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**“Commerce and Arms: The Federal Government, Native Americans,
and the Economy of the Old Northwest, 1783-1807”**

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**Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati**

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**In the Department of History
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by

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Abstract

This dissertation is a study of the changing economy of the Old Northwest for the period following the Revolution until the War of 1812. It examines the role of the federal government in bringing the market economy to the West. This work relies on local and national sources from the United States and Canada to give a fuller picture of the interstices of policy and economy during a critical period in the economic history of the region.

This study supports Andrew Cayton's assertion that the federal government had an important influence on the history of the early West. But whereas his focus is on politics and ideology, this dissertation examines the impact of government on the economy. This study also refutes Eric Hinderaker's assertion that federal government fostered western growth by not interfering in its economic affairs.

Following the Revolutionary War, settlers began to move into the Ohio Valley hoping to transplant a market economy in the West. When they did, they entered into a region largely controlled by the Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, Wyandot, Ottawa and others who practiced a semi-subsistence trade economy. The local conflict for economic control of the Ohio Valley manifested itself as a drawn-out property war. This property war ended when Anthony Wayne and his military defeated the northern tribal confederacy and took control of the region's economy.

After Wayne's victory, the United States built military and post roads, which facilitated the movement of goods and people, and encouraged settlements along specific lines of trade. The federal government also spent great sums of money through the Indian Agency, the factory system and territorial governments to assimilate Native Americans into the American economy by making them European-style farmers. These efforts failed and much of the money ended up

in the hands of western traders. By 1807, the western market economy again threatened the productive power of the northern tribes. The Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa helped form a new confederacy by addressing the economic problems many villages faced. The defeat of the confederacy in the War of 1812 removed regional economic control from the hands of the confederacy.

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Introduction

On December 31, 1804, Thomas Jefferson addressed the Senate regarding a recent treaty made with chiefs of the Sac and Fox. In return for a large land cession along the Wisconsin River, these tribes received an annuity of \$1,000. This treaty “strengthens our [the United States’] means of retaining exclusive commerce with the Indians,” he pronounced, “a right indispensable to the policy of governing those Indians by commerce rather than by arms.”¹

Jefferson’s comments here suggest a larger federal policy regarding the West than historians have recently acknowledged. The United States did not trade with Native Americans on neutral ground, nor did they control the West. Indeed, the tribes of the Northwest, most notably the Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, Wyandot, and Ottawa, among others, commanded not only land and resources in the West, they also dictated its economy. Almost all of these tribes practiced a form of semi-sedentary agriculture mixed with a rich fur trade economy and most of this trade traveled north into the hands of British merchants and traders in Upper Canada. When American settlers and speculators moved west they reproduced the growing market economy that characterized the economy of the eastern states. Jefferson hoped that by engaging Native Americans more intimately with market forces, primarily by forcing them into debt, they could be more easily managed and assimilated into the American economy. Trade therefore served two purposes for the federal government; it allowed Americans access to the resources of the West while also serving as a vehicle for the transformation of the western economy.

Jefferson, in his remarks to the Senate, also alluded to the central role of the federal government in that transformation. For the United States to command the West, it needed to be

¹ Thomas Jefferson to the Senate, 31 December 1804, and Articles of a Treaty, 3 November 1804, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 693-94.

able to shape the terms of the western economy. The tools at the government's disposal, according to his words, were commerce (policies and institutions designed to control trade), and arms (the military). Since the 1790s, the United States had used both means to alter the economy of Kentucky, Ohio and the Indiana Territory. Specifically, the federal government had done so in three ways. First, the military wrested control of the western economy from the tribes of the Northwest Territory through warfare. Second, the federal government sponsored the construction of roads throughout the region, some of them as a part of the war effort. Other roads the Post Office ordered constructed as a part of that institution's extension into the West. Both kinds of roads facilitated the movement of people and goods while also encouraging western settlement. Finally, through the federally organized Indian Agency, the Factory System and Territorial governments, the United States attempted to transform the Native American economy from one focused on semi-subsistence and fur trading to one centered around sedentary agriculture. Although these federal agencies failed to successfully assimilate Native Americans, they poured federal money into the western economy. These agencies also scouted the region for valuable mineral resources, which they then appropriated from Native Americans through treaties.

Most historians have not viewed the Old Northwest in such economic terms. When examining the region, historians have focused mainly on the political transformation of the region. Rivalries of leadership, territory and empire form the core of this narrative.² Military conflicts too have been framed in political terms.³ In biography, great men vied against faceless

² Michael McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

³ Wiley Sword, *President Washington's Indian War: The Struggle for the Old Northwest, 1790-1795* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985); *The Old Northwest in the American Revolution*, ed., David Curtis Skaggs (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977); Francis Paul Prucha, *The Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846* (London: Macmillan Company, 1969); James Ripley Jacobs, *The*

enemies or bureaucracies, or they were supported by less visionary, less capable men who undermined heroic agendas.⁴ Where economics became an important element of the story, these historians have often treated it as an extension of politics, not an end unto itself. Most notably Richard White, in his seminal study *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, views the Great Lakes region as contested ground. There during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, local Native American groups attempted to maintain sovereignty and self-determination even as they faced refugee Native American groups emigrating into the region, European empires vying for control of territory and trade, and a powerful Iroquois confederacy likewise wrestling for territory and influence. Together, chiefs and French commanders established ritualized diplomatic procedures that offered political and economic stability to the heterogeneous Native American groups and provided the French with a means to claim sovereignty over the region. White calls the resulting balance of power the “middle ground.” During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, neither British officials nor Americans viewed Native Americans as equals and therefore they failed to replicate the middle ground, choosing instead policies of exclusion.⁵ Politics certainly were important to the region, but politics only partly explains the conflicts that characterize the history of the early West.

Beginning of the U.S. Army, 1783-1812 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947); Randolph C. Downes, *Council Fires on the Upper Ohio: A Narrative of Indian Affairs in the Upper Ohio Valley until 1795* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940); Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: H. Holt & Company, 1920). The exception to this statement is George Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994).

⁴ Mary Beacock Fryer and Christopher Dracott, *John Graves Simcoe, 1752-1806: A Biography* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1998); Paul David Nelson, *Anthony Wayne: Soldier of the Early Republic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Harry Emerson Wildes, *Anthony Wayne: Trouble Shooter of the American Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941).

⁵ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Ethnohistories of Native Americans in the Old Northwest also rely to a great extent on political narratives, though they also examine issues of religion and culture. Much of this work has centered on the important task of resurrecting individual tribal histories. Despite the limited scope of these works, they offer keen insights to the cultural diversity and political dynamics of the Great Lakes region.⁶ Biographies of tribal leaders have also begun to challenge previous notions of each tribe's relative power and authority within the region, as well as the nature of inter-tribal politics.⁷ Unfortunately, questions of economy and labor in these volumes have often been given short shrift. Authors typically spend only a few obligatory paragraphs to describe Native American planting, hunting, and, to greater or lesser extents, trade. Few ethnohistorians have attempted to describe how the regional economy changed over time or its relation to European and American expansionism.⁸ By focusing on economics, this dissertation seeks to look beyond ethnic and tribal barriers, and to juxtapose the common economic interests of Native Americans in the Old Northwest against those of the United States. To that end,

⁶ Georges E. Sioui, *Huron-Wendat: The Heritage of the Circle*, Jane Brierley, trans. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999); Stewart Rafert, *The Miami Indians of Indiana: A Persistent People, 1654-1994* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996); James H. Howard, *Shawnee! The Ceremonialism of a Native Indian Tribe and Its Cultural Background* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981); R. David Edmunds, *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978); C.A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972).

⁷ John Sugden, *Blue Jacket: Warrior of the Shawnees* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000). See also, John Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998); Harvey Lewis Carter, *The Life and Times of Little Turtle: First Sagamore of the Wabash* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). See also, Larry L. Nelson, *A Man of Distinction among Them: Alexander McKee and the Ohio Country Frontier, 1754-1799* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1999).

⁸ Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *A Gathering of Rivers: Indians, Métis, and Mining in the Western Great Lakes, 1737-1832* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); R. Douglas Hurt, *Indian Agriculture in America: Prehistory to the Present* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987); Bruce Trigger, *Children of Aetaentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1976). See also the debate regarding the cultural and economic understandings of the fur trade. *Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade: A Critique of Keepers of the Game*, ed., Shepard Krech III (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981); Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

throughout this work, Native Americans will be viewed as an economic category and not a racial one.

Few historians have attempted to find alternative methods by which the federal government addressed issues of internal improvements.⁹ When historians have focused on the economy of the Old Northwest, they primarily have done so by surveying local developments, especially at the state and city levels. These histories have looked at urbanization in the Ohio Valley, as well as the ways commercial development and changing land laws affected land ownership patterns during the Early Republic.¹⁰ Other works have investigated state-directed internal improvements and local efforts to participate in the national economy.¹¹ More recently, the role of the economy in the construction of local and national identities has also been explored.¹² If historians have examined the role of the federal government in shaping the national economy, they have done so for the period following the War of 1812.¹³ Studies of earlier eras have highlighted efforts with a narrow impact on the national economy, such as the National Road.

⁹ Francis Paul Prucha, *Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest, 1815-1860* (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1953). Prucha later revisited this argument in *The Sword of the Republic*, 182-92.

¹⁰ John Clarke, *Land, Power, and Economics on the Frontier of Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); Steven Aron, *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington, Louisville, and St. Louis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

¹¹ Harry N. Scheiber, *The Ohio Canal Era: A Case of Government and the Economy, 1820-60* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1969).

¹² Kim Gruenwald, *River of Enterprise: The Commercial Origins of Regional Identity in the Ohio Valley, 1790-1850* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

¹³ Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Carter Goodrich, *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800-1890* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960); George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860* (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1951).

Still, a few historians have argued that the federal government had a powerful influence on the development of the West prior to the War of 1812. In *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780-1825*, Andrew Cayton argues that the United States government promoted expansion into the West and westerners attempted to build ordered communities that reflected and expressed national ideology and politics.¹⁴ Although Cayton offers some insight to the region's economy, it is not his main focus. And whereas he sees a decline in federal influence following Ohio's entry into the Union, this dissertation argues that this influence remained long after statehood. In a contrary argument, Eric Hinderaker believes the federal government had its greatest impact on the region by not meddling in the western economy, instead allowing that economy to blossom through locally directed initiatives. In *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800*, he contends that French and British efforts to transform the colonial economy often ran aground because local traders usually chose to maintain their intimate and lucrative connections with Native Americans rather than sacrifice those relationships for the cause of empire. This constant conflict between colony and empire thwarted economic development of the region. The regional economy grew only after the American Revolution when local traders and settlers began to trade freely without bureaucratic interference.¹⁵ This dissertation takes the opposite stance, arguing that the federal government played a key role in the western economy by seizing economic control of the region from Native Americans while also providing necessary internal improvements to foster economic development.

¹⁴ Andrew R.L. Cayton, *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780-1825* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1986).

¹⁵ Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

This dissertation focuses on the Old Northwest broadly defined, but especially the areas that became Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. It also takes into consideration the influences of Upper Canada and the Upper Mississippi River Valley. For centuries, social and political developments outside of the Old Northwest had strongly influenced that region's economy. To limit this study to the arbitrary bounds established by the United States in the Ordinances of 1784 and 1787 would make no sense because the region's economy had long stretched south into Kentucky and north into Upper Canada (now Ontario). Native American refugees from the Iroquois Beaver Wars, for example, pushed west into the region from as far away as the Chesapeake during the seventeenth century. And imperial rivals pressing from the lower St. Lawrence and lower Mississippi valleys struggled for influence and trade in the region throughout the colonial period. The history of early Ohio and Indiana certainly means little unless national and international forces and events are considered a part of that history.

Throughout this dissertation, I have used different terms to describe the region. The Old Northwest, or Northwest Territory, typically encompasses the lands that became the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, plus parts of Minnesota as per the Ordinance of 1784. Throughout this work I used the "West" and the "Northwest" interchangeably to refer to the entirety of the region south of the Great Lakes, including Kentucky, except when specified otherwise. When also considering Upper Canada I have so qualified my statements. I have used the "Ohio country" to identify the eastern section of Northwest Territory, specifically, those lands east of the Wabash River. Throughout this work I have attempted to avoid applying artificial boundaries on the region, such as the Ohio River and the Great Lakes. Indeed, in this dissertation, the Ohio River and Great Lakes serve less as borders than binding forces.

Chapter 1

American Expansion into the Ohio Valley: A Property War

During the last third of the eighteenth century, the conflict between Native Americans and American settlers in the Ohio Valley became a contest for control of resources and trade in the West. By the 1770s, Virginians and other colonists began traveling into Kentucky to hunt and trade. Some established temporary settlements which later became permanent. The Shawnee, Delaware and other tribes recognized these incursions as challenges to their control of resources and territory. The new American settlers were more than interlopers; they attempted to carve out an independent space that not only challenged territorial control, but also threatened to transform the region from a semi-subsistence economy to a market-driven settler society. For the northern tribes, the easiest way to remove this threat was to undermine each settler's ability to produce food and materials for their own use and for the market, hopefully forcing them to return to the East. The result was a violent property war. Warriors attacked the tools, crops and other property of settlers, undermining the ability of their enemy to sustain themselves in either subsistence or commercial farming in the West. Settlers responded by destroying Native American villages and agricultural fields, undercutting their economic livelihood. As American settlement expanded, the United States faced an impending crisis. Who would control the West's resources? What would be the form of the Western economy? How could order be brought to the West? What role would the federal government play in the West? Ultimately, the American military inherited the property war, and with their involvement, the federal government began to influence the economic future of the West.

For centuries, economic forces had shaped the Great Lakes region. Prior to contact, several culture complexes characterized by intensive agricultural production, and interregional trade flourished along the Ohio Valley and upper Mississippi basin. The Adena, Hopewell and Mississippian Culture Complexes imported raw material from as far away as the Rocky Mountains and traded with other cultures as far away as the Gulf coast. These cultures rose, disbanded, and reorganized, only to face collapse a final time, all a century before Columbus made his initial voyage.¹ During the decades prior to contact, in the territory between Georgian Bay and Lake Ontario, the Huron established themselves as key middlemen in a trade system that tied a northern fur trade to southern agricultural production. This status they attempted to maintain after contact.²

Competition between Hurons (later referred to as Wyandot), Mohawks, and Montagnais, among others, for furs and access to European trade increased as the different empires traveled farther inland. French explorers and traders began to move farther up the St. Lawrence River and Dutch-sponsored explorers and traders engaged the Iroquoian economy of the upper Hudson River Valley during the sixteenth-century. In an effort to gain better control of the regional economy and trading position vis-à-vis Europeans, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga and Cayuga and Seneca intensified their confederacy (the Iroquois Confederacy) during the sixteenth century, consolidating their military and economic power. The alliance proved remarkably effective. Warriors spread in all directions of the compass, finding the most success to the south and southwest of New York. Conquered tribes either retreated, thereby opening up new hunting

¹ See for example, Neil Salisbury, "The Indians' Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans," *William and Mary Quarterly* 50 (1996): 435-58.

² Bruce Trigger, *Children of Aetnaensis: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1976).

territory, or they became tributaries of the Iroquois confederacy, providing furs in exchange for peace.³ The Iroquois wars of expansion, collectively known as the Beaver Wars (1625-1700), forced a number of refugee tribes to the region south of the Great Lakes where they competed with other tribes for territory and resources. There the French worked to establish peaceful relations in an effort to stabilize the region, establish imperial title to the territory, and improve the fur-trading economy.⁴

The Shawnee were one of these refugee tribes. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Shawnee lived along the Ohio Valley in villages between the Wabash and Cumberland rivers. Finding themselves on the losing side of the Beaver Wars, most bands left the region. Some Shawnee migrated west to sites near St. Louis, while others went south to Carolina where new wars for territory and resources forced another move. Parts of the southern Shawnee contingent moved west to live among some Creek settlements, others moved north. By the early eighteenth century, some Shawnee had moved to eastern Pennsylvania where they lived in proximity to Munsees and Delawares who had also been displaced from their homelands.⁵

The Delaware, or Lenni Lenape as they called themselves, had lived along the Delaware River and its tributaries in southern New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania. There they encountered Swedish and Dutch traders and settlers during the early seventeenth century. By 1660, competition for land with the Swedes led some Delaware to move west. This trend continued after 1664 when the Dutch empire lost its claims in the region to the English and fresh conflicts erupted over land and trading rights. Delaware villages in eastern Pennsylvania found

³ Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

⁴ White, *Middle Ground*, 141-43.

⁵ Howard, *Shawnee!*, 5-8.

some peace during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, but also faced increased competition over furs as German, Swiss and Dutch settlers poured into Philadelphia and the surrounding region.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Pennsylvania colonial government forced the Delaware to relocate along the Susquehanna River. Together with the Shawnee, Munsee and other small bands, they attempted to rebuild their economy. Unfortunately, their geographic position placed them under threat from the Iroquois confederacy to the north—who considered the collection of villages to be subject to Iroquois authority—and European settlers who continued to press from the East. During the middle third of the century, warfare and resource competition led some Shawnee and Delaware villages to relocate to the upper Ohio River Valley where they fought against the French for territory. After the British won the Seven Years War, British imperial officials worked to relocate all Shawnee and Delaware westwards and to establish the Ohio River as a new boundary between British and Native American settlements.⁶ At a treaty council at Fort Stanwix in 1768, the British believed they achieved this goal when they convinced the Six Nations (Iroquois confederacy) to relinquish the territory. During the treaty, leaders of the Six Nations felt that they alone possessed proprietorship of the land. In their eyes, because the Iroquois held seigniorship over the Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo tribes among others in the Ohio country, the confederacy spoke on their behalf. Later, the Ohio country tribes called the Treaty of Fort Stanwix illegal and refused to conform to its precepts.

After 1763, the tribes of the Ohio country attempted to reestablish their economic footing. The territory gained by the Shawnee and Delaware came from the Wyandot. The Wyandot lived in the northern part of what later became Ohio, along the Sandusky and Huron River valleys and also along the eastern shores of the Detroit River. Like the Shawnee and

⁶ Weslager, *Delaware Indians*, 32-36, 134, 192, 253; Howard, *Shawnee!*, 10-12.

Delaware, the western migration of Wyandot villages had occurred in large part because of Iroquois expansion during the Beaver Wars. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Wyandot, despite their small numbers, had maintained a leadership role among the region's various tribes, who referred to them as Grandfather, a term of both endearing and practical respect. For the Shawnee and Delaware, Wyandot chiefs negotiated land cessions with the Miami, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa. By the middle of the 1760s, Shawnee villages

MAP 1. Major Rivers and Lakes of the Northwest

SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO, (10 DECEMBER 2004), <http://nmviewogc.cr.usgs.gov>.

flourished along the Scioto River Valley. To the east, Shawnee and Delaware villages grew along the Muskingum and Tuscarawas Rivers.⁷ The Ohio country had become a place of great diversity where tribes with very different cultural roots worked to live together in relative peace.

Despite much cultural diversity among the various Native American tribes of the southern Great Lakes and Ohio Valley, there nevertheless was a great amount of similarity in terms of productive practices. To a greater or lesser extent, the Shawnee, Delaware, Wyandot, Ottawa, Miami, Piankshaw, Wea, Eel River Indians, Potawatomi, Kickapoo and Ojibwa all engaged in a semi-sedentary, semi-subsistence trade economy based on agriculture and hunting. Like most agricultural cultures, time functioned on a cyclical basis. The growing season typically allowed more than 140 frost free growing days throughout the region. The yearly cycle began with spring planting, and harvest and winter hunts closed the year.⁸ Some historians and ethnologists have attempted to depict Native Americans as ecologically in harmony with nature or culturally unable to fully understand a market economy.⁹ Yet evidence shows that tribes in the Ohio country routinely hunted for the sole purpose of collecting furs, allowing skinned carcasses to rot in the woods, and manufactured some goods for trade purposes.

Most tribes divided labor responsibilities along lines of gender. Women took charge of agricultural pursuits. In the spring they cleared land by cutting and girdling trees and then burning the underbrush. Under the open canopy, women planted domesticated vegetables such as corn, squash, beans, peas, and pumpkins. They gathered wild nuts, fruits, vegetables, and roots to supplement their agricultural pursuits. Because corn represented a staple of the eastern

⁷ *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, ed. Helen Hornbeck Tanner (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 62-63.

⁸ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 19.

⁹ For this debate see, Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade: A Critique of Keepers of the Game*, ed. Shepard Kretch III (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981); Shepard Kretch III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999).

woodland Native American, women held a central place in the productive capacity of a village. Corn could be dried, mashed and boiled and made into a myriad of concoctions, including hominy and bread, which could be eaten throughout the year. During the summer women weeded and hilled corn while men fished in the region's many streams and rivers. They also hunted turkey, deer, bison, raccoon, wolves and other fur-bearing animals with a mix of techniques that included guns as well as archery. The products of these hunts served both to provide meat and also fur that could be used to trade with itinerant French or British traders and at British forts. Villages also often traded corn, maple sugar and other domestic products.¹⁰ In the late autumn, after the harvest, most of the village moved to their winter hunting grounds. There men spent much of their time setting traps and following herds of fur-bearing animals, returning to camp to deposit their catch. Women and young children at camp worked to slaughter carcasses and clean hides so the skins would be ready to sell in the spring.¹¹ As winter began to break, some of the families returned to the village while others went to maple sugar camps where they tapped maple trees and boiled down the sap.¹² As the ground thawed, women cleared land for planting and the yearly labor cycle began anew.

Much like their Native American brethren, early settlers in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley also participated in a semi-sedentary, semi-subsistence trade economy based on agriculture and hunting, and they too lived according to an agricultural cycle. Springtime meant that settlers cleared fields using the same slash and burn techniques used by their Native American

¹⁰ Howard, *Shawnee!*, 48-49, 53; Weslager, *Delaware Indians*, 56-57, 59-60; Rafert, *Miami Indians of Indiana*, 12-14; Edmonds, *Potawatomis*, 15-17, 22; Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 16-17; William W. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, originally published 1885), 97, 299-300; William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 48.

¹¹ Howard, *Shawnee!*, 44, 45-46.

¹² *Ibid.*, 54-55.

neighbors. Likewise they used the same method of scattering seed across unplowed fields rather than using wooden plows.¹³ But instead of women bearing the burden of agricultural work, European tradition placed men in the fields. Settlers too planted large amounts of Indian corn because of its usefulness, but supplemented this grain with others such as wheat, oats, barley, rye and buckwheat, as well as pumpkins, beans and peas. All of these commodities and more could be used for barter.¹⁴ Summer brought less rigorous labor demands in the fields, allowing settlers the time to cull game from the forests and draw fish from streams, as well as construct fences, buildings and perform general maintenance on the property.¹⁵ Domestic work tended to be neglected because many initial squatters and settlers came without wives. The relative scarcity of women in the West did not mean that American men radically restructured their inherited concepts of gendered labor. Fall meant harvesting what crops remained after being eaten or destroyed by animals and weather. Winter brought another season of hunting, trapping and maintenance on the property. Planting began anew after the last frost in the spring.

These two market economies, one located in the upper Ohio country and the other in western Pennsylvania and Kentucky, competed for the same fur resources. Early settlers in the West did not engage in agriculture for commercial reasons. They planted to provide themselves with a subsistence to supplement the same primary economic agenda as Native Americans: the fur trade. So in this sense, the economies of early American settlers did not clash with Native Americans. Thus the discord between the two groups centered not on ownership of land but rather on land use—that is, who could use the land and for what purpose.

¹³ Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 70.

¹⁴ Slaughter, *Whiskey Rebellion*, 71; Reginald Horsman, *The Frontier in the Formative Years, 1783-1815* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 117-18.

¹⁵ Horsman, *Frontier in the Formative Years*, 105.

By the 1770s, probably no northern tribe felt the impact of this competition more than the Shawnee. Although they lived north of the Ohio River, Kentucky had been their historic hunting ground and they defended their rights to the territory vigorously. During a hunting trip in 1769, a party of Shawnee discovered Daniel Boone with a group of other men traveling through Kentucky on the same mission. Though they did not harm anyone, the Shawnee hunters, led by Captain Will (his English name) warned them not to return, telling them to “go home and stay there. Don’t come here any more, for this is the Indian’s hunting ground, and all the animals, skins and furs are ours.” To drive home his point, Captain Will took all of the goods and furs that Boone and his cohort had collected during their eight month hunt, as well as their horses. When Captain Will and his fellow hunters left, Boone’s party had only a gun with enough powder and shot to feed themselves on their trek back east.¹⁶ Boone had his life, but not the means to pursue his livelihood.

Unfortunately for the Shawnee and other northern tribes, attacks on the property of hunters failed to deter migration by American colonists into Kentucky. What had been a trickle of illegal settlers during the 1760s and early 1770s became a flood during and after the American Revolution. By 1790, Kentucky boasted a total population of 73,677, including 12,430 slaves.¹⁷ Much of the population was concentrated in the Bluegrass Region located in the central and northern areas of the state, from Louisville east to the foothills of the Appalachians and northward toward Cincinnati. The temporary camps that hunters established had helped spawn more permanent settlements. Most settlers bought small tracts of land and engaged in semi-

¹⁶ Lyman Copeland Draper, “The Life of Boone,” 2B188, Draper Manuscripts, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, quoted in John Mack Faragher, *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1992), 80-81.

¹⁷ (2004), Historical Census Browser, Retrieved October 27, 2004, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index/html>.

subsistence farming, while others accomplished the same simply by squatting. Wealthier settlers bought larger properties and grew corn and wheat, letting hogs, cattle and horses forage in forest and field. Others established businesses that catered to hunters and the growing population. Salt licks had originally attracted American and Native American hunters who preyed upon the game that frequented those sites. American hunters also had used the salt to cure meat during their long journeys. As the western population increased, some businessmen attempted to process the salt and sell it to the saline-hungry settlements. Of course, harvesting a salt mine or boiling down brine left saltmakers and their equipment exposed to the ill-will of Native Americans hunting or raiding parties who treated them the same as they did hunters.¹⁸

When Kentuckians complained about Native Americans, they did so in regard to attacks on persons and property. Kentuckians most commonly complained that Indians had stolen their horses. Christopher Greenup complained to Judge Innes in May 1790 that “Indians stole four horses from Mr. Meaux.”¹⁹ The next month, another group of Indians “stole a number of horses, to the amount of sixteen,” and these could not be recovered.²⁰ When warriors stole horses, they did so not simply as a game of cat and mouse. Though America inhabitants were often killed in small encounters on the farms and forests of the state, many Native Americans wanted to inflict as much damage as they could on Kentuckians. Most farmers considered their horses one of the most important resources they owned. Horses provided much of the energy needed to run a farm; and they had a direct impact on other property. Without horses clearing land became an even more time consuming task, fields could not be sowed, goods could not be brought to

¹⁸ Horsman, *Frontier in the Formative Years*, 116; Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 30-31, 42.

¹⁹ Christopher Greenup to Judge Innes, 24 May 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 89.

²⁰ John Caldwell to Judge Innes, 4 June 1790, *ibid.* 1: 89.

market, and the transmission of information slowed to a crawl, allowing a raiding party to inflict more damage before word could spread. A very incomplete overview of the “depredations” committed by Native Americans in several counties during the summer of 1789 counted well over one hundred twenty horses stolen.²¹ The collective actions of Native Americans from the Northwest, especially the Shawnee, against property led some Americans to refer to them as banditti. Arguing that Congress needed to take a firmer stand against the “banditti of Indians from the northwest side of the Ohio,” Henry Knox suggested that regular troops be raised to “punish” them.²² So by removing horses, Native Americans effectively tried to undermine Kentuckians efforts to establish profitable settlements.

But new western settlers found that groups other than Native Americans also attacked their property. Squatters and small farmers who felt threatened by the new settlers whose new economy undermined their own land claims and trade networks. Additional settlement interfered with hunting. Disorderly surveying, fraudulent land sales and a menu of other litigious problems undermined early land ownership in Kentucky. Speculators and land jobbers successfully used the courts to evict squatters and sometimes even those with legitimate land claims. A dramatic restructuring of land ownership in the state followed, a narrative common throughout the Ohio Valley.²³ Moreover, the new settlers added to a growing economy grounded more on merchant capital and agricultural capitalism than the early settlers’ semi-subsistence trade economy. Both of these forces led marginalized settlers to defend their livelihood with force. In 1789, three

²¹ An account of the depredations committed in the District of Kentucky, by the Indians, since the first of May, 1789, *ibid.* 1: 85.

²² Henry Knox to The Honorable the President of the Senate of the United States, 8 December 1790, *ibid.* 1: 83.

²³ Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 58-81.

“Hunters” near Wheeling began stealing horses from farmers.²⁴ Politicians and military officers in the West and in Washington complained about lawless American “banditti” who threatened land claims and the general economy because of their self-serving interests.²⁵ One Indian commissioner went so far as to refer to these settlers as “our own white Indians.” For Kentuckians and Ohioans attempting to transform the western economy, little difference existed between Native Americans and settlers who acted “without Regard to public benefits.”²⁶

Although new westerners recognized problems marginalized settlers posed, Native American attacks against property resonated more loudly and represented a broader danger. When opportunities arose, raiding parties stole or destroyed other property. After defeating a small company in a skirmish near Ingle’s station, “About ten or fifteen Indians took possession of all their horses and goods, ready packed up to start.”²⁷ Warriors also targeted vulnerable cattle, sheep and hogs.²⁸ The results of these attacks hindered the ability of farmers to produce for themselves and for market. Militia lieutenants from Fayette, Woodford and Mercer counties wrote to the Secretary of War in April 1790, complaining “We almost every day receive accounts of their [Native American] horrid murders on our defenseless frontiers . . . and the taking of horses and other property, to the ruin of a number of families.”²⁹ Judge Innes wrote to the Secretary of War during the same year, “by them is the wealth of our citizens diminished,

²⁴ Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, *City into Town: The City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988* (Marietta: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 61, 63.

²⁵ Cayton, *Frontier Republic*, 7-9.

²⁶ Parsons to Johnson, November 26, 1785, William S. Johnson Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, quoted in Cayton, *Frontier Republic*, 8.

²⁷ John Logan to Judge Innes, 17 May 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 90.

²⁸ Colonel Benjamin Wilson to Governor St. Clair, 4 October 1789, *ibid.* 1: 85.

²⁹ Extract of a letter from the Lieutenants of the counties of Fayette, Woodford, and Mercer, to the Secretary of War, 14 April 1790, *ibid.* 1: 87.

and the value of our lands decreased. What will be the result?”³⁰ Innes estimated that in seven and one-half years in the Danville area, “upwards of 20,000 horses have been taken and carried off, and other property, such as money, merchandise, household goods, and wearing apparel, have been carried off and destroyed” amounting to over £15,000.³¹ Warriors rarely kept all of the material. Instead, they often chose to destroy it rather than have it fall back in the hands of settlers. Also, few warriors wanted to carry bulky materials while hunting or raiding. Merchants and settlers saw only destroyed property.

Native Americans not only targeted isolated and exposed frontier farming families, they also focused on the property of emigrants moving into the region and merchant vessels. River traffic proved especially vulnerable. Angered by recent assaults on river craft, Brigadier General Harmar ranted about “vagabond Indians, who had infested the river.”³² Charles Johnson recounted how a group of Shawnee persistently harassed a convoy of three boats traveling down the Ohio River. During the course of two days, a party of Shawnee warriors repeatedly attempted to overtake the boats. In an attempt to escape, all passengers—of which Charles Johnson was one—gathered in one boat and abandoned the others. The Shawnee took the two boats left behind along with “goods and other property” still in them. “[I]n my opinion,” wrote Johnson, the total value “must have amounted to several thousand pounds.”³³ Travelers on the river passed at their own risk. Not only did the meager western military not have enough men to guard settlements, it lacked a fleet of armed ships to defend the river.

³⁰ Judge Innes to the Secretary of War, 7 July 1790, *ibid.* 1: 88.

³¹ Judge Innes to the Secretary of War, 7 July 1790, *ibid.* 1: 88

³² Brigadier General Harmar to the Secretary of War, 9 June 1790, *ibid.* 1: 91.

³³ Deposition of Charles Johnson, taken before the Secretary of War, 29 July 1790, *ibid.* 1: 87

Residents and travelers expressed particular concern during the spring of 1790 because a group of as many as fifty Shawnee had established a camp on the north side of the Ohio River near the mouth of the Scioto. Ships that passed consistently came under attack from that camp.³⁴ This bold party struck even at convoys, sometimes as many as five boats at a time, causing “the destruction of much property, the loss of many lives, and the great annoyance of all intercourse from the northward.”³⁵ Some attacks resulted in the loss of several thousand pounds worth of goods.³⁶ James Wilkinson protested the lack of protection afforded to merchants and emigrants suggesting that “if this party is not dislodged and dispersed, the navigation of the Ohio must cease.”³⁷ In April, General Scott with a jumble of continental troops and local volunteers attempted to drive out the “enterprising savages.” Scott’s party managed to kill four Shawnee as they marched up the riverside, but Knox called the mission a failure as boats continued to be harassed and ransacked.³⁸

Even as northern tribes culled property from the region’s rivers, they did so with a discriminating eye. Warriors dealt with travelers differently, in part based on their national affiliation. The Shawnee and Miami specifically targeted American emigrants, merchants and the military. Traders friendly to the British Empire did not suffer the same wrath. During the summer of 1790, Joseph Maria Francesco Vigo, navigated up the Wabash along side another boat operated by an American trader named Melchor. The two craft traveled separately and had met only incidentally as they entered the Wabash River. A Sardinian by birth, Vigo had

³⁴ Wm W. Dowell to the Hon. John Brown, 4, April 1790, *ibid.* 1: 86.

³⁵ James Wilkinson, Esq. to General Harmar, 7 April 1790, *ibid.* 1: 91.

³⁶ Report of Buckner Thruston, Esq., 24 March 1790, *ibid.* 1: 91.

³⁷ James Wilkinson, Esq. to General Harmar, 7 April 1790, *ibid.* 1: 91.

³⁸ The Secretary of War to General Harmar, 7 June 1790, *ibid.* 1: 97.

established himself as a prominent fur trader by 1790. He worked as a subagent for the Miami Company of Detroit and for landowners along the Wabash River.³⁹ Because he lived and traded out of Post St. Vincennes, warriors who lived near the river knew him well. When both ships came under attack, Melchor managed to escape but the party boarded Vigo's ship. Warriors searched and seized much of the crew's personal items, but the party allowed Vigo to continue on its way to Vincennes with his cargo of peltry because he commanded a French vessel. Before each group went their own way, the warriors admonished Vigo for traveling with Americans, and explained that they would not have boarded the ship if it had been traveling alone.⁴⁰ As long as Native Americans retained control over the Ohio territory and its resources, they reserved the right to police the region, both to maintain their authority and to manage the region's economy.

Although Native Americans worked to remove unwanted emigrants from the Ohio Valley throughout the year, their military efforts tended to occur in tandem with the rhythms of their agricultural cycle. During the late fall and winter months, Kentuckians saw fewer attacks on their persons and property because most Native Americans, especially the Shawnee and Delaware, traveled to their winter hunting sites in the north. Thus fewer warriors engaged in guerrilla warfare. But as spring came to the region, so too did increased confrontations. By March or April, when most Native Americans returned to their summer villages, western settlers and river travelers began to anticipate increased attacks as Native American men combined hunting expeditions with military raids.⁴¹ Because most Native American men raided exposed property

³⁹ (February 2000) William W. Giffin, "Vigo, Joseph Maria Francesco," *American National Biography Online*, Retrieved 27 October 2004: <http://www.anb.org/articles/03/03-00517.html>.

⁴⁰ The Governor of the Western Territory to the Secretary of War, 19 September 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 95-96.

⁴¹ To Governor St. Clair, or Brigadier General Harmar [from Henry Knox], 3 March 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 101; To Harry Innes, Esq. District Judge of Kentucky [from Henry Knox], 13 April 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 101.

and people, and did not seek to engage in pitched battles, hunting and warring could go hand-in-hand. Still, despite the attempts many Native Americans made to mesh the war effort with productive labor, many villages in Ohio and Indiana suffered economically as a consequence of continuous warfare. Women continued to plant, but Americans who carried the property war northward regularly targeted the fields. Just as importantly, men spent less time hunting. Truncated winter hunts to defend territory disrupted seasonal hunting patterns. Although men attempted to hunt and raid at the same time, guerrilla tactics sometimes required them to abandon peltry, which could not easily be carried during an attack or a retreat. By 1793, merchants in Detroit and as far north as Michilimackinac saw declines in the fur trade.⁴² Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada John Graves Simcoe recognized the negative impact the conflict had on the regional economy and hoped for a quick end to the “serious Inconveniences in the Commercial View of this Unfortunate War.”⁴³ During the Revolutionary War, Simcoe had sided with colonial Loyalists and fought against the American regular army. Years later, the crown rewarded his years of service by appointing him Lieutenant Governor of a newly organized territory in the Lakes region—Upper Canada. As Lieutenant Governor, Simcoe ran the daily operations of the province. Although he worked independently from Lower Canada, he ultimately answered directly to the Governor of (Lower) Canada, Lord Dorchester.⁴⁴

⁴² J.G. Simcoe to George Hammond, 24 August 1793, *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents Relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada*, v. II, ed., E.A. Cruikshank, (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1924), 41.

⁴³ J.G. Simcoe to George Hammond, 24 August 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 43. On other merchants attitudes toward peace, see, General Benjamin Lincoln, Extracts from a “Journal of a Treaty Held in 1793 with the Indian Tribes North West of the Ohio, by Commissioners of the United States,” *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 33.

⁴⁴ For a detailed biography of John Graves Simcoe, see Mary Beacock Fryer and Christopher Dracott, *John Graves Simcoe, 1752-1806: A Biography* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1998).

