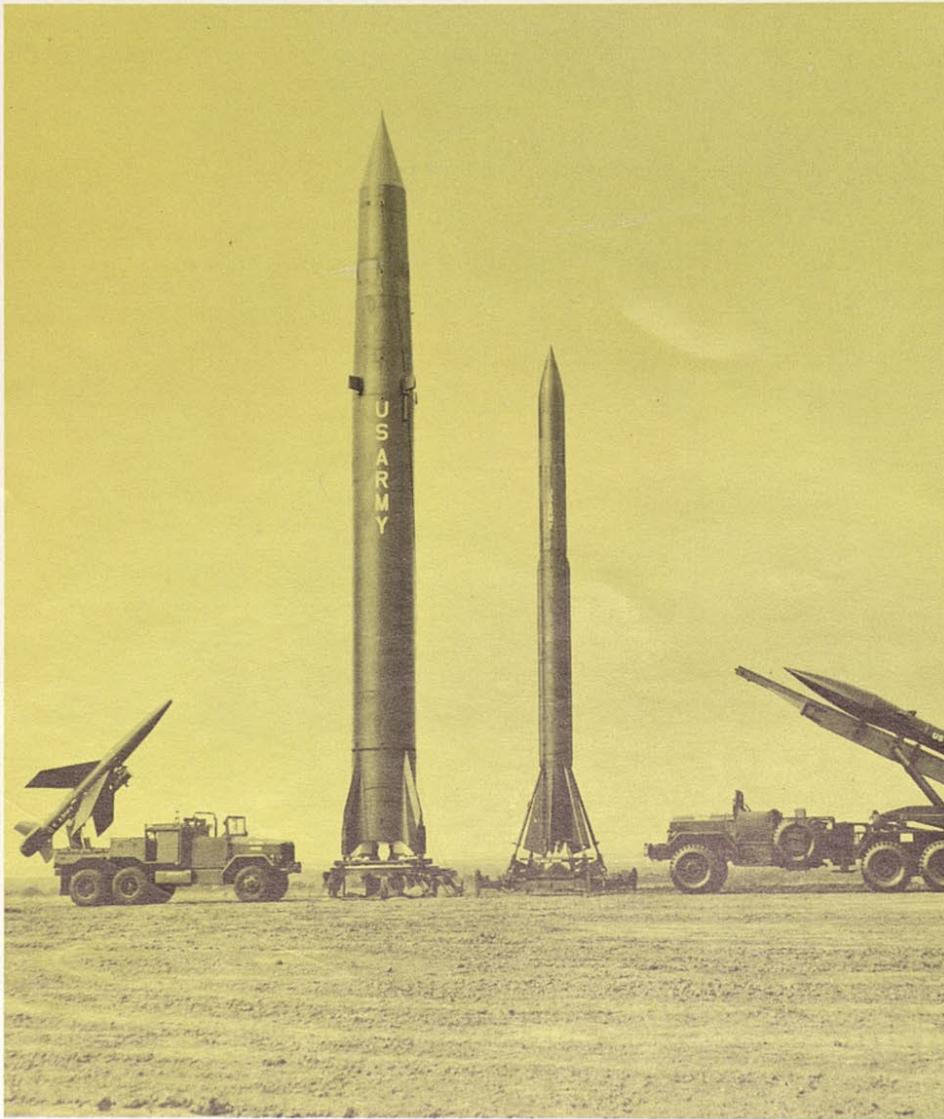




Spring 1960

**THE SHOOTING OF BUFFALO  
FROM BARRACKS WINDOWS  
IS PROHIBITED.**

**BY ORDER OF THE  
COMMANDING OFFICER.**



*The sign above was for horse soldiers in the early days of Ft. Sill and the carbine. But times have changed and so have the weapons of destruction. Now, the moon is a more likely target than buffalo for the Army's missiles — the Lacrosse, Redstone, Corporal and Honest John.*

# FORT SILL

## Redskins to Redstones

It is with a feeling of near reverence that one treads the grounds of Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. All about, one can see memorials to a glorious past — a past rich in name and deed.

You need only close your eyes to visualize dashing militarists like Sheridan, Sherman, Marcy, Grierson and McKenzie or such daring Indian warriors as Satanta, Satank, Stumbling Bear, Kicking Bird and Quanah Parker. It would take little imagination to see once again the vast herds of buffalo that roamed the rolling terrain of the Wichita Mountains.

But these are scenes of the past. The rattle of the cavalryman's saber, the click of the infantryman's carbine, and the cuss words of the oldtime mule skinner have long since given way to the thundering rumble of "tube" artillery. Now, even this is giving way to the roaring blasts of Heaven-bound missiles.

Ft. Sill has successfully spanned the transitions from cavalry-infantry to artillery to missile. But it has not been without writing one of the most colorful chapters in the annals of U. S. history. The history of the little "outpost in the Wichitas" and the men who wrote it will be a favorite as long as history books are compiled.

Few forts built in that period of Indian unrest survived the erosions of time. But Ft. Sill not only has survived, it has continued to expand in size and importance until today it is one of the nation's largest military posts.

Ft. Sill seemed destined for greatness from the start. The West was far from settled in the late 1860's. Marauding Kiowas, Comanches, Apaches and allied tribes were savagely fighting off the advance of the whites into their buffalo range immediately after the Civil War.

Gen. Philip Sheridan, a distinguished cavalry

commander of the Union Army, was placed in command of the Department of the Missouri in 1867. A harsh and stern officer, he ordered out a scouting party to find a site for a new outpost from which the Indians could be brought to tow. Prompt and decisive action was Sheridan's rule for dealing with their raiding and killing.

