

Outcasts of all Nations: The Rise and Decline of French and Indian Relations in the American  
Midwest 1665-1851

Noah Sandweiss

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In 1773, British Major Henry Basset wrote a letter to his superiors, requesting permission to launch a preemptive attack on the trading post of Ft. Saint Joseph on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. Basset felt that he had good reason to believe that the fort's commander, the half-French half-Indian Louis Chevalier, maintained ties with disloyal Indian tribes. The memory of Pontiac's Rebellion ten years earlier still cast a shadow over the British occupants of forts Detroit and Mackinac; Basset felt unready to trust Chevalier, who had along with his French compatriots avoided the wrath of the native uprising. In his letter, Basset accused Chevalier of the "plunder of young men with good character," and described him and his biracial kinsmen as "outcasts of all nations and the refuse of mankind."<sup>1</sup> Though Basset failed to obtain permission to make war on the L'Archeveque-Chevalier kin network, in less than a century the L'Archeveque-Chevaliers, Chouteau-Osage, and other powerful French-and-Indian kin networks of the Northwest Territory existed only in the dusty pages of history books. In the decades following the American Revolution, racialization, Western settlement, and business interests created rifts within the mixed families of the Midwest. Clans divided along racial and cultural lines as members faced the decision of whether to adhere to a traditional way of life, or to secure a place for their family in American society.

Louis Chevalier's loyalty notwithstanding, the British command considered his family critical to native diplomacy and the provisioning of the Great Lakes garrisons.<sup>1</sup> In order to appreciate fully the significance of these French and Indian kin networks, one must first examine the origins of French settlement in the American Midwest. Beginning with Robert de LaSalle's voyages south from France's Canadian colony in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, religion and trade played

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<sup>1</sup> Sleeper-Smith, Susan. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001. Pg. 57-59.

central roles in French colonization. Though some Jesuit missionaries saw fur traders as “serpents in the garden,” spreading vice, drink, and sex among their congregants, the French crown treated both enterprises as necessary for gaining allies in the new world. Wherever Jesuit missionaries established their chapels, young and unwed merchants followed, bearing guns, alcohol, and jewelry. The early missionaries earned the reverence of 19<sup>th</sup> century American writers like John Law, who asserted in his 1858 book *The Colonial History of Vincennes*, that “no set of men, in pursuit of any object temporal or spiritual...has made greater sacrifices than these reverend fathers.”<sup>2</sup> Gilded age historian George Greene somewhat inaccurately lauded the missionaries for introducing the “children of the forest” to “industry and social economics.” Nineteenth-century historians’ views of the fur traders, meanwhile, were less positive. Greene, for instance, criticized them for committing “racial suicide.”<sup>3</sup>

From 1665 through the 1690s, LaSalle’s mission work and trade with the Fox, Sauks, Huron, Potawatomi, Algonquin, and other tribes of the western Great Lakes brought the French colonies into the warpath of the Iroquois Confederacy, an aggressively expansionist English supported faction. The need for self-preservation, disrupted trade, and the westward movement of refugees forced French colonists and their Indian allies to act quickly. LaSalle and his native *aide-de-camps*, Ouillamette, constructed a string of forts, inviting refugees to settle amongst traders and missionaries in the Illinois country. In true native custom, these alliances necessitated traditional marriages and gift giving. Indian women and French men frequently married each other in hopes of greater economic opportunity, the French benefiting from access to trade networks, and Native women gaining commercial prospects, as well as marriages often more equitable and monogamous than traditional arrangements.<sup>4</sup> To French settlers, often peasants or the younger sons of noble families, tribal politics presented a rare opportunity for matrimony. Of the estimated ten thousand French immigrants to North America before the Seven Years War, only one thousand women made the journey, including wives and indentured servants.<sup>5</sup> In the first twenty-one years of the Mississippi River settlement of Kaskaskia, out of twenty-one babies

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<sup>2</sup> Law, John. *The Colonial History of Vincennes: Under the French, British and American Governments: From Its First Settlement down to the Territorial Administration of General William Henry Harrison*. Vincennes: Harvey, Mason, 1858. Pg. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Greene, George E. *History of Old Vincennes and Knox County, Indiana*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Pub., 1911. Pg. 33, 65.

<sup>4</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 12-19.

<sup>5</sup> Meinig, D. W. *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*. Vol. 1. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. Pg. 113-114.

baptized, only one was born to a French woman.<sup>6</sup> For generations to come, mixed men in the Midwest frequently wed Indian women, while mixed women usually chose French or mixed husbands.<sup>7</sup>

In Indian communities, French Jesuits often had the most success in converting women. In addition to the prospect of marriage into the fur trade, cooperation with the Jesuits offered women protection from honor killings and gender violence, as well as spiritual authority in the new Christian order. Understanding the popularity of Christianity amongst Indian women, priests like Father Gravier at Kaskaskia emphasized female saints, referred to God and Jesus as *manitous*, an indigenous word for god, and emphasized the power of the Virgin Mary. Though in most indigenous Midwestern cultures men had traditionally served as story tellers and spiritual leaders, female converts took up roles as community leaders, preaching Bible stories, leading prayers, and providing ad hoc baptisms and communions.<sup>8</sup> When in 1763 Missouri's new Spanish rulers forbade Jesuit proselytism, reducing the territory's clergy to a single priest in Kaskaskia, local women began to organize community prayer meetings and Sunday festivals.<sup>9</sup>

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a number of Indian and mixed women achieved positions of wealth and power through strategic marriage, commercial involvement, and religious authority. In Kaskaskia, an Illini woman named Marie Rouensa achieved recognition as a teenager for her charismatic sermons and assertive community involvement. She entered the commercial sector by marrying a wealthy French trader, working to support his business while entering business contracts independently. Like many mixed couples in the region, Rouensa and her husband brought up their children speaking the languages of both parents. Her will, dictated according to French law, left her children a forty-five-thousand-livre estate, including two houses, two barns, scores of animals, four black slaves and one Indian slave, as well as nine tons of wood. The will makes no reference to her husband.<sup>8</sup> Another woman, the half Illini Marie Madeleine Reaume, went on to become one of the wealthiest and most powerful fur traders in the new world. Operating a highly successful business in imported French goods out of Montreal, Reaume

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<sup>6</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 32.

<sup>7</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 24-33.

