Missourias: A Study of Indian Removal and the Legal Aftermath* (Stillwater, Oklahoma: Times-Journal Publishing Company, 1965), 45.

¹²Albert Green to Barclay White, February 22, 1872; Barclay White to J.A. Walker, February 26, 1872. National Archives and Records Administration, Microcopy 234, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Oto Agency, 1856-76 (hereafter, "Oto Agency Letters").

¹³W.W. Dennison, Oto and Missouri agent, left with over \$7,000 in annuity funds in 1861. A special fund was created to repay the Indians, and it was used for a variety of expenses. Richard E. Jensen, "The Oto, Missouri and Agent Dennison," *Nebraska History*, 59 (Spring, 1978), 47-55.

¹⁴Albert Green to Samuel Janney, June 5, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters."

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶*Report of the Commissioner*, 1859, 140; 1863, 253.

¹⁷Dobbs, *Gage County*, 92.

¹⁸Albert Green to Samuel Janney, June 5, 1869; January 13, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

¹⁹Dobbs, *Gage County*, 92.

²⁰*Report of the Commissioner*, 1866, 218.

²¹*Ibid.*, 1868, 243.

²²Dobbs, *Gage County*, 92.

²³*Report of the Commissioner*, 1858, 102; 1864, 377; Albert Green to Samuel Janney, June 23, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters."

²⁴Albert Green to Samuel Janney, July 12, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters." The contract was signed on August 18, 1869.

²⁵*Report of the Commissioner*, 1871, 456.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 1872, 402; 1873, 363.

²⁷See Green's 1939 reminiscence, 64.

²⁸Barclay White to Albert Green, January 3, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters."

²⁹*Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 248.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 1857, 155; 1858, 103; 1859, 141; Dobbs, *Gage County*, 92-93. The school was about six miles south of the village. It was ninety by forty feet and three stories tall with a two-story wing.

³¹Dobbs, *Gage County*, 93.

³²Petition of the Chiefs, March 22, 1871, "Oto Agency Letters."

³³Albert Green to Samuel Janney, June 30, 1869; Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, January 12, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

³⁴Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, January 12, 1870; Report of Employees, Third Quarter, "Oto Agency Letters."

³⁵Albert Green to Samuel Janney, February 20, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

³⁶*Ibid.*, July 12, 1870; *Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 249. The frame schoolhouse was sixteen by twenty-four feet.

³⁷Albert Green to Samuel Janney, July 12, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters." Quakers of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, formed an association to provide clothing for Nebraska Indians according to the *Bucks County Intelligencer*, December 14, 1869.

³⁸*Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 249; 1872, 387; 1873, 334; 1874, 206.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 1870, 250.

⁴⁰Albert Green to Barclay White, July 9, 1882, "Oto Agency Letters."

Albert Lamborn Green

⁴¹Ibid., May 9, 1873; Dobbs, *Gage County*, 102; *Report of the Commissioner*, 1873, 196.

⁴²*Report of the Commissioner*, 1869, 353.

⁴³Chapman, *Otoes and Missourias*, 324.

⁴⁴Report of Employees, Third Quarter, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁴⁵*Bucks County Intelligencer*, May 3, 1870.

⁴⁶Barclay White to H. R. Chem, January 8, 1871; Barclay White to J. A. Walker, July 22, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters." Traders who did business on the reservation had to be licensed and bonded. John Story Briggs became the licensed trader in July 1872, which may date the departure of the Elys from the reservation.

⁴⁷Albert Green to Barclay White, February 22, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁴⁸*Report of the Commissioner*, 1874, 204. A. J. Koser was the farmer.

⁴⁹Ibid., 1869, 354; 1871, 455.

⁵⁰Ibid., 1870, 248; 1869, 354.

⁵¹Ibid., 1872, 402; 1873, 196.

⁵²Ibid., 1869, 354; 1873, 402.

⁵³Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, July 29, 1871; Albert Green to Barclay White, August 3, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁵⁴Green, "Otoe Indians," 193.

⁵⁵Albert Green to Samuel Janney, August 12, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁵⁶Ibid., September 6, 1871.

⁵⁷Report of Employees, Second Quarter, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters." Deroin was hired on June 29.

⁵⁸Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, June 5, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁵⁹*Report of the Commissioner*, 1869, 353.

⁶⁰*Bucks County Intelligencer*, December 28, 1869.

⁶¹Medical Report, July 1, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁶²Green, "Otoe Indians," 204; Albert Green to Samuel Janney, September 6, 1871, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁶³*Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 248; 1871, 455.

⁶⁴Medical Report, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁶⁵*Report of the Commissioner*, 1874, 197.

⁶⁶*Bucks County Intelligencer*, December 2, 1869; Dobbs, *Gage County*, 96, 100.

⁶⁷See Green's 1939 reminiscence, 68.

⁶⁸*Report of the Commissioner*, 1873, 197.

