THE EMIGRANT MÉTIS OF KANSAS:
RETHINKING THE PIONEER NARRATIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

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Under the U.S. government’s nineteenth century Indian removal policies, more than ten thousand Eastern Indians, mostly Algonquians from the Great Lakes region, relocated in the 1830s and 1840s beyond the western border of Missouri to what today is the state of Kansas. With them went a number of mixed-race people – the métis, who were born of the fur trade and the interracial unions that it spawned. This dissertation focuses on métis among one emigrant group, the Potawatomi, who removed to a reservation in Kansas that sat directly in the path of the great overland migration to Oregon and California. Utilizing entrepreneurial skills learned in the fur trade, the French-Potawatomi Louis Vieux located his home on the banks of the Red Vermillion, built a bridge, charged overland travelers to cross, and did a side business by offering meals. The métis Louis Ogee established a ferry over the Kansas River, and Madore Beaubien opened a store. Acculturating full-bloods, meanwhile, cut the prairie sod, fenced their fields, domesticated livestock, lived in log cabins, and embraced the Christian faith. Their spatial and temporal location placed these Indians and métis people in the center of momentous historical forces taking place as America moved west, and toward war, in the 1840s and 1850s, while their actions, I suggest, made them “pioneers” no less than the Euro-Americans who followed when Kansas was opened to non-Indian settlement in 1854. By placing the métis on center stage, this study, borrowing a phrase from historian Philip Deloria, has found Indians in an “unexpected place” – in the very pioneer saga of the American West. In 1850s Kansas, Indians and métis faced choices: Would they break up the reservation, take an allotment, become an
American citizen and attempt to coexist with Anglo settlers, or would they hold fast to traditional ways? So diverse and wide was the gap in how members of the Potawatomi viewed themselves that these questions came to a head in Kansas. In 1861, the tribe split in two over the allotment question, a crisis, I suggest, that centered on culture and the changing face of the Indian Country.
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INTRODUCTION

The old Vieux cemetery, surrounded by rolling fields and pasture land, rests on a hill in northeast Kansas, the Red Vermillion River flowing nearby. Years ago, the Kansas State Historical Society planted a sign here, announcing that this is the place where Louis Vieux, of Potawatomi and French ancestry, operated a toll bridge over the Vermillion when throngs of Oregon Trail pioneers and California gold seekers passed this way. The sign says Vieux (pronounced VIEW) charged one dollar per outfit to cross his bridge and took in as much as three hundred dollars a day. Louis Vieux lies buried in the cemetery that bears his name, the graves of his wives Sha-note and Mary at his side. Nearby are the stones of his brothers Paul and Jacques Vieux, as well as those of his twin daughters, Estea and Mary, who died in infancy, as did a number of Louis’ grandchildren. They also lie buried here, far from Louis’ birthplace in the Old Northwest.

How a French-Potawatomi métis and his extended family came to be buried amid the corn and soybean fields of Kansas is a question that gave rise to this dissertation. That he operated a bridge and collected tolls from the storied pioneers of the Oregon Trail is still more puzzling. How, this dissertation asks, does the presence in pre-territorial Kansas of a métis family like that of Louis Vieux change the way we think about the “settlement” of the American West and the “pioneers” who achieved it?
This dissertation explores that question by placing the Potawatomi métis of Kansas at the center of the westering story. It focuses, as does Anne F. Hyde’s recent *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800-1869*, on the “intermingled racial past” of families like that of Louis Vieux and Sha-note.¹ By placing métis families front and center in the narrative of Kansas settlement, the familiar pioneer story of sunbonneted women and stalwart Anglo men venturing onto an empty prairie emerges, I suggest, as arrogant, a half-truth that has marginalized the Indian and métis families who relocated to Kansas under the U.S. government’s Indian removal policies of the 1830s.

**The Emigrant Indians**

The War of 1812 usually ends discussion of Indian people living in the southern Great Lakes region. Although they, too, were forced west of the Mississippi, scholars have focused, instead, on the five Southern tribes, especially the Cherokees and their removal on the “Trail of Tears,” which “epitomized both the removal experience and the final defeat of Indians residing east of the Mississippi.”² While the removal of Algonquian tribes from the Great Lakes region has occupied a secondary place in scholarship, these groups did not simply disappear.

In 1828, with their removal imminent, the missionary Isaac McCoy, a well-meaning advocate of Indian removal, led an expedition beyond the western border of Missouri to scout out a new home for these Indian people. The land he traversed soon would become part of the Kansas Indian Country, a place set aside for the removal of Eastern tribes. McCoy made a second scouting trip in 1832, by which time removal of “the emigrant Indians” – so-called by the United States government – was well under way. Groups of Shawnees and Delawares who had migrated beyond the Mississippi after the American Revolution relocated to the Kansas Indian Country as early as 1825, but others of the emigrant Indians arrived later, at various times
throughout the 1830s and 1840s. The emigrant groups comprised members of more than a dozen Indian nations, mostly Algonquian, who removed to the Indian Country under various treaties concluded with the United States government. Their reservations – stacked tier on tier along the future Kansas-Missouri border – placed these Eastern Indians in the center of momentous historical forces taking place as America moved west in the 1840s and 1850s. Central among these forces was overland traffic to the Pacific and the debate over the expansion of slavery, which gave rise to the years of “Bleeding Kansas.”

An 1836 map, taken from Colonel Henry Dodge’s journal of his trip to the Rocky Mountains the previous year, charts the location of the first arrivals of emigrant Indians in Kansas. The map places confederated Weas and Kaskaskias hard against the Missouri border and the Kickapoo adjacent to the recently constructed Fort Leavenworth. The Shawnees are found on the south side of the Kansas River, and the Delawares on the north side, their

Figure 2: Special Collections/Wichita State University

This 1836 map locates the reserves of the early arriving Shawnees and Delawares, as well as the Potawatomi reserve in Iowa.
reserve comprising a long, narrow outlet to the buffalo country, as well as a triangle of land
where the Missouri and Kansas rivers come together. In short years to come, this would become
prime real estate in the industrial bottomlands of present-day Kansas City.

Dodge’s map indicates that some groups of emigrant Indians had not yet relocated to the
Kansas Indian Country, including the Potawatomi, a nation that included a number of métis
families. The métis were born of the fur trade, their ties to the Potawatomi spanning generations
and centering on native networks of commerce and kinship. These networks extended all around
the Lake Michigan crescent, where métis lived in hamlets from the St. Joseph River Valley and
River Raisin areas of Michigan; to the Wabash and Tippecanoe rivers of northern Indiana; the
Kankakee and Rock rivers of Illinois; and locales that would grow into today’s Chicago,
Milwaukee, and Green Bay.

Potawatomi bands and the métis among them arrived in Kansas from different places and
at different times. Generally, those from Michigan and Indiana arrived in the mid- to late-1830s,
while those from Wisconsin and Illinois, who had relocated first to a reservation in Iowa, were
late-comers, arriving in Kansas in the late 1840s, under a treaty initiated by the U.S. government
and signed in 1846. Under this treaty, the government united both groups of Potawatomis on a
576,000-acre reserve that spanned both sides of the Kansas River, beginning about two miles
west of present-day Topeka. The location placed the Potawatomi in the very path of the
Independence Road, one of the major routes of the California-Oregon Trail.

Here it is that we find Louis Vieux operating his toll bridge. Vieux arrived in the Kansas
Indian Country with his Potawatomi kin sometime in the late 1840s. He was a native of
Wisconsin who had followed his father into the fur trade. Louis married the full-blood Sha-note
sometime around 1830 when he and his brother Jacques were living at Skunk Grove, in today’s
Racine County, Wisconsin, where they operated Jambeau’s Trading Post, “well-known as a haven in the wilderness,” on the trail from Chicago to Green Bay. Louis and Sha-note’s first child, Madeline, was born there in 1833, followed by Sophie, and then Jacob in 1836. Their next children, Ellen, Archange, and Rachel – all born in Iowa -- and their last child, Louis Jr. – born in Kansas – reflect the family’s movements as Louis and Sha-note relocated with the Potawatomi under the government’s removal policies. The Vieux family’s trajectory and that of other métis families who relocated with the Potawatomi – including the Beaubiens, Bertrands, Bourassas, Burnettts, LaFramboises, Nadeaus, Navarres, and Ogees – complicates an old and familiar narrative by adding broad, new brush strokes to the story of pioneer settlement in the American West.

The Pioneer Story

In Kansas, the familiar story dates to 1854, when passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the former Indian Country to a flood of Anglo-American families. As these families populated the new Kansas Territory, they came to be celebrated as the state’s first pioneers, a reflection found in a statue on the lawn of the Capitol building in Topeka. The “Pioneer Mother” holds babe in arms, a rifle across her lap, symbolizing the bravery of the young American mothers who made new homes on the Kansas prairie. Another bronze “Pioneer Mother” carries her baby west in Kansas City, Missouri’s, Penn Valley Park. She sits atop a horse, while two men, carrying a rifle and leading a pack horse, walk alongside. Nearby, in the median of a prominent Westport intersection, the “Pioneers” statue offers a telling of Kansas City history, replete with figures symbolic of the settlement of the American West: Here is mountain man Jim Bridger and Pony Express partner Alexander Majors, both of whom made homes in early
Westport and Kansas City. Here also is the founder of Kansas City himself, John Calvin McCoy, son of missionary Isaac McCoy. 5

These statues, I suggest, fail to recognize an entire group of people who also participated in the settlement of the Kansas-Missouri border region: the emigrant métis. Like Louis Vieux, these people did not sit idly by after their removal to the Kansas Indian Country, but took up where they had left off in the Old Northwest, making a living as entrepreneurs and serving as intercultural brokers with the United States government. They worked as interpreters and teachers, operated mills and ferries, built bridges, and, like Louis Vieux, charged for access, a toll that extended to the United States military. Métis opened their homes to overland travelers or supplemented their income by establishing crude inns. Benjamin Bertrand opened a retail store and, like Madore Beaubien, platted a town, while the Kentucky-born George L. Young, who was married to a Potawatomi woman, ran a billiard room and saloon. 6 Like settlers who arrived after 1854, the métis and many full-blood Potawatomis cut the prairie sod, fenced their fields, domesticated livestock, lived in log cabins, sought an education, and embraced the Christian faith.

They, too, I suggest, were “pioneers,” no less than the celebrated Anglo-Americans who followed. Despite their presence and active participation in the nation’s advance westward, the experience of the emigrant Indians and métis of Kansas has been little-noted except as it involves their removal, first from the Great Lakes region and then from Kansas in the years following passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. So marginalized in the historical narrative have they been that the preface to Paul Wallace Gates’ classic study of land policies that led to the removal of Indians from Kansas, stated that Kansas “was virtually uninhabited” in 1854. 7 In fact, more than ten thousand Eastern Indians and métis were living in Kansas at the time. By pushing them to
the wings and presenting them as simple foils – as obstacles to be overcome so that white civilization could advance – we strip the region of its human complexity.

This dissertation, as does Hyde in *Empires, Nations, and Families*, listens “for lost voices,” which can be heard by tracing connections and mapping the family names of Frenchmen in the fur trade who married Potawatomi women and removed to Kansas with the emigrant Indians. By documenting the personal journeys of emblematic Potawatomi métis families such as the Vieuxs, we not only complicate the traditional pioneer narrative of Kansas, but present a larger and more inclusive history of the American nation itself.

Overlanders on the trails, writing in diaries and journals, often mentioned seeing and interacting with Indians as they passed through eastern Kansas. The Indians, some undoubtedly métis because they were described as “looking almost white,” sold food goods and moccasins along the trail. At the Potawatomi trading post of Uniontown, where licensed traders had set up shop, overlanders might purchase a pair of boots. Or, they might stop briefly a few miles up the road at St. Mary’s Catholic Mission, its white-washed buildings and neatly fenced fields eliciting surprised accolades.

Travelers and newly arrived Anglo settlers arriving after 1854 also looked occasionally to Indian and métis people for sustenance or shelter. When Franklin L. Crane and his son, Frank, got lost in a snowstorm on the open prairie in 1855, “an Indian” named “Battes” came to their rescue. Battes, who quite possibly was the French-Peoria métis Baptiste Peoria, guided them to “a log house,” where the Cranes spent the night in warmth. The Boston writer Hannah Ropes, who took a six-month tour of Kansas Territory in 1856, was ten miles outside of Lawrence when she put up for the night at a “sort of tavern” kept by the French-Shawnee métis Paschal Fish, who, she wrote, “employs a Yankee to cook for his company.” The image of the mixed-race
Paschal Fish employing “a Yankee to cook” for him, sets the traditional Kansas pioneer narrative on its head. Not only did Americans such as Franklin Crane and Hannah Ropes mingle with Indian and métis people in the new Kansas Territory, but they depended on their kindesses and services.

Church-affiliated missions to the emigrant Indians also played a central role in the new Kansas Territory. The Jesuits’ St. Mary’s Mission to the Potawatomi was so prominent by 1854 that its superior, John Baptist Duerinck, S.J., offered it up as the territorial capital, while the Shawnee Methodist Mission, with its slave-holding superintendent Thomas Johnson, became thoroughly involved in the political furor that erupted when popular sovereignty was used to decide the slavery question in Kansas. Indian and métis people experienced these tumultuous years no less than their white neighbors as their churches split, danger lurked on dark roads, and Indian and métis men joined the Union Army.

Recent scholarship, especially John P. Bowes, *Exiles and Pioneers: Eastern Indians in the Trans-Mississippi West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), has begun to explore neglected aspects of emigrant Indian history. Bowes’ work centers on the political status of native communities as the creation of new territories and states made Indians “an important element of policy discussions and diplomatic negotiations.” He argues that the weakness of federal authority in these years allowed for the persistence of native autonomy, but also for exploitation by traders, settlers, speculators, and local officials. Bowes concludes that Indian removal and post-removal encompassed “the prolonged battle for influence on both sides of the Mississippi River,” with Indian residents exploiting federal weaknesses “to maintain a measure of autonomy even as they suffered from the inability and unwillingness of the American government to protect Indian welfare.”
This project is less interested in the politics of removal than in the people affected by government policies. It seeks to illustrate ways in which Indian and métis people did not live in isolation, but participated in the larger narrative of American history. While Bowes also recognizes the emigrant Indians as “pioneers” because they turned to farming and struggled to adapt to life on the Kansas prairie, his research is less interested in the pioneering struggles of individuals and families than on strategies Indian communities used to resist or manipulate U.S. government authority west of the Mississippi.

Precursor to the Dawes Act

The power struggles so central to Bowes’ work often played out at the local level as members of Indian communities found themselves in opposition to one another when the U.S. government – in what amounted to a dress rehearsal for the Dawes Act three decades later – pushed the emigrant Indians in Kansas to break up their reservations and take their land in severalty. In the 1850s, Indian and métis people had choices: Would they take an allotment, become an American citizen and attempt to coexist with Anglo settlers, or would they hold fast to their traditional ways? These questions center on the complexity of Indian identity, an issue that played out in full force among the Potawatomi in mid-nineteenth century Kansas. So diverse and wide was the gap in how members of the Potawatomi viewed themselves that the tribe split in two over the allotment question, a crisis, I suggest, that centered on culture and the changing face of the Indian Country.

Under a treaty signed in 1861, some Potawatomis elected to break up the Kansas River reservation and take an allotment, while others, refusing to do so, accepted a diminished reservation – today’s Prairie Band reserve north of Topeka. Many who took allotments soon lost or sold their land, and, in 1867, formed a new Potawatomi unit, the Citizen Band, which
relocated to Oklahoma. Métis families played such a primary role in the formation of the Citizen
Band that in her 1995 dissertation, “Never ‘Quite’ White, Never ‘Quite’ Indian,” Kathryn
Lamirand Young defines the Citizen Band as a “true Métis” culture.14

That so many métis elected to take allotments speaks to their acculturation and
understanding of the transformative events happening in Kansas after 1854. That year, as the
U.S. government pushed for new removal treaties, the Kansas Indian Country disappeared as
emigrant Indian nation after emigrant Indian nation relinquished its reserves and agreed to
remove to Oklahoma. Enacted at a time when Kansas was home to only about eight hundred
non-Indians, the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the former Indian Country to a flood of Anglo-
Americans who took up claims even before treaties relinquishing Indian rights to the land were
signed.15

Matters of identity were not new to the Potawatomi, but dated to the arrival, beginning in
the seventeenth century, of Europeans in their homeland. The Iroquois wars and the fur trade
dispersed Potawatomi groups to different geographic locations around the Great Lakes, where
strong allegiances to the French were undermined by British and then, American conquest,
forcing individual Potawatomis to make new, and sometimes divided accommodations.
Geographic location played a role in allegiances and also in the degree of exposure to the
acculturating influences that stemmed from the European and American advance. While the
causality of Potawatomi cultural identity is more complex than simple geography, a divide was
evident by the 1830s-era of Indian removal; Potawatomi bands in Wisconsin and northern
Illinois tended to retain traditional cultural values more-so than those in the southern Michigan-
northern Indiana region.

Missionary influence
At the center of the cultural debate surrounding Indian and métis people were numerous missionary groups that located in the Indian Country and encouraged Indian parents to send their children to mission schools, an appeal most often answered by mixed-race parents. Illustrative of missionary influence is St. Mary’s Mission, where the zealous Jesuit John Baptist Duerinck took such a hard-line attitude toward Potawatomi acculturation that he dismissed those trying to retain their traditional culture as “old incorrigible rogues.” Duerinck’s reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs shine light on issues dividing the Potawatomi in the 1850s, while his mechanized “model farm,” with its 350-head cattle herd and cutting-edge, McCormick mowing machines, situate the Potawatomi reservation – and especially métis like Louis Vieux – in the midst of the day’s affairs. This project argues not only for the importance of the role played by St. Mary’s Mission in factional divisions splitting the Potawatomi, but also for the mission’s centrality to early Kansas agriculture and education. In 1869, the Jesuits’ mission school transformed from a place for Indian and métis boys to Kansas’ first college, an institution that served mainly Anglo youngsters.

Like Bowes, this project found initial inspiration in a journal article by R. David Edmunds, “Indians as Pioneers: Potawatomis on the Frontier,” in which Edmunds argues that displaced Eastern Indians, many with lifestyles markedly transformed by years of interaction with Europeans, often were “the first large numbers of new ‘settlers’ to move onto the eastern fringes of the Great Plains.” He suggests that their westward migrations and experiences in Kansas (as well as Iowa and Missouri), “reflect their role as Indian ‘pioneers,’ people who transformed the West.”

Why then, one must ask, have the emigrant Indians, and especially the enterprising métis among them, been overlooked in the pioneer narrative of Kansas? Edmunds offers that the
omission centers perhaps on the circuitous routes – over several decades – that took the
Potawatomi west and the fact that historical records “are scattered across at least half-a-dozen
states.” Another scholar of the emigrant Indians, William E. Unrua, also notes the general
absence of the emigrant Indians in the literature and suggests that their short tenure in Kansas
might account for the omission.

While access to records and temporal space undoubtedly have contributed to the
oversight, the nineteenth century’s hardening racial ideologies also are likely culprits. Even
more, perhaps, is the mythic image of the American West itself, in which, quite simply, Indian
people never can be “pioneers.” Indians, like portrayals of the harsh environment that greeted
the West’s “true” pioneers, are cast as impediments, as useful foils and obstructions to
“progress.” Indians must be removed so that white “civilization” can emerge victorious in the
familiar narrative of an American West where individual effort and hardy Anglo families create a
new land.

Americans, as Anne Hyde explains, were unfamiliar with, or chose to ignore, the
complexities of métis families, which many Americans “found uncomfortable.” Relying
mostly on secondary sources, Hyde’s Empires, Nations, and Families explores these
complexities by using “the experiences of specific families to carry the narrative.” Families are,
if you will, “informants and organizing devices” that enable her to recast stories told about the
history of the trans-Mississippi West. This dissertation uses a similar methodology to explore
the blended world of the Potawatomi métis of Kansas. Even though Potawatomi society was
patrilineal, and the métis families presented in this dissertation seemingly as Christian and
monogamous as their mid-nineteenth century neighbors, newly arrived Anglos in Kansas found
them confusing, a fact reflected in census records that enumerate some métis as “Indian” and others as “white.”23

By listening to the muted voices of the emigrant métis of Kansas, this dissertation seeks to tell new stories of the American West by illustrating the essential role these families played in the geographic space that became the State of Kansas in 1861. This project aims to rescue them “from the periphery of several prevailing narratives” by illustrating how their stories are not separate, but are intertwined with the greater narrative of the American advance westward.24 By applying Hyde’s framework of family and region to the Potawatomi métis, the familiar pioneer narrative of the American West suddenly becomes new and unfamiliar as we add a man like Louis Vieux to the narrative.

In a studio portrait taken sometime in Louis Vieux’s later years, he wears a top hat, a coat, and a vest with watch chain prominently displayed. He stands pigeon-toed in European-style shoes, his long pants properly fitted, the thumbs of both hands tucked, Napoleon style, in the arm openings of his vest. He neither smiles nor frowns, but looks directly into the camera, a man seemingly at ease and self-assured. When the U.S. census taken came round in 1870, he recorded the value of Vieux’s property and personal belongings at $40,000, making Louis Vieux the richest man in Louisville Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas.25 When Louis died on his Kansas homestead on May 3, 1872, he left an estate appraised at $15,823.26. Among his belongings was a litany of farm equipment, including a $150 McCormick mowing machine to cut the hay in his fields and a spring wagon to carry him hither and yon. Like many another Kansas pioneer of 1870, his kitchen included a cook stove and cupboard, a clock, and a table with seven chairs, enough for each of his children.

Background and Literature
The displacement of Indian people has been a troubling and recurring theme in American history. The forced migration in the 1830s of Cherokees on the “Trail of Tears” is a well-known aspect of this topic. Less well-known is the removal, during that same decade, of more than a dozen tribes and factions of tribes from the Old Northwest to what is now the eastern third of Kansas. Among the more than ten thousand people who emigrated to Kansas were members of the Potawatomi, an Algonquian-speaking tribe with a long history of contact with Jesuit priests and intermarriage with French-Canadian men in the fur trade. This study, which centers on Potawatomi métis during their sojourn in the Kansas Indian Country, necessarily deals with a wide range of subject matter: Potawatomi and Catholic history; Indian affairs, including treaty-making, removal, and missions; as well as American expansionism and how it shaped the history of Kansas and the Kansas City region in the mid-nineteenth century.

A starting point for any study of Indians in Kansas is William E. Unrau’s *Indians of Kansas: The Euro-American Invasion and Conquest of Indian Kansas* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1991; repr. 2001). Although a thin, one hundred pages, this book covers vast territory, beginning with Kansas’ prehistoric setting, the migrations of the Kansa and Osage to the region prior to 1673, and the French integration of these Indian people into the economic fabric of the fur trade. Unrau covers other familiar milestones: the Louisiana Purchase, the creation of Fort Osage in 1808 under the government factory system, exploration parties and commercial outfits that passed up the Kansas River Valley, the surveying of the Santa Fe Trail in 1825, and the construction of Fort Leavenworth in 1827. With the white advance and establishment of outfitting points such as Independence and Westport, Missouri, came devastating outbreaks of smallpox and cholera, which weakened resident Indian groups such as the Kansa and Osage, who relinquished their claims to what today is the Kansas City
metropolitan region. Even as the border of western Missouri filled with Anglo settlers in the 1830s, the United States government created the Kansas Indian Country and set to work to remove tribes there from the Old Northwest.

Unrau outlines these events and the dizzying array of treaties that brought the Potawatomi and other emigrant Indians to the future Kansas. He charts the “white avalanche” that roared into the Indian homeland after the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and concludes with the expulsion of the emigrant tribes. Indian removal from Kansas, he writes, lacked the grisly episodes of a Sand Creek or a Little Big Horn. Instead, the story was more enigmatic, playing out “in offices and cloakrooms” and creating such a complexity “of land-disposal policies and land-administering agencies” that even today, Unrau writes, they can baffle a student of Kansas Indian history.27

**Missions**

The land polices of which Unrau speaks, as well as the role of missionaries, are major themes in the literature of Kansas’ emigrant Indians.28 A number of mission studies have taken the form of dissertations, including Arthur T. Donohue’s eighty-year-old effort, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas” (Ph.D diss., University of Kansas, 1931), which alerted me to the existence of the records of St. Mary’s Mission and, especially, those dealing with Father Duerinck’s “model farm.” Like many older works on missions, Donohue applauds the Jesuit missionaries and praises their role as “pioneers and social builders,” which he states was “for the welfare of the Indians of Kansas.”29 Donohue structures his work chronologically, beginning with the consecration in Rome in 1815 of Louis William DuBourg, D.D., as bishop of upper and lower Louisiana, his arrival in America in 1817, and his efforts to enlist missionaries for his vast domain beyond the Mississippi River.
Donohue follows the journey of the young Belgium Jesuits who responded to DuBourg’s appeal, how they settled in St. Louis and then undertook journeys to the western border of Missouri to minister to the Osages and, in the process, began visiting the French-and-Indian Chouteau settlement at the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers. He divides his narrative into chapters on missions established by the Jesuits to three tribes in the Kansas Indian Country: the Kickapoo, Osage, and Potawatomi, with the bulk of his work dealing with the most successful missions – those to the Potawatomi at Sugar Creek and St. Mary’s. He devotes two chapters to St. Mary’s Mission in which he discusses the Jesuit John Baptist Duerinck’s varied enterprises and concludes that St. Mary’s Mission “was intimately connected with and formed an integral part of the economic life of early Kansas.”

This dissertation agrees with Donohue’s economic argument, but is not satisfied with his assessment of Jesuit missionaries like J.B. Duerinck as “truly great men” whose work among Indian people deserves round applause. This project has attempted to present a much more nuanced picture while also documenting the prominent role of Potawatomi métis in the unfolding of events recorded by Donohue. While Donohue does an admirable job of pointing out Duerinck’s many involvements – from his experiments in plant varieties and use of modern machinery to his preemption of land and financial interest in establishing mills – he does not question the good father’s motivations, ask who his devotees were, or what impact his actions may have had on the dispossession of Indian people. Reflecting the times in which he wrote Donohue characterizes Indian people as “barbarians, who were liable to cause endless trouble” and “fierce savages” whom the Jesuits came to know and help by bravely leaving civilized Europe “to plunge at once into the heart of the American wilderness.”
Much scholarship since Donohue’s time, beginning with works such as Edward C. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on Indians of the Southwest* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962), and Robert F. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), has complicated the “great man” imagery of missionaries by documenting the alarming impact religious missions had on Indian culture. Furthermore, Donohue’s characterization of the Kansas Indian Country as “the heart of the American wilderness” is greatly exaggerated. As this project has argued, the Indian Country, which began exactly where the boundary of Missouri ended, was a frontier fast-evolving into a contested borderland.

Mark Stephen Joy’s more recent dissertation, "'Into the Wilderness': Protestant Missions Among the Emigrant Indians of Kansas," (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1992), does for Protestant missions what Donohue did for the Catholic. He offers a detailed analysis of Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian missions in the Kansas Indian Country, stating from the outset that he is not striving for a “reinterpretation” but to address the failure of scholars “to integrate the history of Indian missions into the broader subject of the history of Christianity in America.” Joy explores one facet of that shortcoming, asking “what role did denominational issues play in Indian missions?” He explores the approaches Protestant missionaries took to evangelize the emigrant Indians, concluding that they stuck to the traditional teachings and methods of their individual denominations.

While the unquestioning Donohue categorically praised the work of missionaries, Joy, writing sixty years later, comes to their defense, castigating scholars of the “New Indian Mission History” who engage in “a harsh, judgmental” polemic against Indian missionaries, “in part
because they simply do not find the missionaries and their religious and theological ‘baggage’ relevant.”36 Joy acknowledges that the old orthodoxy, where missionaries were heroes and Indian were villains, “was clearly inadequate,” but neither is it satisfactory, he argues, to flip the equation and make the Indians heroes and the missionaries villains.

Such a middle road is the one this dissertation has attempted to walk even as it recognizes an inherent problem in Joy’s noticeable fondness for Christian missionaries, whom he declares are less culpable because their “primary goal” was not to acculturate Indians to the white lifestyle but to locate Indians, as the Methodist missionary Thomas Johnson put it: “who are capable of understanding the nature and enjoying the influence of our holy religion.”37 What Joy fails to recognize is that the mission story has winners and losers, and even if the only motive of missionaries was to save souls, they still assumed white cultural imperialism.

I would also argue that men like Thomas Johnson aspired for much more than Indian souls. Missionaries like Johnson prospered in the Indian Country and became active participants in its transition from frontier to borderland state.38 Joy wrongly concludes that the Indian mission era in Kansas ended “with relatively little to show for the years and the labor invested by the missionaries.”39 As this dissertation has argued, that was far from true, illustrated, for example, by the evolution of St. Mary’s Mission from Indian school to Kansas’ first college, or by Thomas Johnson’s own ventures into territorial politics.

Like Joy, Paul Odell Myhre “Potawatomi Transformation: Potawatomi Responses to Catholic and Baptist Mission Strategy and Competition, 1822-1872” (Ph.D. diss. Saint Louis University, 1998), is less interested in the impact of missions on Indian people than in understanding why Catholic mission strategies were more successful in converting the Potawatomi than were Baptist strategies. He argues that Baptists were less successful not only
because they showed distain for Potawatomi culture and failed to grasp its subtleties, but also because Baptists lacked “a rich devotional (sacramental) system for faith expression.”40 The Catholic use of Sacraments and devotionals, on the other hand, corresponded with the Potawatomi employment of ritual objects.

Myhre’s work is valuable as it demonstrates that Catholic practices and beliefs were “in full swing” in Michigan and Indiana before the Potawatomi emigrated to Kansas, thus accounting “for the swift development of Catholicism” among the Potawatomi at the Sugar Creek and St. Mary’s missions.41 Myhre concludes that the actions of missionaries among the Potawatomi, and especially Catholic missionaries, “in part, fostered the transformation of a considerable portion of the tribe.”42 Myhre also delves into the interpersonal relationships that developed between Catholic missionaries and the Potawatomi, arguing that a Lucille Mathevon, for instance, “gained respect and admiration” as a consequence of her emphasis on relationships and her “dedication to the personal needs of the Potawatomi…”43

This project concurs with Myhre’s assessment of the important role played by Catholic missionaries in Potawatomi acculturation, but faults him, as it does Joy, for a seemingly placid acceptance of missionary methods. This occasionally leads Myhre into a false assessment, such as his conclusion that Catholic Indian schools “focused on the needs of the students.”44 J.B. Duerinck’s hard-edged approach and complaints about maturing Indian boys who went home to help their parents rather than work in his fields at St. Mary’s Mission belie such a conclusion. While nuns and priests perhaps were, as Myhre states, more tolerant of Indian ways, he wrongly concludes, as Duerinck’s writings prove, that it was only Baptist missionaries who looked with distain on traditional Potawatomi culture.

More recent scholarship on Kansas missions is not extensive, but has begun to address shortcomings in the literature, such as Kevin Abing’s “A Holy Battleground: Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker Missionaries Among Shawnee Indians, 1830-1844,” *Kansas History* 21 (1998): 118-137. Abing argues that competing missionary groups caused friction among tribal members in the Kansas Indian Country. Although Abing’s focus is on the Shawnee, his scholarship deals with identity issues that also were present among the Potawatomi. Abing illustrates how different spiritual beliefs, exacerbated by the presence of competing missionary groups, tore apart Shawnee bands and even families. Some Shawnees joined one or another of the Christian denominations, while others, as was the case with the Potawatomi, strove to retain their Indian identity by doggedly adhering to their traditional religion and life ways.
Stephen A. Warren, “The Baptists, The Methodists, and the Shawnees: Conflicting Cultures in Indian Territory, 1833-1834, *Kansas History* 3 (Autumn 1994, ) 149-61, also notes factional difficulties arising between “proacculturation Shawnees” and Shawnees who were more traditional. In a separate article, Abing also argues that métis were among the most influential Shawnees and “were more amenable to acculturating into white society,” which, like the Potawatomi métis, found expression in their support of missions schools. As the above examples illustrate, scholarship, new and old, often has focused on missions to the Shawnees rather than the Potawatomi or other emigrant Indian groups.

Contemporary missionary letters and diaries are important primary documents. Essential to the study of Catholic missions among the Potawatomi are James M. Burke, ed., “Early Years at St. Mary’s Potawatomie Mission: From the Diary of Father Maurice Gailland, S.J,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 20 (1953): 501-29; J. Neale Carman, "The Bishop East of the Rockies Views His Diocesans, 1851-1853," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1954): 81-86; Maurice Gailland, S.J., “The Annals of St. Mary’s Mission” and Christian Hoecken, “Father Hoecken’s Diary,” both of which appear in various issues of *The Dial*, the magazine of St. Mary’s College. *The Dial*, a student publication inaugurated in 1890, also contains valuable reminiscences written by students and others associated with the college in its early years. One former white student, for instance, recalled being in class in 1864-65 with the Potawatomi boys Neobaukwa and Peter Moose, writing of them as “gifted lads.” Others wrote sketches of the college, as well as of the nuns who served there.

**Land policy**

A second major theme involving studies of the emigrant Indians of Kansas centers on federal policy and the dispossession of Indian land. Paul Wallace Gates’ *Fifty Million Acres: Conflicts*
over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1890 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954; repr. Atherton Press, 1966) is the classic study, although Gates all but dismisses the emigrant Indians themselves as he focuses on the government’s failed land policies. (A forward to the 1966 edition of the book, written by Robert W. Johannsen, actually states that Kansas Territory “was virtually uninhabited when its government was established,” while Gates, in his preface, refers to the emigrant Indians of Kansas as those who had “intruded” from farther east. 54) Gates’ sympathies lie not with Indian people, but with ordinary Kansas settlers who were overrun by speculators and railroads before they “had an opportunity to pre-empt or otherwise acquire” Kansas land. 55 A big part of the problem for settlers, Gates explains, was the government’s decision to re-open the treaty-making process, whereby a railroad, for example, could snap up all of a reservation’s unallotted lands, a transaction accomplished, as in the case of the Potawatomi reserve, by underhanded dealings and bribes that stretched from the reservation to Topeka to the Office of Indian Affairs in Washington. 56

In The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871 (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978, repr. 1990), Unrau and H. Craig Miner acknowledge Gates’ groundbreaking work on Kansas land policy, but aim to make Indians central to the narrative as they explore “the subtle tactics that public, private, and even tribal leaders used to dispossess Indian people of their natural resources and sovereignty.” 57 As the two scholars set out in the 1970s, “virtually nothing from a serious, documentary point of view,” they state, was known about their topic. 58 Kansas presented a “complex and unusual case” because the territory was opened for settlement even though its land – occupied by the emigrant Indians according to treaty law -- was not legally available for public ownership.
Nonetheless, by 1875, except for “a few Kickapoos, Sacs and Foxes, Prairie Potawatomis, and assorted mixed-bloods,” Kansas was devoid of Indian people, the result of “remarkable incongruities in Indian policy, land policy, law, and administration” and “a complicated mix of good and sinister intentions on the part of both factions,” red and white.\(^5^9\) Miner and Unrau conclude that most Indians in nineteenth-century Kansas were dispossessed because they “were unable to stand up to congressional plenary authority and its myriad applications by both the public and private sectors.”\(^6^0\)

Unrau, ever intent on ferreting out villains in the Kansas Indian Country, next took on, again with H. Craig Miner, the avarice and devious dealings of churchmen and town builders. In *Tribal Dissolution and the Ottawa Indian University Fraud* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), they lay out a scheme in which men of the Baptist Church (with the help of a few mixed-bloods and civic leaders) secured lands of the emigrant Ottawa by opening a college for Indian youth, though few Indians ever attended while churchmen and town builders gained. In *Mixed-Bloods and Tribal Dissolution: Charles Curtis and the Quest for Indian Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989) Unrau examines the Kansa métis and future vice president of the United States Charles Curtis, who emerges as an unsavory character who claimed his Indian heritage only when he stood to gain from it.\(^6^1\) In *White Man’s Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), Unrau explores the pervasive and devastating impact of alcohol in the Indian County and, finally, in his recent *The Rise and Fall of Indian Country, 1825-1855* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007), he assembles his extensive knowledge to examine the *creation* of the Kansas Indian Country as well as its dismantling.
The first section of Unrau’s *Rise and Fall* focuses on the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834, which created the Indian Country, an endeavor that Unrau describes “as an unprecedented effort to arrest the taking of Indian land.” While creation of the Indian Country generally is viewed as a humanitarian effort, Unrau argues that the “endeavor was flawed from the beginning,” concluding that, at best, it was “a stopgap measure for delaying non-Indian occupation of the trans-Missouri West for a decade or two,” while at its worst it was “divisive or completely deceptive legislation from the start.” He questions the government’s sincerity in creating the Indian County as what one Indian described as a “strong fence” intended to protect Indians from the white advance. In fact, holes appeared in the imagined fence as early as 1825 when George Sibley surveyed a right-of-way for the Santa Fe Trail right through the heart of the Indian Country. And even as the government drew boundaries in eastern Kansas in the 1830s for the thirteen reservations of the emigrant Indians, authorities already were talking of carving a path up the Kaw River Valley for a central railroad. Unrau argues for complex and “cumulative” reasons for the demise of the Indian Country, but places the primary reason for its decline and fall on the voracious demand of non-Indians for land promised to Indians.

While this dissertation concurs with Unrau’s scholarship, and while Unrau notes that non-Indians displayed “little or no sympathy” for the fact of Indian residence on the lands they coveted, his book does not delve into the issues of racism and prejudice that underlay the lack of sympathy felt by Kansans for their Indian and métis neighbors. And while he acknowledges the “irony” of Indian assistance to novice overlanders and settlers, he does not address the concurrent role played by Indian and métis people in the settlement process. His interest is political and administrative, centering on government policies and actions to understand “what
had gone wrong” with the place that supposedly was designated to harbor and acculturate the emigrant Indians.  

Also focusing on policy is Stuart Banner, *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (Cambridge: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005). Banner examines the question from colonial times to the present, concluding: “The road to Indian land loss has always been paved with both good and bad intentions.” While “in the end, the story … is still a story of power,” Banner argues that “it was a more subtle and complex kind of power than we conventionally recognize. It was the power to establish the legal institutions and the rules by which land transactions would be enforced.” White people, he finds, “were never a single bloc with uniform interests, and neither were the Indians. At all times there have been Indians with good reasons to sell land and others with good reasons not to sell.” Although Banner does not discuss the emigrant Indians of Kansas his conclusion rightly applies to the Potawatomi in Kansas where the Prairie Band held fast to their land but the Mission/Citizen Band willing agreed to take allotments and sell their share of the Kansas River Reservation.

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It has been the intent of this dissertation to place Indian and métis people at the center of the Indian Country narrative, but to do it in ways other than an examination of land policy. My effort follows on the heels of John Patrick Bowes, “Opportunity and Adversity: Indians and American Expansion in the Nineteenth Century Trans-Mississippi West,” (Ph.D. diss., University of California-Los Angeles, 2003), published in 2007 as *Exiles and Pioneers: Eastern Indians in the Trans-Mississippi West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Bowes examines the migrations and relocations to the Kansas Indian Country of the Delawares, Shawnees, Kickapoos, Potawatomis, Wyandots, Sauks and Foxes and argues for Indian agency.
However difficult the Indian experience was in the removal years and in Kansas, Bowes argues that these years also provide “a critical starting point for addressing how Indians both used individual initiative and capitalized on government limitations to maintain a measure of cultural and political autonomy.”

Bowes asks different questions about the Indian Country than does this project, but our work begins with the same desire to “illuminate neglected aspects of … the postremoval experiences of eastern Indians.” We both resurrect a familiar narrative, but by framing it with unfamiliar events, seek to force a rethinking of old stories. Bowes’ suggestion that the emigrant Indians were “the leading edge of western expansion” concurs with this project’s central argument. Furthermore, his research on emigrant tribes other than the Potawatomi bolsters findings of his dissertation as métis, from whatever tribe, acted in ways that are consistent with the Potawatomi métis in this study. Like the Bourassa brothers Jude and Joseph, for example, the Shawnee métis Paschal Fish was an entrepreneurial innkeeper and a salaried government interpreter, while the Delaware métis Charles Journeycake was an influential tribal member who signed the 1854 treaty to allot the Delaware reservation, thus contributing to tribal factionalism.

Also seeking to rethink old stories is Michael L. Tate’s *Indians and Emigrants: Encounters on the Overland Trails* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), which argues that the collective fear of Indians on the overland trail “outweighed the reality of Indian assistance, barter, and friendship.” The peaceful interactions of Indians and overlanders on the California-Oregon Trail also was noted, but briefly, by John D. Unruh, Jr. in *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978).
Métis and identity

That métis contributed to tribal factionalism and were involved in sometimes nefarious dealings speaks to the argument put forth by James Clifton in *The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture 1665-1965*. Clifton portrays the Potawatomi métis as “interlopers,” interested only in their own gain and seeking “opportunity, power, and fortune, at the expense of the traditional Potawatomi.” Clifton disputes treaty documents that refer to métis as “chiefs and headmen,” arguing that métis “are better understood as playing out a special kind of newly emergent intermediary role,” of which he disapproves. He blames them for “a sharp decline in the traditional authority and influence of Potawatomi village leaders,” thereby diluting the tribe’s “cultural integrity.” He writes of them as “parasites” – “a marginal people counted as Potawatomi by most Indian agents, missionaries, and traders,” while “most Potawatomi found them suspect,” as clearly, also does Clifton.

While not refuting the métis’ disruptive involvement in tribal politics and their sometimes self-interested, even dishonest, dealings, this dissertation disagrees with Clifton’s assessment of them as something less than “real” Indians. By faulting métis for not being full bloods, Clifton exudes disquiet with the state in which he finds his Potawatomi subjects. He wants Potawatomi people to retain a static identity, but also recognizes that contact with the larger world has changed them. Clifton constructs a world where the métis are whipping boys; not only are they the most changed Potawatomis, ie: acculturated to white society, but their accommodation to white cultural and social values, as well as their participation in its economic and political systems, has influenced others in the tribe and altered the Potawatomis’ traditional culture. The métis, in other words, have upset the anthropologist’s apple cart. No longer can Indians be studied as a totally exotic “other” who exhibit elements of personality and culture that do not
change. But, as Clifton has shown, that does not mean one cannot continue to romanticize and favor those who are the least changed, ie: the more traditional, culturally conservative Prairie Band.

In a 1992 critique noting Clifton’s biases, Vine Deloria, Jr. pilloried Clifton as a “bitter” person “eager to criticize Indians at the drop of a hat…” Deloria writes that Clifton and contributors to a book of essays he edited, *Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990), “seem to be very disappointed that modern Indians do not act like the Indians of their undergraduate textbooks or the movies they enjoyed as children and they seem determined to attack contemporary expressions of Indian-ness as fraudulent and invalid because modern Indians fall short of their expectations.” Deloria’s opinion that modern Indians “in store-bought clothes have no romantic value whatsoever” to Clifton and his contributors, that they “are just pale imitations of ‘real’ Indians,” could apply also to Clifton’s characterization of the Potawatomi métis in the Kansas Indian Country. A métis like Louis Vieux, with his McCormick mowing machine, his two-seated spring wagon, his bedstead and chest of drawers, was the “modern” Indian of his day and no less to be scorned, in Clifton’s view, as a fraud. This writer, as does Deloria, disagrees, finding Clifton’s view shortsighted because he fails to understand “tribal identity and purpose.”

Identity is rooted in much more than blood, as a “white Potawatomi” like George Young proved a century and a half ago in the Kansas Indian Country. While identity is not a new question, it has become more controversial today because blood quantum has become a key factor used by tribes and the federal government not only to identify “official” Indians, but to determine which tribes merit federal recognition and, thus, which get government assistance. Numerous scholars have weighed in on this contentious debate. A good starting place is William
T. Hagan ‘s “Full Blood, Mixed Blood, Generic and Ersatz: The Problem of Indian Identity,” *Arizona and the West* 27:4 (Winter 1985), 309-26, which traces a century and a half of key court cases, as well as trends affecting the government’s stance and that of tribes. Identity was a “serious question” twenty-five years ago, and continues to be “one of the most perplexing problems confronting American Indians today.” Identity, according to George Pierre Castile, has become “bound up … in the political economy” and therefore “commodified,” while R. David Edmunds, who is Cherokee, argues that it is malleable.

Serious scholarship on métis history and identity dates to 1945 and Marcel Giraud’s *Le Métis Canadien: son rôle dans l'histoire des provinces de l’Ouest*, which was translated into English by George Woodcock and published as *The Métis in the Canadian West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986). When Giraud’s work was first published, Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. H. Brown explain, the word *métis* was virtually unknown in the United States, and it has been only in the past thirty years that métis history has become an area of marked interest among scholars. In 1985, with Peterson and Brown as editors, *The New People’s: Becoming and Being Métis in North America* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1985; repr., St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001) appeared as a compilation of essays stemming from a conference on métis – the first in North America – held in September 1981 at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

In the three decades since that conference, métis scholarship has grown so substantially that Thomas N. Ingersoll, in his 2005 *To Intermix with Our White Brothers: Indian Mixed Bloods in the United States from Earliest Times to the Indian Removals*, argues that mixed bloods were so important to American history that they “shaped the Jacksonian Indian removal,” an argument he attributes to their “dogged resistance” to removal and the fear of a racially-mixed
society that their presence stirred in white people.”

While Ingersoll’s extensive research contributes much to the study of individual mixed bloods, he presents such a utopian image of egalitarian, mixed-race communities that his monograph has faced criticism. The extreme opposite of Clifton, Ingersoll has high praise for mixed-race Indians, rightly calling them “creative self-improvers” and “active agents of acculturation,” but then goes overboard by claiming their coping strategies “contributed to the formation of the American national character and its distinctive values,” a conclusion that historian Daniel J. Herman would caution borders on falsely romanticizing the frontier as the root of American exceptionalism.

In their introduction to *The New Peoples*, Peterson and Brown credit the resurgence of interest in métis to the activities of métis people themselves who began, in the 1970s, to form groups to explore their history and cultural identity. In her essay, “Many Roads to Red River: Métis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1815,” Peterson demonstrates that the founders of cities including Detroit, Chicago, and Green Bay were mixed-race families that grew out of the fur trade. They were, she argues, “a new people” who served as intercultural brokers and buffers between European and Indian societies.

Peterson’s observations are now well-accepted and apply to the Potawatomi métis who are the subject of this dissertation. Not only were métis families such as the Navarres, Vieuxs, Ouilmettes, Beaubiens, and Bertrands central to the founding of fur trade cities such as South Bend, Indiana; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Monroe, Michigan, but the roots of lesser-known towns in Kansas, including Silver Lake, St. Marys, Louisville, and Rossville (Cross Creek), date to the entrepreneurial efforts of métis who removed with the Potawatomi to the Kansas Indian Country in the 1830s and 1840s. Historian John E. Foster’s “Some Questions and Perspectives on the Problem of Métis Roots” details the broad geographic sweep of the métis population in
North America, which illustrates not only the complexity of reconstructing their history, but also argues for the importance of doing so. The tangled lineages and different migration patterns of which Foster speaks are evident in the métis communities of this dissertation.

**The Potawatomi**

R. David Edmunds provides one of the best overall treatments of the Potawatomi in *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978). This is a traditional tribal history, which begins in the winter of 1615-16 when a report by Samuel de Champlain was the first to mention a people whom the Chippewas called the Potawatomink, or “people of the place of the fire.” Most of Edmunds’ monograph is set in the Great Lakes region as it follows the Potawatomi through the Fox Wars, their allegiances with the French and Pontiac, to the Treaty of Paris, and then to their military confrontations with the British and American empires.

The book ends in about 1840 with a final chapter, titled “Removal,” in which Edmunds notes the “morass of conflicting claims between different villages” that led to the signing of separate treaties with different Potawatomi bands from Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. “The influence of the mixed-bloods was apparent,” he writes, and the treaties “reflected the growing skill of the tribe in negotiating with the government.” Edmunds also correctly points a finger at Indian traders, stating that Potawatomi indebtedness to them reflected “the economic deterioration of the tribe.” In a concise telling, Edmunds explains the various removal paths that Potawatomi bands took to the West, castigates the “inexcusable ignorance” of the government for the misery that ensued because of its “disorganized planning” and the hiring of “dishonest and ill-trained” personnel to carry it out. In a three-page epilogue, he leaves the Potawatomi scattered, most of their lands around the Great Lakes now “passed into white
hands,” and the Prairie and Mission bands about to be united under the Treaty of 1846 on the Kansas River Reservation.

Despite its negative view of the métis, Clifton’s *The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture, 1665-1965* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1977; repr., Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998), also is an excellent monograph about the Potawatomi. Clifton’s work is an ethno-historical study of the Prairie Band, in which he explores Potawatomi pre-contact, as well as post-contact history, “intertwining facets of Potawatomi culture and social structure with discussions of historical events and processes.”

In early chapters, Clifton goes to great lengths to explain workings of the tribal society and the importance of kinship networks and the systems of “linked clans,” which had “great force in unifying scattered tribal segments.” He writes that “extended kinship ties,” whether real or fictive, were “the most important binding element” of the tribe. The advent and importance of “chiefs,” he states, did not occur until after the arrival of the French, who “began making them.” By the time the French arrived in North America, the Potawatomi “had likely developed a special kind of patrilineal kinship system,” which did not exclude women “from consideration in calculating descent and affiliation.”

Even as he lays the foundation for Potawatomi society, Clifton’s primary interest is “the evolution” of the Prairie Band, whom he chooses to focus on “because they are the most culturally conservative of all modern Potawatomi.” Clifton is interested in them as “the major repository of the modern versions of ancient Potawatomi ethos, value system, language, and cultural and social patterns.” In other words, they retain “the older culture forms” that interest him most as an anthropologist.
He argues that until the 1830s, despite villages scattered in the four-state area around Lake Michigan, all Potawatomi “constituted a single tribal society.” Clifton identifies these years of treaty-making with the United States as a turning point that led groups of Potawatomi down different paths – one led by acculturated mixed-bloods who undercut traditional authority in the tribe, and another led by culturally conservative Potawatomis who refused to lose their Indian “identity.” Clifton’s distain for most mixed-bloods is everywhere evident, while his admiration for those he describes as “firmly, bitterly, and successfully resistant to enforced cultural change, outside domination, and assimilation” is no less obvious.102

Clifton’s division of the Potawatomi into, if you will, goods guys who preserved “older cultural forms” vs. bad guys who destroyed them, is the biggest failure of his otherwise excellent study, which is the most expansive of extant monographs on the Potawatomi. As many scholars, including Vine Deloria and R. David Edmunds have argued, and with whom this writer agrees, Indian identity takes many forms and need not be judged by the extent to which an individual adheres to cultural forms of past centuries.

In addition to Clifton, anthropologist Ruth Landes has shown great interest in the Prairie Band. She undertook field studies on the Kansas reservation in 1935-36, which she published as *The Prairie Potawatomi: Tradition and Ritual in the Twentieth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970). Unlike Clifton’s study, Landes’ book is strictly descriptive, a compilation of observances made when she was “under pressure to glean everything she could about what was then thought to be a ‘dying’ culture.”103

Scholarship on Potawatomi missions and/or acculturating groups, including this dissertation, have tended to focus more on the Mission/Citizen Band than on the Prairie Band.104 This includes the well-researched dissertation, “Potawatomi Indians of the West: Origins of the
Citizen Band (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1961), by Joseph Francis Murphy. Murphy, a Benedictine priest associated for years with St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee, Oklahoma,\textsuperscript{105} is interested in the forces and events that created the Citizen Band. Murphy provides an excellent overview of the removal of separate bands of Potawatomi to Iowa and Kansas, a dispersal complicated by its extended timeframe. Murphy details the tribal split that led to the Treaty of 1861, and then follows the fragmentary movement of members of the Citizen Band to Oklahoma in the years 1870-1872.

Clifton’s opposite, Murphy views the métis as a positive force who “provided leadership and example” and established “the tendencies” of the Potawatomi “to move in the direction of the white man’s civilization.”\textsuperscript{106} He, like Father Duerinck, lays much blame for the tribe’s factional strife on Prairie Band members who refused to assimilate, and concludes that the Citizen Band, by 1861, was “the more advanced faction of the Potawatomi on the Kansas River” – a circumstance for which he credits the efforts of Catholic missionaries at Sugar Creek and St. Mary’s Mission. They were, he writes, “most influential and important,” although “the Baptist Mission must not be ignored.”\textsuperscript{107}

Despite Murphy’s excellent research, his Catholic affiliations cannot be ignored in his assessment of the good work done by missionaries such as J.B. Duerinck. That said, the Citizen Band itself has embraced Murphy as a champion of the tribe, writing of him as “a longtime friend and supporter.” On its reservation in Shawnee, Oklahoma, the tribe has named a street after him (Father Murphy Drive) and, “by action of the tribal Business Committee” adopted him as a member on August 27, 1985.\textsuperscript{108}

Kathryn Lamirand Young’s "Never 'Quite' White - Never 'Quite' Indian: The Cultural Dilemma of the Citizen Band Potawatomi" (Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 1995) also
is interested in the formation of the Citizen Band. Young examines the continuity of métis kinship structures from the Great Lakes region to Oklahoma and argues that “a strong case can be made” for the Citizen Band being a “true Métis” culture, a conclusion with which this dissertation agrees.

While Young, in a concluding chapter, follows members of the first Citizen Band families to leave Kansas in the early 1870s for Oklahoma, Joseph B. Herring, *The Enduring Indians of Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990) explores remnants of the emigrant tribes that remained in Kansas. By the early 1870s, he writes, the number amounted to only “several hundred” Kickapoos, Chippewas, Munsees, Iowas, Sacs, and Potawatomis, mixed with a few others. Herring rightly explores the continued resolve of the Prairie Band Potawatomi to keep their land and retain their cultural traditions, even as they became more acculturated over the ensuing years. The leader Wahquahboskuk (Roiley Water), for instance, resisted the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 just as resolutely as a previous generation opposed the Treaty of 1861 that called for sectionalizing the Potawatomi’s Kansas River Reservation. Today, Herring writes, Wahquahboskuk remains a “heroic figure” among the Prairie Band in Kansas.

**Kansas City**

Particularly important to the direction taken by this dissertation was a presentation William E. Unrau made at the Kansas City Public Library in the summer of 1996 in which he spoke about the overlooked importance of the emigrant Indians – and the annuity money they brought with them – to the development of the Kansas City area. A copy of his speech, "Indian Presence in the Kansas City Region," paper presented at the Kawsmouth Lecture Series, Kansas City Public Library, June 9, 1996, kindled the original thoughts that led to this project. R. David Edmunds, in “Indians as Pioneers: Potawatomis on the Frontier” (*The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 65 (Winter
1987-88), 340-353), points out the entrepreneurism of Potawatomi métis in the Kansas Indian County and argues for their role as “pioneers,” an idea that inspired the central premise of this dissertation. In “Two Case Histories,” (The Wilson Quarterly 10:1 (Winter 1986), 132-142), Edmunds argues that the Potawatomi métis were “masters of accommodation” whose “entrepreneurial spirit” continues to shape fortunes of the Citizen Band Potawatomi today.

Stephen Aron’s American Confluence: The Missouri Frontier from Borderland to Border State (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2006), offered a conceptual framework to explore the Kansas River-Missouri River confluence in the years immediately after Aron’s Missouri River-Ohio River-Mississippi River confluence, 250 miles to the east, had completed its transition to border state.

The most scholarly history of early Kansas City, A. Theodore Brown’s Frontier Community: Kansas City to 1870 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963), notes the French and Indian presence in the region, but does not concentrate on it as particularly interesting or important. More recent treatments suggest a different view, including Dorothy Brandt Marra, Cher Uncle, Cher Papa: The Letters of Francois and Berenice Chouteau (Kansas City, Missouri: Western Historical Manuscript Collection, 2001), and Charles E. Hoffhaus, Chez les Canses: Three Centuries at Kawsmouth: the French Foundations of Metropolitan Kansas City (Kansas City: Lowell Press, 1984). Marra’s work, which makes available in English a collection of letters previously available only in French, touches on many topics significant to this dissertation, including the intimate connections between French fur traders and Indian people and the changing nature of the Kawsmouth frontier in the 1830s as the Chouteaus found themselves in competition with newly arrived Anglo businessmen in nearly Independence, Missouri. Hoffhaus, a Kansas City attorney, presents “a labor of love” that celebrates the
French presence in Kansas City. While his effort lacks footnotes, Hoffhaus offers a bibliographic overview and correctly argues for the important role of the fur trade and French and Indian people in the region’s beginnings.

Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., has contributed pioneering work in his *Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City, Missouri* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1929), in which his effort to detail activities of early nineteenth century priests at Kawsmouth also provides a vivid description of the French-métis community there. Garraghan also has written the valuable, *The Jesuits of the Middle United States*, 3 vols. (New York: America Press, 1938), as well as a detailed telling of the settlement of Florrisant, Missouri, *Saint Ferdinand de Florissant; The Story of an Ancient Parish* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1923), which sheds light on the sojourn there of Catholic priests and nuns important to this dissertation.

Writing more currently in this same vein is Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), which argues for “indigenous persistence.” Unlike Richard White, who posits that the “middle ground” failed with the withdrawal of the British and the dominance of the United States after the War of 1812, Sleeper-Smith posits that, for Indians, the new state of affairs was “another stage in a continuous process of encounter with foreigners” and that Indian people “were still far from powerless.”

She explores the daily life of fur trade communities, finding in their kin-based societies the strategies and adaptive behaviors that led to Indian persistence. Sleeper-Smith argues for the “highly important role that Native women played in establishing the fur trade as an avenue of sociocultural change,” a role rooted in the fact that Indian women did not “marry out,” but remained in the villages where they were raised. They incorporated their French husbands into their community, and served as the “progenitors of Catholic kin networks.”

Thus, she concludes, “Women, kinship, and Catholicism shaped the dynamics of the exchange process and minimized the intrusion of market forces. This, coupled with the longevity of the fur trade,” she writes, “contributed to Indian persistence.”

In her exploration of daily life in the geographic locale of today’s southwestern Michigan and parts of Indiana and Illinois, Sleeper-Smith encounters métis families important to this study, including the Bertrands, Bourassas, and Burnetts. Her work offers valuable analysis of these families in the pre-removal years, which aids in understanding their actions in the Indian Country. Sleeper-Smith illustrates, for example, the important connection of the Bertrands to the Catholic Church, and the assorted political leanings of the Burnetts.

Numerous scholars have explored the fur trade. Most important to his project has been the overall narrative of W.J. Eccles, *The French in North America, 1500-1783*, rev. ed.
(Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1998), and works dealing with specific areas, such as Ida Amanda Johnson, *The Michigan Fur Trade* (Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1919) or Bert Anson, “The Fur Traders in Northern Indiana,” (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1953).

Genealogical efforts, while extremely helpful in tracing métis roots, must be read with caution and matched to primary sources where possible. Even then, the subject matter can be extremely daunting. For example, when the French-Canadian Pierre Navarre married a Potawatomi woman, her name appears variously as Kiskwalka, Kes-he-wa-quay, Keshewaquay, and Kish-waqua, while her French name was Angelique. Especially important to this project was the Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project in Shawnee, Oklahoma, where members of the Citizen Band are endeavoring to trace their ancestral roots. Also important is the extensive Christian Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region* (Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1976, 2 vols.; rev. ed., Harold Frédéric Powell, ed., 1987), Les and Jeanne Rentmeester, *The Wisconsin Fur-trade People* (Melbourne, Fla.: privately published, 1987), and efforts of individuals such as Gladys Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestors," (Kansas State Historical Society, 1985).

**Chapter organization**

This dissertation moves both chronologically and topically as it introduces the emigrant Indians and discusses issues pertinent to this project. Chapter Two introduces the early-arriving emigrant Indian groups and notes how their influx into the Kawsmouth region in the late 1820s and early 1830s not only disrupted the lives of the indigenous Kansa and Osage, but added to an ever burgeoning cultural mix on the border. Chapter Three offers an overview of the Potawatomi, illustrating the tribe’s close historical connection to the French, their introduction to
the Catholic faith, and their embrace of interracial unions as a way to make friends with the French strangers in their midst explains. Chapter Four uses a genealogical methodology to document kinship networks and trace the movement of métis families who accompanied the Potawatomi to the Kansas Indian Country. Chapter Five examines the removal of various bands of Potawatomi to the Indian Country and illustrates the role of métis as cultural brokers during the treaty-making process. Chapter Six places the Potawatomi on their reservation in the Kansas River Valley, where, I argue, they were active participants in the momentous historical forces taking place as the American nation moved west in the 1840s and 1850s. Chapter Seven explores the establishment of St. Mary’s Catholic Mission, which, I suggest, played a far greater role in the region’s history than as a mission to the Potawatomi. Chapter Eight explores conflicting identity issues that split the Potawatomi nation in two after the Kansas Indian Country opened to non-Indian settlement in 1854.

By focusing the lens on region and individual métis families, this dissertation urges a rethinking of the traditional pioneer narrative as it seeks to give voice, as does Anne Hyde in *Empires, Nations, and Families*, “to the human complexity” and “intermingled racial past” of the American West.120

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4 See Nelson Peter Ross, "Two Civilizations: Indians and Early White Settlement," in *Racine: Growth & Change in a Wisconsin County*, Nicholas C. Burckel, ed. (Racine, Wisconsin: Racine County Board of Supervisors,
5 See, for example, Tim Janicke, City of Art: Kansas City’s Public Art (Kansas City, Mo.: Kansas City Star Books, 2001). The region’s art does not leave out Indian people, although it often centers on acculturated Indians. In the suburb of Shawnee, Kansas, for example, notes that a statue depicts “Chief Charles Blue Jacket,” a Shawnee métis who, Bowes, Exiles and Pioneer, 253, notes, “owned hundreds of acres of land, raised livestock, and made a distinct attempt to work with the forces of American expansion.” On the city hall grounds of the suburb of Lenexa, Kansas, a statue depicts “NaNexSe,” an Indian woman said to be educated in Ohio and from whom the city took its name. A plaque states that NaNexSe raised cattle and pigs, harvested corn, oats, and potatoes, and “had been a good example to the community.”


8 Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families, 17-18. Frenchmen also married Ottawa and Ojibwe women, who were closely associated with the Potawatomi.


12 Bowes’ Exiles and Pioneers, 4.

13 Ibid. Central to his study are four emigrant nations: the Shawnee, Delaware, Wyandot, and Potawatomi.


15 Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families, 480.


17 Ibid, 342.


19 Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families 275. Prior to the early nineteenth century, Hyde writes, “Anglo-Americans saw race as a very malleable characteristic in America, much as Native Americans did … However, as race became a ‘problem’ and categories sharpened and hardened, nonwhite people became innately inferior and progression impossible. These ideas,” she writes, “were applied to Indian people in very uneven ways … especially early in the nineteenth century, so that it remained very unclear whether being more or less Indian was better or
worse. For the large number of people of mixed race, did their supposedly superior white parts win out, or did their inferior Indian parts drag them down?"

20 I am grateful to Associate Professor Phoebe S.K. Young, a member of my dissertation committee and the history faculty at the University of Colorado at Boulder, who suggested this idea to me.

21 Hyde, _Empires, Nations, and Families_, 1.

22 Ibid, 17, 22. Hyde focuses mostly on well-known families such as the Chouteaus, McLoughlins, Sublettes, Vallejos, and Austins. Her book was commissioned by the University of Nebraska Press as part of a new, six-volume history of the trans-Mississippi West.

23 See _Ninth Census of the United States_, Louisville and St. Marys townships, Pottawatomie County, Kansas; and Silver Lake Township, Shawnee County, Kansas. Clifton, _The Prairie People_, 33, 108, 116-17 writes that by the early 1600s, the Potawatomi had developed a “special kind of patrilineal kinship system … [that] did not exclude women from consideration in calculating descent and affiliation.” The system, while patrilineal, aligned “each individual secondarily with the descent line of his mother’s father.” During the naming ceremony – which occurred about a month after birth – the child was “formally incorporated into the patrilineal clan of his father, the most important social group it would ever belong to and the center of the most vital relationships.” Potawatomi society was exogamous so that those in one clan, both men and women, sought marriage partners in another clan. “Thereby,” Clifton writes, “the clans were linked as intermarrying groups, and the Potawatomi tribe in this fashion became a network of affinal kinfolk.”


25 Ninth Census of the United States, Louisville Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas.


27 Unrau, _Indians of Kansas_, 80-82. Unrau gives credit to Paul Wallace Gates, whose _Fifty Million Acres: Conflicts Over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1890_ (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954) is considered the classic study of land distribution in Kansas following the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The first serious study of the displacement of the emigrant tribes from Kansas is Annie Heloise Abel, “Indian Reservations in Kansas and the Extinguishment of Their Title,” written as her master’s thesis at the University of Kansas in 1902 and published in _Kansas Historical Collections, 1903-04_, 8 (1904), 72-109.

28 Unrau, in _The Emigrant Indians of Kansas_, divides study topics as follows: Changing Federal Indian Policy; Removal to the Kansas “desert;” Conflict between Federal Land and Indian Policies; Tribal Leadership and Fractional Response; Role of the Missionaries; Impact of Malnutrition, Disease and Alcohol; Expulsion from Kansas.

29 Donohue, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” ii.


31 Ibid, 18.

32 Ibid, 18, 182.

33 Ibid, 2. Donohue does acknowledge that the “western country,” as he calls it, “was a country which was undergoing a rapid transition, due to shifting of the fur trade, westward movement, commerce and new departures in Indian policy.”
Examples are numerous. John Calvin McCoy, who went to the Kansas Indian Country in 1830 with his father, the missionary Isaac McCoy, went to work for the War Department, marking the boundaries of numerous reservations, employment that lasted for some nine years and brought as much as $8 a day. In 1833, John Calvin McCoy founded the town of Westport, prospered, and then laid out the Town of Kansas, which was the seed that became Kansas City, Missouri. Today, celebrated as the “father of Kansas City,” John Calvin McCoy sits in bronze in Pioneer Park at the corner of Broadway and Westport Road, rubbing shoulders with a bronze likeness of Alexander Majors, “the great freighter” who looked to the Potawatomis at St. Mary’s Mission for the tons of hay required for his firm’s prosperity.

Also entering the freighting business was Thomas Johnson, the slave-holding Methodist missionary to the emigrant Shawnees who became deeply involved in the organization of Kansas Territory. Johnson, described as “an aggressive entrepreneur who capitalized on any opportunity to enhance his own wealth,” formed a freighting business by 1850 “and also dabbled in real estate in the fledgling community of Kansas City.” Many people, historian Kevin Abing writes, “suspected that Johnson established his Methodist Manual Labor School to enrich himself and his Methodist brethren.” Accusations came from the mouths of Indians, as well as whites. The Shawnee métis Charles and Paschal Fish, for instance, detailed a number of complaints in a seven-page letter against the Methodists living and working on their reserve, charging that the Methodists had “become ‘money changers.’”

When the Baptist Johnston Lykins left missionary work among the Potawatomi, he went on to build a fortune as banker, mayor, and one of the biggest railroad promoters in Kansas City. The same may be said of the trader William Gilliss, who arrived on the border with the emigrant Delawares. Gilliss became a member of the Town of Kansas Company, purchased a thousand acres on the Missouri border, and helped establish Kansas City’s first newspaper. For four decades, historian Lynn Morrow writes, “Gilliss continued his free-wheeling business ventures among the Indians, while he engaged in several land and merchant ventures...” In 1849-50, he built the Gilliss House on the Kansas City levee, where twenty-seven thousand guests registered during the rush to Kansas Territory in 1857. For himself, Gilliss built a mansion described as “the great wonder of the town” and, as an old man in 1867, “drove the last spike in the rail of the Cameron Railroad,” which secured Kansas City’s future over its rivals as a rail center. Also, Hayden McMeekein, the Sac and Fox trader who platted Indianola on land owned by Louis Vieux, went on to establish the famous Planter House in Leavenworth.


Myhre “Potawatomi Transformation,” 403.
From 1822 to 1872, Myhre writes, more than two thousand Potawatomis “inculturated Catholic religious practices and adopted many elements of Western civilization.”

Ibid, 404.

Ibid.


While offering no analysis, Shoup does argue that Indian missionaries such as Isaac McCoy and Thomas Johnson contributed to future state development, by starting Kansas’ first schools and laying the foundation church institutions.

These themes are noted in Unrau, The Emigrant Indians of Kansas, 32-33.

Abing, “A Holy Battleground,” 121, 131, 133, 136-37. Abing quotes the Methodist missionary Edward T. Peery, who noted in 1843 how Shawnee traditionalists “up-braided” Christian factions for “shamefully yielding up their national identity and conforming to the customs of the white man.” In an 1846 census, agent Richard Cummins estimated that three-fourths of Shawnees still adhered to the “National or ancient Religion.”


See “Father Hoecken’s Diary,” The Dial 1:4 (June 1890), 1-3; 2:1 (September 1890), 1-2; 2:2 (October, 1890), 17-18; 2:3 (November 1890), 35-36; and 2:4 (December 1890), 51-53.


Gates, Fifty Million Acres, vii, x. Johannsen writes that “no significant population existed in Kansas.”

Ibid, xi, 8. Johannsen, xiii, writes that Kansas certainly did “bleed,” but questions of land policy, more than those involving slavery, opened the wound. Gates, he summarizes, argues that the “great blunder” of the Kansas-Nebraska Act was not repeal of the Missouri Compromise, but that “it opened Kansas to settlement before proper steps could be taken to insure an orderly disposal of the land.” Gates points out that not one acre of land was available for sale in Kansas when the 1854 act was passed, “causing confusion and conflict during the years that followed.”
The Potawatomi case centered at first on the Leavenworth, Pawnee, and Western Railroad, which drew up a treaty enabling it to buy all of the unallotted Potawatomi lands. The railroad and its attorney, Thomas Ewing Jr., then enlisted Potawatomi agent Edmund G. Ross as commissioner to conduct the negotiations. Gates unfurls a trail of bribes, and also implicates an unnamed Jesuit at St. Mary’s Mission, whom he says agreed to support the railroad purchase in return for a section of land for the Catholic Church. Opposition to the railroad sale was expressed by “the wildest of the fellows” and “the witch,” he writes in what undoubtedly is a reference to members of the Prairie Band. Their opposition was overcome, however, and eighty-six Indians, “no more than a handful of whom could write their names,” signed the treaty.

Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas*, x.

Ibid, xiii-xiv.

Ibid, xii, xv.

Ibid, x.


Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian Country*, xii.

Ibid, 3.

Ibid, 38, 62, 123.

Ibid, 147.


Ibid, xii.


Ibid.

In November 1857, for example, Potawatomi agent William Murphy asserted that many Potawatomi were “extremely anxious” to accept allotments and become citizens; only “the poor ‘Prairie band’ of Potawatomis appear to be confirmed in their ignorant obstinacy.” Murphy quoted in Herring, *The Enduring Indians of Kansas*, 127.


The questions Bowes asks center on the “continuities and discontinuities” in westward relocations and how they affected power relations between Indian people and the United States government.

Ibid. 2.

Ibid, 109, 197.

76 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 354.

77 Ibid, 184, 275. Clifton especially faults the influence of those of “Scots-Irish and Anglo-Saxon antecedents,” whom, he writes, caused “a decline in the prestige, power, and influence of the long-resident, French-origin Métis.”

78 Ibid, 282, 300. This reference to “most Potawatomis” is a reference to Prairie Potawatomis on the Iowa Reservation in 1838, who, Clifton states, “purged themselves of the ‘half-breed’ elements and sent them packing. These displaced Metis then resettled on the Osage River reserve in Kansas, where they were welcomed by the missionaries and tolerated by the more disorganized, missionized Potawatomi in that locale.”

79 Such thinking is rooted in the “persistence versus change” dilemma noted by historian Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. forty years ago as the “New Indian History” spawned the courtship of the once divided disciplines of anthropology and history. In the 1971 essay, “The Political Context of a New Indian History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 40:3 (August, 1971), 357-82. Berkhofer recognized “difficulties of evidence and theory” that came with the courtship. While arguing that the central theme of the “new history” should be the “remarkable persistence” of Indian cultural and ethnic identity over time, Berkhofer saw the basic problem as “how to achieve this aim.” He defined the problem as a theoretical dilemma in which Indian societies and ways of life were understood to change “drastically over the years,” while at the same time “Indian ethnic identities and societies remained static and elements of personality and culture are said to have persisted unchanged.” While anthropologists studied “the aboriginal past and reservation present,” and stressed cultural persistence, historians “emphasized the fundamental changes wrought in Indian life by white government policy and military might.” On one hand, anthropologists believed it was alright to use present-day information to describe the past, while historians thought change over time invalidated any evidence but the contemporary. The result, Berkhofer writes, was confusion: “How were and how are ‘Indians’ to be identified and grouped at various times?”


81 Ibid, 400.


84 L.S. Houghton, *Our Debt to the Red Man: French-Indians of the United States* (Boston: Stratford Company, 1918) perhaps should not be excluded as “serious,” but her work is mostly a celebration of mixed-blood achievements. In the process she offers many details on individuals, including on some in this dissertation.


87 Reviewer Nancy Shoemaker, for instance, faults Ingersoll for a “starkly polarized” argument that portrays “complete white animosity toward Indian intermarriage” on one hand and “complete Indian acceptance of it” on the other. See “Reviews of Books,” *American Historical Review* 112:3 (June 2007), 846-47.

88 Ingersoll, *To Intermix with Our White Brothers*, xix, 127.
Daniel J. Herman, “The Romance of the Middle Ground,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 19:2 (Summer 1999), 279-91. Herman cautions scholars to beware of the “fashionable” middle ground paradigm lest they “resurrect the ghost of western history past” by suggesting, as Frederick Jackson Turner did, that the frontier transformed Americans into “egalitarian, restless, inventive, optimistic men, eager for new experiences and new challenges.” By portraying the cultural clashes of the West as transformative for all involved, Herman writes, “we find a new (or not so new) formula for American exceptionalism: to be American is to be heir to a culture forged in the crucible of white-Indian contact, a culture formed on the frontier.”


John E. Foster, “Some Questions and Perspectives on the Problem of Métis Roots,” in Peterson and Brown, *The New Peoples*, 73-91. Foster turns to anthropologist Fredrik Barth for an understanding of the cultural formation of métis origins, a concept that also helps to explain why many métis in Kansas might have banded together and removed to Oklahoma Territory as the Citizen Band after 1867. Foster quotes Barth’s “Descent and Marriage Reconsidered”: “I find it reasonable to see social institutions and customs as the outcome of a complex aggregation of numerous micro-events of behaviour, based on individual decisions in each person’s attempts to cope with life….If a number of persons in communication share a similar opportunity situation, experience the same confrontations with reality, and have the same conceptualizations falsified, one would expect them to develop shared understandings and modify their collective culture and expectations in accordance with this.”


Ibid, 241-42.

Ibid, 257.

Ibid, 272.


Ibid, 23.


Ibid, 33.

Ibid, xix-xx. The only other Potawatomi group that approaches the Prairie Band in retention of “older culture forms,” Clifton states, is the Potawatomi of Forest County, Wisconsin.

Ibid, xxi, 184. Clifton relates how he first encountered the Prairie Band in 1962, though he had no intention of studying them because he assumed that all Potawatomi “were largely decultured and assimilated.” He soon changed his mind, however, and quickly came to realize that the Prairie Band was “one of the most stubborn people I had ever met…So far as they were concerned – they made perfectly clear to me – the great melting pot was a place to cook fried bread, not to lose one’s identity in.”

Alfonso Ortiz, Review, *Man: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5:4 (December 1970), 725. Landes spent much time on Prairie Band religion, illustrating how “ancient personal medicine and bundle complexes” were overlaid by “the syncretistic and widespread Religion Dance, or Drum cult, and the still more widespread Peyote religion, which was introduced in 1910.”

See “Father Joseph Murphy, author, historian, is dead,” *How-Ni-Kan* 11:9 (October 1989), 1, 6.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 501.

Ibid, 499.

“Father Joseph Murphy …. is dead,” *How-Ni-Kan*. Joseph Francis Murphy was born in Oklahoma on December 1, 1910, and died October 19, 1989. A graduate of St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota, he was ordained a priest on May 31, 1936. He served for many years in a number of capacities, including history professor, at St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee, Oklahoma. He earned a master’s degree in 1942 and a doctorate in 1961, both from the University of Oklahoma. In 1988, the Citizen Band Potawatomi published his dissertation, “Potawatomi Indians of the West.”

Young, " 'Never 'Quite' White',' vi, 71.

Herring, *The Enduring Indians of Kansas*, 166.


Hoffhaus, *Chez les Canses*, xiii.

Thorne, *The Many Hands of My Relations*, 1-3. Thorne addresses “some of the gaps and imbalances in the historical literature,” which tends to focus on the fur trade of the upper Missouri River, Rocky Mountains, and Santa Fe.


Ibid, 5.

Ibid, 5-6.
119 Ibid, 90, 102.

120 Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families, 1.
CHAPTER II
THE KAWSMOUTH CONFLUENCE

Until 1854, Kansas was part of the vast “Indian Country” set aside by the United States government and declared off-limits to non-Indian settlers. That, however, did not prohibit routes of the great overland trails – the Santa Fe and the California-Oregon – to pass right through. Historian Merrill Mattes estimates that thirty thousand travelers followed the California-Oregon Trail in 1849 alone, and another fifty-five thousand in 1850. Mattes identifies five major routes of the overland trail, including one known as the Independence Road, which started at present-day Independence, Missouri, passed through Westport, and ambled southeast, crossing the Missouri state line into what today are the sprawling suburbs of Johnson County, Kansas.¹ In 1849, however, this was reservation land, home to the Shawnee, Miami, Potawatomi and other Eastern Indian groups removed west under the U.S. government’s Indian removal policy.

As overland travelers passed though eastern Kansas in the mid-nineteenth century, they recorded their impressions in trail diaries, journals, and accounts they wrote for their hometown newspapers. “One gets but a very faint idea of what is called ‘the plains’ from reading what others have written,” the Indiana traveler Addison Crane wrote in his trail diary in 1852. Instead of the “vast levels” he had expected, the country was “one continued undulation … beatifully[sic] diversified with here a lovely valley, there a high rolling swell and yonder a beatiful skirt of timber on some stream. I saw today one of the most beautiful landscapes the eye ever rested upon,” Crane wrote. “At one view the vision embraced a circle at least 50 miles in diameter all high rolling prairie, varigated with skirts [of] timber. That sight of itself was worth a journey from Indiana here.”²
Overlander Pardon Dexter Tiffany found the country “most beautifully diversified,” its “woods & green fields looking like English lawns & parks on an extensive scale.” Alexander B. Nixon wrote of seeing wild strawberries and marveled at one stretch of prairie covered densely with large, blue violets. “The Modest Blue intermingled with the bright green produced a beautiful landscape,” he wrote. “This part of the country is highly fertile and well adapted to agricultural purposes.” Edward Alexander Tompkins, who set out from Cincinnati in the spring of 1849, was just a few miles over the Missouri border into the Kansas Indian Country when he described what he saw as “a singularly wild and enchanting region.” All that was wanting, he said, was “the Company of friends to make it the most charming & happy place in the world.”

Such observations reveal the pleasant surprise of nineteenth century overlanders as they crossed eastern Kansas. The region clearly was not part of the Great American Desert, although, mistakenly, it had been so-identified following topographical engineer Stephen H. Long’s one-hundred-day expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the summer of 1820. The land traversed, Long declared, was “unfit for cultivation and of course uninhabitable by a people depending upon agriculture.” The “land traversed” by Long, however, had not actually included Kansas, although the expedition’s map – perhaps because it clearly showed the hard-lined boundary of the recently admitted state of Missouri – gave the impression that all the land to the west, including the rich Kansas River Valley crossed by overlanders like Tompkins, Nixon, and Tiffany, was part of the “Great Desert.”

Indeed, only four years after Long’s expedition, William Channing Woodbridge stamped “Great American Desert” on a map of North America intended to accompany his textbook on the rudiments of geography, titled *A System of Universal Geography on the Principles of Comparison and Classification*, published in 1824 by Oliver D. Cook & Sons, Hartford, Connecticut. In
1831, Woodbridge followed up with *A Modern Atlas on a New Plan to Accompany the System of Universal Geography*, (Hartford: Oliver D. Cooke & Co.), a popular geography used in classrooms throughout the United States. “West of the Mississippi, and south of the Missouri,” the book states, “there is a vast extent of untimbered country, of a barren sandy soil, which has some resemblance to the deserts of Africa.” The map shows “The Great American Desert” extending from the western line of Missouri and Arkansas Territory to the Rocky Mountains and from the Platte River in the north to the Red River in the south. A new edition of Woodbridge’s 1831 map, published for schools in 1837 and titled Polar projection of North America and Asia, kept the desert designation, as did Samuel Mitchell’s 1839 Map of North America and Nathaniel G. Huntington’s *A System of Modern Geography for Schools, Academies and Families* (Hartford, 1836), which spoke of the territory west of the state of Missouri as “a vast wilderness, resembling a desert … It is a region of open elevated plains, generally destitute of forest trees, and interspersed with barren hills.”

While this description perhaps fits the plains of western Kansas, eastern Kansas was something entirely different – a well-watered, rolling prairie extending some 120 miles west from the Missouri border. But even today, stereotypes of Kansas disparage the state as flat, dry, and monotonous, although this is far from true. As historian Robert W. Richmond explains, Kansas is far from flat, rising from about seven hundred feet above sea level in its southeastern corner to more than 4,100 feet on its western border. While it is true that the western third of the state is dry – with an average annual rainfall of only 19.01 inches – the eastern third of Kansas averages 35.27 inches of rain, often accompanied by booming thunderstorms that darken the skies and stage magnificent lightning shows. Dry? Kansas claims at least fifty thousand
streams large enough to be named and encompasses forty thousand square miles of the Missouri River basin.\textsuperscript{10}

The Missouri River, winding its way down from the Rocky Mountains, forms the north-eastern corner of the state of Kansas, passing at it goes, St. Joseph, Missouri, and Leavenworth, Kansas. At the two Kansas Cities, the Missouri turns sharply east, toward St. Louis, where it spills into the Mississippi. If one stands on the high river bluffs of downtown Kansas City, Missouri, the great bend of the Missouri is visible below, as is a far smaller river – the Kansas – which comes from the and empties into the Big Muddy in Kansas City’s industrial bottomlands. The Kansas River – known to locals as “the Kaw” – originates in east-central Kansas and flows 138 miles east before disappearing into the Missouri River at a place known in the early 1800s as Kawsmouth, the mouth of the Kansas River.

![Figure 3:](image)

**Figure 3:** Denver Public Library

*Cutout locates the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers, far right.*\textsuperscript{11}
Here, by 1821, was a small fur trading outpost overseen by the prominent Chouteau family of St. Louis. Situated as Kawsmouth was, midway up the Missouri River, the location was a natural extension of the family’s trade with the indigenous Osage and Kansas, and as a station for furs coming down from the Upper Missouri. By 1834, however, the tiny settlement of about a dozen French and Indian families in the fur trade found itself in the midst of a confluence region fast transforming to contested borderland. Arriving during the decade was a cavalcade of people from diverse regions and cultures.

For purposes of this dissertation, chief among the arriving groups were the so-called “emigrant Indians,” who comprised more than a dozen Eastern Indian groups, mostly Algonquians from the Great Lakes region, who removed to present-day Kansas – then part of the vast “Indian Country” – under the U.S. government’s Indian removal policies. The “Indian Country” was a

![Map of Indian Reservations in Kansas, 1846](kansasmemory.org, Kansas State Historical Society)

**Figure 4** In 1846, Potawatomi still were living on the reserve in east-central Kansas (No. 13).
huge region delineated in the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834 as that part of the United States “west of the Mississippi, and not within the states of Missouri and Louisiana, or the territory of Arkansas.”\textsuperscript{13} In other words, the western boundary of Missouri, which abutted the unorganized Indian Country to the west, become a dividing line between the advance of the American empire and the great stretches of prairie and plains beyond, where non-Indian settlement was forbidden until passage of the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act.\textsuperscript{14} The reservations of the emigrant Indians were stacked, tier upon tier, on what today is the Kansas-Missouri border.

Also arriving in the 1820s and 1830s were Anglo-Americans, mostly from the Upper South, who moved across Missouri after the War of 1812 and established towns such as Liberty, Independence, and Westport on the state’s far western border. Also arriving were Mormons from the Northeast who moved to western Missouri in the early 1830s, looking to establish their New Jerusalem as close to the “Lamanites” as they could. Missionaries of the Protestant and Catholic faiths, some of whom already were ministering to Algonquian groups in the Great Lakes region, also were present, having followed the emigrant Indians to Kansas. The confluence region also was home to soldiers manning Fort Leavenworth, established in 1827 and serving as a base for patrols, which escorted caravans along the newly opened Santa Fe Trail, which dissected eastern Kansas.

In addition to commercial traffic on the Santa Fe Trail, the overland migration of American to the Pacific Coast also passed through the Kawsmouth region. The traffic began as a trickle in 1836 and reached a crescendo with the discovery of gold in California in 1849 and again in Colorado in 1859. Because the reservations of the emigrant Indians lay directly in the path of the Santa Fe and overland trails, the Kansas Indian Country, although theoretically off-limits to non-Indians, became a nineteenth-century crossroads. And even as Santa Fe and Pacific Coast over-
landers tread on lands set aside for the removing Eastern Indians, the arriving Algonquians intruded on lands of the Siouan- and Caddoan-language Indians already living and hunting there.

**Prior Occupants of the Kansas River Valley**

Long before these nineteenth century arrivals, the central plains already had seen dozens of cultures rise and collapse – from the Clovis and Folsom peoples to the Plains Woodland Indians, who lived in “a kind of cultural borderland” between the nomadic hunters to their west and the horticultural people to their east.¹⁵ Sometime around 1000 A.D., an Indian people apparently migrating from the south and speaking Caddoan languages arrived and built homes of standing logs, the sides plastered with mud. They built their dwellings in clusters, and, unlike the American settlers who followed centuries later, did not turn up the thick, prairie sod, but planted their gardens of maize, beans, and squash in the protected, low-lying areas of the stream banks and the rivers, rivers such as the Smoky Hill and the Republican, which rise on the high plains of today’s Colorado.

The Smoky Hill and Republican flow east until, about two miles northeast of today’s appropriately named Junction City, Kansas, they join, giving birth to another river – the Kansas. The Kansas is a wide, shallow stream lined by high, limestone bluffs along its entire course. The river loses elevation as it winds its way east, draining 34,526 square miles before spilling into the Missouri River. Along the way, a number of tributaries important to this study enter the Kaw from the north, including the Red Vermillion near present-day Wamego, and Cross Creek at present-day Willard, where the now-extinct Indian trading post of Uniontown once stood.¹⁶

All told, the Kansas River travels only 169 miles, but it and the rich agricultural lands in its valley always have played a central role in the history of Kansas. The banks of the Kansas and Smoky Hill rivers are rich with evidence of the horticultural people who flourished in east-
ern Kansas for more than a thousand years before the coming of Europeans and the emigrant Indians. Overall, scholars estimate that perhaps twenty-four to twenty-eight different Indian groups or tribes called Kansas, or other parts of the Great Plains, their homelands.\textsuperscript{17}

Taking a great interest in these prehistoric cultures was Johan August Udden, an instructor of natural science at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas. In 1881, Udden began excavating the ruins of an Indian village along the Smoky Hill River, uncovering items of great interest: stone tools, pottery shards, the bones of butchered animals – and a two-inch-square piece of rusted iron, which Udden identified as a section of chain mail armor, undoubtedly brought to the New World by Spanish explorers.\textsuperscript{18} The Spaniard Francisco Vásquez de Coronado and a small delegation from his sixteenth century exploring party are thought to be the first Europeans to set foot in Kansas, crossing the Smoky Hill River and possibly going as far east as present-day Lindsborg in Rice County, Kansas.\textsuperscript{19}

Despite his failure to find the existence of a fabulously wealthy kingdom called Quivira, Coronado’s name has not been forgotten in Kansas. In 1915, almost four centuries after his failed mission, another Bethany College instructor, Emil Olaf Deere, promoted the name Coronado Heights to mark a prominent hill overlooking the Smoky Hill valley. Coronado Heights, with its stone castle constructed by the Works Progress Administration in 1932, is a local landmark, a favorite spot to picnic. From atop Coronado Heights, the native prairie sweeps to the horizon. At the hill’s base, shale, in colors of gray and red, attest to a time when this valley was the floor of an ancient salt-water sea.\textsuperscript{20}

**The Kansa Indians**

In standard histories of Kansas, the presence of prehistoric Indian peoples is duly noted, as is the arrival in the Kaw River Valley, by the early 1700s, of the Kansa Indians, classified by
ethnologists as members of the Dhegiha division of the Siouan people. The Kansa, a small group of perhaps sixteen hundred people, are thought to have migrated from the east, moved up the Missouri River, and made their homes in a wide swath extending from the Kaw’s source just west of Junction City, south along the Neosho River past present-day Emporia, Kansas, east to Kansas City, and into northwestern Missouri and central Iowa. Their hunting grounds, also utilized by the Osage, Pawnee, and surrounding Indian groups such as the Kiowa, Arapaho, and Cheyenne, extended west along the Smoky Hill River to today’s Kansas-Colorado border.

In 1724, the French military officer Etienne Veniard de Bourgmont, on an exploring expedition, visited a large Kansa village on the Missouri River, above the mouth of the Kaw. It was the ruins of this village that the Americans Lewis and Clark, ascending the Missouri River early in their epic journey, found in 1804. The precise date the Kansa abandoned the Missouri River in favor of a location farther west cannot be determined, but there is reason to believe they had moved up the Kansas River by 1800, where their principal village was situated on the Kaw’s north bank, near the mouth of the Big Blue River at present Manhattan, Kansas.

On a visit there in May 1811, Fort Osage factor George M. Sibley counted 128 lodges and about a hundred acres planted in corn, beans, and pumpkins. Stretching away from the lodges was a beautiful prairie where Sibley saw many children herding horses and mules. In short years to come, the Kansa would cede these lands, and the bucolic scene witnessed by George Sibley would give way to a tide of westering Americans. But in 1811, on the eve of the War of 1812 and the British defeat that would open the trans-Mississippi west to American settlement, the future Kansas seemed far away, a region still dominated by Indian people.

The origin of the word Kansa and the derivation Kaw is much in dispute. In his history of the Kansa Indians, William E. Unrau devotes six pages to what he calls “the nomenclature
question” and concludes that the name *Kansa* “probably evolved into the language of the European invader from some endemic source, Siouan or otherwise.” The Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy claimed the authentic pronunciation was “Kan’zau,” while the interpreter Addison W. Stubbs placed the pronunciation closer to “Konza,” while the missionary James G. Pratt wrote the word “Kauzas.” The pronunciation *Kaw* may have been a derivation from the French pronunciation of *Kansa* or *Cans*, used by French-Canadian *voyageurs* who frequented the region as early as 1705 on their way up the Kansas River or down the Missouri in search of furs.  

The first map showing the Kansa Indians, which dates to 1718, is Guillaume de l'Isle's *Carte de la Louisiane, Cours du Mississi*. On it, he places the "Grande Riv[iere] des Cansez" flowing into the Missouri at about the 40th parallel, indicating a large village of "les Cansez" at the prominent fork in the river where Kansas City, Missouri, now stands. This exact map, except for words printed in English, was published by John Senex, a London cartographer and engraver, in 1721. One of the earliest written references to the name of the river, other than on maps, also is found at this time. The French explorer Bienville in 1722 spoke of "las riviere des Canzes, qui afflue dans celle du Missouri."  

**The Osage Indians**

Besides the Kansa, the powerful, Siouan-speaking Osage laid claim to parts of Kansas, as well as present-day Oklahoma, Missouri, and northwestern Arkansas. In 1794, when Louisiana was still under Spanish rule, Louisiana Governor Francisco Carondelet accepted an offer from the fur trader Auguste Chouteau to build, arm, and equip a fort among the Osage. Because no Spanish soldiers were available to fortify the fort, named Fort Carondelet in honor of the governor, twenty men from the Illinois militia were chosen to man it, with Pierre Chouteau Sr. and Louis Lorimer as commandants. The fort, built along the Marais des Cygnes, a tributary of the
Osage River, stood near the Great Osage village of Papuisea, or White Hair’s people, in present Vernon County, Missouri.  

This fort, as Aron writes, theoretically gave the Spanish a military presence in the heart of the Osage Country, but actually the fort was a fort in name only, for the men manning it were fur traders in the Chouteaus’ employ and maintained peace through accommodation. The building itself was not a brick or stone stockade, but a typical wood-framed trading post like those that French *voyageurs* had been constructing in the interior of North America for well over a century. In return for building Fort Carondelet, the Chouteaus received a six-year monopoly on the Osage trade and continued to dominate the region’s fur trade for years afterward, even after Louisiana passed into the hands of the United States in 1803.

Present Missouri, which was part of the 828,800-square-mile-Louisiana Purchase, initially was attached to the Territory of Indiana, and thus received a visit in October 1804 from Indiana Territorial Governor William Henry Harrison. Harrison went to St. Louis, where he was wined and dined by the Chouteaus. Impressed by the “state of elegance” in which the elite of St. Louis lived and entertained, Harrison declared the Chouteaus as equal to the “first rank in Philadelphia or New York.” He named a number of prominent French colonists to administrative posts, including Pierre Chouteau as Indian agent of the Louisiana District, illustrating how smoothly the French Chouteaus transitioned their political loyalties from the French to the Spanish to the Americans.

Just five years after the Louisiana Purchase, the United States built Fort Osage, a government factory on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River near present Independence, Missouri. The fort, where Indians could obtain goods at below market prices, was proffered to the Osage as a benefit under the Treaty of 1808, by which the Osage ceded all their lands in Missouri east of
This treaty and the defeat of the British in the War of 1812 seemed to assure American jurisdiction over the Lower Missouri River, while also bringing more politically stable conditions. A burst of renewed activity in the fur trade followed, and new outposts of white civilization, populated by people of mixed French and Indian ancestry, began to dot the lower Missouri River. From 1816 to 1823, Paul “Liquesc” Chouteau maintained a post at Halley’s Bluff, the former site of Fort Carondelet, where his father, Pierre Chouteau Sr., once had been commandant. Liquesc’s half-brothers Cyprien and Francois Chouteau took over this post briefly in 1825 before starting a new Chouteau post the following year near the mouth of the Kansas River, where a small settlement comprising about a dozen French families located in the bottomlands at the confluence.

The French Settlement at Kawsmouth

Catholic missionaries who visited Kawsmouth in the 1820s and 1830s left records that shed light on a confluence region on the brink of change. In a letter dated November 12, 1828, Joseph Anthony Lutz, the first priest to visit the confluence, reported that Francois Chouteau and his younger brothers, Cyprien and Frederick – all grandsons of St. Louis founder Pierre Laclede – were in the midst of putting up “a grand edifice” on the Kansas River that would serve as a "a sort of emporium" for the sale and exchange of goods with the nearby Kansa and Shawnee. These were the emigrant Shawnee, whose recent arrival at the confluence already was having an impact. As did the indigenous Kansa and Osage, the emigrant Shawnees hunted and trapped furs for the Chouteaus, thereby adding to competition for the region’s game population, while simultaneously depleting resources.

Five years after Lutz was at Kawsmouth, the priest Benedict Roux visited what he called "the French Village" at the mouth of the Riverie des Cans. By then, the Chouteaus’ "grand edi-
"fice" was complete and well-established. It housed the Chouteaus' warehouse, situated on the banks of the Missouri, with a nearby river landing just east of today's downtown Kansas City, Missouri. "Chouteau's Landing," as it was called, served as the base of the Chouteaus' fur operations in the Kawsmouth region. Here, steamboats carrying goods for the Indian trade and merchandise for settlers docked on their way upriver from St. Louis. Here also, bundles of furs were loaded onboard for the trip back down the river. The enterprise did a tremendous business. One waybill for the steamboat Otto, dated March 23, 1833, for instance, records that Francois Chouteau shipped 240 packs of skins from his warehouse. They were of many kinds – beaver, otter, deer, muskrat, and raccoon. Another day he shipped to St. Louis 25,000 pounds of deer-skins, 800 otter skins, 500 beaver, 500 muskrat, and two bundles of bearskins.38

The Chouteau brothers Francois, Cyprien, and Frederick, were the sons of Pierre Chouteau Sr. (half-brother of St. Louis founder Auguste Chouteau) and his second wife, Brigitte Saucier. Francois Chouteau (1797-1838), the eldest of the three brothers, married the equally well-connected Berenice Thérèse Menard, daughter of the prominent Frenchman Pierre Menard of Kaskaskia, who, in 1818, became lieutenant governor of Illinois.39 At Kawsmouth, Francois Chouteau and his wife were ranking members of the French settlement there, while the two younger Chouteau brothers went up the Kansas River and established outposts among the indigenous Kansa and the emigrant Shawnee and Delaware. Cyprien Chouteau established a trading post about eight miles up the Kansas River, near present Edwardsville, Kansas, and married a Shawnee woman who had been educated by Christian missionaries.40 Frederick Chouteau, who fathered fourteen children by three Shawnee women, began trading with the Kansa near present Topeka in 1828. In 1832, he established a trading post between the Kansa villages of Hard Chief and American Chief at the mouth of Mission Creek, above present Topeka.41
At Kawsmouth, the French and Indian settlement was a community divided by social rank. Louis Gonville, for instance, was outfitted by Francois Chouteau and trapped for awhile, but later found employment with Frederick Chouteau, who described Gonville, as “a very good man you could depend on,” but a “common laboring hand” whom he hired at $300 a year “to chop wood, boat and farm.” Middle-ranking members of the community were men like Louis Roy and his sister the Widow Revard, who were descendants of the independent French trader Andre Roy. The French Roy family had long intermarried with Indians and included Ioway, Osage, Otoe, and Pawnee mixed-bloods, while the French Revard lineage included Pawnee and Osage. Francois and Berenice Chouteau were the settlement’s elite. They lived in a fine, two-story house, owned slaves, cattle, and twelve hundred acres of land, while most of the villagers at Kawsmouth lived “at subsistence level, doing some farming, selling honey, trapping, trading, and finding some supplementary employment at the trading posts and the Kaw Indian agency.”

In 1825, the U.S. government located its Indian agency to the Kansa at the Kawsmouth confluence, but it remained there only briefly. Attached to the agency as government farmer was one American – Daniel Morgan Boone, son of the celebrated Daniel Boone, while his co-workers were French: Gabriel Philibert as government blacksmith, and Clement Lessert as interpreter. Lessert’s history typifies the complex familial relationships that existed in French and Indian communities such as Kawsmouth. In 1835, he married the métis Julia Roy, but already had at least one child by a Kansa woman. The child, Adeline Lessert, went on to marry the Frenchman Moyse Bellemaire and live with him on a Kansa “half-breed tract” set aside under the Kansa Treaty of 1825.

While church records attest to the French and Indian character of the Kawsmouth confluence, they also signal changes under way in the early years of the 1830s. Instructive is the story
of Father Roux, a Frenchman recently arrived in America. Trained in France, Roux came to St. Louis in the early part of 1831 and set himself to the task of learning English. He spent months with a family in Dardenne, Missouri, and another in St. Charles, trying, as historian Gilbert Garraghan, S.J., writes, “to acquire a command of the vernacular.” Roux took his broken English to Kawsmouth, where he was in residence from November 1833 to April 1835. During that time, he baptized a total of forty-eight people, most of whom were French Catholics – thirty-six white, seven black, and five Indian.

His letters also refer to the growing presence of Americans. Preaching for the first time on Christmas Day 1833, Roux held services “in a house which an American Protestant had placed at his disposal,” probably somewhere close to the American settlement at Independence, Missouri. Roux did not celebrate Mass that day, explaining the reason as “the irreverence I feared on the part of the Americans.” In a letter to Bishop Joseph Rosati in St. Louis, Roux painted the scene: “There, vested in my soutane, surplice and stole I preached first in French, for the Catholics of the neighborhood had eagerly gathered at the place; then, would you believe it, I was presumptuous enough to preach in English and to start off with a subject really beyond my capacity.” By March 1834, “thanks to the Chouteau family, who lavish a thousand cares on me,” Roux reported that he had leased a house near the river landing and was holding meetings there on Sundays. “I have the pleasure,” he wrote, “of seeing many Americans present; they listen with the greatest patience to my poor English. I preach in French and English every Sunday. Hymns in the two languages are now beginning to be sung regularly…Though we have no American Catholic family here, I hope to have some before long.”

