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EARLY RECORDS OF THE WILD TURKEY. V.

BY ALBERT HAZEN WRIGHT.

(*Concluded from p. 224.*)

Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Illinois.

IN this area the wild turkey held its own against two centuries of civilization's advances. The first note comes in 1658-1660 when Peter Esprit Radisson (l. c. pp. 152, 212) finds in the country of the "Pontonatemicks" (Lake Superior region) "there are so many Tourkeys that the boys throw stones at them for their recreation." Of this same region, he again says "many have Turkeys." The Jesuit Relations speak of the turkey in this region in several accounts. In 1661 and 1662 they assert that in the Mississippi valley ¹ "Turkeys and fowls fly in flocks as Starlings do in France." In 1669-70, Marquette, when in the Illinois country, finds ² "There is fine hunting of . . . Turkeys, . . ." Along the Mississippi River, the Relations of 1672-74 say ³ "Turkeys strut about, on all sides," and of Illinois River they hold that "Turkeys are found there in greater numbers than elsewhere." On Marquette's Voyage,

¹ The Jesuit Relations. . . . Vol. XLVII, p. 143.

² *ibid.*, Vol. LIV, p. 189.

³ *ibid.*, Vol. LVIII, pp. 99, 107.

1673-77, we find that they, on the upper Mississippi reached ¹ "the parallel of 41 degrees 28 minutes," "Turkeys had taken the place of game." In the Illinois country, "There was more snow there then elsewhere as well as more tracks of animals and Turkeys" and they here find themselves "in a fine place for hunting cattle, deer and turkeys, which are excellent. . . ." According to Allouez,² "they hunt. . . . Turkey" in Illinois, and, for the same region, Binnetau in 1699 records, "Game is plentiful such as ducks. . . . Turkeys." In 1698, Hennepin mentions Turkey-Cocks for the head of the Illinois River. When along the Mississippi, he says ³ "I observed they have tame Poultry, as Hens, Turkey-Cocks, and Bustards, which are as tame as our Geese." "The country affords all sorts of Game as Turkey-Cocks. . . .," and "in our way we kill'd seven or eight Bustards or Wild Turkeys, which in these Countries encrease mightily." In general, "There are to be had. . . . Turkies, which are of an extraordinary bigness."

In 1703, La Hontan holds ⁴ "The River of the Illinese is intituled to Riches, by vertue of the benign Climate, and of the great quantities of. . . . Turkeys that feed on its brinks." In 1712, Marest records that along the Illinois River,⁵ "Turkeys are likewise found here in abundance and they are as good as those of France." In 1750, a letter from Vivier finds in the Illinois country that ⁶ "Wild turkeys abound everywhere, in all seasons, except near the inhabited portions." In the same year the mission at Detroit purchased turkeys from the natives at several different times.⁷ Twenty-eight years later (1778) Hutchins records in Illinois that ⁸ "*Savannahs* or natural meadows, are both numerous and extensive; yielding excellent grass, and feeding great herds of Buffaloe, Turkies. . . ." Lastly in 1791, J. Long, the Indian interpreter gives the Chippeway name for Turkey as ⁹ "Weenecobbo." The following year (1792) John Heckewelder made a journey to the

¹ *ibid.*, LIX, pp. 111, 171, 173, 177.

² *ibid.*, LX, p. 163: LXV, p. 73.

³ Hennepin, L. 1. c., pp. 93, 94, 123, 137, 149; continuation, p. 137.

⁴ La Hontan, l. c., pp. 134, 112.

⁵ The Jesuit Relations, Vol. LXVI, p. 225.

⁶ *ibid.*, Vol LXIX, pp. 143, 145, 257.

⁷ *ibid.*, LXX, pp. 59, 63, 43.

⁸ Hutchins, l. c., p. 44.

⁹ Early Western Travels, Vol. II, p. 263 (orig. p. 223).

Wabash.¹ "Wild turkeys and deer were seen in great numbers on the banks of the Ohio." Below Vincennes on one October day they took five turkeys. Opposite Louisville at another time they shot four more and the same success was experienced at several other places.

At the beginning (1801) of the next century Matthew Carey says that in the Northwestern and Indiana Territories,² "Turkies . . . are in greater plenty here, than the tame poultry are in any part of the old settlements in America." Not until 1816, do we discover the next pertinent note. David Thomas in the Wabash country at first writes that³ "We had been taught to expect that turkies were very numerous, but we have been disappointed, for certainly we have not seen half a dozen full grown in all the Western Country." Later, he holds that "at that (above) time it appears that these fowls were hatching or secreted with their young." "*Wild Turkies* abound in this country." The next year 1817, Samuel R. Brown records that⁴ "Wild turkies abound in the hilly districts" of Illinois. "The woods (of Indiana) abound with deer, bears, wolves and wild turkies." "In travelling seven miles through the woods of Dearborn county I counted two bears, three deer and upwards of one hundred turkies; more than half of the latter however are young ones, just beginning to fly." In Michigan he also notes this species.

In the early days of Illinois, Morris Birkbeck⁵ tells us that when the stock of provisions failed, the wild turkey was one of the last resorts. Its pursuit also served the pioneer with plenty of strong exercise. The same author in his "Letters" writes⁶ "We are now feasting on wild turkeys. We have not sat down to dinner for the last month, I believe, without a fine roast turkey. They weigh about twelve pounds, and are sold five for a dollar. Some weigh

¹ Penn. Mag. Hist. and Biog., XII, pp. 166, 173, 176.