⁶⁹Barclay White to J. A. Walker, January 1, 1872; Albert Green to Samuel Janney, April 13, 1870; John L. Smith to H. B. Denman, April 28, 1869, "Oto Agency Letters"; Green, "Otoe Indians," 205. Wood thieves were tried in District Court but there were no convictions. The killers of the Indians were never found.

⁷⁰*Report of the Commissioner*, 1867, 272.

⁷¹H. B. Denman to A. G. Taylor, June 12, 1868, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁷²Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, February 5, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁷³Ibid., March 19, 1870.

⁷⁴Ibid., February 5, 1870.

⁷⁵*Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 249; 1871, 456; 1872, 225.

⁷⁶Ibid., 1873, 19.

⁷⁷Ibid., 1872, 225; Milner, *Good Intentions*, 117.

⁷⁸Green, "Otoe Indians," 193.

⁷⁹Albert Green to Samuel Janney, September 6, 1871, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁸⁰Dobbs, *Gage County*, 94. Here Green wrote that Ar-Ke-Ke-Tah was deposed in 1870, but he continued to be the first signator of various documents until the summer of 1871.

⁸¹Petition, August 4, 1872, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁸²Barclay White to J. A. Walker, December 9, 1872; Robert W. Furnas to the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives, January 26, 1873, "Oto Agency Letters"; *Omaha Tribune*, November 17, 1872.

⁸³*Report of the Commissioner*, 1872, 214.

⁸⁴Secretary of the Interior to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 15, 1873, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁸⁵Albert Green to Barclay White, April 25, 1873, "Oto Agency Letters." The April 25 letter gives the date of Green's departure as April 19, but a second letter of May 9, 1873, gives it as April 23.

⁸⁶Green, "Otoe Indians," 176.

⁸⁷See Green's 1939 reminiscence, 70-71.

⁸⁸Minutes of meeting, October 31, 1873, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁸⁹"Thomas L. Green," *Nebraska History*, 35 (December, 1954), 241.

⁹⁰*Beatrice Daily Sun*, February 26, 1947.

⁹¹Green is referring to the hoop and spear game, which was played on a smooth lane at the edge of the village. A contestant attempted to throw his spear through a five-inch hoop, which was rolled on the ground by an assistant. Hooks on the end of the four-foot spear prevented it from passing too easily through the hoop. Stewart Culin, *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1902-3, 516.

⁹²Captain E. J. Spaulding, Company C, Second Cavalry, reported that he would take sixty soldiers and escort the Oto, Pawnee, and Ponca to the buffalo range in the Republican River valley. The Indians were to carry a white signal flag with a red center, so that they would not be mistaken for hostile tribes. E. J. Spaulding to General George D. Ruggles, July 24, 1870, Letterbook, Company C, Second Cavalry, microfilm copy in

the State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society.

⁹³Moses Merrill, a Baptist missionary, was with the Oto from 1833 until his death in 1840. Green's opinion of the effort is correct. See *Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, 4 (1892), 157-91.

⁹⁴A police force of twelve served during Green's term. Each received about \$12 per year. Albert Green to Samuel Janney, June 23, 1869; Samuel Janney to Eli Parker, September 15, 1870, "Oto Agency Letters."

⁹⁵Dr. Edward Painter was the Omaha agent from April 30, 1869, until September 30, 1874. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1869, 343; 1874, 203.

⁹⁶Isaac T. Gibson was the Osage agent from October 1869 until 1876. John J. Mathews, *The Osages* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 685, 719.

⁹⁷The Winnebago Reservation in Thurston County, Nebraska, had a population of 1,343 in 1872. Howard White was agent, 1869-74. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1869, 347; 1872, 221; 1874, 209.

⁹⁸The sale of the western part of the reservation was authorized in 1876 and the land sold for an average price of \$3.85 per acre. The remainder of the reservation was sold in 1883 for \$12 per acre. Chapman, *Otoes and Missourias*, 120, 149.

⁹⁹The Oto Allotment Roll of 1891-1907 (in effect a census) lists about 450 people. There are nine Greens, one Lightfoot, fourteen Elys, but no Janneys. French names predominate, with twenty-eight Robedeauxs, and "Indian" names such as Arkeketah (ten) and Pipestem (seven) are common.

¹⁰⁰Albert Green "was a teacher and orator. He was really the principal chief when he died" on January 17, 1921. Richard Sunatona, "Otoe Indian Lore," *Nebraska History*, 5 (October-December, 1922), 60.

¹⁰¹White Cloud is a family name dating at least to the 1820s. George Catlin, *North American Indians*, 2 (1973 edition), 22.

¹⁰²Tattooing was common among Plains tribes. Kiowa women had forehead circles as did the Omaha. Mildred P. Mayhall, *The Kiowa* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 15; Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Bison Book edition, 1972), 504.

¹⁰³A summary of this August 20, 1870, meeting mentions only discussions concerning the "discountenancing of superstitious rites and demoralizing customs." *Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, 233.