**A Land in Transition**
While French names predominated at Kawsmouth until about 1846, the region was a land in transition by then. Representative was business competition faced by the Chouteau’s “emporium” as more Americans, as well as emigrant Indian groups, arrived on the border. The Scotch-Irish James H. McGee, for example, settled in the Platte Country northeast of Kawsmouth in 1827. The following year, within days of the opening of Missouri land sales at the confluence, McGee entered four quarter-section parcels in what today is the heart of downtown Kansas City, Missouri. He also purchased a gristmill recently built by two Frenchmen and, under government contract, began to supply flour to the emigrant Indians and to gain a reputation for illegally selling liquor to them.51

More reputable American merchants at nearby Independence, Missouri, also created competition for the Chouteaus as all sought a slice of the $28 million in annuities that the emigrant Indians brought to the border.52 There was so much money to be made in the Indian trade that in 1841 the brothers W.G. and G.W. Ewing of the substantial, and not always scrupulous Ewing company, moved out of the fur trade to concentrate on “the field of general Indian trade, with a sideline business in Indian claims.”53 Speaking of the Indian trade in a letter dated December 10, 1851, W.G. suggested to G.W. that an able man at Westport “could make us $100,000, the next five or years.”54 In 1847, the Ewings extracted $21,000 from the annuity payment to the emigrant Sac and Fox alone, while the Chouteaus received only $9,000.55

Early histories of the Kawsmouth confluence note the importance of the Indian trade. C.C. Spalding’s 1858 Annals of the City of Kansas states that “the great portion” of the city’s early trade was “mainly done with the neighboring Indians, the employees of the mountain traders and freighters, the Mackinaw boatmen, etc. etc.” The annals speak of “ponies, pelts, fur, trinkets, and annuity monies,” received by early traders in exchange for “powder, lead, tobacco,
sugar, coffee, candies, beads, and … a little bad whiskey … by the large and the small.”

By 1839 and 1840, with the emigrant Indians living just over the border, “calicoes, blankets, very many saddles, bridles and ribbons” became important trade items, as did rings, which Spalding reports cost ten cents in St. Louis, but then “were frequently sold … for five and six dollars” to the Indians. “As a general thing,” he states, “the Indians paid cash for goods; but when they had no money they would freely pledge anything in their possession,” a reference to the credit system that made it even easier to cheat the Indians.

By 1840 the Indian trade was in full swing. “It was not uncommon, on the arrival of Mackinaw boats,” Spalding states, “to see as many as three or four hundred men on the levee at one time, and all of them buying more or less, from our traders.” Many goods were taken overland to the town of Westport, established in 1833 about four miles from the river landing at the confluence. Hugging the Missouri line, just one and a half miles from the reservation of the emigrant Shawnees, Westport merchants also counted on the Indian trade.

The End of Indian Missouri

Westport was established on land ceded in 1825 by the Kansa. With white settlers encroaching on their Missouri hunting grounds, with their numbers depleted by warfare and disease, and with the prospect of a generous annuity settlement, the Kansa, on June 3, 1825, agreed to relinquish to the United States all of their land in Missouri and all of present-day eastern Kansas. In exchange, they received a 1,600-square-mile reservation in Kansas and an annual annuity of $3,500 for twenty years. In an effort to turn the Kansa toward agriculture, a farmer and blacksmith to assist the tribe were promised to them, as well as agricultural instruments, three hundred cattle, three hundred hogs, and five hundred domestic fowl. In addition, the government agreed
to assume any debts or claims against the Kansa, including a five-hundred-dollar debt owed to Francois Chouteau, which illustrates the central place of the Chouteau establishment in 1825.\textsuperscript{58}

The new Kansa reservation was a thirty-mile-wide swath of rich Kaw Valley land that included twenty-three, one-mile-square plots given in fee simple and set aside “for each of the half breeds of the Kanzas nation,” where families like that of the métis Adeline Lessert and her French husband, Moyse Bellemaire, settled. The setting aside of such tracts for tribal métis was a provision that would be included in other treaties with other Indian nations, indicating the important status of the métis as negotiators and cohorts of government officials and missionaries. Among other “half breed” tracts set aside for Kansa métis were those for Josette, Julie, Pelagie, and Victoire, the four children of Louis Gonville.\textsuperscript{59}

A second treaty signed by the Kansa further indicates the changing character of the Kawsmouth frontier. On August 16, 1825, Kansa chiefs and head men agreed to let “the citizens of the United States and of the Mexican Republic” use “forever free” a road – the Santa Fe Road -- that Congress, the previous March, had authorized to be marked out “from the Western frontier of Missouri to the confines of New Mexico.” In exchange for three hundred dollars in merchandise already paid and a promise of five hundred dollars, the Kansa further agreed that the road would be “considered as extending to a reasonable distance on either side, so that travellers thereon may, at any time, leave the marked track, for the purpose of finding subsistence and proper camping places.”\textsuperscript{60} In other words, the weighty caravans traveling the Santa Fe Road in coming years could use whatever resources they found as they crossed Kansa territory, a scenario that would be repeated on the lands of the emigrant tribes during the years of the great overland migration to the Pacific. Furthermore, in establishing the new Kansa reservation, the United States did nothing to arrange an understanding with the Pawnee or other tribes who, by tradition,
claimed a share of the hunting grounds now assigned to the Kansa. Intrusions on the Pawnee hunting grounds would only intensify with the arrival of the emigrant Indians.

The new Kansa reservation began twenty leagues west of the Missouri border, at about present Topeka, and stretched to an undetermined point west, beyond the Republican and Smoky Hill rivers. This explains the presence of the Kansa tract on later maps locating all the emigrant tribes in the Indian Country. By 1831, the Kansa had abandoned their village near Manhattan, where George Sibley found them in 1811, and moved east, situating their villages in the shade of the tall cottonwoods that grew along the Kansas River and along the creeks that would figure so prominently in events to come – Soldier and Mission creeks near present Topeka, and the Red Vermillion near Wamego. The Kansa, placed under the jurisdiction of the St. Louis Indian Superintendency, arranged their villages based on loyalties to chiefs or blood relations.

In addition to the 1825 treaty removing the Kansa from Missouri, the U.S. government negotiated another treaty that same year with the Great and Little Osage bands who were living in four villages numbering about twenty-six hundred souls on the Neosho River in what today is southeastern Kansas. Under this treaty, signed in June 1825, the Great and Little Osage ceded all their lands in Missouri and in Arkansas from north and west of the Red River to south of the Kansas River. In exchange, they accepted a reservation some fifty miles wide and two hundred-fifty miles long, cut from the ceded lands. On a map of the Kansas Indian Country, the Osage tract was directly north of that set aside for the emigrant Cherokees, whose reservation spilled across the present Kansas border into Oklahoma, which also was part of the new Indian Country.

The Blues Country
With Indian title to western Missouri extinguished, white squatters, counting on preemption rights, began pouring into what was known as the Blues Country, the future Jackson County, Missouri, with the Big and Little Blue rivers flowing through its heart. The county was organized on December 15, 1826, and the town of Independence established as the county seat in 1827. Surveyors set to work, platting the land into a grid of ranges and townships. Sections were numbered, each containing 640 acres, further divided into half sections, quarter sections, and down to one-quarter of a quarter section – or eighty acres. In this way, the land was offered for sale – at a minimum price of $1.25 an acre, an amount that enticed ordinary farmers of limited means.

Americans from the Upper South, predominantly of the Scots-Irish yeoman and planter class, had begun settling in the central Missouri River Valley in the 1810s, often bringing their slaves with them. Because the central Missouri Valley so- resembled the American South it came to be known as ”Little Dixie.” These Southern transplants, as Gary Gene Fuenfhausen notes, raised pigs, horses, and mules, and cultivated corn and cash crops in central Missouri’s fertile hills and valleys. Early on, farmers raised cotton for the market, but by the 1850s tobacco and hemp had become such major cash crops that Missouri’s tobacco production ranked fifth in the nation, while the state, along with Kentucky, raised seventy-five percent of all hemp produced in the United States. With these labor intensive crops came an increase in slave labor, from 10,222 slaves in 1820 to 114,931 by 1860. As the state’s leading tobacco producer, Howard County, with its county seat at Fayette, contained thirty-five percent of Missouri’s slaves in 1850. The leading hemp producer, Lafayette County – just west of Jackson County – counted 6,374 slaves in 1860, the largest number in any county. After 1810, Missouri’s population
more than doubled with each ten-year census: from 19,783 in 1810; 66,586 in 1820; 140,455 in 1830; and 383,702 in 1840.

Isaac McCoy, who long had lobbied for a separate Indian country beyond the Mississippi, came to the confluence region as early as 1828 to scout locations for Indian removal and would. McCoy’s son John Calvin McCoy, educated as a surveyor, accompanied his father to the Indian Country and found employment surveying the lands of the emigrant Indians. John Calvin McCoy founded Westport in 1833 and then, in 1837, organized the Town of Kansas Company, the root of Kansas City, Missouri. J.C. McCoy’s biography illustrates the fluid ways of the border, where a young man went to the Missouri frontier because of the presence of the emigrant Indians, then stayed on and literally helped develop the confluence into a border state.

The Mormon Zion at Kawsmouth

American Indians were central to Joseph Smith’s teachings in the Book of Mormon. The book, historian Robert W. Walker argues, “was not just a record of the ‘Laminate’ or Native American people, but a highly unusual manifesto of their destiny.” The Indians, Smith taught, were descendants of the Old Testament prophet Israel. In the last days, Smith believed, the Lamanites would play an important role and once more “be joined into the ancient Israelite covenant.”

Shortly after formation of the Mormon Church – which occurred just weeks before passage of the Indian Removal Act of May 28, 1830 – Joseph Smith dispatched the Mormon elders Oliver Cowdery, Parley Pratt, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson, to the “borders of the Lamanites,” meaning the western frontier of Missouri. On the way, the elders stopped in Kirkville, Ohio, where numerous people of European ancestry were converted to their religion,
including Frederick G. Williams, who joined the elders on their trek to Missouri. The group arrived at Independence in December 1830 and sometime the next month Cowdery, Pratt, and Williams crossed the Missouri line into the Kansas Indian Country, where members of the emigrant Shawnee and Delaware already had settled.72

Because the Shawnee reservation abutted the Missouri line, Shawnees often were the first Indians people encountered when entering the Kansas Indian Country. So it was with the Mormon elders who, according to historian Warren A. Jennings, spent their first evening in the Indian country among the Shawnees.73 The next day the three walked across the ice to the north bank of the Kansas River and followed it to a Delaware village situated twelve miles from the place where the Kansas River entered the Missouri. Here, Jennings writes, they were directed to a comfortable two-room cabin, where they were introduced to the village leader, Kik-Tha-We-Nund, also known as William Anderson, a Delaware métis who had signed the 1795 Treaty of Greenville.

The Mormon effort to establish a mission in the Indian Country came to naught when Richard W. Cummins, government agent to the Shawnee and Delaware, ordered the elders out of Kansas. In colorful words narrated years later, John Calvin McCoy said Cummins told the Mormons “to go eastward into Missouri or westward to the Leavenworth guard house.”74 While Cummins, according to McCoy, faced pressure from Protestant missionaries already in the Indian Country to expel the Mormons, the agent was within his rights because the Mormons had not obtained a license, which was required to teach or reside among the emigrant Indians.

In his report to Indian Superintendent William Clark, Cummins described the Mormon men as “strange,” an impression that foreshadowed ugly events to come. "They say they are sent by God and must proceed,” Cummins wrote. “They have a new Revelation with them, as there
Guide in teaching the Indians, which they say was shown to one of their Sect in a miraculous way, and that an Angel from Heaven appeared to one of their Men and two others of their Sect, and shewed [sic] them that the work was from God, and much more &c. I have refused to let them stay or, or go among the Indian unless they first obtain permission from you, or some of the officers of the Genl. Government who I am bound to obey. I am informed that they intend to apply to you for permission to go among the Indians, if you refuse, then they will go to the Rocky Mountains, but that they will be with the Indians. The Men act very strange.”

Despite the failed mission to the Delawares, Joseph Smith himself toured the Missouri border in July 1831. Smith’s teachings called for the faithful to gather "unto one place" – a place not precisely designated – but that should be "on the borders by the Lamanites." During his tour, determining that “Zion’s center place lay in Jackson County,” Smith dedicated a site not far from the Independence, Missouri, town square. That same summer of 1831, Edward Partridge, first bishop of the church, began buying up land in Jackson County. In just over two years, he purchased 1,985 acres that embraced what today is prime Kansas City real estate, including the Country Club Plaza and the campus of Rockhurst University. The first contingent of Mormon settlers, known as the Colesville Branch, which came originally from Colesville, New York, were followed by others until the number of Mormons in Jackson County swelled from 538 people in November 1831 to twelve-hundred two years later – representing one-third of the county’s population.

Profound social and cultural differences separated Mormons and Missourians at the confluence, leading to violence and the expulsion of church members from a confluence region fast transforming to borderland. Not only did Mormons foreswear alcohol and tobacco, but they were Northerners, while the great bulk of Missourians on the border came from the Upper South
– and some owned slaves. Not only did Mormons not own slaves, but the Church had admitted a handful of free blacks and mulattos. The Mormon interest in allying with the nearby Indians also caused alarm. Some of these zealous Saints, Walker writes, “had boasted of the rise of the Lamanite and the triumph of their own cause in taking the Jackson County lands.”

The expulsion of the Mormons from Missouri became an ugly chapter in the history of the confluence region. “With each wave of persecution in the state,” Walker writes, “the old settlers charged the Mormons with ‘Indian tampering,’ which included reports that the Mormons were planning to join with the Indians and take Jackson County by the sword.” One report claimed that the Mormons “had secretly placed twelve men among the western tribesmen,” and another said “Joseph Smith boasted of having fourteen thousand men -- presumably Native American warriors -- ready to answer his command.” The Missourians in Jackson County apparently were concerned enough about the emigrant Indians on their border that when they pushed the Mormons out of their county in 1838, they pushed them north rather than south or west, which would have placed them within easy reach of the Indian Country.

**The Indian Removal Act**

Joseph Smith’s teachings to locate the Mormon Zion on “the border of the Lamanites” came at an opportune time. As Smith and five associates founded the Mormon Church in Fayette, New York, on April 6, 1830, the 21st U.S. Congress had just concluded a heated debate over Senate Bill 102, “A bill to provide for an exchange of lands with the Indians residing in any of the States or Territories, and for their removal West of the river Mississippi.” Known as the Indian Removal Act, the bill was reported to the Senate on February 22, 1830, by Tennessee Senator Hugh Lawson White of the Committee on Indian Affairs. It was printed that April 9,
submitted to the full House on April 26, and signed into law by President Andrew Jackson on May 28, 1830.

The effects of the act, as well as its historic and legal antecedents, have been explored in depth by many scholars. Under the Removal Act, Indian people would exchange one-hundred million acres of land in the East for $68 million and thirty-two million acres in present-day Oklahoma and Kansas. The Removal Act made it lawful for the president to divide “into a suitable number of districts,” any territory belonging to the United States west of the Mississippi as long as the Indian title had been extinguished and the territory was not organized or included within the borders of any state. These districts would be designated for the reception of “such tribes or nations of Indians as may choose to exchange the lands where they now reside, and remove there; and to cause each of said districts to be described by natural or artificial marks, as to be easily distinguished from each other.”

Under the law, the president “solemnly” assured those Indians exchanging lands that the United States would “forever secure and guaranty to them, and their heirs or successors, the country so exchanged with them.” In addition, the United States agreed to pay for any improvements on eastern land that the Indians left behind, to furnish “aid and assistance” to enable them to remove and settle in the new country and to continue that aid and assistance for one year after removal. Also, the government promised to protect the emigrant Indians “at their new residence, against all interruption or disturbance from any other tribe or nation of Indians, or from any other person or persons whatever.” As historian William E. Unrau points out, nowhere in the act was the use of force to remove Indians beyond the Mississippi “required or even implied.” The act simply provided “for the reception of such tribes or nations of Indians as may choose to exchange the lands where they now reside, and remove there.”
In conjunction with the Indian Removal Act, Congress, as part of the Trade and Inter-course Act of 1834, created the special “Indian Country” for the Indians who would remove – not always voluntarily -- to present-day Kansas and Oklahoma. While the new Indian Country generally was viewed as a humanitarian effort and “safe haven” for displaced Indians, the endeavor, Unrau argues, “was flawed from the beginning.” Not the least of the flaws was the issue of Indian people who already lived or hunted in the “new” Indian Country. Ten years prior to passage of the Indian Removal Act, in a report for the War Department, geographer Jedidiah Morse documented the location of the Osage, Kansa, and thousands of other Indian people who lived and hunted in what now was the new Indian Country. Far from a “vacant desert,” the region to the north of the Kansas River, in present Nebraska, was home to the Caddoan-speaking Pawnees, who farmed and hunted in the middle Platte and Republican valleys. To their east were the Omahas and, on the northern plains, the numerous and much-feared Lakota. In the Arkansas and Canadian River valleys to the south and the High Plains to the west were the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche.

Complicating matters was the vagueness of the Indian Removal Act on exactly where Indian people were expected to relocate. No particular place was named, except that it was to be beyond the Mississippi and completely outside the boundaries of all organized states and territories. The Southern tribes – Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw – removed west of the Arkansas boundary to what became Oklahoma. Indian groups from the Great Lakes region, comprising Potawatomi and Kickapoo, Shawnee and Delaware, Miami, Ottawa, Chippewa, Iowa, Sac and Fox, Wea, Piankashaw, Kaskaskia and Peoria, Seneca, Stockbridge, Munsee, and Wyandot – removed west of the Missouri boundary to what, in 1854, became Kansas Territory.
The Emigrant Shawnees at the Confluence

Soon after the French defeat in the Seven Year’s War, groups of Shawnees and Delawares turned to the Spanish, who invited them, as well as French habitants living in the Illinois Country, to take refuge across the Mississippi River. Spain, viewing the Indian presence as a buffer, set aside an approximate 750-square-mile tract near Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, for these Indian groups. By the 1790s, about twelve hundred Shawnees and six hundred Delawares were living in six villages on or near Apple Creek.90

These eastern Indians living in Missouri – as well as the indigenous Osage – were the first to remove to the Kansas Indian Country. The Shawnees surrendered their claims in the Ste. Genevieve region in a treaty signed on November 7, 1825, and began to relocate to a 1.6-million-acre tract on the south side of the Kansas River. The tract extended twenty-five miles south along the Missouri border and another 120 miles west, comprising what today are all of the vast suburbs across State Line Road from Kansas City, Missouri, and into present-day Johnson County, Kansas.91 The Ste. Genevieve Shawnees soon were joined by Shawnees from Ohio, including the Wapakonetas and Fish band, to which the families of Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet, belonged. The Prophet settled just south of the Kansas River, in present-day Argentine, Kansas, where he died in 1837.92

The Emigrant Delawares

Under a treaty signed on September 24, 1829, the Delawares, now living on the James Fork of the White River, exchanged their Missouri lands for 2.2 million acres on the north side of the Kansas River. The Delaware reserve lay in the fork of the Kansas and Missouri rivers and stretched north to Fort Leavenworth, encompassing present-day Wyandotte County, Kansas, practically all of present-day Leavenworth and Jefferson counties, and parts of Shawnee County.
Described in the 1850s as “a beautiful tract of prairie and woodland,” the Delaware lands were considered the most valuable of all the territory occupied by the emigrant Indians.

By 1833, some 1,050 Delawares had removed to the Kansas Indian Country, most of them emigrants from Missouri and Ohio. The Delaware chief Kik-tha-we-nund, whom the Mormon elders visited, agreed that the land was “good,” but complained that the game was scarce. To address Kik-tha-we-nund’s complaint, the U.S. government included a ten-mile-wide, two-hundred-mile-long “outlet” to the buffalo range to the west, a decision that infringed on the hunting grounds of the Pawnee. Thus, it was not only Jackson County, on the Missouri state line, that was transforming to contested borderland, but the Indian Country itself as new, Algonquian groups from the East competed for game and territory with the Caddon Pawnees, the Siouian Kansa, and, farther north, the Lakota.

**The Emigrant Kickapoos**

Kickapoo bands also were early arrivals in the Indian Country. On October 24, 1832, Kenekuk, “the Kickapoo Prophet,” who was leader of the Vermillion Kickapoo of east-central Illinois, and Kishko, leader of the Prairie Kickapoo, met at the home of Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark near St. Louis, where they signed the Treaty of Castor Hill, calling for their bands to relocate to a 768,000-acre reservation in the Kansas Indian Country. The Kickapoo reservation, encompassing large swaths of present-day Atchison, Leavenworth, Jefferson, and Jackson counties in northeastern Kansas, began six miles west of Fort Leavenworth, continued west for sixty miles and north for twenty miles before proceeding east to the Missouri River.

Also signing treaties at the Castor Hill proceedings were the Kaskaskia and Peoria, who ceded all their land in Illinois and Missouri in exchange for 150 sections south of the Shawnee reserve in the Indian Country. The Wea and Piankeshaw also signed away all their lands in Illi-
nois and Missouri, receiving in return a reserve of 250 sections, which ran for fifteen miles along the Missouri border, south of the Shawnees.\textsuperscript{95}

**A Tier of Reservations**

Other groups of eastern Indians arrived throughout the 1830s and into the early 1840s. On a map of the Kansas Indian Country, the reservations of the emigrant Indians formed a tier, stretching for one hundred and fifty miles along the future Kansas-Missouri border.\textsuperscript{96} For the most part, they were Algonquian-speaking people who had been pushed farther and farther west during the bloody years of European conquest and empire building. The Chippewa, Ottawa, Kickapoo, Miami, and Wyandot, as well as the Sac and Fox, were all tribes of the Great Lakes region, as were the Potawatomi. The smaller emigrant groups – the affiliated Piankashaw, Wea, Peoria, and Kaskaskia – migrated from Illinois and Indiana.

In extreme southern Kansas, reservations also were set aside for the Osages, portions of the Cherokees, Quapaws, and the New York Indians, an inclusive term for members of the Senecas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Tuscaroras, Oneidas, St. Regis, Stockbridges, Munsees, and Brothertowns. Few of the New York Indians accepted removal, and their parcel of land in Kansas remained nearly vacant. All of the emigrant Indians had experienced varying degrees of dispossession and acculturation before their removal west.

By 1846, nearly two dozen emigrant tribes, comprising about ten thousand people, had been removed to the eastern third of Kansas.\textsuperscript{97} The location of their reservations, it soon became apparent, not only sat directly in the path of the overland migration to Oregon and California, but stood like a roadblock, “diametrically opposed to the forces then tending to a more complete national development.”\textsuperscript{98}

**Missionaries at the Confluence**
Numerous religious groups established missions and schools on the emigrant reservations, bringing with them not only competition for Indian souls, but for the federal money that was parceled out to schools enrolling Indian pupils. Groups included the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Moravians, and Friends, as well as priests and nuns of the Roman Catholic Church, nearly all of whom were foreigners arrived from France, Belgium, or the Netherlands. Catholic missionaries located among three emigrant tribes: the Kickapoo, Osage, and Potawatomi. On the Potawatomi reservation, contention was especially keen with the other primary missionary group there: the Baptists.

Competition boiled after 1842 when Johnston Lykins, who was Isaac McCoy’s son-in-law, accepted an appointment as government physician to the Potawatomi. He, along with fellow Baptists Robert and Fanny Simerwell, located among the Potawatomi, in the same vicinity as Catholic priests. While Catholics and Baptists lambasted one another, the Potawatomi seemed to play one off the other. Writing of the situation in 1850, Peter DeSmet, S.J., stated that Potawatomi “medicine-men, or jugglers” bred dissatisfaction among their tribesmen by drawing comparisons between the Catholic and Baptist Indian schools. “The consequence of all this,” DeSmet wrote, “was that a great number of boys and girls were, so to speak, wrested from our school and taken, in spite of themselves, to the Baptist school.” This, he said, “elated” the Baptists, “who did not hesitate to say openly that our school and mission would soon close.”

The River Corridor

In June 1842, prior to embarking on an exploratory trip to the West, U.S. Army topographical engineer John C. Fremont and a party that included twenty-two French-Canadians made final preparations at Cyprien Chouteau’s trading post on the south side of the Kansas River. Setting out on June 10 with eight carts drawn by mules – and an unnamed Indian as guide
Fremont followed the river valley west, traveling for a time on the Santa Fe Road. He reported passing “several good-looking Indian farms” (undoubtedly belonging to emigrant Shawnees) before fording a rain-swollen Kansas River at a location some ninety miles upriver, which would have placed him beyond present-day Topeka. The river was 250 yards wide and “sweeping by with an angry current,” Fremont wrote. In fording it, two carts upset and nearly the entire store of coffee lost. This detail led Fremont to mention a “half-breed near the river” from whom “I had the good fortune to obtain some twenty or thirty pounds of coffee.” Also near the river were Kansa Indians, one of whom spoke fluent French and several of whom, Fremont wrote, “brought us vegetables, pumpkins, onions, beans, and lettuce.” Another brought butter, and from an Indian woman he obtained “a fine cow and calf in exchange for a yoke of oxen.”

Fremont’s report and maps, drawn by Charles Preuss, popularized what became the California-Oregon Trail, which included a route similar to Fremont’s through eastern Kansas. In 1842, at present-day North Topeka, the métis Papin family established a ferry, which became one of a handful of places to cross the Kansas River as traffic to the Pacific Coast increased year by year – from 1,000 in the spring of 1843, 2,000 in 1844, and 5,000 in 1845. Traffic slowed during the Mexican War but, with the discovery of gold in California, mushroomed to 30,000 in 1849 and 55,000 in 1850, reaching a total of 350,000 by 1866. The main trail route through eastern Kansas passed, just as Fremont had, directly across the reservation of the emigrant Shawnees. After 1846, when the emigrant Potawatomi replaced the Kansa at the ford of the river, the overland trail would cross their reservation, as well.

**Fort Leavenworth**

To protect Americans on the overland trails, the United States government established frontier forts. Fort Leavenworth dated to 1827 – fifteen years before the great tide to the Pacific
Coast got under way. Established on the right bank, or west side of the Missouri River, about twenty-five miles north of present Kansas City, the fort’s original mission was to protect caravans heading back and forth to Mexico over the Santa Fe Trail, first used in 1821. Fort Leavenworth, with its strategic location on the border of the Indian Country, served “as the general depot for virtually all the government’s military operations in Indian country.”\(^{106}\) Fort Leavenworth's location on a commanding bluff overlooking the Missouri River drew praise from Lt. Philip St. George Cooke, who was stationed there in the fort’s early years. Standing on the hilltop and looking east over the "massive bluffs," Cooke described the site as “admirable.” He wrote of the "the mighty river" coursing south toward its confluence with the Kaw. To the west were "rolling prairies" of grass "dotted with groves."\(^{107}\) Fort Leavenworth brought soldiers like Cooke and officers’ wives to the border, further adding to the cultural mix in the confluence region.

Fort Leavenworth was barely a year old when soldiers garrisoned there were detailed to go across the river and open a road over what was known as the Platte Country, a fertile valley that stretched east toward the American settlement at Liberty, Missouri, which counted a population by 1833 of some six hundred people. Among early arrivals was one Zadock Martin, described as a “stout, muscular man, [who] commanded all about him with despotic power.”\(^{108}\) He built a two-room cabin for his six sons, three daughters, and six slaves near the “falls” of the Little Platte River, a tributary of the Missouri that rose in Iowa and flowed south, entering the Missouri not far from Fort Leavenworth. Martin operated a ferry on the Little Platte and, as a sideline, opened a tavern at the ferry slip. In 1829, the ferry at Fort Leavenworth, some 9½ miles west of the Little Platte, also was placed in Martin’s hands. He “did a large business” and seems
to have dominated the scene, having “an eye that flashed like lightning and a voice like thunder,” and demanding whatever price he chose of the chance traveler.109

According to Fort Leavenworth historian George Walton, Martin charged exorbitant fares and his tavern became a hangout for "a motley crew of drunks and thugs" who often loitered there, where "their chief pleasure seemed to be insulting the (ferryboat) passengers."110 The situation was bad enough in 1833 that Captain W.N Wickliff, Fort Leavenworth commander, issued a set of rules governing the operation of Zadock Martin’s ferry.

The regulations – stating “that all military personnel, all Indians, all official visitors to the fort, and the mail couriers should be carried free, and that a standard fee should be established for civilian passengers” – further illustrate the confluence region as frontier – a place where people of various cultures and polities converged and mingled.111 Wickliff’s rules allude to the wide array of people in the confluence region, all of whom were divided by rank, social status, nationality, ancestry, race, and purpose, but all rubbing shoulders in the most public of places – a ferryboat slip. Among the "military personnel" were enlisted men, many of German and Irish immigrant ancestry, drawing $11 a month in pay, as well as officers like Lieutenant Cooke and Colonel Henry Leavenworth, the son of a three-term Vermont legislator.112

Wives such as Mrs. Orsemus B. Boyd accompanied their officer husbands to the fort and employed "civilians" as household servants. These servants, Walton writes, usually were Indian or biracial women of French and Indian ancestry,113 although, as other scholars have shown, they also included black slaves. Fort Leavenworth Chaplain Leander Kerr and Colonel Hiram Rich, a former resident of nearby Liberty, kept slaves, as well as employing slaves hired out from masters in Missouri. Also owning slaves was the emigrant Shawnee métis Joseph Parks, who collected the salary of a fort blacksmith although a young slave named Stephen did the ac-
tual work. Situated as it was just across the river from the Southern strongholds of Platte and Clay counties in Missouri, Fort Leavenworth, historian Gunja SenGupta writes, “had established a well-deserved reputation for being thoroughly ‘sound on the goose question.’”

Fort "visitors" under Captain Wickliff’s rules would have included the wealthy and the work-a-day. Prince Paul of Württemberg stopped at the fort in 1830, and Maximillian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, was there in 1832 with the artist Karl Bodmer. Missionaries of the Catholic and Protestant faiths likely used Martin’s ferryboat, as did Americans living across the river in Missouri who came to sell farm goods and timber they had cut. On the sly, they also sold liquor to the Indians.

Settlers in Missouri also could find, if they so chose, to get well-paid work on the reservations of the emigrant Indians. When the Jesuit Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, established the Kickapoo Mission near Fort Leavenworth in 1836, for instance, he engaged workmen to build a dwelling for the habitation of Jesuit missionaries. "It is exceedingly difficult to secure workmen, especially such as find the place to their liking," he stated. "We have paid as high as $1.50 a day. A carpenter of the kind they call here a rough carpenter receives up to $2.00 a day. Our expenses already amount to more than $2,000.00." That the Catholic priest's difficulties were made all the harder because many workmen didn't seem to "find the place to their liking" suggests that the predominantly Protestant residents across the river in Clay County, Missouri, either did not like working for Catholics, or perhaps objected or feared being around Indians.

Thus, even as the emigrant Indians and missionaries like VanQuickenborne began to arrive in the Indian Country in the 1830s, the Kawsmouth frontier already was transitioning to contested borderland.

Chapter Summary
This chapter, which challenges the stereotype of eastern Kansas as a “vacant” and worthless “desert,” has introduced the various groups present on the Kansas/Missouri border in the decades before passage of the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act. It argues that even as the United States government established the Kansas Indian Country in the 1830s and represented it as a place of perpetual refuge for displaced, Eastern Algonquian tribes, this was a flawed vision. As demonstrated by the removal of early-arriving Potawatomi from the Platte Purchase lands in 1836, the border of Indian Country already was populated with Anglo-Americans who clam-bered for Indian land. The border, as illustrated by rules governing use of Zadock Martin’s ferry, saw a variety of peoples come and go: from soldiers and government agents, to slaves and masters, Indians and traders, overland travelers and religious groups – from the earliest Catholic priests in the region to Mormon settlers who were expelled in the early 1830s by the borders’ overwhelmingly Protestant population.

This chapter establishes the removal trajectory of the various, early-arriving emigrant Indian groups and notes how their influx into the region not only disrupted the lives of the indigenous Kansa and Osage, but added to an ever burgeoning cultural mix on the border. At “Chouteau’s Landing,” at the confluence of the Missouri and Kansas rivers (present-day Kansas City), a small, mixed-race French and Indian community continued to center on the fur trade while, simultaneously, the Santa Fe trade took root and towns such as Independence, Liberty, and Westport, Missouri, grew up on the edge of the Indian Country. In his classic *The California and Oregon Trail*, first published in 1849, Francis Parkman noted the cultural mix at Westport, writing that the town “was full of Indians, whose little shaggy ponies were tied by the dozens along the houses and fences.” There were Sacs and Foxes “with shaved heads and painted faces,” but also mixed-race Shawnees and Delawares, “fluttering in calico frocks and turbans,” and
Wyandots, “dressed like white men.”119 These emigrant Indians and the métis among them, this chapter argues, arrived in a Kansas Indian Country situated hard against a place fast transitioning to contested borderland.

1 Merrill J. Mattes, The Great Platte River Road (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 8. Overlanders who “jumped off” from St. Joseph or Leavenworth followed separate roads west until they reached present Horton, Kansas, where the two roads came together and then joined the Independence Road at Marysville, Kansas. Overlanders leaving from St. Joseph and Leavenworth crossed the reservation of the emigrant Iowa, Sac, and Fox, in the far northeastern corner of Kansas. A fourth route started at Old Fort Kearney on the Missouri River at present Nebraska City, Nebraska; the fifth began in the vicinity of present-day Omaha. The newer Fort Kearny, in central Nebraska, was established in 1848.

2 Addison Crane, “Diary,” entry for May 11, 1852.

3 Pardon Dexter Tiffany, “Diary,” entry for May 20, 1849.

4 Dr. Alexander B. Nixon, “Journal to the Pacific Ocean,” entry for April 28, 1849, California State Library, Sacramento.

5 Ibid, entry for April 29, 1849.


7 See Elliot West, The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 12; and William E. Connelley, A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1918), Vol. 1: 76-83. The descriptions found in these school books, or those they were designed to accompany, never failed, Connelly writes, to compare “The Great American Desert” with the “Great Sahara” of Africa.

8 Connelley, A Standard History of Kansas, 1:76-83.


12 Ibid, 150.

14 Ibid, 4-10. As Unrau discusses, the use of the term *Indian Country* and the dimensions that defined it changed over time. Before passage of the 1834 Trade and Intercourse Act, the Indian Country had a “the wide array of topographical descriptions,” which were written into the many treaties the United States entered prior to 1834 with various Indian groups.


16 See Zornow, *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State*, 9-10; Floyd Benjamin Streeter, *The Kaw: The Heart of a Nation* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941), 3-5; Erasmus Haworth and assistants, *The University Geological Survey of Kansas* (Topeka: The Kansas State Printing Company, 1896, Vol. 1); and Kansas Geological Survey, “The Kansas River Corridor, Its Geologic Setting, Land Use, Economic Geology, and Hydrology,” <www.kgs.ku.edu/Publications/KR/kr_intro.html> (May 14, 2011). While the Kansas River Valley is approximately 138 miles long, the length of the river itself is about 170 miles. The meandering of the river channel accounts for the difference. Other important tributaries of the Kansas River include the Big Blue River, with its mouth at Manhattan, Kansas, and the Delaware, which enters the Kansas River at Lecompton. Other important creeks include Soldier Creek, which enters the Kansas River from the north, at Topeka, and Stranger Creek, its mouth a dozen miles east of present-day Lawrence. Mill Creek and the Wakarusa River flow into the Kansas River from the south.


18 Chain mail was made of interlocking small rings of iron, forming a net-like fabric to protect its wearer from arrows, spears, and knives. The piece of chain mail, on display at the Kansas State Historical Society Museum, is thought most likely to be chain mail used on a horse. <www.kshs.org/portraits/uddenchainmail.htm> (October 23, 2009).


22 Ibid.


25 See ibid., 90, 98; and Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian Country*, 81. In 1816, Sibley estimated the numbers of Kansa at 1,600. Explorer Zebulon Pike estimated them at 1,465 a decade earlier, and Indian Agent Richard W. Cummins put the number at 1,750 in 1839.
One early study from 1907, Unrau writes, claims to have discovered “more than 125 different spellings of the tribal name, from the ‘simplest’ forms, such as Can, Caw, Kan, and Kaw; to the ‘longer’ forms, Ka-anzou, Kancez, Kansies, and Kantha; to the ‘odd’ forms, Caugh, Kensier, and Quans; and the ‘most complicated’ forms, Escansaques, Escanzaques, Excansaquex, and Excansaqex.

Ibid, 10.


See Dorothy Brandt Marra, Cher Uncle, Cher Papa: The Letters of Francois and Berenice Chouteau (Kansas City, Missouri: Western Historical Manuscript Collection, 2001), 8, 231-32; and Tanis C. Thorne, The Many Hands of My Relations, French and Indians on the Lower Missouri (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996), 138. Auguste Chouteau (1749-1829) was the son of Marie Therese Bourgeois and Rene Chouteau. Having the same mother, he was the half-brother of Pierre Chouteau, whose father was Pierre de Laclede Liguest, founder of St. Louis. In accordance with French custom, Pierre Chouteau kept the Chouteau name because his mother, Marie Therese Bourgeois, never divorced her husband, Rene Chouteau. The Chouteaus lost exclusive trading rights with Osage in 1802. Aron, American Confluence, 95, spells White Hair’s name as Pawhiuskah.


Aron, American Confluence, 120-21.

Ibid, 121.


Thorne, The Many Hands of My Relations, 117-121.

See ibid, 134, 138; and Garraghan, Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City, Missouri, 121.

Garraghan, Catholic Beginnings, 32.

Shirl Kasper and Rick Montgomery, Kansas City: An American Story (Kansas City, Mo.: Kansas City Star Books, 1999), 12.

See Marra, Cher Uncle, Cher Papa, 8-9; and Thorne, The Many Hands of My Relations, 150,139. Menard, whose principal trading clients were the Shawnees, was a key figure in the coming relocation of the Delawares and Shawnees to the Kansas Indian Country, where these emigrant Indians would supplement the Chouteaus’ dealings with the Kansa. So central to the Kawsmouth settlement were the Chouteaus and their warehouse of trade goods that as late as 1837 Wetmore’s Gazetteer of Missouri referred to steamboat landing as simply, "Chouteau's.

See Frederick Chouteau to W.W. Cone, May 5, 6, 10, 1880; Unrau, the Kansa Indians, 22; and Marra, Cher Uncle, Cher Papa, 106. Mission Creek, which entered the Kansas River above Topeka, was known in the 1830s as American Chief Creek.

F. Chouteau to W.W. Cone, 6, 10 May 1880. Gonville married into the Kansa tribe, and his métis daughter Josephine married Joseph Papin. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Thorne, The Many Hands of My Relations, 95, 149. While in the Osage country, Francois Chouteau also had fathered a child by an Osage woman, whose name was Marie. Baptismal records document that the boy, James Chouteau, stayed behind in the Osage country, where he was baptized in May 1822. See Marra, Cher Uncle, Cher Papa, 8-9.


Garraghan, Catholic Beginnings, 120. Aron, American Confluence, 71-72, 98-99, explains that just as the American Revolution was breaking out, Daniel Boone led a party of thirty men over the Appalachian Mountains to the Kentucky River, where they established Boonesborough. By July 1776, several other settlements also had been founded in what is now central Kentucky. In 1795, when Spain lifted its ban on American immigration to Louisiana, an influx of Americans followed, including Daniel Boone and his sons Daniel Morgan Boone and Nathan Boone. Boone accepted a Spanish land grant of about 850 acres (one thousand arpents) for himself and an additional 1,180 acres for his sons and relocated to Femmes Osage, thirty miles west of St. Louis. By 1800, Aron writes, so many other Americans had accepted the Spanish invitation that these newcomers already outnumbered the approximately two thousand French colonists on the west side of the Mississippi.

Garraghan, Catholic Beginnings, 120-21. The tract was on the Kansas River above Lawrence. Moyse Bellemaire’s name appears as the builder in 1850 of the chapel of the Sacred Heart at Soldier Creek.

Ibid, 36-37.

Ibid, 67-68, 117. Francois and Berenice Chouteau sometimes acted as godparents at these ceremonies. On February 23, 1834, for instance, they stood as godparents at the baptism of Martha Roy, Adeline Prudhomme, and Martha Lessert, the first of twelve children baptized by Father Roux that day.

Roux to Rosati, January 20, 1834, quoted in Garragan, Catholic Beginnings, 55-56.

Roux to Rosati, March 11, 1834, quoted in Garragan, Catholic Beginnings, 59-60. He well may have been thinking finances as well as souls because he wrote that with the exception of the Chouteaus, all the French families at Kawsmouth were “in a state of distress which renders them incapable of providing for my support.”

See A. Theodore Brown, Frontier Community: Kansas City to 1870 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963), 21; William H. Miller, The History of Kansas City, Together with a Sketch of the Commercial Resources of the Country with which it is Surrounded (Kansas City, Mo.: Birdsall & Miller, 1881), 12-13; O.B. and Joanne Chiles Eakin, ”Record of Original Entries to Lands in Jackson County Missouri, with Additional Records Relating to Land Ownership,” (Independence, MO: O.B. and J.C. Eakin, 1985), 104-05; and Historic Kansas City Foundation, <historickansascityfoundation.org> (March 13, 2011). Many other names entered in the earliest plat book are those of the French-Canadian voyageurs who were then living in the Kansas River bottoms. Pierre La Libertie, for instance, purchased two lots at the confluence, and Joseph Phillibert another. Louis Roy bought 53.25 acres, Louis Bartholot 49.6 acres, and Gabriel Prudhomme 271.77. Francois Chouteau also bought land along the river, where his warehouse and home were situated. Following the death of Gabriel Prudhomme, his land was sold in the 1830s and divided into lots that became, in June 1850, the Town of Kansas. In 1853, by a special act of the Missouri General Assembly, the town was chartered as the City of Kansas. In 1889, with adoption of a new City Charter, the official name became Kansas City. See Kasper and Montgomery, Kansas City: An American Story, 35-36.
52 Miller, *The History of Kansas City*, 19. This total represented claims for the entire Indian Country, from south of the Platte River in Nebraska to the southern boundary of Oklahoma.


54 Ibid, 50.

55 Ibid, 50-51.


57 Ibid.

58 Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 107-09, 159.


60 Ibid, 248-250.

61 Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian Country*, 110.


63 See Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 22, 118-20; J.C. McCoy to W.W. Cone, August 1879, Kansas State Historical Society collections; Rev. J.J. Lutz, “The Methodist Mission Among the Indian Tribes in Kansas,” Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society 9 (1906), 194-95 n53; and M.E. McCoy, “Indian Agency House,” Historic American Buildings Survey (Topeka, Kansas: May 16, 1940), 2-4. American Chief located his village on the south side of the Kansas River, near the mouth of Mission Creek, which today is in the vicinity of the town of Auburn, west of Topeka. Hard Chief initially located on Mission Creek as well, but in 1834 moved north of the Kaw near the mouth of the Red Vermillion at present Wamego (from 1834-48). White Plume established a much smaller village near the place where the government originally located the new Kansa agency, on the Kansas River, some seven or eight miles north of present Lawrence. The new agency dated to March 9, 1826, when Major Angus L. Langham, a military engineer, along with some three hundred soldiers from Troops E and F of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry out of Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, were dispatched to survey the Kansa reservation and establish a new Indian agency. With the soldiers went ten escort wagons with camp and garrison equipment for a detail expected to last two years.


65 Headwaters for the Blue River are in Johnson County, Kansas, south of Olathe. The river flows in a northeasterly direction, crosses the state line, skirts the east side of Kansas City, Missouri, and enters the Missouri River near the town of Sugar Creek, Missouri.

66 See Eakin, *Records of Original Entries to Lands in Jackson County Missouri*, 21-22; William Patrick O’Brien, “Independence, Missouri’s Trade With Mexico, 1827-1860: A Study in International Consensus and Cooperation,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1994), 58; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifth and Sixth Census of the United States, Jackson County, Missouri; and Wilder, *Annals of Kansas*, 21-22. On February 16, 1825, the Missouri General Assembly named and authorized the surveying of the new county of Jackson. Until this time the locale had been known as Blues Country by many citizens though it was still a part of Lafayette County. In June 1825, under an act of Congress, George Sibley was appointed to survey and establish a wagon road from Missouri to Santa Fe. On December 15, 1826, by an act of the Missouri General Assembly, Jackson County was declared "a separate and distinct county."
Because slavery was banned from the Northwest Territory and because land prices were relatively expensive there, lands north of the Ohio River were not as attractive as those to the west.

See Gary Gene Fuenfhausen, “The Cotton Culture of Missouri’s Little Dixie,” Midwest OpenAir Museums Magazine (Summer Issue 2001); U.S. Bureau of the Census; Missouri History; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station; “Soil survey of Howard County, Missouri” (1978); Slaves made up 15 percent of Missouri’s population in 1820; and 9.7 percent in 1860. While Lafayette County had the most slaves, Howard County retained the highest concentration of slave population, at 36.4 percent.

Lela Barnes, “Journal of Isaac McCoy for the Exploring Expedition of 1828,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 5:3 (August 1936), 227-277. McCoy made his home at Fayette, Missouri, before moving to the confluence area.


Harry E. Hanson, comp., A Historic Outline of Grinter Place From 1825 to 1878 (self-published, 1965?), 12.

Cummins to Clark, January 20, 1831, cited in Walker, “Seeking the ‘Remnant,’” page?


Ibid, 9.


Ibid.


Ibid, 15.

Ibid, 16. In an article published in the Missouri Intelligencer, Isaac McCoy verified these fears, stating that the Mormons were "strongly suspected" of seeking aid during their Jackson County struggles from the natives across the border.

Ibid. Looking back on their experience, Walker writes, the Saints understood that Indian relations had played a role in their turmoil. When reviewing the causes of their "persecution," Parley Pratt listed Indian relations among the half dozen most disturbing factors.”


“An Act to provide for an exchange of lands with the Indians residing in any of the states or territories, and for their removal west of the river Mississippi,” *United States Statutes at Large*, 4:411-412 (May 28, 1830).


Ibid, xii-xiii.


by Pecan, Black Buffalo, and Mosqua had exchanged tribal lands in Illinois and Indiana and removed to Missouri under a treaty signed in the summer of 1819. The Illinois Kickapoo signed the Treaty of Edwardsville on July 30, 1819; the Wabash Kickapoo, the Treaty of Fort Harrison, on August 30, 1819. Mosqua’s band settled in the Mexican province of Texas on the Sabine River. Despite the 1819 treaty, Kennekuk and his followers had refused to leave Illinois until fallout from the Black Hawk War of 1832 forced their exit.

Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, II:376-77, 382-83. The Kaskaskia and Peoria signed the treaty on October 27, the Wea and Piankashaw on October 29.

Unrau, "Indian Presence in the Kansas City Region."


Malin, *Indian Policy and Westward Expansion*, 12.

Protestant missions included those established by Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists. The Moravians, Society of Friends, and Catholics also had missions. The Methodist Thomas Johnson established a mission among the emigrant Shawnee by 1830. He first located the mission near present-day Turner, in Wyandotte County, Kansas, but soon moved it south, to a location just a mile from the Missouri line in present Johnson County. Here, in 1839, he established the Shawnee Manual Labor School, which enrolled seventy-two students in its first year. His brother William Johnson started a Methodist school among the Kansa in 1835. It was situated near present-day Silver Lake. Methodists also launched significant missions to the emigrant Delaware, Kickapoo, and Wyandot, and less extensive efforts to the Peoria, Wea, Piankeshaw, Kaskaskia, and Potawatomi. The Methodist Jerome C. Berryman, in early January 1834, constructed a mission station on the Kickapoo reserve near Fort Leavenworth, where the religious leader Kenekuk was hired as an assistant at a salary of $200 a year. A school also was built, which reported an enrollment of ninety students in 1834. Methodism already was well-established among the Wyandots before they emigrated to the Indian County in 1843. Presbyterians established only two missions, one in April 1834 on the Wea reservation; the second in 1835 on the Iowa reservation in the far northeastern corner of Kansas, which served the Iowa, Sac and Fox. Neither mission either fared very well. The Society of Friends, which had worked among the Shawnees in Ohio, established a mission, school, and farm in 1836 to the emigrant Shawnees and not far from the Baptist and Methodist Shawnee missions. Meanwhile, the Moravian Missionary Society worked among the Munsees, who were a branch of the Delawares and lived on the Delaware’s Kansas reserve.

At the time, the Potawatomi were living on the Marais des Cygnes River in south-central Kansas. Johnston Lykins arrived in the Kansas Indian Country in 1831, and began work, among the Shawnees. In 1833, Jotham Meeker joined Lykins, hauled a printing press to the mission, and began printing translations of scripture, hymns, and other religious literature into the Indian languages. When the Ottawa arrived in the Indian Country in 1834, Meeker left the Shawnee Baptist Mission to establish a Baptist mission to the Ottawas. By January 1840, he reported a church of fifty-nine members. Like Lykins, the Simerwells also had worked among the Potawatomi at McCoy’s Carey Mission in southern Michigan. See Joy, ‘‘Into the Wilderness,’’ 219, 238-39.

De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries*, 331.

See George A. Root, “Ferries in Kansas,” *Kansas History Quarterly*, 2:1 through 6:2 (February 1933 through May 1937); *Report of the exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44*. By Brevet Capt. J.C. Fremont, of the Topographical Engineers, under
orders of Col. J.J. Abert, Chief of the Topographical Bureau, 28th Cong. 2nd Sess., H.Doc. 166 (Washington, D.C., 1845), 9-12; and Hanson, A Historic Outline of Grinter Place, 28, 43. Fremont hired the men of his party, who were “principally Creole and Canadian voyageurs,” in St. Louis. Cyprian Chouteau’s trading post, situated on lands of the emigrant Shawnee, was about ten miles from the mouth of the Kansas River and six miles from the Missouri border. It also was three miles downstream from a ferry landing situated on Delaware lands and operated by Moses Grinter, a white man married to the Delaware woman.

103 Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 11-12.


105 Ibid.

106 Unrau, The Rise and Fall of Indian Country, 55.

107 See Elvid Hunt, History of Fort Leavenworth, (Fort Leavenworth, 1926), 37-38; and George Walton, Sentinel of the Plains: Fort Leavenworth and the American West (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1973), 15, 53. At its founding, Fort Leavenworth comprised only sixteen officers and 164 enlisted men. Until 1832, the fort was called Cantonment Leavenworth.


109 Ibid. Because work at Fort Leavenworth required “the employment of great numbers of laborers carpenters and masons,” Martin “did a large business at his ferries,” which were “made of hewed gunwales, and boards sawed by hand.”

110 Walton, Sentinel of the Plains, 51-52.

111 Ibid.

112 See Walton, Sentinel of the Plains,10; and Richard Joseph Bollig, "History of Catholic Education in Kansas, 1836-1932" (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1933), 12. By age 21, Leavenworth had studied law and been admitted to the bar. He died in July 1834, at age fifty, while on a mission out of Fort Gibson in the Oklahoma Indian Country.

113 Walton, Sentinel of the Plains, 88-89.

114 See ibid; Bowes, Exiles and Pioneers, 11; Zu Adams, “Slaves in Kansas,” September 28, 1895, slavery file, Kansas State Historical Society; and Kristen Tegtmeier Oertel, Bleeding Kansas: Race, Gender, and Violence in Pre-Civil War Kansas (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 38-39. Gupta writes that by March 1855 the largest number of slaves inhabited Missouri River Districts 14, 15, 16, and 17 in northeastern Kansas, and the well-watered Districts 5 and 6. Pre-territorial military posts and Indian missions in Kansas, she writes, “formed the nucleus of Kansas’s black belt,” although Adams estimated the number of slaves in Kansas prior to 1854 to be no more than thirty. At Fort Scott in 1844, Gen. George A. McCall owned at least one slave, a young man named Jordon.


CHAPTER III
THE POTAWATOMI

While this study will touch on many of the emigrant Indian groups, it deals especially with the Potawatomi, who offer a particularly rich field for study because of the excellent records kept by Catholic missionaries who settled among them, as well as the location of their Kansas River reservation in the very path of the overland migration to the Pacific. The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief history of the Potawatomi, noting as historian Kathryn Lamirand Young does, that the Potawatomi, from their initial contact with French voyageurs in the seventeenth century, adopted certain European cultural attributes. Among the most important was their conversion to Roman Catholicism and their keen interest in Euroamerican education.1 The Potawatomi, as did many other native groups, also freely intermarried with Frenchmen in the fur trade, creating a subculture of métis who emerged as middlemen and increasingly served an intermediary role in dealings with French, English, and finally American authorities.2

Potawatomi oral traditions say the prehistoric Potawatomi were part of an immense group of people who originally traveled down the eastern shores of North America, along the Atlantic Ocean. At the time, this group—the Chippewa (Ojibwa), Ottawa (Odawa), and Potawatomi—constituted a single tribe, which later split and went their separate ways.3 Because the Potawatomi retained the original council fire once shared by the three tribes, the Chippewa applied the term Potawatomi to them, meaning “people of the place of the fire.” Today, the Potawatomi people refer to themselves as the Nishnabec or the “True People.”

Scholars agree that the Potawatomi were closely related to the Chippewa and Ottawa.4 All were an Algonquian-speaking people whose economy centered on the seasons. Women grew maize, beans, and squash in small, semi-permanent clan villages in the summer. In the winter,
they moved to smaller village units in the forest, where the men hunted and fished from birch-bark canoes. Anthropologist James A. Clifton writes that the Potawatomi lived in self-sufficient local communities, which placed “a strong emphasis on patrilineage and a system of linked clans,” within each of which men and women were like brothers and sisters to one another.\(^5\)

Social control was dispersed through the entire tribe by means of secret societies, ritual congregations, ceremonial organizations, and military sodalities – although the most important binding element was extended kinship ties, real and fictive.\(^6\) Unlike European nations, the Potawatomi did not have a king or nobility. Instead, several people functioned in leadership roles that could, Clifton writes, be translated as chief. \(\text{Okama,}\) for instance, was the leader of a village, clan, or extended family, while \(\text{okawokitchita}\) was a leader of warriors, \(\text{okamakwē}\), a leader of the women, \(\text{kiktowenene}\) a leader who spoke, and \(\text{patopit}\), a substitute for one of the other leaders.\(^7\) Decisions affecting the entire tribe were reached, not by one chief, but by full tribal consensus after days of deliberation.\(^8\)

The arrival of the French and the trade goods they offered caused an unprecedented upheaval that changed forever the Potawatomi way of life. The Potawatomi already had horses when they encountered the French in the seventeenth century, but they coveted new technology, especially firearms, for which they were willing to trade. The French, on the other hand, needed the cooperation of Indians they could trust. Thus, the French and Potawatomi developed a symbiotic relationship, each benefiting from the other.\(^9\)

Because the French were more interested in the economics of the fur trade than in establishing permanent settlements in the interior of the continent, it was the fur trade that took them down the St. Lawrence River Valley and into the Great Lakes region, where reports of early fur traders and Jesuit missionaries provide the first written accounts of the Potawatomi.
French records correspond with Indian oral tradition, which says the original group of Chippewa-Ottawa-Potawatomi split in the Georgian Bay area and that portions of the Potawatomi migrated to today’s Michigan – to the straits between Lakes Huron and Superior and farther south, along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, where scholars place the Potawatomi in the years prior to 1640.\textsuperscript{10} Clifton estimates their population at about twenty-five hundred in 1634, when the Potawatomi are first mentioned in historical records by the Jesuit Paul Lejeune.

The coming decades brought great change as the Iroquois, armed by Dutch traders, swept north and west from their homelands in upper New York, decimating the Hurons, where the Jesuit mission at Sainte-Marie was abandoned and burned in 1649.\textsuperscript{11} Pushed west by the furious Iroquois raids, the Hurons fled Ontario to the straits, then to northern Wisconsin, where other Algonquian people soon fled as well – first the Sac (Sauk) of the Saginaw Valley, then the Fox (Mesquakie), Kickapoo, Ottawa, Miami, and Potawatomi. The Potawatomi sought refuge around Green Bay and in southern Wisconsin, on lands long held by the native Winnebagos and Menominees. “…the fury of the Iroquois having pursued them everywhere, they thought to find security only by retreating to the very end of the world, so to speak,” the Jesuit Francois le Mercier wrote to the Jesuit Provincial in France.\textsuperscript{12} So many Potawatomi and other Indian people fled west that their former homelands in the southern peninsula of Michigan became a “No Man's Land, a depopulated barrier between the fury of the Iroquois and the … tribes that had sought refuge beyond.”\textsuperscript{13}

So many Indians of different nations fled to Wisconsin that historian Richard White says “the region became a hodgepodge of peoples.” The whole length of the southern coast of Lake Superior was lined with the villages of Algonquian peoples, several groups of whom often occupied a single village. Even when they did not live together, their villages often were
According to Jesuit estimates of the 1670s, fifteen thousand to twenty thousand persons lived in these settlements, where a Babylon of dialects was heard. Village rivalries were intense and the fear of outsiders assuaged, White argues, by turning strangers into friends through the giving of gifts, the smoking of the calumet – and intermarriage, which created ties of kinship and obligation. As historians Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown have demonstrated, these intermarriages created a new people, "a people in-between," the children of French men and Indian women – the métis, whose origins uniformly may be traced to the fur trade and its expansion under the French regime.

**Early Contact**

That the Potawatomi were living in Wisconsin by the mid-1650s is a matter of historical record, documented by two French fur traders, Pierre-Espirit Radisson and Medart Chouart de Groseillers, who spent several months in a Potawatomi village there. The Potawatomi, ever interested in French trade goods, regularly traveled to Chequamegon Bay on Lake Superior, where the Ottawa had established villages and were acting as middlemen in the fur trade with Montreal. At Chequamegon Bay, the Jesuit Claude Allouez established a mission and offered some of the first written accounts of the Potawatomi. Father Allouez had embarked for Chequamegon Bay on August 8, 1665, leaving from Three Rivers, north of Montreal, in company with six Frenchmen and more than four hundred Indians of various nations who were returning home after traveling to the St. Lawrence to trade.

The route they took to the west is instructive: They traveled into a channel of the Ottawa River called “the rapids of the river des prairies” near Montreal, on to Lake Huron, and then through “the long Sault,” which Allouez described as “a half-league of rapids … in a beautiful river which unites two great Lakes—that of the Hurons, and Lake Superior.” Seeing Lake
Superior for the first time, Allouez was as awestruck, as the Indians long had been. They revered it, he wrote, “as a Divinity, and offer it sacrifices.” Its fish were abundant and “of excellent quality,” and the water “so clear and pure” that objects at the bottom could be seen “to a depth of six brasses.” This lake, Allouez reported, was “a resort” used by “twelve or fifteen distinct nations,” who came there to fish and to trade with one another.

In a long letter to the Jesuit Provincial, Allouez went on to describe the many things he had seen at Chequamegon Bay—how the Indians dressed, the languages they spoke, their hunting and fishing methods, the gods they worshipped, and the superstitions they practiced. He described the nations one by one, including his view of a people he called the Pouteoutatamiouec. They spoke the Algonquian tongue, he said, and came from a lake country to the southwest with which he was not familiar (Lake Michigan). Father Allouez found the Potawatomi to be “extremely idolatrous, clinging to their ridiculous legends, and are addicted to Polygamy.” On the other hand, their wives and daughters, he said, “are more modest than those of the other Nations. They observe among themselves a certain sort of civility, and also show it toward strangers—which is rare among our Barbarians.” He told the story of an elder he had met: “…his eyes fell upon my shoes, which were made after the French fashion; and curiosity moved him to ask leave to take them, in order to examine them easily. Upon returning them to me, he would not permit me to put them on myself, but obliged me to allow him to perform that service, -- even insisting on fastening the thongs, and showing the same marks of respect that servants do their Masters upon rendering them this service. Kneeling at my feet, he said to me, ‘It is in this way that we treat those whom we honor.’

“On another occasion when I went to see him, he arose from his seat to yield it to me, with the same formalities that politeness demands of gentlefolk … Of all the people with whom I
have mingled in these regions, they (the Potawatomi) are the most docile, and the best disposed toward the French.”17 Allouez's words are contradictory because even as he described the Potawatomi as "docile," he counted three hundred Potawatomi men bearing arms and characterized the Potawatomi as a “warlike” people. It had been just a dozen years earlier, in 1653, at their village at Mechingen, north of today’s Milwaukee, that the Potawatomi had supplied forty percent of an Algonquian fighting force that repelled an invasion from the Iroquois. This victory catapulted the Potawatomi “into the position of dominance they were to reinforce with French help during the next century.”18 Their loyalty to the French would stand the test of time, perhaps explaining Allouez's description of them as "docile." Perhaps he meant the Potawatomi were "docile" when it came to their friends the French. As Clifton writes, the Potawatomi proceeded “to establish themselves as hosts for peaceful visitors, welcoming them to their villages on Rock Island and the Door Peninsula.”19

In the summer of 1658, the Jesuit Gabriel Druillettes traveled to the shores of Lake Superior, where he marveled at the rich deposits of copper to be found there, as well as the abundance of Indian groups. The cooper was of such excellence, he wrote, that pieces as large as one’s fist were to be found. Druillettes reported, as well, a large concentration of Potawatomis on the western shore of Lake Michigan, at a village called St. Michel. He estimated the total population at three thousand, including seven hundred men. On his return to Quebec in the spring of 1659, Father Druillettes encountered the Frenchmen Radisson and Groseilliers, who also had just returned from Lake Superior. With them were three hundred Algonquian people and sixty canoes loaded with furs.20

As early as the 1660s, the Potawatomi were well-known to fur traders such as Nicolas Perrot and Toussaint Baudry, who spent the summer of 1668 at Green Bay, trading among the
Potawatomi villages. So desirous of French goods were the Potawatomi, that warriors lavished gifts on the French traders and carried them on their shoulders.21 As historians including Sylvia Van Kirk, Jacqueline Peterson, Jennifer S.H. Brown, Tanis C. Thorne, and Susan Sleeper-Smith have shown, Indian women often had sexual relations with outsiders such as Perrot and Baudry as a way to strengthen ties of friendship and cement agreements with the French.22

In 1670, Father Allouez founded the mission of Saint Francis Xavier near a large Potawatomi village at DePere, on the Fox River near Green Bay. There, the Jesuit Jacques Marquette spent the winter of 1673-74 on his return from exploring the Mississippi River. Through these early contacts, the Potawatomi not only developed political and economic ties to New France, but also received an introduction to the Catholic religion, to which they “were more than ordinarily receptive.”23 Eager to acquire spiritual power, they received these French Catholic missionaries easily, believing that Christianity would be an added source of power in dealing with intruders.24 By 1676, the Jesuit Louis André reported more than four hundred converts in the Green Bay region. Many of these Christian Potawatomis, R. David Edmunds writes, assisted Robert Cavelier de La Salle as he attempted to gain control over the fur trade of New France. When La Salle landed his boat, the Griffon, at Green Bay’s Washington Island, it was the Potawatomi, led by Onanghisse (Shimmering Light), who loaded the boat and helped it set sail. So central a role did the Potawatomi play in the French fur trade that the French “regarded the Potawatomi as the dominant Indian group of this area.” The Potawatomi consistently supported the French during France’s colonial wars with Britain, often, Edmunds writes, “journeying to Montreal to join French expeditions against New England.”25

The Fur Trade
The fur trade that developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries became the mainstay of the economy of New France and played a central role in the long series of wars that ensued between France and England in North America's colonial years. The wearing of fur was the fashion of the day among French aristocrats and members of the wealthy middle class, who aped the styles and manners of lords and ladies. As the fashion spread to other European countries, merchants, faced with a limited supply of fur-bearing animals in Europe, turned to the vast fur resources in North America. Sought were the pelts of bear, elk, deer, martin, raccoon, mink, muskrat, opossum, lynx, wolf, fox, and an occasional wolverine. By far the most important animal, however, was the beaver, whose near extermination in North America was due to the popularity in Europe of the broad-brimmed beaver hat. As the estimated ten million beavers present in America when the Europeans arrived were exterminated in one region after another, fur traders advanced farther and farther inland to find them. Even before the close of the seventeenth century, beavers were said to be rare in the vicinity of the Straits of Mackinac, a key passageway between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan, where the French settlement at Michilimackinac was a center of the fur trade.\textsuperscript{26}

For many years, rulers of New France tried to contain the fur trade. In 1696, with the market flooded with furs, France's Louis XIV issued a royal ordinance (not completely enforced until 1698) revoking all licenses for the trade and forbidding all citizens of New France to carry goods into the west. Under this policy, Indians still could bring furs to Montreal to trade, but traders no longer would be allowed to take French goods to them at their villages. These orders were not obeyed, and the foundations of trading towns such as Michilimackinac were laid in the dozen or so years (1702-1714) after Louis XIV's royal ordinance.\textsuperscript{27}
By the close of the seventeenth century, historian Ida Amanda Johnson writes, the Michigan forests were filled with illicit traders, known as couriers de bois (woods runners). Illegal traders also settled in the Illinois Country, at Peoria, Cahokia, and Kaskaskia, which, like Detroit, was designated after 1700 as a military/mission center. Even after the French reopened the fur trade to licensed traders in 1716, laws limiting the number of traders, canoes, and engagés, (men under contract as a boatman or hunter) continued to be broken.28 By the mid-1700s, as the search for fur-bearing animals pushed ever farther into the interior, the trade became increasingly dependent on the individual trader – or the voyageur. Furs were collected over wide areas, historian Harold Adams Inni writes, "and the ability of the trader in dealing with Indians was of dominant importance."29 Voyageurs worked with merchants (after 1763 known as the bourgeois) in Quebec and Montreal who purchased in Europe the commodities sought by Indian people. The voyageurs and their engagés carried the commodities inland and traded them for furs, which Indian people trapped for the trade.

The log and bark cabins of perhaps one hundred couriers du bois and their families were recorded at Michilimackinac in 1712.30 Beginning in 1725, Catholic priests began to record marriages and baptisms there in the valuable historical document, The Mackinac Register, which carries the names of French Canadian men and their families who were living there, some with Indian women.31 The surnames of métis people who figure later in Kansas appear at Michilimackinac in the 1700s—Chevalier, Bourassa, Bertrand, LaFramboise, Nadeau, Roy, and Papin.

By 1700, Potawatomi people were beginning to view French trade goods not as luxuries, but as necessities. As the years progressed and the Potawatomi discarded their clay pottery for metal pots and utensils, bows and arrows for guns and gunpowder, and their deerskin shirts and
dresses for colorful calico or flannel, they began to lose their self-sufficiency. Thus, Louis XIV's 
royal ordinance of 1696 forbidding French citizens to carry goods into the interior had such a 
detrimental impact on the Potawatomi and other western tribes that in August 1697 more than 
three hundred Potawatomi, Ottawa, Sacs, and Hurons went to Montreal to plead their case. 
About the same time, as the Iroquois threat diminished (the French negotiated a peace treaty with 
the Iroquois in 1701), the Potawatomi began moving back toward their ancestral homeland. 
They moved south from Green Bay, some settling along the western shores of Lake Michigan, 
others continuing on around the tip of the lake to its eastern shores. By 1698 French officials 
indicated that Potawatomis were living at villages near the present sites of Manitowoc and 
Milwaukee, south of Green Bay, and on the St. Joseph River in southern Michigan. "This 
migration," Edmunds writes, "continued into the eighteenth century and eventually resulted in 
the dispersal of the majority of the Potawatomis from Green Bay."32

It was probably in the 1680s that the Potawatomi living in the Green Bay area began this 
series of migrations. According to the French commander at Michilimackinac, La Mothe 
Cadillac, two hundred Potawatomi warriors with their families, which would equate to perhaps 
twelve hundred people, were living along the St. Joseph River in southwestern Michigan as early 
as 1695. Potawatomi soon migrated as far east as Detroit, south along the Wabash River into 
Indiana, and west along the Kankakee into Illinois. During the remainder of the French era, 
which ended in 1763 with the British conquest of New France, the Potawatomi, Joseph Francis 
Murphy writes, "seem to have become more and more consolidated in their Lake Michigan 
crescent. A document of 1730 referred to the greater part of them, in company with elements of 
Sacs, Mascouten, and Kickapoo, as dwelling along the valley of the St. Joseph River."33

The St. Joseph River Valley
The 210-mile-long St. Joseph River, with headwaters near today's Baw Beese Lake in south-central Michigan, plays a central role in the history of Potawatomi métis of the Great Lakes. The St. Joseph, navigable for 175 miles in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, ran a zigzag route generally westward across southern Michigan, dipping for a time into northern Indiana at today's Elkhart and South Bend before re-entering Michigan. The river continued on its way, coursing through Niles and Berrien Springs before entering Lake Michigan between today's towns of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor. To the south was the important portage at South Bend, where Indian people and fur traders lifted their canoes out of the St. Joseph and carried them just a few miles across the swampy lands leading to the Kankakee River, a tributary of the Illinois.

The Kankakee flowed west and joined the Des Plaines River about fifty miles south of present Chicago, where it became the Illinois River. The Illinois River flowed south through central Illinois, emptying into the Mississippi near today’s Grafton, just twenty miles upstream from the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. French settlements along the Illinois River, at places including LaSalle and Peoria, formed the heart of what was known in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the Illinois Country. Thus, the St. Joseph River, with its access to the Great Lakes, its winding route through southern Michigan, and its South Bend portage to the Kankakee, became a principal water route connecting the Great Lakes, the Illinois Country and the Mississippi.

The Potawatomi called the lower portion of the St. Joseph River "Sawk-wauwk-sil-buc” meaning “the mystery,” because it had steep banks that allowed the river to rise suddenly after heavy rains. The St. Joseph ran through a country described by one early traveler as level, with good soil and hunting that was "exceeding plentiful" with "elks, deer, bears, racoon, bevers,
otters, turkeys and other kind of wild fous in great plenty." A description from 1718 reported
"pheasants as in France; quail; and perroquets; the finest vines in the world, which produce a vast
quantity of very excellent grapes, both white and black, the berry very large and juicy, and the
bunch very long. It is the richest district in all that country."36

With its abundance of fur bearing animals and its waterway access, the St. Joseph River
Valley became an area of great interest to French fur traders, as well as explorers, who looked to
Indian people as hunters and guides. As Jacqueline Peterson notes, a hallmark of the fur trade
was the willingness of Europeans to deal with Indians where they lived, which led to the building
of a string of trading posts and military forts to provide protection.37 Histories of the area state
that it was Indian people who directed the celebrated explorer Rene Robert Cavalier, Sieur de
LaSalle to the St. Joseph-Kankakee portage at South Bend.38

LaSalle, who arrived at the mouth of the St. Joseph after sailing across Lake Michigan
from Green Bay, set out in eight canoes on December 3, 1679, with a party of thirty-three men,
including four priests. They reached South Bend, carried their canoes across the five-mile
portage, descended the Kankakee to the Illinois River, and then turned back. They returned to a
fort they had built on the bluffs overlooking the mouth of the St. Joseph River near today's town
of St. Joseph.39 They called this fort Fort Miami for the Miami Indians who, like the
Potawatomi, had returned to southern Michigan from Wisconsin after fleeing from the
Iroquois.40 The hastily constructed Fort Miami, described as forty by eighty feet and surrounded
by palisades, apparently was short-lived, used as a stopping place by LaSalle on his journeys
between Canada and the Illinois Country. The fort served LaSalle again in 1681 as he set out to
explore the Mississippi River, this time reaching its mouth on April 9, 1682.41
Fort Miami often has been confused with a subsequent fort built by the French – Fort St. Joseph – which was constructed, not like Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, but at a point some twenty-five miles farther south, near the present limits of the city of Niles, Michigan. According to Cadillac's memoir, Fort St. Joseph was established in 1691, but abandoned about 1697 when Louis XIV's royal decree closed Great Lakes posts. The fort was reoccupied in about 1715. On a visit there in 1721, the French traveler Pierre Francois Xavier de Charlevoix described the fort as a "small garrison. The commandant's house, which is but a very sorry one, is called the fort, from its being surrounded with an indifferent pallisado…" In 1701, near the then abandoned Fort St. Joseph, former post commander Augustin le Gardeur de Repentigny de Courtemanche, serving as a messenger for the governor of New France, reported large numbers of Potawatomis (as well as Sacs, Foxes, Winnegabos, Menominees, and Kickapoos) living on the St. Joseph River, where, Edmunds writes, “they clustered around a mission established by the Jesuits during the 1690s.”

**St. Joseph Catholic Mission**

St. Joseph Mission was built on land granted to the Jesuits by the Quebec government on October 1, 1686, and approved in Versailles two and a half years later, on May 24, 1689. The land grant was designated as twenty arpents by twenty arpents fronting on the St. Joseph River "at the place they find the most suitable for the erection of a chapel and residence, and for the planting of grain and vegetables." The land was to be held by the Jesuit Claude Dablon, other missionaries, and "their successors and assigns in perpetuity as their own property…” The mission, constructed about the year 1690, stood about sixty miles from the mouth of the St. Joseph River and anywhere from one to three miles south of Niles, Michigan. Niles would
figure prominently not only in Catholic missionary efforts to the Potawatomi, but also in efforts by the Baptist Isaac McCoy to missionize the Potawatomi in the 1820s.

The St. Joseph Catholic Mission originally served the Miami, but within a few years, as Potawatomis returned from Wisconsin, it also embraced them. It is highly likely that some Potawatomi and Miami returned to Michigan already converted to Catholicism because Jesuit priests had followed them west in the 1650s and, by 1683, were preaching at missions on Green Bay (St. Francis Xavier), Sault Ste. Marie (Sault de Ste. Marie Mission) and the Straits of Mackinac (St. Ignace and St. Francois de Borgia missions). The Jesuit Claude Aveneau was sent to labor at St. Joseph Mission beginning in 1690, and was joined there in the early 1700s by the Jesuits Jean Mermet and Jean Baptiste Chardon, who remained until 1712 when an uprising by the Fox forced his withdrawal to Michilimackinac. Nearly a decade passed before another priest came to live on the St. Joseph.47

When Charlevoix visited Fort St. Joseph in 1721, he indicated that a priest had recently arrived there. The date corresponds with a baptismal register, dated 1720 to 1773, and kept by priests serving at the St. Joseph fort and mission. The St. Joseph post was a small community, comprising soldiers and their families, blacksmiths, farmers, interpreters, bourgeois traders and the lower-ranked voyageurs and engagés. Gathered around the fort and the chapel, Charlevoix reported, were the villages of Miami and Potawatomi—the Miami living on the east side of the river, the Potawatomi on the west, where the fort, Catholic chapel, and priest's residence were situated among them. Both the Miami and Potawatomi, Charlevoix wrote, “are for the greater part Christians, but they have been a long time without pastors, and the missionary which has been sent to them lately, will have something to do to restore to them the exercise of their religion.” Charlevoix spoke of a chief named Wilamek, whom he described as "a Christian and
well instructed, but makes no exercise of his religion. One day as I reproached him for it, he left me abruptly, went directly to the chapel, and said his prayers with so audible a voice, that we could hear him at the missionary's….“48

**French Fur Traders in the St. Joseph Valley**

It is not possible to say at what date French-Canadian fur traders arrived in the St. Joseph River Valley, but it is reasonable to suppose they arrived as early as the priests – about 1690. Until the influx of American settlers and the removal of Indian people west of the Mississippi in the 1830s, the post remained an important center of the Indian trade. In the St. Joseph River Valley beginning in the 1720s, we find a succession of prominent fur trading families important to this study – the Chevaliers and Bourassas early on, the Burnetts in the 1780s, the Bertrands in the 1810s, and the Navarres in the 1820s. A baptismal register for St. Joseph Mission, which begins with an entry dated August 15, 1720, documents that French traders had settled on the St. Joseph River by that date.49

The prominent St. Joseph surname Chevalier first appears in the baptismal register in 1730 when Charlotte Chevalier, wife of the post blacksmith, Antoine Deshêtres, served as godmother at the baptism of a son born to a post soldier. The Chevaliers were a large French-Canadian family identified with the St. Joseph River as early as 1718 when Jean Baptiste Chevalier purchased a trade permit for the recently reoccupied Fort St. Joseph. He subsequently returned to Michilimackinac, where he is found with his wife, Marie Françoise Alavoine. They would have sixteen children, all of whom married into the fur trade. Their daughter Charlotte Chevalier, who married the blacksmith Antoine Deshêtres, moved to the St. Joseph valley in 1730, as did her brother Louis Thérèse Chevalier.50
Louis Thérèse Chevalier lived on the St. Joseph River in southern Michigan for years, where he became the patriarch of the French and Indian settlement there. After 1745, much of the St. Joseph trade passed through his management, even during the British period when France, under the 1763 Treaty of Paris, ceded its holdings in North America to Britain. Born in 1719 or 1720, Louis Chevalier married a woman about ten years older than he, the widowed French and Illinois métis Marie Madeleine Réaume L'archevêque, daughter of Simphorose Ouauagoukoue, an Illinois woman, and Jean Baptiste Réaume, an interpreter for the French king at Fort St. Joseph. Marie Madeleine's name first appears in the St. Joseph register on March 7, 1729, when she was about nineteen years old, serving as godmother at the baptism of a mixed-ancestry child.51

By the summer of 1749, when she was about thirty-nine years old, Marie Madeleine was widowed from her first husband, fur trader Augustin L'archevêque. She took her three children from Fort St. Joseph to Michilimackinac, where her young son Augustin was baptized and two of her daughters married. Two-year-old Augustin's godmother was "Mlle. Bourassa," a surname important to this study. The prominent fur trader Rene Bourassa also served as a godparent to Chevalier kin at St. Joseph Mission. Godparents, as Sleeper-Smith writes, were "fictive kin" who served to link households and communities; in this case, the Bourassa, Langlade, Réaume, and L'archevêque families. Kinship ties extended to the Chevalier family when the widowed Marie Madeleine Réaume L'archevêque, now forty-one years old, gave birth in October 1751 to another son, named Louis after his father, the St. Joseph patriarch Louis Thérèse Chevalier. Marie Madeleine and Louis Chevalier married six months later at St. Joseph mission.52

Louis and Marie Madeleine Réaume L'archevêque Chevalier lived on the St. Joseph until 1780, where Louis, even after the British took power, was considered the key intermediary with
Potawatomi people of the area. Marie Madeleine, meanwhile, became what Sleeper-Smith calls "the community's most important Catholic lay practitioner." Because visits by priests were infrequent, Marie Madeleine played an important role in maintaining a Catholic presence in the valley. She employed religion “as a socially integrative tool that incorporated increased numbers of Native people," be they Potawatomi or Miami, Ottawa or Illinois, an Indian slave, or a person of mixed-ancestry.53

Despite the complex and shifting colonial-era history and allegiances of the St. Joseph River Valley, Indian and métis people "were always defined by the extensive kin networks that controlled and mediated the exchange process of the fur trade."54 Even with the mobility of the trade and its vast geography, French Canadian fur trade families, increasingly métis, held onto and shared a far-reaching kin network in which Catholicism and the fictive kin of godparents played a central role. Furthermore, generations of fur trade families often followed one another into the trade. Marie Madeleine Réaume L'archeveque Chevalier, for instance, was the daughter of a fur trader, married successively two fur traders, and had five daughters who also married fur traders.55 This generational pattern is evident, as well, with many of the core métis families of this dissertation, not only in the St. Joseph Valley, but in other important fur trading areas.

**Fort Detroit**

In 1701, Cadillac built Fort Detroit, which began a new phase of French-Potawatomi relations. With its strategic position on a river connecting lakes Erie and Huron, Detroit’s location was an advantageous place to hold in check the English and Iroquois from carrying the fur trade to Indian tribes farther west. Adding to the locale's desirability was the abundant variety of pelttries in the region. Because the Iroquois wars of the previous century had left the
lower peninsula of Michigan practically deserted, animals had thrived. Detroit at once assumed the lead in the peltry traffic.\textsuperscript{56}

On July 24, 1701, Cadillac, in company with fifty French soldiers, fifty French artisans, and one hundred Algonquian Indians, laid the foundations of a town inside the heavy pallisaded walls of Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit, named for Count Pontchartrain of France. Cadillac conveyed lots and charged an annual sum for public revenue. He had a public windmill built for grinding grain and offered certain exclusive rights for blacksmiths and traders who located at Detroit. The people who located at Detroit were soldiers, farmers, craftsmen, and hunters.\textsuperscript{57} It was Cadillac's strategy to close the posts at Michilimackinac and St. Joseph and develop one closer to the St. Lawrence, which would be less expensive and also would block English access to the upper Great Lakes. Next, he induced faithful Indians to relocate to Detroit. Hurons, Ottawas, and Chippewas from the Straits of Mackinac, Potawatomis from the St. Joseph River Valley, and Miamis from along the Maumee River soon gathered there in numbers of about six thousand, living in four or five villages about the fort. Edmunds writes that many Potawatomi in the lower St. Joseph River Valley, fearing raids by the warring Fox and Mascouten, abandoned their homes in western Michigan and followed the Potawatomi leader Winamac to Detroit.\textsuperscript{58}

By 1718, the Potawatomi at Detroit were the most populous group there, although the St. Joseph River Valley, where the French built another fort near Niles in 1718, remained the main settlement for those Potawatomi in close association with the French. Thus, with these migrations, villages of Potawatomi were scattered from the St. Joseph Valley and northern Indiana to Detroit. Potawatomi on the St. Joseph hunted far afield, going through the portage at South Bend, down the Kankakee and into the Illinois Country. Those at Detroit, on the other
hand, hunted immediately to their south, along the River Rogue and the River Raisin and probably into Ohio along the south shore of Lake Erie.\textsuperscript{59}

After 1755, the Potawatomi and other Indians in the Great Lakes region became embroiled in wars where the French and British nations, and then the American nation, competed for ownership of the North American continent. A complicated sequence of strategies, battles, and shifting Indian allegiances make this historical period sometimes hard to grasp, but understanding the Potawatomi in the conflicted years between 1755 and 1795 adds to an understanding of developments that unfolded years later in Kansas.

The British

In the eighteenth century, conflicts between Britain and France often spread from the Europe to North America. The French and Indian War, however, centered not on Europe, but on the importance of the Ohio Country.\textsuperscript{60} France feared British expansion into Ohio would hurt its position in the west, while Britain thought French forts threatened its seaboard colonies. At first, the French and Indian War went well for the French. In 1755, with the aid of their Indian allies, they destroyed the army of Major General Edward Braddock in western Pennsylvania. Of Braddock’s fourteen hundred British and colonial troops, more than one thousand were killed or wounded. Participating in the slaughter were many Potawatomi warriors from villages at Detroit, the St. Joseph, and Chicago.\textsuperscript{61} Encouraged by the victory, Potawatomis from Detroit went on to attack British settlements in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. By October 1755, they had killed or captured more than one-hundred-twenty British settlers.\textsuperscript{62} In August 1756, many Potawatomis again answered the French call to fight the British. They traveled to Montreal, and that October attacked a British supply train in the Albany, New York, region, taking several scalps and one prisoner. In July 1757, they participated in an ambush of British
barges on Lake George; the episode involved torture of prisoners and cannibalism. That August, Potawatomi warriors from Detroit and the St. Joseph again participated in the slaughter of prisoners following the British surrender of Fort William Henry.\textsuperscript{63}

Any jubilation was premature because the warriors brought smallpox back to their villages, and the Great Lakes tribes suffered a severe epidemic in 1758, with villages on the St. Joseph River hit particularly hard.\textsuperscript{64} Still, in June 1759, Potawatomis went out again for the French, serving as scouts at Fort Niagara. But the fall of Niagara, the subsequent French defeat at Quebec, coupled with an acute shortage of trade goods, caused the Potawatomi to reassess their allegiance. Seeking trade goods, Potawatomis from Detroit attended a multi-tribal council in Pittsburgh, where they informed George Croghan, the main British trader in the area, that they would welcome the British to Michigan.\textsuperscript{65} In November 1760, when Fort Detroit fell to the British, Potawatomis there willingly made friends with the British.\textsuperscript{66} Potawatomis in Illinois, Indiana, and western Michigan, however, remained more closely tied to French traders.\textsuperscript{67}

The French and Indian War formally ended with the Treaty of Paris on February 10, 1763, by which France lost all of its North American empire except for its West Indies sugar islands. France turned over to Britain all its lands east of the Mississippi, except the city of New Orleans, which went to Spain, along with French claims in the Trans-Mississippi West.\textsuperscript{68} Despite the French defeat, most French-Canadian men in the fur trade remained in the interior country, continuing their good relations with Indian people. The British, now preeminent, showed less hospitality toward Indians. General Jeffrey Amherst, British commander in America, ordered that gifts and the entertaining of Indian guests be scaled back. Powder for Indians was in short supply, and rum withheld.\textsuperscript{69} Indian resentment, fueled by the Delaware prophet Neolin and the Ottawa leader Pontiac, came to a head in the spring of 1763. In Detroit,
Potawatomis led by Ninivois joined Pontiac’s Rebellion and laid in for a six-month siege of Fort Detroit. The rebellion failed, but the Potawatomi, in particular, remained at odds with the British and up until the time of the American Revolution, periodically plundered English traders or raided troops.70

**The New American Nation**

It is difficult to lay out the history of the Potawatomi in the years leading up to and during the American Revolution because, as Richard White explains, the contests for dominance in the Great Lakes region were as much internal struggles for power within Indian villages and factions of villages as they were an imperial rivalry between the United States and Britain.71 Most Indians, White writes, were “localistic and independent” with few acting as tribal units.72 Loyalities waxed and waned. Dependent now on European technology and in need of trade goods, Indian allegiance shifted depending on which side had the goods – and which leader was in charge. For instance, the Milwaukee Potawatomi Siggenauk (Blackbird) was pro-American, while Detroit Potawatomis under the influence of the French-Ottawa métis Charles Langlade were firmly pro-British. Others, such as La Petit Bled supported one side and then other.73

Generally during the Revolution, the Detroit Potawatomis “declared themselves for the British cause” and, in company with other Indians from the upper lakes, began raiding American positions in New York and Kentucky.74 These raids, which continued successfully into 1778, generally were not supported by Potawatomi villages and clans in western Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, where the people were not so much in need of British trade goods because they increasingly were trading with the Spanish and French on the Mississippi, where “traditions of the older French relationship remained influential.”75 The western Potawatomi, Clifton writes, “were not so much pro-American as they were anti-British”76 For instance, when Siggenauk
became angered that British traders had occupied the old fort on the St. Joseph River and were supplying goods to the St. Joseph Potawatomis, he arranged, in January 1781, for an expedition of Spanish soldiers and sixty Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Chippewas to travel east and attack the fort. The mission was successful, and the Indians stole the British goods.  

The Wisconsin and Illinois Potawatomi gave their allegiance to the Americans only after George Rogers Clark captured Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes.  Then, in February 1779, when Clark captured Henry Hamilton, lieutenant governor of Detroit, Potawatomis in the St. Joseph Valley “accepted the hand of the Americans” and those in Detroit gave only “occasional, desultory support to British military efforts.” When the war ended, deep divisions existed among Potawatomi villages. The Detroit and St. Joseph Potawatomi continued to frequent British traders, which helps to explain the British refusal to vacate the Northwest territory even after American victory. The Wisconsin and Illinois Potawatomi, on the other hand, continued to trade with French métis such as Auguste Chouteau, although the vast Louisiana country beyond the Mississippi now was owned by the Spanish.

The Potawatomi soon discovered that dealing with the new American nation differed from dealing with the French or British. Americans did not want to trade for Indian furs or mercenaries; they wanted only one thing: Indian land. Conflict ensued as American settlers pushed west into Kentucky and Tennessee and eyed land to the north, across the Ohio River. In treaties conducted with the American nation in 1784, the Iroquois relinquished claims to land in western Pennsylvania and New York, and the Chippewa, Ottawa, Delaware, and Wyandot ceded land in Ohio, but the Shawnee refused. The Potawatomi, living west of Ohio, were sheltered by their geographic location. In 1788, when General Arthur St. Clair, governor of the Northwest
Territory, called for a multi-tribal conference at Fort Harmer, the Potawatomi were divided over whether to sell their land to the Americans, and the conference came to naught anyway. In 1789, new waves of violence exploded between Americans and Indians. Potawatomis from northern Indiana and southern Michigan joined the Shawnees, Kickapoos, and Miamis in attacks against American settlements in Kentucky and Ohio. In October 1790, a combined force of about one-hundred Potawatomis and Shawnees contributed to the defeat of General Josiah Harmar’s army. Opposition to American settlers spread through Potawatomi villages on the Wabash and St. Joseph, leading in 1791 to the “greatest Indian victory over an American military force in all of American history” as Indians, including Potawatomis, defeated St. Clair’s army on the upper Wabash, killing 647 American men and an untold number of camp followers.

Unlike the ill-disciplined troops with St. Clair and Harmar, General Anthony Wayne’s army did not fall before the Indian confederacy. In August 1794, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in western Ohio, Wayne turned back thirteen hundred Indian warriors, including seventy-five St. Joseph Potawatomis, who had gathered to fight near Roche de Bout on the lower Maumee River. Though the surprised Indians were able to continue their flight down the Maumee, Wayne went on to destroy vast amounts of Indian property and stockpiles of food, adding to the demoralizing effect of the British betrayal at Fort Miami. The Indian confederacy shattered, Wayne built Fort Wayne at the headwaters of the Maumee, Americans occupied Fort Detroit, and the Potawatomi, recalling the British betrayal at Fort Miami, began to make peace with the Americans, although American influence diminished the farther west one went. Unlike the Potawatomis near Fort
Wayne and Detroit, Potawatomi along the Tippecanoe River and into Illinois, continued “to act independently of American policy.”

In the summer of 1795, at treaty negotiations following the Battle of Fallen Timbers, 240 Potawatomis attended the proceedings at Greenville, Ohio, most coming from villages along the St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, and Elkhart rivers in southern Michigan and northern Indiana, and from farther north, on the Huron River. Some also came from Illinois and Wisconsin. In what was the first of many treaties the Potawatomis would sign in coming years with the United States, twenty-three Potawatomis attached their names to the Treaty of Greenville on August 3, 1795. Under this treaty, by which the Potawatomi were promised a $1,000 annual annuity, they ceded small sections of land at Detroit and in the Illinois Country at Lake Peoria and the mouth of the Chicago River, where, in 1803, the United States established Fort Dearborn.

By the time of the Treaty of Greenville, Clifton writes, “the Potawatomi tribe was on the edge of a major, disruptive crisis in governance. Political institutions that had served them well during 125 years of tribal growth and territorial expansion had begun to break down.” By 1800, the populous Potawatomi were so dispersed that communication and coordination were difficult, a situation that “continued to foster political autonomy among the different towns.” Clifton writes that “the interests, concerns, values, and adaptations of the different villages began to diverge, particularly so after 1800 when the American frontier began to press in rapidly on their lands.”

By 1810, nearly one million Americans lived west of the Appalachian Mountains. With Indians frustrated by increasing demands for their land and discontented over annuity payments and the whiskey trade, times were ripe for the pan-Indian resistance movement that grew up around Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, who preached a messianic evangelism that urged
Indians to return to native rituals and belief systems. In 1806, emissaries from the Prophet visited Potawatomi villages as far west as Chicago, and the Prophet’s influence grew as William Henry Harrison, the governor of Indiana Territory, secured more Indian land by lavishing money and gifts on the more accommodationist Indians, who signed treaties that angered other Indians. The Prophet’s brother, Tecumseh, for example, angrily denounced pro-American Potawatomis such as Winamec and Five Medals, who signed the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne, by which nearly three million acres passed from Indian hands.

Younger, more militant Potawatomis flocked to the new village of Prophetstown, headquarters for the pan-Indian movement, at the confluence of the Wabash and Tippecanoe rivers. By June 1810, the village was filled with Shawnees, Kickapoos, Winnebagos, Sacs, Chippewas, Ottawas, Wyandots, Iowas, and many Potawatomis, including the leader Main Poc. The numbers of Indians at Prophetstown were estimated variously at from 650 to nearly three thousand, and rumors of Indian attack on American posts were rampant. In November 1811, Harrison marched on Prophetstown and burned the village, both sides suffering heavy losses. Tecumseh now joined forces with the British, ushering in the War of 1812. “Before the Battle of Tippecanoe,” Edmunds writes, “most hostile Potawatomis had been concentrated at Prophetstown or on the Illinois. After November 1811, angry warriors were scattered from Peoria through Amherstburg. For the Potawatomis, the War of 1812 already had started.”

Fort Detroit fell to the British in August 1812 and, a day before, Fort Dearborn at Chicago, where civilians and soldiers were massacred as they evacuated the fort. About six hundred warriors, mostly Potawatomi followers of Main Poc, had overwhelmed their fleeing column of ninety-six people, killing two-thirds of them, including fifty-three soldiers, three women and twelve children. Potawatomis in the region had been deeply divided over the attack.
119

Some, who had befriended traders at Chicago, counseled neutrality or peace, then acted to hide evacuees and save others who were wounded in the attack that followed.94

Potawatomis next laid siege to Fort Wayne, but dispersed with the approach of William Henry Harrison’s American army. Attacks on Potawatomi, Miami, and Kickapoo villages on the Elkhart and upper Wabash rivers in Indiana, as well as in Illinois, followed, but the main offensive began on the western shores of Lake Erie as Americans moved to retake Fort Detroit.95 The first engagement occurred on the River Raisin in January 1813, where Americans under Gen. James Winchester defeated a small party of British regulars and Indians. Later than month, a counterattack by British Colonel Henry Proctor led to Winchester’s defeat and the massacre of eighty wounded Americans left under the guard of Indians, mostly Potawatomis.96

The war turned in the Americans favor in September 1813 with the defeat of the British fleet at Put-In-Bay, giving the Americans direct access to Detroit. Proctor retreated toward Lake Ontario, where his ally Tecumseh was killed. Most Potawatomis who had fought with the British remained in Michigan and Indiana, but following Proctor’s defeat, they and other pro-British Indians “were forced toward accommodation” with the Americans.97 On October 14, 1813, Potawatomi leaders Topinebe, Five Medals, and Main Poc accepted a truce with Harrison, and Potawatomi support for the British continued to decline throughout 1814. The winter of 1813-14 was one of famine for the Potawatomis, and in the summer of 1814, a large number of Indiana and Michigan Potawatomis, including Topinebe, gathered at Greenville, Ohio, and that July signed a peace treaty with William Henry Harrison and Lewis Cass, governor of Michigan Territory.98

The following July, Potawatomi in Illinois villages signed a peace treaty with Governors William Clark of Missouri Territory and Ninian Edwards of Illinois Territory. On September 15,
1815, twenty-five Potawatomi leaders from villages in Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin gathered near Detroit and signed a treaty of peace that officially ended the War of 1812 for the Potawatomi. The French-Potawatomi métis Louison, son of the longtime St. Joseph River trader Louis Chevalier, was among the signers. This, Clifton explains, was the first time a métis was listed as a Potawatomi on a treaty and marked “the beginning of a process of ethnic-group switching that would increase through the years.”

**Potawatomi Land Cessions**

With the end of the War of 1812, Potawatomis returned to their villages and assumed their old way of life. No longer, however, could they rely on the British for support against the Americans, who emerged from the war with a new nationalism and a hunger for land that brought pressure to remove all Indians west of the Mississippi River. While pressure was most intense in Georgia, where the Creeks and Cherokees were defrauded of their lands and legal rights, the times were no less serious for Potawatomis in the Lake Michigan crescent. Between 1816 and 1833, the Potawatomi signed treaty after treaty relinquishing their homelands. Main Poc’s death in 1816, signaled the end of the traditional war chiefs. “The new leaders among the tribe,” Edmunds writes, “would be men skilled in diplomacy, not warfare. Some would be full-bloods, and some would be of mixed lineage, but all would be masters at accommodation.”

The 1816 treaty, by which the “united tribes of Ottawas, Chipawas, and Pottawotomees” ceded much of western Illinois, was the first in which the United States purchased land and delivered annuities not to the entire tribe but to specific bands. This would continue and was a step toward “producing American-fostered and American-recognized bands,” in a process that further fragmented the tribe. Villages bickered when annuities, paid at Peoria, for instance, did not reach tribal members on the St. Joseph, who found it too far to travel to the site of the
payment. With tribal fragmentation and growing dependence on annuities, the Potawatomi became more and more susceptible to the aggressive land policies of the American government. On occasion, different villages each claimed large areas of the tribal homeland and each tried “to gain the lion’s share of the annuities.” The Potawatomi, Edmunds writes, “would bargain away their birthright, selling their lands piecemeal for the Americans’ trade goods, money, and promises.”

In 1817, the Potawatomi joined the Wyandot, Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee, Ottawa, and Chippewa in ceding the remainder of Indian-held lands in Ohio and a small tract in southeastern Michigan. The treaty contained provisions that would continue to appear in treaties to come. The United States, for example, reserved the right to build roads through Indian lands and establish “taverns and ferries for the accommodation of travellers.” The treaty also made special grants to individuals. For the Potawatomi, a section of land in the ceded territory was set aside for Alexander D. Godfroy and Richard Godfroy, identified as “adopted children of the Potawatomy tribe.” Such special provisions, as Clifton writes, “created a mechanism for distributing part of the proceeds of a treaty to Americans of dubious ancestry and to others, like the Godfroys, who had close business dealings with these tribesmen.” In years ahead, many Potawatomi métis would obtain land because they were identified as “Indians by blood,” meaning descent.

In another treaty, in 1818, the Potawatomi ceded lands in the Wabash Valley of western Indiana and eastern Illinois, and three years later, in a treaty held at Chicago on August 29, 1821, they ceded nearly all of southwestern Michigan and an eleven-mile strip across northeastern Indiana. In return for these ancient homelands south of Michigan’s St. Joseph River, they
received $5,000 a year in silver coin for twenty years, plus $1,000 a year to pay a blacksmith and
teacher.109

Other treaties followed. In 1826, the Potawatomi ceded two large tracts in northern
Indiana, plus a one-hundred-foot right of way for a road extending from Lake Michigan through
Indianapolis and south to the Ohio River.110 A road figured the next year in another treaty, this
one negotiated by the government to consolidate dispersed band reservations as a way to remove
Indians from the road leading from Detroit to Chicago, “and as far as practicable from the
settlements of the Whites.”111 Six more treaties followed quickly through 1832; in 1828, at a
treaty on the St. Joseph, seventy-one “chiefs and warriors” signed the document that ceded most
of the Potawatomi’s remaining land in Michigan, as well as a large part of northeastern Indiana
in the Elkhart River Valley.112 In 1829, at a treaty signed at Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi
River in southwestern Wisconsin, the “United Nations of Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomie”
ceded a track running down the Mississippi from Prairie du Chien and into Illinois west of the
Rock River.113 The “United Nation of Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi” actually were two
separate groups but, according to Indian agent Richard S. Elliott, recognized no distinction
between themselves despite their origin in different nations. The United States government in its
treaty and business relations clearly regarded the group as one. The Ottawa and Chippewa in the
group were “so few in number,” Elliott said, that the name “is now little better than a misnomer.”
He also said the group included Sioux, Menominies and Sacs, but all were classed as
Potawatomis.114

Following the 1829 treaty, Potawatomi in the west lived in relative peace with settlers
until 1832 when the Sac warrior Black Hawk, determined to abandon the reservation in Iowa to
which his people had been assigned, led some two thousand Sacs across the Mississippi into
Illinois to reoccupy their old town on the Rock River. As Black Hawk’s people sought to evade contact with the American army and militia, some sixty Potawatomi warriors, accompanied by perhaps three Sacs, killed sixteen settlers on Indian Creek, south of Ottawa, Illinois. Other Potawatomis – among them the prominent métis Billy Caldwell, Joseph LaFromboise, and Mitchel Ouilamette – served with the Americans against Black Hawk. Rather than making war against the United States, most Potawatomi – whatever their ethnic origins – “now had a vested interest in demonstrating both their loyalty and usefulness” to the Americans if they, as had happened to Black Hawk’s people, were to avoid removal farther west.