Through the late 1780s, Congress hesitated to raise an army to address the threat Native Americans posed to the Kentucky settlements. The treaty negotiations that ended the American Revolution had been completed only recently and Congress already found itself struggling to raise money from the thirteen confederated states to pay debts incurred during the war. The cost of another war seemed too daunting for many congressmen. Instead, they left the task of protecting frontier settlements to local militias and “volunteer expeditions” who operated, in the words of Judge Innes, for “*revenge, protection, and self-preservation*” when continental troops could not or would not lend help.⁴⁵ Despite its reluctance to engage in outright war, the military at times helped settlers perform that task even without official authorization. Brigadier General Wilkinson did not try to stop a party of one hundred eighty mounted volunteers from Kentucky when they left to attack Indian settlements in the spring of 1792 despite the fact that General Anthony Wayne had given him strict orders to maintain “*pacific overtures*” toward Native Americans. Wilkinson relayed these orders to the country lieutenants but made no effort to prevent the incursion.⁴⁶

Vigilante parties organized themselves and marched north to Native American villages where they razed homes and fields as retribution for American property destroyed. Unlike American emigrants and merchants, Native Americans did not possess equivalent material property, such as horse-drawn plows, preventing these expeditions from inflicting the same damage on village residents. Also, villagers often abandoned their homes and fields shortly before American raiding parties arrived. Nevertheless, American settler expeditions undermined the livelihood of Native American villages by destroying their ability to produce for themselves.

⁴⁵ Judge Innes to the Secretary of War, 7 July 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 88 (original italics).

⁴⁶ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 15 June 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness: The Wayne-Knox-Pickering-McHenry Correspondence*, v. 1, ed., Richard Knopf (Columbus: Anthony Wayne Parkway Board, 1955), 6.

By divorcing Native Americans from the means of their own production and subsistence, American militias forced villages into a temporary dependence on neighboring villages or British garrisons. In the short term, this tit-for-tat style of a property war favored Native Americans. A merchant or emigrant farmer might spend years working to replace property destroyed by a party of warriors. When American settlers razed a Native American village, the village's residents returned the subsequent spring, rebuilt homes and replanted their fields. But, in the long term, Native American warriors could not inflict sufficient property damage to a broad enough spectrum of the settler population to significantly retard the regional economic growth. And villages closest to the Ohio River repeatedly found themselves destroyed, bogging down their ability to effectively engage in the fur trade.

If by 1790 the larger confrontation between Ohio Valley settlers and the northern tribes had become a contest of attrition then the latter found themselves on losing end of it. Emigrants continued to flood into Kentucky. By 1790, Kentucky, which had been little more than a set of Virginia outposts only ten years before, had become one of the fastest growing areas in the country. Speculators jockeyed for position to make the best profit as the Bluegrass Region became a land market paradise. Farmers had firmly established themselves along the Salt, Kentucky and Green rivers. The prospect of Native American violence removing the settlers from the region became a wishful dream at best.

Native American forays into settled territory along the Ohio, however, wore incessantly on the residents, who looked to the newly organized Constitutional government in Philadelphia for assistance. Repeated stories given by western settlers who prophesized the destruction of a burgeoning western economy gradually convinced Congress, President Washington and his cabinet to move beyond diplomatic efforts to secure peace. Indeed, Secretary of War Henry

Knox hoped to use a military strike upon the villages at the headwaters of the Wabash “to punish” the Shawnee and Miami, the two tribes perceived by the American government to be causing the most destruction along the river.⁴⁷ He, and others, expected that such a move would convince Native Americans that they could not defeat an organized military assault by the United States. The burden of the property war began to shift from local residents to the shoulders of the federal government.

On September 30, 1790, Brigadier General Josiah Harmar and 1,453 troops—320 federal soldiers and 1,133 militia—marched out of Fort Washington (near Cincinnati), beginning their 170 mile trek to the Miami villages.⁴⁸ Once at the Wabash, the army managed to kill just over one hundred warriors, who tried to hold them off, and to destroy about three hundred wigwams and log-houses, leveling the village.⁴⁹ In the surrounding fields, Harmar estimated the Shawnee and Miami had about 20,000 bushels of corn as well as other vegetables not yet harvested, which he had seized and placed under control of his Quartermaster General for redistribution to the soldiers.⁵⁰ Soldiers plundered the villages of kettles and other valuable items in an effort to get more than pay from their enlistment. Such “unsoldier-like behavior” irked Harmar who struggled to discipline his men and redistribute booty fairly among the soldiery.⁵¹ What the army did not consume Harmar ordered burned and destroyed—a pattern he repeated at other Shawnee

⁴⁷ The Secretary of War to Governor St. Clair, 12 September 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 100.

⁴⁸ Brigadier General Harmar to the Secretary of War, 4 November 1790, *ibid.* 1: 104.

⁴⁹ Brigadier General Harmar to the Secretary of War, 4 November 1790, *ibid.* 1: 104.

⁵⁰ Brigadier General Harmar to the Secretary of War, 4 November, 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 104; General Orders, 17 October 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 105.

⁵¹ General Orders, 18 October 1790, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 105.

villages later.⁵² Although the troops made it back to Fort Washington with little incident, skirmishes around the Miami and Shawnee villages killed one hundred eighty-three of Harmar's men and wounded thirty-one, a heavy loss considering the limited scope of the effort.⁵³ Harmar had succeeded in destroying the villages, but most members of Congress and the administration viewed the mission as a failure.

MAP 2. The Northwest, 1791-1795

SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO, (10 DECEMBER 2004), <http://nmviewogc.cr.usgs.gov>.

⁵² General Orders, 20 October 1790, *ibid.* 1: 105.

⁵³ Return of the killed and wounded upon the expedition against the Miami towns, under the command of Brigadier General Harmar, 4 November 1790, *ibid.* 1: 106.

Back at the Shawnee and Miami villages, towns and fields smoldered. Earlier when soldiers approached, women and children fled into the countryside. Warriors also left, but they patrolled the outskirts of villages and attacked soldiers when exposed, avoiding any direct engagement with the army. This strategy had been effective in the past when militias and “volunteer expeditions” marauded in their territory. They often sacrificed their physical communities but also reduced their own casualties while inflicting heavy blows on overextended and isolated bands of soldiers. After the attack, the dispossessed villagers disbanded and scattered to their neighbors, as well as to British forts and traders where they found support during the winter months. The following spring, they returned and rebuilt their villages, sowing fields anew.⁵⁴

By the winter of 1791, the consequences of Harmar’s expedition began to reveal themselves. Other Shawnee and Miami bands became more militant in the wake of the attack. Some Ojibwa and Ottawa warriors began to join their aggressive Wabash counterparts as stories of the assault traveled through the Great Lakes region.⁵⁵ Up and down the Ohio Valley, American communities concurred with one contemporary observer who complained that the Native American’s seasonal attacks had “overtaken us much sooner than I expected.”⁵⁶ For many living along the river valley and deeper in Kentucky, more brazen raids by bands of Native Americans “clearly prove[d] that the expedition against the Shawanese w[ould] not produce peace, but, on the contrary, a more general and outrageous war.”⁵⁷ Federal involvement in the conflict had intensified animosities on both sides of the river.

⁵⁴ Report of Brigadier General Scott, 28 June 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

⁵⁵ Captain David Zeigler to Governor St. Clair, 8 January 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

⁵⁶ Rufus Putnam, Esq. to the President of the United States, 8 January 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

⁵⁷ Rufus Putnam, Esq. to the Secretary of War, 8 January 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

In Ohio, densely populated areas such as Marietta, a village of as many as eighty houses concentrated along a one mile stretch of river, came under attack. In January 1791, Rufus Putnam wrote to George Washington, impressing upon him the need to send troops for protection from a set of attacks which had occurred “much sooner than . . . expected.” Apparently, Native Americans had been targeting corn, forage and cattle along an over forty mile strip of settlements on the banks of the Ohio River. Local militia had been organized, but such actions took away from the productive capacity of communities. Putnam especially worried that conflict would affect each town’s labor pool. He claimed that almost half of the men hired in the area to work in the fields had aspirations of acquiring their own land some day. Putnam feared that with repeated attacks and forced militia service many young men would quit the region entirely, the result of which would be a dilapidated economy. If that happened he lamented, those lucky enough “not [to] fall a prey to the savages” would be “a ruined people.”⁵⁸ In March 1791, Congress authorized another federally funded assault against the northern tribes.⁵⁹

Early in June, an army of 794 Kentucky volunteers led by Brigadier General Scott attacked several Kickapoo towns along the Wabash. Unlike Harmar who found villages empty, Scott caught the village of Ouiatanon near the Eel River frantically trying to escape before his arrival. Warriors kept Scott’s men under fire, but they eventually succumbed. Scott ordered the fields and the town burned along with other items the army could collect such as household goods, and peltry. The local trading post, operated by French traders, suffered the same fate.

⁵⁸ Rufus Putnam, Esq. to the President of the United States, 8 January 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

⁵⁹ Instructions to Brigadier General Charles Scott, 9 March 1791, *ibid.* 1: 122.

Scott bragged afterward that he lost no men, had only five wounded, and took forty-one prisoners.⁶⁰ Still, it was a small victory.

By the time Lieutenant Colonel James Wilkinson led his own raid against the Shawnee, Miami, Delaware, Potawatomi and Kickapoo, the villages destroyed by Scott had been reconstituted. To Wilkinson's surprise, he found at the village of Tippecanoe that "the enemy had returned and cultivated their corn and pulse, which I found in high perfection, and in much greater quantity than at l'Anguille."⁶¹ At Ouiatanon "the corn had been replanted, and was now in high cultivation." An astonished Wilkinson continued, noting "several fields being well ploughed, all which was destroyed" by Scott.⁶² Wilkinson again burned villages and fields as he trekked along the Wabash during his late-summer expedition, leveling "at least 430 acres of corn, chiefly in the milk" just at Ouiatanon.⁶³ "[L]eft without houses, home or provisions," Wilkinson hoped, the tribes "must cease to war, and will find active employ to subsist their squaws and children during the impending winter."⁶⁴ War consisted of economic conflict by other means.

During the fall of 1791, General Arthur St. Clair led another military raid into the Northwest to undermine Native American subsistence, hoping the expedition would further destroy the warriors' ability to fight. With just over two thousand soldiers, not including the garrisons at Fort Washington and Fort Hamilton, St. Clair left Cincinnati with the goal of

⁶⁰ Report of Brigadier General Scott, 28 June 1791, *ibid.* 1: 131-32.

⁶¹ Pulse here probably refers to peas and beans. Lieut. Colonel-Commandant Wilkinson's Report, 24 August 1791, *ibid.* 1: 135.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

building forts even farther north than those already in service. To accomplish this goal the American military had been using a well-worn trail that had long tied together interregional Native American trade. The trail ran from the Glaize, at the confluence of the Auglaize and Maumee Rivers, south toward Cincinnati and continued through the Natchez trace.⁶⁵ The line of American forts, hence, pointed in the direction of two major Native American settlements—the Miami villages at the headwaters of the Wabash, and the Glaize. American strategists hoped that this string of forts would help the military gain easier access to the Northwest and allow it to exert the power of the state in a region where the population—comprised of Native Americans, French Canadian traders and settlers, as well as British soldiers and settlers—scoffed at American authority. By the beginning of November, St. Clair’s army had constructed two more forts—Fort St. Clair and Fort Jefferson.

The Miami villages and the Glaize made for important military targets because they represented the heart of a Native America defense. Since the American Revolution, the Miami villages had been an important political center in the Northwest. But as the Glaize grew in size, the Miami villages began to lose some of their political and economic importance to the newer settlement. The Glaize had grown as the property war intensified during the late 1780s and early 1790s, and thereafter Shawnee and Delaware villages had moved north and west to avoid attack from vigilante settlers. After Harmar’s campaign, some Miami, Shawnee and Delaware villages began relocating to the Glaize where greater distance from American soldiers ensured a more safety. Moreover, some of the top Shawnee chiefs lived there—including Captain Johnny and Blue Jacket, as well as Miami Chief Little Turtle, and Delaware Chief Buckongahelas—making the Glaize both a political and military center. At times, over one thousand warriors

⁶⁵ Copy of a letter from General St. Clair to the Secretary of War, 1 November 1791, *ibid.* 1: 137.

concentrated at these villages. Out of this community grew a tribal confederacy organized to defeat the United States.

In the face of strong military opposition the region's villages had developed a strategy of forming composite, or pan-Indian, communities. These communities worked together, not only through political and military confederacies against common enemies, but also to more efficiently produce food and materials for the war effort. The Glaize emerged as the ideal example of the economic and political relationship. Dozens of villages lived adjacent to each other alongside the rivers that defined the area's landscape. Hundreds of acres of corn, potatoes, pumpkins, beans and cucumbers grew for miles along the lush river banks, at times intermittently, from the Miami villages northwest to British Fort Miami. Later, an American soldier remarked that the fields stretched "On each side of the river as far as your eyes could see."⁶⁶ The cornucopia meant that the Glaize represented the productive heart of the confederacy. Extra food produced there went to support allies spread throughout the region. British and French traders also established posts there. One historian has estimated that the bulk of the £30,000 in trade (mostly fur) south of Lake Erie came from these communities.⁶⁷ If the United States wanted to destroy the confederacy's ability to produce for itself, the Glaize and the Miami Villages needed to be destroyed. St. Clair's planned to do just that.

As cool November air washed over the Ohio country landscape, St. Clair readied his troops for combat. He did not face an easy task. Soldiers hated the harsh conditions under which they lived. Early morning parading and harsh penalties for violating rules of conduct wore on soldiers. Many of the militia and infantry represented the poorer ranks of Kentucky,

⁶⁶ Diary of Captain Thomas Taylor Underwood, Who Served Under Gen. Wayne In His Expedition Against the Indians of the North West, Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, Ohio.

⁶⁷ Helen Hornbeck Tanner, "The Glaize in 1792: A Composite Indian Community" *Ethnohistory* 25 (Winter 1978), 15-39.

Pennsylvania and Virginia society who used the military as a form of income. They did possess decorum or discipline in the line of fire that commanders like St. Clair desired. Conflict between common soldiers and professionally trained officers had occurred before. During the Revolution, George Washington had complained of the common soldier's behavior, and little had changed since the founding of the Republic. Now St. Clair watched minor revolts spring up in his army. Men deserted for many reasons. Whippings, other corporal punishments, and poor provisions inspired many deserters. Others abandoned the army with plans of financial gain. On October 31, for example, about sixty soldiers deserted with reportedly half of them looking "to plunder the [military] convoys which were upon the roads."⁶⁸

At eighty-one miles advanced of Fort Washington and Cincinnati, St. Clair found his supply lines intermittent at best. Supply convoys faced numerous obstacles as they carried food along the military constructed roads. The military, as did traders, used river travel as much as possible to speed up the journey. But low rivers, especially in summer and late fall, meant goods needed to be carried over the rolling terrain of Great Miami River Valley. There, muddy roads bogged down wagons already susceptible to falling apart. Beef cattle wandered off and needed to be rounded up. And Native Americans often took advantage of the highly vulnerable and valuable convoys. Thus, even though the Quartermaster arrived at Fort Jefferson on October 22 with a supply of beef and flour for the waiting army, rations still ran low.⁶⁹ The surrounding environment, in a late autumn decay, offered little in the way of additional sustenance, though St. Clair supposed if they had "arrived a month sooner" his horses and cattle "would have been all

⁶⁸ Copy of a letter from General St. Clair to the Secretary of War, 1 November 1791, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 137.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 1: 136.

fat now.”⁷⁰ Such was the situation St. Clair’s army faced in early November as it pressed forward toward the Shawnee, Miami and Delaware villages.

Early November 4, reveille awoke St. Clair’s men who then gathered to parade. Then, just as the general dismissed his men from parading, a party of warriors attacked the invading army, sending the camp into disarray. Warriors successfully pushed the army back, only faltering once during a countermove made by St. Clair. Pushed off their advantageous position near the river, St. Clair’s men fell back taking shots along the way. “It was, in fact, a flight” wrote a humiliated St. Clair. Warriors skirmished with the army as it retreated back to Fort Washington.⁷¹ To speed their way, soldiers jettisoned their arms and supplies. Warriors collected abandoned goods, which they confiscated or destroyed. Horses left behind suffered the same fate.⁷² In only a short time, months of accumulated provisions, ordinance, supplies had been destroyed and manpower defeated before St. Clair could deploy them.

St. Clair’s defeat led to an intensification of the war effort on both sides. The northern tribes had lost the war for Kentucky, but they were winning the war for Ohio. Shawnee, Miami and Delaware warriors eager to oust American intruders saw their support grow, first after inflicting a heavy toll on Harmar’s troops and then after defeating St. Clair’s. Some tribes who had viewed the cause as futile began to see success as a possibility; the American military could be defeated. More warriors came to the Glaze while others sent representatives pledging support. Anthony Wayne, who replaced St. Clair as general, characterized Native Americans

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Copy of a letter from Major General St. Clair to the Secretary for the Department of War, 9 November 1791, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 137.

⁷² Copy of a letter from Major General St. Clair to the Secretary for the Department of War, 9 November 1791, *ibid.*, 1: 137.

north of the Ohio River as “confident[,] haughty and insolent from recent success.”⁷³ They had a right to be.

Under St. Clair, the American Army had suffered its worst defeat against Native Americans thus far. In addition to numerous losses among the infantry, dozens of officers had also been killed in the action, a loss, wrote Sinclair, which “cannot be too much regretted.”⁷⁴ The embarrassing defeat convinced many in Congress that the United States needed to regroup militarily and attempt to make peace through diplomatic channels. With that mission in mind, a party of three American delegates departed for Sandusky, still hoping to make peace in the region according to their terms. Many high ranking Americans objected. In their eyes, the United States had lost a battle, but the war for the West had not yet ended. Too many settlers had converged in the river valley, too much financial investment had been made, and the economic potential of the West too great to abandon the region. The war would continue.

Residents in the Ohio Valley concerned themselves mostly with the present defeat and a seemingly interminable conflict. “[T]his is an alarming affair to Kentucky,” wrote one Mercer County Kentuckian.⁷⁵ Many settlers had hoped for victory to stabilize the economy and promote growth. As George Nicholas succinctly put it, “The interest of the country necessarily suffered with our reputation; for as emigration is our chief dependance [sic] everything that deters emigrants must materially injure us.”⁷⁶ Emigrants still came, but Nicolas’ point remained. Until

⁷³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 60.

⁷⁴ Copy of a letter from Major General St. Clair to the Secretary for the Department of War, 9 November 1791, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 138.

⁷⁵ Samuel McDowell to Andrew Reid, 8 December 1791, Miscellaneous Papers, Samuel McDowell Papers, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁷⁶ The quote here is in reference to Harmar’s defeat. George Nicholas to John Brown, 13 July 1790 (31 December, both dates appear on the letter), George Nicholas Letters, microfilm, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.

the Native American challenge to the growing Ohio Valley economy could be thwarted, settlers in the region would suffer by their hands.

While diplomatic efforts continued in Sandusky, a period of relative calm overtook the region. During the summer of 1792, the stability offered by peace allowed farmers time to plant, cultivate and harvest without the interruption or destruction skirmishes and war brought. According to Anthony Wayne, “no traces of hostile Indians [could] be discovered upon the borders of the frontiers.”⁷⁷ Henry Knox found himself pleased at the news that “the Yeomanry of the Country are reaping their harvests unmolested.”⁷⁸ Wayne believed that the efforts of the United States to negotiate with the Indians had allowed the peaceful season to progress. But many western Americans remained skeptical. Even though few incidents marred the season, Wayne found himself constantly “endeavor[ing] to reconcile the Inhabitants of [Washington] County and Ohio to remain upon their farms.”⁷⁹

The federal government slowly moved to meet the growing demands of settlers for a stronger military presence in the region. In 1792, Henry Knox noted that “It is essential that the frontier Counties should be amply protected.” He therefore ordered Major General Anthony Wayne to “direct such stations or send such patrols [sic] as will afford all reasonable protection to the Inhabitants and banish any well founded apprehensions from their minds.”⁸⁰ Wayne tried to quell complaints by assuring settlers that he did all he could to protect them, but he hesitated to spread his soldiers too thinly throughout the territory. In reaction to suggestions that United States troops should protect each individual settler’s farm during the harvest season, Wayne

⁷⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 13 July 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 15.

⁷⁸ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 20 July 1792, *ibid.* 1: 21.

⁷⁹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 27 July 1792, *ibid.* 1: 33.

⁸⁰ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 21 September 1792, *ibid.* 1: 96.

joked that “if all the troops belonging to the U.S. were stationed upon the Frontiers of that County—they wou’d not be deemed sufficient; Unless there was an addition of Militia, supported at publick charge & detached as Usual two or three to each house, to Assist the farmer in harvesting seeding &c.”⁸¹ Though local farmers and merchants placed unreasonable expectations on the military to protect their property, they nevertheless believed that the United States government had the authority, power, and responsibility to defend the economy of the West.

The United States needed a decisive victory against the northern tribes to assert its authority in the region and open the Ohio Valley to expanded settlement. To fulfill this mission, the United States appointed Major General Anthony Wayne commander of the western armies. Wayne had risen through the ranks of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, and there had caught the eyes of several influential national leaders, including George Washington who helped advance his career. Though he served primarily in Pennsylvania during the war, Wayne participated in campaigns throughout the colonies from Fort Ticonderoga to the Georgia frontier. In the Georgia backcountry Wayne had his first experience with the legionary organization of the military, which he deployed in the Northwest. In this structure, rather than having separate infantry, cavalry and artillery, he divided these corps equally between several legions. Thus, each legion included its own infantry, cavalry and artillery, providing a much more dynamic and varied force. Applying this military structure to his army in the northwest, Wayne created four sub-Legions, each with 1,280 men organized into four companies of riflemen, eight companies of infantry, one troop of dragoons and one company of artillery.⁸²

⁸¹ Anthony Wayne to Knox, 28 September 1792, *ibid.* 1: 103.

⁸² Nelson, *Anthony Wayne*, 226-27.

Wayne understood that the United States needed a victory to insure control of the western territories, and that he did not need to rush into battle. Writing to Secretary of War Henry Knox in August 1792, he stated that the United States “ought not to risk another defeat,” a certain result if the significant number of raw recruits in his ranks entered war too hastily.⁸³ Though Wayne planned no large campaign until at least the spring, he nevertheless thought “one or two desultory Expedi[t]ions composed of Mounted Volunteers may be usefull [sic]” in the fall to affirm the continued presence of the American military in the region.⁸⁴ Wayne reserved the bulk of his forces for the major campaign, but did not want to allow the confederacy to organize an attack on his main forces in the meantime. The property war would continue, but the Mounted Volunteers ensured the destruction stayed away from the main body of his troops and his supply lines.

During the lull in campaigns, Wayne used the time to train his raw troops and organize supplies and provisions. The discipline of his troops represented an important obstacle for Wayne. Though military officers typically came from the more respectable ranks of society, most men in the rank and file joined the military to receive bounties, the good pay it offered, the prospect of receiving payment in land, and the potential for plunder. But the law limited the size of the American Army. Reluctant to have a standing army in the aftermath of the Revolution, Congress declared on June 3, 1784 in an Act of Congress that the military could have no more than one 700 man regiment. Only Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania contributed men to this initial army, though both the number of men allowed and state

⁸³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 63.

⁸⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *ibid.* 1: 64.

contributions expanded over time.⁸⁵ Most of the men who joined Harmar's and St. Clair's expeditions came from militias organized in the newly-opened western country. Of the 2,000 soldiers who took part in Harmar's Expedition, 1,600 men came from the ranks of militia and only 400 came from the federal regiment. Of the militia, a significant majority of men came from Kentucky, while Pennsylvania rounded out the number.⁸⁶ Like their regular military brethren, militia men sought to open up the region and carry home plunder.

As Wayne expanded the federal military, more opportunities arose for men in Kentucky and Ohio to join the army. Many recruits came from the growing urban poor, especially in Cincinnati, and rural laborers who sought more regular pay than offered by seasonal farm work. In spite of these new opportunities, the military had a hard time recruiting new soldiers throughout the 1790s. High wages paid in the Ohio Valley proved one factor preventing men from enlisting. In a region where most young men sought their own land, the demand for laborers easily outstripped supply. Farmers, eager to keep hands from leaving, bartered wages they could not pay in specie.⁸⁷ In growing towns, young men made a decent living working any number of professional trades or industries, such as shipwrights, millers, carpenters, in merchant houses, on the public landing. In mid April 1793, Henry Knox forecast that it would be difficult near Cincinnati to raise more than three hundred recruits to join Wayne's army by July because of high wages.⁸⁸ The growing market economy had exacerbated the property war between the

⁸⁵ Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 79.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 84, 86.

⁸⁷ Specie was often difficult to come by in the early Ohio River Valley so barter formed the basis of many forms of exchange. Isaac Shelby to Thomas Hurt, 24 August 1791, Folder 1 (Correspondence, 1777-1794), Isaac Shelby Papers, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁸⁸ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 20 April 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 73.

Ohio Valley settlements and the northern tribes. Now that same economy hindered the military sent to defend it.

Administrators in Upper Canada also prepared for war during the early 1790s, often facing the same problems as their American counterparts. For many Upper Canadians, it seemed clear that the United States meant to continue the war despite their recent losses. Military and government officials worried that the slow-growing region would fall victim to Wayne's army. For leaders like Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, the problem was economic as well as military. Settling the region and bolstering the economy helped supply lines and improved communications. Lord Dorchester remarked in 1793, "The weakness of the present [frontier] is too visible" and suggested trying to settle four thousand men in Upper Canada "to make a tolerable Defense in case the Americans should attack them."⁸⁹ Similarly, Simcoe called the "State of this Province . . . totally inadequate for its defense."⁹⁰ To prepare for war with the Americans, the British moved to augment the size of their military as well. The colonial Canadian government, authorized by the British War Office, offered bounties worth £15 to willing non-Native Americans.⁹¹ In this diverse region of refugees and immigrants, these bounties were offered "to Men enlisted in America, as well as this Country."⁹²

Regardless of their efforts, the Upper Canadian government struggled to meet recruitment goals in spite of the impending threat. Simcoe in part blamed a poor public response on the high number of loyalist refugees from the United States who had resettled in Upper Canada. "[L]ittle

⁸⁹ Lord Dorchester's Remarks on the Suggestions, 4 August 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 3.

⁹⁰ J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 2 December 1793, *ibid.* 2: 111.

⁹¹ Sir George Yonge to Lord Dorchester, 3 February 1794, *ibid.* 2: 140.

⁹² Sir George Yonge to Lord Dorchester, 3 February 1794, *ibid.* 2: 140.

is to be expected from a people who have already suffered severely for their Loyalty,” wrote Simcoe, “& too many of whom poor & dispirited, are more apt to regret what they have lost, than to remember what they have received.” But in the end, even Simcoe recognized that forces other than disillusionment hindered recruitment in Upper Canada. “[N]o Recruits can be raised in this Province,” he observed, “so very high is the Price of Wages.”⁹³ Just as in the Ohio Valley, the Upper Canadian private sector continued to offer better financial rewards with less risk than could be gained by joining the military. As a result, British leaders worried continuously about their forts, especially those at Detroit and Niagara, wondering if they could withstand a direct attack by Wayne’s troops.⁹⁴

Like in the Ohio Valley, Upper Canadian military officials struggled to train soldiers who resisted a discipline required of a professional army. Neither urban poor, nor farmers, nor farm labors made good soldiers. Most of these workers experienced a great deal of independence in their work routines. Military life attempted to transform men’s conception work-discipline from one predicated on “natural” rhythms and individual choice to one dictated by the clock, the trumpet and their commanders.⁹⁵ The government paid soldiers and extorted as much labor as possible from them. Stringent daily regimes required men to perform repetitive and often boring tasks at a pace unfamiliar to them. The lack of discipline and order of fresh troops became apparent during both St. Clair’s and Harmer’s expeditions when soldiers broke rank and abandoned supplies and provisions. Wayne hoped to spend a significant amount of time training

⁹³ J.G. Simcoe to Henry Dundas, 20 September 1793, *ibid.* 2: 55.

⁹⁴ J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 14 March 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 179. Forts Detroit and Niagara were the two most vulnerable forts to an American assault and were therefore the most heavily fortified, eight and one-half companies assigned to each. See “Stations of the British Army in Canada, 1794, 27 March 1794,” *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 197.

⁹⁵ E.P. Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” *Past and Present* 38 (1967): 60-61, 72-73, 76-79, 85, 91-93.

his troops. Even Henry Knox approved of the increased emphasis on training, which brought about a “progressive discipline.” “After the troops shall have learned their trade perfectly,” he suggested, “there will be as much difference between them and raw militia as between a master workman and his raw apprentice.”⁹⁶

Wayne hoped to instill work-discipline by curbing what he viewed as distracting and destructive vices. When he moved his troops down the Ohio River in the spring of 1793 to prepare for his campaign against the northern tribes, he positioned the bulk of his forces just beyond the mouth of the Great Miami River, west of Cincinnati and Fort Washington, at a place he called Hobson’s Choice. He so dubbed the position because of the meagerness of his options. On the one hand, he could put his men in Fort Washington and Cincinnati, which was, in his eyes, “filled with ardent poison & Caitiff wretches [i.e., cowardly, despicable men]”⁹⁷ Taverns, inns, public houses and merchant houses in the burgeoning city offered gambling, alcohol and women to a myriad of emigrants and soldiers. There the debauched life of soldiers met the violent male sporting world of the frontier creating a riotous atmosphere that frequently consumed the town and damaged property.⁹⁸ Military leaders commonly believed that the “vice[s] of drunkenness . . . and gaming w[ould] debilitate and render unfit for active service any army whatever.” On the other hand, he could choose to base his men at a rough encampment “near some dirty villages” some distance down river. Although more isolated from his resources

⁹⁶ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 12 January 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 11.

⁹⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 9 May 1793, *ibid.* 2: 84-85.

⁹⁸ Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier*, 25; Elliot Gorn, “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry,” *American Historical Review* 90 (February 1985): 18-43.

than at Fort Washington, Hobson's Choice freed his men from the distractions of town life. The decision to make Hobson's Choice his base-camp seemed nothing of the sort to Wayne.⁹⁹

After he positioned himself away from the taverns of Cincinnati, Wayne attempted to reduce the amount of alcohol his troops consumed because of its effects on discipline. "Troops must advance out of reach of any of the settlements in order to keep clear of that ardent poison as well as to cut & secure our magazines of Hay" and protect convoys that supplied the encampment, he wrote to Henry Knox.¹⁰⁰ Although Wayne generally issued gills of whiskey to his men, he did so in moderation, even when used as a reward. At Hobson's Choice, Wayne's scheme worked and soldiers found it difficult to obtain additional liquor. On St. Patrick's Day 1793, a party of warriors surprised his troops but the soldiers proved victorious in the skirmish. Wayne praised his soldiers whom he described as "perfectly sober & orderly," allowing them to effectively display the "progress" they had "made both in manoeuvring [sic] and as Marksmen."¹⁰¹ The troops had performed well, but Wayne had not yet succeeded in reshaping the attitudes and behavior of his recruits.

Wayne also wanted to train his soldiers to abandon their normal eating habits and subscribe to a more meager military diet. Soldiers needed to be able to survive on rations, an arbitrary quantity of food designated by government and military officials to be the amount of subsistence one infantryman needed on a daily basis. A ration consisted of three-quarters of a pound of Bacon or salted pork, or one pound of beef; one pound of bread; and one gill of

⁹⁹ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 7 August 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 50.

¹⁰⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 30 March 1793, *ibid.* 2: 59.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

whiskey.¹⁰² In a pinch, contractors could substitute flour or corn meal for the ration of meat. Other variations depended on the environment. If soldiers had access to fish or game, these could be used instead of beef or pork. Rank determined how many rations a soldier received. Colonel-commandants and lieutenant colonels received five rations per day, majors four, captains three, and all other commissioned officers two. Noncommissioned officers and privates received only one ration per day.¹⁰³ By rationing food, the military prepared soldiers for poor supply lines while also reducing the financial costs of wars. It encouraged military leaders to supplement the diet of their soldiers with food from the area of their operations. Soldiers found adapting to their meager rations a hard experience. “It is an old observation—& it is a very just one,” noted Wayne, “that it requires three years—for a soldier to learn to live upon his ration & to take proper care of his Arms & Clothing.”¹⁰⁴ Transitioning from pre-industrial attitudes toward work to industrial work-discipline proved a difficult one, especially in the military.

By 1793, the economic conflict in the West remained far from over. While Shawnee, Delaware and Miami villages moved north, farther away from American settlements, warriors continued to conduct a property war with hopes of maintaining the Ohio River as a boundary for American settlement. Two victories over the American military had bolstered support for the core tribes leading the growing confederacy. The population and agricultural acreage at the Glaize and Miami villages grew as more villagers sought a economic and military stability the Native American metropolis offered. In Kentucky and Ohio, some settlers continued to resist structural changes in an economy that appeared to marginalize them, but merchants and

¹⁰² “Detail of officers and privates in this battalion, with their apportionments of stipendiary lands, respectively,” n.d., *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 116.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 9 May 1790, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 86.

commercial farmers seemed to be winning this internal conflict. The region's market economy continued to grow despite continuous warfare. Moreover, Congress again had sent the military to bring economic stability by ending the property war plaguing the valley.

Chapter 2

Wayne's Campaign: War as Economy by other Means

As the region moved to war, Wayne wrestled with the same supply problems that his predecessors had faced. The farther he moved his legion from the Ohio River, supply failures became more of a reality. The federal government hired private contractors to furnish provisions, but these businesses regularly failed to meet quotas and delivery dates. Tardy and undersized deliveries resulted from each contractor's dependence on subcontractors and merchants to cull the required goods from the region's farmers. By the middle of the 1790s, Kentucky's economy had grown, but had it expanded enough to support an extended military campaign in the region? To the north, Upper Canada's settler economy likewise grew. Centered near Detroit and Niagara, Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe believed a successful military strategy against an aggressively expansionist United States could not be divorced from economic development. Only a strong Upper Canadian economy and lines of trade could repel American military and economic advances. To that end, he aided the growing Native American resistance centered at the Glaize. As Wayne planned his attack, the size and productive capacity of the western economy played into his strategy. Could his overextended legion succeed where Harmar and St. Clair had failed? Would a major victory over the northern confederacy end the western war? If he destroyed the Glaize and Miami Villages, could his legion maintain its presence in the northern Ohio country or would supply issues force them to retreat? By razing the Native American confederacy's agricultural and trading centers, would Wayne succeed in wresting control of the western economy from the members of the northern confederacy?

In some ways, adequate supplies proved just as important if not more important than having a professional military. The limited but growing agricultural economies along the Ohio

Valley and in Upper Canada made the acquisition of provisions a general problem for the American and British militaries. Transforming raw land into usable commodities through the proliferation of agriculture, trade and transportation networks allowed for both the defense and expansion of the respective economies. In spite of their smaller economy, the British military in Upper Canada fared better in terms of supply than its American counterpart for several reasons. The King's Stores, which relied on the local economy, could also draw from Lower Canadian agriculture as well trans-Atlantic trade and the imperial treasury when needed. The broad St. Lawrence River and navigable Great Lakes provided a convenient highway upon which Britain's sophisticated merchant marine helped supply posts throughout Canada. Britain also possessed years of imperial governance and an expansive bureaucracy designed to meet the challenges of frontier supply, obstacles the young republic south of Canada struggled to overcome.

Moreover, the Upper Canadian economy had been reshaped during the previous decade. Despite protests by fur traders, the demographics of Upper Canada had transformed quickly during the late-eighteenth century. Prior to the American Revolution, outposts like Detroit and Niagara had been sparsely settled by British and French military and traders. These traders first felt their livelihood threatened when Britain ceded the western lands south of the Great Lakes to the United States at the Treaty of Paris in 1783. But as refugee Loyalists fled the thirteen colonies during and after the American Revolution, Britain offered many of them land near these military and trading centers. A new economic danger to the fur industry began to emerge. By 1791, bustling towns huddled around military installations and the population of Upper Canada crept to approximately 10,000.¹ Farming and merchant capital grew quickly along accessible

¹ The entire population of Canada was estimated to be 161,311 in 1790. (July 2004) "Introduction (continued), Censuses of Canada, 1785 to 1797," *Censuses of Canada, 1665-1871* (Ottawa, 1876), *Statistics Canada*, Retrieved 1 November 2004: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/98-187-XIE/upcan.htm>.

and navigable waterways. By 1794, merchants and farmers had formed a political alliance that worked to wrestle political control from the fur trading elite who dominated Canadian politics.²

Two factors facilitated this transformation, especially during the 1790s. The Constitutional Act of 1791, which organized Upper Canada into a distinct political entity, represented a disaster for traders engaged in the region's fur trade. The appointment of John Graves Simcoe represented another. By officially organizing Upper Canada as an independent political entity, the British Empire stated its intention to distance itself from a declining western fur trade economy, and instead attach itself to a developing market economy built upon staple crop production and local manufacturing. Simcoe favored this economic policy and worked feverishly to implement it.³ In his eyes, the ideas of economic development and defense of the region against United States expansion could not be separated. A stronger economy would better supply the military with troops and supplies. During the first half of the 1790s, Simcoe found his imperative to strengthen Upper Canada intensify as Wayne's apparent readiness for war grew. The Lieutenant Governor wanted to ensure that any invasion of Upper Canada by the American Major-General would fail.

In 1793, as Wayne prepared his legion for war, a forceful invasion of Canada remained low on his list of priorities. Poor supply lines and his contentious relationships with military contractors seemed more pressing issues. He hoped to have all provisions and supplies advanced to forward forts to ease any strain on his internal lines the might develop as he advanced his troops north into the Ohio country. Wayne's own writings reveal the significance of provisions

² Donald Creighton, *The Empire of the St. Lawrence* (Toronto: MacMillan Company Canada Limited, 1956; originally published *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, 1760-1850* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1937)), 23-24, 125.

³ Mary Beacock Fryer and Christopher Dracott, *John Graves Simcoe, 1752-1806: A Biography* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1998), 109.

to his strategy. His letters read as a litany of complaints regarding the acquisition and transportation of foods and forage.

The burden of acquiring provisions fell on the shoulders of the Quartermaster's Department. During the Revolutionary War, this department operated under the auspices of the Board of War who took responsibility for collecting and distributing provisions and supplies.⁴ After the Revolution, these duties fell to civilian hands. On a yearly basis, the government opened bidding for a year-long contract to supply military provisions. The contractor, a civilian, received the rank and salary of a lieutenant colonel. As the small, post-Revolutionary army grew, especially in the West, so too did logistical challenges to supply it. To meet these growing problems and demands, contractors often worked in the theatre of operations to oversee acquisition and delivery of goods. Through the War of 1812, the Quartermasters Department joined a growing list of bureaucracies that buttressed and implemented governmental responsibilities.⁵

Throughout their service, American commanders consistently complained about food being delivered late or short of expected orders. Although these failures grew out of an inability of the small western economy to provide adequate support to the war effort, contractors received most of the blame. When St. Clair planned to advance from Fort Jefferson in 1791, he cursed his contractors who, he felt, had not brought enough supplies forward as promised.⁶ When Anthony Wayne later took command of the western forces, he politely critiqued the contracting firm Elliot and Williams. He demurely characterized Isaac Williams as “a Gentleman who would wish to

⁴ Henry M. Ward, *The Department of War, 1781-1795* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), 4.