<sup>9</sup> Foley, William E. *The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989. Pg. 102.

extended her influence and kin network from Canada to the Mississippi Valley with the Catholic tradition of godparenthood. By accepting spiritual responsibility for the children of partners, competitors, and fur trade hopefuls, Reaume and other godparents in the region promised to educate their children in Catholic and native customs in exchange for political and business ties. During her tenure at Ft. Saint Joseph, she served in lieu of a priest, performing baptisms Reaume also forged connections through the arranged marriages, not only of her five daughters, but also for matters of business.<sup>10</sup> Written off by the aforementioned British Major Henry Basset as a “squaw wife,” Marie Madeleine Reaume sent one hundred and eighty French and Indian warriors of various tribes on a six-hundred-mile trek from St. Louis to Ft. Saint Joseph in defense of her second husband, Louis Chevalier, during the American Revolution.<sup>11</sup>

In 1696 Jesuit priests gained the ear of Madame de Maintenon, mistress to Louis XIV. Appealing to her religiosity, they complained of fur traders interfering with their mission work. With warehouses overstocked, and the price of fur falling, the king issued a temporary ban on the trade. Though the ensuing eighteen-year suspension of fur exports sparked protest from traders and Natives alike, this period of economic isolation created a greater need for interdependence, and strengthened the ties between French voyageurs and allied tribes.<sup>12</sup> In 1702 alone, at the remote mission town of Vincennes Indiana, trappers sent a reported twenty-thousand furs up the Wabash River for internal trade.<sup>13</sup> Though voyageurs continued to sustain themselves through hunting, their Native wives, like Marie Rouesna, took to farming. Villages like Saint Joseph, Kaskaskia, and St. Genevieve grew wheat and corn to support frontier posts and trade for furs. Women in these sedentary communities continued to take up religious and commercial roles. When trade reopened in 1714, the number of registered female and mixed traders increased significantly. Ft. Saint Joseph reopened under the leadership of Jean Baptiste de St. Ours, who, unlike his predecessors, had grown up in the New World, and who had established ties with local tribes.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 45-50.

<sup>11</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 68.

<sup>12</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 42

<sup>13</sup> Law. Pg. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 52, 55, 44.

The markedly different customs of French America confused and occasionally offended observers. The reactions of Anglophone and foreign visitors ran the gamut from admiration to revulsion. Visiting Spanish held St. Louis in 1801, future commandant Cpt. Amos Stoddard wrote approvingly that the city was “elevated and healthy, and the people are rich and hospitable. They live in a style equal to those in the large sea-port towns, I find no want of education amongst them.” Victor Collot on the other hand, a Frenchman touring the nearby community of St. Charles, spoke disparagingly of French traders living with “Indian habits,” exclaiming that “it would be difficult to find a collection of individuals more ignorant, stupid, ugly, and miserable.” Despite the district’s small-scale wheat and tobacco production, Collot complained that the inhabitants did not till the ground.<sup>15</sup> In 1787 Joseph Buell, described by his contemporaries as a “quintessential New Englander” wrote of the inhabitants of Vincennes that “the people give themselves to all kinds of vice and are indolent and idle a community as ever posed a town.”<sup>16</sup> French agricultural patterns differed significantly from those of English colonists. Instead of the randomly placed farms of the East Coast, French settlers in Canada and the Midwest cultivated long, narrow fields along river banks. Along with the gendered division of labor, the relative surplus provided by common fields contributed to stereotypes of the lazy creole held by English colonials, who placed a premium on private property.<sup>17</sup> Reflecting on his 1810 stay in St. Louis, Washington Irving wrote disparagingly in his bestselling book, *Astoria*, that “the old French houses engaged in the Indian trade had gathered around a train of dependents, mongrel Indians and mongrel Frenchmen, who had intermarried with Indians.”<sup>18</sup>

Though the French and Indian War ended with the cession of France’s colonial possessions to Spain and England, extant communities continued to grow and thrive under the distant and lax rule of European empires. The era of relative peace before the American Revolution saw the founding of St. Louis, which within a few decades became the largest city in the region. Established in 1764 near the extant Creole towns of Kaskaskia and St. Genevieve by the New Orleans based Louisiana Company under the leadership of Pierre LaCledé and Auguste Chouteau, St. Louis’s strategic location attracted thousands of Native Americans from twenty-

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<sup>15</sup> Foley. Pg. 84, 87.

<sup>16</sup> Greene. Pg. 36.

<sup>17</sup> Meinig. Pg. 202, 214.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Hyde, Anne Farrar. *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800-1860*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. Pg. 42.

three tribes, producing immense wealth in furs and cereals. As in other Creole settlements, the early inhabitants of St. Louis intermarried with Indians as a matter of policy, and often adapted native dress and customs, such as gift based diplomacy.<sup>19</sup> By the estimates of Pierre Chouteau, (nearly all men in the dynasty bore some permutation of the names Pierre and Auguste), the Spanish government paid an estimated \$13,000 per year in tribute to surrounding tribes, up to \$30,000 in times of war.<sup>20</sup> This was money well spent, as by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, St. Louis traded an estimated \$203,000 in fur per year.<sup>21</sup> The upper tier of St. Louis society invested heavily in books, art, and commodities from the old world, as well as indigenous art and fine native clothes.<sup>22</sup> While Spanish efforts to curb the trade in Indian slaves and horses (mostly stolen) irked French and Native settlers, the declining profitability of raiding induced trade and peace in the region. Deferring to French knowledge of Indian practices, such as feasts and gift giving, Spain administered the region without significant change to the status quo.<sup>23</sup> Under British rule, communities on the Great Lakes, Ft. Saint Joseph in particular, became dependent on agriculture for subsistence. By 1770 the town not only supplied the provisions of Ft. Mackinac, but also managed to sell a surplus to neighboring tribes. On the Mississippi and Great Lakes water mills, often built by Indian women, contributed to the surplus.<sup>24</sup>

Disrupting the period of relative peace and prosperity for Creoles and their tribal allies, the American Revolution fractured the Midwest, as it did the East, between loyalists and revolutionaries. Some French settlers and Indians remembering bitterly the Seven Years War, eagerly joined the rebels in the hopes of driving out their foreign rulers. Others, particularly those reliant of British trade, pledged loyalty to King George. Complicated by the region's vast, intertwined, kin networks, the war divided families and alliances, and set the course of Indian affairs for decades to come. After meeting with the American guerilla George Rogers Clark in Kaskaskia, Father Pierre Gibault, the last priest in the region since the Spanish and English had expelled the Jesuits, rallied support for the American cause amongst the Spanish subjects of the St. Louis area. He traveled with Clark to Vincennes where many of the towns inhabitants

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<sup>19</sup> Hurley, Andrew. *Common Fields: An Environmental History of St. Louis*. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Foley. Pg. 46.

<sup>21</sup> Green, Constance McLaughlin. *American Cities in the Growth of the Nation*. New York: J. De Graff, 1957. Pg. 56.

<sup>22</sup> Foley. Pg. 106, 121.