Despite loyalties, within months of the end of the Black Hawk War, removal loomed for the Potawatomi. In October 1832, amid bickering over who owned claims to what land, the Potawatomi signed three different treaties, all within days on the Tippecanoe River in Indiana. The first, signed on October 20, 1832, mostly by Potawatomis from northern Illinois and along the Kankakee River, ceded a large tract of northeastern Illinois south of Chicago; the second, signed on October 26, mainly by Potawatomis from villages along the Wabash and Elkhart rivers, ceded all that remained of northwestern Indiana; and a third treaty, signed on October 27 by leaders from southern Michigan and northern Indiana, ceded a large swath of north-central Indiana between the Tippecanoe and Wabash rivers. These treaties included several small “band reservations” within the ceded lands, which permitted the heads of thirty-nine extended families to remain on the land. By 1837, however, all of these small reserves passed out of Indian hands as the Michigan and Indiana Potawatomi removed beyond the Mississippi. By that time, “the Potawatomi tribe was broken into a number of discordant pieces, each moving in very different cultural and geographic directions.”
Different segments of the tribe removed west at different times and to different locales, a process that began with the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, by which the Potawatomi ceded about five million valuable acres along the western shore of Lake Michigan, from Chicago north to Milwaukee and on to the southern tip of Lake Winnebago. By this treaty, signed at Chicago on September 26, 1833, the Wisconsin and Illinois Potawatomis also agreed to remove to “a tract of country west of the Mississippi River.” The tract, measuring five million acres, began above Council Bluffs, Iowa, and ran south along the east side of the Missouri River to the northwest corner of Missouri. The Treaty of Chicago stipulated that the Indians were to remove “as soon as conveniently can be done,” the United States agreeing to pay the expense, including “subsistence while upon the journey, and for one year after their arrival at their new homes.”

**Toward Acculturation**

The various articles of these many Potawatomi treaties negotiated between 1816 and 1833 illustrate the growing acculturation of the Potawatomi and the influence of the métis among them. For one thing, the Potawatomi learned over time to drive harder bargains. Under the Treaty of 1816, for instance, by which they ceded a huge trace of western Illinois, they received from the government a promise of merchandise valued at $1,000 to be delivered annually for...
twelve years. By the Treaty of 1826, they negotiated to receive $30,500 in goods, an annual payment of $2,000 in silver for twenty-two years, 160 annual bushels of salt, the building of a grist mill on the Tippecanoe River, and expenses for a blacksmith and a miller.\textsuperscript{121} In 1828, they negotiated for another $40,000 in goods, another permanent annuity of $2,000 in silver, plus another $1,000 for twenty years.\textsuperscript{122} In addition to the thirty-five band reservations negotiated by various chiefs under the three treaties of 1832, the Potawatomi demanded and received vast amounts of money and goods, as well as $1,400 to cover the loss of horses stolen during Black Hawk’s War and $7,835 to be applied toward the purchase of new horses.

In addition, numerous Indians and métis reserved land for themselves, ranging from ten sections (6,400 acres) to one-quarter section (160 acres).\textsuperscript{123} Vast sums also were demanded and received under the 1833 Treaty of Chicago: $280,000 in annuities to be paid over twenty years; $150,000 to cover debts; $100,000 in merchandise; and $100,000 to satisfy “sundry individuals” who had requested but been denied individual reservations. Many of these “sundry individuals” who received money under the treaty were métis: Charles and Madore Beaubien; Joseph, Jacques, Louis, and Josette Vieux; Joseph, Mark, Jude, Therese and a number of other Bourassas, as well as the children of Daniel Bourassa; Joseph and Alexis LaFromboise and their children; the children of Francois Bourbonnais Sr. and Francois Bourbonnais Jr.; the children of Claude LaFromboise, Antoine Ouilmette, Francis Chevalier, Luther Rice; and the list goes on.\textsuperscript{124} The six métis children of the American trader William Burnett and the Potawatomi Kakima, sister of Topenabe, had received grants of land as early as 1818, under the treaty negotiated that year in western Ohio.\textsuperscript{125} Reserving tracts for many “Indians by descent” became a common practice, reflecting “the growing importance of these people in tribal councils.”\textsuperscript{126} Among the Indians by descent receiving tracts in the Treaty of 1821 were Joseph LaFromboise, Pierre Le
Clerc, Charles and Medore Beaubien, the five métis children of Madeline and Joseph Bertrand, and again, the Burnett métis. “These individuals,” Edmund writes, “realizing that the tribe was giving up most of its remaining lands in Michigan, were anxious to acquire valuable tracts of real estate for themselves. Many possessed the rudiments of a formal education, and in the years to come they would serve as catalyst between the two cultures, mediating Indian-white problems while reaping rewards from both sides.”

The various treaties also reveal the Potawatomis’ growing willingness to accommodate government efforts to push them toward agriculture. In the Treaty of 1826, for instance, the Potawatomi negotiated to have a grist mill built for them on the Tippecanoe River, and for the government to hire a miller to run it, and, in 1832, they negotiated for the construction of a sawmill. In 1828, they received a government payment of $7,500 for “clearing and fencing land, erecting houses, purchasing domestic animals and farming utensils, and in the support of labourers to work for them,” as well as the annual delivery of fifteen hundred weight of iron and 350 pounds of steel for use by the blacksmith they had been promised in earlier treaties. In 1833, when the Illinois and Wisconsin Potawatomi agreed to remove west, they demanded and received for their new homes in the west a promise of $150,000 “to be applied to the erection of mills, farm houses, Indian houses, and blacksmith shops, to agricultural improvements, to the purchase of agricultural implements and stock, and for the support of such physicians, millers, farmers, blacksmiths and other mechanics, as the President of the United States shall think proper to appoint.”

A growing interest in education also was evident. The word teacher first appears in a treaty with the Potawatomi under Article 4 of the Treaty of 1821, by which the Potawatomi ceded most of southwestern Michigan. The article stated that a one-square-mile tract on the
south side of the St. Joseph River was to be selected, “upon which the blacksmiths and teachers employed” by the tribe were to reside. According to Kathryn Lamirand Young, the majority of Potawatomis wanted a Catholic teacher, but the leaders Chebass and Meteor invited the Protestant Isaac McCoy, who sought and received the appointment from Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass. On July 16, 1822, at a salary of $600 a year, McCoy moved to a site one mile west of today's Niles, Michigan, where he established Carey Mission, named in honor of a celebrated Baptist missionary. The site being 180 miles from the nearest white settlement, McCoy had "to hew his way through the forest" because there were as yet no roads.

That December at Niles, McCoy was joined by his longtime associate Johnston Lykins and others from a school he had established two years earlier at Fort Wayne. In addition to Lykins, the group comprised seven members of McCoy's family, six work hands, and eighteen Indians, as well as fifty hogs and five cows. On the first of January 1823, about forty Potawatomis, the leaders Topenabe and Chebass among them, came by McCoy’s place to celebrate the New Year and eat a dinner prepared by the McCoys. "Their observance of holidays is not an original custom among them," McCoy wrote in his journal that day, "but is derived from the French traders among them."

According to McCoy, some of the Potawatomis and Ottawas in and around Carey Mission were nominally Catholic. They had, he said, “some knowledge of the ceremonies of the Catholic missionaries; who were early in their country, and of Catholics, who continue to mingle with them, chiefly for purposes of trade.” He related how some of the Indians near Niles “frequently told us that they still recollected portions of prayers which they had been taught, and two or three old persons told us that ‘they had had water put on their faces,’ as they expressed
On at least two occasions, McCoy told of Potawatomis who, upon approaching him, had crossed themselves in the Catholic fashion.\textsuperscript{138}

The Potawatomis’ long attachment to French traders, who were Roman Catholics, and to the Black Robes whom they first met in the seventeenth century, was evident in the Treaty of 1817. Under Article 16, in which the Potawatomi stated that “they may wish some of their children hereafter educated,” they gave 960 acres on the Raisin River in southeastern Michigan to the rector of the Catholic Church of St. Anne of Detroit.\textsuperscript{139} Loyalty to the Catholic Church was revealed again in 1833 when a supplement to the Chicago Treaty allowed Pokagon’s band of Potawatomi, “on account of their religious creed,” to remain in Michigan rather than remove beyond the Mississippi. This was allowed only because the Catholic Pokagon agreed to remove “to the northern part of the peninsula Michigan,” and settle among the Catholic Ottawas at their reservation near L’Arbre Croche on Lake Michigan.\textsuperscript{140}

The competition for Potawatomi souls – and educational funds – that began with arrival of the Baptist Isaac McCoy at Niles would continue into the years in Kansas, when a host of missionaries from different denominations of the Christian faith sought and received permission to open missions in the Indian Country.\textsuperscript{141} Up until their removal to Kansas, in treaty after treaty with the U.S. government, the Potawatomi set aside funds for education: $2,000 under the 1826 treaty; $1,000 in 1828; $2,000 in 1832; and in the Chicago Treaty of 1833, $70,000 “for purposes of education and the encouragement of the domestic arts.”\textsuperscript{142} The 1833 treaty stated that because the Indians were “desirous to create a perpetual fund” for education, they wanted the $70,000 invested “in some safe stock, the interest of which only is to be applied as may be necessary for the above purposes.”\textsuperscript{143} While those directions affected the entire tribe, the request
undoubtedly was the work of more sophisticated métis negotiators among the Chicago Potawatomi.

McCoy’s appointment at Niles and his friendship with the future U.S. Senator John Tipton, who, in 1823, was appointed Indian agent to the Potawatomi and Miami, was important in events to follow. On June 4, 1823, McCoy presented to Congress his plan for an Indian colony west of the Mississippi River. In 1828, “having made known the desire of certain Potawatomies to visit the Country west of the Mississippi,” McCoy was appointed, with a $15,000 appropriation from Congress, to accompany an exploring party to the Kansas Indian Country to examine lands for the removal of Indians from the East.144

“We are going to look [for] a home for a homeless people – a people who were once lords of all the Continent of America, and whose just claims have never been acknowledged by others, nor conveyed away by themselves,” McCoy wrote in his journal. “The measure of alocating [sic] the Indians in a country of their own under suitable provisions of our government, is the only one in which we can discover grounds to hope for their preservation.”145 On September 2, 1828, McCoy and his party of three Ottawas, two Potawatomis, and a Potawatomi métis interpreter, reached the Presbyterians’ Harmony mission, established in 1821 among the Osage in present-day Bates County, Missouri.146 Two days later they crossed the Missouri line into the Indian Country and camped on a river McCoy wrote as “the Miry DeSein,” a French name meaning “River of Swans,” whose correct spelling was Marais des Cygnes, a tributary often called the “Upper Osage River,” and which would figure prominently in events to come.

McCoy was surprised at the richness of the land as he traveled from the headwaters of the Osage River, into the Neosho River basin, and north to the Kansas River. He traveled as far as 140 miles west of the Missouri border, returning by way of the north bank of the Kaw. “I had
expected to find the country almost wholly destitute of wood,” he stated. “In this I have been happily disappointed.” He wrote of “a beautiful rolling prairie [sic] country,” diversified with “streaks of wood-lands,” and limestone abundant on the hillsides and in the gullies. He envisioned a settled country, writing that the lands should be laid out so that each settler could have fifty to eighty acres of woodland and as much prairie as necessary. He thought that hogs would thrive initially but that the country was best suited to sheep and cattle grazing. This, he wrote, “will be the principal business of farmers.” He found the soil so fertile that “a small field to each [Indian ] would be sufficient … to furnish his bread and vegetables.” McCoy’s enthusiasm for the country apparently was not shared by his Indian companions. Noonday objected to resettlement because of the scarcity of wood, of sugar trees, of bark for bags and twine, and of bulrushes for mats, telling McCoy that he could not “bear the idea of leaving Michigan.” While Gosa vowed to follow McCoy to the new country, the métis interpreter Jean Baptiste Chandonnais tried to discourage the notion of relocating to Kansas, telling Gosa that “should the Indians settle in it, they would soon be driven thence by the influx of white population.”

Despite such objections, and while passage of the Indian Removal Act was still months away, Indians already were moving to the Kansas. As McCoy and his party approached the Missouri state line on their way home that fall of 1828, they encountered two villages of emigrant Shawnees already arrived in the Indian Country and “putting up with their own hands very neat log cabbins.” With passage of the Indian Removal Act in May 1830, the Shawnees soon were joined by Indian people of many other nations.

Chapter Summary
This chapter has presented an overview of the Potawatomi, illustrating the tribe’s close historical connection to the French and their introduction to the Catholic faith through Jesuit missionaries who arrived in New France in the early seventeenth century. Potawatomi involvement in the fur trade and their embrace of interracial unions as a way to make friends with the French strangers in their midst explains the advent of the métis, who became numerous among the Potawatomi, as well as the associated Ottawa and Ojibwa. The Iroquois wars precipitated the scattering of Potawatomi bands, which, by the time of the Seven Year’s War, were living from one end of the Great Lake crescent to the other. With the expulsion of the French empire from North America in 1763, geographic location often influenced Potawatomi allegiances during future colonial wars between Britain and the United States. Loyalties could differ, not just between bands, but among family members, as well. The full-blood Potawatomi Kakima, who married the Scots-Irish fur trader William Burnett, for instance, had one brother, Chebass, who was a militant, pro-British leader, while husband William and her brother Topenabe were pro-American, and another brother, Pokagon, remained neutral.\(^{153}\)

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1 Kathryn Lamirand Young, "Never 'Quite' White - Never 'Quite' Indian: The Cultural Dilemma of the Citizen Band Potawatomi" (Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 1995), iv, v. Because the Potawatomi were “ever interested in acquiring spiritual power,” they accepted French Christian missionaries easily, Young writes, although their Catholicism was “a synthesis of religious practice.”


4 The most recognized scholars of the Potawatomi are historian R. David Edmunds and anthropologist James A. Clifton. Helpful dissertations are Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White” and Joseph Francis Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West: Origins of the Citizen Band” (Ph.D. diss, University of Oklahoma, 1961).

See ibid, and Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 17.

Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 57.

Young, "Never ‘Quite’ White," 18.

Ibid, 19, 21.


See "Relation of what occurred in the Mission of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, in the country of New France, from the Summer of the year 1653 to the Summer of the year 1654," in Edna Kenton, ed., *The Indians of North America*, selected and edited from Reuban Gold Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1927), 47-48; R. David Edmunds, *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 4-5; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 14; and David Goldfield, et al, *The American Journey: A History of the United States* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1998), 64. Le Mercier's letter also said: "All of the Indian peoples have forsaken their former country and withdrawn to the more distant Nations, toward the great lake which we call 'the lake of the Stinkards.'" This was Green Bay, called the lake of the Stinkards because the Indians who fled there previously had lived by the ocean and the Indian word for ocean, because it was salt water, was "stinking water." Green Bay was not salt water but it was odorous because of the sulphurous soil surrounding it.


Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 16.

Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 438-441.


23 Murphy, *Potawatomi Indians of the West*, 101.

24 See ibid, 101; Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 9, 23; and Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 7-8.


28 See Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 43; and Johnson, *The Michigan Fur Trade*, 6, 29. "Michilimackinac was a veritable nest of illicit traders," Johnson writes. "When the French governor sent Sieur Alphonse de Tonty to bring them back to Montreal, only twenty followed him. The others, 84 in number, had planned a trading trip down the Mississippi to the establishment there, where, said they, thirty had already gone with 10 canoes loaded with beaver."


33 Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West," 6.


35 Ibid, 14, 42.


39 Coolidge, *A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County*, 10. LaSalle arrived at the mouth of the St. Joseph River on November 1, 1679.


Coolidge, *A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County*, 10-11. According to the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, 11 (1888), 178-79 n5, the St. Joseph River was surveyed in 1879 by a corps of U.S. engineers from its mouth up river to Niles. The distance was not twenty-five miles as suggested by Coolidge, but forty-two miles to Niles and 56.39 miles to South Bend.


Courtemanche had served as commander of the post from 1693 to 1697.


Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 47-49, 188n. 36.

Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 47, 186 n.29. The prominent fur trader Rene Bourassa first appears in the St. Joseph register on July 25, 1735, when he serves as godfather to Marie Anne Deshĕtres, daughter of Charlotte Chevalier and her husband, the blacksmith Antoine Deshĕtres. Catholicism, Sleeper-Smith writes, “did not demand of Native Americans that same personal transformation required of Protestant conversion.”

Ibid, 49.

Ibid, 50.

Ibid.


See Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 29-30; Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 43; Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 72, 84, 89; Louise Phelps Kellogg, *The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, (Madison: State Historical Society, 1925), 271-73; and C.M. Burton, "Early Detroit," in *Historic Michigan: Land of the Great Lakes*, 1:163. Edmunds writes that other Potawatomi from the St. Joseph returned to old villages in Wisconsin, while others may have scattered to the south, in the Illinois River Valley. Clifton writes that Ouilamette (also Winamac or Catfish) had migrated with a substantial number of Potawatomi from Green Bay to the St. Joseph River in 1701. Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West," 6, writes that due to "difficulties with the Fox tribe, in which the Potawatomi and other tribes were allies of the French, an undetermined number of the Fire Nation moved into the protective environs of Fort Detroit. Some were living in that neighborhood at least as early as 1714."

See Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 29-30; and Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 86-88. Clifton writes that Potawatomi villages rarely exceeded three hundred people and generally averaged fewer than one hundred. In addition to the Indian people at Detroit, Burton, "Early Detroit," 157, writes that 270 persons of French descent were living there in 1706, including twenty-five families, all of whom were required at night to go within the fort palisades.


Ibid.

Ibid, 52-55.

See ibid, 55-56; and Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 27.


See ibid, 58, 78; and Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 134. When the British occupied Fort St. Joseph, the St. Joseph Potawatomi resented their presence and did not welcome British traders into their villages.


Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 75.


White, *The Middle Ground*, 367. The struggle for power within villages also pertained to white villages.


Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 139.

Ibid.

Ibid.
77 See Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 101, 110-12; and White, *The Middle Ground*, 397. Siggenauk’s continued attachment to the French is suggested by his cooperation in the attack with the son of longtime St. Joseph trader Louis Chevalier, whom the British had removed. Edmunds argues that the St. Joseph Potawatomi, needing trade goods, “were willing to accept anyone who made such merchandise available,” and that some, by 1780, were becoming more pro-British.

78 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 139.

79 See ibid, 139-49; and Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 32-33.

80 Young, 33.

81 See Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 142; and Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 118-19. The Fort Harmer Treaty also came to naught. Of the Indians present, the Delaware, Wyandot, and Seneca were the only ones with claims to the lands involved, while others who had claims, the Shawnee and Miami, avoided the treaty proceedings.


84 See Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 130-133, 153-54; and Young “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 35. In the decade before the Louisiana Purchase, the Potawatomi plagued settlers in southern Illinois, stealing horses, slaughtering livestock, and making solitary travel dangerous. And, encouraged by Spain, Potawatomi warriors crossed the Mississippi to attack the Osage.


86 See ibid, 155; Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 171-72; Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 35-36; and Kappler, “Treaty With The Wyandot, Etc., 1795,” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* 2:239-45. The ceding of these parcels in Illinois angered Illinois-Wisconsin Potawatomis, who were not present at the treaty proceedings and who never received any of the annuity pledged to the tribe because the annuity payment was distributed at Detroit.

87 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 172.


89 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 172.


95 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 208.

96 Ibid, 209-10. Potawatomis again slaughtered prisoners and wounded men during Proctor’s assault on Fort Meigs, near the rapids of the Maumee River.
97 Ibid, 211-12.


99 Clifton, *The Prairie Potawatomi*, 214. This followed the December 24, 1814, Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812.

100 Ibid, 215.


102 Ibid, 205-06.

103 See ibid, 218; Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 222-23; and George E. Fay, ed., *Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States 1789-1867: Publications in Anthropology Ethnology Series*, no. 19 (Greeley, Colorado: University of Northern Colorado Museum of Anthropology, 1971), 38-39. Edmunds explains that federal officials had negotiated before with a few chiefs representing only one or two villages, but nonetheless regarded them as spokesmen for the entire tribe.

104 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 223.


107 Fay, *Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States*, 40-50. For the Potawatomi specifically, the government promised an annual annuity of one thousand dollars for fifteen years, the specie to be delivered at Detroit. Provisions that eventually would appear in treaties with the Potawatomi alone – such as the appointed of an agent, the hiring of a blacksmith, and promises to erect mills on the reservation – were included in this treaty for the Wyandots and others but not the Potawatomi.


on the one hand, with the Illinois and Wisconsin Prairie Potawatomi, much more primitive in character, on the other.”


116 Ibid, 233-34.


120 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 227.


122 Ibid, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, September 20, 1828,” 2:294-97.” Under this treaty, the Potawatomi received an additional permanent annuity of $2,000, another $1,000 for twenty years, $30,000 in goods, and another $10,000 in goods and $5,000 in silver to be paid in 1829.

123 Ibid, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, October 20, 26, 27, 1832,” 2:353-55, 367-70, 372-75. Annuities ranged from $15,000 a year for twelve years to $35,000 a year for twenty years, as well as $247,000 in merchandise, and $111,879 to cover debts.


127 Ibid. Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 228, notes that the métis Billy Caldwell and Alexander Robinson, selected as intercultural brokers for the Potawatomi during the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, also came out well; the Anglo-Irish-Mohawk Caldwell received an annual four hundred dollars lifetime annuity from the U.S. government, and the Scot-Ottawa Robinson three hundred dollars.


129 Ibid, 71.

130 Ibid, 98.

131 See Fay, 51-53; and Young, "Never ‘Quite’ White," 48. Pokagon’s village in the South Bend area was exempt from the cession. Article 4 also stipulated that a one-square-mile tract for a teacher, blacksmith, and farming instructor was to be set aside on the Grand River for the Ottawa nation.


133 See Isaac McCoy, *History of Baptist Indian Missions, Embracing Remarks on the Former and Present Condition of the Aboriginal Tribes; Their Settlement within the Indian Territory, and Their Future Prospects* (Washington: William M. Morrison, 1840), 107; Coolidge, *A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County*, 17; Lela

134 See Coolidge, *A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County*, 17; and Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821." 127. Early on, McCoy’s school in Fort Wayne reported ten English pupils, six French, one Negro, and eight Indian.

135 Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 141.

136 Ibid, 142.


138 Ibid, 111-12, 237. McCoy told how on one occasion in October 1824, after he had preached “at the house of Amukos, an elderly man came and took me by the hand, by way of acknowledgment for the favour of preaching to them, and as he approached me he crossed himself after the fashion of the Catholics.” On another occasion, in 1821, McCoy wrote that a Potawatomi “came into my house with many singular airs. He first touched my hand, and then kissed the place on his own hand, which had come in contact with mine. He then wet his finger and touched my forehead, each shoulder, and my breast, which was virtually crossing me according to the Catholic ceremonies.” McCoy’s response was to “quietly allow the simpleton to perform his ceremonies to his own taste.”

139 Fay, *Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States* 45.

140 See ibid, 112; Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 240-41; and Murphy, *Potawatomis of the West*, 17-18n3.

141 Competition among missionaries was intense in the Kansas Indian Country. Presbyterians established two missions, one in April 1834 on the Wea reservation, and another in 1835 to the Iowa, Sac and Fox. By 1830, Methodist missionaries were among the Kansa and emigrant Shawnee. Methodists also launched significant missions to the emigrant Delaware, Kickapoo, and Wyandot, and less extensive efforts to the Peoria, Wea, Piankeshaw, Kaskaskia, and Potawatomi. Baptists worked among the Potawatomi, Shawnee, Delaware, Wea, Ottawa, and Stockbridge. The Friends established a mission to the Shawnee, and Moravians to the Munsees. See Mark Stephen Joy, “Into the Wilderness”: Protestant Missions Among the Emigrant Indians of Kansas, 1830-1854” (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1992).


143 Ibid, 98.


145 Ibid, 229-230.

146 Ibid. Among the party were Gosa, Wesauogana, and Naoquah Kozhuk, who were Ottawas; Magaukwok and Shawaunukwuk, who were Potawatomis; the Potawatomi métis interpreter Jean Baptiste Chandonnais; and two hired white men.

147 See ibid, 254; and Murphy, *Potawatomi Indians of the West*, 100.

148 Ibid, 259.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid, 265. Noonday does not seem to have been on the trip, but responded to inquiries from McCoy once he returned to the States.
151 Ibid, 265-66.

152 Ibid, 258-59. In all, McCoy said “three or four” villages of Shawnees were in Kansas, consisting “chiefly of about one half of those who resided at Waupaugkonetta in Ohio, some from Merimack, in this State [Missouri], some from Lewistown, O. & elsewhere.”

153 Susan Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 90.
CHAPTER IV

MÉTIS ORIGINS

Only in the past thirty years have scholars begun to document the interracial unions between French men and Indian women during the years of the North American fur trade. These unions created a population of biracial, or métis, children (métis meaning “mixed”). Métis, as historians Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. H. Brown define the term, are “persons of mixed Indian and European ancestry who for whatever reasons, are not regarded as either Indian or white.” Often pejoratively, they are referred to as “half-breeds” or “mixed-bloods.”¹ A recent synthesis of scholarship on métis, To Intermix With Our White Brothers: Indian Mixed Bloods in the United States from Earliest Times to the Indian Removals, argues that people crossed the racial divide in North America “more readily and more frequently than previously imagined.” So many métis were among Indian people living at Detroit by the early 1800s, for instance, that Michigan territorial governor Lewis Cass described them as “extremely numerous.”²

The most-studied métis are those of the North West Rebellion under the leadership of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont, who, in 1885, led an unsuccessful effort to create la nation métisse in western Canada’s Red River Valley. While much historical interest has focused on the Red River Valley, the history of métis people, as Peterson and Brown note, “runs deeper and more broadly across the North American landscape than has previously been acknowledged.” Indeed, the roots of métis culture lay, not in western Canada, but at a place one thousand miles east – Sault Ste. Marie, Michilimackinac, and the Lake Michigan crescent—home to the Potawatomi.³

That the Potawatomi and other Algonquian-speaking people were scattered over a wide geographical area during the fur trade years is a central premise of Richard White’s study of the
Great Lakes region from 1650 to 1815. White identifies five different areas where Algonquian people concentrated, areas he defines as “regional blocs.” They stretched from Green Bay in the west to the Illinois Country in the south, north to Michilimackinac, east to Detroit, and, eventually into the Ohio Valley. These blocs were the subunits of White’s pays d’en haut. They were, he writes, “flexible and shifting,” gaining and losing members with time and with members of different tribes often scattered among different blocs. The scattered and diverse nature of these Algonquian villages also is noted by historian John E. Foster, who states that métis had diverse origins because they formed “a variety of distinctive communities in widely separated (geographic) areas.”

Certain of these distinctive métis communities are central to this dissertation, which focuses on core métis families who removed with the Potawatomi to the Kansas Indian Country under the U.S. government's Indian removal policy of the 1830s and 1840s. The kin networks of these core families were extensive and, like the métis settlements themselves, scattered from one end of the Lake Michigan crescent to the other. The Bertrand, Bourassa, and Burnett families, for example, settled in the St. Joseph River Valley of southern Michigan and northern Indiana; the Beaubiens, Navarres, and Nadeaus in the Detroit/River Raisin region; the Bourbonnaises and Ogees in the Illinois Country; and the LaFromboises, Ouilmettes, and Vieuxs in Milwaukee and Green Bay.

By using a genealogical methodology it is possible to trace the origins of these families. Their life journeys provide insight into the differing influences that preceded their removal to Kansas, and thus, the differing ways they responded once there. Furthermore, this genealogical approach demonstrates that geography, as well as kinship and Catholicism, were key factors in determining settlement patterns in Kansas. Settlement patterns were important because where
people settled often indicated their band affiliation, and band affiliation played a central role in the subsequent fracturing of the tribe in Kansas.

Genealogies also are important because they illustrate the generational continuity of métis families as middle men in the fur and transportation trades and also because they lay the groundwork for the removal period, when different groups moved beyond the Mississippi at different times and to different locales. Potawatomi from northern Indiana and southern Michigan would remove to southeastern Kansas while those from Illinois and Wisconsin removed to Iowa. The Michigan-Indiana group had continued to adopt white ways following the War of 1812 and thus were more acculturated than many Potawatomi living in Illinois and Wisconsin, which were more distant from the influx of white settlement. The Potawatomi in Illinois and Wisconsin formed the nucleus of the more traditional Prairie Band, while many of those from northern Indiana and southern Michigan were so Christianized that they would be known as the Mission Band. By tracing métis genealogies it is possible to locate families in one or other of the two regions.

**Origins in southern Michigan and northern Indiana**

**The Burnetts**
The arrival date of the American trader William Burnett in the St. Joseph River Valley is not known, although it was shortly before or shortly after the departure of the principal French trader, Louis Chevalier. Chevalier was ordered out of the valley in 1780 by the British, who apparently were suspicious of his loyalty to the Crown during the years of the American Revolution. With Chevalier gone from the valley, the New Jersey-born Burnett, of Scots-Irish descent, became the principal trader on the St. Joseph and the Kankakee. As had Chevalier, Burnett was obliged to pay tribute to the British at Michilimackinac (the name was changed to Mackinac in 1779) until "the victories of the (American) Revolution gave him courage to disregard their authority." Burnett's account books show him to be a wealthy man, trading in peltries and agricultural products. Burnett's fur trade activity spanned the period from about 1780 to 1812, when the English controlled the important posts at Detroit and Michilmackinac and when the most desirable trade goods came from England.

Burnett's warehouse stood at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, although his trading post was a mile or two inland, in what later became Section 25 of St. Joseph Township, on the west side of the river – the same side of the river where the Potawatomi lived. Burnett's cabin was said to have stood at the foot of a hill, about three hundred or four hundred feet from the river. Between the house and the river was a well-kept orchard of apples, peaches, quinces and cherries. He also had a warehouse at Chicago and a house on the Kankakee River where he spent his winters, "leaving his St. Joseph post to his Indian wife."

Scholars and genealogists agree that Burnett's Indian wife was Kakima, a full-blood Potawatomi. She was the daughter of the prominent Potawatomi chief Nanaquiba, who had counseled for peace during Pontiac's Rebellion against the British in 1763-64. She also was the sister of the prominent Potawatomis Cheebas, Topinebe, and Pokagon, each of whom had
divided allegiances. The pro-British Cheebas, or “the Duckling,” sided with Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, during the War of 1812 and helped the British defend Mackinac against American attack. Pokagon remained neutral, while Topinebe, or “Sits Quietly,” used Tenskwatawa's defeat at Prophetstown “to publicly declare his support for the Americans.” He signed a peace treaty with the United States in July 1814, and promised to aid the Americans in any future war against the English.

That Burnett married the daughter of the prominent chief Nanaquiba fits with the custom of the country. As Sylvia Van Kirk and others have argued, unions with Indian women were instrumental in gaining for fur trade men like Burnett the access they needed to Indian villages by transforming those of European ancestry from strangers into kin. What is known about Kakima's father, Nanaquiba, comes from the journal of Henry Hamilton, British lieutenant governor at Fort Detroit. In an entry dated October 27, 1778, Hamilton spoke of him as “the Old Chief Naniquibe.” Nanaquiba apparently had traveled some distance from his village on the St. Joseph River to attend a feast given “in a spirit of union” by the Ottawas to the Miamis and other Indians. Hamilton had attended the feast, where he met Naniquibe and commended him for “his zeal in coming so far at his advanced age to give an example to the young men.” The British Hamilton noticed that Nanaquiba was wearing “a Medal of the French King,” which Hamilton considered “an impropriety” since it was not the French king, but the king of Great Britain who now “supplied (the Potawatomi) with ammunition and all necessities.” Hamilton wrote that “having an English medal ready, I made the exchange.”

This simple exchange says much about the history of the region—that it was the French whom Potawatomis like Nanaquiba had long embraced as political and economic allies, not the British or more recently the Americans. Native people – including the Shawnee, Delaware,
Wyandot, Miami, Ottawa, Chippewa, Kickapoo, Menominee, Sac, Fox, and Potawatomi – were caught in shifting coalitions and alignments as these colonial powers, as discussed in Chapter Two, contested for control of the vast territory between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River in the years from 1761 to 1795. During the Tecumseh uprising and the War of 1812, when many Potawatomi sided with the British against the Americans, William Burnett's post on the St. Joseph River apparently remained open – even though he was rabidly pro-American. During the Indian attack on Chicago's Fort Dearborn in 1812, Burnett openly aligned himself with the Americans by intervening. "Shortly after that," Sleeper-Smith writes, "he disappeared, reportedly the victim of an irate, pro-British Indian."  

Sleeper-Smith credits Burnett's success to his marriage to Kakima, who exchanged furs for trade goods with all of her brothers, even as they moved into oppositional villages during the War of 1812. Even the militant Main Poc, who was involved in the massacre of Americans at Fort Dearborn and whose village was in the swampy headwaters of the Kankakee, had access to St. Joseph River trade goods during these years. Kakima, Sleeper-Smith writes, "facilitated an exchange process that allowed the Potawatomi to avoid a disastrous path of being unwaveringly pro-British or pro-American." Burnett relied on his wife to handle his operation on the St. Joseph while he wintered in Potawatomi villages on the Kankakee, reporting in February 1790 that Kakima "had done on her part in the trading very, very well." The marriage of William Burnett and Kakima, recorded by the Sulpician priest Michael Levadoux at Detroit in 1782, indicates that Kakima already was a baptized Catholic. Her baptismal name was Angelique. By 1812, Burnett and Kakima had seven métis children – James, John, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Nancy, and Rebecca – at least two of whom, as had their father, married an Indian. The oldest, James Burnett, born in about 1784, married Menache, daughter of She-cau-go-se-qua; and
the second oldest, John Burnett, married No-ta-no-quay. Of particular importance to this dissertation is William and Kakima's bachelor son, Abraham, who kept a store at Fort Wayne. Although he never married, Abraham, in the mid-1820s, adopted a son, a full-blood Potawatomi who had been orphaned at a village on the St. Joseph River, not far from Niles, Michigan. In a deposition he later gave in Kansas, the boy said that his father was the Potawatomi Shau-uque-be and his mother was Cone-zo-qua, daughter of Cheebas. Thus, the boy's grandfather was the prominent Cheebas – the brother of Kakima, Topinebe, and Pokagon. With the death of his parents, the boy said, his grandfather Cheebas took him to live at Fort Wayne, where they "remained for two winters."23

"When at Fort Wayne," the deposition states, "we lived with a gentleman named Abraham Burnett. He was a half breed Pottawatomie Indian. This Abraham Burnett adopted me as his son…I was provided for and cared for by him after he adopted me and the name of Abraham Burnett was given to me." That the two shared the same name would cause much confusion in the historical record. The Abraham Burnett who figures later in Kansas was not the offspring of William Burnett and Kakima, but an adopted relative – the grandson of Kakima's brother Chebass, raised by Kakima's own son Abraham. In the deposition, Abraham Burnett states that when he had been at Fort Wayne about two years, "my adopted Father Abraham Burnett sent me to the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky. I remained there about five years and then returned home for a short vacation. I then returned to the Academy where I remained about eight months."24

That the adopted boy Abraham Burnett went to the Choctaw Academy is important to understanding the tangled affiliations of Potawatomi and métis people, as well as the fact of métis education, which played such a large role in their leadership positions during treaty-
making and after the removal. The Choctaw Academy, under the care of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, opened in 1825 at Great Crossings, Scott County, Kentucky, on the property of U.S. senator and future vice president Richard M. Johnson, who viewed the academy as a commercial venture to alleviate his debts. At first, the school used government funds stipulated by treaty for the education of Choctaw youth, but ultimately, annuities and children came from many other tribes, including the Potawatomi.25

Enrollment figures in February 1828 listed 101 students – sixty-five Choctaws, twenty-five Creeks, and eleven "Putawatamies," among whom was Chebass's grandson, Abram Burnett. By the fall of 1834, when the academy superintendent, the Rev. Thomas Henderson, listed all 156 students by name, tribe, age, and class, and whether the boy was of "good," "ordinary," or "dull" mind, there were twenty-four Potawatomis among them, one of whom was a good deal older than the others. He was listed as twenty-one years old, of "good mind," and enrolled in the last and highest of the four classes. His name was recorded as William Burnett. It is possible, because the age and dates correspond with Abraham Burnett's deposition, that the name was recorded in error. On the other hand, this William Burnett may have been the grandson of the patriarch William Burnett, whose second son, John, married the Indian woman Node-no-qua, attended the Choctaw Academy in 1827, and had a son named William.26

Either way, attendance at the academy of at least two Burnetts and possibly three reveals the family to be interested in education and advancement in the white way, particularly because, early on, villages selected just a few young men to send away for schooling.27 Abraham Burnett's years at the Choctaw Academy would have immersed this full-blood Potawatomi boy in American ways, though he surely already had had an introductory lesson from his adopted British-Potawatomi métis father, Abraham Burnett, at Fort Wayne. That the Choctaw Academy
aimed at high standards in education is reflected in its curriculum, which not only included "reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, practical surveying, astronomy, and vocal music," but a debating club and the Napoleon Society, whose principal object was "to instruct the young men in all the peculiarities of etiquette observed in the polite circles of Society." The school also formed the Lycergus court, which consisted "of a grand-jury, a Judge, sheriff, two lawyers and clerk." Members of the grand jury were a kind of police force, taking notice "of every species of misconduct during the hours of recess and at all times when out of school."

During regular sessions of the Lycergus court, officers presented their findings, "endeavoring to copy the proceedings of common courts of Justice." The academy's aim of acculturating Indian and métis children into white society is apparent in its every facet, including its dark gray with blue and white student uniforms, which included a frock coat, pantaloons, shirts, and a hat for dress wear and a cap for everyday use. The only bow to Indian attire apparently came to the feet, since each student was issued four pairs of "shoes or moccasins."

The academy closed in 1848. Enrollment had declined as several tribes undertook efforts to establish local schools and as the school faced criticism from tribal leaders because graduates did not fit into their tribal communities when they returned home. Besides the Burnetts, other families important to this study enrolled sons in the academy, including the Bourassas, Navarres, LaFromboises, and Bourbonnaises.

**Isaac McCoy**

The adopted Abraham Burnett, as did a number of Potawatomi métis, not only had ties to the Baptist-affiliated Choctaw Academy, but also to the Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy, who opened a school and mission in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in May 1820. The school, assisted by McCoy's longtime associate Johnston Lykins, soon reported ten English pupils, six French, one
Negro, and eight Indian, among whom was Abraham Burnett, whose adoptive father was a Fort Wayne storekeeper. 31 In his *History of Baptist Indian Missions*, McCoy writes that one of his pupils, "the lad" Abraham Burnett, served as his interpreter and travelling companion on a trip to the St. Joseph River Valley in June 1821. As they set out from Fort Wayne on June 7, McCoy intended to meet with key Potawatomi chiefs in hopes of persuading them to let him establish a mission and school among them on the St. Joseph River. 32

Although Abraham was only about eight years old, he served as McCoy’s guide, seemingly eager to please. One day while the party was stopped for lunch "a tremendous shower poured down," McCoy writes. "I sat over my saddlebags, until Abraham, seeing that I was taking wet fast, ran to an old Indian camp, and brought thence a piece of bark, which I held over me as a partial shelter; but it was impossible to keep dry." 33 The following night, Abraham went to the neighboring villages of Potawatomi to announce McCoy's coming. "I met Topenebe, Chebass, and Cheshaugen, and others, at one of their villages,” McCoy wrote. “As is usual on those occasions, business was opened by throwing my tobacco in a heap on the ground, in the midst of the company, followed by a round of smoking. Next came our talk. I spoke very cautiously to them upon all subjects except the advantages of education and the character of our institution as it respected education.”

From the St. Joseph, he set off for Menominee's village near today's town of Twin Lakes, Indiana, stopping along the way at “the residence of the Burnetts, Abraham's relations … Here we were made comfortable, rested two days, and obtained a supply of provisions.” 34 McCoy described the Burnetts as "acknowledged Indians by their tribe," who were "intelligent," and "related to Topenebe, the principal chief of the Putawatomi tribe." 35
Abraham again served as interpreter and guide that summer when McCoy, hoping that the Potawatomi would offer him land for a mission, sent Robert Montgomery, teacher at the Fort Wayne mission, to attend upcoming treaty negotiations at Chicago in August 1821. On the way, Montgomery stayed at the home of "a Mr. Bobia," probably a phonetic spelling for Beaubien. While there, Topinebe and Chebass came into his room and agreed to “do everything they could” to help McCoy locate a mission on the St. Joseph.36 Upon reaching the Chicago treaty grounds, Montgomery reported that Abraham’s uncle John Burnett sat in with the Potawatomis on their private councils and agreed to "use his influence" to secure the mission land for McCoy.37

The Carey Mission

The Chicago Treaty of 1821, concluded on August 29 and ratified on March 25, 1822, was a victory for Montgomery and McCoy. Article 4 of the treaty specified that the United States, for a term of fifteen years, would appropriate an annual sum of $1,000 to the Potawatomi nation in support of a teacher and blacksmith, who would reside on a one-square-mile tract selected for them (and ostensibly their school) on the south side of the St. Joseph River, on lands not ceded by the Potawatomi.38 After receiving an appointment from Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass to take charge of the mission at a salary fixed at $600 a year, McCoy, in 1822, moved to a site one mile west of today’s Niles, Michigan, where he established Carey Mission, named in honor of a celebrated Baptist missionary. The site being 180 miles from the nearest white settlement, McCoy had "to hew his way through the forest" because there were as yet no roads.39

Almost forty years old at the time, McCoy finally had fulfilled his longtime dream of living among Indian people. His mission family at Fort Wayne, thirty-two persons in all, moved to Carey Mission that December, the group comprising seven members of McCoy's family, one
assistant, six work hands, and eighteen Indians, as well as fifty hogs and five cows. On the first of January 1823, about forty Potawatomis, Topinebe and Chebass among them, came by to celebrate the New Year and eat a dinner prepared by the McCoys. "Their observance of holidays is not an original custom among them," McCoy wrote in his journal that day, "but is derived from the French traders among them."41

The Bertrands

The genealogy of Joseph Bertrand II, an important nineteenth-century trader in the St. Joseph River Valley, is representative of many French Canadians in the fur trade. Joseph’s ancestors were among the pioneer families of New France. His grandfather Jean Bertrand was a young man, no more than twenty-five years old, when he emigrated to New France with his brother Gabriel sometime in the late 1680s from the village of La Ferrière, in the province of Poitou. Jean Bertrand, as did all Canadian pioneers, settled in the St. Lawrence River Valley. His first residence was at Riviere du Loup, north of Quebec, where the seigneur was Charles Aubert La Chesnaye, a wealthy man deeply involved in the fur trade. Riviere du Loup was just across the St. Lawrence from Tadoussac, which already had become the central post of the French fur trade.42

By age thirty, Jean Bertrand was living in Montreal, where, on September 23, 1697, he married Marie Charlotte Brar dit Riverdra, a twenty-three-year-old native of Sorel, Quebec. The marriage license notes the presence of Marie's parents, Jean and Charlotte Coy Brar of Riviere du Loup, and of her brother, Jean Brunion, who "could not sign." That Marie's brother was illiterate suggests their humble origins, as likely also were those of her husband Jean Bertrand, who became a habitant, a farmer. Judging from future marriage records, the children of Jean and Marie Bertrand also were illiterate.43 By the 1720s, the habitant Jean Bertrand had a farm of
thirty-seven arpents, of which thirty were tillable – a goodly amount considering that it took three years' labor for one man to clear four arpents. Even the most prosperous Canadians usually tilled no more than one hundred. Four of Jean Bertrand's arpents were still in prairie, and three apparently holding the house, barn, and stable when he died sometime before 1729. He left his estate to his widow and two of his nine children – his oldest sons Jacques and Laurent.44

The first-born Jacques Bertrand spent his life in Montreal, raising eight children and working as a mason and stone cutter. He probably also worked the farm since most artisans in New France were farmers who practiced their trades on the side. While Jacques stayed put, the second-born son, Laurent Bertrand, like so many other young men, opted to leave the farm and sign on as an *engagé* in the fur trade. "A season in the woods," geographer R. Cole Harris writes, "was an adventure which might be profitable, and throughout the French regime the lure of furs along the upper Ottawa and around the Grand Lac beyond attracted many of Canada's most vigorous youths."45 Why Laurent Bertrand chose to enter the trade and leave the farm to his brother is not known. Perhaps it was an adventure, or perhaps he needed to earn money to help support his widowed mother, three sisters, and two younger brothers. Laurent Bertrand, on June 7, 1732, just a month shy of his twenty-fifth birthday, engaged himself to Laurent-Eustache Gamelin, who was hiring for a number of posts, including Michilimackinac, which already was the central French trading post in the west.46

Two years after Laurent entered the fur trade, another of Jean Bertrand's four sons, twenty-two-year-old Francois engaged on June 5, 1734, for the post on Lake Nipigon, north of Lake Superior. A few years later, on May 18, 1740, the last and youngest of Jean Bertrand's sons, Touissaint, left for Michilimackinac.47 The scenario of three of the four Bertrand brothers engaging in the fur trade fits the *voyageur* model of historian Carolyn Podruchny, who writes
that it was the sons of *habitants* who were the overwhelming majority of men to sign up for the fur trade and that service in the trade sometimes was an occupation "handed down through generations," which it certainly was in the Bertrands' case.\(^{48}\)

The second-generation Bertrand fur trader brothers Laurent, Francois, and Touissaint passed the occupational wand to their nephew, the third-generation Joseph Laurent Bertrand Sr., born November 8, 1741, in Montreal. Joseph was the fifth son of the oldest Bertrand brother, the farmer and stone cutter Jacques Bertrand. Perhaps it was Joseph's birth order that led him to grow up and follow his uncles into the trade. When Joseph left for Michilimackinac is not known, although he certainly was there by the summer of 1762, when, at age twenty-one, on August 31, 1762, he married Michilimackinac native Marie Theresa Dulignon, whose mother, Marie Lamarie, was half French, half Indian.\(^{49}\)

That Joseph married a métis woman fits the pattern documented by Jacqueline Peterson in her essay, "Many Roads to Red River." Utilizing the Catholic *Mackinac Register* of marriages and baptisms, Peterson found that forty-eight percent of the eighty-seven marriages at Michilimackinac from 1698 to 1765 (during the French period) were between Canadian employees of the fur trade and Indian or métis women. While eighty-seven marriages were recorded, it is likely that more unions took place because the register does not record marriages contracted without church sanction. Of recorded baptisms, 38.75 percent were of persons at least one-eighth Indian. During the British period (1766 and 1797), 71.67 percent of the 131 baptisms recorded were of métis.\(^{50}\)

**Michilimackinac**

Peterson paints a vivid picture of life at Michilimackinac. "Trade," she writes, "was the preoccupation of all residents, civilians and soldiers alike."\(^{51}\)

Late in the summer, Montreal
merchants paid a visit or sent agents to supervise the unpacking of canoes laden with trade goods shipped from Montreal and Lachine. Inside the post, goods were sorted and outfits organized for voyages to Lakes Michigan and Superior. Come spring, voyageurs would return from the Indian villages loaded with furs, which were weighed, baled, and marked at Michilimackinac, then shipped to Montreal.

“The population of Michilimackinac rose and fell with the mercury,” Peterson writes. "In the summer months, the narrow beach stretching west to the Ottawa villages was crowded with the canoes and portable mat- and bark-covered wigwams of thousands of visiting natives who came to barter furs, corn, maple sugar, dried fish and bear’s grease for ammunition, traps, stroud (coarse woolen cloth), thimbles, glass beads and trinkets, and brandy, as well as to receive their annual present, a reward for a good hunt and fidelity to the Crown. Several hundred voyageurs, clerks and their bourgeois (wintering traders) came in to tally up the year’s receipts, to revive family ties and obligations or, if single, to spend their meager wages on riotous amusements for a few months, and, if not returning to Montreal, to catch their breath before indebting and indenturing themselves for the next winter’s outfit of goods. When the thousands departed in the fall for the hunting grounds, Michilimackinac battened down for the winter."52

Those who hunkered down for the winter included the families of voyageurs and traders; garrison soldiers, who rarely numbered more than thirty-five men; clerks; apprentices; indentured servants; Indian and black slaves; merchants; retired voyageurs and traders with their kin and servants; and labourers such as Joseph Ainse, "builder of the rows of one-story dwellings within the fort." These "rows of one-story dwellings" were indicated on a map of Fort Michilimackinac drawn in 1749 by Michel Chartier de Lotbinière, who had been dispatched by Canadian Governor de La Galissoniere to survey the route from Montreal to the fort.53
Among the rows of dwellings on Lotbinière's map was the Bertrand house, which stood along the back street of the fort, out-of-the-way, compared to the fort commandant's house, which sat prominently on a corner of the large, central parade ground with its calvaire (crucifix) in the center. One could see it from St. Anne's Church, which dominated the west side of the parade ground, with its garden and court, and the Jesuit residence nearby. Michel Chartier de Lotbinière reported that Fort Michilimackinac contained forty houses, "all very badly built" and made of upright posts caulked inside and outside with clay and cob. Many still were covered with bark, but others, including the church, was built of squared timbers and covered with boards. Chariter counted ten French families at the fort, among whom "three are of mixed blood."54

He was not impressed by the residents he saw, whom he judged to be lazy. "They prefer strolling around the fort's parade ground, from morn till night, with a pipe in their mouth and a tobacco pouch on their left arm, rather than take the least pain to make life more comfortable…They prefer living on corn, fish, and deer or moose grease rather than take the least pain to better their life." Chartier looked down his nose at the Michilimackinac residents, declaring that although they "call themselves merchants" they "are only plain Coureurs de Bois."55 Peterson corrects Chariter's impression by noting that most of the men he saw actually were the "petty merchant elite" of Michilimackinac who "could afford to pass the winter idly parading and smoking."56

**Fourth-generation Bertrands**

Joseph Laurent Bertrand and his métis wife had five children, all born at Michilimackinac. Evidence of the deep kinship and parish ties that marked the fur trade is borne out as these fourth-generations Bertrands continued in the trade. Especially important to this
study is the Bertrand son born on October 8, 1778. He was named Joseph like his father, engaged in the fur trade like his father and, like his father, married a woman who was half-French, half-Indian. Her Indian name was Mouto, but her baptismal name was Madeleine Bourassa. Joseph and Madeleine moved to southern Michigan, where they ran a fur trading post for the American Fur Company and where they and their children, like the Chevaliers and Burnetts before him, became trusted friends of the Potawatomi.

There is no definitive information on when Joseph Bertrand left Michilimackinac and moved to the St. Joseph River Valley, although it was sometime in the first years of the nineteenth century. Genealogist Gladys Moeller says he was working as an agent for the American Fur Company as early as 1804. That he definitely was in the valley by 1807 is evident from records of Mackinac notary Samuel Abbott, who listed Joseph Bertrand as signing on as an *engagé* for the St. Joseph Valley on July 29, 1807. Bertrand had visited Abbott's office that July in keeping with the law, which required *voyageurs* embarking into the interior to sign before a notary public a formal contract or *engagement*. Joseph signed on with Charles Chandonett, who was one of thirty-five independent employers in the fur trade in 1807. Although Joseph signed on as a lowly hired hand for the St. Joseph trade, he would rise in the social order of the business after the disappearance of William Burnett in 1812.

Joseph Bertrand settled far upstream from the mouth of the St. Joseph at what the French called *Parc Aux Vaches*, or cow pasture, named for the buffalo that once roamed there. Two important Indian trails crossed nearby – the Sauk Trail, or old Chicago Trail, which linked Detroit and Chicago; and the Miami Trail, linking the Grand River to the north and the Wabash River to the south. Bertrand built his cabin on the west bank of the St. Joseph, just below Pokagan's Creek, the future town of Niles, and the site of old Fort St. Joseph, which was
destroyed by the Spanish in 1783. The old mission church still stood, however, and local tradition says Bertrand took logs from it to build his cabin. A staunch Catholic, he also built a new log church, frequented by the approximately forty French families living around his trading post, which would become today's town of Bertrand, Michigan.\textsuperscript{61}

With the arrival of Joseph Bertrand and his métis wife, the type of Catholic fur trade community that had existed earlier, during the Chevalier years, was re-established, "with kinship, Catholicism and trade inextricably intertwined."\textsuperscript{62} Joseph Bertrand offered quality goods through the American Fur Company and was "a more agreeable fur trade partner for the Potawatomi" than was William Burnett, because Bertrand "possessed none of Burnett's nationalistic fervor" and remained politically neutral.\textsuperscript{63} The Bertrands lived fifty miles upstream from the mouth of the St. Joseph, in the midst of five Potawatomi villages, including that of Leopold Pokagon, who was the brother of Chebass and Topinebe.\textsuperscript{64} According to James Clifton, Joseph Bertrand took Pokagon's son, also named Leopold, into his care and "manipulated his way into a position of considerable influence, and founded a modest dynasty."\textsuperscript{65} Clifton's assessment seems quite harsh considering that Joseph Bertrand would use his influence to enable some Potawatomis, including the Pokagon family, to remain in Michigan after the U.S. government's removal edicts in the 1830s.

\textbf{The Bourassas}

The kin network formed by the marriage of Joseph Bertrand II and the French-Potawatomi métis Madeleine Bourassa, is especially complicated. While Madeleine's ancestral lineage remains unconfirmed, scholars and genealogists agree that she was related in some way to the Potawatomi chief Topinebe, whose ties with Isaac McCoy help explain the presence of so many Bourassa children at Carey Mission and the Choctaw Academy.\textsuperscript{66}
The Bourassa [BURR-saw] surname appears in *The Mackinaw Register* as early as July 25, 1735, when one Rene Bourassa served as a godfather. Rene Bourassa was a longtime fur trader at Michilimackinac and the head of one of ten families who lived year round at the fort. Baptized on December 21, 1688, at Laprairie, Quebec, he was the son of Francois Bourassa dit La Ronde, who, like Jean Bertrand, had emigrated from Poitou, France. Although of humble origins, Francois Bourassa married well, to Marie Le Ber, who was the daughter of Jacques Le Ber, a Montreal merchant who was a principal ally of the wealthy seigneur Charles Aubert La Chesnaye, who was deeply involved in the fur trade.67

Francois and Marie Le Ber Bourassa had seven children. Most were born, as was so often the case in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, at two- to three-year intervals. However, a seven-year lapse exists between the birth of their second child (Rene, baptized on December 21, 1688) and the birth of their third child (Marie Elizabeth, born February 25, 1695), which suggests that something changed in the couple’s life during the intervening years. Possibly, it was sometime during those years that Francois Bourassa entered the western fur trade and left home for long stretches of time. Historian David A. Armour and genealogists Les and Jeanne Rentmeester place Francois Bourassa dit La Ronde in the trade by 1690.68

Of all the Bourassas, Francois' son Rene stands out in the historical record, perhaps because of his capture and near death at the hands of the Sioux in 1736. Rene entered the trade in the early 1720s, a time when the English colonies were offering twice the price for pelts as the French. That he engaged in the illicit trade between Montreal and the English at Albany is documented by his capture in July 1722, when he was he fined 500 livres.69 Over the next several years, his name appears in the fur trade at various locations – from Montreal to Green Bay, and Michilimackinac to the St. Joseph River Valley. While he appears to have kept a hand
in the illicit trade, his focus was the legal trade. By 1735 he was connected with the business associates of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Verendrye and spent that summer in the St. Joseph River Valley, near Niles, where he served on July 25th as godfather to the daughter of Charlotte Chevalier and post blacksmith Antoine Deshetres.  

He spent the winter of 1735-36 at Fort Saint-Charles on the Lake of the Woods and set out with four others for Michilmackinac early in June of 1736. As David A. Armour tells the story, a party of Prairie Sioux some one hundred strong, who claimed the French were arming their enemies, captured them and was preparing to burn Bourassa at the stake "when his Sioux slave girl dramatically pleaded for his life and he was released." Romantic as the story of Rene Bourassa's rescue is, it is plausible considering that Bourassa did indeed keep slaves, a fact verified by an entry in The Mackinac Register, dated November 30, 1754, when "Charles, a slave of Mr. Bourassa," married Marie, "a slave of Mr. l'englade." According to Armour, Bourassa, in future years, had "a number of slaves" who helped manage his properties at Michilimackinac.

Rene Bourassa was among the few traders who lived year round at Michilimackinac, where, like the Bertrands, he owned one of the post's forty houses. But unlike the back-street Bertrand house, Bourassa's house stood just across from the fort commandant's house, at the corner of Rue de Babilarde and Rue Dauphine, facing the parade ground. In the 1740s, Rene Bourassa's wife of two decades, Marie Catherine Leriger de la Plante, joined him at Michilimackinac, apparently bringing with her all of their five children. The oldest, Ignace, was in his 20s and would follow his father into the fur trade, while the youngest, Charlotte-Ambroise, was still a child. Charlotte, who grew up and served as a witness to numerous baptisms and as godmother to several infants at Michilimackinac, married the prominent French-Ottawa métis Charles Langlade.
In addition to his children by Marie Catherine Leriger de la Plante, Rene Bourassa also had a son from his long ago first marriage to Agnes Gagne. Born on June 1, 1718, this son was named Rene after his father. Rene Bourassa II married into the prominent Chevalier family of the St. Joseph River Valley. In a ceremony performed by the priest R.P. du Jaunay on August 3, 1744, Rene II married Michilimackinac native Anne Charlotte Vèronique Chevalier, sister of longtime St. Joseph River patriarch Louis Chevalier, and thus providing another link in the Bourassa-Chevalier kin network. Over the next twenty years, Rene II and Anne Chevalier Bourassa had nine children.

Most important to this dissertation is their second son, Daniel Bourassa, born into the fur trade at Michilimackinac on October 8, 1752. As a young man, Daniel fathered a daughter by an unidentified Potawatomi woman, but in this thirties married into the Church to another woman, Marguerite Bertrand, daughter of the French-Indian Marie Therese Dulignon and oldest sister of St. Joseph River trader Joseph Bertrand. The Bertrand-Bourassa lineage grows ever more entwined when Joseph Bertrand married Madeleine Bourassa, the métis woman born of Daniel’s union with the unidentified Potawatomi woman. In other words, Daniel Bourassa not only was Joseph Bertrand’s brother-in-law, but also his father-in-law. Because Madeleine Bourassa Bertrand was related to the Potawatomi chief Topinebe – brother of Kakima and Chebass – the St. Joseph River Valley kinship network linked the Burnetts, Bertrands, Bourassas, and Chevaliers.

The Beaubiens of Detroit

The surname Beaubien first appears at Detroit in 1717. That year, Marie-Catherine Trotier dit Beaubien arrived with her husband, the French officer Francois-Marie Picot de Beletre, who served at Fort Detroit until his death in 1729. Marie Catherine married Beletre in
Montreal, following the death of her first husband, Jean Cuillerier, sometime around 1710. With her two children from that marriage, Antoine and Jean-Baptiste Cuillerier dit Beaubien, and her younger brother Alexis Trotier, she followed Beletre to Fort Detroit.

Marie Catherine's ancestry, like that of the Bertrands and Bourassas, dated to the pioneer days of New France, when Gilles Trotier, a native of Ige, St. Martin Parish, Le Perche, France, accepted an offer of work from the *seigneur* de La Poterie to clear land at Potneuf in New France. Although fifty-five years old, Gilles Trotier sailed for New France, arriving in July 1646 with his wife and five children. After completing what likely was an indentured servant contract, Gilles bought land at Cap-de-la-Madeleine, outside of Quebec, where he lived out his days, dying there in May 1655.

Trotier's third son, Antoine, married at Trois Rivières on September 2, 1663, to Trois Rivières native Catherine Lefebvre and moved his family to Batiscan, Canada, where he was a prominent merchant. In all likelihood it was Antoine Trotier who attached the "dit Beaubien" appellation to the surname. Under New France's seignorial system, in which the king granted land to persons of influence, such appellations often were attached to surnames as land holders gave names to their estates, *dit* meaning "called." Thus, Antoine Trotier became Antoine Trotier dit Beaubien. Antoine and his wife had twelve children, including daughter Marie-Catherine dit Beaubien, who married three times.

Of particular interest is Marie-Catherine’s first marriage to Jean Cuillerier, who was the son of an indentured servant, Rene Cullerier, who came to the New World from La Fleche, France, in 1659 under contract to Sister Judith Moreau de Bresoles, superior of the Hotel-Dieu of Montreal. On October 25, 1661, Rene Cullerier signed on with other settlers to travel to Ile de la Pierre, in the St. Lawrence River valley, to quarry material for the first seminary in Montreal.
On this trip, the Iroquois attacked the workers, killing some, and capturing others, including Rene, who was held for nineteen months. According to a family history, Rene was tortured but eventually saved by an Indian woman who asked to adopt him as a replacement for a dead brother. He eventually escaped, settled in Montreal, obtained a forty-five-acre land grant, helped found the first Catholic parish at Lachine and, in 1675, became its first church warden. By the time of the 1681 census, he had thirty-two acres under cultivation and owned six muskets, one pistol, and six head of cattle.81

Rene Cuillerier’s property suggests that his son Jean Cuillerier was a man of some stability when he married Marie-Catherine Trotier dit Beaubien in 1696. When Jean Cuillerier died sometime around 1710, Marie-Catherine remarried, to the French officer Francois-Marie Picot de Beletre, and took her Cuillerier children with her when she relocated to Fort Detroit with Beletre. Her son Jean-Baptiste Cuillerier dit Beaubien was only a youngster at the time and grew up in Detroit. There, he married Detroit native Marie-Anne Lootman dit Barrois in 1742 and lived out the eventful years of his life in Detroit, watching as the region passed through the hands of three empires – from France to Britain to the United States.82

By the mid-eighteenth century, between two hundred people (in the winter) and four hundred (in the summer) lived inside Fort Detroit, while outside, another five hundred people lived in a French-Canadian community that remained French even after the British conquest. The people, including many métis, generally were poor, had adopted the manners and customs of surrounding Indians, and spoke the Indian tongue “perfectly well.”83 Indians neighboring the French settlement included more than one thousand Wyandots and three thousand Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi.84
On a map of Detroit, drawn in the fall of 1763 by Lieutenant John Montresor, the Beaubien farm is visible just east of the fort, along the River Road. There, Jean Baptiste Cuillerier Beaubien, who had received a government land grant of thirty arpents, and his wife, Mary Anne Lootman Beaubien, raised their large family of thirteen children, all of whom married others of French Canadian descent at Detroit. Jacqueline Peterson describes the Beaubiens as "clannish, devout pillars of the Catholic Church, small farmers and orchard tenders."  

The sixth-born Beaubien sibling, Joseph Cuillerier Beaubien, was eight years old when the French surrendered Fort Detroit to the British in 1760, and he undoubtedly was present during the long months of May to October 1763, when Indians faithful to the Ottawa leader Pontiac laid siege to the fort. Joseph's father, Jean-Baptiste Cullerier Beaubien, had served as a captain in the militia, and his uncle, the fur trader Antoine Cuillerier, had served as an Indian interpreter. Joseph's cousin Angelique Cuillerier has been called the "heroine of Pontiac's Rebellion" because it was she who informed the British of the Indian plot against the fort.

Perhaps it was Joseph's relatives in the fur trade who influenced him to leave Detroit and move about forty miles southwest to the River Raisin, which flowed into Lake Erie at today's Monroe, Michigan. The settlement there would be home to so many French Canadians by the 1790s that it was known at the time as Frenchtown. Joseph moved from Detroit sometime after his marriage, on March 10, 1777, to the Detroit Catholic Marie-Joseph Bovaire de Bondy. As the nine children of Joseph and Marie Beaubien grew up on the River Raisin and married, the tangled family relations evident years later in Kansas began to unfold as Joseph Cuillerier Beaubien's sons and daughters married into the French and métis lines of Trembley, Nadeau, LaFromboise, and Navarre.
Joseph’s son Mark Beaubien, who figures prominently in the history of Chicago, married Monica Nadeau, whose lineage traces to Joseph Osanny Nadeau, born in France in 1637.87
Joseph’s son Jean-Baptiste Beaubien served as an American militia officer in the War of 1812, become a fur trader in the employ of the American Fur Company, and married at least twice – first to the Ottawa woman Mah-naw-bun-no-quah and then to the métis Josette LaFromboise. Joseph’s daughter Teresa married Paul Navarre, and his sons Joseph and Alexis married the Trembley sisters, Marie and Archange.

The Navarres

The Detroit Navarres trace their lineage to French royalty – the sixteenth-century reign of Antoine of Bourbon, Duke of Vendome and King of Navarre. The first of the line to arrive in New France was Robert Navarre, who was born in 1709 in the parish of Villeroy, Brittany, France. He emigrated to New France, went to Detroit in 1729, and soon after was appointed sub-intendant and royal notary at Fort Pontchartrain.88

Detroit historian Clarence M. Burton describes Navarre as "a man of education and good sense" who was involved in every matter of local importance. "He saw that taxes were levied and collected. He collected the tithes and church dues. He listened to the complaints of citizens against the increase of taxes or the unjust treatment of citizens by the officers. He was a judge between quarreling citizens, and it was by his judgment that delinquents were forced to pay their just debts or become bankrupt."89 So well-respected was Robert Navarre that even after the British conquest he retained his appointment as notary.
On February 10, 1734, Robert Navarre married Mary Lootman dit Barrois90 and, for his government service, received, in 1747, a grant of land west of the fort, where he located in about the year 1762, living there until his death in 1791.
His son François entered the fur trade and, along with his brother Robert II, moved south to the Raisin River after negotiating a private treaty with the Potawatomi, signed June 3, 1785, for a tract of land on the banks of the river at Frenchtown. On the Riviere aux Raisin, the Navarre brothers reared their families. Of particular importance is Robert II's youngest son, Pierre Frenchette Navarre, born February 8, 1787. Pierre became a manager for the American Fur Company and began trading at the St. Joseph-Kankakee portage at today's South Bend, Indiana, in about 1820. County historian Timothy Edward Howard describes Pierre Navarre as a man "of literary tastes, of a kind and gentle nature, earnest and honest in his dealings, though not remarkable for business ability." 

Like Joseph Bertrand, Pierre Navarre located his home and trading post in the region known as the Parc aux Vaches, not far from Pokagon's village. There, on September 12, 1834, his marriage to the Potawatomi Kish-wa-qua was ratified, although the two already had been living for years according to "the custom of the country." They would have ten children, the youngest born in about 1820. All, Howard writes, "were bright and received a good education, for the time." Their métis son Anthony Navarre, who would play a prominent role in Kansas, married the Potawatomi woman Sow-Na-Wa-Que, who already had two children, Peter and Susan Latranch, the French surname suggesting that they, too, were métis.

The American Fur Company

Pierre Frenchette Navarre's employment with the American Fur Company was a testament to the improving fortunes of company founder John Jacob Astor after the War of 1812. His business prospered following an act of Congress, passed in 1816, that prohibited all British traders or British companies (such as the powerful Northwest Company) from operating in the United States. Historian Mease C. Williams writes that Astor went to Montreal “and at almost
his own price bought all (the British) trading posts within the limits of the United States.  
With a free course, the business of the American Fur Company grew into a gigantic operation. 
The region around the Great Lakes was made into the northern department and mapped out, 
grouping every tribe and band into definite districts.  
The company established trading posts 
"at every important point" and hired a trader to manage each center.

During the years 1821 and 1822, a total of sixty-four traders were directly or indirectly 
connected with Astor's company. They occupied the upper and lower Mississippi, the Illinois, 
Wabash, St. Joseph, and Kankakee rivers, as well as areas of Wisconsin.  
Pierre Frenchette Navarre’s name, along with that of Joseph Bertrand, appears in the “Outward Invoices” of the 
American Fur Company as trading on the St. Joseph River. Navarre was assigned to the St. 
Joseph-Kankakee portage at today's South Bend, Indiana, while Joseph Bertrand was stationed a 
few miles farther north, around Niles and the town of Bertrand in Berrien County, Michigan.

**Origins in Wisconsin and Illinois**

Colonial wars and the fur trade had long pulled métis families farther west than 
Michilimackinac, Detroit, and the St. Joseph River Valley. As early as 1700, illegal traders were 
"a few miles below Lake Peoria" in the winter of 1763-64. Other Potawatomis from the St. 
Joseph had earlier established villages in the Chicago region and near the mouth of the 
Milwaukee River. During the nineteenth century, these Potawatomi, who included members of 
the future Prairie Band Potawatomi, were lumped by United States treaty negotiators as one 
group, called the United Band, which was a combination of Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa
people who had moved from Detroit, as well as other Indian people who ranged over northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin.\textsuperscript{101}

**The LaFromboises**

The LaFromboises were a prominent métis family among the Prairie Band. Of particular importance to this study are sons of Jean-Baptiste Faford dit LaFromboise, who was born at Trois Rivieres, Canada, on July 3, 1737. Jean-Baptiste was in the fur trade by 1761, when he married fellow Trois Rivieres native Marguerite La Bissoniere at Michilimackinac. Of their eleven children, four sons entered the fur trade, once again serving as a testament to the deep kinship connections that marked the trade.

The first brother, Alexis LaFromboise, married Josette Adhemar, daughter of the Michilimackinac notary. For several years, Alexis wintered at Milwaukee, where, beginning in 1784 or 1785, he operated a fur trading post and had two sons with a Chippewa woman. Both of his sons entered the trade, lived with Menominee women and settled in Wisconsin.\textsuperscript{102} The second brother, Joseph LaFromboise, was living in the St. Joseph Valley when he married the 14-year-old métis Magdeleine Marcot, daughter of the French-Canadian Jean Baptiste Marcot and an Ottawa woman, Thimotée, who was the daughter of Chief Kewinaquot, or "Returning Cloud."\textsuperscript{103} Like the Chevaliers, the Marcot family was forcibly removed from their post at Fort St. Joseph in 1781, and Jean Baptiste Marcot, less well-established than the Chevaliers, headed west into Wisconsin, where he was killed by Indians when Magdeleine was a young girl. Thimotée returned to the Ottawa villages in the Grand River valley of Michigan, where she raised Magdeleine and her siblings.\textsuperscript{104}

The third brother, Pierre LaFromboise, was a trader at Bay Settlement, Wisconsin, where he also lived with a Menominee woman. The fourth brother, Francois LaFromboise, was born at
Michilimackinac shortly before the outbreak of the American Revolution. In time, he went to Milwaukee to take over the trading post of his brother Alexis. Before Francois was killed at the hands of a Winnebago in 1803, he fathered five métis children with an unnamed Potawatomi woman. His children included the métis daughter Josette LaFromboise and the métis sons Claude and Joseph LaFromboise, who took up after their father and became fur traders in Chicago. Joseph LaFromboise, whose name appears on several documents in the city’s early history, was among the most influential Potawatomi métis during the removal period. Joseph and his brother Claude voted in the city's first election on August 7, 1826, paid taxes, and signed a petition to St. Louis Bishop Joseph Rosati, requesting that a priest be assigned to Chicago. Of the thirty-five total votes cast in Chicago’s first election, three-fourths were by Indians or métis. In addition to the LaFromboises, names included Daniel Bourassa, Antoine Ouilmette, Jean Baptiste Beaubien, Billy Caldwell, and Alexander Robinson.105

Josette LaFromboise, perhaps because of the death of her father when she was about eight years old, went to live in the John Kinzie household in Chicago, where she was employed as a servant.106 It was not unusual for the prominent Kinzies to apprentice young métis. The Milwaukee trader Jean Baptiste Mirandeau had done the same with his children, and, as Jacqueline Peterson writes: "Prior to the outbreak of the War of 1812, nearly everyone in Chicago was either in Kinzie's debt or his employ."107 Not only did he employ métis as household servants, but he imported the métises Billy Caldwell and Alexander Robinson from the St. Joseph River Valley to help run his fur operation.

Billy Caldwell was the son of a Mohawk woman and the Irish-born William Caldwell, a captain with the British Tory Ranger Brigade and a leader of Britain's Iroquois allies during the Revolutionary War. The boy Billy Caldwell, who was fluent in English, French, and several
Indian dialects, entered the Indian trade in about 1799 on the St. Joseph and Wabash rivers as an apprentice to the British Thomas Forsyth, who was John Kinzie's half brother. Caldwell moved to Chicago in 1803 as chief clerk of the Kinzie-Forsyth fur trading partnership, an association that lasted intermittently until 1833. Caldwell, along with the Scot-Ottawa métis Alexander Robinson and the Ottawa Shabbona became, as Clifton puts it, a "triumvirate" of "highly successful intercultural brokers" so important to the American removal cause that they would be recognized as "chiefs" of the Potawatomi. The employment of métis such as Billy Caldwell and Josette LaFromboise established yet another set of relationships in the fur trade that combined cooperation, friendships, and multiethnic families and neighborhoods.

The Beaubiens in Chicago

Also relocating to Chicago before the War of 1812 was Jean-Baptiste Beaubien of the River Raisin. Jean-Baptiste Beaubien was "something of a prodigy" who had entered the fur trade when a teenager of perhaps thirteen, serving as an apprentice clerk to Joseph Bailly on the St. Joseph River and among Ottawa villages on the Grand River. By 1804, when Jean-Baptiste was 17, "his trading sphere had enlarged to include Milwaukee, Chicago, and Mackinac." By 1818 he was in the employ of the American Fur Company, living in the old government warehouse beneath the pickets of the new Fort Dearborn. Beaubien was a widower; his Ottawa wife, Mah-naw-bun-no-quah, having recently died, leaving him with three French-Ottawa métis children: a daughter, Marie, and sons Charles Henry and Medard (also called Madore) Beaubien.

Mah-naw-bun-no-quah was the sister of Shabbona, who was described by one traveler as "a great friend to the whites" who had been rewarded by the American government with "two sections of fine rich land" for warning settlers of danger at the outbreak of the Black Hawk War
in 1832. Sometime after Mah-naw-bun-no-quah's death, Jean-Baptiste Beaubien remarried, to the métis Josette LaFromboise, the nurse for John Kinzie's children. Joining them in Chicago was Jean-Baptiste’s brother Mark Beaubien, who brought with him his French wife, Monica Nadeau, and his violin, which he often played at the hotel and tavern he owned, the Sauganash.

Like the family generations that preceded him, Mark Beaubien was French Catholic. When Father St. Cyr, said to be the first American-ordained priest to say Mass in Chicago, arrived in town, it was Mark Beaubien's home where he stayed while a church was built. When the man who did the woodwork, Anson Taylor, came to be paid, he said that Mark Beaubien "pulled a half-bushel measure out from under his bed and paid him in new silver half dollars, such as the government had used in paying the Indian annuities." That would not be unusual considering that the Beaubiens were in the Indian trade – be it furs for trade goods, or annuity dollars for whiskey at the Sauganash. That Mark Beaubien got along well with Indians living near Chicago comes through in histories that say his Ottawa brother-in-law Shabbona and other Indians would pay him a visit, camping out in Beaubien's yard. At places like the Sauganash, the diverse races and ethnicities of early Chicago commingled. Held together by a common dependence on the Indian trade and "a liberal use of the universal solvent – whiskey," Peterson writes that they put aside "their private animosities and prejudices" and came together in community.

The Kinzies of Chicago

As the principal trader in Chicago from 1804 to 1812 and again after 1816, John Kinzie had associations with all the métis families in the Wisconsin-Illinois country. Kinzie entered the fur trade on the St. Josph River under the English-speaking William Burnett, who was financing
his operations as late as 1801.\textsuperscript{117} After moving to Chicago in 1804, Kinzie had agents at Milwaukee, Peoria, and the Rock River in the Illinois Country, and was known to have bought, held, and sold slaves. His business, which he ran in partnership or proprietorship with his step-brothers Thomas and Robert Forsyth, grew and prospered, including a suspiciously obtained sutler's contract for Fort Dearborn.

We find the household servant Josette LaFromboise holed up with the Kinzies and other Chicago residents behind Fort Dearborn’s wooden pallisades in 1812 after a band of Winnebagos who had enlisted in the British cause raided a farm just a few miles south of the fort and killed two farm laborers. Potawatomis did not participate in that raid, but they would in the forthcoming attack on Fort Dearborn, which was part of the Indian wars that ensued after the defeat in 1811 of Tecumseh's confederation. Tensions only worsened with the outbreak of the War of 1812 as Britain redoubled support of its Indian allies, including the Winnebagos and some Potawatomis.\textsuperscript{118}

The Potawatomis who lived around Chicago, Clifton writes, “were seriously divided over the issue of what policy to adopt” during the War of 1812 – pro-American or pro-British. The métis Billy Caldwell, for instance, served as a British captain during the war and was severely wounded during the battle of the River Raisin in January 1813. His métis friend Alexander Robinson, as well as chief Black Partridge, counseled for neutrality, while Main Poc was militantly anti-American. On the other hand, Winamac, who resided near Fort Wayne, was so pro-American that he was dispatched by Michigan Governor William Hull to carry an urgent message to Fort Dearborn. Fearing the small garrison of fifty-five soldiers could not hold against attack, the message ordered the commander there, Captain Nathan Heald, to evacuate.
In what became a famous event of the War of 1812, the fleeing soldiers and citizens were attacked about a mile and a half outside of Chicago on August 15, 1812; sixty-four of the ninety-six evacuees were killed and all but nineteen of the soldiers. The household of John Kinzie, including Josette LaFromboise, was saved by friendly Indians and métis. Also saved was Mrs. Linah T. Helm, wife of a fort lieutenant who was spirited away to the Chicago house of fur trader Antoine Ouilmette and hidden under a large feather bed. Sgt. William Griffith, the fort quartermaster, also was saved by hiding in Ouilmette's garden.

Following the “Fort Dearborn Massacre,” the Winnebago and Potawatomi raiders, led by the chiefs Sturgeon and Blackbird, burned Fort Dearborn and caused so much fear that white settlers would not return to Chicago for four years. When soldiers did come back, in 1816, to build the second Fort Dearborn, they found Antoine Ouilmette and his family (the surname transformed over the years to Wilmot, Wilmet, or Wilmette), with Alexander Robinson, living alone at Chicago. Ouilmette and Robinson are said to have sold corn to the fort builders and harrowed the ground for a garden.

Years later, in a letter dated in 1839 to John Harris Kinzie, son of John Kinzie, Antoine Ouilmette, who apparently could not read or write, recalled the story of the Fort Dearborn Massacre in a letter he dictated to a surrogate. Ouilmette told how he "saw the indians brake open the door of my house and also the door of Mr. Kinzie's house. At first there was only three indians came. They told me there was forty, more coming, and they told me to run. I did." That some Indians told him to run while others ransacked his house speaks to the complicated situation. On one hand, Ouilmette "was part of the establishment of Mr. Kinzie," but on the other he was married to the French-Potawatomi métis Archange Chevalier and had kin relations among Potawatomi people.
The Ouilmettes

Antoine Ouilmette was born at Landrayh, near Montreal, in 1760, was at Chicago by 1790 and, in 1796, married Archange Chevalier, daughter of the French-Canadian Francois Chevalier and Mary Ann, who most likely was the daughter of chief Neebosh, a Potawatomi Catholic who lived in northern Indiana. In time, Antoine Ouilmette, like other traders in Chicago, became an employee of the American Fur Company. His métis son Louis Ouilmette appears as a guide to traveler Colbee Chamberlain Benton in Benton’s book, A Visitor to Chicago in Indian Days. "He is half French and half Indian; rather short but very strong and active-looking," Benton wrote of Louis, spelling his surname Wilmot. "His complexion is that of an Indian, and his hair is long, straight, and black. He wears a hat, blue calico shirt, moccasins, and pantaloons, and he also wears a red belt round his waist in which is fastened his tomahawk and scalping knife. He has lived with the Indians more or less for six years and understands their tongue very well, and can speak English and French.”

Louis took Benton on a weeklong tour of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, paying visits in August 1833 to the villages of Met-tay-wah on the Des Plaines River; Wapsé on a branch of the Rock River, about sixty miles from Galena, Illinois; Bigfoot on the western end of Lake Geneva in southern Wisconsin; and what likely was the Winnebago village of the Turtle at today's Beloit, Wisconsin. They also visited Shabbona's village in DeKalb County, Illinois, where Benton settled up with Louis, giving him some money to purchase tobacco for the Indians and bidding him goodbye.

Reading between the lines of Benton’s journal, the tour both pleased and disappointed him as he measured what he saw against Anglo stereotypes of Indians. He told how he "was very much pleased with the Indians" he saw at Wapsé's village, writing that "they looked more
warlike and brave, many of them painted more or less." He was taken, too, with one "little squaw who roasted the corn for us." She was "the prettiest" he had seen and "was very coy, for I could not catch her eye without being very sudden in my movements. If I turned she would be looking serenely towards the sky, and I could not help thinking that she was some pure and sinless being whose noble spirit held converse with angels in a brighter world, far above the mortal things of earth. Her tawny complexion only made her more interesting, and there in such a wild place among such a rude class of beings; altogether, she seemed quite a Pockahontas."

While Benton was “completely astonished” by the naked and dirty children and the “wigwams so small” that he saw at Nic-saw-mah’s village, he seemed equally surprised by what he encountered when Louis took him on a visit to the home of his parents, Antoine and Archange Ouilmette, situated between today's Evanston and Wilmette, Illinois. Benton told how the breakfast he was served was "as good, and finally a good deal better than some breakfasts I have had among the whites in this country," although, he added, "it was cooked by a squaw." The “squaw” was Louis' mother, Archange Chevalier Ouilmette, who actually was half French. Louis' father and mother, in their seventies by the time of Benton’s visit, soon removed to a farm at today's Racine, Wisconsin, where Antoine Ouilmette dictated his letter of 1839, in which he recalled the Fort Dearborn Massacre. In the letter, he also gave details of his life, saying that he went to Chicago in July 1790 when "old Mr. Veaux" was there, as well as "Fr. Bul bonne," likely meaning Francois Bourbonnais. "These men were living in the country before the wear (war) with the winabagoes traiting," Ouilmette dictated.

Jacques Vieux at Milwaukee

"Old Mr. Veaux" was Jacques Vieux, who had migrated by 1795 to the mouth of the Milwaukee River, where he established a trading post. Indian people pronounced his name "Jean
Beau," which was corrupted to "Jambeau," and is just one of various spellings found for the
Vieux surname." Jacques Vieux was born May 5, 1757, at Cour de Neige, a suburb of
Montreal. He was the son of Françoise L'accuyar and Jacques Jauvan, whose father was said to
have emigrated to New France during the oppression of the Huguenots. Jacques Vieux, as a
young man, had gone with his brother Nicolas to Michilimackinac and engaged as a voyageur
with the North West Company at La Pointe, in Chequamegon Bay, Lake Superior.

Jacques Vieux became a clerk for the company, eventually was appointed an agent and,
in 1795, "was sent out with a supply of goods to explore and establish posts on the west shore of
Lake Michigan." He established secondary posts, known as "jack-knife" posts, near present
Kewaunee, Sheboygan, and Manitowoc, Wisconsin, leaving a clerk in charge at each. In August
of 1795 he established a trading post on the future site of Milwaukee, where he often wintered.
The family homestead, however, was in Green Bay.

Jacques Vieux's sons Andrew and Peter related the story of how their father when
arriving at the future site of Milwaukee had "met at the mouth of the river, a large number of
Pottawatomies, but mingling freely with them were Sacs and Foxes, and a few Winnebagoes
who had married into the other three tribes." Andrew Vieux stated that his father erected two
buildings, one for a dwelling and the other for a warehouse, a mile and a half up the Menomonee
River at today's Milwaukee, where he spent every winter for the next two or three years. Every
spring, "after packing up the winter's peltries and buying all the maple sugar obtainable from the
Indians, father would start out with his family and goods on his return to Mackinac, after leaving
a clerk in charge of the post, to superintend the planting of potatoes and corn and the purchase of
what are called 'summer furs.' … Upon his return down the lake, father would stop at his various
'jack-knife posts' and collect their furs and maple sugar, and often relieve the men stationed there
by substituting others for them. This trip to Mackinac would, with fair weather, take about a month.¹³²

Jacques Vieux was married by a priest at Michilimackinac on July 16, 1804, to Angelique Roy, daughter of the Green Bay trader Joseph Roy (Roi) and an Indian woman named Marguerite. According to the marriage license, Marguerite was "a Sauteur," meaning Chippewa, although other sources say she was a daughter of the Menominee A-kee-nee-ban-wah (also spelled Ahkenepaweh) and a sister or niece of the Menominee Onaugesa, whose wife was Potawatomi.¹³³ Jacques and Angelique Roy Vieux had twelve métis children, at least one and possibly two born before they officially were married by the church. All the children were born either at Milwaukee or at Green Bay, where Jacques Vieux for many years had a farm on the west bank of the Fox River.¹³⁴

The Vieux offspring includes sons Jacques Jr. and Louis Vieux, both of whom went to live at Skunk Grove, Wisconsin, where they farmed, traded, and lived with the Potawatomi, among whom they married. Skunk Grove, later surveyed as the northeast quarter section of Township 3, Range 22, of Racine County, Wisconsin, was on the trail from Chicago to Green Bay. The grove, comprising hundreds of acres of oaks, maples, walnut, ash, and elm along a broad ridge, was an early landmark, where a trail crossing to Lake Michigan had been used for hundreds of years by Indian people. "By coming north on the trail as far as the Skunk Grove ridge, land travelers could reach the shores of Lake Michigan without crossing the wetlands of Pike Creek," a local history states.¹³⁵

At Skunk Grove, Jacques Jr. and Louis Vieux located their trading post. "Jambeau's Trading Post," the local history says, "became well known as a haven in the wilderness," although by 1836 Anglo settlers with squatters’ claims were locating nearby. That same year,
Louis Vieux's house at Skunk Grove, today's town of Franksville, was used as a polling place for election of Wisconsin's territorial council, and on December 7, 1836, Racine County was formed. The county's Field Survey Book indicates that Louis and Jacques Jr. were given preemption and floating rights for their land and then purchased what amounted to 267 acres at Skunk Grove, on both sides of Skunk Creek, a tributary of the Root River, which had its mouth at today's Racine.136

**Bourbonnais at Peoria and Kankakee**

The "Bulbonne," or Bourbonnais, surname appears in fur trade records at the Grand Portage on Lake Superior as early as 1770-71.137 Antoine Ouilmette places Francois Bourbonnais in Chicago in 1790, but other sources state that that was the year he was born and that he did not settle in Chicago until 1812. That he was in the area by 1809 is documented by the John Kinzie account books, which record that on April 25, 1809, Francois Bourbonnais Sr. purchased "by indenture' from John Kinzie one 'Negro wench' for 160 pounds."138 Following the Fort Dearborn Massacre, Bourbonnais moved to Detroit, but was back in Illinois by 1825-26, when he and his métis son Francois Jr. were licensed to keep a tavern "at Bourbonnais (Bulbona’s) Grove on the east side of the Illinois River three miles below Lake Peoria. Francois Sr.'s wife was the métis Catherine (Cattice, Catish) L'archeveque-Chevalier, whose relatives from the St. Joseph River Valley were early inhabitants at Peoria.139

Francois Bourbonnias Sr.'s son, or possibly nephew, Antoine Bourbonnais, also is recorded as an early inhabitant near the shores of Lake Peoria, where he initially was an independent trader. He owned land there in 1821 when the American Fur Company employed him and assigned him to a post on the Kankakee River, near today's towns of Bourbonnais and
Kankakee, Illinois. By 1834, the entire Bourbonnais clan had moved to the Kankakee-
Bourbonnais Grove area, south of Chicago.\textsuperscript{140}

The Bourbonnais family connects to the Ouillette and Trembley line through the
marriage of Antoine Bourbonnais to Ozetta Trembley (also spelled Trombly and Tremblay).
Their son Antoine Bourbonnais Jr., born in about 1820 in Will County, Illinois, married Mary
Anderson, great-granddaughter of Antoine and Archange Chevalier Ouillette. Mary Anderson
Bourbonnais, who would become a Sunday School superintendent in Oklahoma after the Citizen
Band Potawatomi removed there in the 1870s, was the daughter of John Anderson, who,
according to Potawatomi tradition, came from Sweden and became a member of the Potawatomi
band by "crossing wrists."\textsuperscript{141}

**The Ogees on the Rock River**

There had been, since the earliest times, a steady stream of travel over Wisconsin's
portage plain, a mile and a half in width, between the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, at today's
Portage, Wisconsin. Historian Lucy Eldersveld Murphy states that from the time of the French
and Indian War to the end of the eighteenth century, perhaps because the British abandoned
Wisconsin in 1763, Creole communities (which she defines as a mixture of several ethnic and
racial influences) grew at either end of the Fox-Wisconsin riverway. Jacqueline Peterson
identifies fifty-three multi-ethnic, mixed-race settlements in the western Great Lakes region
between 1763 and 1830.\textsuperscript{142}

The Rock River rose to the southeast of the Wisconsin-Fox portage and flowed south into
northern Illinois. Near a bend in the river at Grand Detour, near today's town of Dixon, lived the
métis Joseph Ogee, who most likely was the son of Michel Auge, a merchant at Mackinac during
the British period. Ogee married the métis Madeline LaSallier, daughter of a Potawatomi
woman and Pierre LaSallier, longtime trader at Grand Detour.\textsuperscript{143} Records place Ogee in the vicinity of Fort Clark (Peoria) in the early 1820s, where he was employed by the American Fur Company and, in 1823, took a license to run a tavern. In 1828, he and his wife established a ferry over the Rock River and prospered. They built a log house at what is now Dixon, Illinois; obtained a license to sell liquor; and acted as interpreter for the U.S. government in its treaty negotiations that led to the removal of the region's Indians.\textsuperscript{144} In about 1831, however, Ogee and his wife separated. Madeline LaSallier Ogee, who had received a grant of land under the Prairie du Chien Treaty of 1829, moved twenty-eight miles southeast to Paw Paw Grove, taking her three children, Louis Henry, John, and Robert, with her.\textsuperscript{145}

**Tangled Relations**

The complex métis kin networks that began at Michilimackinac, Detroit, and the St. Joseph River valley and then extended to the Kankakee and Wabash, Peoria, and Chicago, and up the Lake Michigan shore to Racine, Milwaukee, and Green Bay, would grow ever more complex by the time of the Indian removals to Kansas as French-Indian métis such as Louis Ouilmette began to intermarry not only with other French-Canadian and Indian people, but with Euro-Americans of Irish, Scots-Irish, Swedish, Welch, German, and other ancestries. Louis Ouilmette, for instance, married the full blood Wa-Wiet-Mo-Kwa in a ceremony performed by the Jesuit Peter DeSmet on August 19, 1838. Louis' sister Elizabeth Ouilmette, on the other hand, married an Irish immigrant, Michael Welch, of Chicago, in 1830, and later entered a second marriage to the Scots-Irish Lucius R. Darling. Louis' sister Archange Ouilmette continued the French-Canadian line with her first marriage to the Canadian-born Trousoint (or Tousan) Trembley at Cahokia in 1813, although her second marriage was to John Mann, a soldier at Fort Dearborn.\textsuperscript{146}
At least four of the Vieux métis removed to Kansas with the Potawatomi, although the tangled pattern of kinship relations was not as apparent among the Wisconsin Vieuxs as it was with métis families in Michigan and Illinois. This probably was because the younger Vieux siblings came of age as white settlement was advancing into Wisconsin and opportunities existed for jobs outside of the fur trade. Peter and Andrew Vieux, for instance, did not follow their father into the remote interior as had generations of Bertrands, Bourassas, and LaFromboises, but took wage-paying jobs as store clerks. In yet another example of the connected network of métis in the Great Lakes region, Andrew Vieux, when about twenty years old, was clerking in Chicago for Madore Beaubien, thus linking the Milwaukee Vieuxs to the Chicago Beaubiens and LaFromboises.147

Following the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, Andrew Vieux returned to Milwaukee and started in business for himself. Even though he was the son of a French father and Indian mother, Andrew, unlike his brother Louis Vieux, centered his life in the white world, even so far as segregating the Indian customers at his store. "My establishment in Milwaukee," he said, "consisted of two sections – one, a miscellaneous store for the use of the general public and the other a room where Indians could be separately waited on."148

Andrew and Peter Vieux lived out their lives in Wisconsin. Besides owning stores, Andrew became involved in local politics, while Peter learned the printing trade and worked at a number of clerking jobs, including one for "David George & Co., hats and caps," on Milwaukee's East Water Street. On the eve of the twentieth century, as Milwaukee was preparing to mark its centennial, Peter Vieux was a local celebrity, featured in a number of newspaper articles as one of Milwaukee's earliest "pioneers."149 Peter had married a woman of Scotch descent, Julia McNulty, while Andrew's wife was Rebecca R. Lawe, daughter of the
English-born John Lawe, who was educated in Quebec and became a trader for the American Fur Company on the Lower Fox River. In 1820 he was made an associate judge of the Brown County Court in Green Bay. Of all the Vieux métis siblings, only Louis, born November 30, 1809, married an Indian woman, the Menominee Sha-note, daughter of Ches-aw-gan.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has taken a genealogical approach to trace métis families from their ancestral roots in the St. Lawrence River Valley of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New France to nineteenth-century Kansas. By focusing the lens on family and region, this chapter argues that French involvement in the fur trade often spanned generations of families who formed extended kinship networks by intermarrying with Indian women. Members of métis families in this study often intermarried with one another, forming kinship networks that stretched from southern Michigan and northern Indiana into Illinois and Wisconsin. Such extended networks in the fur trade, as historians Sylvia Van Kirk, Jacqueline Peterson, Tanis Thorne, Susan Sleeper-Smith, Anne Hyde, and others have shown, are key to understanding complex métis families, whose mixing, as Hyde explains, “went far beyond French trappers and Native wives.” As this chapter illustrates, a Potawatomi métis family might include members from other Native groups and could involve British and American men as well as French. Affiliation of métis with different Potawatomi bands, who located in various physical spaces around the Great Lakes, makes geography an important subject of inquiry. Geography, this chapter argues, explains the trajectories followed by individual métis families on their journey to the Kansas Indian Country.
1 Peterson and Brown, The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America, 4.


4 White, The Middle Ground, 146-47.

5 Peterson and Brown, The New Peoples, 9.

6 The emergence of large numbers of métis in the Great Lakes region was characteristic of many tribes, not just the Potawatomi. With origins rooted in their dominance of the region's commerce, the métis "served as role models" to other members of their tribe and also as intermediaries between tribal communities and federal govt. See R. David Edmunds, R. David Edmunds, ed., Enduring Nations: Native Americans in the Midwest (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 5.

7 R. David Edmunds, “Potawatomi,” in what handbook book is this?

8 See ibid; Louis Chevalier to Gen. Frederick Haldimand, October 9, 1780, Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections 13 (1889), 60-62; Louis-Joseph Ainsse to Haldimand, August 5, 1780, Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections 10 (1888), 434-37; and David A. Armour, "Louis-Joseph Ainsse," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography <www.biographi.ca> (November 17, 2008.) In his letter, Ainsse told how he had been given orders, "in writing, to go to St. Joseph to bring with him to Michillimakinac, all the Canadian families who were settled there, viz Mr. Chevallier his uncle." (Ainsee's wife was Constante Chevalier, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Chevalier and sister of Louis Chevalier). A complete census of the St. Joseph post taken June 25, 1780, in Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, 10 (1888), 406, lists eight families as well as seven "private persons" for a total of forty-seven men, women, and children. In his letter to Haldimand, October 9, 1780, Chevalier stated that upon arriving at Michilimackinac, he was confined as a prisoner in the fort, which recently had been relocated to Mackinac Island. In a letter to Gen. Frederic Haldimand, Quebec governor and commander of British troops in the territories, Chevalier told how Patrick Sinclair, Mackinac lieutenant governor, had searched his boxes, opening them in his presence and taking "all the papers they contained, which were all the letters of the Commandants & their orders." The treatment, Chevalier wrote, "was as hard as unexpected" because, he declared, he "has been and will always be faithful to his Prince. In the letter, Chevalier stated that he had been settled at St. Joseph "for about thirty five years," placing him there in 1745. He referred to "the conquest and cession of Canada" to Britain after the fall of Quebec in 1759, writing that "having made himself beloved by the Indians in this district," it was he whom the British commandants "had chosen as the King's man in this district." Chevalier wrote the letter to Haldimand as a petition in which he asked to be reimbursed for expenses ("6000 Livres de twenty sous") he had incurred equipping his Indians friends for a "strike at the Post of Vincennes, and at the Belle Riviere" and for caring for them afterwards. A party of twenty-two men, he said, had marched on the Americans at Vincennes but was "quickly met and repulsed by the enemy," with six killed and four wounded. "The rest of this party arrived at St. Joseph on the 24th of June last, nearly naked and all tattered." The next day, even as Chevalier "set himself to console the afflicted & to clothe them," his nephew Louis-Joseph Ainsse, former interpreter for the British at Michilimackinac, arrived at St. Joseph with a "detachment of Indians and Canadians to either voluntarily or by force…bring all the Inhabitants of the Post to Michilimackinac." Chevalier, along with his now seventy-year-old wife, Marie Madeline Reaume d'archeveque Chevalier, obeyed, leaving behind what he described as "all his fortune in the neighborhood, ten houses, good lands, orchards, gardens, cattle, furniture, utensils and debts, of which he has made an entire sacrifice to obedience," meaning to the British. Quoted in Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest,
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103, Ainsee refers to the situation as "delicate" and left for the St. Joseph with six canoes, "in each of which were three Canadians." Also "in each of the said canoes twenty Courtoreiller Indians, chosen by him." Once there, "He placed in his canoes all the inhabitants with a part of their baggage & brought them to Michillimakinac."

9 Wilbur M. Cunningham, Letter Book of William Burnett: Early Fur Trader in the Land of Four Flags (Fort Miami Heritage Society of Michigan, 1967). The letter book begins in 1786. Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest, 103, states that Burnett was one of only seven fur traders in the interior who had a British surname. Burnett replaced the L'archeveque-Chevalier family, who for years had been the principal French-Canadian traders at St. Joseph. Burnett's Potawatomi name was Waub-zee, meaning "White Swan." Cunningham, places his arrival in the valley in 1779 or 1780 and "certainly by 1782."

10 See ibid, vi; Blanche Haines, "French and Indian Footprints at Three Rivers on the St. Joseph," Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, 38 (1912), 395-6; Bert Anson, "The Fur Traders in Northern Indiana" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1953), 23; Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 91; Copley, "Early Settlement of Southwestern Michigan," 19; Henry H. Harbut, Chicago Antiquities: Comprising Original Items and Relations, Letters, Extracts, and Notes, Pertaining to Early Chicago (Chicago: The author, 1881), 49-78; and Bert Anson, "Lathrop M. Taylor, The Fur Trader," Indiana Magazine of History 44 (December 1948), 368-383. For Burnett's Potawatomi name, see Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project. Haines writes that William Burnett "did not pay license nor do business under Michilimackinac later than 1782." Cunningham credits Burnett's son John as stating that William Burnett was from New Jersey. Anson writes that Burnett could have arrived in the St. Joseph Valley as early as 1769. Anson also writes that the trader Antoine Leclare (various Leclerc) settled in the valley, "a few miles up the river from the site of Fort St. Joseph in 1781…and remained until 1800."

11 Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 92-95.

12 See Ibid, and Cunningham, Land of Four Flags, 92.


14 See Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 90; Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 156, 202; and Clifton, Prairie People, 212-13.

15 See ibid; and Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:105. While Topinebe would align with the Baptist Isaac McCoy, Pokagon, on the other hand, remained neutral – and ardently Catholic

16 The location possibly was on the Grand River in central Michigan because that is where the Ottawa had their villages.


18 Clifton, The Prairie People, 131-32.

19 See ibid; Cunningham, Land of Four Flags, 97; and Juliette Magill Kinzie, Wau-Bun, the "Early Day" in the Northwest (Chicago: D.B. Cooke & Co., 1857, rep. 1992), 126. While Joseph Bertrand remained neutral, his allegiance, Sleeper-Smith suggests, was perhaps "only more clandestine," than Burnett's because, after the war, he claimed he had been an American spy.

20 Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 90.

21 William Burnett to Charles Patterson, February 2, 1790, and Burnett to Andrew Todd, February 10, 1792, quoted in Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 91-92; Cunningham, Letter Book of William Burnett, 32, 52; and Anson, "The Fur Traders in Northern Indiana," 73. Sleeper-Smith notes that Burnett also depended on Kakima to produce sufficient corn, wheat, and maple sugar to feed their household and to "export as a
marketable surplus at both Michilimackinac and Detroit." Agricultural products, she writes, became more important as warfare interrupted seasonal hunts for furs. "There is no appearance of doing anything here this year, as fear keeps the Indians from hunting," Burnett wrote from the St. Joseph to Andrew Todd on February 10, 1792. "They continually imagine that the Americans are coming upon them. Let me know if provision will be scarce this year at Detroit and in particular if Indian corn will be worth anything."

22 See Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 203; Cunningham, Land of Four Flags, 90; and Cunningham, Letter Book of William Burnett, vi. Kakima's maiden Indian name, Gag-ii-mi-i, was commonly believed to mean "one who steals away." That Burnett and Kakima were married by a Sulpician priest is instructive. The Society of Jesus was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV in July 1773 and would not be restored until August 1814, by Pope Pius VII.

