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A HISTORY OF THE POTAWATOMI INDIANS, 1615-1795

A DISSERTATION

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BY

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A HISTORY OF THE POTAWATOMI INDIANS, 1615-1795

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PREFACE

Many Indian tribes have been the subject of considerable study. The history of such tribes as the Sioux, Cherokees, or the Iroquois Confederacy has been detailed in numerous scholarly books and articles. The exploits of their leaders and the struggles of their people are well known to the public and are recognized as important events contributing to the mainstream of American history. Other Indian peoples often are mentioned by American historians, but their tribal history has remained unchronicled as scholars have concentrated their efforts upon the better known or more popular tribes. Yet many of the less known people also have made significant contributions to American history. Their story deserves to be told.

Such a people are the Potawatomis. Closely allied to the Ottawas and the Chippewas, the Potawatomis scattered their villages from the shores of Lake Michigan to Detroit. They formed the nucleus of New France's widespread system of Indian alliances and loyally assisted the French in suppressing Indian rebellions in the west. Indeed, the French relied upon them so heavily that French officials in Michigan and Illinois vied with one another in attempts to locate

the Potawatomis near their posts. The French also valued Potawatomi assistance in their wars against the British. French officers led Potawatomi warriors from the shores of Lake Michigan as far east as New England where they raided against the frontiers of New York and Connecticut.

The Potawatomis also relied upon the French. As their contacts with French traders increased, the Potawatomis lost much of their aboriginal self-sufficiency. They became dependent upon French trade goods for economic subsistence and slowly acculturated to the spreading European civilization. After the fall of Quebec, the Potawatomis turned to the British to supply them with the economic necessities they had earlier obtained from the French. British reluctance to provide such economic assistance encouraged the Potawatomis to join with the Ottawas in Pontiac's Rebellion. After the uprising failed, most Potawatomis accepted the British and many Potawatomis fought with the Crown in the American Revolution. Yet Potawatomi ties to the British were never as close as were their ties to the French. During the closing years of the eighteenth century many bands of the tribes became autonomous and tribal unity dissolved.

Lack of unity also characterized Potawatomi support of the red confederacy during the 1790's. Those tribesmen on the Tippecanoe, near Detroit, and on the St. Joseph periodically joined the anti-American alliance but the Potawatomis on the Illinois did not participate

in the actions against American military expeditions. Illinois River Potawatomis signed the abortive Vincennes Treaty of 1792 and afterward visited the president in Philadelphia. Yet other Potawatomis fought again Anthony Wayne at Fallen Timbers and after the Indian defeat, tribal members signed the Treaty of Greenville which opened Ohio to American settlement.

This study will attempt to discuss the history of the Potawatomis from earliest French contacts to the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. The close alliance between the Potawatomis and the French will be examined in detail as will Potawatomi relations with the British, Americans, and other Indian tribes. Yet the focus of the text will remain upon the Potawatomis. Hopefully this study will illuminate both the history of the Potawatomis and their contribution to the early history of the United States.

Many people have offered invaluable assistance to me in my efforts to complete this study. Very special gratitude goes to Professor Donald J. Berthrong of Purdue University. Although he no longer was associated with the history department at the University of Oklahoma, Professor Berthrong graciously consented to take time from his busy schedule at Purdue to direct my research and writing. If the manuscript has any merit, it is primarily due to his direction.

I also wish to thank Professor A. M. Gibson for serving as co-chairman of my dissertation committee. Professor Gibson provided

valuable advice and assistance while I was completing the research for this study. Gratitude is also extended to Professors William Bittle, Russell Buhite, Norman Crockett, and Henry Tobias for taking time to read the manuscript and for their helpful suggestions.

I would be remiss not to express my thanks to several other individuals and institutions who also have contributed to the completion of this project. Mrs. Alice Timmons, Mr. Jack Haley, and Mr. Milton Ream at the University of Oklahoma Library all provided valuable assistance to me as I conducted my research. Courteous assistance also was extended by the director and staff of the Great Lakes Indian Archives Project in the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology at the University of Indiana. I also wish to thank the Ford Foundation for the very generous financial assistance provided to me while I worked on this study. It was much easier to concentrate on my research and writing knowing that financial security had been provided by the Ford Foundation.

Finally, a special expression of gratitude is extended to my wife, Christie. Her support and encouragement throughout the entire Ph. D. program has made its successful completion a reality.

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CHAPTER I

FORGING THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

During the first half of the seventeenth century, French explorers began to penetrate the vast interior west of the lower St. Lawrence Valley. Utilizing the Ottawa River as an avenue for such penetration, French agents followed this well traveled Indian route as far as the portage to Lake Nipissing and then guided their canoes down the French River to the Georgian Bay area of Lake Huron. In 1615 Samuel de Champlain arrived at Lake Huron via the Ottawa waterway and spent the winter of 1615-16 with the Huron Indians who were living along the southern shore of Georgian Bay. While among the Huron villages, Champlain was informed of a tribe of people whom the Hurons called the Asistaguerouons of Fire Nation. The Asistaguerouons, who were currently at war with such neighboring tribes as the Ottawas and Neutrals, lived along the western shore of Lake Huron on lands that are now part of the lower peninsula of Michigan. This tribe also was known to the Chippewa people living near Sault Ste. Marie who called them the Potawatamink or "people of the place of the fire."¹ Champlain's narrative of his journey is the first recorded account of the Potawatomi Indians.

¹W. Vernon Kintietz, The Indians of the Western Great Lakes, 1615-1760 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965), p. 308. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kintietz, Indians of Western Great Lakes. Also see Frederick W. Hodge, ed., Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Bulletin 50 of the Bureau of American Ethnology (2 vols.; New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 1971), II, p. 289.

Little is known of the prehistory of the Potawatomis. They are part of the great wave of Algonquian speaking peoples that descended upon the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence area from the north. The Potawatomis have religious and linguistic ties with tribes as far east as the New England coastal regions, but they are more closely related to the Ottawas and Chippewas.² Legends from these three tribes agree that they were once a unified people. The date of their separation is less certain. Traditional tribal accounts suggest that the separation of the three tribes was a relatively recent event which took place at the Straits of Mackinac no earlier than the sixteenth century. Chippewa legends indicate that the three tribes separated simultaneously: the Ottawas remaining at the strait, the Chippewas migrating to the north and west, and the Potawatomis moving down the shores of Lake Michigan. The Potawatomis continued to keep the council fire of the originally united tribes and therefore received their name as the "Fire Nation."³

More recent investigation would suggest that the Potawatomis separated from the Ottawas and Chippewas at an earlier date. Linguists

²David I. Bushnell Jr., Tribal Migrations East of the Mississippi, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (153 vols.; Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1862-), LXXXIX, No. 12, pp. 1-3; Donald J. Berthrong, "Before the Claims Commission: An Historical Report on Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Areas 132, 133, 145, 146, 180 and 181 in Northern Indiana and Southwestern Michigan as Related to the Treaties Held at St. Mary's, October 2, 1818; Paradise Springs, October 16, 23, 1832." This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Berthrong, "Before the Claims Commission."

³William W. Warren, "History of the Objibwas," Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society (13 vols.; St. Paul: Ramalay, Chaney and Co., 1872-), V, pp. 81-82.

agree that the Potawatomi language is closely related to Chippewa, but a vigorous examination of Potawatomi vocabulary indicates significant differences and implies that the two tribes may have been divided before they reached the upper Great Lakes.⁴ Other anthropologists point out that the prehistoric economic and settlement patterns of the Potawatomis may more closely resemble those of the Miamis rather than such patterns among the more northern Ottawas and Chippewas. These anthropologists assert that the prehistoric Potawatomis spent their summers in large permanent villages surrounded by fields of corn and other vegetables. The men spent the summer hunting near the village while the women tended crops in the nearby fields. In the winter the villagers split into smaller bands which scoured the region for food. Both men and women took part in these hunting parties, establishing small temporary camps as bases for their hunting activities. During these winter hunts old and infirm tribesmen were left at the permanent summer villages.⁵

George Quimby, a leading historical archaeologist, argues that the prehistoric Potawatomis had significant cultural differences from the Miamis, but he also associates the early Potawatomis with historic

⁴Charles F. Hockett, "The Position of Potawatomi in Central Algonkian," Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science Arts and Letters (53 vols.; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1923-), XXVIII, p. 542.

⁵Charles Callender, Social Organization of the Central Algonkian Indians, Milwaukee Public Museum Publication in Anthropology No. 7 (Milwaukee: Board of Trustees, 1962), pp. 1-2. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Callender, Social Organization of Central Algonkian. Also see James E. Fitting and Charles Cleland, "Late Prehistoric Settlement Patterns in the Upper Great Lakes," Ethnohistory, XVI (Fall, 1969), p. 297.

tribes other than the Ottawas and Chippewas. Asserting that the Potawatomis' ancestors had begun to adapt to a prairie type of environment, Quimby states that their settlement patterns more closely resembled those of the prehistoric Sauks, Mascoutens or Kickapoos. He believes that the forefathers of the Potawatomis were the people of the Dumaw Creek culture in west central Michigan. Utilizing both radiocarbon dating and dendrochronology, archaeologists have shown that this culture flourished shortly after 1600 A. D. on a sandy plain near the Pentwater River. The Dumaw Creek people subsisted on a mixed economy based upon hunting, gathering, and agriculture. Living in a village of domed shaped wigwams, they hunted the neighboring prairies and forests for elk, deer, beaver and bison. Corn and pumpkins were grown in nearby gardens and food either was roasted over an open hearth or boiled in pottery vessels supported by stones. The Dumaw Creek people wore clothing made of animal skins and adorned themselves with objects obtained through inter-tribal trade. Tubular copper beads were acquired from the Lake Superior region and were used as hair ornaments while marine shells from the Gulf of Mexico were used for a variety of purposes. Quimby points out that the Dumaw Creek area is contiguous to the region in which the Potawatomis were living when first mentioned by Champlain.⁶

Although the period of Potawatomi occupancy of Michigan prior to 1615 remains uncertain, such occupancy was interrupted shortly after

⁶George Irving Quimby, Indian Culture and European Trade Goods: The Archaeology of the Historic Period in the Western Great Lakes Region (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp. 22-23.

Champlain's visit to the Lake Huron region. The Neutrals, who traded with the Iroquois, obtained firearms from the Five Nations and used these weapons against the Potawatomis and neighboring tribes in Michigan. To escape the onslaught of the better armed Neutrals, the Potawatomis fled north to the Sault Ste. Marie area. This flight took place during the latter half of the 1630's for by 1640 the Potawatomis had left the Sault and moved south along the western shore of Lake Michigan.⁷ Here they encountered a Siouan speaking people, probably the Winnebagos, who resisted their southward advance and drove them back to the north. In 1641-42 the Jesuits found them living with the Chippewas in the Sault region.⁸

The quarter century following 1640 was a period of great upheaval for the tribes of the Old Northwest. Well armed by Dutch traders in the Hudson Valley, the Iroquois surged north and west from their homelands in upper New York and cut the trade routes between Montreal and the western Great Lakes. Iroquois hatred toward France also was extended to her allies and the Hurons bore the brunt of this enmity. Although a temporary truce was arranged in 1645, it lasted less than one year. In 1647 the Hurons were unable to ship their furs to Montreal. By the

⁷Louise P. Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Old Northwest (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1925), pp. 94-95. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin. Also see George T. Hunt, The Wars of the Iroquois: A Study in Intertribal Trade Relations (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p. 109. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Hunt, Wars of the Iroquois.

⁸Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (73 vols.; Cleveland: Burrows Bros., 1896-1901), XXIII, p. 225. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Thwaites, Jesuit Relations. Also see Hunt, Wars of the Iroquois, p. 109.

end of the decade they had suffered from such heavy Iroquois attacks upon their villages that they fled their homeland in the Georgian Bay region and sought sanctuary among other tribes. The Hurons' kinsmen and allies, the Petuns or Tobaccos of the Bruce Peninsula suffered a similar fate but were able to maintain their tribal identity as they sought refuge among tribes farther west. Meanwhile, the Neutrals had continued their attacks upon the Algonquian peoples of southern Michigan and in the early 1640's such tribes as Sauks, Foxes, Kickapoos and Mascoutens fled westward toward Wisconsin. But the victory celebrations of the Neutrals were short lived for they also became the victims of Iroquois aggression. Between 1650 and 1653 they suffered a series of attacks by the Iroquois which destroyed them as a tribal entity. Yet the Neutrals fared better than the Hurons and the Petuns, for many of them were adopted into the Iroquois where they later formed separate villages.⁹

As the Iroquois were spreading their conquest to the west a major tribal realignment was occurring on the western shores of Lake Michigan. The Winnebagos, who had dominated the region prior to 1635, suffered a series of disasters. Although they were successful in repulsing the advance of the Potawatomis in the early 1640's, the Winnebagos shortly thereafter lost several hundred warriors when their canoes were capsized in a storm on Lake Michigan. This loss was coupled by a plague that swept through the tribe and further decreased their

⁹Hunt, Wars of the Iroquois, pp. 87-116. Francis Parkman in The Jesuits in North America (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963) describes the Huron-Iroquois contest in vivid detail. For a discussion of the identity of the Mascoutens see Appendix A.

population. Finally, the Winnebagos treacherously murdered a party of Illinois who were visiting in their village. The Illinois confederacy retaliated with a war of extermination that so decimated the Winnebagos that the latter were unable to defend their homeland. Therefore, as the Algonquian tribes fled from Michigan, many were able to seek refuge in the Green Bay area and in southern Wisconsin.¹⁰

The Potawatomis were among these refugees. With the decline of the Winnebagos, the Potawatomis successfully established themselves on the islands at the mouth of Green Bay and on the neighboring mainland. Here they soon were joined by refugee Petuns and Ottawas. By 1652 the Potawatomis had erected a fortified village which they called Mechingan on the western shores of Green Bay. This village soon became the most important settlement in the Green Bay area.¹¹

Mechingan also became a center for anti-Iroquois resistance in the West. During the 1650's rumors of an impending Iroquois invasion swept through the Green Bay region causing the Petuns and Ottawas to seek refuge among the Potawatomis. The fortifications surrounding Mechingan were strengthened and the combined force of Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Petuns periodically sent out scouting parties for intelligence of the Iroquois advance. These parties were successful, for when an Iroquois force arrived at Mechingan they found the Potawatomis and

¹⁰ Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 88; Hunt, Wars of the Iroquois, pp. 119-120.

¹¹ Nicolas Perrot, "Memoir on the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the Savages of North America," in The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes, by Emma Helen Blair (2 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1912), I, pp. 148-150. Hereafter this memoir will be cited as "Perrot Memoir", Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi.

their allies entrenched behind the walls of their village. The Iroquois unexpectedly were in a precarious position. All hope of a surprise attack had vanished and the Iroquois had exhausted their food supplies in their long march from their homeland. The Iroquois therefore offered to make peace with the defenders and the latter guardedly accepted the Iroquois proposal. But the Potawatomis had no intention of forgiving the Iroquois and presented them gifts of poisoned corn bread. Fortunately for the Iroquois, an informer warned them of the plot and the bread was not eaten.¹²

Still short of provisions and faced with the continuing enmity of the Potawatomis and their allies, the Iroquois divided their force into two parties and fled to the east. Yet their flight toward New York proved more disastrous than their initial venture at Green Bay. One party who attempted to return via Lake Huron were cut to pieces by the Chippewas and lost over one hundred warriors. The other Iroquois force retreated toward the South where they attacked a small village of Illinois. Fugitives from this attack quickly warned other nearby Illinois villages and a large party of Illinois warriors successfully surprised the Iroquois and severely defeated them. The Illinois then pursued the remnant of this Iroquois force as they fled toward their homeland.¹³

The defeat of the initial Iroquois invasion into Wisconsin and Illinois enabled the Potawatomis to strengthen their position on the shores of Green Bay. They remained in this region through the

¹²"Perrot Memoir" in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 151-153.

¹³Ibid., pp. 153-157.

remainder of the seventeenth century. The Iroquois defeat coupled with a French-Iroquois treaty in 1653 also encouraged further French expansion into the western Great Lakes. This expansion marks the beginning of a French-Potawatomi friendship that continued throughout the French period in North America.

Shortly after the defeat of the Iroquois invasion the Potawatomi villagers at Green Bay received their first official French visitors. Although the exact date remains uncertain, during the middle 1650's two French traders, Pierre-Espirit Radisson and Medart Chouart de Groseillers passed through eastern Wisconsin where they found the Potawatomis in the Green Bay region. The Potawatomis were friendly and the Frenchmen spent the winter in their villages.¹⁴ Either these traders or friendly Indians brought news of the Potawatomi settlements to New France for in 1657 Father Gabriel Druillettes arbitrarily named the largest Potawatomi village St. Michel and estimated its population as approximately three thousand, including seven hundred warriors. Such an estimate obviously was the result of second-hand information, for Druillettes was serving at a mission in Quebec at this time.¹⁵

During the early 1660's the Potawatomis began to visit an Ottawa village at Chequamegon Bay on Lake Superior. The Ottawas had

¹⁴Pierre-Espirit Radisson, "Radisson's Account of His Third Journey," in Early Narratives of the Northwest, ed. by Louise Phelps Kellogg (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1917), pp. 45-55. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest. A good discussion of the confusion existing over the exact date of the Radisson-Groseillers journey can be found in Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 104-109.

¹⁵Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, XLIV, p. 245.

assumed the role of middlemen in the fur trade between the western tribes and the French, and they maintained their monopoly by exaggerating the danger of Iroquois attacks upon the routes to Montreal.¹⁶ The Potawatomis and other tribes anxious for trade goods journeyed to Chequamegon Bay and periodically took up residence in the Ottawa village. This assemblage of Algonquian peoples soon attracted the attention of the Jesuits and in 1660 Father Rene Menard arrived with some French traders and spent the winter in the village.¹⁷ Menard died during the following summer, but in 1665 Father Claude Allouez journeyed to the Ottawa village where he founded the Mission of the Holy Spirit. Allouez remained at Chequamegon Bay from the autumn of 1665 till the summer of 1667. Allouez was visited by large numbers of Potawatomis and estimated they could muster three hundred warriors. Although he described them as "warlike", he also commented that they were more friendly to the French than any tribe he had encountered.¹⁸

The growing friendship between the Potawatomis and the French was enhanced in 1668 when large numbers of Potawatomi warriors first made a voyage to Montreal. Anxious for closer commercial ties with New France, the Potawatomis were encouraged to make the journey by

¹⁶Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 114.

¹⁷Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, XLIV, p. 143; "Perrot Memoir" in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 170-173.

¹⁸Claude Allouez, "Journal of Father Allouez's Journey to Lake Superior," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 123. Hereafter this memoir will be cited as "Allouez Journey Memoir" in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest. Also see Pierre Francois Xavier Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, trans. and ed. by John Gilmary Shea (6 vols.; London: Francis Edwards, 1902), III, p. 104. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Charlevoix, History of New France.

recent Chippewa and French successes against the Iroquois.¹⁹ These Potawatomis were thoroughly impressed by the frontier accommodations of Montreal. They had never encountered such an abundance of wonders as the white man's civilization offered and they closely examined the food, clothing and buildings of their hosts. The Potawatomis were especially impressed when Jean Talon, the Governor of New France, supplied them with such delicacies as white bread, prunes and raisins and referred to them as his children.²⁰

While the Potawatomi delegation was marvelling at the wonders of Montreal, their fellow tribesmen at Green Bay were welcoming other French visitors to Wisconsin. In 1667 Nicolas Perrot and Toussaint Baudry traded among the tribes along the shores of Lake Superior. At Chequamegon Bay a group of Potawatomis from Green Bay invited these French traders to their villages. Perrot and Baudry accepted the invitation and arrived during the early summer of 1668. The Potawatomis received the Frenchmen cordially, lavishing gifts upon them and treating them with almost religious adoration. The women and children seemed awe-stricken by the strangers and feared to approach them while the men carried them about on their shoulders.²¹

Such cordiality by the Potawatomis created a favorable impression on Perrot. He described the tribesmen as affable and

¹⁹"Perrot's Memoir," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 179-181, 199-203.

²⁰Claude Charles Le Roy Bacqueville de-la Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples Who Are Allies of New France," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, p. 316. Hereafter this selection will be cited as La Potherie, "History of Savage Allies" in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi.

²¹Ibid., pp. 308-310.

intelligent, with good physical appearances and a steadfastness of purpose. Perrot indicated that the Potawatomis were the leading tribe in the region and arbitrated inter-tribal disputes among their neighbors.²² Perrot was less complimentary in describing these neighbors. He found the Sauks living in close association with the Potawatomis: the two tribes even sharing a common village on the Oconto River. Perrot pictured the Sauks as unintelligent brutes with good physiques, but addicted to thievery and poor canoemen. The neighboring Winnebagos were described as irascible braggarts who were disliked by other tribes for their haughtiness. He also encountered a small number of Menominees whom he depicted as good natured and skillful fishermen but lacking in intellect and plagued by overwhelming selfishness.²³

While Perrot was visiting among the Potawatomis villages the Potawatomis became embroiled in a quarrel with the Menominees. A Menominee had accidentally killed a Potawatomi in a hunting accident and an angry Potawatomi retaliated by tomahawking a Menominee who was visiting among the Winnebagos. Although the Potawatomis were a larger tribe than the Menominees, the majority of their warriors were absent on the voyage to Montreal and they feared a Menominee attack. They therefore turned to Perrot to mediate the dispute. The trader, who was anxious to increase French influence among these tribes gladly

²²Ibid., pp. 301-302. This description by Perrot is not contained in his memoirs, but is part of his "lost writings" which was used by La Potherie. Also see Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 15-16 and Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, fn. 43, p. 124.

²³La Potherie, "History of the Savage Allies" in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 300-304; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, fn. 46, p. 125.

accepted and was successful in placating the Menominees with gifts and promises of a French alliance. He also warned the Menominees against any hasty action toward the Potawatomi since the Potawatomi warriors would soon be returning with firearms that they had acquired in Montreal.²⁴

Perrot's warnings were well founded. Two weeks after the dispute the Potawatomi voyagers returned from Montreal. Upon approaching their villages the returning Potawatomi fired a volley from their newly acquired guns which caused some consternation among their tribesmen. Prior to that time only the Iroquois had possessed weapons in such numbers and the villagers feared that the approaching canoes might carry a large party of their enemy. Fortunately, they soon recognized the canoemen and welcomed them back to their homes. The returning Potawatomi described their reception at Montreal in glowing terms and were surprised to learn that there were Frenchmen present in the village. After being informed that Perrot had settled the dispute with the Menominees, the warriors escorted the Frenchmen through the villages and then held a feast in their honor.²⁵

The voyage to Montreal had proven informative to the Potawatomi canoemen. They now realized the vast economic opportunities to be gained through the fur trade and they soon began to supplant the Ottawas as suppliers of French goods in the Green Bay area. The Potawatomi returned from Montreal with a large quantity of trade goods and they

²⁴La Potherie, "History of the Savage Allies," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 310-313.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 314-316.

immediately sent runners to the Illinois, Miamis, Foxes, Mascoutens, and Kickapoos to inform them that such merchandise was available. The Foxes, who possessed few European goods, were the most tempted by the Potawatomi offer and in the autumn of 1668 they moved their village to the Wolf River, approximately thirty-five miles west of the Potawatomis on Green Bay.²⁶

The Potawatomis hoped to develop a monopoly over the trade in Wisconsin and Illinois and wished to keep the tribes of the interior from any contact with the French. They were unsuccessful. During the winter of 1668-69 Perrot and Baudry visited the Fox village and found them so desperate for trade goods that the Frenchmen feared the Foxes would seize their goods without returning any payment. In the summer of 1669 the Miamis, Mascoutens, Kickapoos and part of the Illinois moved to the upper Fox River. Other French traders arrived in the Potawatomi villages. The recent arrivals along the Fox River asked the Potawatomis to send the traders to their villages but the Potawatomis refused. Finally the French encountered some of the Fox River tribesmen at Green Bay and accepted invitations to visit their villages. The Potawatomis informed the traders that the tribes along the Fox River were a rude people who had no beaver pelts to trade. They also warned the French that the Fox River tribes would seize their goods, but in the summer of 1669 Perrot and Baudry visited the Mascouten and Miami villages.²⁷

²⁶Ibid., pp. 316-317; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, fn. 50, p. 127.

²⁷La Potherie, "History of the Savage Allies," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 321-332.

Although the Potawatomis realized that French contacts with the Fox River tribes meant an end to their plans for a trade monopoly, they still continued to trade with the French. During the early summer of 1669 another trading expedition embarked for Montreal, but upon reaching the Straits of Mackinac they encountered a small group of Iroquois. The Potawatomis believed the Iroquois to be part of a large war party and fled back to the Green Bay area. Warnings of an Iroquois invasion were spread among the Bay tribes and the Potawatomis prepared themselves for an attack. When a large fleet of canoes were sighted in the bay the more timid tribesmen fled into the woods but the remaining warriors were pleasantly surprised to find that the canoes held an Ottawa trading party. The Iroquois had been few in number and were the remnants of a war party that had raided against the Shawnees in Tennessee. While attempting to return to their homeland via the Great Lakes and shortly after their encounter with the Potawatomis, the Iroquois were ambushed by the Chippewas who released a Shawnee captive held by the raiders. The Shawnee was later sent to the Sauks and Potawatomis who gave him French goods and allowed him to return home.²⁸

Once again the Potawatomis decided to send a trading expedition to Montreal and when a group of French traders left the Green Bay area in the late summer of 1669 a party of Potawatomis accompanied them to the east. Enroute the Potawatomis were joined by other Indians so that a great flotilla of western tribesmen passed down the Ottawa River to Montreal. Yet their trading venture was only partly successful. Earlier in the summer other Indians from the Lake Nipissing area

²⁸Ibid., pp. 333-336.

had made a similar voyage and had already selected the best trade goods; moreover, the great quantity of furs carried by the western tribesmen glutted the market, causing a rise in the price of available merchandise. Although the Potawatomis were disappointed over these trading conditions, they were flattered when the French asked them to accompany the Ottawas to Quebec to witness certain French negotiations with Iroquois.²⁹

As the trading party of Potawatomis returned home from Montreal they were joined at Sault Ste. Marie by Father Allouez who was anxious to extend his work to the Green Bay area. The Potawatomis however invited him to their villages for political and economic reasons. Increasing numbers of French traders had arrived in the Green Bay area during the previous summer and the Potawatomis resented their competition in the fur trade. Several quarrels between the two groups had occurred and the Potawatomis hoped the Jesuit might exercise a restraining influence over the traders.³⁰

Allouez arrived at Green Bay in early December, 1669. He found that many of the Indians inhabiting the region had dispersed into the interior for their winter hunt, but the Potawatomi village in which Perrot still was residing contained about six hundred people including some Sauks, Foxes and Winnebagos. Allouez founded the Mission of St. Francis Xavier near the village and spent the winter among the Potawatomis.³¹

²⁹Ibid., pp. 336-342.

³⁰Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LIV, p. 197.

³¹Ibid., pp. 205-207.

In February, 1670, Allouez visited a Potawatomi village across the bay from his mission. During the spring he traveled inland passing through the villages of the Miamis, Mascoutens, Kickapoos and Illinois, and in May he founded a mission among the Menominees. Allouez was convinced that the Green Bay region offered fertile ground for an enlarged ministry. On May 20, 1670, he left St. Francis Xavier for Sault Ste. Marie to seek additional assistance for his new mission.³²

While Allouez was seeking assistance at Sault Ste. Marie, the Potawatomis once again found the peace and prosperity of their Green Bay villages deteriorating. The Senecas raided westward into Wisconsin and captured thirty-five Potawatomi prisoners. Although some of these Potawatomis were returned to the French, others remained as captives among the Iroquois.³³ Perrot returned to Montreal during the summer and in his absence the friction between the remaining traders and the Potawatomis increased. The Potawatomi trading fleet made their summer voyage to Montreal, but the Potawatomis were unhappy over the high prices of goods on the St. Lawrence. After returning, the Potawatomis attempted to recoup their losses by demanding excessive prices for their furs from traders who were active in their villages.³⁴

³²Claude Allouez, "Father Allouez's Journey Into Wisconsin, 1669-1670," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, pp. 147-153. Hereafter this selection will be cited as "Allouez Wisconsin Memoir," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest.

³³Charlevoix, History of New France, III, pp. 161-162; Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LIV, p. 265.

³⁴La Potherie, "History of the Savage Allies," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, p. 343.

Allouez returned to Green Bay in the autumn of 1670 accompanied by Father Claude Dablon. The two Jesuits attempted to improve the French position among the Potawatomis. They were only partly successful, for while the priests were cordially welcomed among the Miamis and Mascoutens, the Potawatomis still remained somewhat resentful.³⁵

While Perrot was on the St. Lawrence he was instructed to return to the west and to assemble the tribes at Sault Ste. Marie so that they might witness an official French ceremony claiming the entire Great Lakes region for France. Perrot spent the winter of 1670-71 on Lake Huron from where he dispatched messengers to the western Indians asking them to come to the Sault. To Perrot's dismay, only the Winnebagos accepted. The Potawatomis still were unhappy over their treatment in Montreal and the tribes along the Fox River had recently suffered attacks by the Sioux and were reluctant to leave their villages.³⁶

Perrot decided that his only recourse was to journey to Wisconsin using his personal influence among the tribes to bring them to the Sault. He arrived among the Potawatomis in early May, 1671 and successfully convinced them that they should attend the ceremony. Since the Sioux recently had raided the Mascoutens, the Potawatomis furnished Perrot with an escort on his journey to the

³⁵Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LV, p. 187; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 162.

³⁶La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 343-344.

tribes along the Fox River. These people heartily welcomed Perrot but they did not attend the ceremony. Although warriors from the Fox River tribes returned with Perrot to Green Bay, they feared the extended voyage on Lake Michigan and therefore delegated the Potawatomis to represent them at the Sault. In late May Perrot left Green Bay accompanied by delegations from the Sauks, Winnebagos, Menominees, and Potawatomis.³⁷

When Perrot and the Potawatomis reached Sault Ste. Marie they found French officials and many other tribesmen already assembled. The French were led by Francois Daumont Sieur de St. Lusson who journeyed to the Sault specifically to preside over the ceremony. Representatives from many tribes were camped around the mission house including Crees and Assiniboinis who had traveled from the region north and west of Lake Superior.³⁸

The ceremony, announcing possession of the Great Lakes, took place on June 14, 1671. It was presented with a pomp and pageantry that must have impressed the Potawatomis. After presents were given to the Indians, they acknowledged the authority of the French king and promised to remain in perpetual alliance with him. The French then turned over three spadefuls of soil and ceremoniously claimed the vast interior of North America as their own. St. Lusson, resplendent in the finery of the French court, attached the royal

³⁷Ibid., pp. 344-346.

³⁸Saint-Lusson's Proces-Verbal, June 14, 1671, in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XI, pp. 26-28. Hereafter volumes in this collection will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections.

coat of arms to a cedar cross that had been erected for the occasion. Finally, to add dramatic impact to the ritual, the French gave three rousing cheers of "Vive le Roi" while the Indians fired their muskets. The Potawatomis and other tribesmen inscribed the signs of their various clans on a French document and the Potawatomis promised to carry news of the French claim to the other Wisconsin tribes.³⁹

In the decade following the ceremony at Sault Ste. Marie the Potawatomis witnessed increased Jesuit activity among their villages. In 1671 Dablon was recalled to the east and was replaced by Father Louis Andre who had earlier worked among the tribes of Lake Huron. Andre concentrated his efforts among the Potawatomis and other peoples along Green Bay while Allouez furthered his ministry among the tribes of the Fox River. The Jesuits met with only limited success. In September, 1672 Allouez erected a large wooden cross near a Potawatomi village at the foot of Green Bay. Later in the fall the cross was destroyed by a group of young Potawatomi warriors who were leaving to attack the Sioux. To the Jesuits' horror, the warriors burned the cross as part of a ritual asking their native spirits for success.⁴⁰

³⁹ Simon-Francois Daumont, esquire, Sieur de Saint-Lusson, "Report of the Taking Possession of the Countries Situated Toward Lakes Huron and Superior, June 14, 1671," frames 136-138, Part One, Margry Translation, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan (microfilm); La Potherie, "History of the Savage Allies," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 246-348.

⁴⁰ Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LVIII, pp. 37-41; Hjaalmar R. Holand, "The Sign of the Cross," Wisconsin Magazine of History, XVII (December, 1933), pp. 157-158. Hereafter this article will be cited as Hjaalmar, "The Sign of the Cross."

The campaign against the Sioux was disastrous. The Potawatomis were enticed into attacking the Sioux by the Ottawas and Hurons. Warfare had flared intermittently between the Sioux and a mixed band of Ottawas and Hurons living on Chequamegon Bay. In the summer of 1672 the Ottawas and Hurons journeyed to Montreal where they traded their entire supply of winter furs for arms and powder to be used against the Sioux. Hoping to inflict a decisive defeat upon their enemy, the Ottawas and Hurons gave a large part of these weapons to the Potawatomis, Sauks and Foxes in return for support against the Sioux. The allies journeyed to Minnesota and destroyed a few small Sioux hunting camps, but the Sioux rallied and counter-attacked with superior force. The Potawatomis, Foxes and Ottawas wisely fled, but the Sauks and Hurons were caught and overwhelmed. The victorious Sioux then tortured and killed their hapless captives.⁴¹

The Jesuits seized upon the Sioux victory to further their ministry among the Potawatomis. They informed the Potawatomis that they were being punished for destroying the cross and chided them for their flight from the Sioux. The Potawatomis then apologized for their actions and brought gifts to the Jesuits' god as atonement.⁴² After this incident the Jesuits met with increased success. In 1672 the priests baptized less than forty Indians from among the tribes

⁴¹"Perrot Memoir" in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississinni, I, pp. 188-189; "From the Jesuit Relation of 1672-73," in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, 29-30.

⁴²Thwaites, Jesuit Relations LVIII, pp. 267, 287.

living on Green Bay, but by 1676 Andre reported that there were over four hundred converts in the region.⁴³

The spread of Christianity among the Potawatomis also was facilitated by an increase in the Jesuit personnel at the mission on Green Bay. Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet passed through the Potawatomi villages in early June, 1673 on their voyage of exploration to the Mississippi.⁴⁴ Upon their return, Marquette spent the winter of 1673-1674 recuperating from the journey and ministering to the Potawatomis at St. Francis Xavier Mission on Green Bay. Marquette left Green Bay in October, 1674 to open a mission among the Illinois.⁴⁵

By 1675 the Potawatomi were spread throughout the Green Bay region. On his journey from St. Francis Xavier to the Illinois Marquette spent the first night in a Potawatomi village at the mouth of the Fox River on Green Bay. Other villages were located on the Keweenaw River, on Sturgeon Bay and at the end of the Sturgeon Bay portage on Lake Michigan. The Potawatomis also erected settlements

⁴³Holand, "The Sign of the Cross," p. 164; Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LVIII, pp. 37-41.

⁴⁴Francis Borgia Steck, The Joliet-Marquette Expedition (Quincy, Ill.: The Franciscan Fathers, 1928), p. 152.

⁴⁵Jacques Marquette, "Unfinished Journal of Father Jacques Marquette, addressed to the Reverend Father Claude Dablon, Superior of Missions," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 262. Hereafter this selection will be cited as "Marquette Journal" in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest.

at the tip of the Door Peninsula, on Washington Island, and on the Mink River.⁴⁶

Several of these villages were visited by Robert Cavalier Sieur de La Salle and Father Louis Hennepin in the autumn of 1679. Hoping to gain a monopoly over the fur trade in the west, La Salle sent agents among the tribes of Wisconsin to gather the Indians' furs for shipment to Montreal. To transport this valuable cargo, La Salle constructed the first sailing ship on the Great Lakes. This vessel, The Griffon, was built on Cayuga Creek above Niagara Falls and then sailed through the lakes to the mouth of Green Bay. In early September La Salle and his men moored the ship offshore from the Potawatomi village on Washington Island. Meanwhile La Salle's agents had acquired a large quantity of furs from the Indians of the Green Bay region and had stored them in the Potawatomi village in anticipation of the Griffon's arrival.⁴⁷

The Potawatomis on Washington Island were led by Onanghisse who had visited Montreal and who was favorably impressed by French hospitality. Onanghisse and his tribesmen welcomed La Salle and his party and entertained them in the Potawatomi village during the four days needed to load the ship and prepare it for the return voyage to the east. Since the weather was stormy, Onanghisse spent the nights with La Salle aboard the tossing ship to demonstrate his

⁴⁶"Marquette's Journal," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 262; Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LX, pp. 151-155; Holand, "The Sign of the Cross", p. 163.

⁴⁷Francis Parkman, La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West (New York: The New American Library, 1963), pp. 126-129. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Parkman, La Salle and the West.

friendship for the French. On September 18, 1679 the Griffon set sail for the east. She never reached her destination. Although her fate remains unknown, the Griffon probably sank in the autumn storms which are common on the Great Lakes.⁴⁸

Soon after the Griffon's departure, La Salle and his party left Onanghisse's village for the mouth of the St. Joseph River in southwest Michigan. As the French guided their canoes along the western shore of Lake Michigan their progress was interrupted by frequent storms. La Salle had purchased provisions from the Potawatomis on Washington Island but this supply of Indian corn diminished rapidly as the French were forced to spend days ashore waiting for the storms to subside.⁴⁹

On October 28, the tired and hungry Frenchmen stumbled ashore at a Potawatomi village near the mouth of the Kewaunee River. While the Potawatomis in this village were evidently friendly, La Salle and his party regarded them with suspicion and prepared to defend themselves. The French actions alarmed the Potawatomis who fled from their village into the surrounding forest. The French then advanced into the deserted village and took a quantity of corn that the Indians had collected, leaving trade goods in exchange. Meanwhile the Potawatomis had mustered their warriors and La Salle's party found itself facing a growing number of armed Indians.

⁴⁸Louis Hennepin, "Hennepin's Narrative," in Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (34 vols.; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1903-), I, pp. 53-56. Hereafter this selection will be cited as "Hennepin's Narrative," in Illinois Historical Collections.

⁴⁹Parkman, La Salle and the West, p. 130.

Fortunately, the Potawatomis on Washington Island had given La Salle a calumet which he displayed to the gathering Indians and which convinced them of his good intentions. The Potawatomis then welcomed the French, brought them more foodstuffs, and on the following day held a feast in their honor. On October 2, 1679, La Salle and his party continued their voyage to the south.⁵⁰

La Salle's attempts to establish a fur monopoly in the west were unsuccessful. The Iroquois resented the growing French trade with the west and during the early 1680's they swept into the Illinois country. Their invasion also may have been partly caused by the Potawatomis. Throughout the 1670's the Potawatomis periodically had killed Iroquois warriors whom they had encountered while hunting. The Potawatomis continually flaunted their success and La Salle earlier had warned that:

It is not to be wondered that the Iroquois speak of waging war against our allies inasmuch as they receive affronts from them every year. I have seen, among the Potawatomi and Miami at Michillimackinac, the spoils and scalps of numerous Iroquois whom the Indians from this region had treacherously killed while hunting last spring and earlier; which is not unknown to the Iroquois, our allies having the improvidence of celebrating this feast in their presence while they were trading among them, as I have seen Potawatomi at Michillimackinac who, dancing with the calumet, boasted of this treachery, holding up the scalps at arms length in the sight of three Mohawks who were there to trade.⁵¹

⁵⁰"Hennepin's Narrative," in Illinois Historical Collections, I, pp. 57-59.

⁵¹"Statement by La Salle on the Illinois Country, 1680," in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIII, p. 15.

The heaviest blow fell upon the Illinois. During August and September, 1680, the Iroquois invaded the Illinois River Valley and devastated the hapless Illinois Confederacy. La Salle's agents among the Illinois, led by Henri de Tonty, fled toward Green Bay where they hoped to find refuge from the invaders. Retreating up the Illinois River, Tonty and his men reached the southern tip of Lake Michigan where they turned their canoe northward and proceeded up the western shore toward Green Bay. Their canoe capsized somewhere near Milwaukee and they were forced to continue their journey on foot. Tonty hoped to reach the Potawatomi village near the mouth of the Kewaunee River which La Salle had visited during October, 1679, but upon reaching this site he found that the Potawatomis had learned of the Iroquois attacks and had fled toward Green Bay. The French scoured the empty Indian village for any food that had been left, even collecting discarded pieces of leather that might be edible. They also repaired an abandoned canoe and during the middle of November once again continued their northerly course up the coast of Lake Michigan. Upon reaching Sturgeon Bay they discovered another deserted Potawatomi village, but they also encountered some Ottawa hunters who led them to Onanghisse's winter village which had been established on the upper Door Peninsula. Here the exhausted Tonty spent the winter although part of his followers were taken by the Potawatomis to the Jesuits at St. Francis Xavier.⁵²

⁵²"Relation of Henri de Tonty Concerning the Exploration of La Salle from 1678 to 1683," in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Hereafter material from this project will be cited as Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. This archives contains a vast amount of materials collected by the Indian

The Iroquois invasion of the west continued. In the summer and autumn of 1681 they once again attacked the Illinois causing these frightened tribesmen to scatter beyond the Mississippi or flee toward Green Bay.⁵³ In 1682 a Jesuit priest among the Onandagas informed Governor Frontenac of New France that the Iroquois were planning attacks upon other western tribes and warned the governor that the Iroquois intended to carry the war to the Potawatomis and other Indians near Green Bay.⁵⁴ Although this planned attack upon the Potawatomis did not materialize, the Iroquois besieged Michillimackinac during 1683 and in March, 1684, they again struck at the Illinois.⁵⁵

During this period of Iroquois incursion into the west, French influence among the Potawatomis temporarily declined. No longer convinced of the omnipotence of French power, the Potawatomis also resented the growing number of French traders who were infringing upon Potawatomi trade with tribes to the south and west. La Salle may have encouraged this sentiment for he was anxious to exclude other

Claim Commission. Also see Louise P. Kellogg, "A Wisconsin Anabasis," Wisconsin Magazine of History, VII, (March, 1924), pp. 332-338.

⁵³Robert A. Goldstein, French-Iroquois Diplomatic and Military Relations, 1606-1701 (The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1969), p. 119. Hereafter this volume will be cited Goldstein, French-Iroquois Relations.

⁵⁴Reverend Father de Lamberville to Count de Frontenac, September 20, 1682, in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1853-1887), IX, p. 192. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as New York Colonial Documents.

⁵⁵Hunt, Wars of the Iroquois, pp. 156-157.

traders from the west and urged the western tribesmen to plunder those traders who were not in his employ.⁵⁶ During 1683 the Potawatomis began to seize the goods of French traders operating in the Green Bay region. Such actions were strongly opposed by the Jesuits who disliked La Salle and resisted his attempts to gain influence over the Potawatomis. They reported that Onanghisse was active in La Salle's behalf and was attempting to encourage the Miamis and Illinois to follow the Potawatomis' example.⁵⁷

French officials realized that the growing disaffection of the Potawatomis threatened their position in the west and they quickly attempted to remedy the situation. Perrot and the French commander at Michillimackinac, Oliver Morel Sieur de la Durantaye, journeyed to Green Bay during the fall of 1683 and convinced the Potawatomis of the folly of their actions.⁵⁸

French officials also realized that their influence among the Potawatomis and other western tribes would remain in jeopardy as long as the Iroquois were able to attack these Algonquian peoples with impunity. Therefore they attempted to forge these western tribesmen into an anti-Iroquois alliance which would furnish warriors to carry the conflict into the Iroquois homeland. The Potawatomis were willing

⁵⁶"From La Potherie," Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 100-101.

⁵⁷Father Enjalaran to Lefevre de la Barre, Governor of New France, August 26, 1683 in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 110-111.

⁵⁸La Barre to Jean Baptiste Colbert de Seigneley, November 4, 1683 in New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 202-203. Seigneley was a French official in charge of Canadian affairs.

participants in this campaign against the Five Nations. Their traditional enmity toward the Iroquois was aggravated by the Iroquois disruption of the fur trade and by Iroquois attacks upon Potawatomi neighbors. After the Iroquois had scattered the Illinois they concentrated their attacks upon the Miamis. In 1686 a large Seneca war party attacked a Miami village near Chicago and the Potawatomis, Mascoutens, and Foxes rallied to the Miami defense. The combined Algonquian force pursued and overtook the Senecas. In the ensuing battle the Algonquians killed many of the Iroquois and freed part of their Miami captives.⁵⁹

The Potawatomis also took part in a major French expedition against the Senecas in 1687. Jacques Brisay, Marquis Denonville, became Governor of New France in 1685. Anxious to prosecute the campaign against the Iroquois, he planned an invasion of the Mohawk and Seneca homelands and solicited the aid of the western tribes in this endeavor. Perrot was dispatched to the Green Bay area to rally the Potawatomis and their neighbors. The Potawatomis, Menominees, and Winnebagos gladly accepted this opportunity to strike at their enemy and their enthusiasm spread to the other tribes of the region. The Kickapoos, Foxes, Miamis and Mascoutens set out overland to join the French expedition at Niagara while Perrot led the Potawatomis, Menominees and Winnebagos who were to travel by canoe through the Great Lakes to reach the rendezvous.⁶⁰

⁵⁹La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, II, p. 16.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 20.

The Potawatomis turned their canoes northward to Michillimackinac where they joined the Ottawas who also had agreed to attack the Iroquois. The Ottawas greeted the Potawatomis and their fellow travelers ceremoniously, but they were less anxious than the Green Bay Indians to join the expedition. The Ottawas attempted to persuade the Potawatomis to return to Green Bay but the Potawatomis refused the Ottawa overtures and when the Ottawas procrastinated in leaving to join the French on Lake Ontario, the Potawatomis continued their journey without them.⁶¹

On July 4, 1687 the Potawatomis and the other western Indians rendezvoused with a French force from Montreal at Irondequoit Bay on the southern shore of Lake Ontario. The French army was expected. An Iroquois warrior who had been captured by the Hurons escaped as the western tribesmen approached their rendezvous point and he spread the alarm to the Seneca villages.⁶² As the French force advanced inland they found the first Seneca village deserted. Upon approaching the abandoned settlement however, the French and their allies were attacked by approximately five hundred Senecas who lay in ambush along the flanks of the French column. Although the French force at first recoiled under the Seneca attack, they soon rallied and forced the

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 21-25; Cadwallader Colden, The History of the Five Indian Nations Depending on the Province of New York in America (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 58-62. This volume was originally published in two parts in 1727 and 1747. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Colden, History of the Five Indian Nations.

⁶² Henry de Tonty, "Tonty's Memoir," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 310. Hereafter this selection will be cited as "Tonty's Memoir" in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest.

Senecas to retreat. The Potawatomis and other western Indians urged Denonville to pursue the fleeing Iroquois but the French governor was content with the victory. After destroying the village and the surrounding cornfields, the expedition withdrew. Denonville's victory was not decisive. The Senecas lost about eighty men while the French and their allies suffered one hundred and ten killed. Yet the victory temporarily restored French prestige among the Potawatomis and it turned the direction of future Seneca attacks toward the St. Lawrence and away from the western Great Lakes.⁶³

Such Seneca attacks were soon delivered and their impact resounded through the west. In August, 1689, a large force of Iroquois surprised the French settlements at Lachine and killed over two hundred Canadians. They then raided into the very outskirts of Montreal and shortly after their retreat a large delegation of western tribesmen arrived on a trading expedition. These western Indians quickly perceived the seriousness of the French defeat and upon their return to the west the Foxes and Ottawas sent messengers to the Iroquois suggesting an alliance. Although the Potawatomis were not involved in this intrigue, the tide of anti-French sentiment continued to swell around them. The Mascoutens also were angry with the French for selling arms to the Sioux who repeatedly raided both the Mascouten and Fox villages. A full scale war among the western

⁶³Colden, History of the Five Indian Nations, pp. 63-65; Goldstein, French-Iroquois Relations, pp. 152-154. The total strength of the French force is unknown.

tribes seemed imminent. Such a conflict would shatter the French position in the west and would certainly involve the Potawatomis.⁶⁴

Fortunately for both the French and the Potawatomis, in the autumn of 1689 Frontenac returned from France and once again resumed control over French fortunes in North America. The aging governor acted promptly to forestall the Iroquois and to reforge the tribal alliances in the west. He sent Louis de la Porte Sieur de Louigny with one hundred and fifty men to Michillimackinac where they overawed the Ottawas and brought them back within French hegemony. To rebuild the French position in Wisconsin, Frontenac relied upon Perrot. Perrot traveled through the region assuring the tribes of French strength and convincing the Foxes and Mascoutens to remain within the French alliance.⁶⁵

While at Green Bay Perrot used all of his diplomacy to persuade the Potawatomis to renew their attacks upon the Iroquois. Assembling the Potawatomi chiefs near the mission at St. Francis Xavier, Perrot thanked them for their past loyalty to the French. He lavished gifts upon the Potawatomis and congratulated them for their wisdom in not becoming involved in the Fox-Ottawa intrigue. Perrot warned the Potawatomis that they should reject all future Iroquois overtures and exhorted them to renew their attacks upon the Five Nations. The Potawatomis responded favorably to Perrot's speech.

⁶⁴La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, II, pp. 54-60.

⁶⁵Ibid.; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, 245-248.

They assured him of their fidelity and promised to support the continuing French campaign against the Iroquois.⁶⁶

The Potawatomis honored their pledge to Perrot. During the next five years they and other western tribesmen joined the French in carrying the war to the Iroquois. Although the Foxes and Mascoutens remained reluctant to join in the war, the Potawatomis, Sauks, Menominees and Winnebagos joined with the Illinois in attacking the Senecas. Hundreds of Senecas were killed and the tribe was forced to abandon their outlying western villages as they fled before the Potawatomis and their allies. By 1694 the Iroquois had suffered such losses that they sent a delegation to Frontenac begging for peace.⁶⁷

Frontenac believed that such overtures were only attempts by the Iroquois to gain immunity from attacks while they regrouped their forces to strike the French. The peace was not made. During the late summer of 1695 Onanghisse led a delegation of western Indians to Montreal where they were received cordially by Frontenac. Onanghisse assured the governor that the Potawatomis had faithfully prosecuted the war against the Iroquois and even had refrained from seeking vengeance against the Sioux whom he claimed had killed some Potawatomis. While at Montreal, Onanghisse and many of the Potawatomis joined a French force attempting to intercept an Iroquois war party that was reported in the area. The Iroquois were not found

⁶⁶La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, II, p. 60.

⁶⁷An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in Canada From the Month of September 1694 to the Sailing of the Vessels in 1695, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 620; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 249-253.

and on Sepbtmeber 3, 1695, the Potawatomis and other Indians assembled to leave for Wisconsin. Frontenac admonished them to remain loyal to the French and asked Onanghisse to personally carry instructions of allegiance to all the tribes of Green Bay. Four days later the Potawatomis left for the west.⁶⁸

Onanghisse's assurances of Potawatomi loyalty were soon tested by conditions over which neither he nor Frontenac had any control. In May, 1696, Louis XIV issued a royal ordinance forbidding all citizens of New France to carry goods into the west and revoking all licenses for the fur trade. The new policy resulted from the large quantity of furs which had been brought to Montreal during the past three years and which had glutted the market. This policy also reflected the rising influence of the Jesuits at the court of Louis XIV. The Jesuits opposed westward expansion since they believed that the French traders corrupted the Indians and were in turn led astray by the carefree life of the interior. Although the Potawatomis could still bring their furs to Montreal to trade, they and their neighbors would no longer be able to purchase French goods from traders in the west. By the 1690's all the tribes in Wisconsin had become dependent upon such traders for goods which had once been luxuries, but were now deemed necessities. The tribesmen no longer preferred to make the long trading journeys to Montreal. Frontenac wisely procrastinated in enforcing the king's decision and two years passed before all of

⁶⁸ An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in Canada From the Month of September 1694 to the Sailing of the Vessels in 1695, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 620-626.

the traders were forbidden to carry their goods into the west. Yet the diminishing supply of merchandise was sorely missed by the western tribes and once again the winds of discontent arose over the upper Great Lakes.⁶⁹

The Iroquois were anxious to take advantage of this dissatisfaction and offered both trade goods and political alliances to the western tribes. Part of the Miamis, Hurons and Ottawas accepted the Iroquois offers, but the Potawatomis remained loyal to the French. Inspired by Antoine la Mothe de Cadillac, the French commander at Michillimackinac, in 1696 the Potawatomis and other Indians attacked an Iroquois party that had been befriended by the Hurons. The Iroquois attempted to flee but were overtaken by the Potawatomis and in the ensuing battle the French allied tribesmen killed thirty Iroquois and captured thirty-two prisoners.⁷⁰

Cadillac was anxious to keep the Iroquois reeling and continued to encourage the western tribesmen to carry the war to the Iroquois. His efforts were successful. During the spring of 1697 the Potawatomis and their allies killed or captured over one hundred Senecas. By the following summer the Iroquois trade and diplomatic offensive into the west had crumbled before the onslaught of the Potawatomis and allied tribesmen.⁷¹

⁶⁹Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 257-260.

⁷⁰Charlevoix, History of New France, IV, pp. 277-278.

⁷¹Statement Regarding Frontenac's Policy Toward Northwest Indians at Quebec, 1697, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 166-167.

Since the Iroquois threat to the west had been checked, the French were apprehensive that the five nations might once again strike along the St. Lawrence. Rumors on such a raid reached Quebec and during the summer of 1697 French officials asked Cadillac to bring a force of western tribesmen to bolster the French position in the St. Lawrence Valley. Cadillac assembled a force of three hundred Potawatomis, Ottawas, Sacs, and Hurons and on August 29, 1697, the French commander and his red allies arrived at Montreal. Although the Potawatomis remained loyal to the French and accompanied Cadillac to the St. Lawrence, they were beginning to suffer from a shortage of trade goods and were anxious to make their problems known. The Potawatomi warriors were once again led by Onanghisse who expressed the Potawatomi position to Frontenac. Onanghisse informed the governor that the Potawatomis had grown accustomed to acquiring goods from French traders who journeyed to their village and no longer wished to bring their furs to Montreal. He reminded Frontenac of the French governor's promises to furnish the Potawatomis with needed goods and warned Frontenac that if such goods were not sent, Potawatomi ties with the French would be broken.⁷²

Onanghisse's speech had a chilling effect upon the French governor. Frontenac realized that if such allies as the Potawatomis were lost, all of the western tribes might transfer their allegiance to the English. In replying to Onanghisse and to the speeches of

⁷²Charlevoix, History of New France, V, p. 67; An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in Canada From the Departure of the Vessels in 1696 to the 15th of October, 1697, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 673.

the other chiefs, the governor tried to regain the Indians' confidence. He lavishly praised them for their attacks upon the Iroquois and promised that goods would be sent to the Great Lakes region. Frontenac admitted that few goods had recently been sent west. He explained that all of the traders were currently fighting the Iroquois and after they had triumphed they once again would carry merchandise to the western tribesmen. Although the Potawatomis were evidently satisfied by Frontenac's explanation and shortly returned to Wisconsin, the French remained apprehensive over their declining position in the western Great Lakes.⁷³

French worries were well founded. The decline of French influence in the west was evidenced by Potawatomi tribal movements in the 1690's. Although the French wished to keep the Potawatomis concentrated in the Green Bay region, Potawatomi villages soon spread south along the western shores of Lake Michigan.⁷⁴ Since the Potawatomis no longer feared Iroquois invasions into the Old Northwest, they moved back toward the sites of their ancestral villages in Michigan. In 1695 Cadillac reported that a band of Potawatomis had taken up residence on the St. Joseph River in Michigan and by 1698 other French officials indicated that Potawatomis were living at villages near the present sites of Manitowoc and

⁷³ An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in Canada From the Departure of the Vessels in 1696 to the 15th of October, 1697, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, pp. 673-675; Charlevoix, History of New France, V, p. 69.

⁷⁴ An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in Canada From the Month of September 1694 to the Sailing of the Vessels in 1695, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 623.

Milwaukee Wisconsin.⁷⁵ This migration continued into the eighteenth century and eventually resulted in the dispersal of the majority of the Potawatomis from Green Bay.

By the end of the seventeenth century the Potawatomis were well known to the French on the St. Lawrence. From the accounts of early French travelers and from the investigations of later writers a picture of Potawatomi life during this early period emerges which indicates that the Potawatomis were well adapted to their wilderness environment.

The Potawatomi economy was based upon a combination of horticulture, hunting and gathering, and trade. In the extensive gardens that usually surrounded their villages the Potawatomi women cultivated such crops as beans, peas, squashes, pumpkins, melons and tobacco. They also raised an abundance of corn which was traded to the French and to the Chippewas and other northern tribes.⁷⁶ Crops from their fields were supplemented by a wide variety of products which they gleaned from the lakes and forests of their homeland. Wild rice was harvested when it was available as were nuts, roots

⁷⁵Letter by Francis Buisson de St. Cosme, January 2, 1699, in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 345; Berthrong, "Before the Claims Commission," pp. 15-17. St. Cosme was a Roman Catholic priest who traveled in Wisconsin 1698.

⁷⁶Antoine Denis Raudot, "Memoir Concerning the Different Indian Nations of North America," in Kinitz, Indians of Western Great Lakes, pp. 313, 381. Raudot was Intendant of Canada, 1705-1710.

and berries.⁷⁷ Especially important among the products gathered from the forests were beech nuts which the Potawatomis roasted and then pounded into flour.⁷⁸

The Potawatomis complemented the vegetables in their diet with many types of fish and game. The lakes and streams of the Green Bay region abounded in fish which the Potawatomis both speared and caught in nets. Much of the fishing was done from pine log dugouts or birch bark canoes. These vessels also were used to hunt the vast flocks of waterfowl that migrated through the bay region in the autumn.⁷⁹ In the surrounding forests and nearby prairies Potawatomi hunters killed deer, bears, bison, and smaller game. During the winter groups of Potawatomi families commonly left the larger villages to establish small hunting camps in less populous areas.⁸⁰

Many of the animals which the Potawatomis killed for food also furnished skins for clothing. Deerskin was fashioned into

⁷⁷Albert Ernest Jenks, "The Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes: A Study in American Primitive Economics," Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (48 vols.; Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1881-1933), p. 1063; Huron H. Smith, Ethnobotany of the Forest Potawatomi Indians, Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee, Vol. VII (Milwaukee: Board of Trustees, 1933), pt. 1, p. 24. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Smith, Ethnobotany of the Forest Potawatomi.

⁷⁸"Allouez Wisconsin Memoir," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 145.

⁷⁹Smith, Ethnobotany of the Forest Potawatomi, p. 24; La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 303-305.