<sup>23</sup> Foley. Pg. 37, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 75, 76, 78.

willingly gave their possessions--and some their lives--in Clark's campaign for the west.<sup>25</sup> While the fabled heroism of this adventure has inspired the awe and appreciation of American writers such as aforementioned John Law, and Maurice Thompson in his popular 1900 novel, *Alice of Old Vincennes*, this period marks the beginning of the end of the Indian presence in southern Indiana. In 1774 a party of marauding Virginians, illegally passed beyond the Allegheny Mountains and massacred the family of a neutral Iroquois Catholic by the name of Logan. Logan's call for revenge rallied the tribes of Ohio country into a war against Virginian settlers.<sup>26</sup> Small wonder that the Indians of the Vincennes area rallied to the infamous "scalp-buying general" Henry Hamilton in opposition to the Virginian Indian fighter George Rogers Clark.<sup>27</sup> Shortly after the battle of Vincennes, a French contingent loyal to the rebels came in conflict with a Creole and Indian force under Chief Little Turtle, suffering a humiliating defeat at the hands of kinsmen.<sup>28</sup> In the post-war spillover of conflict between Natives and settlers, American general "Mad" Anthony Wayne recalled burning Indian fields in the proximity of Vincennes that he reckoned to be vaster than any from "Canada to Florida."<sup>29</sup> Though insignificant to the course of the war, these events drew a political line between members of the Franco-Indian community, identifying American supporters as Vincennes French, and loyalists as Indians. Following America's acquisition of the Northwest Territory, concessions made by the governor to participants in the Battle of Vincennes include tracts labeled "Indian Fields", "Old Indian Village," and "Former land of the Piankashaw."<sup>30</sup> When conflict in the Indiana territory halted with the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, several tribes--including the Shawnee, Delaware, and Miami--moved to the peripheries of the territory.<sup>31</sup>

In the Great Lakes region, under the suspicious oversight of Henry Basset and Maj. Arent Schuyler de Peyster, French and Indians living in the shadow of Fort Mackinac defected from the British side, joining the American partisans. Despite Louis Chevalier's displays of loyalty in recruiting native warriors to fight for the British cause in Cahokia and Vincennes, the British authority arrested five hundred Creoles, a quarter of the region's demographic. The number

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<sup>25</sup> Law. Pg. 53-54.

<sup>26</sup> Greene. Pg. 316.

<sup>27</sup> Law. Pg. 69.

<sup>28</sup> Glenn, Elizabeth, and Stewart Rafert. Indianapolis, 2009: Indiana Historical Society Press, IN. Pg. 36.

<sup>29</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 80.

<sup>30</sup> Law. Pg. 61.

<sup>31</sup> Glenn. Pg. 43.

certainly would have been higher, had French trader responsible for transporting prisoners apprehended any members of the L'Archeveque-Chevalier kin network. The frustrated de Peyster complained that Chevalier was "so connected with the Potawatomi's that he can now do anything with them." Following the raid by Louis and Marie Madeleine's son, Louison Chevalier, Louis embarked on the difficult task of turning his Potawatomi allies from the British to the Americans. Already exhausted by war and bound to their agricultural obligations, few Potawatomi joined the call to arms. The tribe did break ties with the British however, and assumed cordial relations with the Americans.<sup>32</sup>

In the tribal tinderbox of St. Louis and the Illinois country, already experiencing an influx of American settlers, the breaking of the peace upended the old order, dividing the French population and upsetting old alliances. Despite Spain's formal support for the rebelling colonies, and a ban on trade with the English, Ste. Genevieve traders continued to secret away to Ft. Mackinac to sequester British goods. With trade cut off by the war, a number of tribes with close French connections such as the Fox, Sauks, Sioux, and Winnebago, turned to British Canada for commerce, further crippling the business of St. Louis traders.<sup>33</sup> On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1780, under the leadership of the British Canadian William Hesse, and the mixed trader and Chouteau rival Jean-Marie Ducharme, an army of hundreds of Indians from nine tribes descended on St. Louis and Cahokia. Ducharme ordered the Fox and Sauk forces, many of whom had family connections to local Creoles, to take up the vanguard, and break through the town's defenses. Fortified by trenches, barricades, and a stout stone gun tower, St. Louis's French, Spanish, American, and Potawatomi defenders, though outnumbered, held the clear advantage. In the midst of their formal rivals, and ordered to undertake a suicide mission, the Fox and Sauks abandoned the field. The next time they took up arms, the tribes followed Louison Chevalier on his march against the British.<sup>34</sup>

Opening the West to further settlement, the American victory further heightened tensions between Whites and Indians--not only for American settlers, but also Creole populations, still divided by the war. Along the Canadian border, French traders and Natives who had supported

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<sup>32</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 65-67, 84.

<sup>33</sup> Foley. Pg. 41.

<sup>34</sup> Primm, James Neal. *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis, Missouri, 1764-1980*. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998. Pg. 44.



the British abandoned their settlements in the United States, and evacuated their communities to British controlled Canada.<sup>35</sup> By the laws of the new republic under the articles of Confederation, French Whites gained US citizenship, while Indians and free blacks received the status of “resident foreigners.” Article 11 of Articles of Confederation invited French Canada to join the Union, but founding father Gouverneur Morris, among other members of the continental Congress, insisted that Canada and the West should be governed as provinces and not given representation, fearing that the French lacked an understanding or appreciation of democracy.<sup>36</sup> Relations between French and Indians in the Illinois Country and Indiana began deteriorating sharply when in 1783 General Arthur St. Clair, governor of the Northwest Territory, vowed to extinguish all Indian land claims east of Mississippi. Incited in part by the preferential treatment afforded to the French, native groups retaliated with an attack on the Creole town of Cahokia, just across the river from St. Louis. The attack shocked the French populace from the Mississippi to Vincennes, driving the inhabitants to seek protection from the United States.<sup>37</sup>

American settlers, incentivized by low taxes and cheap, abundant, land, flocked across the Mississippi to Spanish Missouri. Though some settlers, such as the defected Colonel George Morgan, endeavored to preserve the forests and quarry of Natives in order to maintain peace and the fur trade, taken as a whole, the new settlement sparked conflict between Indians and Whites. Into the 1790s, though American settlers and major Creole families continued to make strategic marriages to Natives, *Métises* on the lower rungs of St. Louis society began living increasingly amongst Indians in the surrounding countryside. Tensions continued to increase in 1784, when a band of Big Osage warriors robbed and stripped a party of St. Genevieve hunters, leaving them stranded in wilderness. In response, the Spanish governor, Esteban Miro, temporarily embargoed the tribe, much to the protest of the Chouteau clan. In response, a group of Little Osage, also implicated in the embargo, scalped and decapitated the hunter Jean la Buche. When Miro sent agents to apprehend the culprits, their tribesmen claimed that the perpetrators had died. Following a Delaware assault on a French trade post, an American militia killed five Delaware in retaliation. Still bound to Indians through trade and marriage, the inhabitants of St. Louis brought the militia leader to trial, though the judge would acquit him for lack of evidence. The situation

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<sup>35</sup> Meinig. Pg. 43.