Col. Benjamin H. Grierson — later to become the first commander at Ft. Sill — was dispatched by Sheridan to locate the site. He looked over the plateau above Medicine Creek, so glowingly recommended in 1852 by Captain Marcy, a noted explorer. This, Grierson decided, should be the spot for the new post. He named it Camp Wichita.

On Jan. 8, 1869, General Sheridan arrived to look over the terrain. He approved the location after moving Grierson's original stake 300 feet. The Yankee general promptly changed the name to Ft. Sill in memory of his good friend, Gen. Joshua Sill, killed while leading one of Sheridan's own brigades in a Civil War battle.

Grierson and his 10th Cavalry Regiment — a Negro outfit — immediately fell to throwing up temporary stockade and log structures. Their most urgent need was for shelter and protection from Indian attacks.

Permanent buildings were started in 1870, but work was frequently interrupted by Indian fighting. By the end of the year, only 38 buildings had been completed. Most important among them were post headquarters, one barrack, an ordnance building, two quartermaster storehouses, a commissary, a stone corral (put up after a band of Kiowas successfully raided the fort and made off with 73 horses and mules), and two buildings near the corral. Work was also begun on two other barracks, the officers' quarters, and the guardhouse.

It is also believed that the Old Post Chapel

was begun and perhaps completed during that year. The chapel was early used as a school house and a recreation hall.

Other facilities were provided early in the history of Ft. Sill. The quadrangle of buildings that comprised the Old Post circled the parade ground where countless blue-clad troopers passed in review.

It was with a stern hand that the Army dealt with the marauding of the Indians. From the new fort, Custer and his 7th Cavalry rode in various directions, pursuing the wily redmen and attempting to lure them into surrender on the reservation. McKenzie and his raiders, in forays to the South, brought back many prisoners. Soon Ft. Sill was choked with captives.

The turning point in the Indian fighting came in 1875. The Indians had met defeat after defeat and gradually turned to the security of the reservation. Quanah Parker brought in his reluctant Quohadas that year and in 1887, Geronimo, the last of the hostiles, surrendered his Chiricahuas. The Indian wars were over. The original need for Ft. Sill's existence had vanished.

The next few years were quiet ones for Ft. Sill. For the most part, the Indians were content on the reservation and settled down to a life of peace and solitude. Most of the famous old chieftains — with the exception of the notorious Geronimo — had passed to their happy hunting grounds when,

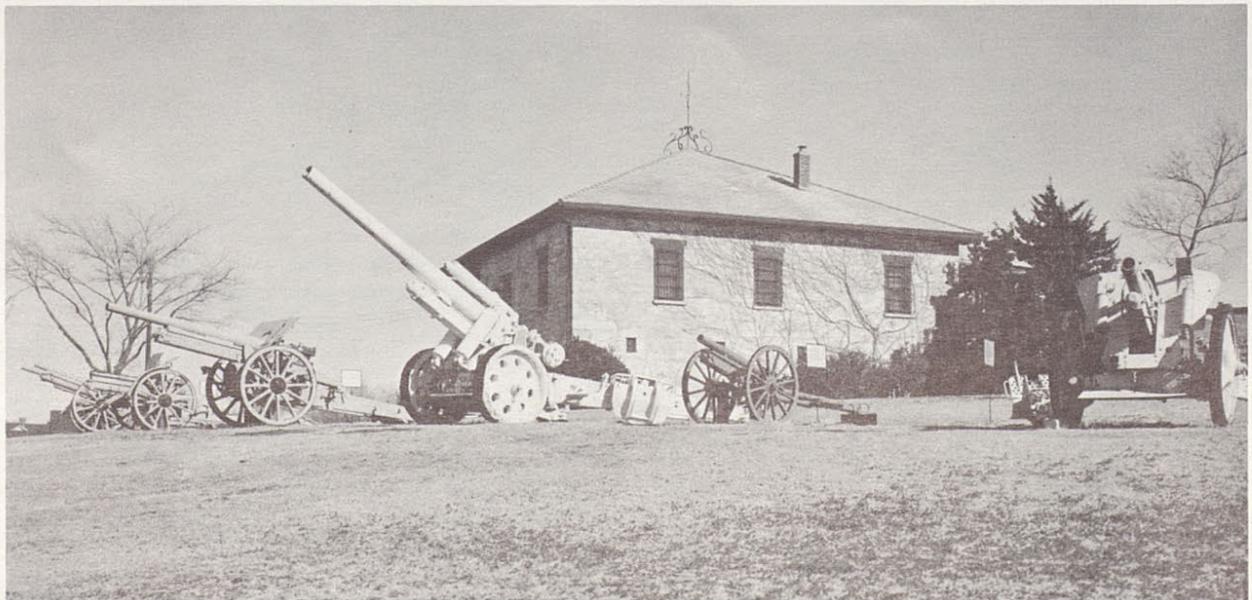
in 1901, the Kiowa-Comanche reservation opened for settlement.

It was about then that Geronimo was having his fling in the limelight. The Chiricahua Apache chief was a lover of publicity and frequently made public appearances, hamming it up in a manner befitting his notoriety. He attended the St. Louis Expedition in 1904 and Teddy Roosevelt's inauguration in 1905. He died of pneumonia in a little stone building on the post, Feb. 17, 1909. He was about 80.

Contrary to popular belief, Geronimo did not spend his last years imprisoned in a cell in the post guardhouse. Instead, he was allowed to roam at will over the reservation. His most urgent quest during his captivity was not that of white scalps, but another drink of firewater. He purportedly sold buttons from his cavalry uniform for a dollar apiece and inhabited the guardhouse only long enough to sleep off his frequent drunks.

With peace between the whites and the Indians, the need for cavalry troops diminished and the old fort appeared doomed to decay near the turn of the century. But destiny had decreed a kinder fate. Big guns were sent in to replace the horse soldier.