² Carey, Matthew. American Pocket Atlas. 2nd edit. Phila., 1801, p. 76.

³ Thomas, David. Travels through the Western Country in the Summer of 1816. . . . Auburn, 1819, pp. 161, 162, 210.

⁴ Brown, S. R. The Western Gazetteer; Auburn, N. Y., 1817, pp. 30, 48, 78, 169.

⁵ Birkbeck, Morris. Notes on a Journey in America, . . . 3rd edit., London, 1818, pp. 123, 149.

⁶ Birkbeck, M. Letters from Illinois. Phila., 1818, p. 63.

twenty-five pounds — I have heard of thirty. They are fat and tender: better I fancy, than Norfolk turkeys; but I must not be too positive on this nice point." In 1817, Fordham when in Illinois and Indiana, narrates how "game is as plentiful as in other parts of the U. S. east of the Mississippi,"¹ turkeys being among the forms he mentions. Two years later, 1819, Faeron finds² turkeys in tolerable quantities in Illinois, and in Michigan Dana reports³ them in plenty. Hulme in a "Journal of a Tour in the Western Countries September 30, 1818–August 8, 1819" remarks that⁴ "On our way to Princeton (Ind.), we see large flocks of fine wild turkeys, Some of the inhabitants who prefer sport to work, live by shooting these turkeys. . . ." In the same year, Richard Flower says that at Albion, Illinois, one can secure,⁵ "a fine turkey (for) a quarter of a dollar," and, in another series, he notes "turkeys in plenty, having purchased four for a dollar the preceding week." Along the Wabash River in 1819, John Woods tells how⁶ "they killed . . . some turkeys: these they were obliged to eat without bread, but once they procured a few potatoes at a cabin." In Illinois, he says, "The birds are turkeys," "Turkeys are of a large size; we bought many during the winter for 25 cents each. At that time they were in general, thin, but in the spring, they get very fat; we bought one in April that weighed more than 20lb. for 1s 8½ d." In 1819, W. Faux reports turkeys from Vincennes and Princeton, Ind. At the latter place, he records⁷ "turkeys in sickening abundance." Later, in his account, he says, "Colonel Boon and his party, being without bread for six months, used wild turkey to their meat as a substitute." In one instance, he gives the prejudiced view of an Englishman who retorts "You talk about your wild turkies and your game, but they are not there; game is more scarce than in England." At Bain-

¹ Fordham, E. P. *Personal Narrative*, Edited by F. A. Ogg. Cleveland, O., 1906, pp. 119, 143.

² Fearon, H. B. *Sketches of America*. . . . 3rd edit., London, 1819, p. 257.

³ Dana, E. *Geographical Sketches on the Western Country*: . . . Cincinnati, 1819, p. 262.

⁴ *Early Western Travels*, X, p. 49 (orig. p. 279).

⁵ *Ibid.*, X, p. 108 (orig. p. 30), 124 (orig. p. 13).

⁶ *ibid.*, X, pp. 263 (orig. p. 147), 291 (orig. p. 196).

⁷ *ibid.*, XI, pp. 143 (orig. p. 136), 210 (217), 228 (238), 256 (272), 263 (282).

bridge, O., on September 5, 1819, Adlard Welby, another Englishman sees the wild Turkey,¹ "which seemed to resemble exactly our dark tame breed." At the mouth of the Ohio, 1819, Nuttall finds² "The whole country here, on both sides of the Mississippi and the Ohio, . . . abounds with various kinds of game, but particularly deer and bear, turkeys. . ." The Expedition of Major Stephen H. Long on May 27, 1819, records³ the turkey at Shawneetown on the Ohio. Schoolcraft (l. c., 114) in 1821 on the Wabash River says, "The turkey . . . often appear, to enliven this part of the river (Mississineva River)." In another work he records that at Prairie di Chien⁴ "the wild turkey, . . . are also common along this part of the Mississippi, . . ." On his excursion of 1822-23, W. H. Blane (l. c., p. 239) at Carmi, Ind., "passed on a single day's ride . . . five gangs of wild turkeys." In "Remarks made on a Tour to Prairie du Chien . . . in 1829" (p. 166) Caleb Atwater gives the Sioux name for Turkey, as "Zezeha, Zezecha tunka." In 1832 Timothy Flint (l. c., p. 384) writes, "Wild turkeys have been supposed by some, to abound as much on the waters of White River, as they do in the settled regions. Hundreds are sometimes driven from one cornfield." The same year, Vigne (l. c., p. 61) finds "Wild turkeys are there very plentiful," in Indiana and Illinois. In the winter of 1832-33, Maximilian Prince of Wied says,⁵ "The most interesting of the birds in this part (New Harmony on Wabash) is the wild turkey, which was extremely numerous, and is still pretty common. A large cock was sold at Harmony for a quarter of a dollar. A young man in this neighborhood, who supplied the place with this delicate game, had often ten or fifteen hanging about his horse at the same time." Later, he writes "my informant had killed . . . great numbers of wild turkeys." "In our excursions we often visited some others of the numerous islands in the Wabash, being particularly attracted by the loud cries of the

¹ *ibid.*, p. 208 (orig. p. 62).