<sup>36</sup> Meinig. Pg. 393.

<sup>37</sup> Law. Pg. 121.

irked Spanish authorities against both the hostile Indians and unruly settlers. Governor Miro's replacement, the Baron de Carondelet called the Americans "determined bandits...hostile to all subjugation," demanding an increased military presence on the border. Though Carondelet's successor, Zenon Trudeau, negotiated peace in 1792 with the help of Jean Pierre and Auguste Chouteau, the peace alienated immigrant tribes from the east, still in open war with the Osage. Complaining of the hastily resumed conflict, Trudeau implored his superiors in New Orleans either to "annihilate the Indians or stop irritating them." Orchestrating another peace in 1794, Pierre and Auguste Chouteau built a fort near the main Osage village as a safeguard against an American invasion or Indian insurrection, resuming their trade monopoly with the tribe. Independent factions, such as the allies of Canadian-born *Métis* Louis Lorimier, openly defied Spanish and American rule, participating in the resettlement of migrant tribes, attacking American settlers, and most audaciously, trading with the British.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to ethnic violence, integration into American culture, politics, and economics shook Creole and Indian society. In 1803, Jefferson proposed the radical and legally questionable idea of purchasing the Louisiana Territory, secretly retroceded from Spain back to France three years earlier under the rule of Napoleon. Pleading his case to Congress, Jefferson implored that the United States of America would benefit from resettling its countrymen on the other side of the Mississippi, and that the French inhabitants would prefer republicanism to European colonialism. In the hopes of Americanizing Louisiana, Jefferson supported a bill to grant 160 acres of land to 30,000 volunteers to settle in the new possessions. News of the machinations in Washington alarmed Louisiana's former Spanish subjects. If French law were replaced, women would lose their equal stake in marriage, bastards would lose their inheritance rights, and non-Whites, as well as the territory's large mixed population, could lose equal rights.<sup>39</sup> With an estimated eighty percent of the population at least part Native, the deal boded poorly for the inhabitants of St. Louis, including many American ex-patriots who had immigrated for the promise of tax-free land.<sup>40</sup> The Louisiana Purchase also angered the Spanish government, which felt cheated by the liberties taken by Napoleon with the retroceded land, as well as ambiguity over the Purchase's proposed borders. Charles deLassus, the territory's final Spanish governor,

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<sup>38</sup> Foley. Pg. 62-70.

<sup>39</sup> Meinig. Pg. 17.

<sup>40</sup> Hyde. Pg. 40

faithful in his duties even under retrocession, begged superiors to reclaim the land. Following ratification of the deal, the ever faithful deLassus wrote in his diary “the devil can take it all.” Another diarist at the time, the Creole Charles Gratiot, described the tense emotions of 1803, detailing people’s fears of loss of rights, taxation, land claims, and most significantly, American lawyers. In spite of the gracious feasts thrown by St. Louis’s elite for the provisional American government, eye witnesses recall tears and a sense of malaise in the time surrounding the Louisiana Purchase. Cpt. Amos Stoddard, an interim commandant and key intermediary for the treaty, assured the Creole population that America would respect French laws and rights, and agitated for interests of local elites.

Though the new government stood by its word in protecting the existing rights of White locals, news spread of vitriolic speeches in Washington warning of avaricious, land grabbing creoles. President Jefferson, and Indiana Territorial governor William Henry Harrison attempted to court elite families by granting Charles Gratiot and Auguste Chouteau positions as local judges and Indian agents, and by inviting their sons to study at West Point. On the other hand, the new government provoked protest by authorizing resettlement of eastern Indians, dividing the territory in two, and nullifying land grants written after October 1, 1800 with the exception of 640 developed acres. Charles Gratiot led a delegation of American and Creole land owners protesting the District act’s lack of self-governance. More recent settlers, like St. Louis’s first post master, Rufus Easton, described petitioners to Jefferson as “greedy monopolists.” Easton had moved to the territory in search of land and fortune, only to find most of it divided up between older settlers and Indian tribes.<sup>41</sup>

In the interest of maintaining positions of power and traditional rights, many Creoles made a significant effort to cooperate with the American authorities, attempting to juggle old Indian alliances and fealty to the Republic. Though poorer Creoles, particularly Métis, faced harassment from newcomers, local elites saw the necessity of involving themselves in American society and politics.<sup>42</sup> In St. Louis, traders from the region’s influential families led the way in welcoming the American presence, hosting feasts and granting gifts to the new territorial government. Already, since the 1790s, French traders had begun arranging marriages with

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<sup>41</sup> Foley. Pg. 72-77.

<sup>42</sup> Primm. Pg. 48.

wealthy and up-and-coming American settlers. In the years following the American Revolution, with Indian relations increasingly tenuous, those Creoles who opted to live amongst Whites increasingly married not only American settlers, but insularly within the French community, and in the interest of maintaining business dynasties even cousin to cousin.<sup>43</sup> While women in Creole or Native marriages retained equal property rights, Anglo-American law favored the inheritance of male relatives. In the coming years this custom would take precedence.<sup>44</sup> Some American settlers made an effort to get along in French society. An 1809 advertisement in the *Louisiana Gazette* asks for “a French gentleman to board with a genteel family...no other compensation will be required than...lessons in the French language.”<sup>45</sup> St. Louis’s first newspaper, the *Louisiana Gazette* published columns in both English and French. The first English school in St. Louis, built in 1808, initially taught classes in both languages, as did the school in Vincennes for some time.<sup>46</sup> In Northern Indiana however, where French traders oscillated between British and American loyalties, the Territorial Government established trade factories to outcompete the areas established, and potentially dangerous, trade networks.<sup>47</sup>

In less cosmopolitan areas, such as the wilderness of the Indiana territory, mixed marriage remained the norm for Creole men into the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The diaries of the German Moravian missionary Sr. Kluge, written between 1801 and 1806, describe the dependency of French voyageurs, mostly lone trappers near the Great Lakes, on marriage with Native women. Despite loyalty to the Catholic faith, several French/Indian couples asked Sr. Kluge for the sacraments of baptism and blessings for their children. In one journal entry, Kluge vents in frustration about a young French interpreter regularly running off to flirt with Native women during prayer meetings, promising a cow for the bride price.<sup>48</sup> The 1818 travel journal of a Pennsylvania Quaker, Morris Birkbeck, describes the preference of Indiana Natives toward French traders, who dress similarly in furs, blue vests, and moccasins. By Birkbeck’s estimates, Indians from within a hundred mile radius continued to travel to Vincennes to conduct business.