Thirty-three years and one day after Ft. Sill was established as a cavalry post, the 29th Battery of field artillery was moved in on Jan. 9, 1902. The fort actually became a field artillery post in



*Artillery pieces, many of ancient vintage, surround the Old Post guardhouse that now houses the Artillery and Missile Center Museum. Contrary to popular belief, Geronimo occupied a cell here only long enough to sleep off occasional drunks.*



*Sherman House, on the north side of the quadrangle that comprised the Old Post, has been the home of all post commanders.*



*Snow Hall adds a note of newness to an old post as headquarters for the U. S. Army Artillery and Missile School.*

1905 when it was made the home of a provisional regiment of artillery. Then in 1907, Field Artillery was made a separate branch of the armed forces. The First Field Artillery was organized with regimental headquarters and three of its six batteries stationed at Ft. Sill.

The transition from cavalry to artillery was complete.

At first the change in status did little to wake up the sleepy post. A few additional buildings were erected and grass covered the parade grounds, obscuring the hoof marks of the horse soldier.

But in 1909, New Post was begun and the place started to take on new life. It became a full-fledged artillery post in 1911 when Captain Daniel Moore established the first School of Fire. With headquarters in a small frame building that still stands, the school instructed from 20 to 40 students a year in the operation of artillery pieces.

The Army, however, failed to recognize any merits in the efforts of the new school and by 1916 was preparing to abandon it. But once more fate stepped in in the form of the Mexican War. It was there that the efforts of Captain Moore and his School of Fire proved their mettle.

And then came World War I. Everything the School of Fire could provide in facilities and men were needed and put to use. Talk of doing away with Ft. Sill ceased.

The Armistice of 1918 did not stop the testing of new and more effective artillery. New guns began to pour into Sill and once again the

Wichitas reverberated with the thunder of cannon.

Techniques of artillery use were observed by the U. S. military in the 1930's during civil strife in Ethiopia, Spain and China. The lessons learned there in addition to the information compiled in the years of testing at Ft. Sill paid off well for the U. S. in those fateful years of 1941-45.

Through it all, Ft. Sill continued to turn out cannoneers. New schools taught new techniques of fire. Buildings popped up like mushrooms. The old fort was literally bursting at the seams.

Then came the missiles—and still another new era.

Expansion that followed World War II at Ft. Sill was nothing compared to the growth brought about by the new dimension of missile use. Millions of dollars worth of facilities were added to instruct men in the use of missiles and rockets.

Today, the U. S. has something like a quarter of a billion dollars invested in Ft. Sill. And the end of the growth is not in sight. Still more buildings and equipment are needed.

It is perhaps ironic that land played such an important part in the history of Ft. Sill. Less area over which to chase raiding Indians would have been welcomed by the Army in the days of Geronimo, Satanta and Quanah Parker. More land is needed now in the days of the Redstone, Corporal and Lacrosse missiles.

Today, it takes a lot of room to kill the enemy with long-range weapons. Yesterday, it took only the length of a saber.

# LAWTON "THE CITY OF LOTS OF HOUSES"



*A scene from the Lawton Easter Pageant*

A colorful and historical past, a thriving and economically sound present, and a promise of even greater opportunities for the future are factors that have prompted the phenomenal growth of Lawton, Oklahoma. It is here that a confluence of the old and the new has produced an atmosphere for living uncommon in many U. S. cities.

Lawton is more than a mass of brick and steel that sprang from a "tent city" nearly 60 years ago. It is home for more than 60,000 persons who enjoy a healthful climate, an unusual spirit of friendliness, and a cosmopolitan atmosphere created by the presence of men from all over the nation at Ft. Sill, just to the north.

The growth of the state's third largest city has been akin to phenomenal. Lawton dates back to August 6, 1901, when President McKinley issued a proclamation opening the townsite by a lot sale. Nearly 25,000 people were on hand to purchase lots at public auction.

The city boasted 5,552 residents by 1907. By 1940, the population had risen to 18,000 and by 1950, Lawton counted 38,000. Conservative figures have placed the present population at slightly more than 62,000.

The city was named for Maj. Gen. Henry Lawton, one of the early officers at Ft. Sill. In light of the city's tremendous growth, the name is particularly appropriate because of the Comanche word "lawton" that means "lots of houses."

Lawton enjoys a great many facilities that promise continued growth. One of the greatest influences on the city's economy, culture, and future is Ft. Sill. As home base for the Army's missile training program and the largest artillery base in the world, the old fort draws not only millions of dollars into the city's till, it also attracts thousands of new residents.

As for industry, Lawton is yet a babe in arms. But the city planners have not been asleep. They have set aside two large areas of land for future industrial development and the Chamber of Commerce has established a million-dollar industrial fund, designed to help firms locate in Lawton.

The city is geographically located in the heart of Oklahoma's dairy, beef cattle, and wheat growing area. The agricultural products grown represent more than an eight-million-dollar annual income. And because of its specific location in Southwestern Oklahoma, Lawton is in a strategic position to supply a vast area with the products it raises.

One of Lawton's greatest blessings is an abundant supply of water. A number of lakes nestled in the valleys of the Wichita Mountains provide an ample supply of municipal water in addition to facilities for recreation. Some of the best fishing in the Southwest can be found in this chain of lakes. Swimming, boating, and water skiing are also popular.

Recreation is not limited to water sports in the Lawton area. The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, just a short distance from downtown Lawton, has been an outdoor playground and wildlife attraction for more than half a century. Herds of buffalo and longhorn cattle roam the hills and wooded areas. A drive to the top of Mt. Scott in the Wichitas can be awe-inspiring.