² *ibid.*, XIII, p. 72 (orig. p. 41).

³ James, Edwin. *Account of expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*. . . . 2 vols. Phila., 1823, Vol. I, p. 32.

⁴ Schoolcraft, H. R. *Travels in Central Portions of the Mississippi Valley*. New York, 1825, p. 71.

⁵ *Early Western Travels*. Vol. XXII, Part I, p. 168 (77), 178 (81), 191 (89), 192 (90).

wild turkey; their voice is exactly similar to that of the European turkey. We could hear them scratching among the dry leaves on the ground, in search of food. If we surprised them, they were generally too far off for our fowling-pieces, loaded with small shot, for they ran away with extraordinary rapidity. Turkey Island seemed to be a favourite place of resort. At the upper end of the island drifted wood was frequently piled up to such a height, that it was difficult to clamber over it, and among this wood there were generally many otters. Here we often found wild turkeys, . . . ; and it is really a fine sight to see a flock of these wild turkeys fly across the river, . . . " At Black River, Wabash country, "we were unsuccessful in our chase of the wild turkeys, of which we sometimes saw whole flocks fly across the Wabash."

In 1834, H. R. Schoolcraft in the "Natural History of Michigan," writes that,¹ "The *gallipavo meleagris*, or wild turkey, pursues its food in the vast ranges of the new counties of the peninsula, and is still found in the vicinity of this city. It does not extend its summer migrations to the extremity of the peninsula, and has never been seen north of it." The following year, 1835, Chas. Fenno Hoffman writes,² "Here the numerous deer-runways, with the flocks of wild turkeys. . . showed us that we were upon the favorite hunting-ground of the Pottawattamies." The same year Patrick Shirreff (l. c., p. 434) finds turkeys in endless numbers in Illinois. Four years later, 1838, Jas. Hall records that³ "Wild turkeys are still abundant. They are shy and difficult to shoot, but our hunters kill great numbers of them. In the spring they are found in pairs, but during the rest of the year in flocks consisting of the old pair and the last brood. Fine turkeys may be bought of the hunters for twelve and a half cents apiece." In 1830-1840 turkeys were plentiful⁴ in Michigan. In this region,⁵ "A turkey was generally roasted by hanging it up before the fire by a string attached to a beam above. A dripping pan was placed under it and

¹ Schoolcraft, H. R. *Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan*. Detroit, 1834, p. 189.

² Hoffman, Chas. Fenno. *A Winter in the West by a New Yorker*. N. Y., 1835, 2 vols., Vol. I, p. 202.

³ Hall, Jas. *Notes on the Western States*. Phila., 1838, p. 124.

⁴ Mich. Pioneer and Historical Colls., Vol. 6, p. 475.

⁵ *ibid.*, Vol. XIV, p. 436, XIII, p. 548.

it was basted and turned till done. Though cooked by primitive means, a turkey roasted in this manner is equal in flavor to the best that improved methods can produce." Finally, in Michigan we have this note. "Wild turkeys were often seen by the score by the early settlers, and some few have been seen till quite recently (1888). In the Wabash region in 1855 Beste, an Englishman, says,¹ "We met a peasant carrying a rifle over one shoulder, and in the other hand, a black wild turkey."

Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota.

Most of the printed records of the wild turkey in this region come after 1800. When at Lake Pepin, J. Carver in 1766-1768, finds in November,² "Great numbers of fowl frequent also this Lake and rivers adjacent, . . . and in the groves are found great plenty of turkeys and partridges." In 1804, Captain Clarke traversed this region and on one occasion,³ "went out to hunt and killed a small turkey." In another instance when the party was only 4 days' trip west of St. Louis, the record says, "passed the mouth of Mine River; saw several turkeys on the shores." In 1808-1816, Henry Ker (l. c., p. 40) and his party when on the Mississippi "were visited by a few of the Osark tribe of Indians, who came to us in canoes, bringing with them a few turkies; . . ." In 1806, Zebulon Montgomery Pike starts on a trip up the Missouri and Osage Rivers, and through Kansas to the Pawnee River on the Republican River. At Gasconade River, July 24, he⁴ "killed . . . three turkeys." Thereafter, they continue to kill turkeys throughout the trip. In one instance he pities some poor fellows to whom he gives whiskey, "they having had only two turkeys for four days."

In 1809-1811, Bradbury says,⁵ "With . . . turkeys, the town of

¹ Beste, J. R. *The Wabash; etc.* 2 vols. London, 1855. Vol. 2, p. 50.

² Carver, J. *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America, in the Years 1766, 1767 and 1768.* London, 1778, p. 55.

³ Gass, Patrick. *Journal of the Voyage and Travels of . . . Capt. Lewis and Capt. Clarke. . . . During the Years 1804, 1805, 1806.* 4 edit. Phila., 1812, pp. 27, 262.

⁴ *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike.* New edit. Edited by Elliott Coues. N. Y., 1893, Vol. II, pp. 366, 368, 370, 373, 381, 394, 395, 399.

⁵ Bradbury, John. *Travels in the Interior of America in the Years 1809, 1810 and 1811. . . .* Liverpool, 1817, p. 261.