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<sup>43</sup> Foley. Pg. 131, 143, 161, 184.

<sup>44</sup> Primm. Pg. 53.

<sup>45</sup> *Advertisement*, The Louisiana Gazette, 11-9-1809.

<sup>46</sup> Green. Pg. 57.

<sup>47</sup> Glenn. Pg. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Kluge, John Peter. *The Moravian Indian Mission on White River; Diaries and Letters*, May 5, 1799, to November 12, 1806. Translated by Lawrence Henry Gipson, Harry Emilius Stocker, Herman T. Frueauff, Samuel C. Zeller, and Abraham Luckenbach. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1938. Pg. 178, 181, 300.

Surprised by the degree of intermarriage, he remarks of meeting a Shawnee man with “a respectable beard, enough for a German officer of the British dragoons.”<sup>49</sup> Following the recent intercommunal conflict of the Revolutionary War, native names continue to appear on Vincennes school roles into the early 1800s. Originally comprising half of the town by some estimates, Shawnee, Wabash, and Miami Indians had built Vincennes’s original church, and tended vast swathes of farmland in the region.<sup>50</sup>

As American settlers and prospectors moved west in pursuit of land, the issue of land ownership under US law became a preeminent concern of Creole communities. The newcomers had no interest in working the communal fields, a core unifying element of the extant Creole communities. In the Illinois and Mississippi territories, poor Creole and Indian farming families sold their shares of the much sought communal fields, spreading across the countryside, and farming private, square fields in the fashion of Anglo-Americans.<sup>51</sup> Although in 1789 the inhabitants of Vincennes successfully appealed to the territorial government for the protection of common fields, the community privatized and sold off the land shortly afterwards, catering to the demands of new settlers.<sup>52</sup> In the former Spanish possession of the Louisiana territory, the ambiguity and irregularity of Spanish land titles led to no end of contention between settlers and former Spanish subjects. By some clerical trickery, the American speculator Moses Austin managed to buy and sell off the communally held lead mines. With the support of a friend in the military, Maj. Seth Hunt, Austin evicted “squatters” from his newly acquired lands.<sup>53</sup> A flamboyant conman by the name of John Smith Tennessee gained notoriety for grabbing titles by means of trickery, corruption, and when necessary the two daggers, pistols, and musket that he reportedly carried at nearly all times.<sup>54</sup> A cohort of lawyers made names for themselves in the region by reviewing titles and negotiating claims for those unfamiliar with US property law.<sup>55</sup> Although Thomas Jefferson had intended for the sale of unclaimed land to compensate the payment of the Louisiana Purchase, he eventually repealed the law which had restricted Spanish

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<sup>49</sup> Birkbeck, Morris. *Notes on a Journey in America from the Coast of Virginia to the Territory of Illinois. To Which Is Added Letters from Illinois.* New York: A.M. Kelley, 1971.

<sup>50</sup> Greene. Pg. 34, 65, 412.

<sup>51</sup> Primm. Pg. 67-68.

<sup>52</sup> Greene. Pg. 61.

<sup>53</sup> Foley. Pg. 162.

<sup>54</sup> Primm. Pg. 83-84, 88.

<sup>55</sup> Foley. Pg. 183.

land claims to those dating from before 1800 in the interest of preventing further fraud. The government continued to deny dubious land claims, such as the Barbadian Jacques Clamorgan's claim to 500,000 arpents, about half the size of Rhode Island.<sup>56</sup>

As contentious as land issues between former Spanish subjects and American settlers became, the conflict paled in comparison to the controversial and often violent Indian affairs. Though Jefferson hoped for Native Americans to take up farming and assimilate into American society, the key architects of his Indian policy, William Henry Harrison and Henry Dearborn, were both seasoned Indian fighters, and strongly anti-Indian in their views.<sup>57</sup> In Louisiana Territory, relations between the United States and the native tribes soured almost immediately after the occupying force arrived. Upon the suggestion of local Frenchmen, Cpt. Amos Stoddard presented gifts to the neighboring tribes. Accustomed to firearms, jewelry, and tons of fur, local chiefs took offence at his paltry gifts of tobacco and alcohol. Though Stoddard expressed concerns for the unfair treatment of Indians by the local justice system and hostile settlers, he lacked the support to effectively prosecute Whites for the killing of Indians, or to curtail the violence between the increasingly stand-offish Fox and Sauk tribes and American settlers. Shortly after Stoddard's arrival, a gang of Sauk youths dragged an American flag behind their horse. Sauk bands attacked Osages, their historic enemies and friends of the US military government, as well as raiding several American farmsteads and settlements. At a meeting with Stoddard, Fox and Sauk representatives protested the settlement of their hunting grounds, as well as the US's preferential treatment of the Osage, and demanded a trade factory. Trusting and respecting Stoddard to some degree, the representatives confided that they'd been invited to talks by British agents in Canada.

With a garrison of fifty men and an irregular militia of around two hundred individuals, Governor William Henry Harrison invited the Fox and Sauks to discuss terms.<sup>58</sup> With Osage allies Pierre and Auguste Chouteau presiding, the negotiations produced one of the most notorious treaties in American history. The five chiefs present, invited ostensibly to negotiate ransoms, received fine gifts and copious amounts of alcohol. Yielding to the tribes' wishes for a trade factory, and yearly payments of a thousand dollars, America acquired fifty million acres,

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<sup>56</sup> Primm. Pg. 80.

<sup>57</sup> Hyde. Pg. 235.