23 See Abraham Burnett, Deposition as to Ancestry," March 23-24, 1870, Kansas State Historical Society; and Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Women, 204 n.80. James and John Burnett were not as influential as they might have been because they had been educated in Detroit among Americans rather than Kakima's people. Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 204 n.80, writes that although they both married Potawatomi women, the women left them and migrated west when the Potawatomi were removed to Kansas. James and Menache were married for only two years, and John Burnett was imprisoned for debt in 1821, when the American Fur Company purchased his debts from another trader. It was the American Fur Company, Sleeper-Smith writes, that drove the Burnett's out of the St. Joseph River Valley.

24 Ibid.

25 Marjorie Hall Young, "'Stars In A Dark Night': The Education Of Indian Youth At Choctaw Academy." Chronicles of Oklahoma 75:3 (1997), 280-305.


31 See Coolidge, A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County, 17; and Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 127.

32 McCoy, History of Baptist Indian Missions, 100. In letters to Alexander Wolcott and John Kinzie at Chicago, McCoy had sought to recruit Chicago area Indians to his school at Fort Wayne. Responses from both men, dated in January 1821, said it was doubtful Indians from the Chicago area would send their children to Fort Wayne because it was too distant and they would be unwilling to send their children into the country of the Miami, "towards whom their feelings are never very cordial." See Wolcott to McCoy, January 13, 1821, and Kinzie to McCoy, January 27, 1821, in Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 129-130.

33 Ibid, 100-101.

34 Ibid, 102.
Because her children were "acknowledged Indians" of the Potawatomi, or perhaps through her powerful relatives, Kakima was able to secure land grants for all her children under the Potawatomi Treaty of October 2, 1818. James got Sections 2 and 3 at the “mouth of the Tippecanoe River”; John got Sections 1 & 3; and Isaac Sections 4 and 6 on the “Flint River”; Abraham got Sections 4 and 6; Rebecca got Section 1; and Nancy Section 5 on “the Tippecanoe River.” See Fay, Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States, 50; Cunningham, Letter Book of William Burnett, xiii; Cunningham, Land of Four Flags, 96; and Commissioners, General Land Office, to William Marshall, Indian agent, Logansport, Ind., September 14, 1832, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project. Abraham’s adoptive uncles James and John Burnett took over their father's trading business near the mouth of the St. Joseph after William Burnett’s death in about 1812.

Montgomery to McCoy, August 12, 1821, cited in Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 133-134.

Montgomery to McCoy, August 22, 1821, cited in Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 135-36. Montgomery came to realize before the negotiations ended that John Burnett did not have "as much influence as I expected" and was in Chicago attending to "much business of his own."

See Fay, Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States, 51-53; and Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 48. Under this treaty the Potawatomi ceded "all of their lands in southwestern Michigan from the St. Joseph River in the south to the Grand River in the north, although Pokagon's village in the South Bend area was exempt from the cession. For this cession they were to be paid five thousand dollars annually, in specie, for twenty years. Article 4 also stipulated that a one-square-mile tract for a teacher, blacksmith, and farming instructor be set aside on the Grand River for the Ottawa nation, which was to receive fifteen hundred dollars annually for ten years to support them. Under Article 2 five small tracts measuring at the most six square miles also were reserved for the villages of five Indian leaders.

See McCoy, History of Baptist Indian Missions, 107; Coolidge, A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County, 17; Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 141; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 223.

Barnes, "Isaac McCoy and the Treaty of 1821," 141.

Ibid, 142.


In a marriage record dated August 31, 1762, the second-generation Jacques Bertrand "declared he could not sign" at the marriage ceremony of his son Joseph.

See Eccles, The French in North America, 52; and R. Cole Harris, The Seigneurial System in Early Canada: A Geographical Study (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 46. Harris writes that the system of inheritance in New France was a modified form of primogeniture, a compromise between the assumption that an individual had a "natural right" to land and the desire to preserve the integrity of the family estate. The division of Jean Bertrand's land between his two oldest sons, as cited by Bertrand genealogists, deviates from the usual system as explained by Harris, who writes that "the eldest son inherited the seigneurial manor, its courtyard, and half of the rest of the seigneurie; the other half was divided among the other children. … If a seigneur's death preceded his wife's, the estate was divided between the widow and the children although the widow's half was held in usufruct and passed to the children at her death. These rights were rigorously protected and were lost only if an individual accepted something in their stead, renounced his claim, or entered the Church."

See Clark, "Bertrand Family;" Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestors;" and Harris, The Seigneurial System in Early Canada, 162-163.
Laurent Eustache Gamelin (1695-1771) was the nephew of Ignace Gamelin, Sr., who, in 1729, financed his son Joseph Gamelin and his nephews Michel and Laurent Eustache to the Michilimackinac trade. By the time Laurent Bertrand signed on, Eustache Gamelin had formed a fur trading partnership (on April 28, 1731) with Jean-Baptiste Gaultier de La Vérendrye and Nicolas Sarrazin.

Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestors," 3

Carolyn Podruchny, Making the Voyageur World: Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 28-30. Podruchny writes that habitants sometimes worked intermittently in the trade to earn extra cash. While generations of one family often entered the fur trade, other times, Podruchny writes, "working as a voyageur was a common practice in the parish and not limited to individual families." Well over a third of the male population in the parish of Sorel, for instance, entered the fur trade between the 1790s and 1820s. Sorel, on the south shore of St. Lawrence, was the birthplace of Jean Bertrand's wife. Perhaps it was his in-laws who introduced the Bertrand brothers to the trade. In the early part of the eighteenth century, Podruchny writes, the majority of voyageurs were recruited from the immediate vicinity of Montreal and to a lesser extent Trois-Rivières. In the latter part of the century, due to competition from urban employers, merchants turned increasingly to the countryside.


Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 48-52. Sixty-two of the eighty-seven marriages were recorded and another twenty-five inferred from the baptismal register. The British takeover, Peterson writes, "seems to have precipitated a major movement of Canadians and their native families out of the fort at Michilimackinac." In 1779 the British relocated the fort to the island of Mackinac.


Gerin-Lajoie," Fort Michimackinac in 1749," 9. Chartier didn't name the three mixed-race families. According to Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 49-50, the average civilian house at Michilimackinac measured only 17 feet 4 inches by 20 feet 5 inches, with two 3-foot 5-inch doors and a tiny garden attached.


See Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestors," 3; "The Mackinac Register," Wisconsin Historical Collections, 19 (1910), 83; and Coolidge, A Twentieth Century History of Berrien County, 207.

Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestors," 3, 11. Some accounts, including Haines, "French and Indian Footprints at Three Rivers on the St. Joseph," 395, say Bertrand worked for William Burnett before setting up his own trading post, but Moeller notes that Joseph Bertrand is mentioned in Burnett's account books only once, in 1792, when, at age fourteen, he received a small amount of merchandise in payment of wages.

60 Ibid.


62 Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 93, 98.

63 Ibid, 93-94.


65 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 229.

66 See ibid, 93, 203 n74; Cunningham, *Land of Four Flags*, 104; and Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 71. Sleeper-Smith writes that Madeleine was Potawatomi, and notes that some genealogists say she was born into the Chevalier kin network.

67 See "Bourassa," Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project; Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 47; Gérin-Lajore, "Fort Michilimackinac in 1749"; Eccles, *The French in North America*, 55; and *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* (November 17, 2009.) In colonial Montreal, where the fur trade dominated the economy, there were a number of merchant families, but eight were especially wealthy, including that of Jacques Le Ber. Eccles writes that he had made a sizable fortune in the trade and was ennobled for "purchasing a lettre d'annoblissement for 6,000 livres." These wealthy merchants came to form the colony's dominant class and were "very conscious of their elevated economic and social status." Genealogists Dorothy Strickland and Virginia Bourassa write that Francois Bourassa II (1659-May 9, 1708) was the son of Marguerite Dugas and Francois Bourassa I of the diocese of Lucon, Poitou, France. He married Marie Le Ber, daughter of Francois Le Ber and Jeanne Tetard, on July 4, 1684. Marie Le Ber (1666-1756) remarried after Francois Bourassa II died. Her second husband was Charles Robert Desleuier; her third was Pierre Herve.


69 Ibid.


71 Armour, "Rene Bourassa dit La Ronde." The Jean-Baptiste Gaultier de La Verendrye party, following some miles behind, was not so fortunate. Twenty-one of its members were killed by the Sioux.

72 See ibid; and "The Mackinac Register," 18:481.

Charles Langlade was the son of trader Augustin Langlade and Domitilde, sister of Ottawa chief La Fourche, who was the most prominent Ottawa at L'Arbre Croche on Sturgeon Bay.

Rene Bourassa first married Agnes Gagne on October 23, 1710, in Laprairie, Canada; they had three children, including Rene II, born June 1, 1718. After apparently divorcing Agnes Gagne (who died in Montreal on September 7, 1778), Rene I remarried, on September 28, 1721, to Marie Catherine Leriger de la Plante, whose mother was Marie-Marguerite Roy, a surname that is prominent in the early history of Kansas. Another Rene Bourassa, who does not figure prominently in this study, was born of this second marriage – Rene-Clement Bourassa (born September 17, 1722).

See "The Mackinac Register," 18:471-72; Virginia Bourassa genealogy chart; and Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 187 n33. Named Rene Francois Bourassa, he was born March 3, 1744 at Michilimackinac. As often was the case in a vast country with few priests, the couple had a child before their marriage was consecrated. The child was born the previous March at Michilimackinac.

Moeller, "Joseph Bertrand Sr., His Ancestry," 11-13, thinks Madeleine was adopted by Topinebe, or possibly was a granddaughter; Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 93, says she may have been Topinebe's sister; and Clifton, The Prairie People, has her as a niece of Topinebe. Moeller quotes Catholic Church records from Ste. Anne's Church in Detroit, which state that Madeleine was born in 1781 and her marriage to Joseph Bertrand ratified August 13, 1818, by a mission priest there. Various newspaper articles contend that Madeleine Bourassa was the daughter of Topinebe, but based on church records this cannot be true. Moeller dates this inaccuracy to the 1880s and 1890s when older residents of Bertrand, Michigan, were interviewed about the region's origins. As a young man, Daniel fathered a daughter by a Potawatomi woman whose name and identity are lost, though scholars and genealogists agree that she was closely linked to Topinebe. Daniel's métis daughter, whose baptismal name was Madeleine, was born about 1781 "near the portage landing at St. Joseph River," meaning in the South Bend-Niles area. She married Joseph Bertrand.

See F. Clever Bald, Detroit's First American Decade, 1796 to 1805 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1948), 34; and Rentmeester, The Wisconsin Fur-trade People, 1:34, which says Beletre was Tonty's brother-in-law. During his command, which began in 1717, Tonty sublet trade licenses it to a select few. The only son of their marriage, also named Francois-Marie Picot-Beletre and also an officer, was commandant at Detroit in 1760 when the French surrendered the post to the British.

See "Beaubien family records," Kansas State Historical Society; Rentmeester, The Wisconsin Fur-trade People, 195; and Bald, Detroit's First American Decade, 34.


"Beaubien Family Records." Jean Cuillerier was born in Montreal on November 2, 1670. He died in about 1710.

See ibid; Askin Papers 1:47; Jacqueline Peterson, "Goodbye, Madore Beaubien: The Americanization of Early Chicago Society," Chicago History 9 (1980): 98-111; Bard, Detroit's First American Decade, 35; Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, 73; and Bela Hubbard, "The Early Colonization of Detroit," in Fuller, Historic Michigan, 211. John Baptiste's half-brother, Francois-Marie Picot-Beletre, was commander at Fort Detroit when the post was transferred to the English in 1760. During Pontiac's Rebellion, when Indians laid siege to the fort (May 9-October 30, 1763), Jean-Baptiste had served as a captain in the militia, and his brother, the fur trader Antoine Cuillerier, had served as an Indian interpreter. It was Antoine's daughter and Jean-Baptiste's niece Angelique Cuillerier who has been called the "heroine of Pontiac's Rebellion" because it was she who informed the British of the Indian plot against the fort. According to the Irish fur trader James Sterling, who was Angelique’s husband, she had been involved in the trade "from her infancy & is generally allowed to be the best interpreter of the different Indn languages at this place."

Ibid, 39.

See Peterson, "Goodbye, Madore Beaubien," 106; Burton, "Early Detroit," 159; "Beaubien Family Records"; and Askin Papers, 1:74. Their daughter Mary Catherine (born August 5, 1743) married James Parent, whose recollections of Pontiac's War were put into writing by General Lewis Cass and used by Francis Parkman in his writings. Son Jean Baptiste (born April 15, 1745) married Geneva Parent. Son Louis Beaubien (born July 6, 1754) became a lieutenant colonel in the militia and married Catherine Lootman dit Barrois. Daughter Geneviève (born May 1, 1761) married John Baptiste Barthe, who was involved in supplying fur traders at Sault Ste Marie and Mackinac. Son Lambert (born April 7, 1767) and daughter Susanne (born May 30, 1769) married into the early Detroit Campau family. Five of the thirteen children died as infants.

Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 64. According to Angelique's husband, the Irish fur trader James Sterling, she had been involved in the trade "from her infancy & is generally allowed to be the best interpreter of the different [Indian] languages at this place."

See Askin Papers 1:318; and Cecile A. Nadeau, R.S.M., “Nadeau Family Genealogy and History of Two Collateral Lines in Canada and the United States of America, 1665-1975,” (Dyer, Indiana, n.p., 1976). Joseph O. Nadeau was born in 1637 in the province of Angoumois (Charente) France and died February 12, 1677. He married Marguerite Abraham, born in 1645, daughter of Godgaud (or Godefroid) Abraham and Denise Fleury of the parish of Saint Eustache in Paris. Marguerite Abraham was known as “the beautiful Jewess.” Joseph Osanny Nadeau emigrated to New France, where he married Margaret Abraham. He died in 1677 and was buried at Isle d'Oe Orleans near Quebec. Three of his great-grandsons, Joseph, Martin, and Anthony Nadeau, located at the River Raisin in 1790, where Anthony’s daughter Monica Nadeau married Mark Beaubien on March 13, 1817.

See Askin Papers, 1:36-37; *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections* 8 (1886), 450-52, and 37 (1909-10), 424; Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region*, 46; and Hubbard, "The Early Colonization of Detroit," 208, which says Robert Navarre was appointed in 1734.

See C.M. Burton, "City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922" (Chicago, 1922), 1:166, quoted in Askin Papers, 1:37; and *Navarre News*, n.d., Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project, which says that for his service Robert Navarre was granted land along the Detroit River in 1747 at what is today Tenth and Jefferson Avenue in Detroit.

Based on Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region*, 46, this Mary Lootman dit Barrios differs from the Mary Ann Lootman dit Barrios who married Jean Baptiste Cuillerier dit Beaubien. Denissen states that the Mary who married Navarre was born in 1719, while the Mary Ann who married Beaubien was born in 1726. Both were daughters of Francis Lootman dit Barrios and Mary Ann Sauvage.

See Dennis M. Au, *Michigan History*, 23 (November/December 1989), 32-36; Olive Chapman Lauther, *Robert de Navarre: The Last of the Bourbons*, (Arlington, Virginia.: Cooper-Trent Division of Keuffel & Esser Co., 1970), 260, 270,272; and Timothy Edward Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1907), 130. Lauther’s work contains a copy of the original deed, showing that the land was given by the Potawatomis Askiby, Mongo-agon, Minguinan, Ona-oni-attenne, Nana-onito, and Sac-co-ni-binne. Lauther writes that the land grant was twenty acres in width by eighty or one hundred in depth and went to Francois Navarre and his brother James. Au writes that private treaties were unlawful under the British and Americans but that the United States did allow generous grants of land to any Michigan resident who could provide proof that his land had been occupied by 1796. "When the testimony was taken in 1808, Joseph Jobin, the captain of the River Raisin militia, swore," Au writes, "that Neutrau had erected his house in 1789." During the War of 1812, Francois Navarre, as he had during the American Revolution, sided with the United States against the British. His house on the River Raisin, in fact, served as headquarters for American General James Winchester prior to the Battle of the River Raisin, January 22, 1813. Winchester road to the battlefield on a horse supplied by Navarre.
I.P. Christaincy, "Recollections of the Early History of the City and County of Monroe," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections* 6 (1884), 162-63. Christaincy writes that as late as 1844 he saw wild grapes growing "over the tops of the tallest forest trees," some of the vines being from six to eight inches through and after climbing to the tops of the trees, dropped branches to the ground, which again took root and "made an inextricable mat of vines."


The name is found variously as Kiskwalka, Kes-he-wa-quay, and Keshewaquay. Her French name was Angelique. According to Howard, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, the main portion of the Potawatomi lived in Marshall and Fulton counties, Indiana.

See ibid; "Potawatomi Enrollment Roll, 1863," Kansas State Historical Society; Joseph Greusel, "Lewis Bond papers," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections* 37:424; and Mary Kaye and Robert George Smits, "Our Native American/Navarre Ancestors," based on Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region*. County histories say Pierre Navarre came from Monroe, Michigan, as an employee of the American Fur Company. He also traded along the Kankakee for Lathrop Taylor in 1839. Little is known of Kis-wa-qua except that she received a grant of land in Indiana under the Treaty of 1828, and that her marriage to Pierre Navarre was ratified in Pokagon's Village on September 12, 1834, an important date since it followed the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, in which the Potawatomi agreed to remove to the west. According to Navarre descendant Keith J. Navarre, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project, Pierre Frencheotte Navarre, who died December 27, 1864, and Angelique Navarre, who died circa 1834-36, are buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery at Notre Dame, Indiana. Angelique's body is thought to have been removed, to make way for a road, to a common Potawatomi grave site in Cedar Grove Cemetery. Genealogists suggest that Pierre Navarre's middle name was taken from one of his godparents, a Mr. Frencheotte. Another godparent was Angelique Campeau, who in all likelihood was related to Pierre's mother, Mary Louisa Campeau Marsac, who married Robert Navarre II. Mary Louisa, who died October 10, 1796, when Pierre was nine years, was the daughter of Francis Marsac and Teresa Campeau. Today, Pierre Navarre is celebrated as the first pioneer settler of South Bend, Indiana. His cabin, moved to Leeper Park in South Bend, has been designated a historical monument. Descendants of Judith Navarre, a daughter of Pierre Frencheotte Navarre and Kish-wa-quah, include Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput.

Despite the 1783 Treaty of Paris, British traders had acted as if the border with the United States was open, and up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the whole of the fur trade in America with the exception of Russians in Alaska, was a British monopoly.

Meade C. Williams, "The Fur Trade" in George N. Fuller, ed., *Historic Michigan: Land of the Great Lakes*, 1:115. The two companies that Astor already controlled, the Mackinac Company and Southwest Company were merged into the American Fur Company, which was chartered in 1808. The British Hudson Bay Company and Northwest Company settled their longtime feud and merged under the name of the HBC.


See ibid, 124-25; *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 3 (1881), 58; 6 (1884), 346-7; and 37 (1909-10), 134; and Williams, "The Fur Trade," 116. The American Fur Company, with headquarters at Mackinac, would flourish for twenty years, until Astor sold his interest in 1834 and the business declined.

"American Fur Company Invoices -- 1821-22," *Wisconsin Historical Collections* 11 (1888), 376-377. A sample invoice of the goods being traded for furs: 151 blankets (3-point to -point) valued at between $3.20 and $8.10 each; 71 pieces of cloth, from blue broad cord and green flannel to domestic cotton, printed cotton, and Indian calico valued at $1,230.71; a half dozen printed cotton shawls at $6.40 apiece; and a variety of handkerchiefs from cotton flag to black silk.
101 See Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 43; Quaife, Lake Michigan, 199; Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 90; and Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West," 7.

102 See Rentmeester, The Wisconsin Fur-Trade People, 286-87; and Quaife, Lake Michigan, 201. Alexis LaFromboise's two sons by his union with this Chippewa woman were Jean-Baptiste LaFromboise (born 1788) and Joseph LaFromboise (born 1790), both of whom also lived with Indian women. Jean-Baptiste was a voyageur at Prairie du Chien in 1808, working for the Mackinac Company and later lived with a Menominee woman named Marguerite. He later drew annuity payments for himself, his wife and daughter, Mary Ann (Mrs. Peter Larocque). Joseph LaFromboise settled at Bay Settlement, Wisconsin, with a Menominee woman named Veronique and received Menominee mixed-blood payments in 1849 for himself, two boys and four girls. He also received three thousand dollars for himself and one thousand dollars for his children as part of the 1833 Treaty concerning Milwaukee Indians.

103 Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 150-51. Joseph LaFromboise became a prominent trader at Mackinac, where his daughter Josette (born 1795) married Captain Benjamin Pierce, brother of the future American president, Franklin Pierce. This Josette LaFromboise has been confused with the Josette LaFromboise who married into the Beaubien family. Joseph LaFromboise would receive a life annuity under the Chicago Treaty of September 26, 1833.

104 Ibid.

105 See Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project; Garragahan, The Jesuits of the Middle United States, 1:423; Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West," 32. Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 73, writes that Joseph LaFromboise's métis son Claude also married a Potawatomi woman, perhaps Shawwenoquah. Alexander Robinson's Indian name was Chechequinquay.


107 See Peterson, "Goodbye, Madore Beaubien," 106-107; Clifton, The Prairie People, 228, 231, 273; R. David Edmunds, "Chicago in the Middle Ground"<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/254.html> and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, "Métis," in Encyclopedia of Early Chicago <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org> (December 12, 2010.) Strongly loyal to Britain, Billy Caldwell (March 17, 1780-September 27, 1841) served as a British captain during the War of 1812 and was severely wounded during the battle of the River Raisin in January 1813. From 1814 to 1816 he served as assistant deputy superintendent general of the British Indian Department, the same agency of which John Kinzie also was a member until his 1813 arrest for treason. After the war, in 1820, Caldwell returned to Chicago to resume work with Kinzie, Forsyth and Wolcott in the Indian trade, switching his allegiance to the United States, and also becoming an interpreter for Indian agents. In 1826 he served as election judge for Peoria County; was rewarded in 1828 for his services by the U.S. Department of Indian Affairs with a frame house in Chicago and a sixteen-hundred-acre land grant along both sides of the north branch of the Chicago River. During his Chicago years he occasionally visited John Kinzie on business, as shown in Kinzie's account books for the dates April 30, 1804 (when Kinzie still lived on the St. Joseph River), November 16, 1804 (when Kinzie was in Chicago), and again in 1812 on August 18 and September 21, when Kinzie was on his way from Chicago to Detroit. After 1804, Caldwell formed an enduring friendship with Alexander Robinson.

108 See Clifton, The Prairie People, 231; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 72. Billy Caldwell's mother was the daughter of Rising Sun, a Mohawk. The Ottawa Shabbona (also Shabeni) married a Potawatomi woman. Alexander Robinson was the son of a Scots trader and an Ottawa woman.

109 Murphy, A Gathering of Rivers, 158. "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr.,” Wisconsin Historical Collections 11 (1888), 218-237, says that Jean Baptiste Mirandeau's daughter Victoria "was raised by the Kinzies in Chicago, and in 1822 she married a Canadian named Joseph Porthier."

111 Peterson, “Goodbye, Madore Beaubien,” 107, put the date of her death at about 1812.


Shabbona, according to Crane, was born into the Ottawa tribe about the year 1775, but married the daughter of a Potawatomi chief and in time succeeded to the old chief’s place. Early in the nineteenth century, Shabbona was living in his own village in the southern part of present DeKalb County, Illinois. He lost possession of this tract through a technicality. A small group of settlers bought him a small farm near Morris in Grundy County. Shabbona would continue to draw a United States government annuity long after the removal years. He died in July 1859.

113 See “Beaubien Family Records”; Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project; Moeller, “Joseph Bertrand, Sr., His Ancestors;” and Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 74, 78. The tavern was named for Mark Beaubien’s friend Billy Caldwell, who was called Sauganash, meaning “The Englishman.”

114 “Beaubien Family Records.”

115 Ibid.

116 Peterson, “Goodbye, Madore Beaubien,” 100-101. In her essay, Peterson follows the rising destiny of the second-generation John Harris Kinzie as a speculative frenzy brought streams of American settlers into Chicago in the mid- to-late 1830s.

117 John F. Swenson, “John Kinzie,” A Compendium of the Early History of Chicago: To the Year 1835 When the Indians Left (River Forest, Ill.: Early Chicago, Inc., 2000) <http://www.earlychicago.com/encyclopedia> (December 12, 2010). Kinzie was born in Quebec on December 27, 1763, the son of John MacKenzie, a Scottish surgeon in the British army, who died about 1793. His mother, Emily Tyne, remarried in about 1764 to William Forsyth of the prominent Forsyth trading family and living in Detroit by 1779. John Kinzie had changed his name from MacKenzie and Kenzie to Kinzie. His mother was married three times. Her first husband was the British army chaplain John Halliburton. When he moved to Chicago, Kinzie's immediate family comprised his second wife, Eleanor, widow of Daniel McKillip and daughter of William and Ann Lytle; their infant son, John Harris; and Margaret McKillip, Eleanor’s daughter from her first marriage. In Chicago they had three more children: Ellen Marion in 1804, Maria Indiana in 1807, and Robert Allen in 1810. He had an establishment on the St. Joseph River, near South Bend, from 1796 to early 1804, when he moved to Chicago.

118 See Robert G. Spinney, City of Big Shoulders: A History of Chicago (Northern Illinois University Press, 2000), 19-24; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 184-85. Spinney writes that the entire white community of Chicago, numbering fewer than one hundred, fled to the fort, where "they huddled in fear for the next few months." Bands of Winnebagos and "young Potawatomis who did not share their parent's willingness to accommodate the Anglo-Americans" took the opportunity to steal livestock in the countryside and burn buildings.


120 See Juliette Magill Kinzie, Wau-Bun, the 'Early Day' in the Northwest (Chicago: D.B. Cooke & Co., 1857, rep. 1992), 236-37; Benton, A Visitor to Chicago in Indian Days;” 70-72; and Swenson, "John Kinzie," who writes that it can only be guessed when the British Kinzie's allegiances changed to the United States. "The Indians' destruction of his business at Chicago by the massacre in August, 1812," Swenson writes, "was perhaps the unintended consequence of a British order to the Indians to attack Fort Dearborn. This shocking carnage might well have caused him, at least privately, to switch sides, but instead he moved into British-held territory and assumed a
new active role in the British Indian department." After the massacre, the Kinzies and Mrs. Helm were escorted to the Burnett trading post at the mouth of the St. Joseph River by Jean Baptiste Chandonnai, Kinzie’s métis clerk. Kinzie resumed trade at his old post on the St. Joseph by September 9, 1812. "By January 1813, Kinzie and his family were living in British-held Detroit, "although Kinzie himself appears to have spent part of his time at the St. Joseph post, where the last entry in his accounts is dated March 22, 1813."

121 See Bessie Louise Pierce, ed. As Others See Chicago: Impressions of Visitors, 1673-1933 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933); and Craig Anderson, genealogy, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project.

122 See Kinzie, Wau-Bun, 236-37; and Antoine Ouilmette to John Harris Kinzie, June 1, 1839.

123 See Anderson, genealogy; Thomas A. Meehan, “Jean Baptiste Point du Sable: The First Chicagoan” Journal of Illinois State Historical Society 56:3 (Autumn 1963), 439-53; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 155-56. The first Fort Dearborn was constructed in 1803 on a six-square-mile tract relinquished by the Potawatomi under the 1795 Treaty of Greeneville.

124 Benton, A Visitor to Chicago in Indian Days, 77-78.

125 Ibid, 115-16. Benton headed south on the Fox River to the mouth of the Illinois and then to the Vermillion, where he found residents "building a flour mill."

126 Ibid.

127 Ouilmette to Kinzie, June 1, 1839

128 See "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr.,” 218-19, 233; Quaife, Lake Michigan, 200; and Milwaukee Sentinel, March 13, 1895. According to Andrew J. Vieux Sr., the original family name from France was De Veau, but since it meant calf or veal and children were wont to tease playmates by bleating at them, the names was changed to Vieau. In Wisconsin, the spelling most often found is "Vieau," while in Kansas it is more often "Vieux," although the original family name in New France seems to have been "Jauvan."

129 See ibid; "Narrative of Peter J. Vieau," Wisconsin Historical Collections 15 (1900), 458; Merton Whitlow,"Gleanings of the Vieux (Vieau) Family”; Hiram Martin Chittenden, The American Fur Trade of the Far West (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1935, rep. 1986), 1:91-92; and The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed., (Columbia University Press), [http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/history/A0860040.html] (December 12, 2010). The Grand Portage, north of Chequamegan Bay on today's Canadian-U.S. border, was the important trading center where the North West Company's business connected to the vast Canadian interior. The Citizen Band newspaper How-Ni-Kow, n.d., puts the birth date as 1767. An obituary for Jacques Vieau Sr., Green Bay Advocate, July 8, 1852, says he was born in 1759, "emigrated from Canada" in 1781 and "was universally respected." That Andrew, Peter, and Nicholas Vieux attended the Rev. Richard F. Cadle's Episcopal mission school at Green Bay in 1829 or 1830 may help verify the Huguenot background. The North West Company of Montreal, longtime rival to the British Hudson Bay Company, was an outgrowth of the aftermath of the French and Indian War, when Britain gained sovereignty over French Canada. The fur trade, by 1766, Chittenden writes, "fell into the hands of a few Scotchmen." For several years these leading merchants acted independently of one another, but competition and the loss of profits due to a smallpox outbreak, induced them to enter into an association, which had stabilized by 1787 as the North West Company.

130 See Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr.,” 220-222; "Narrative of Peter J. Vieau,” 459; Louis Falge, History of Manitowoc County, Wisconsin (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1912), 31; and "Milwaukee: Interesting Sketch of Early History," The Milwaukee News, July 6, 1872. Reuben Gold Thwaites, Wisconsin: The Americanization of a French Settlement (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1908), 165, says jack-knife posts possibly were so-called because the posts were easily opened and closed.

131 Ibid.
132 See "Narrative of Andrew Vieau, Sr.," 223; and Peter Vieux quoted in Milwaukee Free Press, August 6, 1905. Jacques Vieux, in about 1797-98, also was said to have spent two or three seasons at the Fox-Wisconsin portage. "The 'red skin of the deer' was said to be "the only summer fur" that was worth taking.

133 Perhaps Marguerite's father was Menominee and her mother Chippewa; both tribes were an Algonquian people living in the Green Bay area. Sources differ on Angelique Roy Vieux's ancestry. Based on her baptism record, however, she was about twenty years old on July 7, 1804, which would make her birthdate about 1784 and place her as seventy-eight years old at the time of death. See obituary, Green Bay Advocate, March 24, 1864; Whitlow, "Gleanings of the Vieux (Vieau) Family." Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr., 219; Thwaites, Wisconsin: The Americanization of a French Settlement, 180-81; Falge, History of Manitowoc County, 31; "Favor a Celebration," Milwaukee Sentinel, March 11, 1895; "The City's Centennial," Milwaukee Sentinel, March 13, 1895; "Of Long-Lived Stock," Milwaukee Sentinel, March 24, 1895; "Peter Vieux Now Eighty Years Old," Milwaukee Journal, January 10, 1900; "Peter Vieau: Oldest Living Resident Born in Milwaukee," Milwaukee Free Press, August 6, 1905; and Green Bay Advocate, March 24, 1864, which says she was born on the bank of the Fox River in Green Bay's Fort Howard borough. Fort Howard was constructed in 1816 on the Fox River, a mile from its mouth. According to Augustin Grignon in Wisconsin Historical Collections, 3 (1857), 200-201, 290-91, Onaugesa was a Menominee with a Potawatomi wife. Grignon says that Marguerite was Onaugesa's sister and that her mother was Menominee. A local dispute exists over who was Milwaukee's first white settler, Jacques Vieux or Solomon Juneau. Jacques Vieux traded in Milwaukee as early as 1795, but his homestead was in Green Bay. Solomon Juneau, who was Vieux's son-in-law, settled in Milwaukee in 1820. Solomon Juneau married Josette Vieux, Jacques Vieux's daughter by a woman other than Angelique Roy, but who was raised in the Vieux household. In 1819, Jacques Vieux turned over his trading post, by then affiliated with the American Fur Company, to his son-in-law Solomon Juneau. According to Andrew Vieux, Juneau lived in Green Bay until 1834 or 1835 when he moved to Milwaukee. Thwaites states that Juneau platted the town in 1833. See Milwaukee Journal, March 13, 1927; and "He Was a Frenchman; The First White Settler of Milwaukee; His Identity a Fruitful Source of Dispute," unidentified Milwaukee newspaper, n.d., http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/wlhba. (December 12, 2010).

134 "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr.," 224. The Fox River runs through the heart of today's Green Bay, Wisconsin. Jacques Vieux served the British during the War of 1812.


136 Ibid. Skunk Creek today is known as Hood's Creek. Racine County previously was part of Milwaukee County. The mail had been carried as early as 1825 from Chicago to Milwaukee and Green Bay.

137 The earliest record indicates that “Antonine Bourbonois” sent a canoe to Grand Portage with a cargo valued at eighty pounds. Lafrance Bourbonois was in charge of boats for fur trader Maurice Blondeau in 1770 and apparently worked as a guide for Blondeau at the Grand Portage in 1772.

138 A Compendium of the Early History of Chicago to the Year 1835 states that Francois Bourbonnais Sr.'s wife was the métis Catherine [Cattice, Catish] Larcheveque Chevalier, and that they had four sons and two daughters: Antoine, Francois Jr., Washington, Ozette, Peter, and Catherine. Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, 123, writes that Gallia County, Ohio, downstream from the early settlement at Marietta (founded in 1788), was settled by Frenchmen who had purchased lands from an agent of the Scioto Company.

139 See Vic Johnson, "Few traces remain of Bourbonnais clan," The (Kankakee, Illinois) Sunday Journal, November 21, 1982; Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 48-49; United States Department of the Interior to Carroll S. Bourbonnais, July 5, 1979; and http://www.earlychicago.com (December 12, 2010), which says the Bourbonnais tavern was located at the Opa post of the American Fur Company. Sleeper-Smith places the two oldest daughters of Marie Madeleine Réaume L'archeveque Chevalier at Peoria by the mid-eighteenth century. One daughter married Louis Chevalier's younger brother, Louis Paschal Chevalier (the brothers both were named Louis), and another daughter, Angelique L'archeveque, married Louis Chevalier's Montreal trading partner, Charles
Lhullic dit Chevalier. Also relocating to the Illinois Country, Sleeper-Smith writes, were the children of Louis Chevalier's sister Charlotte, who married Antoine Deshêtres, the former St. Joseph blacksmith. Eventually, they moved farther south to Cahokia, where they were joined by another of Marie Madeleine's daughters, Marie Amable, and her husband. Louis Chevalier's sister, Marie Josephe (Josette) and her husband, Pierre Renaud die Locat, and their children also moved to Cahokia.


141 See Young, “Never 'Quite' White,” 73, 79; Anderson, genealogy; [http://www.earlychicago.com]; and Florence Drake, "Mary Bourbonnais Organized a Sunday School," The Chronicles of Oklahoma 40 (1962), 386-389. The Mary Anderson who married Antoine Bourbonnais was the daughter of Marie Trembley Anderson, whose mother was Archange Ouilmette Trembley Mann. Marie Trembley Anderson's husband was John Anderson. They would have three children, John Charles (born December 24, 1837), Mary (born April 1, 1847), and Peter (born 1845). Antoinie and Mary Anderson Bourbonnais, in time, moved to the North Canadian River near Shawnee, Oklahoma.

142 See Murphy, A Gathering of Rivers, 46-47; Peterson, "Many Roads to Red River," 44; and Thwaites, Wisconsin, 166-67. Fort Winnebago was built at the Fox-Wisconsin portage in 1829.


144 Ibid.

145 Ogee sold his ferry in April 1830 to John Dixon, the son of a British soldier who laid out lots for the town of Dixon, Illinois. Murphy, A Gathering of Rivers, 159-60, writes that Joseph Ogee's account in Dixon's books for 1830 "suggests that either he was trading with Indians or that, before Madeline left him, his family production and lifestyle tended toward Indian patterns. Ogee was credited with turning over to Dixon 21 pounds of feathers, 27 pounds of tallow, and 16 pounds of sugar." Madeline LaSallier Ogee later sold the land and migrated with the Potawatomi to Iowa. The Ogees' three children were Mary Margaret, born in about 1819, John Lafayette, born 1824, and Louis Henry, born 1826. Prairie du Chien is at the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers.

146 See Milwaukee Journal, January 10, 1900; Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project; and Clifton, The Prairie People, 364. The Trembley (Tremblay, Trombley, Tromble) surname, which appears on gravestones in the Vieux cemetery in Kansas, surfaces in the St. Joseph River valley fur trade as early as August 1722, when one "Jacques Du tremble from Champlain" served as godfather at a baptism. One Jean Trembley went to Green Bay in 1793 as an employee of fur trader Joachim Ulrich, and was in Chicago in 1796. Archange Ouilmette Trembley married a second time, to John Mann, a sergeant in the United States Army, stationed at Fort Dearborn who, after his discharge, kept a ferry boat near the mouth of the Calumet River as late as 1836.


149 See "Narrative of Peter J. Vieau," 463, 465; "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau, Sr.," 226; Milwaukee Sentinel, March 11, 24, 1895; January 6, 1903; Milwaukee Journal, January 10, 1900; and Milwaukee Free Press, August 6, 1905.

150 Young, "Never 'Quite' White," 73. Her second husband was John B. Thiebault. She died at Stevens Point, Wisconsin, in 1878.
151 See Joseph B. Thoburn, *A Standard History of Oklahoma*, Vol. 5 (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1916), 2168-70; "Susan Campbell's Potawatomi Genealogy," http://www.Kansasheritage.org/ PBP/legacy/vieux.html (June 20, 2011); and "Museum Given Historic Paper," unnamed Milwaukee newspaper, December 18, 1902. Although not marrying Indians, the Vieux siblings Paul, Jacques Jr., and Charles also relocated to Kansas. Before moving to Kansas, Jacques Vieux, Jr. married Lizitte Langier in 1830 and left Skunk Grove for Milwaukee, where he ran an inn, known as the Triangle Inn. The "historic paper," dated March 21, 1836, said Solomon Juneau and his wife, Josette, conveyed to Jacques Vieau the lot on the northeast corner of Broadway and Chicago street, described as 'lot 7, block 39, village of Milwaukee." This Jacques Vieux is probably Jacques Vieux Jr., "who the year before opened the famous 'Triangle' tavern, on the northwest corner of East Water and Huron streets." Sha-note was connected to Po-mom-ke-tuck or Ship-she-wan, who was said to be Peter the Great on the 1887 Citizen Band Potawatomi roll.

152 Family lines could become quite entwined. For example, when the Frenchman Joseph Bertrand married the métis Madeline Bourassa, he became the brother-in-law of Daniel Bourassa, who married Bertrand’s sister. However, because Daniel Bourassa also had fathered a child by an Indian woman – the métis Madeline who became Bertrand’s wife – Daniel Bourassa also was Joseph’s father-in-law. The Bertrands and Bourassas were prominent families in Kansas.

CHAPTER V
THE EMIGRANT POTAWATOMI AT THE CONFLUENCE

With removal to the Kansas Indian Country, métis families among the Potawatomi picked up where they left off in the Great Lakes region, becoming, I suggest, transitional figures who helped bridge the evolution of the confluence region from frontier to contested borderland. Métis befriended government officials, traders, and missionaries, started businesses, adopted technology, and lived in fine homes. In this chapter I explore removal of the various Potawatomi bands from the Great Lakes region to the Kansas Indian Country.

They went at different times and to different reservations – in what today are two states, Kansas and Iowa. Most of those in Illinois and southern Wisconsin removed to a five-million-acre tract that began at today’s Council Bluffs, Iowa and extended south into today’s northwestern Missouri. Most of those in southern Michigan and northern Indiana removed to the vicinity of the Marais des Cygnes River in south-central Kansas. Because the Marais des Cygnes is a tributary of the Osage River, the tract often was known as the Osage River Reservation. In 1846, under yet another treaty signed with the United States, Potawatomi and métis on the

![Figure 7: Author’s map Platte Purchase and Potawatomi reserve after 1846.](image-url)
Council Bluffs Reservation and those on the Osage River Reservation moved once again, this time uniting on a new reservation set aside for them in the heart of the Kansas River Valley, just west of present-day Topeka.

**Wisconsin and Illinois Bands**

The bulk of Potawatomi and métis from southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois removed west in 1835 under provisions of the Chicago Treaty of 1833. While two-thirds of their reservation was situated in Iowa, the other third followed the eastern shore of the Missouri River south, comprising what today are the six counties of northwestern Missouri, including the fertile Platte Country. The Platte Country, with its ragged western border shaped by the course of the Missouri River, comprised what historian William Connelley describes as “the best body of land in Missouri.” Originally off-limits to non-Indians, the Platte Country was left outside of Missouri when the state boundary was drawn in a straight line running due north from the juncture of the Missouri and Kansas rivers. At the time, federal officials envisioned the Platte Country as a district where Indians from the East would be relocated – a plan that was carried out under treaties in 1830 and 1833 with the Potawatomi.

In early December 1835, the métis Billy Caldwell led 252 Illinois and Wisconsin Potawatomis to the Platte Country with intentions of settling there. Upon arriving, Caldwell and his followers found 454 other Potawatomis already living there. The next year Caldwell's people were joined by another nine hundred Potawatomis; they included 266 followers of Padekoshēk who arrived from Illinois in mid-July 1836 and another 634 from northern Illinois who arrived on November 15. With the arrival of the latter group, conducted west by Gholson Kercheval, sixteen hundred to eighteen hundred Potawatomis were living in the Platte Country just four months before the region was annexed to Missouri on March 28, 1837.
Illegal though it was, white squatters blatantly settled in the Platte lands before the region was annexed. Among the squatters were enterprising men like Robert Cain, a veteran of the War of 1812 who went to Missouri in 1819 and established his home on a “fine spring” at the crossing of Todd’s creek. Cain opened a “large prairie farm,” kept a ferry at Fort Leavenworth and secured the contract to supply the garrison with provisions and stock. That men like Cain already were in the Platte Country and that others located there at the same time as emigrant Indians were arriving is, R. David Edmunds argues, an example of “misadministration and poor planning” by the federal government on Indian removal.5

Tensions were high in the winter of 1836-1837 as white settlers who had not squatted waited anxiously, poised to move in, the minute annexation was approved by Congress. In February 1837, as the United States government tried to persuade the Potawatomis to remove from the Platte Purchase lands to Iowa, it created the Council Bluffs subagency and appointed Dr. Edwin James, a former Army physician, as subagent.6 When the Potawatomi refused to leave the Platte, the U.S. government applied pressure by cutting off their rations. The War Department made plans to remove them forcibly and ordered Brigadier General Henry Atkinson to the region. Before he arrived, however, General Edmund P. Gaines, commander of the Army's Western Department, took matters into his own hands, gathered the Potawatomis together and promised them food in Iowa and steamboat transportation for the old and infirm among them.

This plan was put into action by Atkinson, who arrived in mid-July, assembled Caldwell's followers near St. Joseph, Missouri, and loaded 165 infirm Potawatomis on a steamboat bound for Council Bluffs. The other Potawatomis went overland, some 1,385 arriving at their new home in Iowa in mid-August 1837.7 The Beaubien, LaFramboise, Ogee, Vieux, and other métis
families removed to Iowa with the Potawatomi. With the Platte Purchase, Stephen Aron writes, “the last frontier in Missouri” closed.8

**Michigan and Indiana Bands**

As Caldwell’s followers left the Platte Country for Iowa, the Potawatomi in northern Indiana still were living there on thirteen small “band reservations” on the Wabash, Tippecanoe, and Yellow rivers. These small tracts for individual chiefs and their villagers were preserved under treaties conducted on the Tippecanoe River in October 1832.9 Under the October 26, 1832, treaty, for instance, Aub-be-naub-bee's band received thirty-six sections; Men-o-mi-nee, No-taw-kah, Muck-kah-tah-mo-way, and Pee-pin-oh-wah twenty-two sections; O-kaw-wause, Kee-waw-nay, and Nee-bosh, eight sections; Mau-ke-kose, six sections; Nees-waugh-gee and Quash-qua three sections; and two sections each for the bands of Com-o-za and Mah-che-saw. Under an agreement concluded on October 27, 1832, another fifteen tracts were set aside, including sixteen sections for the bands of Ash-kum and Wee-si-o-nas, five for Wee-sau, and the two sections that held the Potawatomi mills on the Tippecanoe River.10

Only two years after agreeing to let these Potawatomi bands live on these small reserves, the United States set out to acquire all the tracts, which it did under individual treaties conducted from late 1834 to February 11, 1837, when Potawatomis relinquished the last of their holdings east of the Mississippi. The chief Com-o-za, for instance, ceded his 1,280-acre reserve at a treaty negotiated on December 4, 1834, at a camp on Lake Max-ee-nie-kue-kee (Maxinkuckee) south of today's Plymouth, Indiana. In return, he received $400 in goods at the signing of the treaty, and a $400 annuity for one year. Six days later, at a camp on the Tippecanoe River, the chief Muck Rose, ceded his 3,840-acres reserve on the Tippecanoe, receiving in return for $400 in goods and an annuity of $1,000 for two years. Under another treaty six days later, the
Potawatomi ceded their mill on the Tippecanoe, and the next day, chief Moto and his band relinquished four sections reserved for them under the 1832 treaty. And so it went until February 11, 1837, when, in the last of the thirty-four treaties the United States had negotiated with the Potawatomis since 1795, the chiefs Chee-chaw-kose, Ash-kum, Wee-saw, Muck-kose, and Qui-qui-to, agreed to cede the small reserves set aside for them.\(^{11}\)

Furthermore, under the treaty of February 11, 1837, Potawatomi members of all these small bands agreed "to remove to a country…southwest of the Missouri River, within two years from the ratification of this treaty." The United States, in return, agreed to convey "by patent to the Potawatomi of Indiana" a "tract of country on the Osage river ….sufficient in extent, and adapted to their habits and wants…"\(^{12}\) This "tract of country," despite its description as being "on the Osage River," actually was situated on the Marias des Cygnes River, a tributary that rose in the Flint Hills of present Wabaunsee County, Kansas, flowed southeast, and joined the Osage River soon after crossing into Bates County, Missouri, about seventy miles south of present downtown Kansas City.\(^{13}\)

The fifteen-hundred-square mile tract, measuring about thirty-six miles by forty-two miles, started eighteen miles west of the Missouri state line, comprising parts of today's Kansas counties of Franklin, Miami, Anderson, and Linn. Except on the west, the tract was surrounded by reservations set aside for other emigrating groups – the Miamis on the east, the New York Indians on the south, and the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Ottawa, Chippewa, and Sac and Fox to the north. The Neosho River also ran through the reserve, as well as Sugar Creek and Potawatomie Creek (later made famous by John Brown). It was on these two creeks, both tributaries of the Marais des Cygnes, that the emigrating Potawatomi from Michigan and Indiana would establish their principal settlements.\(^{14}\)
Isaac McCoy had scouted out lands for Indian removal, and, in the spring of 1837, he and his associates selected Potawatomie Creek as suitable for an Indian village. That summer, the first Potawatomis began to locate on Potawatomie Creek. They numbered 164 and were led by young Topenabe, son of the old chief who had agreed to let McCoy set up his Carey Mission on the St. Joseph River in Michigan. Young Topenabe and his followers were living at the time in the Platte Country, where they had settled temporarily with Potawatomi from Illinois. In late July 1837, as the Prairie Potawatomi set out for their reservation in Iowa, Topenabe's people, who were closely associated with McCoy, left instead for south-central Kansas. Topenabe and his followers were at Potawatomie Creek for only two months when McCoy’s assistant Robert Simerwell established a Baptist mission there, at a site near present-day Osawatomie, Kansas.

The Catholic Influence

Soon competing for souls with the Baptists were priests with the Society of Jesus, the Black Robes who had been ministering to North American Indians since the seventeenth century. The Jesuit Christian Hoecken was at work among the emigrant Kickapoo near Fort Leavenworth by 1836. He visited the emigrant Potawatomi on Potawatomie Creek in 1838 and built a temporary chapel there. When the Catholic mission to the Kickapoo failed, Hoecken and other Jesuits turned their attention to the emigrating Potawatomi and indigenous Osage.

All the while, other Catholic priests were working in the Great Lakes mission field. Stephen Theodore Badin was in the South Bend, Indiana, area beginning in 1830, his arrival coinciding with the closure that same year of McCoy's Carey Mission. The secular priest Louis Deseille, coming from Holland in 1832, joined Badin, who lived in a cabin/chapel he built at St. Mary's Lake. The priest Benjamin Marie Petit took over duties in South Bend in October 1837, following Badin’s departure and Deseille’s death. A native of Rennes, France, Father Petit had
been in America less than three months when he established himself in the cabin at St. Mary's Lake and attended to stations in the growing American town of South Bend, as well as the various Potawatomi villages in northern Indiana and southern Michigan.

Because the Ohio River was the most-used migration route into Indiana, the state's southern portions filled before its northern reaches. American migrants arrived from the Carolinas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, later to be joined by people from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. Land offices opened at Vincennes (1804), Jeffersonville (1807), Terre Haute (1817), and Brookville (1819). As the population moved north, the capital relocated, on June 7, 1820, from Corydon in the extreme southern part of the state to Indianapolis, in its center. Admitted to the Union as the nineteenth state in 1816, additional land offices opened at Fort Wayne (1822), Crawfordsville (1823), and La Porte (1833), just ten miles from the Michigan border. By 1830, Indiana counted 343,031 inhabitants, and the state was being settled even in its far northern reaches, where Menominee's people still lived along the Yellow River near Twin Lakes.22

Petit had no kind words for the Americans, a people he said had "hearts dry as cork and their whole thought 'land and money.'" They failed to appreciate the Indians and treated them, he said, with "disdain and injustice," even though the Christian Potawatomi were "no longer savage."23 In fact, he said, the Christian Potawatomi were less savage "than most of these coarse American woodsmen."24 Petit had met the Americans on his rounds, including a trip he made to Leesburg, Indiana, to preach at the funeral of a Mr. Norris, "a poor Maryland Catholic." Despite Norris’ affiliation, nearly everyone in the room was Protestant, and they put Petit on the defensive, challenging him to justify Catholic doctrines and voicing disdain for the wealth and influence of Alexis Coquillard, a French Catholic agent with the American Fur Company.25
Petit's letters document his connections to the Coquillards, in whose parlor he sometimes celebrated Mass, and to the métis Bertrands, who were living in the “middle ground” of the region’s French-Indian and American worlds. As discussed in Chapter Three, the French-Potawatomi métis Joseph Bertrand Sr. established a trading post on the west side of the St. Joseph River in 1808, and later moved across the river to the site of today’s Bertrand, Michigan, where, as a devoted Catholic, he built a church in the village.26

Petit often went to the Bertrand church to celebrate Mass. Although the church “was not entirely finished,” Petit said it was “well closed up,” and he thought he could say Mass there “just as well as in Mme. Coquillard’s parlor.”27 On the occasion of his first High Mass there, he preached in French and recorded in his journal that Bertrand’s wife had given him a saddlebag and "two little books,”28 indicating that Mrs. Bertrand was literate. Petit often depended on the Bertrand family, his letters revealing their devotion to him. For instance, when word came one December that a woman at Pokagon's village, twenty-four miles distant, was seriously ill, Petit, needing transportation, sought out the Bertrands. "I left Bertrand in snow which was falling heavily," he wrote. "I traveled all night through the forest; there were, in the sleigh, M. Benjamin Bertrand and I. We upset nine times on the way -- superb! -- we laughed like kings."29 The Bertrand family had close ties to the priest, shown again when Benjamin’s brother Laurent turned to Father Petit to help him convert his wife to Catholicism.30

A German priest who visited the South Bend region in about 1840 left a vivid portrait of the Bertrands that suggests their rather uncomfortable circumstances as a people “in-between” on an Indiana-Michigan border now dominated by Protestant Americans. The visiting priest, thought to be Clemens Hammer, wrote of the town of Bertrand as “a little, newly constructed village” that, due to the “Michigan fever” (malaria), gave the place “the impression of a deserted
town ruin.” That he found Bertrand “newly constructed,” suggests the presence of recently arrived American settlers, although the métis Bertrands had lived in the vicinity for more than thirty years.

Hammer sought out the Bertrands as one of “the few families of my faith” in the region, describing Bertrand’s wife as “an Indian of the Potawatomi tribe – a good-hearted soul, who has been much refined through Christianity.”31 She was, he said, “the total opposite of her husband,” insinuating that he was not as refined as she. The product of their marriage was children who straddled two cultural worlds. “The children of this marriage might have adopted the outer coat of civilization,” Hammer wrote, “but the traditional life in the woods shows everywhere through the modern city clothing. The sons are married to Anglo-American women, whose children also still have the darker skin of the Indians, which unpleasantly contrasts with the snow-white delicate skin of their mothers.” The younger Bertrands spoke French, English, and Potawatomi, rendering, Hammer said, “great service as translators between missionaries and the Indians. Their sisters are playing ‘Ladies;’ they look in their European outfits, compared to their mother dressed in plain Indian clothes, like strange growths on the family tree. What a good many painters would have given if they could have been in my place to study the peculiar characteristics that emerged from this strange mixture of people in the Bertrand family.”32

The Bertrand family was, indeed, a people-in-between – a family in transition whose individual members with their “peculiar characteristics” reflected the trappings of a changing world. Though the good-hearted Mrs. Bertrand showed much refinement, she still had the darker skin of an Indian and wore the Indian dress. Her children, meanwhile, wore “modern city clothing” and had “adopted the outer coat of civilization,” but they apparently lacked enough polish to hide their upbringing in a French and Indian frontier now gone. To the German priest,
the Bertrand sisters seemed only to be “playing Ladies.” So strange did these dark-skinned young women look, standing next to their mother in their “European outfits” that they seemed “like strange growths on the family tree.” That their dark-skinned brothers had married white-skinned Anglo-American women spoke to the family’s acculturation, as well as Hammer’s racism. In his eyes, the Bertrands did not measure up to the apparently more sophisticated French Coquillards, whom he also visited, describing their “magnificent house and extended estate in the northern part of South Bend,” bought with money made in the Indian trade.

Hammer compared Coquillard and his comfortable surroundings to an “old gray Canadian” trader who brought some hides to trade while Hammer was present. Hammer said the man dwelled among the Potawatomi, dressing “in a manner only a little more European than theirs,” and lived the Indian life with his wife, “a wild Indian woman.” Hammer obviously preferred Coquillard’s lifestyle, writing that sometimes the old Canadian went for several days with nothing to eat. “That is how it is to be human!”

As R. David Edmunds argues, questions of métis identity intensified after large numbers of Americans arrived in the Great Lakes region. Although their Creole French neighbors and ‘full-blood’ kinsmen readily accepted them, many people of mixed-race heritage found themselves out of place within the American socio-economic system. “Newly arrived Americans subscribed to racially polarized categories: individuals were ‘white,’ ‘black,’ or ‘Indian.’” In response, some métis, “initially seemed to jump back and forth across the color line,” but by the late 1840s they were “at least in the eyes of the Americans, indelibly part of the Native American community.”

Rebecca Kugel writes that white definitions of race and gender relations “presented enormous challenges to all the peoples of the ‘middle ground’ and to none more so than to the
multiethnic and multiracial” métis. A distinct métis ethnic identity did not survive American movement into the Great Lakes regions, and places like Bertrand, Michigan, disappeared as a métis enclave. The Bertrand family would follow the Potawatomi west.

Edmunds describes métis as “objects of suspicion” to ethnocentric Americans who looked askance on their interracial marriages and considered them ignorant because many spoke no English. Americans criticized métis “as quasi-Europeans” who were too closely associated with Indians, even welcoming them into their homes. One American soldier objected to the métis’ buckskin garments, writing of them as a “rabble whose appearance caused us to doubt whether we had not actually landed among the savages themselves.” The soldier looked with distain on men like the old gray Canadian, declaring that such a lifestyle “partakes of the ridiculous, as well as the disgusting.” Equally disgusting, he thought, was “the Indian who assumes the tight-bodied coat of the white man.”

The most severe criticism, however, centered on the métis’ failure to become yeoman farmers. Because they were not using the land, they were seen to be wasting it. “Charges of agricultural ignorance were rampant in the Americans’ denunciation” of their métis neighbors, Edmunds writes. Lewis Cass denounced métis traders for spending “one half of the year in labor, want and exposure, and the other in indolence and amusements.” They displayed their ignorance of agriculture, he said, by throwing manure into the river instead of placing it upon their fields and by refusing to raise sheep so they could make wool garments. Cass criticized métis women because they refused to spin or weave their families’ clothing.

Although many Indians and métis like the Bertands had made strides toward accepting certain European values, Edmunds concludes that the trouble lay in their acceptance of “the
wrong European culture, that of the creole French.” Because they were not farmers, they were judged as failed Europeans with “no place in the future of the Old Northwest.” In the American-dominated world at Bertrand, Michigan, the half Indian-half French Bertrand family had become curiosities, a reality apparent in a story told years after the Bertrands removed to Kansas. In an 1896 article in the Detroit Journal, former residents of Bertrand recalled when they were children and had been so curious about the log church where the Catholic Bertrands went that they found a way to peek in the window. “Old residents related that on a memorable occasion while they were yet little children,” the newspaper said, “they mounted a carpenter’s horse and gazed with awe and amazement into the window of the church, where the Bertrand girls and their mother sat, tricked out in gay array.”

During the decades of the 1820s and 1830s, as American settlers streamed into the Old Northwest, they and an increasingly class-stratified system displaced the long-resident métis fur trapping families, who experienced a decline in prestige, power, and influence. Illustrating the altered status of the métis was their exclusion from power in the U.S. Indian Service. By 1822, of twenty-four agents and sub-agents in the Great Lakes region, only two were métis. “These old guard Métis,” Clifton writes, “were faced with a hard choice. They might stay on in this rapidly developing area to compete with the new elite for the leavings of wealth, which some did. Or they might continue their traditional adaptation as trappers and middlemen in the fur trade by moving west to where the pickings were still adequate, which many did. Or they might, following American practice of assigning ethnic status on the basis of ‘blood,’ become Indians, which a goodly number did.” Clifton writes loathingly of most métis who removed west with the Potawatomis, referring to them as “marginal,” a people “whose parasitic attachment to
Indians made them dependent on migrating also – to where their hosts resided.”46 They followed the Potawatomis, he writes, “like a school of pilot fish following a wounded shark.”47

The Potawatomi “Trail of Death”

The exact sequence of Potawatomi migrations from Michigan and Indiana to the Osage River Reservation cannot be determined because, as Murphy explains, Bureau of Indian Affairs records do not provide a definite breakdown of band member movements from 1833 to 1840.48 The first Catholic Potawatomis to remove from northern Indiana probably went in numbers of about 150, led by Neswaki, Nebosh, and Kiwani, and arrived on the Marais des Cygnes River in October 1837.49

The most infamous of Potawatomi migrations came in the summer of 1838 when 756 Potawatomis living in villages near Twin Lakes in Marshall County, Indiana – on a twenty-two-section tract set aside for chiefs Menominee, Black Wolf, Pepinowah, and Notawkah under the treaty of October 26, 1832 – were forced at gunpoint to remove to the Kansas Indian Country. The action came after the Indiana governor authorized Indiana Senator John Tipton to raise a volunteer force of one hundred armed men. On August 29, 1838, without warning, these men took Menominee and other leaders into custody and forced the others to enroll for removal. From August 30 to September 4, 1838, the volunteers rounded up other Potawatomis from northern Indiana and southern Michigan.50

At one point, according to Petit, a discharge of musketry ordered by Tipton so frightened the elderly mother of Black Wolf "that she buried herself in the woods and remained hidden there for six days without taking nourishment. Finally she found a dead pheasant and ate it. She had received a terrible wound in her foot and could no longer walk.”51 The details came out as the old woman said confession. "Fortunately," Petit said, "a savage who was looking for his
horses, having noticed something moving in the bushes, ran in that direction and found the poor fugitive. He put her on his horse and transported her safely to a Frenchman's house near South Bend, where I heard her confession."

On September 4, 1838, as the Indians started west, Petit was still at South Bend, suffering from a fever of three weeks duration. He had gone to Bertrand to recuperate and intermittently visited the sick at Pokagon's village, as well as in the French Catholic Coquillard and Carron households. At Bertrand he learned "the Indians are prisoners of war, Tipton having obtained a signal victory over the Indians who did not think of fighting – they are being forcibly emigrated." Tipton asked Petit to accompany the migration, but without permission from Bishop Simon Bruté he had refused, a situation that changed suddenly when the bishop himself arrived at South Bend and, sometime between the 5th and 10th of September, gave Petit the permission he had sought.

Petit caught up with the emigrating line of Indians, some three miles long, outside of Danville, Illinois, where they were walking on the right bank of the Wabash River. A line of wagons transporting supplies, as well as people unable to walk, was moving along the left bank. "...I saw my poor Christians, under a burning noonday sun, amidst clouds of dust, marching in a line, surrounded by soldiers who were hurrying their steps," Petit reported. "Next came the baggage wagons, in which numerous invalids, children, and women, too weak to walk, were cramped." For his own transportation, Petit apparently borrowed oxen and luggage from the métis Alexander Moose, who was married to Pokagon's daughter. He discovered, however, that the expense to transport the bags was more than the value of the contents, so he left the bags at Danville, but kept the oxen, promising to send Moose "the money" once the party reached the Mississippi. "The money" undoubtedly would come out of the $245 he was to receive as a
salary for signing on, at Tipton's request, as interpreter for the removal. "When we encamp," he wrote, "I am entrusted with the sick and assigned to the doctor as interpreter."56 He did not write again until the emigration party reached the Osage River Reservation. There, in a letter dated November 13, 1838, and addressed to Bishop Bruté from "Osage River, Indian Country," he gave an account of the overland journey.57

"The order of march was as follows: the United States flag, carried by a dragoon; then one of the principal officers, next the staff baggage carts, then the carriage, which during the whole trip was kept for the use of the Indian chiefs; then one or two chiefs on horseback led a line of 250 or 300 horses ridden by men, women, children in single file, after the manner of savages. On the flanks of the line at equal distance from each other were the dragoons and volunteers, hastening the stragglers, often with severe gestures and bitter words. After this cavalry came a file of forty baggage wagons filled with luggage and Indians. The sick were lying in them, rudely jolted, under a canvas which, far from protecting them from the dust and heat, only deprived them of air, for they were as if buried under this burning canopy – several died thus."58

On September 12, in camp not far from the old Tippecanoe battleground, the mother of chief We-wiss-sa, said "to be upwards of 100 years old," passed away. A week later, the chief Muk-Kose died while the party was camped on the Illinois prairie.59 The daily deaths of children filled the pages of an official journal kept by Jesse C. Douglas, secretary to emigration conductor William Polke. From the time the party left Twin Lakes until it reached Springfield, Illinois, seldom did a day pass that the death of a child was not recorded. "A child died on the evening of this day, and was buried... A child died this morning...A child three years old died and was buried. ... A child died today. A child died since dark...A child died since we came
into camp….Two deaths took place this evening…two small children died along the road…a young child died directly after coming into camp…During the evening a woman and a child died. A child also was born today…A child of six or eight years old died this Evening. Also late at night an adult person…While on the march a child died on horseback…A child died early this morning. One also died on the way to our present Encampment…A child died during the evening…A child also died…A child died after dark…Two children died during the night…Nothing occurred during our march save that a child fell from a wagon, and was very much crushed by the wheels running over it."60 And so the journal went, even as physicians came into camp as early as September 9 and erected "a kind of Medical hospital." On September 13, as the march proceeded with so many Indians ill, a Dr. Ritchie and his doctor son were called in from a neighboring town. They reported 106 cases of sickness.61

"The heat along with the dust is daily rendering our marches more distressing," Douglas wrote on September. 16. "The horses are jaded the Indians sickly and many of the persons engaged in the emigration more or less sick." It wasn't only the Indians who were sick, but "the whole country through which we pass appears to be afflicted – every town, village, and hamlet has its invalids….It is worthy of remark, perhaps, that such a season for sickness in this country is almost unparalleled." (Indiana and Illinois were in the grips of a typhoid epidemic.) “In the little town, adjoining which we are now encamped, containing a population of from eight hundred to a thousand persons, four persons died yesterday.”62 Indians too weak to travel fell behind and followed in the wake of the larger party.

The emigrating Potawatomi practiced Catholicism along the march, thus illustrating – even before their removal to the Indian Country – the advance of their so-called “progress toward civilization.” Early in the journey Petit had requested, and received, an hour delay in
leaving camp on Sunday mornings so that he might celebrate Mass. Besides these Sabbath devotions, Petit also began holding "evening prayers" once the entourage camped for the night. "Our evening exercises consisted of a chapter of the catechism, prayer, and the hymn, 'In thy protection do we trust, O Virgin, meek and mild.' Which I intoned in Indian and which was repeated by the whole audience with a vigor which these new Christians bring to all their religious acts," he stated.63 “Often throughout the entire night, around a blazing fire, before a tent in which a solitary candle burned, fifteen or twenty Indians would sing hymns and tell their beads.” When someone died during the day, they constructed a coffin in the evening, laid the body out in a tent, and performed last religious rites. "The next morning the grave would be dug," Petit wrote, "the family, sad but tearless, stayed after the general departure; the priest, attired in his stole, recited prayers, blessed the grave, and cast the first shovelful of earth of the rude coffin; the pit was filled and a little cross placed there."64

Spectacle of a Lost Frontier

Whenever the emigrating Potawatomi camped near a town, it wasn't unusual for Americans living there to wander into the Indian camp. Petit told how the Americans, "attracted by curiosity, were astonished to find so much piety in the midst of so many trials."65 Some of the towns’ "curious inhabitants" even stood around to watch when there was a funeral. "Despite their prejudices," Petit wrote, they ended up being "moved … by these poor yet imposing solemnities of the dead (and) would end by raising their hats, and the smile of scorn would turn to a sort of grave and religious astonishment."66 These looks of “astonishment” proclaim that the frontier past of Illinois was gone. Indians, like the métis Bertrands in Michigan, had become curiosities – strange figures in a former borderland that had transitioned to American state.
Even more than simple curiosities, Indians had become symbols that helped define the American nation.\textsuperscript{67} This is borne out as the emigrating Potawatomi encamped near Jacksonville, Illinois, on the evening of Monday, October 1, 1838. "During the Evening we were much perplexed," Jesse Douglas recorded, "by the curiosity of visitors, to many of whom the sight of an emigration or body of Indians is as great a rarity as a travelling Caravan of wild animals."\textsuperscript{68} A once powerful Indian nation, no longer to be feared, apparently reminded Douglas of caged animals in a circus wagon. At the same time, the sarcasm in his voice suggests that he felt a degree of distain for these American town folks, especially that evening when the local Jacksonville band marched into the Indian camp to show its compliments, Douglas said, “with a serenade.” The scene is all the more disquieting because it unfolded on a day when the Potawatomis had marched seventeen miles and suffered the loss of a child who had been crushed under the wheels of a wagon.

The next day, the band came out again, this time escorting the Indians around the Jacksonville town square. "We struck our tents at 8 this morning," Douglas wrote, "and prepared for a march. Owing to the very great curiosity manifested by the citizens generally, Judge Polke, after being solicited, marched the emigration into the square, where we remained for fifteen or twenty minutes. Presents of tobacco and pipes in abundance were made by the citizens to the Indians, who appeared quite as much delighted with the favor shown them as with the excellent music of the Band which escorted us around the square."\textsuperscript{69}

Jesse Douglas thus depicts a most remarkable scene. The emigrating Potawatomis, just evicted from their ancestral homes, undoubtedly tired and many sick, were rousted early and paraded as spectacle for curious Americans. That the onlookers offered “presents of tobacco and pipes” seems a friendly gesture, but made to a people they no longer feared. Judging from
Father Petit’s observations at graveside services, white scorn had turned “to astonishment,” which perhaps stirred a new kind of ambivalence toward Indians. If Indians held funerals and prayed over their dead, were they so much different after all? As historian Shari M. Huhndorf writes, “Popular images of Native peoples, though never monolithic, grew increasingly ambivalent” as the nineteenth century progress, leading “the conquering culture to reimagine the objects of its conquest.”

Although it is doubtful that emigration conductor William Polke thought of Indians as cultural symbols, he was aware of images and was determined to have his Indian charges make a good impression. Thus, as the emigration party approached the village of Springfield, designated as the new Illinois capital only months before, Polke "requested I-o-weh, one of the principal chiefs, so to arrange and accoutre the Indians as to insure a good appearance.” Douglas seemed to think I-o-weh was “delighted with the proposition,” although he may have been more “delighted” by the tobacco distributed by the emigrating officials to gain Indian cooperation.

The next morning the emigrating Potawatomis again rose before daylight and were on the road by 8 o'clock. "The Indians amongst whom a degree of pride was excited, arranged themselves into line, and with an unusual display of finery and gaudy trumpery marched through the streets of Springfield,” Douglas wrote. “The wayfares were covered with anxious spectators, so much so indeed as to threaten for a time to impede the progress of the Emigration. We passed clearly through however, and that too without the detention of a single Indian.”

The parading of these Potawatomi people to satisfy white curiosity – made all the more callous by the conditions under which it occurred – is a classic example of what Robert Berkhofer, Jr. has defined as the Indian as “a separate and single other. Whether evaluated as noble or ignoble,” Berkhofer writes, “whether seen as exotic or downgraded, the Indian as an
image was always alien to the White.”74 Indians, historian Elizabeth Bird adds, “are the quintessential Other, whose role is to be the object of the White, colonial gaze.”75

In Jesse Douglas’ estimation, the image of parading Indians promised to live up to expectations because it presented “quite a gaudy appearance.”76 As the Potawatomis marched through Springfield, exhibiting “a degree of pride,” they fit perfectly into the structure of the Western narrative – “the nobility of the silent, defeated Indian against a background of inevitable White progress.”77 Illinois had transitioned to an American state, and its frontier past now was something in which to delight. Although this was no theatrical production, the Potawatomis had a role to play – they were “inscribed as remnants of the past, for the entertainment of White culture,”78 even though many among them were as Christian as the white settlers before whom they paraded. Or, perhaps, the fascination of Illinois town folks with the Potawatomis went to a deeper level. Perhaps, as Philip Deloria writes, their fascination was linked to the American fixation on defining a national identity. “Americans,” Deloria states, “had an awkward tendency to define themselves by what they were not.”79 Because the parading Potawatomis were seen as oppositional figures, embedded with all the contradictions of noble savagery – the Springfield citizens “might imagine a civilized national Self.”80

**Arrival in the Kansas Indian Country**

On November 2, 1838, the emigrating party of Potawatomi followers of Menominee, Black Wolf, Pepinowah, and Notawkah crossed into the Kansas Indian Country. We "found ourselves," Douglas wrote, "in the heart of a prairie, with scarcely any traces to mark our route." Riding horseback, he and a large portion of the Indians "became detached from the wagons, and wandered over the prairie" for four hours searching for a path left by the wagons, finding it at last and following it into camp.81 That evening Polke tried "to enroll the Indians," meaning to
make an official list of their names, which would be used when it came time to distribute annuities. He was not very successful, however, because the Indians "did not seem (or would not) to understand or appreciate the object." That same evening – a Saturday night – "several of the chiefs came to Head Quarters, and requested to remain in camp to-morrow" so they could celebrate the Sabbath. With the journey’s end so near, Polke denied the request but allowed the Indians two hours the next morning "for devotional purposes." Once again these Catholic Potawatomi displayed an aspect of their acculturation.

On the afternoon of November 4, 1838, the emigrating Potawatomis crossed the Marais Des Cygnes River, "where the Indians were met and welcomed by many of their friends," who likely were members of the villages of Topenabe, Neswaki, Nebosh, and Kiwani, who had arrived in the Indian Country earlier. Also greeting them, according to Petit, was the Jesuit Christian Hoecken, who “announced his intention of leaving the Kickapoo country… to establish himself among my Christians….He speaks Potawatomi and Kickapoo.” The emigrating party, estimated at between 650 and 750 people, established a settlement on Potawatomie Creek, about seventy miles south of Kawsmouth. In all, forty-two people died and many others had deserted on what the Potawatomi today call “the trail of death.”

In time, two other major Potawatomi migrations arrived on the Marias des Cygnes, one conducted by Alexis Coquillard and S.P. Brady, the other by Major Robert J. Forsyth, a relative of Chicago trader John Kinzie. The Coquillard encourage of 526 Potawatomi, mostly from southern Michigan and including the chiefs Pashpoho, Checawkose, and Abram Burnett, left South Bend on August 17, 1840. Like the earlier emigrating party, these were by and large Catholic Potawatomis who were accompanied by a priest, the Rev. Stanilaus A. Bernier. The
emigrants crossed the Mississippi near Quincy, Illinois, and arrived on the Osage River Reservation on October 6, 1840.

A week later, on October 15, another 439 Potawatomi from Michigan and Indiana who had been collected and kept under guard at Marshall, Michigan, started west under the eye of Robert Forsyth, with Gholson Kercheval and a Mr. Godfroy as contractors. Because "not 20 of the 439 Indians moved willingly," troops accompanied the emigrants as far as Peru, Illinois, where they were placed on an Illinois River steamboat, bound for St. Louis. They reached the Osage River Reservation on November 25, 1840. All told, the Potawatomi population on the reservation by the end of 1840 approached twenty-five hundred.

With the emigration of hundreds of Catholic Potawatomis from Michigan and Indiana, Hoecken and his assistant, the Jesuit H.G. Aelen, decided to establish a separate settlement, away from the Baptists on Potawatomie Creek, a decision indicative of a borderland conflict of the religious kind. Competition between Baptist and Catholic missionaries among the Potawatomi was so intense that Clifton describes it as “near constant.”

In November 1839, Hoecken and a party of Potawatomis selected a site on Sugar Creek, near present Centerville in Linn County, Kansas, some fifteen to twenty miles south of the original settlement on Potawatomie Creek. The new site was fifteen miles west of the spot where the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Scott military road crossed the Marais des Cygnes. The location on Sugar Creek "pleased us for various reasons," Hoecken wrote, "chiefly, for the quantity of timber, its sugar, and its distance from the Americans and from the other Indian tribes who were addicted to liquor." That Hoecken’s Potawatomis wanted to avoid access to liquor is noteworthy, as discussed below.

Markers of Civilization
In his dissertation, "Potawatomi Indians of the West: Origins of the Citizen Band," Joseph Francis Murphy argues that Potawatomis on the Osage River Reservation "were already tending toward the civilized status." This observation is evident in their embrace of agriculture and education, as well as the implementation of temperance societies and anti-alcohol laws at Sugar Creek.

A “Putawatomie Temperance Society” had formed on the Osage River Reservation by the summer of 1839, when it was reported that thirty-six Potawatomis of both sexes “signed the temperance pledge” during a meeting of the temperance society on July 4, giving the society a total of ninety-four Indian members, some of whom were Ottawa. During the morning meeting there had been “resolutions and four addresses,” following by a dinner. Whether the temperance society dinner was held on the anniversary of American independence by design or happenstance is hard to say. But either way, Christians among the emigrant Indians were smashing whiskey bottles long before Kansas’ infamous Carry Nation. Not only did these Indians espouse the “civilizing” influences of alcohol abstinence and temperance, but they instituted laws reflecting the white man’s culture. (In 1851, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Luke Lea stated that nearly all members of the emigrant Wea, Piankeshaw, Peoria, Kaskaskia, and Miami also had signed, for a one-year period, “a pledge to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks.”)

**Jurisprudence**

The “Putawatomie Temperance Society” included twenty-two members who were Ottawa. They most likely were associated with the Baptist missionary Jotham Meeker, who had spoken at the July 4 gathering after riding over from the nearby Ottawa mission. Meeker, a printer by trade, already had accomplished much in the Indian Country. In 1833, while assigned
to the Shawnee Baptist Mission, he hauled a printing press to the Indian Country and began printing translations of the *Bible*, hymns, and other religious literature, using a method of orthography, into Indian languages. In his first years at the mission he printed several books and, in February 1835, began to publish what is recognized as the first Kansas newspaper, the *Shawanoe Sun*, a small paper in the Shawnee language.96

Meeker also printed the *Ottawa First Book*, a small volume containing a grammar on the Ottawa language, translations of the *Gospel of Luke*, mathematical tables – and twenty-five Ottawa laws translated into English. These laws not only offer a rare, written account of the traditions and customs of one emigrant tribe, but also provide another example of an Indian Country already possessing the marks of civilization. (The emigrant Wyandot, who arrived in the Indian Country from Ohio in 1843, also possessed a code of written laws, as well as “a constitutional form of civil government.”97)

Among the Ottawa laws was one forbidding “moccasin playing” (gambling) on Ottawa land, an offence that carried a fine of $2.50.98 More severe were graduated penalties for anyone sending or bringing whiskey onto Ottawa land. A first offence carried a penalty of $5, as well as destruction of the whiskey. Anyone guilty a second time “shall forfeit all of his annuity money.” Anyone guilty a third time “shall be delivered over to the United States officers, to try the severity of the White men’s laws.”

In 1847, the Potawatomis at Sugar Creek also adopted harsh laws against alcohol after merchants sold liquor in their country. Nuns teaching on the reservation told how Father Hoecken, “with a group of savages on horseback and armed with guns,” went looking for the sellers. They did not find them, but did find “their brandy” and proceeded to pour it out, giving “a generous libation to the earth.”99 It was sometime later, while Hoecken was away from the
mission, that “these evil people” again brought what the Indians called “chekoti wabe (water of fire)” onto Potawatomi lands. One man became drunk, went to the home of a friend, and tried to kill the man’s wife. “The husband, wanting to defend her, received a mortal blow.”

After that, the nuns’ account reads, “the chiefs assembled and made the first three laws that have ever existed in this land.” The first law stated that “he who kills will be killed.” The second called for whipping anyone “who goes looking for liquor,” and the third stipulated “that he who drinks liquor will be attached to a tree for three or four hours.” Prohibition councils existed on the Potawatomi reserve as early as 1843 when the Jesuit Felix Verreydt organized some Indians into an “anti-liquor brigade,” under the leadership of Brother Francis Van der Borght. “They were instructed to keep watch that no liquor was brought into the village,” Hoecken wrote in his journal. If anyone was observed bringing in liquor, the brigade was “to go out immediately, surround the place, search for the liquor, break the bottle and spill the liquor. This they constantly did, and the custom is kept up to the present day.”

Hoecken’s diary states on August 22, 1844, that “the Indians drew up a code of laws, which were unanimously agreed to and were put in writing…Moreover, they elected constables to see to it that these laws were well observed.” The punishments that resulted apparently were so harsh that on October 20, 1844, Hoecken abolished the laws. Months later, still grappling with the alcohol problem, Potawatomis invited Indian agent Alfred J. Vaughan to attend a council in which they sought to devise new anti-alcohol measures. At Vaughan’s suggestion, they decided that anyone “thereafter caught bringing liquor into the Mission should be locked up in the guard-house.” In August 1846, another council was held, “and with unanimous consent three laws were passed to suppress drunkenness, libertinism and card-
playing,” Hoecken’s diary states. “These laws were committed to writing and promulgated. Soon after, the tribe came together and built a prison to punish the evil-doers.”

The alcohol problem was severe enough that Potawatomi factions united on the issue. In July 1847, Hoecken writes, “The Indians living at Pottawatomie Creek came to hold a council with our Indians at Sugar Creek in the latter end of July. They decreed unanimously, that: Whoever thereafter should bring into these lands intoxicating liquor, should forfeit for his first offense half his annual pay from the government, and for the second offense should forfeit all his money.”

Historian Jeanne P. Leader writes that the Potawatomis on Sugar Creek “resisted the ‘sinful’ drink,” more successfully than those on the Iowa reservation, where the Council Bluffs, Iowa-Bellevue, Nebraska, area was a key point of deposit and distribution of alcohol into the Indian Country. But like the Potawatomis in south-central Kansas, some Potawatomis in Iowa also took measures on their own to try to control the illegal whiskey trade. At an intertribal meeting at present-day Tahlequah, Oklahoma, Potawatomi delegates were among those signing a “compact of amity” to, among other things, regulate and suppress liquor consumption among their people.” Despite this compact, some Potawatomis at Council Bluffs felt the alcohol situation was so hopeless, Leader writes, that “396 dissenters left Iowa in 1844 and resettled among the more temperate Kickapoos near Fort Leavenworth.”

Like anti-alcohol laws, other edicts issued by the emigrant tribes point to their growing acculturation. The Ottawa, for instance, established what Jotham Meeker called an “Anti-running in-debt Society,” to which by 1849 they had contributed about $150 “for benevolent objects.” Of the recorded Ottawa laws, twenty carried monetary fines, indicating that “the Ottawa were evolving legally from the primitive law of personal wrongs to the more sophisticated concept of
There were, for instance, laws against breaking into a locked house, riding another person’s horse without permission, or taking and using a “White person’s domestic animal” that wandered over the Missouri border and onto Ottawa land. Not only was the Indian not to use the animal, but the Ottawa law required him to “write descriptions” of the animal and go to Westport and to Wolftown and nail the descriptions “to the doors, in order that the owner many know it. If the owner didn’t claim the animal within a year, then the Indians could sell it.” If the owner claimed the animal but let time elapse before doing so, the Indian could charge “$3 a month for the upkeep in winter and $2 in summer.” In a standard practice of later pioneers, a “good fence” law required it to be eight rails high with “crossed stakes,” and made so that “neither small pigs nor hogs can get through.”

**Agriculture**

Laws centering on domestic animals and fences indicate that the Ottawa had adopted another marker of civilization – Euro-American methods of agriculture. This was true of the various emigrant tribes, as noted by agents in their reports to the commissioner of Indian Affairs. “The Shawnees have become an agricultural people; their buildings and farms are similar to those of the whites in a new-settled country,” agent Richard W. Cummins wrote on September 12, 1842. “All their farms are enclosed with rail fences, and most of them in good form: each string of fence straight, and sufficiently high to secure their crops; many of them staked and ridered.”

The Shawnees lived “in comfortable cabins,” Cummins said, perhaps half of which were constructed of good, hewed logs. “They have out-houses, stables, barns, etc. … There is no family that I know of but what has a farm of as much as five or more acres; and some have farms of over one hundred acres. They raise Indian corn, wheat, oats, pumpkins, beans, peas, Irish and
sweet potatoes, cabbage, turnips, and many other vegetables. They raise horses, cattle, hogs, turkeys, chickens, etc. They depend on agricultural pursuits for subsistence, and most of them raise abundance, and many a surplus."

Cummins was equally complimentary about other emigrant groups. “The Delawares, like the Shawnees, depend mainly on their farms for subsistence. Their farms and houses are nearly or quite equal to those of the Shawnees.” The Kickapoos, he said, “still persevere in agricultural pursuits. … They raise a large surplus of Indian corn; they also raise beef and pork for sale.” The Stockbridges, Cummins said, “have built for themselves a number of neat log cabins – I think the neatest hewn logs and the neatest raised log cabins I have ever seen.”

Though they had arrived in the Indian Country “poor, without money, horses, or oxen,” they “bought a few yoke of oxen and a few ploughs on a credit; they have hired themselves about, and have got a few milch cows and a few hogs.” In other words, the emigrant Indians in Cummins’ agency not only had built their own log cabins and established farms, but also had sold their farm surplus and “hired themselves out” to make money.

At the Osage River Agency, which oversaw the emigrant Potawatomi, Ottawa, Chippewa, Kaskaskias, Peorias, Piankeshaws, and Weas, Indian agent Anthony L. Davis also wrote of agricultural Indians. The Ottawa, he stated, “may be said to have entirely abandoned the chase; all of them live in good comfortable log cabins, have fields enclosed with rail fences, and own domestic animals. They have erected a good horse mill out of their annuity, and many of them are making preparations for sowing wheat.” The Chippewa only numbered about fifty people, but also were “improving in their condition,” while the Kaskaskia, Peoria, Piankeshaw, and Wea owned “some cattle and hogs, work oxen, and farming utensils, etc. and depend entirely on agricultural pursuits for a subsistence.”

The Potawatomi on Sugar Creek
came in for special praise. “The settlements on Sugar Creek are notorious for sobriety and industry,” Davis wrote. “They nearly all live in good comfortable log cabins; have fields fenced with rails and well cultivated, and have ploughed and fenced a large quantity of prairie ground the present season.”

The Sugar Creek Potawatomi also had “organized themselves into working bands” of about thirty men. Sounding similar to the slave gang system used on large Southern farms, each Potawatomi band had an overseer who arranged the work and gave directions to the rest—“where, when and how they must work.” Father Hoecken, meanwhile, showed the men how “to split rails and fence and plow the field for each family belonging to his assigned working band.” Fellow Jesuit Charles Felix Verredyt painted a picture of the ensuing scene. One Indian, he said, “would plow for a little while, staggering as if he were drunk. Having never had a plough in his hands, no wonder he was laughed at by the few who knew better.” As soon as one Indian gave out, another took his place, the Indians “by turns laughing and joking,” made the field ready for cultivation. According to Verredyt, the Indians “soon began to see the advantages of industry.” Some of them “bye and bye raised an abundance of corn,” fixed up their cabins “neatly,” and erected “fine log-houses.” One Indian in particular, he said, “had become so industrious that he himself planed all the logs for his house, which was erected as smooth as a brick wall.”

In 1845, agent Vaughan told the commissioner of Indian Affairs that the Potawatomi farmers on Sugar Creek “are now cultivating the prairie land with much success.” They had, in fact, “broken up about one hundred acres” and raised “a considerable quantity of small grain—such as wheat, oats, buckwheat, corn, and vegetables; they have laid in a good quantity of prairie hay, and are well furnished for the winter. … They are industrious and moral; are comfortably
fixed in good log houses; and their fields are well fenced, staked, and rided.” They also were splitting logs and hauling lumber “to inclose a new cemetery.” Meanwhile, the Indians on Potawatomie Creek had received a delivery of twenty-five yoke of oxen, which they were just learning to use by having them yoked and unyoked in their presence.

**Education**

The role that Christian missionaries played in attempting to destroy Indian culture has been examined by many scholars. The Kansas Indian Country was no exception as missionaries of various denominations tried to instill Euro-American values in Indian children. At the Wea Baptist Mission in 1849, for example, Miss S.A. Osgood, the principal teacher, reported that boys and girls were “occupied with their lessons from six to seven hours per day,” after which the girls sat quietly sewing “or engaged in domestic labor,” while the boys were employed, as “needed in appropriate works.” The girls made their own dresses, as well as clothing for others at the school, and also learned to knit and make quilts. Methodists taught Shawnee children to read, write – and work, starting a child’s day at 5 a.m. with the ringing of a bell so they could begin farm chores. Baptist missionary Johnston Lykins explained that Indian boys were taught “manual labor” and girls “labors appropriate for their sex” as a way “to Americanize the Indians, and attach them to our country and institutions.” In what surely was a dig at the nearby Catholic Mission to the Potawatomi, where many of the priests and nuns were Europeans, Lykins added: “A foreign influence must ever engender prejudice, and produce a want to confidence in our government and people.”

When Lykins wrote those words, the European Catholics had been teaching Potawatomi children in the Indian Country for more than ten years. Catholic education took root at Sugar Creek in 1840 when Hoecken and Aelen, joined by Anthony Eysvogles, S.J., and a Brother
Claessens, opened a school for boys. Because they needed someone to teach the Potawatomi girls, they requested help from nuns of the Society of the Sacred Heart, who at the time were teaching the daughters of French and American settlers in St. Louis and St. Charles, Missouri. In 1841, a small delegation of Sacred Heart nuns, including the revered Philippine Duchesne, set out for the Kansas Indian Country. While the Jesuit priests and brothers taught Indian men to cultivate the soil, a responsibility once performed by Indian females, the nuns, just like their Protestant counterparts, taught Indian women and girls the domestic duties of sewing, cooking, and washing, considered befitting for them under white society’s nineteenth-century gender norms.

The Sacred Heart’s first school in the Indian Country opened at Sugar Creek on July 18, 1841. “The salvation of these good people is my sole desire,” the nun Lucille Mathevon wrote. In the process of reaching that goal, she not only set out to discourage what she considered “the most ridiculous superstitions” of the Indians, but encouraged a host of cultural changes. She exhorted the Potawatomi to abandon the “medicines which were their god,” to keep only one wife, and to adopt new modes of work, dress, and sustenance, including the raising of cows and pigs.

The nuns oversaw the Indian girls as they made “shirts and Indian dresses,” where before the girls had been wrapping themselves in about three yards “of a lovely blue cloth that was not sewn.” When official visitors stopped by the Catholic school, Potawatomi girls read for them, recited poems, sang in English and Latin, and offered gifts – a pair of stockings they had made, artificial flowers, or a pair of embroidered moccasins. The girls, Mathevon wrote, “learn to cook, make butter, starch, candles, take out our six cows, cultivate potatoes, busy themselves with every needed chore; they thread, knit, sew perfectly.” They were taught the
catechism in English and in Potawatomi, as well as receiving “the first notions of grammar and arithmetic.”

By 1847, Mathevon reported sixty pupils at the nuns’ Sugar Creek school, some ten or twelve of whom were boarding, while others attended only during the day. For day pupils the sisters set up a reward system based on “the number of good grades obtained.” On Saint Ignatius Day they distributed prizes “in our prairie, where we had put up tents using all of the linens that we possess.” What made the children especially happy, Mathevon said, “was a table covered with little pies. Each girl had one. They were made with apples sent by our mothers in Saint Charles, since here we do not know fruit.” The nuns’ efforts would continue on a greater scale when the Potawatomi removed to a new reservation on the Kansas River in 1848.

While attempts to destroy Indian culture are alarming, mission schools, nonetheless, laid the foundation for education in Kansas. In time, two mission schools in the Kansas Indian Country – one Catholic and one Presbyterian – transformed into the state’s first colleges. The Presbyterian mission to the Iowa and Sac near today’s Highland, Kansas, was chartered by the territorial legislature in 1857 as Highland University, while the Catholic mission to the Potawatomi at present-day St. Marys was chartered in 1869 as St. Mary’s College. The Methodists, meanwhile, added a “classical department” to their mission school among the Shawnees. Calling the department the Western Academy, they offered English, Latin, and Greek and enrolled white children from across the state line in Missouri, claiming their academy to be the “first school of higher learning” in Kansas, opened in September 1848.

In conclusion, the integration of civil laws, education, and cultivation of the soil reveal the emigrant Potawatomi from Michigan and Indiana, as well as other emigrant groups from the Old Northwest, to have adopted aspects Euro-American culture by the 1830s and 1840s.
Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the removal of various Potawatomi bands to the Indian Country. It argues that the métis played an influential role as cultural brokers during the treaty-making processes and that métis family members often stood to gain. This chapter also illustrates the central place held by the Catholic priest Benjamin Petit during the most well-known removal of Potawatomi, that from Michigan and Indiana on what is remembered today as “The Potawatomi Trail of Death.” The chapter explains how different Potawatomi bands removed under different treaties at different times to different locations in the West. Those in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois, who would become the Prairie Band, removed first to a reservation in Iowa, while those in southern Michigan and northern Indiana, generally part of the so-called Mission Band (which became the Citizen Band in 1867), removed first to a reservation on the Marais des Cygnes River in southeastern Kansas. There, competing missionaries of the Catholic and Baptist faiths awaited their arrival and engaged in the work of furthering the Mission Band’s acculturation to Euro-American cultural values. Under yet another treaty with the United States government in 1846, the Prairie Band Potawatomi and Mission Band Potawatomi relocated again, this time coming together on a single, thirty-square-mile tract reserved for them in the Kansas River Valley, west of present-day Topeka.

1 Clifton, The Prairie People, 231.


4 See Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 231, 249, 283-85; Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 249,252; and Perry McCandless, *A History of Missouri, 1820-1860* (Columbia, Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press, 1972), 17, 116-17. Clifton writes that Caldwell emerged as one of three “highly successful intercultural brokers, serving the needs of the Potawatomi, Americans, and themselves.” The other two were Alexander Robinson and Shabeni,(also Shabonna, Shabonee) both of whom received individual tracts under the 1829 treaty. They also would receive a lifetime annuity from the federal government. Another 119 Potawatomis from Illinois and Indiana removed with the Kickapoo Kenekuk, arriving at the Kickapoo Reservation near Fort Leavenworth on May 2, 1833. A second, smaller group of Potawatomis under Kikito and Mishikaba arrived on the Kickapoo reservation on August 26, 1833. In the of summer of 1834 another 199 Illinois and Indiana Potawatomis moved west to the Kickapoo reservation. They were led by Wabanem and Mishikaba and conducted west by William Gordon. Most were from the Iroquois River of northeastern Illinois and adjacent Indiana. Also affiliated with Kenekuk and his religion, they arrived in the Indian Country in September 1834. Other groups of Potawatomi went to Canada. Clifton writes that by the winter of 1835-36, 528 Potawatomis were there. Clifton argues that the choice of location made by these many Potawatomis illustrates the strength of Potawatomi institutions at this time.


7 Ibid. As part of the negotiations to acquire the Platte Country, the United States negotiated a treaty with Caldwell and other United Band headmen on October 1, 1834. This treaty redrew the Iowa reservation boundary to exclude the Platte region.


10 Ibid, 90, 108-09; and Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 243-44. Pokagon's village lay in what is now Bertrand Township, Berrien County, Michigan, about six miles from Carey Mission. Under the 1833 Treaty of Chicago this land was ceded to the government. From proceeds of the sale of a section of land granted to him and his wife by the treaty of 1832, Pokagon purchased 712.8 acres in Silver Creek Township, Cass County, Michigan, and he and his band moved to that place in 1837. Here, with the help of a few white neighbors, they built a Catholic church. See Irving McKee, ed., “The Trail of Death: Letters of Benjamin Marie Petit,” *Indiana Historical Society Publications* 14:1 (1941), 14. Bands on the St. Joseph River in Michigan, including those of Topinebe and Wee-saw, ceded their lands under the 1833 Treaty of Chicago.


14 See ibid; Connelley, *Kansas and Kansans*, 259; and Garraghan, *Jesuits of the Middle United States* 1:190n. All told, the reservation contained 909,565.62 acres, sufficient, according to Isaac McCoy, to provide 320 acres for each prospective Indian settler.


16 Murphy, *Potawatomi Indians of the West*, 102-104. Murphy is incorrect that it was old Topinebe who removed to the Kansas Indian Country. He died in 1826. The reason young Topinebe led his group to the Osage River rather than Iowa, according to Isaac McCoy, was the confusion in the Platte Purchase lands about when the Potawatomi were to move within the redrawn boundaries of the Council Bluffs reservation. Bessie Ellen Moore, "Life and Work of Robert Simerwell," ( Master’s thesis, University of Kansas, 1939), 39, cited in Murphy, *Potawatomi Indians of the West*, states that it was the métis Luther Rice, an assistant to Simerwell at Carey Mission and a former student at the Hampton Institute in Virginia, who helped persuade Topinebe and the others to locate on Potawatomi Creek rather than remove to Iowa with the United, or Prairie Band. A sprinkling of Illinois Potawatomi likely accompanied Topinebe’s people to the Marais des Cygnes.

17 In the early 1760s, the Society was suppressed in France and, in 1763, it was expelled from Louisiana. The reason for its suppression in France centered on the Order’s wealth and political power and the growing rift between the Church and the Enlightenment. The parliament in Paris and several in the provinces banned the Society. Jesuit colleges were shuttered and their religious houses put in charge of receivers. Their overseas missions suffered, as well. At the time, twenty-seven Jesuit priests and brothers were at work from Quebec to Louisiana. In Canada, the British allowed the Jesuits to continue their work, but in Louisiana, a new attorney general just arrived in New Orleans, Nicolas Chauvin de Fafiénière, called for the Superior Council to dissolve the Order, which it did, followed by an auction to dispose of the Society’s property. Jesuits in Louisiana fled, one to San Domingo, another to Pensacola, and another to France, although the seventy-two-year-old superior, Michel Baudouin, who had been in Louisiana for thirty-five years, was allowed to remain. Members of the Society of Jesus would be absent from the Louisiana mission field until the 1830s, when Pope Pius VII restored the Order. See Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen*, 157-160; and J.B. Culemans, “Catholic Explorers and Pioneers of Illinois,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 4:2 (July 1918), 145, 156-57n36.

18 See Murphy, *Potawatomi Indians of the West*, 24-25, 104, 114-117, 165; Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 296; and Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., "The Kickapoo Mission," *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review* 4:1-2, (January-April 1922), 45, 48. Despite their new schoolhouse and Kenekuk's expressed interest in Christianity, so few children were attending the Catholic school (an average of eight for the year 1838) that the government stopped its five-hundred-dollar annuity. Berrymen's Methodist school to the Kickapoo, having averaged only about sixteen pupils a year, closed about the same time as the Catholic school. After that, Methodists turned their attention to the Shawnee Manual Labor School under the direction of Thomas Johnson. Hoecken prepared three English-Potawatomi dictionaries and published books and hymns in the Indian language, the first going into use at Sugar Creek on May 21, 1845.

19 See McKee, “The Trail of Death,” 14-15, 25, 45; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 163, 260, 321-27, 337, 402. Badin went to live near Niles, Michigan, and South Bend, Indiana, upon the request of the Potawatomi chief Leopold Pokagon. In 1830, he dedicated a new Catholic chapel at the Old St. Joseph’s Mission site. With Badin's departure in 1835, the property was conveyed to Simon Bruté, bishop of Vincennes, and seven years later became the site of the University of Notre Dame. The diocese of Vincennes extended to the Indiana-
Michigan border, thus encompassing South Bend and St. Mary's Lake. Michigan, on the other hand, was part of the diocese of Detroit, under the jurisdiction of Bishop Frederic Rezé of Detroit. Thus, Petit was responsible for territory in two dioceses. With passage of the Indian Removal Act, McCoy closed Carey Mission and turned his attentions to the Kansas Indian Country.

The site later became Notre Dame University.

See McKee, “The Trail of Death,” 14-15, 25, 45; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 163, 260, 321-27, 337, 402. Badin went to live near Niles, Michigan, and South Bend, Indiana, upon the request of the Potawatomi chief Leopold Pokagon. In 1830, he dedicated a new Catholic chapel at the Old St. Joseph’s Mission site. With Badin's departure in 1835, the property was conveyed to Simon Bruté, bishop of Vincennes, and seven years later became the site of the University of Notre Dame. The diocese of Vincennes extended to the Indiana-Michigan border, thus encompassing South Bend and St. Mary's Lake. Michigan, on the other hand, was part of the diocese of Detroit, under the jurisdiction of Bishop Frederic Rezé of Detroit. Thus, Petit was responsible for territory in two dioceses.

McKee, “The Trail of Death,” 68, 125, 135. "Methodist O Lord!” Petit recorded in his journal on March 27-30, 1838. In the spring and summer of 1838, Petit celebrated Easter at South Bend and Bertrand, heard confessions "constantly from morning until evening, hardly having time to eat." He had been called to minister to Mrs. Coquillard's half-sister, Mrs. John A. Hendricks, who lay near death at South Bend. There had been a funeral sermon "before an audience wholly Protestant (or at least largely Protestant)" but a Catholic burial in a Catholic cemetery that Petit had laid out on the bishop's land at St. Mary's Lake. On May 14 he departed for Pokagan's village with Angelique Campeau, an unmarried, seventy-two-year-old woman who spoke French and Potawatomi, suggesting that she was a métis of the extended Campeau family. She had taught with Father Gabriel Richard in Detroit for thirty years before joining Father Badin as his interpreter among the Potawatomi from 1830 to 1835. After Badin's departure, she continued in the service of Father Petit. At Pokagan’s village, Petit “heard confessions and preached,” reporting a total of sixty-three communions, fifteen baptisms, and five marriages. "All these Indians, or most of them, have settled on their own land, pay taxes, and enjoy general esteem and confidence" he wrote. "I saw an American who, knowing Pokagon was departing for Bertrand, handed him some money to pay his debts there without taking a receipt.” The success of Pokagon’s village in avoiding removal from Michigan is explored by James Clifton in The Pokagons, 1683-1983: Catholic Potawatomi Indians of the St. Joseph River Valley (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1984).

Ibid, 56.

Ibid, 70. Petit’s predecessor, Father Deseille, had been threatened with removal from Indiana because he was alleged to have counseled the Potawatomi to remain in their homelands.

See ibid, 46; William McNamara, The Catholic Church on the Northern Indiana Frontier, 1789-1844 (M.A. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1931; repr. New York : AMS Press, 1974), 8-9; and Howard, A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana , 131-32. Mme. Coquillard was the wife of Alexis Coquillard, who had grown wealthy after buying out Pierre Navarre’s interest in the local fur trade. With his partner, Francois Comparat, he purchased the American Fur Company agency for the Upper Lakes region. The Coquillards were said to live in a “palace-like residence” that was the site of many official functions in early South Bend, where Coquillard (born in Detroit on September 28, 1785) was “generally regarded as the founder” of the town.