⁵ Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1989), 76, 78.

⁶ Copy of a letter from Major General St. Clair to the Secretary for the Department of War, 1 November 1791, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 137.

give satisfaction” to fulfill his contract, but had nevertheless “been a little negligent” because “some of the provisions [were] not fit for use.”⁷ Through the 1790s, irregular stores remained a sticking point between army commanders and contractors. In *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939*, Erna Risch argues that contractors acted negligently because they failed to provide the material support to which they agreed. He takes Wayne’s perspective and suggests contractors had the ability to supply to the army, but chose not to in order to make a profit.⁸ Although contractors certainly hoped to make money from the government, such a perspective fails to consider difficulties that needed to be overcome in order to procure provisions and deliver them in a timely fashion.

The process of filling orders posed many challenges for contractors. Working with commanders in the field, quartermasters general wrote contracts which forecast expected demands during the ensuing year, and stipulated a deadline to have all required material collected and delivered to requisite posts. They delivered most provisions in the western theatre to military headquarters, and then to forward forts. In the Northwest, this meant provisions originally arrived at Pittsburgh. Fort Washington later became army headquarters until the construction of Fort Greenville in 1793. But contractors soon understood that dynamic conditions on the ground, especially in a region at war, made fulfilling their contractual obligations a difficult task. Military officials expected them to adjust original orders as new demands emanating from posts altered the master plan during the year. As commanders moved or repositioned troops, contractors likewise needed to alter their plans for delivering goods. For example, during the fall of 1792, commanders under Wayne ordered an additional three months of provisions of salt to replace depleted stores. Commanders and contractors estimated

⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 September 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 79.

⁸ Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 107-8.

quantities based upon a number of factors, including the number of troops at each site, pace of consumption and current supply.⁹ In this case, new orders needed to flow down supply chains to subcontractors, independent merchants and ultimately saltmakers. Disruptions at any point along this supply chain could result in months of delay before the salt reached its final destination.

The relative weakness of the western economy proved a significant obstacle facing the extended deployment of large armies in both the Ohio Valley and Upper Canada. Though the region rapidly expanded during the 1780s, in no way did either economy rival its respective eastern counterpart. Most farmers grew only at a subsistence level. Market-oriented farms produced for the local and regional economy, but government officials questioned whether or not each region could produce enough to support a large army or if food would have to be imported from the East. Contractors during Harmer's and St. Clair's campaigns had beef cattle and produce imported from the Chesapeake.¹⁰ But in Upper Canada, as in the Ohio Valley, transporting goods between regions often caused problems. Alexander Davison, the agent appointed to provide supplies to British North American forces, experienced virtually all of the obstacles contractors regularly faced. In 1793, he thought it "disgraceful to Lower Canada, where such plenty prevails and the hogs are numberless, that it [Lower Canada] has not been able to furnish good pork enough for 4 or 5,000 men." He suggested to Simcoe that Upper Canada work to improve its own market in swine, as well as other agricultural and livestock

⁹ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 1 September 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 73.

¹⁰ Secretary of War to Messrs. Elliot and Williams, at Baltimore, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 99.

commodities, for the region's military force.¹¹ Other colonial officials likewise instructed Simcoe to build the province's ability to support its troops.¹²

A military presence in the Great Lakes region proved to be a boon for local merchants. During the late-eighteenth century, John Askin established himself as a successful and influential merchant closely linked to the empire's western forces. From his storefront in Detroit, he directed his son and several other men to travel throughout the region's farm country to collect beef, flour and other commodities, which he sold to the Commissary General.¹³ Such profitable relationships with government officials sometimes led to unscrupulous dealings by merchants who took advantage of farmers. Askin fell into this group. In 1794, some Detroit townspeople sent a memorial to London complaining of "the unfair & unjust, method" by which Askin and his partner acquired some flour.¹⁴ Askin and his partner avoided official censure, but the grievance nevertheless highlighted a problematic set of relationships between farmers and merchants.

Although these two economic groups wanted to develop a market economy and diminish the power of fur traders, they possessed different interests as a consequence of their relative positions vis-à-vis the market. The produce of most farmers in Upper Canada went to market via waterways, and few farmers owned boats. Without adequate roads or capital to purchase watercraft, farmers necessarily relied upon merchants who owned vessels to carry their crops to town. Some merchants attempted to take advantage of their position by overcharging shipping

¹¹ Alexander Davison to J.G. Simcoe, 7 November 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 97-98.

¹² Lord Dorchester to J.G. Simcoe, 16 April 1794, *ibid.* 2: 207.

¹³ Isaac Todd to John Askin, 23 April 1793, *The John Askin Papers*, v. I: 1747-1795, ed., Milo M. Quaife, (Detroit: Detroit Library Commission, 1928), 474; John Askin to William Robertson, 24 June 1793, *Askin Papers*, 1: 475.

¹⁴ Isaac Todd to John Askin, 6 April 1794, *Askin Papers*, 1: 500-1.

rates, reducing the profit farmers made on their yearly crops. Angry farmers called for contracts that that “equally serv[ed]” their interests.¹⁵ But contracts represented only one of their many differences. Farmers and members of the merchant class fundamentally disagreed on issues of taxation and tariffs, as well as government regulation of commerce, industry, and banking.¹⁶ The result was an adversarial relationship hardly unique to the Upper Canada. The same pattern occurred—and continues to occur—in the Ohio Valley and elsewhere in the Americas where farmers must rely on unregulated private businesses to bring their produce and livestock to market.

Likewise in the Ohio Valley, merchants made careers supplying the military. Contractors relied upon subcontractors to fill elements of larger military orders. Regional merchants who effectively used their local connections to acquire agricultural products, livestock, horses and other materials directly from farmers or indirectly through other merchants typically acted as subcontractors. Cincinnati merchants benefited greatly from their proximity to Fort Washington. Not only did soldiers spend their pay at city establishments, Cincinnati merchants had a close communication with military officials, and military goods flowed through their city. John Stites Gano, one such Cincinnati merchant, had regular contracts with Elliot and Williams. From Cincinnati, Gano filled orders by drawing on the agricultural communities north and south of the Ohio River. Kentucky merchants similarly won contracts to support garrisons along important routes, such as the Wilderness Road.¹⁷ But these merchant-state relationships also created problems. Tantalizing access to federal and state monies led many merchants to gouge the

¹⁵ Isaac Todd to John Askin, April 6, 1794, *ibid.* 1: 501.

¹⁶ Creighton, *Empire of the St. Lawrence*, 126.

¹⁷ “Joseph Ballenger to supply provisions for the term of six months to the three garrisons to be stationed on the Wilderness road,” 4 July 1794, Folder 17 (Military Papers, 1793-1794), Isaac Shelby Papers, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

military and governments at local and state levels. After arriving in Cincinnati with his troops, Anthony Wayne complained that “Merchants at this place . . . charge a most exorbitant [sic] advanced price for every Article.”¹⁸ And like in Upper Canada, dishonest merchants at times took advantage of unknowledgeable locals. During the 1790s, some local farmers and small businessmen loaned their horses through a subcontractor to Elliot and Williams with promises of government recompense. When contractors later claimed ownership of the horses a furor erupted. “It would be very hard on the people here,” wrote one disaffected Kentuckian, if the horses “should be turned over to the Agent because [of] the words of a contract which they could not . . . [have] supposed they were bound to provide.”¹⁹ Low literacy rates in early Kentucky would have made such deceit easy to get away with.

Like small farmers and businessmen, contractors too faced risk in wartime investments. The ability of contractors, like Elliot and Williams or Alexander Davison, to meet their contract depended greatly upon their subcontractors—like Gano—filling their orders on time. Subcontractors in turn depended upon both farmers and a good growing season to complete their portion of orders. If harvests fell short, so too did orders and the difference needed to be accounted for elsewhere. In the United States, Elliot and Williams sometimes burdened subcontractors with making up this difference, but responsibility for doing so ultimately rested on their shoulders. When contractors failed to meet their delivery requirements, military commanders often looked to the market to fill the gaps. When they did so, they often paid higher prices than merchants who used advanced purchase and bulk amounts to lower costs. To the displeasure of contractors, military commanders charged them for these independent purchases.

¹⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 2 July 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 106.

¹⁹ George Nicholas to John Brown, 13 July 1790/31 December 1790 (both dates appear on the letter), George Nicholas Letters, microfilm, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.

In Upper Canada, these additional costs came from the empire's treasury. But government officials still wanted to keep costs down. When Lord Dorchester critiqued Simcoe for purchasing directly from merchants after supplies ran low, he recognized exigencies that might lead to such decisions, but stated that "the question must lie, between the necessity of the case, and the injury that may accrue in departure from such a general rule."²⁰ In either case, the local communities, not contractors, reaped the financial benefits.

Contractors tended to rely on local markets when they could because interregional transportation of perishable goods brought hazards. American goods produced in eastern states needed to make an arduous journey over the Appalachian Mountains to the western theater. The primary route brought goods across Pennsylvania from Philadelphia and up the mountains to Pittsburgh where they could then be floated downstream to forts and posts along the Ohio River and its navigable tributaries. Crops and livestock from Lower Canada, as well as those imported from the empire, made an easier but still unpredictable journey up the Saint Lawrence and across the Great Lakes. Along these routes, careless navigators could sink vessels and instantly destroy months of work. Natural obstacles such as rocks and felled trees could damage ships and merchandise, and perishable goods could spoil en route if packed in damaged or improperly sealed containers.

Like farmers, a merchant's business year in the West operated on a cycle defined by the seasons. As each season turned, rivers and trade in the Ohio country rose and fell with the rains. Springtime showers issued forth traders and emigrants alike. Contractors attempted to transport

²⁰ In this case, Simcoe was referring to the King's Indians Stores, but the same attitude held true with military stores. J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 30 January 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 278.

the bulk of supplies gathered from eastern merchants while rivers ran high.²¹ During summer and fall, dry spells often kept river levels too low, even for low-draught vessels. Though river stages at times rose during winter months, solid ice barriers and free floating ice sheets often made river travel too treacherous. Stoppages during good transportation seasons because of damaged vessels, late delivery, or an assortment of other reasons frustrated merchants and contractors alike. Even short delays might exponentially increase shipping time, leaving businessmen empty-handed and in debt. For example, in December 1793, the British schooner Onondago sank not far from York (Toronto) with a sizable cargo of provisions and military stores. The sinking made the payloads of other vessels only more imperative because waylaid provisions during the previous transportation cycle had already produced shortages.²²

Regardless of the shortcomings and unpredictable costs of river travel, this transportation method proved less expensive than land travel. Therefore, when moving provisions to their western forts, military commanders attempted to use cheap water travel as much as possible, especially when carrying goods to forward forts where the use of roads increased costs and travel time. Writing to Henry Knox in 1793, Anthony Wayne argued that “the best mode and means of transporting the Stores[,] forage &c &c to the head of the line. . . [was] to be made by water up the great Miami [sic] as far as Fort Hamilton.”²³ As Wayne began his campaign, he continued to employ river travel as a main means of transport, using land routes as little as possible to reduce costs on the expensive journey north. In fact, Wayne and local commanders lamented dry seasons when land routes became necessary. “What I dreaded more than I do [sic] all the Hostile

²¹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 30 March 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 58.

²² Lord Dorchester to J.G. Simcoe, 27 January 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 136.

²³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 15 February 1793 *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 29.

Indians of the Wilderness,” wrote Wayne during a dry August in 1793, was “the failure of the Waters of the Ohio.”²⁴ The fate of the western military and economy rested on the seasonal character of the waters.

The value of river and land transport in the region led Kentucky to invest in several internal improvements designed to ease travel and the movement of goods. New roads sought to open or improve roads to river ports and to connect western settlements to the East. Access to Virginia and the Carolinas came by way of the treacherous Wilderness Road. This pitted, winding road claimed many wagons over the years. Emigrants and merchants traveling along this route faced attacks from Native American warriors through much of the 1790s. The state helped finance guards to protect travelers, but to little avail.²⁵ During the 1780s, the road from Frankfort to Limestone linked the Bluegrass Region to points north and south along the Ohio River; men and women traveling along the route experienced a sixty-four-mile, two and a half day bumpy trek across northern Kentucky.²⁶ The road carried emigrants and manufactured products from the East into the region, while hemp and other agricultural products that came to define the Kentucky economy made the return trip to the Ohio River. Later, during the mid-1790s, the state legislature approved opening a wagon road to the Cumberland Gap in an effort to promote greater trade with Virginia and the Carolinas.²⁷

During the 1790s, as military campaigns against the northern tribes heated up, and contractors’ regional demands increased, Kentuckians needed better access to the burgeoning

²⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 August 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 119.

²⁵ Chapter 12, *Acts Passed at the Session of the General Assembly for the Commonwealth of Kentucky* (Frankfort, 1795).

²⁶ Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 130; Wade, *Urban Frontier*, 49.

²⁷ Chapter 15, *Acts* (1795).

market of Cincinnati and Fort Washington in order to profit from the wars. To better their trading network, the 1793 Kentucky legislature approved an act to clear a wagon road between Frankfort and Cincinnati.²⁸ That same year, they approved an act to open the Licking River for navigation farther upstream than had already been accomplished. The Licking River winds from the eastern Bluegrass Region to its mouth at the Ohio River, directly across from Cincinnati.²⁹ During the next few years, the Kentucky legislature also attempted to improve economic connections between Frankfort and Cincinnati, as well as to open up commerce more generally with Ohio.³⁰ In many ways, military activity in the region only more tightly bound the regional economy north and south of the Ohio River.

In a similar fashion, British officials in Upper Canada attempted to improve transportation corridors to promote settlement and trade. In the immediate vicinity of the Great Lakes, no single area produced more flour than at Detroit. The crop proved a boon to the fort town. Not only did it supply the military at Detroit, it also generated provisions destined for Michilimackinac, which could best be characterized as a commercial and military dependent of Detroit. During 1793, J.G. Simcoe planned to survey and to construct several portage roads to create a route between York (Toronto) and Lake Huron. Although Simcoe planned the road for military purposes, he recognized the beneficial ancillary impact a road would have on the regional economy. The new road, he believed, would increase the trade of “those heavy Commodities which are necessary in the North West.” He proposed that competition with Detroit would also lower prices and “occasion the King’s Garrisons to be furnished at a cheaper

²⁸ Chapter 29, *Acts* (1793).

²⁹ Chapter 39, *Acts* (1793).

³⁰ For additional efforts to open up the Licking to navigation, see Chapter 39, *Acts* (1794); Chapter 32, *Acts* (1795). For improved economic connections with Ohio, see Chapter 45, *Acts* (1795).

rate.” Upon hearing about the planned route, merchants and traders began speculating on lots along the way.³¹ Other Canadians petitioned to build a road from Lower Canada to Upper Canada.³² Here too, military planning and strategy became a vehicle for the advancement of a market economy.

Although state governments in both Upper Canada and Kentucky used public funds to support the development of infrastructure, entrepreneurs funded many early efforts. As Richard Cartwright lamented, the Upper Canadian government had made road-building “a business that the inhabitants are left to do of themselves as well as they can.”³³ Cartwright, an agent for contractors in British Canada, had reason to complain. In both Kentucky and Upper Canada, citizens increasingly expected their local and national governments to construct internal improvements for the benefit of the economy in general. Both farmers and merchants pushed such measures, but the latter tended to profit more from their construction. Cartwright especially wanted more roads to connect economic centers in Upper Canada. The Upper Canadian government had funded only one major road, he pointed out, a fresh one being cut “from the head of Lake Ontario to the River Tranche (Thames), where there is not a single inhabitant.”³⁴ One military-proposed road connected Detroit to Fort Niagara and allowed better movement of men and supplies.³⁵ As with other roads, settlement grew along the winding route even as men constructed it.

³¹ J.G. Simcoe to Henry Dundas, 19 October 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 90-91.

³² J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 24 July 1794, *ibid.* 2: 338.

³³ Richard Cartwright to Isaac Todd, 14 October 1793, *ibid.* 2: 87.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ J.G. Simcoe to Henry Dundas, 23 February 1794, *ibid.* 2: 161.

Internal improvements only further facilitated the overall impact of the military on the economy. In Kentucky, subcontractors, as well as military commanders, created a wartime economy by advertising in Kentucky newspapers. The frequency of advertisements intensified in 1794 as Wayne made his final preparations to ready his military for a summer campaign. One military ad issued by an Assistant Quartermaster General announced a sale of cavalry horses “for ready Cash,” suggesting to readers that although the physical condition of the horses made them “not fit for service . . . perhaps [they] soon will be.”³⁶ On another occasion, John Belli, a Deputy Quartermaster General, ran several advertisements in the *Kentucky Gazette* for cavalry and packhorses.³⁷ Independent merchants too tried to profit. John Clarke offered “Cash and Merchandise At his STORE in Lexington, for Good PACK-HORSES” and Elisha Winters sought “good second rate COWS and CALVES” that could be sold to the military.³⁸ By the summer of 1794, the Kentucky economy anticipated an influx of federal dollars to support the upcoming campaign.

Kentucky’s growing economy buttressed the western military effort. Kentucky corn substituted for eastern wheat. Kentucky beef cattle and hogs were fatter when slaughtered than those driven from pastures east of the Appalachians. Kentucky forage helped feed livestock and horses. Tall, sturdy Kentucky horses formed the core of Wayne’s cavalry while more diminutive equines and oxen pulled supply wagons.³⁹ “[T]here is not part of the Atlantic or Middle States where Cavalry can be supported better or Cheaper” than at Pittsburgh and Fort Washington,

³⁶ *Kentucky Gazette*, 26 April 1794, 3.

³⁷ *Kentucky Gazette*, 29 March 1794, 4; *Kentucky Gazette*, 12 April 1794, 1; *Kentucky Gazette*, 2 May 1794, 1.

³⁸ *Kentucky Gazette*, 29 March 1794, 4; *Kentucky Gazette*, 25 January 1794, 4.

³⁹ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 27 July 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 39; Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 20 July 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 29.

declared Anthony Wayne. The same held true for Big Beaver, Kentucky where the Mounted Volunteers assembled.⁴⁰ Although prices in the Bluegrass Region tended to be somewhat higher than goods purchased in the East, net costs usually ended up lower for regionally produced goods because they did not need to be transported as far.

Horse, cattle, rations and other supplies all passed through Cincinnati before being shipped to the nearby military headquarters at Fort Washington. Until Wayne moved his headquarters to Fort Greenville on the eve of his campaign in 1794, Fort Washington housed most military stores. From there, convoys distributed materials to northern and western forts. The proximity of Fort Washington to Cincinnati and the Ohio River made it an easy port of delivery for Elliot and Williams. However, delivery to any of the forward forts beyond Fort Washington raised a host of problems that contractors winced at facing. As Wayne prepared his troops, he sparred with Elliot and Williams over who held responsibility for delivering supplies to forward forts. Elliot and Williams questioned whether or not the government could force them to “transport the rations of provisions and furnish them daily to the Troops while on their march.”⁴¹ Brigadier General James Wilkinson argued that “Contractors are not only to supply stationary posts, but are to keep measure with the movements of the Army or any detachment of it.”⁴² Elliot and Williams eventually succumbed to the pressure and took on the burden.

The reluctance of Elliot and Williams in this regard can be ascribed to the dramatic increase in costs and risks associated with advancing supplies to forward lines. Locations near Fort Washington cost contractors little added expense. But both contractors and government

⁴⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 66.

⁴¹ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 17 May 1793, *ibid.* 2: 87.

⁴² *Ibid.*

officials saw an “excessive encrease [sic] in the price of the ration” as distances increased from Fort Washington.⁴³ Greater costs arose from added expenses and risks. Few good roads existed to forward forts such as Fort St. Clair and Fort Jefferson. Military loggers cut roads sixty-feet wide to these installations but made little effort to smooth road surfaces. More than any other factor, wagons destroyed roads by creating deep ruts in loose soil.⁴⁴ During the summer of 1793, soldiers opened a new road between Forts Hamilton, St. Clair and Jefferson “to escape the low swampy ground over which [the previous road] passed.”⁴⁵ But even new roads had their perils. Military leaders complained that the loose soil in the “new country” rendered roads impassable, especially after heavy rains.⁴⁶ Wagons also broke down en route. As roads deteriorated horses and oxen worked harder and moved more slowly, meaning larger quantities of forage needed to be transported along with provisions. This scenario proved especially true from late fall through early spring when horses and oxen could not forage on wild vegetation. Poor roads and heavy loads also meant work animals wore down and needed to be replaced more frequently. Aware of the problems and costs the roads created, the military struggled to maintain them.⁴⁷

Added risk also came from warriors of the Native American confederacy who viewed supply trains as easy targets. With slow paced work animals and minimal military protection, convoys found themselves particularly vulnerable once they left relatively safe areas surrounding Fort Washington. When attacked, civilian laborers often abandoned convoys, much to the chagrin of small military escorts left to defend supplies. When successful, war parties destroyed

⁴³ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 13 April 1793, *ibid.* 2: 65.

⁴⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 27 May 1793, *ibid.* 2: 95.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 23 February 1793, *ibid.* 2: 37.

⁴⁷ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 7 December 1792, *ibid.* 1: 155.

as much of the convoys as they could. Even if escorts successfully defended supply trains, horses and cattle typically wandered off during the skirmish. Afterwards, days might be needed to round up the bulk of the scattered animals. Fort commanders who depended upon successful delivery of provisions viewed these attacks as a pressing concern. To ensure reliable deliveries, some commanders augmented military escorts when intelligence suggested a greater threat.⁴⁸ But those same commanders routinely balked at sacrificing members of their own limited garrisons to protect goods going to posts more advanced than their own. Regional commanders who tried to reduce costs and damage to their troops only reluctantly helped contractors. Wayne complained when contractors repeatedly requested “escort[s] for their trifling, & ineffectual convoys regardless of the fatigue & danger to which the troops are constantly exposed.”⁴⁹ It cost him time and money to replace dead soldiers.

Ultimately, Wayne viewed his supply failures not as a result of external problems inherent in an early western market economy, but rather as a consequence of each contractor’s internal character flaws. Their inability to overcome obstacles led Wayne to see them as nothing more than “Avericious [sic] individuals” who “always consult[ed] their own private interest—in preference to that of the public.”⁵⁰ In his eyes, their shortcomings derived from lack of foresight and parsimony, as agents struggled to profit as much as possible by the government largesse. But Wayne wanted contractors to transport provisions wherever troops went. This meant Elliot and Williams assumed normal risks and costs associated with transporting materials to forward posts plus additional risks linked to carrying those provisions into the heart of Native American

⁴⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 4 January 1793, *ibid.* 2: 2.

⁴⁹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 May 1794, *ibid.* 3: 34.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

territory. If Wayne's military retreated, convoys and their workers would be among the most exposed and vulnerable element of the forces. Their contract did stipulate that "Stall fed Beef, flour, Whiskey &c [was] at public risqué" if captured by the enemy.⁵¹ Still, contractors took on risks and expenses associated with laborers, wagons, horses and other capital needed to transport goods, all of which could be lost or destroyed.

From 1793 through the summer of 1794, contractors balked at assuming responsibility for transporting military supplies northward because Native American warriors continued their guerrilla attacks against the United States army. They did so "with the avowed design of attacking some of the American Posts if they considered themselves equal to it, or interrupting their expected Convoys of Provisions."⁵² At forward forts, cattle and horses outside fortress walls made for easy targets that deprived the army of food and vehicles.⁵³ Convoys moving north to supply garrisons also found themselves under threat.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, warriors continued to disrupt trade and settlement elsewhere in the region as a property war continued unabated. Incensed at the violence, Anthony Wayne could not understand why "The Indians continue [to be] hostile, notwithstanding the pending treaty."⁵⁵ So he warned warriors "that the progress of this Army is not to be retarded or molested in its advancing but shall be permitted to move

⁵¹ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 7 December 1792, *ibid.* 1: 155.

⁵² R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 19 May 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 238.

⁵³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 August 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 116-17.

⁵⁴ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 25 November 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 144; Journal of Colonel Alexander McKee, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 126, 127.

⁵⁵ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 20 June 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 100.

peaceably & quietly with all its aperatus [sic], provisions & stores.”⁵⁶ His counsel fell on deaf ears.

The northern confederacy, led by the Maumee tribes (Shawnee, Delaware and Miami), felt no need to adhere to Wayne’s threats. After defeating St. Clair, the confederacy had grown stronger. During the summer of 1792, core chiefs of the confederacy called a council at the Glaize. In addition to the Maumee tribes, Mingoes, Munsees, Wyandot, Wea, Sac and Fox sent delegates. The Three Fires (Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa) also attended. Smaller regional tribes such as the Conoys, and Nanticokes also had representatives there. From the South, some Cherokee and Creek chiefs arrived to see what help they could offer. From the Missouri River region came warriors on behalf of villages of Shawnee and Delaware who had already migrated out of the Ohio Country. The conference revealed the growing power of the Maumee tribes as they expanded their alliance against the United States, despite efforts made by more conciliatory Seneca chiefs who eventually entered the fold after some debate.⁵⁷

Unfortunately for the Maumee tribes, the alliances gilded over significant fissures. Red Pole and other Shawnee chiefs struggled to convince Seneca Chief Joseph Brant to support the aims of the confederacy. They accomplished this task by pointing to plans stolen during St. Clair’s defeat that indicated the intention of the United States to build permanent forts at the Glaize and the Miami villages. But Brant did not want to lose control of Seneca territory and trade in New York if the confederacy failed. By the end of the summer, he withdrew his support from the confederacy.⁵⁸ Large contingents of the Three Fires also held loosely to the

⁵⁶ Anthony Wayne to the Western Indians, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 131.

⁵⁷ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 134, 138.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 137-38.

confederacy. While Potawatomi chiefs from the Huron River near Detroit adhered strongly to their Shawnee allies and the rest of the confederacy, Potawatomi chiefs from villages along the St. Joseph and at Tippecanoe rivers hoped for a peaceful settlement to the present conflict. Farther from the main field of conflict, these chiefs saw less at stake for their villages in the near future. Moreover, along with these reluctant Potawatomi, some Ojibwa and Ottawa chiefs resented the power accumulated by the Maumee tribes at the expanding Glaize.⁵⁹ This dissent weakened the alliance. Still, the Three Fires committed themselves to sending warriors.

When the 1792 council broke, core Shawnee chiefs continued their campaign of raising support. Red Pole traveled south where he visited with Cherokee and Creek villages. There he hoped to use longstanding alliances the Shawnee had built with these tribes during the previous century. Not only had Shawnee men and women lived among Cherokee and Creek villages in the past, warriors continued to travel south to maintain these important ties. A small band of Cherokee even lived among the Shawnee in Ohio. Regrettably for the confederacy, these tribes faced similar issues of American expansionism and could offer little more than words of encouragement. Nevertheless, as Red Pole and his delegation returned to Ohio, a strong, ready confederacy of two thousand warriors awaited him.⁶⁰

While all sides prepared for war, the United States and the northern confederacy made an effort to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Through 1793, Timothy Pickering, Benjamin Lincoln and Beverley Randolph tried to press the northern tribes to relinquish land south of the Ohio River, recognize the treaty of Fort Stanwix, and allow some settlement on the northern shore of the Ohio River. But rhetoric promoting an idea of abandoning lands and moving west

⁵⁹ Edmunds, *Potawatomis*, 129; White, *Middle Ground*, 463.

⁶⁰ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 139-41, 143; John Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997), 55-56.

lost favor among influential chiefs after St. Clair's defeat. Most of the northern tribes sent delegates to the treaty but few expected that the council would end with a mutually acceptable resolution. Chiefs who attended the council represented the least conciliatory of the politicized villages. More young men and more villages felt emboldened by victory and joined chiefs advocating war. With aid and encouragement from British officials, the confederacy called on tribes north of the Great Lakes to join the war effort. The councils ended as most suspected, with both sides holding unwavering stances, and no resolution.

One sticking point during the council had been Wayne's (re)fortification of forts north of the Ohio River. As early as March 1793, he had promised the confederacy that he would not build any new forts as long as the peace councils continued to meet. The confederacy interpreted this pledge to mean Wayne would halt preparation for war. Wayne nevertheless believed he retained the right to "strengthen and improve" forts already in existence.⁶¹ So as the peace council met, he rebuilt and fortified the chain of forts from Fort Washington north to Fort Jefferson. To chiefs in attendance, the United States had failed to sit idle while the council progressed. Wayne's persistence and apparent preparation for war led many Native American and British leaders to believe the United States meant the council to be a grand diversion to give their military more time to regroup after St. Clair's defeat.⁶²

Indeed, Wayne used the time to prepare not only his men but also his strategy. In order to assert American power in the region and end the current property war, Wayne's army needed to destroy the semi-subsistence fur trade economy that dominated the territory north of the Ohio River. To accomplish this end, Wayne hoped to disrupt avenues of trade employed by the

⁶¹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 30 March 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 60.

⁶² Joseph Chew to Alexander McKee, n.d., *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 38.

different tribes and British traders. Although Detroit and Niagara represented large distribution points controlled by British agents and military, Native American villages and trading centers received the bulk of his attention. At the Glaize, the Miami Villages and Roche de Bout, Shawnee, Miami, Delaware and other tribes traded furs and gained access to British goods. As Knox wrote to Wayne, “the object you propose, to wit, the prevention of the supplies to the Indians from that point [the rapids of the Maumee] will be effectually done by your successful advance.”⁶³ At these trade centers, composite villages also tilled extensive fields of corn and vegetables. Wayne prepared to raze the fields and undercut the confederacy’s ability to support itself. With a diminished Native American power in the region, the United States hoped to establish forward forts at the Miami Villages and the Glaize to prevent these sites from being reconstituted the following spring.

Such a military presence also would assert the United State’s claims to the region as stipulated in the Treaty of Paris, and set the stage for American competition in the Lakes economy. If Wayne’s military failed to achieve victory, government officials feared the United States might be excluded from this economy in the future. Wayne worried that defeat might mean that “the Ohio at least, will be insisted upon as the boundary—& a line [would be] chalked out which shall effectually exclude the United States from the Waters of the [Great] Lakes.”⁶⁴ Thomas Jefferson grumbled directly to British diplomatic envoy George Hammond that the empire had “excluded the citizens of the United States from navigating even on our side of the middle line of the river and lakes established as a boundary between the two nations.” Jefferson further argued that as a result, the United States had been “intercepted entirely from the

⁶³ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 16 August 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 126.

⁶⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 2 July 1793, *ibid.* 2: 107.

commerce of furs with the Indian nations to the northward—a commerce which had ever been of great importance to the United States, not only for its intrinsic value, but as it was the means of cherishing peace.”⁶⁵ A victory from Wayne would allow the United States to reshape the terms of the western economy by exerting greater influence on the fur trade.

Wayne planned to provide access to this economy by building a chain of military forts north into the Ohio Country, connecting the heart of the Ohio Valley to settlements along the shores of the Great Lakes. As with St. Clair before him, Wayne received instructions to establish a “strong post” at the Miami Villages. This post would then support chains of subordinate posts: one to the east as far as Roche de Bout; and another to the south by the mouth of the Wabash River.⁶⁶ Troops and supplies could move along roads freshly hewn by army loggers. If successful, the military could use navigable waterways feeding both the Ohio River and the Great Lakes to supply forward forts. Like his contractors, “the benefit of water transport during the spring season” attracted Wayne. He knew that without rivers, he would find it “next to an impossibility—to supply a large body of troops so far advanced in an uncultivated & savage wilderness for any length in time by means of pack Horses or land carriage.”⁶⁷ So far from his supply source, Wayne understood that the Ohio Valley economy necessarily would pull him south again, preventing a broad occupation of the region. Instead, he had to settle for a symbolic and strategic presence in the northern Ohio country.

To provide his troops as much advantage as possible even as he stretched his internal lines, Wayne planned to take advantage of Native American productive rhythms. After

⁶⁵ Thomas Jefferson to George Hammond, 15 December 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 121.

⁶⁶ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 20 April 1793, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 2: 71.

⁶⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 3 March 1794, *ibid.* 3: 12-13.

reviewing previous campaigns, he noted that they occurred during “the fall of the year [when] he’s [the Native American] strong[,] ferocious & full of spirits—corn is plenty & Venison and other game every where to be met with.”⁶⁸ Instead, Wayne wanted to attack during the spring when he believed the confederacy would be “half starved[,] Weak and dispirited” after returning from their winter hunts but before they could reap the bounty of summer vegetation and their own crops. The result, he hoped, would leave them “timid[,] disconcerted & no longer formidable.”⁶⁹ Unfortunately, Wayne neglected to account adequately for the impact western productive rhythms had on his own military. Rather, he presupposed the ability of the contractors to provide all necessary supplies on time and to effectively transport them northward with his troops. Neither rivers, nor economy, nor contractors allowed Wayne to enact his plan as conceived.

When Wayne first began to move his legion from the Cincinnati area, he did so to protect the economy of Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. On October 7, 1793, Wayne advanced his army from Hobson’s Choice to a site alongside a branch of the Great Miami River six miles advanced of Fort Jefferson. There he built a new headquarters, named Fort Greeneville, which positioned the Legion within striking distance of the Glaize.⁷⁰ Wayne wrote that by moving the Legion north, he hoped to “excit[e] a jealousy & apprehension for the safety of their [the warriors’] own Women & Children.”⁷¹ But Wayne also felt that if he had not advanced, “desultory parties of Savages wou’d have spread themselves . . . along the frontiers & struck the Inhabitants with impunity.” Likewise, supply trains to weakly guarded American forward forts

⁶⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *ibid.* 1: 63.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 23 October 1793, *ibid.* 2: 140.

⁷¹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 5 October 1793, *ibid.* 2: 134.

also would have been exposed.⁷² But even more importantly, by moving north, Wayne attempted to disengage warriors from attacking the economy along the river that support his men and instead tried to get them to engage his Legion.

His decision came with consequences. By advancing, Wayne placed his Legion in a precarious situation. Suddenly, nearly the entirety of his troops faced the same problems and dangers as did all forward garrisons. Distance and rough terrain between Fort Greenville and the Ohio River made access to supplies more difficult. In fact, no sooner had Wayne arrived at Fort Jefferson on his way north than he realized the magnitude of a supply problem that would plague the army for the next few decades. He estimated supplies at the fort to be only one-quarter of what he had ordered. He needed flour and grain more desperately than other articles.⁷³ Making matters even worse, only a small number of wagons with inadequate supplies regularly arrived at Fort Jefferson.⁷⁴ Wayne attempted to alleviate this situation, but to little effect. By the spring of 1794, his supplies still not ready, Wayne conceded that not only could he not begin his campaign as planned, he could not even advance all his troops to Greenville. “The same cause which has compeled [sic] me to remain stationary,” he wrote to Knox, “will also for the present, prevent me from calling for any Auxiliary force from Kentucky—ie want of provision.”⁷⁵ The Legion’s dependence on the western economy and its rhythms of trade had hogtied them for the moment.

Confederacy warriors patrolling southern Ohio proved another factor inhibiting his advance. Warriors felt little intimidation by the Legion’s move to Greenville and decided to not

⁷² Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 23 October 1793, *ibid.* 2: 140.

⁷³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 August 1793, *ibid.* 2: 116.

⁷⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 23 October 1793, *ibid.* 2: 136.

⁷⁵ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 May 1794, *ibid.* 3: 34.

alter their strategy. In fact, they continued to plague settlements near Cincinnati with guerrilla-style attacks despite a continued presence of garrisons at Fort Washington and Hobson's Choice. War parties had engaged in skirmishes at White's Station, only ten miles from Fort Washington at a time when Wayne's Legion remained stationed at Hobson's Choice.⁷⁶ Even as the Legion moved north, warriors targeted vulnerable convoys.⁷⁷ With a bulk of America's military presence separated from their supplies along the Ohio River, warriors realized they could raid with impunity. War parties attacked settlements, circumventing the Legion whenever necessary. During the middle of November 1793, reports circulated in newspapers about attacks at Massie's Station on the Ohio River, on boats traveling between Limestone and Cincinnati, and on hunters outside Frankfort, Kentucky.⁷⁸ In frustration, Kentucky Governor Isaac Shelby wrote to the Secretary of War about the continued threat his citizens faced everyday. "The army had barely fixed themselves in their winter quarters" he informed Henry Knox, "before several parties of Indians" launched incursions across "different parts of the State."⁷⁹ Wayne too must have felt somewhat exasperated. In May 1794, he noted that "almost every day from some time past between this place [Fort Greeneville] & Fort Washington inclusive," where the greatest concentration of American military might was stationed in the entire country, military and civilians alike had found themselves targeted by warriors of the confederacy.⁸⁰ Wayne's strategy to offer relief to his economic core had failed.

⁷⁶ "Lexington, September 26," *Kentucky Gazette*, 26 October 1793, 3.

⁷⁷ "Extract of a letter dated Head Quarters S.W. branch of Miami, 24th of October, 1793," *Kentucky Gazette*, 2 November 1793, 3.

⁷⁸ "Lexington, November 23," *Kentucky Gazette*, 23 November 1793, 2.

⁷⁹ Isaac Shelby to Henry Knox, 10 January 1794, Miscellaneous Folder, Isaac Shelby Papers, 1750-1826, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁸⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 May 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 35.