St. Louis is frequently supplied by a tribe of the Shawnee nation of Indians, who live about seventy miles west of that place. They usually charge a quarter of a dollar for a turkey or a quarter of venison." In 1811, H. M. Brackenridge when not far from Fort Osage up the Missouri writes,¹ "While Castor was out, he saw a *white turkey*, but was not so fortunate as to kill it. I am told that they have sometimes been seen of this color: but I suspect it is *Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno*." He finds that, "In the settlements, and for a considerable distance up the Missouri, turkies stalk through the woods, in numerous flocks, but are rarely met with where the open country commences."

In 1812, Major Amos Stoddard holds that² "these forests (Upper Louisiana) also according to the best accounts, contain about a hundred and thirty species of birds. The most useful of them are several kind of duck . . . and turkey."

In 1816, John D. Hunter (l. c., pp. 170, 383, 425, 432) says, "Wild turkey, prairie hens, etc. . . . are inhabitants of this country." He tells how a band of Indians may often approach a hostile party by gobbling like a turkey cock and their enemies be not aware of their intent or presence. In another instance, he states that when Indians choke, they thrust a turkey feather down the throat to induce vomiting. Finally, he describes at length, the "Soo-ke-He-Ah (or) young turkies' feed." "Turkey pea — There are two highly nutritive articles bearing this name, which grow in the western country in great abundance, but which are entirely different in character from the one now under consideration. One variety is however called by the graziers on the frontiers Pea vine, which from its great abundance and nutritive properties constitute a highly valuable grazing article. The other has a single stock, grows to the height of eight or ten inches, and bears a small pod. It is found in rich loose soils, appears amongst the first plants in the spring, and produces on the root small tubers of the size of a hazelnut, on which the turkies feed. . . . But the substance now under notice grows to a foot or foot and a half in height, and adorns the

¹ Brackenridge, H. M. *Views of Louisiana together with a Journal of a Voyage up the Missouri River in 1811.* Pittsburgh, 1814, pp. 216, 59.

² Stoddard, Major Amos. *Sketches Historical and Descriptive of Louisiana.* Phila., 1812, p. 231.

borders of the prairies, where in July it almost uniformly bears a great profusion of beautiful blossoms, which are white, fringed with red on their margins. These are subsequently followed by a luxuriant crop of small peas, of which the wild turkies are extremely fond, from whence their name. . . ."

Shortly after, 1818, H. R. Schoolcraft visits the Osarks. Around the Great and Little North Forks of the White River, he finds that ¹ "At the early hours in the morning, the wild turkeys appeared in large flocks, with their plumage glistening in the light." When at Wall-cave valley, November 13, 1818, he says "As the evening approached, a flock of turkeys, coming in from the plain to the top of the cliff above the cavern, flew down on to the trees directly in front of us, sheltered as we were from their sight, and afforded a fine opportunity for the exercise of sportsmanship." Throughout the trip, turkeys suffice for many a meal, and, in one case, Schoolcraft relates the enjoyment of a "turkey-pie, with a crust of Indian meal." The following year, 1819, the same author records that ² "The wild turkey is still common on the bottom lands, and during the heat of the day in the open post oak woods."

In 1818, Estwick Evans observes the bald eagle and the turkey in the rôles of pursuer and prey.³ "Whilst in the Missouri Territory, and not far from the bank of the river, a bald eagle, perched upon a tall and blasted oak, attracted my attention. . . . Whilst I was admiring the strength of his form, and the majesty of his aspect, a wild turkey flew from a neighbouring tree and alighted on the ground. The eagle immediately pounced upon his prey; but ere he could effect his object the turkey was shot. I might too, have killed the eagle, but admiration and awe prevented me. I felt that he was the emblem and the inspiration of my country; and at that moment, I would not, for ten thousand worlds like ours, have cut a feather of his wing." In 1820, Stephen Watts Kearny in "A Narrative Account of the Council Bluff, St. Peters Military Expedition" notes that they ⁴ "passed the Wakendaw River on

¹ Schoolcraft, H. R. *Scenes and Adventures in the Semi Alpine Region of the Osark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas.* Phila., 1853, pp. 59, 66, 79, 80, 85, 98, 99, 121.

² Schoolcraft, H. R. *A View of the Lead Mines of Missouri.* New York, 1819, pp. 36, 37.

³ *Early Western Travels*, VIII, p. 311 (orig. p. 205).

⁴ *Mo. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, III, 1908, p. 52.

the West at which point we saw large flocks of Turkeys." About the same time, Stephen H. Long (l. c., pp. 96, 111, 373) finds that at Franklin on the Missouri, "Most of the deer . . . , as well as the turkies have fled from this part of the country, though but a few years since they were extremely abundant." and that at Isle au Vache (100 miles above Osage) there were great numbers of turkies.