Ibid, 50, 120.
29 Ibid, 48.

30 Ibid, 43, 121. She converted on November 2, 1837.


32 Hammer, *Skizzen aus Nord-Amerika*.

33 Ibid.

34 R. David Edmunds, ed., *Enduring Nations: Native Americans in the Midwest* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 5. While this passage aptly applies to the Bertrands, Edmunds is referring to the Miami Jean Baptiste Richardville, who “was forced to accept his role as a spokesman for the Miami people.”


36 Ibid. The disappearance “is all the more striking,” Kugel writes, “because it stands in stark contrast to the Métis experience in Canada, where Métis communities and ethnic identities both persist to the present.” She sites Jacqueline Peterson, who argues that métis communities in the Great Lakes region were “occupationally defined” and “collapsed” with the arrival of American dominion. Edmunds argues, however, that the American view of métis as “uncivilized” and “too Indian,” pressured them to remove west with Indians.

37 Edmunds, “‘Unacquainted with the laws of the civilized world’: American attitudes toward the métis communities in the Old Northwest,” in Peterson and Brown, *The New Peoples*, 189.

38 Ibid, 190.


40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.


44 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 275-76. They were Nicholas Boilvin at Prairie du Chien and Pierre Menard at Kaskaskia. Métis did hold lesser positions in the Indian Service, working, for instance, as interpreters and clerks.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid, 300.


48 Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 104.
A sprinkling of Illinois Potawatomis and about one hundred fifty Potawatomis from Indiana, led by Nefswawke, also arrived sometime in 1837. Significantly, those led by Nefswawke were not Baptist, but Catholic. Religious rivalries appear to have split those on the Marais des Cygnes into two camps in the spring of 1839.

Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 267.


Ibid.

Ibid 128. Petit had sensed the impending removal of the Potawatomi. On April 4, 1838, he wrote to his family in France, telling them the prospect was “like a dark background to the picture of my present life.” Potawatomi representatives had gone to Washington, “with pressing protestions to the President,” he said, but the trip “has been without effect.”

See Ibid, 98; Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 107-08; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 265, 268. Gen. John Tipton was in charge of the procession until the Mississippi River, where he relinquished command to Judge William Polke. Meanwhile, another 163 Potawatomis from northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin emigrated without incident to Iowa, arriving at Council Bluffs on September 18, 1838. This party had assembled at the Des Plaines River near Chicago in early August and went to Iowa under Isaac Berry.

Mckee, “The Trail of Death,” 95-96, 131. A Potawatomi named Peter Moose, who figures in Kansas, was among the emigrants. Petit spelled the name as Mousse, though it likely was Moose.

Ibid, 96.

Forty-two people, the majority children, died en route to Kansas. Petit’s role in trying to ease the discomfort of the sick is memorialized on a plaque that hangs today outside the door of the Midwest Jesuit Archives, 4511 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis.


Ibid, entries for September 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, October 1.

Ibid, 319-320.

See ibid, 320-21; and Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 267-69. A Dr. Jerolaman was engaged for the journey and joined the emigration on September 18, when he reported that of sixty-seven people still sick, forty-seven suffered from cases of intermittent fever, thirteen of continued fever, three of diarrhea, and two of scrofula (tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands. A total of forty-two Indians died by the time the emigrating Potawatomi reached the Kansas Indian Country. The trailing party, comprising twenty-three Indians and conducted west by Jacob Hull, caught up with larger party near the Blue River on October 29.


Bird, *Dressing in Feathers*, 4-8. The benevolent Father Petit was less guilty of viewing the Indians as “other,” but still he called them “children” on one hand and “savages” on the other. This dichotomy, Bird notes, fits another important dimension of the White image of Indians. As Bird notes, when seen “as akin to primitive children,” Indians are “in a rude state of nature” and “nobly innocent, but when crossed they will turn wild and uncontrollable.”


Bird, *Dressing in Feathers*, 4-8.

Ibid.

Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 3-5.

Ibid.

Douglas, “Journal,” 334. The Potawatomi had been in the Indian County for one day when they passed a village of emigrant Weas, who were part of the Miami-Illinois language group. The emigrant Weas had settled on Bull Creek, about five miles south of today's Paola, Kansas.

Ibid.

Benjamin Petit put the number at 650, while Edmunds and Clifton put it at about 750. See Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 268; and Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 280, 299.


See Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 300-01, 315-16; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 113. Christian Hoecken’ diary, which was paraphrased in *The Dial* of February 1891, 87, contains a census of Catholic families at Sugar Creek, placing the number at three hundred. Assuming that an average family comprised six members, *The Dial* estimated the number of Catholic Indians at two thousand. Clifton qualifies the population figure of 2,500 for the Osage River Reservation, stating that while 2,439 people were counted at one point, “this figure included the largely unwilling emigrants under Black Wolf and Pami-tipi, most of whom apparently did not remain long.” In 1842, Agent Anthony Davis reported 1,949 Potawatomi on the Osage Reservation, including 625 persons identified as from former villages on the Wabash River, and 1,324 from the St. Joseph, Kankakee, and Iroquois rivers. Although several of the St. Joseph and Kankakee Potawatomis were identified as Prairie Band, Clifton says this was “a convenient fiction.” He also states that the 1,324 figure quoted by Davis included about 270 individuals who had moved south from Council Bluffs. Clifton writes that they were mainly metis, who “had been made extremely unwelcome there.” The last formally recognized migration of Potawatomi was in 1852. Clifton states that of the 1,195 Potawatomis who moved west under military escort, a larger number, 1,287, went voluntarily into Kansas or Iowa.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 115, writes that it was immediately after the arrival of Petit and his group of emigrants that "they determined to establish a separate settlement area for themselves." The competition that developed between missionaries in the Kansas Indian Country has been explored by scholars including Paul O. Myhre, "Potawatomi Transformation: Potawatomi Response to Catholic and Baptist Mission Strategy and Competition, 1822-1872" (Ph.D. diss., Saint Louis University, 1998); Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West;” and Joy, " ' Into the Wilderness': Protestant Missions Among the Emigrant Indians."


Admitting failure, the Jesuits closed their mission to the Kickapoo near Fort Leavenworth in late 1840 and sent the priests and brothers there to the Marais des Cygnes.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 115. Sugar maple and black sugar maple trees were “the most valued food tree of the Potawatomi” according to Jim Dowd, unpublished Potawatomi history, page 23, Citizen Band Family History Center. He writes: “The sugar was used in most of the cooking...The maple sap was gathered in February or March each year. Sugar camps were set up, and everyone went to work. Maple sap furnished sugar, and also vinegar. Venison was cooked with the vinegar and sweetened afterward with the maple sugar. Giwagamisigan means making maple sugar. Onsiban copomau means making maple sap into sugar.”

Ibid, 102, 109, 205. Murphy argues “that virtually the entire period of Osage River occupancy was a formative period in practicing more fully the arts of civilization, and this largely under missionary supervision and influence.”

Commissioner of Indian Affairs L. Lea, November 27, 1851, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1851-52, 3:269. “The tribes of the Osage river agency, composed of the Weas, Piankeshaws, Peorias, Kaskaskias, and Miamis are said to be doing well,” he wrote. “They have generally abandoned the chase as a means of subsistence; many of them have engaged in agricultural pursuits; and, during the past season, they have made corn enough to supply them with bread for another year…. They are greatly in advance of the wilder tribes contiguous to them; and, but for the facility afforded them of procuring ardent spirits form the shops that are planted along the borders of the State, a thorough and early abandonment of all their vagrant habits might reasonably be expected. Recently, however, with but few exceptions, they signed a pledge to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks for the term of twelve months.”

See ibid, 125; and Peter C. Mancall, Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Press, 1995), 101-02. Mancall writes that many Indian nations – Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, Choctaw, and Catawba – had issued appeals for temperance by the early eighteenth century. They were not an “organized movement” but represent “divergent responses to a common problem.” The efforts “in general did not prove effective.”


Annual Letters, 1847.

“Journal” (of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, 1841-1879). Box 1, Society of the Sacred Heart Archives, St. Louis. The lawmakers apparently went in pursuit of the murderer, intending to follower the new law to the letter and kill the man, but he had fled and could not be found.

Ibid.

“Father Hoecken’s Diary,” The Dial (September 1890), 2.

Ibid, (October 1890), 17-18.

Ibid. He wrote: “On account of great abuses growing out of the laws which the Indians framed for themselves some time ago, I was compelled, by my responsibility as their pastor, to have those laws abolished.”

Ibid, (November 1890), 36.

Ibid.

Ibid, (December 1890), 52.

See ibid, 162; and Ronald N. Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 229.


Ibid. The Ottawas also tried to do away with debt by insisting that any Ottawa in debt must use the next annuity payment to cancel it. The tribe also enacted a ten cents an acre tax on land to help the poor. The first Ottawas arrived in the Kansas Indian Country in 1832 after being forced from their homes in Ohio and Michigan. Further removals occurred from 1837 to 1839. An 1854 census conducted by the Office of Indian Affairs placed the number of Ottawas in eastern Kansas at 247. The laws, River argues, were a reflection of the Ottawas attempt to assert national identity. They “realized their tribal mores had been seriously challenged with their relocation to Kansas and, as a result, they attempted to modernize their tribal custom.” The Wyandots also adopted their own laws.

Edmunds, *The Potawatomis*, 159-63, writes that as early as 1801, the leaders Topinebe and Five Medals had traveled to the American capital to request agricultural assistance. From 1807 to 1811, the government often sent agricultural implements to Five Medals, Topinebe, and Winamac, a chief on the Tippecanoe, but the Potawatomis did not become farmers. In April 1804, the Quaker missionary Phillip Dennis established a mission and farm on the Wabash, about thirty-five miles from Fort Wayne. While Dennis “was able to persuade a few Potawatomi and Miami warriors to assist him in erecting fences and planting crops,” most of the tribesmen “took only a passing interest in the venture,” and Dennis abandoned it.

Cummins to D.D. Mitchell, September 12, 1842, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 27th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1842, H. Doc. 2, 427. Nearly a decade later, Francis Barker, superintendent of the Shawnee Baptist Mission, wrote: “Some of this people have, measurably, arrived to the blessings of civilized life. This is noticed by the passing stranger even, who, as he journeys, observes with surprise the fields of corn, cattle, horses, neatness of arrangement in the construction of dwellings, and the various signs of comfort incident to civilized life; others are starting on a moderate scale, indicating at least a desire to improve and an abandonment of the chase.” See Francis Barker, August 14, 1851, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess. 1851-52. S. Doc., 3: 344.

Ibid.

Ibid, 428.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid, 434.

*The Dial*, (October 1890).
123 Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 166- 67.

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

126 Alfred J. Vaughan to Thomas H. Harvey, September 20, 1845, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29th Cong., 1st Sess., 1845, H. Doc. 2, 555. Vaughan noted the three different bands of Potawatomi on the Osage River Reservation. “The Pottawatomies of Indiana, or, as they are commonly styled, the Saint Joseph band, are located in part on Pottawatomie creek…The Pottawatomies of the Wabash reside about 15 miles south of the former, on Sugar Creek. The Pottawatomies of the prairie are dispersed among their brethren at both creeks, although a moiety of them is living with their friends the Kickapoos, of the Fort Leavenworth agency. They come here annually, at payment time, to receive their annuities.”

127 The Dial, (October 1890).

128 Murphy, “Potawatomie Indians of the West,” 145.


131 Lutz, Methodist Missions Among the Indian Tribes in Kansas,” 175-76, laid out the daily routine at the Shawnee Methodist Mission and Indian Manual Labor School: At five a.m. children were awakened by the ringing of a bell. In the summer they performed light work about the farm until seven o’clock, when they breakfasted, “a horn being blown by way of signal before each meal. In winter-time their morning work, before eating, was confined to the preparation of fuel, milking the cows, some thirty or forty in number, and feeding the stock. At nine the school-bell summoned them to their studies, which were kept up, with short interval for recess, till twelve P. M.” After lunch, they resumed their studies until four o’clock, had an “hour for tea” before dinner and spent their evenings until eight preparing school lessons for the next day. “They were then allowed to indulge themselves in indoor recreation until half-past eight, when they were sent to their dormitories for the night.” The only religious services held during the week, Lutz said, were “the reading of a chapter in the Bible, followed by prayer, just before the morning and evening meals. Saturday forenoon was devoted to work and the afternoon was given them as a holiday. Saturday evening was spent in the bath-room in cleaning up for Sunday.” Each child paid seventy-five dollars a year to the superintendent to cover board, washing, and tuition. “The first task of the instructor was to teach the children English, which they soon learned to speak well, yet a slight foreign accent was usually noticeable. …As to mental capacity, they compared favorable with white children.”

132 J. Lykins to Orlando Brown, September 30, 1849, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 31st Cong., 1st Sess., 1849-50, S. Doc. 2:1, 1089-90. Many children who attended mission schools were métis. On his way west in 1850, for example, Madison B. Moorman spent “an hour or two” at the Potawatomi Baptist Mission, noting “54 pupils were in attendance – most of them ‘half-breeds.’ ” See Louise Barry, “Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 32:1 (Spring 1966), 66.

133 Mathevon to Sophie Barat, February 5, 1842.

134 See Annual Letters, 1845; and Mathevon to Barat, August 1841.

135 Mathevon to Barat, February 5, 1842.
Beginning July 1, 1845, the Sacred Heart girls’ school began receiving five hundred dollars a year in government support.

Annual Letters, 1846, 1847.

“Journal” (of the Convent of the Sacred Heart), 1844.

See ibid; Annual Letters, 1844; and The Dial (October 1890), 17. The reason there was no fruit, the journal noted, was that “we have not yet been able to procure any fruit trees.”


See Martha B. Caldwell, Annals of Shawnee Methodist Mission and Indian Manual Labor School, 2nd ed. (Topeka: The Kansas State Historical Society, 1977), 61-62; and Lutz, “Methodist Missions Among the Indian Tribes of Kansas,” 174-75, 181. The Rev. Nathan Scarritt, principal at Howard High School in Fayette, Missouri, was hired as teacher. Fees at the academy were: Primary, $6; Common English Branches, $8; Higher English Branches, $10; Latin and Greek Languages, $12; Extra per session, for the purchase of Apparatus, $1; Boarding, including washing, lodging, lights, fuel, $1.25 per week.” William G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883) (http://www.kancoll.org/andcutl.htmstates) (July 9, 2011) that “a score or more of young gentlemen and young ladies from across the line, and some, indeed, from more distant parts of Missouri,” were admitted into the Western Academy, as were some Indians, who likely were métis.
CHAPTER VI
RETHINKING THE PIONEER NARRATIVE

In 1846, the Potawatomi in Iowa and those on the Osage River Reservation signed yet another treaty with the United States government – this one intended to unite the different bands on a new reservation in the Kansas River Valley. The new reserve was a 576,000-acre, thirty-square-mile tract spanning both sides of the Kansas River, the eastern boundary situated about two miles west of present Topeka.¹ Potawatomi from the Bluffs – including the métis Beubiens, LaFramboises, Ogees, and Vieuxs – generally settled just northwest of present Topeka, while Potawatomi and métis from the Marais des Cygnes – including the métis Bertrands, Bourasses, and Nadeaus – settled about a dozen miles farther west, near Cross Creek and around a new Catholic mission at present-day St. Marys, Kansas.

The locations of these métis and Potawatomi families placed them in the center of momentous historical forces. On the Iowa reservation, Potawatomis found themselves in the middle of the 1846 Mormon migration to Utah, only to arrive in Kansas just in time for the 1849 rush to the California gold fields. Many a gold seeker, as well as Oregon-bound settlers, went west on the Independence Road branch of the California-Oregon Trail, which passed directly through the Potawatomis’ Kansas River Reservation. Then, with passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, their villages suddenly were positioned in the middle of a tide of new, white settlers and a region bloodied by guerrilla warfare.

This chapter aims to place the emigrant Potawatomi and métis in the familiar Oregon Trail/Bleeding Kansas narrative, which usually overlooks them, and in doing so demonstrate how they oftentimes were vital participants in the sweeping tide of a westering America in the mid-nineteenth century. The emigrant Potawatomi, as historian R. David Edmunds first
discerned years ago, “shared many of the frontier experiences usually associated only with white frontiersmen.” They were, if you will, pioneers, in their own right.

The Overland Trail

Central among historical forces unfolding at the Kawsmouth confluence in the mid-nineteenth century was the huge overland migration to the Pacific Coast, which began as a trickle in 1836 and reached a crescendo with the discovery of gold in California in 1849 and again in Colorado in 1859. Depending on their “jumping off” point on the Missouri River, overlanders followed various trails to reach the main Platte River Road across Nebraska. Historian Merrill Mattes identifies five major routes, including the one that crossed Shawnee and Potawatomi lands in the Kansas Indian Country. Known as the Independence Road, it started at present-day Kansas City or Independence, Missouri, passed through Westport, crossed the state line into the Shawnee country, and continued southwest on the Santa Fe Trail before branching off to the north at today’s Gardner, Kansas. The trail crossed the Wakarusa River east of present-day Lawrence and the Kansas River at least three locations: two at or near today’s Topeka and another to the west, at the now extinct Uniontown, once the trading post of the emigrant Potawatomi. After crossing the Kaw, the trail headed northwest across the lands of the Potawatomi.

As historian John D. Unruh Jr. states, this early segment of the overland trail across eastern Kansas was safer and less arduous than what followed, and seems often to have been slighted by scholars. Lillian Schlissel, for example, in her classic Women’s Diaries of the Westward Journey, mentions Fort Kearney and Scotts Bluffs in Nebraska as “the first stops along the road,” where “emigrants could stop for water, rest and provisions.” She goes on to write about Independence Rock, Court House Rock, South Pass, Fort Bridger, and Fort Hall, but
omits any mention of the Kansas Indian Country, although, in fact, rest and provisions were available there as well – often at the hands of Indian and métis people.

Overlanders on the Independence Road had to cross the wide Kansas River, as well as a number of smaller rivers and streams. Travelers had a choice of where to cross the Kaw – at the Papin Ferry in present North Topeka; a “middle ferry” run in the 1850s by one Sydney W. Smith, about one mile northwest of the Potawatomi Baptist Mission in present West Topeka; or an “upper ferry” operated by Potawatomi métis at Uniontown, about five miles upstream from the Baptist Mission.6

Following the Treaty of 1846, many Potawatomis settled in villages not far from these ferry slips. The path from the “upper ferry” at Uniontown generally followed Cross Creek, which runs through today’s Rossville, Kansas, a vicinity where many Potawatomi could be found. Catholic Potawatomis from Sugar Creek tended to settle a few miles farther west, where Jesuits established a new mission, St. Mary’s Mission at the present town of St. Marys. Baptist missionaries Johnston Lykins and Robert and Fanny Simerwell also relocated to the new Kansas River Reservation, where they built the Potawatomi Baptist Mission, a three-story, stone school building a half mile back from the river and just a mile from the “middle ferry.”7

Meanwhile, Potawatomis from the Iowa reservation – with allegiances to neither the Sugar Creek Jesuits nor the Potawatomie Creek Baptists – settled around Soldier Creek, in the vicinity of present-day Silver Lake and the now-extinct Indianola, across the Kansas River from present-day downtown Topeka.8 This was a strategic location. The “lower,” or Papin Ferry, was perhaps the best-known river crossing, used not only by overlanders, but by soldiers from Fort Leavenworth who needed to cross to the south side of the Kansas River as they escorted caravans to Santa Fe. The military road from Fort Leavenworth passed just east of Indianola
before crossing the river at Papin’s. The road then headed south, passing to the west of Burnett's mound, in today’s South Topeka, then crossed a branch of the Wakarusa River near today’s Auburn, Kansas, before bearing away to the southwest.¹⁰

In the year 1843 nine-hundred people went overland on the California-Oregon Trail, and numbers increased rapidly in following years. In 1844, four independently organized parties, numbering more than one thousand people, left from various points in western Missouri, and in 1845, the number jumped to three thousand emigrants.¹¹ Thus, on the eve of the Potawatomi removal to the Kansas River Valley, the number of overland parties setting out across their reservation was on the rise. With the discovery of gold in California in January 1848, the
numbers mushroomed, just as the Potawatomi were settling into their new homes. Mattes estimates that thirty thousand travelers took the trail in 1849 and fifty-five thousand in 1850. George Root, former curator of archives at the Kansas State Historical Society, states that the bottoms to the west of the Potawatomi Baptist Mission farm "were a favorite camping place for the thousands of wagon trains which passed up the valley to this crossing. Here they went into camp, letting their stock have a needed rest while necessary repairs were being made to their prairie schooners." 12

Sydney W. Smith apparently abandoned the middle ferry for a time in the late 1850s, but, with the discovery of gold in Colorado, announced its resumption in an advertisement he placed in the Topeka Tribune of April 28, 1859: "This point is well known in the country as the most easy and natural crossing on the [Kansas] river, it being on the most traveled thoroughfare through to the new gold mines or the Santa Fé settlement, and over which the U.S. government trains almost invariably pass." The newspaper editor seconded the statement, writing that Smith’s Ferry was a "well-known crossing," used by "thousands of the California emigrants" in earlier years. 13

Estimates of the number of people going overland often appeared in local newspapers in these years. As the spring migration started in 1850, the St. Joseph Gazette reported on May 3rd that "it is thought that up to this date 2,000 have rendezvoused at Independence, 1,000 at Kansas City, 1,000 at Weston, 10,000 at Council Bluffs, and from 15,000 to 20,000 at this point." The previous March, a St. Louis newspaper reported that "not less than 80 out of Parkville, Mo.’s, 150 inhabitants started ‘in search of gold, high up on Caw River, in the Indian Territory.’" 14 Adding to the traffic through the lands of the emigrant Indians were express companies carrying
the mail, a service that opened in 1850 under government contract between Independence and Salt Lake City.\textsuperscript{15}

Johnston Lykins estimated that fifteen thousand to twenty thousand overlanders passed his Potawatomi Baptist Mission in the winter of 1849-1850. So concerned was he in January 1850 about the impact so much contact with Americans would have on his Indian charges that he wrote to the commissioner of Indian Affairs, recommending that the Potawatomi be moved again or “their destruction must be speedy and certain.”\textsuperscript{16} If another removal “could be avoided, and the Indians secured, I would not consent for millions of money,” Lykins wrote, but he told the commissioner that the Potawatomis were sitting in the center of “this great western outlet,” which surely would continue to be a main transportation route for westering Americans. “The southern bend of the Missouri River, found at the mouth of the Kanzas, will constantly throw off its thousands of emigrants who must and will ascend this valley,” he wrote. Lykins’ words were prophetic, as the route would, indeed, remain popular. By 1867, after the emigrant Indians had relinquished much of their land, the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, snaked across the former Potawatomi reserve, following the Independence Road right past the front door of St. Mary’s Catholic Mission, as does today’s U.S. 24/40 – one of the main east-west highways through Kansas.\textsuperscript{17}

While Lykins’ worries about the negative impact of the overland traffic were justified, especially in regards to the availability of alcohol, diaries and journals kept by travelers, as well as American settlers arriving in Kansas Territory after 1854, reveal that encounters could have a positive side for Indian people, as well. Diaries reveal emigrant Indian and métis people cashing in on the overland traffic. In addition, Indian farms, with their rail fences and domesticated livestock, belied the image of an uncivilized land inhabited by “savages.”\textsuperscript{18}
So much “progress” toward white ways had been made on the Shawnee reservation around the Methodist mission, for instance, that Indian agent Richard Cummins said a traveler passing through the Shawnee country “might fancy himself in a white settlement were it not for ‘the swarthy lineaments and strange language of the inhabitants.'”19 In his annual report for 1848, Cummins wrote that some of the Shawnee farms compared “with the best within the state line.” A few of the more opulent ones, he said, held Negro slaves and “almost every family was supplied with horses, oxen, cattle, hogs and sheep, and agricultural implements.”20 The Shawnee Methodist Mission, where Indians raised an abundant crop of grains and vegetables, cultivated fruit trees and made butter and cheese, became a stopping place for overlanders, as did St. Mary’s Mission and others along the trail.

The missions, ferry slips, and trading post at Uniontown not only were places of curiosity to passing overlanders, but also a kind of oasis where a blacksmith shop serving Indians might repair an overlander’s broken wagon wheel, where an English-speaking métis might give an interested passerby a lecture on Indian culture, or where a weary traveler might post a letter home.21 William E. Unrau writes that “many Indian agencies provided more services to the gold seekers than to the Indians.”22

As overlanders crossed the Missouri state line into the Kansas Indian Country, they often encountered the emigrant Indians or saw indications of their presence. J.H. Beresford, leaving Independence for California in the spring of 1852, wrote of seeing “a number of Indians who have comfortable houses and considerable farms.”23 Charles Hassenplug, traveling from Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania, to California in 1850, spoke of passing “some 5 Indian habitats,” as his party approached the Kansas River and crossed from the Shawnee to the Potawatomi reserve. “Both these tribes have houses and farms and live as well as some in the western part of
Missouri,” he wrote. The Indians were doing well enough that they were selling surplus farm produce. “We bought some corn and beans, potatoes,” Hassenplug wrote. “These Indians are pleasant and friendly and some talk the English language. They are also enlighten [sic] with the gospel dispensation. They have some Methodist and some Catholic among them.” As Cyrus Currier crossed the Wakarusa River on his way to California from Newark, New Jersey, in the spring of 1849, he noted the presence of “a few Indians here on each side of the River. They have small houses & a garden attached. Cultivate some corn and raise a few Horses & cattle.” Not to be overlooked was Currier’s observation that “some of the children show the white race mixed in almost full blood.”

Overlander Pardon Dexter Tiffany’s experience was quite intimate as he camped on Shunganunga Creek, southwest of today’s downtown Topeka, in May 1849. “The country through which we passed to day was very beautiful and well watered with fine springs,” he wrote after suffering all day from “the Rheumatic twinges” and “one of my old fashioned sick headaches.” Feeling better the next morning, he went “hunting a while” and then “rode up to an Indian enclosure or farm,” noting that “some three or four families” lived there in “a log cabin & two tents.” He noted a large field, enclosed with a new fence, and “several cows & cattle & horses.”

The setting “on the bluff of the Kansas at the edge of the Prairie” could well have been the home of the Potawatomi Abraham Burnett, who settled in the area of which Tiffany wrote. Tiffany did not mention any names, writing only that “there were some half breed females who were well dressed in calico and who spoke English very well.” There was, he said, “an old Pottowattimie [sic] sewing outside of the cabin who would not look up at us nor take the least notice of any thing we said or did and the younger ones looked at her any time we asked a
question to take their cue from her & she would neither speak nor look up. All we had to do was to go to the next family. Then we found a very pretty half breed and we enquired of her as did of the others for eggs, milk & moccasins. She took a look at the old crone who decked with many silver ornaments and dressed in Indian costume kept silently sewing & receiving as I thought some sign from her she answered us in good English that they had none of the things we asked for, but I thought that the answer was rather to get rid of us than to give any satisfactory information. We rode off.”

Tiffany’s experience on Shunganunga Creek is instructive. He had happened upon a small cluster of Potawatomi families where signs of acculturation abounded – from a fenced field and “several cows & cattle,” to young métis “dressed in calico” and speaking English. They seemed open to engaging with Tiffany had it not been for “an old Pottowattimie [sic] sewing outside of the cabin” who refused to speak or even look up at him. That she wore “silver ornaments” and was dressed “in Indian costume” reveals the older woman to be more of a traditionalist than the young women. That she sat outside “of the cabin” suggests that she was open to adopting some cultural aspects of white society, but that did not mean she was necessarily inclined to befriend a white traveler who came wanting things, “eggs, milk & moccasins.” The older woman’s traditionalist posture versus the more assimilatory stance of the young métis were attitudes that caused divisions in the Potawatomi tribe.

After his encounter, Tiffany continued on his way. He crossed the Kansas River on the Papin Ferry, where he stopped to write to his wife “on a three legged stool on a tottering table in the log cabin of a French man with about twenty persons coming & going & talking all the time.” After likely giving the letter to the Papins to post, Tiffany “started for camp some two miles distant where we spent the night.” Some “two miles distant” would have put him in the
Figure 9: Stereograph of Kansas River ferry operating thirty-seven miles downriver from St. Mary’s Mission.  

Indianola/Silver Lake vicinity, towns settled by Potawatomi métis from the Bluffs – the Laframboises, Beaubiens, Ogees, and Vieuxs. “There are many Frenchmen, half breeds or who have married Indian women who live all around this region and many of them as well as the Indians came to camp today,” Tiffany wrote. “The Frenchmen are well dressed & all look sleek & lazy. All are mounted & as I suppose have many ponies & horses at home. All that I have seen appear to know the use of Whiskey.”

The Métis at Silver Lake, Kansas

Pardon Dexter Tiffany made many false judgments that day. Far from “lazy,” the well-dressed “French men” he saw undoubtedly were métis, industrious men from a long lineage of hard-working engages, voyageurs, and bourgeois of the fur trade. They long had been middle men, “masters of accommodation,” who, as Edmunds notes, had adapted over the years to the changing political realities in North America. When the American nation became
predominant, and the Potawatomi ceded their lands in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana, the métis middle men played an instrumental role. At the Chicago Treaty of 1833, for instance, the métis Billy Caldwell acted on behalf of the Potawatomi, securing such vast amounts of money and goods, as well as a lifetime annuity for himself, that federal negotiators acknowledged “these half-breeds have soon learned how to vex their agents.”33

In the Kansas Indian Country, many métis picked up where they had left off, fashioning new lives as entrepreneurs and leaders of their communities. Joseph Laframboise, who was employed by the government as an interpreter for the Fort Leavenworth Agency, “built his house on the highest point of ground on the east bank” of a lake – present Silver Lake – just northwest of Topeka.34 In 1910, the oldest living resident of Silver Lake, according to a 1910 history of the town, was Mrs. E. R. Kennedy, “generally known as aunt Monique,” who was born at Council Bluffs on March 18, 1837, the daughter of Joseph Laframboise. Monique was the second wife of E.R. Kennedy, a white man who was a trader among the Potawatomi. His first wife was an Indian woman, Ke-bi-ah Wa-da-gah, also known as Susan Onedoggie. Kennedy arrived in Kansas with the Council Bluffs Pottawatomi in 1847, where he “was quite prominent as a free state man.”35

The 1910 history of Silver Lake skips quickly over Mrs. Kennedy to “the first white woman” to locate in the town and “the first white child born,” noting that the town name “is generally believed” to have derived from the “clear and silvery waters” of a nearby lake. The Potawatomi version of the story says, however, that the town was named after “a valuable bird dog” owned by Joseph Laframboise. “This wonderful dog had white curly hair, and was named Silver. He hunted about the lake a great deal, even catching wild ducks upon it.”36
Other métis families from the Bluffs, including the Ogees, Beaubiens, and Vieuxs, appear by 1848 in the same vicinity. Madore Beaubien was said to have arrived in 1847, “prior to the first spring annuity payment of the combined Potawatomi bands, which occurred on May 18, 1848.” He settled on Soldier Creek and was for a long time “the oldest resident of Shawnee County.” In 1854, the recently married Madore Beaubien “built a double log house as store and residence” in Silver Lake, and it was there that the Butterfield stage route stopped. In 1861, when the divisive question of allotting Potawatomi lands was raised, Beaubien accepted 320 acres at Silver Lake and another half section on Soldier Creek, making him the original proprietor of the land where the town of Silver Lake was platted in February 1868. Thus, when the streets were named Beaubein, Madore, Masche, Theresa, and Pottawatomie, they reflected the Indian origins of the town. Madore Beaubien, in partnership with a Charles Palmer, also is credited with erecting, in July 1868, the first store building in the newly platted town, as well as, in 1870, a $6,000, two-story, eight-room residence near the lake. The métis Madore Beaubien, then, not only was a Kansas pioneer, but a man of considerable stature in what by 1883 was an American town. Andreas’ *History of the State of Kansas* states that he was at various times a member of the Good Templars Lodge, Tecumseh Lodge No. 15, A. F. & A. M., and the Grand Lodge of Kansas.

Another early resident of Silver Lake was Lucius R. Darling. Anthropologist James Clifton, whose dislike of métis is blatant, characterizes Darling as typical of “a few men of Anglo-Saxon or Scots-Irish heritage, generally poor landless, unemployed individuals,” who aligned themselves with influential Potawatomi métis. Men like Darling and the métis, Clifton writes, “monopolized practically every government or private sector job associated with Potawatomi affairs available.” He lambasts the métis, saying “they intruded on whatever other
opportunities for gain came to their attention,” whether it be using Potawatomi funds to operate their businesses or to buy a new suit to go to Washington.

While it is true that Lucius Darling, from northern Illinois, was a non-Indian, he married into the tribe and thus became Potawatomi. Unlike today’s use of blood quantum to judge tribal affiliation, in the mid-nineteenth century, kinship ties and the consensus of the tribe determined who was a member. Darling, who referred to himself as Potawatomi, apparently was involved with the métis Elizabeth Ouilmette when he hired on with a trader and moved to the Council Bluffs Reservation with the Illinois and Wisconsin Potawatomi. On July 15, 1838, he married Elizabeth, who was the daughter of fur trader Antoine Ouilmette, who had hidden Mrs. Helm under a feather bed during the 1812 massacre at Fort Dearborn. Elizabeth’s mother was the métis Archange Chevalier, whose family had been the principal French-Canadian traders at St. Joseph, Michigan, in the eighteenth century. It seems likely that Louis Darling and Elizabeth Ouilmette married at Council Bluffs because their son William was baptized there on June 9, 1838. Accounts differ on whether Elizabeth Ouilmette was Darling’s first or second wife, but both of his wives were métis. Darling followed the Bluffs Potawatomi to the Kansas Indian Country, where, on July 10, 1850, he signed a contract with Indian agent Luke Lea to establish a Potawatomi “National Ferry” one and one-half miles upriver from Uniontown. The salary was $650 a year.

South of the Kansas River lived the full-blood Abram (or Abraham) Burnett, who moved in 1848 from the Osage River Reservation to a large plot of land along Shunganunga Creek, where he farmed, traded horses, and lived out his life. When his first wife, Dah-Moosh-Ke-Keaw, died, he remarried a German Catholic immigrant, Marie Knoffloch. Burnett became something of a legend in Topeka because of his immense girth. Said to weigh 450 pounds, he
has been the subject of a score of local newspaper articles. In addition, a prominent bluff in South Topeka bears his name, Burnett’s Mound. Near its foot, he lies buried.\textsuperscript{47}

A “Chief Abram B. Burnett Family” website posts three photographs of Burnett taken during the years 1867 to 1869.\textsuperscript{48} One photograph shows him wrapped in a traditional blanket. In the second photo he wears coat and trousers and holds a cane. In the third, he is dressed in an immaculate white suit with long jacket and scarf tie. These photographs reveal an influential Potawatomi man who undoubtedly was walking an accommodationist road while still retaining his Indian identity. The family website states the situation exactly, noting that Abram Burnett understood “very well the differences between the Indian world and American ways.” When it came time to meet officially with government officials, “he cut his hair and dressed in what was noted by Americans as a more dignified and civilized manner,” while other times, wrapped in a blanket, Abram is “telling all he maintained his traditional ways and faith as a Potawatomi Indian.”\textsuperscript{49}

That there was little to fear from emigrant Indians in Kansas was apparent to overlanders such as Pardon Dexter Tiffany, who scoffed at a companion, a Mr. Bryant, who expressed “great apprehension” after meeting up with six full-blood Potawatomis, apparently while he was out picking strawberries near the party’s camp north of the Kansas River in 1849. In a letter to his wife, Tiffany mocked Bryant for his fear. “Could you see the Indians you would laugh at the idea of being afraid of them in this region,” he said. “This morning one tall powerful looking fellow on a fine horse came dashing into camp & after figuring about some time he was ordered to go away,” which he apparently did.\textsuperscript{50}

When Andrew Lopp Murphy camped some four or five miles upriver from Papin’s Ferry in 1849 he and his companions were so at ease with Indians in the vicinity that they, as Tiffany
had done, wandered up to one of their homes. “Some of the boys went to an Indian wigwam near by and found them playing cards. Both men and women were playing and taking rings, beads and tinsel from their ears and hair to bet.” The next evening, another seven or eight miles up the river, Murphy camped on the Kaw’s banks “near a plantation owned by a half breed,” the word plantation indicating that this métis was wealthier than his wigwam neighbor and illustrating that cultural and economic divides existed between Indians in the country as well as Indians and whites. The overlander Madison B. Moorman, crossing the Potawatomi reservation in 1850, also wrote of “some frenchmen, who had Indian wives – they were well fixed,” he said, “good farms and a sawmill.”

Five miles beyond the métis “plantation,” was Cross Creek, “a small creek with very steep muddy banks,” where overlander James Pritchard, in May 1849, wrote of finding a productive community operating a sawmill, tending crops, and maintaining a toll bridge over the creek, which could be traversed for a fee of twenty-five cents a wagon. The following spring, when overlander Madison Berryman Moorman arrived at Cross Creek, he found two bridges, but still “several hundred wagons,” slowed by several days of rain, waited to cross. The toll over one bridge was five cents a wagon; ten cents at the second bridge. “The two Pot[awatomi] toll collectors competed for customers that morning, as one heralded his cheaper price and the other argued that his bridge was sturdier and safer.” The Moorman party took what seemed to be the safer bridge and “departed with some bemusement about the fierce economic rivalry between the two Pot[awatomi] attendants.” Joseph Rhodes also passed through Cross Creek in 1850, writing that a few miles farther on “we came to a saw and grist mill, 2 miles further we came to a French and Indian Town of about 100 houses.” This “town” would have been in the vicinity of St. Mary’s Catholic Mission.
Indian Toll Bridges

Indian toll bridges were a “prevalent business” on early legs of the California-Oregon Trail, with some Indians reporting incomes of as much as $400 a year. Overlander Hugh McCanne mentioned crossing three “pole bridges, ten or 12 feet in length” near St. Mary’s Catholic Mission. They were “toll bridges,” he said, “10 cent per waggon.” James Woodworth also reported having to pay to cross a stream near the mission, but his toll was 50 cents. On her way to California in 1850, Henrietta Chiles noted passing “several toll bridges owned by the Indians. They charged from five to ten cents per wagon.”

Jumping off from St. Joseph, Missouri, a New Yorker identifying himself only as “H” wrote of paying twenty-five cents to cross a bridge owned by the Sac and Fox. Thomas Woodward told of crossing the Wolf River “below the Sac & Fox village” on May 5, 1850. “The Indians has Built here a Rude log Bridge, otherwise it would Be nearly impossible to cross,” he stated. “They charged 50 cent.” Overlanders Francis White and John Warnock also mentioned the Indian bridge. “At Wolf Creek is a log toll bridge built by the Indians where they charges 25c for each wagon that crosses,” Warnock wrote on May 6, 1850. “The Keeper of the bridge says 1400 wagons had passed before us.” When Lorenzo Sawyer crossed the bridge two days later, he reported “several long trains” ahead of his wagon, “and the road as far as we could see, was lined with wagons on the march.” Joseph Price, crossing Wolf Creek on May 10th, also reported paying twenty-five cents for his “wagon and team” and said the bridge “belonged to the Iowa Indians.” An overlander calling himself “Old Boone,” told of paying ten cents to Kickapoos at the St. Joseph ferry. They “demanded a toll of 10 cts. per wagon, for crossing their territory, and at Wolf creek we had another 25 csts. to pay for crossing a bridge.”
Overlander William H. Woodhams was quite impressed by an Indian toll bridge operator he encountered. Woodhams described him as “magnificently a handsome man – tall, straight, well-proportioned, with glossy curling hair, hanging in curls to his shoulders, rich olive complexion and features, statuesque in beauty; he was absolutely perfect so far as person was concerned.”

Woodhams was surprised by the man’s command of English and his knowledge “of things recognizable only by ‘one educated in the most refined society.’” Woodhams must have scratched his head as he concluded his journal entry: “What can he be doing doing here?”

Toll bridges not only illustrated the savvy of the emigrant Indians, but also served to shatter the preconceived notions that Americans brought with them to the Indian Country. “They came with preconceptions about the Indians who resided there,” historian Michael L. Tate writes. Once encountering the emigrant Indians, however, they felt conflicted. “Many still held tightly to their lifelong stereotypes of murderous savages who would plunder their wagons and kill their relatives,” Tate writes, but others “began to question their negative preconceptions. Surprising to many of them, the Indians that they initially encountered seemed to be friendly, helpful, industrious, and somewhat acculturated into white lifestyles and technologies.”

The Entrepreneurial Métis Louis Vieux

On the Potawatomi reservation, the métis Louis Vieux built a toll bridge, probably in the mid- to late-1850s, at a popular camping place and ford on the Red Vermillion, northwest of Cross Creek. The most dependable source about the bridge comes from interviews with Vieux’s daughter Sophia Vieux Johnson and her husband, Jacob Johnson, which were published in Joseph B. Thoburn’s History of Oklahoma in 1916. Thoburn writes that Jacob Johnson, who was Caucasian, went to Kansas early in its territorial days and established a restaurant with
his youngest brother at Indianola. There, he met and married, in 1856, Sophia Vieux, “who had just returned from school at Saint Marys, Kansas.” Sophia, born at Council Bluffs in 1840, was the daughter of the French-Potawatomi métis Louis Vieux and his full-blood Indian wife, Sha-note (Charolotte). Sources differ on whether Sha-note was Menominee or Potawatomi.

Thoburn writes that Sha-note’s father, Chesawgan, as well as her mother, were “prominent members of the Menominee tribe,” although Potawatomi genealogist Susan Campbell states that Sha-Note was Potawatomi.66 According to Sophia Vieux, Sha-note “lived the camp life” until her marriage to Louis Vieux.67

Louis Vieux, Sha-note, and his in-laws left Council Bluffs, according to Thoburn’s history, sometime in the early 1850s and settled at Indianola, where Sha-note’s parents and brother, Po-mom-ke-tuck (also known as Peter the Great), lived for a time “in bark wigwams,” about six miles from the Vieux family. Louis Vieux, the history states, did “extensive farming and stock raising” and continued “to help the Indians in their business affairs.” Measured by standards of the day, the Vieuxs were wealthy. “Sophia,” the account reads, “often tells about her mother’s silk and broadcloth dresses, furs, the hired servants, etc.” A black man named “Uncle Charlie,” who Sophia Vieux apparently insisted was not a slave, lived in the family “for years, cooking for both hired hands and the family [and] also helping with the house work generally.”68 According to Sophia and her husband, it was after Sha-note died, on April 13, 1857, that Louis Vieux moved to the Red Vermillion River, where he established his toll bridge.

Vieux was said to have charged $1 a wagon to cross his bridge and earned as much as $300 a day.69 He also was said to supplement his income by selling hay and grain to overlanders. Vieux’s son-in-law Jacob Johnson moved nearby and worked as a toll collector. Vieux’s daughter Rachel Vieux Thurber, interviewed in 1927 when she was eighty-eight years
old and still living near Rossville, stated that she lived for many years on her father's farm. She recalled the passing by of “long caravans of covered wagons pulled by oxen” and of “the stage coaches that traveled between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Riley” and which changed horses at the Vieux farm. During annuity payments at the Cross Creek agency, it was her father, Rachel Vieux said, who “call[ed] the Indians by name to come forward and get their pay.”

In 1859, when *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley toured the recently opened Kansas Territory, his circuitous route took him many places, including across Louis Vieux’s bridge over the Red Vermillion. The Potawatomis had not yet treated to take their land in allotments, but many other emigrant Indians, including the Shawnee, Delaware, and Iowa, already had relinquished their Kansas holdings and moved or were in the process of moving to the Oklahoma Indian Territory. As the journal Greeley kept of his trip indicates, the Kansas Indian Country had given way to budding towns and Republican politics, although signs of the passing emigrant Indian era remained.

Arriving by steamer at Atchison on May 15, 1859, Greeley noted the many tents and wagons of Pike’s Peak-bound gold-seekers dotting the prairie. Three days later he was at Osawatomie, looking in on the territory’s first Republican Convention. South of Lawrence a welcoming party met him at Blanton’s bridge – a “good toll bridge,” which had replaced the ferry once operated by the Shawnee métis Bluejacket. Greeley had given a speech on the steps of Lawrence’s fine hotel, the Eldridge, then taken the stage for Leavenworth. So difficult still were many creek crossings that several times the passengers were turned out to lighten the load. At Turkey Creek, the passengers “let themselves down a perpendicular bank by clinging to a tree, and crossed a deep whirling place above the ford on a log,” Greeley said. One passenger was so afraid of risking his life on the “vilest log” Greeley had ever seen, that he hired an Indian,
who apparently was nearby watching the episode unfold, “to bring his pony and let him ride across.” How much he paid, no one said.74

From Leavenworth, Greeley took a stagecoach to Topeka and then another, headed to Fort Riley. The route, as it always had, lay through the Potawatomi reserve, crossing over Cross Creek and passing St. Mary's Mission before hitting the popular ford on the Red Vermillion, where Louis Vieux kept his toll bridge. It was there, Greeley wrote, that the stagecoach stopped so passengers could dine. The meal was served by “the landlady … a half-breed, and the dinner the worst for which the editor of the Tribune ever paid half a dollar.”75 As Greeley’s journal attests, Indians and métis people – no matter how inferior their food or bridges might be judged – were key actors in the westering movement prior to and after the opening of Kansas to non-Indian settlement.

The Métis Ogees and Their Ferries

Uniontown, some dozen miles west of the Papin ferry, was another important crossing on the Independence Road. The ferry here also was operated by métis, the French-Potawatomi Ogees. Uniontown, which was the Potawatomi trading post, dated to 1848 when Indian agents R.W. Cummins and A.J. Vaughan selected the site because it was a central point on the reservation, which spanned both sides of the Kansas River. Here, Indian blacksmiths and traders would be at one place, and it would be easier for the agent to keep an eye on affairs. “I have accordingly stuck my stake and christened it union town,” Vaughan wrote on March 7, 1848.76 “The point selected by us,” Cummins said, “is on the south side of the Kansas…on high ground, near the river…and nearly in the center of their country, east & west & as nearly so north and south as good timber…could be had…”77
In April 1848, about a month after Uniotn town was established, the government trader Thomas N. Stinson of the Westport outfit of Simpson & Hunter, erected a building there, followed within two months by the traders Peter E. Sarpie, R.A. Kinsley, Clemont Shamio, O.H.P. Polk, T.D. McDonald, Moses H. Scott, W.W. Cleghorn, and the Westport outfit of Boone & Bernard, all of whom erected buildings.\(^78\) J.R. Whitehead, J.D. Leslie, and William Dyer arrived a year later. In 1850, Madore Beaubien also established a post there, though he originally objected to the location because his home was on the north side of the Kaw.\(^79\)

Passing through Uniotn town in May 1850, John F. Snyder described it as “the trading post” of the Potawatomi nation, at the crossing of the Kansas River. “This town,” he wrote to his brother in Belleville, Illinois, “consists of about fifty log houses, with a population of about 300, nearly all indians. The government has stationed at this post a physician, two blacksmiths, a wagon maker, two gun smiths, and a circular saw mill.”\(^80\) The day Snyder crossed the Kansas River at Uniotn town he said he “encamped near the hut of a chief, who had the U.S. flag floating proudly over his miserable hut.”

That same month, Robert Chalmers also passed through Uniotn town. “A few Indian huts and two or three stores kept by traders were scattered along the way,” he wrote. “Arrived at the ferry and camped, for there were so many wagons there that we could not get across till morning.”\(^81\) Calling Uniotn town a village, overlander M. Littleton wrote in June 1850: “There are about 25 or 30 Houses in it. Dwellings Stores Bakerys Beer Shops etc…”\(^82\) William Kelly, passing by in May 1849, called the place “a small hamlet, composed of some half-dozen shops, and a little straggling suburb of wigwams. The shops are kept by white men, licensed to supply the Indians around with the flimsy, fantastic, and trumpery articles they require; liquor being specially interdicted ….”\(^83\) Samuel R. Dundass found the stores “reasonable in their prices
considering the difficulty and distance of transportation.” Another emigrant apparently struck up a conversation with Louis Henry Ogee or another ferryman, writing of him as a “venerable but stalwart Indian, a knowing and most entertaining old fellow, who charged five dollars for the transit.”84 Kimball Webster noted that “a few” of the white traders at Unioentown “have taken Indian women for their wives,” while John Hale found “the Indians partly civilized; who live in log-houses.”85

In its first year, Unioentown became an important river crossing for Americans on the Independence Road, as well as for Indians. Barely had the overland migration of 1849 begun, when a St. Louis newspaper reported that, by May 3rd, seven hundred wagons had crossed the Unioentown ferry, said to be operated by Louis Ogee and Charles Beaubien.86 William Kelly described the ferry as “a large flat-bottomed boat, capable of carrying a waggon loaded, together with the team – a very unwieldy craft, propelled with long poles and clumsy oars ….”87

When Stillman Churchill crossed the Kansas River on May 28, 1849, he stated that two ferries were operating, “12 miles apart,” the upper one “navigated by Indians of the Pot[awatomi] tribe.”88 The other ferry, “12 miles” distant, competed for customers. “Each enterprise operated two boats; each hired Indian salesmen to roam widely and convince oncoming travelers of the wisdom of using their employer’s ferry. Rates at $1 to $5.”89

Competition for customers apparently continued because in 1853, John Ogee, older brother of Louis, partnered with Hiram Wells of Silver Lake and went into the ferry business at Unioentown. Their boat, a ten-foot by sixty-foot deck ferry, was said to be the first and probably the only deck ferry ever operated over the Kaw.90 Louis Henry Ogee, in partnership with his nephew Joseph Ogee, also was running a ferry at Unioentown in 1853. One account says the two Ogee ferries and the Smith, or “middle ferry,” operated within a quarter mile of each other, while
another put the distance at between three and four miles. Accounts agree, however, that “there was a large amount of travel over these ferries. On some days there were no less than seventy-five wagons ferried across the river on each boat, making two hundred and twenty-five wagons, with teams, per day. This was the California and Oregon emigration.”

Louis Henry Ogee not only ran a ferry at Uniontown, but also established a grist mill at Silver Lake and a steam sawmill at nearby Indianola. When Ogee was a boy, he and his brothers had removed with their mother, the French-Potawatomi métis Madeline LaSallier Ogee, to the Potawatomi reservation at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Louis Henry was perhaps nineteen years old when he relocated to the Kansas Indian Country with the Bluffs Indians. His brother John Lafayette Ogee, four years older, had married on the Iowa reserve and brought his wife with him to Kansas. She was Sarah Morrow, a Mormon woman of Welch-Irish descent. That a Potawatomi métis met and married a Mormon woman illustrates yet another “meetings of peoples” on the Missouri River frontier.

How John Ogee met Sarah Morrow is not documented, but it likely stemmed from the location of the Potawatomis’ Iowa reservation. In the early 1830s, as discussed in Chapter One, Missourians at the Kawsmouth confluence threw members of the Mormon Church out of the region. The Saints started anew in Nauvoo, Illinois, only to face tragedy again when founder Joseph Smith was murdered in the Nauvoo jail in 1844. Mormons turned to Brigham Young as their new leader, and in the fall of 1845 began preparations to remove the following spring to the Salt River Valley of Utah. The route they took passed directly across the Potawatomi reservation in Iowa. Members of the church spent considerable time in various camps on the Potawatomi reserve, including at Kanesville (Council Bluffs), and established Winter Quarters at Florence, just across the Missouri River in what today is Omaha, Nebraska.
The Mormon Métis Anthony Navarre

When rumors surfaced that Brigham Young might be arrested before the planned spring exit from Nauvoo, members of the Mormon Church, in February 1846, began leaving Nauvoo and crossing the frozen Mississippi River into Iowa Territory. By that fall the last of them had crossed the river, numbering in all perhaps twelve thousand to fifteen thousand people. They divided into groups and moved slowly across Iowa, establishing a series of camps as stopping points, where they planted crops for those who followed. Somewhat permanent stations were established at the present town of Garden Grove, in Decatur County, Iowa, where hundreds of men “set to work, making log houses and fences, digging wells, and ploughing,” and at Mount Pisgah, in Union County, about 138 miles east of Council Bluffs, where “several thousand acres were enclosed for cultivation, and many houses were built.” From Mount Pisgah west to the Missouri River, the Mormons were traveling within the borders of the Potawatomi reservation established under the Chicago Treaties of 1833 and 1837.

In the spring of 1838, as discussed in Chapter Four, Potawatomis who had settled in the Platte Purchase lands were forced to removed to Iowa. About six or seven miles downstream from the center of present-day Council Bluffs, they established a village at a place called Trader’s Point, or Point aux Poules (Pull Point), at an American Fur Company post on the east side of the Missouri River. The Potawatomi had villages, as well, on the Nishnabotna River near present-day Lewis, Iowa, forty-three miles east of Council Bluffs, and often camped on the Nodaway River and in Coe’s Grove, between present-day Stennent and Elliott, Iowa, forty-seven miles southeast of Council Bluffs. These locations overlapped with the Mormon migration and temporary Mormon settlements. For instance, as William Alexander Linn writes, the Mormons, as they “traveled over a broken prairie country,” in western Iowa found that “the game had been
mostly killed off by the Pottawotomie Indians, whose trails and abandoned camps were encountered constantly…”

By mid-June of 1846, an advance party of some one thousand Mormons reached the Missouri River and established a settlement, which they called Miller’s Hollow, then Kanesville, above the mouth of the Platte River, on land owned by the Potawatomi under the Treaty of 1833. Kanesville, renamed Council Bluffs in 1853, served as a Mormon outpost to help those who followed. When Mormon migrant William Draper arrived, he reported “quite a settlement of half breeds and Indians,” adding that he bought “one of their farms with quite a comfortable house on it.” Other Mormons did the same, Draper writing that the cabins were purchased “from the Indians that were about to be driven form their homes by the government.” These Indians “about to be driven from their homes” were the Bluffs Potawatomi, who recently had signed the Treaty of 1846, which required their removal to the Kansas Indian Country. Edmunds states that the Bluffs Potawatomis also bartered or sold “large quantities of government issued annuity goods to the Saints at inflated prices,” let them “graze their livestock (for a price) on tribal pastures,” and sold their wood “for Mormon campfires.”

Encounters between Potawatomis and Mormons were frequent. On her way across Iowa in the summer of 1846, Mormon Leonora Cannon Taylor told in a diary entry for June 1846 how her group came to “a creek and a little Grove of Trees where we stopt tonight. One of the Pottawatomy Chiefes came to us on a lovely little poney black as Jet and dressed as fine as it could be so was the Chiefe. We gave him some biscute and Tobacco. He let the children ride on his pony & said he lived 4 Miles of[f].”

A few days farther on, while “campt on the bank of a Stream called by the Indians Otawee,” Taylor said “some brethren were campt there who said B.B.Y. had preached to the
Indians, on the Sun’d before. The[y] had a town five Miles north of where we campt.” A few days farther on, her group “came in sight of an Indian Village on a hill…I was delighted to see the Indians, Squase, & papoces, all dressed up so smart painted Feathers, beads, blankets, & every thing fantastical they could put on. There was a kickapoo present who talked a little English, a very good looking Man & dressed in a large Shawl. Nanny (Leonora’s hired girl) fell in love With him. His wigwam was 18 miles off…I walkd over & found a party of Indians busily playing cards[s]. A Chief[e] came up to me and shook hands very friendly. They call the River Visibotney [Nishnabotna] … we for’ded it was wide and rapid. The Indians followed us in great numbers to the side of a hill where we campt. The princes all road on Poneys decorated in every possibly way there were, Kikapoos, Pottawatamies, & Ottawas.106

“Several Chiefes,” Taylor continued, “came to our tent but they could understand very little that we said. There interpreter was at councl Blufs for which we were very sory. Mr. T. talked to several and answered Questions (which were very numerous) as well as possibley told our reasons for leaving our homes & wandering with our poor children in the Wilderness. The Squaws brought salt to trade a[nd] green mustard and beads. The[y] wanted ribons & whiskey. We gave them some thing to eat and mild for there papposes. There was one a month old, a fat little thing swathed to its bazket which I ornamented with yellow bows. The[y] all seemed much pleased we staid with them severale hours. We left them campt on a stream.”107

Leonora Taylor’s detailed account reveals much about the Bluffs Indians she encountered. Wearing “painted Feathers, beads, blankets, & every thing fantastical,” and swathing an infant “to its bazket” says that these were traditional Indians, although at least one she met “talked a little English,” indicating a former intermixture with whites. Taylor identified the man as Kickapoo, while others she met were Potawatomi and at least one an Ottawa, whom
she described as “a very pleasant looking Indian” who came to her camp one night in June. “He said he was by birth an Ottawa but had been adopted into the Pottowatamie tribe & had married a chiefs Daughter. He ate with us, got some tabaco and left well pleased.” Such a man could well have been a métis such as Madore Beaubien or Joseph Napoleon Bourassa, whose lineage included Ottawa.

Leonora Taylor also establishes that Mormons preached their religion to Indians they met in Iowa, and “answered Questions (which were very numerous).” It is not a far stretch to believe that the answers to those questions would have resonated with an Indian people who just then were on the verge of yet another removal brought on by the advance of the American empire. As Mormons like Leonora Taylor explained to the Indians “our reasons for leaving our homes & wandering with our poor children in the Wilderness,” the story would have sounded eerily familiar to the Potawatomi.

In a lecture to the Pennsylvania Historical Society in 1850, the American Thomas Kane, who had befriended the Mormons in Iowa, told of his time among them and of “the mutual sympathy” between them and the Indians, which grew out of a common identity as dispossessed peoples. The Potawatomis “were pleased with the Mormons,” Kane said. “They would have been pleased with any whites who would not cheat them, nor sell them whisky, nor whip them for their poor gipsy habits, nor bear themselves indecently toward their women, many of whom, among the Pottawatamies, especially those of nearly unmixxed French descent, are singularly comely, and some of them educated.” But a deeper reason for the Potawatomi’s friendship with the Mormons, Kane seemed to think, was a common admiration among all Indians for “those who sacrifice, without apparent motive, their worldly welfare to the triumph of an idea. They understand the meaning of what they call a great vow, and think it the duty of the right-
minded to lighten the votary’s penance under it. To this feeling they united the sympathy of fellow-sufferers for those who could talk to them of their own Illinois, and tell the story how from it they also had been ruthlessly expelled.”

The hospitaliy of the Potawatomis toward the Mormons, Kane said, “was sincere, almost delicate.” He spoke of Fanny LeClerc, “spoiled child” of Potawatomi interpreter Pied Riche, demanding that a Mormon girl “learn duets with her to the guitar,” and of the daughter of interpreter Joseph LaFramboise welcoming “all the nicest young Mormon Kitties and Lizzies, and Jennies and Susans, to a coffee feast at her father’s house,” which, Kane said, “was probably the best cabin in the river village.” The Potawatomis “made the Mormons at home, there and elsewhere. Upon all their lands they formally gave them leave to tarry just so long as should suit their own good pleasure.”

That Joseph LaFramboise’s house “was probably the best cabin in the river village,” where his young daughter invited friends for a coffee party, speaks to the acculturation of this métis family. The LaFramboise house apparently was located at or near Point Aux Poules, where a ferry over the Missouri was situated. “Here, without intermission,” Kane said of the Mormons, “their flat-bottomed scows plied, crowded with wagons, and cows, and sheep, and children, and furniture of the emigrants, who, in waiting their turn, made the woods around smoke with the crowding camp fires.” It seems plausible that LaFramboise’s daughter and her spoiled friend found playmates in the Mormon camps waiting to cross the river or camped more permanently nearby, as were the families under William Draper’s care.

Leonora Taylor’s account of her various encounters with Indians in Iowa sets her apart from many other pioneer woman, who wrote with feelings of disgust toward Indians. But Taylor seemed charmed, even delighted by their “fantastical” dress, and extended her friendship by
ornamenting the baby’s basket “with yellow bows.” One night she told of a party of seventy persons who dined at the home of Major Robert B. Mitchell, Council Bluffs Indian agent. There was “quite a dance,” she wrote. “There was a number of half breed Squaws danssed very well indeed.”

While the Mormons began their exodus from Winter Quarters in mid-April 1847, some would remain in southern Iowa and eastern Nebraska until 1853, where they “built at least 55 temporary and widely separated settlements, farmed as much as 15,000 acres of land, and established three ferries.”

Documenting when and where the French-Potawatomi métis Anthony Navarre converted to Mormonism would require an investigation that goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. Evidence does place him, however, as living in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1855 and 1856. Navarre probably converted in Iowa, although it is possible he did so in Kansas, where Mormon missionaries led a little-known mission to the Kansas Indian Country in late 1847 and, by 1849, had established a Mormon settlement and mission to their “Lamanites.” The settlement, known as Mormon Mills, Indian Mills, and finally Thompsonville, was situated on Delaware lands near present-day Valley Falls, Kansas, southwest of Fort Leavenworth. A mixture of about four hundred Oneidas, Mahican Housatonic of Massachusetts, and Christianized Munsees (or Stockbridge Indians) had settled there in 1839. The Oneida Lewis Denna, coming south from Iowa with a delegation of Mormons, was instrumental in the enterprise.

Anthony Navarre showed up on the Potawatomis’ Kansas River Reservation in the summer of 1857, where he was an irritation to Potawatomi agent William E. Murphy. That December of 1857, Murphy wrote to the commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, stating that he had been forced to have Navarre arrested and “confined in jail several days to prevent his preaching mormonism, and advising the Indians to go to Utah….to fight against the U.S.
To get his release from jail, Navarre had, according to Murphy, promised to go for a visit to Indiana, where his father was the prominent Pierre Frenchette Navarre, founder of the town of South Bend. However, instead of doing as promised, Murphy said, Anthony Navarre “took up residence entirely amongst the poor, unfortunate band of ‘Prairie Indians,’ to whom he has been a great injury, by instilling into their minds his foolish mormon doctrine, and prejudicing them still more against the intelligent and Christian portion of the Pottawatomies.”

Murphy again complained about Navarre in a letter dated August 25, 1859, to the superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, saying that Navarre was so disruptive that he should be removed from the reservation “or, at least letting him know that he must confine himself within his proper sphere.” Murphy said Navarre arrived on the reservation in the summer of 1857 and had “located near the village of Saint Mary’s Mission, and devoted his time to the argument of Religion and preaching Mormon sermons, the doctrine of which was offensive to some of the Indians…” Mormonism proved “very congenial” to some Bluffs Indians, Murphy said, and Navaree “made some of those poor creatures believe that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost, that he could foretell events, and that the Mormons would eventually whip the U.S. government and give them all their land back in the various states which they had been swindled out of. I have heard him say that the government was not disposed to comply with its treaty stipulations, and he will oppose any thing that is proposed in Council by the industrious and sensible portion of the tribe, no matter how just, or beneficial it may be, and unfortunately for the tribe, has a sufficient control over a portion of the Prairie Indians to make them do just what he tells them.”

This would have been especially distressing to Murphy because at the time he wrote government efforts were under way to urge the Potawatomi in Kansas to sectionalize their
reservation rather than hold the land in common. The unsympathetic Clifton writes that Anthony
Navarre opposed sectionalizing in public, but supported it in private “in his own interests and that
of his Métis kinsmen.” According to Murphy, Navarre was an obstructionist when it came to
sectionalizing. “You may rest assured of the fact,” Murphy wrote, “that the Pottawatomie
Indians would have united upon the subject of sectionizing, and made a treaty one year ago, if
this man Navarre had remained with the Mormons.”

The Métis Interpreter Joseph Napoleon Bourassa

The métis Joseph Napoleon Bourassa settled close to Uniontown, where gravestones in
the nearby Uniontown Cemetery serve as reminders that métis once lived nearby. Overland
c traveler Edward Alexander Tompkins met Joseph N. Bourassa when he passed through
Uniontown on May 27, 1850. Tompkins, a doctor, said he “had a long interview” with Bourassa,
whom he described as “an Educated Potawatomi…who informed me that he was writing a
Book containing the history, usages, superstitions and peculiarities of the Indians in general & of
his own tribe in particular. He appeared well qualified for this enterprise, being possessed of a
liberal education and also the varied customs of the North American Indians. He had already
300 pages of fool’s cap covered with his narrations…”

Joseph Napoleon Bourassa was, in fact, an educated man, although he apparently never
finished, or succeeded in publishing, his history of the Potawatomi. He did write “The Life of
Wah-bahn-se: The Warrior Chief of the Pottawatomi,” which appeared in the Kansas City
(Missouri) Enterprise of March 14 and 21, 1857. A notation with the article stated that it was an
extract from Bourassa’s forthcoming Book of Indian Customs, habits, etc., to be “issued by
Harpers early in the summer.” Although no evidence of publication has been found, that
Bourassa was thinking of writing about Potawatomi customs suggests his “in between” status.
While he embraced and prospered from changes affecting the Potawatomis in the nineteenth century, he still retained pride in their heritage.

Bourassa, described as a “lifelong Catholic and sometime Baptist,” was a boy of eleven when he entered Issae McCoy’s Carey Mission at Niles, Michigan. At age seventeen, Joseph was one of the eight boys McCoy took East in January 1826 and enrolled in Hamilton Baptist Literary and Theological Seminary at Hamilton, New York. “He has a fair complexion and boyish appearance,” McCoy wrote of Bourassa. “Ottawa is his main language but he speaks Potawatomi fluently, French and English well. He reads and writes, is good in arithmetic.” In a letter to McCoy dated June 4, 1827, Bourassa wrote: “You asked us to take our choice what we should do when we are finished with our studies. I have thought a great deal about starting a school. I have wished that I could get prepared in two years and have a desire to teach the poor Indians. Dear friend, I have something which [illegible] me, that I think I could do better than a white man. I should (like to teach the Indians) in their language, which I think would be a great help. And if I am capable to teach and if you will (allow me) I will take a school at the Carey station (or I will) take a school nearby …” In another letter, apparently written from Hamilton College, he wrote: “The other Indian brothers at Hamilton have chastised me for falling away from the church. I am not even counted their friend. I am indeed as a wandering sheep. I am sometimes sorry I came to this place, but I still want to teach the Indians. Bourassa’s statement that he wanted “to teach the poor Indians” suggests he felt other than one of them, yet at the same time seemed dejected that his “Indian brothers at Hamilton” had ostracized him. He felt “as a wandering sheep,” at once rueing the education that set him apart and at the same time desirous of returning to his Indian roots.
In a biographical sketch that appeared in a Kansas City newspaper, Bourassa stated that after attending Hamilton College he “moved to a Kentucky institute to study law, the expenses of his legal studies being defrayed by the government.” The sketch fails to name the “Kentucky institute,” an interesting omission because the “Kentucky institute” was the Choctaw Academy at White Sulphur Springs. That Bourassa did not name it suggests his political astuteness because, as noted in Chapter Three, the academy, until its closure in 1848, remained controversial among Indian people in the Kansas Indian Country.

At the Academy, Bourassa would have studied a curriculum of traditional subjects: surveying, astronomy, vocal music, and manual training, as well as been encouraged to participate in the schools’ debating society. While there, Bourassa occasionally wrote to U.S. Senator John Tipton of Indiana, former agent to the Potawatomi, telling him on August 3, 1832, that he had been hired as an assistant teacher at the Academy at a salary at $200 for the year, and that he recently had been to Cincinnati, where he purchased a “base-Viol” for $25 and had his eye on “a good watch.”

Joseph N. Bourassa’s good fortune as a favored métis continued the next year at the Treaty of Chicago, where he received $200 “in lieu of a reservation.” He removed to the Kansas Indian Country in 1837 with Chiefs Kee-wau-nay and Nas-waw-kay, in a group led by George Proffit. He first settled near the Kickapoos, in the vicinity of Fort Leavenworth, before moving to the Osage River Reservation in 1838. Bourassa would go on to serve as tribal interpreter for many years (for which he was being paid $400 a year in 1861) and as a member of the elite, Potawatomi Business Committee, a management group that handled diplomatic and trading agreements for the tribe.

The Métis Innkeeper, Jude Bourassa
Joseph Bourassa’s brother Jude Bourassa was an educated man, as well, having also attended McCoy’s Carey Mission, and the Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution in New York. Jude had tried to keep his land in Indiana but, when that failed, he went to Kansas in the removal of August 17, 1840. Jude settled with his family and brothers Joseph and Daniel Bourassa III at Sugar Creek. At some point, Jude had a falling out with the Jesuits and moved to Potawatomie Creek, where the Baptists Robert Simerwell and Johnston Lykins were situated. Later, while living on the Kansas River, métis like Jude Bourassa sometimes enrolled their children at the Baptist mission school, other times at the Catholic mission school.135

As did his brother Joseph, Jude Bourassa prospered on the Kansas River Reservation, where he operated the Potawatomi’s water-powered grist mill, built in late 1850 on a creek that entered the Kansas River from the south, near Uniontown.136 As miller, Jude Bourassa was on the government payroll (the miller’s salary in 1862 was $600 a year) and also owned a “rich farm.” A piano in his home indicated his acculturation to white society.137 Letters of Kansas territorial governor William H. Hutter speak of Jude’s comfortable house and fine furniture on Mill Creek, as does a correspondent for an Eastern newspaper. “His house is made available by travelers as a stopping place, and is the best we have seen in the Territory. It has been my good fortune to be ‘entertained’ by him on three different occasions,” the correspondent, Charles B. Lines, wrote.138 “His wife, a French Canadian, is evidently a good housekeeper. He has eight children, among them two young ladies, highly educated, decidedly pretty in appearance and prepossessing in their manner. The only piano we have seen in the Territory is at this place.” Jude apparently was paid by the government to put up certain travelers passing through the Potawatomi reserve. Charles Lines stated that “while Mr. Bourassa is very attentive to his guests and liberal in his charges, he will furnish no whiskey under any circumstances.” The Potawatomi
sawmill was noted on Whitman & Searl’s 1856 map of Kansas, calling the settlement “Bursaw’s Mill.”

Room and Board

Before Jude Bourassa died, reportedly of smallpox sometime between 1856 and 1859, his home was just one of a number of places opened to travelers by missionaries, métis, and emigrant Indians in the confluence region. In May 1850, overlander James Woods, for instance, wrote home to his wife, offering a day-by-day account of his travels across the Kansas Indian Country. He was about twelve five miles over the Missouri line when it started to snow. His party pressed on for twelve more miles anyway, and “camped at Jo. Black Fish’s. He is a Shawnee Indian, and quite talkative, say that he has been to California twice,” Woods wrote. After crossing the Wakarusa, Woods again stopped at an Indian’s home, this time to eat. “I and John Rutledge dined with an Indian at Wahkearuska,” he wrote of his activities on May 9. “They had milk, butter, potatoes, and corn bread, etc. Pretty good for an Indian and better for us. After dinner Rutledge observed that he had “come in more from a desire to see the ladies than to get dinner. They seemed to receive it as a compliment. We each had paid a quarter and departed. These Indians are highly civilized, indeed some are enlightened. They (this family) are genteel people. A handsome white woman is an inmate of this family. Who she is, where from, and what she is doing here! I learned nothing.”

The place of which Woods wrote possibly was the home of the Shawnee métis Paschal Fish, who, in the 1850s, transformed his two-story house, some ten miles east of present-day Lawrence, into an inn. The Bostonian Hannah Anderson Ropes and eight others, enroute to Lawrence in 1856, stopped there for dinner and the night. She had ridden from Kansas City in a carriage with a sailcloth top, the driver overseeing a two-mule team. Out on the prairie, the
country “frightfully wide” and the horizon “glowing,” the driver, after a good while, alerted his passengers to a house far off in the distance. It appeared, Ropes wrote, “like a respectable-sized farm,” where they were to “put up” for the night, the driver’s words making it clear that Fish’s place was well-known and often used by travelers. Based on what the driver told her, Ropes described Paschal Fish as “a very honest man, don’t drink a drop of whiskey, has a corn-field of a hundred acres, and thirty acres of oats; keeps a little store, and employs New England men to make the sales; turns his house into a sort of tavern, and employs a Yankee to cook for his company.” Ropes told how Paschal Fish, sitting with his hat on, welcomed them to “this new hotel.”

The Shawnee métis Bluejacket also kept what was described as a “public house” at the crossing of the Wakarusa River, where he also operated a ferry and ran a store. Historian Kristen Tegtmeier Oertel writes that Bluejacket, like Fish, “entertained numerous white guests and impressed them with their knowledge of English and their familiarity with white customs.” Oertel states that for many white settlers, their “first taste of life in Kansas was filtered through their overnight stays in Indian homes.” The free-stater Sylvester Clarke, for instance, told of staying near the Shawnee reservation in an “Indian Hut” owned by the proprietor John Ham. “Our supper and breakfast consisted of bread and molasses and some tea,” he wrote. “Our beds were previously spoken for by a prospecting company of bed bugs and mosquitoes…In one department there were ten persons including Ham and his Squaw with several Papooses – thus we passed the first night amid the charming scenery of the Kansa Valley.”

Julia Louisa Lovejoy also depended on Indian and métis hospitality. In April 1855, she crossed eastern Kansas on the way to meet her husband, Charles, who was a member of the town
company that laid out Manhattan, Kansas. Charles H. Lovejoy was an abolitionist and Methodist minister from Croydon, New Hampshire. Traveling with her two daughters, Edith and Juliette, Julia took passage on a boat sailing up the Kansas River to Fort Riley, only to have it get stuck on a sandbar four miles out. The three disembarked and went to stay in a one-room cabin “with a half-breed Indian woman, French Catholic whose husband” Lovejoy explained, “lives near the spot, where the boat grounded.” The following night they found shelter with a family named Johnson, “a few miles beyond Westport, Missouri.” The Johnsons were slave-holders, she said, but she and the girls were “cordially received, and freely and kindly entertained.” The next night, the house of a métis again provided shelter. “We stopped at a half-breed Indian house,” Lovejoy wrote, noting that the log cabin contained only two beds. “In one, slept the Indian, and his squaw; in the other, in every conceivable position, were stowed I think, five squaws, and on the floor, stretched two men, travellers.” That two men travellers, as well as Lovejoys’ driver, had stopped there suggests that this métis house served as a make-shift inn. The following night, an Indian’s cabin again provided shelter. “We reached the cabin of a Shawnee Indian,” Lovejoy wrote. “He permitted me, by charging a quarter of a dollar, to spread a mattrass, of my own, on the floor for Edith [who was ill], but would not permit Juliette, to lodge in the cabin, without a heavy price.”

Overlanders and early settlers like Julia Lovejoy seemed to find lodging or food where they could, often looking to Indian people. When New Englander Thomas Wells went to Kansas in 1855, he told of stopping in the Shawnee country “and there we hired for the night an old log cabin of the Indians, made a good fire in the old fireplace, made some coffee, which we drank with our crackers and gingerbread, and then we all seven in number, spread down our blankets etc., pulled off our boots and overcoats, and, tried to go to sleep.”
Henry Baxter wrote of seeing deserted Indian huts in the Shawnee Country and stated the reason as cholera. Churchill’s party stopped at a cabin anyway, where “we filled our water casks and had a bath” in a nearby spring.154 When camping on the banks of the Red Vermillion, Alexander Nixon reported seeing near his camp “several good log houses” built by the Potawatomis “but abandoned last winter through fear of the Pawnees.” In one, he found a California emigrant sleeping.155 Another overlander wrote of spending three days at or near St. Mary’s Mission “‘refreshing ourselves with the last glimpses of civilized life in the mission and agent’s families’ and visits among the Indians.’”156

During his 1851 trip over the California-Oregon Trail, Paul Wilhelm, Duke of Wuerttemberg, also wrote of stopping at St. Mary’s Mission, where he met the resident priests and described the mission as “the last settlement” on his way to Fort Kearney in present Nebraska.157 The Italian Count Leonetto Cipriani and his large entourage, traveling overland to California in the summer of 1853, also stopped at St. Mary’s Mission, where he “attended a special Mass.”158 Occasional visits from government officials and military personnel also occurred. In the summer of 1852, while measuring distances for a military road west from Fort Leavenworth, Lt. Israel C. Woodruff, an Army topographical engineer, stayed for a time at the mission, as did Indian agent Thomas Fitzpatrick and four companions enroute from Fort Laramie to “the States.” One companion, identified only as “H,” stated that he stayed at St. Mary’s Mission for “several days” and that he and Fitzpatrick were “kindly permitted… to examine the female school and establishment.”159 On his final expedition to the West, John C. Fremont spent a night at the mission and obtained provisions there, which he “threw into the wagon” the next morning as he set off.160
In addition to lodging, overlanders looked to Indian people for food and other necessities. On May 5, 1850, prior to reaching the ferry crossing at Uniontown, overlander William Abraham Gordon, a Missouri physician, “encamped on Mission Creek,” where, he said, fellow traveler G.W. Rust “bought a gallon of sweet milk from an Indian woman, which we relished finely, notwithstanding it was bought of a squaw.” Taking a route farther north in the Kansas Indian Country, William J. Cook’s party crossed the Nemaha River and continued on “until it got so dark we could not keep the road as large and plain as it was.” They chanced upon “some Frence … who give us our supper.” His party camped there for the night. Apparently with no robes to offer, the French occupants, Cook wrote, “gave us an armful of dry grass they had pulled, which we thankfully received.”

When Lamech Chambers passed the Kickapoo Reserve, he was so impressed with the “farm stock of all kinds” that he spoke of the Kickapoo as “civilized.” He stopped at a farmhouse, whether of an Indian he did not say, and “bought eggs, butter, the corn of a woman – 15c for eggs and butter.” Joseph Waring Berrien noted the importance of Kickapoo agriculture to overlanders because they were “in an area where hay, corn, and oats were hard to come by” because of the large emigrant traffic. The Indians apparently had produced a large crop because they were selling surplus corn at one dollar for a bushel and a half.

G.T. Barron hadn’t traveled more than fifty miles from his home in Carroll County, Missouri, when he ran into an Indian entrepreneur at Parkville, Missouri. “We are crossing the river among the Indians,” he wrote on May 1, 1850. “We have had to give on an average 20 cts per bu. for corn.” He addressed the letter to his wife, Ruth, promising to write again “at the Indian mission,” though which one he did not say. The soldier Percival Lowe told of
Potawaomi families in northeastern Kansas who freely gave pumpkins, cabbage, potatoes, and fresh pork to hungry soldiers without any compensation.”

Peter Branstetter bought from an Indian agent in April 1850. “I crossed the Missouri river and went thirty miles over the prairie to an Indian village, where the Indian agent lived, and bought five barrels of corn at 90 cents a bushel.” Two weeks later, after paying twenty-five cents to cross the Wolf River on a bridge, Branstetter camped at the Indian agency. “Paid $1.00 a bushel for corn, bought twelve barrels, hauled it,” he wrote. “Our expenses for corn at the agency were $15.25.” While waiting for the teams in his party to cross the Blue River near Independence, Missouri, Pardon Dexter Tiffany “bought a horse of a half breed Indian for $65,” promising to pay the man “as soon as we had passed the wet ground as I had no money with me.” Before Tiffany “could get out of the bottom,” however, someone else stepped up with money in hand, paid for the horse, and took him away.

As Tate notes, “travelers routinely mentioned purchasing at least one pair of moccasins at some juncture in the trip.” Charles G. Hinman, on his way from Peoria, Illinois, to the gold fields in April 1849, had just left the Catholic mission at St. Mary’s when he reported “Indians scattered along the Road to Sell us mockasen.” Jumping off from St. Joseph, a New Yorker identifying himself only as “H” wrote of paying twenty-five cents to cross a bridge owned by the Sac and Fox and then camping about a mile farther on. “A number of Indians,” he wrote, “have visited our camp with ponies, moccasins, and other articles for sale.” When Edwin Bryant crossed the Wakurusa in 1846, he noted a handsome Potawatomi man who was selling moccasins. He sold all his moccasins, but “rejected repeated entreaties to sell his spirited pony, which was the object of much attention from members of Bryant’s party.” David Wooster was struck by the honesty of an Iowa Indian entrepreneur. “The friendly Iowa man, indicating that
he wanted to sell a pair of moccasins, removed a fifty-cent piece and drew his finger across its diameter. Wooster,” Tate writes, “initially interpreted this to mean the man would take twenty-five cents for the item, but he became confused by words spoken in the tribal language, one of which sounded like ‘charity.’ Rather than insult the man, Wooster offered payment above the value of the moccasins, but the owner refused to accept the higher amount. It soon became evident that the honest businessman was merely indicating by the gesture that if the moccasins were too long, he would make them shorter by use of a drawstring.”

Before crossing the Kansas River, overlander James M. Woods stepped into a store at Uniontown. “I bought 1 pr. Boots at $2.75 – one pr. Shoes at 1.50 – both better than I could have got at home for the same money,” he wrote to his wife in southeastern Missouri. By 1852, Uniontown was the largest settlement in present-day Kansas. William Abraham Gordon, on his way to the California gold fields in 1850, bought a buffalo robe at Uniontown. “The upper crossing seemed to be a place of considerable trade,” he wrote. “There were four drygoods stores, hotel, one or two blacksmith shops. I bought myself a buffalo robe here, paid $4.50.” When William Cramp left Woodburn, Illinois, “bound for the land of gold,” he reached “the Catholic Mission” on May 13, 1852, where he reported finding “one store.”

Stillman Churchill bought wood from the Potawatomis. He crossed the Kansas River May 27, 1849, on a ferry boat “made of rough hewed planks” and “navigated by Indians of the Potawatomie tribe,” whom he found “intelligent & good looking.” Soon after passing the Catholic mission he reported seeing “several indian huts” where “we bought 2 trees of oak for which we paid 2 dollars. They know the value of mony. We made some new axes & hounds [a bar to strengthen the running gears] out of this timber.” Afterward, a Mr. Hooker and several others “took 2 teams & left this morning for the upper ferry to purchase provisions as we began
to entertain fears we were short owing to the roads & time spent in crossing the streams.” The company returned “with sacks of flour & some bacon grass wood & water plenty.”

Potawatomi métis even took out advertisements in border newspapers, where they offered “a good supply of articles and provisions at reasonable rates.” An advertisement in the (St. Louis) Missouri Republican indicated that Indians were selling items abandoned along the trail, as well as items purchased from overlanders at what surely were greatly reduced prices. For sale, the ad stated, was “a considerable quantity of household goods recently purchased from travelers enroute to the Pacific.”

**Collusions In Time Of Trouble**

While some emigrant Indians took advantage of the overland traffic, others were simply helpful or performed acts of kindness, which, in the case of one Pennsylvania man, proved to be life-saving. The man, Franklin L. Crane, and his son, Frank, traveled to Kansas Territory in the winter of 1855 to scout out investment possibilities. On March 19, 1855, a “day cold and snowy,” they set out into the territory from Kansas City. “When we got into the open Prairie the cold seemed to increase & steady strong wind with the snow made it exceedingly uncomfortable,” Crane wrote. “Frank once cried thinking his feet were frozen, but worst of all was the prospect of being obliged to camp out at night for we had taken the wrong road and were in a measure lost.” Later learning that this had been the “coldest day of the season,” Crane and his son were rescued “through the assistance of an Indian,” who led them after sundown to “a log house to lodge in.” Owned by an Indian named Battes, Crane left his son there to recover, while he went off the next day to attend to his business, returning later to pick up Frank.

Alexander Joy Cartwright also wrote of getting lost. “Ned Townsend & self started – in advance of the teams – across country for [the Kansas River ferry], by a route said to be shorter
than that taken by the train,” he wrote in April 1849. Cartwright, who had left from Newark, New Jersey, was part of a company of 110 men and thirty-two wagons heading for the California gold fields.183 “By the advice of Colonel Russell I shouldered a double barrelled gun, after four hours walk over the most beautiful country, diversified by every variety of scenery, in many places so quiet and exquisitely homely that we asked ourselves many times where were the farm houses, the herds, & the waving fields of grain, that should be here. A quiet solitude of the most profound reigned supreme. No signs of life but the countless flocks of Plover & an infinite variety of small birds.”184 After walking many miles, he said, “we came to the conclusion that we had missed the trail, but kept on until at last met two Indians, who directed us to the Baptist Mission, which we reached after two miles further travel. Here we found two excellent farms under good cultivation, and on introducing ourselves to Mr. Dilly, the Missionary, who informed that we were in the Pottowattomie country, and a long distance from the Kansas ferry, we accepted his hospitable invitation to dine, and with appetites sharpened by a twenty mile walk done ample justice to his solid fare.”185

As this story and journal entries from other travelers illustrate, Indian missions in the Kansas country proved to be many things: a haven when lost, a place to mail a letter, buy a bushel of corn, or repair a wagon wheel. Edmunds states that Potawatomis at St. Marys Mission even “performed band concerts for weary travelers…. “186 Thus, the emigrant Indians not only were in the forefront of the westering movement, but were a source of sustenance, information, and necessities for westering Americans.

Indians also displayed a competitive camaraderie with overlanders. For instance, after John Furmes Cobbey and his traveling companions left from St. Joseph, they camped one mile beyond a mission to the Iowas. “Several of the natives visited us here,” he wrote.187 “They
seem somewhat degraded: but generous and friendly the men fond [of] sporting and redaly engage in shooting mark; he seems to hold himself an equal to the white man. But the poor squaw seemed to regard her/self as an inferior grade of being and viewed us lords superior to their rightful Soveraign.” Tate writes that such marksmanship demonstrations were common on the first leg of the overland journey, where Indians of different ages and tribes “routinely utilized bows and arrows to shoot at tiny marks for nickel and dime prizes,” which audiences willingly paid to the winners. Overlander Benjamin Franklin Owen, for instance, told of seeing a Potawatomi man near the Red Vermillion shoot an arrow about sixty yards “and then shot one after another til he had all 6 in a direct line about 6 feet apart all inclining the same way.”

Farther north on the Platte, Jane Gould Tortillott told how her party stopped for noon in June 1862. “The Indians came around; so many that we hardly had a chance to get our dinners. They were very anxious to ‘swap’ moccasins and lariats for money, powder and whiskey, but we had none to trade. Charley traded a little iron teakettle for a lariat. Two of them shot at a mark with Albert’s gun. He beat them.”

Alexander Nixon had a poignant encounter at the Papin Ferry. “This day has been spent in getting our wagons and animals ferried over the River,” he wrote on May 2, 1848. “At this place there is quite a Settlement of Canadian French and half breed Kaw Indians,” he reported, writing that about a half dozen houses stood near the ferry crossing, “one built of Bark occupied by a family of Indians.” Nixon told how the children “came out to see us and among them I noticed quite an interesting little boy about 10 or 12 years of age. He could understand some English. I asked him if he was a Kaw Indian – he said no. I then asked him if he was a Shawnee – again answered no. I then asked him to which tribe he belonged but he appeared not to understand me. I then asked him if he was not a Pawnee – he shook his head sorrowfully –
saying Pawnees killed my father. Pawnees kill Pottowatomies. He was a Potouatomie.” Nixon
camped “about three miles above the ferry” and “saw quite a number of Indians galoping their
horses over the prairie this evening but none of them came into Camp.”

Collusion in the Civil War

The emigrant Indians were no less a part of the Civil War narrative as it unfolded in
Kansas. Just four months into the war, Potawatomi agent W.W. Ross was worried enough about
“the wild and hostile Indians of the Plains” siding with the Confederacy that he wrote to the
Superintendent of Indian Affairs H.B. Branch at St. Joseph, Missouri, asking where he could get
“arms and ammunition to arm his Indians if it shall become necessary to defend themselves.”
In a report to the commissioner of Indian Affairs, Branch noted that “the question of the
organization of the Indians into military bands for the defense of Kansas and Nebraska has been
agitated considerably.” Noting the paradox of the question, he urged against the idea, stating
that the government’s goal for Indians was to bury the hatchet and “confine themselves to
peaceful avocations.” He added that Indians who still followed the chase could not engage in war
and pursue the hunt at the same time.

Despite Branch’s protest, and while numbers are hard to come by, it is certain that at least
some members of the emigrant Potawatomi and other tribes in Kansas participated in the war as
soldiers. Kansas fielded 18,069 white troops during the war and received credit for 2,080
“colored” soldiers who served with the Union Army. While another 3,530 Kansas troops were
credited to the Indian Nations, many of these Indians were from the Five Civilized Tribes,
hundreds of whom took refuge in southern Kansas rather than join the Confederacy. The United
States organized three Kansas Indian regiments to include these refugees and any other Indians
in Kansas who wanted to enlist. Officers were white Kansas soldiers. Documentation proves
difficult, as the adjutant general’s January 1865 report to the Kansas Senate attests. The number of Indian troops, he explained, embraced “a number of Indians who were regularly recruited into white regiments,” as well as “our home Indians, such as the Delawares, Shawnees, Pottawatomies, etc., many of them having been made citizens of the United States by act of Congress. It is impossible to separate these home Indians, or distinguish them from other members of the regiments, as they are reported here the same as other volunteers.”

It is possible, however, by examining names and places of residence in records of the adjutant general to document a few names of emigrant Indians. Samuel and William Ketchum of the “Delaware Nation,” for instance, enlisted in Co. M of the Sixth Regiment, Kansas Cavalry-Volunteers, at Fort Leavenworth in May 1863 and were mustered in the same day, July 23, 1863. A number of men enlisted in Co. L of the Sixth Regiment, Kansas Cavalry-Volunteers, that same spring of 1863 at St. Mary’s Mission. Among them were Pvt. Louis Shop-ka-kee and Pvt. Peter Sho-pin-tee, both of whom enlisted on April 26 and were mustered in on June 18. Their regiment operated in the Cherokee Nation before moving to Fort Smith, Arkansas, in mid-November 1863, where Shop-ka-kee died of disease in the regimental hospital that November 19.

The Potawatomi Was-an-qua, listed as twenty-two years old and married, was mustered into service on January 4, 1864, the same day he enlisted with Co. K of the Eleventh Kansas Regiment. In the months prior to his enlistment, Was-an-qua’s company had been escorting Santa Fe trains to the Cow Creek Crossing of the trail in central Kansas. But in the weeks after Was-an-qua’s enlistment, the company moved to Oxford, in southern Kansas, near the border with the Cherokee country. There they would remain on duty, “patrolling up and down the line, the duties being very heavy,” until October 12, 1864, when they were ordered “to pack up at
once,” and proceed to the Blue River,200 where Union troops were collecting prior to the Battle of Westport, which took place two weeks later. Was-an-qua, however, did not make the quick march; he died from disease at Oxford on May 3.201

Two other privates who listed their residence as the “Pottawattomie Nation,” also were members of Co. K of the 11th Kansas Volunteers. John No-wehs-be, age thirty, named his place of nativity as Berrien County, Michigan, the place from which so many Potawatomi had emigrated beyond the Mississippi. No-wehs-be mustered in at Kansas City, Missouri, on August 20, 1863, one day after Pvt. David Green, who also stated his residence as the “Pottawattomie Nation.”202 The métis LaFromboises were Union men. Mitchell LaFromboise, twenty-eight years old, born in Chicago and now a resident of Shawnee County, mustered in to Co. G. of Fourteenth Kansas Regiment at Fort Scott on September 8, 1863, as did Francis LaFromboise and a number of other Potawatomis.203

Francis Chevalier, age twenty; Meu-gee-chee, age eighteen; Isaac McCoy, age twenty-three; John Moose, age twenty-one; and Neb-ne-qua, age thirty-eight; all single men, enlisted together on August 1, 1863. Fifteen years later Neb-na-qua and Isaac McCoy (Indians sometimes took the names of white men), identified as “citizen Pottawatomie Indians,” were represented in a letter to the Second Auditor of the Treasury, asking whether any bounties were due them for their service.204 A number of Indians also appear as members of Co. L of Fifteenth Regiment, Kansas Volunteers, who mustered in at Fort Leavenworth in October 1863. Half Day, age eighteen; James Davis, age thirty-three; John Elyessa, age twenty-two; and Tomy Pascawa, age eighteen, all single and residents of “Wabansa” (Wabaunsee), stated their nativity as “Potawatomi Reserve, Kan.” So did Tomy Pascawa, age eighteen, but his residence was listed as St. Mary’s Mission.205
The métis Bertrand and Bourassa families also had members in the military. Richard Bertrand, a grandson of Joseph Bertrand Sr., was a member of the Ohio National Guard who served “in front of Petersburg [Virginia] doing hard duty for nearly five months.”206 During the war years, when Potawatomi lands in Kansas were being sectionalized, Richard Bertrand, being absent from the reservation, was given no land. With the help of agent Luther R. Palmer,207 whom documents reveal to be a good friend of the Bertrand family at St. Mary’s Mission, Richard Bertrand wrote to Secretary of the Interior James Harlan requesting that he be awarded eighty acres in the Kansas River Valley, but was told the “allotment could not be reopened.” In another letter addressed to Sen. James Rodd Doolittle, chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Bertrand appealed to Doolittle to intercede for him. Writing from St. Mary’s Mission on October 27, 1865, Bertrand explained his problem and argued that if his case were “laid open” by itself and its “merits” explained that Harlan “would decide in my favor.” Bertrand sounded intelligent and confident, concluding his letter: “I can make a strong case.” Perhaps it was Bertrand, who did win his case, who inspired others to request that their cases be re-examined, the ferryman Sydney Smith and David Easton, a non-Indian married to Richard Bertrand’s sister Lucy, among them.208

Richard’s mother, Adelaide Bertrand, also interceded on her son’s behalf, explaining his absence from the reservation in a letter written from St. Mary’s Mission and addressed to Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole.209 Adelaide explained that she, her three children, and her late husband, Lawrence, “being part Indian,” had emigrated to the Kansas Indian Country with the Potawatomi from Bertrand, Michigan, in 1842. After her husband’s death she and her children, she said, “were left very poor,” causing Richard to move first to California and then to Ohio to find work. As historian Laurence M. Hauptman explains, poverty
was one of the reasons that an Indian might enlist in the army, which may well have explained
Richard’s presence in the Ohio National Guard.\textsuperscript{210}

In addition to these Indian and métis volunteers, Kansas also fielded three regiments of
“Indian Home Guards.” Because regimental records name only officers, it is difficult, if not
impossible, to know whether emigrant Indians served. The only name recorded in the Home
Guards as a recognizable Potawatomi is that of Luther Rice, who had attended Hampton Institute
in Virginia and was an assistant to the Simerwells at Carey Mission. Rice, who listed his
residence as Shawnee County, Kansas, was discharged as a Second Lieutenant in the Second
Regiment Indian Home Guard on August 30, 1863.\textsuperscript{211}

\textbf{Chapter Summary}

By 1848, the Prairie Band and Mission Band Potawatomi had relocated from reservations
in Iowa and southeastern Kansas to a new, thirty-mile-square reserve in the heart of the Kansas
River Valley, just west of present-day Topeka. The location of their reservation, this chapter
argues, placed them in the midst of momentous historical forces taking place as the American
nation moved west in the 1840s and 1850s. Central among these forces was the enormous traffic
on the overland trails to the Pacific, the debate over the expansion of slavery, and the opening of
the Kansas Indian Country to non-Indian settlement in 1854. The emigrant Potawatomi and
métis, this chapter argues, did not sit idly by, but took advantage of their location, making money
by hawking goods along the overland trail and establishing toll bridges, ferries, and crude inns.
When the Indian Country transitioned to a United States territory, métis and many full-blood
Potawatomi, no less than the Anglo settlers who flooded into Kansas after 1854, recognized the
value of the land. The métis and many full-blooms choose to break up the reservation they held
in common and, instead, become individual land owners and United States citizens. A few
engaged in the rampant land speculation taking place in Kansas and became town builders and railroad promoters. Others established mills, and at least one saw opportunity by opening a saloon and billiard room in Topeka. The Potawatomi métis took up government jobs as teachers, interpreters, and Union soldiers who served during the Civil War. They were not isolated characters, but participants in the greater story of American history. Far from popular representations of Indians in the West, this chapter demonstrates how the emigrant Potawatomi and métis were seldom guilty of ravages on Americans. Often, just the opposite was true as overlanders killed Indian game and cut Indian timber, while newly arrived settlers squatted on Indian land or depended on Indian kindnesses and services.

1 The Council Bluffs Potawatomi signed the relocation treaty on June 5, 1846, and the Marais des Cygnes Potawatomi on June 17, 1846. Kappler, “Treaty with the Potawatomi Nation, 1846,” Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:557-60. The land to which the Potawatomi moved was ceded by the Kansa, who moved to a new reservation on the Neosho River under a treaty signed January 14, 1846. The new Potawatomi reservation includes parts of what today are Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Pottawatomie, and Jackson counties. For the new land, the Potawatomi paid $87,000, deductible from $850,000, the purchase price of all their former lands in Iowa and Kansas. After deducting money for the first year’s expenses and the first annuity payment to be held in on the new reservation, the balance of the $850,000 remained in trust with the United States at five percent interest.


3 Mattes, The Great Platte River Road, 8. Overlanders who “jumped off” from St. Joseph or Leavenworth followed separate roads west until they reached present Horton, Kansas, where the two roads came together and then joined the Independence Road at Marysville, Kansas. Overlanders leaving from St. Joseph and Leavenworth crossed the reservation of the emigrant Iowa, Sac, and Fox, in the far northeastern corner of Kansas. A fourth route started at Old Fort Kearney on the Missouri River at present Nebraska City, Nebraska; the fifth began in the vicinity of present-day Omaha. The newer Fort Kearny, in central Nebraska, was established in 1848.


5 Schlissel, Women’s Diaries of the Westward Journey, 10-12, 24. Schlissel’s book does include, on Page 26, a photograph of an emigrant train arriving at Manhattan, Kansas Territory, in 1860.

6 See George A. Root, “Ferries in Kansas, Part II, Kansas River,” Kansas History Quarterly, 2:3 (August 1933), 251-293, and “Kansas River, Continued,” 2:4 (November 1933), 343-76; J.C. Fremont, Report of the exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44, 28th Cong. 2nd Sess., H.Doc. 166 (Washington, D.C., 1845), 9-12; and Harry E. Hanson, comp., A
Historic Outline of Grinter Place From 1825 to 1878 (self-published, 1965?), 28, 43. Unruh, The Plains Across, 252, says the Papin ferry was destroyed by the great flood of 1844 and may not have been re-established until 1847. Smith's was a rope ferry. A “Potawatomi National Ferry” also was established one or two miles upriver from Uniontown in July 1850. It was intended for the “use & benefit of the Potawatomi Indians on the Kansas River …at or near” the residence of Lucius R. Darling, a white man who had married into the tribe and who was hired as ferryman at pay of $650 a year. See Louise Barry, comp., “Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 32:1 (Spring 1966), 87. Sydney W. Smith was a native of Orange County, Vermont.

7 The structure still stands on the grounds of the Kansas State Historical Society.

8 In a letter dated January 1, 1852, Catholic Bishop John Baptist Miége wrote of the location of Catholic settlements. “The Potowatomi tribe comprises 3500 Indians dispersed in small villages over thirty square miles of land,” he wrote. “We count among them 1500 converted Indians distributed between three villages, the first and largest…is called St. Mary’s. Here are found the schools, the farm, and the big folk of the countryside, namely the doctor, the horse-shoer, a few traders and a certain number of mixed-blood families who know a little of reading and writing. The Indian families who surround us have each their log house…their little herd of livestock and a field sufficient for their support … these [number] 600 or 700 simple and truly pious savages.

9 In the two other villages which are located only three miles from one another and twenty miles from St. Mary’s, there is also a good number of zealous and fervent Christians…

At Soldier River[sic], twenty-five miles from St. Mary’s on the confines of the Delaware [land], we have another village, which can also be called Catholic. It is composed of half-breeds, nearly all of them Canadians, rangers of the mountains and plains, who have ended by marrying one or more Indian women. With the exception of one or two families who lead a good life, the rest are a perfect canaille in the matter of immorality, drunkenness, bad faith, stupid ignorance, indifference to all instruction … [etc.]” See Louise Barry, The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854 (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972),1060, who states that the extinct town of Indianola – site of today’s Goodyear Plant in North Topeka, developed from this community.