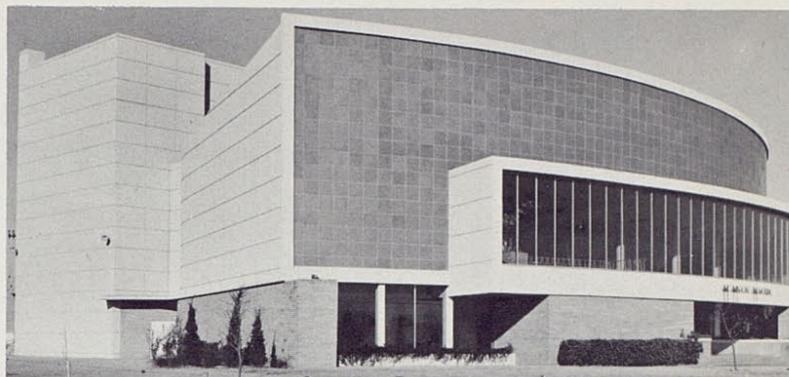
One of Lawton's greatest claims to fame is their annual Easter Pageant, held at the Holy City of Oklahoma, about 22 miles northwest. Here each year members of the Wichita Mountains Easter Service Association, a non-profit, interdenominational organization, stage a portrayal of the Life of Christ in pageant form.

The Easter service starts at 2:00 a.m. on Easter morning and ends at dawn. Each year thousands of worshippers line the hills that form the natural amphitheater to watch as the story of Christ's Life is told in tableau on the many stages constructed of native stone.

For Lawton visitors interested in history, the Artillery and Missile Center Museum at Ft. Sill is a must on their agenda. A tour of this historical layout brings today's visitor face to face with the past as he views remnants of yesterday's civilization.

A visitor can also tell at a glance that while Ft. Sill is rich and colorful in its history, it is not living in the past. It is serving the present by training men for the future. Atomic cannons and long-range missiles have replaced cavalry troops and horse-drawn artillery.

The city of Lawton is also gearing for the future. City planners a few years ago adopted a slogan — "Population, Unlimited" as they considered their 1960 census. Some today are considering a change to "Opportunity, Unlimited."



*Beautiful McMahon Memorial Auditorium was built three years ago at a cost of more than a half million dollars.*



*Lawton, in Comanche language, means "lots of houses" and this residence is typical of the city's many fine homes.*



*Nearly any summer day finds scenes such as this in the several small lakes scattered throughout the Wichitas.*

# SATANTA



# SATANTA

## THE ORATOR OF THE PLAINS

By J. EVETTS HALEY

He was not the greatest of the Kiowa — that darkly handsome warlike people who came with dog-teams out of the land of the deep snows beyond the beginnings of the Yellowstone — but he is one of their best remembered. For when their feathered arrows, long lances, and knives failed to prevail against the tide of whites, it was he who delighted to stand before them in council, in the war of words, and wither them with his logic and his irony. *Set-t'ainte*, the swarthy White Bear, was known far and wide among red men and white as "the orator of the Plains."

Their earliest records indicate that the Kiowas came down from the high Rockies and made peace with the Crows. They took over the Black Hills, traded and raided to acquire horses, and pushed against the fighting Comanches who held the Plains below, while the Cheyenne and Dakota pressed upon them from above.

Between 1775 and 1800 they moved into the Plains and Mountains around the upper reaches of the South Platte. Gradually they spread out into the buffalo country along the Republican and Smoky Hill Rivers, and next were pitching their hide lodges well inside the Comanche range, along the Arkansas.

Adept in council as in war, they, in the late 1700s, met and smoked their pipes with that great tribe, and federated their forces through a treaty of peace that was never broken. Then, in wide, bold and imaginative raids, they really swept into their own. It was about 1830, in the heyday of this period, that Satanta, who was to symbolize their tragic transition, was born in one of their buffalo hide lodges.

At that time, in the light of "the Comanche moon," they, too, struck the Mexican haciendas in a wide arc reaching from the state of Tamaulipas through Chihuahua to Durango, and left their trails of blood from Matagorda Bay, on the Gulf of Mexico, across the Sierra Madres and the desert sands of the Gulf of California. They brought back captive women and children, and herds of horses to swell their wealth and their strength. With vast maneuver and movement, they held the buffalo ranges from the upper Arkansas and Red to the Western Cross Timbers, and the lower prairies and plains from the White Sands of Texas to their favorite valleys in the Wichita Mountains.

On the fringes they held their own against many hostile tribes. But from the east the aggressive whites, ever lustful for trade and land, were ominously and forever pressing. During this time

Satanta was growing in crafty, wily nature as the pressures and their dangers grew.

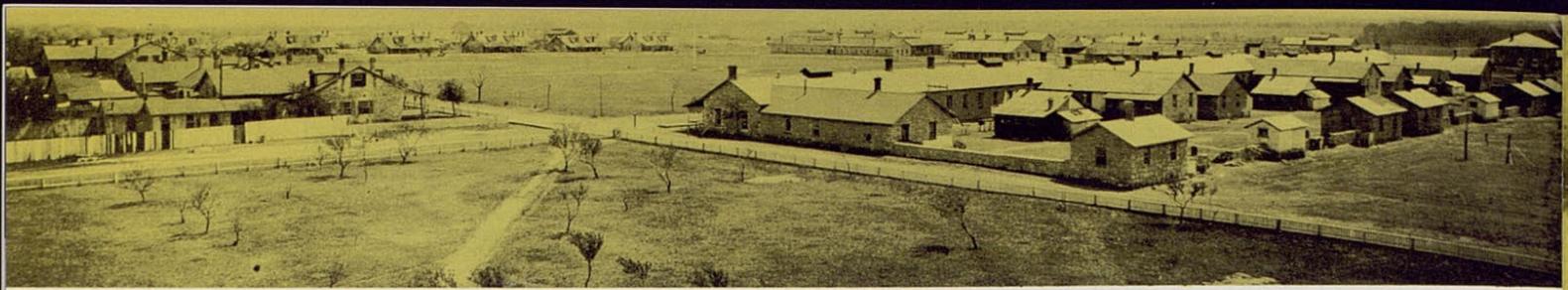
Smallpox decimated their tribe early in 1862 while they were camped on the Arkansas in western Kansas, and their decline rapidly followed the death of their great chief Dohasan, four years later. The tribal leadership was then divided between a number of chiefs — Satank, Black Eagle, Kicking Bird, Lone Wolf, Satanta, and others. They were tough and seasoned warriors, but in the councils with the whites, Satanta excelled them all in the double-talk of diplomacy.