Despite Wayne's failure to alter warfare in the Ohio Valley, his move altered the tenor of life in the northern Ohio country. The American redeployment to Fort Greeneville induced some British traders and officials at the Glaize and other locations to withdraw northward to the foot of the Rapids on the Maumee River.⁸¹ Skittish traders felt their property might be better protected in the rear of the Glaize, where most chiefs and British officials believed Wayne would focus his early assault. Their removal disrupted normal trading and exchange patterns. Alexander McKee complained in December 1793 that "Vouchers for the distribution of Presents cannot now be sent, a small part only having yet been delivered, owing to continual alarms, which during this whole fall has [sic] been kept up in the Indian Country."⁸² Trade and diplomatic exchange continued in no small part due to efforts made by McKee to sustain positive relations with members of the confederacy. Unfortunately for him, British merchants occasionally bungled his efforts by sending defective merchandise.⁸³ Only after April 1794, when the British military rebuilt Fort Miami on the Maumee River, did merchants once again begin the region enthusiastically.⁸⁴

Wayne's move also led leaders of the confederacy to believe he might attack the following spring. Until then, they could do little. Warriors returned home during the fall of 1793 to prepare for their winter hunts. As villages collected their gear and traveled to their hunting grounds, they did so knowing that the arrival of spring might very well bring war. As winter broke, the Maumee tribes returned to the Glaize and planted as much as they could, knowing that warriors would be arriving shortly. By early May, men began to funnel into the

⁸¹ Robert Woolsey to John Edwards, 2 November 1793, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 96.

⁸² Alexander McKee to Joseph Chew, 13 December 1793, *ibid.* 2: 119.

⁸³ Alexander McKee to Joseph Chew, 30 May 1794, *ibid.* 2: 253.

⁸⁴ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 19 May 1794, *ibid.* 2: 238.

region. Ojibwa, Munsee Wyandot, Ottawa and Potawatomi warriors arrived at the Glaize and other settlements along the Maumee River during May and June. Although the Glaize had supported the war effort in the region for a couple years, the arrival of these warriors pushed it beyond its capacity. By the end of June, thousands of warriors crammed themselves in the villages at and near the Glaize, causing a food shortage that could not be entirely remedied, even with British support. In an effort to decongest the area, chiefs of the Maumee tribes directed new warriors coming into the region to Fort Miami where they could be supplied more easily. They also advised parties traveling to the Glaize or Fort Miami to take alternate paths to avoid over-hunting along the most used routes. By the end of June more than one thousand additional warriors received victuals outside the gates of the British fort.⁸⁵ As summer began, most warriors waited to see what Wayne's next move would be.

Like his adversaries, winter kept Wayne hunkered down strategically. As the New Year turned, Wayne made efforts to fortify his positions and prepare for a springtime invasion of the northern Ohio country. He sent a small corps of soldiers to the site of St. Clair's defeat in 1791, where he ordered them to erect a blockhouse, which he dubbed Fort Recovery. He established a small garrison there during the winter months and had contractors supply the fort. Wayne hoped to store a portion of his provisions for the coming offensive at this new fort. Meanwhile, he and the contractors scoured local market as they prepared for the offensive. But as spring approached Elliot and Williams began to recognize that they again would fail to deliver provisions on time. Wayne delayed his assault until summer.

As Wayne waited for his Legion to be properly supplied, turmoil erupted in his rear. Throughout the Ohio Valley, dissatisfied merchants and commercial farmers began to protest the

⁸⁵ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 160-61.

federal government's inattention to the West's circumscribed economy. As commerce flowed with the rivers, many Kentuckians believed that expansion and future prosperity lay in the stabilization of the region by pacifying Native Americans and convincing Spain to open the Mississippi River to American trade. A specter of uncertainty raised by both these issues led many merchants to refuse federal bank notes for military orders. As a result, Robert Elliot struggled to fill requisition upon which Wayne waited because "Inhabitants peremptorily refused to receive Bank Notes in payment for any kind of supplies nor would they deliver any unless first paid for in Specie."⁸⁶ Talk of secession tore through Kentucky during 1794. If the state left the Union, specie would have held value while federal bank notes would have possessed little.

The two issues served as the basis of regional angst. To most Americans in the East, trade on the Mississippi River and wars with Native American seemed two separate issues, but not so to many market-driven westerners. Rivers served as the conduit to the region's economy. For that conduit to function properly, trade needed to flow both safely and cheaply. Trade would not be safe until the wars against the northern confederacy came to a close. "[I]t is a universal opinion in this state," summed up Isaac Shelby, "that the system of warfare which is pursued by the United States will never humble the Indians or induce them to consent to make a lasting peace."⁸⁷ More than two years had passed since St. Clair's defeat and Wayne appeared to be stalling. Government officials also appeared to have abandoned the second issue, that trade needed to flow along its "natural" pathway to its outlet at New Orleans. American diplomats had made little headway toward opening the Mississippi River to American trade and shipping. Each of the major imperial players in the region, Spain, Britain and the United States, coveted the

⁸⁶ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 11 June 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 55 (original underscore).

⁸⁷ Isaac Shelby to Henry Knox, 10 January 1794, Miscellaneous Folder, Isaac Shelby Papers, 1750-1826, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

Mississippi River trade and jealously wanted to prevent competition from their imperial rivals. For its part, Spain feared United States expansion and wanted to use access to river trade as a bargaining chip to protect its Florida and Louisiana territories. For that reason, Spain had closed the lower Mississippi River to all but Spanish shipping in 1784.⁸⁸ Despite the fact that Kentuckians frequently petitioned the national government throughout the 1780s and 1790s, eastern politicians felt willing to postpone gaining access to the river for two reasons. They feared doing so might divert Western trade and economically bind the West to Spanish New Orleans, and lead to uncontrolled western expansion that would drain eastern labor markets.⁸⁹ In the eyes of many Kentuckians, their economy could not expand because of “the partial and local interest of a few Commercial cities” in the East.⁹⁰ Following American traditions of protest established during the 1760s and 1770s, Kentucky merchants and farmers suggested taking the reigns of their economic future.

By the summer of 1794, regional angst needed only a catalyst. A necessary spark came with the passage of a federal excise tax on whiskey. Alexander Hamilton’s whiskey excise tax, passed by Congress in 1791, attempted to collect revenue to pay for the nation’s debt arising from the war for independence. This highly controversial tax had little support in the West where many farmers produced whiskey on a small scale and often used it in lieu of, or in addition to, pay for their laborers.⁹¹ Everyone seemed affected. The new tax cut into the profit merchants and tavern keepers made on a popular drink; farmers could see labor costs increased

⁸⁸ David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 279.

⁸⁹ Slaughter, *Whiskey Rebellion*, 40-41.

⁹⁰ ARISTIDES, “To the inhabitants of western America,” *Kentucky Gazette*, 1 January 1794, 1; ARISTIDES, “To the inhabitants of western America,” *Kentucky Gazette*, 11 January 1794, 1.

⁹¹ Slaughter, *Whiskey Rebellion*, 73.

or they could pass those costs onto their laborers; and brewers believed such a tax would concentrate production into the hands of more-efficient, large-scale manufacturers. Moreover, many westerners believed successful implementation of the whiskey tax might diminish a widely used source of barter and drain the region of precious specie. As a result, Kentuckians, and westerners in general, protested the act widely with mixed levels of success. By the end of the summer, western Pennsylvanians took up arms against the excise tax in what became known as the Whiskey Rebellion. Kentuckians did not need to resort to violence; they rejected the tax so extensively that no one tried to enforce its collection.⁹² Nevertheless, as summer approached, Kentucky looked like a powder keg ready to explode.

As May passed to June in 1794, Kentuckians could point to little that the federal government had done to help them. Wayne's troops remained at rest, as did the lower Mississippi River traffic. By demanding specie from contractors, merchants and farmers sought to ensure payment should the state secede. Coinage, after all, retained value while paper money might become worthless. Until the impasse with either Spain or the northern confederacy came to a resolution, merchants and farmers continued to question the economic future the region. A ray of hope emerged for these men when in late June the northern confederacy broke the stalemate.

The Glaize and other Maumee River settlements had become crowded with thousands of warriors by the middle of June, and straggling parties of warriors continued to trickle into the region. Chiefs at the Glaize communities and the British forts realized they could no longer support the numbers of men who continued to arrive. A collection of Maumee chiefs decided to launch an offensive in an effort to catch Wayne off guard. Two large parties of warriors traveled

⁹² Slaughter, *Whiskey Rebellion*, 117.

south, planning to meet near Fort Recovery. From there they hoped to move south of Fort Greenville and cut off the Legion's supply lines. The Delaware chief Buckongahelas led one large war party along a westerly route to intercept Wayne's men should he move to attack villages along the White River while the confederacy's forces advanced. Shawnee chief Blue Jacket led a second wave, comprised of Miami, Mingo, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Shawnee and Wyandot warriors, on a more direct path toward Fort Recovery.⁹³

As Blue Jacket and his men approached Fort Recovery, scouts reported the presence of a supply train. Warriors of the Three Fires (Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa) argued that the party should attack both convoy and fort. Blue Jacket and other Shawnee and Delaware leaders disagreed but could not sway their minds. The Three Fires warriors did not even want to wait for Buckongahelas to arrive. On June 30, approximately 2,000 warriors attacked a supply train outside to walls of Fort Recovery.⁹⁴ Ninety riflemen and fifty dragoons protecting the convoy held the warriors at bay. Unfortunately for the party of warriors, even if they had succeeded in overtaking the wagons, they would have found little. The convoy had already deposited its provision in Fort Recovery on the twenty-ninth and had only just left on its return trip much lighter for the load. Troops and wagons retreated back within the confines of the fort but the party of warriors continued to fire upon the installation. On the first of July, the warriors launched another assault but failed to take the garrison.

With a number of warriors injured and killed, the entirety of the party retreated and began their journey back to the Glaize. On their return, blame for the failed assault passed between the two factions. Blue Jacket, along with his Shawnee and Delaware warriors characterized the

⁹³ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 161, 164; Carter, *Little Turtle*, 130.

⁹⁴ John Butler to Joseph Chew, 14 June 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 265; Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 164.

Three Fires decision to launch an assault on Fort Recovery as rash and imprudent. The Three Fires, whose ranks had taken most of the casualties, countered by accusing Shawnee and Delaware warriors of not providing sufficient support. Frustrated in the dissent, the Three Fires departed for home, taking half of Blue Jackets warriors with them.⁹⁵ Later, Alexander McKee simplified the dispute. “[H]aving completed the belts they carried, with scalps and prisoners and having no provisions there [the Foot of the Rapids on the Maumee] or at the Glaize to subsist upon,” the Three Fires quit the confederacy.⁹⁶ The Huron River Potawatomi stayed, but Blue Jacket returned to the Glaize with a much smaller army. Shortly thereafter Buckongahelas and his men arrived at the Glaize. The offensive had failed. Wayne’s supply lines remained intact. To make matters worse, food shortages at the Glaize and along the Maumee had not been alleviated. Men began to hunt for food, reducing even more the number of warriors available should Wayne advance.

As Blue Jacket’s party retreated back to the Glaize, Wayne waited for his Mounted Volunteers to arrive from Kentucky. Meanwhile, he employed a number of small parties of Chickasaw and Choctaw scouts to spy on the Glaize and settlements at Chillicothe on the Great Miami River.⁹⁷ This practice was not new to Wayne who regularly relied upon warriors from southern tribes to act as his scouts. Chickasaw and Choctaw men associated with Wayne not as mercenaries but rather out of their own material interest in the conflict. Each of these tribes held land claims that overlapped those made by tribes in the northern confederacy and the state of Kentucky. They hoped that their alliance with Wayne might win them American recognition of

⁹⁵ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 168; Edmunds, *Potawatomis*, 130.

⁹⁶ Alexander McKee to R.G. England, 5 July 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2:306.

⁹⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 7 July 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3:60-61.

that territory. In fact, both tribes already vied against settlers in the Cumberland River Valley. Spain struggled to supply the Choctaw and Chickasaw as they waged a property war in western Kentucky not unlike that prosecuted by the northern confederacy. In this case, both tribes played imperial rivals against each other for control of land and resources, as well as to reduce competition in the region's fur trade.⁹⁸ However, their participation in Wayne's campaign did not mean a cession of hostilities. During February 1794, Governor Isaac Shelby reported he expected to be "attacked by the Creek and Chickamaggy [Chickamauga Cherokee] Indians as soon as the Winter breaks."⁹⁹ The alliance simply underscored the fact that common economic interests could make lukewarm friends of enemies.

When the first of 1,500 Mounted Volunteers from Kentucky began to arrive at Fort Greenville during the middle of July, Wayne began his campaign in earnest.¹⁰⁰ He ordered his woodsmen to hew a road north toward the Glaize. On July 28, Wayne's four sub-Legions marched north with the smell of fresh woodchips leading their way. When Wayne's men reached the banks of the St. Mary's River on the first of August, he ordered them to build a blockhouse, which later became Fort Adams. As soon as they finished erecting the structure, the Legion departed again, traveling north, downstream along the Auglaize River toward the collection of villages that comprised the Glaize.

The confederacy had been watching Wayne organize his offensive. As he moved toward the Glaize, scouts brought word of his approach. Despite the extraordinary investment in time and labor members of the confederacy had made constructing the towns and fields of the Glaize,

⁹⁸ Weber, *Spanish Frontier in North America*, 283.

⁹⁹ Isaac Shelby to Henry Knox, 10 February 1794, Miscellaneous Folder, Isaac Shelby Papers, 1750-1826, Manuscript Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

¹⁰⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 27 July 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 63.

they abandoned them as they had their previous villages when attacked. Women and children moved to safer locations where they could be supported until the end of the campaign: Shawnee to Sandusky; Delaware to the White River villages; and Miami to Kekongia, a village in the Miami villages.¹⁰¹ The warriors retreated to Fallen Timbers, a grove of blown over trees along the Maumee River, just south of Fort Miami and McKee's Store where they received what food and material support the British could offer.¹⁰² The chiefs and the empire had not yet solved their supply problems. Previously the confederacy had failed to destroy the American Legion's ability to support itself by cutting off their supply lines. Ironically, by deserting the Glaize, the warriors executed for themselves what they could not against the Americans.

The Legion arrived at the abandoned Glaize on the eighth of August and began to implement their strategy for ending the war. There they erected Fort Defiance as a defensive post in case the confederacy overran the Legion and forced a retreat. The fort would also remain after the conflict to discourage the Maumee Tribes from resettling the area. Wayne then made a half-hearted attempt at peace that went unanswered. On August 15, his troops departed and aimed their sights on Fallen Timbers. Ten miles short of their destination, Wayne established another blockhouse, which he called Fort Deposit, to store all provisions not needed for the upcoming battle. Having secured his ability to sustain his troops, Wayne marched his men down the Maumee River. On the cool, wet morning of August 20, 1794, the United States Legion met warriors of the northern confederacy on the field of battle at Fallen Timbers.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Carter, *Little Turtle*, 133.

¹⁰² Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 173.

¹⁰³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 28 August 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3:65.

Although warriors anticipated the arrival of the American Legion, Wayne somehow managed to catch them off guard. Some historians have estimated as many as 1,300-1,400 warriors made camp at Fallen Timbers. But when Wayne arrived, fewer than 1,000 met him in battle. Some men had gone hunting because of the scarcity of food, some Wyandot and Ottawa had gone a short distance away to obtain more supplies, and still others had been caught asleep.¹⁰⁴ On the battlefield, a small group of French-Canadian militia, who arrived despite specific instructions by the British government to the contrary, joined warriors of the confederacy on the battlefield. This independent militia had been organized and led by some members of Detroit's fur trading community who felt they had a vested interest in the outcome of the conflict.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately for both, the battle was nothing short of a rout. In less than an hour, the confederacy's lines broke and warriors retreated to Fort Miami. They arrived there to find the gates closed and British officers refused to offer assistance or protection. Enraged at the failure of the British to fulfill their promise of support, Buckongahelas never forgave them. The remaining warriors scattered northward.

The decision to not aid the confederacy had been made in Britain and derived from foreign affairs with other states, not issues particular to the North American West. Since the American Revolution, relations between Britain and the United States had been chilly at best. But as the summer of 1794 approached, diplomatic relations between these two rivals appeared to be improving. Britain's war with Jacobin France proved the deciding factor. Although the United States and Britain continued to vie over trading rights, British leaders began to believe that achieving peace with their former colonies might help their war cause in two ways. First, a

¹⁰⁴ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 176; Carter, *Little Turtle*, 135; Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 303.

¹⁰⁵ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 173-74.

treaty with the United States might halt deliveries American food to France. Second, it might prevent the United States from entering the war and expanding the conflict to North America. So as the United States and Britain moved toward reconciliation during the summer of 1794, Parliament ordered Dorchester and Simcoe to avoid a direct confrontation with Wayne's army, despite the empire's previous promises of support to the confederacy. Simcoe reluctantly passed on the orders to his subordinates.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, British officials failed to inform the confederacy of their changed policy.

Wayne kept his troops near Fort Miami for three days. During that tenure he began to implement his second agenda—to undermine the confederacy's economy and ability to produce for itself. To accomplish that end, he ordered his men to gather as many crops as remained in the vicinity of the British installation. He then had the food distributed among his men rather than have them consume their own provisions, which he saved for later. What his troops did not eat, he had them lay waste. “[A]ll the Houses & Corn fields,” recounted Wayne, “were consumed & destroyed for a considerable distance both above & below Fort Miamis as well as within pistol shot of the Garrison.”¹⁰⁷ The houses, stores and property of Alexander McKee, whom Wayne and many Americans mistakenly blamed for being “the principal stimulator of the war,” also fell victim to American torches.¹⁰⁸ British officers at Fort Miami gave strict orders to their men not to engage the Americans, leaving them little more than “tacit spectators to this general devastation [sic] & Conflagration.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Britain and the American Frontier, 1783-1815* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1975), 94-96.

¹⁰⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 28 August 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 68.

¹⁰⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 28 August 1794, *ibid.* 3: 69.

¹⁰⁹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 28 August 1794, *ibid.* 3: 68.

On their return trip to Fort Defiance, Wayne practiced the same destruction upon the extensive agricultural fields that lined the Maumee River. His men took their time but worked with purpose, “laying waste the Villages & Corn fields for about Fifty miles.”¹¹⁰ At Fort Defiance, Wayne’s troops took advantage of the “great Quantity of Corn” and vegetables that remained at the confederacy’s cornucopia. Before Wayne departed he assured Henry Knox that all the area’s produce would “be consumed or destroyed . . . in the course of a few days.”¹¹¹ During that time his men ate well. Yet even with agricultural abundance around him, Wayne began to feel the strain of his internal lines as his supplies began to run low. Eager to advance as many prepared rations as quickly as possible, Wayne took the remarkable step of pressing his Mounted Volunteers to serve as packhorse men and use their war steeds as simple packanimals.¹¹² The speed of the campaign had transformed most of the original packhorses to wisps of their former selves, and many had died. On September 14, after another half-hearted and unanswered call for peace, Wayne again departed Fort Defiance, this time heading west toward the Miami villages. After just over two days of hewing a forty-eight mile road, the Legion arrived unmolested.¹¹³ Prior to their arrival, villagers, as well as refugee Miami women and children, fled to neighboring Potawatomi villages.¹¹⁴

At the Miami Villages, Wayne executed the same plan he had implemented along the Maumee. Some of his troops razed the extensive fields in the area while others constructed Fort Wayne. The Major-General had succeeded where St. Clair had failed. American military

¹¹⁰ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 28 August 1794, *ibid.* 3: 69.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Nelson, *Anthony Wayne*, 269.

¹¹³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 20 September 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 71.

¹¹⁴ Carter, *Little Turtle*, 133.

installations now stood in the heart of each productive center of the confederacy. Tens of thousands of acres of fields had been flattened in a matter of days. And with the construction of Forts Wayne and Defiance, the United States could maintain a military presence north of some of the tribal hunting grounds. As Wayne watched his troops destroy the labors of so many Native American women, he began to appreciate the significance of his victory. Given the confederacy's economic circumstances, "their future prospects must naturally be gloomy & unpleasant."¹¹⁵ He was right.

But at the moment, Wayne's immediate prospects did not look much better. By the time his troops finished their work on Fort Defiance, the middle of October had arrived. Wayne realized he could not last much longer in the northern Ohio country. His internal lines had been stretched to the breaking point and they did not improve with time. The death of Robert Elliot, one of the contractors who had been in the theater to oversee the collection and transportation of supplies, only magnified the litany of problems associated with transporting supplies so far north. On October sixth, a party of warriors attacked Elliot's convoy near Fort Hamilton and killed him. Wayne noted his death "added to the deranged state of that Department."¹¹⁶ Isaac Williams, Elliot's partner, agreed to continue supplying the military through April, but his promise did little to alleviate immediate disruptions caused by his partner's death.¹¹⁷

As a result of these factors, the economy of Wayne's military began to crumble. The lack of provisions wore increasingly on the soldiery. Near settlements, soldiers could purchase food to supplement their diet, but on this campaign they relied almost entirely on the Quartermaster

¹¹⁵ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 20 September 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 71.

¹¹⁶ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 17 October 1794, *ibid.* 3: 73.

¹¹⁷ Henry Knox to Anthony Wayne, 5 December 1794, *ibid.* 3: 84.

General to provide their meals. The lack of food led some soldiers to take extreme measures. On the night of October 25, 1794, Corporal James Reading and three privates—John Fry Miller, John Hassell and another recorded only as Crowell—slinked away from their posts near Fort Wayne. The members of this skulking group had been ordered to stand guard and watch for parties of warriors. Instead, they headed for the Quartermaster’s herd of cattle. Reading and his cadre led one cow into the woods where they slaughtered and ate it. The next day, the group found itself in front of a general court martial for disobedience of a general order, leaving their guard, and “Plundering or stealing a cow from Mr. Thorpe.” The court martial found them guilty and sentenced Corporal James Reading “to be hanged by the Neck, until he is dead.” The three privates received one hundred lashes each. The court martial also ordered that \$4.98 be deducted from each soldier’s pay and paid to Thorpe for the loss of the cow.¹¹⁸ An ordered military economy had been temporarily reestablished through a restoration of misappropriated capital and state-issued corporal punishment.

To relieve some pressures on his supplies, Wayne dismissed his Kentucky Mounted Volunteers on the thirteenth of October. He knew the move would provide only a temporary fix to his crisis. He understood that he could not maintain so large an army so far from its source of supplies. “[T]wo powerful obsticles [sic]” faced the army: “the necessary supplies & the expirations of the terms of service for which the troops were inlisted [sic]!”¹¹⁹ If Wayne could not alleviate the first obstacle, then the second would prove a non-issue. In late October, the

¹¹⁸ 27 October 1794, Book 7 (2 October 1794-18 May 1795), General Anthony Wayne’s General Orderly Books (24 May 1792-25 August 1797), microfilm (originals located at the Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA), Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

¹¹⁹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 20 September 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 72.

entirety of Wayne's Legion, less a corps to garrison the new American installation, departed Fort Wayne. On the second of November, his Legion arrived at Fort Greeneville.

Wayne had only just completed his campaign and already evidence suggested that he had achieved his objectives. Some warriors continued to attack settlers, convoys and soldiers, but most resigned themselves to the idea that only peace could restore an economic stability sorely needed in the region.¹²⁰ Most members of the confederacy had few options other than to rely on their former ally, despite a failure of British military support at Fallen Timbers. Because the war had been a fall campaign, not enough time remained to grow corn before the first frost. Men and women displaced from the Glaze and Miami Villages dispersed to smaller villages and British forts for support through the oncoming fall and winter. The empire had foreseen such an outcome and prepared to meet it. Still, without ample supplies of corn, chiefs cut short winter hunts or called them off altogether. By the end of December, leaders from some Wyandot villages near the Sandusky River, along with some from other villages, petitioned Wayne to guarantee a "suspension of hostilities . . . to afford the Indians an Opportunity to make their fall & winter hunt unmolested."¹²¹ Wayne enjoyed the idea that he controlled access to some important Native American hunting grounds in his rear. Those lands, he wrote to Knox, remained "completely within our power & . . . within striking distance . . . hence their solicitude."¹²² The economy of the northern Ohio country had been wrested from the confederacy.

¹²⁰ Major John H. Buell to General Henry Knox, 6 October 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 116.

¹²¹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 23 December 1794, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 3: 86.

¹²² Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 23 December 1794, *ibid.* 3: 87.

One of the great strengths of the confederacy in the western property war had been their resilience when Americans destroyed their scattered villages. In an effort to consolidate their productive and military power, the confederacy had concentrated their villages and forces. For two years the confederacy reaped benefits from their growing metropolis. Their collective agricultural and trading capacity allowed them to support a regional war. Their gathered military power came close to cutting of Wayne's supply lines and forcing another retreat. But these added benefits came with risks. When Wayne razed the fields and trading centers at the Glaize and Miami Villages, he destroyed the core of an economy and not simply an isolated cell. Defeat meant that the economy of the northern Ohio country needed to be reconstituted. The confederacy had lost the property war and suffered for it. But where one door closed, another opened. With a Native American control of the regional economy weakened, merchants, farmers, and the governments of Upper Canada and the United States attempted to reshape the regional economy according to their terms. In the face of these pressures, remnants of the recently disbanded confederacy fought to control their own economic futures.

Chapter 3

The Road to Greenville: Reshaping the Western Economy

When Wayne razed the Glaize and Miami Villages, he removed a great amount of productive capacity from Native Americans hands. Rather than eating their own corn during the winter, many villages from the Ohio country drew rations from the British. Without adequate food, and with the United States patrolling Shawnee, Wyandot and other tribal hunting grounds, winter hunts did not provide expected yields. In many ways, the tribes of the Ohio country had found their northwestern trade economy slipping from their control. Rather than engaging in the regional economy as superiors, or even partners, the now dismantled confederacy found themselves thrust into a season of semi-dependence.

The temporary destruction of the fur trade economy, meanwhile, created new financial opportunities for merchants and commercial farmers, especially in Upper Canada. American forts stood in the midst of ruined corn fields and could not be adequately supplied from the Ohio Valley, thus providing a new market for Upper Canadian agriculture. Many farmers and merchants in the Great Lakes region attempted to use market forces to their benefit as prices rose. Disintegration of the confederacy also called into question land ownership south of the lakes. During the immediate months after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, speculators from north and south of the lakes attempted to acquire land cessions from members of the former confederacy before the scheduled peace council at Fort Greenville during the summer of 1795. At the Treaty of Greenville, some chiefs even jockeyed to guarantee their proprietorship of land and to (re)establish trade networks. By the end of the summer of 1795, members of the northern tribes had begun to resurrect their disheveled economy. Unfortunately, the shape of the western

economy had changed. Their temporary loss of control of the economy of the Northwest had allowed an expansion of the western market economy into the region.

For many members of the northern confederacy, the dramatic events during August led to two immediate effects. First, Native American families migrated to different parts of the region in a great diaspora. The great settlements at the Glaize and Miami villages had been home to thousands of Native Americans, as well as British and French traders and laborers. Now two American forts, Fort Wayne at the Miami villages and Fort Defiance at the Glaize, commanded strategic positions at the heart of these productive and trading zones. As early as the middle of September, some families chose to return to cultivate lands along the Auglaize and Maumee rivers after Wayne offered peace.¹ But most refugee families who called the Glaize their home constructed temporary settlements close to the mouth of the Maumee River, near Swan Creek, for the winter.² Many other families spread throughout the region. Some Delaware families who had retreated to Swan Creek decided to join other Delaware settlements along the White River while others explored migrating to the Illinois River.³ A contingent of Shawnee debated moving west of the Mississippi River. Others traveled to the northeast to seek protection at the British citadel Detroit. Others passed north of the Lakes to various British, French and Native American settlements. At the Moravian settlement Fairfield on the Thames in Upper Canada, David Zeisberger offered a bleak assessment on October 26 when he noted that some “strange Indians from the Miami” had arrived. “[T]hey are scattered,” he reported, “and each man must see

¹ Anthony Wayne to the Western Indians, 12 September 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 80.

² Lord Dorchester to the Duke of Portland, 1 January 1795, *ibid.* 3: 251.

³ Antoine Lasselle to Colonel McKee, 23 October 1794, William Clause Papers, v. 6, MG 19/f 1, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

where he will stay, for they are restless and disposed to fight.”⁴ For most warriors and their families, the future held little certainty.

Second, a political struggle within the confederacy emerged. After the defeat at Fallen Timbers a peace faction within the northern coalition began to gain supporters rapidly. Chiefs who first led this movement, except for Little Turtle (Miami), primarily belonged to supporters of the confederacy who were not considered a part of the core leadership. Yet they recognized that even if Wayne chose to abandon the Glaize and Miami villages, the destruction of these agricultural centers dampened the ability of the confederacy to continue a war through the winter months. Still, core leaders like Blue Jacket (Shawnee), Buckongahelas (Delaware), Le Gris (Miami), and Egusheway (Ottawa) maintained their resolve to wage war.⁵ The pro-war faction found support from Joseph Brant who arrived at the end of August. The previously conciliatory Brant had met a change of heart after events in New York began to turn against him. He argued vigorously that the confederacy needed to regroup and fight.⁶ With winter approaching, debates raged within and between villages.

Uncertainty during the months following the Battle of Fallen Timbers only exacerbated tensions. Wayne had won a decisive military victory, but that victory did not immediately translate into clear political boundaries, alliances, diplomatic channels, access to resources, or trading rights, among a litany of other issues facing confederacy members after the war. Thus, as nuggets of information disseminated throughout the region—some factual, some rumor, some

⁴ 26 October 1794, David Zeisberger, *Diary of David Zeisberger: A Moravian Missionary among the Indians of Ohio*, v. II, trans. and ed. Eugene F. Bliss (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1885), 380.

⁵ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 186-87.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 183.

a blend of both—villages for peace could quickly push for war, and vice versa.⁷ By October 1794, some Wyandot chiefs viewed deep divisions between and within various tribes. They characterized the bulk of the Shawnee and Ottawa as supporting continued war while deep divisions underscored debates among Delaware, Miami and some Wyandot villages. In the eyes of these Wyandot chiefs, only Potawatomi and Ojibwa villages seemed to hold strong majorities in favor of peace.⁸

As result, a property war in the Ohio Valley continued. Warriors continued to raid, avoiding direct engagements with military and militia. Through March of 1795, a party of Shawnee near the mouth of the Scioto River continued to harass both military and civilian targets, especially on the Ohio River.⁹ Likewise, Kentuckians formed vigilante parties, harassed Native American hunting and war parties, and torched Native American villages.¹⁰

This sporadic violence and lack of centralized control in United States and Native American communities concerned both Anthony Wayne and peace-advocating chiefs who worked hard to ensure that small skirmishes would not erupt into war. Wayne attempted to distance himself from this violence, a move some chiefs mirrored in response to the actions of their own young men, claiming he could not be responsible for the conduct of all settlers.¹¹

⁷ Thomas Smith to Alexander McKee, 14 October 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 128.

⁸ A Short Sketch of the Proceedings of the Council at the Big Rock, 10 October 1794, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 549.

⁹ Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 8 March 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 12.

¹⁰ General Wayne to Governor St. Clair, 5 June 1795, *The St. Clair Papers: The Life and Public Service of Arthur St. Clair*, v. II, ed. William Henry Smith (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1882), 374-77; Anthony Wayne to Pickering, 17 June 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 60; Governor St. Clair to Governor Shelby, 20 June 1795, *St. Clair Papers*, 2: 386; Governor St. Clair to General Wayne, 30 June 1795, *St. Clair Papers*, 2: 387.

¹¹ Anthony Wayne to the Indians at Sandusky, 1 January 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 252.

Timothy Pickering, whom Congress had recently appointed Secretary of State, also worried. Western settlers had a poor history of following orders from the federal government. The recent American victory did little to improve their attitudes or behavior.¹²

Notwithstanding these obstacles, efforts to secure a peace continued. Native American pro-peace advocates began to dominate the discourse by the turn of the New Year. This peace faction scored a great victory when Blue Jacket joined their side. In early February, Blue Jacket, along with a number of other Shawnee and Delaware Chiefs, arrived at Fort Greenville to sort out temporary conditions for peace until a more formal treaty could be made. While there they indicated that they also spoke for the Miami who lived at the Glaize.¹³ A month later, Wyandot villages at Sandusky, who had asked Wayne for permission to travel to their hunting grounds in November of the previous year, also entered into formal preliminary articles for peace.¹⁴ Other villages also sent emissaries in an effort to create a peace. By early spring, word had spread throughout the region that a formal treaty would be held at Fort Greenville during the upcoming summer.

For leaders in Upper Canada, an inclusive treaty as proposed by the American government ranked high on a list of concerns they faced as the war drew to a close. In November 1794, the United States ratified Jay's Treaty. This treaty between the United States and Britain (re)verified the Great Lakes as the boundary between Canada and the United States, and set a protocol to transfer the region's British forts to the American military, among other conditions. Although Jay's Treaty stipulated that individuals from both countries could trade across the international border without being taxed, a new presence by American businessmen

¹² Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 8 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 31-32.

¹³ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 12 February 1795, *ibid.* 4: 9.

¹⁴ Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 8 March 1795, *ibid.* 4: 11.

threatened to undermine British control of the western fur trade. So when American deserters reported to Upper Canadian officials that Wayne intended to make peace “in hopes of obtaining the entire Indian trade,” the region’s British and French merchants had reasons for concern.¹⁵ Decisions made by Native Americans south of the lakes would weigh heavily on the future of the fur trade. McKee pointed to the Native American diaspora and claimed with some hyperbole that “if the Indians Remove to the Southern & western Parts of the Country the Trade of Detroit &c. is Totally lost.”¹⁶ These fears proved unfounded because Jay’s Treaty kept the Upper Mississippi trade open to British shipping. Even if certain villages decided to move south and west, the fur trade would not be lost to British merchants. The greater impact on British western trade came with the transfer of British forts to the United States. Without these military fortifications, British traders and merchants lost all of their important economic hubs south of the Great Lakes. If Native Americans wished to continue to trade with the British, they would either have to deal with itinerant traders or travel north of the lakes.

Uncertainty at the close of the war also exacerbated regional economic instability. Native American villages had long relied on merchants to provide guns, ammunition and other manufactured goods, as well as to offer supplemental subsistence during wartime. Although merchants sought a profit in their profession, they built relationships with villages through reciprocal gift-giving that benefited their long-term sales goals. Through this exchange, merchants gained a broad loyal customer base from which they benefited financially. Villages gained tools they needed to participate in a regional fur trade, amplify their agricultural pursuits,

¹⁵ Deposition of William Beatie and Rubin Hunt, 14 September 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 88.

¹⁶ Joseph Chew to Thomas Aston Coffin, 22 September 1794, *ibid.* 3: 105.

build intertribal alliances, and wage war. Native Americans also expected that these local relationships reified their larger alliance with the British Empire.

The resulting sets of economic and political relationships functioned within the larger matrix of the “middle ground” as described by Richard White. As war became a greater reality during the summer of 1794, tribes throughout the Great Lakes region attempted to amass as many warriors as they could at the Glaize to face the American army. The full weight of alliances with other villages and traders suddenly came due. Warriors threatened villages that refused to send warriors. As early as the close of April 1794, warriors from the confederacy threatened violence against Moravian (Delaware) settlement at Fairfield on the Thames if they did not send warriors of their own to the Glaize. To drive home their point, they reminded these Delaware settlements of the massacre at their previous settlement on the Muskingum River in Ohio that came as punishment for failing to answer a previous call for help.¹⁷ Warriors also looked to their Upper Canadian trading partners to offer support beyond the normal exchange relationship. In the middle of June 1794, a war council held at a Mequachake (Shawnee) village at the Glaize decreed “That every white man either English or French residing among or getting their livelihood [sic] by the Indian Trade or otherwise now within the limits of their Country shall immediately join the Indian Army to defend the territory which their mutual interest is so greatly concerned.”¹⁸ The point of the conflict could not be made more pointedly. For the confederacy, war meant a defense of an economy, not simply territory. All who benefited from that economy needed to help the war effort or suffer consequences for failing to do so.

Few British merchants embraced responsibilities they held to their Native American customers. They nevertheless recognized their common interest in keeping the United States out

¹⁷ 27 April 1794, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 354.

¹⁸ 16 June 1794, *Diary of an Officer J.C. in the Camp Opposed to Gen'l Wayne*, Claus Papers, v. 6.

of the West. In May of 1794, such prominent merchants of Detroit as James Baby (Jacques Baby de Rainville), Thomas Laselle and John Askin, among others, petitioned R.G. England to allow them to establish “Armed Trading Posts” for the defense of the “Indian Territory.” They proposed that subscribers would pay to garrison the posts which would be under the protection of the British government. Not only would these posts provide a defensive perimeter to Upper Canada, they would, according to the petitioners, help stimulate trade by removing “Freebooters” and others who “commit inroads and depredations” upon the Native Americans. This enterprise would wed government to the merchants and allow government regulation of trade in the region.¹⁹ Although British officials denied the petitioners their request, it reinforced the interest merchants had in maintaining a colonial monopoly on the regional trade. Citizens of Upper Canada recognized this common interest. Rumors floated about Upper Canada in mid-August that Detroit merchants had closed their shops and gone to meet Wayne’s army at the Maumee River. Few, in fact, did.²⁰

In the end, just as British officers closed the doors of Fort Miami, so too did British merchants fall short of their obligations after the call-to-arms issued at the June war council. The failure of merchants to live up to their economic and political duties called into question their protected status among the warring nations. During the months following Fallen Timbers, British traders sometimes found themselves the target of Native American ire. Writing from Sandusky, Detroit merchant George MacDougall reported that after some British merchants arrived, “Several threats & attempts in consequence have been made upon others & myself

¹⁹ From the Merchants of Detroit to R.G. England, 23 May 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 2: 244.

²⁰ 21 August 1794, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 370; Richard Cartwright to Isaac Todd, 1 October 1794, *ibid.* 3: 112.

which has given me the justest cause for uneasiness.” He further qualified his situation, explaining that “nothing but an ardent desire to satisfy my just creditors could have ever induced me to quit my peaceful habitation in Detroit to winter here” and live under the threat of “murder.”²¹ Other villages threatened to cut off all trade with British agents, leading to conflicts that sometimes resulted in violence.²² If British traders wanted to maintain their connections to the western fur trade, alliances needed to be struck anew.

On a more immediate level, the wake of war had dispersed thousands of Native Americans to Upper Canadian posts. With their fields razed, thousands of Shawnee, Miami, Delaware and other families recognized that a tough winter lay before them even if the British government provided them with support. Upper Canadian officials too foresaw an impending crisis. As early as 1790, Alexander McKee wrote Sir John Johnson indicating that “the Indians will no doubt turn their Eyes towards this Place [Detroit] for protection” if a large American force marched into their villages.²³ After Fallen Timbers, R.G. England began to understand the gravity of the situation and requested that Simcoe send more provisions to Detroit than he previously requisitioned. This call for an increase in provisions followed a summer when the build-up to war had led the provincial government to supply more provisions than normal to Native Americans in order to feed a swelling number of warriors and families at the Wabash and Maumee villages.²⁴ But as British commanders struggled to provide for their own military in the

²¹ George MacDougall to R.G. England, 11 January 1795, Clause Papers, v. 6.