⁸⁰La Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples," in Blair, Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi, I, pp. 305-306; Kinietz, Indians of Western Great Lakes, pp. 313-314.

shirts, leggings, and moccasins for men and into loose dresses and moccasins for women. In the winter bison robes provided warmth for both sexes. The Potawatomi women ornamented both deerskin and bison clothing with dyed porcupine quills or shell and glass beads. As the Potawatomis gained greater access to French trade goods, they replaced their traditional deerskin costumes with shirts, leggings, and dresses made of brightly colored cloth. Potawatomi men usually shaved their heads, except for a scalp lock. When going to war, warriors adorned themselves in red and black paint. Both sexes painted their face and bodies upon ceremonial occasions.⁸¹

Potawatomi dwellings were domed shaped structures comprised of woven reed mats attached to a frame built of poles. The mats were easily detached and when the Potawatomis moved their village they carried their mats with them.⁸² Inside these dwellings could be found such implements of everyday life as extra clothing, storage vessels, and cooking utensils. Potawatomi women made baskets and bags from the bark of such trees as the white cedar and the linden. Other containers were made of elm and hickory bark and from animal skins. Prior to French contact, Potawatomi women used mussel shells as spoons

⁸¹ Kinietz, Indians of Western Great Lakes, pp. 312-313; B. P. Witherell, "Reminiscences of the Northwest," in Wisconsin Historical Collections, III, p. 302.

⁸² Jacques Charles Sabrevois de Bleury, Memoir on the Savages of Canada as Far as the Mississippi River, Describing Their Customs and Trade, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 366, 368. Hereafter this memoir will be cited as "Sabrevois Memoir" in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI. Sabrevois was the French commander at Detroit in 1714.

and ladles, but by the end of the seventeenth century such common trade items as iron kettles and metal utensils were utilized.⁸³

The Potawatomi political system was a very decentralized organization. The different bands were led by band chiefs who maintained order in the villages and attempted to speak for the band at tribal councils. Their influence was limited and as among the Chippewas, the position may have been partly hereditary. Chiefs maintained their position through personal influence and through the consent of their followers.⁸⁴ Prior to 1750 there is little evidence of stable band membership and even after that date individual Potawatomis could easily move from one band to another. Since the Potawatomis intermarried frequently with neighboring tribes many Indians of mixed tribal lineage often lived in the Potawatomi villages while other people of Potawatomi descent could be found among the Ottawas, Miamis, Sauks, Illinois and other tribes.⁸⁵

Potawatomi marriages were often polygamous and residence seemed to be patrilocal. The Potawatomis traced their descent through patrilineal relationships. Almost all aspects of daily life

⁸³Smith, Ethnobotany of the Forest Potawatomi, p. 23; "Allouez Wisconsin Memoir," in Kellogg, Early Narratives of the Northwest, p. 146.

⁸⁴Robert E. and Pat Ritzenthaler, The Woodland Indians of the Western Great Lakes (Garden City, New York: Natural History Press, 1970), p. 52. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Ritzenthaler, Woodland Indians. Also see Ruth Landes, The Prairie Potawatomi: Tradition and Ritual in the Twentieth Century (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), p. 13. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Landes, Prairie Potawatomi.

⁸⁵Kinietz, Indians of Western Great Lakes, pp. 314-315.

were governed by formal sexual divisions in which men and women followed different patterns of behavior. Men hunted. Women raised crops. Men made war. Women cared for the children. Potawatomi children were raised in accordance with this division and their childhood play prepared them for their roles as adults.⁸⁶

Potawatomi religious beliefs were similar to those held by other Algonquian tribes of the Old Northwest and were animistic in content. The Potawatomis believed that many natural objects held spirits which could exercise an influence over their life. Periodic offerings were made to such spirits so that the Potawatomis might gain success in hunting or warfare, or to protect the tribe from disease and other disasters.⁸⁷ The Potawatomis believed that certain members of the tribe were especially successful in propitiating spirits and gave great respect to shamans who claimed powers. The Potawatomis also had a great fear of sorcery and practiced many types of rituals to safeguards themselves against its evil effects.⁸⁸

Although the Potawatomis lived in fear of sorcery, they also enjoyed many lighthearted social activities. Dances were held on many occasions and while some were for religious purposes, many dances were social in origin. The Potawatomis often held dances to

⁸⁶Landes, Prairie Potawatomi, p. 36; Kinitz, Indians of Western Great Lakes, p. 315.

⁸⁷Smith, Ethnobotany of the Forest Potawatomi, pp. 25-26.

⁸⁸Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXI, p. 149; Callender, Social Organization of the Central Algonquian, p. 96.

honor tribal victories or to celebrate inter-tribal lacrosse games. Since many of the Algonquian tribes were familiar with lacrosse, the Potawatomis occasionally played against such neighboring tribes as the Sauks or Ottawas. Both tribes wagered heavily on the outcome of the game and after the contest had been decided, dances were held into the night. These occasions were important social events and the Potawatomis adorned themselves in their finest clothing to celebrate such festivities.⁸⁹

By 1700 the Potawatomis were integrated into the French political and trade systems, remaining loyal to New France despite a shortage of trade goods. The Iroquois menace had diminished, yet the Potawatomis were not destined to live in peace. The declining power of New France in the west would soon bring unforeseen problems and the French would once again be forced to rally the Potawatomis to Onontio's banner.⁹⁰

⁸⁹"Sabrevois Memoir," in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 368-369; Ritzenthaler, Woodland Indians, pp. 117-119.

⁹⁰Onontio was the Potawatomi name for the Governor of New France.

CHAPTER II

THE FOX WARS

As the dawn of a new century broke over the western Great Lakes, the Potawatomis found themselves surrounded by change and uncertainty. For over five decades they had opposed the Iroquois and during the fifteen years prior to 1700 the Potawatomis formed the vanguard in the pro-French alliance which had carried the conflict into the Seneca homeland. Yet in 1701 the French and Iroquois finally came to terms. Frontenac died in 1698, but his successor, Louis Hector Count de Callieres continued his strong stand against the Iroquois and was anxious that the western tribes be included in the peace agreement.

During the winter and spring of 1700-1701 messengers were sent to the western Indians inviting them to the treaty negotiations at Montreal in July, 1701. Augustin le Gardeur de Repentigny de Courtemanche journeyed to Lake Michigan where he found large numbers of Potawatomis settled with the Miamis and bands of other tribes upon the St. Joseph River. To Courtemanche's dismay, the Potawatomis had recently sent a raiding party against the Iroquois. Courtemanche feared that these raiders might strike the Senecas and completely upset the proposed peace negotiations. He persuaded the Miamis to

intercept the Potawatomi raiders and to instruct them to return to the St. Joseph. After the Indians on the St. Joseph agreed to attend the conference at Montreal, Courtemanche traveled to the Illinois and then turned northward to the Green Bay region. There he found a large force of Potawatomis, Sacs, Winnebagos, Menominees, Foxes and Kickapoos who were planning to attack the Sioux. Courtemanche convinced these tribesmen to relinquish their expedition and to also attend the negotiations at Montreal. On July 2, 1701 Courtemanche returned to Michilimackinac where he prepared to accompany the western Indians on their voyage to the St. Lawrence.¹

The Potawatomis formed part of the large number of western tribesmen who arrived in Montreal on July 21, 1701. The Potawatomis were led by Onanghisse and Ouilamek, the chief of the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph River. The Potawatomis brought all of the Iroquois prisoners from their villages whom they planned to exchange for Potawatomi prisoners held by the Iroquois. Negotiations about such an exchange took place during the next ten days and were complicated by the Iroquois insistence that certain Algonquian prisoners refused to leave the Iroquois families that had adopted them and were reluctant to return to their original tribes. The French assured the western tribesmen that such Iroquois claims were true and that the Five Nations were not holding any captives against their will. After the French guaranteed that they would endeavor to persuade the Iroquois to

¹ Pierre Francois Xavier Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, trans. and ed., by John Gilmary Shea (6 vols.; London: Francis Edwards, 1902), V, pp. 141-142. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Charlevoix, History of New France.

return all western captives regardless of the captives wishes, the Potawatomis and their allies agreed to conclude the treaty.²

Callieres conducted the final ceremony with a Gallic splendor designed to impress both the western tribes and the Iroquois. The ceremony was held on a plain near Montreal on which a large canopy of branches had been erected. Under this canopy sat Callieres and other French officials flanked on both sides by lines of French troops which extended forward from the canopy onto the plain. In the area in front of the canopy, Callieres assembled approximately one thousand Indians: eight hundred western tribesmen and two hundred Iroquois. Callieres addressed the throng and admonished both the western Indians and the Iroquois to live in peace and to treat each other as brothers. He asked both sides not to seek revenge against each other, but to submit any grievances to the French who would then administer justice. Callieres also distributed belts of wampum to the tribesmen to symbolize the peace that had been made. After Callieres' speech the various tribes returned prisoners and pledged to abide by the treaty. Onanghisse spoke for the Potawatomis and presented their former Iroquois captives with a calumet as a symbol of Potawatomi friendship. After completing the negotiations, the Potawatomi delegation returned to the west.³

²Ibid., p. 143; Robert A. Goldstein, French-Iroquois Diplomatic and Military Relations, 1606-1701 (The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1969), pp. 195-196. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Goldstein, French-Iroquois Relations.

³"Ratification of the Peace Between the French and the Indians," in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1853-1887). IX, pp. 722-724. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as New York Colonial Documents. Also see Goldstein, French-Iroquois Relations, pp. 196-197.

The peace treaty of 1701 ended the period of large scale raiding between the Potawatomis and the Iroquois. Yet the removal of the Iroquois threat proved to be a mixed blessing. No longer forced to stand together against the Iroquois, the western allies of New France began to turn on each other. Petty jealousies and incidents which had been overshadowed by the Iroquois menace now assumed an importance which led to inter-tribal conflict.

At first the Potawatomis remained on the periphery of these disputes. Although the French never had formed a formal alliance with the eastern Sioux, French traders were active among this tribe and had furnished them with firearms. The Sioux used these weapons against the Wisconsin tribes, especially the Foxes and Mascoutens. When these two tribes retaliated against the Sioux, Potawatomis occasionally joined them. In 1700 a mixed force of Potawatomis, Foxes, Sacs and Winnebagoes raided into Minnesota and upon their return encountered five French coureurs de bois on the Mississippi River. The coureurs de bois, who were trading illegally in the west, were carrying a quantity of arms and ammunition to the Sioux. Incensed by the traders' purpose and suffering from a shortage of such goods themselves, the Potawatomis and their allies attacked the Frenchmen and seized their cargo. This war party later encountered Pierre Le Sueur who also was ascending the Mississippi hoping to establish a successful mining enterprise in Minnesota. Le Sueur gave the Indians a small quantity of powder and they permitted him to continue upriver.⁴

⁴Benard de la Harpe, "Historical Journal of the Establishment of Louisiana by France," in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XVI, pp. 181-183. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections. Le Sueur was a French trader.

Although the Potawatomis remained out of the mainstream of turmoil that was growing in the west between 1700 and 1706, the Foxes did not. Angered by the French trade with the Sioux and realizing that the official French position in the west had weakened, the Foxes exacted a growing tribute from the coureurs de bois who traveled into Wisconsin. Although the government of New France opposed these illegal traders, they could not stop them from carrying goods to the Indians. Yet the very impunity with which the Foxes mistreated the coureurs de bois increased their arrogance and further contributed to the decay of French prestige in Wisconsin.⁵

While Fox-French relations deteriorated in Wisconsin, the Potawatomis continued their migration around the southern tip of Lake Michigan. The focus of this migration was the St. Joseph River Valley where Ouilamek had earlier established a Potawatomi village near the Miamis. During the 1690's the Jesuits had erected a mission on this river which drew bands of many tribes into the region.⁶ After 1702 the French attempted to resettle the Miamis near Detroit and in 1703 a band of Miamis left the St. Joseph and joined a Huron village in the Detroit area.⁷ During the next four years other Miamis also

⁵Louise Phelps Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Old Northwest (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1925), pp. 275-276. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin.

⁶Daniel McCoy, "Old Fort St. Joseph," in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Lansing: Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), XXXV, pp. 546-547. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Michigan Historical Collections.

⁷Claude Aveneau to Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac, June 4, 1702, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 123. Aveneau was a Jesuit priest serving at the mission on the St. Joseph. Also see

moved from the St. Joseph to the south and east. They were replaced along the river by Potawatomis and Sacs from the Green Bay region.⁸

As the Potawatomis were establishing new villages in the St. Joseph Valley, the cauldron of intertribal unrest boiled over at Detroit. Shortly after 1700 the French decided upon a policy of resettlement for the tribes in the west. French officials persuaded the Illinois Confederacy to gradually abandon their ancestral villages in the upper Illinois Valley and to center their population along the Mississippi in southwestern Illinois. Meanwhile, Cadillac began to concentrate Indians from many tribes around a recently established fort at Detroit. The French hoped that a large settlement of Indians at Detroit would serve as a barrier against any future Iroquois attacks and block English expansion into the region. The majority

Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Area 66 ceded by the "Ottoway, Chippeway, Wyandotte, and Pottawatamie nations of Indians" to the United States pursuant to the Treaty made at Detroit on November 17, 1807," p. 115. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66."

⁸Frances Krauskopf, "The French in Indiana, 1700-1760" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1953), p. 30 (microfilm). Hereafter this dissertation will be cited as Krauskopf, "French in Indiana." Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 117 which was ceded to the United States by the "Ottawa, Chippewa, and Pottawatamie Nations of Indians" under the Treaty held at Chicago on August 29, 1821," pp. 45-46. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in Box 34, of the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 117."

of the tribesmen resettled at Detroit were Hurons and Ottawas from Michilimackinac and Miamis from the St. Joseph. But Cadillac's policy failed. The concentration of Indians at Detroit produced intertribal friction which flared into open conflict in 1706.

Between 1704 and 1706 several Ottawas were killed by Miamis and the Ottawas sought satisfaction through the French rather than initiating a vendetta against the Miamis. When the French did little to punish the Miamis, Ottawa resentment toward this tribe was expressed in threats of violence.⁹

The Potawatomis and other tribes were gradually drawn into the feud. In 1704 the Oujatanon band of the Miami Confederacy killed a Potawatomi causing Potawatomi-Miami relations to deteriorate. By 1706 the Miamis were fearful of Potawatomi-Ottawa revenge and decided to attack the Ottawas after part of the Ottawa warriors had departed on a raid against the Sioux. To ensure success in their intrigue, the Miamis solicited the aid of the Hurons, Kickapoos, and a party of Iroquois who were trading at Detroit. The Potawatomis and Sacs learned of the Miami plot and warned the Ottawas who quickly returned to Detroit. Deciding to strike before the Miamis could muster their allies, the Ottawas attacked the Miamis and in the ensuing melee some French soldiers and a priest were killed. The French were able to

⁹Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 271-272; William J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969), p. 136. Detroit was founded in 1701. Also see Francois Clairambault d'Aigremont to Count de Ponchartrain, November 14, 1709, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, pp. 431-432. D'Aigremont was a French official investigating conditions in the west. Louis Phelypeaux, Count de Ponchartrain was Intendant of Finance in France.

restore a temporary peace, but the fires of intertribal enmity still continued to burn.¹⁰

Although the Potawatomis did not join in the attack upon the Miamis, they had warned the Ottawas of the Miami plot.¹¹ After the Ottawas withdrew their village from Detroit to Michilimackinac following the dispute with the Miamis, the Potawatomis no longer possessed any Indian friends in the Detroit area and refused to travel to the French post located there.¹² Fearing that the Miamis and Hurons would seek revenge for Potawatomi complicity in the Ottawa attack, the Potawatomis asked the French to build a fort near their villages on the St. Joseph River. The Potawatomis also sought alliances with the Ottawas, Sacs, and other tribes as a defense against the Miamis and Hurons.¹³

While French officials at Detroit and Michilimackinac were attempting to keep the peace among the western tribes, Marquis de

¹⁰D'Aigremont to Ponchartrain, November 14, 1708, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, pp. 432-435; Speech of Miscoquaky, Chief of the Outaouas to Phillipe de Rigault, Marquis de Vaudreuil, September 26, 1706 in ibid., pp. 288-289. Vaudreuil was appointed Governor of New France after Callieres died in 1703. Also see C. M. Burton, "Fort Ponchartrain de Detroit - 1701-1710 - Under Cadillac," in ibid., XXIX, fn. 1, p. 285.

¹¹Jean Joseph Marest to Vaudreuil, October 30, 1706, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 267. Marest was a Jesuit priest among the Ottawas.

¹²Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 31; Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 115.

¹³Words of Jean LeBlanc to the Governor General on June 23, 1707 in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 382. Jean LeBlanc, also known as Otoutagon, was a chief of the Ottawas. Also see Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 31.

Vaudreuil, who had become governor of New France in 1703, was waging war against the English. Queen Anne's War began in 1702 but for nine years the conflict remained centered along the New England frontier and did not spill over into the west. In 1711 however, Vaudreuil received rumors that a great English fleet had left New England and was enroute to conquer New France. Fearing such an invasion might be successful, the governor dispatched messengers to French commanders in the west instructing them to send large numbers of western tribesmen to Montreal. Vaudreuil also believed that such a force of western Indians would insure Iroquois neutrality if the English fleet reached Quebec.¹⁴

The Potawatomis rallied to the French cause. Although they officially had remained at peace with the Iroquois, this relationship had been strained by ill feelings on both sides. The Potawatomis were aware that the Iroquois had agreed to aid the Miamis in their ill-planned intrigue against the Ottawas and in 1710 the Potawatomis reciprocated such treachery by seizing two Iroquois warriors in Michigan and cutting off their ears. A year later, when the French sought allies against a possible Iroquois incursion, the Potawatomis were anxious to volunteer.¹⁵

The Potawatomis and other western tribesmen arrived in Quebec during the early summer of 1711 but the English threat did not

¹⁴Vaudreuil to Ponchartrain, October 25, 1711, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 858; Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 36

¹⁵Extract of a letter by Vaudreuil to Ponchartrain, October 31, 1710, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 263.

materialize. The English fleet had been wrecked by a storm near the mouth of the St. Lawrence. Although the French no longer needed the aid of the large force of western Indians which had assembled at Quebec, Vaudreuil welcomed the opportunity to address these warriors. He urged them to live together in peace and to cease their intertribal bickering. Vaudreuil was particularly forceful in addressing the Foxes whom he envisioned as the primary disruptive force in the west. He cautioned the Foxes against further hostilities and warned them that continued belligerency would attract the wrath of neighboring tribes.¹⁶

The Foxes ignored Vaudreuil's warnings. In late 1710 or early 1711 a band of Foxes, accompanied by some allied Sacs, Mascoutens and Kickapoos left Wisconsin and resettled near Detroit. Their migration had been prompted by Cadillac who hoped that their removal from Wisconsin would separate the Foxes from the Sioux and ease intertribal conflict in that area. Cadillac also was anxious to concentrate these tribes near Detroit and to remove them from the Jesuits whom he believed opposed French expansion in the west. Cadillac's plan proved disastrous. The trouble makers of Wisconsin soon became trouble makers near Detroit.¹⁷

Cadillac did not reap the whirlwind he had sown. In 1711 he was appointed governor of Louisiana and was replaced at Detroit by

¹⁶Words of the Marquis de Vaudreuil to the Savages Who Came Down From the Upper Country, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, pp. 503-506; Howard H. Peckham, The Colonial Wars, 1682-1762 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 72

¹⁷Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before The Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 116; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 276.

Charles Regnault, Sieur Dubuisson, who did not share Cadillac's desire to resettle the Foxes. Dubuisson resented the intrusion of these unruly warriors into the tribal powderkeg near Detroit. Since the Foxes and their Mascouten allies were a disorderly people who soon claimed the Detroit area as their own, the other tribes of Michigan shared Dubuisson's sentiments. The Foxes' haughty actions fostered such resentment among the Miamis, Ottawas, Hurons and Potawatomis that these tribes soon forgot their intertribal bickering in their growing enmity toward the newcomers.

The tribal powderkeg exploded in 1712. The Potawatomis provided the spark. By 1711 the Potawatomis of the St. Joseph Valley had centered their villages around the Jesuit mission near modern South Bend, Indiana. The mission was directed by Jean Baptiste Chardon who ministered to the Potawatomis and attempted to keep the peace in the region.¹⁸ During 1711 a band of Mascoutens allied to the Foxes at Detroit established a village on the upper St. Joseph River. The Potawatomis resented this uninvited intrusion into the St. Joseph Valley and their resentment was increased when rumors of a pro-English plot spread among the tribes of the west. The Illinois were informed that the Foxes, Mascoutens and Kickapoos had agreed to attack the French and their allies near Detroit and then flee to the English and Iroquois. Since the Illinois and Potawatomis were on good terms and often traveled to each other's villages, information regarding

¹⁸Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (73 vols.; Cleveland: Burrows Bros., 1896-1901), LXVI, pp. 279-285. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Thwaites, Jesuit Relations. Also see John Gilmary Shea, History of the Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes of the United States. 1529-1854 (New York: Edward Dunigan and Brothers, 1857), p. 423.

the Fox-Mascouten plot probably reached the Potawatomis from the Illinois. The Potawatomis and a band of Ottawas settled on the Grand River decided to forestall the Fox-Mascouten intrigue. During the spring of 1712 the Potawatomis and Ottawas attacked the Mascouten village on the upper St. Joseph, killing fifty men, women and children.¹⁹

While the Potawatomis and Ottawas were attacking the Mascoutens, the Foxes at Detroit awaited the arrival of the Kickapoos before beginning an assault upon the French post. When the Foxes heard that their allies had been attacked, they attempted to burn an Ottawa lodge near the walls of the French fort. Dubuisson, who suspected the Foxes of treachery, sent a message to the Ottawas and Hurons asking them for assistance. The Foxes and some Mascouten allies besieged the French fort, erecting a rude fortress of their own within range of the French walls. The French position was desperate since their garrison was understrength and the Fox and Mascouten besiegers numbered in the hundreds. Finally, during the middle of May, the French were relieved by a mixed force of western tribesmen led by the Potawatomi chief, Mackisabe. Mackisabe's large war party was comprised of over six hundred Potawatomi, Ottawa, Huron, Menominee, Sac, Illinois, Missouri, and Osage warriors.²⁰

The arrival of Mackisabe's party turned the tide of battle in favor of the French. The Foxes and Mascoutens who had formerly surrounded the French fortress now found themselves besieged in their

¹⁹Dubuisson to Vaudreuil, June 15, 1712, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 269, 278; Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVI, p. 285. Also see Charlevoix, History of New France, V, p. 257.

²⁰Dubuisson to Vaudreuil, June 15, 1712, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 267-272.

own stronghold. Yet the Foxes and Mascoutens defended themselves valiantly and after several days the French and their allies were unable to capture the Fox fortress. The Foxes however, had not prepared their fortress for such a prolonged siege and finally exhausted their supply of food and water. On the twentieth day of the siege they asked the French for a truce which French and their allies refused. Mackisabe spoke for the French allies and warned the Foxes to expect no quarter. He reminded them that they had formed an alliance with the English which was the cause of their predicament. Mackisabe was joined by Makouandeby, a chief of the Illinois who informed the Foxes that they were being punished for their treachery toward the French and for their actions against other tribes.²¹

The siege of the Fox fortress continued. Fox women and children died of starvation but the Fox warriors fought on. Once again the Foxes asked for a truce and their chief Pemoussa begged the besiegers to allow the Fox women and children to leave the fortress. Mikasabe refused. The French erected towers from which marksmen fired down over the Fox walls. This fire kept the Foxes and Mascoutens from burying their dead and as the bodies decayed illness broke out among the Fox defenders. Finally, after withstanding the French attack for nineteen days, the Foxes and Mascoutens slipped away during a midnight rainstorm.²²

They did not go far. The Foxes and Mascoutens knew they would be pursued and a few miles north of Detroit they prepared an

²¹Ibid., pp. 272-278.

²²Ibid., pp. 278-283.

ambush for the French and their allies. When the flight of the Foxes was discovered, Mikasabe's Indians were joined by a French force led by Jean Baptiste Rissot, Sieur de Vincennes, and the entire party started in pursuit of the hapless refugees. Although the Fox-Mascouten ambush was successful and twenty members of the pursuing party were killed in the initial volley, a second siege was established and after four days the Foxes surrendered. The Potawatomis and their allies spared only the women and children. All of the Fox and Mascouten warriors were either killed or bound for future torture. Of the captured warriors, one hundred Foxes later escaped and fled to the Iroquois.²³

Although Pemoussa's band of Foxes and their Mascouten allies were dealt a heavy blow at Detroit, other bands of these tribes suffered no losses and were incensed over the destruction of their kinsmen. The Potawatomis knew that the remaining Foxes would seek revenge against those tribesmen supporting the French and informed the French that the Foxes would recruit new allies among the tribes still in Wisconsin.²⁴ Both Ouilamek and Mikasabe journeyed to Montreal to warn the French

²³Ibid., pp. 283-284. Also see William A. Hunter, "Refugee Fox Settlements Among the Senecas," Ethnohistory, III (Winter, 1956), pp. 11-12. The exact site of the Fox-Mascouten ambush remains unknown although historians generally agree that the attack took place a few miles north of Detroit. See Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, fn. 2, p. 283 and Louise Phelps Kellogg, "The Fox Indians Under the French Regime," in Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its Fifty Fifth Meeting (Madison: Published by the Society, 1908), fn. 83, p. 162. Hereafter this selection will be cited as Kellogg, "The Fox Indians".

²⁴Vaudreuil to French Ministers, October 15, 1712, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 570.

that the Fox War was not over and on their return the Potawatomis moved their villages from the St. Joseph Valley.²⁵

The Potawatomi withdrawal from the St. Joseph area was inspired by their fear of Fox vengeance. They did not reoccupy the valley until 1719. During this seven year period a new Potawatomi settlement was formed at Detroit. By 1714 the Potawatomis had established a village near the Hurons on the north bank of the Detroit River in the vicinity of the French fort.²⁶ This influx of Potawatomis into the Detroit area soon made them the most populous tribe in the region. In 1718 their village near Detroit could muster one hundred and eighty warriors while the Ottawas and Hurons could raise one hundred men apiece.²⁷ As the Potawatomi population near Detroit increased, other Potawatomis continued to reside in the Green Bay region, maintaining their villages on the islands at the mouth of the bay.²⁸

Potawatomi fear of Fox vengeance was based upon reality. Upon hearing of the massacre at Detroit, the Foxes and their Mascouten and Kickapoo allies infested the trade routes of the west, killing

²⁵Marest to Vaudreuil, June 21, 1712, in ibid., p. 553-555; Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 117," pp. 48-49. Most of the St. Joseph Potawatomis probably moved to Detroit although some may have scattered among the Illinois villages in the Illinois Valley.

²⁶Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 116.

²⁷Memoir on the Indians of Canada as far as the River Mississippi, with remarks on their manners and trade, in New York Colonial Documents, IX, p. 888.

²⁸Milo Milton Quaife, ed., The Western Country in the 17th Century: The Memoirs of Antoine Lamothe Cadillac and Pierre Liette (New York: Citadel Press, 1962), p. 64. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Quaife, The Western Country: Cadillac Memoir.

French travelers and their allied tribesmen indiscriminately. By 1714 travel in the west was impossible and the fur trade was completely disrupted.²⁹

The French and their allies struck back. In 1714 the Treaty of Utrecht was signed allowing Vaudreuil to concentrate his efforts on the west. During the same year Vaudreuil authorized a campaign against the hostiles which failed when a plague swept through the ranks of the French expedition. In the following year the Potawatomis were more successful. During late November, 1715, the Potawatomis and other tribesmen attacked a hunting camp of Kickapoos and Mascoutens in southern Wisconsin. The Potawatomis and their allies stormed the camp killing over one hundred Kickapoo and Mascouten warriors and taking over fifty prisoners. Upon their retreat however, the Potawatomis were overtaken by a party of four hundred Foxes who attempted to free the prisoners. The Potawatomis and their allies repulsed the Foxes and fled toward Detroit.³⁰

During the summer of 1716 the Potawatomis also participated in Louis de la Porte de Louivigny's successful campaign against a Fox fortress near Little Butte des Morts Lake in Wisconsin. Louivigny and two hundred and fifty-five Frenchmen left Montreal on May 1, 1716. They picked up additional forces at Detroit and at Michilimackinac and

²⁹Milo Milton Quaife, Chicago and the Old Northwest, 1673-1835 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1913), pp. 58-59. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Quaife, Chicago and the Old Northwest. Also see Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 282.

³⁰Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 14, 1716 in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 341-342. The exact location of the Fox-Mascouten camp is unknown, but it was probably in southern Wisconsin since the Foxes were able to counterattack so quickly with such a large number of warriors.

arrived at Green Bay during the middle of the summer. Louivigny seemed assured of success. He had brought cannon from Montreal and as he approached the Fox fortress his army numbered over eight hundred men. The Foxes did not flee. They had fortified their village with a moat and a strong pallisade of pointed oak stakes and the five hundred warriors within the fortification were determined to sell their lives dearly. Louivigny attacked the fortress using the best methods of European warfare. While mortars and cannon bombarded the pallisade, trenches were dug which gradually approached the fortress walls. Yet the Foxes fought back with such determination that the French and their allies made little progress. After three days the Foxes asked for terms but Louivigny refused. On the next day however, he consented and the fighting came to an end.³¹

The Potawatomis and other tribesmen accompanying Louivigny were appalled at the leniency of his terms. The Foxes were required to cease hostilities, encourage the Kickapoos and Mascoutens to make peace, give up all prisoners and hunt to pay the cost of the expedition against their village. Although Louivigny and Vaudreuil congratulated themselves with assurances that the Foxes would remain at peace, the Potawatomis and their neighbors were skeptical that such a peace would be of long duration.³²

The temporary truce achieved through Louivigny's campaign allowed French officials to concentrate on other problems. By 1714

³¹Ibid., pp. 342-343; Kellogg, "The Fox Indians," p. 164.

³²Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 14, 1716, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 343; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 288.

the French were aware that their attempts to keep traders out of the west had ended in failure. Dozens of coureurs de bois were illegally trading with the Indians and this unlicensed traffic brought little income into the coffers of New France. Yet even these unlicensed traders could not supply the Indians' great demand for trade goods. Fearing that British traders might penetrate into the region, the French decided to officially re-open the west. Between 1714 and 1717 licences were again issued to traders and French military forces reoccupied strategic position in the Great Lakes region.³³

This change in French policy did not come too soon. After the French had concentrated the Potawatomis and other tribes at Detroit, these tribes had been visited by pro-British Indians who continually reminded them of the ample trade goods available from the British. The Miamis who had settled in the Maumee Valley were particularly susceptible to British trade and were on very friendly terms with the Iroquois.³⁴ The British used the Miamis as a medium through whom they contacted the tribes at Detroit. By 1717 they were achieving some success. These British efforts were aided by the actions of the French commander at Detroit. In 1714 Jacques Sabrevois had assumed command at the post and during the following three years he had alienated many of the Potawatomis. Sabrevois established a

³³Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 290-292.

³⁴Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, March 11, 1720 in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 382; Burt Anson, The Miami Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 34. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Anson, The Miami Indians.

monopoly over the trade at Detroit and the Potawatomis felt his merchandise was too expensive. The Potawatomis also believed that Sabrevois treated them harshly and they resented his parsimony with gifts of tobacco and brandy.³⁵

During the spring of 1717 the British sent messages to the Potawatomis and Ottawas inviting them to come to Albany where the British promised they would give the Indians better prices for their furs.³⁶ Part of the Potawatomis responded favorably. In May, 1717, seventeen canoes manned by Ottawas and Potawatomis left the Detroit region for New York.

As the trading caravan glided over the waters of Lake Ontario they encountered a French party led by Alphonse de Tonty who was journeying to Detroit to assume command of the French post at that location. Tonty was astonished to find these Indians enroute to Albany. He warned them that they were acting against the wishes of their French father and reminded them that the British had supported the Iroquois in their invasions of the west. The new commander distributed goods among the tribesmen and promised them that the price of goods would be lowered at Detroit. Evidently convinced of Tonty's sincerity, part of the Potawatomis and Ottawas followed him back to Detroit. Others, accompanied by members of Tonty's party,

³⁵Speech of the Ottawas and Potawatomis at Montreal, June 24, 1717, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 584.

³⁶Sabrevois to Vaudreuil, April 8, 1717, in ibid., p. 583.

decided to journey to Montreal to lay their grievances before the governor.³⁷

Before reaching Montreal one canoe of these Indians deserted the party for Albany, but the others continued on to meet with Vaudreuil. The Potawatomis and Ottawas assembled before the governor and informed him of their displeasure with Sabrevois. Otchik, a minor chief from the Detroit area spoke for the Potawatomis and assured the governor that the journey to Montreal had only been attempted after repeated insults from Sabrevois. He pleaded with Vaudreuil to lower the price of trade goods at Detroit and asked that more brandy be sent to the post. Vaudreuil was conciliatory in his reply. He assured the Potawatomis that the price of merchandise at Detroit would be lowered and provided them with brandy to take back to their lodges. The governor accepted Otchik's explanation of the Albany journey but admonished the Potawatomis to bring all future complaints to Montreal rather than seeking solace from the British. The Indians then returned to Detroit.³⁸

Although the French attempted to lower the price of goods at Detroit, Indians from the area still slipped away to Albany. The French believed that Miamis were the promoters of such trade and

³⁷Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 12, 1717 in ibid., pp. 590-591. Alphonse de Tonty was a younger brother of Henry de Tonty who had served as a lieutenant to La Salle. The younger Tonty had formerly served with Cadillac at Detroit and at Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario.

³⁸Ibid., p. 591; "Talk of the Poutouatamis and the Reply of M. de Vaudreuil, June 24, 1717" in Michigan Historical Collections XXXIII, pp. 586-587.

attempted to move them from the Maumee to the St. Joseph valley. They were only partially successful. Although one band of Miamis moved to the St. Joseph, the majority of the tribe remained on the Maumee and the Wabash.³⁹

The Miami refusal to move to the St. Joseph was prompted by their knowledge that Potawatomis and Sacs were reoccupying the region.⁴⁰ Between 1715 and 1719 the French erected a new post, Fort St. Joseph, on the St. Joseph River at the site of modern Niles, Michigan. This post attracted Potawatomis who had formerly lived in the area and also drew Potawatomis from the Green Bay region. By 1719 they had established new villages along the lower St. Joseph Valley.⁴¹

As part of the Potawatomis established new villages in the St. Joseph Valley, other members of the tribe aided Tonty in keeping the peace at Detroit. In 1717 a party of Ottawas going to war against the Cherokees and Chickasaws killed an Iroquois warrior and his Miami wife on the Miami river in Ohio. The Miamis angrily threatened retaliation and Tonty feared that a new intertribal conflict would erupt. Such a conflict was averted when the Potawatomis convinced the Miamis to come to Detroit where Tonty "covered" their dead with presents.

³⁹Letter by Vaudreuil, October 22, 1720, in Frances Krauskopf, ed. and trans., Ouiatanon Documents (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1955), p. 169. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Krauskopf, Ouiatanon Documents.

⁴⁰Anson, The Miami Indians, p. 35.

⁴¹Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 292; Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 117," pp. 50-51. A few of the Potawatomis may have remained in the St. Joseph's valley. See Valentine B. Deale, "The History of the Potawatomis Before 1722," Ethnohistory, V (Fall, 1958), p. 337.

The Potawatomis also extended presents to the Miamis and supported Tonty in his pleas for peace. At the conclusion of the conference the Potawatomis, Miamis, Ottawas, Chippewas and Hurons agreed to the future surrender of any of their tribesmen who killed a member of the other tribes. They also agreed to act in unison if any of the tribes was attacked by strangers.⁴²

The Ottawa-Miami conflict was not the only problem that threatened the peace in the west. Although the Foxes had been subdued in 1716, their power was not broken. The Potawatomis aided the French in attempts to re-integrate the Foxes into the French alliance and in 1719 Ouilamek convinced a delegation of Fox chiefs that they should journey to Montreal to visit the French governor. The Fox delegation met with Vaudreuil and assured him of their fidelity, yet their promises were worthless, for while they were in Montreal their fellow tribesmen were raiding against the Illinois.⁴³

The Fox-Illinois conflict had flared intermittently after the Fox defeat at Detroit. The Foxes claimed that the Illinois Confederacy held Fox prisoners whom they refused to release and, aided by the Kickapoos and Mascoutens, the Foxes carried the war to the Illinois River Valley. This warfare was fanned by an intercolonial quarrel over control of the Illinois Country. In 1718 Illinois was taken from Canada and annexed to Louisiana, an act which was opposed by

⁴²Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," pp. 75-77.

⁴³Vaudreuil to the Duke of Orleans, October 12, 1717, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIII, p. 590; Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 28, 1719, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 380-381.

Vaudreuil. Although the French governor was responsible for keeping the Foxes at peace, Illinois was no longer within his jurisdiction and at first he did not act vigorously to restrain the Foxes from attacking the Illinois Confederacy.⁴⁴

Vaudreuil's policy proved a failure. The war soon spilled over into Canada. In 1720 the Foxes attacked a Potawatomi hunting party near Chicago, capturing two Potawatomis. One of the hunters was the son of Ouilamek. Although the Kickapoos and Mascoutens freed the two hunters, the Potawatomis were incensed over the attack. During the same year the Foxes also killed a Miami who was visiting in a Sauk camp near their village and murdered a French trader who was living among the Kickapoos. These actions so frightened the Mascoutens that they approached the commander of the French fort on the St. Joseph and informed him that they wished to leave the Foxes and settle near the Potawatomis.⁴⁵

Angered by the Fox hostilities, the Potawatomis asked Tonty for permission to retaliate. They assured the French commander that they would join with the Miamis and Illinois to crush the Foxes if the French would give them permission. Tonty refused, but the French commander at the post on the St. Joseph had difficulty in persuading Potawatomi warriors from raiding the Fox villages in Wisconsin.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 302-304.

⁴⁵Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 22, 1720, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 392-393; Proceedings of the council regarding the letter of Governor Vaudreuil, December 2, 1721, in ibid., pp. 395-397.

⁴⁶Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 22, 1720, in ibid., p. 393; Proceedings of the council regarding the letter of Governor Vaudreuil, December 2, 1721, in ibid., p. 397.

The Fox hostilities continued. In 1721 Pierre Francois Xavier de Charlevoix passed through the west stopping at Potawatomi villages at Washington Island and on the St. Joseph. Although the Potawatomis had mistakenly killed a French trader, they had made amends and Charlevoix described the tribe as the most faithful ally of France in the west.⁴⁷ He was less complimentary toward the Foxes. He stated that they had made travel on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers quite hazardous and were completely disrupting the fur trade in the west.⁴⁸

Potawatomi-Fox relations continued to deteriorate throughout the decade. In 1722 the Potawatomis and the Sacs again asked for permission to march against the Foxes and during the same year the Foxes met with the French and issued a veiled threat to the Potawatomis. The Fox chief Oushala informed the French that the Foxes considered the Potawatomis their "most cruel enemies" but had refrained from attacking them since the Potawatomis were under French protection. Oushala stated that his tribe was aware that the Potawatomis had been urging the French to attack the Foxes and that the Potawatomis "owed their lives to Onontio", for otherwise the Foxes would "devour them."⁴⁹

⁴⁷Vaudreuil to the Minister of Colonies, October 11, 1723, in ibid., p. 437; "From Charlevoix's Journal Historique," in ibid., p. 410. Also see Charlevoix to Madame le Duchesse de les Diguieres, August 16, 1721, quoted in Daniel McCoy, "Old Fort St. Joseph's," in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXV, p. 547.

⁴⁸"From Charlevoix's Journal Historique," in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 417.

⁴⁹Vaudreuil to the Minister of Colonies, October 11, 1723, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 433; "Speeches of the Foxes at a Council Held at the House of Monsieur De Montigny In the Presence of the Missionary, September 6, 1722," in ibid., p. 419.

French inactivity enabled the Foxes to draw segments of other tribes into the web of their intrigue. Bands of Sacs and Winnebagos joined with the Foxes to raid the Illinois and share in the rich plunder being carried north into Wisconsin. The Foxes also made peace with the Sioux. This alliance enabled the Foxes to retreat to the west if threatened by French retaliation and ended their fear of being caught between two powerful enemies. During the middle 1720's Fox raiding on the upper Illinois reached such proportions that the French were forced to communicate between the St. Joseph and Cahokia through the Wabash Valley.⁵⁰

The Potawatomis remained puzzled by French inactivity, but they followed French wishes and did not attack the Foxes. During the 1720's Jesuit missionaries on the St. Joseph claimed significant gains in converting the Potawatomis to Christianity and recorded a growing number of Potawatomi-French marriages. Potawatomi ties with the French were strengthened although their impatience with French policy continued to mount.⁵¹

By the end of the decade conditions in the west were intolerable. The Foxes continually refused French attempts to mediate a peace

⁵⁰Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 110; Kellogg, "The Fox Indians," pp. 166-170.

⁵¹Unknown to Claude de Ramezay, January 10, 1723, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVI, p. 422; George Pare' and Milo Milton Quaife, eds., "The St. Joseph Baptismal Register," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIII (September, 1926), pp. 201-213. Ramezay was acting governor of Canada, 1725-1727.

with the Illinois and in 1728 a French expedition designed to subdue the Foxes in Wisconsin failed when the Foxes were warned by a renegade Potawatomi from the Green Bay area.⁵² Yet other events occurred which weakened the Fox position and influenced the French to acquiesce in Potawatomi demands for action. The French regained the friendship of the Sioux and detached them from the Fox alliance. The French also were able to win the allegiance of other Fox allies. In 1728 a Jesuit priest, Michel Guignas was captured by the Kickapoos and Mascoutens on the Mississippi River. Guignas was held captive by these tribesmen for five months. During this period he was able to convince them to desert the Foxes and to rejoin the French alliance.⁵³

The crumbling of the Fox alliance, coupled with pressure from France prodded Canadian officials toward action. Vaudreuil had died in 1725 and the new governor, Charles de la Boische de Beauharnois was anxious to prosecute the war against the Foxes. Beauharnois' energy had inspired the abortive campaign of 1728 and its failure only whetted his desire for success. During the summer of 1729 Beauharnois assembled delegations of Potawatomis, Ottawas, Chippewas, Sacs, Hurons and Miamis at Montreal and exhorted them to destroy the Foxes. The Potawatomis needed little encouragement. They returned

⁵²Constant Marchand de Lignery to Beauharnois, August 30, 1728, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 31-39; Beauharnois and others to French Minister of War, September 1, 1728, in ibid., V, p. 94. Lignery led the campaign into Wisconsin in 1728.

⁵³Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVII, pp. 207-211; A. M. Gibson, The Kickapoos: Lords of the Middle Border (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 18-19.

to the west during the late summer of 1729 and a war of extermination was soon initiated.⁵⁴

The initial blow of the revitalized French offensive fell in the autumn of 1729. A large party of Chippewas, Ottawas and Winnebagos attacked a Fox village in Wisconsin killing thirty Fox warriors and seventy women and children. The Foxes realized that their alliance was disintegrating. Only one band of Sacs refused to desert them and join the swelling ranks of their enemies. Faced with the treat of destruction, the Foxes attempted to make peace with the French but their overtures were refused. Decades of Fox duplicity had reaped its harvest. The French and their allies no longer trusted Fox pleas for clemency and their protestations of friendship went unanswered.⁵⁵

Rebuffed in their attempts to regain French friendship and surrounded by a growing host of enemies, the majority of the Foxes decided to forsake their homelands and seek sanctuary among the Iroquois. First however, they struck at the Winnebagos, their former allies who had aided the Ottawas and Chippewas in the attack upon the Fox village. When the attack failed, these Foxes deserted their villages in Wisconsin and fled across the prairies of northern Illinois towards refuge among the Senecas.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Beauharnois to French Minister, July 21, 1729, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 62-65.

⁵⁵Beauharnois to the French Minister, October 12, 1729, in ibid., XVII, p. 81; Beauharnois to the French Minister, September 1, 1729, in ibid., pp. 67-70.

⁵⁶Pierre Paul Sieur de Marin to Beauharnois, May 11, 1730, in ibid., pp. 88-100. Marin was the commander at the French post on Green Bay.

The Fox flight did not go unnoticed. Encumbered by their women and children, the Foxes often were forced to stop and hunt to provide food for their families. During July, 1730 they crossed the upper Illinois river where they encountered their bitter enemies, the Illinois. The Illinois sent messengers to the French posts on the Mississippi River and also alerted a mixed party of Potawatomis, Kickapoos and Mascoutens who evidently were hunting nearby. The Illinois then attacked the Foxes, hoping to hold them until help arrived.⁵⁷

The Illinois were successful. The hunting party of Potawatomis, Kickapoos and Mascoutens was led by the Potawatomi chief Madouche who immediately rallied his men and led them toward the site of the Fox-Illinois battle. The Foxes did not anticipate the arrival of the Potawatomi party and Madouche was able to attack them by surprise, completely cutting off their escape route to the east. Entrapped by a growing number of enemies, the Foxes fought with desperation and forced the Illinois to retreat, but the Potawatomis, Kickapoos and Mascoutens maintained their position and the Foxes could not escape. Seeking every natural advantage that the terrain would afford, the Foxes took refuge in a small grove of trees on the prairie. Madouche's warriors surrounded the grove, digging holes in the ground to provide cover from the Fox fire.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Jean Baptiste St. Ours Deschaillons to Beauharnois, August 22, 1730 in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, pp. 67-68. Deschaillons was the commander at Detroit. After 1728 bands of Kickapoos and Mascoutens began to settle near the Sacs and Potawatomis on the St. Joseph.

⁵⁸Deschaillons to Beauharnois, August 22, 1730 in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, p. 68. Madouche was a chief of the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph.

The Potawatomis were soon buttressed by the arrival of large numbers of allies. Jean St. Ange, the French commander at Fort Chartres on the Mississippi arrived on August 17 accompanied by a force of five hundred French and Illinois. Two days later Nicolas Coulon, Sieur de Villiers accompanied by three hundred French, Potawatomis, Sacs, Kickapoos, Mascoutens and Miamis arrived from the St. Joseph. His arrival was followed closely by the appearance of the Weas and Piankashaws from the Wabash and on September 1, Nicolas Joseph des Noyelles, Sieur de Fleurimont, entered the camp followed by ten French soldiers and two hundred Miamis. The combined strength of the French force numbered almost 1400 men.⁵⁹

The Foxes realized they had little chance against such overwhelming odds and asked for leniency but the French refused. Many of the Indians accompanying the French took pity on the Foxes and asked De Villiers to spare their lives. The Sacs secretly gave food to the Foxes and smuggled Fox children away from the grove. The Weas and Piankashaws also pleaded the Fox case but De Villiers was determined to crush the Foxes and the siege continued. Although the French could not convince their allies to storm the Fox position they were able to deny the Foxes access to food and water and after three weeks the Foxes were forced to eat animal skins they had used for clothing.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Beauharnois to the French Minister, September 9, 1730, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 109-112; De Villiers to Beauharnois, September 23, 1730, in ibid., pp. 113-115. Although the first of these two letters is dated September 9, it obviously was finished at a later date.

⁶⁰De Villiers to Beauharnois, September 23, 1730, in ibid., pp. 116.

The siege lasted for twenty-three days. On the evening of September 8, a violent thunderstorm swept across the prairie providing cover for the Fox retreat. Enshrouded in darkness and rain, the Foxes crept through the French lines and fled to the east. Their flight was in vain. The crying of the hungry Fox children alerted the French and a straggler informed the allies of the direction of the Fox retreat.⁶¹

De Villiers took up the pursuit at daybreak. During the morning of September 9 the French and their allies caught sight of the wearied Foxes struggling eastward across the prairie. The Foxes had anticipated their pursuers and assembled their warriors in the rear of the fleeing women and children. They were no match for the French and their allies. Hopelessly outnumbered by the better fed and better supplied French Indians, the Foxes were overwhelmed. The French force killed between two and three hundred warriors besides countless women and children. Only about sixty Fox warriors escaped.⁶²

⁶¹ Beauharnois to the French Minister, September 9, 1730, in *ibid.*, p. 113; De Villiers to Beauharnois, September 23, 1730, in *ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶² *Ibid.* The exact location of this engagement has been the source of much speculation by historians and antiquarians. Kellogg, in *The French Regime in Wisconsin*, fn. 29, p. 326, places the encounter about one hundred and thirty five miles south-southeast of Starved Rock near the headquarters of the Kaskaskia. Other historians argue that the site of the battle was further north. Stanley Faye in "The Fox Fort - 1730," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXVIII (October, 1935), pp. 137-147, states that the battle took place near the Vermillion River of the Illinois, probably in Livingston County, Illinois. John H. Burham in "Mysterious Battle Grounds in McLean County, Illinois," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the Year 1908* (Springfield: Illinois State Journal Co., 1909), p. 190, claims that the encounter occurred near the headwaters of the Sangamon River in McLean County.

The massacre of the Foxes during September 1730 marks a turning point in Potawatomi-Fox relations. The St. Joseph Potawatomis had formed the vanguard of the French offensive, but the complete devastation of the Foxes seems to have given them second thoughts. During the fall of 1730 French observers in the west reported that these Potawatomis were supplying Fox refugees with corn and were reluctant to prosecute the war against them. A year later the Potawatomis of the St. Joseph refused to join an expedition of Hurons and pro-French Iroquois who attacked the remnants of the Foxes in Wisconsin.⁶³ During the autumn of 1732 the Potawatomis of Detroit, who had not participated in the slaughter of the Foxes on the prairie, joined with the Ottawas and Hurons in attacking a fortified Fox village in northern Illinois. Yet the attack was half-hearted for no siege was attempted and the raiders left after the Foxes promised to surrender sometime in the future.⁶⁴

After these raids many of the Foxes settled among the Sacs at Green Bay who refused to surrender these refugees to the French. French attempts to seize the refugees resulted in a battle following which the Sacs and Foxes fled to the Wapsipinicon River in Iowa.

⁶³Memorandum by De Noyan Concerning the Present Condition in Canada, 1730, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, pp. 74, 82. Pierre Jacques Payan de Noyan was a French military officer in the west who later participated in the Chickasaw campaigns and also served as commandant at Fort Frontenac. Boishebert to Beauharnois, February 2, 1732, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 148-152. Louis Henri Deschamps, Sieur de Boishebert assumed command at Detroit in 1730.

⁶⁴Beauharnois to the French Minister, May 1, 1733, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 172-173; Boishebert to Beauharnois, November 7, 1732 in ibid., pp. 173-174.

After this flight, which marks the beginning of the permanent union of the Sacs and Foxes, the Sacs asked the Potawatomis to speak in their behalf to the French.⁶⁵ Potawatomi appeals for leniency had little effect however, for during the summer of 1735 the French sent another expedition against the two tribes.

The Potawatomis took little part in this campaign. Although a few Potawatomis from Detroit accompanied the expedition as far as the Wea towns on the central Wabash, they refused to follow the French into Illinois. Informing Des Noyelles, the French commander, that they intended to strike a village of Sacs on the St. Joseph, the Potawatomis and some Hurons left the expedition and evidently returned home. The expedition proceeded on into Iowa where it met with little success. The French finally found the Sacs and Foxes in a fortified position on the banks of the swollen Des Moines River. The Kickapoos accompanying the French refused to fight and indeed seemed willing to join which ever side seemed strongest. After some futile skirmishing, the expedition returned to Illinois.⁶⁶

After the failure of Des Noyelles' campaign the Potawatomis increased their efforts to bring peace between the French and the Foxes. During the summer of 1736 the Potawatomis welcomed part of

⁶⁵Yearly Report of Beauharnois and Hocquart Relating to Affairs in the Upper Country, October 7, 1734, in ibid., pp. 206-207. Gilles Hocquart was Intendant of Canada from 1728 to 1748. Also see Kellogg, "The Fox Indians," p. 177.

⁶⁶De Noyelles to Beauharnois, no date, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 221-229; Hocquart to the Controller General, October 26, 1735, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, pp. 130-133. The Potawatomi-Huron attack on the Sacs at the St. Joseph evidently was never made. No reference to such an event can be found among the letters and reports of French observers in the vicinity.

the Sacs from Iowa into their villages on the St. Joseph and in the summer of the following year they journeyed to Montreal to plead the Sac and Fox cause. Accompanied by delegations of Ottawas, Winnebagos and Menominees, the Potawatomis asked Beauharnois to relinquish his war against the Foxes and to spare the lives of the hostiles. The governor wished to retain the good will of these allies. He also realized that the Foxes no longer threatened the west. He informed the Potawatomis that he would welcome a delegation of Foxes at Montreal. During the summer of 1737 a group of Fox chiefs visited the French governor and Beauharnois welcomed them back within the French alliance.⁶⁷

The conclusion of the Fox Wars brought a tenuous peace to the shores of Lake Michigan. The fur trade was restored and Potawatomi hunters no longer were threatened by Fox attacks. Yet the Potawatomis did not live in peace. French control of the west weakened as British traders began to penetrate the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. During the two decades prior to the French and Indian War the Potawatomis would once again serve Onontio in a futile attempt to stop the westward expansion of British influence.

⁶⁷Beauharnois to the French Minister, October 17, 1736, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 259; Beauharnois to the French Minister, October 16, 1737, in ibid., pp. 275-276. Also see Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 338-339.

CHAPTER III

ONONTIO'S FAITHFUL

The French and Indian victory over the Foxes on the prairies of northern Illinois during September, 1730 assured the Potawatomis and their French allies of control over the trade routes between the western Great Lakes and the Mississippi. Once again Potawatomi and French messengers could travel from the St. Joseph valley to French posts at Kaskaskia and Cahokia without fear of Fox attacks. Communications between upper Louisiana and Canada were uninterrupted and the French position in the Illinois Country seemed secure.

French control of the lower Mississippi valley was much more tenuous. During the 1720's the Chickasaws had risen against Louisiana, attacking French allied Indians and disrupting French commerce between New Orleans and Illinois. Supplied by British traders and aided by the Natchez, the Chickasaws attempted to build a pro-British alliance among neighboring tribes. Chickasaw emissaries to the Choctaws were successful in winning certain bands of Choctaws away from the French. They were much less successful in their attempts to spread their alliance to the tribes of Illinois. The Illinois Confederacy and Miami bands on the lower Wabash rejected Chickasaw offers and reported their activities to French officials. During 1729 a French expedition

crushed the Matchez but the Chickasaws remained unscathed and by the early 1730's they were attacking French convoys on the lower Wabash and Ohio.¹

In 1732 Chickasaw raiders killed six French traders and two Indians on the lower Wabash and during the early months of 1733 they terrorized French commerce on the lower Ohio, attacking a detachment of one hundred and fifty French soldiers enroute from New Orleans to Ouiatanon and ambushing a pirogue of seven Frenchmen carrying corn from Illinois to the Wabash. Although Potawatomi villages were not immediately threatened by these Chickasaw incursions, the Potawatomis rallied to the French defense and joined other French allied Indians in retaliatory measures.²

By 1732, Francois Margue de la Valtries, Sieur de Vincennes, the French commandant among the Miamis was urging the Wabash tribes to strike the Chickasaw villages and during the following year the Potawatomis joined in these raids. Encouraged by officials at Detroit, Potawatomis from that region crossed the Ohio and raided

¹Arrell M. Gibson, The Chickasaws (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), pp. 40-48. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Gibson, The Chickasaws.

²Vincennes to the French Minister, no date, quoted in Jacob Piatt Dunn, The Mission to the Wabash (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Co., 1902), p. 307; Beauharnois to the French Minister, May 30, 1733, in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.-; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XVII, p. 181. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections.

into the Chickasaw homeland during the spring of 1733.³ Yet these retaliatory strikes had little impact, for the Chickasaws continued to raid French commerce and in 1734 they threatened to cut communications between New Orleans and Illinois.⁴

The French struck back. While continuing to urge their Indian allies to harass the Chickasaws, the French planned a major expedition to invade the Chickasaw homelands and destroy the towns of their enemy. The campaign was disastrous. The Chickasaws defeated two French armies and captured a group of French officers from Illinois and the Wabash. These officers, including Sieur de Vincennes were later tortured and burned to death. Although no Potawatomis took part in these French defeats, they continued to raid into Kentucky and Tennessee, attacking outlying Chickasaw camps and ambushing Chickasaw hunting parties.⁵

³Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville and Edme Gatien Salmon to Jean Frederic Phelypeaux, Comte de Maurepas, April 8, 1734, in Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, French Dominion, 1729-1740 (3 vols.; Jackson: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927-1932), III, pp. 656-667. Bienville was governor of Louisiana. Salmon was Intendant of Louisiana. Maurepas was Minister of Marine. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Mississippi Provincial Archives. Also see Beauharnois to the French Minister, May 30, 1733, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 181-182 and Beauharnois to the French Minister, July 24, 1733, in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Lansing: Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), XXXIV, p. 108. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Michigan Historical Collections.

⁴Gibson, The Chickasaws, pp. 49-50.

⁵Account of the Battle fought by D'Artaguet with the Chickasaws, March 25, 1736, in Caroline and Eleanor Dunn, trans. and eds., Indiana's First War: An Account Made by Bienville of His

Between 1736 and 1740 Potawatomis from both Detroit and the St. Joseph took part in these incursions. In the spring of 1736 a party of Potawatomis and Sacs from the St. Joseph raided across the Ohio and brought three captured Chickasaws to the Piankashaw villages on the lower Wabash and later in the same year Potawatomis from Detroit returned from the South with a Chickasaw scalp. This type of raiding continued for the following three years but evidently had little effect. The Chickasaws remained intransigent and continued to threaten French travelers on the Mississippi.⁶

In 1739 the French assembled another expedition to crush the Chickasaws. The Potawatomis were participants. During the autumn of 1739 Potawatomi warriors were part of a large force of French and Indians who assembled at Fort Assumption at the Chickasaw Bluffs near modern Memphis, Tennessee. The French expedition was comprised of forces from both Louisiana and Canada. Governor Bienville of Louisiana hoped that a major French victory would restore French prestige and finally divorce the Chickasaws from their ties with British traders. Bienville planned well. Large stores of supplies were accumulated at

Expedition Against the Chickasaws (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1924), p. 109. D'Artaguet was the leader of French forces from Illinois in the campaign of 1736. Also see Gibson, The Chickasaws, pp. 50-54.

⁶Copy of a list of Indian Parties at the Piankashaw Post, April 24-September 6, 1736. This list was originally in the Paris Archives, but copies were translated and placed in the Library of Congress and in the Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. This copy is in the Potawatomi File at the Great Lakes Project. Hereafter all such materials will be cited as Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Frances Krauskopf, "The French in Indiana, 1700-1760" (unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1953), pp. 193-199. Hereafter this dissertation will be cited as Krauskopf, "French in Indiana."