<sup>58</sup> Foley. Pg. 174-176.

including 61,500 acres of common held lead mines, which went to Auguste Chouteau along with an additional 25,000 acres. Pierre, the younger brother, came off with 7900 acres.<sup>59</sup> The defiant Sauk and Fox violently refused to accept the treaty, which the chiefs had signed without proper authority, bypassing tribal protocol. In protest, the tribes marauded against the Osage and Sioux, whose privilege they viewed as collaboration with the hated Americans. Though Pierre Chouteau, Indian agent to the Osage tribe, propped chief White Hair to unify the tribe under a friendly banner, many of his tribesmen broke bread with the Fox and Sauk, meeting in secret with English and Spanish agents. Threatening war with one hand, and offering trade factories with the other, Indian agent William Clark brought the Osage to the negotiating table. Again without tribal permission, the Osage party ceded their land between the Missouri and Arkansas Rivers. Following tribal outcry, Clark rewrote the treaty. In the second round of negotiations, the Osage demanded that the United States respect the land claims of their traditional trade partners, the Chouteau family.<sup>60</sup> Still reliant on trade with the Osage and bonded through marriage, members of the Chouteau family protested when Jefferson banned the trading of firearms with Indians, even in the face of rising insurrection.<sup>61</sup>

Efforts to subdue tribal upheaval through treaties and trade factories did little to stem the mounting tide anti-American sentiment. In the Indiana Territory, a Shawnee warrior and orator, Tecumseh, and his brother, known to Americans as “The Prophet,” rallied the territory’s Natives to a nativist, pan-Indian cause. Demanding the separation of Indians and Whites, Tecumseh sided with the British in the War of 1812, campaigning to drive the Americans out of the Indiana Territory. In the ensuing conflict, American militias destroyed at least twenty-five Indian towns, burned vast land holdings, and killed in battle many of the region’s most powerful Indian leaders. Following Tecumseh’s climactic defeat at the Battle of the Thames, in Ontario, many of his followers fled west of the Mississippi, while others, including the Miami and Potawatomi returned to their ancestral land in a much compromised position.<sup>62</sup> Despite Tecumseh’s sharply nativist message, battle lines did not fall cleanly between Whites and Indians. Though ultimately turned down by the army, Auguste Chouteau managed to raise a host of Osage willing to fight

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<sup>59</sup> Primm. Pg. 77

<sup>60</sup> Foley. Pg. 203-205.

<sup>61</sup> Foley. Pg. 176.

<sup>62</sup> Glenn. Pg. 45-46.

for the American side. When Sauk Indians drunkenly raised a British flag over one of their towns, the Osage declared war against their old rivals. Eventually however, many members of the Osage tribe also joined the uprising.<sup>63</sup> In keeping with historical precedent, the war divided the loyalties of French traders in the Great Lakes region. In his memoirs of his time serving the British at Ft. Mackinac, French immigrant and trader Augustin Grignon recalls hearing of French interpreters serving in Tecumseh's army. He also describes one of his colleagues, the French American Charles DeLanglade, as a supporter of the English and relation of the Ottawa tribe by marriage.<sup>64</sup> Marrying into the St. Joseph Potawatomi trade network, the Anglo-American William Burnett and his wife, Kakima, traded with and supplied the Americans within British-controlled territory along with their senior Creole colleague, Louison Chevalier. Though historically underplayed in comparison to her husband, Kakima was already heavily involved in trading and commercial farming by the time of her marriage to Burnett. Amongst the Northern Indiana Potawatomi community, the war literally divided families, separating brothers, fathers, and sons along ideological lines.<sup>65</sup> The Prophet's antagonism toward Christians usually turned off Indians from observant Catholic communities.<sup>66</sup> Following the end of the war, the aging Louison Chevalier left the Indiana territory along with a party of Potawatomi, fearing violent retribution from either side, and seeking the support of his Chouteau relatives.<sup>65</sup>

In the footsteps of emigrating Natives, settlement boomed following the War of 1812. As Americans moved west in increasing numbers, Osage families left their farms in the Mississippi Valley, retreating to the secluded reaches of the western Ozark Mountains.<sup>67</sup> Though Auguste Chouteau negotiated a peace treaty with the Osage in 1816, that allowed them to keep most of their land, the treaty proved unpopular, and Indian Agent William Clark went ahead with an 1808 proposal to exile the nation to the western edge of Missouri, hoping to preserve peace between Natives and settlers. The moderation of the Indian agents caused a strong negative backlash amongst anti-Indian parties. In St. Louis, prominent non-French merchants, farmers, and even the city's one newspaper called for the elimination of all Indians east of the Rocky

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<sup>63</sup> Foley. Pg. 227, 231.

<sup>64</sup> Grignon, Augustin. *Seventy-two Years Recollections of Wisconsin*. Wisconsin Historical Collection volume 3. 197. Pg. 199, 271.

<sup>65</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 90-91.

<sup>66</sup> Hyde. Pg. 237.

<sup>67</sup> Foley. Pg. 237, 234, 248.



Mountains.<sup>68</sup> Though some Indian agents, such as Clark and Chouteau, had personal relationships with Natives and on some level believed that they stood for the tribes' best interests, misunderstandings and broken promises continued to plague Indian policy. In 1828, Chief Wapichadamon of the Peoria tribe sent a letter to President John Quincy Adams complaining of unfair treatment by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "When the French and Spanish were with us," Wapichadamon wrote, "we lived happy and easy. They never asked for us to sell our land...we lived in common with them." Claiming that the Peoria had "never stained [their] hands with the blood of white men," the Chief protested the resettlement of Eastern tribes in Peoria land, and the insufficiency of the tribe's \$300 annual allotment.<sup>69</sup> The following year Indian agent Thomas Forsyth sent a letter to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, expressing his desire to expel the Fox tribe, which continued to question the validity of old treaties, and which protested the settlement of Whites on their former land.<sup>70</sup>

Inundated with complaints from Indians shortchanged in government allotments, Clark wrote the Secretary of War a number of urgent letters pleading for more funding.<sup>71</sup> Several years later, adventurer and former governor of Tennessee Sam Houston would mail a six-foot tall stack of letters to President Andrew Jackson consisting of complaints from tribes that hadn't received promised payments.<sup>72</sup> Though most tribes received agricultural and trade-related supplies with the expressed purpose of incentivizing them to take up agriculture, the letters received by Indian agents tell a different story. In an 1829 "Statement of Probable Amounts Which May Be Required to Effect Exchange of Lands," estimating the payments in farming supplies necessary for a land deal with the Delaware and Kickapoo tribes, the notary comments that the wants deal completed quickly so the tribes "may be induced to move out of the state."<sup>73</sup> In 1832 the United States Senate issued an ultimatum to William Clark to ensure the cession of all Indian lands in Illinois and Missouri to the United States.<sup>74</sup> In the state of Indiana, native tribes faced land seizures for failure to pay off debts to American trade factories. From 1838 to 1840, Jacksonian

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<sup>68</sup> Primm. Pg. 91, 107.

<sup>69</sup> National Archives RG 75 Roll 748. Aug 1, 1828.

<sup>70</sup> Forsyth, Thomas. *Thomas Forsynth to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs*. May 17, 1829.

<sup>71</sup> Clark, William, *To Peter Porter of St. Louis*. National Archives RG 75 Roll 748. Aug 1, 1828.

<sup>72</sup> Hyde. Pg. 51.

<sup>73</sup> *Statement of Probable Amounts Which May Be Required to Effect Exchange of Lands*. Dec 2, 1829.