When the government sent a doctor among them in 1864 for vaccination against the dreaded smallpox, Satanta received him as befitted a savage prairie potentate in his hide-skin lodge on the Arkansas, forty miles above Fort Larned. He always spread "a carpet for his guests to sit on," served them meals in style on painted fire-boards in place of tables, and announced the meals by loudly blowing a brass bugle. The doctor reported herds of cows and calves, and horses and mules grazing about his camp — the result of his raids on Mexico and Texas. Satanta confided that he would lead another soon.

That fall a large expedition under the noted Kit Carson was sent against the Kiowa from Fort Bascom, New Mexico, with the intention of catching and wiping them out in winter camps. Carson struck them at the mouth of the creek that now bears his name, just west of Adobe Walls, in the Panhandle of Texas, and got the surprise — the whipping of his life.

Beginning early, the battle raged throughout the day, the confusion of the whites further confounded by an Indian bugler who kept close to their lines, always sounding the opposite call from that ordered by Carson's officers on the line of skirmish. When the whites sounded "advance," the Indian immediately blew "retreat"; when the whites blew "retreat," he countered with "advance." According to a participant in the fight, this contrary bugler "kept it up all day, blowing as shrill and clearly as our very best buglers." Carson always claimed it was a white man, but history suggests that it was the wily Satanta.

While the government considered it fine for the Indians to rape and raid in Texas during the Civil War, it came to realize, when faced with pressure from the upper frontiers, that killing and stealing from Yankees was a horse of another color. When, in 1865, the Indians hit hard along the Arkansas and Platte, virtually cutting off the Colorado settle-



*Ft. Sill as it looked about 1895.*

ments and the gold fields from the Missouri, the furor raged.

The government sent a commission to treat with the Plains Indians at the mouth of the little Arkansas near the site of Wichita, Kansas – to treat and smoke the pipe of peace. Satanta and others among the Kiowa and Comanche signers agreed to a definition of their ranges. They sat in council, professed their good intentions, and left for the buffalo country and the war trail.

As the raids continued, at last a sort of summit peace council was deemed imperative. Another Commission was named and in 1867 left for the Indian country – for the appointed place on Medicine Lodge Creek, seventy miles south of Fort Larned, Kansas, where thousands of the finest Plains warriors foregathered in a colorful show of strength to await it.

On the way camp followers of the Commissioners killed a lot of buffalo – the Indians' principal source of shelter, clothes, and food – for sport, and left them where they lay. This drew Satanta's livid scorn:

"Have the white men become children, that they should kill meat and not eat? When the red men kill, they do so that they must live."

In council the whites, through interpreters, proposed Indian annuities in relief, farms, homes and churches, and sharper definition of the reservations. The thousands of stolid, blanketed figures sat immobile and inscrutable as the sharp and burly Satanta, their first in council, rose to speak; to cajole and taunt the white and sway the red with his mighty voice. He began, as a diplomat of course, by disavowing all intention of and responsibility for war, and launched upon the initiative.

"The Commissioners have come from afar to listen to our grievances," he began. "My heart is glad, and I shall hide nothing from you. . . . I moved away from those disposed to war," he said, in reference to the Cheyenne. He referred to the fact that the Commission had traveled a long and weary way from Washington, but then "I also came from afar to see you. . . . We have been waiting here a long time . . . and we are getting tired."

Then he came to the point, for well he knew it was land, in peace, that the hated enemy wanted. "All of the land south of the Arkansas," he said,

magnificently, "belongs to the Kiowas and the Comanches, and I don't want to give any of it away."

"I love the land and the buffalo and will not part with it. I don't want any of the medicine lodges (churches) within the country. I want the paposes raised as I was.

"I have heard that you want to settle us on a reservation near the mountains. I don't want to settle. I love to roam over the prairies. There I feel free and happy, but when I settle down, I grow old and die."

As for houses, he said with scorn, "this building of homes for us is all nonsense. We don't want you to build any for us; we would all die. Look at the Penetekas," who had been settled by the whites, he continued: "Formerly they were powerful, but now they are weak and poor. I want all my land even from the Arkansas south to Red River. My country is small enough already. If you build us houses the land will be smaller.

"Why do you insist on this? What good will come of it? I don't understand your reason. Time enough to build us houses when the buffalo are all gone. But do you tell the Great Father that there are plenty of buffalo yet, and when the buffalo are all gone, I will tell him. This trusting to agents for my food I don't believe in."

So much for the white man's settled life, churches, and bonuses, and as for war, he could reassure them: "Harken well to what I say. I have laid aside my lance, my bow and my shield . . . I have told you the truth. I have no little lies hid about me, but I don't know how it is with the Commissioners; are they as clear as I am?"

"A long time ago," he said at last, in pathos, "this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up the river I see the camps of soldiers on its banks. These soldiers cut down my timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that it feels as if my heart would burst with sorrow. I have spoken."