Fort Assumption including cannon, mortars and mines to be used against the fortified Chickasaw towns. By October, 1739 almost thirty-six hundred men were camped near Fort Assumption awaiting Bienville's orders to march against the Chickasaws.⁷

Such orders were never delivered. Before Bienville could organize his forces and send them eastward, western Tennessee was drenched by a series of autumn storms which flooded the area and made overland travel impossible. Bienville who realized he could not transport his heavy ordinance in such conditions, kept his army encamped near the Mississippi hoping weather conditions would improve. They did not. The rains continued and the prolonged inactivity of camp life fostered a growing restlessness among the Potawatomis and other Indians. Finally a force of six hundred French and Indians commanded by Pierre Joseph Celeron was ordered into the Chickasaw country to demonstrate French strength and to urge the Chickasaws to negotiate a peace with France.⁸

Celeron's campaign met with limited success. Although he failed to capture any Chickasaw towns, Celeron did succeed in delivering Bienville's invitation to a council. Potawatomi warriors accompanied Celeron and he entrusted them with the task of notifying the Chickasaws of Bienville's desire for negotiations. The Potawatomis had no illusions that they would be received cordially by the Chickasaws and did not attempt to deliver the message orally. Under cover of

⁷Gibson, The Chickasaws, pp. 54-55.

⁸Ibid., pp.

darkness Potawatomi warriors crept beneath the walls of a fortified Chickasaw village and attached a letter with Bienville's invitation to the log gates of the Chickasaw stronghold. Although the Chickasaws accepted Bienville's invitation and met with the French at Fort Assumption, the conference produced few results. Chickasaw promises to cease hostilities were not carried out and the failure of Bienville to penetrate their homeland only confirmed Chickasaw opinions that they could attack the French with impunity. Chickasaw ties with the British continued as did their warfare with French-allied tribes of the Old Northwest.⁹

The Potawatomis continued to take an active part in this intertribal warfare. During the 1740's Potawatomi war parties from the St. Joseph and Detroit periodically crossed the Ohio River to raid the Chickasaw homeland. In 1741 five separate Potawatomi war parties invaded Kentucky and Tennessee¹⁰ and during the following two years at least five more parties traveled down the Wabash to attack their enemies.¹¹ The French encouraged such incursions and

⁹Salmon to Maurepas, May 4, 1740, in Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, I, p. 441; Gibson, The Chickasaws, pp. 55-56.

¹⁰Memoir on the Indians and Their Relations, unsigned, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 337; Beauharnois to the French Minister, September 26, 1741, in ibid., p. 366. Also see Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," pp. 212-213.

¹¹Beauharnois to the French Minister, October 12, 1742, in Frances Krauskopf, trans. and ed., Ouiatanon Documents (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1955), pp. 191-192. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Krauskopf, Ouiatanon Documents. Also see Krauskopf, "French in Indiana." pp. 220, 227.

provided the Potawatomis and other Indians with supplies for these ventures. In 1745-46 French posts on the Wabash furnished several parties of Potawatomis with powder, lead, tobacco and flour, and French blacksmiths repaired Potawatomi guns and tomahawks which were to be used against the Chickasaws.¹²

During the 1750's, Potawatomi raids against the Chickasaws continued but their frequency declined. French officials in the Old Northwest were forced to use the Potawatomis to repulse a threat much greater than the Chickasaws. In the 1740's British traders penetrated the Ohio Valley and enlarged their trade with the tribes of Ohio and Indiana. Although the Miamis and other French tribes had previously conducted a clandestine trade with the British at Albany or Oswego, the new British penetration enabled British traders to journey to French Indian villages and to operate openly in an area supposedly controlled by New France.¹³

French officials realized that they could not compete economically with the British traders. After 1741 French trading

¹²Inventory of supplies furnished by me Michel Gamelin at Poste des Ouyatonons for the accounts and service of the King, following the orders of Monsieur de Laperiere, Commandant for the King at that place. From September 5, 1743 to the first of July of the current year (1746), from Paris Archives Nationales, in Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 235.

¹³Mactigue Macarty to Antoine Louis Rouille, May 20, 1753 in Theodore Calvin Pease and Ernestine Jenison, eds., Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years War, 1747-1755, Vol. XXIX of The Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (34 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1903-), p. 187. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX. Macarty was the French officer in command of Illinois from 1752 to 1760. Rouille was Minister of Marine between 1749 and 1754. Francis Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe (3 vols.; Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1899), I, pp. 45-46.

posts in the west were leased to the highest bidder and French traders were forced to sell their goods at a high price to recover the cost of the lease. This practice enabled the British to consistently undersell their French competitors, for French prices were often double those charged by British traders. The French economic position also suffered during King George's War when the British navy blockaded New France and kept French trade goods from entering the colony. To meet this economic threat, the French relied upon their military power in the west. The French threatened those tribes trading with the British with punishment and urged more loyal Indians to convince the erring tribesmen to return to the French trade system.¹⁴

The Potawatomis remained loyal to Onontio and served the French as emissaries to those tribes harboring British traders. By the middle 1730's almost all the Potawatomis were concentrated at Detroit or on the St. Joseph where they proudly referred to themselves as the "eldest sons" of the French. In 1736 fewer than thirty Potawatomis continued to reside at Washington Island while the village at Detroit numbered one hundred and eighty warriors. The Potawatomis along the St. Joseph counted one hundred men plus ten Miamis who lived in a Potawatomi village. Census accounts taken by French officials reveal that the Potawatomi population had not increased significantly since 1718.

¹⁴Krauskopf, Ojibwa Documents, p. 148; W. J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 150-154. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Eccles, The Canadian Frontier. Also see Louise Phelbs Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1925), pp. 373-376. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin.

Potawatomi losses in the Fox and Chickasaw campaign may partly account for the stability in population, but a smallpox epidemic in 1733 also contributed to a lack of growth in Potawatomi numbers.¹⁵

British penetration of the Ohio Valley was facilitated by an intertribal quarrel near Detroit in 1738. In a multi-tribal council at Detroit in the Spring of 1738, the Hurons announced that they had made peace with the Chickasaws and Cherokees and warned the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas against raiding the southern tribes. The Three Fires were taken aback by the Huron announcement and resented what they considered to be a Huron ultimatum. The Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas refused to make peace with the southern Indians and accused the Hurons of planning treachery and then seeking refuge in the south. At the conclusion of the council, a mixed war party of Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas left Detroit to raid the Chickasaws and Cherokees.¹⁶

Enroute to the South, the war party was passed by two groups of Hurons who evidently warned the southern Indians of the war party's approach. The Potawatomi war party was ambushed and only three of seventeen warriors escaped death or capture. One of these three, an Ottawa, claimed that he recognized and killed a Huron who helped the southern tribes in the ambush. When the three survivors returned to

¹⁵Enumeration of the Indian Tribes Connected with the Government of Canada; the Warriors and Armorial Bearings of Each Nation, 1736, in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887), IX, p. 1058. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as New York Colonial Documents. Also see Beauharnois to the French Minister May 1, 1733, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 172-173 and Beauharnois to the French Minister, May 30, 1733, in ibid., p. 181.

¹⁶Beauharnois to the French Minister, October 6, 1736, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, pp. 151-153.

Detroit, the Ottawas accused the Hurons of planning an attack upon the French and their allies and threatened them with war. The French attempted to mediate the dispute, but the Hurons feared an Ottawa-Potawatomi attack and fortified themselves within their village, even refusing to harvest their corn.¹⁷

During the winter of 1738-39 the Hurons fled into the interior of Ohio and asked the French for permission to permanently leave the Detroit area and to resettle near Montreal. Beauharnois did not immediately grant their request. French Indians near Montreal resented the Detroit Hurons' peace with the Chickasaws and at first opposed their settlement on the St. Lawrence. Meanwhile the British and Iroquois learned of the dissension at Detroit and offered the Hurons sanctuary among the Senecas. During the summer of 1740 part of the Hurons led by Oronty or Chief Nicolas established villages at Sandusky on the southern shore of Lake Erie. Fearing that these new villages would be targets for British trade, the French belatedly granted the Huron request to settle on the St. Lawrence, but by 1741 the Hurons were not interested. Although part of the Hurons eventually returned to Detroit, others remained at Sandusky where Nicolas solicited British traders in growing numbers.¹⁸

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 152-154.

¹⁸Memorandum on what has taken place in the affair between the Hurons of Detroit and the Outawacs, Poutawatamis, Sauteux and Missisagues of that Post, from the 12th of August, 1738 up to the 12th of June, 1741, in ibid., pp. 195-202; Memorandum to serve as instructions for the Chevr. de Beauharnois, to go and bring the Hurons from Detroit to come down here, June 14, 1741, in ibid., pp. 205-206. Charles de la Boische, Chevr. de Beauharnois was the nephew of the Canadian governor. Also see Charles Augustus Hanna, The Wilderness Trail (2 vols.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911), II, p. 165. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Hanna, Wilderness Trail.

At first the Potawatomis and Ottawas did little to convince the Hurons to leave Sandusky. Potawatomi and Ottawa warriors occasionally harassed Huron villagers near Detroit and cut down their cornfields, actions which the French opposed but could not stop. By 1743 however, intertribal relations improved and many of the Hurons returned to Detroit where they established a village opposite Bois Blanc in Ontario. These Hurons were received peacefully by the Potawatomis and Ottawas but the Potawatomis still suspected them of pro-British sentiments. Yet, the years between 1743 and 1747 were years of peace for the Detroit Potawatomis. Although they sent occasional parties against the Chickasaws, the Potawatomis spent their summers growing corn near Detroit and their winters hunting north of the headwaters of the Maumee.¹⁹

For the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph the early 1740's were also a time of peace. They had not been involved in the controversy with the Hurons for by 1740 the two bands of Potawatomis were politically autonomous except for matters of the gravest importance. In 1740 a chief of the St. Joseph band, the Raven, was killed by a French

¹⁹Memorandum on what has taken place in the affair between the Hurons of Detroit and the Outawacs, Poutawatamis, Sauteux and Missisagues of that Post, from the 12th of August, 1738 up to the 12th of June, 1741, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, p. 202; Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 226. Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Area 66 ceded by the "Ottoway, Chippeway, Wyandotte, and Pottawatamie nations of Indians" to the United States pursuant to the Treaty made at Detroit on November 17, 1807," pp. 203, 207. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66."

trader, but De Villiers at Fort St. Joseph did his best to "cover" the death. De Villiers spent between two and three hundred livres for gifts to the dead man's relatives and in 1742 persuaded the Potawatomis to go to Montreal where Beauharnois also expressed his sorrow over the event. While at Montreal the Potawatomi delegation expressed regret over rumors that the St. Joseph band had recently killed Frenchmen in Illinois. The governor assured them that he knew such rumors to be false since the Potawatomis were too loyal to be suspected of such evil deeds. Beauharnois also granted their wish for a blacksmith and lavished presents upon them. The Potawatomi delegation consisted of four men, Pilemou, Tchichaakane, Mekissilini, and Oquiyaouy. The governor gave medals to Pilemou and Tchichaakane and a gorget to Oquiyaouy. He also sent medals to Ouilamek, Memidokay, and Ousado, Potawatomi chiefs who remained at the St. Joseph. Before the Potawatomis left however, Beauharnois warned them against any trade with the British.²⁰

Beauharnois' warning reflected the governor's growing concern over the decline of French trade in the west. By 1745 the faults of the lease system were evident. The Indians were dissatisfied over the high prices of French goods and were turning to British traders. The British naval blockade during King George's War created such a

²⁰Norman Ward Caldwell, The French in the Mississippi Valley, 1740-1750 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1941), p. 76. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Caldwell, French in the Mississippi Valley. Also see Speech by the St. Joseph Potawatomis to Beauharnois, July 16, 1742, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 393-394, and Reply of Beauharnois to the St. Joseph Potawatomis, July 22, 1742 in ibid., pp. 394-396.

shortage of merchandise in Canada that during 1745 Beauharnois had difficulty in finding traders to bid on the leases. Although the Potawatomis did not accept British traders into their villages, there is evidence to suggest that some tribesmen carried their furs to Oswego. The French attempted to limit such trade by gifts to influential Potawatomi chiefs and the number of individual Potawatomis trading with the British remained small.²¹

Although a few Potawatomis may have traded with the British, other members of the tribe served with the French during King George's War. In the summer of 1746 a delegation of Potawatomis offered their services to the French in Montreal. During March, 1747 they attended a multitribal council in the same city after which they left to attack British settlements near Albany and along the Connecticut River.²² In July, 1747, Potawatomis from the St. Joseph accompanied French officers from Michilimackinac to Montreal to join raiding parties against the New England frontier, and during August sixty-four more Potawatomi warriors from the St. Joseph and Detroit arrived to fight with the French. Operating out of Fort St. Frederick (Crown Point) near Lake Champlain, the Potawatomis split their forces and raided

²¹ Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 374-376; Reply of Beauharnois to the St. Joseph Potawatomis, July 22, 1742, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 395-396. Also see Krauskopf, "French in Indiana," p. 232.

²² Extracts from the Potier Gazette in Ernest J. Lajeunesse, ed. The Windson Border Region (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 38. Pierre Potier was a missionary to the pro-French Hurons living near Detroit. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Lajeunesse, Windson Border Region. Also see Journal of Occurences in Canada; 1746, 1747, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 91.

toward Albany, taking three prisoners and one scalp. Another war party scoured the countryside near Saratoga, where they took two scalps and collected information about British troop movements in the area.²³

Yet while these Potawatomis were carrying the war to the British, the Hurons at Sandusky brought the conflict into the Potawatomi homeland. By 1747 the Hurons on Sandusky Bay led by Chief Nicolas were under the influence of British traders, especially George Croghan. Croghan established a number of storehouses on Lake Erie and carried on a profitable trade with the Hurons and other Indians who visited the region. During 1746 and the winter of 1747 Nicolas attempted to forge the tribes of the Old Northwest into an anti-French conspiracy. Some of the Hurons at Detroit were involved and according to Nicolas' plan they were to enter the French fort at Detroit and spend the night among the French. During the early morning hours the Hurons were to massacre the sleeping French and then burn the fortress.²⁴

The plot failed. Prior to the proposed attack other Hurons killed a Frenchman near Detroit and the conspirators were afraid that the French would suspect treachery. The conspiracy was then

²³Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 457; Abstract of the different movements at Montreal, on occasion of the war, from the month of December, 1745 to the month of August, 1746, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 34. Also see Journal of Occurrences in Canada; 1746, 1747, in ibid., p. 122.

²⁴William Trent, Journal of Captain William Trent, ed. by Alfred T. Goodman (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke Co., 1871), p. 17. Trent was a British trader. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Trent, Trent's Journal. Also see Albert T. Volwiler, George Croghan and the

disclosed by a Huron woman who warned a priest and the French commandant, Paul Joseph le Moyne, Baron de Longueuil rallied his soldiers. French citizens at Detroit were brought into the fort, warnings were sent to other French posts, and messengers were dispatched to Montreal asking for reinforcements.²⁵

The extent of the Huron conspiracy remains unclear. After the plot was disclosed, the chiefs of the Hurons at Detroit pleaded that they knew nothing about it and blamed the proposed attack upon Nicolas. The Chippewas and those bands of Ottawas living at Michilimackinac and Saginaw were undoubtedly involved. During July and August Nicolas attempted to carry out the attacks and these Ottawas and Chippewas destroyed French property near Michilimackinac and Detroit. They also killed several French settlers and severed French communications with the Lake Superior region.²⁶ Part of the Miamis also joined with Nicolas.

Westward Movement, 1741-1782 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1926), pp. 35-36. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Volwiler, George Croghan. Volwiler suggests that Croghan probably instigated the conspiracy.

²⁵Trent, Trent's Journal, p. 18; Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 458.

²⁶Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 458-469, 484-486; Count de Raymond to the French Minister, November 2, 1747 in ibid., p. 475. Raymond was commandant at the French fort at Niagara.

During August 1747 they attacked Fort Miamis, the French post on the headwaters of the Maumee, seizing French property and setting buildings afire.²⁷

The Potawatomis remained loyal to the French. Although frightened French officials at first suspected them of complicity in the rebellion, later French appraisals exonerated them from any guilt. During the outbreak of hostilities in July, Longueuil questioned Potawatomi loyalty when they refused to attack an encampment of hostile Hurons on Bois Blanc island. Writing to Beauharnois, Longueuil stated that he believed the Potawatomis at Detroit were undecided and were waiting to see which side was strongest before committing themselves in the struggle. He also accused them of remaining loyal only to obtain French supplies and disregarded their protestations of friendship as unreliable.²⁸

Such accusations were false. Although the Potawatomis at Detroit at first refused to take up arms against the hostiles, they did attempt to mediate between the two sides. The Potawatomis seemed unsure of the extent of the conspiracy and realized that any attack upon the hostile bands of Ottawas, Chippewas, or Hurons might reap a

²⁷ Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in ibid., pp. 484-485; Burt Anson, The Miami Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 43. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Anson, The Miamis.

²⁸ Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 468, 486.

counter-attack by overwhelming forces. Since Longueuil at Detroit distrusted them and seemed hard pressed to maintain the French fort, they knew they could not rely upon French assistance. Therefore, the Potawatomis continued to assure Longueuil of their fidelity and dispatched messengers to Quebec to plead for greater French assistance.²⁹

Although the Potawatomis at Detroit were distrusted by Longueuil, their fellow tribesmen on the St. Joseph remained above suspicion. They consistently refused to enter into the conspiracy and warned the French commander at the St. Joseph that pro-British messengers were active in the region.³⁰ Many of the Potawatomis raiding with the French in New England were from the St. Joseph and when they learned of the outbreak of hostilities in the west, they asked permission to return to their homes so that they could assist the French in restoring order. These Potawatomis assured French officials that they considered the hostilities as personal affronts and asked for French officers to lead them against the insurgents.³¹ French officials in Illinois considered the St. Joseph Potawatomis so loyal that they attempted to lure them from the St. Joseph to the Illinois River Valley. They

²⁹Journal of whatever occurred at Quebec...since the sailing of the ships in November, 1747, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 151; Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 490-491.

³⁰Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 490-491.

³¹Journal of Occurrences in Canada, 1746, 1747, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 122; Report of Boishebert on Indian Affairs, November, 1747, in ibid., p. 84. Boishebert was in charge of all Indian affairs in New France at this time.

were unsuccessful. Both Pierre Paul Marin, the French commander at Fort St. Joseph and Jacques le Gardeur, Sieur de St. Pierre, commanding at Michilimackinac labored to keep the Potawatomis in the St. Joseph Valley. St. Pierre believed that these Potawatomis "were the only nation to be relied upon" and trusted them to check the spread of the conspiracy to the west.³²

In September, 1747, reinforcements from Montreal reached Detroit. These forces strengthened Longueuil's position, but the Potawatomis and Ottawas sought additional assistance and during December, 1747, a delegation from the two tribes arrived in Quebec to plead for more troops. The Potawatomi delegation carried a message from Ononguisset, a chief of the Potawatomis at Detroit who asked that one hundred more French and Canadian Indians be sent to the post to aid the Potawatomis and loyal Ottawas in suppressing the Hurons. Michel Rolland Barin, Comte de la Galissonniere, succeeded Beauharnois as governor in 1747 and had arrived in Quebec in September. He answered the Potawatomi and Ottawa requests with promises that additional reinforcements would be sent in the spring and assured them that their loyalty to the French would be rewarded.³³

During the winter of 1747-48, the Huron conspiracy collapsed. The hostile Ottawas and Chippewas sued for peace and surrendered those

³²Extract from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 479.

³³Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 210; Extracts from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 490-492.

tribesmen whom they claimed were responsible for their treachery.

Nicolas and many of the Sandusky Hurons fled to the Cuyahoga and Muskingum valleys in eastern Ohio.³⁴ The hostile Miamis sought sanctuary in a new village, Pickawillany, near the juncture of the Miami River and Loramie's Creek. French officials in Illinois reported that unrest in that quarter had subsided and by the summer of 1748, the revolt was over.³⁵ In October, La Galissonniere wrote to France and summarized his investigations of the conspiracy. He exonerated the Potawatomis from all blame. The governor reported that the St. Joseph band was involved in the events only through their "offers of service and protestations of loyalty" to the French. The Detroit Potawatomis also were found guiltless. La Galissonniere stated that they consistently refused to join the conspiracy and had remained loyal to New France.³⁶

By 1748 it was apparent that the lease system had failed. The Huron conspiracy had been thwarted, but discontent over trading conditions in the west continued. Merchandise was still scarce and French prices remained high. The St. Joseph Potawatomis asked that no more lessees be sent to the trading post on their river and other tribes also complained of the system. Such protests inspired La Galissonniere to reject the lease system and to return to the earlier practice of selling

³⁴La Galissonniere to the French Minister, October 23, 1748, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, pp. 509-512; Hanna, The Wilderness Trail, II, pp. 166-167.

³⁵Vaudreuil to Maurepas, March 20, 1748, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 54. Pierre Francois Rigault, Marquis de Vaudreuil was the son of the former Governor of New France. In 1748 he was serving as Governor of Louisiana. Also see Anson, The Miamis, p. 43.

³⁶La Galissonniere to Maurepas, October 23, 1748, in New York Colonial Documents, X, pp. 181-182.

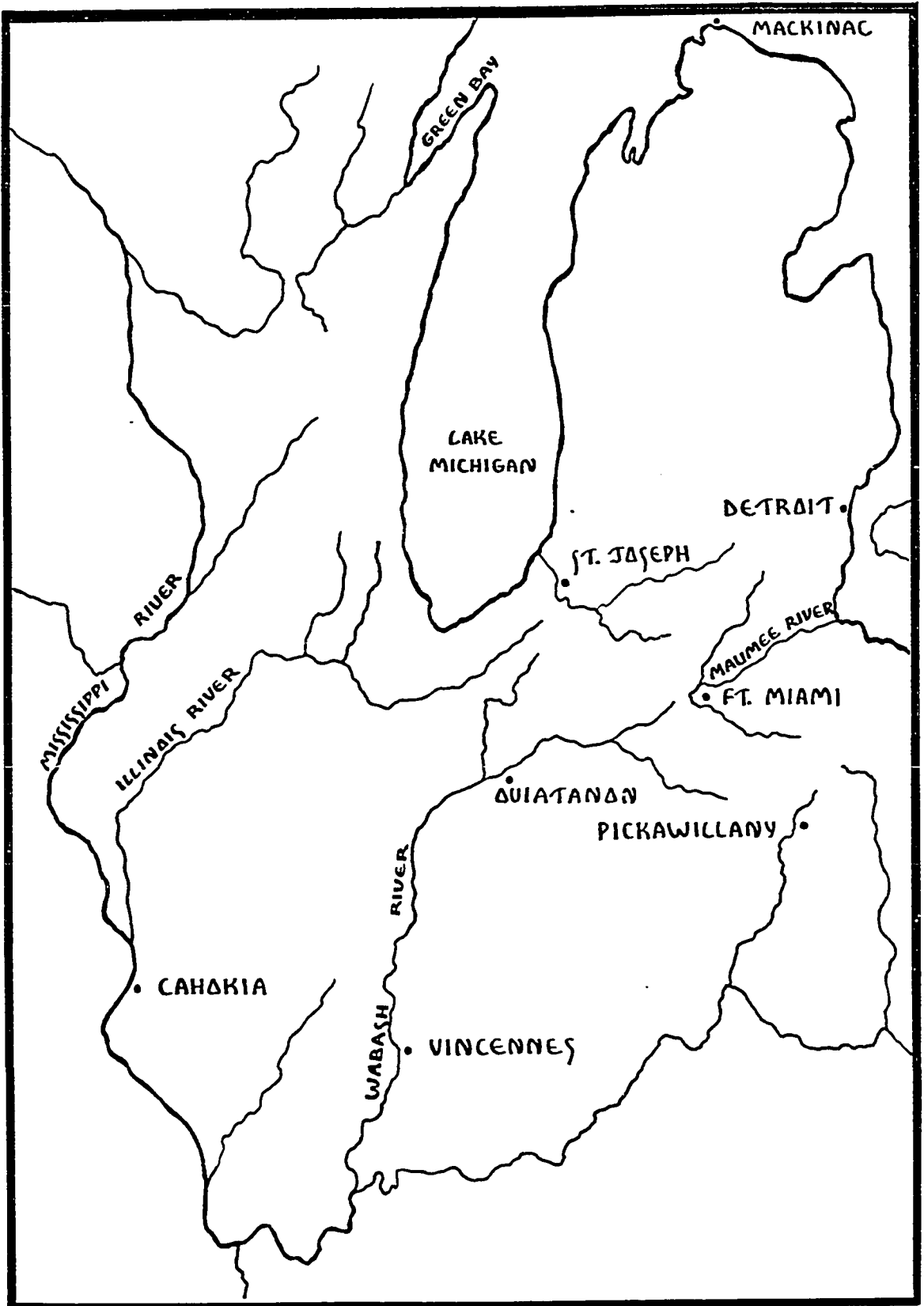
licenses to all traders going west. Yet this change did not solve the French dilemma. British goods were still less expensive and British traders continued to gain influence among the tribes.³⁷

After the failure of the Huron conspiracy, the Miami village at Pickawillany became the center for British penetration of the Ohio Valley. Led by the Piankashaw chief La Demoiselle or "Old Briton", the Miamis at Pickawillany contacted the Iroquois and requested a formal alliance with Great Britain. The Iroquois relayed this message to colonial officials in Pennsylvania and during July, 1748, Miamis from the village signed a formal treaty with the British.³⁸ Governor James Hamilton of Pennsylvania was delighted with the treaty and optimistically predicted that it would not only extend British trade, but would also weaken French control of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Hamilton's predictions came true. British traders flocked to the Miami village and British influence expanded westward through the Wabash Valley.³⁹

³⁷Wilbur R. Jacobs, "Presents to Indians Along the French Frontiers in the Old Northwest, 1748-1763," Indiana Magazine of History, XLIV (September, 1948), p. 252; La Galissonnere to the French Minister, October 23, 1748, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 504. Also see Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 379.

³⁸Minutes of the Provincial Council, June 23, 1748, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records (17 vols.; Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Co., 1838-1853), V, pp. 289-290. Report of a Treaty at the Court House in Lancaster, in ibid., pp. 307-314. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Pennsylvania Colonial Records. Also see Anson, The Miamis, pp. 48-49.

³⁹Message from the President and Council to the Assembly, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records, V, pp. 329-330; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 413-414.



THE FRENCH WEST

The Miami-British alliance did not go unnoticed by the French. La Galissonniere realized that British traders at Pickawillany were attempting to extend their influence westward towards Illinois. He also was aware that the French could not match the British in economic competition for control of the tribes in the Ohio Valley. Therefore La Galissonniere decided to counter the British economic threat with French military power. The governor hoped that a display of French strength would frighten British traders from Ohio and induce the recalcitrant Miamis to return to French hegemony. During the spring of 1749 he dispatched a party of Canadians and pro-French Indians under the command of Pierre Joseph Celoron to descend the Ohio and re-assert French control over the region. Celoron's force journeyed down the Ohio burying metal plates which claimed the region for France. Ascending the Miami River, Celoron arrived at Pickawillany in September, 1749. There he forced British traders to flee to the east and attempted to convince the Miamis to return to the Maumee. He was unsuccessful. La Demoiselle refused to accompany him to the Maumee and Celoron was forced to leave the Miamis at Pickawillany.⁴⁰

Prior to Celoron's journey, La Demoiselle had attempted unsuccessfully to draw the tribes of Indiana and Michigan into the British trade network. During the summer of 1749 the Wea band of the

⁴⁰A. A. Lambing, ed., "Celoron's Journal," in Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications (34 vols.; Columbus: Published by the Society, 1887-1925), XXIX, pp. 335-396; R. David Edmunds, "Pickawillany: The Focus of the British-French Struggle for Control of the Miamis, 1748-1752" (Paper published at the 47th Biennial Convention of Phi Alpha Theta, New York City, December 29, 1968), pp. 5-7.

Miamis on the central Wabash and the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph both refused La Demoiselle's proposals. The Potawatomis and Weas also endeavored to minimize La Demoiselle's influence among other Indians on the Wabash. La Demoiselle attempted to persuade a village of Miamis led by Le Gris to move to Pickawillany, but the Potawatomis convinced Le Gris to remain on the Tippecanoe and even invited some of these Miamis to come to the St. Joseph to escape La Demoiselle's influence.⁴¹

Yet Celoron's failure to bring the Miamis back to the Maumee was advantageous to La Demoiselle. French military strength seemed to be waning and tribes that had been cool to La Demoiselle's proposals expressed a renewed interest in British trade. Less than two months after Celoron left Pickawillany La Demoiselle warmly received a large number of British traders into the village. Led by George Croghan, these traders erected a fort and trading post at Pickawillany and entered into a brisk trade with Indians in the region. The French again ordered La Demoiselle to send the British away and offered a reward for Croghan's scalp, but the British remained and La Demoiselle continued his intrigues along the Wabash Valley.⁴²

⁴¹ Charles de Raymond to Pierre Jacques de Taffanel, Marquis de Jonquiere, September 5, 1749, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 110; Raymond to La Jonquiere, October 11, 1749, in ibid., pp. 120-123. Raymond was the French commandant at Fort Miamis, 1749-1751. La Jonquiere succeeded La Galissonniere as Governor of New France in 1749. He held the office until 1752.

⁴² Nicholas B. Wainwright, George Croghan, Wilderness Diplomat (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), pp. 30-31. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Wainwright, George Croghan, Wilderness Diplomat.

During the winter and spring of 1750 La Demoiselle's machinations began to reap a harvest. Miamis from Pickawillany ranged as far west as the St. Joseph Valley and Illinois, distributing British trade goods and advocating political alliance. Although the Potawatomis evidently were not interested in British alliances, they were anxious to acquire British trade goods. During the early months of 1750 the St. Joseph Potawatomis began to carry furs to Pickawillany. La Demoiselle was more successful among the Miami bands of the Wabash Valley. In May, 1750, the French commander at Fort Miamis on the Maumee learned that two hundred fifty Weas and Piankeshaws had left the Wabash to join the pro-British Miamis at Pickawillany.⁴³

The St. Joseph Potawatomis were aware that the French knew of their trade at Pickawillany. They also knew that the French had received reports which accused them of joining La Demoiselle's pro-British alliance. During May, 1750 they sent a delegation of warriors to Ft. Miamis to assure the French of their fidelity. Although

⁴³Raymond to La Jonquiere, January 5, 1750, in Krauskopf, Ouiatanon Documents, p. 214; Raymond to La Jonquiere, May 22, 1750, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, pp. 205-209. The French did receive some reports that the St. Joseph Potawatomis were plotting with La Demoiselle in favor of the British. These reports however, all seem to exaggerate La Demoiselle's influence and claim that even the Kickapoos were plotting to destroy the French. There is no evidence that any St. Joseph Potawatomis committed any hostile acts toward the French except for contacts with British traders. Most claims of Potawatomi intrigue originate from reports gathered by Raymond at Ft. Miamis. Such reports also indicate Raymond's paranoic fear of an Indian uprising at his isolated post on the Maumee, a fear which made him gullible to almost any reports of Indian hostility. See Reports to Raymond, March-April, 1750, in ibid., pp. 166-178.

Raymond at Fort Miamis remained doubtful of their sincerity, he accepted six belts of wampum as a pledge of their good intentions and reported the visit to La Jonquiere. During the summer of 1750, a group of Potawatomis and Sacs from the St. Joseph journeyed to Montreal where they again pledged their loyalty to France. La Jonquiere accepted such pledges as sincere, but on their return home some of the Potawatomis left the party to visit British traders at Oswego. These traders gave one of the Potawatomi chiefs an ornamental blanket and other gifts. When La Jonquiere learned of the Oswego visit he ordered French officials in Michigan to confiscate the blanket and to prevent any Potawatomis from leaving the St. Joseph to move to Ohio.⁴⁴

Although the Potawatomis at Detroit occasionally traded with the British at Oswego, they had little friendly contact with Pickawillany. In 1750 Celoron was appointed commander at Detroit and he was anxious to atone for the failure of his expedition. He reported that the Potawatomis and other tribes at Detroit remained loyal to the French and that he had dispatched Potawatomi and Ottawa envoys to La Demoiselle to threaten him to return to the Maumee. Potawatomis also accompanied Louis Coulon De Villiers to Pickawillany in March, 1751 when the new commandant at Fort Miamis also tried to persuade the Miamis to return.

⁴⁴Raymond to La Jonquiere, May 14, 1750, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 68; La Jonquiere to the French Minister, September 20, 1750, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 68. Also see La Jonquiere to the French Minister, September 17, 1751, in ibid., p. 84.

La Demoiselle defiantly informed De Villiers that he had no father other than the English and that the French were knaves and traitors. The Miami chief assured De Villiers that the Miamis at Pickawillany could rely upon aid from the English, Iroquois, Shawnees, Delawares, Piankashaws, Weas, and Illinois and that they did not fear the French.⁴⁵

Angered by La Demoiselle's defiance, the French planned an expedition which they hoped would crush the Miamis at Pickawillany. A force of French and Indians was dispatched from Canada which was to rendezvous with Celoron and loyal Indians at Detroit. The combined party then planned to march upon the Miami village, capture all British traders, and force the Miamis to return to the Maumee.⁴⁶

The plan failed. When the Canadian force reached Detroit on August 14, 1751, it consisted of only fifty Nipissing and Algonkian warriors led by Marie Francois Picote, Sieur de Ballestre. The Potawatomis had expected a much larger force, but upon Bellestre's arrival they accepted the red belt of war and seemed willing to join with the Canadian Indians. The Detroit Potawatomis sent messengers to the St. Joseph to raise their kinsmen and also invited the Kickapoos and Mascoutens to join them against Pickawillany. The Potawatomis and

⁴⁵Return of the Western Tribes who traded at Oswego, 1749, in New York Colonial Documents, VI, p. 538; Celoron to Vaudreuil, August 4, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 286. Also see Celoron to Vaudreuil, April 25, 1751 in ibid., pp. 247-248. De Villiers was a son of Nicolas-Antoine Coulon de Villiers, commandant at St. Joseph in 1730.

⁴⁶The Examination of Morris Turner and Ralph Kilgore, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records, V, pp. 482-484; Benjamin Stoddart to Governor Hamilton in ibid., pp. 549-550. Turner and Kilgore were British traders captured by the French who later escaped and brought back news of the proposed raid to the British. Stoddart was the British commander at Oswego who learned of the expedition from French coureurs de bois.

Ottawas at Detroit evidently believed that Bellestre's party was the advance guard of a much larger force, but when they learned that no large body of troops was expected, they lost their enthusiasm for the venture. The Potawatomis complained that the raiding party would be much too small and that the French had not supplied as many soldiers as they had promised. The refused to attack Pickawillany, telling Celoron that they would wait until the following spring when a larger army could be mustered.⁴⁷

Although Celoron capitulated to Potawatomi defection, Bellestre remained undaunted. Most of the Canadian Indians refused to leave Detroit, but seventeen warriors including at least one Potawatomi followed Bellestre on to Pickawillany. Ironically, upon their arrival, the French force found the Miami town practically deserted. Almost all of the Miami warriors were absent on their autumn hunt. The other Miamis fled toward the British stockade but Bellestre's party took two Miami scalps and captured some British traders before they could reach safety.⁴⁸

⁴⁷La Jonquiere to Rouille, October 25, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 419; La Jonquiere to Celoron, October 29, 1751, in ibid., pp. 385-388. Also see Charles le Moyne, Baron de Longueuil to the French Minister, April 21, 1752, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 107. Longueuil served as acting governor of Canada after La Jonquiere died on March 17, 1752 until August of the same year.

⁴⁸Francois Marchand des Ligneris to Vaudreuil, October 25, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, pp. 416-417. Des Ligneris was the French commandant at Ouiatanon. Also see La Jonquiere to Rouille, October 29, 1751, in ibid., pp. 417-421; French Minister to Ange du Quense, May 15, 1752, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 119. Du Quense served as Governor of Canada from 1752 till 1755.

Yet Bellestre's raid only angered the Miamis and made them more contemptuous of the French. In January, 1752, La Demoiselle held a council at Pickawillany with other pro-British tribes during which three captured French soldiers were ceremoniously killed and another had his ears cut off before being sent to Canada as a warning to the governor. Pro-British Miamis invested the Wabash killing nine French travelers and two slaves. Other warriors from Pickawillany traveled into the Illinois country where they attempted to gain new converts among the Illinois Confederacy and the Osages.⁴⁹

While La Demoiselle spread his intrigue along the Wabash Valley, the Potawatomis at Detroit and on the St. Joseph continued to assure the French that they would march against Pickawillany if the French would provide adequate assistance. The sincerity of such assurances seems questionable. After Bellestre's raid a Potawatomi from the St. Joseph informed the Weas at Ouiatanon that the St. Joseph Potawatomis had no intention in becoming involved in any expedition against Pickawillany. Meanwhile, events at Detroit also turned the Potawatomis at that location away from thoughts of war. During the winter of 1751-1752 a smallpox epidemic swept through the Detroit region killing approximately eighty Potawatomis and Ottawas in the villages near the French post.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Martin Kellogg to William Johnson, April 13, 1752, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records, V, P. 574. Martin Kellogg evidently was a British trader. William Johnson was the famed British Indian agent. Also see Longueuil to the French Minister, April 21, 1752, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, pp. 110-111.

⁵⁰Longueuil to Rouille, April 21, 1752, in New York Colonial Documents, X, pp. 247-248.

Although the Potawatomis were reluctant to attack Pickawillany, the French were not. They realized that the failure of their previous attempts to crush La Demoiselle had weakened their prestige in the west and they were anxious to make an example of the hostile Miamis. During the spring of 1752 plans again were made for another expedition against Pickawillany and this time the French planned well. The leader of this new campaign was Charles Langlade, a mixed blood trader and cadet in the French colonial forces from the Green Bay-Michilimackinac region. Langlade was only twenty three years old, but he had been raised on the frontier and as a boy he had participated in the Chickasaw campaigns in the South. The young Frenchman was living with an Ottawa woman and he exerted considerable influence over her kinsmen. In April and May, 1752 he gathered over two hundred Ottawa warriors from northern Michigan and in June this party reached Detroit where it was joined by other Ottawas and a few Potawatomis before leaving for Pickawillany.⁵¹

Langlade's raiding party struck Pickawillany on June 21, 1752. The attack was a complete surprise. The French raiders swept down upon the village so suddenly that they captured many of the Miami women in their cornfields. Most of the Miami men were absent hunting but those in the village and several British traders fled to the British stockade. Langlade's forces captured three British traders outside the fort who informed them that the British stockade was under-manned. The Ottawas

⁵¹Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, fn. 68, pp. 130-132. Although there were some Potawatomis with Langlade their number was few. See Alexis F. X. de Guyenne to Vaudreuil, September 10, 1752, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 716. De Guyenne was a Jesuit priest in Illinois.

and Potawatomis occupied positions around the fort and poured a steady fire upon the defenders, but with little effect. Finally, the French party offered the Miamis their lives if they would surrender and give up the British traders. The Miamis replied that they would surrender if the besieging force would guarantee the safety of the British. The French and their allies agreed.⁵²

Both sides failed to honor the agreement. There were seven traders in the fort. The Miamis surrendered five of them. The other two were hidden inside the fort and later brought news of the attack to the British. Langlade's raiders also did not keep their promise. One of the traders surrendered by the Miamis was wounded. The French Indians killed him, took his scalp, and then cut out his heart and ate it. La Demoiselle suffered a similar fate. The old Miami chief had taken refuge in the fort with the other Miamis and when he emerged he too was killed and scalped. The Ottawas and Potawatomis then threw his body into a kettle of boiling water after which they devoured it before the cowered Miamis. The French and their allies then gathered up British goods valued at £3000 and returned to Detroit.⁵³

Langlade's raid on Pickawillany shattered the Miami conspiracy. Most of the Miamis evidently returned to the Maumee, for when a British trading party visited the village one month later they found it deserted.

⁵²Trent, Trent's Journal, p. 87; Sewell Elias Slick, William Trent and the West (Harrisburg: Archives Publishing Company of Pennsylvania, 1947), pp. 19-20. Also see Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, fn. 67, pp. 128-129.

⁵³Trent, Trent's Journal, pp. 86-89; Emily J. Blasingham, "The Miami Prior to the French and Indian War," Ethnohistory, II (Winter, 1955), p. 6.

The St. Joseph Potawatomis did not fail to grasp the significance of the French show of strength. The French commander at Ouiatanon reported that they had helped him to convince the Weas and Piankashaws to return to their old homes on the Wabash. Once again French military strength in the west achieved what French commerce could not. British traders retreated towards Pennsylvania and New France regained control of the lower Ohio Valley.⁵⁴

Perhaps the reason that the St. Joseph Potawatomis refused to aid the French against Pickawillany was that they had become embroiled in a dispute with the Illinois. During the 1740's, while the British conspiracies were flourishing in Ohio, a major population shift was occurring among the Potawatomis to the west. Although there are no census figures available, French reports indicate that by the middle of the decade the population of the St. Joseph Potawatomis exceeded that of the Potawatomis at Detroit.⁵⁵ During the 1740's Potawatomis from

⁵⁴Trent, Trent's Journal, pp. 47-49; De Ligneris to Unknown, October 3, 1752, in Krauskopf, Ouiatanon Documents, pp. 218-219. Also see Anson, The Miamis, pp. 52-53.

⁵⁵Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 117 which was Ceded to the United States by the 'Ottawa, Chippewa, and Pottawatamie Nations of Indians' under the Treaty held at Chicago on August 29, 1821," pp. 64, 67-68. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in Box 34 of the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Also see Donald J. Berthrong, "Before the Claims Commission: A Historical Report on Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Areas 132, 133, 145, 146, 180 and 181 in Northern Indiana and Southwestern Michigan as related to the Treaties held at St. Mary's, October 2, 1818; Paradise Springs, October 16, 23, 1826; Carey's Mission, September 20, 1828; and Tippecanoe, October 26, 27, 1832," pp. 48-49. This is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in ibid.

both locations began to establish a new village on the Chicago River. This migration may have occurred as early as 1743, for by 1751 the French considered these Potawatomis to be a separate band.⁵⁶

The Potawatomi migration into northeastern Illinois was the result of two factors. The Illinois confederacy gradually moved out of the upper Illinois Valley. Wasted by disease and decimated by inter-tribal warfare, the Illinois relinquished control of the Illinois Valley north of Starved Rock and concentrated their diminishing numbers near French posts in the American Bottom.⁵⁷ French officials in Illinois also were anxious for the Potawatomis to move into the region. In 1747, Chevalier Bertet, the French commandant at Fort de Chartres, attempted to persuade the St. Joseph Potawatomis to resettle in the upper Illinois Valley. Although most of the Potawatomis remained on the St. Joseph, some of them moved to Chicago.⁵⁸

The withdrawal of the Illinois Confederacy from northern Illinois reflected their deteriorating relationship with the tribes of Michigan and Wisconsin. Fox and Sioux warriors repeatedly swept down upon the

⁵⁶Grant Foreman, "Illinois and Her Indians," in Papers in Illinois History and Transactions for the Year 1939 (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 1940), p. 88; J. Joe Bauxar, "The Historic Period," in Illinois Archaeology. Bulletin No. 1 of the Illinois Archaeological Survey (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1959), p. 54. Also see La Jonquierre to Rouille, September 16, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 349.

⁵⁷Emily J. Blasingham, "The Depopulation of the Illinois Indians," Ethnohistory, III (Fall, 1956), pp. 204-206; Hereafter this article will be cited as Blasingham, "Depopulation of the Illinois." Also see Clarence Walworth Alvord, The Illinois Country, 1673-1818 (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1922), pp. 222-223.

⁵⁸Extract from the diary of events for the year 1747, sent by the governor and intendant of New France to the French Minister, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 479. Bertet's given names are unknown.

Illinois from Wisconsin, raiding Illinois villages and taking Illinois scalps. Potawatomi-Illinois relations also suffered. In 1750 a party of St. Joseph Potawatomis returning from French posts on the Mississippi passed through a village of the Peoria band of the Illinois Confederacy. While in the village, a Potawatomi warrior named La Grue quarreled with a Peoria and was killed.⁵⁹ The Potawatomis returned to the St. Joseph, but the Peorias feared that they would seek revenge and appealed to the French to settle the matter. Jean Baptiste Benoist, Sieur de St. Claire, the French commandant at Fort de Chartres wrote to French officials at the St. Joseph and attempted to maintain the peace. St. Claire reported that La Grue had been at fault and was well known as a troublemaker. Meanwhile the Potawatomis complained to La Jonquiere who instructed the Illinois to send some representatives to the St. Joseph to "cover" La Grue's death. The French commandant at St. Joseph also sent La Grue's sister and an Illinois warrior living in the Potawatomi village to the Peorias, hoping that the mutual exchange of villagers might contribute to peace.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Emily J. Blasingham, "Before the Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 77, which was Relinquished, and Royce Area 78, which was Ceded, by the 'united tribes of Ottawas, Chipawas, and Pottowotomees, residing on the Illinois and Melwakee rivers and their waters, and on the southwestern parts of Lake Michigan' under the Treaty held at St. Louis on August 24, 1816," p. 69. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in Box 34 of the Berthrong Collection, Division of Manuscripts, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Also see La Jonquiere to Rouille, September 25, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 359.

⁶⁰La Jonquiere to Rouille, September 25, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 360; La Jonquiere to Rouille, October 15, 1750, in ibid., p. 240. Also see La Jonquiere to the French Minister, September 17, 1751, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVII, p. 84.

The French attempts to maintain the peace failed. During the spring of 1751 a mixed party of Potawatomis, Menominees, Mascoutens, and Chippewas descended the Illinois River to attack the Peorias. They were unsuccessful. The Peorias surprised the invaders and captured three Potawatomis and Mascouten. Yet the Peorias were anxious to placate the Potawatomis and released the prisoners unharmed, telling the Potawatomis:

Why do you disturb the earth for a fool who has been killed? What is your reason for coming to such extremes? Some of our people who were married in your villages have been killed there and we have never taken up arms to revenge ourselves. Moreover, if you attack us we will revenge ourselves; the earth will be disturbed and the roads will be closed through your fault.⁶¹

Although the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph evidently returned to their villages, the campaign against the Illinois was taken up by their kinsmen at Chicago. During the summer of 1751 the Chicago Potawatomis sent messengers to the Chippewas and to the few Potawatomis remaining on Washington Island inviting them to assemble at Chicago to raid against the Peoria villages near Starved Rock. When the war party reached the site of a small Peoria village on the Illinois River, they found it deserted except for a French trader named Jean Brossac. The trader treated the raiding party cordially, but one of the Chippewas killed him. The Indians then fled back to Chicago. Although the French realized that the murder was committed by the Chippewa, they seemed displeased with the Potawatomis for organizing the war party.⁶²

⁶¹La Jonquiere to the French Minister, September 25, 1751, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 89.

⁶²La Jonquiere to Rouille, September 17, 1751, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, pp. 349-351.

During the summer of 1752 the northern tribes struck again. On June 1, an enormous war party comprised of between four and five hundred warriors descended into Illinois and attacked the Cahokia and Michigamea villages in the American Bottom near Fort de Chartres. The attacking party contained Sioux, Foxes, Sacs, Winnebagos, Menominees, and Potawatomis from Chicago and Washington Island. The raiders were eminently successful. They killed or captured over seventy of the hapless Illinois tribesmen, burned twelve of their lodges, and scattered the bones of their dead over the ground. Five days later the Chippewas attacked a Peoria village on Lake Peoria and throughout the rest of the summer, the panic stricken Illinois fled to the French settlements in southern Illinois where they sought sanctuary and attempted to form a defensive alliance with the Osages.⁶³

The St. Joseph Potawatomis were not involved in these attacks and during August sent messengers to the Illinois to prevent the beleaguered confederacy from seeking revenge against them. Yet these Potawatomis were still embittered over the death of La Grue and wished to share in the plunder being taken from the Illinois. In the fall of 1754 the St. Joseph Potawatomis sent messengers to the Kickapoos, Mascoutens, and Sioux inviting them to join in an attack upon the Peorias. Although the tribes assembled, Governor Duquense instructed French officials in

⁶³Macarty to Vaudrenil, September 2, 1752, in *ibid.*, pp. 654-655; Blasingham, "Depopulation of the Illinois," pp. 207-209. The Cahokia and Michigamea were bands of the Illinois Confederacy.

the west to keep the peace and the attack evidently did not take place.⁶⁴

Duquense could ill afford inter-tribal clashes in the west. By 1754 France and England once again were on the brink of war and the French governor was busy fortifying the forks of the Ohio. During the summer of 1754 Fort Duquense was completed and French forces defeated the British at Fort Necessity. Yet Duquense realized that such skirmishes were only portents of things to come. If France was to hold the west, she would need the aid of her Indian allies. Foremost and most faithful of these allies were the Potawatomis. During the next nine years the Potawatomis would continue to serve Ontario well: loyal partisans in a struggle that marked the death of New France.

⁶⁴Macarty to Vaudreuil, September 2, 1752, in Illinois Historical Collections, XXIX, p. 678; Macarty to Vaudreuil, March 18, 1752, in ibid., p. 507. Also see Duquense to the French Minister, October 13, 1754, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 141.

CHAPTER IV

IN DEFENSE OF A DYING EMPIRE

To the English colonists in America, the construction of a French fortress at the forks of the Ohio was seen as a serious threat to their security. No longer would the Ohio River serve as an avenue for British penetration of the west. By 1755 the broad western river was in French possession and Fort Duquense loomed as a staging point from which French allied Indians could be sent against the frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania. Earlier colonial attempts to force the French from the forks area had failed, so in 1755 Great Britain sent two regiments of British regulars to aid the colonial forces in their attempts to dislodge the French. Led by General Edward Braddock, these regulars were to join with colonial troops and seize Fort Duquense, then assist Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts in attacking the French at Fort Niagara.¹

French officials in Canada were aware of the British plans and were determined to defend Fort Duquense. The French realized

¹Louise Phelps Kellogg, The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Old Northwest (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1925), p. 425. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin. Also see Howard H. Peckham, The Colonial Wars: 1689-1762 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 140. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Peckham, The Colonial Wars.

they could not muster enough troops to match Braddock's force, so they attempted to bolster their defense of Fort Duquense by raising the western Indians. During the spring of 1755 messengers were sent to all the French-allied tribes and in the early summer war parties of western tribesmen began to arrive at Fort Duquense. The Potawatomis rallied to the French cause. Tribesmen from both Detroit and the St. Joseph formed part of a large force of northern Indians which arrived at the forks of the Ohio during early July.²

As the French were greeting their red allies from the west, Braddock and over fourteen hundred British and colonial troops were approaching Fort Duquense from the southeast. Braddock and an expedition of two thousand five hundred men had left Fort Cumberland in Maryland on June 7, 1755, but the British force averaged only two miles per day and on June 20 Braddock had divided his army and forged ahead leaving most of his supply wagons behind. Braddock was aware that the French knew of his intentions and he expected to be attacked while crossing the Monongahela River near the mouth of Turtle Creek about eight miles southeast of the French fort. But as the British column forded the river they met no opposition and by the afternoon of July 9, Braddock's forces had completed the crossing and were

²Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 425-426; "Augustin Grignon's Recollections," in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.-; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), III, p. 212. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections.

marching towards a clearing a few miles ahead where they planned to spend the night prior to attacking Fort Duquense.³

Braddock's approach did not go unnoticed. French scouts had followed his progress through southern Pennsylvania and on July 6 a party of Hurons informed the French that the British were less than thirty miles from Fort Duquense. The French sent out other parties who confirmed the Huron report and on July 8, Claude Piere Pecaudy, Sieur de Contrecoeur, the French commandant at Duquense, assembled the western tribesmen and admonished them to accompany the French in an attack upon the British. Although most of the Indians were willing to follow the French, the Potawatomis from Detroit were hesitant and delayed joining the French soldiers. The reason for this Potawatomi hesitancy remains unknown, but the refusal by the Detroit Potawatomis caused the other Indians to persuade the French to postpone their attack until the following day. On the morning of July 9, 1755 the Potawatomis and approximately six hundred other warriors joined a force of two hundred ninety French regulars and militia led by Captain Daniel de Beaujeu. At about eight A. M. the French and their allies left Fort Duquense to meet the British.⁴

³Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 143-144; Account of the Affair at the Belle Riviere, July 6-9, 1755, in Report of the Archivist of The Province of Quebec, 1932-1933, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes - Ohio Valley Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter all such materials in the Potawatomi File at the Great Lakes Project will be cited as Great Lakes Indian Archives.

⁴Account of the Affair at the Belle Riviere, July 6-9, 1755, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. The author of this account is unknown. Also see Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 145.

The Potawatomi procrastination of July 8 allowed Braddock to cross the Monongahela unscathed and as his column neared its proposed campsite during the afternoon of July 9 the British troops proceeded carelessly, believing that the French preferred to meet them behind the bastions of Fort Duquense. Before reaching their campsite, the British army was forced to follow the trail as it passed between a small rounded hill and a ravine. Although Braddock dispatched skirmishers to protect his flanks, he did not occupy the hill which loomed to the right of the British column. Just after the advance guard of the Braddock's forces had passed the hill they encountered the French and Indians who rushed forward to meet them.⁵

A skirmish occurred after which Braddock's advance guard fell back upon the main body of British troops which continued to slowly advance. Unfortunately for the British, the forest pathway was too narrow to allow them to maneuver and when the advance guard fell back into the foremost ranks of the main body of troops, the soldiers became confused and bewildered. To add to the pandemonium, the rear echelons of Braddocks force continued to move forward piling men and wagons together in the narrow pathway.⁶

The French and Indians quickly took advantage of the situation and spread their forces throughout the underbrush bordering both sides

⁵Stanley Pargellis, "Braddock's Defeat," American Historical Review, XLI (January, 1936), pp. 257-259, 269. Hereafter this article will be cited as Pargellis, "Braddock's Defeat." Also see William A. Hunter, Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1753-1758 (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1960), p. 120. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Hunter, Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier.

⁶Pargellis, "Braddock's Defeat," pp. 263, 269; Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 145-146.

of the trail. They also gained command of the hill and, hidden behind the dense foilage, they poured a deadly fire upon the panic stricken British. The battle lasted about three hours. The British soldiers, unfamiliar with forest warfare, huddled together in the open pathway and were cut down by assailants they could not see. Braddock was mortally wounded and of the eighty-six British officers in his command, sixty-three were killed or wounded. Finally, the survivors broke and ran, eventually reaching Braddock's supply column fifty miles to the rear on July 11 and 12. Of the fourteen hundred troops who had followed Braddock across the Monongahela, over one thousand were either killed or wounded. The French and Indians suffered only about sixty casualties.⁷

The Potawatomis' role in Braddock's defeat remains unclear. It seems certain that they participated in the engagement, for an eyewitness account by a French official indicates that they accompanied the French force which left Fort Duquense on the morning of July 9. Yet accounts of the battle generally refer to "Indians" and rarely mention specific tribes. The Potawatomis probably joined with other Indians who took shelter in the brush surrounding the trail and who fired upon Braddock's troops from such concealment.⁸

⁷Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 146-147.

⁸Account of the Affair at the Belle Riviere, July 6-9, 1755, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

Shortly after the French and Indian triumph, the Potawatomis returned to their homes on the St. Joseph and at Detroit. There they were praised by French officials and the Detroit Potawatomis were rewarded with French gifts and encouraged to prepare themselves for future raids against the British.⁹ The Potawatomis needed little encouragement. During the late summer and autumn of 1755 they joined with other Indians to scourge the frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. By October, 1755, French officials at Detroit reported that Potawatomis from that post had continually sent raiding parties to the east and had killed or captured over one hundred and twenty British settlers.¹⁰

Potawatomi raiding was encouraged by the inability of the British to protect their western frontiers. After Braddock's defeat, Governor Shirley of Massachusetts led twenty-four hundred British troops to Oswego in preparation for an attack upon the French fort at Niagara. Yet he tarried so long at Oswego that the approaching winter forced him to postpone his attack indefinitely. During the winter of 1755-56 the French strengthened Fort Niagara with artillery

⁹Contrecoeur to Vaudreuil, July 26, 1755, in Archives of the Seminary of Quebec, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Entry for August 13, 1755, in Sylvester Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds., Journal of Chaussegros De Lery, in ibid. Lery was a French engineer who earlier had directed the construction of Fort Niagara.

¹⁰Journal of Occurences in Canada from October, 1755 to June, 1756, in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887), X, p. 401. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as New York Colonial Documents. Also see John H. Krenkel, "British Conquest of the Old Northwest," Wisconsin Magazine of History, XXXV (Autumn, 1951), p. 50. Hereafter this article will be cited as Krenkel, "British Conquest."

captured at Braddock's defeat and increased the garrison to five hundred men in anticipation of a British offensive that did not materialize. By the spring of 1756 the British colonies were spending their funds in a desperate attempt to fortify their frontiers and had no resources available for an offensive campaign against Fort Niagara.¹¹

While consolidating their position in the west, the French anticipated a campaign against the British post at Oswego. During the summer of 1756 French officials in the west successfully concluded a peace between the Illinois Confederacy and the tribes surrounding Lake Michigan, including the Potawatomis. On August 14, 1756, Louis Joseph Gozon de St. Veran, Marquis de Montcalm, captured Oswego giving New France control of Lake Ontario and increasing French prestige among their red allies of the western Great Lakes. No longer could British traders at Oswego advocate British alliances to the western tribesmen. No longer would French traders in the west be forced to compete with less expensive British goods. By September, 1756 the French controlled both the Ohio River and Great Lakes trade routes and their growing military ascendancy seemed to assure them of victory in the west.¹²

In control of the west, French officials turned their attention toward the New England frontier. There Lake Champlain stretched as a

¹¹Krenkel, "British Conquest," pp. 49-50; Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 151-152.