10 See Emma Cones Richerter, A History of Silver Lake, Kansas (Topeka: Topeka Printing Co., 1910), 7, 12; F.W. Giles, Thirty Years in Topeka: A Historical Sketch (Topeka: Kan. G.W. Crane & Co., 1886), 16-17; Robert W. Baughman, Kansas Post Offices, May 29, 1828-August 3, 1961 (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, [1977]); Barbara Brackman, “Kansas Troubles,” Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commision (www.kshs.org) (August 20, 2010); and Isely and Richards, The Kansas Story, 84-85. A post office was established at Indianola on December 21, 1855, and discontinued December 29, 1869. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas (www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/shawnee/) (November 26, 2010) states: “After the treaty of 1846, by which the Pottawatomies were granted the eastern portion of the old Kansas reservation, many white men came to this locality and, intermarrying with the tribe, became actual settlers on the lands, or remained as traders or other government employees among the Indians. The California and Oregon, and the military road from Fort Leavenworth, joined a little east of this point, and passed through this section as the great highway north of the Kansas River; making it particularly desirable for location.”


12 Root, “Ferries in Kansas, Kansas River, Concluded,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 3:1 (February 1934). It apparently was not unusual for overlanders to pay a visit to the mission. In May 1850, for example, overlander Madison B. Moorman wrote of spending “an hour or two” at the Potawatomi Baptist Mission before moving on to the Kansas River ferry, “half a mile” distant. He reported fifty-four pupils “most of them ‘half-breeds’” in attendance at the Baptists’ manual labor school.
13 See *Topeka* (Kansas) *Tribune*, April 28, 1859, cited in William W. Cone, *Historical Sketch of Shawnee County, Kansas, including an Account of the Important Events in the Early Settlement of Each Township* (Topeka: Kansas Farmer Printing House, 1877), 10; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 242. Cone writes that the crossing of the Smith ferry was on the south half of Section 30, Township 11, Range 15 East, on the south bank of the river. Smith was born in 1812 in Orange County, Vermont, and removed to Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1838, where he remained until moving to Kansas in 1848. Lest anyone had forgotten the Smith ferry’s long and apparently excellent reputation, Smith noted in his newspaper advertisement that the resumed ferry was the same as “the old stand.” The Grinter Ferry also operated on the Kansas River, but it was far downstream, on the Delaware reservation, some dozen miles from the Missouri state line.


15 See National Park Service, *Overland Migrations*, 13, 16; and Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 23. The National Park Service study states that as many as forty-five thousand people went overland in 1849. Murphy, "Potawatomi Indians of the West," 271, says that from 1841 to 1866 some 350,000 people set out across the plains for the Pacific Coast.

16 Johnston Lykins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 15, 1850.

17 John H. Putnam, “A Trip to the End of the Union Pacific in 1868,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 13:3 (August 1944), 196-98. That Johnston Lykins recognized the strategic location of the Potawatomi reservation portended his personal future. In short years to come, he would leave missionary work and become a banker, railroad promoter, and early mayor of Kansas City, Missouri.

18 To understand how domesticated animals fit into European ideas of civilization, as well as why Alquonquians did not domesticate them originally, see Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

19 Quoted in Caldwell, *Annals of Shawnee Methodist Mission*, 62. Cummins also said in his report for September 26, 1848, “the Indian hunter had about disappeared from the border tribes.” A traveler passing through their country might fancy himself in a white settlement were it not for ‘the swarthy lineaments and strange language of the inhabitants.”

20 Ibid.


24 Charles Hassenplug, “Diary of His Trip to California,” entry for April 21, 1850.

25 “Cyrus Currier’s Journal to California by the Northern Overland Route from Newark State of New Jersey,” entry for April 27, 1849, Wyoming State Archives Collection H-77.

26 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Alexander Gardner, “Ferry across the Kaw at Lecompton Kansas, 338 miles west of St. Louis, Mo.,” 1867.

31 Ibid, entry for May 23, 1849.


33 Ibid, 139-40. Under the 1829 Prairie du Chien Treaty, which recognized Caldwell as a chief, he was awarded two-and-a-half sections of land on the Chicago River. He was not the only métis to be so recognized. While the Potawatomi gave up two large areas of land in northern Illinois and southwestern Wisconsin under the 1829 treaty, thirteen other individual tracts were reserved in the ceded territory for, as the treaty language put it: “the following persons, (being descendants from Indians).…” Among them were Claude LaFromboise, who received one section of land on the Riviere aux Pleins; François Bourbonné, Jr., one section “at the Missionary establishment,” on the Fox River of the Illinois; and “Madeline, a Potawatamie woman, wife of Joseph Ogee,” one section at Paw-paw Grove, Illinois, which adjoined the tract given to Pierre Leclerc. Archange Ouilmette, “a Potawatamie woman,” and wife of Antoine Ouilmette, received two sections “for herself and her children,” on Lake Michigan. Antoine Ouilmette also received a section of land, as did François Leclerc. See Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:297-300.

34 See Richerter, A History of Silver Lake, Kansas, 4, 9-13; and Barry, “Kansas Before 1854,” (Spring 1966), 111.

35 Ibid.

36 See ibid, and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 231-234.

37 See Richerter, A History of Silver Lake, Kansas, 11; and Andreas and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (November 26, 2010). The spring annuity payment of the combined Potawatomi bands on May 18, 1848, listed 3,235 Indians on the Kansas River reservation. Cutler, a contemporary of Beaubien, writes that he “built his residence in 1870 at a cost of $6,000.” He owned a two-acre tract and an orchard with eighty bearing trees. Beaubien came “to Kansas in the fall of 1847, his first location being on Soldier Creek … having there located 100 acres of land and opened a small stock of goods. He then removed to the banks of Silver Lake and there can now be seen the double log house then built by Mr. Beaubien as a store and residence. He continued as an active and influential member of the tribe until they were naturalized and allotted the title to the land in severalty. Was married June 2, 1854, at Baptist Mission on the Reserve to Mrs. Theressa Harden, a widow and native of Chicago, Ill.”

38 Richerter, A History of Silver Lake, Kansas, 11.

39 Ibid, 5, 6. Madore Beaubien’s wife, Theresa Hardin Lafromboise Beaubien, received eighty acres joining the townsite on the west.

40 See Andreas and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (November 26, 2010); and Clifton, The Prairie People, 364-65.

41 Clifton, The Prairie People, 364-65.

43 See Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project; and “Deposition on Estate of William C. Darling, Shawnee, Oklahoma, May 28, 1917. Andreas and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas, lists Darling as a resident of Silver Lake in 1847.

44 Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 78, states that Darling’s first wife was Theresa Hardin. He would marry a third time, to Esther Smith, a non-Indian after Elizabeth Ouilmette died.


46 See Kansas State Historical Society, “Abram Burnett,” <www.kshs.org> (March 17, 2011); “Abram B. Burnett, Potawatomie Chief,” Kansas Historical Collections, 13 (1913-14), 371-73; and “Abraham Burnett’s Burial Place,” unidentified clipping, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project. Burnett died June 14, 1870, and was buried to the south and west of the mound. Mary Knoffloch Burnett moved with her children to the Citizen Band Potawatomi reservation in Oklahoma. The Burnett homestead was said to be located on the north side of Shunganunga Creek on the southeast quarter of Section 9, Township 11, Range 15E, Mission Township.

47 Ibid. The Kansas Historical Collections states that Abram Burnett married Knoffloch in Indiana in 1842. She “was born in Germany and came to the United States when she was eight years of age.” The unidentified article states that Burnett’s widow purchased a burial plot from Prudence Wilson, who had received Allotment No. 1062 under the supplemental Potawatomi Treaty of March 29, 1866, which allowed allotments to adult Indian female heads of households. Wilson’s land apparently included part of a burying place used by the Potawatomi, which is mentioned in the Historical Collections as being on land originally owned, in 1847, by Jonas Lykins, brother of Johnston Lykins. The graveyard, according to the Shawnee (Oklahoma) Chief of March 27, 1914, was “plowed under by Frank Helm several years” prior to 1914.


49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Andrew Lopp Murphy, “Diary,” entries for May 13-16, 1849.


53 Murphy, “Diary,” entries May 13-16, 1849; and Dale Morgan, ed., The Overland Diary of James A. Pritchard from Kentucky to California, 1849 (Denver: F.S. Rosenstock, 1959), 57-58, cited in Michael L. Tate, Indians and Emigrants: Encounters on the Overland Trails (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 29. “We passed an Indian village about 9 A.M. where their was a saw mill, and a temporary bridge thrown across a bad muddy creek by an old Indian who charged us 25 cts apiece for our wagons,” Pritchard wrote. “In about 10 mi[le]s from where we started this morning we came to a Catholic mission, surrounded with a number of [Potawatomi] Indian Wigwams.” See Barry, The Beginning of the West, 801.

54 Ire D. Paden, The Journal of Madison Berryman Moorman, 1850-51 (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1948), 11, cited in Tate, Indians and Emigrants, 29. Before reaching Cross Creek, Moorman had stopped at the Potawatomi Baptist Mission, a site “half a mile from the ferry of the Kanzas river,” a site he described as “a most beautiful and healthy place.

55 A dozen years later, tolls still were being charged over Cross Creek. Five men on “an expedition in search of buffalo,” passed over Cross Creek in late December 1860, and noted in their journal: “...drove past Silver Lake, and past the council house of the Potawatomies, and paid outrageous toll over Cross Creek bridge...” See “A Buffalo Hunt: from The Commercial Gazette, Wyandotte, December 1, 1860,” cited in Kansas Historical Quarterly, 6:2 (May 1937), 203-04.
Barry, The Beginning of the West, 1150, states that Congress, on March 3, 1853, appropriated $11,725 for “...bridges, establishing communications between Fort Leavenworth and the Republican Fork of the Kansas River.” But most of the bridge-building came later.

See “Hugh McCanne’s Day Book,” entry for May 15, 1850,” Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Missouri; and “Diary of James Woodworth: Across the Plains to California in 1853” (Eugene, Oregon: Lane County Historical Society, 1972), entry for May 25-26, 1853.


Mary McCauley’s Day Book,” entry for May 13, 1850, published in Daily Alta California, September 25, 1850. National Frontier Trails Museum. The Kickapoos also constructed crude toll bridges, as did the Omahas and Pawnees along the Platte River. See Tate, Indians and Emigrants, 29-40. Charlotte Stearns Pengra, Tate writes, “...was surprised by the obvious intelligence and resourcefulness of the Omaha toll collector, who told her in remarkably good English about his previous trip to Washington, D.C. Another toll collector proudly showed a picture of President Millard Fillmore to passersby, in an apparent attempt to demonstrate his importance and his friendship for Americans.” Other overlanders, Tate writes, viewed the Omaha toll on Big Papillion Creek “as highway robbery,” because the creek was no more than 10 feet wide and the toll fluctuated. “When George Belshaw agreed to pay the toll of ten cents per wagon, only to find that it had been raised to a quarter, he bargained the price down to nine cents per wagon.” The Pawnees assisted travelers over Elkhorn River, where they operated a pontoon bridge.

Barry, “Kansas Before 1854,” (Spring 1966), 58.

Tate, Indians and Emigrants, 29-30, quoting William H. Woodhams, “Diary,” Nebraska History 61 (Spring 1980), 51-52. The Indian whom Woodhams admired could well have been a métis.

Ibid, 30.

Tate, Indians and Emigrants, 34-35. When overlanders reached the Great Plains, Tate writes, “they would meet tribes that would little resemble those they had met in the Missourri River valley.”

Numerous secondary sources mention Vieux’s toll bridge, but nearly all state that Vieux’s bridge dated to 1847 or 1848, although this is doubtful. See Connelley, Kansas and Kansans, 213-14; and “Comprehensive Management and Use Plan Oregon National Historic Trail” (Washington, D.C: United States Department of the Interior, August 1981), 35. Although Fremont’s map refers to “Little Vermilion Creek,” Connelley states it is the Red Vermillion, which flows south through Pottawatomie County and empties into the Kansas River. So crowded was this camping place at the fording of the Vermillion during the California gold rush that it was the spot where some fifty overlanders died of Asiatic cholera within a week. The headstone of T.S. Prather, listing his death as May 27, 1849, still can be found nearby. Fremont wrote that a mist hung over the Kansas River as he made his way along its bank, the river hills looking “dark and gloomy...” His party stopped for dinner “on the banks of one of the many little tributaries to the Kansas,” which he said “looks like trenches in the prairies, and are usually well timbered.” When he reached the mouth of the Vermillion, he reported “a large but deserted Kansas village.” It was situated in an open wood, some of its houses burned, others blackened with smoke and weeds following an attack by Pawnees that spring.


“Susan Campbell’s Potawatomi Genealogy,” ‹http://www.kansasheritage.org› (May 3, 2007). Campbell states that Louis Vieux’s mother was Menominee, while Thoburn has her as Potawatomi. A birth certificate for Louis and Sha-note Vieux’s daughter Rachel, born at Council Bluffs, Iowa, on December 26, 1844, records Sha-Note’s race as “Red” and lists her birthplace as Wisconsin. It does not state the names of her parents or her tribal affiliation.
Thoburn, History of Oklahom, 5:2168-70. That Sophia Vieux had just “returned home” to Indianola in 1856 suggests that Louis Vieux and his family of seven children were still living there. Her husband, Jacob Johnson, was born March 2, 1823, in Washington, D.C. At the time of the interview, Sophia Vieux Johnson was living in Oklahoma, where she and her husband had moved with the Citizen Band in the early 1870s.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Root, “Ferries in Kansas” 6:1 (February 1937), 14 to 20, writes that the first and probably only ferry over the Wakarusa was operated by the Shawnee Bluejacket. “This was near the Wakarusa ford and crossing at the north boundary of the defunct town of Sebastian, and about two miles from the historic town of Franklin.” The date probably was in early in 1855, when the bulk of travel south of the Kansas River followed the Oregon Trail. The flatboat for Bluejacket’s ferry was built in 1855 by a Shawnee named Tula or Tooley, who operated a ferry not far from the Delaware crossing, or Grinter’s as it was commonly known. Two years later, the Territorial Legislature of 1857 established a territorial road from Olathe on the Santa Fe Trail, “on the most direct and practicable route to the crossing of the Wakarusa at Bluejacket’s.” Barry, Beginnings of the West, 824, writes that Bluejacket was a mixed-race Shawnee, mission-educated, influential, and a man licensed to preach by the Methodist Church, South, in 1859.


Ibid. 128.

Vaughan to Fort Leavenworth Agency, March 7, 1848.


See Ibid; and William W. Cone, Historical Sketch of Shawnee County, Kansas (Topeka: The Kansas Farmer Printing House, 1877), 10. Uniontown would continue as the main trading post until 1855. Andreas and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas, states: “From 1847 until 1859 the Pottawatomies received their annuities at Uniontown, from 1859 until their final payment in 1870, on the banks of Cross Creek, a little west of the present site of the village [of Rossville]. At this point were a few shanties,” including one “occupied by Anthony Navarre (who cultivated a small farm)…” A Simpson & Hunter account log gives an example of the business done at Uniontown. The log of “balances due for credits of goods and provisions made at Uniontown,” from April 1848 to November 1851, totaled $8,312.65. Thomas Stinson, born April 14, 1818, in Preble County, Ohio, moved to Westport, Missouri, in the spring of 1843 and spent the next year “at his trade as a blacksmith, and assisting his brother who was in the mercantile trade.” For the three years after that he was employed “as a traveling agent among the Indians” in the employ of Simpson & Hunter, merchants at Westport. In the spring of 1848 he moved to Uniontown, “where he built the first building and entered into the business of trader on his own account.” In 1850
he married Julie Bushman and moved to the Burnett farm, where he lived until 1853. For a list of traders in the Kansas Indian Country in 1851 see Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 1016, 1026.

79 See Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 245; and Richerter, *A History of Silver Lake, Kansas*, 11. Beaubien objected, saying, it “will subject us to grate[sic] inconvenience as it is not crossable at great portion of the Season and when it is fordable it is very dangerous on account of quicksand…Our women and children cannot cross there for supplies.” Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 315, writes of competition existing between traders on the Osage River Reservation. By the early 1840s, he writes, Pierre Chouteau Jr. had eleven men employed at three locations on the reservation; the Boone and Hamilton firm had six men at Sugar Creek; Cornelius Davey three men at Sugar Creek and Potawatomi Creek; and the old Indiana firm of Ewing and Clymer operated in the Protestant community. “Generally,” Clifton writes, “these trading outfits represented a link between the national political scene and the reservation community, as well as with missionary groups.” The early trader Robert Polke, for instance, was Isaac McCoy’s brother-in-law, and Sen. John Tipton of Indiana served as patron for the Ewings, who had transferred much of their operations to the West. “These traders,” he explains, “habitually conducted business on a credit basis, knowing that the controls they exercised over domesticated ‘chiefs’ guaranteed them payment when annuity funds were delivered annually. However, they also continued to serve the Office of Indian Affairs, bidding on contracts and offering their services, together with those of the missionaries, so as to promote what was allegedly in the national interest as regards Indian problems. It was, for example, McCoy and Alexis Coquillard who "worked hard at persuading the Council Bluffs Potawatomi to cede their Iowa land and move to Kansas.”

80 John F. Snyder to W.H. Snyder, May 22, 1850. MS 1136.05, Kansas State Historical Society.

81 Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 931. A resident from Jackson County, Missouri, said the Papin and Uniontown ferries each crossed “65 to 70 wagons per day, cost of ferriage $1 per wagon.” See Barry, 795.

82 Ibid, 932.

83 Ibid, 795.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid, 796. Passing through in October 1853 on his final expedition to the West, John C. Fremont described Uniontown as “a street of log-cabins. Nothing to be had here. Some corn for our animals and a piece of cheese for ourselves.” See Barry, 1181.

86 St. Louis *Daily Missouri Republican*, May 7, June 3, 1849, cited in Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 257 n54. This number also was reported by emigrant George Mifflin Harker, who crossed the river on May 18, 1849. “Today we journeyed through a beautiful country – arrived at this place, sometimes called Uniontown, a trading post for the American Fur Company, and several individual fur companies … the ferryman here informed me that he had crossed about seven hundred teams already this season. He has, or rather the company, two small boats propelled by poles, and is very successful in passing over teams safely.” See Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 795-96.

87 Kelly quoted in Barry, *The Beginnings of the West*, 795. Kelly stated that he “chartered her [the ferry] for the occasion rather than run the risk of fording…the loose animals were got over by swimming.”


89 Indian agent George W. Clarke discharged Louis Ogee in the fall of 1854, accusing him of breaking the law by charging Indians to use the ferry and refusing to carry them if they would not pay. See Clarke to A. Cumming, superintendent of Indian Affairs, November 12, 1854, RG 75, M234, Reel 681, Potawatomi Agency, 286.

Ibid.

92 “House Diary,” October 17, 1856, St. Mary’s Mission, Kansas, Box I Folder D, Midwest Jesuit Archives, St. Louis.

93 Ibid.

94 Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project.


96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 This post was situated across the river, just east of present-day Bellevue, Nebraska, nearly on the Pottawattamie-Mill County, Iowa line. At Bellevue, American Fur Company agent Peter Sarpy ran the trading post. See Kimball, “Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail.”

99 See William Alexander Linn, The Story of the Mormons From The Date of Their Origin to the Year 1901 (Hackensack, New Jersey: n.p., [1901?]), 345-353, Community of Christ Library, Independence, Missouri; and Lance M. Foster, The Indians of Iowa (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009), 62.

100 Kimball, “Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail.” On the west side of the Missouri River, the Mormons established Winter Quarters on land owned by the Omaha Indians. Unrau, The Rise and Fall of Indian Country, 113, writes that the Mormon settlement on Omaha and Potawatomi land was “patently illegal,” but that President James Polk “yielded to Mormon lobbyist Thomas L. Kane by refusing to expel the Mormons in the spring of 1847 and allowing them to stay until they decided to resume their march west on their own terms a year later.” Unrau also points out that the Mormons “harvested Omaha timber at will and so depleted game-animal resources that one federal official described the Omahas’ land … as ‘more destitute of game than any other’ in Indian country."

101 Draper quoted in Kate B. Carter, “Eight Pioneer Biographies,” Daughters of Utah Pioneers, (October 1971), 78. Kimball, “Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail,” writes that Winter Quarters comprised eight hundred “cabins, huts, caves, and sod, or ‘prairie marble,’ hovels, and 3,483 people,” and at its height counted four thousand people. By special charter in 1853 the Iowa Legislature changed the name of Kanesville to Council Bluffs. The name Council Bluffs derived from a council held in 1804 by Indians with Lewis and Clark on the west side of the river about twelve miles upstream. By 1846, steamboat landings existed on both sides of river at Kanesville, with service to Fort Leavenworth, Independence, and St. Louis. During the winter of 1846-1847, some fifteen thousand Mormons lived in the vicinity of Council Bluffs, on both sides of the Missouri River.

102 Ibid, 80-82. The absence of five hundred men, who were recruited in July 1846 for the Mexican War apparently added to the purchase of Indian cabins. With so many men gone, Draper wrote that families were divided into “districts or wards,” each to be overseen by a bishop. “It fell my lot to be one of them,” he wrote, “and when I went to look up those that were in my district, there were 33 families…we immediately set about the work of gathering up the cattle and getting herdsmen to take care of them. The next move was to provide shelter for the folks and provide for the stock, as we were left with so few men that we could not move on any further until the brethren returned from the army.”

103 See Kappler, “Treaty with the Potawatomi Nation, June 5 and 17, 1846,” Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:557-560. The Bluffs Potawatomi signed the treaty just one month before Mormon men left for the Mexican War.
104 Edmunds, “Indians as Pioneers,” 349.

105 “Leonora Cannon Taylor Personal Diary, 1846-47” in Carol Cornwall Madsen, Journey to Zion: Voices From the Mormon Trail (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1997), 202-06.

106 Ibid.

107 Ibid.


109 Ibid, 195-96, 210-11. Thomas Kane went to Council Bluff after the Mormon elder Jesse Little called on Kane’s father, Judge Kintzing Kane, in Washington, D.C., “to acquaint the government with the plight of the Mormons and seek permission to raise a Mormon battalion for the expedition against Mexico.” The authors that that twenty-four-year-old Kane was “already something of a humanitarian,” (he later would be an abolitionist) who “immediately dropped his law clerkship and headed west to give what help he could. He carried with him President Polk’s orders to General Stephen W. Kearney at Ft. Leavenworth to raise the requested [Mormon] battalion.” In 1857 Kane was sent to Utah as the president’s special emissary to mediate between the Mormons and federal officials in the so-call Utah Rebellion.

110 Ibid, 211. Judging from the tone of William Draper’s words, Mormons also felt like the “other” in American society. When told that the United States wanted five-hundred able-bodied Mormons to enlist for service in the Mexican War, Draper seemed insulted, writing that the United States wanted Mormons “to fight their battles.” There remains today a belief among Mormons that the raising of the Mormon Battalion was “a great sacrifice on the part of the church to an undeserving government.” See Carter, “Eight Pioneer Biographies,” 79; and Kimball, “Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail.” At total of 489 Mormon men mustered for the Mexican War, along with some twenty wives who went as laundresses and perhaps a dozen boys as officers’ aides. According to Madsen, Journey to Zion, 195, the Mormons requested to join the Army.

111 Ibid, 206.

112 Madsen, Journey to Zion, 206.

113 Kimball, “Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail.”


115 Danny L. Jorgensen, “Building The Kingdom of God: Alpheus Cutler and the Second Mormon Mission to the Indians, 1846-1853,” Kansas History 15:3 (1992), 192-209. The settlement was abandoned in 1852 or 1853. The Mormons had tried to minister to the Delaware in the early 1830s, but were ordered out of the Kansas Indian Country.

116 Murphy to Denver, December 11, 1857.

117 Ibid. Murphy wrote to the commissioner in 1857 apparently to warn him that Navarre had assembled a delegation of Bluffs Indians and was on his way to Washington to help them state their opposition to plans to sectionalize the reservation. According to Murphy, “the delegation now en route for Washington, go there contrary to the wish of four fifths of the Indians under my charge, and consequently have not right to propose, or make any arrangement with your honor, for the Pottawatomi nation.” Murphy said those who aligned with Navarre were “that class of the Pottawatomies who are opposed to educating their children, and to cultivate the soil.” Murphy stated that these Bluff Indians initially had agreed with the “intelligent, and industrious portion of the
Pottawatomies” not to go to Washington, until they were “induced to forfeit their word, and thus unexpectedly start off, by one Anthony Navarre…”

118 Murphy to Robinson, August 25, 1859.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 Clifton, The Prairie People, 354, 366-67. On April 15, 1862, a treaty was ratified under which some tribal members elected to take their land in allotments. That March, a six-member Business Committee was established, with Navarre a representative of the Prairie Band. Two weeks later, however, he “was forced out of office,” Clifton writes, the reason being that he opposed the 1861 allotment treaty and what was known as the “order system,” whereby the Potawatomi used vouchers instead of cash to make purchases.

122 Murphy to Robinson, August 25, 1859. After returning to the reservation from a trip to Washington, D.C., in the spring of 1858, Murphy accused Navarre of speaking out against the secretary of the Interior and urging the Indians to sign no treaty.

123 Among gravestones are five bearing the surname Bourassa: three of whom died as infants, possibly the children of Joseph G. (1846-1869) and Mary E. Bourassa (1838-1872), who also are buried there. Joseph N. Bourassa patented land in Shawnee County in 1867, 1868, 1870. See: Shawnee County Cemeteries vol. 2 (Topeka: Topeka Genealogical Society, 1977); and Keith Navarre to “Uncle Raymond and all,” February 11, 1972, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project. No gravestone exists for Joseph N. Bourassa, who, according a newspaper account, died at his sister’s home in Rossville, Kansas, in 1877. See “Uniontown Cemetery,” National Register of Historic Places, May 17, 2010.

124 Dr. Edward Alexander Tompkins, “Expedition to California, 1850,” Entry for May 29, 1850.

125 J.N. Bourassa, “The Life of Wah-bahn-see, The Warrior Chief of the Pottawatomies,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 38:2 (Summer 1972), 132-43; Clifton, The Prairie People, 365, states that Wisconsin historian Lyman Draper once wrote to Bourassa for information and that Bourassa replied briefly, telling Draper that he had been writing a history of the Potawatomis in order to make money. He wanted Draper to help him edit the manuscript for publication and promised to pay him well. He also asked for advice on how to gain entry to the Chautauqua circuit because he wanted to travel in the East lecturing.

126 See Clifton, The Prairie People, 365; and McCoy, History of Baptist Indian Missions, 265-272. Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution is present-day Colgate University. See “History & Traditions,” www.colgate.edu (November 21, 2010). On his way East, McCoy stopped in Troy, Ohio, so “tailors could prepare clothing” for the boys. He also purchased, on credit, horses, saddles, and other items. The entourage was near Wheeling, Virginia, when McCoy received instructions from the Board of Missions to take the boys to the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky, something McCoy refused to do. “To have compiled with these orders,” he wrote, “would have required us to retrace our steps through Ohio. I was unwilling to turn back, and the boys insisted that if I did not proceed I should take them back to Carey.” McCoy made a side trip to Washington, obtained a promise of seven hundred dollars a year form the government to support the boys, and then proceeded on to Hamilton, New York, where he said, “we were welcomed by the Rev. N. Kendrick, D.D., President, and all others of the faculty, and by the students and the people of that neighborhood.”

127 Ibid. McCoy, whose goal was to locate Indian people in a “country of their own, and under and independent Government,” explained his reasons for enrolling the boys in college: “As a measure preparatory to the success of the scheme of a colony, we deemed it our duty to endeavour to fit for enlarged usefulness some of our most hopeful Indian pupils,” believing that “Indians with suitable qualifications could be more useful than white men among their countrymen.” McCoy also sought to “extend the opportunities of education” to two Indian girls,
“but our designs,” he wrote, “were not much favoured, either by the board of missions or our correspondents. We did, however, find an opportunity of sending two of the female pupils, upon our own responsibilities, to a school in Ohio a few weeks.”

128 Genealogist Carol Layman to Bourassa family, August 27, 1996, and Genealogist Helen Depel, November 1989, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project. McCoy stated that Bourassa came to his mission on September 26, 1820 and “was now about 17.”

129 J.N. Bourassa to Isaac McCoy, July 22, 1827. Isaac McCoy Papers, Kansas State Historical Society.


131 See Foreman, “The Choctaw Academy,” 382-411; and 10:1 (March 1932), 77-114; J.E. Bradford, *Education in the Ohio Valley Prior to 1840* (Columbus, Ohio: F.J. Heer Print. Co, 1916); Marjorie Hall Young, "Stars In A Dark Night", 280-305; and Drake, “Choctaw Academy: Richard M. Johnson and the Business of Indian Education,” 260-297. Foreman lists I.N. Burrossa (sic) as an Indian youth “employed as a teacher” at the academy in 1832. That August, 114 Indian students of many tribes (Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Miami, Potawatomi, Seminole, and Quapaw) were attending the Academy, including sixteen Potawatomis and ten Miamis. In 1830, nine Potawatomi boys, including Abram and John Burnett, were to be sent to the academy. Others of the boys had been given names of well-known contemporary white men, such as General Jackson and Thomas Jefferson. On September 23, 1839, the academy superintendent wrote: “...this school can boast of having produced a greater number of the best schollars, and mechanics; some of the best accountants and school teachers, as well as some of the best practical farmers and merchants, than any other institution of which I have any knowledge. A smith shop is conducted in the Choctaw nation by a young man from this institution; and I am told that a shoe and boot shop is managed profitably in the Potawatamie country by a young man who learnt at this place.”

132 See Bourassa to Tipton, August 3, 1832; and Dorothy V. Jones, “A Potawatomi Faces the Problem of Cultural Change: Joseph N. Bourassa in Kansas,” *Kansas Quarterly* (Fall 1971) 3:4, 50-52. Years later in Kansas, Bourassa put whatever legal know-how he had to work when he got involved in a case against the white trader Joseph Clymer Jr., who illegally had built a house on Potawatomi land. On January 19, 1842, Bourassa led a group of about forty Potawatomis to Clymer’s house, where they ordered the occupants out and took possession of the house and outbuildings. Jones writes: “Bourassa and his men then loaded all the furniture and household goods into Clymer’s wagon and drove the wagon to the front yard of Clymer’s store, where they left it.” The dispute probably started when Clymer, a trader who was living with an Indian woman, complained that Indians were cutting timber near his trading post (though, of course, the land belonged to the Indians). Things came to a head when Clymer, who had fenced, plowed and farmed five acres, married a white woman and turned the Indian woman out of the house. In two lengthy memorials, the Potawatomis laid out their grievances against Clymer. Bourassa and forty-one others signed it. They demanded an investigation – and not by Indian agent Anthony Davis because they said he had an interest in Clymer’s store. An investigation by the War Department (then in charge of Indian affairs) found charges serious enough against Davis to dismiss him. As Jones points out, the suit and a subsequent memorial that Bourassa and eighteen others sent to Secretary of War John C. Spencer illustrates that Bourassa and the Potawatomis knew how to assert control over their lands. Davis, not surprisingly, complained that “no agent of the Government will be able to do business with the Indians,” when men like Bourassa led and advised them. As Jones writes, “Indians could learn white ways too well for the comfort of white administrators.”

133 See Shirley Willard, “Bourassa family traces deep Potawatomi roots,” in *Indian Awareness Newsletter of the Indian Awareness Center*, Fulton County Historical Society, Rochester, Indiana (June 1997), 8; and Jones, “A Potawatomi Faces the Problem of Cultural Change,” 54 n19. He was among a group of 107 Potawatomis who already were petitioning the government to change the reserve from communal to individual ownership.

134 See ibid; and “Letters Received By the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-81,” Roll 684, Potawatomi Agency, 152; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 10-11. Traditional chiefs retrained greater importance among the Prairie Band. Joseph Bourassa would spend his life near Uniontown. In March 1862, the business
committee comprised Louis Vieux, Benjamin Bertrand, Madore Beaubien, Joseph N. Bourassa, John Tipton, and George L. Young, who replaced Anthony Navarre. See “The Board of Commissioners,” March 26, 1862 in Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Reel 683, Potawatomi Agency, 366. George L. Young married Josette Vieux on January 20, 1856, at Indianola, and signed himself as a headman on the February 27, 1867, treaty by which Potawatomi in the Kansas Indian Country accepted a reservation in Oklahoma. See Fay, *Treaties Between the Potawatomi Tribe of Indians and the United States,* 146, 150; and Charles Clark manuscript, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project.

135 See Willard, “Bourassa family traces deep Potawatomi roots;” and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 225. Daniel Bourassa III and his family removed to the Kansas Indian Country on the Potawatomi “Trail of Death.” Daniel was one of seven hundred Indians and métis who died during the years the Potawatomi lived at Sugar Creek. He died in 1848.

136 Barry, “Kansas Before 1854,” (Spring 1966), 96, 98, writes that the mill was “about four miles (west) from Uniontown on the south side of the Kansas River, and about three miles (west) from the Pottawatomie’s national ferry.” Jude Bourassa was paid as “Keeper of the grist mill.” On September 4, 1850, Agent Luke Lea, Barry writes, forwarded a $5,000 contract to Frederick Kesler for the erection of the mill. Kesler was paid $1,000 on November 15, 1850. Today’s Mill Creek took its name from the Potawatomi mill built upon it.


138 Ibid.

139 See ibid; “Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs,” Roll 684, 152; J.N. Bourassa, “The Life of Wah-bahn-see,” 333-35; Jones, “A Potawatomi Faces the Problem on Cultural Change;” and Barry, “Kansas Before 1854,” (Spring 1966), 98. Sherrine O’Brien-Williams, Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project, states that Jude’s wife was Marie-Catherine Sharai. Jude Bourassa complained to Charles Lines “that the policy of the government toward the Indian tribes is very bad, calculated to prevent any progress among them, and to promote only indolence, pauperism and crime.”

140 James M. Woods to family, May 6-May 22, 1850, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Missouri, C995, Typescript Collection.

141 Ibid.

142 Hannah Anderson Ropes, *Six Months in Kansas,* 9-12.


144 The Shawnees Charles Bluejacket, Paschal Fish, Joseph Parks, Tooly, Black Hoof, Pumpkin, and Silverheels, “all were half, and in some cases more than half, white-blood,” according to contemporary Joab Spencer, quoted in Lutz, “Methodist Missions Among the Indian Tribes in Kansas,” 184.

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150 Whether this was the Thomas Johnson family at the Shawnee Methodist Mission she did not say, though it well could have been. The Shawnee mission was just two miles from Westport, and the Johnsons were slaveholders.

151 Ibid.

152 Ibid.


155 Alexander B. Nixon, “Diary of an Overland Journey from Cincinnati, Ohio, to California” 2 vols. (n.p. 1849-1862), entry for May 5, 1849. California State Library. The man’s story “was a sorry one,” Nixon wrote. “He had come to St. Louis with $300. On his way to California – got into a spree and gambled it all away. After conversing with him some time I found that we had been acquainted with each other – having both of us attended a course of Lectures together in the Ohio Medical College -- . He graduated at the same College afterward and had been an assistant sergeant [sic] in the Army during the War with Mexico.”

156 Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 795.

157 Ibid, 1036. Upon returning through the mission in November 1851, however, Wilhelm described his reception from the Jesuits as “cold and inhospitable,” apparently because they showed no interest in sending someone to help his traveling companion, H.B. Möllhausen, who, having been caught in a blizzard, was still camped back on the trail. Wilhelm said a “Canadian half-breed” volunteered to go and the “Anglo-Americans” present made up a purse of $200 to help. According to Wilhelm, the “Canadian” never found Möllhausen, who ended up remaining alone on the prairie from late November to January 1852, when he was rescued by “some friendly Otoes.” Despite the “ill-concealed hostility” of the mission Jesuits, Wilhelm spent a night at St. Mary’s. See Barry, 1049-50.

158 Ibid, 1163.

159 Ibid, 1103-04, 1135. “H” wrote that Fitzpatrick remained at the mission “some time longer.”

160 Ibid, 1181.


Potawatomi Baptist missionary Eliza McCoy, *Annual Report of the Commission of Indian Affairs*, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., 1851-52, S. Doc. 3:338, noted in September 1851 that métis were sowing wheat. “In two instances half-breeds sowed wheat, of which they are now eating flour ground at their national mill. The present autumn many talk of sowing wheat…” In 1858, Potawatomi Agent William E. Murphy also spoke of surplus crops. “The farming and industrious portion of these people have the present season appropriated a part of their beautiful and fertile soil to the production of wheat and oats, which crops were very much injured, and in some cases entirely ruined by the heavy and frequent rains,” he wrote. “Their corn and potatoes are very fine, of which they will have not only an abundance for their own consumption, but some to sell. Some of them have improved upon their last year’s condition by enlarging their fields, and putting up better houses to live in.” See Murphy, August 31, 1858, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1858-59, House Doc. 2:465


Pardon Dexter Tiffany, “1849 Diary,” entry for May 26, 1849. Edmunds, “Indians as Pioneers,” 351, states that Potawatomis at St. Mary’s Mission “were widely known as the breeders of excellent saddle-horses.”

Tate, *Indians and Emigrants*, 42.


“H” (anonymous), entry for May 13, 1850.


James M. Woods to family, May 6-May 22, 1850.

William A. Gordon, “Diary,” entry for May 6, 1850.


Ibid, entry from May 29, 1849.


Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Benjamin Franklin Owen, “My Trip Across the Plains, March 31, 1853-October 28,1853.” Typescript. Lane County Pioneer-Historical Society, Eugene, Oregon, cited in Tate, Indians and Emigrants, 98. Edmunds, “Indians as Pioneers,” 351, states that Potawatomis enticed overlanders “into a broad spectrum of entertainments ranging from games of chance, horse-racing, or marksmanship contests (the latter two endeavors also replete with considerable wagering).

Schlissel, Women’s Diaries of the Westward Journey, 221.

Alexander B. Nixon, “Diary of an Overland Journey from Cincinnati, Ohio, to California,” entry from May 2, 1849.

Ibid.

H.B. Branch, October 22, 1861, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861-62, S. Doc. 1:660. Despite his stance, Branch noted concern in a letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs W.P. Dole on August 6, 1861, RG 75, M234, Reel 683, Potawatomi Agency, 25. Branch wrote: “I think there can be but little doubt but what the visions of the Rebels have been and are actively engaged in [is] creating dissatisfaction against the government with any tribe of Indians that they dare approach on that subject.”

Ibid.

Clifton, The Prairie People, 382, states that while some Potawatomis enrolled in the Union Army, other Potawatomis in Wisconsin opposed the Union.


Ibid.

Senate Journal of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Kansas (1865), 56.


Ibid, 496-506.

201 Ibid.

202 Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1:1087-1095. Green apparently deserted on February 12, 1865, and was confined at Fort Leavenworth.

203 Ibid, 445-533. Mitchell LaFromboise deserted on February 1, 1865. Francis LaFromboise, whose birth place is listed as Iowa, was appointed a captain. He deserted on November 19, 1863, but returned to duty that December 9.

204 E.A. Hoyt to Second Auditor, April 29, 1878. Other men in Co. G, based on their surname and place of birth, likely were Indians, including: John White-pigeon, Wa-we-ackinuck, Battie Parrish, Penosh. Almost invariably the physical description of Indians’ hair, eyes, and complexion is listed in the register as “black, black, dark.”


206 See Richard Bertrand to Secretary of the Interior James Harlan, and Richard Bertrand to Sen. James Rodd Doolittle, October 27, 1865. Richard Bertrand was the grandson of Joseph Bertrand Sr.’s youngest son, Lawrence.

207 L. R. Palmer was a medical doctor, born in Chatham, Columbia County, New York, on January 9, 1819. His connection to the Potawatomis dated to the 1840s, when he went to Berrien County, Michigan, to practice medicine and was appointed physician to the Potawatomi. (He was a graduate of Berkshire Medical College in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.) He followed the Potawatomi to the Kansas Indian Country, resided near St Mary’s Mission, and worked as government doctor until 1857 and again from 1861 to 1864. From 1864 until 1870 he was the Potawatomi Indian agent. He was a member of the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention that framed the Kansas Constitution and also was elected to the Territorial Council, where he served until Kansas was admitted into the Union. In 1872 Palmer was elected to the State Senate, and served in the sessions of 1873 and 1874. He was county commissioner from 1857 to 1860, and was “the prime mover in the organization of Pottawatomi County.” In October, 1882, he was appointed postmaster at St. Marys. See Andreas and Cutler, “Pottawatomie County,” History of the State of Kansas ‹http://www.kancoll.org› (July 7, 2011).

208 See Commissioner of Indian Affairs D.N. Cooley to Thomas Murphy, superintendent of the Central Superintendency, January 20, 1866; and Bertrand genealogy chart.

209 Adelaide Bertrand to William P. Dole, August 2, 1863.

210 Laurence M. Hauptman, Tribes & Tribulations: Misconceptions About American Indians and Their Histories (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 53.

211 See Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army (1861-1865), Part VII (Washington, D.C.: Secretary of War, March 2, 1865), 364-368; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 103. Crawford, “The Organization of the Kansas Troops in the Civil War,” 63, states that even before the Indian regiments were formed, James Lane used about fifty-four Delaware scouts during the winter of 1861-62. Crawford writes that “few records” were kept of the Indian regiments. During the war, dangers from attack by Indians who had joined the Confederacy was great enough that Potawatomi agent W.W. Ross requested permission to “get arms & ammunition to arm [the] Indians if it shall become necessary to defend themselves” against “the wild and hostile Indians of the plains.” See H.B. Branch, Superintendent of Indian Affairs H.B. Branch at St. Joseph to Commissioner of Indian Affairs W.P. Dole, August 6, 1861. There already had been two invasions, Branch said, “by the Rebels [who] have been and are actively engaged in creating dissatisfaction against the government with any tribe of Indians that they can approach on that subject.”
CHAPTER VII

ST. MARY’S MISSION: A PIONEER INSTITUTION

St. Mary’s Mission, established in 1848 on the Potawatomi’s new Kansas River Reservation, was an extension of the Catholic mission on Sugar Creek. With dissolution of the Osage River Reservation under the Treaty of 1846, the Sugar Creek mission closed, and the Potawatomis living in south-central Kansas began to move north to the Kansas River Valley. They went in groups over an extended period of time.

The first group, accompanied by the priest Christian Hoecken and the Jesuit brother Andrew Mazzella, left Sugar Creek in November of 1847 and went as far as the south side of the Kansas River, where they stopped, afraid to cross to the north side of the river for fear of encountering Sioux and Pawnee hunting parties. Thus, they established their villages south of the Kaw, along Mission Creek, a tributary of the Wakarusa where timber was plentiful. Here, they planted gardens, plowed fields, and built a church, which was enlarged in the spring of 1848 as other groups arrived.¹

Despite the existence of this village and fears of the Pawnee and Sioux, Sugar Creek superior John Felix Verreydt, S.J., wanted to locate the new Catholic mission and school on the north side of the river, in a spot closer to the center of the thirty-mile-square Potawatomi reserve. In June 1848, accompanied by the métis Michael Nadeau, Verreydt went north of the river and examined the surrounding region. Two weeks later, accompanied by the métis Joseph Bertrand Jr., he “conferred with the agent, Major Cummins, about building on the north bank of the Kaw,” and a site was selected for a new mission, called St. Mary’s.² Michael Nadeau and his brother hauled “the furniture and old doors of Sugar Creek” to the new St. Mary’s Mission, which was
about ninety miles northwest of Sugar Creek and about eighty miles west of present-day Kansas City.

Fears of the Pawnee and Sioux, who were known to hunt as far south as the Republican and Kansas rivers, were so great that it apparently took much persuasion to convince the Potawatomis settled south of the Kansas River to move to the new mission site, about a mile north of the river.³ Verreydt’s efforts were not helped by an incident that summer of 1848 in which a group of Pawnees and Bluffs Potawatomis battled on the upper Kaw, the Potawatomis taking five scalps.⁴

The situation gave rise to a story that became legend among nuns of the Society of the Sacred Heart. On their journey from Sugar Creek to the new mission site at St. Mary’s, the nuns stopped at the Potawatomi settlement south of the river, which was serving as “the base of operations” for the move across the river. Events are recorded in a diary kept by Maurice Gailland, S.J., who accompanied the nuns on their journey.⁵ Gailland stated that he, Father Verredyt, a lay brother, one Indian named Charlot, and the nuns departed from the south-side settlement for St. Mary’s on September 7, 1848.⁶ According to Gailland, the party was detained “for a whole day” at Uniontown, “owing to the river.” The next morning, “the water having subsided, we ford the [Kansas] river, some on horseback, others in wagons,” he wrote. “At noon we stop for dinner at a stream (Cross Creek, where now stands Rossville). Continuing, we arrive at our new home about 4 o’clock in the afternoon of September 9, 1848. We were accompanied the whole way by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart and Mr. Joseph Bertrand.”⁷ Lucille Mathevon also wrote of the journey, mentioning in her journal that before arriving at the St. Mary’s mission site, the party “dined near the little river,” an apparent reference to Cross Creek.⁸
Neither Gailland nor Mathevon mentioned anything about tall prairie grass impeding their progress or about Indian escorts who were afraid to cross to the north side of the Kansas River that day. Nonetheless, in the institutional memory of the Society of the Sacred Heart, the “story has been handed down” that Mother Lucille, seeing the hesitation of the Potawatomi men in crossing to the north side of the river, “took a sickle and led the way cutting down grasses that were taller than she was. Her determination heartened and, perhaps, shamed the men, who then followed her example.”

Whether the story is true or not is less important than the message it conveys. The story, passed down over the years among the Religious of the Sacred Heart, reflects the pride these nuns have taken in their pioneer heritage. Looking back, they consider these missionary women as heroines – as “pioneer women” in keeping with the familiar trope of the American West. Just as Protestant Americans would institutionalize the stories of the sun-bonneted women of the Oregon Trail and the brave “Pioneer Mothers” who settled in territorial Kansas, so, too, did the Sacred Heart nuns make heroines of their pioneer women – women who took charge when men cowered. “When we arrived here it was a vast prairie where no one had ever lived,” Mathevon wrote in later years. “It was a place for the buffalo. Never had this land been cultivated, and now it is inhabited for 200 miles around...”

**Up the Missouri River in 1841**

Lucille Mathevon came to America from France in 1828 with the French-based Society of the Sacred Heart, a religious order that, like the Jesuits, was devoted to education. Society nuns, led by the revered Philippine Duchesne, first came to the United States in 1818 and established schools at St. Louis and St. Charles, Missouri. Sacred Heart nuns went to the Kansas
Indian Country for the first time in 1841 to teach Potawatomi girls at the Jesuit’s school on Sugar Creek.

On July 2, 1841, Mathevon and the elderly Duchesne, accompanied by the slave Edmund, two priests and two other nuns, boarded the steamboat *Emilie* for the 250-mile trip up the Missouri River to the Kansas Indian Country. On a journey so memorable, Mathevon kept a journal and wrote letters back to France telling what she had seen – documents that offer a glimpse into the mind of a woman whose attitude toward the frontier stood in stark contrast to many women who followed their husbands west that same decade on the California-Oregon Trail. Mathevon’s journal and letters also are testament to the changing demographics of Missouri in the early- to mid-nineteenth century. From 66,557 non-Indian residents in 1820, Missouri’s population mushroomed to 383,702 by 1840. Its slave population also steadily increased, from 3,011 in 1810 to 114,931 by 1860.

"I should never have imagined that Missouri was so thickly populated," Mathevon wrote. Although she envisioned herself setting out into "the wilderness," every county along the Missouri River – all the way to the state's western border with the Kansas Indian Country – already was established. By 1841, English had become the state's dominant language and American customs so accepted that Mathevon expressed no surprise when the crew of the *Emilie*, approaching present-day Kansas City on the third day of its journey, staged a Fourth of July celebration. She told how passengers had gathered in the steamboat's large hall for a special meal served at three in the afternoon. There had been a sermon, in what language she did not say, by Father Verhaegen, and then "everyone applauded in the American style with hands and feet after they presented the wines on ice and we drank to the health of the good father and of Washington." She enjoyed the frivolity of the twenty soldiers onboard, who produced one
drum and one clarinet and "played as if they would make bears dance." That bears danced in Mathevon's head spoke to the nineteenth-century vision of the West as a vast wilderness yet to be tamed. But even as bears danced, Mathevon counted more than fourteen towns along the river, including the new capital of Jefferson City, incorporated just two years earlier.

That same July 4th, the Emilie docked at Kawsmouth, which Mathevon recorded in her journal as "Chouteau’s Landing." They went to the home of Berenice Chouteau, where "the good lady received us with such kindness and charity," then followed the rough road to Westport, where Mathevon and the others walked about town, purchasing items for their journey, including "fifty breads that the baker made while we dined." From Westport, they set out for Sugar Creek, some seventy miles to the south. Mathevon recounted the four-day trip in her journal, revealing an unexpected delight in sleeping on the prairie. "We lit a large fire, and we made coffee, cooked our ham..." she wrote. We “cook our food like savages and eat our meat out of our own two hands without plates, drink one after the other. All of this was very amusing. Never had I made such a pleasant, happy, and fun journey.”

The entourage was twenty-one miles from Sugar Creek when the Jesuit Herman Aelen greeted members on the trail and took them “to a dwelling” where “they are French people who have a store that sells to the savages of different nations who come.” Indians also greeted them, revealing again the Catholic leanings of the emigrant Potawatomi at Sugar Creek. "Every two miles we found two savages, mounted on handsome horses, who came to greet us and to tell us which way to go,” she wrote. “Having arrived at a large prairie situated a mile from the priest's house, we saw 150 savages on horseback in their most beautiful costumes, their horses well-harnessed, all arranged in good order, preceded by their two missionaries and their flags – one white, their other red.
"Our vehicles advanced into the middle of this cavalry, which would sometimes make half-moons around us, other times perfect circles. It was truly amazing: not one horse's foot overtook another. When we had descended, they sat us down on benches; the savages arranged themselves in the rows to each side, then the chief approached in order to compliment us in these terms, which were translated by the interpreter: 'What good fortune for us to see arrive the Ladies who have sacrificed so much to come and instruct our children in the ways of the true Religion.'"\textsuperscript{21}

The hardships endured by the “ladies who have sacrificed so much,” resembled those of more traditional pioneer women. They lived in a two-story cabin where, without caution, “we banged our heads when climbing the little stairway from the high chamber” and worried “with every step … one was going to fall into the chamber below.” They kept food provisions under a plank in the floor, slept in the attic, and told of waking up covered in snow from holes in the roof.\textsuperscript{22} Lucille Mathevon spoke of “snakes with bells,” surely meaning rattlesnakes, that slithered into her cabin through holes between the logs, and another nun wrote of crickets that got onto her bed “and chirped with all their might so that sleep or rest was impossible.”\textsuperscript{23}

When the Sugar Creek mission relocated to the Kansas River Reservation, the Sacred Hearts nuns followed, conveyed in wagons driven by the métis Joseph Bertrand Jr. By the fall of 1849, they and the Jesuit priests had settled in at St. Mary’s. A log church was constructed, and a cabin originally built for the priests was converted to a school for Indian boys. A fence soon was up around school and residences and hedge apple trees planted for shade. On the hill that rose behind the mission, the Catholics planted a Christian flag. To the south and east stretched the broad, flat bottomlands of the Kansas River Valley, soon to be traversed by thousands of gold seekers on their way to California. Many Potawatomi had by now moved to the north side of the
river, where they settled “near to the mission in large numbers,” while others remained on the south side of the river.24

**Financial Straits**

By late 1849, St. Mary’s Mission comprised three priests, four lay brothers, and five Sacred Heart religious. Initially, the mission received fifty dollars per pupil per annum from the U.S. government for boarders, a sum far short, according to Maurice Gailland, to support the mission, which also faced heated competition for pupils from the nearby Potawatomi Baptist Mission. “Our first aim was to labor devotedly in the training of the young, for a rival Baptist school had already started,” Gailland explained. “It would be a case of the ‘survival of the fittest;’ and in every deed we had to clear our way through a jungle among hissing reptiles before finding an open field to cultivate.”

Gailland did not name these “hissing reptiles” but implied they were Potawatomi “medicine men or jugglers” as well as “some wicked men” whom he blamed for “exciting the people against us, drawing odious comparisons between the Protestant schools and ours. The consequence was that a great number of boys and girls were, so to say, carried off bodily and transferred to the Baptist school.” Because settlements were scattered on the reservation, Gailland concluded that even Catholic Potawatomis “were easy prey to interlopers, in sheep’s clothing,” an apparent reference to Baptist missionaries.

Harsh feelings were no less apparent at the Potawatomi Baptist Mission, where missionary Eliza McCoy, Isaac McCoy’s niece, stated in August 1849 that “the Jesuits cannot give up the idea of monopolizing all the school fund.” She accused the Jesuits of trying, the year before, to get the funds “for both schools,” Baptist and Catholic, and of “holding councils in
various places” to get rid of Johnston Lykins, the mission superintendent, “and also to take possession of our buildings and farm.”

There may have been truth in her allegations because St. Mary’s Mission certainly needed to find ways to increase its revenue. Mission finances were in such dangerous straits that Gailland described them as “most critical and embarrassing in the judgment of all persons versed in business matters.” St. Mary’s had enrolled about 120 pupils in its boys and girls schools, “but on terms so onerous,” Gailland said, “that good sense pronounced them intolerable.” He sat down and figured that the fifty-dollar per annum per pupil the mission received from the government equated to fourteen cents a day per child. “In other words,” he wrote, “for fourteen cents a day, lodging, food, clothing, books, stationery must be supplied to each child; while no hotel-keeper in the place would board and lodge any person for less than five dollars per week.” In addition, the money the government had allowed for constructing and furnishing buildings had run out before the work was finished. Saving the day, in Gailland’s estimation, was the arrival, on November 3, 1849, of a new mission superintendent, John Baptist Duerinck, S.J. “Well,” Gailland later wrote, “thanks to the intelligence and activity of Father Duerinck, the Mission met all these expenses and triumphed over all the obstacles.”

John Baptist Duerinck was a native of Saint-Gilles-lez-Termonde in East Flanders, the Netherlands. Born May 8, 1809, Duerinck felt called in the early 1830s to enter the Society of Jesus as a missionary. He received instruction in Turnhout, Belgium, at the school of Pierre-Jean De Nef, a layman who had been authorized by the Jesuit superiors to admit candidates for the Indian missions in America. De Nef was the man who had sent the first group of Jesuits, including Peter DeSmet and former St. Mary’s Superior John Felix Verreydt, to America in
1823. Duerinck, said to be a cousin of DeSmet, joined a second group of Jesuits heading to the American missions. The group left Antwerp, Belgium, for the United States in October 1833.32

Duerinck entered the novitiate at White Marsh, Maryland, on January 16, 1834, but by the end of June had elected to join the Jesuits at Florissant, Missouri, where he took his vows on January 16, 1836. He was assigned to teach at St. Louis University, and there he continued his theological studies while also taking an interest in plants, which would prove helpful in years to come. He was said to have traversed “a great portion of Illinois and Ohio in search of rare plants and flowers, discovering several new varieties.” He corresponded and exchanged specimens with botanists in Europe and North America and became so accomplished as a botanist that a new species he discovered was named after him, *prunus Duerinkiana*.33 From 1840 to 1843 he served as treasurer at St. Francis-Xavier College in Cincinnati and in the same position at St. Joseph’s College in Bardstown, Kentucky, until being assigned to the Kansas Indian Country in 1849. He would remain at St. Mary’s Mission until his tragic death in a boating incident in 1857.34

**A Pioneer Jesuit**

At St. Mary’s, Duerinck kept a daily house journal that reveals the enormous impact his activities had on the direction of St. Mary’s Mission. He made of it a “model farm,” where he experimented in the cross-breeding of cattle and plant varieties, and introduced what probably were the first labor-saving machines in Kansas. He made a prosperous business of the mission, selling beef to the military, produce to settlers, and supplying horses for express companies. As Arthur T. Donohue first noted in his dissertation at the University of Kansas eighty years ago: “St. Mary’s Mission was intimately connected with and formed an integral part of the economic life of early Kansas and the great West.”35
This section will examine the records of St. Mary’s Mission, which reveal not only that the mission and Father Duerinck were Kansas “pioneers,” but that Indian and métis people in the vicinity of the mission participated in Duerinck’s ventures, making them historical actors in their own right as the nation entered the industrial age – in as unlikely a place as the Kansas Indian Country.

**Duerinck and Fort Riley**

Notwithstanding raids from the Pawnees, which would continue into 1852, and deadly scourges of smallpox, cholera, and measles, St. Mary’s Mission prospered under Father Duerinck. One of his important business clients was a nearby Army post, Fort Riley, established in 1853. Originally called Camp Centre, Fort Riley dated to March 4, 1853, when Congress appropriated $65,000 for construction of a new military post intended to protect lines of communications and shield Americans going overland from hostile Indians on the Plains. Also needing protection were the “friendly Indians” who had emigrated to the Kansas Indian Country over the past three decades.

In May 1853, three companies of the Sixth Infantry arrived to build the fort at the juncture of the Smoky Hill and Republican rivers, on the north bank of the Kansas River at present Junction City, Kansas. Post quartermaster was Capt. E.E. Ogden, whose duty it was to see to the sustenance of the men. Post returns for August and September 1853, list sixty citizen mechanics and twenty-six citizen teamsters employed in the quartermaster department. Most of the “mechanics” were masons and carpenters hired in Cincinnati or St. Louis for $2 a day and transportation to the post. Some seventy or eighty soldiers also worked, at per diem, on building the original fort. In April 1854, Capt. Ogden employed the steamboat *Excel* to carry men and supplies – eleven hundred barrels of flour and seven thousand barrels of corn – from the town of
Weston to Fort Riley. To provide ground transportation, the government built a new road – a military road west from Fort Leavenworth. The new road crossed Soldier Creek, four miles north of Papin’s Ferry, went through Silver Lake and continued up the north side of the Kansas River – passing through St. Mary’s Mission before continuing on another fifty-two miles to the junction of the Republican and Smoky Hill rivers.

At St. Mary’s Mission, Father Duerinck recognized a business opportunity when he saw one. “It is reported,” he wrote in the fall of 1852, “that a new road will be opened from Fort Leavenworth to the mouth of the Republican fork, where the United States propose to establish a new military post; this road would pass through our village, and become the highway to Santa Fé and Fort Laramie. This plan would benefit our people, for they would then find a market for their produce.” Whatever rumors Duerinck had heard about a new road were substantiated that October when a board of military officers from Fort Leavenworth passed by St. Mary’s Mission on their way to select a site for the new military post. Accompanying the officers was an escort of First Dragoons from Company B, including D.C. Bearn. “I was ordered to take 5 men and 3 teams and go back to the mission for corn,” he wrote. He and the other soldiers apparently remained at the mission for three days, “work[ing] hard” to shell 125 bushels of corn. They then returned to the Army camp, cold but happy to find that their comrades had killed lots of turkeys, “strung up to roast.”

Back at St. Mary’s Mission, Father Duerinck chalked up what likely was his first money-making transaction with Fort Riley. Many more would follow as he put a business plan into action. Duerinck started a cattle herd and marketed meat, hay, and produce to Fort Riley, as well as to white settlers after 1854. Market relations with Fort Riley were well under way by the fall of 1855 when Duerinck and four others, apparently operating independently, agreed to deliver to
the fort 2,300 bushels of shelled corn at ninety-five cents a bushel, fifty-six pounds to the bushel. H.A. Low of Fort Riley was to furnish the sacks. Duerinck’s share of the deal was 1,300 bushes, equating to a sale of $1,235. This was just one of many transactions between St. Mary’s Mission and Fort Riley recorded in Duerinck’s daily journal. “Sent 28 head of beef cattle to Fort Riley on Thursday morning, September 27, 1855,” he entered one day. In addition to the cattle, he sent two men to herd them and to attend to the slaughtering. On November 7, 1855, he sent another sixteen head, delivering “10 at the slaughter house, Fort Riley, 18 at Wildcat at Mr. Eubank’s. The latter have run off and come back to the Mission.” On November 15, he sent twenty-seven more head to the fort.

Potawatomis on the Kansas River Reservation also may have looked to Fort Riley for an income. In 1864, for instance, a member of the métis Ouilmette (also spelled Wilmet) family inquired about teamster work “for a Potawatomi friend.” Though no work was available at the time, the episode indicates that Indians “knew of the sporadic job opportunities at the post and sought employment there whenever possible.”

In the fall of 1855, Duerinck also concluded a contract with the prominent freighting outfit of Alexander Majors and William H. Russell. “Agreed to let Messrs Major & Russell have eight ton of hay @ $8 per ton and the use of a yard to feed it to their teams, also agreed to store for them three hundred bushels of corn in the ear to feed their cattle in the months of November and December 1855, for which they are to pay the sum of eleven dollars. = $75 in all.” Duerinck was on friendly enough terms with Alexander Majors of Westport to ask him “to be kind enough to buy for St. Mary’s Mission 5 bushels of Millet seed, which the farmers about Independence raise in their fields. J.B.D. will send the money as soon as we know the price and understand that the seed can be got.” Another day, by way of Mr. Orton, wagon master of a
mule team, he sent six bushels of beans at $1.75 per bushel to the settlement of Hickory Point in Jefferson County, Kansas.48

The St. Mary’s Mission house journal is filled with Duerinck’s business transactions. A sampling follows:

**November 7, 1855** — Delivered to day at Wildcat 16 head of Beef Cattle. They have now killed 20 head cattle from the Mission; 24 head of the Quartermaster and 16 head are now being killed forthwith. Dyer’s steer has been delivered, but has strayed off. Dave Gormon & W. Grace have now a scale to weigh the meat.

**December, 8 1855** — End of November 40 head killed. 12 head drove up to kill, 2 head our own strays killed, 4 strays out yet about Wildcat & 18 head drove up Dec. 8th = 76 -- minus 4 strays = 72 head on hand at the mission.

**January 20, 1856** — J.B. Duerinck -- 66 head of Beef cattle have yielded 38,492 lbs Beef at Fort Riley.

**January 24, 1956** — Mr. A. G. Reed arrived to-day at the Mission with 50 head of Beef cattle and with 7 head of young cattle for Father Duerinck. Besides there have been 3 left on the road, a fine roan Bull & cow at Venneman’s on Bee Creek and calf at Soldier Creek. O. Jeanveau.

**February 14, 1856** — Number of cattle at the Mission: Claude Milo’s Filed -- 221; Calves in pen -- 63 calves, 3 yearlings – 65 (one heifer did not belong to the mission); Cows & calves (milch cows) 6 cows & 7 calves -- 13. Total - 312 head. We are feeding 312 head: 24 head of Beef cattle. Durham Bull cow & calf – 3 are out. We have 6 young calves.

**February 25, 1856** — Sold to Mr. Eubank of Wildcat 2 steers for 50 do. 1 Black steer for $15. Black cow Runty for $28. Cow & calf for $25. 1 heifer for $20. To Mr. S.D. Houston 4
cows vis 3 @ $25, one @ $28. One cow delivered to him for his cornstalks. Given him in charge, 4 yoke to break and to come back next fall.

**April 16, 1856** – Delivered to Fort Riley teams 16,132# of shelled corn on the Lowe contract … Advised Capt. Brent of the fact that we consider our contracts filled.

**April 25, 1856** – Started to-day by Mr. S.D. Houston’s man, Mr. Hunting, to Fort Riley 18 head of beef cattle.

**May 10, 1856** – Received to-day from A. G. Reed, Liberty, Mo., 16 head of Beef cattle for commissary, Riley. Started them same day to Vermilion on their way to Wildcat – one steer, Jim, is intended for the Quartermaster in exchange for a Beef steer. We finish today planting our corn.

**June 12, 1856** – The slaughter house has rec’d from March 10th 1856 to May 25th 1856 from the Quartermaster 2,320 lbs of hay and 540 lbs of corn. J.B.D. & A.G. Reed have delivered on accommodation exchange to Quartermaster orders and teams at the Mission 48,710# corn & 960# of hay. Acct. of J.B. Duerinck with Quartermaster -- $1,066.80 less $150 for horse, 145 doll[ars] to be retained according to acct. of the clerk, Mr. John Dyer. Settled and given receipts $807.22.

**June 22, 1856** – The steer exchanged by J.B.D. with the Quartermaster has been killed and weighed 652 lbs.

**June 27, 1856** – Forwarded per Tunis Roova 193 @ $2.00. Dry Beef hides from Fort Riley, and 11 bbls of tallow to Messrs Reese & Ketih of Leavenworth City to be shipped to Waterman & Ryan, St. Louis … Shipped also by Mr. Myers, G. Daniels, 13 Dry hides belonging to the same lot & directed to be shipped in the same manner as above.
July 12, 1856 – Finish ploughing our corn, begin to cut oats “with the machine.” We are milking every day 26 cows. Dave and Tom are on their claim at Rock creek, building their cabins...they are to be at the mission July 15th inst. Hides and tallow from Fort Riley have been shipped to St. Louis but no returns of sale received. Fernandist train & Wilson go up to Fort Riley to make hay July 12, 1856.

October 10, 1856 -- Forage master at Riley offers to buy our corn and expects to have it @ 50 cts per bushel. We have asked 90 cts for 3,000 bushel. Price for potatoes $1.00 per bushel delivered at mission. New well is working. It started being dug 20 july 1857 by Patrick Behan, P. Woods and John Lenon. They board and lodge at the mission, use our tools. Col. Murphy pays them $100 for the job for a good well.

January 10, 1857 – Sold to Mr. Henry Rodierke of Rock Creek Kansas Territory 20 head of cattle & made him a present of a young bull 3 years old next spring. Received in cash $400. Received by his note @ 6 months after date $210.

January 24, 1857 – Corn delivered to qmaster at 17,680 lbs.

January 28, 1857 -- Here are vouchers for what fort owes mission: $1,424.19 – for shelled corn, for keeping for one night 30 head oxen lodging; keeping a horse (crippled) till well; mending 500 old corn sacks for capt. Brent.

These entries document that St. Mary’s Mission had a herd of 312 cattle by early 1856. The herd included a Durham bull used for breeding and cattle imported from Texas a full decade before the famous cattle drives from Texas to Abilene, Kansas. According to Arthur Donohue, the beginning of the mission cattle herd was linked to St. Mary’s location on the California-Oregon Trail. Donohue writes that demand exceeded the supply of oxen and cows as overlanders outfitted in Independence, Missouri, “so everything was bought up that had horns
and could walk on four legs. Frequently these animals were exhausted when they reached St. Mary’s and had to be exchanged or left behind to die,” he writes. “Many of these crippled animals were of the best breeds of stock from the Middle States and though some died of exhaustion, the majority recovered after a few weeks rest and were added to the cattle of the mission.”

Writing in 1933, Donohue stated that descendents of “what was afterwards so well known as the ‘mission herd,’” still could be found “throughout the state of Kansas.”

Duerinck’s diary confirms that the mission took in tender-footed and exhausted animals. Sometimes, as already shown with soldiers at Fort Riley, the horses were cared for for a fee and then returned. Other times, however, it appears the mission kept them. In a journal entry from 1854, for instance, Duerinck writes that a Mr. John Poisell[?] had arrived at the mission to take his children to Westport. “He has left at the Mission two horses,” Duerinck said, “one given out, the other tender feet.”

That the mission sought to buy animals at a bargain price from overlanders on the California-Oregon Trail comes through in a letter Duerinck wrote to Father Druyts, who apparently was inquiring about prices. “Mares can be had from the Californians as long as the emigration lasts – at reasonable prices,” Duerinck told Druyts. The horses were “of good size, good limbs, (and) desirable age.” They were, he said, “good looking animals, apparently gentle and free of visible defects” and could be had “far below the rates of St. Louis.”

That Duerinck had no trouble obtaining Californians’ horses was apparent as he concluded his letter with a promise to bring two mares to St. Louis on an upcoming trip. “If I succeed in getting them on favorable terms,” he wrote, “I will make him a present of them.”

Duerinck’s journal reveals that St. Mary’s Mission was buying and selling cattle and slaughtering the animals for meat and hides. The mission contract with Fort Riley called for more than cattle and corn. On December 12, 1856, Duerinck reported delivering to Captain
Thomas Brent 33,090 pounds of forage and shelled corn, as well as 2,300 pounds of hay. Orders also included food for human consumption. In October 1856, Duerinck placed in Captain Brent’s wagon “140 bushels potatoes at $1 per bushel, 1½ bushels of onions at $2 per bushel, 5 bushels of turnips at 25 cents per bushel, 50 head of cabbage at $2.50 for the lot, as well as 5 bushels of beets at $1 for the lot, 11 bushels corn and 540 pounds of hay for 18 mules. Sent the bill of the produce to the Capt. with an offer to deliver more if needed,” Duerinck recorded.54

The relationship with Fort Riley reached into other areas. As the journal documents, the mission provided fresh horses to the U.S. Army’s pony expressmen and its blacksmiths nursed tender-footed Army animals back to health. “One of the Fort Riley sorrel horses, mail service, has been taken up to the Fort,” Duerinck wrote on January 24, 1856. “On 31st inst. Joe Pennigar has taken up to the Fort the big bay horse tender footed.” Again on June 27, 1856: “Last night received from Capt. Th[omas] Brent a written request for express rider to furnish the bearer, expressman, with a good horse or mule to go to Osawkee & that the horse would be returned in a few days – also a request to take the other horse ... Let him have the black horse, Branded U.S. He started Thursday evening @ 10 o’clock.”55 Duerinck also supplied horses to Fort Leavenworth: “Advised Major Sibley Fort Leavenworth of the bills which I intend to charge for furnishing horses for his expressman.” The charge was five dollars.56

Another day he recorded: “Quartermaster Fort Leavenworth has returned expressman’s horse – had 12½ days @ $1.00 per day. Charged Quartermaster $6.00 for keeping his horse 12 days. Sent him the bill by Lieut. Armstrong.”57 On November 15, 1856, Duerinck noted that “Capt. Anderson, Fort Riley, left at the Mission a grey horse with a sore knee. Cannot travel & have to send him up when well.” On December 29, he “let Capt. Anderson know the condition of his horse – he is slow mending.” Three days later, on January 1, 1857, he wrote that the
acting assistant commissary at Fort Riley had sent fifty head of cattle to St. Mary’s Mission “in order to winter them.”

An account by Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston documents St. Mary’s Mission as a kind of roadside oasis. In the fall of 1857, Johnston was on his way from Fort Kearney in Nebraska to Fort Leavenworth when the Mormon troubles broke out in Utah. He had stopped at Fort Riley and was leaving when a courier caught up to him with orders “to return as rapidly as possible to Leavenworth... and join my regiment, already on the march for Salt Lake.” Johnston was in a hurry when, “as luck would have it,” he said, “the axle of the ambulance in which we traveled broke. We had a new one put in at the Roman Catholic mission among the Pottawatomie Indians, but lost a day. I bought of a priest there a Canadian pony, which I rode most of the way to Salt Lake...”

Whether the priest from whom Johnston bought his “Canadian pony” was Father Duerinck he did not say, but Duerinck often dealt with individual soldiers. On March 31, 1856, he promised to send to Captains Brent and Buford at Fort Riley “a box of eggs say 50 doz.,” as well as “a lot of fresh butter” and to Mr. Dyer “some maple sugar, a lot of garden seeds & perhaps a good milch cow.” Again on January 12, 1857, after loading wagons bound for Fort Riley with 44,228 pounds of shelled corn and 1,005 pounds of forage, he also sent by a return wagon “2 bush[el] meal to Lieut. J. Buford; ½ dozen chickens to McClure, forage master; a crock butter, 1½ or more doz[en] eggs and 2 cheeses to Capt. Th. S. Brent with a note of advice to each of them.”

Whether his “note of advice” was simply a bill or clerical advice, Duerinck did not reveal, but he and other priests at St. Mary’s on occasion served on military juries, officiated at fort weddings and offered the sacraments in times of sorrow or death. In 1854, for instance, at
the request of the commanding officer at Fort Riley, Duerinck agreed to send a priest there periodically to conduct services, not only in English, but in French and German. Priests were called again in the summer of 1855 when cholera broke out at the fort. In his journal entry for August 2, 1855, Duerinck noted a “request from Major E.A. Ogden, Fort Riley … to send a clergyman to the fort to attend the sick and administer to them the rites of the Church.” That there is not another entry in Duerinck’s journal until August 31 suggests the havoc that must have ensued as cholera spread quickly through the fort. By the time Ogden called for a priest, “several” already had died and, within another day fifteen more, including Captain Ogden.

Duerinck and the Potawatomi

By 1852, St. Mary’s Mission had 170 acres fenced and ninety-five acres under cultivation: sixty acres in corn, twenty-five in oats, six in potatoes, and the balance in turnips, hemp, and buckwheat. The cattle herd, which would continue to grow, comprised two-hundred-fifty horned stock in 1853, including eighty cows, fifteen yoke of oxen, forty steers, and one hundred young cattle born at the mission. Potawatomis around the mission also were doing well, Duerinck reporting that they “have this season an abundance of produce,” their surplus corn amounting to six or seven thousand bushels. “With much ado, we have succeeded the last year in prevailing upon [the Indians] to break down their old-fashioned corn patches, and to make, in various places, large square common fields,” he reported to the commissioner of Indian Affairs. There was, he said, “a good demand for corn, potatoes, oats … [and] the mission as well as the Indians can sell at fair prices.”

Thus were Duerinck’s efforts to acculturate the Potawatomi paying dividends, at least among some members of the tribe, who not only were employing Euro-American farming methods, but also marketing their produce. While Duerinck praised the work of “our Catholic
Indians around the mission,” he expressed disappointment – and not a little distain – for “the Pottawatomie Prairie Indians” who, he said, were “averse to work, and live in wretched cabins and wigwams.” They painted their face, were “addicted to liquor,” and delighted, he said, “in all sorts of motley and fantastical dress and trappings.” He lamented their lack of thrift and enterprise, writing that they could find a ready market for all the produce they could raise – if only they would work. But, he allowed, it was a difficult goal “to make an Indian fall in love with work, who deems labor a disgrace, and who looks to his squaw to hoe the corn.”

He dismissed these Indians and turned his attention instead to the boys in the mission school, noting that “it has always been our aim to establish a school where a true life can be lived, where labor can be united with learning, where boys can be fitted to do more extensive good than has yet been accomplished … We have set up our mark, and the little Indians must have their bow and arrow and shoot at it. If they cannot help us to raise corn and pumpkins, they must peel potatoes, mind the gap, and be somewhere ‘in pomorum custodian.’”

The tough-minded Duerinck placed the bulk of his energies on finding ways to support the mission school, stating his reasons in his annual report of 1855: “We have an extensive establishment to support; we are every day in the year about 140 persons in family, which we have to provide with butter and bread,” he wrote. “Our means are limited, and bear no proportion to our expenses.” With so many pupils to support, “our school is a real paradox; the more scholars we have the harder times we see, for the simple reason that we are engaged in a losing business, a sinking concern. If we only had four scholars we could make money, whereas 120 keep us constantly in hot water.” As Father Gailland had done, Duerinck sat down and calculated, figuring that the mission “lost $25 on every scholar” for a total of three thousand dollars a year.
However, he also reported that the mission had *made* four thousand dollars for the year 1855, a profit figured even “after supplying ourselves with milk, butter, and beef.” The money derived from the mission farm, which “as usual,” Duerinck reported, “is the support of the mission.” Not to be overlooked was the mission cattle herd, which had grown to three-hundred-fifty or four hundred head. “They all do well,” he said, ranging on the prairies in summer and, in winter, placed in a field and fed on hay and oats. “Everyone knows that the new Territories are a fine grazing country, and that stock-raising will ere long be the favorite occupation of the settlers.”

By 1857, St. Mary’s Mission, in the words of Indian Agent William E. Murphy, was “the admiration of all passersby,” the “neatness and cleanliness of the school yard and buildings …give to it an air of comfort.” The *New York Daily Tribune* of June 22, 1854, agreed: “The Mission buildings, with the adjacent trading-houses, groups of Indian improvements and extensive cornfields all give it the appearance of a town.” Two years later the *Kansas Weekly Herald* reported that the mission comprised “fourteen buildings including a very respectable church,” as well as one-hundred-ten acres under cultivation.

Passersby who mentioned the mission in their writings document the contemporary scene. On his way to California in 1849, Andrew Lopp Murphy camped “near the Catholic Mission,” and reported “large fields of Sunflower 10 feet high.” When Thomas Evershed passed by that same year he noted that the Potawatomi had “plowed a sizable amount of prairie land in preparation for spring plantings of diverse crops. They shirked from none of the hard work and were living in good quality log houses built by their own labors.” John F. Snyder wrote of the mission in 1850 as “a very neat looking place, consisting of three, or four two story log houses belonging to the church, and about twenty small log huts. The indians here have
large farms, and seem to be very industrious.”

Passing the mission in May 1850, James Woods noted that residents were “just leaving mass.” He stopped long enough to buy “1 bu. of corn … for which we paid 1.50.”

By the time Edwin Bird passed by in 1859 he noted a “peach orchard and several other lucuries [sic].” He wrote of St Mary’s as “quite a town having about 500 inhabitants mostly indians…Saw several well educated indians, one had a store where we stopt to get sum cider.”

On her way to California in 1850, Henrietta Chiles camped half a mile from the mission, in a bottom with plenty of wood and water. It was, she declared, “the most beautiful scenery I ever saw. The mission is in the bottom surrounded with hills. A grove of trees on the creek where it is situated relieves the sameness which the prairie generally has. Flowers are numerous
but there is not a variety of them yet.” She also noted “several toll bridges owned by the Indians. They charged from five to ten cents per wagon.” When Lorena Hays “came by” the mission, she mentioned the log church and white-washed houses. “The place,” she wrote, “had a very neat appearance. The indians dress very fine in broadcloth but wear their clothes in rather an odd and slovenly manner.” Celinda Hines, writing in 1853, also “found there to our surprise quite a pleasant looking village. Country – rolling prairie consequently many ravines…worst one bridged.”

Julia Louisa Lovejoy passed through the Potawatomi reservation in May 1858 on her way home to Manhattan, Kansas, where three years earlier her husband, the Methodist minister Charles H. Lovejoy, had staked a claim. She wrote of the vast Kaw bottomlands, “level as the floor of a house,” of “waving tall grass,” and “here and there, herds of swine, fat cattle and
horses, that roam at large, owned by the Indians.” A log house, “neatly white-washed, a corn patch of a few acres fenced in, meets your view,” she wrote, “while hundreds, yes thousands of acres of heavy timber stretch all along, we think unbroken, through the Kansas valley.”

Lovejoy, noting that she was on the “government road from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Riley,” stated that her party occasionally crossed a toll bridge “kept by an Indian.” Military teams on the road also were expected to pay a toll, which the government agreed to make in lump, quarterly payments to the tribe “at a liberal rate,” a promise that was not always kept. As Lovejoy crossed the Potawatomi reservation, she looked at the land with envy, writing that “thousands of acres of as rich land and choice timber as the sun ever shone upon [was] unoccupied, owned by these lazy Indians. O how many, many times we wished that poor working men in the East, who need farms, or poor Methodist preachers, who have always sung so truly, ‘No foot of land do I possess,’ could have the doors thrown open to them here in this paradise, and find a home for their dependant families in their old age.”

California-bound James Woodworth stopped at the mission “for a feu [sic] minutes … to procure some articles.” That the mission would have been well-supplied there can be little doubt. In addition to Duerinck’s dealings, Madeline Bourassa Bertrand, wife of Joseph Bertrand Sr., ran an inn in the vicinity, her business supplied with beef and at least some groceries from Duerinck’s fields. J. Butler Chapman mentioned the lodging kept by Mrs. Bertrand in his 1854 emigrant’s guide and, on March 1, 1856, the Lawrence Herald of Freedom also noted Mrs. Bertrand’s inn: “She has fine stables, sets an excellent table, and is in every way qualified for
entertaining the traveling public." According to the dragoon Percival Lowe, Mrs. Bertrand "kept the only hotel worth the name between Riley and Leavenworth." According to the dragoon Percival Lowe, Mrs. Bertrand "kept the only hotel worth the name between Riley and Leavenworth."88

Thus was St. Mary’s Mission many things. For overlander Chestina Allen, it was a landmark where she “met W[illiam] just below the Catholic Mission.” For overlander Pardon Dexter Tiffany, the “Catholick Station” was the place where he hoped to be able to send a letter to his wife back in St. Louis. It was, he told her, “the last point from which I expected to be able to write to you until I get to Fort Laramie.”90 With the opening of Kansas Territory in 1854, a store on the mission grounds – kept by Joseph and Madeline Bourassa Bertrand’s son Benjamin – became a polling place in the territorial election of 1855, and Father Duerinck an election judge.91

For a time, St. Mary’s Mission also served as the official seat of Catholicism in the great expanse between the Rocky Mountains and Kawsmouth. In 1851, with the Potawatomi reservation home to the largest concentration of Catholics on the Plains, the Roman Catholic Church selected St. Mary’s Mission as an Apostolic See and appointed John Baptist Miége, D.D., as bishop. Miége, a professor of theology at St. Louis University, arrived at St. Mary’s in May 1851.92 A residence was built hastily for him and, seeing as the mission’s log church was soon to become the “cathedral of the west,” a plank floor was added. When Bishop Miége returned from a trip to Rome, he brought back for the mission church “costly vestments, chalices, a silver ostensorium, and works of art, including a painting of the Virgin Mary, which was hung over the church altar. Most delightful was an organ, surely one of the first, if not the first, in Kansas.93

By 1853, eighteen Religious were working at the mission. An addition was added to the Jesuit residence to allow private rooms, and a larger bell was ordered for the log church so that
its ringing could be heard “in all parts of St. Mary’s in a high wind.” On a visit to St. Mary’s Mission toward the end of 1857, the Jesuit Peter DeSmet spoke of the “progress” being made among the Potawatomis. “In the space of the last ten years, our Fathers at St. Mary’s have baptized beyond four hundred adults and a great number of children,” he wrote. “The heart of the missionary is soothed with an unspeakable joy on witnessing their assiduity in church, their resignation in sickness, their natural charity, exercised especially in regard to the poor, the orphans and the sick …They are styled savages, but we may boldly assert that in all our great cities, and everywhere, thousands of whites are more deserving of the title.”

“A great number of Pottawatomies have made considerable progress in agriculture, and live in a certain degree of affluence,” DeSmet continued. “The whites who pass by and visit the little territory of the Pottawatomies, especially in the environs of St. Mary’s Mission are agreeably surprised. They find it difficult to believe that they are among Indians.”

**Duerinck and the Merchants**

Arguably, St. Mary’s Mission played an important economic role on the border as its business dealings extended to settlers and establishments in Missouri. In March 1857, for instance, Duerinck sent a man named Tom Quigley to Cass and Clay counties on the Missouri border “to go & buy cattle.” At the town of Liberty in Clay County, Duerinck worked with a Mr. A.G. Reed in buying cattle for his accounts with Fort Riley. Duerinck dealt often, as well, with the merchants Elijah Cody and a Mr. Warner of Weston, as well as the firms of Waterman & Ryan and P. & B. Slevin of St. Louis. On August 19, 1856, for instance, Duerinck listed items requested from Waterman & Ryan: “Send me a barrel sauterne wine, prime article; 1 keg nails No. 6; 4 pieces.” And from P. & B. Slevin he requested: “4 pieces osnaburg, 2 doz. paper tacks No. 8; 2 paper screws from ½ to 1¼ inch long; 1 paper screws 2 in. and 1 paper 3 inch
long; 4 lbs. glue.” The items were to be shipped care of Rees & Keith, Leavenworth City. On
February 14, 1856, he sent to Waterman & Ryan, St. Louis, for garden seeds from Mr. Plant’s
store. The list included a wide variety of seeds — onions, beets, beans, and lettuce to parsnip,
parsley, radishes, peas, sage, thyme, and saffron.

Not only did Duerinck’s business life embrace everything from cattle to paper tacks,
turnips to glue, but it also extended to real estate. On November 23, 1857, his journal records
that Hamilton J. Bertrand had left the key to his house “at the cross roads” with Father Duerinck,
“which he is to rent to the best advantage of the owner. He says that he is willing to take $5 per
month.” A Mr. C. Polk, who apparently was a non-Indian, agreed to rent the house for the said
five dollars per month.

Duerinck also served as a kind of banker and trusted emissary. In January 1857, for
instance, he sold twenty head of cattle to Henry Rodierke of Rock Creek, accepted four hundred
dollars in cash and took a note for the rest, to be paid in six months. The following March, John
Murphy of Indianola entrusted Duerinck with four hundred dollars in gold, which Duerinck
promised to take to Murphy’s son, who was attending Jones Commercial College in St. Louis.
Duerinck promised not to give the young man all the money at once, but made arrangements
with a Father Verdin in St. Louis to distribute the sum in specified increments.100

If IOUs were not repaid in a timely manner, Duerinck wasn’t afraid to press for
collection. On October 27, 1857, he informed Daniel Lennon “that J.B.D. is anxious to have the
debt of $160 of James Lennon (Daniel’s brother) paid or secured in some shape.” Duerinck said
he had asked the Riley County sheriff, a Mr. Davis of Ogden, to call on the brothers at
Chapman’s Creek “to attach some cattle.” This was no idle threat, and that November 15,
Duerinck noted in his journal that the sheriff had taken the cattle. Duerinck was no less tough on
the métis Hilarie Nadeau, whom he informed on March 20, 1857, “of my intention to make him pay for the cow he has drove off and killed.” Duerinck hired at least two black people to work at the mission; one was a washerwoman and the other a man named Tom, who appears to have been a free black who helped put up hay and drive cattle. A “Mexican” named Juan also worked at least occasionally as a messenger.101

It is instructive that Duerinck’s journal begins in August of 1854, just two months after the signing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. That Duerinck started keeping financial notes that summer suggests how the opening of the country to white settlement presented new business opportunities for the mission. “At no period has the institution been more popular and prosperous…we thank our stars for our good fortune,” Duerinck wrote in September 1854, by which time St. Mary’s Mission had expanded to three chapels “in various localities for the accommodation of our Catholic population…”102 That Duerinck used the word population rather than Indians, and then in the next sentence spoke about the “many new settlers” in the territory, suggests that he meant to impress upon readers that the mission’s three chapels served Euro-Americans as well as Potawatomis. In addition to the mission at St. Mary’s, another was located on Soldier Creek, northwest of Topeka, and another on Mission Creek, south of the Kansas River.103 Duerinck unabashedly wrote that Catholic Religious at St. Mary’s Mission “have hailed with pleasure the organization of the Territories” and forecast that “laws and the fear of punishment” would curtail any violence involving popular sovereignty.104

**Kansas Troubles**

When violence did erupt in Kansas, one Indian agent told how his charges watched “with amazement and disgust, the horrid scene of political contention in the Territory; astonished and affrighted by proceedings of their friends, the whites…”105 So afraid were the Kansa that for a
time “they abandoned their homes for the safety of themselves and property.” When members of the Ottawa were accused of “taking an active part” in difficulties between the pro- and anti-slavery parties, Ottawa chiefs called a full council and declared themselves “collectively and individually, neutral in the conflicts between the aforesaid parties as long as we are not molested nor violence offered our persons or property.” They furthermore took the stance that if any Ottawa was found to be taking up arms or furnishing money or implements of war to either side, that person would be excluded “from his claim to land and annuity,” and compelled to leave the reservation.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs George Manypenny blamed the Kansas troubles for contributing to the unwillingness of some Potawatomis to adopt white ways. “Many of them are averse to abandoning their ancient habits and customs, and the disorderly conduct of portions of the white inhabitants of Kansas territory has served to confirm in their views such of them as are opposed to civilized pursuits,” he wrote. “One of the chiefs, with his band, one hundred strong, has left for the Cherokee or Creek country, having expressed the opinion that perhaps he would never return.”

The splintering of Protestant churches over the slavery question affected Indian people as well as white. When the Methodist Episcopal Church split into Northern and Southern branches in 1844, the prominent Delaware preacher Charles Ketchum adhered to the Northern branch even though most Delawares, including his brother James, who was considered one of the most eloquent orators of the tribe, sided with the M.E. Church, South. Charles Ketchum built his own church in order to keep the small, northern remnant together. The division of the Methodist Episcopal Church also created much bitterness among the Wyandots, some of whom owned
slaves while others were strongly anti-slavery. The church split soon after the tribe removed to Kansas in 1843.\textsuperscript{109}

Controversy was so serious among Northern and Southern branches of the Baptist Church that the Potawatomi Baptist Mission temporarily suspended operations in 1855.\textsuperscript{110} The slavery question was especially contentious among the Shawnees and contributed to tribal factionalism.\textsuperscript{111} Until their removal west, most Shawnees, living in Ohio where slavery was prohibited, had little exposure to slavery. In the Kansas Indian County, however, the eastern line of their reservation was just west of the zealously proslavery Westport, and their Methodist missionary, Thomas Johnson, introduced slavery onto the reserve, perhaps as early as 1832. Indian Agent Richard Cummins also brought slaves to the area sometime between 1832 and 1837.\textsuperscript{112} As the Shawnees became more acculturated, historian Kevin Abing writes, some wealthier Shawnees also acquired slaves, including the métis Joseph Parks, considered the richest member of the tribe.\textsuperscript{113}

When the Methodist Episcopal Church split, members of the Methodist Indian Mission Conference, which included the Shawnee mission, allied with the Methodist Church, South, which “drove wedges among members of the Shawnee tribe.” Métis leaders supported the pro-slavery missionaries, while more traditional bands of Shawnees sided with anti-slavery forces. The controversy was severe enough, Abing writes, that a portion of the anti-slavery Shawnees left to join a band in Oklahoma, and others removed their children from the mission school. Still others were said to help slaves who had run away from Missouri find shelter in the Indian County.\textsuperscript{114}

Historians long have noted the important role of the Shawnee Methodist Mission in territorial Kansas; it was there that the executive offices of the first territorial governor were
located, where the first territorial legislature convened (some members boarding at the mission),
and where votes were cast in the territory’s 17th Electoral District. In addition, mission
superintendent Thomas Johnson was a pro-slavery delegate. A newspaper correspondent for the
Boston Journal wrote in 1854 of Johnson’s “beautifully situated” house and well-cultivated
grounds, dependent, he said, on slave labor. A correspondent from the New York Tribune
described “Johnson’s mansion” as the headquarters of the Proslavery party in Kansas. “Mr.
Johnson accommodates at reasonable charge all wayfarers who come; and I was speedily
ushered by an active gray-headed negro, who acts the major domo of the establishment, into a
long dining room dimly lighted with lamps…” The “domestic economy” of the mission was
said to have been put in the hands of Jackson and Charlotte, slaves belonging to Johnson, who
owned perhaps four other slaves.

Potawatomi lives also were affected by the slavery issue. At the center of controversy was
the Potawatomi agent George W. Clarke, a strong pro-slavery man who became so embroiled
in what he described as “difficulties in the Territory,” that his house was sacked by people he
described as “a large body of armed marauders, styled the ‘northern army,’ under the command
of General James Lane.” Apparently retaliating for the death of one of their compatriots, likely
at Clarke’s hand, Clarke said they “scattered the papers of my office and many of which had
been lost.” In a lengthy letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs George Manypenny, who
had accused Clarke “of mingling in the ‘broils’ and ‘lawless conduct’” in the territory, Clarke
tried to vindicate himself and keep his job. “I did not take up arms against the outlaws,” he
insisted, “until after I was driven from my house, with my family, and we were compelled to fly,
fugitives into a neighboring state; my house was plundered by the outlaws…” He took
exception to Manypenny’s accusation, writing that the “broils” to which Manypenny alluded
were “ones that involved nearly the whole Territory, and which it was impossible for me to avoid.”

After eight hundred pro-slavery men entered Lawrence, burned the Free State Hotel and wreaked the offices and presses of the town’s two newspapers in May 1856, Clarke delayed the Potawatomi annuity payment for two weeks and then “procured a military escort” as he assembled the Indians at Uniontown. Earlier, he disallowed “delivery of the incendiary speeches,” on the Potawatomi reservation and forbid polling “at the two precincts on the reserve” during elections the previous May. He also had carried on a running battle with territorial governor Albert Reeder, accusing Reeder of trying to defraud the Kansa métis of their lands, while Reeder charged that Clarke had “re-enforced the mob at Lecompton with a party of Indians” during the so-called Wakarusa War.

The Wakarusa War, which occurred in November-December 1855, stood at the heart of Clarke’s troubles. The “war” essentially was a bloodless, one-week siege of Lawrence by an army of pro-slavery Missourians. They camped outside of Lawrence, along the Wakarusa River, while an army of free-state men barricaded the town and stood ready to fight should the Missourians advance. Only one man was killed, Thomas W. Barber, a free-stater who happened upon a party of pro-slavery men – including Clarke – as he took a break from the defense of Lawrence and road toward home. Ordered to halt, the unarmed Barber was shot, the assailant never determined, although it was either Clarke or another man. If Clarke had, as accused, “re-enforced the mob” by taking “a party of Indians” with him to Lecompton or Lawrence, no mention of it appears in an early history of the state.

Following the Wakarusa War, Clarke returned to his job, but hostilities remained. On October 31, 1856, coming back from St. Louis with $31,000 in annuity money, he requested a
military escort. “I do not deem it safe to proceed through the Territory of Kansas with these funds without a military escort,” he wrote, adding that he also wanted a military presence during the upcoming annuity payment. The danger was real. Shawnee agent William Gay was killed and his son badly wounded while they were carrying Indian money from Westport. Thomas B. Sykes, U.S. Special Agent for the Delawares, also worried. “I have a large sum of money to carry from Leavenworth City to the Delaware Agency,” he wrote on June 4, 1859, “and owing to the great danger in the transportation of said money, and the many threats that have been made by the whites, and especially traders living around and adjacent to the Delaware reservation, I desire an escort of government troops to aid me in the transportation of the money, and in the protection of the Indians during the payment ….”

Even after the Bleeding Kansas years, danger was present during annuity payments. In October 1870, Dr. William Nicholson was present during the Potawatomi payment, which took place over a four-day period at the paystation near St. Mary’s Mission. Nicholson explained that most of the Indians deposited their money “with bankers who are in Topeka as it is unsafe for them to undertake to keep it themselves as there are thieves, pickpockets, and robbers around watching their opportunity…Counterfeit money men are usually on hand ready to change money for the Indians & pass off their spurious bills, as many of the Indians receive large amounts and many $100 bills.” Nicholson told how “the paymaster (a Mr. Williamson) closed the payment at dark last night because it was not considered safe. There was a large class of bad men known to have collected in town & it was supposed some of the Indians would be robbed, in going from the office to the camp after receiving their money.”

During territorial days, in February 1857, U.S. Marshal Isaac Winston was concerned enough about Indian money that he requested “an iron safe be furnished as soon as navigation
opens up,” and suggested that Leavenworth might be “the most convenient point,” to deliver it. Without a safe, he said, “I will be compelled to keep the public money at Lecompton, which would be very inconvenient.” Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny spoke of an “influx of lawless men and speculators” who trespassed on Indian land and created “depredations of every conceivable kind” during Kansas’ territorial years. The territory had been opened fewer than six months when Potawatomi agent Clarke informed the superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, Alfred Cumming, that the Indian country “was overrun by white men, who had gone there under one pretext or another,” causing “numerous disturbances,” especially due to “the introduction and sale of spiritous liquors.” Clarke spoke of “gamblers, horse thieves, and trespassers,” and said he had called upon the chiefs to furnish him a police force, which they had done.

Clarke complained of white men “camping on the Military Road” and selling whiskey “at the Cross Creek Bridge,” while agent William Murphy complained of “the proprietors of a small steamboat, called the Gus Linn,” which was navigating the Kansas River and in open violation of the law “selling whisky to the Pottawatomi Indians.” With white settlements now in Kansas, as well as over the Missouri border, it was easier than ever to obtain alcohol. Clarke told of a party of ten or twelve Indians, apparently Potawatomi, who started out on horseback one evening in 1856, rode eight or ten miles, and returned during the night “each with a jug or flask of whiskey,” enough to “intoxicate fifty or a hundred Indians before mornings.” The Indians, he wrote, “are thus settled at the doors of whisky shops owned by infamous men who use every kind of seduction to accomplish this vice.” Other white men outside the reservation had “commited depredations upon the timber of the Pottawatomies.” In December 1854, for instance, Clarke wrote to a Mr. John Keller, who had been cutting timber on Indian land to make
fence rails. “You are directed to pull up those stakes and to abandon your undertaking,” Clarke stated.\textsuperscript{138}

Even as pro- and anti-slavery forces gathered and crossed into the Indian Country, transforming it from frontier to borderland, Father Duerinck seemed more intent on his farm than on the gathering political clouds. “We regret to see the country settling under the present unfavorable circumstance,” he wrote – not in reference to looming hostilities but because there presently were “failure of crops, scarcity of produce, and high prices of provisions.”\textsuperscript{139} As usual, his eyes focused on the mission farm and cattle herd. Even in October 1856, in the midst of what he called “the civil war in Kansas, with all its acts of violence and bloodshed,” the mission had not relaxed its efforts “in the cause of education.” We are, Duerinck stated in his annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, “master of the art of raising pumpkins and corn.”\textsuperscript{140}

With the opening of the territory, settlers recognized St. Mary’s Mission as an outpost of civilization and wrongly assumed they could settle nearby. “Many new settlers, squatters of the first [order], not acquainted with our Indian reservations, have offered to settle about the Mission,” Duerinck said. “Some way or other this place looks to them like a little Paradise. When they understand that they cannot settle here, they feel sorely disappointed.”\textsuperscript{141} Some young folks, he said, even had “boasted that they will out-general our Indians. It is surmised that they intend to marry some of the best-looking young squaws, late school-girls, and to take possession of the land. That is certainly a great trick, and it is confidently asserted, by those who know, that the women will stand the game.”\textsuperscript{142} Such schemes to acquire Indian land also were noted by John C. McCoy, who wrote to the Office of Indian Affairs in 1855. “The Territory of Kansas is now filled with shrewd, designing and unscrupulous men who have a thousand
different schemes concocted and in consequence there seems to be a perfect mania for acquiring lands…”  

The problem, as historian Paul Wallace Gates explains, is that Kansas Territory was thrown open to non-Indian settlement even though not one acre was legally open to sale. The land belonged, by treaty, to the emigrant Indians. Nonetheless, to acquire the land, the government devised what Gates calls “the most complex and confusing array of policies affecting the distribution of public lands and the transfer to white ownership of Indian land-rights that has ever emerged in the continental United States, save perhaps Oklahoma.”  

Kansas tumbled into “land, slavery, plunder, and patronage combined,” explaining, William E. Unrau writes, why the Kansas struggle was so devastating for Indians.  

In the nation’s capital, the Pierce and Buchanan administrations “were pursuing a policy of calculated vacillation;” squatters were allowed to remain on the land as a way to justify new removal treaties with the emigrant Indians.  

Lacking directives from Washington, Clarke, for instance, was unable to do anything about several hundred squatters who had settled on the eastern end of the Potawatomi reserve near Topeka, a similar situation on reservations of the Miami, Peoria, and Kaskaskia.  

Citizens of the territory “regard the whole country as open to them, or soon to be,” Clarke stated, “and it is getting to be a matter of great difficulty – to separate the white from the real population.”  

The Potawatomi Council apparently had complained about intrusions and, at its request, Clarke said, “I ordered a number of white men who were living in the nation to leave, many of whom did so at once.” Legally or not, Clarke took it upon himself to order “certain white men living with Indian women, either to marry lawfully to their wives or to leave the country.”
Depredations occurred on the land of other emigrant Indians, being especially severe on those closer to the Missouri border. The Shawnees faced “an absolute reign of terror,” which included the shooting of agent William Gay within sight of agency headquarters. Illegal squatters were allowed to remain on Indian lands until the winter passed, but ultimately never left.  

“The Delaware and Shawnee tribes are much annoyed, frequently, by emigrants and trains passing through their country, and not unfrequently persons of the State,” Agent Thomas Mosely, Jr. wrote in the summer of 1851. Americans were stealing Indian horses and other stock. “These two tribes inform me that their annual losses, for the last two years, is not less than fifty or sixty head of horses, besides many oxen and hogs killed; that is for both tribes, and they estimate the loss to be over three thousand dollars.”

Manypenny spoke movingly of depredations committed upon the emigrant Indians. They “have been personally maltreated, their property stolen, their timber destroyed, their possessions encroached upon, and divers other wrongs and injuries done them. Notwithstanding all which, they have afforded a praiseworthy example of good conduct, under the most trying circumstances. They have at no time, that I am aware of, attempted to redress their own wrongs, but have patiently submitted to injury, relying on the good faith and justice of the government to indemnify them.” Among the “din and strife” surrounding the condition of the black race, “the interests and rights of the red man,” Manypenny said in his annual report of 1856-1857, “have been completely overlooked and disregarded the good conduct and patient submission of the latter contrast favorably with the disorderly and lawless conduct of many of their white brethren …”
Despite the injustices, Duerinck became a Kansas booster, acting as an informal information agent for the new territory. “Received July 5, 1855, a letter from Francis Arenz of Illinois, enquiring about Kansas Territory, answer him July 15,” he recorded in the *House Diary*. On December 29, 1856, he responded to a letter that arrived from a Mr. Michel Glover of Elora, Canada West. “Informed [him] that Kansas Territory is so & so: that he can make a living with industry, labor & economy.” That same month, Joseph Frasier, described by Duerinck as “bugler to Capt. Newton at Fort Riley” stopped by the mission, apparently for advice on how “to cast anchor in the neighborhood.” That same month Duerinck responded to a letter from Julia and Joseph McIntyre of New Orleans, telling them “that the two claims in question were good and that Mr. McIntyre would always be able to find a claim or to buy a claim, if he concludes to come up and to live in Kansas.”