But the pressures were too great. Tongues in cheek, Satank first and Satanta next, the Kiowa chieftains signed the treaty of Medicine Lodge, and returned to their beloved plains to roam and resist. Official Washington, despairing of peace from compromise, moved the army against them, and Satank and Satanta were taken as hostages by orders of General Phil Sheridan. Upon release their raids continued – on trail herds passing



Satank — About 1871.

Big Tree — About 1871.

through their territory, upon scattered troops, and upon the hapless frontier of Texas. At length, they struck with the vicious massacre and mutilation of the teamsters of Warren's wagon train, freighting corn to Fort Griffin.

When questioned about the raid, back upon their reservation to draw their regular supplies from recently founded Fort Sill, Satanta boasted:

"Yes, I led that raid. . . . Some years ago they took us by the hair and pulled us here close to Texas where we have to fight them. . . . I took about a hundred of my warriors to Texas, whom I wished to teach how to fight. . . . We found a mule train, which we captured, and killed seven of the men. . . . If any other Indian claims the honor of leading that party, he will be lying to you. I led it myself."

General W. T. Sherman, on inspection of the post, had Satanta, Satank, and Big Tree arrested. As a means of terrifying the tribe into submission, he ordered the leaders sent to Jacksboro, Texas, to stand trial for murder under the white man's incomprehensible laws. On June 8, 1871, the manacled chiefs were loaded in two wagons under heavy mounted guard on either side.

Satanta, greatly excited, told a Caddo scout to notify his people to bring in the teamsters' mules. From the lead wagon Satank too called to the Caddo, saying:

"Tell my people that I am dead. I died the first day out from Fort Sill. My bones will be lying out on the side of the road. I wish my people to take them home."

When he refused to get in the wagon, the soldiers picked him up and pitched him in. To a Tonkawa scout who rode along with the troops, he said: "You may have my scalp. The hair is poor." He then pointed to a spot more than a mile away, saying: "I shall never go beyond that tree." As a member of the *Kaitsenko* — the highest order of Kiowa warriors — he began, in a high-pitched, quavering voice, to sing his death song, while the soldiers laughed in glee:

*"O Sun, you remain forever,  
but we Kaitsenko must die;*

*O Earth, you remain forever,  
but we Kaitsenko must die."*

He continued to sing until the wagon reached the designated spot. Then, stripping the manacles from his skinny hands, taking the hide with them, he threw the blanket from his shoulders, drew the knife concealed in his breechcloth, and fell upon the two guards riding close beside him. They jumped in terror, leaving their guns in the wagon behind them. As he grabbed up one of the guns, the soldiers, riding alongside, riddled him with bullets. He fell from the wagon and sat bleeding from the mouth, in the dust but not in dishonor, until he died. The wagons rolled on with Satanta and Big Tree to face legalized justice, at Jacksboro.

The Indians, sentenced to hanging, were commuted to life imprisonment, and shipped off to the gray walls at Huntsville. A sentimental furor arose throughout the United States, and Governor E. J. Davis returned them to the reservation, at Fort Sill in 1873, on parole — at a time of sad transition for their tribes.

On their beloved Plains to the west the "big fifties" of the buffalo hide hunters were booming. The Quahada Comanches under Quanah, with a sprinkling of Kiowas, had never given up, but were, instead, still making the medicines of war. In the early summer of 1874 they fell on the hunters at Adobe Walls in furious fashion, expecting to surprise and wipe them out. Time and again the besieged hunters heard the distant notes of a bugle — surely old Satanta's — sounding the warriors to the charge.

Again the army took Satanta, shipped him off and again threw him into the penitentiary, without disturbing his vast dignity — even behind the bars at Huntsville.

But the fine, free days of the buffalo range, when the Kiowas wandered at will on the sunlit prairies, were over. Their wild freedom, their magnificent maneuvers across the wide West, and their mighty voice in council — all were gone.

One day in October, 1876 — at that season when the braves always left to hunt the buffalo, Set-t'ainte, the White Bear, in despair but still in dignity, sang his death song and took his own life by jumping to his death within the prison walls. He was buried there by the whites, his bow broken, his bugle quiet, his once mighty voice echoing in bitter memory — but still in scorn and derision!



# ALTUS

Rivers have accounted for the destruction of many cities and towns. Seldom have they been credited with re-naming one.

But Altus, Oklahoma—one of Southwestern Oklahoma's finest and fastest growing cities—owes both its name and present location to flood waters that gushed down the Salt Fork River more than 75 years ago.

During the great cattle days, John McClearen in 1884 purchased land certificates to 1,100 acres in Southwestern Oklahoma. He moved his family there, and established the tiny community of Frazier near the banks of the Salt Fork.

This first settlement consisted of a log cabin, two tents, and a dugout. Flooding of the river later forced McClearen to abandon the site and move a few miles eastward to higher ground and re-establish the small trading center. This new town was named Altus—meaning “high place.”

By the turn of the century Altus was a thriving community. It was easily accessible from all directions, serving the pioneers moving westward. Many of these pioneers found the area to their liking and chose to remain. Here was land for farming and ranching.

Early settlers of the region realized the potential of irrigation farming and developed methods for its use. Today, the Altus area is the state's leader in that field with over 70,000 acres under irrigation.

When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, Altus had five general stores, four grocery stores, one hardware store, a drugstore, a bank, hotel, boarding house, shoe shop, jewelry store, two millinery shops, two newspapers, a public school, a private school and a church. Population has swelled from the first handful of settlers to well over 18,000 at last count. The biggest rise in population has been within the last ten years when Altus has more than doubled

in size. Altus Air Force Base is the most important factor of the increase.

Altus Air Force Base got its start during World War II as the Altus Army Air Field, serving as an advanced flying school until the close of the war. During the peacetime lull between 1945 and the Korean conflict, it was used as a storage base for obsolete aircraft. Altus Air Force Base was re-activated in 1953 as a troop carrier base, a part of the Tactical Air Command. It later came under jurisdiction of the Strategic Air Command.