In 1832, Timothy Flint (l. c., 305, 94) writes that in Missouri "Wild turkeys furnish admirable sport to the gunner" and of the Mississippi at the Falls of St. Anthony he says, "Its broad and placid current is often embarrassed with islands, often containing from five hundred to a thousand acres, and abounding with wild turkeys. . . ." The same author in a previous work (1826) finds that ¹ "There is a great abundance and variety of wild fowl, and turkeys, . . ." at Jackson, Missouri. In 1832-33, Latrobe records that ² "Turkeys were plentiful in the woods" of Missouri. About this same time, Maximilian, Prince of Wied, states that ³ "wild turkeys were not often found" at St. Charles on the Missouri. Near Gasconade River, he says "our hunters fired unsuccessfully at a flock of wild turkeys." At Osage on the Missouri, he writes, "Some of my people, attracted by the cries of the wild turkeys, were tempted to land, but returned without having met with any success. I happened to have taken no piece with me, which I much regretted for a wild turkey-cock came out of a bush about ten paces from me, and stood still, looking at me, while his splendid feathers shone in the sun," and at Boyer's Creek near Council Bluffs, he notes "We had a fruitless chase after some wild turkeys." At Missouri City, he finds that "Wild turkeys are still met with." A year later (April 4, 1834), John K. Townsend at Big Spring, Mo., records that ⁴ "We then gave up the pursuit, and turned our attention to the turkies, which were rather numerous in the thicket. They were shy, as usual, and, when started from their lurking places, ran away like deer, and hid themselves in the underwood.

¹ Flint, T. *Recollections of the Last Ten Years Passed in Occasional Residences and Journeyings in the Valley of the Mississippi.* Boston, 1826, p. 248.

² Latrobe, C. J. *The Rambler in North America.* 1832-1833, 2 vols. New York, 1835, Vol. I, p. 100.

³ *Early Western Travels*, XXII, pp. 240 (orig. p. 113) 241 (114), 247 (117); XXIV, pp. 107 (465), 120 (472).

⁴ *ibid.*, XXI, p. 129 (orig. p. 16).

Occasionally, however, they would perch on the high limbs of the trees, and then we had some shots at them. In the course of an hour we killed four, . . .” In his *Travels 1834-1836*, C. A. Murray (l. c., p. 73) notices this form at Keokuk. In 1837, A. Wetmore writes ¹ “The game of Missouri, the ranks of which are thinned as settlements advance, consists of . . . , turkeys etc.” In Saline County, he says “Turkeys and grouse here give animation to the prairie scenery and furnish the table with some of the choicest luxuries of life.” Finally, in 1846, Wm. J. A. Bradford holds that ² “The wild turkey is found in great numbers on the wooded bottom lands” of the Upper Mississippi.

Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and the Northwest.

If we do not consider Coronado of the 16th century, the record begins in 1724, when M. de Bourgmont made a trip from Fort Orleans to the Missouris, Canzas and Padoucas. On the 16th of October, 1724, he says ³ “Besides the larger game, these groves (at River of the Canzas) afforded also a retreat to flocks of turkeys.”

About the beginning of the nineteenth century, Alexander Henry writes of one of Big Belly Indians ⁴ “who had a turkey-cock’s tail, great numbers of which they get from the Schians, and which serve them as fans.” On the return, the Lewis and Clarke expedition when passing down the Missouri River, records the turkey at the mouth of the Platte River.⁵ “At two in the afternoon we stopped to hunt, and soon killed two deer and a turkey.” Shortly after, Pike takes a trip from a Pawnee Village through Kansas and Colorado to Pike’s Peak, October 1-November 30, 1806. At Lamar he says ⁶ “killed one turkey, the first we have seen since we left the Pawnees”; at Florence, “killed . . . six turkeys”; at Royal Gorge of the Arkansaw, “Heard 14 guns at camp . . . found

¹ Wetmore, Alphonse. *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri*. St. Louis, 1837, pp. 29, 219.

² Bradford, Wm. J. A. *Notes on the Northwest, etc.* New York and London, 1846, p. 19.

³ Du Pratz, M. *Le Page*, l. c., p. 69.

⁴ Coues, Elliott. *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, 1799-1814*. 3 vols. N. Y., 1897, Vol. I, p. 355.

⁵ Gass, Patrick. l. c., p. 260.

⁶ Pike, l. c., Vol. II, pp. 442, 462, 463, 464, 471, 474.

that cause of my alarm was their shooting turkeys, killed . . . nine turkeys." Later, at this latter place, he kills others, and, along the Arkansaw, he says he "Saw great quantities of turkeys. . . ." Five years later, 1811, on May 7, Brackenridge (l. c., p. 225) near the mouth of the Platte River, notes "On my return to the boat, killed some pigeons. . . . and saw a flock of turkeys." In 1819 or 1820, Long (l. c., Vol. I, p. 419) when near the sources of the Grand River says "Nothing is more difficult than to estimate by the eye, the distance of objects seen in these plains. . . ., we discovered as we thought, several large animals feeding in the prairie, at the distance of half a mile. These we believed could be no other than bisons, and after a consultation respecting the best method of surprising them, two of our party dismounted and creeping with great care and caution, about one fourth of a mile through the high grass, arrived near the spot, and discovered an old turkey, with her brood of half grown young, the only animals now to be seen." The year following, 1821, Jacob Fowler states that on October 8, near Arkansas River ¹ "Some of the Hands killed 10 turkeys." A month later, November 3, 1821, at Hartland, Kearney Co., he notes that "On this island the Hunters killed Some turkeys and Seen Some more. the first We Have SEEN above the little arken-saw. . . ." Finally, on November 17, 1821, he remarks that at La Junta, "no buffelow or turkeys."