¹²Vaudreuil to Jean-Baptiste Machault d'Arnouville, August 8, 1756, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 437. Machault was Minister of Marine. Also see Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 158-159; Entry for November 21, 1756, in Montcalm's Journal, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, fn. 6, p. 164.

natural highway between Montreal and Albany and the French were anxious to gain command of the waterway so that they might carry the war into the Hudson Valley. During 1756 French engineers began the construction of Fort Carillon at Ticonderoga and by late summer the French hoped to use the new post as a base for raids against the British. To provide raiders for the new post, the French solicited the aid of their red allies. Messengers were sent to the western lakes to invite the Indians to participate in a winter campaign of raids into the Hudson Valley and to serve as scouts against such British posts as Fort William Henry.¹³

The Potawatomis responded to the French request. Led by Charles Langlade, a large flotilla of Potawatomis and Ottawas descended the St. Lawrence and arrived at Montreal during the early autumn of 1756. There they met with Pierre Francois Rigaud de Cavagnal, Marquis de Vaudreuil, who had been appointed Governor of New France during 1755. The Potawatomis and Ottawas assured the governor of their devotion to the French cause and seemed anxious to be sent against the British. They chanted their war songs before Vaudreuil, telling the governor, "Father, we are famished; give us fresh meat; we wish to eat the English; dispatch us quickly."¹⁴

A winter campaign meant that the warriors could not hunt for their families during a season of hardship. Many of the Potawatomi

¹³Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 51; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, pp. 430-431.

¹⁴Conference between M. de Vaudreuil and the Indians, 1756, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 512; Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 431.

raiders therefore brought their families to Montreal to live with the French while the warriors proceeded on to Lake Champlain. During the last week of September, the Potawatomis began to arrive at Fort Carillon at Ticonderoga.¹⁵ Between September 30 and October 2, 1756 the Potawatomis met in council with the French officers and other Indians at Fort Carillon and agreed to descend Lake George to gather intelligence of British troop movements in the Fort William Henry area. The Potawatomis then planned to either ambush British parties on the road between Fort William Henry and Fort Edward or to disperse into small parties and raid into New England.¹⁶

The Potawatomis impressed French officers at Ticonderoga. Louis Antoine de Bougainville, an aide de camp to Montcalm, remarked that they spoke with deliberation in council, making sure that the interpreters understood their speeches before they translated the sentences into French. Bougainville also indicated that the French preferred to use the Potawatomis and other western tribes against the British rather than the more "domesticated" Indians of the lower St. Lawrence Valley. The western tribesmen were more obedient to French commanders and more avid in their campaigns against the British than were the eastern Indians.¹⁷

¹⁵Entry for October 22, 1756 in Edward P. Hamilton, ed. and trans., Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1756-1760 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p. 61; Entry for September 25-29, 1756, in ibid., p. 45. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Hamilton, Bougainville Journals.

¹⁶Entries for September 30-October 2, 1756, in ibid., pp. 45-46.

¹⁷Entry for October 2, 1756, in ibid., pp. 45-46.

On October 3, 1756 the Potawatomis, accompanied by a few Abnakis, Nipissings, Iroquois, and Canadians left Ticonderoga to raid against the British near Fort William Henry. While passing down the lake a scouting party sent ahead by the Potawatomis was ambushed and an Abnaki warrior was killed. The French, Iroquois, and remaining Abnakis turned back to Fort Carillon but nineteen Potawatomis and Nipissings continued on down the lake, intending to apprehend the ambushers and learn their purpose on Lake Ticonderoga. The Potawatomis did not return for two weeks and their fellow tribesmen who remained behind at Fort Carillon began to fear for their safety. On October 15, the Potawatomis at Ticonderoga "made medicine", hoping that the Great Spirit would send them news of their kinsmen. Three days later, on October 18, the Potawatomis again performed religious ceremonies and after fasting a Potawatomi medicine man informed the French that his kinsmen would soon return bearing scalps and prisoners. During the afternoon of October 18 the Potawatomi raiding party returned to Ticonderoga.¹⁸

The Potawatomis had raided near Albany, attacking a supply train enroute from Albany to Fort Edward. They captured a British settler who was with the supply train and brought him back to Fort Carillon. After delivering the prisoner to French officers, the Potawatomis remained at Ticonderoga for a few days then prepared to return to Montreal. The Potawatomis planned to secure more arms and

¹⁸Entry for October 3, 1756, in ibid., p. 48; Entry for October 6, 1756, in ibid., pp. 49-50. Also see Entries for October 15 and October 18, 1756, in ibid., pp. 55-57.

ammunition from Vaudreuil, then to gather their families and to return to Fort Carillon for the winter.¹⁹

Although part of these Potawatomis may have returned to Fort Carillon after visiting Montreal, others spent the winter in the French city on the St. Lawrence. During the spring of 1757 some of the Potawatomis in Montreal joined with Ottawas and raided the region surrounding Fort William Henry. Other members of the tribe left Montreal to return to their homes at Detroit. Enroute to Detroit, these Potawatomis stopped at a French fort at Toronto where they assisted the French in calming some Chippewas who had become intoxicated and threatened to burn the French post.²⁰

While the Potawatomis who had wintered in the east either returned to the Lake Champlain area or journeyed to Detroit, other members of their tribe were preparing to join French offensives against the British. During the first week of June the Detroit Potawatomis joined with the Ottawas, Hurons, and Chippewas to dance the war dance at Detroit. After the ceremonies, war parties comprised of the four tribes left Detroit to raid the frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, other Detroit Potawatomis joined with their kinsmen from the St. Joseph to accompany a large

¹⁹Entry for October 18, 1756, in ibid., p. 57; Entry for October 22, 1756, in ibid., p. 61.

²⁰Entry for April 25, 1757, in ibid., p. 102; Entry for May 5, 1757, in ibid., p. 105. Also see Entry for June 12, 1757, in ibid., p. 114.

force of western Indians to Montreal. During the latter part of June over one thousand western tribesmen assembled beneath the walls of the French city to meet with Vaudreuil.²¹

The Potawatomis and many other Indians met with the governor on July 1 and 2, 1757. Accompanying the French governor was the Marquis de Montcalm. The western Indians presented both of the French officials with belts of wampum. They thanked Montcalm for agreeing to lead them in the proposed French offensive against Fort William Henry and asked him to watch over them. The Indians then asked Vaudreuil to send his brother with them against the British since the governor was remaining behind. After the conference, the western Indians divided into smaller parties and left for Lake Champlain. The majority of the Potawatomis arrived at Fort Carillon on July 19, 1757.²²

Upon their arrival at the French fortress, the Potawatomis met with French officers and agreed to proceed to the portage between Lake Champlain and Lake George where they planned to wait for Louis Coulon de Villiers to lead them against Fort William Henry. Many of the St. Joseph Potawatomis had served with de Villiers in the west and they trusted his leadership. A few Potawatomi warriors left with

²¹James Smith, An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Entry for June 20-25, 1757, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, pp. 117-118. Also see Kellogg, French Regime in Wisconsin, p. 432.

²²Entry for July 1-2, 1757, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, pp. 120-121; Entry for July 19, 1757, in ibid., p. 131.

a party of Ottawas and Chippewas who intended to forge ahead of the main French force and to raid in the area surrounding Fort William Henry.²³

By the last week in July almost two thousand Indians had joined the French on Lake Champlain in preparation for the attack upon the British fortress. French officers had difficulty in maintaining control over their red allies. The Indians were bored by the inactivity of camp life and continually demanded food and other provisions from the French officers. As the tension mounted prior to the attack upon Fort William Henry many of the tribesmen began to slaughter and eat French oxen. Although the French protested such actions, they could do little to stop them. Only the Potawatomis, Algonkins and Nipissings refused to join in the feast of the oxen. Once again Bougainville praised the Potawatomis, calling them "the wisest and most obedient of all the Indians" and stated that their refusal to join in the feast reflected their desire not to give insult or injury to the French.²⁴

French inability to control the Indians also was reflected in events taking place on July 24. During the evening of July 23, British officers at Fort William Henry dispatched approximately three hundred and fifty New Jersey militia in twenty-two barges to sail northward up Lake George on a scouting expedition against the French. The British flotilla was sighted by French Indians and a combined force of

²³Entry for July 20, 1757, in ibid., p. 132.

²⁴Entry for July 30, 1757, in ibid., p. 154; Entry for July 20, 1757, in ibid., p. 132.

Potawatomis, Ottawas, Chippewas and Menominees prepared an ambush.²⁵ At daybreak on July 24, the six barges which formed the advance guard of the British force rounded a point on Lake George and were captured without a shot being fired. As the sixteen following barges neared the point of land, the underbrush along the lake shore exploded in a volley which claimed many casualties and caused the uninjured British to seek the safety of more open water. The barges frantically pulled away from the shore, but the Indians pursued them in canoes which had been hidden in the underbrush. The heavy barges were easily overtaken by the Indians and the militia became panic stricken. Many of the British soldiers offered no resistance as the Potawatomis and their allies seized control of the barges while other soldiers attempted to escape by jumping into the lake and swimming towards shore. The swimmers were in desperate straits. The Indians in the canoes speared them like sturgeon, and most of those who avoided such a fate either drowned or were captured when they reached shore.²⁶

Those militiamen who died in the water were fortunate when compared to many of the captives. The Indians found a quantity of rum in some of the barges and after consuming it they began to torture many of the prisoners. The Ottawas led in this activity and evidently killed, cooked, and devoured some of their captives. The Potawatomis' part in this uncommon activity is unknown, but they probably

²⁵Entry for July 24, 1757, in ibid., p. 142.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 142-143.

participated in the torture since they formed part of the force that attacked the barges.²⁷

On July 27, Montcalm assembled his vast host of Indian allies for a final council prior to the attack upon Fort William Henry. Approximately eighteen hundred warriors representing forty bands from eighteen tribes were present. The Potawatomis, led by Millouisillyny, Ouakousy, Nanaquiba, Oybischagme, and Ninivois contributed eighty-eight warriors to this force; seventy from the St. Joseph's and eighteen from Detroit. Montcalm assured the Indians that as long as they remained united, the British would be defeated. He explained his plans for the attack and urged them to conserve their powder and ammunition for the assault. The Indians thanked him for his leadership and promised to follow his orders. Three days later the Potawatomis and the other western tribesmen left the portage at the north end of Lake George and established a camp three hours journey down the lake toward Fort William Henry. There they planned to rest and await Montcalm's forces which would follow on the next day.²⁸

At two o'clock in the afternoon of August 1, 1757, Montcalm's French army set sail in bateaux from the northern end of Lake George for Fort William Henry. Three hours later they rendezvoused with the Indians who were in canoes and the combined force continued on through the night into the following day. On the evening of August 2, the

²⁷Ibid. Also see Francis Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe (3 vols.; Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1899), II, pp. 170-171. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe.

²⁸Entry for July 27, 1757, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, pp. 146-149; Entry for July 28, 1757, in ibid., pp. 150-151. Also see Entry for July 24, 1757, in ibid., p. 143; Entry for July 31, 1757, in ibid., p. 155.

French and Indians pulled their vessels to shore on the west side of Lake George, a few miles north of the British fortress. Montcalm's army beached their canoes and bateaux behind a point of land which hid them from the view of the British. There they also met Francois Gaston, Chevalier de Levis, who had led a force of Canadians and French Iroquois overland along the western shore of Lake George.²⁹

Montcalm commenced his attack on the following day. St. Luc de la Corne and a force of Canadians and Indians were dispatched to circle the fort and cut the road between Fort William Henry and Fort Edward. The British forces were sheltered behind the walls of Fort William Henry and also were entrenched in a fortified camp approximately one half mile east of the fortress. The British had cleared the forest away from both positions, giving them an open field of fire against any frontal assault. Montcalm decided to reduce the British position with cannons and methodically began to dig trenches through which he planned to advance and protect his batteries. Meanwhile, the Indians surrounded the British positions and kept up a continual fire at any target which caught their attention.³⁰

On August 5, French Indians captured a messenger from General Daniel Webb, the British commander at Fort Edward, to Colonel George Munro who was in command at Fort William Henry. Webb advised Munro

²⁹ Entries for August 1 and August 2, 1757, in ibid., pp. 156-158; Entry for July 29, 1757, in ibid., p. 153.

³⁰ Entries for August 3 and August 4, 1757, in ibid., pp. 158-162; Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, II, pp. 186-188. St. Luc de la Corne was a French officer with extensive experience leading Indians.

to expect no reinforcements. This information encouraged Montcalm to position his artillery securely in the trenches since he no longer feared that he might be forced to retreat from British reinforcements. Montcalm began his artillery barrage on August 6. The Potawatomis and other Indians were quite impressed by the power of the cannon and crowded around while they were being positioned and fired. Montcalm discouraged them from such activity however and urged them to scour the country between Fort William Henry and Fort Edward to intercept British messengers and to gain information of British troop movements. On August 7, Montcalm sent Bougainville with a message to Munro informing him of the contents of the intercepted letter and asking for the British to surrender. Munro refused and the barrage continued.³¹

Shortly after Bougainville returned to the French lines the Potawatomis joined with a force of French and Indians led by Villiers which approached the fortified British camp opposite the fort and began sniping at the position. The British then made a sortie from the camp against Villiers forces and in the resulting skirmish both sides suffered heavy losses. The Canadians and Indians suffered twenty-one casualties but claimed that the British losses were even heavier.³²

By the evening of August 8, the British position was desperate. The French barrage had taken its toll. More than three hundred of the defenders had been either killed or wounded and most of their cannon

³¹ Entries for August 5 and August 6, 1757, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, pp. 162-166; Entry for August 7, 1757, in ibid., pp. 166-167.

³² Entry for August 7, 1757, in ibid., p. 167.

had been destroyed. To add to the British dilemma, smallpox had broken out within the fort and was reaching epidemic proportions. Faced with such overwhelming problems and realizing that he had no hope of reinforcements, Munro bowed to the inevitable. On the morning of August 9, 1757, he surrendered Fort William Henry.³³

The terms of the surrender were generous. The French agreed that the British troops should be escorted by a body of French troops to Fort Edward. The British were allowed to keep their personal possessions and their arms, but no ammunition. The British agreed not to serve against the French for eighteen months following the surrender and to give up all French prisoners captured since the war had begun. The French also were to receive all cannon, powder, and armaments in the British possession except for one small cannon which Munro was allowed to keep as a token of his defense against the enemy.³⁴

French generosity towards the captured British was not shared by the Indians. Many of the western tribesmen had journeyed over one thousand miles to fight for Onontio and they were anxious for the spoils of their victory. European codes of honor had little meaning for the Potawatomis and their allies. Although Montcalm pleaded with them to honor his surrender terms, his pleas had little impact. As soon as the garrison evacuated the fort and joined their comrades under French

³³Entry for August 9, 1757, in ibid., p. 169; Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, II, p. 193.

³⁴Entry for August 9, 1757, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, pp. 169-170.

protection at the fortified camp, the Indians stormed into the abandoned fort, pillaging personal property left behind and killing all the smallpox victims who were too ill to follow the garrison.³⁵

The Indians then turned their attention to the British captives assembled at the fortified camp. The French troops assigned to protect the prisoners were insufficient for that purpose and the Indians roamed at will among the terrified British, seizing property and threatening the captives with death. Finally, Montcalm arrived at the camp and by evening he was able to restore order. Two chiefs from each tribe present agreed to accompany the captives to Fort Edward in an attempt to guarantee their safety. Montcalm therefore hoped that any further problems would be averted.³⁶

He was wrong. On the morning of August 10, the British assembled before dawn in their anxiety to start for the safety of Fort Edward. The camp had been entrusted to the questionable care of Canadian forces and before the regular French troops who were to form the escort could arrive, the Indians once again entered the encampment. Seventeen British soldiers who were too wounded or ill to make the journey to Fort Edward were still in their beds. The Indians dragged them from their shelters and killed them before the eyes of the other captives. The Indians then once more began to pillage the camp and when the escort

³⁵Ibid., p. 170; Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, II, p. 194. Also see Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 163.

³⁶Entry for August 9, 1757, in Hamilton, Bourgainville Journals, pp. 170-171; Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, II, pp. 195-196.

of regulars arrived, they seemed powerless to stop them. The French advised the British to give up their possessions and to immediately form into a column and leave for Fort Edward. The British complied, but as they proceeded down the road, the Indians followed them, dashing into their ranks and snatching at clothing or other items the British were carrying. Finally, a party of Abnakis fell upon a group of New Hampshire militia which formed the rear of the British column and methodically began to slaughter them. This attack caused other British prisoners to bolt from the column and run for the woods in a desperate attempt for freedom. The remaining Indians pursued these hapless refugees, and cut them down in the forest. Upon hearing of the slaughter, Montcalm again rushed to the aid of the British captives and finally restored order. But before the killing had been stopped, over two hundred British prisoners had died and another two hundred had been carried away as captives by the Indians.³⁷

The Potawatomis and other Indians left for Montreal on the day after the massacre. Yet the British had their revenge. Many of prisoners killed by the Potawatomis and the other western tribesmen had been infected with smallpox and the warriors carried the disease to the west.³⁸ During the spring and summer of 1758 the disease reached

³⁷Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, pp. 197-201; Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 163. After the massacre Montcalm protected the sixteen hundred survivors in the French camp for five days before delivering them to Fort Edward.

³⁸Detail of the Campaign of 1757, from the 30th of July to the 4th of September, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 630; Francois Pouchot, Memoir Upon the Late War in North America. Between the French and English, 1755-60, Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Parkman, Montcalm and Wolfe, II, p. 202.

epidemic proportions among the tribes of Michigan, especially among the St. Joseph Potawatomis. Many of the tribal leaders who had consistently supported the French were victims of the disease and their death weakened French influence on the St. Joseph.³⁹ The epidemic and poor trading conditions created a general atmosphere of discontent in the Lake Michigan region. The Menominees besieged a French post at Green Bay and murdered a French family in Wisconsin. The Ottawas were rumored to be plotting against the French and even the Potawatomis, "always attached to the French, the sole savage nation that has never been reproached for any murder" were accused of planning the murder of a Canadian in the St. Joseph Valley.⁴⁰

The discontent among the St. Joseph Potawatomis never reached serious proportions. News of Montcalm's victory at Ticonderoga had a pacifying effect upon the west and although the St. Joseph Potawatomis sent no warriors east during the summer of 1758, their kinsmen at Detroit sent warriors to Fort Duquense where they opposed the advance of General John Forbes.⁴¹ Yet, 1758 was not a good year for French

³⁹Montcalm's Journal in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 205. No date is given for this entry, but internal evidence within the entry suggests that it was entered sometime after the middle of October, 1758. Also see Francois Pouchot, Memoir Upon the Late War in North America, Between the French and English, 1755-60, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

⁴⁰Entry for May 12-20, 1758, in Hamilton, Bougainville Journals, p. 204; Montcalm's Journal in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 204.

⁴¹Montcalm's Journal in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 205; Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Ethnological Report on the Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Area 66 ceded by the "Ottoway, Chippeway, Wyandotte, and Potawatamie nations of Indians" to the United States pursuant to the Treaty made at Detroit on

fortunes in North America. During July the British captured Louisbourg and in late August a British force led by Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet destroyed Fort Frontenac, the French supply center on Lake Ontario. After the fall of Fort Frontenac, the French were unable to supply their post at the forks of the Ohio and in November, 1758 Captain Francois Marchand des Ligneris destroyed Fort Duquense and retreated to Fort Venango rather than withstand a siege from Forbes.⁴²

Ligneris hoped to re-occupy the forks during the following summer and in June, 1759 he began to assemble French allied Indians at Venango. Potawatomis joined with other western tribesmen at Venango and during the first week of July they raided in the Fort Ligonier area, attacking a supply train and inflicting about forty casualties upon the British. But Ligneris' plans to rebuild Fort Duquense were doomed to failure. Before he could muster his growing forces against the British in Pennsylvania, he was ordered to come to the aid of Captain Francois Pouchot at Fort Niagara.⁴³

Pouchot's predicament at Fort Niagara reflected the growing deterioration of the French position in 1759. Denied aid from France by the British navy, Montcalm was forced to withdraw his forces in a desperate attempt to maintain control of the St. Lawrence Valley.

November 17, 1807," pp. 212-213. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Great Lakes Indian Archives. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66."

⁴²Krenkel, "British Conquest," pp. 51-52.

⁴³Nicholas Wainwright, ed., "George Croghan's Journal, 1759-1763," Pennsylvania Magazine of History, LXXI (October, 1947), p. 322. Hereafter this article will be cited as Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal." Also see Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 181.

During the summer of 1759 he removed the garrisons from both Fort Carillon and Fort St. Frederic, concentrating his forces at Isle Aux Noir on the Richelieu River and giving control of Lake Champlain to the British. On Lake Ontario, a British army led by General John Prideaux arrived at Oswego on June 27. Prideaux's force seemed designed to rebuild the British post at Oswego but they actually were dispatched against Pouchot at Fort Niagara. When the British appeared on July 7, Pouchot sent messengers to Venango and other western posts asking for assistance.⁴⁴

Meanwhile a force of Chippewas, Potawatomis and Ottawas had arrived at Niagara from Detroit. They camped near the small French fort at the falls, south of Fort Niagara on the Niagara River. While Prideaux began to methodically dig trenches for the siege of the fort, the Potawatomis served the French as scouts who reported on Prideaux's progress. Accompanying Prideaux was a force of approximately one thousand Iroquois led by William Johnson. Yet Johnson's Iroquois contained few Senecas, for many warriors of this westernmost tribe of the confederacy had allied themselves with the French and the Seneca chief Kaendae had entered Fort Niagara to support Pouchot.⁴⁵ The Iroquois were anxious to separate the Senecas and the western Indians from the French and held a series of councils with them attempting to induce them to at least remain neutral. Although the Iroquois evidently were able

⁴⁴Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 181-182, 184-185; Entry for July 7, 1759, in Pouchot, Journal of the Siege of Fort Niagara, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 978.

⁴⁵Entry for July 7, 1759, in Pouchot, Journal of the Siege of Fort Niagara, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 978; Entry for July 10, 1759, in ibid., p. 980.

to persuade many of the Senecas to desert the French, the western Indians remained loyal to Onontio. The Potawatomis replied that their ancestors had always been the foremost friends of the French and that they did not intend to break the tradition. The Potawatomis stated that they did not know the British and invited the Iroquois to join the French.⁴⁶

As the siege continued, Prideaux was accidentally killed when an artillery shell exploded prematurely and William Johnson assumed command over the British army. Johnson was faced with mounting problems. Although British artillery was taking a toll on Fort Niagara, Pouchot continued to refuse surrender since he knew that help was on the way. Meanwhile, almost a third of Johnson's Iroquois had become disenchanted and declared their intention to leave the siege. On July 23 Pouchot was informed by a messenger that the relief force from Venango and Presque Isle was approaching. Johnson also was aware that the French were near and he decided to meet them before they could re-inforce Fort Niagara. On July 25 the British Indian Agent assembled his six hundred troops and about six hundred of the remaining Iroquois behind a barrier of fallen trees along the portage path south of Fort Niagara.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Peckham, The Colonial Wars, p. 182; Entry for July 11, 1759, in Pouchot, Journal of the Siege of Fort Niagara, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 982.

⁴⁷Entry for July 23, 1757, in Pouchot, Journal of a Siege of Fort Niagara, in New York Colonial Documents, X, p. 986; Peckham, The Colonial Wars, pp. 182-183.

As the French relief force approached the British barricades their numbers began to dwindle. The western tribesmen had no qualms about attacking the British, but they were reluctant to assault the Iroquois. Ligneris and Joseph Marin, leaders of the French column, pleaded with their allies to continue on against the British, but many of the Potawatomis and other warriors began to fall behind. Still, the French pushed on, but the British greeted them with repeated volleys from behind the breastworks and the French advance faltered. Then the British and Iroquois charged their bewildered enemy and the French and their allies fled back along the portage path towards Lake Erie. Most of the French officers were either killed or captured and those French and Indians that managed to escape sought safety through flight on Lake Erie. Fort Niagara surrendered later in the evening.⁴⁸

The fall of Fort Niagara and the British victory at Quebec in September, 1759 had a profound effect upon the tribes of the west. Although the Detroit Potawatomis remained nominally allied to the French, they suffered from an acute shortage of trade goods and they were quick to perceive that the western Great Lakes had been isolated by British military power. Some Detroit Potawatomis had been raiding in the Fort Ligonier area when the French relief force left Venango for Niagara. They continued to operate in Pennsylvania during August, but other members of their band began to move towards

⁴⁸Entry for July 24 and July 25, 1759, in Pouchot, *Journal of the Siege of Fort Niagara*, in *New York Colonial Documents*, X, pp. 987-990; Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, III, pp. 89-91.

British friendship.⁴⁹ During the first two weeks of July George Croghan met with delegations of Iroquois, Shawnees, Delawares, and Wyandots at Pittsburgh. Although no Potawatomis attended this conference, the Wyandots claimed to speak for the Potawatomis and seven other western tribes. The Wyandots asked that British traders be sent into the west to supply merchandise to the lake tribes. Croghan dispatched a message to the Potawatomis and their allies through the Wyandots stating that the British would be glad to trade among them if the western tribes would renounce the French.⁵⁰

During August, Croghan held another conference at Pittsburgh which was attended by eight tribes including a small delegation of nine Detroit Potawatomis. The Potawatomis were led by Opewas and apparently did not speak formally in council. Croghan urged all of the western tribes to restrain their warriors from attacking the Pennsylvania frontier and to honor their commitments of peace toward the British. In reply, the Delaware chief Beaver spoke for all the western tribes and assured the British that the Indians would bury

⁴⁹Vaudreuil to the French Minister, June 24, 1760, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 217. Also see Entry for July 21, 1759, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," p. 330; Entry for August 23, 1759, in ibid., p. 345.

⁵⁰Entry for July 8, 1759, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," p. 324; Minutes of Conference held in Pittsburgh, in July, 1759, By George Croghan, ..., With the Chiefs of the Warriors of the Six Nations, Delawares, Shawanese, and the Wyentotts, who represent the Eight following Nations: Ottowas, Chepawas, Putewatimies, Twightwee, Kuskushkies, Kecopes, Shockeys, and Musquakees, in Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania (16 vols.; Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Co., 1852-1853), VIII, pp. 383-391. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Prov. Council of Pa. Minutes. The Wyandots were the Hurons who fled from Sandusky to the Guyahoga and Muskingum Rivers in 1748. They called themselves "Wendat" which the British mispronounced as Wyandot.

the hatchet and would strive to keep their young men at home.⁵¹ Throughout the autumn and winter of 1759 the Detroit Potawatomi sent other delegations and messages to the British in Pennsylvania assuring them of Potawatomi friendship and urging that British traders be sent into the west.⁵²

In the spring of 1760 British traders carrying the goods that the Potawatomi requested began to travel among the western tribes. Although the French still held posts at strategic locations on the Great Lakes and in the Mississippi Valley, they were powerless to keep the Indians from trading with the British. French officers spread rumors of the impending arrival of massive French armies, but after the British captured Montreal in September, they were forced to surrender. Meanwhile, British Indian agents prepared the Indians of the west for the approaching British occupation. In April, William Johnson met with the Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, and Miamis at Pittsburg and in August Croghan addressed a multi-tribal council at the same location.⁵³

⁵¹Entry for August 7, 1759, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," pp. 336-337; Entry for August 8, 1759, in ibid., pp. 338-340.

⁵²List of the Indian Nations at the Pittsburgh Council, November 5, 1759, Bouquet Papers, Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Entry for December 3, 1759, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," pp. 362-363. Also see At a Council held at Philadelphia, in the State House on Tuesday, the 4th of December, 1759, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records (17 vols.; Harrisburg: Theodore Fenn and Co., 1838-1853), VIII, pp. 415-421. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Pennsylvania Colonial Records.

⁵³George Croghan to Horatio Gates, May 20, 1760, in Aspinwall Papers, Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Krenkel, "British Conquest," p. 54. At this time Gates was a major in the British army.

Croghan expected a large delegation of Potawatomis at the August conference, but prior to the conference a mixed group of six Potawatomis, Kickapoos and Miamis visited him at Pittsburgh. These Indians informed Croghan that they had heard rumors that the conference had been postponed and that they had been sent by their tribes to investigate such news. They claimed that their homes were so far to the west that their tribesmen wished to be sure of the conference before journeying to Pittsburgh. The Potawatomis also stated that they were poor people who needed traders and asked the British to forgive their past actions in support of the French. Croghan and his associates assured them that the conference would be held as planned and indicated that the proposed British occupation of posts on the Great Lakes was intended only to "protect and lay open a free and uninterrupted Trade for you and for all Nations." After the council, the Potawatomis and other Indians received gifts before leaving to carry the British message to their fellow tribesmen.⁵⁴

The conference was held in mid-August, 1760. Croghan, Brigadier General Robert Moncton, and several other British officials met with Indians from seven tribes. Although the assembled Indians numbered over nine hundred men, women, and children, it contained only six Potawatomis: five warriors from Detroit led by Weaponhan. Monckton

Also see Indian Intelligence, Fort Pitt, June 17, 1760, Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald E. Kent, eds., The Papers of Henry Bouquet (19 vols., Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1940-1943), 21655, p. 94. These nineteen volumes are numbered between 21643-21655. Some have two parts. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers.

⁵⁴Entry for August 2, 1760, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," pp. 380-383.

assured the Indians that their "Great Father" wished them well and repeated the British desire to occupy the western posts as soon as possible. He promised the tribesmen that they could keep their lands, but he warned that if they opposed the British they would be severely punished. Iroquois spokesmen asked the Potawatomis and Ottawas to free Iroquois prisoners held by the French at Detroit. Missinago, a chief of the Ottawas, spoke for both his tribe and the Potawatomis. Missinago declared that all past differences between the two tribes and the British had been forgotten and that they would assist the British when they came to Detroit.⁵⁵

During the autumn of 1760 the British made plans to occupy Detroit and in November Major Robert Rogers set out from Presque Isle with a mixed force of rangers, Royal Americans, and friendly Indians. Rogers was accompanied by Captain Donald Campbell who commanded the Royal Americans and by Croghan who had at least nominal control over the Indians. Rogers' force proceeded by water along the southern shore of Lake Erie and arrived at the mouth of the Detroit River on November 27. There they were greeted by chiefs from the Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Hurons living near Detroit.⁵⁶ After talking with these Indians,

⁵⁵At a Conference held by the Honourable Brigadier General Monckton with the Western Nations of Indians, at the Camp before Pittsburgh, August 12, 1760, in Pennsylvania Archives, First Series (12 vols., Philadelphia: Joseph Severins and Co., 1852-1856), III, pp. 744-751. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Pennsylvania Archives, First Series.

⁵⁶Krenkel, "British Conquest," p. 54. Also see Entry for November 27, 1760, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," p. 393-394.

the British spent the next day in the Potawatomi village about four miles downstream from the fort while Campbell proceeded on to Detroit to ask Bellestre, the French commandant, to surrender the post. Campbell carried a letter from Vaudreuil instructing Bellestre to surrender the French Fort. Bellestre complied and on November 29, 1760, the British assumed command of Detroit.⁵⁷

Four days later, on December 3, 1760, the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Hurons met with Croghan, Rogers, and Campbell to discuss the new state of affairs in the west. Croghan assured them that the British would encourage traders to operate at Detroit as long as the Indians remained peaceful. He asked them to relinquish their remaining British prisoners and introduced Campbell as the new commandant at Detroit. Campbell requested the Indians to turn their war parties against the Cherokees who were raiding in the South and to refrain from harming the persons or property of British citizens. He also asked them to supply his garrison with meat for which he was willing to pay in powder and lead. Rogers informed the tribesmen that he would soon leave to occupy the garrisons at Michilimackinac, the St. Joseph and Ouiatanon and asked for some of their warriors to accompany him.⁵⁸

The Indians gave their reply on December 4 and 5, 1760. At first the Potawatomis let Achonenave, a chief of the Hurons, speak for

⁵⁷Entry for November 28, 1760, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," p. 394; Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 272.

⁵⁸Indian Conference at Detroit, December 3-5, 1760, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, pp. 95-101; Entry for December 3, 1760, in Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal," pp. 394-395.

them since the Potawatomis stated that the Hurons had "more Understanding in Council Affairs" than the Potawatomis. Achonenave informed the British that the Indians at Detroit already had delivered almost all of their prisoners to the British and that the captives who remained in their villages did not wish to return. He also asked the new rulers of the west to lower the price of trade goods which he claimed was too high. On December 5, Ninivois, the leading chief of the Detroit Potawatomis, opened the conference by also asking the British to increase the supply of low-priced trade goods at Detroit. He agreed to treat all of the white inhabitants of Detroit as his "brothers" and inquired just what prices Campbell would pay for fresh meat brought to the fort by Indians. Ninivois then requested that a large Indian council be held at Detroit during the following spring and that both William Johnson and the chiefs of the Iroquois be in attendance.⁵⁹

The conference ended on December 5 and the British settled down at Detroit as the first step in their occupation of the western Great Lakes. For the first time in almost a century the Potawatomis were nominally allied with white men other than Onontio. The Potawatomis realized that French military power in North America had been broken. They also were aware that Onontio could no longer supply them with the trade goods they so desperately needed. The Detroit Potawatomis particularly were anxious to sample the beneficence of their new English father, for it was Potawatomis from this band who

⁵⁹Indian Conference at Detroit, December 3-5, 1760, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, pp. 97-101.

had journeyed to the councils in Pennsylvania and who had welcomed Croghan and Campbell to Detroit. Yet the St. Joseph Potawatomis remained relatively untouched by the new British presence in the west. The onrushing winter kept Rogers from occupying the Lake Michigan posts, and although the French garrison had abandoned Fort St. Joseph and fled to Illinois, no British garrison had replaced them. By late December, 1760, Potawatomis from both bands desperately needed the goods and ammunition which they hoped the British might supply. But they would learn that their new father had no intention of furnishing his red children with presents of rum and powder, and they would soon join the followers of an Ottawa chieftain at Detroit.

CHAPTER V

PARTISANS OF PONTIAC

The British officials who met with the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Hurons at Detroit should have listened to the Indians' speeches closely. The Indian concern over trade goods was indicative of things to come. Although the French had been hard pressed to supply the western tribes with goods during the past two years, they had shared available lead and powder with the Indians and the tribesmen expected similar generosity from the British. Moreover, the French had developed a camaraderie with the Potawatomis and their allies and treated them almost as equals. They lavished gifts upon tribal leaders and entertained them as honored guests who were worthy of deference and esteem. The Indians expected to be treated similarly by the British; indeed, they expected the British to be even more lavish with presents, for had not the British always tempted them with more durable and less expensive trade goods in the past? Campbell soon realized the extent of the Indian expectations and reported to his superiors that:

The French have a different manner of treating them from us. The four nations that live in the environs of Detroit are as much under the commandant as the Inhabitants and come for every thing they want. I have told my situation

to General Moncton, I have nothing to give them and the French left us very little in their stores only mere trifles.¹

Campbell admitted that the French had left a quantity of powder at Detroit, but he urged British officials at Presque Isle to send traders to Detroit to furnish the Indians with supplies that they desperately needed. By January, even the powder was in short supply and Campbell's problems were compounded by the arrival of other Indians who also expected provisions from the British. Late in December he wrote to Colonel Henry Bouquet that:

The Indians here are in great distress for want of ammunition. I have had two of the Tribes that depend upon Michilimackinac that came at a great distance - they were absolutely starving, as their whole subsistence depends upon it. I was obliged to give them what I could spare.²

The Potawatomis and other tribesmen at Detroit also were dismayed by the refusal of British officials at the post to supply them with rum. Prior to the defeat of the French, British policy had urged the distribution of rum to the western tribesmen since British officials believed that the alcohol made the Indians unruly and uncooperative with the French. But with their victory in the west, the British were anxious to limit the supply of rum sold to the western tribesmen. They attempted to force traders to

¹Captain Donald Campbell to Colonel Henry Bouquet, undated, Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Lansing: Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), XIX, p. 47. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Michigan Historical Collections. Bouquet was a Swiss officer serving in the British army.

²Campbell to Bouquet, December 23, 1760, in ibid., p. 50.

deal with the tribesmen only at British forts where British military officers could control the quantity of alcohol sold to the Indians. By 1760 the Potawatomis and other Indians in the Old Northwest had become accustomed to both French brandy and English rum and they resented the abrupt change in British policy.³

The Potawatomis also resented the growing British parsimony regarding gifts to Indians. This policy was formulated by General Jeffery Amherst in an attempt to limit the expenses of the British army in North America. Unfamiliar with frontier politics, Amherst considered the presentation of gifts to Indians as wasteful and hoped that a limitation of such gifts would force the Indians to become self sufficient through the fur trade. He also believed that if the Indians could be kept busy hunting and trapping, they would be less prone to enter into conflicts with whites. Although such experienced Indian officials as William Johnson and George Croghan warned Amherst against this policy, the commander-in-chief of His Majesty's forces in North America was determined to have his way. By the summer of 1761 the British began to reap the results of Amherst's decisions.⁴

³Wilbur R. Jacobs, Wilderness Politics and Indian Gifts: The Northern Colonial Frontier, 1748-1763 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1950), pp. 52-55. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Jacobs, Wilderness Politics. Also see Howard H. Peckham, Pontiac and the Indian Uprising (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 73. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Peckham, Pontiac.

⁴Jacobs, Wilderness Politics, pp. 161, 184-185; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 72-73.

During the spring of 1761 Campbell had continued to give presents to the Potawatomis and other tribes at Detroit. Although such generosity contradicted official British policy, Campbell's isolation on the western frontier enabled him to act independently. He also feared the "fatal consequences" of refusing gifts to the neighboring tribes. Campbell's activities served the British well. By 1761 the Senecas already had become disenchanted with British supremacy in the west and were fomenting a conspiracy among the tribes of Ohio and Detroit. During the spring they sent war belts to the Delawares and Shawnees proposing attacks upon Fort Pitt, Presque Isle, Venango, and Niagara. They also sent messengers to the Potawatomis, Hurons, Ottawas, and Chippewas encouraging them to attack the British at Detroit.⁵

The Seneca overtures to the Detroit tribes fell upon deaf ears. Shortly before the Seneca messengers arrived among the Indians at Detroit, Campbell heard rumors of their intended mission and assembled the chiefs of the four tribes to warn them against joining in the conspiracy. Upon their arrival, the Seneca messengers met with leaders from the Detroit tribes in the Huron village. The Senecas invited the chiefs of the tribes at Detroit to meet with Seneca chiefs at Sandusky to discuss their plot against the British, but the Potawatomis and their allies refused. They informed the

⁵Campbell to Bouquet, June 1, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 70; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 74-75. Also see Anthony F. C. Wallace, The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), pp. 114-115. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Wallace, Death and Rebirth of the Seneca.

Seneca emissaries that they had no intention of journeying to Sandusky, but that they would meet with the Seneca chiefs if the latter came to Detroit.⁶

The Senecas were anxious for the cooperation of the Detroit tribes. During the first week of July, 1761, a delegation of Seneca chiefs met with the four tribes in the Huron village across the river from the British fort. On July 3 the Seneca chiefs Teaatoriance and Gayachiouton asked the assembled tribesmen to forget all past differences between them and exhorted them to "cut off" the British at Fort Detroit. They pointed out that the British treated the Indians disrespectfully since they had defeated the French and that they were taking the Indians' lands. The Potawatomis and their allies replied that they would answer the Senecas on the following day.⁷

To the Senecas' astonishment, on the following morning the Detroit tribes informed them that they would give their reply at the British fort in the presence of Campbell. When the British and Indians had assembled inside the fortress, the bewildered Senecas admitted their conspiracy to Campbell and listed their grievances

⁶Campbell to Bouquet, June 16, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 76-77; Campbell to Bouquet, June 21, 1761, in Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds., The Papers of Henry Bouquet (19 vols.; Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1940-1943), 21646, pp. 217-218. These nineteen volumes are numbered from 21643 to 21655. Some have two parts. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers. Also see Report of an Indian conference at Detroit, June, 1761, in ibid., 21655, pp. 123-124.

⁷Donald Campbell, Report of an Indian Council Near Detroit, July 1761, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, p. 125.

against the British. Campbell then thanked the Detroit tribes for their loyalty and warned the Senecas that if they continued in their plans they could expect only "Ruin and destruction". On July 5 the Detroit tribes concluded the council by formally refusing to join in the Seneca conspiracy. The Potawatomis and their allies warned the visiting chiefs that if the Senecas attacked the British, the Detroit tribes would come to the aid of the British and would be "obliged to interpose to put a stop to your proceedings." The Seneca delegates then promised to return to their tribe and to attempt to keep their tribesmen at peace.⁸

The refusal of the Detroit tribes caused the collapse of the Seneca conspiracy. The Potawatomis and their neighbors still believed that the British would supply them with the provisions necessary for their daily life. Campbell's decision to disobey official policy and furnish the Indians with supplies during the winter of 1760-61 probably postponed the outbreak of Indian hostilities for two years. The Detroit tribes evidently believed that the British would eventually adopt the practices of the French, and since the British had not yet occupied the west in force, the Potawatomis and their allies were willing to withhold their judgment until a later date.

British officials in the east were aware of the growing red discontent. They decided to forestall future trouble by strengthening the British position in the west and by meeting with

⁸Ibid., pp. 126-127; Campbell to Bouquet, July 7, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 86-87.

the Indians to iron out their differences. In August, 1761, George Croghan journeyed from Pittsburgh to Detroit to prepare the Indians for a large council which the British planned at Detroit in September. Croghan was received cordially by the Potawatomis, Hurons, and Ottawas and he informed them that William Johnson was enroute to Detroit to speak to them about their relations with the British. He also informed the Indians that a large force of British troops led by Major Henry Gladwin would soon arrive to strengthen Detroit and to complete the British occupation of such western posts as Michilimackinac, Green Bay, and St. Joseph. Croghan gave each of the tribes a keg of rum as a reward for their recent fidelity. He also hoped the rum would make them more receptive to Johnson's message, for he knew that British policy had not been altered to meet their expectations.⁹

Both Gladwin and Johnson arrived early in September and on September 9, Johnson opened the conference with the Detroit tribes. Johnson congratulated the Indians on their loyalty to the British and assured them that their new British father was interested in their welfare. Yet he made no mention of ammunition and trade goods: two subjects which were the key to Indian relations in the west. Johnson's reticence to address the primary problems was understandable.

⁹ Entries for August 16-21, in Nicolas Wainwright, ed., "George Croghan's Journal, 1759-1763," Pennsylvania Magazine of History, LXXI (October, 1947), pp. 412-413. Hereafter this article will be cited as Wainwright, "Croghan's Journal." Also see Robert Mokokton to Bouquet, July 13, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 94, and Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 76-78.

Enroute to Detroit he had received instructions from Amherst further limiting presents and ammunition to the Indians. Johnson had acquired too much experience in Indian affairs to even mention the contents of the message to the Indians at Detroit.¹⁰

During the next three days Johnson listened to the Indians' replies which generally assured the British of their fidelity. On September 13, Johnson concluded the conference by distributing the presents that he had brought from New York and by ordering an ox killed and roasted for the Indians. The Potawatomis and the other Indians evidently believed that Johnson's generosity was indicative of a new British policy and seemed satisfied with the results of the meetings.¹¹

While Johnson was meeting with the Indians, Captain Henry Balfour led a force of one hundred and twenty men from Detroit towards Michilimackinac to complete the British occupation of the western posts. The British reached the island on September 28 and Balfour garrisoned the post with twenty-nine men before leaving for Green Bay. He arrived at Green Bay in early October. There he christened the captured French fortress Edward Augustus and assigned

¹⁰Minutes of a Conference with the Indian Tribes at Detroit, September 9-11, 1761, in Alexander Flick and others, eds., The Papers of Sir William Johnson (13 vols.; Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1921-1962), III, pp. 474-493. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Flick, Johnson Papers. Also see Peckham, Pontiac, p. 31.

¹¹Minutes of a Conference with the Indian Tribes at Detroit, September 9-11, 1761, in Flick, Johnson Papers, III, pp. 474-493; Bouquet to Monckton, October 5, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 114.

eighteen men as a garrison. Balfour then proceeded down Lake Michigan and up the St. Joseph River to the former French fort among the Potawatomis of the St. Joseph Valley. The fort and mission occupied land on the east bank of the river, within the southwest quarter in section thirty five in modern Niles Township, Berrien County, Michigan. To staff this new British post in southwest Michigan, Balfour assigned a garrison of fifteen men under the command of Ensign Francis Schlosser. On November 9, 1761, Balfour and the remainder of his party left Fort St. Joseph and travelled over-land to Detroit.¹²

Although the Detroit Potawatomis accepted British hegemony, their more numerous kinsmen on the St. Joseph were reluctant to relinquish their ties with the French. One of the last French reports from the west described the St. Joseph Potawatomis as "the most faithful to our interests of all the Indians." In August, 1760, a Winnebago chief from the Green Bay region had warned British officials that the St. Joseph Potawatomis were still under the influence of the French and Spanish and were agitating the other tribes against the British.¹³ Since the Potawatomi villages on the St. Joseph were

¹²Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 89-90; L. H. Beeson, "Fort St. Joseph - The Mission, Trading Post and Fort Located About One Mile South of Niles, Michigan," in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, p. 186.

¹³William R. Riddell, ed., "French Report on the Western Front," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, XXIV (October, 1931), p. 580. Although this report is undated, internal evidence suggests that it was written between 1758-1763. Also see Speech of the Puant Chief, August 20, 1760, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VI, p. 327.

important for both strategic and commercial reasons, the British were anxious to bring them under their control. The St. Joseph Potawatomis controlled the major portage between the Illinois River and Lake Michigan and their villages were important trading centers in the west.¹⁴

Ensign Schlosser faced a hard task at Fort St. Joseph. He found that many of the St. Joseph Potawatomis had intermarried with French settlers and that French influence remained strong. Schlosser's attempts to enforce British trading regulations were opposed by both groups and they received encouragement in such opposition from the French in Illinois. By the spring of 1762, Schlosser's superiors in Detroit were questioning his ability to maintain control at his post, but the young ensign remained on the St. Joseph.¹⁵

If the Potawatomis believed that Johnson's generosity at the conference in September, 1761 was indicative of future British policy, their hopes were soon shattered. During January 1762 Amherst issued another order further limiting presents to the tribes and encouraging his western officers to suppress the illegal rum trade. Officers in the west ignored the orders as best they could. At Detroit Campbell realized that the commanders at other western posts were including the costs of Indian presents in the

¹⁴ Extract of a letter to Governor Murray, Giving Some Account of the Indian Trade in the Upper Country, August 10, 1761, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 14. Brigadier General James Murray was Acting Governor of Canada in 1761. Also see Peckham, Pontiac, p. 90.

¹⁵ Campbell to Bouquet, April 26, 1762, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 139.

requisitions for their garrisons and he continued to sparingly share trade goods and ammunition from his diminishing supply with the Potawatomis and their neighbors. Campbell complained to Bouquet,

The General says the Crown is to be no longer at the expense of maintaining the Indians, that they may very well live by their hunting, and desires to keep them scarce of powder. I should be glad to know what to do in that respect. I am certain if the Indians in this country had the least hint that we intended to prevent them from the use of Ammunition it would be impossible to keep them quiet I dare not trust even the Interpreters with the secret.¹⁶

Campbell's attempts to keep British policy a secret failed. During the spring of 1762 the Potawatomis and their allies suffered from a shortage of ammunition and were forbidden to purchase rum. The extent of British policy was further revealed to them in August. Earlier in the summer Croghan had dispatched Thomas Hutchins, one of his assistants, to tour the west and sample the opinion of the Indians toward British Indian policy. Hutchins journeyed through Lake Huron and Lake Michigan before reaching the villages on the St. Joseph on August 7, 1762. He met with the assembled Potawatomis, but gave them no rum nor other presents. The Potawatomis were surprised and offended by what they considered to be a serious breach of etiquette and after listening to Hutchins praise the British, they

¹⁶ Amherst to Bouquet, January 16, 1762, in *ibid.*, pp. 127-128; Campbell to Bouquet, July 3, 1762, in *ibid.*, pp. 153-154. Also see Campbell to Bouquet, August 26, 1762, in Stevens and Kent, *Bouquet Papers*, 21648, II, pp. 74-75.

asked him why William Johnson had sent no presents "to keep their women and children from the cold." They further complained that they were ill and asked for rum to ease their pain. Hutchins, who remarked that the Potawatomis seemed to express "great uneasiness" wisely left the village on the following day.¹⁷

The summer of 1762 passed quietly for the British at Detroit. But beneath the calm facade, the Potawatomis and their allies began to doubt the wisdom of their newly formed allegiance to the British. They now realized that even though Onontio often could not supply them with adequate provisions, his commanders in the west had been willing to share what had been available. The British, who possessed large quantities of rum and ammunition, refused to share any of their vast wealth with their red allies. The Potawatomis also were influenced by the French in Illinois. Although the British had occupied the former French forts on the Great Lakes, the French still clung to their posts at Chartres and Kaskaskia. French agents from Illinois journeyed throughout the Old Northwest assuring the Indians that the French king was sleeping, but that he had recently awakened and would soon force the British from the west. War belts circulated among Miamis, Shawnees, and Delawares, and during August two Frenchmen from

¹⁷Thomas Hutchins, "A Tour from Fort Cumberland North Westward round part of the Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, including part of the Rivers St. Joseph, the Wabash, and the Kiamis, with a Sketch of the Road from thence by the Lower Shawance Town to Fort Pitt," Huntingdon Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes-Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter all such material from the Great Lakes Project will be cited as Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Entries for April 4 - September 24, 1762, in Thomas Hutchins' Journal, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, pp. 167-174.

Illinois met with the Detroit tribes in the Ottawa village on the Detroit River. Although the details of this meeting remain unknown, it did not bode well for the British.¹⁸

Other events transpired which also moved the Potawatomis and their neighbors toward war. In the upper Ohio Valley a Delaware prophet had appeared who preached a nativistic doctrine and predicted that war with the whites would purge the tribes of all their problems. The Senecas once again were seething over continual white advancement onto their hunting grounds, and at Detroit, Pontiac, who possessed the ability to channel red resentment toward meaningful goals, emerged as an important leader among the Ottawas.¹⁹

Rumors of a spreading conspiracy reached the British during the fall of 1762 and although British Indian agents were concerned over the reports, they were not unduly alarmed. In Pennsylvania, George Croghan believed that the tribes were too disunited to pose a serious threat, but he underestimated the resentment of the Indians'. He also

¹⁸Alexander McKee to Bouquet, November 8, 1762, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21648, II, p. 158; Croghan to Bouquet, December 10, 1762, in ibid., pp. 176-177. Also see Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 95-97. Alexander McKee was a trader from Pennsylvania who later became a British Indian agent.

¹⁹Pierre Joseph Neyon, Sieur de Villiers to Jean Jacques D'Abbadie, December 1, 1763, in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.-; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XVIII, pp. 259-260. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections. De Villiers was the French commandant at Fort Chartres. D'Abbadie was governor of Louisiana from 1763-1765. Also see Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 102-103.

underestimated Pontiac. The Ottawa chieftain spent the winter of 1762-1763 agitating the Detroit tribes against the British.²⁰

By the spring of 1763 his endeavors produced results. On April 27, Pontiac met with the Ottawas, Potawatomis and part of the Hurons on the Ecorse River about ten miles southwest of the British fortress. Pontiac informed his audience that he had received war belts from the French king who wanted the tribesmen to attack the British. He also reminded them of the hardships they had suffered at the hands of the British and described the visions of the Delaware Prophet.²¹

²⁰ McKee to Bouquet, November 8, 1762, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21648, II, p. 158; Croghan to Bouquet, December 10, 1762, in ibid., pp. 176-177. Also see Bouquet to Amherst, December 12, 1762, in ibid., 21634, pp. 116-117.

²¹ Entry for April 27, 1763, in "The Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy," in Milo Milton Quaife, ed., The Siege of Detroit in 1763 (Chicago: R. R. Donnelly and Sons, 1958), pp. 7-17. Although the exact authorship of this journal remains uncertain, it probably was written by Robert Navarre, a French settler at Detroit. Navarre was very friendly with the Potawatomis who gave him the land for his farm. Hereafter this journal will be cited as Quaife, "Pontiac Journal." Also see Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 107-111. Historians have disagreed over the role of Pontiac in the rebellion. Francis Parkman in The Conspiracy of Pontiac ascribes the entire conflict to the carefully laid plans of the Ottawa chief. Parkman indicates that Pontiac successfully agitated the western tribes against the British and then planned the attacks upon British posts in a well organized conspiracy. See Parkman, The Conspiracy of Pontiac (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 153-155. Peckham gives Pontiac a lesser role in the rebellion. Peckham indicates that the Ottawa exercised great influence over the Detroit tribes and planned the attack upon Detroit, but he does not believe that Pontiac fomented a well organized conspiracy throughout the entire northwest. See Peckham, Pontiac. Wilbur Jacobs, in "Was the Pontiac Uprising a Conspiracy," Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, LIX (January, 1950), pp. 26-37, also argues that there was no well planned conspiracy, but sees Pontiac channeling Indian grievances into a war of independence against the British.

The conference was a success. The Potawatomis and those Hurons led by Takay eagerly joined in the Ottawa conspiracy. The Detroit Potawatomis numbered one hundred and fifty men and were led by Ninivois who admired the Ottawa chief and was willing to follow his leadership.²² On May 5, the Potawatomis met with Pontiac and his other followers in the Potawatomi village and finalized their plans for an attack upon the British fort. The Potawatomis women and children were sent from the village and sentinels were posted to insure security. Once again Pontiac denounced the British for their refusal to provide adequate trade goods to the Indians. He then informed the Potawatomis and the other members of his audience that he had sent war belts to the Chippewas at Saginaw and to other bands of Ottawas in northern Michigan. The Indians decided that on May 7, Pontiac and sixty chosen Ottawa warriors would enter the fort and ask the British for a council. They planned to carry knives under their blankets and they also plotted to conceal sawed-off muskets under the blankets of some women who would accompany them. At a prearranged signal the Ottawas intended to attack the garrison and seize control of the fort. While the Ottawas attacked the fort, the Potawatomis and Hurons planned to establish ambushes downstream from Detroit so that any soldiers or traders who might be arriving from Lake Erie could be intercepted.²³

²²Thomas Hutchins, "A Tour From Fort Cumberland...", Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before The Indian Claims Commission: An Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Area 66 ceded by the "Ottoway, Chippeway, Wyandotte, and Pottawatamie nations of Indians" to the United States pursuant to the Treaty made at Detroit on November 17, 1807," p. 275. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Great Lakes Indian Archives. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Claims Commission: Royce Area 66." Also see Quaife, "Pontiac Journal," p. 5.

²³Quaife, "Pontiac Journal," pp. 21-26.

The plot failed. Henry Gladwin, who had assumed command at Detroit from Campbell, learned of the plot from an informer. On May 7 when Pontiac and the Ottawas entered the fort they found the garrison under arms and prepared for any emergency. Realizing that their plot had been discovered, the disgruntled Ottawas left the British post without striking a blow. On the following day Pontiac again met with Gladwin and attempted to assure him that the Indians were still loyal to the British. To reinforce the illusion of everyday tranquillity, the Potawatomis and Hurons entered the Ottawa village on the evening of May 8 to play lacrosse. After the games had been completed the Potawatomis met with Pontiac and he informed them that Gladwin no longer suspected an uprising and that their original plans could be carried out on May 9.²⁴

Pontiac was mistaken. Gladwin had not been deceived by the Ottawa's renewed pledges of friendship. He still was convinced that the Indians intended to attack the British and after talking with Pontiac on May 8 he reinforced the fort and sent messages to nearby British settlers warning them to come to the stockade. During the morning of May 9, when Pontiac and a party of Ottawas again approached the fort seeking entrance they were refused. Again frustrated in his attempts to seize Detroit through subterfuge, Pontiac angrily stalked back to the Ottawa village and decided upon a different strategy.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 28-35; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 121-125. Peckham includes a good discussion of those people who possibly could have informed Gladwin of the plot.

During the afternoon of May 9, 1763, he unleashed his warriors who attacked British settlers in the Detroit area and toward evening they began to fire upon the fort.²⁵

The Potawatomis did not take part in these initial attacks since they had concentrated their warriors downstream from Detroit to prevent any reinforcements from reaching the fort. On Tuesday, May 10, they spread their warriors into the forests to the west of the fort to intercept any messengers that might approach Detroit from the British posts at the St. Joseph or Ouiatanon. This extended blockade was successful for during the morning Potawatomi warriors captured two messengers who were approaching Detroit from the St. Joseph. They delivered their captives to the Ottawas who confiscated their dispatches and then killed the messengers.²⁶

While most of the Potawatomis were guarding the approaches to Detroit, others participated in a ruse through which the Indians captured Captain Donald Campbell and Lieutenant George McDougall. In the afternoon of May 10, at least one Potawatomi accompanied a group of French and Indians who approached the British and asked that Campbell be sent to the home of Antoine Cuillerier to negotiate a peace with Pontiac. Although Pontiac had personally assured the

²⁵Quaife, "Pontiac Journal," pp. 35-46; James MacDonald to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 213-214. MacDonald was a lieutenant in the British army serving in the garrison at Detroit.

²⁶Quaife, "Pontiac Journal," p. 59.

safety of the British negotiators, he failed to keep his word. After Campbell and McDougall entered Guillerier's house they were made prisoners. Pontiac then informed Gladwin that the captives would be released if the British would surrender Fort Detroit and return to the east. Gladwin refused to discuss any evacuation of Detroit until Campbell and McDougall were returned to him.²⁷

After the officers had been captured, the Potawatomis again met with Pontiac and agreed to station a party of twenty warriors near the fort to keep the British from leaving the fort to secure provisions in the village. On May 11, while the Potawatomis watched the British post, Pontiac visited the homes and stores of the French inhabitants at Detroit and demanded that they give up their ammunition to the Indians. The lead and powder was then brought back to the Ottawa camp where it was shared with the Potawatomis and Hurons.²⁸

On May 12, the Indians made another attack upon the fort. The Potawatomis, assisted by the Hurons assaulted the south side of the fort while the Ottawas attacked the northern walls. The attack produced few results. The British defenders kept the Indians away from the walls and although a desultory fire was kept up by both sides throughout the day, neither the British nor the Indians suffered many casualties. The Indians also attacked two British sloops that were moored opposite the fort in the Detroit River, but were unable to inflict much damage to them.²⁹

²⁷MacDonald to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 214-215; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 55-58.

²⁸Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 59-61.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 65-67.