²² Thomas Duggan to Colonel McKee, 9 January 1796, Clause Papers, v. 6.

²³ A. McKee to Sir John Johnson, 13 June 1790, series 1, lot 730, page 2, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Northern District of North America (1756-), MG 19/f 35, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

²⁴ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 8 September 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 48.

West, the added burden of providing thousands of provisions for dispossessed Native Americans only further strained an already stressed economic infrastructure.

Swan Creek received a bulk of the refugees. Located about half the distance between Fort Miami and Maumee Bay on the Maumee River, many new huts and wigwams lined the western shore of the river. By the middle of September, 2,556 Native Americans drew provisions from British stores at Swan Creek, including 355 Ottawa, 637 Shawnee, and 1,126 Delaware men, women and children.²⁵ On September 22, Matthew Elliot recommended that R.G. England, commander at Detroit, send six months worth of provisions to support 3,000 Native Americans living at Swan Creek through the winter, but his numbers excluded additional families that might arrive later or pass through over the next few months. An initial order placed by Elliot amounted to 940 barrels of pork, 20 barrels of flour, 16 barrels of rice, 48 kegs of butter, 66 bags of corn, 550 pounds of gunpowder and 8 boxes of ball.²⁶ Two days later, a somewhat discouraged England informed Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe that Detroit also had experienced “an unusual consumption” of provisions by refugee villagers, a situation which he expected to continue throughout the winter months. He warned Simcoe that his stores soon would be “exhausted if a speedy supply [was] not sent here, or authority given to purchase” additional flour and beef directly from local merchants.²⁷

While writing this letter, England probably also considered likely calls for additional help from other posts in the district, such as Sandusky and Michilimackinac, both of which depended upon Detroit for their supplies. The ability of Upper Canada to support distressed Native

²⁵ Return of Indians Drawing Provisions at Swan Creek 15th Sept. 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

²⁶ Matthew Elliot notation attached to Return of Indians Drawing Provisions at Swan Creek 15th Sept. 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

²⁷ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 17 September 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 96.

American families worried many top administrators in the colony. On the same day that R.G. England wrote Simcoe regarding the plight of Detroit, Joseph Chew wrote from Montreal to find out if a larger supply of provisions might be needed to support the Native American settlements near Fort Miami.²⁸ If Upper Canada could not meet the new levels of demand, Lower Canada's agricultural economy might benefit by selling crops up the St. Lawrence River.

Despite potential supply problems, Upper Canada actively sought to support the allies they had locked out of Fort Miami at their most desperate hour. At the local level, the decision to not aid the confederacy wrecked havoc on alliances and economy. In the postwar period, Simcoe and Dorchester faced a daunting task in mending the empire's relationships with the betrayed tribes. Renewed diplomatic ties with the former confederacy provided the empire means by which to continue their imperial contest for territory in North America. For local politicians and businessmen, restoring alliances with the same tribes served the more pressing goal of reinvigorating a disrupted sector of the economy. The region's fur trade had been a declining sector but it nevertheless remained a cash cow of the West. But even more importantly, by providing aid to refugees and relying on the local economy to do so, the British government fostered the expansion of a western market economy. Restoring frayed relationships by providing material help to the displaced tribes therefore not only made for good empire-building, it made for good economics.

Despite attempts by British officials to alleviate the plight of refugees, they suffered the same litany of supply problems that had long plagued supply lines in both the western United States and Upper Canada. Swan Creek received uneven deliveries from September through November. On October 28, Captain Thomas Smith at Swan Creek notified McKee that

²⁸ Joseph Chew to Thomas Aston Coffin, 22 September 1794, *ibid.* 3: 105.

provisions destined for the beleaguered settlement had landed at Turtle Island, another distribution point on the way from Detroit. The provisions “might as well be left at Detroit,” he lamented, leaving him at his “wit’s end as how to keep up in stock of corn at this place necessary for each Draw-day.” Not only were rivers too high for travel, but he lacked the necessary men to navigate provisions upstream to their destination.²⁹ Just over a week earlier, Smith communicated that he had reduced amounts of pork provisions issued—the “article most costly to Government”—to seven barrels per week. But he continued to struggle with local Native Americans who angrily demanded more than their diminished portions.³⁰

British agents succeeded in redistributing provisions they could acquire. During the first three months after Fallen Timbers, British vessels delivered to Swan Creek 309 barrels of pork, 372 barrels and 72 bags of flour, and 1,017 bags of corn, along with quantities of peas, rice and butter.³¹ Over time, demands for provisions did not significantly decrease. On the fourth of December, 2,203 Native Americans received provisions at Swan Creek.³² Although this count represented a decline from the 2,556 men women and children Elliot counted in September, many warriors had probably left only temporarily to go hunting in an effort supplement their rations.³³ At Turtle Island, demand for provisions also outstripped that post’s ready supply.

²⁹ Thomas Smith to Col. [Alexander] McKee, 28 October 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

³⁰ Thomas Smith to Alexander McKee, 16 October 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 129.

³¹ Provisions Landed at Swan Creek for the Indian Department from the 2nd September to the 16th of November 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

³² List of Nations Who Received Presents at Swan Creek 4th December 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

³³ Thomas Smith to Col. [Alexander] McKee, 28 October 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

Between August 25 and December 24, the post at Turtle Island “lent” from the stores at Detroit 78,957 rations, and during the following three months they withdrew another 38,374 rations.³⁴

Although British officials and agents at Detroit and—by extension—Upper Canada amassed large quantities of provisions to meet an explosive rise in demand, challenges faced them from every direction. The ability of Upper Canadian agents to accumulate provisions rested on the desire of merchants and farmers to sell. If little produce existed or if better prices could be obtained elsewhere, agents and military commanders either struggled to fill requisitions or reluctantly paid large sums for produce they normally received at a bulk rate from contractors.

Part of the supply problems British officials faced resulted from the American invasion of the northern Ohio country. Newly constructed American forts had created a new outlet for Upper Canadian trade. Forts Industry, Defiance and Wayne stood at the end of the string of roads Wayne constructed as a part of his campaign, and brought American consumers closer than ever to the Upper Canada market in the region. The main route connected Fort Defiance to Fort Washington and Cincinnati, and a secondary avenue connected Fort Wayne to Louisville by way of the Wabash River. Despite the massive military endeavor it took to create these pathways, the impediments to the transportation of goods persisted in the postwar period. The northernmost posts of Fort Wayne and Fort Defiance continued to experience supply shortfalls for several reasons. The factors most out of their control included river levels, adequacy of roads and occasional plundering. New problems began to emerge as commandants along the American supply lines appropriated provisions for their own men from convoys destined for other forts. Supply shortages became an endemic problem in the West, and common soldiers suffered the most. Commandants compounded the cycle of shortages when they attempted to alleviate

³⁴ Returns of Provisions Delivered for Indians at Turtle Island &c. from 25th Aug. to 24th Decr 1794, Clause Papers, v. 6.

provisional shortfalls by skimming food and supplies from cargoes intended for more forward forts. Wayne and other commanders forbade this practice but commanders often disregarded orders. By the time shipments arrived at forward posts, significant portions of their order could be missing.

Appropriating provisions rarely solved supply problems alone, so commandants resorted to a variety of methods to supplement the diets of their soldiery. In essence, forward forts began to embrace a semi-subsistence hunter-gatherer economy to survive, adopting the very economy they had just destroyed. After the United States military withdrew to Greenville, soldiers at Fort Defiance scoured the decimated fields of the Glaze looking for remaining corn and vegetables. By January, parties of up to forty noncommissioned officers and privates traveled distances of over ten miles from the fort with sleds to gather food.³⁵ Hunters went out periodically for days at a time, hunting deer, bear, turkey and a variety of other game, and soldiers fished along the banks of the river. In the spring, officers took advantage of fertile local fields and planted gardens which bore the fruits of their labor in the fall. In a more unique example of industriousness, some officers made a failed attempt to extract salt from some local salt springs.³⁶ Finally, when bands of Native American hunters or families passed by the fort, they often presented wild game as a gift to fort commandants, who shared the food with their fellow officers.

The condition of forward American forts did not go unnoticed by British controlled Detroit and other Upper Canadian merchants. In many respects, the proximity of these installations made supplying them from Upper Canada and the Great Lakes an easier task than

³⁵ 15 January 1795, "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance: The Journal of Joseph Gardner Andrews for the Year 1795," ed. Richard C. Knopf, *Ohio History* 66 (1957): 65.

³⁶ 19-20 and 25-26 January 1795, *ibid.*, 67-68.

doing so from the Ohio Valley. Prior to the establishment of Forts Wayne and Defiance, British and French merchants had traded at the Miami Villages and at the Glaize. Well-worn trade routes connected Detroit and Niagara to the northern Ohio country. After the war, some Upper Canadian merchants began to frequent these forts and established trade relationships with officers and soldiers alike. This trade proliferated as the spring fur-trading season began in earnest. During early March 1795, river ice began to break, indicating that Native American families would soon return from their winter hunting grounds. Soon thereafter, Upper Canadian traders and merchants began to scour the region. On March 7, two French traders, Pierere Menard and François Kee, arrived at Fort Defiance where they stayed for over half of a week.³⁷ During the next several months more traders arrived. Among these merchants included Coco (Jacques) Lasselle, one of three sons of a highly influential French-Canadian trading family who had longstanding economic relationships with many bands of Native Americans, especially the Miami and Shawnee. Coco had been to Fort Defiance as early as January but had returned as the trading season began anew.³⁸

Growing trade between Upper Canadian businessmen and American forts greatly concerned some British leaders. By May, Edmund Burke, Vicar General of Detroit, had become incensed by this traffic between supposed loyal traders and American posts, so he voiced his concern to high ranking officials. Burke had observed the scope of trade and indifference of traders at River Raisin who seemed more inclined to make money than support the cause of the empire. He specifically pointed to the entire Lasselle family, in addition to traders Lafontaine, MacDougall, Williams, Navarre, La Chambre and Desoutre, calling for their arrest. Burke

³⁷ 7 March 1795, *ibid.*, 76-77.

³⁸ 30 April 1795, "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance," 85; Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 90.

viewed these men as threats to the economic and political solvency of Upper Canada because of their trade with the Americans.³⁹ In compiling his list of “traitors,” Burke had only begun to scratch the surface of a larger phenomenon. Large numbers of Upper Canadians reached out to the new market, much to the chagrin of colonial officials. By the end of March, Alexander McKee likewise voiced his resentment of this trade going from Detroit to the American posts. Little of this trade involved guns and ammunition, but McKee hyperbolized that if war erupted between these two rivals, British traders might very well support the American military with such goods. But this trade also damaged British diplomacy with disillusioned Native Americans, an issue even more important to McKee. Prior to the summer of 1794, agents such as McKee had characterized the Americans as a common enemy of Britain and the confederacy. But when British traders went “openly to their Enemies Forts without molestation and with perfect impunity,” McKee wondered how it might “be possible to convince them [Native Americans]” that the two were not allied against the former confederacy⁴⁰

Diplomatic efforts might have put peace on paper but how that peace might evolve on the ground had yet to be resolved. Questions of allegiance near the international border became a point of contention because of potential economic consequences. During the winter of 1794-1795, rumors floated about the countryside and among Native American villages that many British traders would desert to the American side in the spring.⁴¹ Such reports seemed to be confirmed by Wayne’s implicit if not explicit sanction of British traders traveling to and

³⁹ Edmund Burke to E.B. Littlehales, 27 May 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 22.

⁴⁰ J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 17 March 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 329.

⁴¹ George MacDougall to R.G. England, 11 January 1795, *Clause Papers*, v. 6.

operating out of American installations.⁴² Traders who had been integral pieces in the British trade and diplomatic network that tied together the Great Lakes region now seemed to follow their own material interests more closely than those of the empire. McKee understood that effective control over the region depended upon an interlocking management of diplomacy and trade. If British and French traders began to support the United States, they might take Native American political and economic alliances with them.⁴³ Historian Eric Hinderaker argues that during the eighteenth century, traders tended to value their local connections over the goals of the empires they served. Britain benefited from the fluidity of these allegiances after the Seven Year's War. During the 1790s, the same phenomenon seemed to work against them. As the events of 1795 unfolded, colonial officials seemed to be losing their grasp on the region's trade.

Government and military officials worked together to prevent this trade, or even lessen it, but to little avail. The British military simply lacked enough resources to police the region. Richard England expressed his frustration, noting "how very difficult an undertaking . . . it is when the Frontier is so very extensive."⁴⁴ To emphasize his point, he offered an example from Fort Miami. There, the Commander of British forces tried to prevent traders from passing upstream to Fort Defiance and then onto Fort Wayne, only to have traders circumvent Fort Miami altogether. The limited authority British agents held in the region certainly added to their frustration. Although they continued to possess forts throughout the region, such as Niagara, Miami, Detroit, and Michilimackinac, Jay's Treaty—accepted by the United States and Britain, but not yet ratified—had granted regional control to the latter. British forts south of the Great

⁴² Edmund Burke to E.B. Littlehales, 17 June 1795, *ibid.* 4: 27.

⁴³ Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 36.

⁴⁴ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 27 May 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 22.

Lakes could enforce imperial mandates only within the immediate area. Thus, as R.G. England lamented, “if they [the traders] succeed in getting it [their merchandise] beyond Fort Miamis [sic], it is then out of our reach.”⁴⁵ On the very day England wrote this letter, May 27, four boats bound for Detroit loaded with peltry and tobacco arrived at Fort Defiance to trade with the Americans. Only a few days before, the ship had stopped at Fort Wayne for the same purpose.⁴⁶ British businessmen simply found trade with Americans trade too lucrative to abandon.

When the summer of 1795 commenced, Upper Canada continued to support refugees and struggled to regulate the border trade, especially the agricultural trade. Some commanders and politicians began to worry about their ability to fill the King’s stores. On June 18, R.G. England informed Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe that stores of corn, flour and peas, especially, at Detroit had become “much drained.” Following general instructions, he had supplied Native American wants “though the requisition approved of by Your Excellency [Simcoe] has been considerably exceeded.”⁴⁷ One month later, England called the stores “exhausted” and characterized Detroit stores as “approaching fast to a scarcity of flour and Indian corn.” The major supply effort to support the Native Americans living at Swan Creek, River Raisin and other subordinate posts, had strained the region’s productive ability to the limits. The “enormous demand” had left the King’s Store at Detroit without “a barrel of flour, a bushel of corn, and only two hundred and fifty barrels of pork, with a small quantity of peas and rice.”⁴⁸ R.G. England politely noted that almost all the flour and corn that Detroit could produce had been purchased at high prices and that if a fresh supply did not arrive soon, “the Garrison may shortly be reduced to some

⁴⁵ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 27 May 1795, *ibid.* 4: 22.

⁴⁶ 27 & 28 May 1795, “A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance,” 163-64.

⁴⁷ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 18 June 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 29.

⁴⁸ R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 10 July 1795, *ibid.* 4: 41.

difficulties if not distress.”⁴⁹ Moreover, because of information he received from Fort Niagara, he felt he had “no reason to flatter” himself that flour, corn or pork could be acquired from Fort Erie or even Kingston, where supplies had also been reduced.⁵⁰ To make matters worse, England judged that harvest during the coming autumn would not alleviate their woes because “the crops do not promise to be productive.”⁵¹

As the summer drew to a close, England found his situation no better. He reported that he had purchased all available flour and corn in the Detroit area. For two weeks he had not been able to send any provisions to Swan Creek to support the now 5,400 Native American men, women and children residing there. Although neither his garrison nor the families at Swan Creek found themselves yet in dire straits, England reported that the situation would likely only become worse because he had only eighteen days worth of flour in his store for his troops alone.⁵²

Bad weather and infestations of insects throughout the year exacerbated Upper Canadian supply problems. First, a cold winter killed cattle in the Detroit area.⁵³ Then, an arid summer, a wet autumn, and an infestation of Hessian Flies diminished wheat crops in Detroit, Kingston, and Niagara.⁵⁴ Making matters worse, Lower Canada and Britain also experienced crop shortfalls.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 10 July 1795, and R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 13 July 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 41, 44.

⁵⁰ R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 10 July 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 41.

⁵¹ R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 10 July 1795, *ibid.* 4: 41.

⁵² R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 9 August 1795, *ibid.* 4: 58.

⁵³ 18 February 1795, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 395.

⁵⁴ Richard Cartwright to J.G. Simcoe, 20 October 1795, James Farquharson to John Smith, 22 October 1795, and J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 3 November 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 107, 109, 120.

⁵⁵ Lord Dorchester to J.G. Simcoe, 17 September 1795, and Duke of Northumberland to J.G. Simcoe, 6 November 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 94, 129.

Farmers and merchants in both Upper and Lower Canada sold what crops they had—often to civilian agents—as demand sent prices steadily soaring throughout the year. November brought somewhat better news on wheat and corn, but many officials remained skeptical of upcoming harvests.⁵⁶ By autumn, high demand meant that merchants could artificially raise prices for crops. Rising prices benefited merchants and producers but hurt consumers. As crops became harder to purchase, people called for state intervention through the establishment of public granaries.⁵⁷

All of these factors put a strain on Upper Canada's beleaguered supply system. Some military leaders suggested waiting as long as possible to purchase wheat in an effort reduce prices.⁵⁸ Unable to acquire requisite provisions, Simcoe asked the Governor of Canada, Lord Dorchester, if he could enact an embargo to prevent "Flour, Wheat and other grain from being exported into Lower Canada." Not eager to see Lower Canada's supply problems worsen, Dorchester denied this request. Instead, he advised his Lieutenant Governor that an embargo "may be proper to prevent any Grain or Flour from being transported from thence into the Territory of the United States."⁵⁹ If any one had to suffer as a result of the crop shortages, certainly, he believed, it should be Americans. Unfortunately, the empire's limited ability to control its borders and its merchant class prevented effective enforcement outside of British controlled territory. Even more importantly, the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, otherwise known as Jay's Treaty, had attempted to promote free trade and to curb embargoes.

⁵⁶ Thomas Reynolds to R.G. England, 6 November 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 130.

⁵⁷ Richard Cartwright to J.G. Simcoe, 20 October 1795, and R. Dodgeson to E.B. Littlehales, 29 October 1795, *ibid.* 4: 107, 115.

⁵⁸ Thomas Reynolds to R.G. England, 6 November 1795, *ibid.* 4: 130.

⁵⁹ Lord Dorchester to J.G. Simcoe, 3 December 1795, *ibid.* 4: 154.

By law, Simcoe could not prohibit certain articles from being traded locally without potentially affecting the entirety of U.S.-British trade.

Merchants who sought greater shares of trade with Americans sometimes also attempted to use their influence to obtain tracts of land in the Ohio country. During the winter and spring of 1795, land passed from the hands of chiefs to speculators for a number of reasons. Some chiefs signed land away because of avarice; others did so because they planned to emigrate west; still others sought only to alleviate their disadvantageous economic situation. At times, speculators took advantage of chiefs by getting them to relinquish land while intoxicated. British officials at all levels had long attempted to regulate land sales by limiting private transactions with Native Americans. But in the disorder following the war, British merchants, especially those from Detroit, attempted to circumvent government regulations by purchasing lands south of the Great Lakes, where imperial authority fell into question. McKee complained about several purchases, pointing to one made by “Messrs. McNiff, Askwith, Kenzie, and Doddmead” for a large tract on the banks of the Maumee River and an island near Roche de Bout.⁶⁰ Some of the Baubees (Babys), a rich trading family from Detroit, reportedly purchased large tracts of land along the River Raisin.⁶¹ Many British officials felt powerless to stop or regulate purchases taking place outside the territory directly under their control. “Land-jobbing seems to be the rage a present,” lamented a hamstrung Richard England in July 1795.⁶² Not to be outdone by competing Detroit merchants, John Askin also speculated on land. He partnered with his son

⁶⁰ R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 13 June 1795, *ibid.* 4: 26.

⁶¹ Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 20 September 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 101.

⁶² R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 13 July 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 44.

John Askin, Jr. and Montreal merchant Alexander Henry to purchase “what Tracts of Land he [could] of the Indian Nation on the Miamis River and River au Huron.”⁶³

Speculators especially sought fertile land along navigable rivers. Before the war, British and French Canadian traders had long watched Native American women work fields on these same lands. Villages had settled in these areas not only for the rich soil, but also because of their proximity to trade routes north to Detroit and south to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. After the war, many of these traders and speculators sought to gain those lands for themselves, often resorting to questionable methods to obtain them. But if they could acquire proof of land cessions and also have those land claims confirmed by a new American political authority in the region, then they stood to possess highly valuable lands already along established trade routes.

During the months leading up to the Treaty of Greenville, village and tribal leaders saw demands for land cessions to speculators and traders reach a fever pitch. Aggressive attempts to acquire lands represented only one of several problems villages faced. Although many villages planted corn and other vegetables, women still waited for their crops to ripen. Logistical obstacles continued to make British aid intermittent at best. And until a new treaty could be signed, the political and economic future of the region remained uncertain. Would villages need to relocate? Would Native American men still have access to important hunting grounds? What would the role of the United States be in the region? As the council at Fort Greenville approached, many Native American leaders hoped to be able to reconstitute destroyed villages, to establish a lasting peace, and to bring economic stability back to the region.

Through June and July of 1795, some members of the former confederacy congregated in Detroit before departing for Greenville. When deputations traveled, they did so separately. Their journey south carried them along roads Wayne built in his effort to defeat them. Many

⁶³ Agreement Concerning Land Speculation, 27 May 1795, *Askin Papers*, 1: 543.

delegates stopped at forts along the way, attempting to build a peace by invoking ceremonial and exchange relationships with American commanders. On June 26, Egushaway, an Ottawa chief, gave a speech to some officers of Fort Defiance and then passed around a calumet before departing for Greenville.⁶⁴ A month later, the Shawnee chief Red Pole asked select officers of the same fort to attend a dance nearby.⁶⁵ Delaware chiefs likewise invited some officers to participate in a dance when they passed by the fort a short time later.⁶⁶ Although the approaching Treaty intensified rituals of alliance, such ceremonies had occurred for months at American forts. As early as January of 1795, a party of twenty-six Shawnee and Delaware warriors traveled to American forts seeking to forge an immediate peace in order to protect their nearby reconstituted settlements.⁶⁷ When they arrived at Fort Defiance on January 29 to return some prisoners of war, Surgeon's Mate Joseph Andrew reported that it was the first time warriors had "been at this place, since the erection of the Fort, with pacific views."⁶⁸

Over the next several months, especially after families returned from their winter hunting grounds, efforts grew between the former adversaries to create a lasting peace. Some of these efforts occurred at an informal, local level. For instance, returning families occasionally asked for provisions and supplies from the American forts, which they received on a piece-meal basis.⁶⁹ Other work went into building peace at a more formal, regional level. During the first half of 1795, scores of delegations made their way to meet Anthony Wayne at Fort Greenville to

⁶⁴ 25 June 1795, "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance," 171.

⁶⁵ 21 July 1795, *ibid.*, 170.

⁶⁶ 4 August 1795, *ibid.*, 181.

⁶⁷ See for example, the party of Shawnee and Delaware who visited a number of forts including Forts Defiance and Greenville. 29 & 31 January 1795, and 25 & 27 February 1795, *ibid.*, 67, 79.

⁶⁸ 29 January 1795, *ibid.*, 67.

⁶⁹ 8 April 1795, *ibid.*, 83.

express their desire for peace. To these visitors, Wayne provided valuable gifts, including tents, blankets, strouding, jackets, brass kettles, axes and knives. He also offered smaller tokens such as ribbons, thread, needles, buttons, handkerchiefs, and various combs. Besides these material goods, Wayne also presented visitors with provisions for their return trip.⁷⁰

But when compared to the efforts of Upper Canada to support the dislocated tribes, the United States offered but a drop in the bucket. The federal government did not view the humanitarian crisis as their concern. The purpose of the conflict had been to undermine the confederacy's economy. Once accomplished, federal support of the confederacy through humanitarian efforts would have been seen as counterproductive and expensive. More importantly, it appears as if Native American delegations did not make any concerted effort to solicit the American government for greater logistical support. For many local leaders, managing a frayed alliance seemed better than becoming dependent on enemies.

Native American men and women who passed by American forts supplied commanders at those installations with intelligence of British movements. When chiefs visited or camped in the area, officers at Fort Defiance often invited chiefs to dine with them. In this way, fort commanders and officers worked on the forward edge of a diplomatic front in the larger American effort to create a postwar peace. If the United States wanted to shape the economic future of the Northwest, they needed the peaceful support of its inhabitants. Forward commanders also wanted to establish good relations with the region's tribes to secure their own safety. An emotionally charged postwar period made such a task difficult. Officers found awkward moments around seemingly innocuous corners. Early in June of 1795, Major Hunt, commandant of Fort Defiance, dined with Little Turtle along with three other officers. After

⁷⁰ The Torrence Papers at the Cincinnati Historical Society Library contain numerous Quartermaster requisitions, primarily at Fort Greenville, on behalf of Native American delegations. See especially, Boxes 46 and 47, Torrence Papers, Cincinnati Historical Society Library, The Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, Ohio.

breakfast, and without considering the consequences of the recent war, the officers took Little Turtle across the Maumee River to show him a small garden they had planted. Little Turtle politely viewed the garden, but then “assumed a melancholy air & observed that the land was once his own property.”⁷¹ After all, Fort Defiance and the small garden both stood at the heart of the Glaize.

Notwithstanding this and other diplomatic hiccups, officers succeeded for the most part in working with traveling chiefs and warriors as well as local villages. When an intoxicated Captain Reed, a Shawnee chief, attempted to burn down Fort Defiance, Major Hunt and warriors who had accompanied Reed worked to quell the situation. In a more unique enterprise, several officers teamed up with seventy Shawnee men and women to tap nearly six hundred maple trees in a late season effort to make maple sugar.⁷² Such a détente built at forward forts during the half year preceding the council at Greenville must have indeed been bittersweet for members of the northern coalition. All parties seemed to be on the verge of a lasting peace, but for Native Americans, that peace would come with an increased and permanent American presence in the region. Passing by forts such as Defiance on their way to the Treaty must have reminded all delegations of life before the recent conflict, and suggested to them what life would be like in the future.

As Native Americans gathered and began traveling south toward Greenville, merchants too made the trek. Many land-jobbers planned to bring their land sales to the Treaty to have them confirmed by Anthony Wayne as a part of the Treaty process. Many hoped to use their relationships Native American allies as covers to influence the proceedings or to obtain special

⁷¹ 2 June 1795, “A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance,” 167.

⁷² At the end of the season, each of eight officers received twenty pounds of maple sugar. It is unclear how much maple sugar the Shawnees took with them. 3 & 17 March 1795, and 16 April 1795, *ibid.*, 76, 78, 84.

treatment from Wayne regarding their land purchases. Others wanted members of the confederacy to retain a right of sovereignty over their lands. John Askin advised his son in this way, revealing his reasons for supporting the measure. He ordered his son “to use your Utmost Influence, . . . to Endeavor that the first article of the Treaty between them [Native Americans] and the Americans Should be that they are the sole Masters of the Lands, to dispose of them as they think fit without any restraint Whatsoever.”⁷³ Askin and others hoped that Native American sovereignty would legitimize present and future land claims.

Unlike chiefs and warriors who received a welcoming hand at American forts, most land-jobbers traveling to the treaty negotiations did not encounter the reception they desired. It did not matter whether these speculators traveled alone or with an invitation from a tribal delegation. For Americans, British and French “advisors” threatened to undermine the peace and American interests at the council. American scorn arrived early and often. John Askin Jr., passing by way of Fort Defiance in early July on his way to Greenville, “had a cool reception from Major Hunt,” compared to his fellow Ojibwa and Ottawa travelers. While there, the young Askin encountered a turncoat British trader named George MacDougall and he threatened to reveal to the Americans that MacDougall had fought against Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. Askin safely left Defiance and made his way to Greenville. But when he arrived at the treaty site, Wayne had him arrested and imprisoned at Fort Jefferson after soldiers intercepted a letter addressed from his father with instructions on how to advise the confederacy and influence the treaty.⁷⁴

Other jobbers avoided incarceration but still found themselves rebuffed at the council. John Haskins Jr., another land jobber who attempted to attend the treaty had a similar experience to the young Askin. Shortly after arriving in early August, Wayne intercepted a letter from

⁷³ Mission of John Askin Jr. to Greenville, 5 July 1795, *Askin Papers*, 1: 550.

⁷⁴ John Askin Jr. to R.G. England, 19 August 1795, *ibid.* 1: 561.

Haskin's father advising him to tell the Shawnee not to sign the treaty unless Wayne confirmed land sales made between the Haskins and some Shawnee chiefs. In consequence, Wayne removed Haskin from the treaty and told him he could stay at Fort Jefferson. But Haskins became so infuriated by Wayne's actions that he returned to Detroit. The Major General also turned away other jobbers under similar pretexts. Ultimately, Wayne diffused the impact of these jobbers by claiming that he did not have the authority to confirm land sales.⁷⁵ For Wayne, any influence to be had at Greenville would come from him and other Americans, not British or French interests.

Because of Wayne's inability to occupy the Northwest fully, he planned the use the council at Greenville to showcase a continued military presence and the strength of the United States in the West. Several tribal deputations had asked him to hold a treaty at the Miami villages "where the hatchet was first raised, & where they wished to bury it."⁷⁶ But Wayne believed that American military forces would appear weak if they held council so far from the Ohio Valley. Convoys traveling along roads to the Miami villages would have been exposed to attack, placing the main body his troops at Fort Wayne in danger. If the United States military appeared vulnerable, Wayne speculated that some members of the northern confederacy might decide to renew war and use his exposed position to win a decisive battle by trying to catch him off guard. Instead, Wayne wanted a treaty at Greenville where a small number of troops might yet, as he wrote, "inspire the Savages with respect for our force."⁷⁷ As victor, Wayne set the rules for the peace. So, when Native American deputations arrived at Greenville, they did so with American garrisons in their front and their rear.

⁷⁵ 11 August 1795, "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance," 181-82.

⁷⁶ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, January 24, 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 4 [original underscore].

⁷⁷ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 January 1795, *ibid.* 4: 4.

Wayne needed to create a façade of strength because the western economy had begun to impact his Legion. Since the close of his offensive, Wayne had a difficult time reenlisting soldiers after their terms expired. Many veterans of the campaign sought better pay in the cities and towns dotting the Ohio River, especially as prices for laborers rose during the summer months as a consequence of the growing wartime economy.⁷⁸ Many also wanted a less rigorous work-discipline regimen, which they could find outside the military. Even more important to the treaty process, Greenville could be supplied much more easily and with less expense to the American government because it was half the distance from the Ohio River as the Miami Villages. Wayne estimated that by holding the treaty at Greenville instead of alongside the Wabash, the United States cut the cost of the treaty in half.⁷⁹ Such logic suited a presidential administration already self-conscious about ballooning costs associated with the conflict. The war might have been expensive, but there seemed little reason the peace should be.

As June unfolded, tribal delegations began to arrive at Fort Greenville. On the sixteenth, a considerable number of Delaware, Ottawa, Potawatomi and Eel River Indians arrived and began to meet with Wayne in council. During the next week additional parties of Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami and others reached Greenville. These envoys hoped to achieve a peace suitable to their terms, but unfortunately the confederacy had been defeated in battle by the American Legion. Hence, delegates who arrived at Greenville did so at a strategic disadvantage. The American victory had placed them in a position to dictate terms of peace. Chiefs could protest elements of the treaty—and they did—but American military and political officials had

⁷⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 January 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 4; Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 8 March 1795, 11 March 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 13, 18; Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 29 June 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 63-64.

⁷⁹ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 January 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 4-5.

written the document before any one of them stepped foot in Greenville. So when all met at the council fire, very little practical negotiating actually took place. Instead, the treaty process functioned as an elaborate play designed to build trust on both sides.⁸⁰ For three weeks the different sides met. Intense formality and spirited hopefulness characterized much of the dialogue, but much of the outcome had already been decided.

Nevertheless, Native American chiefs and delegations came to Greenville expecting to be treated not as subjects, but as equals. On June 17, New Corn, a Potawatomi chief, announced his hope to Wayne that when the treaty came to a close, American officials would “exchange our old [British] metals, and supply us with General Washington’s.”⁸¹ Through a symbolic exchange of honorary metals, each tribe would begin to make an alliance with the United States. But new alliance would need to be built on more than ceremonial rights. While in council, chiefs sought to receive many of the same luxuries enjoyed by American officers. As many chiefs had made their way south to Greenville, they often enjoyed fine meals with American commandants at American forts. Once at Greenville, chiefs such as Le Gris (Miami), New Corn and The Sun (both Potawatomi) could not understand why American officers reserved for themselves rations of meat without offering them to the tribal delegations. Le Gris plainly stated that they “would like some mutton and pork, occasionally.” The Sun protested that Wayne had not lived up to his suggestion that Greenville’s provisions would be open to their wants. Rather, he claimed that Wayne had fallen short of his promises because chiefs received only “but a small allowance,” which sustained them for the morning but left them “hungry at night.” Wayne responded

⁸⁰ Andrew R.L. Cayton, “‘Noble Actors’ upon ‘the Theatre of Honor’: Power and Civility in the Treaty of Greenville” in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830*, eds, Andrew R.L. Cayton & Fredrika J. Teute (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 235-69; Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 152.

⁸¹ Minutes of a Treaty, with the tribes of Indians called the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanese, Ottawas, Chippewas, Pattawatamies, Miamies, Eel River, Kickapoos, Piankeshaws, and Kaskaskias, begun at Greenville, on the 16th day of June, and ended on the 10th day of August, 1795, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 564.

defensively, claiming the fort had few swine and sheep to offer and that even American officers only “occasionally” ate those meats. Notwithstanding the fort’s apparent shortages, he told these three chiefs that he would send each nation a single sheep and some alcohol for them to enjoy.⁸² As a measure of building positive diplomatic relations, delegates expected to be treated as favored guests. French and British colonial leaders done so—with varying degrees of success—in their efforts to build or maintain peace, to trade, and to (re)establish diplomatic relations. The United States now stumbled in its effort to play the role of ally.

Requests made by tribal delegations did not blindside American officials who planned the council. Prior to the conference, Congress purchased and advanced to Wayne clothing, wampum, paints, tobacco and other gifts for the treaty council amounting to nearly \$25,000.⁸³ As envoys arrived, Wayne made sure his visitors felt comfortable even as he wanted them to be aware of the military presence around them. He issued blankets, kettles, clothes, common tents and other assorted items as gifts to incoming tribes.⁸⁴ But Wayne also wanted to reinforce his military advantage in the minds of his recent enemies. To accomplish this end, Wayne had delegates encamp near his exterior redoubts north of Fort Greenville. Situating visiting tribes just so placed them under the watchful eyes of his cannoneers, who could easily fire on them if trouble brewed. To suspicious chiefs, Wayne cast this decision in terms of convenience and space. But in explaining his calculation to Secretary of War Timothy Pickering, he invoked the

⁸² Minutes of a Treaty, *ibid.* 1: 565.

⁸³ Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 15 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 32.

⁸⁴ See for example, William Henry Harrison to Quartermaster, 14 June 1795 (#199), William Henry Harrison to Quartermaster, 26 June 1795 (#198), and William Henry Harrison to Quartermaster, 26 June 1795 (#105), Box 47, Torrence Papers.

memory of Pontiac's assault on Detroit.⁸⁵ Even before the parties began treaty ceremonies, Wayne revealed that while he would wear kid gloves, he would not be soft.

By the second week in July not all delegations had yet arrived. Blue Jacket and a substantial Shawnee delegation represented one of the most notable chiefs still missing from the council. While Delaware, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Ojibwa, Wyandot and other peers made their way to Greenville and awaited his arrival, Blue Jacket found himself in the closing stretch of a half-year effort to convince Shawnee villages to make peace with the Americans. When he had promised peace to Wayne early in February, Blue Jacket knew he spoke for a minority among the Shawnee. By summertime, a large contingent of the tribe, led most prominently by Captain Johnny, remained on the fence. Other Shawnee who had come to embrace peace abandoned it—if only temporarily—after one of their hunting camps fell under attack by partisan Kentuckians in the middle of May.⁸⁶ Even as the council began in June, some Shawnee and Wyandot met in Detroit with Joseph Brant who encouraged them to again raise the hatchet.⁸⁷ The divided Shawnees, as well as split opinions among Wyandot at Detroit, led Ottawa chief Egushaway to speculate to Wayne on July fourth that neither group would come to the council.⁸⁸ Egushaway had been a part of this debate, arguing as recently as May that his Ottawa peers and other tribes should oppose peace. Yet even as Egushaway spoke these words, Blue Jacket hurriedly cased

⁸⁵ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 565.

⁸⁶ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 191, 195-96, 199.

⁸⁷ Joseph Brant to John Butler, 28 June 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 33; Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 568.

⁸⁸ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 566.

the road from Fort Recovery to Fort Wayne, encouraging all lagging delegations to speed their way to the treaty.⁸⁹

Wayne encouraged attendant chiefs to begin the proceedings almost a week earlier but had been rebuffed. Most delegations wanted to wait a little longer, especially to see if some Wyandot chiefs from Detroit would arrive.⁹⁰ To the region's other tribes, the Wyandot and Delaware held among the highest ranks in a longstanding custom of totemic respect. Many other tribes in the region referred to the Wyandot as Uncle and the Delaware as Grandfather. As such, they received the first two seats at intertribal councils. Despite their position at councils, few expected the Wyandot, who had not taken a leadership role during the war, to do so at Greenville. Delaying the start of the council for them on the one hand represented a sign of respect by the delegations already at Greenville. On the other, their arrival would broaden not only Wyandot representation, of whom only the Wabash villages had arrived, but also that of the confederation in general. The treaty could wait, but not for long.

