Chief Paul Of Chitimacha Indians
In Abbeville This Week For First
Time Since His Visit 51 Years Ago

Returning to Abbeville Thursday, this trip by auto, for the first time since an eventful trip on horseback here 51 years ago, Chief Paul Benjamin of the Chitimacha Indians, despite his years, conversed with old timers, received interesting legends, and upon his departure for his home with his tribe of less than 100 living on the 265-acre reserve at Charenton on the Teche, declared that the trip was one of the most enjoyable in "many a moon."

Chief Paul was accompanied to Abbeville by two students studying for the priesthood who are teaching the Indians during the summer vacations. Surrounded by relics of several tribes gathered by Claude Gooch, collector of valuable antiques, the old Chief spent several hours in examining the arrowheads and Indian implements and joined in a steady conversation with Mr. Gooch and a number of other persons from Abbeville.

Chief Paul told of his trip here 51 years ago. He said that Abbeville then was but a little settlement with a chapel and a few homes. He marveled at the city's growth since that time. Chief Paul recalls the old families who settled this section of Louisiana.

Gives Origin Of Name

Naming the tribes which settled in this section of the state, the Chief recalled the "Kankawaks" reported to be man-eaters and having a stronghold where Carencro is now located. The Chief pronounced "Kankawaks" like "Cakrakawas" . . . which is suggestive of Carencro. A prominent historian stated that the name of Carencro came about after "Carrot Crows" had been attracted to that section when a large animal died there. It appears that the old Chief may be correct and there is no doubt that the citizens of Carencro would prefer to accept the Chief's view than the mere suggestiveness of a "buzzard's roost" for the name of their town.
cept Gueydan, which belonged to the Crowley Post. Commander LeBlanc served as area commander for one year.

Commander J. Elliott Cade was instrumental in having the new bridge over Vermilion River, here, dedicated as a memorial to those who lost their lives in World War I. The dedication, under the auspices of Vermilion Post, was considered a success and a great achievement. At the request of the Post, the Louisiana Highway Commission installed bronze plaques on each end of the bridge, designating it as "Vermilion Memorial Bridge," dedicated to those that died that liberty might live.

Due to the urgent need of bronze in World War II, the federal government removed such metal from all such bridges. In 1947, Commander Cade organized a squadron of sons of the American Legion. Many of its members are now serving in the armed forces in the four corners of the world. Wilner Apple of Esther, was the first son of the Legion, seriously injured in France.

On March 15, 1939, the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Legion, with a joint meeting of the Legion Auxiliary and the sons of the Legions, a celebration was held with a huge birthday cake and cold drinks. When the Louisiana Department inaugurated Pelican Boy's State, Vermilion Post was the first in the state to send in its quota of five boys. Under Commander Cade, an all-time peak in membership was reached. In recognition of this achievement, the Post was assigned the place of honor in the inaugural parade of Post Departments, when Commander Sam H. Jones was governor.

Commander Cade is recognized as a leader in Legion activities over the state, having served as area commander for two years, department sergeant-at-arms, and third district commander.

Under his administration, the Post sponsored a junior baseball team, which won the district championship, and defeated the sixth district champions. Most of the credit goes to Nolan Sandolz, who managed the team.

When retiring, Post Commander Cade was presented a Legion uniform, by his Legionnaire friends, and a watch.

To Commander E. N. Kirkpatrick fell the heavy duty of carrying out the Legion's war time program. Commander Kirkpatrick was made a member of the draft board, as re-employment chairman Legionnaire Dutel was made chairman of that board. Past Commander L. H. Wood served for a time, and former members, H. A. Eldridge and A. A. Comeaux did also. On the Advisory Board for registrants the following Legionnaires were appointed: Past Commander J. E. Cade, chairman, Past Commander A. A. LeJeune, and the late J. S. "Bill" LeBlanc.

Commander Kirkpatrick celebrated the American Compulsory Service Act with a calavade and parade in Delcambre, Erath, Abbeville, and Kaplan. The mayors of each town and many civilians took part. Music was furnished by the Delcambre High School Band. Commander Kirkpatrick organized the High School Victory Corps in Abbeville, Erath, and Kaplan schools, which were said to be the best in the state. He also presented a local talent play which netted over two hundred dollars, which was given to the School Board to help equip the soup kitchens in the parish. In recognition of his fine work, he was presented with a Legion uniform by his Legion friends. Although serving for only one year, Commander R. U. Abshire proved to be one of the most active and devoted officers. His main goal was to raise funds to build a Legion home, but he failed to get enough co-operation from the membership. His scrap metal and records drives were very successful. Under his leadership, the Post succeeded in having the pay for the services of a veterans service office. Commander Abshire exceeded the all time peak membership by 53; 55 of which are World War II veterans.

With the co-operation of J. H. Williams, G. J. Ledet and Ray Broussard, the Post took part in the state high school oratorical contest for the first time; Kaplan winning the parish and district contest.

In appreciation of his sincere devotion to his duties, his Legionnaire friends gave him a Legion uniform.

With the election of T. A. Smith, as commander for 1945, Vermilion Post 29, the American Legion, looks forward to greater activities and accomplishments.

Following is a list of commanders since 1919, to date: Edward G. Sabine, acting commander, 1919; Rene Trahan, 1919 to 1921; W. W. Montagne, 1921; Arthur LeJeune, 1922; Felix Nunez, 1923; Owey Ghe, 1924; Fernand Lachaussee, 1924; Dr. P. O. Landry, 1925; J. Elliott Cade, 1925-1926; R. J. Vallee, 1926-1927; L. H. Wood, 1927-1928; Whitney J. Romero, 1928-1931; F. J. Montagne, 1931-1932; Francis Theall, 1932-1933; J. Simon LeBlanc, 1937-1938; J. Elliott Cade, 1938-1940; E. N. Kirkpatrick, 1940-1943; R. U. Abshire, 1943-1944; and T. A. Smith, 1944-1945.

Adjutants since 1920, to date, are: Rene Trahan, 1920-21; Francis Theall, 1921-22; Dr. P. O. Landry, 1922-24; J. O. LeBlanc, 1924-26; R. J. Vallee, 1926-27; Felix Nunez, 1927-28; R. J. Vallee, 1928-30; Conrad Musseau, 1930-31; John L. Corso, 1931-32; J. Elliott Cade, 1932-38; J. O. LeBlanc, 1938-40; Fernand Lachaussee, 1940-43; Paul Eleazar, 1944-44; and Owey Ghe, 1944-45.

J. C. Villeron of Maurice, who has been active in local and state Legion affairs, was elected Department Colonel Sergeant for 1942.