After the Indians' failure to take the fort through deception and assault, Pontiac decided to besiege the post. On May 18, he met with the Potawatomis and Hurons in a council at which the tribesmen decided to ask Chevalier Pierre Joseph Neyon de Villiers, the French commandant at Fort de Chartres to send a French officer to conduct the siege. Messengers were sent to Illinois with the request. Enroute, they were ordered to inform the Miamis of the attack upon Detroit and to persuade the Miamis to attack the French posts at Fort Miamis and at Ouiatanon.³⁰

While the Detroit Potawatomis were participating in the siege at Detroit, their kinsmen on the St. Joseph were planning an attack upon the British fort near their village. During the first week of hostilities at Detroit, messengers had been dispatched to the St. Joseph Potawatomis urging them to attack Ensign Schlosser and his small garrison. Washee a war chief of the St. Joseph Potawatomis needed little encouragement. Following Pontiac's example, he decided to take the fort through subterfuge.³¹ On the morning of May 25 the St. Joseph Potawatomis informed Schlosser that some of their relatives from Detroit had arrived and wished to pay their respects to the British commander. Schlosser agreed to welcome the visitors, but before the Potawatomis returned a French trader living nearby hurried

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 86-88; Copy of an Embassy Sent to the Illinois by the Indians at Detroit By the Couriers Godfrey and Chene, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 644-645.

³¹ Peckham, Pontiac, p. 145; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", fn. 63, p. 130. Also see Cezar Cormick, Intelligence from Detroit, June 11, 1763, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, p. 204. Cormick was a merchant at Detroit.

into Schlosser's quarters and warned him that the Potawatomis had plotted against the British and that he was in danger. Schlosser rushed to the barracks to warn the garrison, but when he reached his destination he found the barracks already full of Potawatomi warriors. The Potawatomis seemed friendly and the soldiers were not suspicious since the tribesmen frequently entered the fort to trade or carry on other business. Schlosser however, ordered his sergeant to call the men to arms and then hurried back to his quarters. There he found the delegation of Potawatomi chiefs awaiting him, but before he could question them about the purpose of their visit, screams rang out from the barracks. Schlosser attempted to defend himself but was easily overwhelmed by the Potawatomis.³²

The Potawatomi attack was a complete success. Within two minutes of the initial assault in the barracks, the Potawatomis had swarmed throughout the fort killing ten soldiers and capturing three others.³³ The warriors then seized all ammunition and trade goods stored in the fort by the garrison and British traders. Two such

³² Extract of a Court of Enquiry Held by Order of Major Henry Gladwin to Enquire into the Manner of the Taking of the Forts St. Dusky, St. Josephs, Miamis, and Presqu' Isle, July 6, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 636-637.

³³ Ibid., Peckham, Pontiac, p. 159. Accounts of the number of British soldiers killed and captured vary. Schlosser stated all were killed except three, not including himself. If the two messengers from Fort St. Joseph captured by the Potawatomis on May 10 were members of the garrison, then Schlosser's figure seems correct. In The Conspiracy of Pontiac, p. 212, Parkman indicates eleven killed and four survivors. Peckham, in Pontiac, p. 159, states that there were ten killed and six made captive.

traders who were operating in the area were also the targets of the Potawatomi attack, but they were saved from death by Louis Chevalier, a French settler who hid them in his house. After the attack, the Potawatomis carried Schlosser and the other prisoners to their village where plans were made to take the captives to Detroit.³⁴

Fort St. Joseph was not the only target of the expanding Indian rebellion. On May 16, Fort Sandusky had fallen to a force of Ottawas and Hurons and on May 27 the Miamis captured Fort Miami on the headwaters of the Maumee River.³⁵ During June the revolt spread to other tribes. After Fort Ouiatanon was captured on June 1 by a mixed party of Miamis, Kickapoos and Mascoutens, the British post at Michilimackinac fell one day later. At Michilimackinac the Chippewas gained entrance to the post during a lacrosse game and easily overcame the garrison. The fall of Michilimackinac caused the British to evacuate Fort Edward Augustus at Green Bay so that by the end of June there were no British posts west of Detroit.³⁶

³⁴ Extract of a Court of Enquiry Held by Order of Major Henry Gladwin to Enquire into the Manner of the Taking of the Forts St. Dusky, St. Josephs, Miamis, and Presqu' Isle, July 6, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 636-637; Richard Winston to English Merchants at Detroit, June 19, 1763, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, pp. 207-208. Winston was one of the British traders hidden by Chevalier.

³⁵ Copy of Intelligence brought to Fort Pitt by Mr. Calhoun, June 1, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 186. Thomas Calhoun was a British trader. MacDonald to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, in ibid., p. 217.

³⁶ Edward Jenkins to Gladwin, June 1, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 635-636. Jenkins was the commanding officer at Fort Ouiatanon. Also see MacDonald to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, in ibid., pp. 217-218; George Etherington to Gladwin, July 18, 1763, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, pp. 255-256. Etherington was the commanding officer at Michilimackinac.

The uprising also spread to the east. The Delawares and Shawnees besieged Fort Pitt while the Senecas swept through western Pennsylvania. During the middle of June a Seneca war party completely overran Fort Venango and then turned north to strike Fort Le Boeuf.³⁷ Although part of the garrison at Le Boeuf escaped, the Indians burned the fort to the ground. The Senecas then attacked Presque Isle. Aided by a force of Indians from Detroit which may have included some Potawatomis, the Senecas opened fire upon the British fort on June 20. On the next day the fort surrendered and the British inside were taken prisoner and divided between the tribes contributing warriors to the attack.³⁸

While the tide of red rebellion surged throughout the Old Northwest the Potawatomis at Detroit continued to aid Pontiac in his siege of the British fort. On May 25, while their kinsmen were capturing Fort St. Joseph, the Detroit Potawatomis attended a conference between the Indians and the French settlers at Detroit. The settlers complained that the siege had brought economic hardship to them, but Pontiac answered that the Indian cause was also the French cause and that he had taken up the hatchet in their behalf. The Potawatomis supported Pontiac's position and after the conference joined with the Ottawas in firing upon the fort.³⁹

³⁷Bouquet to Amherst, June 25, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 195; William Johnson to Amherst, July 11, 1763, in ibid., pp. 211-212.

³⁸John Christie to Bouquet, July 10, 1763, in ibid., pp. 209-210. Christie was the commanding officer at Presque Isle. Also see Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 121-122.

³⁹Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 96-100.

Since the Potawatomi village was on the same side of the river as the British fort, the Potawatomis had agreed to keep a party of warriors near the fort at all times to warn of any British sortie. Many of the British soldiers were accustomed to leave the fort and to go to the river to relieve themselves if there were no Indians in the immediate vicinity. The Potawatomis watching the fort grew familiar with these British actions and made several attempts to fire upon the soldiers on their journeys to and from the river. During the afternoon of May 25, the British attempted to erect a portable bastion which could be carried to the river by the soldiers and used for protection against the Potawatomis' fire. When the Potawatomis realized what the British were building, they opened fire upon the construction party and forced the carpenters to flee back into the fort. On the next morning however, the British again attempted to complete the bastion and this time they were successful. Although a single Potawatomi scout fired upon the construction party he was unable to halt the construction and the bastion was completed.⁴⁰

The success of the British construction party on the morning of May 26 was due to the arrival of Pontiac in the Potawatomi village. While the British were completing their bastion the majority of the Potawatomis were in council with Pontiac where they decided to attack one of the British sloops which had slipped her mooring and sailed downstream to the mouth of the Detroit River. There her captain ordered her to drop anchor to await any reinforcements that might

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 101-103.

approach Detroit from Lake Erie. In the afternoon of May 26 four hundred warriors in thirty canoes attempted to approach the sloop but were thwarted by gunfire from the vessel which weighed anchor and started toward Lake Erie. Pontiac then placed Campbell in the bow of a canoe and ordered the captive to demand that the ship surrender. Campbell however ordered the vessel to proceed on to Fort Niagara and the sloop sailed out onto Lake Erie.⁴¹

Frustrated in their attempts to capture the sloop, part of the Potawatomis again turned their attention to Fort Detroit. During the evening of May 27 they constructed a log barricade about one hundred and twenty yards southwest of the fort which they hoped would shelter snipers. Yet they abandoned the structure before daylight to await news of the rumored approach of a British convoy from Lake Erie. When the British sighted the deserted barricade on the morning of May 28, they promptly dispatched a sortie which destroyed the Potawatomis efforts.⁴²

Potawatomi failures against the fort and the sloop at the mouth of the Detroit River were soon counterbalanced by a spectacular success upon the shores of Lake Erie. On May 13, Lieutenant Abraham Cuyler and ninety-seven men left Fort Niagara to convoy a fleet of ten provision-laden bateaux to Detroit. Since the sloop had dropped anchor at the mouth of the river, the Indians were aware that the British expected the supply column. Hoping to

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 105; Peckham, Pontiac, p. 150.

⁴² Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 106-107.

intercept such reinforcements, a large party of Potawatomis and Hurons journeyed eastward along the northern shore of Lake Erie. On May 28, 1763 the Potawatomis spied Cuyler's fleet as it approached Point Pelee, a forested finger of land stretching into Lake Erie about twenty five miles east of the mouth of the Detroit River.⁴³

Cuyler was unaware that hostilities had broken out at Detroit. Late in the evening of May 28, he ordered his men to beach their bateaux on the sandy shore along the west side of the point. While many of the soldiers were preparing their camp, a man and a boy from Cuyler's command walked along the beach in search of firewood. As they wandered away from their companions, the boy was seized by Indians but the man escaped and ran back toward the bateaux shouting a warning to his comrades. Unknown to the British, the Potawatomis and Hurons had followed the fleet along the shore and now lay in ambush among the trees about one hundred and fifty feet from the water. Realizing that they had been discovered, the Indians swarmed from the tree line and rushed down upon the camp. The British attempted to form a line of defense but the Potawatomis and Hurons were into their midst before they could maneuver. Surprised by the attack and confused in the darkness, the soldiers broke and ran for the bateaux which they tried to launch to safety on Lake Erie.⁴⁴

⁴³Ibid., p. 110; Peckham, Pontiac, p. 156.

⁴⁴Lieutenant John Christie to Lieutenant Francis Gordon, June 3, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 188-189. Christie was the British commander at Presque Isle. Gordon commanded at Venango. Also see Peckham, Pontiac, p. 156.

Most of the British failed to reach their destination. Of the ninety-seven men in Cuyler's command, fifty-seven were either killed or captured. The survivors fled to Sandusky where they found the fort had been burned. They then turned toward Presque Isle where they arrived on June 3.⁴⁵

The Potawatomis captured eight bateaux, several prisoners, and a large supply of provisions. They placed the prisoners and captured provisions in the bateaux and rowed the vessels back to Detroit. There part of the prisoners and contraband were turned over to the Ottawas.⁴⁶

On June 1 the Potawatomis attended a council at the Ottawa village. On the previous day two hundred Chippewas from Saginaw led by Wasson had arrived to bolster the Indian forces at Detroit. Encouraged by the recent Potawatomi and Huron success, the Indians decided to send out another mixed party of warriors to scour the shores of Lake Erie. This war party which probably included some Potawatomis left for Lake Erie during the afternoon of June 1. Twenty days later they joined with the Senecas to capture the British post at Presque Isle.⁴⁷

On June 6, 1763, some of the Potawatomis who had gone from Detroit to aid in the attack upon Fort St. Joseph returned to their

⁴⁵Guyler's Report, quoted in Parkman, The Conspiracy of Pontiac, fn. 6, p. 207; Christie to Gordon, June 3, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 188-189.

⁴⁶MacDonald to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 216; Parkman, The Conspiracy of Pontiac, fn. 8, pp. 208-209.

⁴⁷Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 121-122; Christie to Bouquet, July 10, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, pp. 209-210.

village on the Detroit River. They informed Ninivois that the attack upon Schlosser's garrison had been successful and that a party of their St. Joseph kinsmen was enroute to Detroit. On the evening of June 9, the St. Joseph Potawatomis, accompanied by seven prisoners, arrived at the Potawatomi village on the Detroit River. At Detroit, the St. Joseph Potawatomis learned that two of their kinsmen, Big Ears and Nokaming, had been captured by the British who were holding the warriors in the fort.⁴⁸ The Potawatomis, like other Algonquian peoples of the Old Northwest had extended kinship systems and close family ties. They were concerned over the safety of the captured warriors and anxious for their return. On June 10 a delegation of St. Joseph Potawatomis approached the walls of the fort and proposed to trade Schlosser for the two warriors held captive by the British. The Potawatomis were accompanied on this venture by Laurence Gamelin, a French trader at Detroit who was well-known to the Detroit Potawatomis.⁴⁹

Gladwin refused their proposal. He demanded that the Potawatomis give up all seven captives in exchange for the two captured warriors. The St. Joseph Potawatomis went back to their kinsmen's village, but on the next day they returned to the fort and again attempted to bargain with Gladwin over the release of their warriors. Gladwin wisely permitted the delegates to talk with the captives who

⁴⁸Peckham, *Pontiac*, p. 181; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 130-131. The circumstances surrounding the capture of the two Potawatomi warriors is unknown.

⁴⁹Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", p. 131. Gamelin was on very good terms with the Detroit Potawatomis. Since 1757 he had been living near the Potawatomi village and served as a spokesman for the tribe. See *ibid.*, fn. 65, pp. 131-132.

were anxious to gain their freedom. The St. Joseph Potawatomis then pleaded with the commander for the prisoners' release. They stated that they really had little desire to make war upon the English and that they had been forced into their attack upon Schlosser's garrison by pressure from Pontiac. Gladwin stubbornly refused to release the prisoners. He chided the St. Joseph Potawatomis and inquired if they were slaves who had no will of their own and who always did Pontiac's bidding. Gladwin also warned them that the war against the British would eventually fail and bring disaster to all those who followed the Ottawa chief.⁵⁰

Gladwin's determination evidently impressed the Potawatomis, for when they again appeared at the fort on the morning of June 15 they were led by Washee who brought Schlosser and two other British prisoners with him. Washee was anxious to secure the release of Big Ears who was a minor chief and well respected by the St. Joseph Potawatomis. Nokaming however was disliked by many of his kinsmen who considered him shiftless and irresponsible. Their assessment was correct. Nokaming informed Gladwin that Big Ears was a man of prominence and that if the British traded Big Ears for Schlosser and the other two prisoners, the Potawatomis would be far less anxious to trade their others prisoners for a man many of them disliked. Therefore, after Gladwin obtained the three British prisoners, he released

⁵⁰Peckham, Pontiac, p. 184; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", p. 135.

Nokaming rather than Big Ears. Disappointed in the exchange, the Potawatomis accepted Nokaming and returned to their camp.⁵¹

On the following day Washee and two other St. Joseph Potawatomis returned to the fort accompanied by two Chippewas from Saginaw. Washee asserted that the St. Joseph Potawatomis had no quarrel with Gladwin and that they wanted to exchange all their prisoners and then return to their village. The Chippewas stated that they too were inclined toward peace and since they yet had not raised the hatchet against the British, they had decided to return to their village before they became involved in the hostilities. Gladwin complimented both tribes on their wisdom and urged them to return to their villages.⁵²

The growing dissatisfaction of the St. Joseph Potawatomis with the war against the British was the result of several factors. They had been so singularly successful in the capture of Fort St. Joseph that they evidently expected Pontiac to achieve similar success against Detroit. When they arrived at Detroit and found that the attack upon the British fort had been extended into a lengthy siege, they soon began to lose interest. Their disaffection from the rebellion also was heightened by their assessment of Pontiac's leadership. Unlike Ninivois, who was infatuated with the Ottawa chief, Washee considered Pontiac to be high-handed and seemed to resent his leadership. This resentment was aggravated on June 11

⁵¹Peckham, Pontiac, p. 184; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 137-138.

⁵²Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 184-185.

when a French trader, Jacques Lacelle arrived from Montreal with two canoes full of merchandise. The Potawatomis demanded that he give them part of the liquor he had brought from the St. Lawrence and Lacelle grudgingly provided them with two kegs of wine. When Pontiac heard of the Potawatomi actions he ordered Lacelle to move the rest of his merchandise to a spot nearer the Ottawa village where Pontiac could provide him with "protection". But after the merchandise had been transported, Pontiac seized five kegs of the liquor and distributed them to his fellow Ottawa tribesmen. A drunken brawl resulted in which several British prisoners were killed and their bodies thrown into the river. Pontiac's actions and the resulting slaughter of the prisoners angered both the St. Joseph and Detroit Potawatomis. Since Big Ears was still held captive by Gladwin, they feared that the British would seek revenge against their kinsman.⁵³

Yet the Potawatomis' disaffection was alleviated on June 18 when the news of the Chippewa victory at Mackinac reached Detroit. Even criticism by a party of newly arrived Shawnees and Delawares did little to dampen Pontiac's spirits and most of the Potawatomis again were swept up by his optimism.⁵⁴ On June 21 Pontiac was informed that the sloop Michigan was returning from Niagara and would soon enter the Detroit River. He mustered the Indians at Detroit, Potawatomis included, and instructed them to build log bastions on Turkey Island from which they could ambush the sloop as it passed up

⁵³Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 133-134; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 183-184.

⁵⁴Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 140-146.

river. The Michigan entered the river late in the afternoon and by six P. M. it had ascended as far as Turkey Island. While passing the island however, the wind fell and the sloop was forced to drop anchor. The Indians were jubilant. They had held their fire and now believed that the British aboard ship were unaware of their presence. After dark the Indians paddled their canoes toward the vessel, hoping to take her by surprise, but confident that their superior numbers would give them victory under any situation.⁵⁵

They were mistaken. Unknown to the warriors, the sloop carried a reinforcement of fifty-five soldiers who were hidden below deck. A lookout aboard ship spotted the oncoming canoes and the soldiers were silently mustered on deck where they remained hidden behind the gunwales. The first indication that the approaching Indians had that their assault had been discovered was the crash made by a wooden mallet as it slammed against the deck. The next clue that they were discovered was the last thing that many of the warriors ever saw. The hammer blow was followed by a well timed volley of muskets and cannon fire which swept through the approaching canoes killing fourteen Indians and wounding many others. Bewildered by their discovery, and anxious to flee from their exposed position on the water, the warriors frantically turned their canoes about and paddled for the refuge of the island. There they fired upon the sloop from the safety of their log barricades, but failed to inflict any

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 150-151; Peckham, Pontiac, p. 189. Also see Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, pp. 221-222.

damage to the British aboard. On the following morning the wind remained calm and the sloop was forced to weigh anchor and drop back into Lake Erie.⁵⁶

On June 30 the sloop finally was able to sail up the river and reach Detroit. As he watched the reinforcements and supplies go ashore and enter the fort, Pontiac must have realized that his siege was ineffective. During the first week of July he met with the French residents of Detroit and tried to enlist their active service in another attack upon the fort. Although a few young Frenchmen responded, most of the settlers diplomatically refused, stating that the former French governor had ordered them to lay down their arms and accept the British. The Ottawa chief also was forced to surrender his prize captive, Donald Campbell to the Chippewas. After the nephew of the Chippewa chief Wasson had been slain in a skirmish near the fort, Wasson demanded that Pontiac turn Campbell over to the Chippewas. Pontiac meekly complied and Wasson then tortured and killed the hapless Campbell.⁵⁷

The deterioration of Pontiac's position was not lost on the Potawatomis. On July 6 a delegation of Potawatomi chiefs accompanied by Camelin approached the fort and again conferred with Gladwin. They informed the commander that they had grown weary of the war and that they wished to leave Pontiac and make peace with the British. The Potawatomis also stated that they had two more British prisoners in

⁵⁶Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 150-152; Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, p. 222.

⁵⁷Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 158-176. McDougall who was captured with Campbell had escaped on July 2.

their village whom they would gladly relinquish if Gladwin would only release Big Ears. Gladwin chided them for their part in the futile attack upon the sloop, but promised that if they would refrain from further hostilities he would exchange the prisoners and speak in their behalf after the rebellion was over.⁵⁸

The Potawatomis returned on the next day accompanied by some Hurons who also were discouraged with Pontiac's siege. The Potawatomis obtained a belt of wampum from Gladwin which they intended to circulate among their tribesmen to show that Gladwin sincerely intended to give up Big Ears in exchange for prisoners held by the Potawatomis. The Hurons informed Gladwin that they too were anxious for peace and that they would surrender their prisoners if he would grant them amnesty. The commander told them to relinquish their captives and he would recommend their amnesty to Amherst when the British regained control of the west.⁵⁹

On July 12, 1763 the Potawatomis returned to the fort during the morning with three prisoners whom they proposed to exchange for Big Ears. Gladwin informed them that they must relinquish all captives if they hoped to obtain their kinsman. The Potawatomis left and returned in the afternoon with ten prisoners, including the traders Hugh Crawford and Chapman Abraham. He turned the prisoners over to Gladwin and he was about to release Big Ears when Abraham informed the commander that the Potawatomis still held other prisoners

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 178; Peckham, Pontiac, p. 196.

⁵⁹Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", p. 179; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 196-197.

in their village. Gladwin then refused to give up his Potawatomi prisoner. The Potawatomis were enraged by Gladwin's refusal and evidently contemplated attacking the commander and then escaping as best they could. They reconsidered however and angrily stalked out of the British fortress.⁶⁰

Disappointed over their repeated failure to obtain Big Ears, the Potawatomis struck back. On the night of July 13 they crept up to the fort and fired upon the sentinels who were stationed outside the walls to warn of approaching Indians. One sentinel was mortally wounded and died the following day. Renewed Potawatomi hostility toward the British was also reflected in their support of Pontiac at a multi-tribal conference held in the Huron villages during the last week of July. After listening to Pontiac harangue the assembled warriors against the British, the Potawatomis joined with the other Indians and chanted the war dance against their British enemy.⁶¹

Yet their renewed hostility was soon dampened by the return of Pontiac's emissaries to De Villiers in Illinois. The French commander informed the Indians that he could send no aid until he investigated the validity of a rumored peace between Britain and France. If such rumors proved to be false, De Villiers promised to

⁶⁰Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 184-185; Peckham, "Pontiac", p. 198. Hugh Crawford had been captured on the Wabash River during the third week in June. See Thomas Calhoun, *Indian Intelligence*, May 27, 1763, in *Michigan Historical Collections*, XIX, p. 186. Abraham had been taken by the Hurons near Detroit on May 13. He feigned insanity and the Hurons gave him to the Potawatomis. See Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 73-74.

⁶¹Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", pp. 185-186; *ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

send such assistance as was available, but in the meantime, he ordered French citizens at Detroit to take no part in the hostilities.⁶²

Other events also increased Potawatomi misgivings about continuing their renewed support of the Ottawa chief. On July 6, 1763, Captain James Dalyell had left Niagara with a reinforcement of two hundred and sixty men. Crowded into twenty-two bateaux, Dalyell's force sailed along the southern shore of Lake Erie where they burned the Huron village near Sandusky Bay and then turned north toward the mouth of the Detroit River. The British entered the river after dark on the evening of July 29 and fortunately for Dalyell, his movements were hidden by dense fog that shrouded the Detroit area. During the early morning hours of Friday, July 30, the British flotilla crept upstream where their progress went unnoticed until they passed opposite the Potawatomi and Huron villages. There they were discovered and while the Potawatomis and Hurons fired upon them from the river bank, the British surged forward toward the safety of the fort. Finally, at dawn the fog lifted and Dalyell's force emerged out of the mist at their destination. The British suffered fifteen wounded, but Fort Detroit was measurably strengthened.⁶³

Dalyell's arrival seemed to convince the Potawatomis that further support of Pontiac was fruitless. Although the Ottawas, Chippewas, and part of the Hurons kept up the siege, the Potawatomis

⁶²Ibid., pp. 196-197; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 199-200.

⁶³Bouquet to Amherst, August 27, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 227; Quaife, "Pontiac Journal", p. 200.

withdrew from active warfare. They did not support Pontiac in the Ottawa's victory over Dalyell at the Battle of Bloody Bridge on July 31 and on August 17 Pontiac was forced to remove his village to the west side of the Detroit River, near the mouth of the River Rouge. Since the Potawatomis no longer could be relied upon to intercept British vessels, Pontiac resettled the Ottawas in a position to guard the southern approach to the fort.⁶⁴

During August 1763 both the Detroit and St. Joseph Potawatomis abstained from the fighting at Detroit. The St. Joseph Potawatomis withdrew to their villages in southwestern Michigan, but on September 9 seventy of their warriors returned to Detroit in another effort to secure the release of the hapless Big Ears. They assured Gladwin that they planned to remain at peace but the commander still refused to relinquish his captive. Some of the St. Joseph Potawatomis then left Detroit but others remained until September 19 before returning to their villages.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 205, 210. On July 31, 1763, Dalyell and two hundred forty seven British troops left Fort Detroit to sortie against the Ottawa village. Pontiac learned of the sortie and ambushed the British with over four hundred warriors. The British suffered twenty killed, including Dalyell, and thirty seven wounded. Indian losses were estimated at seven killed and twelve wounded. See ibid., pp. 202-208.

⁶⁵Peckham, Pontiac, p. 232. The subsequent fate of Big Ears is unknown. As late as October 14, 1763, the Detroit Potawatomis were still trying to obtain his release. Gladwin probably released him sometime between November, 1763 and March, 1764, for during March the St. Joseph Potawatomis raided in the Detroit area and it seems unlikely that he would have released the Potawatomis after such hostilities. In June, 1764 Gladwin mentions that two other St. Joseph Potawatomis were captured by the British, but seems to indicate that they are the only members of the band held prisoner at that time. See Peckham, Pontiac, p. 234. Also see Gladwin to Thomas Gage, April 12, 1764, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomis File, Great Lakes Indian Archives;

Meanwhile, the siege of the British fortress dragged on. The Detroit Potawatomis took no part in it. Although a few of their young men may have joined the Ottawas and Chippewas in an attack upon a British schooner arriving at Detroit early in October, such attacks reflected the efforts of a few individuals and did not reflect tribal policy. The Chippewas also began to grow weary of Pontiac's leadership and during the third week in October they too met with Gladwin to discuss a peace. Even part of the Ottawas lost faith in the siege and approached the British seeking a peaceful solution to the hostilities.⁶⁶ Yet Pontiac continued in his endeavors through October, but his efforts to rally the tribesmen were in vain. On October 29 a messenger arrived from De Villiers in Illinois with the news that the French and British were at peace. De Villiers instructed all the tribes at Detroit to "lay down their arms" and to "cease spilling the blood of your Bretheren the English." The siege had failed. During the first week in November Pontiac and his Ottawa followers left for the Maumee River in Ohio.⁶⁷

Gladwin to Gage, June 7, 1764, in ibid. Major General Thomas Gage was appointed Commander of British Forces in North America During October, 1763.

⁶⁶ John Montresor to Thomas Basset, November 2, 1763, in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Clarence Edwin Carter, eds., The Critical Period, 1763-1765, Vol. X of The Collections of the Illinois Historical Library (34 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1903-), p. 534. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, X. Lieutenant John Montresor arrived at Detroit aboard the schooner Huron on October 3, 1763. Captain John Basset was an engineer at Fort Pitt. Also see Gladwin to Amherst, November 1, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, p. 675; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 234-235.

⁶⁷ De Villiers to the Indians, September 27, 1763, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 653-654; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 240, 243.

Many of the Detroit Potawatomis also left the region for the winter. During the latter half of October they scattered from their village near the fort to establish winter hunting camps in southeastern Michigan. Part of the St. Joseph Potawatomis also dispersed for the winter, but some of their dispersion was of a more permanent tenure. They had earlier established villages in the Chicago region, but by 1763 Potawatomis from the St. Joseph or Chicago had joined with Sacs and Ottawas to form a new village near the mouth of the Milwaukee River in southeast Wisconsin.⁶⁸ Other St. Joseph Potawatomis continued to expand their occupancy down the Illinois River valley. During the winter of 1763-1764 a large party of these Potawatomis established a village about one hundred and fifty miles from Fort Chartres. De Villiers indicated that the Potawatomis wintering on the Illinois remained anti-British and still seemed to be heavily influenced by the teachings of the Delaware Prophet.⁶⁹

De Villiers sent a peace message to the St. Joseph Potawatomis similar to the message sent to Detroit, but it had less impact. Although

⁶⁸Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Emily J. Blasingham, "An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 77, which was Relinquished and Royce Area 78, which was Ceded by the "united tribes of Ottawas, Chipawas, and Pottowotomees, residing on the Illinois and Melwakee rivers, and their waters, and on the southwestern parts of Lake Michigan" under the Treaty held at St. Louis on August 24, 1816." This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims commission and can be found in the Berthrong Collections, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin and Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Areas 77 and 78." Also see Peckham, Pontiac, p. 235.

⁶⁹De Villiers to D'Abbadie, December 1, 1763, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 259.

they had officially withdrawn from the conflict they remained in close contact with the French creole population of Illinois who continued to influence them against the British. They also were encouraged to reopen hostilities by other tribes who remained anti-British. During November, 1763, the St. Joseph Potawatomis were visited by a delegation of four Delawares from the Ohio River who urged them to renew their attacks upon Detroit. The Delawares indicated that the war would be continued in the following spring and that other tribes had agreed to join in the uprising. The Potawatomis accepted the Delaware war belts and promised to strike Detroit as soon as the winter passed. These Potawatomis also were encouraged to re-open hostilities by the Chippewas, and although a faction of the band led by Machoquise counseled for peace, many of the warriors were determined to honor their promises to the Delawares.⁷⁰

At Detroit, Gladwin received intelligence that the St. Joseph Potawatomis were planning attacks and he was suspicious of their recent protestations of friendship. On March 16, 1764, his fears were confirmed. A party of about one hundred St. Joseph Potawatomis appeared at Detroit and although they were unable to inflict any casualties upon the British garrison, they did kill some livestock in the vicinity of the

⁷⁰Louis Chevalier to Gladwin, November 24, 1763, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Thomas Gage to William Johnson, April 25, 1764, in Flick, Johnson Papers, IV, pp. 408-409. Also see Extract from the Diary of the Siege of Detroit, February 23, 1764, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 261.

fort. Gladwin dispatched a force of soldiers who pursued the raiding party and a skirmish resulted. Yet neither Potawatomis nor the British suffered an casualties and the Potawatomis slipped away under cover of darkness.⁷¹

Throughout the spring of 1764 the St. Joseph Potawatomis continued to harass the Detroit region. They remained unsuccessful in their attempts to inflict casualties upon the garrison, but they continued to kill livestock and evidently captured several prisoners. Two Potawatomi warriors also were taken by Gladwin who planned to hold them as hostages until the captured British were released.⁷²

While their kinsmen from the St. Joseph continued to annoy Gladwin, the Detroit Potawatomis remained at peace. They did not take part in the raiding at Detroit and during the summer of 1764 they surrendered additional prisoners to Gladwin who reported favorably upon their behavior. Many of the Detroit Potawatomis refused to re-occupy their old village near the fort during the summer of 1764 and by fall it was completely deserted.⁷³ They evidently seemed unsure of

⁷¹Gladwin to Gage, March 24, 1764, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Gladwin to Gage, April 12, 1764, in *ibid.* Also see George McDougall to Bouquet, March 24, 1764, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21650, II, p. 68.

⁷²Gladwin to Gage, June 7, 1764, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Dederick Brehm to Bouquet, May 1, 1764, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21650, I, p. 123. Lieutenant Brehm was a German engineer serving in the British army at Detroit.

⁷³Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 274; Gladwin to Gage, May 12, 1764, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Gage to the Earl of Halifax, July 21, 1764, in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1857), VII, p. 656. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as New York Colonial Documents.

their status among the British, for in July they refused to attend a multi-tribal conference at Niagara for fear of possible retribution.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, during the summer of 1764, the British launched two punitive expeditions against the Shawnees and Delawares in Ohio. Colonel Henry Bouquet was dispatched from Fort Pitt to strike the Delaware and Shawnee villages along the Ohio River while Colonel John Bradstreet was to sail along the southern shore of Lake Erie from Niagara to Detroit. Bradstreet was instructed to attack any Shawnees or Delawares that he might encounter in Ohio and then to relieve Gladwin at Detroit. Near Presque Isle Bradstreet met a delegation of Shawnees and Delawares. Upon his own initiative, the British commander arbitrarily signed a peace agreement with the Indians and then proceeded on to Maumee Bay. There he dispatched Captain Thomas Morris down the Maumee-Wabash waterway to Illinois. Morris was instructed to make peace with all the Indians he should encounter and then journey to Fort Chartres to ask Louis St. Ange, Sieur de Bellerive, who had replaced De Villiers, to assist him in pacification of the Illinois tribes.⁷⁵

Bradstreet proceeded on to Detroit where he sent messages to the Ottawas, Chippewas, Potawatomis, Hurons and Miamis to meet with him early in September to sign an official treaty of peace. Bradstreet hoped that Pontiac would be in attendance at the conference, but when

⁷⁴Nations at the General Meeting, July, 1764, in Flick, Johnson Papers, IV, p. 481; William Johnson to the Boards of Trade, August 30, 1764, in New York Colonial Documents, VII, pp. 648-649.

⁷⁵Bouquet to Gage, August 27, 1764, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, pp. 271-272; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 257-260. The two St. Joseph Potawatomis captured by Gladwin in the spring of 1764 evidently were released at this time.

the Indians assembled on September 5, the Ottawa chief was absent. Notably absent also were the hostile Potawatomi chiefs Ninivois and Washee, for the Potawatomis were represented by Kiouqua and Nanaquiba Wasson, the Chippewa chief responsible for Campbell's death was present and generally spoke for the assembled Indians. After several days of speeches the Indians agreed to turn in their captives and swore allegiance to the British king. Bradstreet then declared that the Indians were at peace and optimistically reported the results of his conference to his superiors.⁷⁶

Bradstreet's optimism was based upon ignorance. While the Shawnees and Delawares at Presque' Isle were assuring him of their desire for peace, other members of the two tribes were raiding against the British frontier in Pennsylvania. Morris was able to descend the Maumee-Wabash waterway no farther than the Miami village near modern Fort Wayne, Indiana before Miami and Kickapoo hostility forced him to rejoin Bradstreet at Detroit. The elaborate promises of peace by the Shawnees and Delawares had been intended only to keep Bradstreet from attacking their villages while they prepared to re-open the war.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Bradstreet to Gage, August 28, 1764, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Bradstreet to Gage, September 12, 1764, in *ibid.* Also see Congress with the Western Nations, September 7-10, 1764, in Flick, Johnson Papers, IV, pp. 526-533. Kiouqua represented the Potawatomis from Detroit. Nanaquiba spoke for the Potawatomis from the St. Joseph.

⁷⁷Bouquet to Gage, September 5, 1764, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 273; Gage to Johnson, September 16, 1764, in Flick, Johnson Papers, IV, pp. 538-539. Also see Thomas Morris, "Journal of Captain Thomas Morris," in Early Western Travels, 1748-1846, ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites (32 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904-1907, I, pp. 301-302. Hereafter this journal will be cited as "Morris Journal" in Thwaites, Early Western Travels, I.

The Detroit Potawatomis did not join in the renewed hostilities. After fleeing the Miami village Morris passed through a Potawatomi village near Detroit where he received food and where he saw a British flag flying among the lodges. The Potawatomis on the St. Joseph were of a different mind. Morris had been preceded along the Maumee by a party of Shawnees and Delawares who had carried a war belt to the Miamis and Kickapoos and then journeyed north to the Potawatomi villages on the St. Joseph. There the Shawnees and Delawares found a receptive audience. Many of the Potawatomi warriors opposed Nanaquiba's actions at Detroit and while Nanaquiba was negotiating a peace with Bradstreet, his kinsmen danced the war dance on the St. Joseph's.⁷⁸

During October and November, 1764, Colonel Henry Bouquet led a force of British regulars from Fort Pitt against the Shawnees and Delawares and succeeded in bringing a temporary peace to the Ohio Valley. Unaware that the Shawnees and Delawares had ceased their warfare, the St. Joseph Potawatomis honored their promises to them and struck at Detroit. On November 22, 1764 they killed and scalped two British soldiers within sight of the fort and then slipped away before the garrison could retaliate.⁷⁹ Colonel John Campbell, who had assumed command at Detroit after Gladwin's departure in late August, called the

⁷⁸"Morris Journal," in Thwaites, Early Western Travels, I, pp. 323-324; John Montresor, "Journals of Captain John Montresor," in Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1881, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Louis St. Ange, Sieur de Bellerive to D'Abbadie, August 12, 1764, in Illinois Historical Collections, X, pp. 293-296. St. Ange had earlier served at Vincennes.

⁷⁹Intelligence from Fort Pitt, December 20, 1764, in Stevens and Kent, Bouquet Papers, 21655, pp. 254-255; Johnson to the Lords of Trade, May 24, 1765, in New York Colonial Documents, VII, p. 711.

Detroit Potawatomis to the fort from their newly established villages in southeastern Michigan. He instructed the Detroit Potawatomis to go to the St. Joseph and to bring back the Indians responsible for the attack. He also asked that the chiefs of the St. Joseph band appear at Detroit to explain the reasons behind their renewed hostilities.⁸⁰

The Detroit Potawatomis complied with Campbell's instructions and in late January, 1765, they returned to Detroit with a small delegation of their kinsmen from the St. Joseph. The St. Joseph Potawatomis were led by Nangisse and Peshibon who were penitent and apologized for the killings. They claimed that the attack had been perpetrated by irresponsible young warriors and did not reflect tribal policy. They promised to return in the spring with those responsible for the killings and also to return certain prisoners recently taken by members of their band. Campbell accepted their explanation upon condition that they leave two of their party behind as hostages until they should reappear in the spring. The St. Joseph Potawatomis reluctantly agreed, and after surrendering two of their number, they left for their villages.⁸¹

Pontiac had not remained dormant after he fled Detroit in the fall of 1763. After establishing his village on the Maumee, he

⁸⁰Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before The Indian Claims Commission: Royce Area 66," p. 274, Conference with the Potawatomi of Detroit and the Potawatomi of St. Joseph, January 26, 1765, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

⁸¹Conference with the Potawatomi of Detroit and the St. Joseph, January 26, 1765, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

had agitated among the tribes of Illinois in an attempt to form a new alliance against the British. During the early months of 1765 he sent war belts to the Illinois Confederacy and to the Osages and Quapaws across the Mississippi in Spanish Louisiana. He received encouragement from French creoles in Illinois who also supplied the Indians with ammunition. British officials realized they could never bring order to the west as long as Illinois remained unoccupied by British troops. During April, 1765 an initial effort was made to prepare Illinois for British occupation when Lieutenant John Ross was dispatched from Mobile to Fort Chartres. Yet Ross encountered such hostility from the Indians in Illinois that he was forced to flee without accomplishing his purpose.⁸²

Meanwhile, George Croghan made plans to descend the Ohio River to Illinois in hopes that he also could minimize anti-British sentiment and prepare the Indians for British occupation. Croghan was delayed in leaving Fort Pitt and therefore sent Lieutenant Alexander Fraser on ahead to Illinois to make arrangements for a multi-tribal council to be held in May, 1765. Fraser and a small party of soldiers and pro-British Indians left Fort Pitt on March 22, 1765. They arrived at Fort Chartres on April 17.⁸³

⁸²Johnson to the Lords of Trade, May 24, 1765, in Illinois Historical Collections, X, p. 500; St. Ange to D'Abbadie, April 7, 1765, in ibid., pp. 468-471. Also see St. Ange to D'Abbadie, February 21, 1765, in ibid., pp. 439-441.

⁸³Peckham, Pontiac, p. 270.

Fraser immediately found himself in danger. Pontiac was in Illinois and tried to seize the British lieutenant upon his arrival at Fort Chartres. St. Ange prevented Pontiac from taking such action, but two of Fraser's men were captured by Illinois warriors loyal to Pontiac and the lieutenant's presence at Fort Chartres was resented by the neighboring Indians. Fraser finally was able to convince Pontiac and the other Indians that George Croghan would soon arrive and they reluctantly agreed to meet with him. Fraser then obtained the release of his men by providing the Indians with a banquet of a roasted bullock and one hundred and thirty pots of French brandy.⁸⁴

Yet the growing accord between Fraser and Pontiac was soon disrupted by the arrival of a party of St. Joseph Potawatomis. On April 28 they arrived at Fort Chartres accompanied by some Chippewas and immediately seized some of Fraser's men who they hoped to exchange for their two kinsmen held hostage at Detroit. They also attempted to capture Fraser but the British officer was protected by St. Ange. Fraser spent the night of April 28 in hiding but on the next day the Potawatomis apologized for their actions and agreed to join the other Indians in meeting Croghan..⁸⁵

Croghan never arrived at Fort Chartres. Because of difficulties encountered in negotiating with the Shawnees, Delawares and Senecas at Fort Pitt, he failed to leave for Illinois until May 7. Enroute to Fort Chartres, Croghan was captured by a party of Kickapoos and

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 270-273.

⁸⁵Fraser to Gage, May 15, 1765, in Illinois Historical Collections, X, pp. 491-492; Fraser to Campbell, May 17, 1765, in ibid., pp. 493-494. Also see Fraser to Unknown, May 17, 1765, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

Mascoutens near the mouth of the Wabash River. These Indians carried Croghan up the Wabash to Vincennes and then on to their villages near Ouiatanon. Meanwhile, some Shawnees and Delawares who had accompanied Croghan were released by the Kickapoos and Mascoutens and they continued on to Illinois where they informed Pontiac of Croghan's fate. By this time Fraser had left Illinois for New Orleans, but Pontiac and a small party of Indians journeyed to the Wabash and there met with Croghan at Ouiatanon. After a conference with the British agent Pontiac agreed to the British occupation of Illinois and then accompanied Croghan to Detroit.⁸⁶

At Detroit, Croghan met with Pontiac and delegations from many tribes including the Detroit Potawatomis. Croghan implored the Indians to remain at peace and urged Pontiac's Ottawas to re-settle near Detroit. The Indian reply indicates that they were concerned over the coming British occupation of the west and feared that their lands would be taken from them. On September 4, 1765 Pontiac and representatives from the Chippewas and Detroit Potawatomis met with Croghan and reminded him that they had never sold any of their land to the French and that they still considered it their own. They informed Croghan that they were willing to give up enough land so that the British could build trading posts, but they had no intention of ceding large areas and that they expected payment for any lands taken. Croghan's answer to such an argument remains unknown, but he did succeed in persuading Pontiac and

⁸⁶George Croghan, "Croghan's Journal, 1765," in Thwaites, Early Western Travels, I, pp. 126-148. Hereafter this journal will cited as "Croghan's Journal," in Thwaites, Early Western Travels.

the chiefs of the Chippewas, Hurons and Detroit Potawatomis to journey to New York during the following summer to meet with William Johnson.⁸⁷

The St. Joseph Potawatomis did not take part in these initial negotiations but a delegation of their chiefs arrived at Detroit on September 25. Although they had failed to surrender the Potawatomis responsible for the deaths of the two British soldiers in November, 1764, during the summer of 1765 they had released two British prisoners. They informed Croghan that they were sorry for the actions of their young men and that they counseled them against anti-British activities. They also stated that since their French father had been overthrown they had been "wandering in the dark like blind people" but they now hoped to partake of the British "light". Croghan replied that their past conduct had been far from satisfactory and that he had doubted their allegiance but was now convinced of the sincerity of their statements. He admonished them to control their young men and warned them that they could expect swift justice if they did not. Croghan then presented them with gifts of clothing, powder, vermillion and rum for themselves and for their families. On September 26, 1765, Croghan left Detroit for Niagara and the east where he reported upon his journey and made preparations for the coming conference between Johnson and the western chiefs.⁸⁸

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 153-161; Peckham, Pontiac, p. 288.

⁸⁸Campbell to Gage, August 2, 1765, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; "Croghan's Journal," in Thwaites, Early Western Travels, I, pp. 164-166. The two Potawatomis taken hostage by Campbell at Detroit in January, 1765 evidently were released at this time.

During the following summer, Pontiac, accompanied by chiefs from the Ottawas, Chippewas, Hurons, and Detroit Potawatomis complied with Croghan's wishes and journeyed to Oswego to meet William Johnson. Accompanied by Hugh Crawford, who had once been a Potawatomi captive, the Indians left Detroit during June, 1766 and arrived at Oswego on July 4. There Pontiac and the other chiefs, including the Detroit Potawatomis, made a treaty of peace and alliance with the British.⁸⁹

Pontiac's rebellion was over and the Ottawa chief kept the peace with the British. The Detroit Potawatomis did the same. Yet the chiefs from the St. Joseph did not attend the conference for by the summer of 1766 their young men had again raided near Detroit and they were no longer welcome at the British council. The St. Joseph villages also were being disrupted as the Potawatomis in southwestern Michigan continued to disperse and form new bands. Some of these Potawatomis would eventually join with their kinsmen from Detroit and serve with the British in the American Revolution. But others would form new villages and remain reluctant to serve those who had overthrown Onontio. The Potawatomi-British feud would continue.

⁸⁹Proceedings at a Conference with Pontiac and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Pautawattamies, Hurons and Chippawaes begun Tuesday, July 23, 1766, in New York Colonial Documents, VII, pp. 854-867; Peckham, Pontiac, pp. 288-290.

CHAPTER VI

SERVING A NEW FATHER

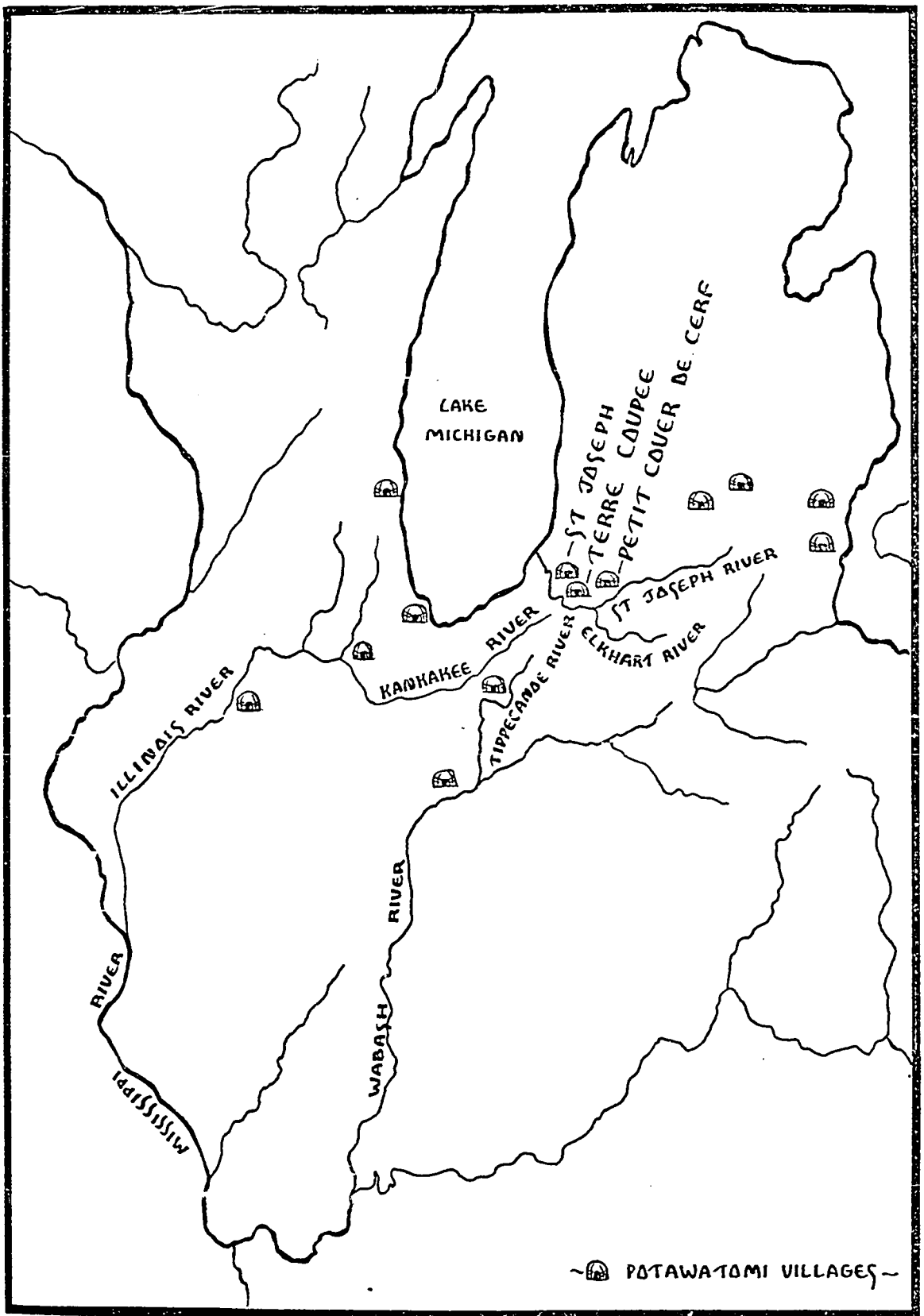
The St. Joseph Potawatomis did not attend the peace conference held at Oswego during the summer of 1766. Although their chiefs had promised Croghan to remain at peace, those promises had been broken. During February Potawatomi warriors associated with the St. Joseph band had struck at Detroit and killed two soldiers. Campbell retaliated and seized two other Potawatomis as hostages and the old animosity was again renewed. Yet the chiefs who had promised peace to Croghan may not have been at fault. By 1766 the St. Joseph Potawatomis were no longer concentrated along the St. Joseph River in southwestern Michigan. Splinter groups continued to leave the Fort St. Joseph area to form new villages to the south and west. This fractionalization caused many of the splinter groups to act independently of each other and the old chiefs from the Fort St. Joseph villages no longer exercised authority over them.¹

¹Campbell to Gage, April 10, 1766, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter all such materials from the Great Lakes Project will be cited as Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 117 which was Ceded to the United States by the "Ottawa, Chippewa, and Pottawatamie Nations of Indians" under the Treaty held at Chicago on August 29, 1821," pp. 106-113. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Area 117."

Prior to Pontiac's attack upon Detroit, Potawatomis emigrating from the St. Joseph had established villages near Chicago and Milwaukee. During the last half of the 1760's they were followed by other members of the band who erected villages in northwestern Indiana and in the Illinois River Valley. Between 1765 and 1769 St. Joseph Potawatomis, often accompanied by Chippewas and Ottawas, continued to move south down the Illinois River.² By 1768 they had established villages at the site of modern Kankakee, Illinois and on the Kankakee River near its juncture with the Des Plaines. A year later Spanish reports from Louisiana indicate that many of the Potawatomis receiving gifts in Louisiana were from villages on the Illinois River. Although the British continued to refer to all of these Indians as "St. Joseph Potawatomis," many no longer lived in the Fort St. Joseph area.³

²Statement by Hugh Crawford, July 22, 1765, in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Clarence Edwin Carter, eds., The Critical Period. 1763-1765, Vol. X of The Collections of the Illinois Historical Library (54 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1905-), p. 484. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, X. Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Emily J. Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 77, which was Relinquished, and Royce Area 78, which was ceded, by the "united tribes of Ottawas, Chipawas, and Pottowotomees, residing on the Illinois and Melwakee rivers, and their waters, and on the southwestern parts of Lake Michigan" under the Treaty held at St. Louis on August 24, 1816", pp. 72-77. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin and Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Areas 77 and 78."

³Report of the Various Indian Tribes Receiving Presents in the District of Ylinoa or Illinois, 1769", in Louis Houck, ed. The Spanish Regime in Missouri (2 vols.; Chicago: R. R. Donnelley and Sons, 1909), I, p. 44. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Houck, Spanish Regime in Missouri. Also see Copy of a Speech by Machioquisse, August 14, 1768, in Alexander Flick and others, eds., The Papers of Sir William Johnson (13 vols.; Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1921-1962), XII, pp. 585-586. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Flick, Johnson Papers. Machioquisse was a chief of the Detroit Potawatomis.



POTAWATOMI VILLAGES, 1700-1790

The Potawatomi raid against Detroit in February, 1766 was indicative of St. Joseph Potawatomi-British relations in the ten years prior to the American Revolution. On February 3, 1766 a party of St. Joseph Potawatomis had visited British traders at Detroit, but on the following day they attacked two British soldiers cutting firewood near the mouth of the River Rouge. One soldier was immediately killed and decapitated with his own wood axe and the other was taken captive and carried a few miles to the west where he too was slain. Campbell ordered a detachment of soldiers after the Potawatomis but the Indians escaped. A few weeks later another party of St. Joseph Potawatomis journeyed to Detroit to make amends for the attack but a force of British soldiers ambushed them in the forest near Detroit and captured two warriors. Campbell was determined to hold the warriors hostage until the Potawatomis turned over those responsible for the British deaths.⁴

Campbell was incensed over the Potawatomi attack against Detroit. He suggested to Gage that an expedition be formed to strike the St. Joseph Potawatomis and to "put to death all Indians of Said Nation they may meet with whether men, women, or Children". Before Gage could reply, Pontiac appeared at Detroit accompanied by Minavavana or the "Grand Sauteur", chief of the Chippewas living near Mackinac. Pontiac pleaded with Campbell to release the two Potawatomis, stating that they were not

⁴Campbell to Gage, April 10, 1766, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Campbell to Johnson, February 24, 1766, in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Clarence Edwin Carter, eds., The New Regime, 1765-1767, Vol. XI of The Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (34 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1903-). pp. 157-158. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, XI,

from the St. Joseph but resided in another village with some Ottawas and Chippewas. Campbell still refused to relinquish the Potawatomi and Pontiac and Minavavana left Detroit.⁵ During June Potawatomi from the prisoners' band in northern Illinois captured a British prisoner near Fort Chartres which they hoped to exchange for their kinsmen. But after the peace treaty with Pontiac and the Detroit Potawatomi was concluded at Oswego in the summer of 1766, the Potawatomi hostages at Detroit were released. During the following spring the St. Joseph Potawatomi gave up their prisoner from Illinois and another captive from their village, but their quarrel with the British continued.⁶

In the summer of 1766 the British became increasingly concerned over their inability to channel the fur trade of the Old Northwest toward the British colonies. French and Spanish traders, operating illegally in Illinois, continued to siphon much of the trade into Louisiana. In August, 1766 George Croghan met with several of the western tribes at Kaskaskia in Illinois and attempted to persuade the Indians to trade only with the British. He was unsuccessful. Although the tribesmen agreed to live in peace with the British and to allow

⁵Campbell to Gage, April 18, 1766, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Gage to Johnson, June 16, 1766, in Flick, Johnson Papers, V, pp. 271-272.

⁶Edward Cole to Johnson, June 30, 1766, in Illinois Historical Collections, XI, p. 330. Edward Cole was a former British soldier who became an Indian trader in Illinois. Also see Robert Rogers to Johnson, September 23, 1766, in Flick, Johnson Papers, XII, pp. 193-194 and George Turnbull to Gage, May 12, 1767, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Turnbull succeeded Campbell as commander at Detroit late in 1766.

British troops and traders to come among them, they continued their commerce with the French and Spanish.⁷

Delegates from the Potawatomis on the upper Illinois River attended the conference but they had no intention of honoring the agreements. By the summer of 1766 they were trading extensively with the French and Spanish and continued to remain under French political influence. War belts were passed among the Potawatomi villages from the forks of the Illinois to the St. Joseph and preparations again were made to attack Detroit. The attack did not take place. At Fort St. Joseph Louis Chevalier dissuaded the Potawatomis from such actions but he reported to British officials that French influence among the tribesmen was increasing and that they remained anti-British.⁸

Chevalier's analysis was correct. Since the British had failed to re-establish Fort St. Joseph they had no means of counter-acting the impact of French or Spanish traders who journeyed among the Potawatomis agitating them against the British. In the spring of 1767 a war party of St. Joseph Potawatomis, accompanied by a few Kickapoos, crossed the Ohio river to raid against their old enemies, the Chickasaws. Near modern Memphis, Tennessee they encountered three British traders whom they made prisoners. The war party then divided into two groups.

⁷Croghan to Gage, January 16, 1767, in Illinois Historical Collections, XI, pp. 487-495; Johnson to Gage, January 29, 1767, in ibid., p. 503.

⁸Entry for August 31, 1766, in Harry Gordon's Journal, in Illinois Historical Collections, XI, p. 300. Gordon was a British officer who accompanied a group of British merchants from Philadelphia to Fort Chartres. Also see Turnbull to Gage, October 19, 1766, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives and Johnson to Gage, December 12, 1766, in Flick, Johnson Papers, XII, pp. 227-228.

Twelve of the Potawatomis started north with the three captives while five of their kinsmen and at least two Kickapoos proceeded on to raid the Chickasaws. The British prisoners were carried up the west bank of the Mississippi until the Potawatomis reached southern Illinois. The party then crossed the river and journeyed on to the St. Joseph. Shortly after entering Illinois, two of the prisoners escaped, but the other trader, John Orr, was taken to the Potawatomi village near Fort St. Joseph where the Potawatomis arrived on June 23, 1767.⁹

On July 9 the other Potawatomi warriors returned to the village with three scalps and another captured British trader, John Michan. The village chiefs were not happy with the war party's actions and ordered the release of the two prisoners. Orr was turned over to Turnbull at Detroit on August 3 and Michan was given up at the same location on August 17. A mixed delegation of St. Joseph and Detroit chiefs then traveled to Detroit and apologized for the seizure of the British traders but disclaimed any responsibility for the warriors' actions. The chiefs informed British officers at the fort that they had warned their young men against attacking the British and had provided them "with as good Advice as was Capable of before they went away."¹⁰

⁹George Pare, "The St. Joseph Mission," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XVII (June, 1930), p. 46; Turnbull to Gage, August 3, 1767, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

¹⁰Jehu Hay to Croghan, August 13-August 17, 1767, in Flick, Johnson Papers, V, pp. 618-621; Hay to Croghan, August 28, 1767, in ibid., pp. 643-644. Lieutenant Jehu Hay was a British officer serving a Detroit. Also see Turnbull to Gage, August 3, 1767, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

The Potawatomi explanation did little to dispel British concern over Indian hostility and during November, 1767, Croghan again journeyed to Detroit where he met with the Chippewas, Ottawas, Hurons, and Detroit Potawatomis. Croghan attempted to inquire about reports of a growing conspiracy among the tribes of Illinois, but he received little satisfaction. The Indians at the conference admitted that they were aware that the St. Joseph Potawatomis and other tribes remained anti-British, but they claimed no knowledge of any organized conspiracy. They did admit however, that many of the Indians wished to unite to form a confederacy which would confront problems common to all the western tribes.¹¹

The St. Joseph Potawatomis did not attend the conference with Croghan at Detroit. During November, 1767, while Croghan was in council at Detroit, Potawatomis on the Kankakee killed another British trader in their village. The trader, a man named Rogers, had intended to winter among the Potawatomis near Fort St. Joseph but was subjected to such abuse that he moved to the Potawatomi village on the Kankakee. There he fared worse, for he was tomahawked by the villagers and his trade goods plundered. Warriors from the Kankakee then journeyed to Chevalier's residence on the St. Joseph where they boasted of their actions and told Chevalier to inform the British at Detroit that they "would not Suffer any English Man to come near their Place."¹²

¹¹Howard H. Peckham, ed., George Croghan's Journal of His Trip to Detroit in 1767 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1939), pp. 40-45.