In 1833, Maximilian, Prince of Wied, gives us several notes for this region. When near the mouth of the Kansas, he says ² "He (McKenzie) brought us several turkeys which had been lately shot." At Cedar Island, 1075 miles from the mouth of the Missouri, he holds that "This may be considered the limit to which the wild turkey extends on the Missouri. It is true that this bird is now and then, found higher up, even on the Yellow Stone River; but these are exceptions, for beyond this place the woods are too open and exposed. The Indians on the Upper Missouri, readily barter for the tails of these fine birds to use them as fans and ornaments,

¹ The Journal of Jacob Fowler, etc. 1821-22. Edited by Elliott Coues. N. Y., 1898, pp. 16, 33, 48.

² Early Western Travels, XXII, Part I, pp. 251 (Orig. p. 119) 296 (144); XXIII, Part II, pp. 102 (249), 103, 261 (339); XXIV, Part III, pp. 74 (446), 109 (465), 226, 248, 275, 276, 285, 293, 295, 300.

and Mr. McKenzie, accordingly took a great supply with him." Of this trade with the Black feet Indians, he says, "The Company now sends to its trading posts, the tail of the wild turkeys, which are much in request" for fans. At Mandan, N. D., he asserts that "For an arrow wound he (Indian) fastened in his hair the wing feather of a wild turkey." At old Fort Clarke, he discovers dogs gaily clothed with feathers. "In the middle of this mass of feathers, the outspread tail of a wild turkey . . . was fixed." Near Weeping Water, Kansas, he frequently espies turkies. He states that "We set out early and passed Weeping-water River, landing several times to pursue the wild turkeys, whose note attracted us to their retreats. We often saw these proud birds in the lofty trees, perched up beyond the reach of small shot." Finally, he gives the following Indian names for the wild turkey:

Dacota (Sioux)	sisitscha-kanka (<i>s</i> soft; <i>kan</i> in the throat).
Mandans	máhnú (<i>a</i> rather full, almost as if with superior <i>o</i>).
Minnitanis or Grosventres	sihs-kichtia (run together; <i>ich</i> with the point of the tongue; <i>ti</i> and <i>d</i> separated).
Omahas	sihsikah.
Oto	wæ-ink-chontjeh (first <i>e</i> barely audible; <i>ch</i> guttural; <i>j</i> French).
Saukis, Sakis, Sacs	pänáh (first <i>a</i> umlaut).
Wasaji or Osage	suhka.

In 1833, September 25, Nathaniel Wyeth in his trip to Oregon, reports killing a turkey just west of Black Snake Hills and Rubideau Fort. In another place, he says he saw several turkeys.¹ A short time later, C. A. Murray (l. c., Vol. II, 45) records that at the mouth of the Kansas River "A lad (of the company) took a ramble with his fowling-piece, and saw some turkeys, . . . but he could not get near enough for a shot." In 1837, Washington Irving writes that² "An Indian trader, well experienced in the

¹ Young, F. G. The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-36. In Sources of the History of Oregon, Vol. I, Parts 3-6, pp. 217, 218.

² Irving, Washington. The Rocky Mountains; etc. 2 vols., Phila., 1837, Vol. I, p. 38.

country, informs us that within ten years that he has passed in the far west, the bee has advanced westward above a hundred miles. It is said on the Missouri, that the wild turkey and the wild bee go up the river together: neither are found in the upper regions. It is but recently that the wild turkey has been killed on the Nebraska, or Platte and his travelling competitor, the wild bee appeared there about the same time." A few years later, Fremont on the Little Blue River (Neb.?) describes it as follows:¹ "The stream was about fifty feet wide and three or four feet deep, fringed with cottonwood and willow, with frequent groves of oak tenanted by flocks of turkeys."

In 1846-1847, the Emory Reconnoissance meets the wild turkey on several occasions. Of the Valley of Purgatory, the report has it that² "the hills are bare of vegetation, except a few stunted cedars; and the valley is said to be, occasionally, the resort of grizzly bear, turkeys...." In Lieutenant Abert's Appendix of this report are several notes on this form. He gives it amongst the birds seen from Bent's Fort to Santa Fe, and holds "our road leads through a region that abounds with the deer....and the turkey." Along the Purgatory River, "dense thickets, composed of plum and the cherry interwoven with grape vines, formed impenetratable thickets, where....wild turkey, found a secure shelter." Here "turkeys are very abundant," and, "they told us that....they daily killed great numbers of....turkeys." Also at Wakarusa river, Kansas, he records that "Some of our hunters went out and killed several wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*.)" In 1848, J. Q. Thornton says the wild turkey is found east of the Nebraska River.³ In "The Overland stage," Messrs. Root and Connelley assert that⁴ "There was an abundance of wild game in the '60's. In eastern Kansas large numbers of wild turkeys.... were seen. Along the Little Blue River there were also many wild

¹ Fremont, J. C. Rept. of Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mts. in the year 1842 and to Ore. and North California in the years 1843-1844. Washington, 1845, p. 15.

² Emory, W. H. Notes of a Military Reconnoissance from Fort Leavenworth in Missouri to San Diego, in California, etc. New York, 1848, pp. 21, 405, 432, 437, 439, 524, 390.