In the months preceding the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Duerinck went so far as to promote St. Mary’s Mission as an excellent site for the territorial capital. “The Catholic mission is said to be the most lovely spot in the Indian country: the mission buildings, with adjacent trading uses, groups of Indian improvements, and extensive cornfields, all give it the appearance of a town,” he wrote. “Some people think that if Nebraska be organized as a territory, St. Mary’s ought to be the capital.”

**Duerinck and the Métis**

John Baptist Duerinck’s dealings extended not only to merchants in Liberty, Weston, and St. Louis, but to Indian agents and tribal workers, as well as the Potawatomi and métis themselves. “Exchanged a cow for an ox with the Indian Xenia,” he wrote in February 1856. Bought “from Wasschia a young cow for a 2 year old bull and $10” and sold to Catat a yoke of work oxen for $90, and threw in “yoke, bows & chain.” The métis Vieux, Bertrand, Nadeau,
and Bourbonnais families appear in Duerinck’s journal, all of whom owned cattle. In March 1857, Francis Bourbonnais gave two of his young, yoke steers to a Mr. Martin and a Mr. Houston “to break and gentle.” They were to return them by August 1st. For thirty dollars, Duerinck purchased a cow and calf belonging to the métis Eli Nadeau and then sold it to the washerwoman at cost. Besides the black man Tom’s heifer, another belonging to “old woman Star’s sister” and another to the métis Louis Vieux were going to have calves.

The Bertrands seem to have been especially close to Jesuits at the mission. Benjamin M. Bertrand, son of Joseph and Madeline Bourassa Bertrand, located his cabin and a “storeroom” close to the mission and was a business partner in Duerinck’s dealings with Fort Riley. Based on journal entries, it appears that Bertrand’s role was to deliver mission produce to the fort. On April 15, 1856, for instance, Duerinck noted that Bertrand “has on hand $185 received … for corn delivered & to be delivered at Fort Riley.” On June 22, 1856, Bertrand turned over to Duerinck “his corn[?] receipts under the A.M. Lowe contract.”

Benjamin Bertrand, who had ridden in the sleigh with Father Petit in 1830s Indiana, seemed always at the ready to assist as he might. When the Potawatomi, in the summer of 1856, held a council to petition Indian Agent George W. Clarke for medicine, it was Bertrand who offered to help pay whatever expenses were involved, while the Indian Naxay furnished a horse, and the Potawatomi physician, L.R. Palmer, who also was a business partner of Duerinck’s, paid $1.50 for the horse hire. The previous spring, Duerinck had called on the Indians Naxay and Catat to travel to Kansas City for fifty bushels of potatoes, and the following March sent the métis Alexander Nadeau to Weston, Missouri, to pick up three old plows and a new one at G. Leckenby’s shop. “Sent also the same to Warner’s store for a barrel lard and 10 sacks flour more or less to make out his load,” his journal states. On October 27, 1857, Duerinck again sent Eli
Nadeau on an errand, this time to Warner’s store to get “20 pairs shoes No. 3, plain, strong, &
heavy for Indian girls at school,” as well as thirty-three pairs of shoes, “men’s brogans,” fifty
pounds of carded wool, a keg of nails, tallow candles and wicks, three bushels of dried apples
and two of peaches.

More than helpers and business allies, certain métis – Louis Vieux, Madeline Bourassa
Bertrand, Joseph LaFromboise, and Madore Beaubien -- joined “a club of ten” organized by
Duerinck to subscribe to the Ohio Cultivator, a striking occurrence considering how
“uncivilized” contemporaries and scholars have considered the Kansas Indian Country.160 On
February 4, 1857, Duerinck pooled the money of these educated and successful métis and mailed
six dollars to the magazine for a subscription to run from February 1857 to February 1858.161
The Vieuxs and Bertrands also were at the forefront of Father Duerinck’s efforts to bring
“scientific farming” to the territory.

**Duerinck and Cyrus McCormick**

As early as 1852, Duerinck imported a McCormick mowing machine, which he used
primarily to cut hay for the mission’s cattle herd, but also to harvest grain.162 In the summer of
1853, he reported cutting sixty acres of “very heavy” oats with his McCormick mower. “We cut
them all in five days with a mowing machine,” he stated to Indian agent John W. Whitfield.
“This implement is the wonder of the country – the Indians are lost in admiration when they see
it work.”163

Beginning in October 1854, Duerinck struck up a correspondence with Cyrus Hall
McCormick, who, at age twenty-two, built the first successful reaper at his father’s forge in
Rockbridge County, Virginia.164 It was patented in 1834. McCormick sold his first reaper in
1840 and, by 1850, with assistance from his brothers Leander and William, had consolidated all
manufacturing in the Chicago plant of C.H. McCormick. The three brothers soon created the
world’s leading producer of agricultural instruments.\textsuperscript{165} As early as 1845, McCormick
employed a traveling agent to sell his machines and published long advertisements in farm
papers, which possibly was how Duerinck first learned of him, although the priest also claimed –
in his first letter to McCormick – to have met him.\textsuperscript{166}

“I claim a slight acquaintance with you, having been introduced to you several years ago
in Cincinnati,” Duerinck wrote on October 10, 1854. “I happened to be in the office of the
Ploughboy, and the Editor Mr. Randell, an honest Quaker, presented Mr. McCormick, the
inventor of the Virginia reaper to Professor Duerinck of St. Xavier College.”\textsuperscript{167} Duerinck began
his correspondence with McCormick just a year after McCormick began manufacturing a
combined reaping and mowing machine known as the “Old Blue Machine,” which sold by the
thousands between 1854 and 1865. Duerinck, however, did not like the combined machine,
preferring to use a mower only. His letter continued:

Now, Sir, your friend, if you will consider him as such, resides in Kansas
Territory, at the Pottawatomie Catholic Mission, where he presides over a Manual
Labor School for Indians boys and girls. We live 75 miles west of Fort
Leavenworth, on the Kansas River.

I believe that I have been the first man that has introduced your mowing
machine in these prairies. We have met with success. One of your machines of
1852 used to be the wonder of this country: people have come 25 miles to see it in
operation. Last year I bought one of your machines for 1853 which has done a
fine business…A good number of your machines have been purchased by my
friends and acquaintances who were induced to buy your machines at my
recommendation. They have generally given great satisfaction: one of your
machines of 1854 has cut at Fort Riley this season 700 ton of hay. My own of
1853 has cut at least 500 ton of hay & oats during the present season without any
material break.

Thus did Duerinck serve as a defacto agent for McCormick, “inducing his friends and
acquaintances” to buy McCormick machines. Duerinck told McCormick that with “the slightest
exertions,” he could “realize a great sale” of mowing machines in Kansas and Nebraska because they were certain to be “grazing countries” and “squatters” already present needed to make hay to winter their horned stock. “A mowing machine,” Duerinck said, “is worth to them a little fortune.” That said, Duerinck told McCormick that he expected “a little accommodation at your hands” and went on to list complaints. First, he was not happy that he had to pay for a combined reaper/mower when he wanted only the mower, and second, he and his friends had experienced “great difficulty” in obtaining replacement parts “owing to our isolated position.” Duerinck’s letter filled a good two pages, recommending ways McCormick could improve his mowers – from using stronger metal at the place where the sickles connected to the drivers, to building in more supports for the fingers, to permanently riveting the nuts, which had a habit of loosening and flying off.

McCormick wrote back, asking whether Duerinck would be interested in “taking an Agency.” In a letter dated January 3, 1855, Duerinck turned down the offer: “I feel very willing to recommend your machines and to bear them the best testimony in my power, but the multiplicity of my weighty and responsible duties would prevent me from taking an Agency.” Instead, he recommended that Mr. E. Cody, a merchant in Weston, Missouri, eighty miles from the mission, be supplied with sufficient machines “to extend your business far up the Kansas River.”

“I am of the opinion,” Duerinck continued, “that you may safely send a dozen mowing machines to Weston, for the supply of this district.” For himself he ordered a machine for 1855. “I intend to pay cash down for it,” Duerinck wrote, adding a request that McCormick “send me about 2 doz. of your circulars for my friends & your customers.” In another letter, Duerinck told how he recently had met McCormick’s Baltimore agent while traveling by train from
Washington City to St. Louis. When the Baltimore man overheard Duerinck talking about McCormick’s mowers and reapers “an electric shock passed through his frame,” Duerinck said. The man could hardly believe that Duerinck, who “lived near Sundown in the Western Prairies,” not only knew of, but used the machines. So surprised was the Baltimore man, Duerinck said, that “he was fairly out of breath.”

The offer of an agency came up again in March 1857 as settlement increased in Kansas Territory. “…what, in your opinion, is the prospects of our being able to sell some of Reaping, and Reaping & Mowing Machines combined in the Territory of Kansas,” a McCormick assistant wrote to Duerinck. “We have had some applications for agencies for that Territory from strangers, but as yet have made none. Will you favor us with your views of the probable number that might be sold there, and also if you would take the agency yourself – or if inconsistent with your taste or duties – will you recommend to us some proper person who would accept an agency – we will allow him 10 per cent – the highest rate of commissions paid in any Territory.”

Judging from what we know of the business-minded John Baptist Duerinck, he certainly must have considered the offer, but noted the mission’s inland location, “75 miles or 80 miles from the Missouri River” as the determining factor for his decision to decline the offer. Instead, he recommended a few merchants in Leavenworth.

Duerinck’s journal and correspondence indicate that besides his own mowing machine, two others – both owned by Potawatomi métis -- were in use in the St. Mary’s Mission neighborhood by the spring of 1856. “Louis Jeanveau [Vieux] wants 4 new sickles for his mowing machine 1853,” Duerinck wrote on April 12, 1856, adding that two sickles and a bevel wheel were needed for the métis Amable Bertrand’s 1852 machine. Before buying his machine, Louis Vieux apparently watched Duerinck’s machine at work as it “mowed and put up about 15
ton of hay in the field,” in the summer of 1854. 175 Duerinck also expressed hopes that the métis Madame Bourbonnais, who recently had purchased the mission’s carriage for four steers and three cows with their calves, “could wish me to cut her hay this season.” Three other outfits in the vicinity of the mission, although not métis, owned McCormick machines and were acquainted with Duerinck. They were: Samuel D. Dyer, who operated the government ferry across the Blue River to Fort Riley; Robert Wilson, sutler at Fort Riley; and W.F. and G.M. Dyer, who, in 1854, laid out the town of Ozawkie, northeast of Topeka. Duerinck took charge of this cast of machine owners, ordering parts for them as necessary and telling McCormick: “The boys say that Old Mac, that is the name your machines goes by, is some pumpkins to cut hay.” 176

The mission and métis profited from their machines by cutting hay for others. “We have also cut two days for Bourbonnais, say about 30 loads,” Duerinck wrote on August 18, 1854. “Next Monday, August 20th we intend to go to the Lake to cut more hay with the machine. A.A. Bertrand is cutting … The mowing machine has just finished cutting all the grass in our field; hay for W. Phelps in the field.” 177 The Vieux mower also was being used for outside work. Charles Vieux “has quit cutting for me,” Joseph N. Bourassa stated in a letter to Uniontown trader Thomas Stinson to explain why there was a delay in getting promised hay to him. 178

**Duerinck the Town Builder**

As Kansas transitioned practically overnight from Indian Country to territory, Duerinck inserted himself and St. Mary’s Mission into the business opportunities and land speculation that followed. An example is a sawmill at Indianola, just north of Topeka. In the summer of 1862, when Potawatomi lands were being sectionalized, the métis Louis Henry Ogee, the former ferryman near Uniontown, owned a steam sawmill the town, laid out in 1854 by three men, including the Kentuckian Hayden McMeekin, who appears in the historical record in 1852 as a
licensed trader to the nearby Sac and Fox. So important was this steam sawmill as settlement grew in the new Kansas Territory that a Mr. C.W. Patten of Chicago wrote to Father Duerinck in 1857, apparently asking him to intercede to urge Ogee to sell the mill.

“Informed C.W. Patten, Chicago, that Louis Ogee asked $4,000 – August 18 – for his saw mill & appurtenances at Indianola,” Duerinck recorded in his journal. “Stated also that if he could not do any business with Mr. L. Ogee, perhaps his friend of St. Mary’s Mission will let him have the mill which is going to be erected at Indianola, for cost & charges.” Mr. C.W. Patten’s friend at St. Mary’s Mission was, of course, the enterprising and scientific Father Duerinck, whose letter reveals that he was involved in plans to build a second sawmill at Indianola. Earlier that same month and again acting as intermediary, Duerinck ordered a shingle machine from the same Mr. Charles W. Patten, on behalf of “Messrs Ryan & Louthan,” who, Duerinck said, “have $200 cash on hand to pay for the machine.”

Hard and fast conclusions are difficult to draw, but it is revealing that as these negotiations were underway, Duerinck, on October 4, 1857, wrote in his journal: “Requested Mr. L. Vieux to attend to our town business at Indianola…” Surely, the “town business” had something to do with land sales or mill construction. He also wrote to Bishop Miége, now in Leavenworth, informing him “that the association of Indianola would meet October 6 (1857) and give titles to shareholders, draw lots and levy an assessment to improve the town.” The entry indicates that Father Duerinck probably was deeply involved in the Indianola town association.

So busy was Duerinck in all his business affairs during the summer of 1857 that his journal contains eight separate entries for one day. Amid his notes to debtors and orders for sacks of super-fine flour, one entry stands out: an order placed with P & B Slevin of St. Louis for “round & square iron, a 36-inch bellows, and a tire iron.” These items undoubtedly were
connected to plans to build a mill, but this seems to be a different mill from the one planned for Indianola because when the boiler and engine arrived in Leavenworth that October, Duerinck sent the métis Alex Nadeau with three teams to haul them – not to Indianola, but to St. Mary’s Mission, where they arrived on December 9, 1857. The bill for storage and freight “for saw mill & shop” amounted to $845.183

It seems probable that the iron and bellows were intended for another of Duerinck’s town building efforts – in the new town of Louisville, on Rock Creek, on the western edge of the Potawatomi Reserve. The creek had figured in his business dealings since the opening of the territory. Louisville, recorded as a townsite on January 15, 1857, lay on both sides of the creek and was described as “a very pleasant locality” with medicinal springs nearby. More importantly, it was situated on the military road. Duerinck apparently recognized the town as a prime location. In a diary entry dated July 21, 1857, he wrote that a Mr. F. Emory was planning to come to St. Mary’s Mission and Louisville on July 25th. “when the Mill question will be discussed. He offers to give ample room for mill purposes above McDaniel’s store on Bank of the creek in the town site.”

Mr. F. Emory, whom Duerinck identified as a “captain at Ogden,” (meaning Fort Riley), held the bond for a quarter-section of land on Rock Creek – the southwest quarter of Section 17, Township 9 south, Range 10 east, which Duerinck was interested in “for putting up a saw mill & grist mill in Louisville.” Before the year was out, thanks to help from his “Club of Ten” friend Francis Bergeron, Duerinck had his claim. That summer he had “borrowed a house of Francis Bergeron, which he is to move on the claim and to put it up for which I have paid him in hand on the spot (he breaking prairie) the sum of $35 as a consideration in full.” By September 11, 1857, the cabin was built and Duerinck “forwarded to J.W. Whitfield, Doniphan, K.T. my
declaration of intention to pre-empt the South West Quarter of section 17. Enclosed a dollar in gold for fee – requested an answer.”

Duerinck had been investing in Kansas land as early as December 1856. “Requested Bishop Miége to invest for account of St. Mary’s Mission $1,000 more or less in property in South Leavenworth,” he recorded that month. By late 1857, Duerinck’s hope-for sawmill on Rock Creek, apparently with some financial assistance from St. Mary’s Mission, was up, but it wasn’t in working order: “Trip to the saw mill on Rock Creek. The saw put up in a wrong way & place cannot work. The miller has left. The engineer can but grind a few bushels of corn meal to support himself. New expenses to be made.”

Duerinck’s claim on Rock Creek actually was northwest of the new town site of Louisville, located in the southeast quarter of Section 20 and southwest quarter of Section 21. But the distance between the two would have been less than a mile. According to Cutler’s History of the State of Kansas, the town site was pre-empted by Robert Wilson, sutler at Fort Riley, who kept a “frontier hotel for several years” at the place where the military road crossed the creek. Although Cutler states that the town was named after Robert Wilson’s son Louis, this seems doubtful since a great many of the town lots were owned by another Louis – the métis Louis Vieux. A warranty deed dated November 26, 1860, reveals that Vieux owned some three hundred lots “free and clear from all encumbrances whatsoever” in the town. His sixteen page will also reveals his extensive holdings of lots in Louisville and the surrounding countryside.

In or near Louisville, Vieux went into the grist mill business in 1858, replacing a former mill operated by Jude Bourassa on Mill Creek, which was washed away by a flood in the mid-1850s. The Potawatomi apparently had asked on many occasions for the mill to be rebuilt and finally, in November 1858, Indian agent William E. Murphy turned to Louis Vieux, who signed a contract to be the miller for the Potawatomi on Rock Creek. On November 25, Murphy
forwarded the contract to the superintendent of Indian affairs in St. Louis, for approval, writing:

“…said Vieux is a half breed Pottawatomie, living on the Vermillion, within this reservation, and owns a steam saw & grist mill, on Rock Creek, about 1¼ miles from the line of the reserve. It is true it will be inconvenient for some of the tribe on account of distance, but it is sufficiently near for that portion of them who cultivate the soil most extensively … and the absolute necessity of the poor Indians having some means to procure bread for the winter, are my reasons for adopting the above plan… I can with pleasure add that Louis Vieux is an honest, sober, and industrious Indian, and has a field inclosed for cultivation of at least 100 acres.”

The contract bound Vieux “to diligently and faithfully do the grinding at his steam grist mill on Rock Creek, in Kansas Territory, for the Potawatomi Indians, by making them a first rate article of meal, and that he will strictly obey the orders of the agent for said tribe of Indians, and the laws and regulations of the Indian Department.” Vieux was to be paid fifty dollars a month, commencing December 1, 1858. Vieux signed the contract with his mark. The witness was John Schultz, S.J., of St. Mary’s Mission.

**Father Duerinck’s Death**

Father Duerinck probably would have been the witness to the mill contract had he not died unexpectedly the previous fall. He left the mission in late November 1857, planning to take a steamboat to St. Louis to make his tertianship. Apparently impatient, he and four other men purchased a “skiff” in Wyandot and proceeded down the river on their own. They had not gone far when the skiff struck a snag between Liberty and the landing at Wayne, flipping the craft and throwing the men into the river. Three drowned, including Duerinck. The Lawrence *Herald of Freedom* of January 23, 1858, stated that the death occurred on December 9, 1857, but this certainly was inaccurate since Potawatomi Agent William Murphy spoke of the drownings as
early as December 2nd. “At this moment,” Murphy wrote to John Haverty, superintendent of Indian Affairs in St. Louis, “the mission and the whole vicinity are plunged in profound grief…I consider this loss as one of the greatest calamities which could happen to the Potawatomies, of whom he (Duerinck) was the devoted friend and the Father…”

Also feeling that the death was “a real calamity for the whole tribe,” P.J. DeSmet, S.J., writing from St. Louis University, sang Duerinck’s praises in a letter reporting his death to the editor of the bulletin, *Précis Historiques*, in Brussels. “The death of good Father Duerinck is an incomparable loss,” DeSmet said. “In him, St. Mary’s has lost him who was its soul and life…this blow (as fatal as unexpected) has thrown everyone into mourning, bitter mourning.”

“Good Father Duernick,” however, was such an avid promoter of Indian acculturation that he had not been loved by all. Few members of the Prairie Band Potawatomi sent their children to the Catholic school and, according to Clifton, harbored growing anti-Catholic feelings in a response to the “profoundly anti-Prairie Band sentiment developed among the Jesuits.” Clifton singled out Father Duerinck, calling him “particularly bigoted” and “an avid supporter of assimilation policies” right up until his death. Duerinck’s distain for those unwilling to assimilate came through in his annual reports to the commissioner of Indian Affairs, in which he once wrote of the traditionalists as “the old incorrigible rogues [who] will have their own way – in spite of the world they will live on pumpkins and corn-soup, smoke their pipe, and lie all day before the fire.”

Father Duerinck took a hard-shelled approach to his Indian charges, refusing even to put his labor-saving machines to work in an Indian’s field. “If we express the delight we feel in possessing laboring machines, such as corn shellers, cultivators, rollers, horse hayrakes, moving machines, corn crushers … they wind up by begging us to come and do their work,” he
explained. “This invitation is, of course, declined, on the plea that we do not profess to hire ourselves to work, but that we show them *practically* how work can be done to advantage when a fellow is up to the tricks.” It would, Duerinck said, “be worse than folly, to work for a man who is too lazy to work, and too poor to pay for it when it is done.”

He explained how he dealt with the resistant Prairie Band, telling them they were like “the ‘starved pig,’ either root or die. Plant corn and pumpkins, raise potatoes and beans, cease to beg, cease to be idle, cease to be a burden to others, make a garden and eat the fruit thereof, etc. Suppose it makes you sweat; well, what of it? A poor devil ought not to be so nice; a little sweat would not kill you.”

He continued:

Some of our gentry have a grudge against us for boldly telling them these things; but in spite of the members of this lazy club, our flag waves in the breeze, and we insist on their making a field and a garden, facilitating them in the way of obtaining a cow or other domestic animal – helping the poor of good will, stimulating the sluggish, rebuking the vicious, reproving the improvident, praising the meritorious, and encouraging the industrious amongst them. We care not for the opinion of those red rovers, and we mean to keep out the fire from the walls of our fort as long as there is a man in arms against us. Their demonstrations and alarms give us but little trouble. We must have patience with them, watch our opportunities, and try again….

Duerinck’s condescension toward the “prairie bands” who were not moving “onward” is unmistakable. They were “red rovers,” a “lazy club,” a “gentry with a grudge.” So be it, he seems to say, he would continue to wave the Catholic flag in the breeze, insist on “their making a field and a garden,” and remind them that they were like “the starved pig – either root or die.” No wonder Duerinck was not popular with the Prairie Band, whose members adhered to different values than his own. Their values were not rooted in Father Duerinck’s individualist, Christian work ethic, but in a traditional Potawatomi culture that centered on collectivity and reciprocity.

**Allotments**
Father Duerinck did not live to see the break-up of the Potawatomi tribe, although the formal process that caused it already was under way. On November 19, 1857, Potawatomi agent William E. Murphy met in council with tribal leaders to discuss the government’s request that they sectionalize their reservation and take individual allotments as other emigrant tribes already had done. Even before the Kansas-Nebraska Act was signed, Congress, on March 3, 1853, authorized the Indian Office to negotiate “immediately” with the emigrant Indians to secure their consent for “the settlement” of citizens upon their lands and “for the purpose of extinguishing” their title to the land “in whole or in part.”

Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny went to the Indian Country that same year to begin negotiations, which centered, not on another Indian removal, but on encouraging tribal members to become yeoman farmers by taking individual allotments. (This was a forerunner of the 1887 Dawes General Allotment Act, which forced the break-up of reservations.) Between May 6 and June 5, 1854, Manypenny negotiated treaties with seven Indian groups in Kansas: the Delaware, Shawnee, Iowa, Sac & Fox, Kickapoo, Miami, and confederated Kaskaskia, Peoria, Pinkashaw and Wea, “thereby placing into motion the legal machinery that would hasten the compression of Indian land, provide rights-of-way and land to railroad corporations across the entire reach of Indian country, and clear title to millions of acres of land for white farmers, town promoters, and land speculators soon to take up residence there.” By 1875, only about one thousand emigrant Indians and two diminished reservations would remain in Kansas.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the establishment of St. Mary’s Catholic Mission on the Potawatomis’ Kansas River Reservation. At St. Mary’s, Sacred Heart nuns and Jesuit priests –
who exuded a bias toward acculturation – devoted themselves not only to converting Indian souls, but to steering Potawatomi people into occupations and gender roles considered appropriate for nineteenth century men and women. This chapter argues that St. Mary’s played a far greater role in the region’s history than as a mission to the Potawatomi, especially during the tenure of superior John Baptist Duerinck, S.J., who turned the mission into a business establishment and economic engine. Duerinck took advantage of whatever business opportunities he could, in the process catapulting St. Mary’s Mission into the “pioneer” narrative. In pre-territorial days, for instance, government couriers and the freighting outfit that became Russell, Majors, and Waddell paid the mission for hay and blacksmithing services, while the quartermaster at nearby Fort Riley contracted with St. Mary’s for vegetables and beef from the mission’s 350-head cattle herd. With the opening of Kansas Territory, Duerinck promoted mechanized agriculture, invested in mills and real estate, and became a territorial promoter so ardent that he offered up St. Mary’s Mission as the new Kansas/Nebraska Territorial capital. In 1869, St. Mary’s Mission transitioned from school for Indian children to Kansas’ first college.

1 See *The Dial* (December 1890), 53, (February 1891), 85-87; and Murphy “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 238. Another group of Potawatomis established a village on the Wakarusa River, south of Mission Creek. These settlements later were determined to be outside the southern boundary of the Potawatomi reservation, on Shawnee lands.

2 Ibid. Michael Nadeau and his brother also hauled “the furniture and old doors of Sugar Creek” to the new St. Mary’s Mission. The mission was about ninety miles northwest of the old Sugar Creek Mission, and about eighty miles west of present-day Kansas City. This was not the first time Verreydt had explored the north side of the Kansas River. On November 1, 1847, accompanied by “a party of Indians,” he had explored “the country along the Kansas river, where the government had assigned a new reservation for the Pottawatomies, and to select a suitable and central locality for the new mission.” See *The Dial* (December 1890), 53. He and a “band of Indians” had explored the area again on May 29, 1848.

3 The Potawatomi at Council Bluffs had long encountered conflicts with the Plains tribes farther north. See Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 283. A monograph detailing contact of the emigrant tribes the Plains Indians has yet to be written. See Fixico, “American Indians in Kansas,” 278.
See The Dial (February 1892), 89-90; and Clifton, The Prairie People, 359-361. The range of the four primary Pawnee bands – Grand, Tappaye, Loups, and Republicans – included most of present Nebraska. The emigrant Delawares also tangled with the Pawnees, as did the emigrant Kickapoo, Sac, and Fox. In the winter of 1829, Pawnees killed three Delaware hunters on Republican River north of the present Kansas-Nebraska border. When three more Delawares trapping on Pawnee lands were killed in 1831, including the headman Poushees and the son of chief Kik-tha-we-nund, another of Kik-tha-we-nund’s sons, Suwaunock, avenged his brother’s death by leading a Delaware war party, in June 1832, to the Grand Pawnee village on the Republican River and destroying it. See Alan Farley, “The Delaware Indians in Kansas,” The Trail Guide (September 1955), 10-11; and Bowes, Exiles and Pioneers, 133-36. In another encounter in 1835, a hunting party of Delawares, some four hundred or five hundred miles southwest of their home on the Kansas River, killed twelve Pawnees whom they accused of stealing their horses. After 1852, threatened by tribes farther west, the Pawnee made peace with the emigrant Indians. “Henceforth,” The Dial entry states, “the fertile valley around the Mission could be cultivated in peace, without fear of a panic or the constant dread of being driven from house and home at midnight.” Before this peace was made, Pawnees made a midnight raid on the settlement at St. Mary’s Mission and carried off forty horses. “This frightened the people, and caused a stampede form the lands west of the Mission to the eastern parts of the Reserve,” The Dial states. “Indeed, the Pawnee scare was so keen that one night, on a false rumor being spread that the Pawnees were coming, all the families around St. Mary’s came pouring into (the Jesuit) residence; and they crowded in and so filled the house that no standing room was left, and we could scarcely move. In this distress, the nuns of the Sacred Heart caught the fright, and impressed with the certainty of being tomahawked that very night, they wanted to prepare for martyrdom by a general confession, if the Fathers had allowed it.”

The Dial (May 1891), 139. Potawatomi interpreter John Tipton, who attended the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky and likely was a métis, taught Gailland the Potawatomi language.

Mathevon, “Journal.” Mathevon writes that Joseph Bertrand died soon after, on November 6, 1848. “He was our benefactor, the first who came to find this place and the first who was buried there. He did much for this mission. He died very tranquilly while pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary. He had a great devotion to the Holy Virgin. He wanted to give the name to this place of Saint Mary of the Lake. One called it only Saint Mary, the town, the parish of St. Joseph.”


Although Mathevon’s journal does not say, Edmund undoubtedly was a slave, apparently given to her by Elizabeth Galitzin, the Society’s provincial, who lived in St. Louis. In a letter written from Sugar Creek in August 1841, Mathevon spoke of Edmund: “Our negro Edmund is of the greatest use to us. Here he is a rather important man; he is almost as respected as we are; he teaches the savages carpentry. They are naturally skillful and easily imitate what they are shown to do. They have surrounded the cemetery with a pretty fence, but they cannot find the place for a door. It was Edmund who got them out of this difficulty and helped them end this small task. I take care not to tell him that he is free here, although he is happy, and maybe too pious to abuse this freedom, it is nevertheless safer to leave him in his ignorance, if it is possible. The Indians are almost as black as he…” The priests on the trip were Monsieur Renard, priest of the St. Louis cathedral, and the Jesuit Peter Verhaegen. The other nuns were Louise Amyot and Mary Ann O’Connor, who joined the group in St. Charles.


16 Mathevon, “Journal de la fondation de la Mission du Sacre Coeur.”

17 Ibid. She said the soldiers "were traveling to their fort," probably a reference to Fort Leavenworth.

18 Mathevon, “Journal.” By 1841 Westport was a thriving town. It was laid out in 1833 by John Calvin McCoy, son of missionary Isaac McCoy. Berenice Chouteau lived at Kawsmouth until her death in 1888, by which time "Chouteau's" had grown into the metropolis of Kansas City, Missouri. She became a leader in the Catholic community, remembered for her hospitality, kindness, piety, and philanthropy. See Thorne, *The Many Hands of My Relations*, 149; Garraghan, “Catholic Beginnings of Kansas City,” 14-15.

19 Mathevon, “Journal.”

20 Mathevon described the house as "situated on the Osage River," and "nearby are lots of savages of the rather cruel nation that has been corrupted by the whites." This "house" likely was the Liguest trading post to the Osage, where Father La Croix had ministered in 1822. There, the nuns were kindly received and given a bedroom in which to stay.

21 Ibid.

22 See “House Journal” (of the Covenant of the Sacred Heart); and Annual Letters, 1869-71.

23 The snake and cricket accounts refer to the nuns’ later habitation on the Kansas River Reservation. See Elizabeth Schroeder, “An Account of My Stay at St. Mary’s Kansas,” 1856-1879, Folder 1-f, Society of the Sacred Heart Archives, St. Louis; and Annual Letters, 1869-1871.

24 *The Dial* (March 1891), 106; (May 1891), 138; and (June 1891), 157.

25 Ibid, (June 1891), 158, (September 1891), 2. Early on, the mission accepted a gift of seventeen hundred dollars from Catholic Indians and six hundred dollars from the Propagation of the Faith. The Jesuits branched out, setting up a mission station seventeen miles south of St. Mary’s to serve those Indians who still lived on the south side of the Kaw, and another station twenty miles to the southeast of the mission, where visits were paid twice a month. Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 955-56, writes that one mission was on Mission Creek, a little above its junction with Blacksmith creek; the other, known as St. Joseph’s or Mechgamiinak, was a few miles west of present Topeka, near the Kansas River – between it and the Potawatomi Baptist Mission.

26 Ibid.

27 Eliza McCoy to father, August, 31, 1849, addressed from “Putawatomie Mission Station,” in McCormick, *The Memoir of Miss Eliza McCoy*, 72-73. In an apparent attempt to fight back, she asked her father “without delay” to send “at least a half dozen French Bibles” to the Baptist mission, stating, “there are a number of French and Indian Catholics who read French, and have expressed a wish, indeed, they appear anxious, to have Bibles, and say they want to know the truth, and would believe the Bible.”

28 The *Dial* (June 1891), 158, (September 1891), 2.

29 Ibid.
Ibid.

31 L.J. Dorr, “Jean-Baptiste Duerinck (1809-1857) and his Collections from the Middle Western United States,” Bulletin of the National Plantentuin, Belgium 56:314 (1986), 397-416. Manuscript at the Missouri Botanical Gardens, St. Louis.

32 Ibid.


34 Duerinck drowned on December 9, 1857, when the flatboat on which he was traveling hit a snag and overturned in the Missouri River. His body never was recovered.

35 Arthur T. Donohue, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” (Ph.D. diss, University of Kansas, 1931), 154. Accompanying Duerinck on his arrival at St. Mary’s Mission were two lay brothers, one to serve as farmer and procurator, the other as cook. Another brother arrived later to serve as herdsman.

36 Barry, The Beginnings of the West, 928-29, writes that in May 1850 a band of Pawnees came into the Potawatomi country and stole horses immediately west of St. Mary’s Mission. She quotes a man writing from Uniontown: “The Potawatomies pursued the thieves, killed 3 and brought in the scalps and recovered the horses. Since then several false alarms…[of Pawnees]. Parties of armed Potawatomies, Sacs, and Foxes went out to scour the country and give them battle. They proceeded some sixty or seventy miles west of [Uniontown], and returned reporting no Pawnees. …The Potawatomies and their allies, the Sacs and Foxes, are on the alert. If the Pawnees should come down, they will meet with a warm reception!” Another statement by a Dr. Garver of Ohio stated that Pawnees raided a small California emigrant train of “some 30 or 40 head of horses and mules” and that the Potawatomi “Wa-wa-sah” proposed to pursue the Pawnees and rescue the stock for the whites. In a skirmish two days later, this was done and a number of horses recovered. Disease was a common and devastating problem for the Potawatomi. Writing from St. Mary’s Mission on January 1, 1852, Bishop Miége stated: “Cholera, fevers of every kind and small-pox … have made great ravages among our Indians this year …” See Barry, The Beginning of the West, 1060.


38 “Returns From U.S. Military Posts, 1800-1916,” Fort Riley, Kansas (May 1853-December 1860) Reel 1011, National Archives and Records Administration. There were twenty-four citizen teamsters in September.

39 See Ibid; William A. Dobak, Fort Riley and its Neighbors: Military Money and Economic Growth, 1853-1895 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 29-31; Fort Riley: Its Historic Past (Government Publications, n.d), 3; and George E. Omer, Jr., “An Army Hospital: From Dragoons to Rough Riders -- Fort Riley, 1853-1903,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 23:4 (Winter 1957), 337-367. http://www.kshs.org/p/kansas-historical-quarterly-an-army-hospital-from-dragoons-to-rough-riders/13141 (July 10, 2011). A total of thirty-four steamers plied the Kansas River between 1854 and 1866, but only three ascended as far upstream as Fort Riley. The fort had 217 officers and soldiers in 1854. Work on the permanent post began in July 1855, when Post returns list 204 mechanics, 202 quartermen, and 117 laborers. In October 1855 the fort expanded to a cavalry post with the arrival of six companies of Second Dragoons from Texas. The Excel was the first steamboat to ascend the Kansas River as far as present-day Junction City, three miles west of Fort Riley. Omer states that the Excel made several supply runs to Fort Riley during construction.

40 See Smith, “The Oregon Trail through Pottawatomie County,” 6-7; and L.R. Palmer, Potawatomi agent, to D.N. Cooley, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 27, 1866. “The military road leading west from Fort Leavenworth in Kansas, passes through the Pottowatomi nation,” Palmer wrote. “On this road there has been for years a very large amount of Government teaming.” Smith states that the road “entered Pottawatomie county near
St. Mary's Mission, crossed what are now sections 14, 10, 9, 4, 5, 6, 31, 36 in St. Marys township; a portion of 36, 35, 26, 27, 28, 21, 20, and 19 in Belvue township; thence west across the Vermillion river in section 24 (Louis Vieux crossing), in Louisville township.


43 “House Diary,” entry for October 20, 1855, St. Mary’s Mission, Kansas, Box I Folder D, Midwest Jesuit Archives. The others were Alva Higbee, L.R. Palmer, and the métis Benjamin Bertrand and Peter Moose. The corn was to be delivered to H. A. Low of Fort Riley “in lots” from November 20 to December 31, 1855.

44 Ibid, entry for November 9, 1855. The cattle business in Kansas exploded after the Civil War when entrepreneur Joseph G. McCoy “maneuvered the Kansas Pacific Railroad to transport cattle to packinghouses in Chicago and St. Louis.” Cattle trails from Texas brought herds to Abilene, Kansas, where they were shipped east. Abilene was “almost a ghost town” until McCoy selected it for his cattle business. See Fixico, “American Indians in Kansas,” 281. Omer, “An Army Hospital,” states: “Much of the food for the men and animals at Fort Riley was purchased from the nearest settlement, Saint Mary’s mission, 42 miles east along the military road.” (July 10, 2011).


46 Ibid, entry for October 23, 1855.


49 The bull possibly was imported to the mission from Kentucky. In an entry dated January 3, 1857, Duerinck stated that he had written a letter to Father Allen (H.G. Aelen) at Paris, Kentucky, “and given him a short account of St. Mary’s Mission. Requested a letter for answer. Shown myself willing to go to Ky. to buy a couple bulls.”

50 See Donohue, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” 155, 229 n22; and F.H.S, “The Pioneers,” The Dial 2:8 (April 1891), 122. Donohue writes that on October 1, 1930, “The present herd known as the College Herd was developed by Brother Ryan in 1900-1910. It consists of 291 pure bred Holsteins, of this number 103 are milch cows...The present College Farm consists of 2,200 acres of the most fertile land in Kansas River valley.” Donohue’s source, which he quoted practically verbatim, was “Editors of St. Mary’s Dial.” The article he specifically cites was written by someone identified only as F.H.S. and dated April 1891 – forty years after the great rush to the California gold fields. F.H.S. does not write as if he witnessed overlanders leaving their exhausted cattle at St. Mary’s so the authenticity of the story cannot be proved.

51 “House Diary,” entry for September 20, 1854. A notation adds that someone, apparently Poisell, returned to the mission from Westport “with 6 animals.”

52 Duerinck to Druyts, March 28, 1854. Midwest Jesuit Archives. While Duerinck praised the mares to be had, he said he did not know whether they would make good mothers.
53 Ibid.

54 “House Diary,” entries for October 28, December 12, 1856.

55 Ibid, entries for January 24, June 27, 1856.

56 Ibid, entry for July 8, 1856.

57 Ibid, entries for July 8, 29, 1856.

58 Ibid, entries for November 15, December 29, 1856; January 1, 1857.


60 See “House Diary,” entries for November 9, 1855, December 16, 1856. Duerinck was called in November 1855 to be a witness at Fort Riley before the court-martial of Dr. James Simons, and in December 1856, was invited to officiate at Fort Riley at the wedding of C.M. Dyche of Ogden, Kansas Territory. Simons, assistant surgeon at the fort, was court-martialed because he fled his duties during a cholera epidemic at Fort Riley in August 1855. See Omer, “An Army Hospital,” (July 10, 2011).

61 Ibid, 139.


66 Ibid.


Andrew Lopp Murphy, “Diary,” entry for May 16, 1849.


Alexander Gardner, “Potawatomie Indians at St. Mary’s Mission, 375 miles west of St. Louis, Mo,” 1867. From series “Across the Continent on the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division.”

Barry, The Beginning of the West, 931. Snyder, a doctor, said he “found a Frenchman with his family living in a small log house on the Little (or Red) Vermillion, and was called in by him ‘professionally’ to see a sick child…We met many Indians here in a tolerable state of civilization, being able to read and write.”

James M. Woods to family, May 6-May 22, 1850. Typescript Collection C995, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Missouri.


Alexander Gardner, “St. Mary’s Mission, 375 miles west of St. Louis, Mo,” 1867. From series “Across the Continent on the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division.”


Joseph Willmett (1808-1897), fourth child of Antoine and Archange Ouilmette, profited from a plank ferry he operated off the government road. The numbers of “foot soldiers” from Fort Riley and their “mule drawn weapon carriers” who used the bridge was listed on at least one occasion “in old log book” recorded by Joseph Willmett and preserved by his grandson Roy Willmett, who died at Maple Hill, Kansas, in 1987. See “Roy Charles Willmett,” unidentified newspaper clipping, Miscellaneous Collection, Kansas State Historical Society. The article states that Joseph Willmett, who died at Maple Hill on December 31, 1897, arrived in Kansas in 1844 and lived two miles north of present Maple Hill, where he operated the ferry for more than twenty years. He also “freighted and had a sawmill.”


Ibid. Lovejoy accused Indians of not usually being willing to work “unless forced to it. Shall I here give some of the classical names of these Indian nabobs – ‘Sambo,’ ‘Johnny Cake,’ ‘Blue-Jacket,’ ‘Greyeyes,’ &c. Every one can select 200 acres of land where he pleases in the tract appropriated to his tribe, and many of them own more cattle and horses than any New England farmer can boast of.” Julia also looked askance on Roman Catholicism, which perhaps explains why she did not stop at St. Mary’s Mission. That she was a curious onlooker, however, comes through in her words. “We noticed, too, in the graveyard (at the mission) a large wooden cross and thought how little they understood the true signification of the cross!”
“Diary of James Woodworth: Across the Plains to California in 1853” (Eugene, Oregon: Lane County Historical Society, 1972), entry for May 25, 1853.

“House Diary,” entries for October 17, 1856; June 26, 1857. “Mrs. Jos Bertrand settled this day our account except Beef,” Duerinck recorded: “Amount of Mrs. Jos. Bertrand’s bill for groceries first cost $139.81. Weight of total 1,089 pounds. in groceries.”


Percival G. Lowe, Five Years a Dragoon (’49 to ’54) and Other Adventures on the Great Plains (Kansas City, Missouri: The F. Hudson Publishing Co., 1906), quoted in Pride, The History of Fort Riley, 73. Lowe incorrectly wrote the name as “Mrs. Bertram.”


“The Census of the Territory of Kansas, February 1855” (Knightstown, Indiana: Eastern Indiana Publishing Co.) The St. Mary’s Precinct was part of District 12, as was the Silver Lake Precinct, were “the store of Sloan & Beaubien” was the polling place. Beaubien was the métis Madore Beaubien. In District 8, the polling station was at “the Council Grove mission, near the Santa Fe road,” meaning the mission house to the Kansa Indians. One of the election judges there was Kansa missionary T.S. Hoffaker. In District 17, the longtime trader Cyprien Chouteau was an election judge.

See The Dial, (November 1891), 34; and Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 328-29. The See moved to Leavenworth in 1855. Superintendent Harvey put the Catholic numbers on the Osage River Reservation at “from ten to twelve-hundred.” Coupled with arrivals from Council Bluffs, Murphy writes that the fifteen-hundred estimate seemed “reasonable.” Barry, The Beginning of the West, 1007, writes that Miége left St. Louis on May 17 and traveled by steamboat to St. Joseph, where his party spent four days. “On the 28th the party crossed the Missouri and ‘started for the western plains’” Miége and the priest Paul M.J Ponziglione were on horseback, followed by “two brothers, and two Creoles driving wagons.” They arrived at St. Mary’s Mission on May 31.

Ibid, (May 1892), 138. An ostensorium is a large gold or silver container for consecrated bread.

Ibid, (March 1892), 106. Owing to the neglect of a boat captain, the bell apparently never arrived.


Ibid.

Duerinck, “House Diary,” entry for March 17, 1857. After sixteen days, having judged the cattle “too high, some too poor,” Quigley returned empty-handed.

Ibid, entries for August 31; May 24, 1856. “Mr. A. G. Reed delivered to-day at the Mission 18 head of Beef cattle… Father J.B. Duerinck & A.G. Reed have agreed to feed & to slaughter the commissary Beef Cattle of Fort Riley, 225 head … Received advices from Mr. A. G. Reed, Liberty, Mo., that the fat hogs, 50 head, bought for the mission are on the way and will be at Tecumseh on Saturday, December 8th.”

Osnaburg was heavy cloth used in grain sacks.

Ibid, entries for January 10, March 5, 1857.
See “House Diary,” entries for October 20, 30, 1855; February 7, June 23, 1856; August 15, 1857; January 10, February 8-12, March 21, October 1, November 7, 1857. Duerinck stated that he sent “Black Tom” and a boy named Joe to help drive the cattle “up to Rock Creek.” He also wrote that “Juan the Mexican... delivered to Eli Nadeau the new set of mule harness for which he is to pay costs and $1 for charges – say $18.” A few weeks later, Duerinck agreed to buy Nadeau’s cow and calf for thirty dollars and let the “washerwoman have the cow @ $30, i.e. @ cost.”


See map compiled by G.J. Garraghan and drawn by J.V. Jacobsen. Vieux file, Citizen Band Family History Center. The “Sacred Heart” station was on Soldier Creek, and “Our Lady of Sorrows” station on Mission Creek.

Kansa Agent John Montgomery, October 1, 1856, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1856-57, S. Doc. 2:680. Montgomery wrote about the ongoing “filthy speculation” over the Kansa half-breed lands, where “lawmen men” had stripped the land of its timber, opening farms, cultivating the soil, and appropriating the fruits to their own use.” Then, “in open transgression of the law,” authorities ruled in favor of the intruders, declaring that the land “was not Indian land, that it was public land, and that they would occupy it at all hazards.”

“The Ottowas in full council,” August 21, 1856, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong. 3rd Sess., 1856-57 S. Doc. 2:678-79. The event that precipitated the council was the murder of a Mr. John T. Jones, the burning of his house, and theft of six hundred dollars from his wife.


Johnston Lykins, former Baptist mission superintendent among the Potawatomis, was living in Kansas City by 1853, where his second wife was such an outspoken Southerner that she was banished for a time from the city following Quantrill’s raid on Lawrence in 1863. See Kasper and Montgomery, Kansas City: An American Story (Kansas City: Kansas City Star Books, 1999) 58. Kevin Abing, “Before Bleeding Kansas: Christian Missionaries, Slavery, and the Shawnee Indians in Pre-Territorial Kansas, 1844-1854,” Kansas History 24:1 (Spring 2001), 60, writes that Baptists among the Shawnees took no public stand on the slavery question.

Abing, “Before Bleeding Kansas,” 56; and Joy, “ ‘Into the Wilderness,’” 177. Baptist missionary Jotham Meeker stated in 1853 that the Shawnees were “more divided among themselves than any other tribe in this region. They are three bands, the Macochas, Piquas, and Chilocotes – are again subdivided into Heathen and Christian parties – and still again into Meth. North, Meth. South, Quaker and Baptist.”


See ibid; and Bowes, Exiles and Pioneers, 114-15. Bowes writes that Parks, who was official government interpreter for the Shawnees in 1835, 1836, 1851, and 1852, relied on slaves to maintain his seven-
hundred farm adjacent to the Shawnee Methodist Mission. At the time of his death he owned five adult slaves and several children.

114 Abing, “Before Bleeding Kansas,” 59-62. When the Northern church sent a missionary to the Shawnees, pro-slavery Indians objected. The federal government eventually stepped in, informing the Indian agent, Luke Lea, that all denominations, with permission, had the right to send missionaries to the Indian country. It took three years to settle the issue, creating “an enduring bitterness” among Northern and Southern Methodists.

115 See Caldwell, Annals of Shawnee Methodist Mission and Indian Manual Labor School, 108; and Lutz, “Methodist Missions Among the Indian Tribes of Kansas,” 174. The offices moved to Pawnee, Kansas, in June 1855 and on July 2, Thomas Johnson was elected president of the Council, whereupon executive offices moved back to the Shawnee mission. The so-called “bogus legislature” assembled there on July 16 and adjourned on August 30, with the free-soil Gov. Andrew Reeder vetoing all its bills. In the spring of 1856 the executive offices moved to Lecompton, where the territorial legislature met again on January 12, 1857.

116 Boston Journal, August 6, 1854, quoted in Caldwell, Annals of Shawnee Methodist Mission, 81, 86, 95. Caldwell also writes that on June 7, 1855, “B.M. Lynch received seven hundred dollars from Thomas Johnson for a negro girl named Harriet of black complexion, age about fourteen, sound in body and mind, a slave for life and free from all claims. Receipt dated from St. Louis, Mo.” Again, on May 24, 1856, “David Burge received from Thomas Johnson eight hundred dollars for a negro girl named Martha, of black complexion, age about fifteen years, sound in body and mind and a slave for life. Receipt dated Westport, Mo.” Lutz, “Methodist Mission Among the Indian Tribes of Kansas,” 174, states that Thomas Johnson owned ten slave children, “who work on the premises.”


118 Zu Adams, “Slavery,” typescript based on interview with E.F. Heisler, Miscellaneous File, Kansas State Historical Society. Shawnee agent Richard W. Cummins owned “at least a dozen slaves and worked them at a farm” near the mission prior to his return to Missouri in 1850. Abzuga (Zu) Adams was the daughter of Franklin G. Adams, secretary of the new Kansas State Historical Society. She served as her father's assistant.

119 Oertel, Bleeding Borders, 48, tells of an advertisement for runaway slaves published by Clarke in the proslavery Lecompton Union of December 2, 1856, in which he offered fifty dollars for “the return of the slave woman, Judy.”

120 See Clarke to Cumming, October 15, 1856; and Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong., 3d Sess., S. Doc., Part I, 2:5, 664-66. Clarke stated that the attack had come so suddenly that he had “not even time to carry off a change of clothing for my family. I fled with my family at a moment’s warning, leaving my officials papers, the public property, and private estate at the mercy of these licentious brigands. My house was plundered of everything valuable...at the same time these marauders broke open the boxes containing the tools and implements for the Indians and carried off about one half of them.” He stated that “the same party of outlaws” plundered the offices of the pro-slavery A.G. Boone at Uniontown, “also, several of the Pottawatomies of wagons, teams, and provisions.”

121 Clarke to Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny, December 5, 1856.

122 Ibid, June 19, 1856.


124 Andreas and Cutler, “The Wakarusa War, Part I and II,” History of the State of Kansas. <www.kancoll.org> (April 23, 2011). In a letter to U.S. Rep. John A. Quitman of Mississippi, dated January 29, 1856, Clarke appealed for support and discussed the killing, stating, “I have been threatened all over the Territory,” and that “Freesoilers” were trying “to use this circumstance against me, to break me down and have me expelled from the little office which I hold.” Concerned about losing his post as Indian agent, Clarke wrote: “I am poor – in
debt, and it takes all my salary to support my family (wife & four children) and that of my mother-in-law & three children – all of whom are on my hands.” Despite appeals to influential Southern friends, Clarke lost his job. “There was quite a jubilee among the abolitionists of Lawrence today at my removal. It is an abolition triumph,” Clarke wrote to U.S. Rep. Alfred Greenwood of Arkansas on December 12, 1856. Clarke, an Arkansas native, asked Greenwood to intercede on his behalf with the president or with incoming president James Buchanan. Any appeals were unsuccessful, and four years after his removal Clarke was charged $1,245.77 that he reputedly owed the U.S. government. Clarke insisted he owed nothing, but was unable to supply vouchers because “many of my papers had been destroyed and scattered” when his house was ransacked and burned. See Clarke to Greenwood, April 1860, dated from Philadelphia. Greenwood, appointed commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1858, later became a member of the Confederate Congress. See “Clarke, G.” Miscellaneous Collection, Kansas State Historical Society.

125 Clarke to Superintendent of Indian Affairs Alfred Cumming, October 31, 1856.

126 Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 60.

127 Sykes to S. Medary, territorial governor, June 4, 1859, cited in Hanson, *A Historic Outline of Grinnell Place*, 85.

128 Nicholson, a Quaker, was appointed in May 1870 as general agent of the Associated Executive Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs to visit the various agencies under the committee’s control and to report back on their condition and progress. The committee was in charge of selecting the agents for Nebraska, Kansas, and the Indian Territory.


130 The payment that Nicholson witnessed was to Potawatomis who had taken allotments. Each, he stated, received $680, for a total payment of $525,000. Women as well as men could be considered the head of a household.

131 Winston to Cumming, February 17, 1857. “Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs,” RG 75, M234, Roll 681, Potawatomi Agency. At the Catholic mission at St. Mary’s, Jesuit superior John Baptist Duerinck noted in his journal on September 2, 1856: “Sent McNamara to Grasshopper Falls to buy some cattle, but owing to the troubles of the times, he returned the same day at noon, deterred by rumors of robberies, horse stealings etc.”


133 See Clarke to A. Cumming, November 12, 1854. RG 75, M234, Reel 679, Potawatomi Agency, 280; and A. Cumming, September 25, 1856, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1856-57, S. Doc 2:622. In a letter to Cumming, dated November 29, 1856 (RG 75, M234, Reel 680, Potawatomi Agency, 359), Clarke joined the chorus of those advocating for relocating the Indians. “The only hope, and it seems almost a shadow,” he said, “is in the relocation[?] of the Indian reservations so as to extend the boundaries of the Indian country, and to embrace place the abode in one tract, and thus throw the back of the Indians farther from the lines and from intercourse with the whites who traffic in liquor, or to abolish the reservations and after sectioning, and securing to the Indians, their individual tracts...” During the autumn annuity payment in 1860, new agent William E. Murphy said the pay ground “was thronged with white people from outside the reservation, some of whom brought with them whisky, and cider which they discovered was promptly destroyed, and themselves placed under guard.” Murphy said he broke the whiskey jug of one man who came to the grounds drunk, “and had [him] tied up the wagon wheel, until the got entirely sober, which had a good effect upon other Indians disposed to drink.” Murphy to A.M. Robinson, superintendent of Indian Affairs, October 31,1860. Potawatomi Agency, Roll 682, 315.

134 Ibid. Clarke said the Indian police proved “useless” to him because they cautioned Indians holding liquor that Clarke was on his way. The letter castigated the officer at Fort Leavenworth who said he didn’t have the troops to spare. In November 1856, a corporal and eight men attended the Potawatomi payment but withdrew
during the second day for a lack of provisions and forage for their horses. Liquor was introduced and three men shot while the payment was under way. See Clarke to A. Cumming, November 29, 1856. During the autumn annuity payment in 1860, fourteen troops were present. Indian agent William E. Murphy said the pay ground “was thronged with white people from outside the reservation, some of whom brought with them whisky, and cider which they discovered was promptly destroyed, and themselves placed under guard. Unrau and Miner, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 20, write that “whiskey was the entire business,” of the town of Kennebek, situated next to the Kickapoo agency headquarters.


136 Clarke to A. Cumming, November 29, 1856, RG 75, M234, Reel 680, Potawatomi Agency, 359. Clarke joined the chorus of those advocating for relocating the Indians. “The only hope, and it seems almost a shadow,” he said, “is in the relocation[?] of the Indian reservations so as to extend the boundaries of the Indian country, and to embrace place the abode in one tract, and thus throw the back of the Indians farther from the lines and from intercourse with the whites who traffic in liquor, or to abolish the reservations and after sectionizing, and securing to the Indians, their individual tracts…”

137 See Murphy to A.M. Robinson, May 31, 1859; and 172. When the Union Pacific, Eastern Division, in need of railroad ties, started laying tracks across Potawatomi lands in 1865-66 builders sought permission to purchase timber on Indian lands. See L.R. Palmer, Potawatomi agent, to Thomas Murphy, superintendent of Indian Affairs, January 16, 1866.

138 Clarke to Keller, December 25, 1854. RG 75, M234, Reel 681, Potawatomi Agency, 331.

139 Ibid, 319.


142 Ibid. About eighty whites on the reservation were married to Indians. See “Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs,” RG 75, Microfilm Reel 684, Potawatomi Agency, 226.

143 McCoy to Manypenny 10 October 10, 1855, cited in Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian County*, 142. Not to be overlooked was McCoy’s assertion that land mania existed not only among whites, but among the Indians’ “own chiefs and headmen as well.”


145 See ibid, and Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian County*, 142-44. Unrau quotes Manypenny’s annual report of 1854: “Already the white population is occupying the lands between and adjacent to the Indian reservations, and at no distant day, all the country immediately to the west of the reserves, which is worth taking, will have been taken up.”

146 Unrau and Miner, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 18-19.

147 Ibid.

148 Clarke to A. Cumming, superintendent of Indian Affairs, December 18, 1854, RG 75, M234, Reel 681, Potawatomi Agency, 308. Such complaints continued. In November 1857, a new agent, William E. Murphy, served notice on two “white settlers” who had intruded on Potawatomi lands on Mill Creek. See Murphy to John Haverty, superintendent of Indian Affairs, November 30, 1857. In January 1860, Murphy wrote that so much timber
had been taken from Delaware lands over a two-month period that “at least one thousand saw logs from 2 to 3 ½ ft. in diameter” were at a saw mill in the nearby town of Ozawkie. See Murphy to A.M. Robinson, superintendent of Indian Affairs, January 22, 1860.

149 Clarke to Cumming, November 12, 1854. The reason he gave was that “their example was highly pernicious and had an adverse influence to the labors of the missionaries and the objects of civilization.” One man left the country, another married his wife, and two others “asked a few weeks for consideration.”

150 Unrau and Miner, The End of Indian Kansas, 16.

151 Thomas Mosely, Jr., August 25, 1851, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., 1851-52, S. Doc. 3: 342-43. Mosely complained that there was no fund for agents to reclaim Indian losses. “If an Indian finds his horse in the States in possession of a white man, before he can regain his property he has to have recourse to a judicial investigation; counsel must be employed, and this often deters the Indian from prosecuting his claim; and for the want (as is often the case) of the means to prosecute his claim, sustains the loss.”


153 Ibid.


157 Ibid, entry for March 21, 1857. Duerinck wrote the surname Vieux as Jeanveau. When the Vieux family lived in Wisconsin, Indian people pronounced the name of Louis Vieux’s father, Jacques, as Jean Beau, which was corrupted to Jambeau. In Wisconsin, the spelling most often found is Vieau, while in Kansas it is more often Vieux, although the original family name in New France seems to have been Jauvan. See "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieux, Sr.," Wisconsin Historical Collections 11:218-19, 233; Quaife, Lake Michigan, 200; and Milwaukee Sentinel, March 13, 1895. According to Andrew J. Vieux Sr., the original family name from France was De Veau, but since it meant calf or veal and children were wont to tease playmates by bleating at them, the names was changed to Vieau.

158 Ibid, entries for April 15, 1856, January 5, 1857.

159 Ibid, entries for May 24, 1856, March 6, October 27, 1857.

160 Ibid, entry for February 4, 1857. On January 1, 1857, Duerinck ordered from Baltimore, two copies of the Propagation of the Faith for 1857 – one for Lucille Mathevon and the other for B.M. Bertrand. He also ordered a copy of the Metropolitan Almanac.

161 Ibid. Others in the “club of ten” were Francis Bergeron, Henry Rodierke, Potawatomi physician L.R. Palmer, ferryman Sydney Smith, and L.R. Darling, who was married to a Potawatomi woman.

162 The McCormick mower was an outgrowth of the reaper. Despite opinions that the machines of other manufacturers were superior in these early years, Duerinck was wedded to the McCormick machines.


166 See ibid; and Hafstad, “Guide to the McCormick Collection of The State Historical Society of Wisconsin.” At least one McCormick biographer credits him with inventing “a system of distribution.” At the Crystal Palace exhibition in London in 1851, McCormick won the first of many medals in Europe and started employing foreign agents. By 1856 there were many McCormick agents throughout the Midwest and East. Improvements to the reaper and introduction of the mower, self rake, harvester, and binder patent followed.


168 Ibid.

169 Duerinck to McCormick, October 10, 1854.

170 Ibid, January 3, 1855.

171 Ibid.

172 Ibid, June 27, 1855.

173 McCormick assistant to Duerinck, March 9, 1857.

174 See Duerinck to McCormick, March 31, 1857; and “House Diary,” entry for March 30,1857.

175 See ibid, April 12, 1856; and “House Diary,” entries for August. 8, 1854, April 12, 1856. “Promised August 6th 1854 L. Jeanveau to cut his hay in the week after the assumption,” Duerinck wrote.

176 See Duerinck to McCormick, July 28, 1855, April 12, May 12, 1856; Louise Barry, ed., “Scenes In (And En Route To) Kansas Territory, Autumn, 1854: Five Letters by William H. Hutter,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 35:3 (Autumn 1969), 312 to 336; and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas, I:523. “Your machine at Fort Riley of 1854 will again have a fine chance to earn laurels for you,” Duerinck wrote. “The Government have let a contract for putting up 1,200 ton of hay this season.”

177 Duerinck to McCormick, August 18, 1854.

178 Bourassa to Stinson, September 6, 1856. Thomas Stinson Collection, Box 1, Folder 11, Kansas State Historical Society. Duerinck and Bishop Miége also put their finances together to order a machine for the Catholic mission to the Osage, in Neosho County, Kansas.

179 George A. Root, ed., “The First Day’s Battle at Hickory Point, From the Diary and Reminiscenses [sic] of Samuel James Reader,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 1:1 (November, 1931), 28-49. Root states that Indianola was laid out in November, 1854, by John F. Baker, Hayden F. McMeekin, and George H. Perrin. It was situated at the crossing of Soldier Creek, a mile and a half from Papin's Ferry, on the road from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Riley. McMeekin and his colleagues were said to have purchased the land for the town site from Louis Vieux, who
reportedly sold a bridge over Soldier Creek in the fall of 1854 for sixteen hundred dollars. The first public land sale in the town was held on June 27, 1855, a post office established December 21, 1855, and a “good frame hotel” and other buildings constructed. When gold was discovered in Colorado in 1858, the Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express Company passed through the town. See “Indian Agency House,” Route 1, Silver Lake, Shawnee County, Kansas,” Historic American Buildings Survey (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress), 2-4; and “Letters of Samuel James Reader, Kansas Historical Quarterly 9:2 (May 1940), 106.http://www.kshs.org (August 20, 2010).

Louis Ogee patented the southeast one-quarter section of Section 15, Township 11, Range 14, where the old Kansas Agency House was situated. Reeder’s account reads: “The next house is occupied by Mr. Ogee a moderate U[nion] man ¼ Indian. Next, Ogee's stable.” Ogee, who also owned a grist mill at nearby Silver Lake, signed a contract on December 9, 1862, with Potawatomi agent W.W. Ross, under which Lewis H. Bertrand was to be miller for the Potawatomi Indians at Silver Lake – with Ogee “furnishing the mill.” Under the contract, Ross agreed to pay Ogee “for his service” the sum of six hundred dollars a year, to begin on December 10, 1862. Contract copy in possession of Citizen Band Tribal Heritage Project.

180 Duerinck, “House Diary,” entry for August 25, 1857. An entry for October 17, 1856, reveals that Duerinck was a customer of Ogee’s steam sawmill. “Sent this day by Louis Vieux an order to the Indianola Steam Sawmill for 500 feet flooring (oak) as it is intended for a floor in a gallery, 68 feet long and 6 ½ feet wide.”

181 Ibid, entry for August 2, 1857.

182 See ibid, entries for August 2, November 4, 1857; and Donohue, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” 178.

183 Ibid.

184 Cutler, “Pottawatomie County,” History of the State of Kansas, http://www.kancoll.org (December 5, 2010). Cutler mistakenly places half of Louisville in the southwest quarter of Section 19 rather than the southwest quarter of Section 21.

185 “House Diary,” entry for July 21, 1857. There appears to be some confusion here because Section 17 was not part of the town site. Donohue, “The History of the Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” writes that Duerinck bought the claim from a Mr. Lasley, with a stipulation from Lasley, “that Dr. Luther R. Palmer might be permitted purchase the forty acres adjoining his own property.”

186 See ibid, entries for September 30, November 23, 1857. The J.W. Whitfield whom Duerinck mentioned undoubtedly was John W. Whitfield, former Potawatomi agent. That a “captain from Ogden” held the bond to the land Duerinck sought agrees with Dobak, Fort Riley and its Neighbors, 45, who states: “Nearly all the officers at Fort Riley in 1854 were members of the Pawatomi [sic] association, or land speculators intent on locating the new Kansas capital at Pawnee. Omer, “An Army Hospital,” (July 10, 2011) states that the Pawnee Town Site Association was organized on September 27, 1854 by Major Montgomery, commanding officer at Fort Riley, and thirteen other Army officers, as well as five civil territorial officers and five civilians. When the town site was surveyed the following year, it was found to be within the boundaries of Fort Riley, which resulted in the court-martial of Major Montgomery, who had granted the land to the town association.

187 Ibid, entry for December 29, 1856. In an entry for March 9, 1857, he used the phrase land speculation. “Stated to Bishop Miége that J.B. Duerinck had forwarded him a draft on the assistant treasurer, St. Louis, for $1,475 and that he has no doubt received it ere this. His course about our joint land speculation meets my appropriation.”

188 Ibid, entry for January 2, 1858.

189 Cutler, “Pottawatomie County,” (December 5, 2010).
“Warranty deed for lots in town of Louisville,” November 26, 1860, History of Potawatomi County, Folder D, oversize file, Kansas State Historical Society. Vieux bought twenty lots in Block No. 5; twenty lots in Block No. 7; nineteen lots in Block No. 9; twenty lots in Block No. 11; eighteen lots in Block No. 13; twenty lots in Block No. 15; sixteen lots in Block No. 17; fourteen lots in Block No. 19; eighteen lots in Block No. 25; twenty lots in Block No. 27; eighteen lots in Block No. 29; eighteen lots in Block No. 33; twenty lots in Block 37; twenty lots in Block 39; twenty lots in Block 46; and lot No. 11 in Block No. 1.

“Estate of Louis Vieux,” filed May 15, 1872, with James L. Sluggins, Probate Judge, Potawatomi County, Kansas.

The mill on Rock Creek probably is the same mill sometimes referred to as the mill in Louisville. Donohue, “The History of Early Jesuit Missions in Kansas,” 231 n60. It mostly likely also is the “Empire Mill” named in Vieux’s will.

Murphy to John Haverty, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, St. Louis, November 25, 1858, “Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs,” RG 75, M234, Reel 681, Potawatomi Agency, 260-62.

In the Jesuit order the tertianship is a time of reflection before the taking of final vows. (www.dictionary.com and <http://jesuit.org> (April 30, 2011).

See (Lawrence, Kansas) Herald of Freedom, January 23, 1858; and Murphy to Haverty, quoted in Rev. P.J. DeSmet, Western Missions and Missionaries, 531-32. The treachery of the Missouri River is well-described in Thomas C. Wells, “Letters of a Kansas Pioneer,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 36:2 (1936), 146. “The Missouri is a strange river, at least it seems so to us Eastern people,” Wells wrote on March 24, 1855. “Every few minutes we run against a snag which one would think would knock a hole through the bottom of the boat, and every day, and sometimes several times a day we are delayed from half an hour to three to four hours on a sand bar. Yesterday we remained stationary for full half a day on this account and after all had been done that the captain thought best he sent about 250 of us ashore, most of us without our dinner, and we had to [walk] five or six miles around to a point while the steamer worked her way across the bar.”

DeSmet to editor of Précis Historiques, Brussels, December 23, 1857, in DeSmet, Western Missions and Missionaries, 521-32. Judging from the letters of Julia Louisa Lovejoy, the death of Father Duerinck and the three other men was well known in the country. Lovejoy, wrongly spelling the name “Durand,” and thinking that Duerinck was from Canada, wrote in May 1858: “He was drowned this spring, with three others, in attempting to descend the Missouri River to St. Louis in a skiff—one was a Mr. Limurst, of Maine, returning after his family. Poor man! I saw his claim, joining Manhattan, his cabin built for the reception of his family, and had an interview with his lonely son, who remained in his cabin.” See “Letters of Julia Louisa Lovejoy,” 379.

Clifton, The Prairie People, 380. Writing in the first decades of the twentieth century, Kansas historian William E. Connelley also criticized Duerinck for his support of sectionalizing the Potawatomi reservation, which he said was short-sighted and made all but the Prairie Band, “a homeless outcast” While calling Duerinck a “vigorous, competent man, and a good director” for St. Mary’s Mission, Connelley insinuated his stance was politically expedient and his annual reports “evidently written to correspond with the demands of the political powers then in the ascendancy.” The Jesuit historians Gilbert J. Garraghan, writing in 1938, and Joseph Francis Murphy, writing in 1961, defended their late Jesuit brother. See William Elsey Connelley, “Prairie Band of Potawatomi Indians,” Kansas Historical Collections 14 (1915-1918), 504-06; and Murphy, Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 366 n17. Connelley wrote that Duerinck was “influenced by those conditions most in evidence about him every day. He did not reflect deeply on what produced those conditions. He had no patience with them. He did not see clearly that the Indian was incapable of competition with the white man. It takes centuries to produce qualities which make the white man successful in fierce competition with his fellows. And even then more white men fail than succeed. The Indian has not had that struggle with individual effort in sufficient degree to develop the stamina and staying power necessary to success in individual life.” In his three-volume Jesuits of the Middle United States, Garraghan challenged Connelley’s indictment by stating that it was the lack of safeguards written into the treaty legislation that caused the Potawatomi to lose their allotted lands, not the policy itself. Murphy, in his “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” acknowledges that Duerinck’s assumptions about sectionizing as a “cure-all”
were “a bit wide of the mark,” but notes that many Potawatomis in Kansas and Oklahoma “very cleverly arranged
for itinerant whites to do the work” on their allotted lands. See Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 366
n17.

198 Duerinck to Whitfield, Indian Agent, Pottawatomi Agency, August 31, 1853, Report of the

199 J. Duerinck, October 20, 1856, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong. 3rd

200 Ibid.

201 Gates, Fifty Million Acres, 16, quoting United States Statutes at Large 10: 238, 277. Congress set aside
$50,000 for the purpose of negotiations.

202 See ibid, 16-17; and Unrau, The Rise and Fall of Indian Country, 146. On January 31, 1855, he also
negotiated a treaty with the Wyandot. “Over the next two decades,” Unrau writes, “nearly 13 million acres of
Indian country land west of Missouri passed directly from tribal ownership to land and railroad companies,
missionary societies, and individuals without becoming part of the public domain or subject to congressional
control.”

203 See Unrau and Miner, The End of Indian Kansas, 32, 134, 139; and Unrau, Indians of Kansas, 72, 74.
CHAPTER VII
A Question of Identity

During his council with the Potawatomi in November 1857, Agent William Murphy reported that a portion of the tribe, whom he identified as members of the Mission Band, had “for some months past been extremely anxious to have their reservation sectionized,” while the Prairie Band was “opposed to it.”¹ So divided were the Potawatomi that four years passed before a treaty was signed, on November 15, 1861. Under the treaty, males and heads of families were given the choice of taking an allotment or continuing to hold tribal land in common.² A “diminished reservation” was created for those electing to keep the common lands, and surplus land was placed on the market.

Those who took allotments could become U.S. citizens and “cease to be members of the tribe” once they indicated to the satisfaction of the president of the United States that they “are sufficiently intelligent and prudent to control their affairs and interests.”³ This was accomplished by appearing in Kansas District Court, where the Indian would “make the same proof and take the same oath of allegiance as is provided by law for the naturalization of aliens.” Indians also would have to prove to the satisfaction of the court that they “were sufficiently intelligent and prudent to control their affairs and interests, that they have adopted the habits of civilized life, and have been able to support, for at least five years, themselves and families.”⁴ Once this was done, they received a patent to their allotted land, which then was subject to “levy, taxation, and sale, in like manner with the property of other citizens.”

By November 1862, about fourteen hundred Potawatomis had selected to take an allotment while one thousand others chose to hold their land in common.⁵ In May 1863, allotment agent Edward Wolcott reported his work about done, and soon the Kansas River
Reservation was divided up and a “diminished reserve” of 77,358 acres for the Prairie Band carved from the northeast corner of the original 576,000-acre reservation. Under Article Five of the Treaty of 1861, the Potawatomi gave the Leavenworth, Pawnee & Western Railroad the right to buy Potawatomi surplus lands at $1.25 an acre, the stated intent being that the presence of the railroad would enhance the value of the lands retained by the Potawatomi and give the Indians the means “to get the surplus product of their farms to market.” The railroad was to pay for the lands “in gold or silver coin,” within nine years, and the money, at six percent interest, to be held in trust for the Potawatomi.

Despite these plans, the L.P. & W. Railroad faltered and five years passed with no track laid or government cash paid, a situation that hurt Indians who had taken allotments because they needed money to pay new taxes and to buy farming necessities. In 1867, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway stepped in and acquired the right to purchase the surplus Potawatomi lands
once designated for the L.P. & W.⁹ Métis on the Business Committee, just as they always had, acted as middlemen in the tribal dealings, but this time in an especially questionable way. At least a few, as well as Potawatomi agent W.W. Ross and former agent L.R. Palmer, were part of what often is called “The Indian Ring,” which was an inner circle of local officials, Kansas businessmen, and Indians who conspired not only to divert allotted Indian land to whites, but to profit by selling the land to other railroad interests.¹⁰

Evidence of mismanagement survives in the words of William Nicholson and Alexander Bushman, both of whom witnessed members of the Potawatomi Business Committee demanding a percentage of the money acquired from the sale of lands to the railroad. Alexander Bushman was a Potawatomi living in Indiana who journeyed to Kansas during this time. In a letter to the commissioner of Indian Affairs in October 1868, he complained that the Business Committee, for their work, demanded 12 percent – or an average of $75 – from each member on the tribal role. “It is ridiculous for them to rape the poor Indians,” Bushman wrote, “and I hope you will be merciful to the ignorant and instruct their agent to do away with the committee.”¹¹ Nicholson, a physician and member of the Society of Friends who was on a tour of Indian agencies in 1870, also told of goings-on. He stated that George Young, a Mr. Bertrand (undoubtedly Benjamin), and Palmer were taking 10 percent of the head money, while Ross charged 12 percent. The money was used, according to Nicholson, “to pay members of Congress and clerks in the Department of the Interior for expediting individual claims.”¹²

**Treaty of 1867**

After taking allotments, many members of the Mission Band failed to hold on to their property. The reasons likely were varied: a failure to pay taxes, land disputes that favored American settlers, or simply the pressure they felt from the enveloping white settlement. While
the sale of surplus land was still under way, many who had taken allotments decided to sell what
remained of their land and remove to Oklahoma Territory. On February 27, 1867, Potawatomis represented by Mazhee, Mianco, Shawgwe, and the métis B.H. Bertrand, J. N. Bourassa, M.B. Beaubien, L.H. Ogee, and G.L. Young signed a treaty by which they requested a new “home” in Oklahoma. Now known as the “Citizen Band,” they began moving to Oklahoma in 1870, taking with them “lots of civilization and some good stock.” They settled on land purchased from the Seminoles and Creeks near present-day Shawnee, Oklahoma. The Prairie Band, meanwhile, remained in Kansas on the “diminished reserve” in Jackson County, north of Topeka.

While living in Oklahoma, some members of the Citizen Band looked back on their years in Kansas and demanded to be compensated for depredations committed by Americans on their “stock, timber, or other property,” a demand allowed under provisions of the Treaty of 1867. In 1869, the Potawatomis “went before their agent and submitted to him their proofs of their losses,” amounting to $49,547.80, an amount that attests to the troubled times they had faced in Kansas. In all, the agent approved ninety claims totaling $48,332.80 and presented them to the Secretary of the Interior, who submitted them to Congress, which presumably paid.

The Indian claimants’ “proofs” included affidavits of “three white men” – among them the ferryman Sydney Smith – who estimated “the value of property upon the reservation during the period covered by these losses.” The period spanned the years 1847 to 1866, although the “greater part” of the damage occurred “from 1855,” when non-Indians settlers flocked to the territory and when thousands of other Americans crossed the Potawatomi reserve on their way to the Colorado gold fields. The prices fixed to each item of property, according to Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah, were “not only reasonable but very low.” American horses were
determined to be worth $60 to $100; ponies from $25 to $50; cows from $20 to $30; yearlings from $7 to $12; two-year-olds from $10 to $15; three-year-olds from $14 to $24; hogs, 5 cents a pound, net weight; corn, 50 cents to 75 cents per bushel; potatoes, 25 cents to $1 per bushel.  

This “Memorial” to Congress aptly summarizes in the words of the Potawatomi themselves the argument this dissertation has attempted to make – that the emigrant Indians were pioneer settlers who lived at the center of the great forces of change under way in mid-nineteenth century Kansas. In the document, the memorialists Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah explained for congressmen that the Kansas River Valley ran through the center of their former reserve and “that through this valley was located the Fort Riley military road, over which emigrants westward traveled in great numbers, and over which the Government troops passed in their expeditions to the frontier of the State. Along and upon this valley, which was the richest portion of the reserve,” they stated, “your memorialists located, made their farms, and bred and raised their stock, and being thus situated, and far away from civil or military protection, their property became an easy prey to evil-disposed persons passing through their country.” The document continues:

The evidence shows that during the great emigration to California and Pike’s Peak the emigrants traveled over this thoroughfare in great numbers, many of whom when on the reservation beyond civilization and the power of the law became lawless, and wantonly trespassed upon the property of your memorialists, who were unable to protect themselves or resist these depredations, the military being beyond their reach, there being no local authority to which they could appeal for protection, and the intercourse-law, so far as its enforcement in this regard, being practically a dead letter.

The testimony further shows that at the time of the first discovery of gold at Pike’s Peak thousands of men from the States started for the mines, and that the road through the reserve became their main thoroughfare; that when great numbers of them reached the more western part of the then Territory they were met by others returning from the mines, who reported that there was no gold at the Peak; whereupon, thousands of them turned back disheartened, many of whom became lawless and desperate, and returning through the reservation committed
many depredations upon the property of your memorialists. They destroyed their timber and fences, killed their hogs and poultry, foraged on their grain, and seized and drove away their horses, ponies, and cattle, always selecting the most valuable upon which they could lay their hands. To these depredations your memorialists were forced to submit.19

As Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah appealed to Congress for reimbursement – undoubtedly with the literary help and probable encouragement of a métis or white Potawatomi like George L. Young – they demonstrated not only their understanding of the white man’s laws and the importance of their treaties with the federal government, but also their own intelligence and agency. In the document, Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah noted their legal rights, mentioning the 1830 removal act, which required the President “to protect, in person and property,” all Indians on their reservations west of the Mississippi. They also mentioned the 1834 Trade and Intercourse Act, which required the U.S. Treasury to repay depredations committed “by white men … upon the property of friendly Indians in the Indian country” if the perpetrators could not be apprehended and brought to trial. They wrote of the Treaty of 1837 under which they “did remove from their homes east of the Mississippi to their reservation in the then wild Indian country west of the Missouri.”

Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah also revealed their understanding of the motives behind the government’s actions, writing:

Your memorialists respectfully submit that the obvious intention of Congress in enacting the laws referred to was to induce the removal of all Indians to the country west of the Mississippi, and it was the promise of this protection and remuneration for losses sustained by the Indians upon the reservations to which they should remove that in no small degree induced your memorialists and their tribe to give up their homes in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, for a home in the wilds west of Missouri.

And your memorialists respectfully urge that, by their removal under these protective acts of Congress, such acts became contracts between the Government and your memorialists, to the carrying out of which the good faith of the
Government is pledged; that this was the understanding between the Government and Pottawatomies is evidenced by the said tenth article of the treaty of 1867.

While twentieth century Westerns would depict pioneer wagons under attack and hardy American homesteaders threatened by marauding Indians, this storyline was far from true in the Kansas Indian Country. The Potawatomi did not carry out depredations on Americans, but just the opposite was true. From frustrated gold seekers and lawless squatters to money-minded traders and overland settlers, Americans in the Kansas Indian Country took whatever they wanted or needed from Indian people – be it annuity money, timber for campfires, game for dinner or trophy, or, in the end, the very land itself.

The Divided Potawatomi

Scholars agree that the splintering of the Potawatomi centered on the wide cultural divide between the traditional Prairie Band, and the far more acculturated Mission Band with its strong adherence to the Catholic faith, its tendency to accept Euro-American agriculture, and its numerous and influential métis who recognized the “wave of the future.” The intensity of tribal divisions and the troubles it caused for missionaries and agents is evident in the writings of Father Duerinck and his associate Maurice Gailland, as well as those of Potawatomi agents William Murphy, George W. Clarke, and Francis W. Lea. Gailland compared Potawatomis who resisted assimilation to “stubborn mules who balk and will not cross the stream.” Their pride, he said, was equal to their ignorance. Potawatomi medicine men came in for special contempt, Duerinck referring to them as “an infidel sect.”

In October 1855, Potawatomi agent George W. Clarke also criticized Indians who refused to assimilate, referring to the Prairie Band as “the ignorant and intolerant portion” of the tribe who “oppose, thwart, and defeat every measure of improvement.” The Potawatomi had broken up “into clans and divided councils,” and Clarke blamed “the ascendancy and rule” of the “Bluff
Indians.” Unlike members of the Catholic Mission Band, who “manifest a desire for the improvement of themselves,” Clarke said that the Prairie Band “adheres to the hunter life, nearly all of whom despise the arts and principles of civilization; who regard it as disgraceful for men to work, and they spare no language in denouncing those of the tribe who cultivate the soil or follow the peaceful arts.” They were “a bold and reckless race, and although they form a minority of the tribe, they domineer over it, rule and misgovern the people in a most lawless manner.” Thus, he explained, “two conflicting elements prevail to distract and stifle the usual efforts of the government to improve these people…”

Potawatomi agent John W. Whitfield also noted the Prairie Band’s unwillingness to assimilate, writing in 1853: “One band of this nation … have as yet quit but very few of their old habits, relying on their annuity and hunting for a support. I have strong hopes, from recent promises, that they will abandon the hunt and rely for a support on cultivating the soil.”

Father Duerinck expressed none of Whitfield’s optimism for the Prairie Band. “They are averse to work, and live in wretched cabins and wigwams. They paint their faces and delight in all sorts of motley and fantastical dress and trappings. They are,” he said, “unfortunately addicted to liquor. Some unprincipled whites and half-breeds, too lazy to work, sell them whisky and cheat the intoxicated dupes out of their horses and ponies, and even out of their guns and blankets.” His depiction of the Prairie Band stands in stark contrast to his own “mission Indians,” who posed for a photograph at St. Mary’s Mission in 1867. The men wear trousers, shirts, and hats, and the two women in the photograph have donned the long skirt and shawl of the Victorian woman. (See Figure 10, page 329) Although it is impossible to say whether the Potawatomi in the photograph are full-blood, métis, or a combination, their attire and location at the Catholic mission identify them as acculturated members of the tribe.
That two distinct and conflicting bands of Potawatomi were resident on the Kansas River Reservation raises the question of Potawatomi identity. While Indian identity “has never been fixed in stone,” and continues to raise intense discussion today, differing ideas of what it meant to be Potawatomi were especially rife in mid-nineteenth century Kansas.27 The culturally conservative Prairie Band, mixed with elements of Ottawa and Chippewa, generally were Potawatomi from northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin who moved to the Kansas Indian Country from the Iowa Reservation. The term Prairie Band was first used in about 1804 but did not come into general use until after the Treaty of 1861.28 Before then, the Prairie Band often was referred to as the “prairie Indians” or the “Bluffs Indians,” a term derived from their Iowa location near Council Bluffs. (During treaty-making in the 1830s, U.S. government agents referred to them as the “United Band.”)

On reservations in Iowa and Kansas, the Prairie Band held on to its religious practices and rooted its identity in traditional gender roles and communal land holding. The Prairie Band resisted American notions of “progress” and “civilization” pressed upon it by missionaries and government agents, while the Mission Band, so-called because of its adherence to the Christian, and especially Catholic, faith, was more open to embracing new ways. Members of the Mission Band generally arrived in the Kansas Indian Country from northern Indiana and southern Michigan and settled first on the Osage River Reservation in southeastern Kansas.

Thus, it was men with the Mission Band who gathered in a field at the old Sugar Creek Mission and let Father Christian Hoecken instruct them in the operation of a plow. However unenthusiastically they may have embraced his instruction, they did not resist, which placed them at odds with Father Duerinck’s “old incorrigible rogues” who were so defiant of the white man’s agriculture that agent Clarke accused them of preying upon the agricultural Indians,
killing their livestock, burning their fences, and turning their ponies into the cultivated fields.  

Duerinck also spoke of this, writing that when “the industrious, frugal, good-natured” Indians secured their crops “and might expect to enjoy the fruits of [their] industry, then, day after day, week after week, you will see a gang of lazy neighbors, relatives and acquaintances, all indiscreet intruders, visit that family, eat and drink with them to their heart’s content, and eat the poor man out of house and home.”  

Agent Francis W. Lea also expressed concern for the agricultural portion of the Potawatomi tribe because they had “no assurance that they will be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their toil, for the less industrious and dishonest part of said tribe convert whatever of stock or grain they may come across to their own immediate wants.”  

That Prairie Band members felt free to take whatever stock or grain “they may come across” or drop in on family members to “eat and drink with them to their heart’s content,” says much about how they viewed Potawatomi society. By ancient Potawatomi traditions, whatever an individual possessed should be shared with the whole village. By dropping in for a meal, Prairie Band men not only were exhibiting old values, but also were illustrating their resistance to the Euro-American way. They retained values rooted in traditional Potawatomi cultural beliefs, which centered on collectivity and reciprocity and where each member had a responsibility to the whole.  

That Prairie Band men were “killing livestock, burning fences, and turning ponies into the cultivated fields” of the Mission Band also speaks to their cultural values and beliefs. Theirs was an identity rooted in traditional gender roles, where women, not men, had charge of garden plots. Neither did men tend livestock; they hunted buffalo and other game. Prairie Band men apparently were holding so steadfastly to their traditional identity that at least some were willing to take aggressive, and certainly symbolic action, against the agriculturalists who seemingly were
letting those traditions slip away. It is not surprising that agriculture and livestock were targets of Prairie Band anger. Their action was a mark of identity – that they were still “men” who did not root and dig. Because Indian men regarded agriculture as degrading employment, they held contempt for physical labor. Missionaries, historian Rebecca Kugel writes, were never able to acknowledge that the work of Indian men, who hunted, trapped, and fished, was “real labor.” Missionaries needed “to persuade the ‘extremely indolent’ and ‘prodigal’ Native men to accept their proper gender role as sedentary agriculturists.” Once men did that, then women could assume their supposed natural role as housekeepers and caregivers for children.

Important to note is that the hard-working agriculturists, although threatened to be eaten “out of house and home,” did not show the door to their drop-in Prairie Band guests. It was true the agriculturists had adopted new, white ways, but that did not mean they had abandoned traditional Potawatomi values. This point illustrates that while it is expedient here, by way of explanation, to identify the agricultural Mission Band as “progressive” and the Prairie Band as “traditionalist,” these terms should be used with caution lest a simplistic, two-dimensional portrait result.

Also important to highlight is that even though members of the Mission Band adopted American methods of agriculture, that did not mean they adopted them with any degree of enthusiasm or resolve. That their determination to follow the plow was fragile is suggested by Duerinck’s harangue about the uninvited dinner guests. Might he have been so upset because the actions of the non-agriculturists were having a decided impact on his agriculturists? “When they go to work and raise good crops they say it does them no good, because their hungry, half-starved neighbors [come] round them and eat them up,” Duerinck explained. “This miserable custom, this aversion to work, this eternal begging, disheartens the willing Indian, and he
becomes at last so reckless that he feels disposed to abandon our advice, and he concludes that it is far better for him to live and to die as an Indian after having vainly endeavored to live like a white man.”  

One can almost hear the sigh in Duerinck’s voice as he wrote:

“It is some trouble to make an Indian fall in love with work, who deems labor a disgrace, and who looks to his squaw to hoe the corn. The old and the young, the father and the son, are all equally averse to work. An Indian is frequently heard to utter this foolish complaint, that it is a pity he cannot plough his corn in winter, when the weather is cool; he says it is too hot to work in summer. There are many exceptions to his rule; but the generality of Prairie Indians live up to it.”

Duerinck also bemoaned the practice of Indian parents who sent their children to the mission school when the children were quite young, but then withdrew them when they were older. Duerinck’s expectation was that boys would spend part of the day in the field and part in the school-room. “But, alas! we cannot muster a sufficient number of grown boys to take a start” on having a manual-labor school, he said. “When our lads grow up and bid fair to render us some assistance in the field, they are taken home to work, and return no more; we only get raw recruits, undisciplined Philistines, hardly willing to learn to work, and unable to handle a tool.”

Here was an expression of agency by the Catholic Potawatomis; they would send their children to the mission, but recall them when it suited their needs.

However discouraged he must have become at times, Duerinck was not deterred. “If we cannot carry out our plan to its full extent, we are not idle,” he wrote. “We have set up our mark, and the little Indians must have their bow and arrow and shoot at it. If they cannot help us to raise corn and pumpkins, they must peel potatoes, mind the gap, and be somewhere ‘in pomorum custodian.’” Duerinck, in his own words, was such a “hard-shelled fellow” that nothing, especially a lack of money, could discourage him and his fellow Jesuits in their work. “As long as we have nails to our fingers we shall endeavor to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow,” he wrote, which was exactly what he expected, as well, of his Indian charges.
By insisting that Indian men work the fields, Father Duerinck, other missionaries, and government agents believed that for Indians to survive, they had to assimilate and become yeoman farmers like Euro-American men. Father Duerinck espoused a Western notion of agriculture, which centered on production and profit. A man – or an institution – raised enough food for the family and sold the surplus on the market. To missionaries at St. Mary’s Mission, this was good advice that “the most sensible” Indians “took to heart.” Those who didn’t were considered to have “no sense of economy or savings.” Members of the Prairie Band thought otherwise.

Differences over what it meant to be Potawatomi came to a head over the issue of sectionalizing the reservation and ended in a permanent fracturing of the tribe. Again, Duerinck’s name appears as a strong advocate of the acculturating Potawatomi. “More than anyone else,” historian Joseph Francis Murphy writes, Father Duerinck “kept alive a continuous campaign” for sectionizing the reservation. In his 1855 report to the commissioner of Indian Affairs, Duerinck listed fourteen reasons for his stance, which revealed the unrealistic belief that allotments would place the Indians in a “position … similar to that of the white settler in Kansas Territory.” Among his reasons was a belief that allotments would make the Indians more apt to make improvements on their land and discourage “their wandering disposition.” Again reflecting his cultural biases, he thought that with allotments the Indian’s “heart will rest upon his home,” and that, possessing “a fine agricultural country,” the Indian could “readily sell for cash, at fair prices, all the produce and stock” he could raise. Father Duerinck believed “the mission Indians” were “impatient” to sectionalize and become yeoman farmers. “Help them out of Egypt,” he wrote to Agent George Clarke, “and guide them to the land of promise, where every one can build on his own, and enjoy, without envy or molestation, fruit of his labor.”
In September 1861, when Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole visited the Kansas River Reservation with the goal of persuading all the Potawatomis to sectionalize, events highlighted deep differences in the two bands. Writing of his two-day council with the Potawatomi, Dole described “a large majority of the tribe, usually denominated the ‘mission band,’” as being “far advanced in civilization” and eager “to abandon their tribal condition” and take allotments. This position, however, was “strenuously opposed” by Potawatomis whom Dole described as “the wild or ‘prairie band’ of the tribe, who look with jealousy upon any innovation upon their traditional customs.” Dole viewed the Mission Band favorably – pleased that they intended to divide the reservation into parcels and sell the remainder to the government, which would provide the United States with its much-desired access for an east-west railroad. Dole assured Mission Band members that their decision “to adopt the principle of individual property, and to rely for support upon the cultivation of the soil, rather than the chase, was warmly approved by the government.” On the other hand, he offered a not-so-veiled threat to those who opposed allotments, writing that “more vigorous action in the very near future” would be taken to “induce the rest of the tribe” to embrace the “mode of life” adopted by the Mission Band.

The “mode of life” Dole wanted to see required that Indians abandon the custom of holding lands in common and become yeoman farmers. This mode of life had everything to do, as well, with Christianity and education. While in Kansas, for instance, Dole attributed much of the Mission Band’s “improvement in the mode of life” to “the advantage of good schools.” He visited St. Mary’s Mission and spoke well of its schools, especially praising Mother Lucille Mathevon’s “female department,” where the girls exhibited their “plain and fancy needle work and embroidery” and evidenced “that their hearts are in the work.” Dole said he could not
“speak so favorably of the school for boys” but was pleased overall. The mission schools appeared to be “doing much good” and seemed “to be popular with the Indians.”47 If he recognized that the school was not popular with the “wild” Indians, as he surely must have noticed, he did not say.

In fact, the Prairie Band chief Shawgwe, who was “painted” and wearing “a feather cap,” gave Dole an ear full at the council gathering.48 With his Indian attire adding “solemnity to the circumstances,” Shawgwe stood up in front of Commissioner Dole and his Washington delegation and told them that he and his fellow Potawatomis were “not prepared” to sectionize their land and become citizens. “It is only now we begin to see into the habits of the white man,” Shawgwe said. Were he to take an allotment and become a citizen, he said, “the whites would immediately surround me by the hundred, and by a thousand artifices get hold of my property; like so many leeches they would suck my blood, until I should be dead of exhaustion. No, we are not advanced enough in civilization to become citizens.”49

When Dole responded that the law would protect him, Shawgwe fairly hissed: “Ah, the law protect me!” he answered. “The law protects him that understands it; but to the poor and ignorant like the Indians it is not a shield of protection; on the contrary it is a cloak to cover the lawgiver’s malice.” Undeterred, Dole then suggested that the Potawatomis move to a location farther west and sell the Kansas reservation, promising: “We will pay you well.” Again Shawgwe was contemptuous: “You will pay me well! Ah, not all your gold can buy from us this our sweet home, the nearest to the graves of our ancestors. Here we have been born, here have grown up and reached manhood, here we shall die. But ye white men why are you so covetous, so ravenous of this my poor limited home? …. You have the brass of exhorting us to peace and union, whilst at home you take up arms against each other and fight to the knife. The
South is arrayed against the North, the son fights against the father; the brother against the brother. … Sir, restore peace and union among yourselves, before you come and preach it to us.”

According to Gailland’s account, the words provoked Dole, who quickly stood up and responded: “Whether you like it or no, you must sign the treaty,” which brought an indignant retort from Shawgwe: “You must, you must…Ah, thou are the strongest; I am the weakest.”

Perfectly illustrating the deep, but divided feelings of identity that were about to split the tribe in two, Shawgwe turned to look at the young Potawatomi men gathered round and said in an angry voice: “Ye braves of the Pottowattomy nation, why do you not rise; but no, the braves are all dead; you are mere children.” It was an eloquent appeal to the Potawatomi tribe to preserve its autonomy and traditional way of life by refusing to accept their lands in severalty.

That the young braves “did not rise” perhaps speaks not so much to their lack of bravery as to the acculturation long under way among Potawatomi people and that found its beginning in the educating of Indian children. Education was regarded as a key marker of “civilization” by federal officials, missionaries, and other agents of acculturation who were convinced that if Indian children were processed through a school system that championed American ideas and values, they would absorb the ethos of their teachers and emerge as useful citizens. As Dole knew when he smiled on the schoolgirls’ needle work and implored the director of the boy’s department to correct “deficiencies,” education – exemplified by the successful school at St. Mary’s Mission—was a key ingredient of instilling white values in the minds of young braves and their sisters. On a visit to the Kansas Indian Country in September 1850, Superintendent of Indian Affairs D.D. Mitchell, like Dole and Duerinck, also recognized education as a tool of acculturation: “…the condition of the border tribes is gradually though slowly improving,” he wrote. “Every year seems to impress them with the necessity of improving their minds as well as
their fields and gardens.” So important were schools to Indian “progress” that Mitchell urged the Washington office to “promptly furnish” any and all aid “that can be afforded them out of the education fund.”

Many contemporary accounts reveal that the more acculturated, and therefore more tractable, Mission Band clearly was viewed in a more favorable light by authorities than the Prairie Band, which still pursued the chase and occasionally engaged in warfare. In 1853, for example, Potawatomi agent Whitfield told how the Bluffs Indians, while out on their summer hunt, had come in contact with “the mountain Indians.” After a battle lasting “more than half a day,” Whitfield said, the Potawatomi brought in twenty to thirty scalps, “over which they have been dancing for the last month.” In St. Louis, Superintendent of Indian Affairs Alfred Cumming took such a dim view of the Prairie Band’s warrior ways and continued pursuit of buffalo that he recommended locating the two portions of the tribe in different places whenever new treaties were drawn. In no other tribe in his superintendency, he said, did such a “wide discrepancy” exist in the “moral and intellectual advancement” of two bands of the same tribe. While denouncing the Prairie Band, he spoke favorably of the Mission Band, describing members as “quiet, orderly, and disposed to turn their attention to agriculture and other peaceful employments.”

Just two months after Commissioner Dole’s visit, portions of the Potawatomi tribe, on November 15, 1861, signed the treaty by which they elected to take land in severalty and, over time, become naturalized citizens. Members of the Prairie Band, vehemently opposing the division of the reservation into individual allotments, did not sign the treaty and managed to retain a diminished reservation where lands continued to be held in common (until the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887). Hannah Ballard argues that it was the Prairie Band’s resistance
to Americanization and missionization that “enabled the tribe to maintain both Native sovereignty and identity in a new homeland.” As she notes, Prairie Band resistance had taken many forms, most notably in rejection of Euro-American farming methods and associated gender roles. The band had retained an identity rooted in traditional ways. Meanwhile, those Potawatomi who had signed the treaty and now were on the road to citizenship also identified as Potawatomi, although in coming years, questions of identity would get ever more complex. This would be especially true for persons of mixed-race.

Objections to uniting

Potawatomi differences existed prior to their coming together on the Kansas River Reservation. In 1846, feelings were so raw between Potawatomi on the Iowa Reservation and those on the Osage River Reservation that each initially objected to settling near the other. Joseph Francis Murphy writes of jealousies, stating that the Bluffs Indians complained that the Osage River Potawatomis “already draw a larger share of annuities than they are entitled to, and that injustice would be increased by a union of the tribes.” Feelings of injustice surfaced among the Prairie Band when Uniontown was selected as the site of the tribal trading post. Because it was on the south side of the river and most Prairie Band members had settled on the north side, they strongly objected and got up a petition, drawn by the métis Madore Beaubien and signed by eighty-one people. To no avail, the Bluffs Indians pointed out the “grate [sic] inconvenience” in distance to and accessibility of Uniontown because of “quicksand” and the difficulty of fording the river during “a great portion of the Season.”

The protest over location of the trading post was not as important as what it said about tension between the Potawatomi bands. The Prairie Band chief Me-ah-mis, for instance, complained that the Mission Band “have too much money” and as a consequence “too many
white friends.” Council Bluffs Agent Edwin James also saw Prairie Band complaints as an issue centering on identity. “It will I hope be remembered,” he wrote, “that they are essentially a distinct people from the Potowatomies of Indiana and by far the larger and more reputable part of them wish to remain so.”

Objections to settling on the new reservation voiced by the Osage River Potawatomi centered on concerns of being “mixed up with those who do not know or who never say their prayers.” The Osage River Potawatomi, as reported by Gailland, worried that their children would be unfavorably influenced by the Bluffs Indians: “‘Shall not our children every day witness their lascivious dances? hear the medicine and drums beating? and will they not see their debaucheries? what then must become of their faith?’” These “serious complaints,” Gailland wrote, “were in the mouths of almost every one …”

The genesis of such striking cultural differences between two groups of the same tribe is an extremely complex topic. The anthropologist James Clifton traces the beginning of fracturing to the decades of the 1820s and 1830s, when the Potawatomi “underwent a crisis in their style of leadership and governance.” Faced by the onrush of American agricultural settlements, the old tribal society divided into small local populations and “increasingly became incapable of managing critical events.” The creation of “multiple political-subsistence units,” Clifton states, was especially true along the St. Joseph, Wabash, and Elkhart rivers in southern Michigan and northern Indiana – the origination point of the future Mission Band. Men who had acted as okamek in the past “were passing one by one,” Clifton writes, and their roles increasingly taken over by new headmen who “were married to or children of Métis or other Americans in the area.”
Clifton contrasts that situation to Potawatomi living in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin – the origination point of the future Prairie Band. He argues that “far less factionalism” existed among Potawatomi there because “larger political units endured,” and traditional okamek continued in positions of power. He does note the important role of métis there, as well, but argues that these métis, particularly the British-Mohawk Billy Caldwell and the Scots-Ottawa Alexander Robinson, “are distinguished from other kinds of intercultural middlemen” because they were “responsible” to the Indian communities, as well as “outside patrons.” Noticeably partial to Billy Caldwell, Clifton credits his “expert advice and guidance” for making it possible for the traditional village and clan leaders of the Chicago region “to escape much of the destructive influence thrust on their kinsmen in Indiana and Illinois.”