¹²Turnbull to Gage, February 23, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Hay to Croghan, February 17, 1768, in ibid.

In January, 1768, the Potawatomis struck again. On January 15, 1768 five Potawatomi warriors from either the St. Joseph or the Kankakee, accompanied by five Potawatomi women, arrived on the Maumee River where they met a British trader named Hamback. For three days they camped near Hamback's residence attempting to learn where he had hidden his trade goods. Finally, on January 19, they killed him and plundered such merchandise as he had in his possession. After threatening another British trader on the Maumee, the Potawatomis returned to the west.¹³

Chevalier was heavily indebted to Hamback and the British suspected that he might have inspired the attack upon the British trader. Their suspicions were strengthened by the fact that the Potawatomis seized Hamback's papers but then refused to surrender them. Chevalier however, asserted his innocence and argued that the attacks were the result of Spanish and French influence from Louisiana.¹⁴ Chevalier's claim was supported by other reports. A Delaware Indian from southern Illinois visited the Potawatomis during the summer of 1768 and reported to William Johnson that he had witnessed a French agent from Louisiana deliver a pro-Spanish speech on the St. Joseph. The warriors who

¹³Gage to Hillsborough, May 15, 1768, in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Clarence Edwin Carter, eds., Trade and Politics, 1767-1769, Vol. XVI of The Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (34 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1905-), pp. 287-288. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, XVI. Lord Hillsborough was a member of the Board of Trade. Also see Turnbull to Gage, February 23, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Turnbull to Croghan, March 1, 1768, in ibid.

¹⁴Hay to Croghan, February 19, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

killed Hamback boasted that they carried belts from the Spanish dyed blue on one end and they "had just begun to reden the other," and in August, 1768, Machiouquisse, a chief of the Detroit Potawatomis informed Turnbull that the French again had sent war belts to the St. Joseph.¹⁵

Yet the St. Joseph Potawatomis did not focus all their hostility against traders near their villages; they also turned their attention toward the British in Illinois. On May 5, 1768 a mixed party of Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Kickapoos descended upon the Fort Chartres area and captured Edward Stuart, an elderly British soldier, and his wife. On the following day ten Potawatomis from the party approached Fort Chartres and were given permission to spend the night in an "Indian House" which had been built for visiting Indians near the fort. During the night the British made plans to seize two of them as hostages, but the Potawatomis became alarmed and fled. Captain Gordon Forbes, the commanding officer at Fort Chartres sent a party of Kaskaskias after the Potawatomis but they escaped.¹⁶ The Potawatomis carried Stuart and his wife to the St. Joseph but released them in September.¹⁷

¹⁵Gage to Johnson, December 4, 1768, in Illinois Historical Collections, XVI, p. 453; Hay to Croghan, February 19, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Copy of the Speech by Machiouquisse, August 14, 1768, in Flick, Johnson Papers, XII, pp. 585-586.

¹⁶John Jennings Journal, May 5-May 10, 1768, in Illinois Historical Collections, XVI, pp. 275-277. Jennings was an agent for Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, a Philadelphia trading company active in the Fort Chartres area. Also see Gordon Forbes to Gage, June 23, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives, and Clarence Edwin Carter, Great Britain and the Illinois Country, 1763-1774 (Washington: American Historical Association, 1910), p. 63. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Carter, The Illinois Country.

¹⁷Account of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan with Certification of

The continued hostility of the Potawatomis caused the British to suspect them of depredations they did not commit. During July, 1768, a party of British hunters were attacked on the Cumberland River in Kentucky and a group of Virginians was ambushed near the same location a few days later. The British immediately accused the Potawatomis of instigating the attacks although later investigations placed the blame upon the Kickapoos and Miamis. The Potawatomis did raid southern Illinois during the fall and although they took no scalps, they were successful in carrying off British property.¹⁸

In November, 1768, the Iroquois signed the Treaty of Fort Stanwix which opened up Shawnee hunting lands in Kentucky to white settlement. The Potawatomis and other northwestern tribes were angered over the British-Iroquois agreement since they believed the Iroquois had little claim to the region.¹⁹ This anger was reflected in a new outburst

Commissary Edward Cole and Captain Gordon Forbes, September 13, 1768, in Illinois Historical Collections, XVI, p. 407; George Morgan to Baynton and Wharton, June 20, 1768, in ibid., p. 331. Also see Turnbull to Gage, June 14, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

¹⁸Forbes to Gage, July 28, 1768, in Illinois Historical Collections, XVI, p. 367; Lewis Soudrey to Lieutenant Colonel John Wilkins, October 21, 1768, in ibid., p. 433. Soudrey was a trader at Kaskaskia. Wilkins assumed command at Fort Chartres in September, 1768. Also see Turnbull to Gage, October 11, 1768, in Gage Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives and Gage to Johnson, October 10, 1768, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VI, pp. 433-434.

¹⁹Anthony F. C. Wallace, The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 154. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Wallace, Death and Rebirth of the Seneca. Also see Jack Sosin, Whitehall and the Wilderness: The Middle West in British Colonial Policy, 1760-1775 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), pp. 193-194. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Sosin, Whitehall and the Wilderness.

of Potawatomi depredations which continued through the next three years. Although the Potawatomis surrendered two warriors accused of murder to the British in 1769, the prisoners escaped before they could be brought to trial and the surrender was the last act of cooperation performed by the St. Joseph Potawatomis prior to 1773.²⁰

In the spring of 1771 Potawatomis from the St. Joseph region struck again at the garrison of Fort Chartres. They scalped one man and seized a prisoner.²¹ During the fall of 1772 they attacked a British trader from Detroit who dared to approach their village. The trader, Cornelius Van Slyck of Detroit escaped with his life, but two assistants who accompanied him were killed and Van Slyck's goods were plundered. The British blamed the attack upon the influence of French traders, but General Thomas Gage also indicted the Potawatomis. In a letter to William Johnson he pointed out that:

Scarce a year passes that the Pouteatamies are not guilty of killing Some of the Traders and of course plundering their Effects,²² which it becomes absolutely Necessary to put a Stop to.

²⁰Gage to Hillsborough, August 12, 1769, in Illinois Historical Collections, XVI, p. 579; Hillsborough to Gage, December 9, 1769, in ibid., p. 638. Also see Hay to Johnson, August 13, 1768, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VII, pp. 93-94.

²¹Entries for March 25-March 28, 1771, in John Wilkins, Journal of Transactions and Presents given to the Indians, December 23, 1768 to March 12, 1772, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Gage to Johnson, August 14, 1771, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VIII, pp. 224-225, and Gage to Johnson, September 10, 1771, ibid., pp. 251-252.

²²Henry Basset to Gage, December 24, 1772, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VIII, pp. 672-673; Gage to Johnson, March 31, 1773, in ibid., p. 749. Basset assumed command at Detroit in 1772.

Johnson attempted to enlist the aid of other Indians in suppressing the hostiles. During April, 1773, he persuaded the Senecas to send a message to the Potawatomis asking them to refrain from further hostilities and warning them that future attacks would bring Seneca retaliation.²³ The St. Joseph Potawatomis received the Seneca message and sent one of their own in reply, the substance of which is unknown, but in which the Potawatomis evidently agreed to comply with the Seneca wishes, for shortly after receiving the Seneca belt, chiefs from the St. Joseph journeyed to Detroit and attempted to explain that they had no part in the attack upon Van Slyck. They presented the familiar argument that the act had been perpetrated by young men who they could not control, but they also attempted to shift part of the blame upon Chevalier, whom they accused as the instigator in the affair.²⁴

Chevalier may have been implicated in the attack upon Van Slyck, but the Potawatomis needed little encouragement from him. They still remained receptive to French and Spanish overtures and continued to receive gifts from the Spanish in Louisiana. Potawatomis from the Illinois River were so favorably inclined toward the Spanish that in

²³Proceedings of Sir William Johnson with the Six Nations, April 9, 1773, in Edward B. O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (15 vols.; Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1853-1857), VII, pp. 367-368. Also see Basset to Frederick Haldimand, August 29, 1773, in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Lansing: Thorne and Godfred and others, 1874-1929), XIX, p. 310. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Michigan Historical Collections. General Frederick Haldimand succeeded Gage as Commander in Chief of British forces in North America during 1772.

²⁴Basset to Haldimand, September 30, 1773, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 313; Speech of the Potawatomi Chiefs at Detroit, May 22, 1775, in Flick, Johnson Papers, VIII, pp. 803-805.

the summer of 1772 they attacked the Osages near St. Louis because the latter had dared to insult Spanish officials. The Potawatomis killed an Osage chief, mortally wounded an Osage warrior and were restrained from taking further actions against the Osages only by Spanish intervention.²⁵

Although the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph and the Illinois continued to plague the British, their kinsmen at Detroit remained at peace. During the early 1770's they spread their residence to the south and west, establishing villages that reached toward their kinsmen on the St. Joseph. By 1774 villages had been erected near modern Ann Arbor on the Huron River west of Detroit, on the Salt Fork of the River Raisin and on the Grand River, near modern Eaton Rapids, in south-central Michigan. The Potawatomis also may have contributed occupants to a village on the Kalamazoo River in the vicinity of modern Battle Creek, but this village probably was populated primarily by Ottawas.²⁶

²⁵Report of Pedro Piernas, October 31, 1769, in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.-; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XVIII, p. 306. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections. Also see Piernas to Don Luis de Unzaga, July 30, 1772, in Lawrence Kinnaird, ed., Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794, Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1945 (3 vols.; Washington: American Historical Association, 1949), I, p. 206. Piernas was the commander of Spanish forces at St. Louis. Unzaga was governor of Louisiana. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Kinnaird, Spain in the Mississippi Valley.

²⁶"The Road From Detroit to the Illinois", undated, in Jacob Piatt Dunn, ed., Documents Relating to the French Settlements on the Wabash, Indiana Historical Publications, Vol. II (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1894), pp. 435-438. Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Use and Occupancy of Royce Area 66 ceded by the "Ottoway, Chippeway, Wyandotte, and Pottawatamie nations of Indians" to the United States pursuant to the Treaty made at Detroit on November 17, 1807." p. 274.

By the outbreak of the American Revolution the large Potawatomi village near Fort St. Joseph had lost most of its population but Petit Coeur de Cerf, a small village a few miles upstream remained in existence and Terre Coupee, the village at the St. Joseph-Kankakee Portage had grown in population.²⁷

In 1776, when war broke out between the colonies and Great Britain, the Detroit Potawatomis rallied to the British cause. Between August 29 and September 2, 1776, they met with Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton at Detroit and pledged their allegiance to King George. At first Hamilton was reticent to send the Indians against the American frontiers since he dreaded the consequences of Indian warfare upon the white population, but he did dispatch a mixed force of Ottawas, Hurons, Chippewas and Potawatomis aboard the British schooner Gaxe to join the Iroquois in New York.²⁸ Many of these Potawatomis assembled at Oswego and then separated from the other tribes to raid the Pittsburg area during October.²⁹

²⁷ Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, fn. 97, p. 398; Wheeler-Voegelin, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Area 117," pp. 112-113.

²⁸ Henry Hamilton to the Earl of Dartmouth, August 29-September 2, 1776, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 269-270. Hamilton assumed his duties as Lieutenant Governor of Detroit in November, 1775. Also see John D. Barnhart, ed., Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark in the American Revolution (Crawfordsville, Indiana: R. E. Banta, 1951), p. 28. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark.

²⁹ Information from John Hamilton and John Bradley delivered to the Commissioners, September 13, 1776, in George Morgan's Letter Book, Book 2, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Hamilton and Bradley were American agents sent to

Hamilton also endeavored to minimize American influence among the Potawatomis and other tribes. Many of the Delawares in Ohio remained friendly to the Americans and attempted to persuade the Detroit tribes to remain neutral in the conflict. During the late summer of 1776 the Delawares sent a peace belt from the Americans to the tribes at Detroit which Hamilton seized and destroyed at a multi-tribal council in September. But the Delawares continued their efforts and during the following spring they sent another message to the Potawatomis asking them to remain at peace for the sake of their women and children. The Delawares also urged the Potawatomis to journey to Pittsburgh, where they promised that the Americans were "ready to take you by the hand and strengthen a lasting friendship with all Nations who love Peace."³⁰

To counteract the Delaware offers, Hamilton promised the Indians presents and awarded gifts of lead and powder in a manner reminiscent of earlier French policy. By the spring of 1777 he also informed the Potawatomis that their British father was anxious that they attack the American frontier and that he would support such actions with supplies.

obtain information from the Delawares. Also see Commissioners of Indian Affairs in the Middle Department to the Committee of Congress for Indian Affairs, September 25, 1776, in ibid. George Morgan was the Indian Agent for the Middle Department.

³⁰ Hamilton to the Earl of Dartmouth, August 29-September 2, 1776, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 269-270. Also see Message from the Delaware Council to George Morgan, February 26, 1777, in George Morgan's Letter Book, Book 1, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; A Speech from the Delaware in Council to the Wiandots, Ottawas, Chipwas, and Powtawatamies, March 26, 1777, in ibid.

Hamilton was following official British policy. During the winter of 1777 the British decided to discard their earlier policy of restraint and to make full use of the Indians against the Americans.³¹

British-sponsored Indian raids were only one phase of a three part British offensive planned for the summer of 1777. General John Burgoyne was ordered to lead an army of British and Indians down Lake Champlain to Albany where he would join with a force of Iroquois under Barry St. Leger and John Johnston who would sweep eastward along the Mohawk Valley. While these campaigns were taking place in New York, Hamilton was directed to send the western tribes against American settlements along the Ohio. British officials hoped that the attacks along the Ohio would serve as a diversion insuring British success in New York.³²

To facilitate these plans, in the spring of 1777 Charles Langlade mustered the tribes from the Mackinac region into a large war party and led them eastward to join Burgoyne. Langlade's force evidently was joined by a handful of St. Joseph Potawatomis who accompanied the mixed-blood leader to Montreal. There, after being entertained by the British, the western Indians joined with Burgoyne in his campaign down

³¹Message from the Delaware Council to Morgan, February 26, 1777, in George Morgan's Letter Book, Book 1, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Lord George Germain to Haldimand, March 26, 1777, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 347-348. Lord George Germain was the British Secretary of State. Also see Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 29.

³²Jack M. Sosin, The Revolutionary Frontier, 1763-1783 (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967), p. 109. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Sosin, Revolutionary Frontier.

Lake Champlain. But Burgoyne's failure to achieve a quick victory and the continual restraints he placed upon his Indian allies caused most of the western tribesmen to become discouraged and to return to their homes during August.³³

While a few of the St. Joseph Potawatomis were accompanying Langlade to Montreal, their kinsmen from Detroit assembled at a great multi-tribal council organized by Hamilton. Between June 12 and June 16, over one thousand Delawares, Shawnees, Miamis, Hurons, Chippewas, Ottawas and Detroit Potawatomis gathered at Detroit. The Indians first met with Hamilton on June 17 and the conference lasted for eleven days. Hamilton presented the western tribesmen with war belts from the Iroquois and admonished them to strike the Americans. He warned them that the Americans already considered many of them as enemies and would treat them as such. Contrary to American opinion of Hamilton, the Lieutenant Governor did warn the tribesmen not to "dip their hands in the blood" of women and children but to concentrate their attacks upon men as was befitting their status as warriors. The conference was interspersed with feasts and the presentation of gifts to the various tribes which pleased the Indians and made them amenable to Hamilton's suggestions. The Indians promised to serve the British and Hamilton was so pleased

³³Arent Schuyler De Peyster to Unknown, June 13, 1777, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 276-277. Colonel De Peyster was the British commander at Mackinac. Augustin Grignon's Recollections in Wisconsin Historical Collections, III, p. 229; "Summary of documents" in ibid., XVIII, p. 357. Grignon was the grandson of Langlade.

with the results of the meeting that he reported he would soon be sending over one thousand warriors against the frontiers along the Ohio.³⁴

During the summer of 1777 Hamilton unleashed his red allies against the Americans. The Detroit Potawatomis participated in the new British offensive. Late in June a war party of Potawatomis stopped in Detroit to obtain provisions and to meet with Hamilton before leaving to raid settlements south of the Ohio. This war party was from eastern Michigan, for most of the Potawatomis from the area around Lake Michigan remained reluctant to join with the British. During early June, 1777, a party of Potawatomis from the upper Illinois accompanied some Kickapoos and Mascoutens to Fort George at Kaskaskia in southern Illinois. There Phillipe Francois Rastel, Sieur de Rocheblave, a former French official now acting in the British interest attempted to win them to the British cause, but the Potawatomis remained non-committal and Rocheblave reported that they still were under Spanish influence.³⁵

Although Potawatomis on the upper Illinois continued to receive Spanish presents, the primary center of Spanish intrigue among

³⁴Hamilton to Unknown, June 15, 1777, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 277; Extract of a Council Held at Detroit, June, 1777 in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XXII, pp. 7-13. Also see John D. Barnhart, ed., "Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton's Apologia," Indiana Magazine of History, LII (December, 1956). pp. 383-396.

³⁵Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 33; Rocheblave to Lieutenant Governor Edward Abbott, June 1, 1777, in Edward G. Mason, Early Chicago and Illinois (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1890). pp. 392-393. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Mason, Early Chicago. Abbott was the British officer in command at Vincennes. In 1772 Fort Chartres was abandoned and a smaller structure, Fort Gage, was built at Kaskaskia. Also see "Summary of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri...", in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. 367, and A. P. Kasatir, "The Anglo-Spanish Frontier on the Upper Mississippi, 1786-1796," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, XXIX (April, 1939), p. 160.

the Potawatomi was the mixed village of Potawatomi, Ottawas, and Chippewas at Milwaukee. The chief of the Milwaukee village, a Potawatomi warrior called Siggenauk by his tribesmen and Letourneau (Blackbird) by the French was deeply committed to the Spanish and consistently refused British attempts to win his loyalty. During the summer of 1777 he attempted to spread Spanish influence among the tribes of Wisconsin and undoubtedly was instrumental in keeping the Potawatomi near Lake Michigan out of the war. At first, Arent Schyler De Peyster underestimated Siggenauk's influence, since he believed that the Indians at Milwaukee could be won over to the British cause through inexpensive trade goods. Later, however, De Peyster was forced to admit that Siggenauk exercised extensive influence and by 1779 the British officer considered Siggenauk a serious threat to the crown's position in the Lake Michigan region.³⁶

Meanwhile, the British-Indian offensive against the western frontier was achieving success. During the late summer and fall of 1777 Indian raids along the Ohio and into Kentucky posed a serious threat to those Americans living in the region. Although large numbers of Indians were not involved, they succeeded in paralyzing Kentucky where American settlers were forced to seek sanctuary behind stockades at Boonesborough, Harrodsburgh, and St. Asaph's. The Indian attacks kept the Americans from their farms and during the winter of 1777-78,

³⁶De Peyster to Unknown, June 6, 1777, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 275. Louise Phelps Kellogg, The British Regime in Wisconsin and the Old Northwest (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1935), pp. 155-156. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Kellogg, British Regime in Wisconsin. For De Peyster, see Footnote 33.

the Kentuckians faced a severe food shortage. Potawatomi participation in these raids is unknown, but some of the Detroit Potawatomis were involved, for by January, 1778, Hamilton had begun to accumulate American prisoners at Detroit which had been surrendered by Potawatomis and other Indians from the region.³⁷

Faced with continual raiding that threatened their ability to remain west of the Appalachians, settlers in Kentucky appealed to Virginia for relief. The Kentuckians believed that the cure for their dilemma lay in the conquest of Illinois. An American Illinois could then be used as a base for expeditions against Detroit and other British posts to the north. During the winter of 1777-78, George Rogers Clark journeyed to Virginia to propose an invasion of Illinois to Governor Patrick Henry. Clark's mission was successful. The government of Virginia authorized him to draw supplies at Fort Pitt and promised three hundred acres of land to volunteers who would accompany him. Clark raised one hundred and fifty Virginians and then returned to Kentucky where a small force of Kentuckians also joined him.³⁸

Clark and his men left Kentucky in June, 1778 and traveled down the Ohio to the Fort Massac region where they landed and then

³⁷Sosin, Revolutionary Frontier, pp. 109-111; Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 33. Also see Proclamation by Henry Hamilton, January 5, 1778, in George Morgan's Letter Book, Book 3, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

³⁸Sosin, Revolutionary Frontier, pp. 116-117; Order of Council, January 2, 1778, in James Alton James, George Rogers Clark Papers, Vol. VIII of The Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (34 vols.-; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1903-), p. 33, and Patrick Henry to Clark, January 2, 1778. in ibid., pp. 34-35. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Illinois Historical Collections, VIII. Also see Clarence Walworth Alvord, The Illinois Country, 1673-1818 (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1922), pp. 324-325. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Alvord, Illinois Country.

proceeded overland toward Kaskaskia. The British post was reached on July 4 and capitulated on the next day. Clark then sent troops to occupy Cahokia and other small villages in the American Bottom. Enroute to Illinois Clark had learned of the alliance between the United States and France and when news of the alliance was spread among the villages of Illinois, the creole population rallied to the American cause. They assured Clark that the French population on the Wabash would also welcome news of the Franco-American alliance so Clark dispatched a force of thirty men under the command of Captain Leonard Helm to occupy Vincennes. Helm was accompanied by a delegation of creoles from Illinois and when he reached Vincennes, the majority of the population immediately pledged their allegiance to the United States and Helm occupied the village.³⁹

The American occupation of Illinois had a significant impact upon the neighboring Indians. Tribes from Illinois and Wisconsin who had earlier professed allegiance to Great Britain were impressed by the American success and by Clark's bold manner. Clark, who relied upon "harsh language to supply the want of men, well knowing that it was a mistaken notion in many that soft speeches was best for Indians," met with warriors from many tribes at Cahokia during the summer and fall of 1778. Attending the conference were Potawatomis from the Illinois River and the Lake Michigan area, including Siggenuak of Milwaukee.⁴⁰

³⁹Clark to the Inhabitants of Vincennes, July 13, 1778, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 50-53; Alvord, Illinois Country, pp. 326-328.

⁴⁰Hamilton to Haldimand, September 5, 1778, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 466; Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, p. xix. Also see William Hayden English, Conquest of the Country Northwest of the Ohio, 1770-1783, and the Life of General George Rogers Clark (2

Clark informed the Indians that they must chose between peace and war and that their decisions mattered little to the Americans. He warned the tribesmen that the "Big Knives" did not fear them and were willing to make war since the English would soon be beaten and American "warriors would get rusty without they could get somebody to fight." Awed by Clark's brashness, the Potawatomis and other Indians at the conference assured the Americans that they would remain at peace and had no intentions of aiding the British.⁴¹

Clark was especially impressed with Siggenauk who journeyed to Kaskaskia during the fall. Upon his arrival, Siggenauk informed Clark that he wanted no elaborate ceremonies, but was more interested in a frank discussion about the war between the British and the Americans. Clark met with the Potawatomi chief and interpreters around a table in his quarters and found Siggenauk a "polite gentleman" who spoke "as much in the European manner as possible." Siggenauk told Clark that he was well acquainted with the British position in the conflict, but that he welcomed an opportunity to hear the American point of view. Clark spent half a day explaining the American position and answering "a great number of questions very pertinent." Clark evidently convinced the chief that the American cause was just, for

vols.; Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Co., 1896), I, p. 205 and Clark to George Mason, November 19, 1779, in *ibid.*, pp. 420-421. Mason was a state official in Virginia. Hereafter this volume will be cited as English, Conquest and Clark.

⁴¹Clark to Mason, November 19, 1779, in English, Conquest and Clark, I, pp. 423-426.

Siggenauk promised to disregard the British and to try to keep his young men at peace. Clark presented him with two pack horses loaded with gifts and the chief returned to Milwaukee.⁴²

While Clark was occupying Illinois, Hamilton continued to send Indians from Detroit against Kentucky and American settlements along the Ohio. During June, 1778 he assembled over sixteen hundred men and women from several tribes and again urged them to strike the Americans. A large delegation of Detroit Potawatomi chiefs were present as were five chiefs from the St. Joseph. Hamilton thanked them for their past services and distributed gifts among the assembled warriors. The Indians agreed to follow Hamilton's wishes and also sent warnings to the pro-American Delawares to either join in the pro-British alliance or to suffer the consequences.⁴³

Hamilton's conference produced the desired results among the Detroit Potawatomis. During July, 1778 a war party led by Peemembikeetach left Detroit to attack American settlements along the Ohio and by

⁴²Patrick Henry to the Virginia Delegates in Congress, November 16, 1778, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, p. 72; Clark to John Brown, 1791, in ibid., pp. 252-255. John Brown was a delegate to Congress from Kentucky. Also see Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, fn. 53, p. 384.

⁴³Council held at Detroit, June 14, 1778, with the Ottaways, Chippoways, Hurons Poutconattamies, Delawares, Shawnese, Miamis, Mingoes, Mohawks and others, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 442-452; Captain White Eyes to George Morgan, July 19, 1778, in George Morgan's Letter Book, Book 3, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. White Eyes was a Delaware chief. Also see Andrew Lewis to Unknown, August 14, 1778, Frontier Wars Manuscripts, 2U44, Draper Manuscripts, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison (microfilm). Lewis was a militia officer from Virginia who had seen extensive action in Lord Dunmore's War. Hereafter material from the Draper Manuscripts will be cited as Draper Manuscripts.

September Hamilton reported that Indians from the Detroit region had taken at least thirty-four prisoners and eighty-one scalps during the summer.⁴⁴

Yet the impact of Clark's occupation of Illinois was not lost on Hamilton and by the autumn of 1778 he was anxious to recoup the British position on the lower Ohio. During the late summer Hamilton began to make plans to recapture the posts in Illinois and on the Wabash. The Lieutenant-Governor realized that he would need the assistance of the British-allied tribes and during August and September he contacted the Potawatomis and their neighbors to secure their participation in an expedition down the Wabash to recapture Vincennes. On August 23, 1778, Hamilton met with the Ottawas, Chippewas and Detroit Potawatomis and they all agreed to accompany him against the Americans. Hamilton then wrote to Chevalier asking him to muster the St. Joseph Potawatomis and to send them to meet the expedition at the Miami villages on the upper Wabash.⁴⁵

Hamilton was skeptical of Chevalier's loyalty to the British and was unsure if he would send the Potawatomis from the St. Joseph. Yet the former French trader continued to send intelligence of American activities in Illinois to De Peyster at Mackinac and had even sent his

⁴⁴Council Held With the Indians at Detroit, June-July, 1778, by the English Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton, Illinois Historical Collections, I, n. 322; Hamilton to Haldimand, September 16, 1778 in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 476-477.

⁴⁵Entry for August 23, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 104; Entry for August 25, 1778, in ibid.

son to Montreal to meet with General Frederick Haldimand.⁴⁶ Unlike Hamilton, De Peyster was convinced of Chevalier's loyalty and defended him against Hamilton's allegations. De Peyster reported to Haldimand that Chevalier had such influence over the St. Joseph Potawatomis that "he now can do anything with them" and that Chevalier's assistance on the St. Joseph was necessary to forestall any American invasions against Detroit.⁴⁷

De Peyster also made plans to support Hamilton's expedition. From Mackinac he dispatched Charles Langlade to raise the Ottawas and Chippewas of northern Michigan and he sent Charles Gautier, Langlade's nephew to help Chevalier organize the Potawatomis. The two agents were to assemble all the Indians on the St. Joseph and then either join Hamilton on the Wabash or lead the warriors down the Illinois in an attack upon Kaskaskia or Cahokia. Yet De Peyster's plan failed. The Ottawas and Chippewas had already dispersed for their winter hunt and most were unwilling to accompany Langlade. Gautier encountered similar problems. When Gautier arrived on the St. Joseph, Chevalier and the few Potawatomis he could muster had already left for the Wabash. Gautier then proceeded on to Wisconsin.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Hamilton to Haldimand, September 22, 1778, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 479; Chevalier to De Peyster, September 15, 1778, in ibid., pp. 352-353. Also see Haldimand to De Peyster, August 30, 1778, in ibid., pp. 353-354 and De Peyster to Haldimand, September 21, 1778, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, pp. 116. For Haldimand, see Footnote 25.

⁴⁷De Peyster to Haldimand, August 15, 1778, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 363.

⁴⁸De Peyster to Langlade and Gautier, October 26, 1778, in Michigan Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 466-467; De Peyster to Haldimand, October 24, 1778, in ibid., IX, pp. 374-376. Also see De Peyster to Haldimand, January 29, 1779, in ibid., pp. 377-378.

Meanwhile, Hamilton met again with the Detroit tribes and on October 7, 1778, he left for Vincennes via the Maumee-Wabash waterway. Hamilton's force consisted of approximately two hundred and forty men, including fifteen Detroit Potawatomis. Hamilton's expedition reached the forks of the Maumee on October 24 and there he dispatched messengers overland to the St. Joseph villages to inform Chevalier that the British would await them at the Miami village of Kekionga, near the site of modern Fort Wayne, Indiana.⁴⁹

Three days later Chevalier and fifteen St. Joseph Potawatomis arrived at the Miami village. On October 28, Hamilton met with the St. Joseph Potawatomis who were led by the old chief, Nanaquiba. Nanaquiba was wearing a French medal given to him prior to 1763 and Hamilton replaced it with an English medallion. Hamilton then congratulated the old chief for his efforts at such an advanced age and both Nanaquiba and Hamilton sang the war song together. Hamilton also provided the St. Joseph Potawatomis with ammunition and supplies and on November 2, the Potawatomis left the Miami village and followed Hamilton down the Wabash.⁵⁰

Hamilton's expedition arrived at the Miami village near the mouth of the El River on November 19, 1778. There the British were

⁴⁹ Extract of a Council held by Lt. Governor Hamilton with the Outawas, Chippawas, Poutawattamies, and Fifty of their Warriors, September 24, 1778, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 482-483; Hamilton to Haldimand, November 1, 1778, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, p. 180. Also see Entry for October 24, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 114.

⁵⁰ Hamilton to Haldimand, November 1, 1778, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, pp. 178-181; Entries for October 27 and October 28, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, pp. 116-117.

joined by other Miamis and a small party of Potawatomis who had recently formed a village on the headwaters of the Tippecanoe River. Hamilton then proceeded down the Wabash gathering Indian allies enroute and arrived at Vincennes on December 17. Faced with such an overwhelming force of British and Indians, the American commander, Captain Helm, surrendered both the fort and the village without firing a shot.⁵¹

After occupying Vincennes, Hamilton was anxious for news of American activity in Illinois. While proceeding down the Wabash he had sent a party of Potawatomis to visit the American at Cahokia and they returned on December 18 to report that Clark had stationed thirty men at the post but that American discipline was lax and they seemed ill-prepared to defend the settlement. On December 25, Hamilton dispatched the fifteen Detroit Potawatomis led by Wyndeego and Eskibee to reconnoiter the area around Kaskaskia. They never reached their destination. As they were crossing Illinois they encountered an American traveler whom they took prisoner and brought back to Hamilton at Vincennes. Hamilton, however, considered their mission to be a failure since the American "could not give any information worth notice."⁵²

⁵¹Entry for November 19, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 124; Entry for December 17, 1778, in ibid., pp. 147-149. Also see Hamilton to Haldimand, December 4, 1778, in Illinois Historical Collections, I, p. 220.

⁵²Hamilton to Haldimand, December 18, 1778, in Illinois Historical Collections, I, p. 232. Also see Entries for December 25 and December 27, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, pp. 156-157.

The Detroit Potawatomis continued to remain at Vincennes, since they planned to take part in Hamilton's campaign against Kaskaskia during the coming spring. Meanwhile, on January 24, 1779, Eskibee organized a party of Potawatomis and Chippewas from Vincennes to attack the settlements in Kentucky. Eskibee had earlier accompanied the Shawnees in their raids along the Ohio and he hoped to cross the river, sweep through Kentucky, and return to Vincennes in time for Hamilton's spring offensive.⁵³ But when the Indians reached the Ohio, they found the river flooded and were unable to cross. Eskibee then returned to Vincennes where he organized another party of ten Potawatomi warriors to raid along the Ohio, evidently hoping to waylay American vessels on the river. Hamilton furnished the warriors with ammunition and on February 1, 1779, Eskibee and his party left Vincennes.⁵⁴

The St. Joseph Potawatomis did not take part in Eskibee's war party for during late January they returned to their villages near Lake Michigan. Hamilton instructed them to support his spring offensive by descending the Illinois River and attacking the Americans from the north while he was marching against Kaskaskia from the east.⁵⁵ Yet

⁵³Hamilton to John Stuart, January 13, 1779, quoted in Robert R. Rea, "Henry Hamilton and West Florida," Indiana Magazine of History, LIV (March, 1958), p. 55. Also see Entry for October 15, 1778, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, p. 112, and Hamilton to Haldimand, January 24, 1779, in Illinois Historical Collections, I, p. 393. Stuart was in charge of British Indian affairs in the South.

⁵⁴Entries for January 28 and January 31, 1779, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, pp. 171-172. Also see Entry for February 1, 1779, in ibid., p. 173.

⁵⁵Substance of a Conference with the Indians, St. Vincennes, January 26, 1779, in Illinois Historical Collections, I, p. 394. This report contains a list of those tribes represented at this conference. The Potawatomis are not included. Also see De Peyster to Haldimand, March 29, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, p. 125.

Hamilton's plans for an attack upon Kaskaskia were never realized. During February, 1779, Clark led a force of Americans from Kaskaskia across the flooded timber lands of southern Illinois and on February 23 he surprised Hamilton at Vincennes. Many of Hamilton's Indian allies deserted him and on February 24, the Americans recaptured the village.⁵⁶

Since Eskibee had not returned from the Ohio, there were few Potawatomis at Vincennes to witness Hamilton's defeat. Yet they realized the significance of the American victory. The Americans were once again in the ascendancy and reports that Clark was planning an expedition against Detroit passed from village to village up the Wabash. In March a delegation of Potawatomis from the Tippecanoe River, accompanied by some Ottawas, Piankashaws, and Miamis met with Clark in Vincennes and assured the Americans that they desired peace. Clark believed that they were acting only through fear of an attack upon their villages, but he accepted their protestations and warned them against future support of the British. They seemed relieved that Clark planned no immediate campaign against their villages and left Vincennes in peace.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Entries for February 22-24, 1779, in Hamilton's Journal, in Barnhart, Hamilton and Clark, pp. 177-183; Clark to John Brown, 1791, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 281-289. Also see August Derleth, Vincennes: Portal to the West (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1968), pp. 60-70.

⁵⁷ Clark to Brown, 1791, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 295-297; Clark to Patrick Henry, April 29, 1779, in ibid., p. 172.

Although Clark never was able to mount an expedition against Detroit, his victory at Vincennes enabled the Americans to regain the offensive in the Northwest. During the spring of 1779 the Potawatomi chiefs at Chicago and on the St. Joseph seemed receptive to American messages asking them to remain at peace.⁵⁸ In May British officials received reports that the Americans were at Milwaukee where Siggenuak was assisting them in constructing a fleet of boats and that American agents also were purchasing horses from the Potawatomis at Chicago.⁵⁹

Although some of these reports later were proven false, the British believed that Clark's recapture of Vincennes was the initial phase of a major American offensive. At Mackinac, De Peyster was convinced that an American fleet soon would be launched against his post from Milwaukee. Other British officials believed that the horses were being purchased for an American expedition which would ascend the Illinois River and then march overland against Detroit.⁶⁰ Obviously, the Potawatomis near the tip of Lake Michigan were the key to American success and Chevalier's reports to British military leaders were not

⁵⁸De Peyster to Haldimand, May 13, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, p. 128. Also see Joseph Bowman to Meckigie, April 20, 1779, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 311-313, and Clark to Nanalobi (Nanaquiba), April 20, 1779, in ibid., pp. 313-315. Meckigie was a chief of the Potawatomis at Chicago. Major Bowman was in command of American forces at Cahokia.

⁵⁹Lieutenant Colonel Mason Bolton to Haldimand, May 20, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 415-416; De Peyster to Haldimand, May 2, 1779, in ibid., IX, pp. 379-380. Also see De Peyster to Haldimand, June 1, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, p. 133. Bolton was a British officer stationed at Niagara.

⁶⁰De Peyster to Haldimand, May 13, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, pp. 127-129; Haldimand to De Peyster, May 20, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 359.

encouraging. During the spring of 1779 he wrote to Haldimand that the Potawatomi tribe was

very inconsistent in its friendships but never in its hatred, wavering in their good resolutions even on the point of abandoning them. Timid in danger, proud and haughty when they believe themselves in safety, credulous to the last degree easily led away by great promises and frightened by threats. These are the two means the Rebels use to corrupt part of this nation.

It does not seem to me, however, impossible to keep this nation in dependance, if they were united under the same chief, but divided as it is into six villages distant fifteen or twenty miles from each other it is very difficult to impose this yoke. Each village has its own chief who disposes his young men according to his private ideas, too attentive to the poisoned speeches of certain traitors who sacrifice honor and duty to sordid interest.⁶¹

Other reports confirmed Chevalier's opinion. The Potawatomis near Fort St. Joseph attacked a party of British traders and Potawatomis from the upper Illinois River visited Cahokia where they were well received by the Americans.⁶² The deterioration of the British position among the Potawatomis also was increased by the activities of Daniel Maurice Godefroy Linctot, an influential French trader serving the Americans. During the early summer of 1779, Linctot and a small force of Americans from Cahokia ascended the river as far as Lake Peoria. Clark had ordered Linctot to just make a show of strength in the region,

⁶¹ Chevalier to Haldimand, February 28, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, p. 375.

⁶² John Long, "John Long's Journal," in Early Western Travels, 1748-1846, ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites (32 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904-1907), II, pp. 181-184. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Thwaites, Early Western Travels. Also see Memorial and Petition by Mathew Lessey, Henry Bostwick, Benjamin Lyon, John McNamara, Etne Camion and A. Reilhe to Haldimand, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 367; Joseph Bowman to Clark, May 28, 1779, in Illinois Historical Collections, II, p. 610. The petitioners were merchants from Mackinac whose goods had been seized by the Indians.

gather intelligence and then march to Ouiatanon on the Wabash where he would join with other American forces. De Peyster however, believed that Linctot intended to march through the Potawatomi villages against either Detroit or Mackinac.⁶³

To forestall such an American invasion, De Peyster decided to send a force of British and Indians against the Americans at Peoria. He sent Charles Langlade down the western shore of Lake Michigan to gather any Indians that he could enlist and lead them to Chicago. There Langlade was to meet with Lieutenant Thomas Bennet whom De Peyster also dispatched to raise the Ottawas and Potawatomis of western Michigan. Bennet collected a party of Ottawas and then proceeded on to the St. Joseph River where he arrived in late July. Uncertain of his reception, Bennet erected a fortified camp and awaited the arrival of the local Potawatomis. The Potawatomis seemed friendly and on July 28, 1779, chiefs from the villages along the St. Joseph met with Bennet and assured him that they would assist him in the raid against Peoria. After the conference, Bennet sent a mixed party of Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Chippewas towards Peoria to gather intelligence. He then settled down to await Langlade.⁶⁴

Bennet's decision to send the scouting party toward Peoria was a mistake. As the Indians journeyed down the Kankakee they encountered other Potawatomis who were anti-British and who convinced them that they

⁶³Clark to John Brown, 1791, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, p. 300; Kellogg, British Regime in Wisconsin, p. 159.

⁶⁴De Peyster to Langlade, July 1, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, pp. 375-376; De Peyster to Haldimand, July 9, 1776, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 390. Also see Lieutenant Bennet's Report in ibid., p. 395.

should remain neutral in the war. The party then returned to the St. Joseph where they reported their encounter with the pro-American Potawatomis to the other Indians. After learning that their kinsmen on the Kankakee would not support the expedition, the Potawatomis from the St. Joseph met with Bennet and informed him that they were withdrawing their support of the raid. Speaking for the Potawatomis, the war chief Le Petit Bled informed Bennet that they believed he had come "to disturb the peace that reigns in our lands" and that they were more interested in the calumet than the tomahawk. Le Petit Bled assured Bennet however, that the Potawatomis had no intention of aiding the Americans, but that they had decided to remain as "spectators" in the conflict.⁶⁵

Bennet was taken aback by the Potawatomi chief's speech and although he tried to persuade the Potawatomis to assist him, they refused. The Ottawas then began to desert the camp and three days later, on August 9, 1779, Bennet reported that he had fewer than twenty Indians who would support his raid upon Peoria. Bennet's predicament was not relieved by the arrival of Langlade. The former French Indian agent was accompanied by only sixty Chippewas who soon learned of the Potawatomis' refusal and who promised to accompany Bennet only if he kept them continually supplied with rum. Bennet refused and the Peoria expedition collapsed. He returned to Mackinac late in August.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Lieutenant Bennet's Report, September 1, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 395-397; Necessary Part of the Councils Held by Mr. Bennet with the Pontawatamies, August 3-6, 1779, in ibid., X, pp. 348-353. Also see Bennet to De Peyster, August 9, 1779, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, pp. 394-395.

⁶⁶ Lieutenant Bennet's Report, September 1, 1779, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 396-397.

Meanwhile, Linctot crossed from Peoria to Cuatianon where he hoped to meet an expedition led by Clark and destined for Detroit. But Clark's expedition failed. Short of funds, and plagued by militia forces unwilling to march on Detroit, Clark was forced to give up his plans for an invasion of eastern Michigan. Yet the American commander was ignorant of the Potawatomis' refusal to serve with Bennet and still considered the villages along the St. Joseph as centers of hostile Indian activity. Accordingly, during the fall of 1779, Clark planned another expedition which was to march up the Wabash and fall upon the Potawatomi villages in the St. Joseph region. But this expedition, like his plans against Detroit, never materialized. Although Clark ordered a force of volunteers and pro-American Indians against the Potawatomi villages, the commander of the expedition, Captain James Shelby, could not raise enough volunteers to make the campaign feasible.⁶⁷

The fall of 1779 marks the low point of British influence among the western Potawatomis. After Bennet had returned to Mackinac, his antagonist, Le Petit Bled, led a party of St. Joseph Potawatomis to southern Illinois where they received presents from the Americans. Meanwhile, De Peyster unsuccessfully attempted to capture the pro-American chief Siggenauk. During October 1779, De Peyster dispatched the sloop Felicity into Lake Michigan where it stopped near Milwaukee. British agents on board the Felicity attempted to bribe tribesmen from the mixed village at Milwaukee to capture Siggenauk and to bring him to

⁶⁷Thomas Quirk to Clark, August 22, 1779, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, p. 359; ibid., XIX, fn. 1, p. 28. Quirk was a captain in the Illinois-Virginia regiment of volunteers. Also see Clark to Thomas Jefferson, September 23, 1779, in ibid., VIII, pp. 364-366.

the vessel. Several of the Milwaukee Indians accepted British gifts, but they were either unwilling or afraid to seize the Potawatomi chief and the British were forced to sail back to Mackinac without him.⁶⁸

During the winter of 1779-1780, the British slowly began to regain the ascendancy in the Northwest. Hindered by a lack of supplies and inadequate finances, the American advance of 1778-1779 ground to a halt and the British once again took the offensive. During the early winter of 1780 they planned a series of campaigns designed to recapture Illinois and to force the Americans south of the Ohio. Since Spain had declared war against Britain during 1779, the main focus of the planned British offensive was directed against the Spanish post at St. Louis. The British hoped to assemble a large force of Indians at Prairie du Chien and then descend the Mississippi to attack St. Louis and American posts in southern Illinois. To support the raid upon St. Louis, the British planned to dispatch war parties led by Charles Langlade down the Illinois River Valley. They also made provisions to send a large force of British and Indians against Clark at the falls of the Ohio.⁶⁹

To insure the success of the attack upon St. Louis, British officials at Detroit enlisted the aid of the Detroit Potawatomis. During

⁶⁸ Chevalier to Unknown, March 13, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 380-381; "Remarks on Board His Majesty's Sloop Felicity by Samuel Roberts on Piloting her on Lake Michigan," in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, pp. 210-211. Also see Kellogg, British Regime in Wisconsin, p. 160.

⁶⁹ James A. James, "The Significance of the Attack on St. Louis, 1780," Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association (11 vols.; Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1907-1918), II, pp. 205-206. Hereafter this article will be cited as James, "The Attack on St. Louis."

the winter of 1780 they sent Potawatomi emissaries to the tribes of western Wisconsin and eastern Iowa to persuade them to join in the expedition. These Potawatomi messengers travelled as far west as central Iowa where they informed the Sacs and Foxes to either join in the British campaign or suffer attacks from the Potawatomis and their allies. Enroute to the Mississippi and back, the Detroit Potawatomis passed through the villages of their kinsmen on the St. Joseph and evidently convinced them that the American position was weakening, for in March, 1780, Chevalier reported that:

I do not know by what prodigy, Sir, the Poutawatamies have suddenly come out from a Sloth or rather a lethargy, that three years of want have not been able to cure, they have risen ashamed of a sleep which the voice of their Father and mine could not awaken them.

Chevalier added that the St. Joseph Potawatomis were forming war parties to assist the British and that even the tribesmen from Terre Coupe were flocking to the British cause and had recently sent a war party against the Americans.⁷⁰

The Potawatomi war party mentioned by Chevalier was directed against Vincennes. It failed. Enroute down the Wabash the Potawatomis encountered a French trader who told them that a French force of four thousand men, supported by captured British artillery had recently occupied Vincennes. Such a tale was enough to convince most of the

⁷⁰ Pierre Provost to Clark, February 20, 1780, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, pp. 394-395. Provost was a French trader sympathetic to the American cause. Also see John Montgomery to Clark, May 30, 1780, in Clark Papers, Missouri Historical Society, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives, and Chevalier to Unknown, March 13, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 380-381. Colonel Montgomery was the commander of American forces in Illinois.

Potawatomis to return to their villages but a small party of Potawatomis continued on to Vincennes where they found the fort garrisoned by only thirty American volunteers. Angry that they had been fooled so easily, the Potawatomis threatened the Americans with death but the garrison was well armed and treated the Potawatomi threats with disdain. The Potawatomis returned to the St. Joseph's.⁷¹

While the St. Joseph Potawatomis were marching on Vincennes, Captain Emanuel Hesse assembled a contingent of British traders and Indians at Prairie du Chien. During May, 1780 the British army descended the Mississippi. They arrived at St. Louis on May 26. There they found that the Spanish were well prepared for them and after an initial assault against the Spanish defenses, the Indians foraged through the adjoining countryside and then began to retreat up the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. Meanwhile, a small force of British Indians attacked Cahokia but also were repulsed and followed their comrades to the north.⁷²

Although a few Potawatomis accompanied Hesse to St. Louis, the vast majority of the tribe took no part in the attack. Some Potawatomis

⁷¹Chevalier to Unknown, April 30, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 391-393; De Peyster to Lieutenant Colonel Mason Bolton May 16, 1780, in ibid., XIX, pp. 519-520. De Peyster was transferred from Mackinac to Detroit in 1779. Bolton was the commander at Fort Niagara. Also see De Peyster to Haldimand, May 17, 1780, in ibid., X, pp. 395-396, and Theodore Calvin Pease, "The Revolution at Crisis In the West," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, XXIII (January, 1931), pp. 676-677.

⁷²Lieutenant-Governor Patrick Sinclair to Haldimand, July 8, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 558; Sinclair to Haldimand, July 30, 1780, in ibid., p. 563. Sinclair became commander at Mackinac in 1779. Also see James, "The Attack on St. Louis," pp. 209-210.

from Chicago followed Langlade down the Illinois River hoping to support the assault upon St. Louis, but they were too late and met the retreating British forces in central Illinois. Upon hearing of the results of the raid, the Potawatomis under Langlade joined the other British forces and retreated toward Chicago. There the forces that had attacked St. Louis boarded two British vessels which carried them back to Mackinac.⁷³

As the retreating British raiders ascended the Illinois River they encountered other Potawatomis who did not support their actions against the Americans. Strongly influenced by Siggenauk, many Potawatomis from the upper Illinois and those from the village at Milwaukee refused to participate in the British raid and even threatened the raiders' retreat after news of their repulse became known. Shortly before the attack upon St. Louis, several Potawatomis from the upper Illinois had visited Kaskaskia where they had met an official representative of the French government who assured them that their former French father expected all his children to support the Americans against the British. Such a message, buttressed by Siggenauk's influence, was more than sufficient to keep these Potawatomis pro-American. They allowed the retreating British army to pass through their lands, but many also joined with a party of mounted Americans in pursuit of the

⁷³Kellogg, British Regime in Wisconsin, p. 169; Sinclair to Bolton, June 4, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 529-530.

raiders who unsuccessfully tried to cut them off before they could reach the vessels on Lake Michigan.⁷⁴

While Hesse was conducting his unsuccessful campaign against St. Louis, the St. Joseph Potawatomis organized another raid against Vincennes. During May they journeyed to Detroit where they apologized for the failure of their earlier expedition against Vincennes and promised De Peyster that they would soon send another war party down the Wabash to capture the American garrison and then raid along the Ohio River. De Peyster hired Dagneaux Du Quindre, a French trader living near Chevalier on the St. Joseph, to lead the Potawatomis on the expedition and in early June, Du Quindre and a war party of Potawatomis left the St. Joseph and traveled down the Wabash toward Vincennes.⁷⁵

Du Quindre's expedition fared no better than the earlier raid against Vincennes. Although the Americans had evacuated the post during the late spring, the Potawatomis were attacked by a war party of Piankashaws. The Piankashaws had recently lost a chief to the Ottawas and in revenge, they ambushed the Potawatomi war party, killing four Potawatomi warriors and wounding several more. The

⁷⁴Proclamation by Montgomery, Cato, Winston, and St. Germain, May 6, 1780, in Illinois Historical Collections, I, pp. 456-457; Sinclair to Haldimand, July 8, 1780, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, pp. 155-157. Richard Winston and S. Cato were citizens at Kaskaskia. Jean St. Germain was a French official sent to America to keep the Indians pro-American.

⁷⁵De Peyster to Sinclair, May 18, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, pp. 582-583; De Peyster to Haldimand, June 1, 1780, in ibid., X, pp. 398-399.

Piankashaw attack caused most of the Potawatomis to turn back although Du Quindre was able to get a few to accompany him to the Ohio where they took one scalp before returning to the St. Joseph.⁷⁶

The Potawatomis were infuriated by the Piankashaw attack and sent messengers to the Ottawas and Chippewas to ask for aid in a war upon the Piankashaws. They also petitioned the British for muskets and ammunition, but De Peyster refused since he feared the outbreak of a full scale inter-tribal war in the Wabash Valley would be disastrous for the British position in the west.⁷⁷

The Detroit Potawatomis did not participate in Hesse's campaign or either of the abortive expeditions down the Wabash. During the summer of 1780 a few of the Detroit Potawatomis accompanied Captain Henry Bird on his successful raid into Kentucky, but the majority of the band remained in their villages in eastern Michigan.⁷⁸

In the fall of 1780 a French agent, Colonel Mottin de la Balme, organized an expedition of creole volunteers from Kaskaskia and

⁷⁶De Peyster to Bolton, July 6, 1780, in ibid., XIX, p. 540; De Peyster to Haldimand, August 31, 1780, in ibid., X, p. 424.

⁷⁷Joseph Louise Ainse to Sinclair, June 30, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 406; Speech which the Indians made to M. Ainsee, bearer of His Majesty's orders, to write to their Father at Michillimackinac, 1780, in ibid., p. 444. Ainse was an interpreter employed by the British at Mackinac. Also see De Peyster to Haldimand, October 1, 1780, in ibid., p. 434.

⁷⁸De Peyster to Bolton, March 10, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, XIX, pp. 501-502; De Peyster to Alexander McKee, May 8, 1780, in ibid., X, p. 394. McKee was a British Indian Agent active among the tribes of Ohio. Also see Indian Council at Detroit, July 28, 1780, in A. S. De Peyster, Miscellanies, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. The minutes of the council lists numerous Potawatomi chiefs in attendance at this council. Bird's expedition had not yet returned to Detroit. See Reginald Horsman, Matthew Elliott, British Indian Agent (Detroit: Wayne State Press, 1964), p. 29. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Horsman, Matthew Elliott.

Vincennes in an ill-fated campaign designed to capture Detroit. La Balme and forty volunteers left Kaskaskia in early October and journeyed to the Wabash where they were joined by about one hundred more creoles from Vincennes. Traveling up the Wabash, La Balme's party captured a British post on the Maumee near the modern city of Fort Wayne, Indiana, but they were then defeated by the Miamis and almost the entire expedition was killed.⁷⁹

La Balme's excursion up the Wabash inspired other pro-American creoles in Illinois to launch a similar venture against a newly formed British trading post among the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph. During the summer of 1780, the British had finally ordered the French traders led by Chevalier to leave the St. Joseph region. They were replaced by British traders anxious to take advantage of the growing St. Joseph Potawatomi-British friendship. Creole traders from southern Illinois resented the competition of these British merchants and were anxious to be rid of them.⁸⁰ Combining political and economic motives, a party of fifteen creoles and one American commanded by Jean Baptiste Hamelin

⁷⁹De Peyster to Haldimand, November 16, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 448; Haldimand to De Peyster, January 6, 1781, in ibid., X, p. 641. Also see Linctot to George Slaughter, January 11, 1781, in Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, p. 491. Major George Slaughter was in command of all regular forces in Kentucky.

⁸⁰De Peyster to Sinclair, September 17, 1780, in Michigan Historical Collections, IX, p. 617; Sinclair to Haldimand, August 2, 1780, in ibid., pp. 569-570. Also see Memorial of Louis Joseph Ainse, October 5, 1780, in ibid., X, pp. 435-437. Volumes X and IX of the Michigan Historical Collections contain extensive correspondence regarding the removal of Chevalier.

left Cahokia and journeyed to the St. Joseph where they attacked the British traders during November. Almost all of the Potawatomis had left the village for their autumn hunt and the raiders successfully captured the British traders and fifty bales of trade goods. Hoping to carry their prisoners and captured merchandise back to Cahokia, Hamelin's force set out toward Chicago. Meanwhile, Du Quindre, whom De Peyster had enlisted into the British Indian service, recalled the Potawatomis from their hunting camps and then led a Potawatomi war party in pursuit of the creoles. Near the southern tip of Lake Michigan the Potawatomis overtook the heavily laden raiders and demanded that they surrender. Hamelin refused and the Potawatomis opened fire, killing four creoles and wounding two others. The remaining ten raiders attempted to flee, but the Potawatomis captured seven of them, including the lone American, Thomas Brady, who was turned over to De Peyster at Detroit.⁸¹

Hamelin's raid against the British traders at St. Joseph was a portent of things to come. The Spanish had been infuriated by the attack upon St. Louis and during the fall of 1780 they continued to work among the Indians of Illinois to undermine the growing strength of the British.⁸² The Spanish were aware that British traders had

⁸¹De Peyster to Haldimand, January 8, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 450-451; Sinclair to Captain Robert Matthews, February 23, 1781, in ibid., IX, p. 629. Matthews was Haldimand's secretary. Also see Arthur Clinton Boggess, The Settlement of Illinois, 1772-1830 (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1908), pp. 37-38.

⁸²Captain John Mompesson to De Peyster, September 20, 1780, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XI, p. 162. Mompesson was an officer stationed at Mackinac. Also see Francisco Cruzat to Governor Bernardo Galvez, December 2, 1780, in ibid., XVIII, p. 413. Cruzat was the Spanish commandant at St. Louis. Galvez was governor of Louisiana.

taken up residence on the St. Joseph and they considered these traders to be responsible for the increased British influence among the tribes of Illinois. They also feared that the British planned to use the old fort on the St. Joseph as a base to launch another attack against St. Louis. During December, 1780, Siggenauk traveled to St. Louis and informed the Spanish of Hamelin's defeat. The Potawatomi chief requested that the Spanish launch an expedition against the British traders on the St. Joseph and promised to support such an expedition with pro-American Indians from Milwaukee and the upper Illinois. The Spanish agreed to Siggenauk's suggestion. The Spanish commandant, Francisco Cruzat, hoped that such a show of Spanish strength would impress the Potawatomis and would keep Siggenauk allied to the Spanish and American cause.⁸³

On January 2, 1781, a force of sixty five Spanish soldiers led by Captain Eugene Poure left St. Louis and ascended the Illinois River. They were accompanied by Siggenauk and Maakewoin, another chief from Milwaukee, who led a force of about sixty Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Chippewas that joined the Spanish on the Illinois. The Spanish and Indians traveled to Lake Peoria, where ice forced them to abandon the river and to march overland toward St. Joseph. Following an arduous

⁸³Cruzat to Galvez, November 13, 1780, in Kinniard, Spain in the Mississippi Valley, I, p. 397; Cruzat to Galvez, January 10, 1781, quoted in Lawrence Kinniard. "The Spanish Expedition Against Fort St. Joseph in 1781, A New Interpretation," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLX (September, 1932), pp. 187-189. There has been much written on the expedition and the reasons behind it. See Clarence W. Alvord, "The Conquest of St. Joseph, Michigan, by the Spaniards in 1781," Missouri Historical Review, II (July, 1908), pp. 195-210 and Frederick J. Teggart, "The Capture of St. Joseph, Michigan, By the Spaniards in 1781," Missouri Historical Review, V (July, 1911), pp. 214-228.

trek across the frozen prairies, the invaders arrived near the fort on the St. Joseph on the evening of February 11, 1781. After setting up camp, Cruzat dispatched a Potawatomi warrior, La Gesse, to inform the St. Joseph Potawatomis living near the fort of the expedition's presence and to warn them to stay neutral. There were few Potawatomis in the village and although they posed no threat to the Spanish, Poure offered them half the trade goods to be captured from the British. The Potawatomis agreed and Poure spent the night making preparations to attack the British traders living in the old fort.⁸⁴

Early in the morning of February 12, 1781, the Spanish and Siggenauk's warriors crossed the frozen St. Joseph River and completely surprised the British traders within the fort. Two of the British attempted to flee, but they were killed by members of Siggenauk's war party. The remaining eight traders offered no resistance and were made prisoners. Poure then divided up the British trade goods among the Indians and burned any British supplies that were not wanted by the Potawatomis. After claiming the region for Spain, Poure occupied the post for twenty four hours and then left to retrace his steps to St. Louis.⁸⁵

The St. Joseph Potawatomis realized their failure to oppose the raiding party would cause the British to suspect them of aiding the Spanish. During March they sent a delegation of chiefs to Detroit

⁸⁴Cruzat to Don Estevan Miro, August 6, 1781, in Kinniard, Spain in the Mississippi Valley, I, pp. 431-432. Miro was Acting Governor of Louisiana.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 432-434.

where they pleaded that many of their warriors were away hunting and that by the time they assembled enough men to oppose the Spanish, the raiding party had gone. The Potawatomis reminded De Peyster that they had rallied to overtake Hamelin's party and informed the commander that they were sorry that the Spanish had escaped before a counter-attack could be launched. The Potawatomis failed to mention that they had shared in the plundered British goods, but they did ask De Peyster to send other traders to their villages.⁸⁶

The Spanish raid against St. Joseph had little impact upon the Potawatomis in the region. Other British traders were sent into the region from Mackinac and the Potawatomis in the St. Joseph Valley generally remained loyal to the British. But after 1780 the Potawatomis in Michigan and Indiana no longer focused their attention upon activities in Illinois. Since most American troops were withdrawn from Cahokia and Kaskaskia, the Potawatomis no longer feared an invasion up the Illinois or Wabash valleys. Instead, they joined with other Indians at Detroit to aid De Peyster, Alexander McKee, and Simon Girty in campaigns against the Americans in Ohio and Kentucky.⁸⁷

Although the British and Indians feared that Clark would invade Detroit through Ohio, the American commander could not muster sufficient support to make such a campaign possible. Instead, the Americans remained on the defensive as the British and Indians raided along the

⁸⁶Indian Council at Detroit, March 11, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 453-455.