³ Thornton, J. Q. Oregon and California in 1848. N. Y. 1855, Vol. I, p. 41.

⁴ Root, F. A., and Connelley, W. E. The Overland Stage to California. Topeka, Kansas, 1901, p. 87.

turkeys." Finally, in 1868, Zincke finds that ¹ "As to feathered game; on lucky days you may get a wild turkey," in the Rocky Mts.

Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and the Southwest.

In this, the last section to be considered, the turkey has always been a familiar form from Coronado's day to the present. In 1723, Bernard de la Harpe finds it in the land about the Red River and asserts that the country of the Arkansas and Tayas has an abundance of turkeys.²

Some hundred years later, 1818, Schoolcraft remarks ³ the cheapness of wild turkeys at 25 cents in the White River country of Arkansaw Territory, and, in 1817, Brown (l. c., p. 174) tells how "50 miles from its mouth (Grand Saline or Newsewketonga) the prairie grass is encrusted with salt; the Indians collect it by scraping it off the prairie with a turkey's wing, into a trencher." The following year, 1819, Thos. Nuttall in "Travels into the Arkansas Territory" discusses the feather mantles of the Osage Indians.⁴ "Nearly all those whom De Soto found inhabiting Florida and Louisiana, on either side of the Mississippi, . . . dressed themselves in woven garments made of . . . ; and in colder seasons of the year, they wore coverings of feathers, chiefly those of the turkey. The same dresses were still employed in the time of Du Pratz. These feather mantles were, within the recollection of the oldest men, once used by the Cherokees, as I learnt whilst among them. There is, therefore, nothing extraordinary in the discovery of these garments around the bodies which had been interred in the nitre caves of Kentucky. Presents of these 'mantels' as they are called by Purchas, now superceded by European blankets, were perpetually offered De Soto, throughout the course of his expedition, and are still made use of by the natives of the north west coast."

In the southwestern country, the Long expedition 1819-1820, encounters the turkey frequently. In the Arkansas River system,

¹ Zincke, T. B. *Last Winter in the United States.* London, 1868, p. 250.

² French, B. F. l. c., Part III, pp. 69, 74.

³ Schoolcraft, H. R. *A View of the Lead Mines,* . . . p. 251.

⁴ *Early Western Travels.* XIII, pp. 258-259 (orig. pp. 193-194).

the hunters were regularly sent out for it and often returned with as many as seven. In the Red River region the ¹ "game grew so abundant, that we had it at any time in our power, to kill as many bison. . . . and turkies, as we might wish." "The grapes and plums so abundant in this portion of the country are eaten by turkies. . . . , as we conclude from observing plumstones in the excrement of these animals." In the Pawnee territory, they record this form and at the Falls of the Canadian River (near Great North Fork). "Turkies were very numerous." On the Red Fork, they find "a seasonable supply of four turkeys." Some years later, Timothy Flint tells how James O. Pattie of Kentucky ² "saw (in 1824) great numbers of. . . . turkeys" in Socoro County, N. M. In the beginning of 1825, he reports fat turkies along the banks of San Francisco River and along its tributary, Bear Creek.

In 1826, W. B. Dewees at San Antonio de Bexar, Texas, says ³ "On the first evening, we encamped about an hour before sundown, and my friend and myself strayed away from the camp for a short time and while absent, succeeding in killing a couple of very fine turkeys. . . . we had driven them to take refuge in a tree, where we had shot them with our rifles." In 1832-33. Latrobe (l. c., Vol. I, pp. 142, 143, 160, 166) finds that "turkeys. . . . were plentiful in the vicinity of the camp (Western Creek Agency at Saline near Verdigris River), . . . so that abundance reigned there." At Bald Hill near Arkansas, he says "We noticed the tracks of innumerable. . . . turkeys," On the Red Fork, he notes an "abundance of turkeys." On the North Fork of the Canadian River, he claims that they "killed in its neighborhood. . . . twenty turkeys," Finally, his last note is of the Arkansas River which is "frequented by. . . . turkeys." "A Visit to Texas, etc. New York, 1834" records (pp. 92, 209) that "There are wild turkies and smaller birds." "The turkies chiefly resort to the woods." Its author on a trip from Brazona to San Felipe tells how they "had plenty of. . . . wild turkey," In 1836, Edward, in his list of birds, writes ⁴

¹ James, Edwin. l. c., Vol. II, pp. 49, 59, 63, 118, 119, 127, 141, 155, 159, 217, 225.

² Early Western Travels. XVIII, pp. 86 (52) 88 (54) 90 (55) 108 (71).

³ Dewees, W. B. Letters from An Early Settler of Texas. Compiled by Cora Cardelle, Louisville, Ky., 1852, Letter IX.

⁴ Edward, David B. The History of Texas; etc. Cincinnati, 1836, p. 75.

"Among the birds fit for food, are the wild turkey, (commonly found in the woods, and near the edges of the prairies)...." In 1837-1838, Daubeney records at Little Rock, Ark., that he ¹ "saw two wild turkies on Saturday, but at too great a distance to give us a chance of shooting either." On a trip from Little Rock to Hot Spring, April 11, he writes, "we accompanied our host in a chase after a wild turkey, which I had a great ambition to kill and stuff for our Museum at Oxford. The females were decoyed by imitating the gobble of the turkey-cock, in which the back settlers are very expert, but on this occasion the strategem was tried unsuccessfully; for though we saw several, and chased them through the wood, we never got within gunshot of any one. My man made several other attempts, but always in vain.