<sup>74</sup> *Resolution of the US Senate Confirming Appointment of William Clark, Francis J. Allen, and Nathaniel Kouns as Commissioners to Treat for Indian Land Cessions*. July 14, 1832.

policy issued the expulsion of all Indians in the eponymous state, leaving only the land of the Miami Creole Richard Godfrey, reputedly the wealthiest man in Indiana. Though Godfrey had spent years delaying and frustrating the removal of his tribe, he received an allotment of land and the protection of a small band of Miami in exchange for his eventual cooperation.<sup>75</sup> Other trade magnates proved less fortunate. Louis Chevalier and his wife Madeleine filed reimbursement claims for “ten houses, good lands, orchards, gardens, cattle, furniture and debts” following their forced removal from St. Joseph.<sup>76</sup>

Close affiliation to French Creoles and the Catholic Church allowed one Indiana tribe to avoid removal for a decade. Citing their commitment to Christianity and ties to local priests, the Pokagon Potawatomi, descendants of the Archeveque-Chevalier kin network evaded expulsion from the city of Chicago in 1838. In negotiations with Secretary of War Lewis Cass, the tribe chose as their representative the quarter-French Joseph Bertrand, as useful for his French heritage as for his reputation as a business man. Though Cass privately suspected that “the sinister half-breed” had entered the negotiations for his own personal gain, and compared him to the notoriously shrewd French diplomat Charles de Talleyrand, Bertrand time and again foiled Cass’s attempts at acquiring Potawatomi land. Having coexisted with the French, British, and American settlers for decades Potawatomi Chief Redbird expressed at a tribal council meeting that his people “wish(ed) to stay among Whites,” and therefore refused to leave. In his dealings with American officials Pokagon, the tribe’s foremost chief, gained the support of priests from Chicago to Detroit, and employed the influence of the Archeveque-Chevalier network to rally local support.

Joseph Bertrand’s wife, Madeline, attempted to ensure the preservation of tribal lands with the creation of a permanent legacy. In spite of her reputation as a lapsed Catholic, Madeline Bertrand gained the support of the bishop of Vincennes to establish St. Mary’s Convent in 1844. Sparking protest from Indian agents, the French priests and nuns who comprised the school’s early faculty provided legal and moral support for Pokagon’s tribe. Though the nuns had some to America expecting to take up in the hitherto incomplete Notre Dame University, they took the initiative to learn the Potawatomi language, and instruct local girls in pedagogical and

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<sup>75</sup> Glenn. Pg. 50-54.

<sup>76</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 77.

ecclesiastical matters. When the sisters assembled to take their vows in 1845, an angry crowd brought the ceremony to an abrupt close. With tensions rising on the Mexican border, anti-Catholic fervor swept the country. Searching for the bodies of Protestant babies, a mob broke into the convent, unearthing graves and making off with the communion wine. Failing to locate the infants' bodies, the looters burned the facilities to the ground. In an ironic reversal, the Pokagon Potawatomi began emphasizing their Indian heritage and downplaying their Catholic faith. Putting away their once ubiquitous crucifix jewelry, the Potawatomi coopted a characteristically Indian style of dress. Whereas the community had often been referred to as French, *Métis*, or Canadian, from the 1840s onward observers simply called the Pokagon Potawatomi "Indians." Once set apart for his French heritage, later descriptions of Joseph Bertrand play up his more stereotypically Indian characteristics such as his skin, which "was dark for an Indian, notwithstanding that he claimed to be one-fourth French," as well as what observers described as an "uncommon strength." Eventually, even the Catholic Church began to treat the Potawatomi differently. The clergy of the Great Lakes region deferred increasingly to the interests of Irish immigrants, who insisted on the construction of separate churches, reluctant to recognize the spiritual authority of the Indian lay women who often led services in the region. Though never formally expelled, a party of six hundred and sixty Potawatomi left the community for Kansas in 1851. In 1855, St. Mary's opened at a new location, farther afield from tribal land. Though the fur trade remained profitable, exporting an estimated four million raccoon hides per decade, traders east of the Mississippi lost the right to collect debts on Indian annuities, further driving a rift between Indians and Whites.<sup>77</sup>

For some French Creoles, blood proved thicker than water, and Indian removal drove the son of St. Louis's leading family west with his Indian kin. Auguste Pierre Chouteau, son of Osage Agent Jean Pierre Chouteau, had split his childhood between his French Creole relatives in St. Louis, and his Osage relatives in the Ozarks.<sup>78</sup> Like his father, who bragged of receiving an education at "Osage academy," A.P. Chouteau felt a strong affinity to his Indian roots, and wrote home from his boarding school in Montreal requesting that his father send moccasins and a bow with porcupine quill arrows. Like many members of his family, A.P. Chouteau spoke French, English, Spanish, Osage, and Pawnee, and regularly visited his Osage and Souix relatives. After

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<sup>77</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 95-117.

<sup>78</sup> Hyde. Pg. 31.

graduating From West Point under the patronage of Thomas Jefferson, A.P. Chouteau earned a promising station under General James Wilkinson, which he abandoned in under a year to embark on a fur trapping expedition. Returning home early, to the embarrassment of his family, Jean Pierre entrusted Auguste Pierre with control of the family business while he served his tenure as an Indian Agent. In exchange for his new position, A.P Chouteau agreed to marry his first cousin, Marie Anne Sophie Labbadie. Though not entirely unusual for French traders, A.P. Chouteau shocked his family again by taking a second wife among the Osage, Rosalie Lambert, and taking up permanent residence with the Osage. A.P's relationship with his St. Louis family further declined after an ill-fated poaching expedition into Spanish territory, which resulted in his subsequent captures by Pawnees and Spanish agents, costing him \$30,000 in lost furs. Returning to St. Louis, A.P. took out a \$66,000 loan from his younger brother, Pierre, only to lose most of the investment later that year in a global economic downturn. Though he kept in touch with St. Louis, New Orleans, and New York merchants, A.P. grew increasingly invested in tribal affairs. With the resettlement of Cherokees in Osage lands, he became wrapped up in the escalating conflict between the two tribes, losing much of his business and many members of his tribe in the subsequent war. Moving with the Osage in their westward exile, Chouteau's home served as a central hub for the Osage community. During his stay with A.P. Chouteau, the very same Washington Irving who had written so disparagingly of St. Louis Creoles felt unnerved by "half-breeds, squaws, negro girls running and giggling," and reflected sarcastically on "Indian nymphs lying half naked on the banks...of a beautiful, clear river." When in 1833 the US Government planned a second Osage removal, A.P. Chouteau took matters into his own hands, confidently demanding more land than the American committee expressed a willingness to offer. Refusing to take his demands seriously, the commissioners carried out the removal as initially planned, prompting the disgraced A.P. Chouteau to abandon the Osage, returning to the tribe at the end of his life to say farewell to his family.<sup>79</sup>

In the aftermath of Indian removal, the tribes of the Midwest quickly became a faded memory for the region's American inhabitants. Settlers who claimed the unusually shaped fields once cultivated by the Michigan Potawatomi plowed them over, believing that they represented the remains of an extinct civilization such as the Mound Builders.<sup>80</sup> Despite the agricultural

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<sup>79</sup> Hyde. Pg. 27-55.