⁸⁷De Peyster to Haldimand, May 7, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 482; Haldimand to Sinclair, May 31, 1781, in ibid., p. 486.

Ohio and into Kentucky. Potawatomis from both the St. Joseph and Detroit areas participated in these actions. In April, 1781, the Detroit Potawatomis attended a multi-tribal council at Detroit where they promised De Peyster to help repel any American incursion into Ohio.⁸⁸ During July, they joined with war parties of Ottawas, Chippewas, and Hurons to assist McKee in a campaign against Kentucky. Meanwhile, Potawatomis from Terre Coupe and from a newly formed village on the Elkhart River in northern Indiana raided along the Ohio where they took two scalps, but also suffered several casualties.⁸⁹

The Detroit Potawatomis accompanying McKee spent most of September 1781 in a campaign along the Ohio River. Although McKee tried to convince them to attack either Fort Nelson at the falls of the Ohio or to besiege Boonesborough, he met with little success. The Potawatomis had joined the expedition to repel a supposed American invasion and when the invasion did not materialize, the Potawatomis were reluctant to attack American forts. Instead, they scattered into small groups and scoured the area along the river, stealing horses and ambushing unwary American settlers. During October they returned to Michigan.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Sosin, The Revolutionary Frontier, n. 138; Council at Detroit, April 26, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 472-476.

⁸⁹De Peyster to McKee, July 21, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 498; Indian Conference at Detroit, August 11, 1781, in ibid., pp. 506-508.

⁹⁰John Macomb to Daniel Clause, September 14, 1781, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 512-513. John Macomb was a Tory officer from New York State. Daniel Clause was the son-in-law of William Johnson. Also see Andrew Thompson to De Peyster, September 21, 1781, in ibid., pp. 515-516, and McKee to De Peyster, September 26, 1781, in ibid., pp. 516-518. Captain Andrew Thompson was a captain of Butler's Rangers.

The Potawatomis spent the following winter in their villages but in May, 1782, they again rallied to the British cause. During the spring reports reached De Peyster at Detroit that the Americans were planning an expedition against the Delaware towns on the Sandusky River. On May 15, 1782 he assembled the Ottawas, Chippewas, Hurons, and Detroit Potawatomis, provided them with presents, and then apprised them of the American ambitions. Earlier in the spring, the Americans had massacred ninety Moravian Delawares at Gnadhutten and the Indians at Detroit were anxious to avenge the atrocity. They promised De Peyster that they would help the Delawares repel any invasion of their homeland.⁹¹

The Potawatomis soon were required to honor their promise. During May an expedition of about four hundred militia commanded by Colonel William Crawford crossed Ohio from the Mingo Bottom near Steubenville and proceeded toward the villages on the Sandusky. The Ohio tribes watched their progress and sent runners to Detroit asking the British for aid. The Detroit Potawatomis and other tribes near Detroit rushed warriors to the Sandusky to swell the force that awaited Crawford while De Peyster sent word to the Potawatomis living on the Elkhart River asking them to assemble at Detroit so they also could be sent to the Sandusky.⁹²

⁹¹ Indian Council at Detroit, May 15, 1782, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, pp. 576-578.

⁹² De Peyster to McKee, June 11, 1782, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 584; De Peyster to McKee, June 13, 1782, in ibid., p. 586. Also see Randolph C. Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), pp. 273-274. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio.

Although the Elkhart Potawatomis arrived too late to take part in the action against Crawford, some of the Detroit Potawatomis joined with large numbers of Delawares, Wyandots, and Mingos to attack the American force as it neared the Indian towns on the Sandusky River. The initial engagement took place in a prairie a few miles north of modern Upper Sandusky, Ohio during the afternoon of June 4, 1782. The Indians took shelter in a grove of trees and fired upon the Americans as they crossed the prairie. Although the battle raged throughout the afternoon, the Americans eventually captured the grove from the Indians and took shelter there during the night. The Indians and their British allies surrounded the grove and on the following morning a sporadic fire was kept up by both sides. During the early afternoon of June 5 however, the Indian forces were buttressed by the arrival of one hundred and forty Shawnees. Within the shelter of the grove, Crawford realized that his attack had failed and after dark on the night of June 5, the American slipped from the grove and fled to the southeast. In the darkness, many of the Americans became separated from the main body of troops and wandered aimlessly in the woods. At daybreak the Indians set out in pursuit of their fleeing enemy and captured several of them, including Captain Crawford. Most of the captives were killed immediately but Crawford was taken to the Delaware village near present Crawford Ohio and there slowly tortured to death. Crawford's defeat was a lopsided victory for the Indians. Although the Indians lost five warriors in the encounter, they killed about seventy Americans.⁹³

⁹³ Consul Wilshire Butterfield, History of the Girtys (Cincinnati: Robert Clarks and Co., 1890), pp. 167-175. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Butterfield, History of the Girtys. Also see Horsman,

The Indian victory on the Sandusky inspired a series of renewed attacks upon the Ohio River frontier. During late July and early August a war party of Potawatomis raided along the Ohio where they captured a Black slave whom they brought to the Delaware towns on the Sandusky. Meanwhile, other Potawatomis journeyed to the Shawnee town at Chillicothe Ohio where they met in council with the Shawnees, Delawares, Mingos, and Wyandots to plan an attack upon Wheeling, West Virginia. During July over eleven hundred Indians led by Alexander McKee and William Caldwell left the Shawnee towns near Chillicothe and traveled overland towards Wheeling. Before they could reach their destination however, they received reports that George Rogers Clark was planning an expedition against the Shawnee villages. The Shawnees, Delawares and Mingos turned back, but the Potawatomis and Wyandots, under the influence of McKee and Caldwell, decided to attack the settlements in Kentucky.⁹⁴

In the second week of August the British and Indians crossed the Ohio and during the night of August 15, 1782 they surrounded Bryan's Station in Fayette County. The British and Indians sent a small number of their party to fire upon the fort hoping to draw the defenders out in a sortie. They were unsuccessful. The Americans were aware of their presence and the ruse failed. The

Matthew Elliott, pp.36-39, and Hiram Beckwith, Ft. Wayne Ms. Notes, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

⁹⁴Antoine Chesne to De Peyster, August 16, 1782, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 628. Chesne was a British Indian agent. Also see Beverly W. Bond, Jr., The Foundations of Ohio (Columbus: The Ohio State Archaeological and History Society, 1941), p. 235; James Alton James, The Life of George Rogers Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), pp. 268-269. Hereafter this volume will be cited as James, Life of Clark.

British and Indians then took cover behind nearby trees and attempted to pick off any defender who showed himself above the stockade while the Kentuckians returned their fire. Although the British and Indians ambushed a relief party approaching Bryan's Station from Lexington, they had little success against the fort and on August 17 they withdrew from the station and slowly retreated toward the Licking River.⁹⁵

The raiders expected that they would be followed and made no attempts to cover their trail. Shortly after the British force left Bryan's Station the defenders welcomed reinforcements from other frontier settlements who were anxious to pursue the attackers. A force of one hundred eighty-two Kentuckians, led by Daniel Boone, Stephen Trigg, and John Todd set out after the Indians and on August 19, 1782 they encountered their adversaries on the Licking River near the Lower Blue Licks. Although Boone cautioned the Kentuckians against an attack, he was over-ruled by the impetuous frontiersmen who wished to inflict punishment upon the British and Indians. The Kentuckians succeeded in crossing the Licking River, but then they were met by the British and Indians whose fire caused the frontiersmen to at first waver and then retreat. The retreat soon became a rout as the Potawatomis and other tribesmen surged from their positions in the timber to overwhelm the Kentuckians as they attempted to flee back across the river. In

⁹⁵Butterfield, History of the Girtys, pp. 195-198; James, Life of Clark, pp. 268-271.

the ensuing melee, about seventy Kentuckians were killed, while the British and Indians suffered only eleven killed and fourteen wounded.⁹⁶

The Battle of Blue Licks was the last major Potawatomi action of the Revolutionary War. During February and March, 1783, Potawatomis from the village near Chicago raided into southern Illinois where they took three scalps and three prisoners along the lower Kaskaskia, but this was a small raiding party which had little impact upon Potawatomi-American relations. When news of the preliminary peace treaty between the British and Americans reached De Peyster in April, 1783, he called the Potawatomis, Chippewas, Ottawas, and Hurons to Detroit and advised them that the war was ending and that they should refrain from further hostilities.⁹⁷

During the summer of 1783, Congress dispatched a former Indian trader, Ephriam Douglass, to the tribes in Ohio and at Detroit. Douglass was instructed to inform the Indians that peace had been restored and that the British had relinquished their claims to the territory east of the Mississippi. Douglass planned to assemble the Indians at the Delaware towns on the Sandusky River and to present them the

⁹⁶ De Peyster to Haldimand, September 4, 1782, in Michigan Historical Collections, X, p. 634; Butterfield, History of the Girtys, p. 198. Estimates of the losses suffered by both sides in the Battle of Blue Licks vary greatly. James, in Life of Clark, p. 274, states that the British and Indians lost only seven men but agrees that the Americans suffered about seventy killed. Jack Sosin, in The Revolutionary Frontier, p. 140, indicates that the British and Indians killed one hundred and forty Americans.

⁹⁷ Narrative of Jean Baptiste Perrault, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXVII, p. 517; Indian Council at Detroit, April 24, 1783, in A. S. De Peyster, Miscellanies, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Perrault was a creole trader at Cahokia.

American version of the peace settlement, but most of the tribes refused to meet with him at that location, so he journeyed on to Detroit. There he was treated cordially by De Peyster, but the British commander would not allow Douglass to meet separately with the Indians, or to discuss British land cessions with them. Meanwhile, De Peyster assembled delegates from the Potawatomis and other tribes and in Douglass's presence admonished them to remain friendly toward the Americans. The Indians were receptive to De Peyster's advice for they treated the American emissary in a friendly manner and on July 7, 1783 he left Detroit for Niagara where he met with the Iroquois and then returned to the East.⁹⁸

The British refusal to let Douglass meet with the Indians was indicative of things to come. During August, 1783, Alexander McKee met with members of many tribes at Sandusky Bay and assured them that the recent British-American treaty was not meant "to deprive you of an extent of country, of which the right of Soil belongs to, and is in yourselves as Sole Proprietors." McKee also assured the Potawatomis and other tribes in attendance that, "The King still considers your happiness by his protection and encouragement of your usual intercourse with Trade."⁹⁹

⁹⁸Copy of a Report by Ephriam Douglass to the Secretary of War, 1783, in Pennsylvania Archives. First Series (12 vols.; Philadelphia: Joseph Severins and Co., 1852-1856), X, pp. 83-90; Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 42-43. Also see De Peyster to Brigadier General Allen MacLean, July 7, 1783, in Michigan Historical Collections, XX, p. 138, and MacLean to De Peyster, July 8, 1783, in ibid., pp. 138-139. MacLean was the British officer in command at Niagara.

⁹⁹Minutes of the Transactions with Indians at Sandusky, August 26 thru September 7, 1783, in Michigan Historical Collections, XX, pp. 174-183.

To the Potawatomis and other Indians at Sandusky, McKee's promises only reinforced their assessment of their position vis-a-vis the Americans. From the Indian point of view, they had not lost the war in the west. They successfully had defended the area north of the Ohio and had inflicted severe damage to property and loss of life south and east of the river. Since the Indians had never given the French nor the British title to their lands in the Northwest, they still believed that they were the owners of the region and that American claims to the area were groundless. Yet the years ahead would sorely test the Potawatomis' conclusions, and they and other tribes would be forced to rely upon their British fathers for assistance in a desperate attempt to defend Ohio from the westward expansion of the new American nation.

CHAPTER VII

THE RED CONFEDERACY

The six years following the Treaty of Paris were a period of frustration for the Potawatomis and their allies. Although they continued to claim the lands north of the Ohio, they were hard pressed to maintain their position against the rapidly expanding United States. In October, 1783, the United States announced that Indian claims to Ohio had been forfeited because the tribes had supported the British, but that the United States would allow the Ohio tribes to occupy small reservations within their former homeland since the United States was "disposed to be kind" to her red Children. The new American government hoped to negotiate separately with the individual tribes and to secure their acquiescence in American occupation of southern Ohio.¹

The American position was strongly opposed by the Potawatomis and other tribes of the Old Northwest. Not only did the Indians refuse to recognize American claims to Ohio, they also hoped to negotiate with the United States as a confederacy rather than as separate tribes. The Indians had emerged from the American Revolution unified in their opposition to American expansion. They intended to employ such unity

¹Entry for October 15, 1783. in Gaillard Hunt, ed., Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789 (34 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902-1937), XIV, pp. 680-695. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Hunt, Journals of the Continental Congress.

as a defense against American aggression. The Potawatomis and other tribes were strengthened in their attempts to form a confederacy by British and Iroquois support. Joseph Brant of the Mohawks met with delegates from all the western tribes and assured them that both the British and the Six Nations were in favor of a red confederacy and would oppose land cessions by individual tribes.²

Unfortunately for the Indians, their early attempts at unity failed. In 1784, at the Second Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the United States forced the Iroquois to relinquish their claims to all lands west of the states of Pennsylvania and New York and in January, 1785, at the Treaty of Fort McIntosh, American officials pressured delegates from the Delawares, Wyandots, Chippewas and Ottawas into ceding all their lands in the Old Northwest except for a reservation in north-central Ohio. The United States then invited representatives from the Shawnees, Miamis, Weas, Piankashaws, Kickapoos and Potawatomis to meet at Fort Finney near the mouth of the Miami River. Government representatives hoped to force these tribes into giving up their claims to lands north of the Ohio, but the American plan failed. Although the Shawnees attended the conference and were coerced into signing away their lands east of the Miami River, the other tribes rejected the American invitation. While the Shawnees were losing their

²Randolph C. Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940), pp. 277-285. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio.

lands to the Americans at Fort Finney, the Potawatomis and other Indians met at Detroit.³

In council at Detroit, the Potawatomis and their allies angrily repudiated the recent treaties and reaffirmed their determination to negotiate with the Americans as a confederacy rather than as individual tribes. Their action was supported by the British who still occupied Detroit and other posts in the American northwest. The British were anxious to retain the loyalty of the western tribes because the Indians still were a valuable source of furs and red warriors served as a barrier to further American expansion. Yet the British were forced to temper their support of the Indians with restraint since the Crown could ill afford to become an active participant in an Indian war in the Ohio Valley. Therefore, the British followed the precarious policy of encouraging the red confederacy and supplying the Indians with arms while attempting to persuade the tribesmen to remain on the defensive against the Americans.⁴

British attempts to restrain the Indians met with only limited success. Angered by American efforts to force the cession of

³Ibid., pp. 289-297. Also see Entry for August 8, 1785, in David I. Bushnell, ed., "Journal of Samuel Montgomery," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, II (September, 1915), p. 264, and Copy of a Speech of Peteasuva to the American Messengers, November 8, 1785, in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), XXIV, pp. 24-25. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Michigan Historical Collections. Montgomery was an American messenger sent to the Indians. Peteasuva was a chief of the Shawnees.

⁴Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, pp. 279-282.

their lands, the Shawnees and other tribes retaliated by crossing the Ohio to raid against American settlements in Kentucky and Virginia.

In June, 1786, Potawatomis from northern Illinois joined in the warfare and killed two Americans near Kaskaskia.⁵ Later in the summer, Miamis from the upper Wabash swept through southern Illinois where they killed six settlers and captured two prisoners. Although the Miamis allowed one of the prisoners to be ransomed, the other was burned at the stake.⁶

Since Americans believed the Shawnees to be the leaders in this resistance, Shawnee villages soon became the targets of American reprisals. In October, 1786, five hundred Kentuckians led by Benjamin Logan invaded Ohio and burned seven Shawnee villages, destroying innumerable corn fields and taking many prisoners.⁷

⁵Arthur Campbell to Governor Patrick Henry, May 21, 1785, in William P. Walker and others, eds., Calendar of the Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts (11 vols.; Richmond: R. F. Walker and others, 1875-1893), IV, p. 30. Campbell was a citizen of Kentucky. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Walker, Calendar of the Virginia State Papers. Also see Cruzat to Miro, July 19, 1786, in Lawrence Kinniard, ed., Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794, Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1945 (5 vols.; Washington: American Historical Association, 1949), I, pp. 173-174. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Kinniard, Spain in the Mississippi Valley.

⁶Cruzat to Miro, July 19, 1786, in Kinniard, Spain in the Mississippi Valley, I, pp. 173-174; John Reynolds, Pioneer History of Illinois (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1887), p. 153. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Reynolds, Pioneer History of Illinois. Also see John Burnett of John Sayer, June 26, 1786, in Wilbur N. Cunningham, ed., Letter Book of William Burnett (N. P. : Fort Miami Heritage Society of Michigan, 1967), p. 14. Burnett was a trader among the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph River. Sayer was an agent for a merchandising firm in Montreal. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Cunningham, Burnett Letter Book.

⁷Josiah Harmar to the Secretary of War, November 15, 1786, in William Henry Smith, ed., The St. Clair Papers (2 vols.; Cincinnati:

Logan's invasion of Ohio forced the postponement of a multi-tribal council the Shawnees had planned to hold in one of their villages. During June and July the Shawnees had sent messengers of the Potawatomis and other tribes asking them to assemble at the Shawnees villages on the Mad River in modern Logan County, Ohio. The American invasion forced the Shawnees to flee to the Maumee, but the large intertribal council still was held. In late November, delegates from the Potawatomis, Shawnees, Ottawas, Chippewas, Miamis, Hurons, Delawares, Iroquois, and Wabash tribes met at Detroit. Angered over Logan's raid, the Indians deliberated for three weeks and then drafted a letter to Congress renouncing the recent treaties and demanding that the United States negotiate with the Indian confederacy rather than with individual tribes. The confederacy invited Congress to send officials to re-negotiate the post-war treaties, but they also warned the United States to keep American settlers and surveyors south of the Ohio.⁸

Robert Clarke and Co., 1882), II, pp. 18-19. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Smith, St. Clair Papers. Also see Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, p. 298.

⁸Information of Captain Teunise, a Delaware Indian addressed to Col. Harmar, July 6, 1786, in Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter all such materials will be cited as Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Report by the United States in Congress Assembled, October 20, 1786, in Pennsylvania Archives, First Series (12 vols.; Philadelphia: Joseph Severins and Co., 1852-1856), XI, pp. 72-73. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Pennsylvania Archives, First Series. Also see Speech of the United Indian Nations, at their Confederate Council, held near the mouth of the Detroit River, the 28th November and 18th December, 1786, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs (2 vols.; Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832-1834), I, pp. 8-9. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as American State Papers, Indian Affairs.

The United States reacted cautiously to the Indians' message. During 1787 government officials examined reports from the west in an attempt to ascertain the strength of the confederacy. They also considered several policies as a possible response to the Indian position. The new American government was not anxious to re-negotiate for the lands north of the Ohio, but they were less anxious to become involved in an extensive Indian war. Henry Knox, the Secretary of War reported to Congress that:

In the present embarrassed state of public affairs and entire deficiency of funds an indian war of any considerable extent and duration would most exceedingly distress the United States - The great distance by land which the stores and supplies must be transported would render the expenses intolerable.

Therefore, in the fall of 1787, Congress authorized Arthur St. Clair, the Governor of the Northwest Territories to assemble the Indians for the purpose of negotiating a peaceful solution to the land problem.⁹

During December St. Clair sent messages to the western tribes asking them to meet with government officials at the falls of the Muskingum River on May 1, 1788. The Indians failed to appear. Once again their confederacy had become torn by indecision and new intertribal disputes over negotiating with the Americans. Although the Potawatomis and the other tribes received St. Clair's message, they wanted first

⁹David Duncan to Harmar, June 17, 1787, in Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatom File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Duncan was a Pennsylvania trader. Also see Report of the Secretary of War to Congress, July 10, 1787, in Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., The Territorial Papers of the United States (27 vols.-; Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1934-), II, pp. 31-35; Secretary of Congress to Governor St. Clair, October 26, 1787, in ibid., pp. 78-79. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Carter, Territorial Papers.

to meet in council and settle their intertribal differences before negotiating with the United States. Therefore, while St. Clair awaited them upon the Muskingum, the red confederacy again assembled near Detroit.¹⁰

The rifts that had developed among the Indians were threefold. The Iroquois were split between Joseph Brant and the Mohawks who urged resistance to the Americans and the Senecas who championed a more conciliatory stand. Many of the other tribes were disenchanted with the Delawares and Wyandots whose lands lay along the Ohio and who were afraid to take the initiative in armed opposition to American settlement at Marietta and Cincinnati. The third disagreement actively involved the Potawatomis. They and the other tribes whose lands lay far north of the Ohio were willing to compromise to avoid a war with the United States. In agreement with the Chippewas and Ottawas, the Potawatomis urged the confederacy to cede the area east of the Muskingum River in return for an American guarantee of the remainder of the area north of the Ohio. Brant also argued for this position since American settlement already was pouring into the region. The Potawatomis position was adamantly opposed by the Kickapoos, Miamis, and Shawnees. These tribes were located in the Wabash and Maumee valleys and saw any compromise in

¹⁰Governor St. Clair to the Secretary at War, January 27, 1788, in Carter, Territorial Papers, II, pp. 89-90; Governor St. Clair to the Secretary at War, July 5, 1788, in ibid., pp. 119-120. Also see Thomas Hughes, A Journal of Thomas Hughes (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1947), p. 164. Hughes was a British soldier stationed at Detroit.

eastern Ohio as a dangerous precedent which might threaten their claims to lands in the lower Ohio Valley.¹¹

When the multi-tribal council assembled near Detroit in July, 1788, the Potawatomis and the other northern tribes attempted to convince the Kickapoos, Miamis, and Shawnees to agree to the compromise. They were unsuccessful. Although they met with the Kickapoos on July 22 and 23, they were unable to persuade the Kickapoos and their neighbors to accept any cession of lands east of the Muskingum. The council dispersed after failing to reach any agreement and the confederacy began to fall apart. Many of the Potawatomis wished to attend the planned meeting with the Americans but the Shawnees attacked American supply trains near the Muskingum and forced St. Clair to move the site of the proposed treaty negotiations to Fort Harmar at the juncture of the Muskingum and the Ohio.¹² Meanwhile, the St. Joseph Potawatomis became increasingly hostile toward the tribes along the Wabash and during October, 1788, they offered to aid the Americans at Vincennes against the Weas and Kickapoos.¹³

¹¹Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, pp. 301-304. Downes includes a good discussion of the intricacies behind the intertribal disputes.

¹²Appendix to the Minutes of the Treaty of Fort Harmar, Wayne Manuscripts, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see St. Clair to the Indians in Council, July 13, 1788, in Carter, Territorial Papers, II, pp. 127-128; St. Clair to the Secretary of War, December 13, 1788, in ibid., p. 168.

¹³John Francis Hamtramck to Harmar, October 13, 1788, in Gayle Thornbrough, ed., Outpost on the Wabash (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1957), p. 122. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash. Animosity between the Potawatomis and the lower Wabash tribes was increased when a party of Wabash Kickapoos

With Indian unity dissolving, the Treaty of Fort Harmar was a disaster for the red confederacy. The Kickapoos, Shawnees, and Miamis did not attend the proceedings and refused to be bound by any agreement made by the other tribes. Of the eight tribes who were represented at the negotiations, only three, the Delawares, Wyandots, and Iroquois confederacy had any claims to the lands in question. The Indians met with St. Clair at Fort Harmar during the middle of December, and the conference lasted through January 13, 1789.¹⁴ Two separate treaties were signed by the United States and the Indians. On January 9, the Iroquois representatives led by the Seneca chief Cornplanter reaffirmed the land cessions made at the Treaty of Fort Stanwix and on the same day representatives from the Potawatomis, Sauks, Chippewas, Ottawas, Delawares and Wyandots were cajoled into accepting the terms of the earlier treaties of Fort Stanwix, Fort McIntosh, and Fort Finney.¹⁵

killed a Potawatomi warrior in late March. See William Biggs, The Narrative of the Captivity of William Biggs Among the Kickapoo Indians in Illinois in 1788 (Unknown: Heartman's Historical Series, 1922), pp. 11-12 (reprint). Major Hamtramck was in command at Fort Knox at Vincennes.

¹⁴St. Clair to Knox, December 13, 1788, in Smith, St. Clair Papers, II, p. 106; Harmar to Knox, January 13, 1788, in Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Also see Ebenezer Denny, "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," in Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (14 vols.; Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1864-1885), VII, pp. 331-334. Denny was an American military officer. Hereafter this journal will be cited as "Military Journal of Ebenezer Denny."

¹⁵Articles of a Treaty made at Fort Harmar...between...the United States of America...and the sachems and warriors of the Six Nations..., in American State Papers. Indian Affairs, I, pp. 5-6; Articles of a Treaty made at Fort Harmar...between...the United States of America...and the sachems and warriors of the Wyandot, Delaware, Ottawa, Chippewa, Pattawatina, and Sac nations..., in ibid., pp. 6-7. The Iroquois also conducted a separate treaty with the state of Pennsylvania. See Agreement Between the Six Nations and Commissioners for Lands on Lake Erie, & C., 1789, in Pennsylvania Archives, First Series, XI, pp. 529-533.

Although the Potawatomis played only a minor role in these proceedings, they had no claims to any of the lands involved. Three Potawatomi warriors signed the treaty including Windigo, the principal chief of the Potawatomis near Detroit. Included in the treaty was an article pledging "peace and amity" between the United States and the Sauks and Potawatomis. Yet the treaty had little meaning. Those Indians in attendance represented only fragments of their tribes and had assembled expecting the United States to make major concessions. When no significant concessions were made, the tribesmen realized that the new treaty was no better than the earlier ones and would be repudiated by the majority of Indians in the Old Northwest. Disgruntled, the Potawatomis and the other representatives made their marks on the treaty document; they had no intention of abiding by its terms.¹⁶

St. Clair optimistically reported that the Treaty of Fort Harmar was a success and that it had broken the Indian confederacy. He was wrong. Rather than causing further dissension among the tribes, the Treaty of Fort Harmar convinced them that they could gain little through negotiation. Their experiences at Fort Harmar also gave renewed impetus to the movement for Indian unity since it became obvious that the United States profited from quarrels among the tribes. As the bitter impact of their failure at Fort Harmar became more apparent, the Potawatomis and other tribes temporarily abandoned all attempts at compromise and

¹⁶ Articles of a Treaty made at Fort Harmar between the United States of America and the sachems and warriors of the Wyandots, Delaware, Ottawa, Chippewa, Pattawatina, and Sac nations in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 6-7.

moved toward the position taken by the Miamis, Shawnees and Kickapoos. By the summer of 1789 British officials reported that the northwestern tribes were once again unanimously opposed to any white settlement north of the Ohio.¹⁷

The tribes also were becoming more active in expressing their hostility. Since 1786 the Shawnees and tribes along the Wabash had been at war with Kentucky, raiding south of the Ohio and in turn defending their villages against reprisals by the Americans. During 1789 the Potawatomis and other tribes again joined in this warfare. No longer did the Potawatomis offer to support the Americans against the Kickapoos and Miamis. During March a war party of Potawatomis from the St. Joseph region struck at northern Kentucky but were overtaken by a force of Kentucky militia and suffered one killed and four wounded. In the fall of 1789 Potawatomi warriors on the Tippecanoe seized the goods of an American trader and during December Potawatomis on the upper Illinois also pillaged a shipment of trade goods belonging to American merchants.¹⁸

¹⁷ St. Clair to the Secretary of War, January 18, 1789, in Smith, St. Clair Papers, II, pp. 108-109; Lord Dorchester to Lord Sydney, June 25, 1789, in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, p. 10. Also see Lord Dorchester to Lord Sydney, July 15, 1789, in ibid., p. 11. Lord Dorchester or Guy Carleton was Governor of Canada. Thomas Townshend or Lord Sydney was Secretary of State for the Home Department, 1783-1789.

¹⁸ Hamtramck to Harmer, March 28, 1789, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash, p. 159; William Burnett to Mr. Hand, February 2, 1790, in Cunningham, Burnett Letter Book, p. 34. Hand evidently was a British trader at Detroit. Also see Milo Milton Quaife, ed., "Henry Hay's Journal from Detroit to the Miami River," in Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its Sixty-Second Annual Meeting (Madison: Published by the Society, 1915), p. 251. Hay was a British merchant at Detroit.

American officials blamed most of these depredations upon the Shawnees, Kickapoos and Miamis since these tribes had refused to attend the Fort Harmar council. Not realizing that the other Indians were now supporting these hostile actions, government agents believed that if treaties could be signed with the tribes along the Wabash peace would be restored in the west. Therefore, during March, 1790, Hamtramck dispatched a messenger up the Wabash from Vincennes. The American envoy was to deliver a message from St. Clair to the Kickapoos and the Miami Confederacy in which the Governor of the Northwest Territory urged the Indians to cease hostilities. The mission failed. The messenger proceeded no farther than the mouth of the Vermillion where his life was threatened by the Kickapoos. He returned to Vincennes.¹⁹

Hamtramck then dispatched Antoine Gamelin up the river with the same message. Gamelin was married to a Wea woman and was well-known among the Wabash tribes. Gamelin traveled up the Wabash Valley stopping in Piankashaw, Wea, and Kickapoo villages. On April 23, he reached the Miami town on the headwaters of the Maumee, near the site of modern Fort Wayne. Throughout his journey up the Wabash, Gamelin had found the Indians non-committal. At the Miami town he found more of the same. The Miamis refused to make peace without consulting the Potawatomis and other northern tribes. They also stated that before reaching a decision,

¹⁹Knox to Harmar, December 19, 1789, in Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; St. Clair to Hamtramck, January 23, 1790, in Smith, St. Clair Papers, II, p. 130. Also see Hamtramck to Harmar, March 17, 1790, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash, pp. 222-225 and August W. Derleth, Vincennes: Portal to the West (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1968), pp. 127-128.

they had to consult with the British at Detroit. Realizing that his mission had failed, Gamelin returned to Vincennes.²⁰

While Gamelin was in the Miami village he encountered a war party of Potawatomis returning from the Ohio with two captured Black slaves whom they intended to sell to British tradtes. The incident was indicative of the growing militancy of the Potawatomis and of their new commitment to defend the lands north of the Ohio. During the spring of 1790 Indian attacks along the Ohio and into Kentucky reached epidemic proportions. Although the Shawnees and the Kickapoos formed the vanguard in these attacks, the Potawatomis also participated. During May, Potawatomi war parties crossed the Ohio to sweep through northern Kentucky and by early summer American travel upon the Ohio had become almost impossible.²¹

In June, St. Clair finally decided that the western frontier could not be defended without military actions against the Indians. During the summer preparations for such a campaign were made. St. Clair planned a two-pronged assault against the tribes along the Wabash and

²⁰ Antoine Gamelin's Journal, in American State Papers. Indian Affairs, I, pp. 93-94.

²¹ Ibid., p. 94; John Cleve Symmes to Jonathan Dayton, April 30, 1790, in Beverly W. Bond, Jr., ed., The Correspondence of John Cleve Symmes (New York: Macmillan Co., 1926), pp. 126-127. Both Symmes and Dayton were land speculators in Ohio. Also see Hamtramck to Harmar, May 16, 1790, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash, p. 233, and Jacob Burnet, Notes on the Early Settlement of the Northwestern Territory (Cincinnati: Derby, Bradley and Co., 1847), pp. 83-91. Burnet discusses a great number of Indian raids along the Ohio in the spring and summer of 1790. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Burnet, Notes on the Northwestern Territory.

the Maumee. General Josiah Harmar was to march upon the Miami and Shawnee towns on the Maumee while Hamtramck was to invade the Kickapoo and Wea towns along the Wabash. By late September, both expeditions had been assembled and were waiting to march.²²

The Potawatomis and their allies did not spend the summer of 1790 in vain. Reports of the planned American campaign reached the Indian villages in northern Indiana and the red confederacy made preparations of their own. During July messengers were sent to all the tribes in the confederacy inviting them to send delegates to a large council to be held at the Miami town on the headwaters of the Maumee in August. The Indians assembled on August 9 and unanimously vowed to oppose any American incursion. They boasted that if Harmar dared to approach their villages they would send their women to chase him away with switches. They also made more serious plans. The Potawatomis and other tribes agreed to send their warriors to support the Miamis and Shawnees at the first notice that the Americans were approaching their villages.²³

The Potawatomis soon were forced to honor their commitment. On September 30, 1790, Harmar led a force of 320 regulars and 1133

²²St. Clair to Winthrop Sargent, June 10, 1790, in Carter, Territorial Papers, III, p. 311. Sargent was St. Clair's secretary. Also see St. Clair to the Secretary of War, August 23, 1790, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 92-93; Harmar to Hamtramck, July 15, 1790, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash.

²³Hamtramck to Harmar, August 2, 1790, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash, p. 242. Also see Sargent to Hamtramck, July 16, 1790, in Carter, Territorial Papers, III, pp. 320-321 and Sargent to St. Clair, August 17, 1790, in ibid., II, pp. 300-301.

Kentucky militia from Fort Washington at the mouth of the Little Miami and moved north toward the Indian towns along the Maumee. In a final attempt to split the confederacy, St. Clair sent messages to the Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Chippewas assuring them that Harmar's expedition had no intention of striking their villages and urging them to keep their warriors at home. St. Clair was wasting his time. As the American expedition slowly straggled north through Ohio, the Potawatomis and other warriors from the confederacy were rushing to the Miami towns on the upper Wabash. Meanwhile, the tribes along the Maumee abandoned their villages and moved their women and children to temporary camps along the Elkhart River.²⁴

By the middle of October, Harmar's expedition reached the Maumee Valley where he burned Indian villages and destroyed vast quantities of Indian corn. On October 18, a force of 300 militia and regulars was dispatched to scout through the adjoining country in an attempt to find the Indians. Harmar ordered them to spend as long as three days on their mission but they returned to the main camp in the evening after killing only two Indians. Displeased with the conduct of the scouting party, on the morning of October 19, Colonel John Hardin led a mixed force of 180 militia and 30 regulars on a similar

²⁴St. Clair to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Ottawa Nations, October 7, 1790, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 101-102; Burt Anson, The Miami Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), pp. 114-115. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Anson, The Miami Indians.

mission. The militia were reluctant to follow Hardin and by the time his party had traveled two miles from camp, many militiamen began to desert.²⁵

About ten miles northwest of modern Fort Wayne, Hardin and the remainder of his men were ambushed by a large party of Potawatomis and Shawnees. The Indian attack took Hardin's force by surprise and the initial volley panicked the militia. Attempting to flee, the militiamen fell back upon the small forces of regulars and threw them into confusion. Most of the militia continued in their flight, but the regulars forces held their position and returned the Indians' fire. The Potawatomis and Shawnees were well protected by the underbrush and their marksmanship took a heavy toll upon the Americans. When the regulars and those few militiamen that supported them finally retreated, only nine survived. The attacking party of Potawatomis and Shawnees was composed of approximately one hundred warriors. American casualties in the action numbered about the same.²⁶

On the following day the Americans remained in their camp on the Maumee, but on the morning of October 21, Harmar and his men

²⁵"Military Journal of Ebenezer Denny," pp. 348-350; Paul Woehrman, At the Headwaters of the Maumee: A History of the Forts of Fort Wayne (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1971), pp. 31-32. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Woehrman, At the Headwaters of the Maumee.

²⁶Elliott to McKee, October 23, 1790, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 108-109; Journal of Captain John Armstrong, quoted in Basil Neek, "General Harmar's Expedition," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, XX (January, 1911), pp. 83-84. Hereafter this article will be cited as Neek, "General Harmar's Expedition." Armstrong was the commander of those regular forces accompanying Hardin.

retreated toward Fort Washington. After traveling for about eight miles, the Americans camped for the night and Harmar decided to send a party back to the Maumee in an attempt to surprise any Indians who had returned to the region. At about nine o'clock in the evening, Harmar dispatched Major John P. Wyllys with sixty regulars and approximately three hundred militia who were ordered to travel through the night and to strike the Indians at dawn. The plan failed. Wyllys' force did not reach the Maumee until after the sun had risen. Meanwhile, a large party of Shawnees, Miamis, Ottawas, and Delawares had returned to the region and their scouts brought them intelligence of the American advance. During the morning the militia units discovered several small parties of Indians on their flanks who fled after seeing the Americans. Disobeying orders, many of the militia charged after the fleeing Indians leaving the regulars unsupported beside the Maumee. While the American forces were scattered and confused, Little Turtle of the Miamis led the Indians in an attack upon the regulars. The tribesmen greatly outnumbered the Americans and the attack was successful. Wyllys was killed and the Americans retreated back to Harmar's camp.²⁷

Colonel Hardin had been serving with the militia units and as the Americans retreated he raced back to Harmar and asked the General

²⁷Diary of General Harmar, in State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Draper MSS, Harmar Papers, 2W343 (microfilm). Hereafter material from this collection will be cited as Draper MSS. Also see Information of Captain Mathew Elliott, October 28, 1790, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 133-134 and Francis Paul Prucha, The Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969), p. 21. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Prucha, Sword of the Republic. The exact number of Indians led by Little Turtle is unknown, but they probably numbered over six hundred.

to send out a sortie to protect the fleeing Americans. Harmar refused. With a fourth of his regulars already dead and the militia entirely unreliable, the American commander did not want to risk more of his troops in further encounters with the Indians. Harmar strengthened the defensive positions around his camp and then received the survivors from the battle on the Maumee. On the following morning the Americans continued their march back to Fort Washington.²⁸

The Potawatomis did not take part in the second encounter yet they did make a substantial contribution to the failure of the American expedition. Of the one hundred and eighty three Americans killed during Harmar's sojourn on the Maumee, over half fell in the Potawatomi-Shawnee attack upon Hardin's force of regulars and militia. The Potawatomis also shared in the plunder. Much American equipment was deserted as the militia fled the Indians and over one-third of the American pack-horses were either killed or stolen.²⁹

While Harmar had been marching to the Maumee, Major John Hamtramck led a force of three hundred and thirty Americans up the Wabash against the Weas and Kickapoos. Although Hamtramck did not meet with a disaster similar to Harmar's, he achieved little success. Plagued by illness and the lack of supplies, the Americans destroyed several Indian villages near the mouth of the Vermillion and then returned to Vincennes. Hamtramck's decision to return was fortunate.

²⁸Meek, "General Harmar's Expedition," pp. 86-87; "Military Journal of Ebenezer Denny," pp. 352-353.

²⁹Prucha, Sword of the Republic, p. 21.

His expedition had been anticipated by the Wabash tribes and they had assembled a large number of warriors including some Potawatomis from the Tippecanoe at an ambush on the central Wabash. When Hamtramck failed to appear some of the Indians attempted to catch the American force on their journey back to Vincennes. Although the war party intercepted the American column, they did not attack. Among the Americans were several creole citizens of Vincennes and the Indians did not wish to endanger them.³⁰

The Indians were elated over their successful defense of their homelands and continued to carry the war to the Americans. During January, 1791, a force of approximately three hundred Miamis, Shawnees, Delawares and Potawatomis descended the Miami Valley in Ohio and struck at Dunlap's Station. The American settlement was located on the Miami River about eighteen miles north of Cincinnati. On January 8, an advance party of the Indians fired upon four surveyors who were upstream from the settlement, killing one and capturing another before the other two made their escape. The scouting party of Indians was soon joined by their comrades led by Simon Girty and Little Turtle of the Miamis. Before dawn on January 10, the Indians attacked the fortified settlement at Dunlap's Station. They were repulsed. The earlier attack upon the surveyors had warned the Americans and they were prepared for the Indians. The Indians kept up the attack throughout the day and into the night but met with little success.

³⁰Hamtramck to Harmar, November 2, 1790, in Thornbrough, Outpost on the Wabash, pp. 259-264; Hamtramck to Harmar, November 28, 1790, in Draper MSS, Harmar Papers, 2W370-2W371. Also see Hamtramck to Harmar, November 20, 1790, in ibid., 2W372.

The Americans were well protected behind stout log walls and they expected the arrival of a relief force from Cincinnati. Realizing that their attack was doomed to failure, the Potawatomis and their allies retreated up the Miami during the early morning hours of January 10. Before leaving however, the Indians tied the captured surveyor, Abner Hunt to a heavy log within sight of the fort and slowly burned him to death.³¹

The attack upon Dunlap's Station was indicative of future Potawatomis actions. In late January Potawatomis near Chicago killed a French trader friendly to the Americans and during the spring other Potawatomis and their allies launched a series of raids against the Ohio Valley.³² In March five Potawatomis from the Detroit area joined twelve Ottawas and Chippewas to raid through northern Kentucky. They encountered a large force of American bateaux upon the Ohio but failed to attack the boats since they feared that the Americans were too well-armed. During early April however, the war party killed and scalped two settlers whom they surprised near modern Covington, Kentucky.³³ In May other Indians swept through southern Illinois and by June land speculators in

³¹ Hiram Beckwith, Fort Wayne Manuscript, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Burnet, Notes on the Northwestern Territory, pp. 111-112. Also see Consul Wilshire Butterfield, History of the Girtys (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke and Co., 1890), pp. 249-255. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Butterfield, History of the Girtys.

³² William Burnett to Andrew Todd, February 6, 1791, in Cunningham, Burnett Letter Book, p. 45. Todd was a merchant in Montreal. Also see Burnett to W. Hand, February 6, 1791, in ibid., pp. 47-48.

³³ Entries for March 9 and March 13, 1791, in Journal of What Happened at the Miamis and at the Glaize with the Guias and Piconns, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 220; Entry for April 7, 1791, in ibid., p. 222.

Ohio were complaining that their business had been destroyed since "Indians kill people so frequently that none dare stir into the woods to view the country and people will not purchase at a venture as formerly."³⁴

The Americans struck back. During the spring of 1791 reports had reached the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph that the Americans were planning a raid against Indian villages in northern Indiana and in June the reports proved true.³⁵ Late in May, Brigadier General Charles Scott and seven hundred mounted Kentuckians crossed the Ohio and proceeded north through Indiana toward the Wabash. The Indians were aware of the American expedition but they assumed it was directed against the Miami village at the headwaters of the Maumee. Accordingly, the Potawatomis and tribes along the Wabash rushed warriors to the Maumee to aid the Miamis in the defense of their village. The Indians miscalculated. Scott's expedition was directed against the Wea and Kickapoo towns of the central Wabash. Since most of the warriors from these villages had gone to the Maumee, these towns were virtually defenseless. Unopposed, the Kentuckians swept down the central Wabash Valley destroying Wea and Kickapoo villages. On June 3 the Kentuckians left the Wabash and returned to Kentucky.³⁶

³⁴Reynolds, Pioneer History of Illinois, p. 175; John Cleve Symmes to Jonathan Dayton, June 19, 1791, in Bond, Correspondence of John Cleve Symmes, p. 143.

³⁵Burnett to Hand, February 6, 1791, in Cunningham, Burnett Letter Book, p. 47; Burnett to Hand, April 11, 1791, in ibid., p. 50. Also see Entry for April 6, 1791, in Journal of What Happened at the Miami and at the Glaize with the Ouias and Piconns, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 221.

³⁶Report of Brigadier General Scott, June 28, 1791, in American State Papers. Indian Affairs, I, pp. 131-132; Unknown to McKee, June 15, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 261-262.

In August, Scott's raid was followed by a similar incursion led by Lieutenant Colonel James Wilkinson. On August 7, 1791, a force of five hundred and fifty Kentuckians commanded by Wilkinson struck again at the central Wabash. After burning several rebuilt villages and destroying Indian corn fields, Wilkinson and his men returned to Kentucky. The Potawatomi villages on the upper Tippecanoe were too far north to be threatened by the American raids and the destruction along the Wabash had little impact upon the Potawatomis. Yet the American attacks were successful in crushing the Weas and after the summer of 1791, they withdrew from the hostilities.³⁷

Although the Americans were able to raid the central Wabash, the red confederacy remained adamant in their demands that most of Ohio should be forbidden to white settlement. On July 1, 1791, British Indian Agent Alexander McKee met with delegates from the Potawatomis and other tribes at the foot of the rapids on the Maumee. After distributing presents to the tribes in attendance, McKee asked the delegates what terms would be acceptable for restoring the peace with the Americans. He promised the Indians that the British would present such terms to the Americans and would endeavor to persuade the Americans to accept them. The confederacy was willing to give up certain lands in

Also see Robert Stuart Sanders, "Colonel John Hardin and His Letters to His Wife," The Filson Club History Quarterly, XXIV (January, 1965), p. 7; David Zeisberger, The Diary of David Zeisberger. A Moravian Missionary Among the Indians of Ohio, trans. and ed. by Eugene E. Bliss (2 vols.; Cincinnati: Robert Clarke Co., 1885), II, p. 199. Hardin served with Scott in the campaign along the Wabash.

³⁷Lieutenant Colonel-commandant Wilkinson's Report, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 133-135.

eastern Ohio, but they informed McKee that all of the region west of the Muskingum was Indian land and was not negotiable.³⁸

Following the meeting on the Maumee, several delegates from the Potawatomis and the other members of the confederacy accompanied Matthew Elliott to Quebec where they met with Lord Dorchester, the Governor of Canada. During the middle of August, several councils were held between the governor and the Indians in which the Potawatomis and their allies informed Dorchester of their boundary proposals in Ohio. Speaking for the confederacy, Joseph Brant stated that the Indians would relinquish lands east of a line from the mouth of the Tennessee River, up the Ohio to the Muskingum and then ascending that river to the Cuyahoga Portage, and then extending directly to Venango. But under no circumstances would the confederacy give up any lands west of the Muskingum.³⁹

Dorchester answered Brant with a speech in which he assured the Indians that the British had never given away the lands in Ohio to the Americans since "no man can give what is not his own." He informed

³⁸Colonel's McKee's Speech to the Nations of Indians, at the Foot of the Miamis Rapids, July 1, 1791, in Ernest A. Cruikshank, ed., The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe (5 vols.; Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1923-1931), I, p. 369. Simcoe was Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe. Also see Reginald Horsman, Matthew Ellicott, British Indian Agent (Detroit: Wayne State Press, 1964), pp. 66-67. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Horsman, Matthew Elliott.

³⁹Merchants trading at Detroit to Sir John Johnson, August 10, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 306-307. Johnson was the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Also see Alured Clark to Simcoe, August 17, 1791, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, p. 55.

the delegates that although the British had no desire to start a war with the Americans, they would support the Indians and would try to arrange a peaceful settlement between the confederacy and the United States. The British were anxious to restore the peace since the continual raiding greatly diminished the fur trade and threatened to involve them in a war with the Americans.⁴⁰

Before any significant peace negotiations could be initiated, the United States dispatched another military expedition against the tribes along the Maumee and upper Wabash. Recoiling from Harmar's defeat, in March, 1791, Congress had appropriated over \$300,000 to finance another campaign against the northwestern Indians. Plans also were made to raise additional troops and to construct a series of military posts stretching from Cincinnati north to the Maumee. When another American peace initiative failed during the spring of 1791, the plans for the military expeditions were put into operation.⁴¹

Such plans were poorly executed. The Potawatomis were aware of American intentions and during September they joined other tribes in assembling large numbers of warriors along

⁴⁰Lord Dorchester's Speech to the chiefs and warriors deputed by the confederated Indian nations..., August 15, 1791, in Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Third Series (10 vols.; Boston: Published by the Society, 1825-1849), V, pp. 159-163. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Massachusetts Historical Collections, Third Series.

⁴¹Instructions Given by H. Knox, Sec'y of War, for the Protection of the Frontiers in the Ensuing Campaign, March 21, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 187-197; Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, p. 317. Correspondence concerning an unsuccessful attempt to enlist the Iroquois in a diplomatic offensive against the northwestern confederacy can be found in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 149-163.

the Maumee.⁴² Meanwhile, on September 17, St. Clair's army left their camp near Fort Washington and slowly proceeded up the Miami Valley. St. Clair's force consisted of approximately twenty three hundred men: two small regiments of regular infantry and large numbers of six-month volunteers and militia.⁴³ The volunteers and militia were poorly trained and the entire expedition suffered from inadequate and shoddy supplies. In an astounding display of poor judgment, St. Clair allowed about two hundred women, mostly prostitutes and camp followers to travel with the expedition. Some of the women were accompanied by their children.⁴⁴

The Americans proceeded at a snail's pace. Twenty-five miles north of Fort Washington St. Clair spent two weeks building a new post, Fort Hamilton. The expedition then marched to modern Darke County, Ohio where a second post, Fort Jefferson was constructed. It was now late October and the cold autumn rains common to Ohio swept through the region. St. Clair also was plagued by desertions. Many of the militia units left en masse and by the time that the Americans reached the headwaters of the Wabash, their numbers had dwindled to about 1400

⁴²McKee to Thomas Smith, July 5, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 86. Smith was an officer in the British Indian Service. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 68, and Butterfield, History of the Girtys, p. 261.

⁴³Prucha, Sword of the Republic, p. 24; Frazer E. Wilson, "St. Clair's Defeat," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, XI (July, 1902), p. 36. Hereafter this article will be cited as Wilson, "St. Clair's Defeat."

⁴⁴William Darke to Mrs. Sarah Darke, November 1, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 231-233. Lieutenant Colonel Darke commanded one of the regiments of regulars. Also see Milo Milton Quaife, ed., "A Picture of the First United States Army: The Journal of Captain Samuel Newman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, II (September, 1918), pp. 44-73. Newman served under St. Clair in the 1791 campaign.

men. St. Clair's personal health was indicative of the American situation: the old governor suffered so severely from gout that he had to be carried in a litter. On the evening of November 3, 1791, St. Clair's army made a bedraggled camp on the East Fork of the upper Wabash, near modern Fort Recovery, Ohio.⁴⁵

The Potawatomis and other members of the red confederacy were aware of St. Clair's progress. Throughout their lengthy march from the camp near Fort Washington, the Americans had been observed by Shawnee scouts who sent reports to the warriors waiting on the Maumee. The tribesmen knew that part of St. Clair's force had deserted and they were confident that the Americans could be defeated. On October 28, 1791, the Potawatomis and their allies left the camps along the Maumee and moved south to meet St. Clair. Indian morale was high. Their war party numbered over 1000 warriors and they were well supplied by British traders.⁴⁶

During the evening of November 3, scouting parties sent in advance of the main Indian force found St. Clair's camp on the headwaters of the Wabash. Word was relayed back to the large war party

⁴⁵Winthrop Sargent's Diary While With General Arthur St. Clair's Expedition Against the Indians." Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, XXVIII (July, 1924), pp. 238-252. Hereafter this diary will be cited as "Winthrop Sargent's Diary." Also see Prucha, Sword of the Republic, pp. 24-25, and St. Clair to the Secretary of War, November 1, 1791, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 136-137.

⁴⁶Simon Girty to McKee, October 28, 1791, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 329-330; Butterfield, History of the Girtys, p. 261. Also see Hiram Beckwith, Fort Wayne Manuscript, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

and in the early morning hours, the Potawatomis and their allies infiltrated the woods surrounding the American encampment. At about midnight, a small patrol of American volunteers encountered part of the Indians within a mile of the camp and after a few shots were fired by both sides, the patrol fled back to the safety of the American position. Ironically, they failed to notify St. Clair of their skirmish.⁴⁷

An hour before sunrise, St. Clair mustered his sleepy army from their blankets and formed them into ranks as a precaution against a dawn attack. From the shelter of the woods, the Indians watched as the troops assembled and then were dismissed thirty minutes later when the American officers concluded that no encounter was imminent. The Americans made preparations to deposit their baggage and to organize for the final march against the Indian towns along the Maumee. Early morning patrols were not dispatched since the Americans assumed that the woods were empty and that the Indians preferred to make their stand near their villages.⁴⁸

They were mistaken. The militia units who were encamped across the river from the other forces had just been dismissed when the war cry was sounded from the woods around the camp and the militia were raked by musket fire. Panic stricken, the militia units fled from their position and crossed the river to spread confusion among the

⁴⁷"Winthrop Sargent's Diary," p. 257; Wilson, "St. Clair's Defeat," p. 39.

⁴⁸"Winthrop Sargent's Diary," p. 258; St. Clair to the Secretary of War, November 9, 1791, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 137.

regulars and six-month volunteers who were attempting to reform their ranks to meet the Indians. As the militia struggled to cross the river, they were followed closely by the Indians who left their position from among the trees to pursue the fleeing enemy. Meanwhile, other tribesmen surrounding the camp opened fire upon the American position.⁴⁹

Supported by artillery, the American regulars repulsed the Indians who were following the militia, but these warriors then took cover behind the underbrush and began to pour a deadly fire into the ranks of their enemy. The artillery units were especially hard hit and many of the gunners were killed. The regulars then mounted several bayonet charges against the Indians in an attempt to dislodge them from the underbrush. Although the Indians fled from the charging Americans, they soon returned after the regulars retreated back to the camp. The battle raged throughout the morning, but by 9:30 the American position was untenable. Indian marksmen had killed or wounded hundreds of American soldiers and the remaining Americans were huddled together in the middle of the encampment seeking shelter from the deadly fire that decimated their ranks. Finally, in a desperate bid to escape the slaughter, the remaining Americans broke through the Indian ranks on the southern perimeter of the camp and fled back toward the south. In their headlong flight most of the Americans abandoned all of their equipment and even their wounded who could

⁴⁹"Winthrop Sargent's Diary," pp. 258-259.

not walk. By seven in the evening they straggled into Fort Jefferson.⁵⁰

St. Clair's defeat was the greatest Indian victory over an American military force in all of American history. The Americans suffered six hundred and forty-seven men killed and hundreds wounded. The number of women and children killed is unknown. During the battle, St. Clair conducted himself bravely and had several horses shot from under him while trying to rally his men. A later investigation found the old governor blameless and charged that the expedition had failed due to poor supplies and lack of experience among the troops. The Indians lost about one hundred and fifty warriors.⁵¹

Following the battle, the Potawatomis returned to their villages with the prisoners and rich plunder they had captured on the upper Wabash. They spent the winter of 1791-92 quietly, but during the spring large numbers of Potawatomis from the upper St. Joseph and eastern Michigan established a temporary village on the Maumee near the mouth of the Auglaize River. In May the Potawatomis and other tribes met with Matthew Elliott on the Maumee and informed him that they had temporarily resettled in the region to forestall further

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 260-262; St. Clair to the Secretary of War, November 9, 1791, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 137-138.

⁵¹ Causes of the Failure of the Expedition Against the Indians in 1791, under the Command of Major General St. Clair, in American State Papers, Military Affairs (7 vols.; Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832-1861), I, pp. 36-38. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as American State Papers, Military Affairs. Also see Prucha, Sword of the Republic, p. 26, and Francois Vigo to Winthrop Sargent, April 1, 1792, in Sargent Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Vigo was a merchant at Vincennes.

American incursions, but that they were short of supplies and needed British assistance. Elliott agreed to furnish provisions, but the increasing number of Indians moving to the Maumee Valley continually needed more supplies and during the spring and summer of 1792 the British were hard pressed to meet their demands.⁵²

While part of the Potawatomis and their allies were concentrating their strength along the Maumee, the United States again attempted to negotiate with the red confederacy. During the early spring American officials sent two agents disguised as traders to the Indians at Niagara and Detroit to ascertain Indian sentiment and to try and influence them towards a negotiated peace. Messengers also were dispatched directly to the Potawatomis and other tribes to inform them that although they recently had defeated two American expeditions, they had achieved only a temporary victory. Secretary Knox warned the tribesmen that if they failed to negotiate a peace, the United States would move against them with "destructive consequences."⁵³

⁵²Rufus Putnam to Henry Knox, July 14, 1792, in Rowena Buell, ed., The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1903), pp. 294-297. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Buell, Putnam Memoirs. Also see Speech of the Shawanees, Delawares, Ottawas, Chippewas, Potowatomies, Munsees, and other Western Nations assembled at this place to Captain Mathew Elliot, May 16, 1792, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, p. 157; and Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 69-70.

⁵³Instructions to Captain Peter Pond and William Steedman, January 9, 1792, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 227. Pond and Steedman were the agents disguised as traders. James Wilkinson to Colonel John Harden, May 20, 1792, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 414-416; Henry Knox to Captain Alexander Trueman, April 3, 1792, in ibid., pp. 390-391; Speech by Henry Knox, Secretary of War, to the Indians, April 4, 1792, in ibid., pp. 394-396. Harden and Trueman were messengers dispatched directly to the Indians. Also see Woehrmann, At the Headwaters of the Maumee, fn. 38, p. 39.

The American efforts had little impact. The two agents disguised as traders were intercepted by the British and kept from contact with the Indians. The American messengers dispatched directly to the tribes suffered a worse fate. During April, Brigadier General James Wilkinson sent three messengers to the Miamis at the head of the Maumee. They were killed before they could deliver their message. Later in the spring two American officers on a similar mission also were killed by the Miamis and during the summer the Potawatomis, Shawnees, and Delawares raided near Fort Jefferson.⁵⁴ They attacked a party of soldiers cutting hay near the post and killed or captured fourteen before the others escaped to safety.⁵⁵

Frustrated in their attempts to negotiate with the tribes along the Maumee, the Americans turned their attention towards the Indians of Illinois and the lower Wabash Valley. There they achieved some success. Scott's and Wilkinson's raids during the summer of 1791 had intimidated the Weas and Piankashaws into suing for peace. Government officials hoped that any treaty with these members of the Miami Confederacy could be enlarged to include the Potawatomis on the Illinois and other tribes to the west. The Americans had some grounds for optimism. During the

⁵⁴Rufus Putnam to Anthony Wayne, July 10, 1792, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Putnam to Knox, July 22, 1792, in Buell, Putnam Memoirs, pp. 301-304. Also see Woehrmann, At the Headwaters of the Maumee, fn. 38, p. 39, and Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, fn. 14, p. 321.