The treaty negotiations began in earnest on July 15, minus the missing delegations. Without Shawnee chiefs present, Little Turtle seized a leadership role at the council in an effort to secure land rights for the Miami. Wayne opened the ceremony making it clear that the United States expected the Treaty of Fort Harmar (1789) to be used at the basis of the current treaty. Little Turtle suggested that the treaty was an unacceptable baseline because it had been "effected entirely by the Six Nations" and attended by few legitimate tribal delegations present at Greenville. Moreover, he questioned the legitimacy of those delegates who had been "seduced"

⁸⁹ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 198, 201.

⁹⁰ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 566.

by the Six Nations to attend.⁹¹ Later, Massass, an Ojibwa chief speaking on behalf of the Three Fires delegations, argued that the Ottawa, Ojibwa, and Potawatomi had always been “true owners of those lands, but now . . . [found] new masters have undertaken to dispose of them.”⁹² Wyandot chief Tarhe (The Crane) added that even if the land had been sold by some, no consensus existed to legitimize that exchange and compensation had not been delivered to all relevant parties.⁹³ On July 18, in an attempt to remedy questions regarding the Treaty of Fort Harmar, and to assert that document as a baseline for the current treaty, Wayne announced that he would read the Treaty of Fort Harmar to the council in two days.⁹⁴ On that day Blue Jacket also arrived with a much smaller party of Shawnee than expected. He apologized for his tardiness and took his seat at the council.⁹⁵

As promised, Wayne read each article of the Treaty of Fort Harmar when the council reconvened. After his opening speech, the chiefs began to realize that Wayne could not be swayed from his goal to advance the American boundary well inside the Ohio country. During the next couple days, tribal delegates debated Wayne about the proposed boundary, unwilling to kowtow to his demands. Some discord between the tribes emerged when Massass suggested the Delaware and Wyandot wrongly sold lands without consent from other tribes.⁹⁶ Little Turtle

⁹¹ Ibid. 1: 567.

⁹² Ibid. 1: 570.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 1: 568.

⁹⁵ When Blue Jacket arrived he assured Wayne that more Shawnee would arrive soon. He also tried to convince Wayne that his mission to convince the Shawnee to abandon war for peace had been a success. To get to the conference, Blue Jacket had made many sacrifices. One historian has argued that by the time he arrived at Greenville, Blue Jacket had “been stripped of the bedrock of his support,” most notably the Shawnee and British. Yet he still carried as much weight, if not more, than any other leader within the confederacy. Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 203.

⁹⁶ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 570.

took the most strident tone, accusing Wayne and his associates of attempting to “cut off from the Indians a large portion of country, which has been enjoyed by my forefathers time immemorial, without molestation or dispute.” He continued personalizing his argument noting, “The print of my ancestors’ houses are every where to be seen in this portion.”⁹⁷ With this savvy logical turn, Little Turtle began to suggest that the United States should grant the Miami a greater annuity and demarcate lands as exclusive property of the Miami.

This move by Little Turtle certainly caught the attention of many at the council. Around the fire, he had assumed a commanding position. One of Little Turtle’s goals for the council had been to retain a leadership position for the Miami after the war. To achieve this end, he had encouraged a large delegation to travel to Greenville. By the end of the council, 381 Delaware members represented the largest tribal delegation out of a total of 1,130 delegates. Wyandot and Shawnee villages sent smaller delegations, 180 representatives from the former and 143 from the latter. Even the 240 Potawatomi representatives must have seemed small in comparison.⁹⁸ With each passing day Little Turtle appeared to be achieving his desired end as Wayne directed his responses more to him than to any other member of the council.⁹⁹

As days passed, it appeared as if Little Turtle possessed goals at odds with those of other delegations at the council. Although many delegations, led by the Wyandot, attempted to present a solid front—even in the face of intertribal differences—a small exchange between Little Turtle and Massass had revealed fissures. In an effort to reassert established intertribal protocol and remind Little Turtle of his totemic place at the council, Blue Jacket announced on July 23 that he

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 1: 582.

⁹⁹ See for example, Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 568, 569, 573. Carter likens the debate between Little Turtle and Wayne to those of Lincoln-Douglas and Gladstone-Disraeli. Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 147, 149.

would take a seat next to the Delaware and Wyandot envoys. “[T]he Shawnee are the elder brothers of the other nations presents,” he stated, “it is therefore proper that I should sit next [to] my grandfathers and uncles.”¹⁰⁰ Egushaway passed Blue Jacket the calumet and, for a moment, the former confederacy again moved toward a unified front.¹⁰¹

Wayne appears to have noticed the dissention in the ranks, and he moved to exploit it. He vehemently defended the legitimacy of the Treaty of Fort Harmar and the United States’s claim to land north of the Ohio River. “[T]he United States have twice paid for those lands,” he asserted, and “they will now, a third time, made compensation for them.” After refuting Little Turtle’s claim of seeing the print of his ancestors’ houses, Wayne pulled out his trump card. He announced to the council that as a part of Jay’s treaty, the British had agreed to transfer control of all their forts—notably, Michilimackinac, Detroit and Niagara—south of the Great Lakes to the United States. That transfer, he noted, would take place during the ensuing summer. If Wayne had not yet convinced the delegations that he held the upper hand at the council fire, this announcement gave him that superior position.

After this move, the council adjourned for three days while the confederacy debated what to do. When the council reconvened on July 27, Wayne read the proposed articles of the treaty. What frail unity had existed among the confederacy now fractured and dissent rose to the surface. Almost as a retort to Blue Jacket’s assertion on the twenty-fourth that the Seven Nations had “always been of one opinion,” Little Turtle averred that this treaty represented “an affair to which no *one* among us can give an answer.”¹⁰² He later reprimanded the Shawnee delegation

¹⁰⁰ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 571.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 1: 571-72.

¹⁰² Ibid. 1: 573, 574.

for having received the calumet but not yet having smoked it.¹⁰³ The next day, July 28, The Sun, a Potawatomi chief, suggested that “the three people who lived at the Miami villages”—the Shawnee, Delaware and Miami—had placed all the tribes in the current precarious situation.¹⁰⁴ New Corn, another Potawatomi chief, followed this critique by rebuking his peers. “I am much surprised,” he admonished, “that you cannot agree, in opinion, on the good work now before you.”¹⁰⁵

With the articles of the treaty read and dissent fomenting, Little Turtle looked to advance his previous argument. He asserted that the Miami, as elder brothers to the Eel River Indians and the Wea, stood as “the proprietors” of all land stretching across most of what is now Indiana.¹⁰⁶ He later presented papers in which General George Washington announced he “protected us in the possession of our lands.”¹⁰⁷ Wayne’s proposal to run a border from Fort Recovery to the mouth of the Kentucky River, Little Turtle argued, took away the “best part” of Miami hunting grounds. Instead, he suggested the line run down the Great Miami River, as in the Treaty of Fort Harmar.¹⁰⁸ Ultimately Little Turtle and others wanted Wayne to certify land claims of their own, defining boundaries between each tribe, making land ownership more certain and land cessions less contentious. Such a permanent vision of land ownership flew in the face of longstanding traditions built upon overlapping land claims. But this move appears in concert with the direction of a newly emerging, American-directed northwest economy.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 1: 575.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 1: 574. Another Potawatomi chief, Au-si-me-the (Ashkibee?), made this point more clear on July 30, when he directly stated that the Shawnee, Miami and Delaware had “caused all our misfortune.” Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 576.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 1:575.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 1:576.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 1:577.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 1:576.

Little Turtle's efforts in this vein seemed to contravene a goal held by many other delegates. Many chiefs hoped to use the Treaty of Greenville to establish a precedent whereby the United States could not enter into treaty with select villages or tribes in order to gain land cessions. Instead, these delegates hoped that large councils, like the one at Greenville, would become a norm, whereby many tribes who held overlapping claims could accept or deny land cessions, and payment for those lands could be applied broadly. Tarhe had attempted to assert this point earlier during the council, claiming that "no one in particular can justly claim this ground; it belongs, in common, to us all; no earthly being has an exclusive right to it."¹⁰⁹ He and others employed this language of "common rights" to describe what in practice operated as usufruct rights. Under this rubric, individuals and villages used common lands for varied purposes at different times of the year. Sometimes land could go unused by a village for years without sacrificing to competitors their claim to use of that land. Results of councils and wars sorted out who used land and when. As composite communities with broadly overlapping land claims had grown during the 1780s and 1790s, most Ohio country villages competed with each other even more for the regions resources. Usufruct rights allowed an order to be placed upon the landscape and its resources in the minds of the region's diverse population.¹¹⁰

Confronted with both visions for the future of Native American land control, Wayne chose to endorse neither directly. On the one hand, if the United States had supported Little Turtle's plan to define borders between each tribe would, they probably would have faced such great expenses and diplomatic complications as to render it a fruitless endeavor, especially without regional consensus. To do so without charges of corruption or favoritism from both the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 1:571.

¹¹⁰ Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 62-67.

crumbled confederacy and the federal government would be Herculean at best. Instead, Wayne decided simply to describe the “impropriety” of such a task.¹¹¹ On the other hand, if Wayne accepted Tarhe and others’ suggestion that all tribes held all the land in common, he might make future land cessions extraordinarily difficult, especially if individual tribes held veto power. So Wayne responded as best as he could, supporting neither position and instead providing his own. “You, Indians, best know your respective boundaries,” he argued.¹¹² In Wayne’s view, boundaries issues needed to be resolved to ease land cessions and subdue conflict. After all, he had been instructed by Pickering to determine the “true Owners” of the territory ceded in the treaty.¹¹³ But Wayne seemed to know that attempts to solve land conflicts in areas outside the immediate cession could easily derail the treaty process.

As July turned to August the treaty came to an end. On July 30, members of the former confederacy reluctantly, but nevertheless unanimously agreed to accept the treaty as Wayne presented it. Tribal delegates had won few of the arguments they proposed. Accepting the treaty amounted to nothing less than a concession to an imbalance of power in the region. Red Pole arrived the following day with eighty-eight Shawnee and a composite group of twenty-seven Wyandot, Delaware and elements of the Six Nations. They had come from Detroit where they had been debating whether or not to rekindle the war. On August 2, Red Pole and his party likewise endorsed the treaty, which all parties then signed the following day.¹¹⁴ Most of the delegates remained at Greenville for almost a week, socializing and waiting for Wayne to begin

¹¹¹ Ibid. 1:577.

¹¹² Ibid. 1: 577.

¹¹³ Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 8 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 20.

¹¹⁴ Minutes of a Treaty, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 578, 579.

distributing presents, which he did on August 8, first to the Wyandot and then to others.¹¹⁵ As the week wore on, men began departing for home.¹¹⁶ Once Wayne distributed gifts, few lingered much longer. Most hurried home eager to return to their daily lives because soon the seasons would change. Corn had ripened while the council progressed and the harvest season had arrived. Soon the villages would prepare to leave for their winter hunting grounds.

With the treaty completed, the time for niceties had ended. Few chiefs socialized at American forts on their way home, as they had done on their way to Greenville. The few that did continued to receive a warm welcome from American commanders. Red Pole was one of the few chiefs to stop at Fort Defiance on his return journey. He and a large party of Shawnee arrived there on August 23 with a train of approximately twenty horses carrying gifts from Greenville. Four chiefs in that party dined with Major Hunt and had a peaceful conversation. But for some individuals, the wealth distributed at the treaty meant an opportunity to gain at the expense of the envoys. That night, a wily trader named Felix scammed the Shawnee party out of their presents by intoxicating them. After receiving a number of complaints, Hunt ordered Felix to return the gifts and “depend on their [the Shawnee] generosity for payment in peltry.”¹¹⁷ To ensure peace, commanders made sure to demonstrate that the will of the United States would be enforced in the vicinity of its newly founded forts.

Although fort commandants extended warm hands to returning delegations, they probably did little to affect discouragement and anger. When relating proceedings of the council to British officials in Upper Canada, chiefs broadly expressed their discontent with the Treaty of

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 1: 579-80.

¹¹⁶ 11 August 1795, “A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance,” 181-82.

¹¹⁷ 23-25 August 1795, *ibid.*, 183-184.

Greenville.¹¹⁸ Certainly some of this ire helped preserve their continuing alliances with the British, even in the face of their newly built relationship with the United States. Again, the region's tribes found themselves in a position to use imperial rivalry to their advantage. But the anger cannot be underestimated. Not only had the confederation lost the war, they had faced a late summer humiliation at Greenville. Their relative impotence at the treaty must have stung deep.

Secretary of State Pickering and others in the federal government did not want these forts to become a disciplinary arm of the American government. The military had not been designed to enforce civil discipline. But order needed to be maintained in and near the forts. By the Treaty of Greenville, the United States acquired from the confederacy sixteen military reserves spread throughout the eastern half of the Northwest Territory and the right for American military and civilians to travel freely between them.¹¹⁹ While forts clearly served an expansionist policy, Pickering instructed Wayne to depict the forts as a benefit to neighboring Native American villages because they would also function as trading centers. The reservations, Pickering wrote, would not harass them or “impose the smallest restraint on their enjoyment of their lands.”¹²⁰ Despite this conservative assessment of an American presence, the military had a profound impact in reshaping the Northwestern economy

As men returned to their villages, they faced another uncertain fall and winter. New fields had been planted, but no settlement matched the productive might of the Glaize or Miami

¹¹⁸ Lord Dorchester to the Duke of Portland, 26 October 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 33.

¹¹⁹ A treaty of peace between the United States of America and the tribes called the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanese, Ottawas, Chippewas, Pattawatamies, Miamies, Eel Rivers, Weas, Kickapoos, Piankeshaws, and Kaskaskias, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 562.

¹²⁰ Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 8 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 22.

villages. Many villages still relied upon British rations to supplement their diets. Winter hunts lasted longer during the winter of 1795 than they had the previous year, but new, contested intertribal boundaries also needed to be renegotiated.¹²¹ The former confederacy also faced an altered social and economic landscape in the West. More traders and merchants from Upper Canada and the Ohio Valley pressed into the region, servicing villages and military posts. The defeat of the confederacy had allowed the economy of the West to be reshaped to the detriment of the fur-trading economy. During the ensuing decade, the American military and federal government helped foster the growth of the market economy into the region.

¹²¹ 24 & 25 September 1795, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 421.

Chapter 4

Webs of Commerce: Government, Roads, and Trade

Roads constructed by Wayne as a part of his campaign and its aftermath helped shape the western economy just as much as his defeat of the northern confederacy. The primary road led north from Fort Washington to Forts Defiance and Wayne. Secondary roads connected other forts, such as Fort Industry, and posts, such as Loramie's Store, to the main supply network. For the United States government, these roads served symbolic and practical purposes. On a more abstract level, federally funded internal improvements suggested a new mission of the federal government—to invest heavily in the settlement and economic development of the West. A practical intent of these roads had been to solidify an American presence in the region by securing a supply network needed to maintain garrisons well advanced of American settlements. Although private investment and personal initiative often drove individuals and families to emigrate, the impact of United States government's financial resources in developing and shaping western settlement cannot be underestimated. Not only the military but also the post office constructed roads throughout the West. Along these military and post roads, lines of commerce, settlement and agriculture stretched north toward Detroit and into Upper Canada. Settlement likewise grew along these routes and commercial agriculture expanded.

Federally funded internal improvements had an impact on more than American settlement and commerce. These roads provided goods not only from southern markets along the Ohio Valley, but also from Upper Canadian merchants who took advantage of these new corridors, selling their wares to soldiers and officers of the American Legion. Native Americans often used these roads for their convenience, but the economy Native Americans built following Fallen Timbers did not necessitate heavy use of these roads. Instead, most villages experienced

some continuity with the past by reconstituting a semi-subsistence fur trade economy despite the political and economic changes that had reshaped maps and access to resources of the region. This economic strategy created stability but not growth in many villages. In contrast, with minimal interference from the defeated confederacy, the United States used roads and new trade connections to a growing Upper Canadian economy to foster a market economy in the Northwest.

I. The Former Confederacy Adjusts to the New Emerging Economy

After the Treaty of Greenville, most of the defeated tribes attempted to improve their diplomatic relationship with the United States while also remaining economically independent of the new political power in the region. Refugee villages at Swan Creek began to disband as communities sought to reclaim lost territory. By the end of 1795, a party of Delaware—led by Tetepachsit—and Shawnee established a temporary settlement in the vicinity of Fort Defiance.¹ In May 1796, a group of Shawnee led by Red Pole constructed a village two miles from the same fort.² Until the takeover of British forts by the United States military, Delaware and Shawnee settlements near Fort Defiance used roads between these points to access both their new American allies and their trading contacts at Fort Miami. But these villages wanted to consolidate their economic interests rather than contend with artificial economic borders. By January 1796, village chiefs asked if their trading contact at Fort Miami could “settle in this quarter as a Trader with them.”³

¹ Major William Winston to General James Wilkinson, 14 January 1796, William Winston Papers, Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, Ohio.

² Major William Winston to Colonel John Francis Hamtramck, 3 May 1796, William Winston Papers.

³ Major William Winston to General James Wilkinson, 14 January 1796, William Winston Papers.

At forts and posts throughout the region, members of the former confederacy attempted to establish with Americans officials reciprocal gift-giving practices that had characterized their political and economic relationships with the French and, less successfully, the British. To that end, Tetepachsit provided what material support he could to Americans who needed it. As the commandant of Fort Defiance glowed, “Too much cannot be said of old Tetteboskey [sic], . . . because his House, and any thing he may have is ever at the Service of the Soldiers that may pass by His House.”⁴ For a moment it appeared as if a middle ground might be found with the American government where it had failed with the British.

But Wayne and his commanders failed to offer much for their side of the expected reciprocity. Many American government and military officials viewed material support of Native Americans as charity and not a duty of reciprocity. When Major William Winston prepared to assume command of Fort Defiance, Wayne instructed him that “Humanity & Policy require that you should comply in a moderate degree with the demands of Indians for the essential articles of provision—that is to say—flour, beef, salt, and occasionally a small allowance of liquor.” Commandants who supplied goods to Native Americans needed to do so with “economy.”⁵ Thus, as supplies to forward forts ran thin, so too did the American government’s ability to support beleaguered villagers and fulfill the expectations of Shawnee, Delaware and other tribes who camped near American forts. No sooner had Winston arrived at Defiance than he halted the distribution of goods to soliciting villagers and put his entire garrison on half rations because of dwindling supplies.⁶ Only Winston’s sympathy led him to issue “more

⁴ Major William Winston to Major General Anthony Wayne, 2 February 1796, William Winston Papers.

⁵ General Anthony Wayne to Major William Winston, 13 December 1795, William Winston Papers.

⁶ Major William Winston to Colonel James Francis Hamtramck, 12 January 1796, William Winston Papers.

than [he] should” to the villagers because he feared they would otherwise die in the harsh winter weather.⁷ It appears that Native American begging could accomplish ends when diplomatic means failed.

Despite these diplomatic difficulties, many tribal leaders attempted to maintain good relations with American traders, military and government officials. By the end of 1797, the United States military abandoned Fort Defiance, but surrounding Shawnee and Delaware communities stayed for a few more years. In 1799, drovers moving a herd of cattle from Kentucky to Detroit along a road cut by Wayne reached Defiance. Though the fort had been deserted since the end of 1797, a lively village life remained. As drovers struggled to move their cattle across the Maumee River, men from nearby villages arrived to help.⁸ The voluntary aid offered by these men demonstrated a dedication to build on an established peace even without a military presence. Much like Tetepachsit who opened his home to passing soldiers, men and women in villages throughout the northwest continued to provide what they could to Americans as an expression of their alliance despite the changing nature of the region’s economy.

For most tribes who retreated toward British forts and posts following Fallen Timbers, they also experienced greater frugality from their imperial allies. By the late 1790s, British officials attempted to cut the bloated expenses of the Indian Department. In essence, some British officials believed that some Indian agents, such as Matthew Elliot, had attempted to utilize imperial coffers to improve their economic relationship with the many regional tribes by providing excessive presents and provisions.⁹ Elliot fell victim to these suspicions and was

⁷ Major William Winston to Colonel John Francis Hamtramck, 2 February 1796, William Winston Papers.

⁸ 10 September 1799, “A Journal of a Journey to Detroit Set out on the 21st day of Augt 1799 by myself and others,” no author, Special Collections and Archives, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky.

⁹ Robert Prescott to Peter Russell, 15 December 1797, *The Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell with Allied Documents Relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada during the Official Term of*

released from his duties.¹⁰ In a further effort halt such abuses, Captain Hector Maclean, commandant of Fort Malden (Amherstburg), had been instructed to observe the operations of the local Indian Department and limit gifts when he could. Unfortunately, he took these orders to such levels of parsimony that Thomas McKee later complained that the commander had fundamentally altered British policy toward the region's tribes.¹¹ Although Maclean's commanders ordered him in 1799 to cease his strict policies regarding presents and provisions to Native Americans, the incident, which took well over a year to resolve, revealed an ambivalent British policy toward Native Americans and a general decline of the middle ground.¹²

Faced with more distant diplomatic relations with Britain and the United States, members of the former confederacy attempted to carve out their own space in the West. The years immediately following the Treaty of Greenville can best be described as a period of renewed tribal sovereignty. Within a few years after 1799, the Shawnee and Delaware near Defiance abandoned their settlements and moved south and west. New settlements that emerged during these years represented a larger reconfiguration of the region following the 1795 Treaty. When villagers attempted to resettle the region after the war, they faced new challenges in terms of land and resources. Prior to the war, refugee villages formed composite settlements. Delaware and Shawnee villages had been forced to move from their settlements along the Ohio River in eastern and southern Ohio to the northwest to places like the Glaize and Miami villages. These composite communities had mitigated the creation of a confederacy. But with peace

Liet.-Governor J.G. Simcoe while on Leave of Absence, v. II, eds. E.A. Cruikshank and A.F. Hunter (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1935), 43.

¹⁰ Robert Prescott to the Duke of Portland, 27 December 1797, *ibid.* 2: 48.

¹¹ Robert Prescott to the Duke of Portland, 27 December 1797, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2:48; Thomas McKee to William Claus, 5 June 1799, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 3: 220-21.

¹² James Green to Hector Maclean, 8 July 1799, *ibid.* 3: 259-60.

reestablished, refugee groups moved south and east, attempting to establish settlement patterns recast with the Greenville cession in mind.

Many Shawnee and Delaware villages moved away from composite communities and sought more autonomy. Most tribes attempted to establish tribal spheres of influence that resembled settlement patterns in the West following the Seven Years War. Increased rivalries for trade land and trade during the peace probably also helped emphasize cultural divides between various tribes. By the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, most tribes seem to have been moving toward establishing proprietary claims to land, just as Little Turtle had tried to do at Greenville. Treaties continued to involve multiple tribes and attempted to deal with overlapping land claims, but no treaty following Greenville had the same diversity of tribes in attendance. This proved the case for two reasons. On the one hand, individual tribes claimed greater sovereignty over specific tracts of land, so they protectively guarded monies received from land sales, as well as augmented annuities. On the other, United States officials became less willing to treat with large numbers of tribes in an attempt to make the treaty process more economical. That meant both limiting the number of tribes involved in treaties and reducing the price of land and annuities as much as possible. Thus, although the different sides moved toward a similar diplomatic end, that is, making treaties smaller affairs, they did so for different reasons.

Still, experiences gained from living as composite communities had not been lost on all villagers. By 1810, Shawnee and Wyandot villages occupied territory at the mutual headwaters of the Auglaize, Great Miami, and Scioto rivers. At the end of the Seven Years War, this land had been at a border between Shawnee and Wyandot lands. The divisive Treaty of Greenville had brought elements of these two tribes closer together and they continued to share agricultural and hunting territories in central and western Ohio, though some Wyandot villages singularly

occupied the lower Sandusky River Valley. Other Shawnee villages moved west, closer to the mouth of the Ohio River, while still others joined Shawnee villages that migrated west of the Mississippi prior to Fallen Timbers.

A Miami leadership, headed by Little Turtle, continued to claim present day Indiana as their own, in confederation with the Wea and Piankeshaw. Miami villages lined the upper Wabash River and its tributaries, though well down stream from Fort Wayne. Wea villages remained in the middle Wabash River region with Piankeshaw south of them along the same river. As factions of the formerly confederated tribes relinquished lands in the southern third of Indiana during the first decade of the nineteenth century, Piankeshaw families began to establish settlements west of the Wabash River. Delaware men and women, who had lost almost all the territory they claimed in the Muskingum Valley in eastern Ohio, now needed to rely on others for land. Some Delaware communities eventually returned to eastern Ohio to live on reservations set aside for them. But to do so meant living among a growing American population. Instead, most Delaware families accepted an offer from Miami leaders which allowed them use of lands along the White River in Indiana.¹³

When faced with a decision of where to reside, most members of the former confederacy chose to live away from American settlements and the roads that linked those communities. By doing so, Shawnee, Delaware, Miami and other villagers attempted to maintain their independence during the postwar period. In the short term, these decisions resulted in the reestablishment of communities, as well as a stabilization of the region's political economy. In the long term, these decisions largely set an economy in Native American controlled territory apart from a growing market economy in the Ohio Valley and Upper Canada.

¹³ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 98-99, 100-3.

II. Initial Mercantile Forays into the Northern Ohio Country

Just as a western economy had shaped the war in the West, so too did it affect the peace. Wayne had wanted the treaty at Greenville to run smoothly and began to plan for it as early as January 1795 when he ordered the Quartermaster General to begin gathering the necessary “Indian goods,” or gifts, which would be exchanged at the council.¹⁴ He also requisitioned the contractors to supply additional provisions to feed arriving delegations. Much to the dismay of commanders and government officials, the new partnership of Scott and Ernest, who replaced contractors Elliot and Williams, also failed to overcome logistical obstacles that had so plagued their predecessors’ tenure.¹⁵ In an effort to minimize problems, Wayne made sure Quartermaster General James O’Hara attended the council.¹⁶

For Wayne, the constant failures of contractors remained a perpetual thorn in his side. He sporadically purchased flour and livestock to replenish stores when Scott and Ernest failed to meet their deadlines. After making such purchases during the year after Fallen Timbers, Wayne wrote to Pickering arguing that purchasing locally to supply the garrisons cost less. He claimed that he saved the federal government \$3.84 per barrel of flour through his method of acquisition.¹⁷ To reduce prices so sharply, he relied heavily on river rather than ground transportation. Contractors, however, often failed to arrive with their goods in time to use river transport, necessitating the more expensive method of employing packhorses. While Wayne had a point in thinking that he could obtain provisions for less, he overlooked or downplayed several

¹⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 January 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 5.

¹⁵ See for example, Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 January 1795, and Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 9 August 1795, *ibid.* 4: 4, 80.

¹⁶ “Treaty of Greenville,” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, v. II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 45.

¹⁷ Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 19 September 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 97.

important factors. First, he removed all profit that motivated contractors into enter the business. Second, contractors sought larger quantities of goods than Wayne did in his stopgap purchases. Third, war and the raising of militias had hindered production in the Ohio Valley. While plenty of wheat and livestock existed in the valley, many farmers and smaller merchants wanted to sell at higher prices than contractors offered, prices they could obtain by selling directly to the government. Finally, the logistical problems inherent in gathering massive quantities of supplies demanded by the army virtually guaranteed delays and other problems.

Filling gaps in deficient orders became easier for individual soldiers soon after the war when merchants from Cincinnati took a greater interest in supplying forts as far north as Fort Jefferson and Fort Greenville. Operating independently, merchants from the Ohio Valley advanced their goods at their own risk and sold directly to soldiers. These ventures could be very profitable. Cincinnati's merchant class, in particular, stood to gain because of their proximity to the forts and improved roads Wayne built during the war. As early as the fall of 1794, merchants there began to hear about and take advantage of the northern military market. One observer, writing to William Stanley, a Cincinnati merchant, about the condition of the soldiery at Fort Jefferson, noted that soldiers described "a thousand wants but at the same time intimate that Nothing will supply them but money and when that comes they will supply themselves." If Stanley brought his business to Fort Jefferson, this observer averred, "I verily [sic] believe that you will get the greater part of the money that comes into this garrison."¹⁸ In a different example, John Stites Gano, another Cincinnati merchant received word that if he or anyone else established an "eating house and tavern" outside the Garrison, he would find it "very profitable." He was told that "All hungry persons call here" and traders already made money

¹⁸ Aaron Reeder to William Stanley, 27 October 1794, John Stites Gano Papers, 3: 229, Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, Ohio.

selling beef and bread to between twenty and thirty people a day.¹⁹ Soldiers who otherwise had little opportunity to spend their salaries hesitated little to supplement their diet and lifestyle when given a chance. By failing to meet pre-approved deadlines, contractors opened a door to local businessmen who eagerly attempted to channel government money funneling into the region.

Despite these new commercial opportunities, many Cincinnati merchants, even those who regularly sold to lower forts, conducted irregular trade. While at Fort Greenville, Major William Winston noted the difficulties of dealing with James Findlay and H. Lewis, two Cincinnati merchants with whom he had a previously done business. “[T]hey treat as they think proper,” he wrote to James Smith, another local merchant. Many factors played into this inconsistency. Most merchants simply did not have enough manpower to convey items to forts while maintaining their local commercial obligations. Difficulties in acquiring requested goods might also prevent merchants from making what could be costly and fruitless journeys. Nevertheless, officers especially relied upon merchant services to supplement their repetitive diet and worn cloths, as well as to obtain luxury items which distinguished them from common soldiers. One of Winston’s orders called for some bacon, some good butter, muslin for sheets, tea, some “B[ottom] legs with sole leather,” and one “Handsome Woman” to help with his domestic chores.²⁰ Such were the benefits to officers that a nearby urban center, money, and good connections provided.

Uncertainty often made business relationships during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century tenuous at best. A great amount of risk accompanied business arrangements, especially in the West where high geographic mobility created communities of strangers. In business, men

¹⁹ Andrew Marchalk to J.S. Gano, 6 June [no year], John Stites Gano Papers, 3: 217.

²⁰ Major William Winston to James Smith, 26 April 1795, and Major William Winston to James Smith, 8 June 1795, William Winston Papers.

might abscond, leaving financial ruin in their wake. Officers, as well as civilian customers, found their ability to deal with merchants greatly improved if they engaged in polite correspondence and friendship.²¹ When customers established more intimate relationships with merchants, they often found greater lines of credit. In this case, Smith competed with other Cincinnati merchants with whom Winston occasionally exchanged letters. Through this correspondence, Winston not only befriended businessmen, he (re)assured them he could be a safe and reliable business partner. In return, merchants kept tabs on a man to whom they extended credit while also benefiting from advanced knowledge of wartime developments that might affect the regional and international markets.²²

Although Cincinnatians quickly addressed opportunities at nearby forts, establishing trade to more northerly forts took time after the war. Not until October 1795 did the first Cincinnati merchant arrive in the northern Ohio country. Eager to survey the potential of a new northern market, Abijah Hunt traveled along roads built by Wayne during the war and arrived at Fort Wayne during late October. He then traveled to Fort Defiance with Lieutenant Pope. Ironically, Pope had gone to Fort Wayne from Defiance to procure flour, only to find that they too were on a half ration. Because of continued supply problems, troops often received half rations of meat or flour if either ran short in the garrison.²³ After spending a couple days at the Glaize, Hunt then traveled to Detroit on business before returning to Cincinnati.²⁴ Despite Hunt's trip, merchants only slowly began to make the costly trip so far north.

²¹ Lewis E. Atherton, *The Frontier Merchant in Mid-America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), 22-23.

²² Major William Winston to James Findlay, 19 July 1795, William Winston Papers.

²³ 9 April 1795 and 9 November 1795, "A Surgeon's Mate at Fort Defiance," 83, 255.

²⁴ 3 November 1795 and 5 November 1795, *ibid.*, 254.

The arduous journey north made many Ohio Valley merchants chary of the risks involved. Nevertheless, Hunt represented an early aspect of a merging of the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes economies. During the second half of the 1790s, forts and settlements in the northern Ohio country received supplies both from the American controlled Ohio Valley and the British controlled Great Lakes. Despite the distance, Kentucky continued to benefit from expansion into northern Ohio. As late as 1799, American contractors purchased droves of cattle in Bourbon County, Kentucky, to be delivered to Detroit.²⁵ Growing agricultural and manufacturing centers at Cincinnati and in Hamilton County, Ohio, contributed greatly to this important supply network.

III. The Early United States-Upper Canadian Border Economy

Still, the experiences of soldiers and officers with trade at Northern forts more accurately reflected the changing Lakes economy than that of the Ohio Valley. The establishment of Presque Isle (Erie, Pennsylvania) illustrated a growing and problematic border economy that emerged following the end of the war. Built upon the site of an old French fort, work on laying out Presque Isle began in earnest with the peace following the Treaty of Greenville and after an arrangement made with the Six Nations.²⁶ By the spring of 1795, the town began to grow, which attracted farmers and entrepreneurs from Upper Canada. Both American and British government officials seemed unconcerned about the small scale border trade that emerged as both Canadian merchants and Presque Isle traders crisscrossed Lake Erie. Local officials began to take notice when four deserters of the British Navy stole a “King’s vessel” loaded with furniture and tried to

²⁵ 21 August 1799, “A Journal of a Journey to Detroit.”

²⁶ Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 15 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 36; *History of the Great Lakes*, v. I, ed. J.B. Mansfield (Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1899), 202.

sell the boat and its stock at the nascent port town. The commandant at Presque Isle suspected the ship and its contents might be stolen, so he had both seized and the men taken into custody.²⁷ Upon notification of the crime, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe wrote the commanding officer of Presque Isle that he wanted “to enter into any regulation that may be necessary to prevent” any such incident from happening again.²⁸ Captain Russell Bissell, a newly appointed United States commander to Presque Isle, happily accepted Simcoe’s offer. He replied, stating that he looked forward to “promoting a friendly intercourse” between the two sides of the lake in accordance with the recent Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation (Jay’s Treaty). “I have every reason to believe,” wrote Bissell, “that the advantages would be reciprocal to the two Governments.”²⁹ The border trade continued, despite some larceny, but each government observed trade on the lakes more closely.

By November, Upper Canadian merchants scurried to take advantage of a lucrative market. Because so little competition existed in western Pennsylvania, Canadian merchants charged high prices that supply-hungry residents of Presque Isle eagerly paid. Some merchants sold salted pork that the Upper Canadian government “condemned as unsound” to an agent in Presque Isle for more than two and one-half times the standard asking price offered by the government.³⁰ More typically, the relative ease of transport across lake waters during summer months meant that merchants who acquired flour and corn from farms along the shores of Lake Erie and its tributaries could supply crops more cheaply than Pennsylvanian traders carrying

²⁷ Russell Bissell to J.G. Simcoe, 9 October 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 100.

²⁸ J.G. Simcoe to William Irvine, 5 October 1795, *ibid.* 4: 98.

²⁹ Russell Bissell to J.G. Simcoe, 9 October 1795, *ibid.* 4: 100.

³⁰ J.G. Simcoe to Charles Long, 3 November 1795, *ibid.* 4: 119.

similar goods over land by way of Pittsburgh. In a frenzy, other traders bought up as much wheat and corn as they could get their hands on in order to sell it to the port town.³¹ Within a year of its founding, trade across the lake had become regular.

Although this increased commerce to south of the Lakes made it more difficult for the Upper Canadian government to fill the King's stores, expansion of trade fit within a larger goal of improving the area's economy. One hope had been to develop a shipping industry on the Lakes. The Duke of Portland had instructed Simcoe that the "Legislature should give all possible encouragement to their Navigation."³² Greater shipping efforts, he and others believed, would strengthen the colonial economy and thus make it less vulnerable to American expansionism. Mappings and soundings of all the Lakes also needed to be completed. Much of this concern centered on the fact that Jay's Treaty required British forces to relinquish their posts and forts south of the Great Lakes, opening the door to American commercial expansion, not only on the Lakes but also along the St. Lawrence River. Rumors that American surveyors had "evaded" garrisons at Oswego during the spring of 1795 and had begun surveying the southern shore of the St. Lawrence River did little to quell British concerns that their imperial monopoly on the Lakes might be in jeopardy.³³ But with the bulk of the new border trade flowing on a southerly course and British ships plying the waves, few local complaints rose to the surface. In addition to military sloops and schooners, no fewer than fifteen private vessels traversed the Lakes.³⁴ During the ensuing years, the British merchant marine grew as wealthy merchants

³¹ John Warren to E.B. Littlehales, 12 November 1795, *ibid.* 4: 140.

³² The Duke of Portland to J.G. Simcoe, 20 May 1795, *ibid.* 4: 14.

³³ J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 20 May 1795, *ibid.* 4: 15.

³⁴ J.G. Simcoe to the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Plantations, *ibid.* 3:69

ordered ships built to augment their businesses.³⁵ Certainly many smaller ships also plied the waters, carrying smaller but no less significant quantities of goods southward.

Some British officials wanted to regulate this trade because they worried it might exacerbate shortfalls in the King's stores, especially since British garrisons continued to supply large numbers of Native American refugees. These efforts, however, proved to be short lived. On November 19, 1795, the United States Senate ratified the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Trade, otherwise known as Jay's Treaty. Great Britain did the same October 28, and the treaty went into effect on February 29, 1796. According to the third article of the treaty, "All Goods and Merchandise whose Importation . . . shall not be entirely prohibited, may freely, for the purposes of Commerce, be carried" across colonial borders.³⁶ Technically, duties could be applied, but Upper Canadian officials hesitated to do so because of the benefits free trade brought them. When Parliament approved the treaty, Kingston merchant Richard Cartwright acknowledged that he found it hard "to determine" the implications of this new treaty, but he believed that "in a commercial Point of View we [Upper Canada] shall be Gainers."³⁷ Time proved him correct. Through the late 1790s, no large American mercantile houses impacted the economy of the Lakes region like those in Upper Canada, and British trade continued to flow primarily along the St. Lawrence River corridor.³⁸

³⁵ Articles of Agreement Between John Askin, Esquire, and William Daly, Ship Carpenter, 9 November 1798, *Askin Papers*, 2: 152-53.

³⁶ "Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation," in *Treaties and other International Acts of the United States of America*, v. 2, 1776-1818, ed., Hunter Miller (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931).

³⁷ Richard Cartwright to Mr. T.L. Palsgraaff, 18 October 1796, *Kingston before the War of 1812: A Collection of Documents*, ed., Richard A. Preston (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1959), 206-7.

³⁸ Richard Cartwright to Messrs. Geo. Davison & Co, London England, 4 November 1797, *ibid.*, 208.