Presently the base represents an investment of \$456 million with a monthly payroll average of one million dollars. Housing units were recently constructed nearby to provide housing for 700 families of military personnel. Other families continue to live in Altus and the surrounding area. Nearly 4,400 men are stationed at the base to serve and operate huge bombers and tankers.

There has always been great cooperation between the military and civilian residents of Altus. Hundreds of service-connected families quickly become a part of this friendly community. Some of the city's top boosters are men stationed at the base. After discharge, many of the former airmen choose to remain or return to make Altus their home.

In addition to agriculture and the Air Force, Altus depends on education, recreation, and industry for its economic stability. Center of the recreational facilities is Quartz Mountain State Park and Lake Altus, located a few miles north of the city.

Jackson county had the highest crop income in Oklahoma in 1958 with more than \$7 million in cotton, \$6 million in wheat, \$220,000 in grain sorghums, and more than a million dollars in other farm products. Two cotton compresses and grain storage for 3.3 million bushels accommodate the crop production.

Recently a \$100,000 Altus Industrial Foundation

# ALL AMERICAN CITY

was launched with the purchase of about 30 acres of land for industrial development. With an ample water supply, low utility rates, high quality labor reserves, and community cooperation, this "City With a Future to Share" attracts more new industries each year.

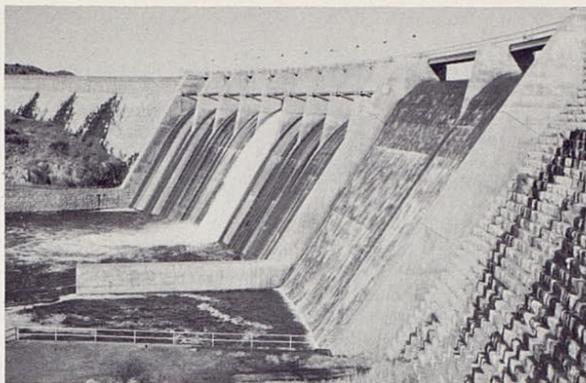
Altus looks upon its youth as one of its most important assets. The city is proud of its reputation as a good place to raise a family. Educational facilities include about nine million dollars invested in nine grade schools, two junior high schools, two senior high schools and Oklahoma's oldest two-year municipal junior college.

The city has thirty-one churches, many equipped with large educational buildings and facilities for community activities. Also serving as a popular meeting place is the municipal auditorium. This attractive structure is host each week to federated clubs and civic organizations. Airmen of Altus Air Force Base also have a service club in the auditorium basement, an example of the cooperation between Altus citizens and military personnel.

Altus is quick to boast that even with all the civic improvements during recent years, no ad valorem taxes for general purposes have been assessed in more than 25 years. Bank deposits have reached more than \$6 million. Construction amounting to more than \$572,000 is being added to the County Memorial Hospital. Chamber of Commerce memberships have jumped from 151 to 800-plus in 15 years and many residential additions have been built within the city limits.

Altus feels that the progressive spirit reflected in the city's growth is the major reason it was selected as one of the 11 All-America cities for 1956. This honor, which no other city in the state has received, was bestowed by the National Municipal League and *Look* magazine.

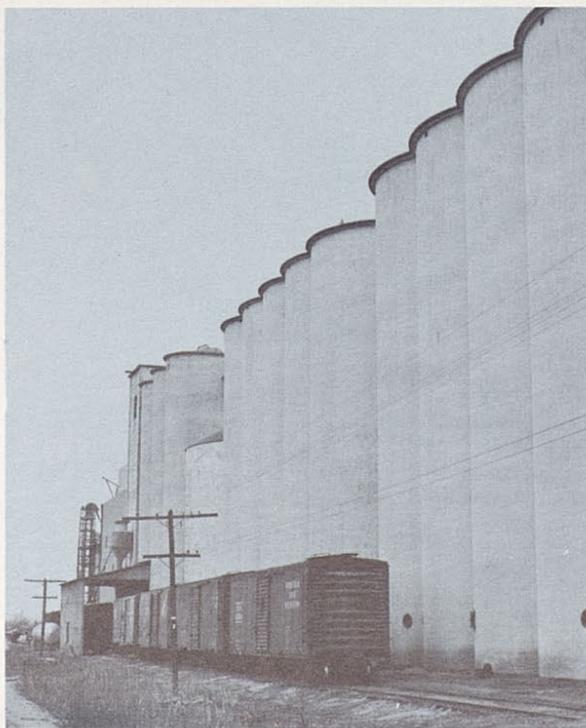
All of Oklahoma is proud of the city of Altus.



*Water from Lake Altus goes over this dam to furnish irrigation for more than 70,000 acres of farm land near Altus.*