In Josiah Gregg's "Commerce of the Prairies" we have under "Animals of the Prairies" the following:² "About the Cross Timbers and indeed on all the brushy creeks, especially to the southward, are quantities of wild *turkeys* which are frequently seen ranging in large flocks in the bordering prairies." Westward of Spring Valley near the Canadian, he says "every nook and glade swarmed with deer and wild turkeys,...." In another instance he states that "In some of the mountains (of New Mexico), wild turkey are very numerous." In 1847 (January 14), Abert's party of the Emory expedition (Emory, l. c., p. 505) "saw wild turkeys" at Valverde, New Mexico. In 1849, R. B. Marcy reports that on the Divide near the Canadian River,³ "We have seen many antelopes and turkeys during the last few days." Seventeen days later in June, he reports for the Canadian river region; "I killed a turkey this evening, which is the first we have seen for a week."

The following year the report of S. G. French appears and therein he notes that ⁴ "It might be well to remark that, in all the streams between San Antonio and the San Pedro, fish are abundant, and that in their vicinity deer and turkeys are found." About the

¹ Daubeney, Charles. *Journal of A Tour through the United States and in Canada, Made During the Years 1837-38.* Oxford, 1843, pp. 154, 157.

² *Early Western Travels.* XX (orig. Vol. II) pp. 282 (232), 115 (28), XIX (orig. Vol. I), pp. 328 (195), 325 (191).

³ Marcy, R. B. l. c., pp. 179, 183.

⁴ French, S. G., Report of. *From Reports of Reconnaissances of Routes from San Antonio to El Paso.* 31st Congress, 1st Sess. Ex. Doc. No. 64, 1850, p. 52.

same time, Washington Irving makes several notes of the turkeys in this southwest country. In the Osage country, he records it and also along the Arkansas River. At the Red Fork, he finds ¹ "a number of turkeys." Later, he says the party "came to a halt, in a beautiful grove of elms, on the site of an old Osage encampment. Scarcely had we dismounted when a universal firing of rifles took place upon a large flock of turkeys, scattered about the grove, which proved to be a favorite roosting-place for these simple birds. They flew to the trees, and sat perched upon their branches, stretching out their long necks, and gazing in stupid astonishment, until eighteen of them were shot down." In Deep Creek or Little North Fork, he writes, "The rich woody bottom in which we were encamped, abounded with wild turkeys, of which a considerable number were killed."

In his "Expedition from Texas to Santa Fe," George William Kendall frequently encounters turkeys. At San Antonio, Texas, he reports ² "We put up two or three turkeys near the branch, but the underbrush was so thick it was impossible to get a shot at them." Of the valley of the Brazos, he says that it "teemed in every species of game. . . . elk, . . . , wild turkeys," On the Red River, he speaks of them at length. "We continued our march until we reached the dry bed of a mountain stream, upon the banks of which we encamped for the night. A flock of wild turkeys had taken shelter under the banks, running off as we approached their roost. Although contrary to strict orders, nothing could restrain our men from banging and blazing away at the turkeys as they sped across the prairie — fifty rifles and muskets being discharged at them before they were out of sight. Two or three only were killed by the volley and running fire which ensued and they were but half grown, and so extremely poor that they did not furnish a meal for half a dozen men." Of the same region, he again writes, "By-and-by a brood of wild turkeys, which had been hunting for their supper at the base of the rocky steeps, flew over our heads, and sought their roost in a large cotton-wood which overhung the river."

¹ Irving, Washington. *The Crayon Miscellany*. Revised edit. New York, 1861, pp. 49, 68, 70, 108, 133, 134, 157, 191, 194.

² Kendall, George William. 2 vols. N. Y., Vol. I, pp. 54, 102, 256, 260.

The sharp crack of a rifle soon announced the doom of one of the flock,"

In 1860, Domenech tells us that in the western part of Texas between the Rio Seco and Rio Blanco¹ "Partridge, quail, wild turkeys . . . have made of this spot their favorite sojourn." Ten years later, 1870, William A. Bell reports that at Turkey Mountain (not far from Las Vegas)² "the wild turkeys had all been either shot or driven away by the officers of Fort Union." Lastly, H. M. Chittenden remarks that³ "on the lower Missouri and in the south west the wild turkey abounded, and was extensively used for food" in the days of the early fur trade of the West.

In this recital, the effort has been to interweave these early records without paraphrase. At times they are decidedly ungrammatical, some bordering on fiction, others bizarre in the extreme; yet they all ought to be added to the turkey literature and may supplement the material so frequently rehashed in recent years.

¹ Domenech, Abbe Em. *Seven Years' Residence in the Great Deserts of North America.* 2 vols. London, 1860, Vol. I, p. 134.

² Bell, Wm. A. *New Tracks in North America.* 2nd edit. London, 1870, p. 122.

³ Chittenden, H. M. *The American Fur Trade of the Far West.* 3 vols. N. Y., 1902, Vol. II, p. 835.



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