Farmers and merchants along the shores of Lake Erie felt the benefits of free trade. By the spring of 1796, word of better prices on the southern side of the lakes had spread across Canadian settlements. In May, an American agent at the town of Gananoque, located on the northeastern most edge of Lake Ontario, bought hundreds of barrels of flour to sell to the new American settlement at Oswegatchie, just over forty miles down the St. Lawrence River.³⁹ Similar purchases occurred in communities all along the northern shoreline. This additional competition impeded British agents' efforts to purchase requisite corn and wheat for the King's stores at the many garrisons in the Lakes region. Farmers who did not suffer the ravages of the Hessian fly scourge that continued to plague the region often sought to sell their wheat and other crops to American garrisons and settlements where they expected to bargain "upon their own terms." Moreover, flies, drought and the generally limited amount of grain—with concomitant higher prices—hindered the fattening of hogs, reducing the readily available amount of pork for another year.⁴⁰ Together these forces dramatically increased the price of grains, a phenomenon that one Kingston merchant estimated would last "for some time."⁴¹

Still, despite rising prices, Britain took few measures to regulate the border trade beyond seizing contraband items.⁴² Peter Russell, who acted as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada when Simcoe went on permanent leave, proposed more stringent measures to control American imports, including the establishment of custom houses and of duties equal to those set at ports of entry in Lower Canada. Through these measures Russell hoped to secure increased funds to run

³⁹ John McGill to J.G. Simcoe, 13 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 263.

⁴⁰ John McGill to J.G. Simcoe, 13 May 1796, and John McGill to J.G. Simcoe, 13 May, 1796, *ibid.* 4: 262, 263.

⁴¹ John McGill to J.G. Simcoe, 18 July 1796, *ibid.* 4: 336.

⁴² Minutes of the Executive Council, 13 June 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 181; Peter Russell to Hon. Mr. Chief Justice Elmsley, 26 June 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 194.

his young province.⁴³ During their session late in 1798, the Upper Canadian Executive Council investigated this matter and commissioned a report by Robert Hamilton. His report estimated that nearly £100,000 worth of trade passed through Upper Canada yearly. Reports that the United States might impose duties on Canadian imports did not disturb Hamilton. According to him, so long as the balance of trade remained in Britain's favor, the Canadian economy would benefit from the exchange.⁴⁴ Goods transported cheaply to the northern Ohio country by way of the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes gave Upper Canada an advantage. The region's economy, Hamilton argued, had "visibly increased by that Mutual and unrestrained Intercourse" and therefore "should be left unincumbered [sic] with Custom house Establishments & Restrictions."⁴⁵ The Executive Council concurred and decided not to establish custom houses or significantly alter import regulations.⁴⁶ So long as the economy benefited, the status quo could remain.

Unfortunately, not all Upper Canadians experienced benefits from this growing economy. Consumers in particular felt a pinch left by free trade, and local administrators did what they could to alleviate the situation. Detroit began to feel the toll during the winter of 1796. Within a short period of time, the price of flour in the city doubled to nearly £5 per hundred-weight. Because of shortages at Detroit and accounting discrepancies at Niagara, allegations of

⁴³ Peter Russell to John Elmsley, 14 June 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 183; Peter Russell to the Duke of Portland, 17 July 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 217-18.

⁴⁴ The United States began imposing duties in Detroit during the late Spring of 1800. Matthew Ernest as Inspector of the revenues to Jno Askin, 2 May 1800, *Askin Papers*, 2: 287. In 1795 Arthur St. Clair estimated British trade in the Illinois territory, flowing to Michilimackinac to the St. Lawrence River, amounted to nearly \$300,000 ("or 1,500,000 livres"). Governor St. Clair to the Secretary of State, 4 May 1795, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 515-16.

⁴⁵ Memorandum on Trade and Commerce by Robert Hamilton, 24 September 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 266-67.

⁴⁶ William Osgoode to Peter Russell, 6 October 1798, *ibid.* 2: 273-74.

corruption and embezzlement emerged against some officers.⁴⁷ But for R.G. England, more pressing issues confronted him. Faced with seeing both his garrison and settlements near Detroit become “much distressed,” England ordered that all Canadian flour intended for American posts and settlements be stopped at Fort Miami and returned to Detroit. George McDougall, became the primary target of the Lieutenant Colonel’s proclamation.

British officials, like R.G. England, had few reasons to admire McDougall. Shortly after Fallen Timbers, McDougall began to trade with the new American forts. His growing business with American officers and his privileged treatment at the Treaty of Greenville had garnered the ire of many of his colleagues, some of whom had been turned away by Anthony Wayne when they arrived at the treaty. Upon returning to Detroit after the council, he faced sharp critiques from his peers, to which he reportedly responded with a “swagger” and threatened to sue “any man who would dare defame him.”⁴⁸ Although many merchants viewed him as a turncoat, many also probably felt pangs of jealousy for his new lucrative business. R.G. England probably wanted kill two birds with one stone—punish a turncoat and secure flour. Twelve miles southeast of Fort Miami, British soldiers confiscated McDougall’s corn and flour. McDougall lashed back, describing this treatment as not “altogether legal.”⁴⁹ British officials agreed and R.G. England received a rebuke from E.B. Littlehales who concurred that the Lieutenant Colonel

⁴⁷ See Lord Dorchester to J.G. Simcoe, 11 April 1796, John McNabb to Robert Pratt, 19 May 1796, and J.G. Simcoe, to Lord Dorchester, 23 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 241-42, 269-70, 273-74.

⁴⁸ Edmund Burke to E.B. Littlehales, 14 August 1795, *ibid.* 4: 62-63.

⁴⁹ Estimates of how much corn and flour were taken varied. One report cited 2,000 weight while another claimed it to be 4,000 weight. Major William Winston to Major General Anthony Wayne, 2 March 1796, William Winston Papers; E.B. Littlehales to R.G. England, 29 April 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 252.

had engaged in an “illegal measure” by confiscating McDougall’s grain.⁵⁰ On June 1, Simcoe also sent England a letter reminding him of Jay’s Treaty.⁵¹ To remedy the situation, his commanders ordered Lieutenant Colonel England to pay the trader the “usual price” for his flour as reparations.⁵² After this incident, McDougall continued his business as one of the most important sub-contractors supplying forward American forts, even after the transfer of control of British forts to the Americans.⁵³

Rising prices also put a strain on military budgets. John McGill, Agent of Purchases for Upper Canada, reported to the Lieutenant Governor on May 30 that Fort Niagara had a deficiency of 99,429 lbs. of flour, not counting the 135,898 lbs. the fort had loaned to the areas settlers and was still owed by them. That deficiency, he claimed, forced him to purchase flour “at a high price, without leaving [him] the alternative of a refusal.”⁵⁴ Free trade had drastically increased government costs in Upper Canada.

Still, the Upper Canadian economy continued to grow even after the British handover of forts south of the Great Lakes. Article two of Jay’s Treaty stipulated that Britain remove all troops and handover all posts south of the Great Lakes in accordance with Treaty of Paris (1783), which ended the Revolutionary War.⁵⁵ Despite the fact that Wayne and others developed

⁵⁰ R.G. England to E.B. Littlehales, 24 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 275.

⁵¹ J.G. Simcoe to R.G. England, 1 June 1796, *ibid.* 4: 285.

⁵² E.B. Littlehales to R.G. England, 29 April 1796, *ibid.* 4: 252.

⁵³ Colonel James Francis Hamtramck to Major William Winston, 9 June 1796, and General Anthony Wayne to Major William Winston, 5 September 1796, William Winston Papers.

⁵⁴ McGill goes on to note that the 99,429 lbs. of flour “would have victualled [sic] 1,500 men for 156 days or 1,000 men for 236 days.” John McGill to J.G. Simcoe, 30 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 284.

⁵⁵ “Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation,” in *Treaties and other International Acts of the United States of America*, v. 2.

elaborate supply plans for Detroit and the other British forts by way of the Ohio River, carrying those plans into practice proved more difficult than originally conceived. Wayne wanted to rely almost exclusively on water transportation to advance supplies, a plan that rested on the ability of contractors to furnish all supplies by the beginning of March so goods could move when rivers levels rose from the spring rains.⁵⁶ Such thinking was nothing more than chimeric. Not once during the 1790s had contractors demonstrated such timely fulfillment of requisitions. As a result, the American military continued to face the same logistical problems that had become endemic to the military aspect of colonization of the West.

For British officials, the handover of forts created a host of economic and military problems. To fulfill the obligations stipulated in Jay's Treaty, the British needed to evacuate their posts at Ontario (Oswego, NY), Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac and Fort Miami. Yet British officials and traders interested in maintaining the fur trade needed to find a way to draw peltry north of the new borders. "The object," wrote Dorchester, was "to form, within our Frontier a Rendezvous for the Indian Traders . . . where they meet the Merchants . . . , discharge past credits with their Peltries, and receive a fresh supply of goods for the ensuing winter."⁵⁷ In April 1796, British surveyors began to scout sites near Michilimackinac along the shore of Lake Huron to establish another post in competition with the Americans after the handover.⁵⁸ Later that month they established Post St. Joseph on the Island of St. Joseph, located where Lake Superior empties into Lake Huron.

⁵⁶ Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 19 September 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 96.

⁵⁷ Lord Dorchester to the Duke of Portland, 16 April 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 246.

⁵⁸ George Beckwith to William Doyle, 11 April 1796, *ibid.* 4: 243.

A similar process happened near Detroit and Niagara. As the handover approached, Detroit merchants petitioned the British government to purchase land from local tribes, specifically in the vicinity of Isle aux Bois Blanc, so as to not lose their business.⁵⁹ But the government had already begun construction of Fort Malden (Amherstburg) opposite Isle aux Bois Blanc in anticipation of the evacuation of Detroit.⁶⁰ There, planners spent more than £267 to construct a council room to encourage Native Americans to trade and meet at the new post instead of at Detroit.⁶¹ At Niagara, the British moved to the other side of the Niagara River, mirroring the American position.⁶² The same could not be said for the Forts at Miami and Ontario for which the British constructed no new forts. Instead, British posts at Navy Hall and Kingston had additional blockhouses and storehouses erected to absorb the men and material of these dissolved forts.⁶³

The transfer of forts from British to American control took place peacefully during the summer of 1796. Though not in attendance, Wayne reported to Secretary of State James McHenry on July 11 that the United States had taken possession of Forts Miami and Detroit.⁶⁴ Within two weeks of the handover of these two forts, Wayne realized the newly stationed garrisons lacked enough provisions to supply themselves and a large number of Native

⁵⁹ J.G. Simcoe to Lord Dorchester, 5 June 1796, *ibid.* 4: 289.

⁶⁰ Memorandum by Lieutenant Colonel Gother Mann, 4 November 1795, and R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 16 December 1795, *ibid.* 4: 123, 159.

⁶¹ James Green to Hector MacLean, 19 January 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 67.

⁶² J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 27 February 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 201.

⁶³ Memorandum by Lieutenant Colonel Gother Mann, 4 November 1795, and R.G. England to J.G. Simcoe, 16 December 1795, *ibid.* 4: 123.

⁶⁴ Anthony Wayne to James McHenry, 11 July 1796, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 25; Colonel James Francis Hamtramck to Major William Winston, 11 July 1796, William Winston Papers.

Americans living near Detroit. Until that moment, British stores had supplemented their diet, now Native American refugees looked to American officials to continue supporting them. For “principles of Humanity as well as good policy,” he stated, “we must feed them [the Native Americans] for the present.” To complicate matters further, troops instructed to go to Fort Michilimackinac lacked an adequate supply of meat.⁶⁵ James O’Hare, a former Quartermaster General who became an army contractor in 1796, wrote to Lieutenant Governor Simcoe requesting that Upper Canada “grant a loan of pork” so the transfer of control of Michilimackinac could occur without delay. Simcoe approved this request but remained befuddled as to where he could find spare pork to send. Depending on the state of each repositories stores, he suggested Isle aux Bois Blanc, Mackinac, or Niagara.⁶⁶

Although the political transfer of power passed peacefully from British to American hands, a moderate degree of social and economic disruption occurred in Detroit. The removal of British power in Detroit paved the way for former political and economic outsiders to rise in rank. Smaller merchants vied to reap material benefits from a new political power. Former military commander R.G. England despised the “Honors conferred on some of *my Acquaintances* there,” adding that he did not “imagine that those new *created Gentlemen* will add much to the Society of Detroit.”⁶⁷ To ascertain loyalty, merchants who intended to remain British subjects needed to submit their names to British commanders and swear allegiance to the crown.⁶⁸ In Detroit, British loyalists occasionally circulated anti-American letters and raised strife in the

⁶⁵ Anthony Wayne to James McHenry, 22 July 1796, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 28.

⁶⁶ J.G. Simcoe to R.G. England, 20 July 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 342.

⁶⁷ General England to Jno Askin, 24 April 1797, *Askin Papers*, 2: 108 (original emphases).

⁶⁸ J. Askin to D.W. Smith, 26 August 1797, *ibid.* 2: 120.

streets.⁶⁹ Despite social wrangling for economic and social gain, older merchants who already possessed the means to support the new American garrisons benefited the most from this transfer of power. John Askin remained a loyal British merchant, but still filled contracts that supported American garrisons in the region.⁷⁰ Because he remained “on a very good footing” with key American administrators, they awarded him a license to operate a ferry across the Detroit River, which further facilitated the movement of goods from Upper Canada to the American garrison.⁷¹ When it came to the new political order of the Lakes region, economics trumped nationalism.

British farmers and merchants found the lure of American business attractive. Because forward forts and settlements could not readily supply themselves, British products filled the gaps. During the winter of 1798, American agents purchased surplus flour near Amherstburg to supplement deficiencies.⁷² As the United States and France threatened war during that summer, farmers and merchants refrained from selling their corn and flour, hoping that they could exact higher prices from American agents.⁷³ War did not come to pass, but Upper Canadian farmers and merchants celebrated an increasing number of stills constructed on the American side of the Lakes. By 1799, American distilled so much Upper Canadian grain into whiskey that the price of those crops began to rise.⁷⁴ Reports from Presque Isle suggested nearly sixteen stills had been

⁶⁹ Mathew Ernest (A Memorial or Petition from Several Magistrates [sic] &ca of Detroit) to Colonel Sargent, 13 March 1797, *ibid.* 2: 114.

⁷⁰ See for example, Robt Hamilton to Jno Askin, 28 October 1798, and Jno Askin’s Agreeemt to take no Advantage of the United States sending for what was lost from the *Annette*, 13 October 1799, *ibid.* 2: 148, 255.

⁷¹ John Askin to Col. DePeyster, 5 January 1799, and Ferry Licence [sic] for John Askin Esquire, 1 February 1798, *ibid.* 2: 129-30, 174.

⁷² John McGill to James Green, 22 February 1798, and John McGill to James Green, 21 March 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 100, 126.

⁷³ John McGill to James Green, 23 May 1798, *ibid.* 2: 157.

⁷⁴ John McGill to James Green, 18 February 1799, *ibid.* 3: 112-13.

erected there by 1803 with many more at several other points along both shores of Lake Erie. Such consistent production of whiskey meant that wheat farmers had a regular “vent” for their crops.⁷⁵

Although the Upper Canadian economy dominated the larger Lakes economy, British merchants did not hold a monopoly on this growing border trade. Soon after Fallen Timbers, New Yorkers began driving cattle to British markets at Niagara. For Simcoe, a strengthened economy on the American shore only meant good news for his colonial government. Not only did American competition drive down prices on British cattle, but he argued that silver paid to Americans in that transaction did not leave Canada. Instead, Americans often purchased horses reared in Lower Canada, maintaining the colonial supply of specie.⁷⁶ When specie ran short, merchants used barter to maintain their businesses, a scenario that drained an economy of its energy.⁷⁷ Simcoe went further in his claims, arguing that when American grains entered the Canadian market, it would increase supply and reduce costs, making the filling of the King’s stores easier and cheaper to accomplish.⁷⁸

Although Simcoe’s predictions did not become manifest in the short term, it appears that more Americans from the mid-Atlantic states entered into the Upper Canadian market. A rough, semi-contiguous road from Niagara to Detroit facilitated this trade. David Zeisberger, who lived

⁷⁵ Alex Grant to Jno Askin, 17 May 1803, *Askin Papers*, 2: 390.

⁷⁶ Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk, noted that “some people . . . import Canadian Horses” in 1804. 21 February 1804, *Lord Selkirk’s Diary, 1803-1804, A Journal of His Travels in British North America and the Northeastern United States*, ed. Patrick C.T. White (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1958), 234.

⁷⁷ At one point, Portland proposed implementing a “Corn Rent” rather than a “Rent in Money” because of the lack of specie. See, Peter Russell to Robert Prescott, 26 May 1798, and The Duke of Portland to Peter Russell, 5 November 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 162, 301; Jno Askin to Jams & Andw McGill, 15 May 1800, & Robt Nichols to Jno Askin, 25 July 1801, *Askin Papers*, 2: 293, 353.

⁷⁸ J.G. Simcoe to George Rose, 21 October 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 138-39.

on the road where it passed through the Moravian settlement Fairfield, could not help but comment on the growing traffic that brought an increasing number of “White people” to what had been, prior to the end of the war, a relatively isolated area. “Hardly a day passes that some or more do not come here.”⁷⁹ He attributed an expanding number of people using the road for trade to the comparatively high cost of water travel between the Detroit and Niagara, caused in part by poor portage around Niagara Falls.⁸⁰ At the local level, these roads eased transportation for smaller traders seeking to extend their narrow trade. The Moravian community benefited from their trade with neighboring settlements and Detroit. Thus they often worked to maintain and improve the road, even going so far as to construct a bridge to ease travel.⁸¹ These local efforts likewise fostered the growing economy along the entirety of the route.

For Americans living in New York and Pennsylvania, this Upper Canadian road eased costs associated with transportation to Detroit. By traveling north to Niagara and then southwest to Detroit, mid-Atlantic merchants and drovers avoided the burden of moving man and beast over the often craggy Appalachians to Pittsburgh. Early in March 1796, Zeisberger noted one of the first Americans he saw pass along the road, a lawyer who had purchased land in Detroit.⁸² Soon thereafter others came. In December, three New York City merchants passed on the road, trying to buy up as much corn as possible to sell in food-strapped Detroit.⁸³ And in July the following summer, men from Wyoming (later, Wilkes-Barre), Pennsylvania stopped by their

⁷⁹ 16 May 1797, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 483.

⁸⁰ 2 October 1795, *ibid.* 2: 422.

⁸¹ See for example, road work done during 3-15 December 1792, and 2-9 January 1798, and bridge building 13 & 30-31 January 1797, *ibid.* 2: 289-90, 471, 474, 510-11.

⁸² 1 March 1796, *ibid.* 2 :439.

⁸³ 19 December 1796, *ibid.* 2: 467.

community on their way to Detroit to sell the cattle they were driving.⁸⁴ Despite these examples, it would be unfair to characterize the direction of trade as exclusively east to west because certainly British merchants from near Detroit explored trade to Albany and beyond.⁸⁵ The peace and stability of the postwar period, in combination with the varied success in terms of internal developments in Upper Canada had begun to tie the Lakes economy to New York and the East. The building of the Erie Canal, some twenty years later, elaborated on these earlier economic connections.

IV. Roads, Government and Economy

Until the onset of the canal era, rivers and roads drove the western economy. By the middle of the 1790s, rivers undoubtedly stood as the preeminent highways of the West. But after Wayne's campaign, the federal government began to invest in road construction. These internal improvements in the Ohio Valley began to reorient the future of that regional economy. If lake and river transport tied together the Lakes border economy, then rivers and post roads bound the Ohio River Valley economy.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, several types of roads existed in the West. Common rural roads linked farms to their local town center. Individual farmers, their neighbors, and at times communities built these hastily constructed roads to carry crops and domestic manufactures to market, merchant and mill. Because farmers wished to devote most of their efforts to their own pursuits, they committed little time to road upkeep. Only when severe

⁸⁴ 7 July 1797, and 20 September 1797, *ibid.* 2: 489, 495.

⁸⁵ 24 September 1797, *ibid.* 2: 495.

ruts and overgrowth made these routes impassible did farmers make efforts to clear them.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, these roads provided the embryonic linkages that ultimately helped spark the regional economy.

In addition to these rural roads, privately funded turnpikes also carried commerce. Here, individuals invested in corporately built roads. Although fewer in number than country roads, turnpikes provided important connections between larger communities. Planners made these roads wider than country roads, but poor management and use made them only marginally better. Moreover, because using these roads required payment of a toll, cash-strapped farmers could not access turnpikes without incurring greater costs or debt.⁸⁷

Other investors built roads to improve the value of their land warrants. In March 1796, Ebenezer Zane petitioned Congress to build a road that would connect Wheeling, Virginia, to two growing markets in the Ohio Valley. The road led to the Scioto River (near present day Chillicothe) at which point it split. One road passed to a spot across from Limestone, Kentucky, where travelers could take a ferry across the river to another road that carried travelers and merchandise to the heart of the Bluegrass Region. The second road from the Scioto proceeded to Fort Washington and Cincinnati. Cincinnati represented the southern most point in Ohio of a growing economic corridor that stretched north along the route Wayne reconstructed during his campaign. For his efforts, Zane wanted no “compensation for his trouble, nor any reimbursement of his expenses,” except to have his land warrants fall along his proposed route.⁸⁸ On May 17, 1796, Congress approved an act granting Zane three tracts of land no larger than one

⁸⁶ Taylor, *Transportation Revolution*, 15-16.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁸ Petition to Congress by Ebenezer Zane, 25 March 1796, *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, v. II, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1934), 551.

square-mile each on the Muskingum, Hockhocking and Scioto Rivers. The road passed through those grants and ferries would be established at those crossings.⁸⁹ Zane completed this road—Zane’s Trace—during the next couple years.

Seeking to develop their own economies, individual states also made initiatives to fund the construction of roads and improve navigation of their rivers. During the 1780s and 1790s, the heart of the Kentucky economy beat in the Bluegrass Region. But before the state began financing its own internal improvements, few routes easily carried goods to market.

Transportation to the north proved especially important because of the financial impetus created by the wars against the northern confederacy, which bolstered the Kentucky economy. Roads constructed to Cincinnati and the clearing of rivers for the purpose of supplying the war made transportation easier, especially compared to country roads. In fact, efforts to transport goods north preceded state efforts to construct roads designed to carry goods and people along an east-west axis.⁹⁰ But these roads also proved crucial because they complemented seasonal river travel. River travel depended on winter run-off and rains during the spring and fall. During these periods, many roads became hazardous or impassable because of the mud. Conversely, during dry summers and frozen winters, rivers ran too low while roads hardened. Between river and land routes, the Ohio Valley ensured transportation routes less dependent on seasonal weather patterns.⁹¹

In the end, federally funded post roads became even more important to the Ohio Valley than either country, state-funded, and private roads. Some of these roads followed and improved

⁸⁹ Act of 17 May 1796, ch. 28, 6 *Stat.*, 27.

⁹⁰ See Chapter Two.

⁹¹ Louis C. Hunter, “Studies in the Economic History of the Ohio Valley: Seasonal Aspects of Industry and Commerce before the Age of Big Business, The Beginnings of Industrial Combination,” *Smith College Studies in History*, 19, (October, 1933-January 1934), 24-25.

already existing country roads while others cut into fresh forests. Initial post roads, especially in the West, could be compared to country roads. Narrow and rough, planners designed road to minimize cost and allow foot, horse and sulky travel.⁹² But as towns and the demand for mails grew, so too did use of the roads. In 1805, Postmaster General Gideon Granger recommended to the Senate that post roads in Ohio and Kentucky be improved to better connect the West to Pennsylvania and Virginia.⁹³ This increased traffic necessitated construction of better and wider roads to accommodate stages and covered wagons.

Some early post roads accomplished the impressive task of linking the Ohio Valley to the east. One route began in Pittsburgh, went west to Wheeling, Virginia and then traveled southwest to Limestone (Maysville), Kentucky, with the last leg of the road ending at Fort Washington.⁹⁴ But other post roads made valuable connections between growing town centers, first primarily in the Bluegrass Region. The initial jagged web of post roads, constructed between 1792 and 1794, connected Bardstown, Danville, Frankfort and Lexington to the Ohio River via another post road to Limestone (Maysville).⁹⁵ By 1800, Richmond, Washington, Lancaster, Versailles, Shelbyville and Louisville entered a federally funded transportation web. By 1802, post roads eased commerce between the above mentioned Kentucky towns as well as Marietta, Chillicothe, Cincinnati in Ohio and Vincennes in Indiana Territory. Post roads even linked communities as far away as Kaskaskia and Cahokia on the Mississippi River. Likewise, the web of roads extended from the Bluegrass south into Tennessee, drawing that market into the

⁹² Richard B. Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700-1860* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989).

⁹³ "Mail Stages or Covered Wagons," 28 December 1803, *American State Papers, Post Office*, 1: 29.

⁹⁴ Act of 8 May 1794, ch. 23, 1 *Stat.*, 355.

⁹⁵ Act of February 20, 1792, ch. 7, 1 *Stat.*, 233; Act of 8 May 1794, ch. 23, 1 *Stat.*, 355, 356.

commercial embrace of the Ohio Valley.⁹⁶ The importance of the post roads cannot be underestimated. By 1810, one could travel thousands of miles to every major city and town from Pittsburgh to the Mississippi River, from Dayton, Ohio, to Nashville, Tennessee, and visit hundreds of smaller towns on and out of the way without ever stepping off a post road. By 1815, 2,158 miles of post roads connected 85 post offices in Kentucky, and 2,778 miles of road linked 134 post offices in Ohio. To the west, longer roads reached to established settlements. About 609 miles of post roads extended to only sixteen post offices in Indiana Territory, and 388 miles did so for a mere nine postal centers in Illinois Territory.⁹⁷

Post roads became especially important in the Ohio Valley because of the inconsistency of river travel, which made the use of post roads more necessary and efficient than in other parts of the country, even after the spread of steam boats.⁹⁸ The pattern of post roads in the West further illustrates this point. Whereas postal routes connecting communities in eastern states primarily ran north-south with few east-west crossroads, in the West, east-west routes became much more common. “Cross-roads are now established so extensively,” overstated Postmaster Joseph Habersham in 1801, “that there is scarcely a village, court house or public place of any consequence but is accommodated with the mail.”⁹⁹ The federal government, fearful of western secession because of a lack of adequate economic connections between the regions, installed east-west post roads as a means to foster literal and abstract connections to eastern markets and

⁹⁶ Act of 23 April 1800, ch. 32, 2 *Stat.*, 43-44; Act of 3 March 1801, ch. 35, 2 *Stat.*, 126; Act of 3 May 1802, ch. 48, 2 *Stat.*, 190-91; Act of 26 March 1804, ch. 34, 2 *Stat.*, 276; Act of 24 April 1806, ch. 55, 2 *Stat.*, 409; Act of 23 April 1808, ch. 56, 2 *Stat.*, 491; Act of 28 April 1810, ch. 30, 2 *Stat.*, 584-85.

⁹⁷ “Statement of the Number of Post Offices in Each State, Produce of Postages, &c for Six Months,” 28 February 1815, *American State Papers, Post Office*, 1: 48.

⁹⁸ Taylor, *Transportation Revolution*, 149.

⁹⁹ Joseph Habersham, n.d., 1801, Book K, 343, Letter Books of the Postmaster General, quoted in Wesley Everett Rich, *The History of the United States Post Office to the Year 1829* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924), 92.

the government in Philadelphia. Federal tax funds allowed a greater number of and more expensive projects to be constructed than was permitted by meager purses of state and local governments. The use of federal funds for internal improvements also freed state and local governments from that responsibility and allowed them to allocate their money to other uses.

The insertion of the Post Office into the West also meant that federal dollars flowed into the region. When the postal officials decided to create a mail service down the Ohio River from Wheeling to Limestone in 1794, they hired Ohio Valley entrepreneurs and shipwrights to build boats.¹⁰⁰ Postmaster General Timothy Pickering contracted with agents in Pittsburgh to construct three boats to be used at different legs of the route. Although Pittsburgh produced the first boats, their crews came from Marietta.¹⁰¹ By the turn of the century, Marietta had become the shipbuilding center of the Ohio Valley and its economy rested on many of the secondary industries associated with that industry, such as rope and iron-making, as well as carpentry.¹⁰² The delivery of mails also meant that the federal government needed to make contracts for individuals to carry letters and packages. Riders hired to carry the mail also needed to take an oath of office.¹⁰³ Few these routes proved more lucrative than the one from Louisville to Kaskaskia. John Rice Jones, who also tried to become Deputy Postmaster at Vincennes, received this contract for \$600 per year to carry the mail once every four weeks between these two towns.¹⁰⁴ Additional money came to the region to supply post offices and their employees

¹⁰⁰ Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to Major Isaac Craig, 24 May 1794, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 481-82.

¹⁰¹ Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to Major Isaac Craig, 7 June 1794, *ibid.* 2: 483-84.

¹⁰² Cayton and Riggs, *City into Town*, 51.

¹⁰³ Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to George Mitchell, 20 June 1794, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 484-85.

¹⁰⁴ Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to John Edgar, 29 November 1799, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 70-71; Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to Washington Johnston, 21 March 1800, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 78-79.

with necessary equipment. Post riders of course needed horses, saddle bags, portmanteaux, sulkies and a host of other items.¹⁰⁵

Federal and state officials understood well what came with road construction in the West—ancillary benefits. Although delivery of the mail represented the core reason to build these roads, they also provided improved and regularly maintained routes that allowed travel and transport between major town centers free of charge. With the federal government shouldering both the financial burden and risk of road construction, merchants and other businessmen could transport and trade at a reduced cost to themselves. Postmaster General Gideon Granger argued in 1803, “The increase of our population, agriculture and commerce, and the consequent increase of intercourse between our citizens, and of travel to and from different States, and distant parts of the same State,” among other factors, “evinced the propriety of giving every reasonable encouragement to . . . establishing and supporting regular lines of public carriage.”¹⁰⁶ Granger’s predecessor, Joseph Habersham, recommended that the federal government not spend money on unprofitable post routes in the East, but rather that they do so in the West. By the middle of the 1790s, Postmasters General realized the benefit of extending service to “remote” areas. Habersham noted that “the aid of public roads will be a public benefit in all its [sic] respects of such magnitude as cannot escape the observations of every legislator.”¹⁰⁷ The use of a public road would increase the population of that outlying area, eventually making “unproductive” post routes profitable. Granger reiterated this general point in 1810 while remarking on unproductive routes that had not been discontinued. “The steady increase of postage received from the

¹⁰⁵ Postmaster General [Timothy Pickering] to George Mitchell, 20 June 1794, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 484-85.

¹⁰⁶ “Mail Stages or Covered Wagons,” 28 December 1803, *American State Papers, Post Office*, 1: 29.

¹⁰⁷ Joseph Habersham, n.d., 1796, Book F, p. 59, Letter Books of the Postmaster General, quoted in Rich, *The History of the United States Post Office to the Year 1829*, 92.

interior,” he argued, “furnishes a reasonable ground to believe that, at a period not very distant, the revenue to be from thence derived will equal the expense of the route, except the great connecting lines which are essential to Government.”¹⁰⁸ In no uncertain terms, federal dollars helped drive the growth of the western economy by reducing entrepreneurial risk and cost, while also dumping specie into the region, thereby bolstering trade and manufacturing.

Some post routes in the Ohio Valley did not provide an immediate spark of growth at their termini for which initial planners had hoped. But enough growth came with road construction that it remained financially feasible for the Post Office to establish unprofitable post offices in remote places based solely on projected growth of those villages. This insight often proved correct. Roads not only connected points of settlement, they also helped shape patterns of settlement.¹⁰⁹ New settlers often attempted to take advantage of new and improved roads by homesteading in proximity to the transportation grid. In this way, post roads and the Post Office not only supported the mail, it also fostered an emerging market economy while ultimately making a profit for the federal agency. Much as canals and railroads later transformed the way goods went to market and the economy, post roads contributed remarkably to the emerging market economy of the Ohio Valley.

The success of post roads in helping attract settlers and improve the western economy led the federal government to expand its efforts. On May 1, 1802, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to open “such roads within the territory northwest of the river Ohio, as in his opinion will best serve to promote the sales of the public lands in [the] future.”¹¹⁰ Within two

¹⁰⁸ “Revision of the Post Office Laws,” 22 February 1810, *American State Papers, Post Office*, 1: 42.

¹⁰⁹ Laurence J. Malone, *Opening the West: Federal Internal Improvements before 1860* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), 71-72.

¹¹⁰ Section 5, Act of 1 May 1802, ch. 44, 2 *Stat.*, 180.

months, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin arranged for six roads to be opened in the eastern Ohio Territory. The first road linked Steubenville and Chillicothe. The second road linked the salt springs on the Scioto to that first road. The third ran from opposite Grave Creek (present day Moundsville, West Virginia) to Lancaster and then to the Scioto River. The fourth connected Marietta to the growing communities near Wheeling. The fifth and sixth roads led from Steubenville. One of these went to the area around present-day Youngstown and the other extended to the northwest corner of the Seven Ranges.¹¹¹ To encourage emigration as well as trade, Gallatin ordered that three roads emanating from Steubenville should be “20 feet wide at least, fit for a wagon with a common load to travel.” To whomever received the contract, the federal government would pay as much as six dollars per mile.¹¹² Gallatin also began to inquire among prominent merchants about which other roads should be opened to “most unite general utility to the Inhabitants, and best promote the sale of lands.”¹¹³ With the Post Office and the Secretary of the Treasury helping to develop the western roads, the federal government committed itself to shaping the future of the West.

In contrast to the United States, Britain did not support extensive, empire-directed, road construction in the Canadian West. After acquiring Canada from France as a result of the Seven Years War, Britain established a postal system that connected the lower thirteen colonies to the newly acquired French territory. Even prior to the American Revolution, British officials had largely focused on improving post routes along a north-south axis from Boston to Savannah. Mails to Lower Canada traveled along an old Native American road from New York north to

¹¹¹ Secretary of the Treasury [Albert Gallatin] to David Hodge, 28 June 1802, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 234-35.

¹¹² Secretary of the Treasury [Albert Gallatin] to David Hodge, 28 June 1802, *ibid.* 3: 235.

¹¹³ Secretary of the Treasury [Albert Gallatin] to the Register [Israel Ludlow] and Receiver [James Findlay] of the Land Office at Cincinnati, 28 June 1802, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 236; Secretary of the Treasury [Albert Gallatin] to Rufus Putnam, 26 June 1802, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 233-34.

Albany, then along roads that ran parallel to Lake Champlain, and finally north to Montreal.¹¹⁴ The Revolution disrupted this pathway, forcing Canada to build a road connecting Quebec and Montreal to a new mail port-of-entry, Halifax. But the long, difficult land journey from Halifax to the St. Lawrence proved too expensive for the empire.¹¹⁵ After the Treaty of Paris (1783), British officials worked with their former colonies to resume mail transport through New York and along the old pathway, rather than building a Canadian infrastructure.¹¹⁶ In 1792, the two sides reached an agreement.¹¹⁷ The United States allowed sealed British mails to travel through New York, for a fee. Mails first arrived in the hands of an American postal agent who then passed the sealed mail to a British agent who then carried it north across the border.

Once in Canada, mails passed slowly along postal routes little improved since the days of French occupation.¹¹⁸ Despite the age and condition of these roads, Canadian postal routes demonstrated their profitability. But, in many ways, the deputy postmaster felt hamstrung by a British bureaucracy that required new routes to generate an immediate profit to cover expenses associated with its construction.¹¹⁹ Unlike in the United States, settlements largely needed to precede imperially funded infrastructure. By the 1810s, only rudimentary post roads connected Upper Canada to settlements along the St. Lawrence River.¹²⁰ Even country roads suffered in the Canadian West, relative to the Ohio Valley, because few laws existed to compel residents to

¹¹⁴ William Smith, *The History of the Post Office in British North America, 1639-1870* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1920), 1, 37, 42-43.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 76-77, 86, 88.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 101, 103, 104.

build or maintain roads.¹²¹ In part because the extension of post roads to the West moved at a snail's pace, Upper Canada did not experience comparable population and economic growth as the Ohio Valley.

Still, several thoroughfares nevertheless wound their way through the Canadian West. By and large the military constructed these roads to improve their supply network. Even after the Canadian government made efforts to encourage emigrants to settle along these roads, many officials and civilians viewed them as "military ways."¹²² But increasingly during the 1790s, the Upper Canadian government attempted to place settlers on land along existing roads and build new roads to cultivate economic improvement.¹²³ In January 1798, Peter Russell, *ex officio* President of Upper Canada, began to make concerted efforts to settle Yonge Street, which ran due north from York to Lake Simcoe.¹²⁴ John Graves Simcoe had built Yonge Street but threats of war had prohibited him from developing this newly accessed area. Russell felt that in order to secure the economic stability of the growing Upper Canadian capital of York (Toronto) which he felt was too isolated from other settlements, the territory south of Lake Simcoe needed to be developed. "The Isolated situation of York, surrounded either by Water or an unsettled Country makes me anxious to open Roads with as little delay as possible . . . ," he explained, "that we may facilitate the supplies of Provisions . . . and thereby lessen the enormous Prices of them."¹²⁵

¹²¹ Ibid., 102-3.

¹²² Minutes of the Executive Council, 9 March 1799, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 3: 137; Minutes of the Executive Council, 24 November 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 323.

¹²³ See for instance, Minutes of the Executive Council, 22 December 1798, *ibid.* 3: 40-41, 137.

¹²⁴ Peter Russell to Robert Prescott, 21 January 1798, *ibid.* 2: 70.

¹²⁵ Peter Russell to Robert Prescott, 28 May 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 163; Peter Russell to the Duke of Portland, 21 March 1798; *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 123.

Where the imperial government failed make improvements, the provincial government stepped in.