⁵⁵Speech of the Shawnees and Delawares to Captain Matthew Elliott, June 11, 1792, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 421; Putnam to Knox, July 5, 1792, in American State Papers. Indian Affairs, I, p. 238. Also see Butterfield, History of the Girty's, p. 265.

early 1790's Potawatomis from the Kankakee and upper Illinois Valley began to establish new villages on the Illinois near the northern end of Lake Peoria. Potawatomis from these villages were heavily influenced by the Spanish in Louisiana and generally did not participate in the hostilities against the Americans. These Potawatomis were led by La Gesse or the Quail who had aided the Spanish in the raid against Fort St. Joseph during the American Revolution. Since their villages were located far to the west, the Illinois River Potawatomis were not immediately threatened by American expansion. During June, 1792, La Gesse informed Hamtramck at Vincennes that he wished to remain friendly and that his village of Potawatomis might be interested in attending peace negotiations on the Wabash.⁵⁶

The Americans reacted favorable to La Gesse's suggestion. The Weas also wished to negotiate a peace treaty at Vincennes, so in late July Hamtramck sent invitations to all the lower and central Wabash tribes and to the Potawatomis and Illinois Confederacy. The treaty negotiations were to be directed by Brigadier General Rufus Putnam who hoped that the proposed peace negotiations would enable the United States to split the red confederacy.⁵⁷

In September, 1792, Putnam met with delegates from nine western tribes at Vincennes. Only eleven Potawatomis were in attendance.

⁵⁶Major John Smith to Captain Francois Le Maistre, October 20, 1790, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 108; Statement by Major John Smith Relative to Indians Near Detroit, January 23, 1791, in ibid., p. 167. Smith was a British officer stationed at Detroit. Le Maistre was a British officer stationed at Quebec. Also see Indian speech to Major Hamtramck, no date, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 241.

⁵⁷Putnam to Knox, July 22, 1792, in Buell, Putnam Memoirs, pp. 302-303; Hamtramck to Putnam, August 9, 1792, in ibid., p. 320.

Putnam assured the assembled Indians that the Americans wanted peace and that the "great Chief General Washington" desired to "establish a good and lasting Friendship between all his Brothers and the United States." He did not broach the subject of land cessions. During the following three days the Indians replied favorably to Putnam's peace overtures and generally expressed a willingness to sign a formal treaty with the United States. La Gesse and several other delegates spoke for the Potawatomis. They concurred in the expressions of peace and friendship proposed by the other Indians but added that they had no intention of giving up any of their lands. Accepting gifts of clothing, hardware, and vermillion, on September 27, 1792 these Potawatomis and delegates from other tribes signed a "Treaty of Peace and Friendship" with the United States.⁵⁸

La Gesse, Gomo, and Waeachsetch, the three chiefs who signed the treaty were from the Illincis River, but a few Potawatomis from the Tippecanoe also attended the treaty negotiations. They shared in the gifts and feasting and after the treaty had been signed some of the Potawatomis including La Gesse and Gomo accompanied a delegation

⁵⁸ Rations delivered to Indians at the Treaty of Vincennes, September, 1792, in Putnam Papers, Marietta College Library, in Potawatomis File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Articles delivered to Indians at Post Vincent, 1792, in Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Marietta College Library, in *ibid.* Also see A Journal of the Proceedings at a Council Held with the Indians of the Wabash and Illinois at Post Vincents, by Brigadier General Putnam, in Buell, *Putnam Memoirs*, pp. 335-362; "A Treaty of peace and friendship, made and concluded between the President of the United States of America, on the part of the said States, and the undersigned kings, chiefs, and warriors of the Wabash and Illinois Indian tribes, on the part and behalf of the said tribes," in *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, p. 338.

of Indians who journeyed to Philadelphia to see Washington.⁵⁹ Yet Putnam's hopes that the Vincennes treaty would aid the Americans in splitting the red confederacy never materialized. Most of the Indians attending the treaty proceedings were already friendly to the United States and the other Potawatomis denounced their three kinsmen for complicity in the affair. Ironically, even the United States rejected Putnam's efforts. When the senate learned that the proposed agreement did not guarantee exclusive rights of the American government over Indian lands in the region, they refused to ratify the treaty.⁶⁰

While Putnam was arranging for the Vincennes negotiations, the United States sent another peace message to the tribes along the Maumee. To deliver this message, American officials dispatched Captain Hendrick

⁵⁹List of the Signers of the 1792 Treaty, in Putnam Papers, Marietta College Library, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; A Journal of the Proceedings at a Council Held with the Indians of the Wabash and Illinois at Post Vincents, by Brigadier General Putnam, in Buell, Putnam Memoirs, p. 358. Also see Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Emily J. Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area 77 which was Relinquished, and Royce Area 78, which was Ceded, by the "United tribes of Ottawas, Chipawas, and Pottowotomees, residing on the Illinois and Melwakee rivers, and their waters, and on the southwestern parts of Lake Michigan" under the Treaty held at St. Louis on August 24, 1816," pp. 103-104. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Hereafter this report will be cited as Wheeler-Voegelin and Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Areas 77 and 78."

⁶⁰Wheeler-Voegelin and Blasingham, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: Royce Areas 77 and 78," p. 104-105; Dwight Smith, "Wayne's Peace With the Indians of the Old Northwest, 1795," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, LIX (July, 1950), p. 244. Also see John Jordan, ed., "John Heckewelder's Journey to the Wabash in 1792," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XII, (No. 2, 1888), pp. 173-184.

Apaumut, a Stockbridge Indian whom they hoped would be well received by the red confederacy. The Indians treated Captain Hendrick respectfully, but his message made little impression upon them. During late September and early October, 1792, the Potawatomis and other members of the red confederacy met on the Auglaize River in Ohio. Their victories over Harmar and St. Clair had increased the number of tribes sending delegates to the council and had given them a renewed faith in their ability to defend their lands from the United States. Among the Indians who assembled on the Maumee were representatives from such southern tribes as the Cherokees and Creeks and delegates from the Iroquois. The Iroquois urged moderation upon the Potawatomis and their confederates and pleaded with them to make peace with the Americans. Iroquois spokesmen informed the western confederacy that American officials had asked them to invite the western Indians to a council so that the United States could peacefully settle the differences with them and that the Americans were willing to make additional payments for lands claimed through the treaties of Fort Stanwix, Fort Finney, and Fort Harmar.⁶¹

Flushed with confidence, the western tribesmen chided the Iroquois and asked them if the "sweet speeches" of the Americans had so "blinded" and "intoxicated" them, that they had not heard of the confederacy's great victories over Harmar and St. Clair. Speaking for

⁶¹Instructions to Captain Hendrick Aupaumut, Chief of the Stockbridge Indians, May 8, 1792, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 233; Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, p. 321. Also see Proceedings of a General Council of the Several Indian Nations mentioned underneath, held at the Glaize on the 30th day of September, 1792, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, pp. 218-229.

the Potawatomis and other members of the confederacy, Messquakinoe, a chief of the Shawnees informed the Iroquois that since the Ohio River had originally formed the boundary between the British and the Indians, the tribesmen now renounced their earlier concessions of lands east of the Muskingum and claimed all lands north of the Ohio. Messquakinoe stated that the western tribesmen were aware of the plan of the "American Chief", which was to

put them at his back and give them Hoe's in their Hands to plant Corn for him and his people, and make them labour, like beasts, their Oxen and their Pack Horses.

But he instructed the Iroquois:

Now Brothers of the 6 Nations, as you were sent here by the Americans to tell us what they say. We not tell you Brothers to go the same road you came and inform them, that the boundary line then fixed on is what we want.... You have told us that Washington says he will make us a compensation, if the Lands were not purchased of the right owners. We do not want compensation; We want a restitution of our Lands which He holds under false pretenses.

Finally, however, the confederacy agreed to meet with the Americans in the spring of 1793 if the United States would destroy its forts in Ohio.⁶²

During November, the Iroquois relayed the information to the Americans in New York where the news was readily accepted. In reply to the Indians' message Henry Knox stated that the United States "embraces your proposal and he will send Commissioners, to meet you at

⁶²Proceedings of a General Council of the Several Indian Nations mentioned underneath, held at the Glaize on the 30th day of September, 1792, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, pp. 218-229; Entries for October 2 - October 7, 1792, in the Journal of William Johnson, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 470-472. Johnson was a British trader.

the time and place appointed." Yet in their desire to be bearers of good news, the Iroquois overemphasized the confederacy's desire for peace and created a false sense of optimism among the Americans.⁶³

Such optimism was unrealistic and should have been tempered by knowledge of Potawatomi actions late in the fall of 1792. On November 6, a large party of Potawatomis, Shawnees, Delawares, and Miamis attacked a camp of mounted Kentucky infantry within sight of Fort St. Clair near modern Eaton, Ohio. The Indians struck at dawn and succeeded in running off the Kentuckians' horse herd before the whites could offer any organized resistance. A battle then raged for about an hour before the Potawatomis and their allies withdrew. The Americans suffered six killed and five wounded while the Indian lost equal numbers. The Potawatomis and their allies brought the stolen horses to Detroit where they proudly displayed them to the British.⁶⁴

The United States continued preparations for the proposed treaty negotiations at Sandusky. In an attempt to sample red opinion

⁶³Western Indians to President Washington, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, pp. 283-284; Speech of Cornplanter and New Arrow to Major General Wayne, December 8, 1792, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 337. Cornplanter and New Arrow were chiefs of the Senecas. Also see Speech of Henry Knox to the Indians, December 12, 1792, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 518-519.

⁶⁴John Adair to James Wilkinson, November 6, 1792, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 335. Colonel John Adair led the Kentuckians at the battle near Fort St. Clair. Also see Hiram Beckwith, Fort Wayne Manuscript, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Deposition by Joseph Collins, February 16, 1793, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Hereafter this deposition will be cited as Collins Deposition, Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

north of the Ohio, Brigadier General James Wilkinson dispatched Captain Joseph Collins to the Indian villages near Lake Michigan and Detroit. Collins disguised himself as a British trader and in late October, 1792 he journeyed up the Illinois River to the Potawatomi villages near Lake Michigan. There he found the Potawatomis denounced their kinsmen who had signed the treaty at Vincennes and claimed that La Gesse, Gomo, and Waeachsetoh had no authority to negotiate with the Americans. From the Chicago region, Collins traveled to the St. Joseph where he found a Potawatomi village of approximately two hundred and twenty warriors near the ruins of old Fort Joseph. The St. Joseph Potawatomis seemed adamantly anti-American and had thirty white prisoners they had captured in their forays against the United States. Many of the St. Joseph warriors had joined in St. Clair's defeat and Collins found them dressed in captured American military uniforms. In December, Collins left the St. Joseph and journeyed to Detroit where he found other Potawatomis and their allies also opposed to any American expansion north of the Ohio. While at the British fort, he witnessed the return of the war party which had attacked the Americans near Fort St. Clair. In January Collins returned to the United States via Niagara and later reported his intelligence to Anthony Wayne.⁶⁵

During Collins' sojourn in Michigan, the United States appointed three commissioners, Benjamin Lincoln, Timothy Pickering, and Beverly Randolph to meet with the Indians on June 1, 1793. The Americans made careful preparations for the negotiations and the commissioners were

⁶⁵Collins Deposition, Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

instructed that the government would relinquish the lands ceded at the Treaty of Fort Harmar except for those areas purchased by private citizens and such military forts as were supposedly given up by the British in the Treaty of Paris. The United States also was willing to evacuate most of its other military posts north of the Ohio and agreed to pay the red confederacy \$50,000 in goods and an annuity of \$10,000.⁶⁶

The Indians made preparations of their own. Before meeting with the Americans the confederacy hoped to hold an intertribal council so that they could settle any differences and present a united front to the Americans. Yet the Indians were slow in completing their plans for the intertribal council and the negotiations with the Americans were postponed until July. On June 15, the Potawatomis, Ottawas, Chippewas, Delawares, Shawnees, Wyandots, and Miamis met with Joseph Brant and a delegation of Iroquois at the rapids of the Maumee and discussed policy towards the United States. They asked the British at Detroit to supply them with copies of all treaties, maps and records involving Indian affairs in the northwest. They also asked Lieutenant Governor Simcoe to allow British agents to participate in the negotiations with the Americans. Meanwhile, delegations from many other tribes were

⁶⁶ Henry Knox to the Western Indians, February 28, 1793, in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, p. 43; Instructions to Benjamin Lincoln, of Massachusetts, Beverly Randolph, of Virginia, and Timothy Pickering, of Pennsylvania, Commissioners appointed for treating with the Indians Northwest of the Ohio, April 26, 1793, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 340-342. Also see George Washington to the Heads of the Departments, March 22, 1793, in Carter, Territorial Papers, II, pp. 447-449 and the Secretary of War to the Indian Commissioners, April 29, 1793, in ibid., pp. 454-455.

assembling along the Maumee and the confederacy decided to send representatives to meet the American commissioners who had proceeded no farther than western New York.⁶⁷

During early July Potawatomi warriors comprised part of a delegation from the red confederacy which journeyed to meet the Americans at Niagara. Led by Joseph Brant, the Indians met with the commissioners on July 7 and asked them to explain the growing military strength of the United States along the Ohio. Speaking for the confederacy, Brant inquired if the commissioners had been given the authority to settle the boundary dispute and if they were inclined toward a peaceful solution, why was Anthony Wayne building a new army at Legionville, near Fort Washington.⁶⁸

In reply, the commissioners informed the Indians that no hostilities would be initiated against them until the results of the forthcoming treaty negotiations were known. Indeed, they assured the Potawatomis and their allies that Wayne's army was in place to protect the Indians against raids from Kentucky and Virginia while the treaty negotiations were being carried on. The Commissioners also promised the Indians that they had the authority to make a permanent boundary

⁶⁷Speech of the Confederate Indian Nations at the Glaize to Lieutenant Colonel England, Commanding at Detroit, no date, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 43-44; Lieutenant Governor J. G. Simcoe to the Western Indians, June 22, 1793, in ibid., pp. 551-554. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 80.

⁶⁸Minutes of a Council assembled and holden at Free Mason's Hall, Niagara, Sunday the 7th of July, at the request of a Deputation of Indians from the Western Confederacy, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, pp. 377-378; Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 82.

between the confederacy and the United States, but warned that "Doubtedless, some concessions must be made on both sides." On July 11, 1793, after the council had concluded, both the Indians and the commissioners left Niagara for Detroit.⁶⁹

The American commissioners reached the western end of Lake Erie on July 21. Since the British would not allow them to journey on to Detroit, they were accommodated in Matthew Elliott's house near the mouth of the Detroit River. Meanwhile, the Indian delegates returned to the tribesmen assembled on the Maumee and reported their conversations with the Americans at Niagara. Once again a disagreement arose among the tribes over what would be accepted as a boundary between the confederacy and the Americans.⁷⁰

The Potawatomis contributed to the dissension. In agreement with the Ottawas, Chippewas and Iroquois, the Potawatomis again were willing to relinquish the lands east of the Muskingum in exchange for American guarantees of Indian sovereignty over other lands north of the Ohio. The Shawnees, Delawares and Miamis stubbornly opposed such concessions and they were supported by the British Indian Agent

⁶⁹Minutes of a Council assembled and holden at Free Mason's Hall, Niagara, Sunday the 7th of July, at the request of a Deputation of Indians from the Western Confederacy, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, I, pp. 378-382; Burnet, Notes on the Northwest Territory, pp. 141-145.

⁷⁰Benjamin Lincoln, Journal of a Treaty held in 1793, with the Indian Tribes north-west of the Ohio, by Commissioners of the United States, in Massachusetts Historical Collections, Third Series, V, pp. 137-142. Reginald Horsman, "The British Indian Department and the Abortive Treaty of Lower Sandusky, 1793," Ohio Historical Quarterly, LXX (July, 1961), pp. 202-203. Hereafter this article will be cited as Horsman, "British Indian Department."

Alexander McKee. By the third week in July, over eighteen hundred warriors had assembled along the Maumee and they met daily in an attempt to settle their differences.⁷¹ The councils continued for six days and the Ohio tribes eventually were able to gain the reluctant support of the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas in demanding that the lands east of the Muskingum be given up by the Americans. On July 27 the western tribesmen prepared a message to be sent to the American commissioners demanding that the Ohio River serve as the boundary between American and Indian lands and refusing to recognize American claims to the region between the Ohio and the Muskingum. The Iroquois delegation led by Joseph Brant was angered by the confederacy's position and did not sign the message sent to the American commissioners.⁷²

On July 28, 1793, a delegation of twenty tribesmen left the Maumee and journeyed to meet the American commissioners at Elliott's farm on the Detroit River. Two days later they delivered their message to the Americans, demanding the Ohio River as the boundary

⁷¹Brant to Simcoe, July 28, 1793, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 571-572; Brant to Joseph Chew, September 26, 1793, in ibid., p. 614. Joseph Chew was Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs at Montreal. Also see copy of the Deposition of William Wells, September 16, 1793, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma and Dwight L. Smith, ed., "William Wells and the Indian Council of 1793," Indiana Magazine of History, LVI (September, 1960), pp. 217-226. Wells was a former Kentuckian raised by the Miamis who left the tribe in 1793 to serve as a agent for the Americans.

⁷²Brant to McKee, August 4, 1793, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, V, pp. 66-67; From the Western Indians to the Commissioners of the United States, July 27, 1793, in ibid., I, pp. 491-492. Also see Horsman, "British Indian Department," p. 206.

and asserting that if the delegates at Niagara had implied anything less, they had been mistaken. On July 31, the commissioners replied to the message and informed the delegates that the Ohio River was unacceptable to the United States as a boundary since great numbers of Americans had already crossed into Ohio and had erected farms and villages. Therefore, the commissioners proposed that the lands ceded at Fort Harmar remain in American hands, but they offered additional payments and annuities for the region and agreed to recognize Indian title to all other lands north of the Ohio. The Indians agreed to relay the American reply back to their kinsmen on the Maumee, but they were pessimistic about its acceptance.⁷³

The Indian delegates' pessimism was well founded. When they returned to the Maumee, only the Iroquois offered any serious interest in the American proposal and after another series of councils, the confederacy sent a reply to the commissioners which was delivered on August 16. The Potawatomis and their allies still insisted upon the Ohio River as a boundary and refused to concede any American control to areas in Ohio. In answer to the commissioners' statement that too many American settlers had already established homes north of the river, the confederacy suggested that the United States take the funds they

⁷³Benjamin Lincoln, Journal of a Treaty held in 1793, with the Indian Tribes north-west of the Ohio, by Commissioners of the United States, in Massachusetts Historical Collections, Third Series, V, pp. 142-143; Speech of the Commissioners of the United States to the Deputies of the Confederated Indian nations, assembled at the rapids of the Miami river, July 31, 1793, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 352-353.

had offered to the Indians as payments and annuities and

Divide therefore this large sum of money which you have offered to us, among these people, give to each a proportion of what you say, you would give us annually over and above this very large sum of money, and we are persuaded that they would most readily accept of it, in lieu of the Lands you sold to them. If you add also the great sums you must expend in raising and paying armies, with a view to force us to yield you our country you will certainly have more than sufficient for the purposes of repaying these settlers for all their labor and their improvements.

The American commissioners answered that since the tribesmen were unwilling to make any concessions north of the Ohio, the negotiations were at an end. On August 17, the Americans left Elliott's farm and returned to the United States.⁷⁴

The breakdown in the negotiations did not come as a surprise to Major General Anthony Wayne. Since the spring of 1792 he had been rebuilding the American army in the west and he was anxious to move against the confederacy. Wayne had learned much from Harmar's and St. Clair's disasters. He drilled his recruits mercilessly and maintained such strict discipline that his men nicknamed him "Mad Anthony." Wayne also was wise enough to realize that late fall campaigns imposed tremendous hardships upon soldiers in the field. Although he received news that the treaty negotiations had been

⁷⁴Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 87-88; Reply of the Indians to the Commissioners of the United States, August 13, 1793, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 587-592. Also see Commissioners of the United States to the Chiefs of the Indian Nations, August 16, 1793, in ibid., pp. 592-593, and Benjamin Lincoln, Journal of a Treaty held in 1793, with the Indian Tribes north-west of the Ohio, by Commissioners of the United States, in Massachusetts Historical Collections, Third Series, V, p. 173. Correspondence and speeches regarding the American peace offensive during the summer of 1793 also can be found in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 342-361.

unsuccessful during September, 1793, Wayne decided to wait until the summer of 1794 before launching a major expedition against the Indians. Meanwhile, during the fall of 1793 he erected two new American forts in west-central Ohio: Fort Greenville, six miles north of Fort Jefferson and Fort Recovery at the site of St. Clair's defeat.⁷⁵

Wayne's activities were well known to the Potawatomis and their allies and they long had been aware that the Americans were planning another campaign if the peace negotiations failed. Yet Potawatomi support of the Ohio River boundary was tenuous and was the result of pressure by the Shawnees and Alexander McKee. While on the Maumee the Potawatomis had promised to furnish one hundred warriors to defend northern Ohio against any future American expeditions, but after leaving the conference an intratribal split over continued support of the Shawnee position emerged.⁷⁶ The western Potawatomis, those tribesmen on the Tippecanoe, St. Joseph and the Illinois lived in villages far removed from white settlement and preferred to compromise with the Americans rather than risk further warfare. In October these Potawatomis supported a last effort by the Ottawas, Chippewas and Iroquois to again

⁷⁵Prucha, Sword of the Republic, pp. 29-35; Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, pp. 324-325.

⁷⁶William Burnett to Unknown, May 12, 1793, in Cunningham, Burnett Letter Book, p. 57; Copy of Deposition of William Wells, September 16, 1793, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Also see Simcoe to Henry Dundas, November 10, 1793, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, pp. 99-100; Council with the Six Nations at Buffalo Creek, October 8, 1793, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Dundas was a British official in England.

reach a compromise in Ohio and although that proposal failed, the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph and Tippecanoe continued to work for peace. In December, 1792, Lieutenant Abner Prior, an American officer at Vincennes reported to Wayne that the Potawatomis on the Tippecanoe and the Illinois were inclined toward peace and had asked to go to Philadelphia to see President Washington.⁷⁷

The Potawatomis living near Detroit did not take part in these activities and continued to support the Ohio River boundary. During November they received reports that Wayne was planning an immediate invasion of northern Ohio and they rushed warriors to the defense of the Indian towns along the Maumee. When the invasion failed to occur, the Detroit Potawatomis returned to their villages, but they continued in their alliance with the Shawnees, Wyandots, and Delawares.⁷⁸

The militant determination of the Detroit Potawatomis was buttressed by British officials in Canada and the Northwest. After the failure of the negotiations in August, 1793, British agents anticipated another American expedition and they attempted to hold the red confederacy together. In February, 1794, Lord Dorchester spoke to a delegation of Indians in Quebec and rashly implied that the tribesmen

⁷⁷ Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, November 10, 1793, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 103; Prior to Wayne, December 20, 1793, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Berthrong Collections, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Also see Captain Thomas Pasteur to Wayne, January 14, 1794, in ibid. Pasteur was in command of Fort Knox at Vincennes.

⁷⁸ Entries for November 5 and November 14, 1793, in "Extracts the Journal of Thomas Duggan," in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, pp. 107-108; Entries for November 5 and November 14, 1793, in Journal of Colonel Alexander McKee, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 128. Thomas Duggan was employed by the British Indian Service at Detroit.

could expect the full support of the British government. In April, Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe journeyed to Detroit to supervise British defenses in the region. He also began construction of a new British post, Fort Miami, on the lower Maumee at modern Toledo, Ohio. These British actions convinced the Indians that they could rely upon the Crown's support in any engagement with the Americans. Many of the tribes who had favored compromise became increasingly militant and the red confederacy again grew in strength and determination.⁷⁹

The western Potawatomis were swept up by this militancy. During February fifty-six Potawatomi warriors from the Tippecanoe met with American officials in Vincennes and promised that they would remain at peace, and as late as March 8, 1794, they returned a captured prisoner, but such peaceful overtures soon ended. When news of the construction of Fort Miami reached the Tippecanoe and St. Joseph, the Potawatomis living along those streams again moved back into the confederacy.⁸⁰ On April 14, Simcoe spoke to the Shawnees, Delawares and Miamis and urged them to stand united against the Americans. These tribes promptly sent messages to the Potawatomis and other Indians informing them of Simcoe's speech and asking that they send warriors to the Maumee to oppose any American invasions. Red militancy also was increased when Delaware messengers brought a speech from the Spanish in Louisiana

⁷⁹Speech by Lord Dorchester, February 10, 1794, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, pp. 149-150; Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 93-95.

⁸⁰Pasteur to Wayne, March 8, 1794, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, April 29, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, pp. 659-660.

which warned the tribesmen to beware of the "Big Knives" who were planning to invade their homeland.⁸¹

The Potawatomis responded to the message from the Indians along the Maumee. During May warriors from the villages in Michigan and northern Indiana left their families behind and hurried to the Indian towns near the juncture of the Maumee and the Auglaize rivers. There they met with the Delawares, Shawnees, and other tribesmen to plan their defense against the anticipated American invasion.⁸² By the middle of June over one thousand warriors had assembled on the Auglaize River and on June 20 they moved south towards Fort Recovery expecting to meet the Americans.⁸³

As the Indian army moved through Ohio their numbers increased. Small war parties from many tribes joined with the larger force and by late June, 1794, the expedition numbered over fifteen hundred men. During the night of June 29 the Potawatomis and their allies approached Fort Recovery and learned that a supply train of pack horses had

⁸¹ Speech of the Shawnees, Delawares, Miamis, Mingoes together with Deputies of the Wabash Nations to His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe delivered to Captain Elliott at the Glaize, April 14, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXIV, p. 656; Speech by the Delawares to the Nations of the Glaize, May 7, 1794, in ibid., XX, pp. 347-350. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 95.

⁸² Speech from the Western Indians, May 24, 1794, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 247; McKee to Brant, May 10, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, p. 116. Also see Speech by the Delaware Chiefs to the Wyandots, Ottawas, Chippewas, and Potawatomis, May 25, 1794, in ibid., XX, pp. 354-355.

⁸³ McKee to Joseph Chew, June 9, 1794, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 262; McKee to Chew, June 10, 1794, in ibid., p. 263. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 95-97.

recently arrived at the fort and was scheduled to depart early in the morning. Under cover of darkness, the Indians surrounded the fort and when the American supply column prepared to leave, the warriors swarmed from their hiding places and overwhelmed their enemy. The attack took place at about seven o'clock in the morning and in the initial assault, the Indians killed fifteen Americans and captured approximately three hundred horses. Exhilarated by their success, the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas attempted to assault the fort. They were unsuccessful. Although they rushed all sides of the fort simultaneously, they were driven back with heavy losses. The Potawatomis and their allies then took refuge in the surrounding forest and kept up a continuous fire upon the garrison throughout the remainder of the day. Late in the evening, they decided to retire toward the Maumee. During the night they collected their dead and wounded and in the morning they started north. A small party remained behind to harass the garrison and keep the Americans from following.⁸⁴

The attack upon Fort Recovery was a minor skirmish to the Americans, yet it had great impact upon the Indians. American losses

⁸⁴Wayne to Knox, July 7, 1794, in Richard C. Knopf, ed., Anthony Wayne: A Name in Arms. The Wayne-Knox-Pickering-McHenry Correspondence (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1960), pp. 345-348. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Knopf, Anthony Wayne. Also see McKee to Chew, July 7, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XX, pp. 364-365. Estimates of the number of Potawatomis present at the Battle of Fort Recovery vary greatly. A Potawatomi warrior later captured by the Americans stated that only forty of his kinsmen took part in the encounter. This figure seems small in comparison to British reports of the Indian army and British concern over Potawatomi defections after the army returned to the Maumee. The captured Potawatomi may have minimized the role of his tribe in order to gain favor with his captors. See Examination of a Potawatomi Warrior, July 23, 1794, in Wayne Papers Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives.

totalled twenty-one killed and twenty-nine wounded. The Indians suffered about twenty killed and many wounded which were large losses by their standards. The Indians were unhappy over the battle and the Potawatomis, Ottawas and Chippewas accused the Shawnees and Delawares of failing to support their assault upon the fort. After the Indian army returned to the villages near the mouth of the Auglaize, many of the Potawatomis, Ottawas, and Chippewas left the region and returned to their homes. Yet several Potawatomi chiefs remained behind on the Maumee so that they could summon their warriors if Wayne advanced into northern Ohio.⁸⁵

They did not wait long. On July 26, Wayne's army at Fort Greenville was joined by fifteen hundred mounted Kentucky volunteers led by Major General Charles Scott and two days later the American army of thirty-five hundred men marched north toward the Maumee Valley. Although Wayne proceeded cautiously his advance was monitored by Potawatomi scouts sent south by the chiefs along the Maumee.

⁸⁵Wayne to Pasteur, July 5, 1794, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma; Reginald Horsman, "The British Indian Department and the Resistance to General Anthony Wayne, 1793-1795," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLIX (September, 1962), p. 276. Hereafter this article will be cited as Horsman, "The British and the Resistance to Wayne." Also see McKee to Colonel Richard England, July 10, 1794, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 315, and Entry for August 13, 1794, in Dwight Smith, ed., From Greenville to Fallen Timbers: A Journal of the Wayne Campaign (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1952), p. 277. Hereafter this volume will be cited as Smith, From Greenville to Fallen Timbers. England was the commanding officer at Detroit.

These chiefs also sent messengers to the Potawatomi villages near Detroit and on the St. Joseph to ask the warriors to reassemble in northern Ohio.⁸⁶

On August 8, 1794, the American army reached the Indian towns near the mouth of the Auglaize. They found the towns deserted. The Indians had abandoned the villages to concentrate their strength near Rouché de Bout on the lower Maumee. Wayne remained near the mouth of the Auglaize for a week. During this period his men pillaged the surrounding countryside, destroying Indian crops and villages while construction crews erected a new American post, Fort Defiance. On August 13 Wayne sent a message to the confederacy asking them to send delegates "to settle the preliminaries of a lasting peace." The Indians sent no reply and on August 15, Wayne left Fort Defiance and marched down the Maumee Valley toward the Indian stronghold.⁸⁷

At Rouché de Bout the red confederacy was desperately playing for time. Although their forces numbered approximately thirteen hundred warriors, including many Potawatomis from the St. Joseph, they

⁸⁶Entry for July 28, 1794, in Richard C. Knopf, ed., "A Precise Journal of General Wayne's Last Campaign," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, LXIV (October, 1954), p. 279. Hereafter this article will be cited as Knopf, "Journal of Wayne's Last Campaign." Also see McKee to Simcoe, July 26, 1794, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Simcoe, II, p. 344, and Horsman, "The British and the Resistance to Wayne," pp. 277-279.

⁸⁷Prucha, Sword of the Republic, p. 36; Entries for August 9-16, 1794, in Knopf, "Journal of Wayne's Last Campaign," pp. 285-287. Also see McKee to England, August 15, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXV, p. 14.

still awaited the arrival of the Detroit Potawatomis and the Chippewas and Ottawas from northern Michigan. These Indians still were angry over the failure of the Shawnees and Delawares to support their assault on Fort Recovery and were slow in responding to the confederacy's plea. On August 17, as Wayne's army drew closer, the Indians on the Maumee sent an evasive reply to Wayne's message asking the Americans to halt their advance and to wait for ten days after which the confederacy would send a formal answer to Wayne's request for negotiations. Yet the Indians were pessimistic about this delaying tactic and they realized that a battle was imminent. In the evening of August 18 they began to fast and on the following day they took defensive positions in a grove of storm-felled trees on the north bank of the Maumee below Rouche de Bout.⁸⁸

Indian pessimism was based upon reality. By August 18 Wayne had advanced to within ten miles of the British fort and seemed likely to reach the Indian position on the following day. Yet on August 18 the Americans paused to construct a fortified position, Fort Deposit, where they left much of their baggage before again moving forward on the morning of August 20. The confederacy had expected the attack to

⁸⁸ Captain William Doyle to Charles Langlade, July 26, 1794, in The Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.-; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XVIII, p. 445. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Wisconsin Historical Collections. Doyle was the British commander at Mackinac. Entry for August 12, 1794, in "William Clark's Journal of General Wayne's Campaign," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, I (December, 1914), p. 425. Hereafter this article will be cited as "William Clark's Journal." Also see Smith, From Greenville to Fallen Timbers, fn. 92, p. 281 and Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 105. The Indians often fasted before a battle since it lessened the danger from infection from an abdominal wound.

come on August 19 and when the Americans failed to appear, many of the warriors returned to Fort Miamis for food and other provisions. During the night of August 19-20, thunderstorms swept through the lower Maumee Valley and other warriors left the tangle of fallen trees to seek sanctuary in their lodges near the British fort. Therefore, on the morning of August 20, less than four hundred Indians and a few British traders remained at Fallen Timbers.⁸⁹

The battle began at mid-morning. Wayne's army did not start its advance until eight o'clock and after marching about five miles a party of mounted volunteers was ambushed as they approached the Indian position. The volunteers turned and fled back toward Wayne's regulars who momentarily were thrown into confusion. Yet Wayne's legion was a different army than the ill-disciplined rabble that had followed Harmar and St. Clair and the Indians failed to take advantage of the situation. Wayne rallied his forces and his regulars held. The Americans slowly advanced and the Indians fell back into their defensive positions among the trees. As the Americans approached the Indian lines, the warriors fired at them from behind the cover of their natural barricade and then sent a party away from the river in an attempt to outflank the left end of the American line. Yet Wayne anticipated their moves and in turn sent his cavalry in wide sweeps around the Indian position so that the mounted volunteers and dragoons successfully gained the rear of the Indian position. Wayne then ordered his legions to fix their

⁸⁹Entry for August 20, in Knopf, "Journal of Wayne's Last Campaign," p. 290; Wayne to the Secretary of War, August 28, 1794, in American States Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 491. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 103.

bayonets and charge the Indian center. The American maneuvers were too much for the tribesmen. As Wayne's infantry stormed over the trunks of the fallen trees, the warriors broke and fled for the safety of Fort Miami.⁹⁰

Such safety was denied them. As the fleeing warriors approached Fort Miami, the British commander of the post, Major William Campbell, closed the gates and refused them sanctuary. The British were willing to furnish arms and encouragement to the confederacy. They were not willing to risk a confrontation with the United States. The surprised warriors then continued down the Maumee where they congregated near Lake Erie.⁹¹

Wayne remained on the lower Maumee for two days, exchanging notes with Campbell and destroying Indian cornfields and villages before marching back to Fort Defiance. Both sides suffered similar numerical losses. The United States lost forty-four killed and eighty-nine wounded. Indian losses are harder to ascertain. Wayne estimated Indian casualties to be at least double that of his army, while McKee stated that the confederacy had suffered only nineteen killed. Actual Indian losses probably lie somewhere in between these two extremes and may have reached fifty warriors. Yet Fallen Timbers was a greater

⁹⁰Wayne to the Secretary of War, August 28, 1794, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, p. 491; Entry for August 20, 1794 in "William Clark's Journal," pp. 428-430. Also see McKee to Chew, August 27, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XX, pp. 370-372 and Thomas Case, "The Battle of Fallen Timbers," Northwest Ohio Quarterly, XXXV (Spring, 1963), pp. 54-68.

⁹¹Horsman, "The British and the Resistance to Wayne," p. 282.

American victory than the figures would indicate. The failure of the British to give sanctuary to the fleeing warriors demoralized the Indians and Wayne's army destroyed vast amounts of Indian property including extensive stockpiles of food the tribesmen had stored along the Maumee.⁹²

The extent of Potawatomi participation in the battle remains unknown. Prisoners captured by the Americans during the encounter reported that Potawatomis were present but did not state their number. Evidence suggests that the Potawatomis contributed fewer than fifty warriors to the Indian defense and almost all of these were from villages on the St. Joseph. Warriors from the villages near Detroit did not arrive in time to oppose Wayne and the Potawatomis on the upper Illinois and at Chicago suffered from a serious smallpox epidemic during the summer of 1794 which undoubtedly kept most of their warriors near their homes.⁹³

After Fallen Timbers, the confederacy was broken. Fort Defiance remained at the mouth of the Auglaize and in October the Americans built

⁹²Entry for August 21, 1794, in "William Clark's Journal," pp. 430-431; Milo Milton Quaife, ed., "General James Wilkinson's Narrative of the Fallen Timbers Campaign," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XVI (June, 1929), fn. 5, p. 86. Also see Deposition of Thomas Stephens, October, 1794, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Stephens was an American soldier held prisoner by the Ottawas. The Wayne-Campbell correspondence can be found in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 493-494.

⁹³Entry for September 1, 1794, in Richard C. Knopf, ed., "Two Journals of the Kentucky Volunteers, 1793 and 1794," Filson Club History Quarterly, XXVII (July, 1953), p. 268; Guillaume La Mothe to Chew, July 19, 1794, in Wisconsin Historical Collections, XVIII, pp. 442-443. La Mothe was an interpreter at Mackinac. Also see Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 104.

Fort Wayne near the major Miami village at the headwaters of the Maumee. In September Wayne sent a message to the Potawatomis and other former members of the confederacy again promising them peace if they would surrender their white prisoners and negotiate with the Americans. He reminded them that the British had refused them entry to Fort Miami and had "neither the power nor inclination to protect you."⁹⁴

Wayne's message initiated a new struggle between the British and the Americans for the Potawatomis' allegiance. The British were certain to lose. The Potawatomis and their allies could not forget the closed gates at Fort Miami. Although the British supplied the tribes with food during the fall of 1794 and Simcoe again journeyed to the west to renew pledges of British friendship, these actions made little impact upon the Potawatomis. Simcoe, Elliott, McKee and other British officials met with the Potawatomis and other Indians at Brownstown near the mouth of the Detroit River in October. The Indians listened politely to the British speeches, but they remained bitter. A Wyandot chief spoke for the assembled tribesmen and answered Simcoe's promises of friendship by stating that he had listened to such promises before and that the Indians were "low spirited by waiting so long and we are nearly at the end of our expectations."⁹⁵

⁹⁴General Wayne to the Indian Sachems, September 12, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, pp. 143-144; Woehrman, At the Headwaters of the Maumee, pp. 44-48.

⁹⁵Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 106-109; Proceedings of a Council held at Brown's Town, October 11-14, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXV, pp. 40-46.

During the fall of 1794, the Potawatomis living in Michigan and Indiana began to make their peace with the Americans. In November a delegation of Miamis and Potawatomis journeyed to Fort Wayne where they met with Colonel John Hamtramck and made arrangements to meet with Wayne at Fort Greenville in January. The Potawatomis were led by Metea or Five Medals, a chief from the village on the upper Elkhart River. In late December a delegation of Elkhart Potawatomis, accompanied by Sacs, Chippewas and Ottawas again passed through Fort Wayne enroute to Greenville where they arrived during the middle of January, 1795.⁹⁶ At Greenville, the Indians conferred with Wayne and agreed to an armistice with the Americans. They also agreed to journey to Greenville during the following June to sign a permanent peace treaty with the United States. Wayne treated the Potawatomis cordially and presented them gifts of clothing and trade goods. The Potawatomis returned to their villages favorably impressed with the Americans.⁹⁷

While Wayne was winning the friendship of the Elkhart Potawatomis the British were desperately attempting to maintain their

⁹⁶Woehrmann, At the Headwaters of the Maumee, p. 50; Hamtramck to Wayne, December 29, 1794, in Michigan Historical Collections, XXXIV, p. 734.

⁹⁷Council with the Chipewas, Ottawas, Putawatamis and Sackies, January 19-21, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Wayne to the Secretary of War, January 24, 1795, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 559-560. Also see Antoine Laselle to Jacques Laselle, January 31, 1795, in Cruikshank, Correspondence of Sincoe, III, p. 281. Antoine Laselle was a trader living near Detroit who fought for the Indians at Fallen Timber and was captured by the Americans. In exchange for his life, he agreed to become an American agent. See Woehrmann, At the Headwaters of the Maumee, fn. 65, p. 51.

ties with those Potawatomis living on the St. Joseph and on the Huron River near Detroit. They were unsuccessful. Although the British continued to distribute food to the Indians near Detroit and gave presents to Potawatomi chiefs from the St. Joseph, they could not keep these tribesmen from treating with the Americans.⁹⁸ During March a party of Potawatomi chiefs from the Huron River traveled to Greenville where they met with Wayne and agreed to an armistice similar to the pact signed by their kinsmen from the Elkhart. This delegation of Potawatomis was led by the old chief Windigo, and by Okia and Cashkoa. Speaking for the Huron River Potawatomis, Okia stated that they were pleased with the armistice and were "determined to bury the hatchet so deep and so secret that it will never again be found." In May the St. Joseph Potawatomis also sent their chiefs to talk with Wayne.⁹⁹

Farther to the west, along the Wabash and the Illinois, the Potawatomis were less receptive to American peace overtures. In September, 1794, a Potawatomi war party had killed an American trader near Vincennes, but by midwinter the Potawatomis along the Tippecanoe approached the Americans and asked for their friendship. On February 15, 1795, Keesass or the Sun and Turkey Foot, two chiefs from the Tippecanoe journeyed to Vincennes and assured Pasteur of their good

⁹⁸ Alexander McKenzie to McKee, March 5, 1795, in Michigan Historical Collections, XII, pp. 162-163. McKenzie was a British interpreter among the St. Joseph Potawatomis. Also see Hamtramck to Wayne, April 10, 1795 in ibid., XXXIV, p. 737 and Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 109-112.

⁹⁹ Speech by Okia, Potawatomi Chief, March 12, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; Speech by Cashkoa, Potawatomi Chief, March 12, 1795, in ibid., Also see Preliminary articles of peace signed by the Potawatomi of the Huron, March 12, 1795, in ibid.; Hamtramck to Wayne, May 16, 1795, in ibid.

intentions. In April they again visited Vincennes and gave up some American prisoners. Kessass informed Pasteur that he intended to move his village from the Tippecanoe to the Wabash so that his people could be near American traders.¹⁰⁰ The Potawatomi chief was true to his word. During May he established a new Potawatomi village on the Wabash a few miles below the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Yet Keesass' protestations of friendship were more valid at Vincennes than on the central Wabash. Potawatomis from his village soon became notorious for stealing American horses and for attempting to exact tribute from all American travelers journeying up and down the river.¹⁰¹

The animosity of the Potawatomis on the Wabash may have been engendered by events in Illinois. On January 26, 1795, a war party of Potawatomis from either the St. Joseph or the upper Illinois, attacked the Robert McMahan farm near Belleville, Illinois. In the initial assault Mrs. McMahan and four children were killed but the Potawatomis carried McMahan and one nine-year-old daughter back towards Lake Michigan. After traveling two days, McMahan escaped and leaving his daughter with the Indians, fled back to Cahokia. Angered by the attack, a group of white settlers led by Johnson Whiteside attacked a party of friendly

¹⁰⁰Pasteur to Wayne, October 12, 1794, in ibid.; Pasteur to Wayne, February 15, 1795, in ibid. Also see Hamtramck to Wayne, April 10, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma; Report of a Council at Fort Wayne, April 19-23, 1795, in ibid.

¹⁰¹Dwight L. Smith, ed., "Notes on the Wabash River in 1795," Indiana Magazine of History, L (September, 1954), pp. 287-289. Smith's article contains the journal of John Wade, an American traveler on the Wabash. Also see Thomas Bodley to Wayne, June 12, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Bodley was an American officer who traveled on the Wabash.

Potawatomis from the Illinois, killing six men and two women.

Meanwhile, two of the Potawatomis that raided the McMahan farm were captured by the Illinois Confederacy who turned them over to the Americans at Kaskaskia. American officials at Kaskaskia ordered the prisoners to be transported to Cahokia, but enroute they were attacked by a mob near Belleville and murdered.¹⁰²

The Potawatomis struck back. In March warriors from the upper Illinois ranged through southern Illinois attacking isolated farms and settlements. They killed five settlers, three slaves, and carried another slave back to their villages. During April a mixed party of Potawatomis and Kickapoos attacked an American convoy on the Ohio killing eighteen and plundering their possessions. American settlers in southern Illinois clamored for troops and urged Wayne to build a new fort on the Illinois River near Peoria.¹⁰³

At Greenville, Anthony Wayne was dismayed over the renewed fighting in Illinois. He feared that the outburst of hostilities would sabotage the treaty negotiations to be held during the summer and he

¹⁰²Pasteur to Wayne, March 15, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Pennsylvania Historical Society, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives; James T. Hair, Gazatteer of Madison County, pp. 250-252, in ibid. Also see May Allinson, "The Government of Illinois," in Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the Year 1907 (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1908), pp. 289-290.

¹⁰³John Edgar and Francois Canis to Anthony Wayne, March 31, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives. Edgar and Canis were American citizens living at Kaskaskia. Also see J. Hammill to Major Thomas Doyle, April 30, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma; Norman Caldwell, "Fort Massac: The American Frontier Post," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, XLIII (Winter, 1950), p. 272. Doyle was the Commander at Fort Massac in southern Illinois. Hammill evidently was an officer stationed at this post.

was anxious that the fighting cease. Wayne and Governor St. Clair were aware that both the Potawatomis and the settlers shared in the blame for the encounters. Although they took actions urging that the guilty Indians be punished, they also endeavored to keep the whites from attacking the Potawatomis. Messages were sent to officials in Illinois demanding that those responsible for the murder of the Potawatomi prisoners be punished and St. Clair issued proclamations forbidding all American citizens to enter into the Potawatomi homeland or to kill, injure or insult any member of the tribe.¹⁰⁴

Yet Wayne's fear that the treaty proceedings would be disrupted was premature. The Potawatomi bands were so autonomous that the skirmishes taking place in Illinois had little impact upon the Potawatomis on the St. Joseph and near Detroit. During June large numbers of Potawatomis left their villages in northern Indiana and Michigan and traveled to Greenville. Enroute to the negotiations, the tribesmen passed through both Fort Defiance and Fort Recovery where they were given food and lodging by the garrisons. Most of the Potawatomis arrived at Greenville during late June and early July.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Wayne to St. Clair, June 5, 1795, in Smith, St. Clair Papers, II, pp. 374-375; ibid., fn. 1, pp. 343-344. Also see St. Clair to Wayne, May 12, 1795, Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Potawatomi File, Great Lakes Indian Archives and Winthrop Sargent to the Justices of the Peace, April 21, 1795, in Carter, Territorial Papers, III, pp. 433-434.

¹⁰⁵ Entries for June 9, 19, 25, 1795 in Richard C. Knopf, ed., "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance: The Journal of Joseph Gardener Andrews for the Year 1795," Ohio Historical Quarterly, LXVI (April, 1957), pp. 168-171; Wayne to Pickering, June 17, 1795, in Knopf, Anthony Wayne, pp. 427-428. Also see Samuel Drake to Wayne, June 30, 1795, in Wayne Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Berthrong Collection, Manuscripts Division, University Library, University of Oklahoma. Lieutenant Drake was stationed at Fort Recovery.

The official treaty negotiations began on July 15, 1795.

There were approximately two hundred and forty Potawatomi warriors in attendance. Most of these Potawatomis were from villages on the Huron, St. Joseph, and Wabash rivers although a few may have come from the Illinois. During the treaty negotiations, Okia spoke for the tribesmen on the Huron River, Keesass represented his village on the Wabash, and the elderly New Corn served as a delegate for the Potawatomi on the St. Joseph. The Potawatomis, in conjunction with the Ottawas and Chippewas, vigorously pushed the claim of the Three Fires to the ceded lands in Ohio and were happy when Wayne agreed to their demands and awarded each of the tribes one thousand dollars. The Indians agreed to relinquish all claims to lands in southern and central Ohio and the Potawatomis consented to ceding small sections of land at Lake Peoria at the mouth of the Chicago River, and near Detroit. The Potawatomis also agreed to allow American travelers access to the Illinois River and to the Chicago portage. Twenty-three Potawatomis attached their signatures to the treaty on August 3, 1795.¹⁰⁶

Although the Potawatomis had few legitimate claims to the lands ceded by the Indians at the Treaty of Greenville, they acquiesced

¹⁰⁶Minutes of a Treaty with the tribes of Indians called the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanees, Ottawas, Chippewas, Pattawatamies, Miami, Eel River, Kickapoos, Piankeshaws, and Kaskaskias, begun at Greenville, on the 16th day of June, and ended on the 10th day of August, in American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 564-582; United States, Statutes at Large, Vol. VII (Treaties Between the United States and the Indian Tribes), "A Treaty of Peace Between the United States of America and the Tribes of Indians called the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanoes, Ottawas, Chipewas, Putawatimes, Miami, Eel-river, Weea's Kickapoos, Piankashaws, and Kaskaskias, pp. 49-54.

in the cession and shared in the payments. The treaty only formalized a new set of conditions that had existed since the Indian defeat at Fallen Timbers. Realizing that they could no longer rely upon the British, the Potawatomis and other tribes were left on their own to make the best of a bad situation. Anthony Wayne's legions had proven that the United States now controlled Ohio. At Greenville the Potawatomi and their allies were happy to receive some payment for what they had lost in battle at Fallen Timbers. They had no alternative.

CHAPTER VIII

EPILOGUE

By 1795 Potawatomi villages were spread across the Old Northwest from the Huron River in Michigan to the central Illinois Valley. Potawatomi fishermen near Milwaukee speared sturgeon from Lake Michigan while their kinsmen on the Wabash hunted deer among the hills of southern Indiana. They were a populous people, for they had intermarried with the Ottawas and Chippewas and their villages had escaped the ravages of border warfare during the 1790's. They also were becoming more independent. As Potawatomi villages spread to the south and west tribal unity disintegrated and many of the bands acted as autonomous entities. Potawatomis from the Illinois River rarely met with their kinsmen from Detroit and although they both faced problems common to all Indians in the Old Northwest, they often sought different solutions.

The Potawatomi way of life had changed greatly since they first welcomed French traders into their villages. No longer were the Potawatomis self-sufficient hunters and fishermen who lived off the products of the wilderness and traveled over the Great Lakes in their bark canoes. They still hunted and fished, but by 1795 they were dependent upon the white man's gunpowder and his steel fish hooks to provide them with meat. They also were dependent upon the

large fields of corn raised by their women along the fertile river valleys of Illinois, Indiana, and southern Michigan. Furthermore, they had replaced their canoes with horses, for as the Potawatomis moved on to the prairies of northern Illinois and Indiana, the white man's horse proved invaluable in crossing expanses devoid of navigable waterways.¹ The Potawatomis also had adopted other trappings of the whites' material culture. By 1795 most Potawatomis wore clothing made of cloth and wrapped themselves in trade blankets. Potawatomi warriors carried metal tomahawks and drank the white man's rum from tin cups or small iron kettles.

Potawatomi acceptance of white technology was indicative of the increased contact between the races. The Treaty of Greenville ushered a new era into the Old Northwest. A precedent was established for the cession of large tracts of land north of the Ohio and Indian tenure of the region reached its twilight period. White settlement surged northward from Kentucky and Virginia and although Potawatomi villages were not immediately overrun, they were threatened. Once again the Potawatomis would be forced to fight for their homeland.

They had fought before. They had driven back the Iroquois and defeated the Foxes. They had assisted the French and then the British. The Potawatomi struggle for their homelands had become

¹De Peyster to Haldimand, November 3, 1781, in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), X, p. 537. In this letter De Peyster discusses the Indian demand for trade goods and indicates that the Potawatomis, Shawnees, Delawares, and Mingoes no longer use canoes but traveled extensively on horseback and desired that traders supply them with saddles.

interwoven into the history of the American frontier. The struggle would continue. But after 1795, the Potawatomis were destined to failure. As American settlement poured westward, the Potawatomis and their red brethern would be overwhelmed. Split into factions and wracked by indecision, part of the tribe would follow Tecumseh in the War of 1812. Others would assist the Americans. After the war, white eyes would turn toward the lush prairies of northern Illinois and Indiana. American settlers would gaze greedily upon the fertile St. Joseph Valley. Potawatomi lands would be divided and taken from them. It was only a matter of time. The Potawatomis were a doomed people.

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APPENDIX A

THE MASCOUTENS

The question of the identity of the Mascoutens is a problem that has plagued historians and anthropologists for generations and never fully has been resolved. In his Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Hodge points out the confusion arising from the mistranslation of tribal names by the French and indicates that they may have confused the Mascoutens or "people of the little prairie" with the Potawatomis.¹ Alanson Skinner in The Mascoutens or Prairie Potawatomis asserts that the Fire Nation, Mascoutens and Potawatomis are different names for the same people and states that the Prairie Potawatomis now living in Kansas and Oklahoma are the direct descendants of the Mascoutens of earlier times.²

Other ethnologists disagree. Truman Michelson in "The Identification of the Mascoutens" argues that the Mascoutens were

¹Frederick W. Hodge, ed., Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Bulletin 30 of the Bureau of American Ethnology (2 vols.; New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 1971), I, pp. 811-812.

²Alanson Skinner, The Mascoutens or Prairie Potawatomis, Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee, Vol. VI (Milwaukee: Board of Trustees, 1924), pp. 9-11.

a separate tribe and were probably part of the Illinois Confederacy.³ In a more recent report prepared for the Indian Claims Commission. David Baeris, Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Remedios Wycoco-Moore agree that the Mascoutens were a separate tribe, but indicate that they were more closely associated with the Kickapoos than with the Potawatomis or Illinois.⁴

The last of the above positions seems the most probable. Undoubtedly the early French were confused in their discussions of the Mascoutens and the "fire nation." It would seem that the term "Mascouten" was used indiscriminately to describe both the specific tribe that may have merged with the Kickapoos and also all the Algonquian tribes residing on the prairies extending from southern Michigan through the Mississippi River. In 1644 a Jesuit priest among the Hurons estimated the Mascouten population to be greater than that of the Hurons, Neutrals and Iroquois combined⁵ and as late as 1679 another Jesuit reported that the Mascoutens were comprised of

³Truman Michelson, "The Identity of the Mascoutens," American Anthropologist, New Series, XXXVI (April-June, 1934), pp. 226-234.

⁴David Baeris, Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, and Remedios Wycoco-Moore, "Before the Indian Claims Commission: An Anthropological Report on the Indian Occupancy of That Portion of Royce Area 148 East of the Fox River in Illinois Which Was Ceded to the United States by the United Nations of Chippewa, Ottawa and Potawatamie Indians of the Waters of the Illinois, Milwaukee and Manitowuck Rivers Under the Treaty of July 29, 1829, Appendix A. This report is a multilith copy of materials prepared for the Indian Claims Commission and can be found in the Great Lakes Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University. Hereafter this report will be cited as Baeris, Wheeler-Voegelin, and Wycoco-Moore, "Before the Claims Commission."

⁵Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (73 vols.; Cleveland: Burrows Bros., 1896-1901), XXVII, p. 27. Hereafter these volumes will be cited as Thwaites, Jesuit Relations.

twelve nations speaking three different languages and numbering approximately twenty thousand souls.⁶

In the thirty-five years that elapsed between the date of the above two statements, other French officials in the west were describing the Mascoutens as a single tribe whose population was similar in numbers to that of neighboring peoples. In the late 1650's the Mascoutens were described as living with the Kickapoos in a single village on the Fox River in Wisconsin⁷ and during the 1670's several French travelers encountered them in the same area, but residing with the Miamis and segments of other tribes.⁸ In 1670 the Jesuit priest Claude Dablon estimated the combined population of the Mascoutens and the Miamis to be no more than three thousand and commented on the confusion surrounding their identity.⁹ Two years later other French reports continue to place them with the Miamis on the Fox River but also indicate that bands of other tribes had settled nearby. These reports illustrate that a multi-tribal settlement was being formed on the Fox River, but they carefully list the population of the different tribes in the area. The enlarged village was comprised of ninety cabins of Miamis, fifty cabins of Mascoutens, thirty cabins of Kickapoos, twenty cabins of Illinois and three cabins of Weas.¹⁰

⁶Ibid., LXI, p. 149.

⁷Ibid., XLIV, p. 247.

⁸Ibid., LIV, pp. 227-233; ibid., LX, pp. 197-199.

⁹Ibid., LV, pp. 199-201.

¹⁰Ibid., LVIII, p. 23.

Although the identity of the early Mascoutens is uncertain, it seems obvious that they were not part of the Potawatomis. Many of the same reports that reflect the confusion over the Mascoutens consistently list the Potawatomis as a separate people and also indicate that the two tribes were not always on friendly terms. In 1690 the Mascoutens attempted to kill both the French trader Nicolas Perrot and a Potawatomi chief that accompanied him to a Mascouten village.¹¹ In 1712 and 1715 open warfare broke out between the two tribes.¹²

During the first decades of the eighteenth century, while the Potawatomis were settling on the St. Joseph River and near Detroit, the Mascoutens moved to the prairies bordering the Wabash.¹³ There they remained in close association with the Kickapoos until their disappearance as a tribal entity at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ After this disappearance some of the Mascoutens may have been absorbed by the Prairie Potawatomis since these Potawatomis also

¹¹Claude Charles Le Roy Bacqueville de-la Potherie, "History of the Savage Peoples Who are Allies of New France," in The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi and Region of the Great Lakes, ed. by Emma Helen Blair (2 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1912), II, pp. 83-85.

¹²Charles Regnault Dubuisson to Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil, June 15, 1712 in Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society (40 vols.; Lansing: Thorp and Godfrey and others, 1874-1929), XXXIII, p. 538; Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil to the Council of Marine, October 14, 1716, in Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (25 vols.; Madison: Published by the Society, 1854-), XIV, pp. 341-342.

¹³Thwaites, Jesuit Relations, LXVI, p. 237.

¹⁴Baeris, Wheeler-Voegelin, and Wycoco-Moore, "Before the Claims Commission," pp. 162-163, 167.

welcomed many Ottawas and Chippewas into their ranks. But there is no conclusive evidence indicating that the Mascoutens were associated with the Potawatomis during the one hundred and fifty years prior to 1800. It would seem more probable that the majority of the Mascoutens joined with the Kickapoos, a tribe with whom they had maintained a cultural and geographic proximity for one hundred years.