<sup>80</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 77, 84.

independence of the region's extant Miami and Potawatomi, their neighbors considered the tribes bound on the path to extinction.<sup>81</sup> Observers of exiled tribes believed that these nations would fail to adapt as American settlement moved westward. Reflecting on his stay with the Illinois tribe, anthropologist John D. Caton wrote in 1870 that while "some progress has been made in teaching them in school...final extinction is the end to which all are quickly rushing."<sup>82</sup> Wishing to capture a last glimpse of "authentic" Indians, painters George Catlin and George Bird King chose subjects who dressed in characteristically Indian clothes, and practice minimal agriculture. Their colleague, the British George Winter, stands out for his portrayal of Potawatomi and Miami Indians wearing silk turbans and silver crosses, posing on their farms.<sup>83</sup> In Indiana, Protestant missionaries experimented with the first attempts to assimilate Indian children through rigidly disciplinarian boarding schools. Students at Choctaw Academy, with the exception of those bearing French names, received Anglo-American names such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Lewis Cass. Several of these schools shut their doors as their student bodies faced removal to Indian country.<sup>84</sup>

Though time proved less cruel to the French than to their Indian neighbors and relatives, the loss of economic power and cultural distinction stemming from Indian trade led to a decline of Creole prominence. In his *Colonial History of Vincennes*, John Law wistfully lamented the impending extinction of the "sons of St. Louis," as they become "amalgamated with another people." Employing the fatalistic language of Manifest Destiny, Law maintained that "the laws of civilization, as sure as the laws of nature, will force [Creoles] to yield to the manners...of their more powerful neighbors."<sup>85</sup> Though some Creole families, like the Chouteaus, maintained wealth and influence for decades to come; anti-French sentiments and changing economic and political cultures made for a difficult transition into American life. In St. Louis, visitors reported as early as 1817 that although some Creoles wielded political influence, the French presence seemed insignificant. In the interest of political representation, French St. Louisans arranged marriages between members of their community and both territory attorney Edward Hempstead

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<sup>81</sup> Hyde. Pg. 116.

<sup>82</sup> Caton, John Dean. *The Last of the Illinois: And a Sketch of the Pottawatomies: Read before the Chicago Historical Society, December 13, 1870*. Chicago: Fergus Printing, 1876.

<sup>83</sup> Sleeper-Smith. Pg. 123.

<sup>84</sup> Glenn. Pg. 58.

<sup>85</sup> Law. Pg. 17.

and his sister.<sup>86</sup> One can only imagine the disappointment felt by Hempstead's in-laws when in 1829 he proposed to the territorial assembly that former Spanish subjects should speak English and have a dated record of purchase in order to confirm land titles.<sup>87</sup> When, to the worry of many of its French inhabitants, Missouri gained status as a second-class territory, the white male populace did not elect a single Creole to the lower house of the territorial assembly. To make matters worse, interim governor Frederick Bates wrote that "the very name *liberty* deranges the Creoles intellects." He briefly vacated all governor appointed positions, many held by influential Creoles, until the territorial court reversed his action.<sup>88</sup> According to historian Constance Green in, *American Cities in the Growth of the Nation*, the government of Missouri passed over St. Louis as state capital in part because of the perceived standoffishness of its creole merchants.<sup>89</sup> Though they did not face the same type of religious persecution as the Potawatomi, Midwestern Creoles experienced mistrust by anti-Catholic immigrants.<sup>90</sup> Conspiracies circulated concerning French and German prayer societies, the strategic location of cathedrals, and a plot to relocate the Holy See to the Mississippi Valley.<sup>91</sup> At least through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chouteaus held some sway in St. Louis politics, investing heavily in real estate, and organizing the Louisiana Purchase Centennial Celebration.<sup>92</sup>

Following a catastrophic fire in 1805, Detroit's new American administrators, unfamiliar with Creole land management or community organization, replatted the street grid and fields of the old French town according to the standards of the American republic. The government of the Northwest Territory replaced pelts with US currency as the city's official tender, further shaking Detroit's post-fire economy. Shortly afterward, the American authorities appointed a mayor with veto power over the city government. Though forced to change the policy due to popular protest, the territorial government revoked Detroit's status as a city in 1809, stripping the authority of the old city government, noteworthy in its time for women's suffrage. Under the calm guidance of Father Richard Gabriel, the French populace of Detroit swore allegiance and pledged

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<sup>86</sup> Primm. Pg. 85.

<sup>87</sup> "Speech of Mr. Hempstead in the House of Representatives." *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), April 13, 1829.

<sup>88</sup> Foley. Pg. 284.

<sup>89</sup> Green. Pg. 56.

<sup>90</sup> Foley. Pg. 276.

<sup>91</sup> Billington, Ray A. "Anti-Catholic Propaganda and the Home Missionary Movement, 1800-1860." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 22, no. 3 (1935): 361-84.

<sup>92</sup> Letter signed L.H. Kingsland, Kingsland Mfg. Co., St. Louis, Mo., to Pierre Chouteau, Security Building, July 2, 1898

cooperation to the US government. In 1824 Detroit elected Gabriel to Congress, the only Catholic priest to hold such a position. Though Detroit lost its native population and Creole character, the Catholic clergy would remain an influential force in the city as French Canadians and Irish immigrants arrived *en masse* later in the century, searching for work in the important lake port.<sup>93</sup>

With the division and disappearance of Creole-Indian communities, the narrative of western expansion and nation building transformed into a pattern of war, removal, and settlement. With passing references to intermarriage, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century histories emphasize the division of white and red, and the settlement of American pioneers in untamed land. French priests, voyageurs, and townsfolk accented the pages of history as carefree squatters and intrepid explorers, relics of a simpler time. As contemporary historians explore the details of business and family life in the developing Midwest, the traditional interpretation of Manifest Destiny fails to accommodate fully the complexities of settlement and Indian removal. As problematic today as in the past, this history suggests the mutability of race, and the political utility of othering and racialization.

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<sup>93</sup> Green. Pg. 195-196.

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