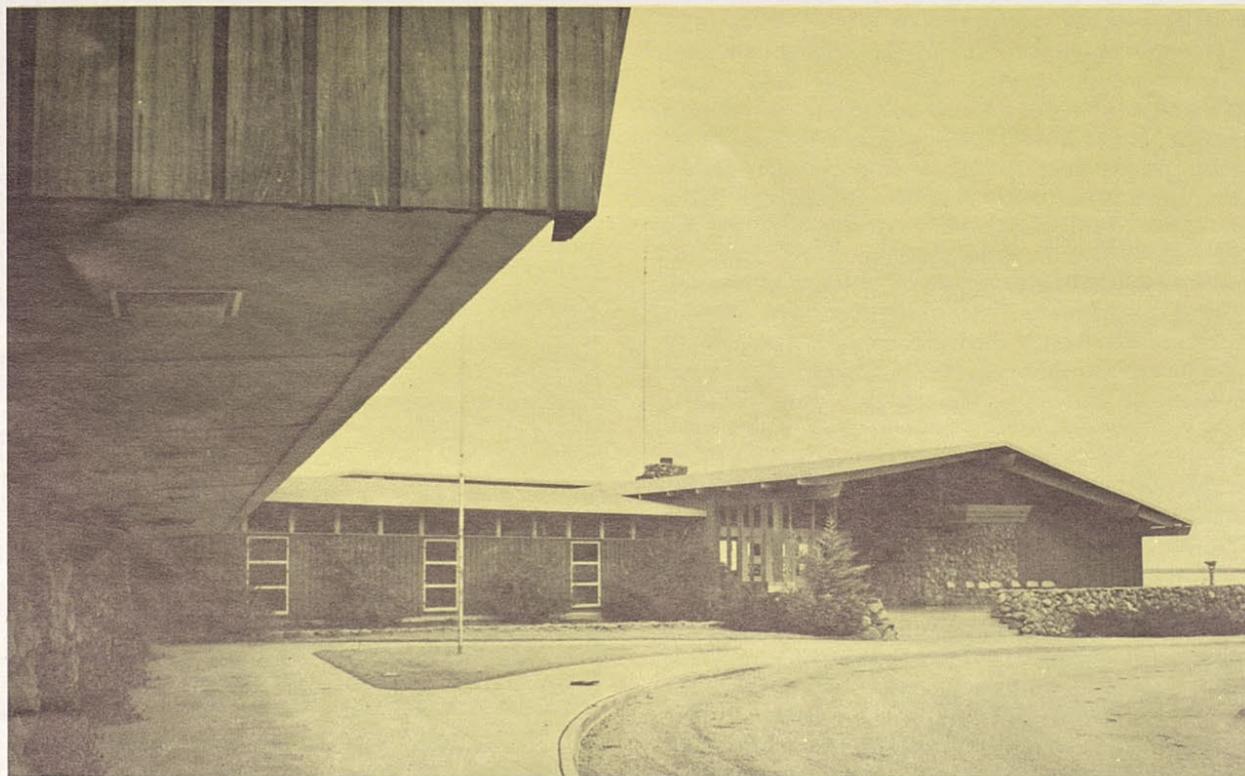


*Cars parked downtown in mid-week attest to the fact that Altus is a busy shopping center. Below is one of the city's many elevators that store the area's bumper crops of grain.*





*Beautiful Lake Altus, located north of the city, offers recreation in fishing, boating, swimming and water skiing for weekend or vacation visitors. Quartz Mountain Lodge, below, is a favorite spot for guests. Individual cabins are also available.*



# LAKE ALTUS

## Altus' Water Wonderland

The Southwest, with its short grass and treeless plains, has few lakes to serve as recreational centers. Lake Altus, in Quartz Mountain State Park of Southwestern Oklahoma, is one of the most popular.

This sprawling 7,000-acre lake is a haven for vacationers who prefer water skiing, boating, camping, fishing, hiking, or an opportunity "to get away from it all." The lake area also serves as a popular convention site for visitors from other parts of Oklahoma, the Texas Panhandle, and North Texas.

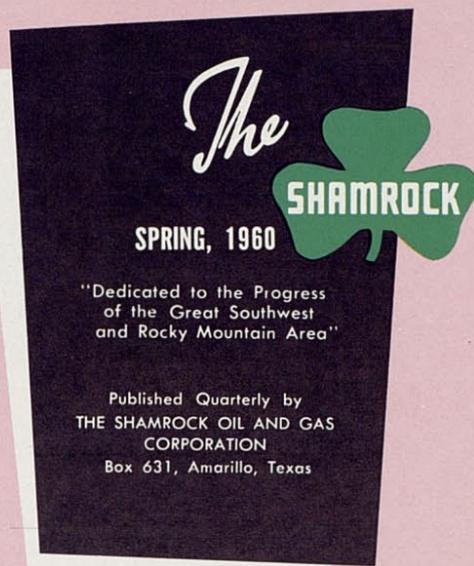
At the lake, visitors find Quartz Mountain Lodge offers an easy, informal, and relaxed atmosphere, synonymous with the Southwest. The modern conveniences of the Lodge provide guests with air-conditioned rooms and a dining area with a panoramic view of the lake. Also available are private lakeside cabins complete with maid service and kitchens for those who wish to cook their own meals. The Lodge is the center of group activities such as dancing, movies, games, and meeting for the guests.

For the sportsmen, water skiing and swimming are excellent in the lake's clear water. A keyhole-shaped swimming pool near the Lodge is a popular fun spot with guests who prefer less rigorous activities. Golfers are provided a nine-hole, grass-green course near the lake.

Craterville Park, two miles south of Lake Altus, offers amusement for the children. Here, they can enjoy riding the miniature planes and trains in a setting of mountain ruggedness.

In addition to the recreational facilities, the lake is used as a water supply for the area's irrigation. Today, more than 70,000 acres in the Lugert-Altus irrigation district are supplied with water from Lake Altus.

Lake Altus provides a vacation and holiday spot with western scenery to assure all ages an enjoyable time.



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## CREDITS

### ON THE COVER

No matter how dire a man's circumstances, he never fails to display his reliance upon, or need for, Divine Guidance. This was especially true in the early Southwest when Indian fighting and regimentation of cavalry life created great demands on human character. In the early 1870's while Ft. Sill was being constructed for physical protection, Old Post Chapel was built to afford spiritual guidance to blue-clad troopers who faced daily uncertainties. The colorful little chapel still stands, the second oldest place of worship in Oklahoma.

Cover photo by *The Shamrock* staff; photo bottom page 2 and page 5, U. S. Army; page 6 and bottom two photos, page 7, Lawton Chamber of Commerce; pages 8, 10, and 11, National Archives.



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