To summarize Clifton, the emergence of the culturally conservative Prairie Band was the retention of their traditional political units, which, it should be added, likely had much to do with geography. Potawatomi living in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin in the 1820s were far less affected by the advance of American settlement than were Potawatomi living in southern Michigan and northern Indiana. In 1830, Indiana had more than twice as many people as Illinois (343,031 vs. 157,445), and Wisconsin’s first federal census was not taken until 1840, when it recorded a population of only 30,945.

Although the United States government, under the Treaty of 1846, envisioned uniting in Kansas the Illinois-Wisconsin Potawatomis (living in Iowa) and the Michigan-Indiana Potawatomis (living on the Osage River Reservation), it hardly can be said the two groups “reunited” on the Kansas River Reservation. While Potawatomis were placed on the same reservation, they no longer were a single, solitary society. Their parting of ways was evident in general settlement patterns in Kansas: The Bluffs Indians settling near present-Topeka, the
missionized bands farther west, closer to present-day St. Marys. Thus, when overlander Andrew Lopp Murphy walked up to a Potawatomi home near the Papin ferry at present-day Topeka he saw Potawatomis playing cards and gambling, while overlander James Woods, passing by St. Mary’s, noted Potawatomis leaving Mass.

The Métis

Complicating the dichotomy between those holding fast to the old ways and those adopting new forms of agriculture were the métis, who always had walked the middle ground. Clifton expresses distain not only for the métis, but for the accommodating full-bloods, seemingly finding both groups something less than “true” Indians and less manly than traditional members of the Prairie Band. For instance, when Potawatomis in Indiana signed the Treaty of 1837, by which they agreed to remove to the Kansas Indian Country, Clifton writes of them as “vulnerable to outside influence and pressure” and blames the métis among them. More to his liking are elements of the tribe who fled to Canada rather than sign the treaty. In the same way, he prefers the Illinois-Wisconsin Potawatomi. Although these groups signed removal treaties in the 1830s, when they reached the West they “took up a High-Plains, buffalo-hunting style of life,” thus retaining, in his opinion, their authenticity as Indians.

Clifton traces the beginning of métis influence – or what he characterizes as “ethnic-group switching” – to a treaty signed near Detroit in September 1816, when the métis son of Louis Chevalier – longtime trader on the St. Joseph River – was among signers. “This listing of Louison Chevalier as a Potawatomi,” Clifton writes, “marks the beginning of a process of ethnic-group switching that would increase through the years.” As the War of 1812 concluded, Clifton’s “ethnic-group switching” also was underway among Potawatomi in the Chicago-Milwaukee area when perhaps ten métis were among signers of the treaty of August 24, 1816,
which took place in St. Louis. In that treaty, certain individuals — for the first time — were identified as Potawatomi “by blood or adoption” and received a tract of land under the treaty’s provisions. The individuals were Alexander D. and Richard Godfroy, sons of Indian agent G. Godfroy. The treaty does not say whether the two boys were white or mixed race, but it is quite possible they were the product of their father’s union with an Indian woman. The distribution of land under future treaties would go to other métis children. To Clifton, these individuals were “Americans of dubious ancestry” or people like the agent Godfroy “who had close business dealings with these tribesmen.”

Clifton finds the métis not Indian at all, but interlopers who called themselves Indian by “switching their ethnic identities and aligning themselves with the interests and fortunes of the Potawatomi.” They were, he writes, people with a “parasitic attachment to Indians,” a “new category of people, ‘Indians by Descent,’ [who] emerged full-blown in the treaty making processes of the 1820s and ’30s.” Of the approximately six hundred métis who removed west with the Potawatomi, he writes that they “joined the western migration like a school of pilot fish following a wounded shark. Not only were these marginal people counted as Potawatomi by most Indian agents, missionaries, and traders, they were generally considered by them to be exemplary Indians, because of their cooperativeness and their degree of ‘civilization.’”

Certainly, the métis, as revealed in reports of Indian agents and missionaries, were the most acculturated of the Potawatomi. Journals of the Jesuits Gailland and Duerinck document how it was métis like the Bertrands and Bourassas who assisted them in their travels and acted as teacher assistants at their schools. Métis landed jobs as interpreters and ferrymen, ran stores and mills, and otherwise gained the favor of missionaries and government agents, who looked to them to help other members of the tribe acculturate. A few were so acclimated to American
ways that they put down ten cents to subscribe to Father Duerinck’s farming journals, or paid much more for one of his mowing machines. One and all, as Joseph Francis Murphy writes, they became “prosperous farmers or businessmen, loyal patrons of St. Mary’s Mission and school.” They were “definitely ‘mission band’ ” – meaning acculturated Potawatomis.78

This was true whether they arrived in Kansas from the Bluffs – as part of the Prairie Band, or from Sugar Creek – as part of the Mission Band. This was true regardless of where they settled on the new Kansas River Reservation following the Treaty of 1846. The Beaubiens, LaFramboises, Ogees, and Vieuxs came from the Bluffs and settled generally in the Topeka-Indianola-Silver Lake area, while the Bertrands and Bourassas came from the Osage River Reservation and settled in the vicinity of St. Mary’s Mission. Yet, unlike the divided Potawatomi bands with whom they migrated to Kansas, they marched one and all toward the future, adapting to American ways. Even Anthony Navarre, who sided with the Prairie Band in its effort to retain a diminished reservation, accepted allotted land and became so adept at the American political system that, until his death, he lobbied on Indian behalf in Washington, D.C.

While acknowledging that métis used knowledge acquired through the fur trade and mission schools “to emerge as the new economic and political leaders of the tribe,” historian R. David Edmunds, unlike Clifton, does not regard them as “interlopers,” but as people who retained a tribal identity, although they “envisioned themselves as a people somewhat removed from more traditional tribal members.”79 The métis incorporated European clothing into their wardrobes, learned to read and write at parochial boarding schools, spoke French and/or English, as well as tribal languages, “and considered themselves to be a socioeconomic elite within the Great Lakes region. Obviously,” Edmunds writes, “these people were part of both tribal and
European societies, but their particular identity was malleable, transcending their affiliation with either or both camps.\textsuperscript{80}

Rebecca Kugel finds that métis she studied in the Great Lakes region from 1820 to 1842, sought to create their own identity. Americans’ “bipolar conceptualizations of race,” Kugel writes, “presented enormous challenges to all the peoples of the ‘middle ground,’ and to none more so than to the multiethnic and multiracial Métis.” Despite this, she argues, métis contested definitions that Americans placed on them “and sought to advance their own understandings of who they were, creating or reformulating definitions of identity not based on ‘race’ at all.”\textsuperscript{81}

Certainly, the métis benefited from their elevated status with persons in authority. There is no doubt that many looked out for themselves as they advocated for allotments, attempted to speculate in land, or became town builders when Kansas became a territory. As scholars including William Unrau, Craig Miner, and Paul Wallace Gates have documented, corruption was rife as the reservations of the emigrant Indians were divided and surplus lands sold. Potawatomi agents W.W. Ross and L.R. Palmer, as well as the métis Benjamin Bertrand, were named specifically in under-handed dealings as they demanded a cut of the money that individual Potawatomis were due. Miner and Unrau argue that the Potawatomi Business Committee during this time (which comprised no full bloods) was “a conniving cadre” obviously taking advantage of its position. Miner and Unrau castigate the “nefarious” tactics of Business Committee member Joseph N. Bourassa, who used his connections to claim an additional eight hundred acres of land and to indulge (with Anthony Navarre and Benjamin Bertrand) in “a $6,000 trip to Washington to firm up the details of one of the more notorious land steals concluded in Kansas” – meaning the loss of thousands of acres of Potawatomi land, ultimately to the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railway.\textsuperscript{82}
Difficulties and loss of individual allotments following the Treaty of 1861 led to formation of the Citizen Band and the move of many Potawatomi and métis to the Oklahoma Indian Territory. The Prairie Band, meanwhile, took up residence on their diminished reservation north of Topeka, although, as Murphy notes, so many Prairie Indians left Kansas during the 1860s that it amounted to “a wholesale exodus.”

The story of the métis Eli Nadeau, who switched his loyalties from Citizen Band to Prairie Band, serves as an example of the complexity of métis identity. Judging from interactions in the late 1840s and 1850s, the Nadeau family was connected with the Mission Band and Catholics at St. Mary’s Mission. Michael Nadeau had accompanied the Jesuit Felix Verreydt to the north side of the Kansas River in June 1848 to search out a spot for the new St. Mary’s Mission. In the 1850s, Alexander Nadeau ran an errand to Weston, Missouri, for Father Duerinck, and Eli Nadeau sold a cow and a calf to the priest.

Eli Nadeau was among métis who signed the Treaty of 1861, by which he accepted land as allottee No. 584. As a landowner he now faced Kansas laws and taxes and was hauled into court when he failed to get the proper license to operate a hotel. Shortly after, rather than paying taxes, “Eli availed himself of the permission to forfeit his allotment and take membership in the Prairie Band.” He went to live on the Prairie Band’s diminished reservation near Mayetta, Kansas, where he became a member of the business committee and prospered, apparently not always in legal ways. For many years, he owned a “large and well-stocked store and trading post” on the reservation and served as postmaster. An 1878 inventory of cattle and agricultural production on the Prairie Band reservation revealed that Eli Nadeau was the wealthiest man there. He owned 260 head of cattle, 160 hogs, 81 horses, 53 sheep, and 7 mules, while the average Potawatomi household owned nine hogs, three horses, and rarely any cattle.
Clifton rebukes Nadeau for his wealth, his influence, and his slippery ways, which extended to enrolling his children at the new St. Mary’s Academy and paying their tuition out of Prairie Band education funds. He finds Eli Nadeau to be just one more example of a calculating métis who used his status with authorities to his own advantage and claimed to be Indian only when it served his interests. Métis, just as they always had, Clifton writes, “occupied the difficult if profitable battleground between American and Potawatomi institutions.”

While Clifton’s criticism of métis who profited at their kinsmen’s expense cannot be disregarded, Nadeau’s situation speaks to more than one man’s morality; it illustrates the complexity of métis identity. As Mary Christopher Nunley writes, “ethnic and personal identity is almost infinitely adaptive, malleable, and inconstant.” Thus could an Eli Nadeau seemingly move without difficulty from Citizen Band to Prairie Band to United States postmaster. Like Nadeau, Louis Vieux also became a wealthy man who crossed cultural boundaries. When he died on his Kansas homestead on May 3, 1872, he left an estate appraised at $15,823.26. His stock and articles alone were valued at $4,350.15, which included his McCormick combination mower/reaper, listed at $150. The appraiser’s inventory of animals and goods documents Vieux’s footing in the American marketplace. He died with two hundred acres planted in corn, oats, barley, and wheat, and sixty-five pigs rooting in their pen. Of his twenty horses, an eight-year-old sorrel mare and nine-year-old bay were valued at $210 between them. In addition to Vieux’s property, the appraiser counted some two dozen men who were debtors to him and another five dozen who had taken out stock in his Empire Mill. While we have no photograph of Vieux’s home, the appraised contents also speak to his acculturation. Besides his two-seated spring wagon, he owned a bedstead and chest of drawers, a cook stove and cupboard, a clock, and a table with seven chairs, enough to seat all of his children, to each of whom he bequeathed
ample land in Pottawatomie County, as well as numerous lots in the town of Louisville.\textsuperscript{92} As Edmunds writes, the Potawatomi “always have been masters of accommodation,” an “adaptable people” who would continue to walk the middle ground, survive, and prosper.\textsuperscript{93}

**A question of identity**

Clifton’s opinion that métis were not “real” Indians raises a question of ongoing relevance. As Edmunds writes, the question of identity “continues to be one of the most complex and controversial aspects of Native American existence.”\textsuperscript{94} In the reservation period of the mid-nineteenth century, Indian identity equated to tribal identity, delineated through “traditional systems of clan and family ties.”\textsuperscript{95} In other words, kinship and the consensus of the tribe defined who was a member. As early as 1846, a court case enunciated as much.\textsuperscript{96} If the Potawatomi considered a person a member of the tribe, then you were a Potawatomi, and thus an Indian. This would not exclude white persons, eighty of whom were living on the Potawatomis’ Kansas reservation in 1863, according to a statement by allotment commissioner Edmund Wolcott.\textsuperscript{97}

Among them was the American-born George L. Young, who requested a patent to lands set aside for him and his family under the Potawatomi Treaty of 1861. As a Potawatomi, Young became a naturalized citizen on November 27, 1863, although his citizenship apparently was questioned when he tried to vote in the national election of 1864.\textsuperscript{98} “You sir, place yourself in my position,” he wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole on February 19, 1864. “You consider yourself an American, and would like all the rights of one. And suppose (as I have done) that you went to the Polls to vote for A. Lincoln and your vote refused because forsooth you were not a qualified voter. You are an Indian in the eye of the law…”\textsuperscript{99}
Figure 13:  
kansasmemory.org, Kansas State Historical Society

Studio portrait of Louis Vieux, likely taken in the 1860s.
Federal procedures incorporated into the 1887 Dawes General Allotment Act markedly altered tribal definitions of Indian-ness because federal agents “enrolled” -- or made a list -- of all members of the tribe, the intent being to determine eligibility for allotments. Thus, blood quantum came to be a marker of Indian identity, a factor that continued to be used in the twentieth century, including in the Wheeler-Howard Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 – the “Indian New Deal.” Edmunds argues that the listing of blood quantum – “full-blood,” “half-blood,” “one-quarter,” “one-eighth” and so on – reflected “the American fixation on defining ‘race’ only in biological terms and completely ignored an individual’s adherence to, or rejection of, traditional tribal values.” In the twentieth century, most tribes also embraced blood quantum and came to demand that all members be direct descendants of those individuals first enrolled on the allotment lists or other federal census reports taken in the nineteenth century. Although membership requirements today vary from tribe to tribe, the most widely used standard requires minimal biological ancestry of one-quarter or one-eighth and at least one parent enrolled in the tribe.

This becomes critically important because as Indians increasingly marry non-Indians, blood quantum declines and those with a limited percentage are no longer eligible for tribal enrollment even though they may adhere more to traditional tribal values than someone with a higher percentage who no longer resides in the tribal community or participates in its activities. Thus, today, “enrollment has been critical to one’s identity as an ‘official’ Indian.” Federal actions in the Kansas Indian Country were a precursor to Sen. Henry L. Dawes’ General Allotment Act of 1887. More than thirty years before the Dawes Act, beginning in 1854, emigrant tribe after emigrant tribe in Kansas, pressured by the influx of non-Indian settlement following the Kansas-Nebraska Act, agreed to sectionalize their reservations and take individual
Like provisions of the future Dawes Act, tribal rolls were created, although blood quantum was not included. Thus, the Potawatomi enrollment list, completed in 1863 and listing the names of those who took allotments as well as those who did not, is a vital tribal document recording the names of Indian, métis and white families.

In an ironic twist, the insistence of Potawatomi traditionalists in 1861 to hold on to reservation land—a stance characterized as “stubborn” and “primitive” then—is recognized today by the most progressive of tribal members as “the well-spring of tribal identity.” The reason hinges on the unique status of tribally owned land, which has played an instrumental role in processes used by the Potawatomi and other tribes to lure development onto the reservation, including lucrative casinos made possible by the liberalization of gaming laws in the 1970s. Edmunds credits passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act of 1975 and the Reagan administration’s “new federalism” in the 1980s for spurring tribal governments to enlarge “both trial sovereignty and its accompanying economic envelope to provide a broad spectrum of both services and business opportunities for tribal communities.” The Citizen Band Potawatomi reservation in Shawnee, Oklahoma, is a prime example. When Citizen Band allottees, in essence, threw in the towel in Kansas and acquired a new reservation in the Indian Country in Oklahoma, their troubles were far from over. Under the Dawes Act, the Citizen Band again allotted their tribally owned land, this time without a choice, and by the late 1950s owned only 2.5 acres, and warehoused all their tribal records in a garden shed in one member’s backyard.

Today, however, the tribe has re-purchased twelve hundred acres and owns, as well, a bank, a supermarket, and a golf course. “Currently,” Edmunds wrote in 2008, “they are the largest single employer in Pottawatomie County.” He points to John “Rocky” Barrett, chairman
of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Business Committee, who likens the Indian’s ability to sell commodities such as tobacco and gasoline free of state and local taxes to “seed money” that has helped them to become more and more economically self-sufficient and “to construct a way of life that retains many of the cherished traditions of the past,” while also capitalizing on educational and economic opportunities to create “both modern tribal and pan-tribal societies.”

Even before removal to the Kansas Indian Country, Edmunds notes, many of the emigrant tribes already had integrated traditional ways with the society that surrounded them. Removal to the West, though traumatic, furthered this process – and Potawatomi identity continued to evolve.

As the Citizen Band continues its self-described “entrepreneurial spirit” with “a myriad of business ventures,” the more traditional Prairie Band also has embraced entrepreneurialism in recent years, including the opening, in May 2011, of an eighteen-hole golf course on reservation land. Such entrepreneurial enterprise dates to 1998 when the Prairie Band opened a reservation casino that by 2002 was grossing more than $100 million a year. The revenue has allowed the Prairie Band to engage in a “land acquisition program” aimed at buying back reservation land lost over the years. According to a report from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Prairie Band in 2010 owned 7,165 acres in trust and another 17,256 acres allotted to individual tribal members. That represents about thirty-two percent of the original 77,358-acre reservation redrawn following the Treaty of 1861.

Chapter summary

This chapter centers on the Treaty of 1861 by which the Potawatomi reservation in Kansas was broken up after some Indians elected to take their land in severalty while others refused to do so. A “diminished reservation” was carved out of the original acreage and Indians
who refused to take allotments moved there, where they continued to hold their land in common.  
This chapter argues that the splintering of the Potawatomi centered on the wide cultural divide between the traditional Prairie Band, who refused allotments, and the far more acculturated Mission Band with its influential métis, its strong adherence to the Catholic faith, and its tendency to accept Euro-American methods of agriculture. Many Mission Band full-bloods and métis soon lost or sold their allotments and, under a new treaty signed in 1867, became known as the Citizen Band and moved to a new reservation in Oklahoma Territory.

Centering on questions of identity, this chapter discusses the cultural divide between the two bands and illustrates the bias of government agents and Catholic missionaries, especially Father Duerinck, toward the more acculturated Mission Band Potawatomi. While Indian identity “has never been fixed in stone” and continues to raise intense discussion today, differing ideas of what it meant to be Potawatomi were especially rife in mid-nineteenth century Kansas. The Prairie Band, this chapter argues, held on to its religious practices and rooted its identity in traditional gender roles and communal land holding, while the Mission Band embraced Catholicism, individual property ownership, and Euro-American gender roles, where men, not women, worked the fields.

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1 William E. Murphy to John Haverty, superintendent of Indian Affairs, St. Louis, November 19, 24, 1857. RG 75, M234, Roll 681, Potawatomi Agency, 57-60. During the council, Murphy urged the Potawatomi to “unite as a great family” in making a decision. He advised them to sell part of their reservation, take allotments, and become citizens. He recommended they sell their land south of the Kansas River, which would give them money to begin “a fine start in farming.” He “begged” those “opposed to educating your children, and opposed to cultivating the soil…to change your unfortunate course,” intimating that if they persisted, “you will find that it will be the policy of the government to remove you back amongst the wild Indians in the neighborhood of the Bent’s Fort. In his letter to Haverty, Murphy stated that he thought there were “bad advisors” among the Mission Band, “both half breeds, and white men, who, I fear are governed more by mercenary motives, than for the future welfare of the poor Indian.” Murphy, figuring there were 2,800 Potawatomis, calculated that because the reservation comprised 576,000 acres, each tribal member would get 205.66 acres through allotments, or 2,262.33 acres for a family of eleven.
This stipulation later was changed when a subsequent treaty, in 1866, was amended to grant 160 acres to all adult Potawatomis regardless of sex or family headship. See Kappler, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, March 29, 1866,” Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:916. Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 60, states that the Potawatomi had debated taking allotments since 1853.

Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 60, states that the Potawatomi had debated taking allotments since 1853.

See ibid, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, November 15, 1861,” 824-828; and Murphy, Potawatomi Indians of the West, 284. Murphy concludes that the disorder in Kansas territorial years played a role five years later when the Prairie Band decided against taking allotments.

Ibid.

See Edward Wolcott to William P. Dole, March 16, May 7, 1863; W.W. Ross to William P. Dole, February 12, March 17, May 7, 1863, RG 75, M234, Roll 684, Potawatomi Agency; and William Elsey Connelley, “The Prairie Band of Pottawatomie Indians,” Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society 14 (1915-1918), 514, 534-35. A census of the Potawatomi called for by the Treaty of 1861 and taken on May 17, 1862, counted a total population of 2,259 – 648 men, 588 women, and 1,023 children. The principal allotment was approved by the Department of Interior on December 12, 1863; the last assignments were approved on January 17, 1866. The work had been fraught with questions due to intermarriage and the presence of white persons living on the Potawatomi reservation. The situation was such that Edward Wolcott, allotment commissioner, and W.W. Ross, Potawatomi agent, had written to William P. Dole, commissioner of Indian Affairs, asking for clarification on whether certain “classes of persons” should be entitled to allotments. Wolcott stated that about eighty white persons were living on the reservation in 1863. Some had married “recently,” others had been married “many years and have more or less numerous families.” Wolcott listed “the classes” as he saw them:

1. Whites, both male and female, intermarried with the Indians. Were they to be considered members of the tribe? Furthermore, when the husband was white, should he be entitled to 160 acres as head of the family and the Indian wife 80 acres, or should the wife be considered the head of the family? And what happened when an Indian husband or wife died, leaving a white wife or husband with no connection to the tribe, although still receiving annuities? Things got ever more complicated when a white widow and white widower remarried each other, thus leaving families where both husband and wife were white but with mixed-race children.

2. Persons of mixed Indian blood who already had received an allotment of land from a tribe. Were they entitled to an allotment from another tribe? There were, Wolcott said, “several prominent cases of persons who have both Shawnee and Pottawatomi bloods.” With land already in hand from the Shawnees, Wolcott said, they had then withdrawn from the Shawnee tribe “and connected themselves with the Pottawattomies, and now claim allotments of land from the latter tribe.” He said few resided or had ever resided on the Potawatomi reservation. Among those appealing for land under this class was the prominent trader Thomas Stinson, who stated his case to Dole on March 10, 1863. Stinson wrote that although his wife’s mother was Shawnee, her father “was a full blood Pottawatomie.” Stinson argued his case, stating that “the Indians have it as a general rule that the status of the children born in lawful wedlock shall be determined by the status of the father.” Thus it followed, Stinson wrote, that both his wife and children “are and always have been de facto & [illegible] members of the Pottawatomie nation.” He went on to state that he had been adopted into the tribe and as head of his family “have a perfect right” to a Pottawatomie allotment although Wolcott had refused his application to select lands, stating that Stinson already had received lands from the Shawnee.

3. Persons of Pottawatomi blood who were absent from the reservation, sometimes for many years, but had now returned or might yet return. Should they be allowed to claim land?

4. White persons not connected with the tribe by marriage, but allowed to receive annuities. Ross appealed on behalf of these men, stating that most were “very worthy well disposed men.” He credited their influence and examples as “the means of elevating the tribe to that position which entitled it to rank as one of – if not the most intelligent, industrious, and honest of all the Indian tribes that acknowledge fealty to our Government.” Wolcott also praised the Potawatomis as “considerably advanced in civilization, and are, as a class, more intelligent than any tribe to whom I have allotted lands. Any rule, then, for the admission or rejection of whites, which does not allow a clear line of distinction to be drawn, would, if adopted by us, cause dissatisfaction among them, and subject us to the charge of partiality and favoritism. All the whites who have married into the tribe are residing among the tribe.” He had “no doubt” that some whites recently married to Indian women had done so only “with the hope of obtaining a farm and annuities,” and as soon as they obtained title “would abandon their Indian families, sell out and leave.”
Dole responded to these inquiries by stating that for a white married to an Indian to be considered “Indian,” he must “have abandoned his own people, cast his lot with the tribe, reside among the Indians, have been ‘adopted’ by them, and have ceased to exercise his rights as a citizen.” Ross wanted more clarification, saying that all whites would qualify except that all had not been “adopted” in the Indian sense of an initiation ceremony. A census was taken and the principal allotment approved by the Department of Interior on December 12, 1863, and the last assignments approved on January 17, 1866.

Most of the allottees had sold their land by 1870. In November 1873, the federal government paid the last remittance to the Potawatomi under the removal treaties.

6 In 1865, an official census fixed the count of Prairie Band at 780, some three hundred of whom did not live on the reservation. The official count included half a dozen métis who were heads of families.


8 Kappler, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, November 15, 1861,” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 2:825-26. Edmunds, *Two Case Histories*, 140, writes that “most Potawatomis, perhaps 1,500,” took allotments under the 1861 treaty “and jointly purchased a new reservation” in Oklahoma, while about five hundred members of the tribe settled on the diminished reservation in Jackson County. Unrau and Miner, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 85, argue that the 1861 treaty was designed “to destroy tribal cohesion and satisfy the land and timber requirements of the L.P. & W. as it looked forward to government subsidies under the Pacific Railroad Act of 1862.” They describe the formation of the diminished reserve “as a sop” to allotment dissenters led by the métis Anthony Navarre.


11 Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 88-91. The committee, in 1869, included Joseph N. Bourassa, Benjamin Bertrand, Madore Beaubien, Anthony Navarre, Eli Nadeau, and George L. Young. An earlier committee, selected in March 1862, comprised Joseph N. Bourassa, Anthony Navarre, and Madore Beaubien representing the Prairie Band, and Benjamin Bertrand, Louis Vieux, and John Tipton (a métis who took the name of the Indiana senator) serving on behalf of the Mission Band, or what Agent W.W. Ross called the “Catholic Band.” See W.W. Ross to Office of Indian Affairs, March 10, 1862, “Potawatomi Agency,” RG 75, M234, Reel 683, 368. The committee’s broad powers were necessary, Ross explained, “to facilitate the transition of business,” which under the former system, “no matter of how trivial a nature, a council of the nation must be called, thus consuming much time and often to no purpose.” Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 76, names Louis Ogee and Francis Bergeron as also attempting to take advantage of land speculation by working as middle men between their fellow allottees and the Indian Ring. Their efforts, she writes, netted them not much more than a dollar an acre in profit.

12 Nicholson, “A Tour of Indian Agencies in Kansas and the Indian Territory,” 310-12; and Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 64. Nicholson explained how a percentage of the $680 individual payments was distributed. “They used 6 per cent of the 12 per cent claims upon members of Congress ([Samuel] Pomeroy-[Sidney] Clarke- &c. &c.) and about $2000 or more upon clerks in the Department of the Interior - Irving & Clum would not accept anything.” Nicholson also described the payment procedure: “Each Indian receives his portion from the paymaster hands it to E. Earle to be counted again directs him to pay to Dr Palmer the 12 per cent for the agents who secured the appropriation & takes the balance. A new Business Committee, comprising George Young, J.N. Bourassa, Eli Nadeau, and Anthony Navarre, was elected during a “general tribal council” in December 1869. The committee, Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 89, write, was certified “without a word of protest” from the Indian Office. “It was,” they state, “leadership bordering on anarchy, yet wholly acceptable to the Potawatomi ring.” Miner and Unrau also state that Ross and Palmer “expected to collect the grand sum of $45,000 for their efforts” on behalf of government and railroad interests.

13 Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 75.
See ibid, 76, 80; and Chapman, “The Pottawatomie and Absentee Shawnee Reservation,” 301. The purchase price was $119,791.08. Under an act passed by Congress on May 23, 1872, the Citizen Band reserve was divided into tracts for individual members of the tribe.

See Kappler, “Treaty with Potawatomis, 1867,” Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 2:970-974; and “Memorial of Pottawatomie Indians, Praying Payment, as provided by treaty, for depredations committed upon their reservation in Kansas,” 44th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Misc. Doc. No.15. Under the tenth article of the Treaty of 1867, the government had promised to examine any claims made by the Potawatomi if they could produce evidence of depredations on “stock, timber, or other property.”

The “Memorial of Pottawatomie Indians, Praying Payment” was filed with Congress on December 20, 1871.

Ibid.

Ibid. Prices were higher for depredations that occurred in the years 1860 to 1867 because “the drought in 1860, and the war afterward, raised the prices of all kinds of stock and produce.” In all, ninety claims amounting to $48,332.80 were submitted to Congress.

Ibid.

See Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 65; Young, “Never ‘Quite’ White,” 52; and Clifton, The Prairie People, 252. On his tour of Indian agencies in 1870, William Nicholson stated that the Prairie Band “are blanket Indians.” See Nicholson, “A Tour of Indian Agencies in Kansas and the Indian Territory,” 310. Berlin B. Chapman, “The Pottawatomie and Absentee Shawnee Reservation: Potawatomie vs. Pottawatomie,” The Chronicles of Oklahoma 24:3 (1946), 295, writes succinctly of the Prairie Band: “They were satisfied with the usages of their ancestors. They were not inclined to engage long in manual labor; nor could they understand how their social status could be improved by each individual selfishly striving to acquire for the exclusive use of himself or his immediate family all the wealth he could command.”


Ibid. It was Clarke’s “unchangeable opinion that government should not only assume the patriarchal, but exercise a dictatorial rule over this tribe.”

John W. Whitfield, October 8, 1853, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853-54, S. Doc., 1:322. He referred to the band as the “Council Bluffs Indians,” which was synonymous with the Prairie Band.


28 Clifton, The Prairie People, 318.

29 Clarke, October 17, 1855, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 417-16.


32 Ballard, “‘The old incorrigible rogues will have their way,’” 8, 12.


34 Ibid. Some government officials blamed the Indian men’s refusal to work on the annuities they received from the government. Superintendent of Indian Affairs Alfred Cumming, for instance, wrote: “Many of the frontier tribes are making very perceptible advances in the arts of civilization, and the industrious portion of the Shawnees, Delawares and Wyandotts, are in a comfortable and improving condition. …Some of the Pottawatomies are rendered improvident and indifferent to agriculture by the payment of their large annuities in money, which, I believe, has retarded their advancement.” See Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 33rd Cong, 1st Sess., 1853-54, S. Doc. 1:320. Also blaming annuities was agent Thomas Mosely, Jr.: “I believe, and feel well assured, that large annuities of money afford a certain data by which the final extinction of the red men can, with arithmetical precision, be made.” His concern was for the Wyandots, which he then compared to the Shawnees, whom he said were “better farmers,” and the reason “must be because they draw but a very small annuity, not sufficient to attract traders, and they are thrown upon their own resources, and it is with them work or do worse.” See Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1851-52, S. doc 3:341.

35 David Rich Lewis, “Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928,” Ethnohistory 38:2 (Spring 1991), 124-48, discusses this topic at length, arguing that the progressive-traditional dichotomy is too simplistic and “unrealistically neat.” It wrongly produces a two-dimensional picture of native peoples without taking into consideration an individual’s motivations. Métis identity is not static, he states. It is “individualistic, fluid, and issue-and-economics-oriented.”

36 Duerinck quoted in Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 365.

37 J.B. Duerinck, September 25, 1854, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1854-55, S. Doc. 1:317. Other emigrant tribes, even as they acculturated, also were averse to field labor, as noted by M. McCaslin, agent for the Weas, Peorias, Piankeshaws and Kaskaskias. “As to their civility and kindness, and their apparent good intentions, there can be no complaint,” he wrote in his annual report for 1856. “In truth, they are far in advance now of many of the ‘pales faces’ (who are in this Territory at present) in all the characteristics which constitute the higher and nobler degrees of civilization. The Indians here always seem to be thankful for good advice, and manifest a great willingness to conform to all the requirements of good counsel; but their innate aversion to labor, and their native indolence, which nature has, to a great extent, made constitutional with them, seem in most cases to overbalance every good intention which may be awakened in their minds by all the counsel and example which can be given them.” See M. McCaslin, September 12, 1856, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong. 3rd Sess., 1856-57, S. Doc. 2:673-74.
Ibid. Missionaries at other Indian schools echoed the same complaint. S.M. Irvin at the Iowa and Sac Mission, wrote: “Children, when young and almost helpless, or at least useless, and only a charge, are brought by parents or relations, and allowed to remain till they are able to work, or acquire a little English, so as to interpret, so when they are taken or at times stolen away by their improvident ignorant parents or friends, but few things in missionary life are more trying. This unfair practice has been a fruitful source of prejudice and opinion against the education of the Indians. Children put in missions and other schools in early life, are permitted to remain only a short time. They go out when their characters are only half formed, and at a tender age, among all the influences of heathenism; and because they soon yield to these influences, we are told that ‘they are Indians and will be Indians still.’ But what else can they be; what else would our own children be, if left at such an age, to such influences?” See Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 34th Cong., 3d Sess., 1856-57, S. Doc. 2:661.”


The Dial, 3:1 (1891), 2.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 363-64.


Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid. Dole mentioned educational work at the Potawatomi Baptist Mission, but noted that, with the Civil War under way and the mission under the auspices of the Baptist Church, South, the school was closed. The Baptist mission had had trouble earlier, as well. In 1853, Potawatomi agent John W. Whitfield said the mission “has had many difficulties to encounter this year, having lost their superintendent and having found it difficult to supply this place, consequently for a short time the school was not in a prosperous condition…”

The Jesuit Maurice Gailland wrote an account of the council, which was recorded in the Woodstock Letters and printed verbatim in Murphy, Potawatomi Indians of the West, 409-12.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

R. David Edmunds, ed., The New Warriors: Native American Leaders since 1900 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 2. Although the context of Edmunds’ book is the post-1900 period, his observations can be applied to the reservation period in Kansas.

Ann Searcy, “The Value of Ethnohistorical Reconstructions of American Indian Typical Personality: The Case of the Potawatomi,” *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 68:2 (Summer 1965), 277-78, writes: “In general, impressions of the Potawatomi bands living at St. Joseph and at Sugar Creek are positive and similar to impressions of early Jesuits. Reports of the Council Bluffs band are the most negative, with repeated allusions to the drunkenness and general demoralization of the band.” She notes that Father Gailland wrote of “robbery, brigandage, murder, immorality, drunkenness, and so forth,” when reporting on the Prairie Band.

John Whitfield, October 8, 1853, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853-54, S. Doc., 1:322-23. “I learn from various sources that the mountain Indians came down expressly for the purpose of having a fight with the frontier Indians,” Whitfield wrote. “They first came in contact with the Pawnees, and, but for the timely aid of the Pottawatomies (who happened to be but a few miles off,) would have killed the last one, as they had them surrounded, and had killed some ten or fifteen before the Potottawatomies reached the scene of action. All parties give the Potottawatomies great credit for their gallant conduct on that occasion. They lost in killed and wounded some four or five. From the best information I can get the frontier Indians are not to blame, as they were fighting in self-defence.[sic] We anticipate a renewal of hostilities next summer if they should meet on the plains.”


Hannah Ballard, “‘The old incorrigible rogues will have their way’,”, 8.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 218. Murphy quotes Council Bluffs agent Richard S. Elliott, who stated: “Considerable jealousy and distrust have grown up between the bands here and those south of the Missouri, and I think it will be difficult to effect their harmonious re-union, without some concessions to the feelings and prejudices of the people here…”

Ibid, 242. Murphy suggests that selection of the Uniontown site appears to have been “a gesture of favor” to Potawatomis on the Osage River Reservation, who, he states, were hoping to settle on the south side of the river and at the time were the most recalcitrant in moving to the new Kansas River Reservation.

James quoted in Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 320. As early as 1837, the Iowa bands were being pressured to move to the Osage River Reservation but refused to do so.

Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 226, quoting Maurice Gailland, S.J., who reported on treaty negotiations in the *Catholic Mirror* (Baltimore), November 9, 1850. Gailland’s report was first quoted in Garraghan, *Jesuits of the Middle United States*, 2:597-98.

Ibid, 226, 426. Murphy states that any Bluffs Indian who became a Christian “and no longer associated with the pagan and primitive Indians” passed into the classification of “mission band.” Aggravating issues on the new reservation was the arrival in 1851 of another group of 639 Potawatomi from Wisconsin. They were “not entirely welcome by their cousins in Kansas” because most had for years not been sharing in annuity payments, a situation now changed. Their arrival on the reservation meant a diminished per capital amount for those already in Kansas. See Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 300-01.


Ibid.

Ibid, 273.

Ibid. Clifton is noticeably partial to Billy Caldwell although Caldwell was instrumental in bringing about the Treaty of 1833, by which the Illinois and Wisconsin Potawatomi sold their lands extending from Chicago to Milwaukee.

U.S. Bureau of the Census (Washington, D.C., 1930). Michigan’s 1830 population was 31,639.

Clifton, The Prairie People, 276. While sectionalization culminated the fracturing of the tribe, the process had begun years before. By the mid-1830s, Clifton states, “the single, unitary tribal structure of Potawatomi society was no more,” a result of “numerous internal strains and external pressures.” Central was “the basic segmentary structure of the society,” combined with “the extreme territorial expansion and the distances between Potawatomi clans and villages… which meant that the fundamental, traditional processes of intratribal decision making and policy formation were no longer efficient.” Clifton quotes trader John Kinzie, who commented on the structure of the Potawatomi in 1819. The tribe was, he said, “scattered over a large tract of country, divided into small villages, at the head of each…a Chief who holds himself independent, on this account it is impossible to get the general consent of their nations without calling a meeting of every individual composing them who are perfectly republican & will not acknowledge anything well done, which is not done by the whole or a majority of them.”

Ibid, 185. In regards to the Treaty of 1837, Clifton specifically mentions the métis John C. and Abram B. Burnett, who witnessed the treaty and were associated with Isaac McCoy. While Abram (also known as Abraham) B. Burnett was, in fact, an associate of McCoy’s, he was not métis, but a full-blood Potawatomi.

Ibid, 185.


Ibid, 222-23. This was first treaty, Clifton writes, where the United States “knowingly and deliberately” negotiated with a part rather than the whole of the tribe.”

Ibid, 224. The Godfroy brothers, labeled as “adopted children,” received a 640-acre tract. “Within a few years,” Clifton writes, “there would be a loud clamor from many more such individuals, once Americans came to recognize there was land and silver to be obtained at Indian treaties if they could get themselves accepted as ‘Indians by blood [descent] or ‘adoption.’ Such a process would contribute to a large, if curious, increase in the Potawatomi population during the late 1820s, particularly involving the many French-Canadian Métis who then changed their status to ‘Indian by blood.’”

Ibid, 225, 300. Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 228, agrees, writing that “the emergence of new leadership occurred during the last half of the 1820s and is reflected in several treaties negotiated during that period.”

Ibid, 281-82. In 1992, following publication of The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1990), Clifton came in for stinging criticism from Vine Deloria, Jr., who calls him and other essay contributors “second-rate scholars” who “seem to be very disappointed that modern Indians do not act like the Indians of their undergraduate textbooks or the movies they enjoyed as children and they seem determined to attack contemporary expressions of Indian-ness as fraudulent and invalid …” Deloria notes Clifton’s dismissal of people he feels are “not Indians in his eyes” and accuses him of “pretended objectivity.” Deloria accuses Clifton of not being able to accept “that the world has changed,” and of arrogantly “defining Indians in whatever manner” he chooses. See Vine Deloria, Jr., “Comfortable Fictions and the Struggle for Turf: An Essay Review of the Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies,” American Indian Quarterly 16:3 (Summer 1992), 397-410.

The importance of métis influence among the Potawatomi was clear. In 1851, as the United States already was discussing cutting up the reservations of the emigrant Indians and creating Nebraska Territory, Superintendent of Indian Affairs D.D. Mitchell recommended creating special lands, separate for mixed-race Indians. He detailed his idea as “a half-breed colony, properly located in the midst of the Indians.” It would, he said “form a semi-civilized nucleus around which the wild Indians would soon be drawn by necessity to assemble. Here, too, might be established the government agency, missionary, and trading establishments, where their physical
wants could, to some extent, be supplied. The example, too, of the half-breeds, who would be compelled by want to
turn their attention to the agricultural and mechanical pursuits, would be of more advantage to the Indians,
intermixed as they are with them, than all the government farmers that were ever sent among them.” See D.D.
Doc. 3:322-23, 325. Kansa Agent John Montgomery, on the other hand, thought that separation of the métis onto
separate tracts was a bad idea. “…I believe that separation of the main tribe and the half-breeds has only retarded the
progress of the civilization and christianizing of the former; from the fact, that there has been no change in the
Indian customs and manners to those of the white man; and from the fact that there has been no white people or half-
breeds among the full-blooded Indians since they were removed from the Kansas river to this place (the Neosho

78 Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 426.


80 Edmunds, ed., *Enduring Nations*, 5. John E. Foster also recognizes the complexity of métis identity,
writing that métis “chose to see themselves in various collectivities distinct from their Indian neighbours and, in
some instances, distinct from members of the ‘white’ community.” See Foster in Peterson and Brown, *The New
Peoples*, 73.

81 Rebecca Kugel, “Reworking Ethnicity: Gender, Work Roles, and Contending Redefinitions of the Great
Lakes Métis, 1820-42” in Edmunds, ed., *Enduring Nations*, 162-64. Kugel’s essay centers on a group of well-
educated, young métis women who refused to be categorized as persons fit only for domestic service. They sought
positions as teachers and missionaries. She argues that racial definitions “meant nothing in their case” because they
had a “strong sense of identity” based on themselves as “sophisticated, young, Christians” whose education and
accomplishments mirrored or even surpassed Anglo women.

82 Ibid, 86-88, 91. After taking allotments, members of the Citizen Band, Miner and Unrau write,
“eventually lost many of their allotments to squatters and nearly 200,000 acres at an average of a dollar an acre to
such railroad magnates as Willis Gaylord, Thomas Ewing, Jr., William Borland, and Sidney Clarke.” Land deals
involved other emigrant tribes, as well. As early as 1854, when Shawnee allotments were made, the chief Black
Hoof and the métis Joseph Parks “received nearly 2,000 extra acres of land for cooperating to the fullest extent with
the government.”

83 Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 417. By 1908 there were 676 Potawatomis counted as living
in Kansas.

84 Ibid, 419. While he may have given up his allotment, an 1873 plat of the Rossville, Kansas, area,
indicates that Nadeau still held title to three other allotments of family members. See “Mark J. Wagner and Tracey
Sandefur, “Cross Creek Flood Control Project, Rossville, Kansas” 2:60, Citizen Band Family History Project. The
1865 census of the Prairie Band indicated that twenty persons on the roll originally had signed up to take allotments,
but switched, and of those, ten later changed back to citizen status, indicating, Clifton writes, “something of the
indecisiveness of many when faced with the question of whether to elect citizen status or to join with the Prairie

85 Clifton, *The Prairie People*, 368-69, 393, writes that Nadeau was charged with “collecting large sums of
annuity and other payments for deceased Citizen Potawatomi” but escaped prosecution by repaying part of the sum,
amounting to $6,340 to the superintendent of Indian Affairs in Lawrence, Kansas. Clifton writes that Nadeau also
enrolled his children at St. Mary’s Academy and paid their tuition out of Prairie Band education funds. He states
that the Prairie People “thought ill” of Nadeau and in 1886 attempted to remove him and get a new trader.

86 Henry J. Adams and George A. Root, “Pottawatomie Indian Mission and School,” March 6, 1935. MS
Collection, Kansas State Historical Society.

“There was no one like Billy Caldwell to hold them in check and no powerful traditional leader such as Padegoshèk,” Clifton writes, “to say no to them.”

Mary Christopher Nunley, “Review,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 11:1 (Fall 1991), 118-20. In this review of James A. Clifton, ed., *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers*, Nunley finds Clifton’s introduction and exposition to be “of exceptional quality.” She paraphrases Clifton, noting how he finds “that there is often an element of personal determination about identity and the ethnic path that an individual chooses and what there is to be gained or lost becomes a part of the equation of choosing.” The volume is a series of essays on individuals “living on cultural margins.”


Ibid. In his will, Vieux bequeathed “to my friend James S. Merritt” lots in Louisville, as well as the “dam across Rock Creek” and “the water privileges” belonging to the Empire Mill. Merritt also inherited the mill and all its machinery, provided he paid $4,100 to Vieux’s executor by June 1, 1873. Merritt apparently paid the money because he later is listed in partnership with his brother Albert C. Merritt as owner of the “Union Mills of Louisville.” Albert Merritt, who moved to Kansas from Michigan in 1876, was elected to the Kansas House of Representatives in 1882. See Cutler, “Pottawatomie County,” *History of the State of Kansas* (July 10, 2011).

Ibid. Louis Vieux left all of his personal property to his wife, Mary, and vast amounts of property: two hundred acres in Pottawatomie County and twenty-five lots, as well as another entire block, in the town of Louisville. To his son Louis Vieux Jr., he gave two hundred acres and five town lots; while daughter Archange Vieux Young received eighty and twenty-eight town lots.

David Edmunds, “Two Case Histories,” 139.


Ibid.

William T. Hagan, “Full Blood, Mixed Blood, Generic and Ersatz: The Problem of Indian Identity,” *Arizona and the West* 27:4 (Winter 1985), 310. The case was *United States v. Rogers*, in which the court enunciated two factors: First, that the individual must have some Indian blood; and second, that those with whom the individual claimed affiliation must accept him/her as a fellow tribesman.

Edward Wolcott to William P. Dole, March 16, May 7, 1863.

Joan Kusek, comp., *Federal Naturalizations for the 1st District of Kansas, Northeast, 1856-1902* (October 1990). The Potawatomis were far from the only tribe with white members. Hagan, “Full Blood, Mixed Blood,” 311, writes that white men constituted “the great bulk of non-Indians living among the Five Civilized Tribes in the post-Civil War era. Some married Indian women, fathered mixed-race children, and applied for tribal membership, which the five tribes permitted. Other white men, however, “without a shadow of a legal claim” attempted to get on the tribal roll simply for economic gain. The 1885 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians v. United States* and *Cherokee Nation* found that the Cherokee Nation had the right to determine its own criteria for citizenship.

George L. Young to William P. Dole, February 19, 1864, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, RG 75, M234, Roll 685, Potawatomi Agency, 473-74. Young’s problem may have had something to do with taxes because he wrote: “I am very anxious to become a citizen in the full sense of our state and under my present circumstances I do not feel that I am one, until I become a tax payer.” There were non-Indians with no legal claim to tribal membership who tried to acquire tribal membership as a way to gain access to reservation land. A well-publicized case involved the Sac and Fox reservation in Kansas. The case centered on the métis grandchildren...
of a Menominee woman who was adopted into the tribe in the 1870s. The Menominee woman’s daughter, who married a white man, eventually was adopted into the tribe, as well, but her mixed-race children were specifically excluded. Nevertheless, in 1889, they applied for adoption in order to get access to the Kansas reservation. Denial of their petition led to a ten-year struggle that cost the Sac and Fox about $10,000 in legal fees. See Hagan, “Full Blood, Mixed Blood,” 313.

100 Edmunds, The New Warriors, 4.

101 The Wheeler-Howard Indian Reorganization Act defined three categories of people: 1. All persons of Indian descent who were members of a recognized tribe under federal jurisdiction. 2. All persons who were descendants of such members who on June 1, 1934, were residing within the present boundaries of an Indian reservation. 3. All other persons of one-half or more Indian blood. The act also encouraged tribes to compile membership rolls and define membership criteria. These criteria have varied, though a common criteria required one-quarter blood. See Hagan, “Full Blood, Mixed Blood,” 317.

102 Edmunds, The New Warriors, 4.

103 Ibid.

104 For example, the Delawares signed a treaty ceding their lands on May 6, 1854; the confederated Kaskaskia, Peoria, Piankeshaw, and Wea on May 30, 1854; and the Miamis on June 5, 1854. See Kappler, Laws and Treaties 2:614-18, 636-46. The Kansas-Nebraska bill passed Congress on May 30, 1854.

105 In 1984, besieged by questions about eligibility for tribal enrollment, Citizen Band Tribal Administrator John Barrett described issues and problems created by the enrollment process in nineteenth-century Kansas thus: “As the Indian person walked in the door, blood degree was determined by the census taker according to skin color: dark people were full bloods, light people were mixed bloods. Also in Kansas at that time, full bloods could be judged incompetent and their lands taken from them through collusion by local tax and law enforcement people. When asked about blood degree, most Potawatomi responded in their own self interest in order to protect themselves: mixed blood.” See John Barrett, “The history of blood degrees - a BIA bugaboo;” How-Ni-Kan 6:7 (September 1984), 5. <http://www.potawatomi.org/pubinfo/HowNiKan/Volume06No071984.pdf> (September 17, 2011).

Barrett stated that a similar situation occurred with the 1887 Dawes Act. “The final result is the present day rolls which list blood degree based on these prior rolls (plus challenges or "appeals" made over the years based on birth certificates, baptismal records, church and Indian school records and letters claiming "grandma was a full blood"). Our rolls are rife with errors in which full brothers and sisters are listed with different degrees of blood, children with higher degrees than their parents, and a large number of people (who know! better) listed as N.D. - no degree of blood.” At the time, the Citizen Band Tribal Constitution and By-Laws limited enrollment to persons possessing one-eighth degree Potawatomi blood or greater, a stipulation that went into effect in 1961 by General Council vote. “Based on the declining number of enrollments and the increasing number of deaths, the tribe will be reduced to less than one-half its present size in two generations if this formula is not changed – or Potawatomi don’t start marrying each other,” Barrett stated.

Today, with a membership of approximately eighteen thousand, the Citizen Band has dropped a specific blood quantum for membership. Requirements for membership include: a) All persons of Indian blood who were bona fide members of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and who were enrolled or were entitled to be enrolled on the official census roll of the Band on January 1, 1937. b) Each child of Citizen Potawatomi Nation Indian blood born since the date of said roll whose parent is, or was, a member of the Tribe. c) Each child of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Indian blood of a marriage between a member of the Tribe and any other person. See enrollment application: See <http://www.potawatomi.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=82:tribal-rolls&Itemid=18> (September 17, 2011).

106 The 1863 Potawatomi Land Roll is available online. A notation states that 780 Potawatomis elected to retain land in common, while a similar number took allotments. <
R. David Edmunds, “Moving with the Seasons,” 43. Today, nearly five thousand people are enrolled members of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Enrollment has declined considerably since a May 2000 amendment to the constitution, which made it necessary for members to possess at least one-quarter Prairie Band blood. See <http://www.pbpindiantribe.com/member-services.aspx> (September 17, 2011).

There also was a flood of applications in the 1960s by tribes seeking federal recognition. William T. Hagan states the reason as a combination of greater pride in Indian-ness, millions of federal dollars available for Indian programs, and publicity from land claims cases. See Hagan, “Full Blood, Mixed Blood,” 322.

Indian entrepreneurship is evident among many tribes. Howard Tommie of the Seminoles, for instance, championed the Seminole “smoke shops” where tax-free cigarettes are sold at lower prices than at non-Indian stores, in the process making personal financial gains. His success paved the way for similar economic enterprises among other tribes. The Choctow Philip Martin also was an entrepreneur who sought out to develop reservation industry. The Choctows developed an “enterprise zone” and lured outside industries to the reservation with offers of low taxes, inexpensive labor, and legal benefits. Martin was criticized for encouraging Indians to join an industrial economy because that stands in stark contrast to the slower Indian way of life. Yet, as author Benton R. and Christine Schultz White illustrate, “Native American cultures, like all cultures, continually evolve. They are not fixed in stone.” See Harry A. Kersey Jr., “Howard Tommie, Seminole,” and Benton R. and Christine Schultz White, “Phillip Martin, Mississippi Choctaw,” in Edmunds, The New Warriors, 12-13.

Recent census figures indicate that more than half of the people who identify as “Native Americans” in the Midwest are of mixed lineage. “Demographers,” Edmunds writes, “argue that if current trends continue, by 2080, almost 90 percent of all Native Americans in the United States will be less than one-half Indian by lineage.”

Entreprenuership is evident among many tribes. Howard Tommie of the Seminoles, for instance, championed the Seminole “smoke shops” where tax-free cigarettes are sold at lower prices than at non-Indian stores, in the process making personal financial gains. His success paved the way for similar economic enterprises among other tribes. The Choctow Philip Martin also was an entrepreneur who sought out to develop reservation industry. The Choctows developed an “enterprise zone” and lured outside industries to the reservation with offers of low taxes, inexpensive labor, and legal benefits. Martin was criticized for encouraging Indians to join an industrial economy because that stands in stark contrast to the slower Indian way of life. Yet, as author Benton R. and Christine Schultz White illustrate, “Native American cultures, like all cultures, continually evolve. They are not fixed in stone.” See Harry A. Kersey Jr., “Howard Tommie, Seminole,” and Benton R. and Christine Schultz White, “Phillip Martin, Mississippi Choctaw,” in Edmunds, The New Warriors, 12-13.

See Citizen Potawatomi Nation <http://potawatomi.org> (June 23, 2011). Enterprises include two casinos, a golf course and mini-putt, a bank, gas station, convenience store, grocery stores, gift shop, and Italian bistro.

“Getting It Right: This Tribe Plays for Keeps,” Time, December 8, 2002. <http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101021216/ncasinotribe.html> (June 23, 2011). The article states that prior to construction of the casino the Prairie Band “suffered from 70% unemployment” and that “about 85% of its members living on the reservation were on some form of public assistance.”


Following passage of the 1887 Dawes General Allotment Act, Prairie Band members were forced them to take individual allotments.
CONCLUSION

When Louis Vieux died on May 3, 1872, Kansas was a vastly different place from the Indian Country he had known when he arrived some twenty-five years earlier. Kansas now counted a population of 363,399 – an increase of 239.9 percent since 1860. Tides of immigrants again were flooding Kansas, although this time they were not French métis and Indian people from the Great Lakes, but Swedes, Scots, Irish, English, and Welsh from Europe, as well as German Mennonites from Russia, who brought with them the seeds of Turkey Red winter wheat, which would revolutionize the state’s wheat production. The year 1871 had been a peak year for homestead entries in Kansas, and, by 1875, all public land in the state had been surveyed.

In 1866 the Kansas Pacific Railroad reached St. Marys and pushed seventy-five miles farther west to Abilene, which became the shipping point for cattle driven north from Texas. By 1871, with nearly five thousand cowboys and seven hundred thousand cattle passing through town, Abilene entered the lore of the American West as a mythic cattle town patrolled by Wild Bill Hickok. For a time, the Panic of 1873 checked Kansas’ rapid growth, as did the severe drought of 1874, accompanied by plagues of grasshoppers that consumed everything in their path. The droughts, the grasshoppers, the cattle towns, and the Indian raids that continued into the 1870s by nomadic tribes in western Kansas, lingered in the American imagination while the sojourn in eastern Kansas of peaceful Algonquians and métis such as Louis Vieux faded from memory. Broad surveys of Kansas history, such as William Frank Zornow’s *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1957), would not forget, but even then, a chapter titled “The Red Man Casts a Passing Shadow,” suggests the fashion in which the emigrant Indians have been portrayed.
This dissertation has suggested that Louis Vieux’s presence, as does that of other métis in Kansas, forces us to reconsider this dismissive analysis. Vieux’s wealth and extensive land holdings stemmed, at least in part, from his signing of the Treaty of 1861, by which he and other members of the Potawatomi agreed to break up the reservation, take individual parcels, and become American citizens.\(^3\) In 1863, with allotted lands selected, the names of those taking allotments and their allotment numbers were listed on the official, 1863 Potawatomi Tribal Roll. Louis Vieux’s name appeared first on the list, followed by his wife, Mary L., and his youngest children, Louis Jr., 14, and Rachel, 16. His other children, now married and living in households of their own, also appear on the tribal list as having accepted allotments, which suggests their willingness to walk in step with nineteenth century American values regarding property. The Federal Census of 1870, which recorded the value of an individual’s personal property and real estate, reflects the many Indian and métis families who took allotments.

Louis Vieux’s real estate holdings, which amounted to at least eight hundred acres, were valued in the 1870 Census at $32,500, easily making him the largest land holder in Louisville Township. In his will, dictated sometime in the months before his death, Louis divided his property among members of his immediate family. He left one-half of his personal belongings, all of his household furniture, numerous town lots in Louisville, and two hundred acres of land to his wife, Mary Louise, who remarried the German immigrant Augustus F. Heiser in 1874, two years after Louis’ death.\(^4\) A year before Mary’s death in 1901, a Pottawatomie County plat map documented that she still held the acreage Louis had bequeathed to her, although it was recorded in her husband’s name. Louis also bequeathed lots in the town of Louisville and land in Louisville Township to his seven métis children, whose lives, like his own, had been shaped by the U.S. government’s Indian removal policies.\(^5\)
A glimpse of the Vieux siblings’ lives after their father’s death further complicates the question of Indian identity. Family histories and census records, which indicate that some of the Vieux children removed with the Citizen Band to Oklahoma while others stayed behind in Kansas, suggests that the Vieux métis, probably more-so than full-blood Potawatomi, had options that allowed them, as Anne Hyde notes of all mixed-race individuals, to “make lives beyond the restrictions of how others might define Indian.”

Louis’ youngest daughter, Rachel Vieux Thurber, for instance, spent her life on a farm outside the old Cross Creek settlement east of St. Mary’s Mission (present-day Rossville), where her two daughters, Lucinda and Rhoda Ann, grew to maturity. Rachel’s great-great-granddaughter Susan Campbell was born and raised in Kansas but tells how she was thirteen years old and living in Seattle before she began to learn about her Potawatomi ancestry. Campbell writes that Lucinda Thurber, who was her great-grandmother, lived her entire life on the banks of Cross Creek, where family stories relate that she “was a strong Catholic woman who, as a girl, rode bareback across the plains with her long, dark hair flying behind her.” As an older woman, Lucinda “took a liking to smoking a pipe,” Campbell writes, adding that she had “heard stories of how local children would sneak up to peek in her window to see a woman smoking a pipe!”

The stories Susan Campbell heard are noteworthy for their conflicted depiction of her métis great-grandmother. As noble savage, Lucinda Thurber rides freely across the plains in true Indian style, bareback with her long, dark hair flying. But then she becomes harder to decipher as she goes against the American gender grain by smoking a pipe. The story is reminiscent of that told in earlier times of the métis Bertrand women who were the object of the curious Anglo
gaze back in Michigan. Neighbors there also had peeked over a window sill to get a look at the gaily glad Indian women.

Susan Campbell’s words suggest that her Vieux ancestors in Rossville did not broadcast their Indian heritage, a thought that echoes in the 1870 Federal Census, where confusion over the racial status of the Vieux siblings is evident. That year, when census taker A.J. Shaw enumerated Pottawatomie County’s Louisville Township, he recorded the families of Louis Vieux’s two youngest children, Rachel Vieux Thurber, born in 1847, and Louis Vieux Jr., born in 1849. While both were métis – the children of Louis and his full-blood Potawatomi wife Shaftonote – Shaw listed them and their children under the racial category “white.” In nearby St. Mary’s Township, however, their brother Jacob Vieux, born in 1836, was recorded as Indian, as were his children. The distinction possibly centered on the racial category of spouses: Jacob wed the full-blood Elizabeth Goslin, half Potawatomi and half Kickapoo, while Rachel married a white man, the New York-born Benjamin Thurber.9 But what of Rachel’s sisters Sophie, Ellen, and Archange, all of whom also married white men? Each was recorded as “Indian” by B.F. Kistler, who enumerated the Federal Census that same year for Silver Lake Township.10

Census taker Shaw was so confused by Indian racial identities that while he recorded some métis, including the Vieux siblings and Antoine Bourbonnais as “white,” he recorded Joseph Bertrand, Jr. as “Indian,” although Joseph also was mixed race – the son of fur trader Joseph Bertrand Sr. and his half Potawatomi wife, Madeline Bourassa. Also identified as “Indian” was Louis Vieux Sr.’s sixty-nine-year-old métis brother Jacques, who probably met Shaw’s expectations of “Indian” by announcing that his occupation was “hunting and fishing.”

As census taker Shaw progressed through Louisville Township, he must have realized his confusion because he began overwriting many of his “I”s for Indian with an “M” for mulatto,
explaining in his notes that these were mixed-race Indians, not Negroes. Initially, for example, Shaw recorded the métis Lewis Tremble as Indian, then changed his mind and overwrote the “I” with an “M.” Adding to confusion is Shaw’s initial listing of township residents who appear by their names to be full-blood – such as Pahs-Kah-We, Shah-we, and Shah-nah-bno-qua – as “I” for Indian, but then changing his mind and overwriting the “I” with an “M” for mulatto.11 That Louis Vieux and Sha-Note’s daughter Sophie Vieux Johnson and son Louis Vieux Jr. moved to the Oklahoma Indian Country with the Citizen Band, while daughters Ellen Vieux Frayer, Rachel Vieux Thurber, and Madeline Vieux Nadeau remained in Kansas adds to the complexity of identity issues that existed within Indian families, as well as Indian nations.

Furthermore, some Potawatomis, even though they displayed a high degree of acculturation, could not blend in to Anglo-American culture as easily as the Vieux siblings appeared to do. The full-blood Abram Burnett is an apt illustration. Burnett, who, as a boy, attended the Choctaw Academy and assisted the missionary Isaac McCoy on his travels, was living by March 1848 on Potawatomi land along Shunganunga Creek in present-day south Topeka, where he “broke about 40 acres of prairie on his farm.”12

Photographs and a family website devoted to Burnett point out the ways Abram adapted, both in dress and hair style, to accommodate Anglo expectations. In one photograph he wears a blanket
wrapped around his body, “telling all,” the website states, that he “maintained his traditional ways and faith as a Potawatomi Indian.”\textsuperscript{13} Another photograph depicts a much more formal Abram. Although still wearing moccasins, he is dressed all in white, including European-style trousers, long jacket, and shirt, accented with a dark, ribbon tie.

\textbf{Figure 15:} kansasmemory.org, Kansas State Historical Society

\textit{Abraham Burnett and possibly John Peyton, his son-in-law, right}
Burnett, whose second wife was the German immigrant Mary Knofflock, lived out his life on his allotment in what became the town of Topeka, where he lies buried at the foot of a high hill that now bears his name, Burnett’s Mound. Abram became something of a local legend, with newspaper accounts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century painting him as a comic, stereotypical figure, which had as much to do, perhaps, with his immense girth as it did with his Indianness. The dark-skinned Abram, weighing between 400 and 500 pounds and sometimes doing business in town, was a recognizable figure who could not “pass” as white.\(^{14}\)

The lives of Burnett’s métis children also illustrate the complexities of Indian identity and the varied life pathways that might present themselves. Abram’s daughter Mary, for instance, married Christopher Pearce, a West Point graduate who had studied for the Episcopalian ministry, while daughter Catherine married the German immigrant and successful Indian trader William Greiffenstein, who joined other traders in 1870 in establishing Wichita, Kansas, where he was a leading businessman and served as mayor from 1878 to 1884.\(^{15}\) The Pearces, meanwhile, relocated, in 1879, to the Indian Country, where they settled on an allotment east of present-day Noble, Oklahoma.

In her 1995 dissertation, Kathryn Lamirand Young explores the migration of the Citizen Band Potawatomi to Oklahoma, where members took new allotments between the Canadian River and its North Fork, on a tract purchased from the Seminole and Creek nations for $119,791.08.\(^{16}\) Initially, Young writes, two single men and five métis families, whom she considers “the original founders of the Citizen Band of Oklahoma,” made the move from Kansas in the spring of 1871. She provides the surnames as Melot, Anderson, Toupin (Toupan), Bergeron, Pettifer, Clardy, and Baldwin – métis families whose kin connections extended to
families central to this dissertation: the Vieuxs, Bertrands, Bourassas, LaFramboises, Ogees, Trembleys, and Wilmots. Members of families with these surnames soon followed the “original founders” to Oklahoma. All of these families, Young writes, “had exhibited a remarkable cohesiveness, intermarrying within the small group of Potawatomi who were French-speaking, Catholic, committed to Catholic education, [and] not afraid to try the allotment experiment again…”17

As Citizen Band families moved to Oklahoma, members of the Prairie Band were taking up residence on their eleven-mile-square diminished reservation, fourteen miles north of Topeka, where white neighbors, according to the Potawatomi agent, coveted the Indians’ well-timbered land along Soldier Creek, with its good water and rich prairie soil. Only an hour’s horseback ride from the dome of the state Capitol, white farmers, the agent wrote, thought the site “could never have been intended as a home for the Indian, the land to remain, to a great extent, uncultivated, and forever free from taxation.”18

By 1870, only 419 Indians had taken up residence on the Prairie Band Reservation, where they were living in “one frame house, fourteen log cabins, and thirty-five bark lodges.”19 Over the years until 1891, when the Prairie Band was forced, under the Dawes General Allotment Act, to divided their diminished reservation into allotments, agents reported “progress” among the Prairie Band: An Indian Boarding School opened in 1875, and by 1882, there were 105 houses and as many fields, ranging in size from three to 150 acres, many surrounded “by the very best rail woven fences in Kansas.” By 1904, the Prairie Band was reported to be wearing “citizen clothes” and most members speaking English.20

Allotment had not come easily to the Prairie Band Reservation. There was ongoing opposition, “as well as frequent threats of violence,” although, by 1893, more than half of the
532 Prairie Band members had selected allotments. “A large majority” of the 287 allottees were full-bloods, the agent reported, and embraced “some of the most influential and intelligent members of the tribe.” By 1905, the total number of allottees, including the addition of children born after the original allotments were completed, totaled 812. Surnames of a few métis appear on the original Prairie Band allotment roll, although, by and large, the nation comprised full-bloods. The most notable métis was Eli G. Nadeau, who, for many years, owned a “large and well-stocked store and trading post” on the reservation. He also served as postmaster at a site on the reservation known as “Nadeau.”

Like Eli G. Nadeau, members of the Citizen Band in Oklahoma also continued their entrepreneurial ways. Sophie Vieux’s husband, Jacob Johnson, opened a general store for a time at Pleasant Prairie, Oklahoma. Johnson, a native of the District of Columbia, had gone to Kansas Territory in its early days and established a restaurant with his brother at Indianola, where he probably first met Sophia Vieux. George L. Young, who also was a white man who married a Potawatomi woman, moved his family to Oklahoma Territory in 1871 and opened a general store at “Young’s Crossing,” which became a principal crossing of the South Canadian River and the nucleus of today’s town of Shawnee, Oklahoma. Young also ran a school for a portion of the winter. In Oklahoma, another Catholic mission and two new Catholic schools opened on the Potawatomi reservation, where “a new generation of educated Potawatomis established flourishing farms and ranches.”

Rethinking the narrative

By focusing the lens on region and family, this dissertation has argued for a rethinking of the traditional pioneer narrative in which Indian people are mere foils – obstacles to be overcome so that American settlement could advance west. I have argued that the emigrant métis of
Kansas, no less than the Anglo settlers who arrived after 1854, fit the definition of *pioneer* – an “early settler” or “one of the first to settle in a territory.”

By allowing Indian and métis people to step on central stage, the old, familiar trope of the Western pioneer suddenly broadens as we find a métis like Lewis Henry Ogee ferrying Oregon Trail pioneers across the swift Kansas River, George L. Young operating a billiard room in early Topeka, and the Nadeaus, Bertrands, and Beaubiens running hotels and platting towns.

Joseph Napoleon Bourassa aspired to put Indian history on the written page, while Anthony Navarre, undoubtedly introduced to Mormonism during the Saints’ passage across the Potawatomi reservation in Iowa, converted and became an influential Mormon preacher-turned Washington, D.C., lobbyist. These métis, like Louis Vieux with his toll bridge, his mill, and his cutting-edge McCormick mowing machine, were active participants – pioneers, if you will – in an America moving west in the mid-nineteenth century.

Borrowing a phrase from historian Philip Deloria, this dissertation has found Indians in an “unexpected place” – as pioneering settlers in the storied saga of the American West. While twentieth century television Westerns would depict Indians as the marauding adversaries of Oregon Trail caravans and hardy American homesteaders, this storyline was far from true in the Kansas Indian Country. The emigrant Potawatomi did not carry out depredations on Americans, but, as their 1871 “Memorial” to Congress proves, just the opposite often occurred. In the Memorial, Keep-Shkuh-wid and Shmah-gah explained to congressmen that the Fort Riley military road passed over Potawatomi land, making their property “easy prey to evil-disposed persons passing through their country.”

During the “great emigration to California and Pike’s Peak,” the two said, emigrants in great numbers had “wantonly trespassed” upon their property, and there being “no local authority” to protect them, had destroyed their “timber and fences,”
killed their “hogs and poultry,” foraged their “grain,” and “seized and drove away their horses, ponies, and cattle,” the thieves “always selecting the most valuable upon which they could lay their hands.”

This document gets to the heart of this dissertation’s argument as it establishes that the emigrant Indians had put down the roots of “civilization” in Kansas. They owned property, planted fields of grain, raised hogs and poultry, built fences, and bred cattle. As the many eyewitness accounts preserved in overland trail diaries attest, many Potawatomi in Kansas lived in log cabins and attended the Catholic Church. These were peaceful, approachable Indians, willing to sell a bushel of grain or a pair of moccasins. The métis among them were especially entrepreneurial, be it Louis Vieux with his toll bridge or the French-Shawnee Paschal Fish with his crude, but popular inn. When the Boston writer Hannah Ropes stopped there one night in 1856 she described Fish as “a very honest man, don’t drink a drop of whiskey, has a corn-field of a hundred acres, and thirty acres of oats; keeps a little store, and employs New England men to make the sales; turns his house into a sort of tavern, and employs a Yankee to cook for his company.” His establishment seemed to be doing a brisk business because Ropes reported “a line of men” eating at “a long table,” while her own party comprised some half-dozen travelers.

Building on past experience to shape new lives in Kansas, the emigrant métis fashioned themselves, as they always had, as entrepreneurs and intermediaries between the Potawatomi and the United States government. It is not surprising that the Potawatomi Business Committee comprised a majority of métis. Many métis had received at least the rudiments of an education at Isaac McCoy’s Carey Mission or Dick Johnson’s Choctaw Academy. In Kansas, they sent their children to the Catholic or Baptist mission schools and, no less than the Anglo settlers who followed, recognized the value of Kansas land, which figured in their hearty support for breaking
up the reservation into individual allotments. Louis Vieux, recorded as allottee No. 1 on the official Potawatomi allotment roll, became, by 1870, the largest land holder in Louisville Township. That Vieux stood at the door of the Potawatomi pay station on annuity day, calling out family names one by one, suggests that he also was an influential and respected member of the tribe.

Louis Vieux had made a new life for himself in Kansas, but its pattern resembled his previous life in Skunk Grove, Wisconsin, where he had run Jambeau’s Trading Post with his brother Jacques Vieux, Jr. in the 1820s. The fur trade so central then had waned, but Louis’ business skills had not. In Kansas, he recognized a good business opportunity when he saw one and located his home in a strategic place: on the banks of the Red Vermillion, where the overland traffic passed right by. He built a bridge, charged wagons to cross, and apparently did a side business by offering meals to travelers, including the ungrateful Horace Greeley. When Father Duerinck imported mechanized farm machinery to Kansas, Louis Vieux put down the necessary cash to buy a new McCormick mower, revealing himself to be a far-seeing man. And with the opening of the territory, he engaged in building a mill and buying up lots in a new town named Louisville.

Past experience also shaped the lives of other métis in Kansas: Louis Henry Ogee, as had his father in Illinois, entered the ferry business; Joseph Napoleon Bourassa again found work as a teacher and interpreter; and Benjamin Bertrand, like his father had done in Bertrand, Michigan, founded a town. Madore Beaubien was perhaps inspired by his uncle Mark Beaubien, who for several years operated the Sauganash Hotel in early Chicago, where Madore had lived as a boy. In 1854 Kansas, after settling on Soldier Creek, Madore built a log house that doubled as a store and also served as a stop for the Butterfield stage. Madore also erected the first store building
when the town of Silver Lake was platted in 1868. By 1883 he was a man of considerable stature, whose blending into the American culture is evident by his memberships in the Good Templars Lodge, Tecumseh Lodge No. 15, A. F. & A. M., and the Grand Lodge of Kansas.³³

While this dissertation has found these entrepreneurial métis to be pioneer settlers of Kansas, they have been relegated to footnote in the region’s historical narrative. It is other men – many who prospered from their association with the emigrant Indians – who are celebrated as pioneers. Examples are numerous. John Calvin McCoy, a surveyor who went to the Kansas Indian Country in 1830 with his father, the missionary Isaac McCoy, went to work for the War Department, marking the boundaries of numerous reservations, employment that lasted for some nine years and brought as much as $8 a day. In 1833, John Calvin McCoy founded the town of Westport, prospered, and then laid out the Town of Kansas, which grew into Kansas City, Missouri.³⁴ Today, celebrated as the “father of Kansas City,” John Calvin McCoy sits in bronze in Pioneer Park at the corner of Broadway and Westport Road, rubbing shoulders with a bronze likeness of Alexander Majors, “the great freighter” who looked to Father Duerinck and the Potawatomis at St. Mary’s Mission for the tons of hay required for his firm’s prosperity.

Also entering the freighting business was Thomas Johnson, the slave-holding Methodist missionary to the emigrant Shawnees who became deeply involved in the organization of Kansas Territory. Johnson, described as “an aggressive entrepreneur who capitalized on any opportunity to enhance his own wealth,” formed a freighting business by 1850 “and also dabbled in real estate in the fledgling community of Kansas City.”³⁵ Many people, historian Kevin Abing writes, suspected that Johnson established the Shawnee Methodist Manual Labor School “to enrich himself and his Methodist brethren.”
When the Baptist Johnston Lykins left missionary work among the Potawatomi, he went on to build a fortune as banker, mayor, and one of the biggest railroad promoters in Kansas City. Hayden McMeekin, a Sac and Fox trader who platted the town of Indianola on land owned by Louis Vieux, went on to establish the famous Planter House in Leavenworth. The Indian trader William Gilliss, who arrived on the border with the emigrant Delaware, became a founding member of the Town of Kansas Company, purchased a thousand acres on the Missouri side of the border, and helped establish Kansas City’s first newspaper. For four decades, historian Lynn Morrow writes, “Gilliss continued his free-wheeling business ventures among the Indians, while he engaged in several land and merchant ventures...” In 1849-50, he built the Gilliss House on the Kansas City levee, where twenty-seven thousand guests registered during the rush to Kansas Territory in 1857. For himself, Gilliss built a mansion described as “the great wonder of the town” and, as an old man “drove the last spike in the rail of the Cameron Railroad,” which secured Kansas City’s future over its rivals as a rail center. The year was 1867, where one hundred miles to the west, the Mission Band Potawatomi were making plans for yet another removal, this time to the Oklahoma Indian Country.

**Earlier studies**

This dissertation follows earlier studies of the Potawatomi, including works by R. David Edmunds, John P. Bowes, James A. Clifton, and Joseph Francis Murphy, but has differed in its methodology, emphasis, and conclusions. Because it centers on the Potawatomi years in Kansas, this dissertation extends the scope of Edmunds’ *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire*, which concludes in about 1840. John P. Bowes’ *Exiles and Pioneers*, on the other hand, shines the spotlight directly on the 1850s and 1860s, the same period of interest to this dissertation. Bowes, however, diffuses the light over a number of emigrant tribes as he looks for Indian agency amid
the complexity of unfolding events. Power relations, internal and external, East and West, interest Bowes, while this project has been driven by the simple allure of individual lives and what they can tell us about the intermingled racial past of the American West.

In *The Prairie People*, anthropologist James A. Clifton also takes an interest in the emergence of mixed-race people among the Potawatomi, but the discussion he provides is a small portion of what amounts to a large canvas spanning three centuries of history. Organizing his work by themes of “persistence and change,” Clifton explores Potawatomi social organization, leadership, ideology, religion, language, naming practices, and the like. He takes an ethno historical approach, intertwining Potawatomi culture and social structure with “discussion of historical events and processes.”

It is no happenstance that Clifton’s book is a study of the Prairie Band rather than the Citizen Band, whom he dismissively characterizes as “a very large population of legally defined Potawatomi.” He chose to study the Prairie Band specifically because he founded them in 1962 to be “the most culturally conservative of all modern Potawatomi” and “one of the most stubborn people [he] had ever met – firmly, bitterly, and successfully resistant to enforced cultural change, outside domination, and assimilation.”

As such, they interested him as “modern versions” of an older Potawatomi society.

Clifton’s preference for culturally conservative Potawatomis is evident as he comes down hard on the more acculturated Frenchmen and others of European descent who intermarried with the Potawatomi, accusing them of “ethnic group switching.” In Clifton’s telling, the métis were a group interested only in themselves and whose conversion to “legal” Indian was a way to gain numerous benefits, including an “additional and reliable income, free lands, free educational facilities for their children, added influence, expense-paid travel, jobs in the Indian business, and a more securely established ethnic identity.”
Quite to the contrary, this study has found the métis to be, not interlopers, but integrated members of the tribe whose acceptance spanned generations. I would suggest that the métis demonstrated their own version of “persistence and change” by adhering to patterns of entrepreneurship learned in the fur trade and then adapting that experience to their new life in Kansas. It is true that the métis, as intercultural brokers, garnered benefits from their association with the Potawatomi, especially the parcels of land attained during treaty-making sessions. But their association with the Potawatomi led, as well, to the prejudices they faced from Anglo-Americans and the upending of their lives, no less than that of the full bloods, during the removal period. Rather than vilify the métis, this study has illustrated the role they played in the larger story of an American nation pushing west in the mid-nineteenth century.

This study builds on the findings of Joseph Francis Murphy’s 1961 dissertation, “Potawatowi Indians of the West,” which proceeds chronologically to document the creation of the Citizen Band. Murphy’s is a factual telling that details the removal of the Potawatomi to Kansas and the swirl of events that led to the Mission/Citizen Band’s decision to relocate to Oklahoma. Individual métis often figure in Murphy’s work, but he asks no particular question of them and weights his narrative toward the value of Indian acculturation and the efforts of Catholic missionaries toward that end. Clifton’s opposite, Murphy views the métis as a positive force who “provided leadership and example” and established “the tendencies” of the Potawatomi “to move in the direction of the white man’s civilization.”42 While this dissertation offers a more nuanced portrait of the métis, it augments Murphy’s observations by establishing that many Potawatomi, and especially the métis, not only “moved in the direction of the white man’s civilization,” but participated actively in that civilization as Kansas pioneers.

An adaptable people
By placing the Potawatomi and métis people on center stage, this study has offered a more complicated interpretation of the settlement of Kansas, one that includes not only hardly Anglo-Americans, but acculturated French-Potawatomi métis who removed West with their Indian kin under the U.S. government’s Jacksonian-era removal policies. With a top hat on his head and a stop watch tucked inside his vest, Louis Vieux presented himself as an acculturated man of his time. Although he never learned to read or write, he died a wealthy man who owned not only a home and numerous personal belongings, but vast acres of prime, Kansas prairie.43

Today, he lies buried in the old Vieux Cemetery, not far from the former St. Mary’s Mission, its campus now part of St. Mary’s Academy and College, operated by the traditional Catholic Society of St. Pius X.44 Nearby stands the former Government Pay Station, now a historical museum, where Louis Vieux once served as the Potawatomi “caller” on annuity day. Today, Kansas Highway 24, coming west from Topeka, enters the town of St. Marys on Bertrand Avenue, named after the métis family so instrumental in the town’s beginnings. It was Benjamin Bertrand, the son of Joseph Sr. and Madeline Bourassa Bertrand, who became a railroad promoter and town builder. On August 8, 1866, Benjamin platted the town of St. Marys, giving the streets names that reflected the area’s history: Mission Street, in honor of the town’s most prominent institution; Palmer Street, named for Potawatomi Indian agent L.R. Palmer; and the misspelled Durink Street, surely a reference to the departed Jesuit John Baptist Duerinck. The town’s main street, Bertrand Avenue, paralleled the newly arrived main track of the Union Pacific Railroad, Eastern Division (later renamed the Kansas Pacific), which ran directly in front of St. Mary’s Mission.45

The Sacred Heart nun Elizabeth Schroeder recalled the “many passenger trains to the Rocky Mountains” that stopped at St. Marys in those years. Curious passengers, she said, often
paid visits to the nuns’ four-story brick school and “destroyed everything within reach” because “Mother Lucille never refused anything asked of her.”46 The nuns continued to run their girls school at St. Marys until a fire on February 3, 1879, destroyed the Jesuits’ school for boys. Within days, the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, “generously vacated” their school and the Jesuits moved in.47 The Society of the Sacred Heart soon sold its building to the Jesuits and, by July 1879, had withdrawn from St. Marys for good.48 The Jesuit boys’ school, meanwhile, had been chartered in 1869 as St. Mary’s College – Kansas’ first. It now enrolled nearly all Anglos, including a number of Kansas City boys who arrived over the Kansas Pacific.

By 1880, some Indian names still appeared in the Federal Census for Pottawatomie County, but they were few. Twenty-four-year-old John B. Pawbago, who worked on a farm, lived with his wife, Po-to-go-qua and their young daughter, Ahs-sah. All were Kansas natives. The young family lived two doors down from John’s father, sixty-year-old Joseph Pawbago, who was born in Michigan and undoubtedly had removed to Kansas with the Potawatomis sometime in the 1830s. Joseph, who reported his occupation as “laborer,” was a widower, caring for two teen-age daughters and providing a home for a second son, twenty-two old Joseph Jr., who also worked on a farm.49

Although many Citizen Band had relocated to Oklahoma and the Prairie Band had taken up residence on the diminished reservation north of Topeka, some métis continued to live among their Anglo neighbors in Pottawatomie and Shawnee counties. Louis Vieux’s daughter Ellen was living in Rossville Township in 1880, and her sister Archange, still holding on to the tract her father had given to her, was listed in Emmett Township, north of St. Marys.50 The métis Joseph Wilmot, whose father had hidden Refugees fleeing from Fort Dearborn in 1812, was living in the nearby town of Maple Hill, while members of the Bertrand and Yott families could
be found in St. Marys, where Adelaide Bertrand still ran her hotel. Eli G. Nadeau had busily been buying up land around Rossville, although many other métis had sold out by the turn of the century. The Bourbonnais name, for instance, prominent on a Rossville Township plat map printed in 1873, was gone by 1898, as were tracts once identified as held by the Navarres. The same was true in Silver Lake, where the Ogees owned a number of tracts in 1873, but none by 1898.51

Whether they remained in Kansas or not, these Indian and métis people did not fade away, but found ways to survive and to prosper. As historian R. David Edmunds has written, the Potawatomi “always have been masters of accommodation,” an “adaptable people” who would continue to walk the middle ground, survive, and prosper.52 In recent years, through tribal heritage projects, both the Citizen Band and Prairie Band have embraced digital technology to explore their family histories.53 These projects hold the promise of further enriching our knowledge about the lives of the Indian people who removed to Kansas under the U.S. government’s Indian removal polices of the 1830s and 1840s.

1 Zornow, Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State, 162-63.
2 Ibid., 165, 182-85.
3 Kappler, “Treaty with the Potawatomi, 1861,” Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties II:824-25. Under Article 2 of the treaty it was the duty of the Potawatomi agent to designate “chiefs and head-men,” each chief to receive one section of land and each head-man one-half section. Each of the other heads of a family received one-quarter section, and all other persons eighty acres, “to include, in every case, as far as practicable, to each family, their improvements and a reasonable portion of timber.” Louis Vieux was not identified on the 1861 treaty as a “chief.” The only métis so designated was Joseph LaFramboise. Also designated as “chiefs” were Shaw-guee, We-we-say, Mu-zhe, Mkome-da, Pauce-je-yah, Wah-sah-to, and Shaw-we.
4 Louis Vieux’s third wife, according to family genealogical records, was Mary Louise Laughton, also known as Mary Lorton, Mary Jonesse, and Louisa Janisse. She was born April 2, 1847, in Rossville, Kansas, and christened at St. Mary’s Catholic Mission on October 22, 1848. She was the oldest child of Joseph E. Laughton, who died in 1855, and Kitih e Kumikme (aka Sally Lorton). Her mother remarried James W. Dehoney, but died in 1859. Mary Louise then was adopted by her mother’s sister, Julia Ann O’Keshemikwe and her husband, Eli G. Nadeau. Augustus Heiser born April 29, 1849. He and Mary Louise wed in Westmoreland, the Pottawatomie

5 “Estate of Louis Vieux,” filed May 15, 1872, James L. Sluggins, probate judge, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. Louis gave two hundred acres to his youngest son, Louis Jr.; eighty acres each to his daughters Madeline, Archange, Ellen, and Rachel; and forty acres each to his son Jacob and daughter Sophie.

6 Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families, 514.


8 Ibid.

9 See Ninth Census of the United States, St. Marys Township and Louisville Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. Louis Vieux Jr.’s wife is identified only as “Mary,” a white woman born in Kansas who could not read or write, suggesting she was Indian. The couple had one son, Andrew. Family records state that Louis married Mary Ann Melott. A Mary A. Melotte is listed in the same 1870 Louisville Township census, but as only 11 years old and still living at home with her father, Glade Melotte, a white farmer born in France. His wife, Teresa, is identified as mixed-race Indian, as is their daughter Mary A. and her siblings. Mary Ann Melotte may well have been Louis’ second wife because the Tenth Census of the United States (1880) records him as married to Mary A., 19 years old. In the household is Louis’ son Andrew, now 12, which surely suggests that his mother was other than Mary A.

10 Ibid., Silver Lake Township, Shawnee County, Kansas.

11 Ibid., Louisville Township.

12 William W. Cone, Historical Sketch of Shawnee County, Kansas, including an Account of the Important Events in the Early Settlement of Each Township. (Topeka: the Kansas Farmer Printing House, 1877), 9-10.

13 See “Chief Abram B. Burnett Family,” http://www.wiskigeamatyuk.com (Accessed December 19, 2010; February 12, 2012); Clifton, The Prairie People, 317; Louis Charles Laurent, "Reminiscences by the Son of a French Pioneer," Kansas Historical Collections 13 (1914), 371; John Guthrie, “Primeval Heroes, Patriots and Priests,” The Agora: A Kansas Magazine (July 1893), 69-73; “Monument to Indians Still Near Topeka,” Kansas City Journal, April 4, 1920; “Burnett’s Mound,” The Kansas Democrat, April 26, 1890; “One of the Early Rulers,” Topeka Capital, February 28, 1909; and Aileen Mallory, “Burnett’s Mound,” (n.p., November-December,1986). Clifton writes that Burnett “was a staunch Baptist and a virulent anti-Catholic,” but “changed his affiliations, becoming a Catholic in 1845.” In his reminiscence of Burnett, Laurent states: “He was a very large Indian, weighing nearly five hundred pounds, and a man of some education. The only way that he could mount into his wagon was by means of a pair of steps which he carried for the purpose.” Guthrie writes: “Burnett was an unusually stately, stalwart Indian. On one occasion Wilson L. Gordon and G.G. Gage induced him to get upon the scales in Craig & Moon’s grocery store on Kansas avenue, and, incredible as it may seem, he turned the beam at 406 pounds. He frequently came to town in a farm wagon drawn by two Indian ponies, with members of his family and neighbors, and sometimes on such occasions he would become intoxicated, and his wife, with the help of the town officers and citizens, would manage to get him into the wagon, while in a hapless, unconscious state, that he might be taken home.” Burnett’s first wife was D-Moosh-Kee-Kee-Awh. According to the family website, he died June 14, 1870, “at his home … at the base of the mound that bears his name, and his remains were buried in a clump of timber in an old Indian graveyard on the south side of Lykins creek, about six miles southwest of the State House…”

14 Newspaper accounts, clearly racist, contrast with the depiction of Abram presented by the Burnett family website, which writes of him as “a remarkable man, a fine person, intelligent, who was honest and strictly upright and honorable.”

16 See Young, “‘Never ‘Quite’ White, Never ‘Quite’ Indian,’” 65, 76; and “Treaty With The Potawatomi, November 15, 1861,” in Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*, 2:827-28. Under Article VIII of the 1861 treaty, it was provided that the U.S. government, using proceeds from the sale of the Potawatomis’ surplus reservation lands in Kansas, would buy a new home “for any band or bands of the Pottawatomie Nation” who desired to remove from Kansas. Under congressional legislation passed on May 23, 1872, the Absentee Shawnee and Citizen Potawatomi were allowed to secure permanent homesteads of not less than eighty acres within a thirty-mile tract west of the Seminole Reserve.

17 Young, “‘Never ‘Quite’ White, Never ‘Quite’ Indian,’” 77-79, 89. Of Citizen Band families who were allotted land under an act of 1872, only three were full-bloods – the Tom Nona family, the Stephen Negahnquet family, and an Indian named Po-to-go-qua.

18 Ibid, 520, 522. A report for 1874 noted that 181 Prairie Band members had moved to Wisconsin and thirty to Mexico. The number of Prairie Band under the Treaty of 1861 was computed at 780. A government roll dated May 6, 1865, is considered the foundation of the establishment of the Prairie Band on the diminished reservation in Jackson County, Kansas.

19 Ibid, 528. In 1882, twenty mowing machines were reported on the reservation, and the annual annuity stood at $395,636.42, plus school and other funds.

20 Ibid, 538, 540, 544. The anti-allotment faction comprised many Prairie Band members who had left the Kansas reservation for Wisconsin, but then returned. Opposition to allotments continued to be voiced in the agent’s reports for 1895 and 1896. Under an act dated March 3, 1903, a total of 190 additional allotments were made to children born since the completion of the original allotment and to absentee members of the Prairie Band. The land awarded to them was part of sixteen thousand acres remaining after the original allotment was complete. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Prairie Band Reservation already had begun to take on its checkboard pattern of Indian/white ownership. The situation stemmed from rules allowing allotments to be sold to a white person upon the death of an Indian. By 1903, with at least 140 original allottees having died, these sales amounted to $36,550.

21 Ibid, 562. Nadeau’s name appears as Allottee No. 69, although he – and 140 other of the original allottees – had died by the time the list was published in the U.S. Statutes at Large, 57th Congress, 1901-02. In addition to the surname Nadeau, other surnames that cross over with the Citizen Band include Bourbonnais, Darling, Leclere, and Latranch.


23 See Henry J. Adams and George A. Root, “Pottawatomie Indian Mission and School,” March 6, 1935. MS Collection, Kansas State Historical Society; and Connelley, “The Prairie Band of Pottawatomie Indians,” 562. Nadeau’s name appears as Allottee No. 69, although he – and 140 other of the original allottees – had died by the time the list was published in the U.S. Statutes at Large, 57th Congress, 1901-02. In addition to the surname Nadeau, other surnames that cross over with the Citizen Band include Bourbonnais, Darling, Leclere, and Latranch.

24 See Young, “‘Never ‘Quite’ White, Never ‘Quite’ Indian,’” 81, and “Young Family,” Tribal Heritage Project, Citizen Band Potawatomi Cultural Heritage Center, Shawnee, Oklahoma.

25 David Edmunds, “Two Case Histories,” 139-41. In 1986, Edmunds states, only 2,928 of the Citizen Band’s 11,568 members had more than one-eighth Potawatomi blood.


28 "Memorial of Pottawatomie Indians, Praying Payment, as provided by treaty, for depredations committed upon their reservation in Kansas," 44th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Misc. Doc. No.15.

29 Ibid.


32 Richerter, A History of Silver Lake, Kansas, 11.

33 See Andreas and Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (November 26, 2010); and Clifton, The Prairie People, 364-65.


35 Abing, “Before Bleeding Kansas,” 62-63. Accusations came from the mouths of Indians, as well as whites. The Shawnee métis Charles and Paschal Fish, for instance, detailed a number of complaints in a seven-page letter against the Methodists living and working on their reserve, charging that the Methodists had “become ‘money changers.’”


37 See ibid; Glaab, Kansas City and the Railroads, 49, 53, 158-60; Oertel, Bleeding Borders, 21; and Missouri Intelligencer, November 29, 1867.

38 Clifton, The Prairie People, xx-xxi.

39 Ibid, xx.

40 Ibid, xxi. To the Prairie Band, Clifton writes, “the great melting pot was a place to cook fried bread, not to lose one’s identity in.”

41 Ibid, 250-51.

42 Murphy, “Potawatomi Indians of the West,” 501.

43 Ninth Census of the United States, Louisville Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas.

44 For more on St. Mary’s Academy and College, see http://www.smac.edu/ (Accessed March 3, 2012).

45 Dorothy Newcomer Hoobler, And They Called the Site ‘St. Marys’ (St. Marys, Kan.: Valley Ho! Publishing Co., 1978), 5. L.R. Palmer, a former physician to the Potawatomi, served as government agent from 1866 to 1869.
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46 Elizabeth Schroeder, “An Account of My Stay at St. Mary’s Kansas, 1856-1879,” Folder 1-f, Society of the Sacred Heart Archives.


48 See Schroeder, “An Account of My Stay at St. Mary’s Kansas;” Fr. A.J. Reid, S.J, to Mother McCabe, November 12 1950, Society of the Sacred Heart Archives; and Mary E. Gentges, “The Pioneer Sisters of St. Mary’s Mission,” http://www.smac.edu/?PioneerSisters (accessed February 26, 2012). The nuns dispersed to other of the Society’s houses. Lucille Mathevon had died a few years earlier, in 1876. She lies buried in St. Marys’ Calvary Cemetery, along with six other Sacred Heart Religious who served at the Indian mission: Mother O’Connor, who died in 1864; Sister Amiotte, 1857; Madame Reegan, 1868; Sister Layton, 1876; Mother Boyle, 1877; and Mother Deagan, 1872. Many Jesuits who served at St. Mary’s Mission, including Maurice Gailland, are buried nearby, around a central obelisk.

49 Tenth Census of the United States, St. Marys Township, Pottawatomi County, Kansas.

50 See ibid, Emmett Township, Pottawatimi County, Kansas; and L.F. Rorhbeck, ed. “The Onaga Courier’s Sectional Map of Pottawatomie County Kansas;” a supplement to the Onaga, (Kansas) Courier, (September 14, 1899), 37.


52 Edmunds, “Two Case Histories,” 139.

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Burnett Genealogy

Naniquiba (Potawatomi headman) and Potawatomi woman

Topenabe

**Cheebas**
daughter Cone-zo-quah

**Kakima**
Pokagon

Cone-zo-quah (daughter of Cheebas) and Shau-ique-be (Potawatomi)

**Nan-wesh-mah (English name: Abraham B. Burnett, also Abram Burnett)**
b: Nov. 1812, Tippecanoe River, Ind.,

****adopted by Abraham Burnett, son of Kakima and William Burnett

1st m: June 5, 1838, Dah-moosh-ke-keaw
d: Oct. 10, 1842, Sugar Creek, Kan.

2nd m: 1843, Mary Knofflock
d: June 14, 1874, Topeka, Kan.

Kakima and William Burnett

b: 1760[?], New Jersey

m: 1782, Detroit
d: ca. 1812

**Abraham**
b: ca. 1790

*m: single (adopts Nan-wesh-mah)
d: 1827, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Other children, including:

James (b: ca. 1784; m: Menache, daughter of She-cau-go-se-qua; d: 1833)

John (m: No-ta-no-quay)

Nancy (b: 1798; m: John Henry Davis, agent of American Fur Company, Indiana; d: 1837)

Isaac, Jacob, Rebecca (b: 1791; d: 1841)

Abraham B. Burnett (Nan-wesh-mah) and Mary Knofflock

b: 1835, Bavaria

m: 1843, Kansas
d: Oklahoma
Mary A.  
b: ca. 1846, Kansas  
m: John[?] Peyton  

Clarissa (Clara)  
b: ca. 1858, Kansas  
m: Francis Yott  

J. Mary  
b: ca. 1847, Kansas  
m: Christopher Pearce  

Joseph W.  
b: ca. 1856, Kansas  

Catherine  
b: ca: 1851, Kansas  
m: William Griffenstein  

Abraham Lincoln Burnett  
b: ca. 1864  
m: Mary A.
Louis Vieux Genealogy

Jacques Jauvan and Francoise L’ecuyer
b: 1757[?], Cote-des-neige, b: June 29, 1750, Montreal
Cote-des-neige, Canada St. Laurent, Canada

Jacques Vieux
b: April 29, 1770,
St. Laurent, Canada
m: July 16, 1804, Michilimackinac
d: July 7, 1852 at Green Bay, Wis.

Jacques Vieux and Angelique Roi
b: 1784
d: 1864, at Green Bay

Joseph Roi (b: Sept. 30, 1754, at Montreal, son of Andre Roi and Marie Joly)
Mah-tee-nose, Menominee daughter of Ahkenepoweh, “Standing Earth”

Madeline (b: April 11, 1802)
1st m: Jean Baptiste Yott
2nd m: 1830, Jean Baptiste Thiebault

Josette (b: 1803, mother not Angelique Roi)
m: 1819, Solomon Juneau

Paul (b: Jan. 16, 1804)
m: Ketch-e-kowie, full blood (Angeline)
d: March 15, 1867, Kansas (buried Vieux Cemetery)

Jacques Jr. (b: Jan. 8, 1807)
1st m: Lizzie Langier
2nd m: March 1871, Mis-No-Qua
d: April 10, 1872 Kansas (buried Vieux Cemetery)
*Daughter Josette, or Mary (b: 1843; m: George L. Young) [1863 roll]

**Louis (b. 30 Nov. 1809 )
b: Nov. 30, 1809
1st m: Sha-Note (Charlotte)
2nd m: Mary L. d. 11 April 1859
3rd m: August 28, 1860 Mary Louisa Laughton
d: May 3, 1872 at Louisville, Kansas.
Louis Vieux and Sha-Note (Charlotte)
b: 1820, daughter of Ches-aw-gan, Potawatomi headman who signed 1795 Treaty of Greenville
d: April 13, 1857, in Kansas

Madeline
b: April 1833, Wisconsin
m: February 22, 1857 Peter Alexander Nadeau (b: March 1830, Michigan, one-half Potawatomi)
d: 1878
*son David (b: Nov. 6, 1870, Kansas, m: May, Indian); son Lewis (b: August 1869, Kansas, m: Laura, Indiana); son Isadore (b: July 1876, Kansas, single in 1900 Census)

Sophie
b: 1835, Iowa
m: June 29, 1856, at Indianola, Kansas, Jacob Johnson (b: 1830, District of Columbia, non-Indian storekeeper at Indianola, Kansas. d: May 8, 1911 on wife’s allotment in Shawnee, Oklahoma)
d: ?
*children Richard, Rachel, Loran, James Sarah, all born, 1858-1870, in Kansas

Jacob (aka Jake)
b: 1836, Illinois [1870 Census]
m: Elizabeth Goslin, (b: 1836, Kansas, daughter of Potawatomi Mis-sah and Kickapoo Ke-o-duck
d: ?
*children Charlotte, Margaret, Mary A., all born, 1862-1869, in Kansas.
  * Charlotte m: Hiram Thorpe, one-quarter Sac & Fox. Son Jim Thorpe becomes Olympic athlete

Ellen
b: 1838, Iowa
1\textsuperscript{st} m: Franklin E. Frayer
2\textsuperscript{nd} m: George Cooke
d: ?
*Children Caroline, John, born in Kansas.

Archange (aka Margaret?)
b: 1841, Iowa
m: [John L.?] Young
d: ?
*Children Joseph, Louisa, Rosanna, John, all born, 1860-1869, in Kansas
Rachel
b: December 26, 1844, Iowa
m: Benjamin Thurber, non-Indian farmer, August 13, 1865 at Louisville, Kansas
d: 1931, Rossville, Kansas
   *Children Lucinda, Thomas, one other, all born 1867-?, in Kansas

Louis Jr.
b: 1849
1\textsuperscript{st} m: unknown (possibly Eliza Beaubein)
   *son Andrew (b: 1869, Kansas)
2\textsuperscript{nd} m: Mary Ann Melot, May 26, 1860, on Vermillion homestead, four miles east of Louisville, Kansas
d: December 22, 1896, at Wamego, Kansas
   *Children Sarah Louise, Lorena May, Louis Vieux III (b: Dec. 30, 1885, on Vieux farm in Kansas, m: Bessie Bertrand, Shawnee Okla. d: April 17, 1946)