Upper Canadian provincial authorities believed that the region's economy would only improve by building settlements along pre-established routes. Especially near newer settlements, roads continued to be "in such a deplorable state of neglect, that the farmers cannot bring their produce to Market . . . excepting by Water."¹²⁶ For this reason, David William Smith, Surveyor General for Upper Canada, encouraged settlements along larger military roads, especially Yonge Street, Dundas Street, and the Kingston Road. Upper Canadian officials did not force settlement in isolated areas, but because they issued controlled disbursements of free land grants, they could encourage poorer settlers to occupy lands in sparsely settled areas. Even then laws increasingly required settlers to improve road conditions near their homes. In December 1798, the Executive Council, in an effort to improve settlements and the road along Yonge Street, dictated that all new settlers needed to clear and fence at least five acres, build a "Sufficient dwelling House," and maintain one-half the width of the road in front of their property.¹²⁷ Within a couple months, the Executive Council placed the same terms on land distributed on the Kingston Road through the townships of Leeds, Landsdown, Pittsburgh and Kinston.¹²⁸ Ultimately this plan had little impact on Upper Canadian roads which continued to be rough and poorly maintained.

Nevertheless Upper Canadian provincial officials took several measures to improve their primary thoroughfares. Other than Yonge Street, the Executive Council's primary concern was itself primarily with the condition of an extensive road that stretched from the St. Lawrence

¹²⁶ Peter Russell to the Duke of Portland, 25 November 1798, *ibid.* 2: 327.

¹²⁷ Minutes of the Executive Council, 6 December 1798, *ibid.* 3: 25.

¹²⁸ Minutes of the Executive Council, 4 February 1799, *ibid.* 3: 98-99.

River near Cornwall in the East to Kingston, then to York, across the Grand River to Norwich and then downstream along the River Thames to Amherstburg.¹²⁹ The Council found that such a long road posed a difficult task. To deal with this situation, they earmarked land to be sold to cover the cost of building and maintaining these roads.¹³⁰ They planned to employ idle soldiers, in addition to government agents, to clear fallen timber and smooth roads.¹³¹ To construct and improve roads, they also hired private contractors.¹³² In the end, the Council succeeded in overcoming some obstacles. At some points, workers successfully cleared a road thirty-three feet wide to allow for a great deal of traffic.¹³³ And Upper Canada did experience some growth in their market economy. Unfortunately, a limited financial investment in internal improvements at both the provincial and empire level helped prevent the economy of Upper Canada from expanding at the same pace as along the Ohio Valley.

V. Avenues of Commerce in the Ohio Valley and Beyond

After the Treaty of Greenville, states and territories worked to link themselves to this expanding physical web of commerce in the Ohio Valley. But whether a town or village could enter into this web depended in large part on its location. For established towns in Kentucky and most villages settled in Ohio, only capital and drive stood in the way. For areas lying outside the bounds of the Treaty of Greenville and subsequent treaties, settlers could sometimes find this task more complicated. The Treaty of Greenville allowed Americans “free passage by land and

¹²⁹ Report of the Committee Re Roads to Peter Russell, 1798(?), *ibid.* 3: 46.

¹³⁰ Minutes of the Executive Council, 13 April 1799, *ibid.* 3: 173.

¹³¹ Minutes of the Executive Council, 19 January 1799, *ibid.* 3: 58.

¹³² Minutes of the Executive Council, 26 March, 1799, *ibid.* 3: 157-58.

¹³³ Minutes of the Executive Council, 9 April 1799, *ibid.* 3: 165-66.

by water” through unceded territories in order to better link the chain of posts and forts north of the Ohio River to supply veins.¹³⁴ The treaty failed to legitimize other roads connecting settlements. Instead, it preserved Native American sovereignty in territories not ceded. Because of limitations placed on settlement outside of ceded territory, many new settlers beyond the frontier chose to establish themselves in proximity to American forts where clear lines of transportation already existed. Others did not.

Some settlers erected communities west of the Treaty of Greenville line or squatted on public and private lands. Many of these illegal settlers and squatters, like their predecessors in Kentucky, avowed their preemptive right to the land and despised government supported efforts to remove them. Some of these men preached “hostile intentions” toward the territorial government even though little violence erupted as a result.¹³⁵ Still, government officials in all regions of the country worried about this “Set of men” that Ohio Territorial Governor Winthrop Sargent once referred to as “but little advanced from a State of Nature and owing no Subjection to this Government.”¹³⁶ In an effort to regulate settlement within and without treaty limits, the Ohio territorial government attempted to reign in these “trespassers.”¹³⁷

Federal and territorial officials largely avoided internal rebellion from this “set of men” because internal improvements often attached them quickly into the regional market economy. As Ohio moved toward statehood in 1802, it became clear that settlements in the ceded territory west of the Great Miami River to the mouth of the Kentucky River would be isolated from its

¹³⁴ “The Treaty of Greenville,” *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 562.

¹³⁵ Rufus Putnam to the Secretary of the Treasury [Oliver Wolcott], 30 October 1798, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 654.

¹³⁶ Winthrop Sargent to Liet. Prior, 25 October 1792, *ibid.* 3: 386.

¹³⁷ Governor St. Clair to the Secretary of State, n.d., 1796, *The St. Clair Papers: The Life and Public Service of Arthur St. Clair*, volume II, ed. William Henry Smith (Cincinnati: Robert Clark & Co., 1882), 402.

territorial government. This area had been a part of the Ohio Territory according to the Treaty of Greenville cession. But with Ohio statehood, the land became a section of Indiana Territory. When that happened, William Henry Harrison observed, “The settlements . . . will be totally cut off from a communication with the seat of government [at Vincennes] unless we can have a new road.”¹³⁸ Although roads there already connected settlements to Cincinnati and other places to the east, no roads existed to tie villages like Lawrenceburg directly to the western Indiana Territory economy. Rivers did connect these two points, but creating a road infrastructure had ancillary benefits. The new road accomplished several ends. It connected eastern and western sections of the territory and facilitate the movement of settlers. Also, the erection of stations every twenty-five or thirty miles along the road helped legitimize small settlements in unceded territories and encouraged the expansion of a market economy to lands distant from the rivers.

Any new roads through unceded territory needed to be sanctioned by the several tribes who laid claim to the territory. But not until the Treaty of Grouseland in 1805 did the Miami, Delaware, Eel River, Wea and Potawatomi relinquish to the United States land that connected this eastern set of settlements to Vincennes and other southern Indiana settlements.¹³⁹ By 1807, a network of four roads ran from east to west from the Ohio River to the White and Wabash rivers, with four north to south roads intersecting them between the Wabash and Blue rivers. Harrison noted that these roads provided better security, making “that section of this territory very desirable for settlers.”¹⁴⁰ Ease of travel and access to trade routes did not hurt either.

¹³⁸ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War [Henry Dearborn], 26 February 1802, *Governors Messages and Letters: Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, v. I, 1800-1811, ed. Logan Esarey (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Commission, 1922), 41.

¹³⁹ “A treaty between the United States of America, and the tribes of Indians called the Delawares, Pottawatimies, Miamies, Eel, River, and Weas,” 21 August 1805, *Indian Affairs*, 80.

¹⁴⁰ William Henry Harrison to William Hargrove, 4 November 1807, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1:271.

Most Native Americans understood the effect roads had on American expansion in the region. As the network of roads reached westward during the late 1790s, tribes living just east of the Mississippi river debated the impact of this expansionism. Some Delaware and Shawnee who had already moved west during the warfare of the 1780s and 1790s admitted that new roads being laid out near American posts on the Mississippi River “create[d] great uneasiness” among them.¹⁴¹ Roads facilitated their own trading interests, but along with trade came settlers and new demands for land cessions. Similar debates certainly occurred in eastern villages. For example, in 1808, a body of Ottawa, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Wyandot, and Shawnee chiefs allowed the United States to construct two roads. One helped connect Detroit and the eastern Michigan Territory to the Connecticut Reserve, and the other went from Detroit to southern Ohio. These chiefs almost certainly recognized the impact of this cession, if only by the size of the project the United States meant to undertake. Not only did the United States make each road one hundred twenty feet wide, they also took the land adjacent to the roads, one mile in each direction, for purposes of settlement.¹⁴² Very obviously, the road would link the three sub-economies of the region: western Pennsylvania, Detroit and Upper Canada, and the middle Ohio River Valley. Two months later, President Thomas Jefferson thanked each of these tribes for their cession and reminded them, “Our settlements are now extending so much every direction that we shall be obliged to ask roads from our Indian Brethren, that we may pass conveniently from one

¹⁴¹ Report of Joseph Jackson sent as a Messenger to the Mississippi by order of the late Deputy Superintendent General,” 5 May 1799, William Claus Papers, v. 8 (1797-1803), MG 19/f 1, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

¹⁴² “Articles of a treaty made and concluded at Brownstown, in the territory of Michigan, between William Hull, governor of said territory, superintendent of Indian affairs, and commissioner plenipotentiary of the United States of America, for concluding any treaty or treaties, which may be found necessary, with any of the Indian tribes, North West of the river Ohio, of the one part, and the Sachems, Chiefs, and Warriors of the Chippewa, Ottawa, Pottawatamie, Wyandot, and Shawanoese nations of Indians, of the other part,” 25 November 1808, *Indian Affairs*, 2: 99-100.

settlement to another.”¹⁴³ With these roads, a gateway to settling northwestern Ohio had been opened wide.

In addition to road construction, federal officials facilitated settlement and trade by issuing ferry licenses. Many western roads often crossed rivers difficult to ford expect during dry seasons. To facilitate the movement of people, the territorial government issued licenses for men to operate ferries. Some of the first applications for ferry licenses came from men wanting to start or continue these services in places such as Cincinnati and Limestone where large numbers of people and goods crossed the Ohio River on a daily basis. Later, other ferries on the Ohio River, especially in Hamilton and Washington counties, reflected the lasting economic connection between the two states. Still other ferries conveyed people and goods across the Muskingum, Scioto, the Great and Little Miami rivers, where they intersected post roads.¹⁴⁴

If the western economy had only just sprouted by 1790, it had blossomed by 1800. That year, 220,955 people, including slaves, inhabited Kentucky.¹⁴⁵ One year later, a census of the Ohio Territory indicated a population of 45,365, including just over 3,000 people living in Wayne County (the county encompassing Detroit and its surrounding settlements).¹⁴⁶ By 1810, Kentucky and Ohio had populations of 406,511 and 230,760, respectively.¹⁴⁷ In southern parts of Ohio, corn, wheat, and rye fields stretched along river valleys and along roads crisscrossing the

¹⁴³ Thomas Jefferson to My Children Chiefs of the Ottaways, Chippeways, Potawatomes, Wyandots, and Shawnese, January 31, 1809, Reel 4, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, 1789-1861, RG 107, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁴ See ferry licenses issued by the territorial governors, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 293, 366, 436-437, 439, 444, 445, 446, 455, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 470, 471, 479, 480, 483, 484, 493, 499, 509, 516, 517, 518, 519, 522.

¹⁴⁵ (2004), Historical Census Browser, Retrieved 26 November 2004, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index/html>.

¹⁴⁶ William Goforth to the President [Thomas Jefferson], 5 January 1802, *Territorial Papers*, 3: 199.

¹⁴⁷ (2004), Historical Census Browser, Retrieved 26 November 2004, from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index/html>.

territory. In the fertile Miami and Scioto River valleys, corn farmers reaped as much as sixty bushels per acre.¹⁴⁸ From 1804 through the War of 1812, cattle raised in the Scioto River Valley not only supported the local economy, they also were sent to markets as far away as Baltimore.¹⁴⁹

A large portion of this interregional trade went to New Orleans. In 1795, Spain retreated from its hostile stance toward the United States and signed the Treaty of San Lorenzo (Pinckney's Treaty). By that treaty, Spain opened the Mississippi River duty-free to American river traffic. Even more importantly, American traders could use New Orleans as a staging depot for transnational and trans-Atlantic trade.¹⁵⁰ By 1802, a year before the United States acquired the Louisiana Territory, nearly \$2.6 million in trade traveled to New Orleans from Kentucky, western Pennsylvania and Ohio. By 1807, this trade had increased to \$5.3 million, and with every passing year, Ohio gained an ever increasing proportion of the region's exports.¹⁵¹ Of all the Ohio Valley goods traveling to New Orleans during the first decade of the nineteenth century, nearly seventy percent traveled to ports outside of the United States, including many in the West Indies, South America, and the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁵² The Ohio Valley economy had stepped into the world.

The rise of a western market economy must be credited in large part to the intervention of the federal government. The arrival of the American military and American settlers in the northern Ohio country fostered an expansion of the Lakes trade. Post roads and other federally

¹⁴⁸ John G. Clark, *The Grain Trade in the Old Northwest* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 13.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁵⁰ Weber, *Spanish Frontier in North America*, 289.

¹⁵¹ Clark, *Grain Trade in the Old Northwest*, 34.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 34-35.

funded roads helped open up the West to settlement, agriculture and commerce. Even in Upper Canada, military roads helped encourage economic development and trade in the Lakes region. As states came into the Union, Congress hoped to pass the responsibility of internal improvements to those individual states. In 1803, when Ohio entered the Union, Congress declared that three percent of proceeds from land sales of would be reverted back to the state for the purpose of constructing roads.¹⁵³ But, not until 1810 did the state use these funds for internal improvements.¹⁵⁴ Although historians have viewed the period from 1800 to 1830 as the great age of turnpikes, most turnpikes were not constructed until after 1810.

When Albert Gallatin suggested to Congress in 1808 that the federal government actively participate in extensive road and canal building, he did so hoping to tie together the commercial regions of the United States. The western economy had grown enough to be integrated into the national economy. He argued that improving the ability to transport goods across regions would increase trade nationally and raise property values along trade routes. Because he drew a national portrait, he neglected to point to the role of federal improvements already underway at the local level.¹⁵⁵ Historians also have failed to see the impact of the federal government on the western economy because they have looked for internal improvements designed ostensibly for improved trade, such as turnpikes, locks, and canals.¹⁵⁶ But few of these efforts existed before 1815. Instead, the federal government influenced the western economy through expenditures where economic impact occurred as an ancillary benefit to the primary agenda. Nevertheless, federal officials recognized this impact as real, as demonstrated by statements made by several

¹⁵³ Section 2, Act of 3 March 1803, ch. 21, 2 *Stat.*, 226.

¹⁵⁴ Malone, *Opening the West*, 25.

¹⁵⁵ Albert Gallatin, "Roads and Canals," *American State Papers, Miscellaneous*, 1: 741.

¹⁵⁶ See for instance, Taylor, *Transportation Revolution*, 18, 157.

Postmasters General and their strategies to expand their agency. Through his previous experiences, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin had seen the impact of federally funded roads both on land sales and the economy. His report sought not to create a new role for the federal government, but rather to expand current trends.

Chapter 5

Defining the Market: State-Directed Assimilation and the Economic Transformation of the Northwest

At the same time that the federal government attempted to improve roads and trade in its newly acquired western territory, it also sought to transform the economy in Native American controlled territory. After the Treaty of Greenville, the United States government established a set of agencies, including the Indian Agency, the factory system, and territorial governments, designed to simultaneously capture the benefits of the Native America semi-sedentary, fur trade economy, while also attempting to transform that economy by encouraging sedentary commercial farming. Some Shawnee, Miami, and Potawatomi chiefs eagerly sought to transform their economies at the village level, while others vocally rejected these federally-directed assimilation programs. At the same time that these government agencies attempted to work with the tribes of the former confederacy, they also attempted to identify and acquire mineral resources from individual tribes, earmarking those properties for commercial exploitation and not common usage by the area's residents. Although by 1807 the United States largely failed to integrate Native American villages into the western market economy, their efforts had spawned reform movements. Unfortunately for American officials, these Native American movements called for a rejection of the American market economy and embraced semi-subsistence economic practices.

Life in the Ohio country began to settle down after 1794. Warriors returned to their families, families moved to new plots of land and planted, and men began to hunt more regularly than they had during the previous few years. The conflict had concentrated men's energies to the tasks of war. Although hunting had continued during the 1790s, men generally killed less game.

Where hunting did occur, such as in the Maumee and upper Wabash River Valley where families concentrated during the early 1790s, game populations came under heavy stress. Elsewhere, winter hunts affected fewer animals than normal. As a result, when warriors began hunting and sorting out new territorial boundaries they often found game populations to be “prodigious.”¹ Most men viewed improved game populations as a boon in the postwar period, especially as they attempted to reestablish their local economies. During the fall of 1795, parties of Delaware attempted to carve out a hunting space for themselves south of the Maumee and Auglaize rivers valleys but met fierce resistance, probably from Shawnee and Wyandot warriors also attempting to find their niche in the new West.² Good hunting followed for several years. After a fall hunt in 1796, Delaware hunters remarked at the large number of deer and bear they killed.³ That same fall, large numbers of animals, perhaps reacting to renewed hunting pressures, moved north away from the Lake Erie and damaged some Upper Canadian agricultural fields.⁴

Despite the recent defeat at Fallen Timbers, many chiefs wanted to encourage traders (British, French and American) to return to their villages. As the Treaty of Greenville came to a close, Little Turtle asked Anthony Wayne to allow a trader to come to Ouiatenon. Wayne acknowledged that the Miami, Wea, and others could independently deal with traders, as long as an agent of the United States issued them a license. In response, Little Turtle and some Wea

¹ J.G. Simcoe to the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Plantations, 1 September 1794, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 55.

² The resistance might have also come from Miami, Wea or Piankshaw hunters, but this scenario seems less likely. 24 & 25 September 1795, *Diary of David Zeisberger*, 2: 421.

³ 1 December 1796, *ibid.* 2: 465.

⁴ 5 October 1796, *ibid.* 2: 459.

chiefs gave Wayne a list of people they wanted licensed as soon as possible.⁵ Even some villages belonging to Kaskaskia in Illinois asked if the United States “might create a small post in that Quarter.” Taking advantage of renewed regional imperial rivalries for trade and territory in the Mississippi River Valley, this Kaskaskian message suggested the Spanish had been attempting to create animosity in their villages toward the United States.⁶ To American territorial officials, aggressive moves by British traders posed a more immediate concern. In an effort not to lose their trade to enterprising American merchants, British traders traveled throughout Illinois and Indiana country, sometimes as close as ten to twenty miles outside of American trading centers, underselling their American counterpart or giving away their goods as gifts. Territorial Governor Arthur St. Clair characterized this strategy as an attempt “to destroy the Credit of our traders, and alienate the Affections of the Savages.”⁷ Imperial contests often meant material benefits to Native American groups willing to play competing powers against each other. If the United States wanted to stretch their colonial influence into the West, plenty of villages would welcome them and gifts of alliance. Rather than trying to compete with established British and French merchants, United States policymakers instead decided to dictate the terms of trade. Hopefully by controlling trade, the United States could more effectively shape the western economy.

For the United States, trade with the region’s Native American population had long been a central issue to American expansionism. Certainly many Americans wanted access to a fur trade dominated by British and French traders. Prior to *Fallen Timbers*, British officials and

⁵ Treaty of Greenville, 30 July 1795, and Supplement to the Treaty of Greenville, *American State Papers*, 1: 577, 578, 583.

⁶ Anthony Wayne to James McHenry, 8 July 1796, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 5: 22.

⁷ Governor Arthur St. Clair to the Secretary of State, 4 May 1795, *Territorial Papers*, 2: 515-16.

traders successfully used their political alliances with local villages to strengthen their economic ties and limit American participation in the region's fur trade. From an American perspective, the British government had used its economic and political connections to manipulate Native Americans into belligerence and thereby incite war. In 1792, Wayne surmised that British "may not directly—[but] I am convinced that they do indirectly stimulate the savages to continue the War."⁸ In the opinion of many American leaders and policymakers, once the United States dominated trade with Native Americans, they could influence their behavior. These two issues—trade and control—could not be separated. "[C]ould the valuable skin and fur trade . . . be diverted to the ports of the United States, instead of Canada," Harrison mused, "it would not only give a handsome emolument to our merchants, . . . but it would also confirm the dependence of the Indians upon us."⁹ Trade brought influence and control, which in turn positively affected trade. As Timothy Pickering prepared instructions in 1795 for American policy toward Native Americans, this vein of thought had changed little. One of the United States' great goals of the post war period was to "gain their permanent confidence and a useful influence over them."¹⁰ In the postwar period, if the United States could control trade in the West, then they could stabilize the region's economy and political order.

As government officials in Philadelphia realized, trade in the West would exist in two forms, public and private. Despite a transfer of political influence in the Ohio country from Britain to the United States, private merchants and traders allied strongly with French and British empires continued to engage Native Americans throughout the region. After 1794, the number of American traders in the region grew enormously and competed for control of Native

⁸ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 24 August 1792, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 1: 61 (original underscores).

⁹ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 19 February 1802, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 38-39.

¹⁰ Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 8 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 29.

American trade. Through the War of 1812, these three groups vied for Native American alliances and furs.

Government controlled trade, both British and American, complemented—and to a certain degree overlapped—this trade. Despite the fact that British military and traders officially withdrew from south of the Great Lakes, both groups worked to maintain a monopoly on the western fur trade. For just that reason, Upper Canada had constructed forts and trading houses in proximity to Detroit, Michilimackinac and Niagara to ensure that established patterns of trade could persist without a great deal of disruption. As a result, Native Americans continued to move furs and goods along well-established trading routes that passed through Upper Canada to the St. Lawrence River valley. Still, Upper Canadian fur traders worried that the United States would attempt to usurp their monopoly. In 1797, reports circulated among British officials that Anthony Wayne had pressured the region's tribes to “look up to [him] as their Father for everything” that they might need.¹¹ Fur traders naturally feared that the United States government meant wrest control of the western economy from them.

Still, the British fort system and its alliances with Native Americans proved resilient. Private Upper Canadian traders continued to trade south of the Great Lakes, and they utilized their newly constructed bases north of the border to draw the fur trade to the Upper Canadian economy. To prevent disruptions in established trade patterns, British diplomats ensured that provisions in Jay's Treaty stipulated that their citizens and Native Americans could “freely” trade across the new international border.¹² In the eyes of British officials, this right amounted to

¹¹ Matthew Elliot to Prideaux Selby, July 1797, Indian Affairs, Deputy Superintendent General's Office, Correspondence 1789-1805, v. 26, RG, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

¹² Article 3, “Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation,” in *Treaties and other International Acts of the United States of America*, v. 2, 1776-1818, ed. Hunter Miller (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931).

more than a trifle. When the United States ratified the Treaty of Greenville, alarms sounded in Upper Canada and across the Atlantic because the eighth clause of that treaty required that traders needed an American issued license to do business with Native Americans. The British Empire might have relinquished its claim to the territory south of the Great Lakes, but that did not necessitate abandoning its trading interests. For Lord Grenville, the contradiction in policy between free trade and licensed trade cast doubts on the “sincerity and good faith” of the United States.¹³ Not until Congress passed an explanatory article that gave supremacy to the third article of Jay’s Treaty did British officials relent, though ultimately British traders needed to be licensed.¹⁴

American officials realized that they needed to regulate trade of all sorts if they were to assert economic control in the region and challenge the British-Native American trading network. Jay’s Treaty offered British merchants relatively unfettered access to trade south of the Lakes, but that did not mean the United State relinquished its right to regulate and limit that trade. Initial Congressional efforts at regulation dealt only with American traders. In 1790, Congress required licenses for all those who intended to trade with Native Americans.¹⁵ But as settlement in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley increased, Congress opened trade by allowing emigrants to do so without a license, but only for necessities and as long as these individuals did not purchase horses from Native Americans.¹⁶

¹³ Lord Grenville to Phineas Bond, 18 January 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 172-173. See also, Lord Dorchester to R.G. England and Alexander McKee, 23 April 1796, and J.G. Simcoe to Alexander McKee, 3 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 249, 258.

¹⁴ J.G. Simcoe to R.G. England, 1 June 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 285.

¹⁵ An act of 22 July 1790, ch. 33, 1 *Stat.*, 137-38.

¹⁶ An act of 1 March 1793, ch. 19, 1 *Stat.*, 329.

Such codes met the needs of American lawmakers only as long as the economies of Upper Canada and the United States did not overlap. After appropriating lands in Ohio via Jay's Treaty and the Treaty of Greenville, regulation became a much more complicated venture. New boundaries needed to be surveyed, not only between the United States and Canada, but also between newly opened United States territory and lands controlled by the former Native American confederacy. As settlement increased in the West, Congress wanted to ensure that settlers and traders would not violate these new borders and break agreements made under the Treaty of Greenville. Additionally, an entire population of alien traders now fell under United States jurisdiction. Congress addressed this problem with laws requiring that all traders—American, British or otherwise—needed a license to trade in Native American territory. It also required fines or confiscation of goods for traders and drovers who violated the American law or the autonomy of any tribe.¹⁷ Much to the dismay of lawmakers and western merchants alike, an expanded federal role in regulating trade and shaping the regional economy proved extraordinarily daunting.

Federal regulation in the West grew around the network of forts established by Wayne during and after the war. Although the United States decommissioned some forts and depots in the Northwest during the years following 1795, the United States nevertheless kept an impressive presence in the region. This network of forts became a launching pad for publicly sponsored trading houses designed to capture Native American furs. In 1796, Congress formally enacted legislation “for the purpose of carrying on a liberal trade with the several Indian nation, within the limits of the United States” on the western and southern frontiers. Under this plan, government paid agents, or factors, operated trading houses for the sole purpose of attracting and

¹⁷ An act of 19 May 1796, ch. 30, 1 *Stat.*, 469-74.

maintaining economic relations with villages in the immediate area of the factory. In an effort to focus the official role of the factors, Congress specifically forbade its agents from engaging in any ancillary trade, either with Native Americans, settlers or other traders.¹⁸ Duties required of factors included oversight of their stores, maintaining well-kept ledgers and helping maintain good relations with their customers. A national supply agent subcontracted orders to eastern and western merchants in order to fill requisitions and stock factories. Merchants supplied goods on credit and, because the federal government financed the trading houses, factors received all the credit they needed.

The role of a trading house agent remained distinct from that of a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, even though the goals of the two officials overlapped. Superintendents held a diplomatic position. They met with chiefs and worked to resolve grievances between various tribes, and also between tribes and settlers. They settled land disputes, offered reparations, monitored for illegal surveying, and looked for settlers trespassing onto unceded lands. Likewise, they monitored Native American movements and reported hostilities to territorial governors and military commanders. But superintendents also prodded chiefs and villages to move toward European patterns of agricultural subsistence, although Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, Wyandot and other tribes in the Lakes region already practiced semi-subsistence agriculture.¹⁹ Agents instructed villagers to abandon hunter-gatherer techniques in favor of a more sedentary lifestyle and a greater emphasis on individual land ownership. Such a transformation required more than the establishment of permanent villages and towns, it meant a reconfiguration of gender roles. Indian agents encouraged men to adopt what had been

¹⁸ An act of 18 April 1796, ch. 13, 1 *Stat.*, 452-53.

¹⁹ Henry Dearborn to William Lyman, 14 July 1801, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824, RG 75, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

traditionally female tasks of agriculture and husbandry.²⁰ Meanwhile, they pushed women to abandon their role in agriculture and to adopt spinning, weaving, and domestic work. To achieve these ends, Congress made sure that each tribe's annuity flowed through the Indian Agency. Agents hoped to gain a greater influence in how annuities would be spent by controlling the flow of money to tribes. Often an agent's ideals of how money should be spent clashed with tribes resistant to changing their subsistence model. To ease this transition to the proposed American system of farming, agents sent blacksmiths to fix tools and weaponry, and instructors to train men and women in their new productive and gender roles.

Factory agents also worked to this end. Items provided by trading houses catered to a Native American demand for manufactured items. After centuries of relationships with the French and later the British empires, Native Americans came to rely upon tools which they could not provide for themselves but used on a daily basis. French and British agents had largely supplied these goods to Native Americans in the Lakes region as a part of a diplomatic reciprocity associated with the middle ground. The United States, however, attempted to limit this type of exchange in favor of commercial trade.²¹ Though political alliances remained an important goal of the American government, federal administrators attempted to divest their government of what it viewed as a charitable role. American officials hoped economic assimilation, rather than gift-giving, would wed Native Americans to the federal government. At factories, Native Americans traded furs, corn, maple sugar, and other products—though factors mostly desired furs because they possessed the greatest value—for manufactured goods. Factors provided ceremonial items such as ribbon, paints and tobacco, domestic tools, such as needles

²⁰ For an in-depth discussion of women's vital role in agriculture, see Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

²¹ Richard White, *Middle Ground*, 470.

and thread, different types of cloth, clothing, knives and kettles, hunting gear such as saddles, powder and shot, as well as agricultural instruments such as hoes and ploughs.

Through this exchange, factors hoped to put individual Native Americans into debt. To encourage hunters to sell their furs at American factories and not to individual traders, the federal government instructed factors sell their goods at cost, underbidding private traders. Even though the United States sold furs on the national and international market, government officials viewed profit as a goal secondary to controlling trade and Native Americans. Instead, the government sought only to recoup the costs of establishing houses, paying agent salaries, and transportation expenses. By prompting Native Americans to become indebted, American policy makers hoped to force them to become, as Thomas Jefferson most forcefully argued, yeoman farmers.²² Policy makers believed that homesteading offered families economic competence compared to their characterization of the Native American economy, which resulted in poverty. Once a Native American man became indebted, policymakers believed he would chose to sedentary farming to pay off the money he owed. With Native Americans in debt and as yeoman farmers, many government officials hoped they would become bound to the United States economically, belligerence would diminish in the West, they would fall away from British influence, and no longer wage expensive war. In addition, the United States might also forgive debts for land cessions. “[W]e shall push our trading houses, and be glad to see the good and influential individuals among them run in debt,” argued Thomas Jefferson, “because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of land.”²³ Westward expansion thereby became a cold war of economic attrition.

²² Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 204-5.

²³ Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 27 February 1803, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 71.

The construction of these factories in the northwest took time. During the late 1790s, the United States constructed its first factories along the southern frontier. Their success among the tribes that would become the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole) led to an expansion of the system to the northwest where Congress likewise hoped tribes would embrace this new economic system. Not until the fall of 1803 did construction begin on buildings to house factors and their stores at Fort Wayne and Detroit.²⁴ Prior to this construction, military supplies and stores attempted to achieve the means and ends of the factory system in the Northwest. Prior to the arrival of agents, Native Americans who wanted to purchase goods needed to appeal directly to fort commanders who managed small Indian stores. In most cases, commanders distributed these goods more as presents of the state than as commodities. With the construction of separate buildings, the factory system began to distance itself from the military. Secretary of War Henry Dearborn ordered a set of two buildings for each factory—a store and a home for the agent—be constructed just over two hundred yards from an associated garrison.²⁵ The distance distinguished the commercial agenda of a factory from the disciplinary and police force represented by military forces. Yet by placing each factory “in full view of the Garrison,” government officials meant for Native Americans not to forget its military presence.

Indian goods traveling to these factories followed two specific routes that tied each of the two western market economies to their eastern counterpart. The first route had become well-worn by settlers and traders. Men and materials beginning their journey in the eastern markets of

²⁴ Henry Dearborn to William Henry Harrison, 29 July 1802, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

²⁵ Dearborn suggested the factory be built about forty rods from the fort. Henry Dearborn to William Wells, 4 June 1802, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore were funneled through Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh. From there, Indian stores and military supplies floated downriver to forts and settlements linked to the Ohio Valley such as Fort Washington, Vincennes and St. Louis. A second, newer route took goods from New York up the Hudson River to Albany. From Albany caravans skirted the southern foothills of the Adirondack Mountains as they traveled up the Mohawk River and west toward the salting settlements at Salina. Salina, located just north of Syracuse, produced more salt at the turn of the century than any other site in the United States.²⁶ Later, the Erie Canal followed a very similar path. From near Salina, convoys then traveled to Lake Ontario where river and lake passage reduced transportation costs compared to transporting goods over land to Fort Black Rock (Buffalo, New York) more than one hundred fifty miles away. Once on the water, ships carried materials to Detroit, the supply hub for American forts along the Great Lakes. Fort Wayne, Michilimackinac, and Chicago, as well as other minor outposts, received their supplies, provisions, and Indian goods from Detroit. These two parallel routes—one across Pennsylvania to the Ohio River, and one across New York to the Great Lakes—supplied two distinct economies in the Northwest. As webs of military roads and post roads expanded, and as settlement increased, these two economies began to merge. But not until the construction of canals in Ohio, along with the completed Erie Canal, did the two become more successfully integrated.

Once factories opened, their operators found Native Americans ambivalent about the American presence. Some factories found success. From 1803 through to the War of 1812, Fort Wayne continued to have one of the most important trading houses after Detroit in the Northwest. Shawnee and Wyandot villagers who lived near the headwaters of the Auglaize,

²⁶ Garnett Laidlaw Eskew, *Salt, the Fifth Element: The Story of a Basic American Industry* (Chicago: J.G. Ferguson and Associates, 1948), 53, 79.

Sandusky and Great Miami Rivers became intimately tied to an American economy that radiated out from that fort.²⁷ The quantity of furs brought in on a yearly basis varied based on manpower available and success of the hunts. From 1804 through 1810, Fort Wayne collected 7,232 deer skins and 46,338 raccoon skins. The price of these furs dropped during the first decade of the nineteenth century. But if a baseline of forty-seven cents for a deer skin and twenty-five cents for a raccoon skin is used—the prices offered in 1809, lowest prices during the decade—then it appears that Native Americans collected more than \$15,000 in cash and credit for these furs at Fort Wayne alone. Other furs, such as bear and otter sold for about two dollars per skin during the same period, but Native Americans brought fewer of these to the fort. Hunters bringing in these furs would have received an additional \$1,340. These figures do not even take into consideration the thousands of beaver, cat, mink, fox wolf and rabbit furs that also passed through Fort Wayne.²⁸ Nor do they reflect the amount of trade passing through the hands independent traders at or in the vicinity of the fort.

Factors hoped to retain customers by attaching men to a cycle of credit and debt that would keep them coming through their shop doors. When men brought furs to the factory, they also purchased items to carry themselves and their villages through the ensuing season. Often, the value of these purchases outweighed the value of the furs they delivered, placing men in debt. On September 10, 1805, John Johnson, the factor at Fort Wayne, reported that different Native Americans owed his Indian factory \$972 for items purchased there on credit. In contrast,

²⁷ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 103.

²⁸ Furs and Peltry Forwarded from Fort Wayne, 14 April 1804, 23 April 1805, 13 May 1806, 17 May/7 June 1807, March/April/May 1808, 1/31 May 1809, May/June 1810, *Fort Wayne: Gateway of the West, 1802-1813*, ed. Bert J. Griswold (Indianapolis: Historical Bureau of the Indiana Library and Historical Department, 1927), 433-34, 435, 453-54, 480-82, 504-7, 563-64, 580-81; An Inventory of Merchandise on Hand at the Fort Wayne Factory, 8 September 1805, 1 July 1806, 6 July 1807, 30 June 1808, 31 March 1809, 5 October 1809, 31 March 1810, *Fort Wayne*, 450-51, 466-67, 499, 533, 550, 578, 607, Average Prices given for Furs and Peltries by the Traders at Fort Wayne, 8 February 1806, *Fort Wayne*, 595.

military officers, traders, and laborers collectively owed \$518.84.²⁹ The following year, “different Indians” had an outstanding balance of \$1,203, more than one-third of the entire debt owed to the Fort Wayne factory. Most of the remaining debt derived from loans made to other factories and government agencies.³⁰

Other Indian factories did not experience the same level of success as Fort Wayne. After 1803, the United States established trading houses in the northwest at Kaskaskia, Chicago and Michilimackinac. When the United States reestablished a trading house at Michilimackinac in 1809, the agent, J.B Varnum became frustrated at the lack of Native Americans in the region. “I have sold but very few goods since I opened the factory,” he reported.³¹ Most Native Americans, he noted, had moved elsewhere and those who remained tended to frequent trading houses at British Fort St. Joseph. Scattered Ojibwa villages near the confluence of Lakes Superior and Michigan preferred to deal with their more longstanding British allies than American newcomers. After 1800, Ojibwa villages south of Saginaw Bay tended to trade with Detroit.³² Despite a reticence by many northern Ojibwa to trade with Americans, other tribes who historically traveled to Michilimackinac chose to frequent forts in Illinois and Wisconsin. Varnum suggested that some of his factory’s “inactive Capital” be moved to Chicago where it might be of more use to Potawatomi, Menominee, Kickapoo and other tribes.³³ If the United

²⁹ Debts due the Fort Wayne Factory, 10 September 1805, Colonel John Johnston’s Indian Agency Account Book, 1802-1811, *Fort Wayne*, 451.

³⁰ Debts due the Factory, 1 July 1806, *Fort Wayne*, 467.

³¹ J.B. Varnum to General J. Mason, 12 February 1810, Letters Received by the Superintendent of Indian Trade, 1806-1824, T58, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

³² Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 97.

³³ J.B. Varnum to General J. Mason, 12 February 1810, Letters Received by the Superintendent of Indian Trade, 1806-1824.

States possessed little interest in making a profit from these trading houses, why did Varnum show concern for the level of demand at his factory?

At least part of the reason might have been parsimony. When Congressmen spent large amounts of taxpayer dollars on these factories, it needed to justify expenses and be able to defend the efficacy of their policies. Struggling factories might represent waste in the new federal government. But to many government officials, spending money in the West seemed just as important as thrifty factories. Beginning with the Treaty of Greenville, the United States

MAP 3. Map of the Northwest, c. 1808

SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO, (10 DECEMBER 2004), <http://nmviewogc.cr.usgs.gov>.

promised each tribe an annual annuity. Larger tribes, such as the Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, and Wyandot, each received \$1,000, while the smaller Kickapoo, Wea, Eel River, Piankshaw and Kaskaskia tribes collected \$500.³⁴ Each year, chiefs decided whether they wanted to receive their annuities in goods or in specie. Although the treaty stipulated the money be used to encourage the development of husbandry and agriculture, Timothy Pickering also noted that annuities served “to compensate them [the tribes] for the loss of the Game,” for example, furs, as a consequence of land cessions.³⁵ Either way, American officials did not mean for annuities to remain in trust to the various tribes; instead chiefs needed to spend that money to create more sedentary lives modeled on intensive, European-style farming techniques. Moreover, this money tended to end up in the hands of factors, traders and merchants who sold manufactured goods and other items. By the Treaty of Greenville alone, the federal government funneled over \$10,000 annually into the western economy. As tribes ceded more land, they received more annuities. From 1795 to 1810, the United States sent more than \$245,950 in cash and merchandise to different tribes to fulfill treaty provisions.³⁶

The factory system theoretically extended American influence farther into the West, but in practice, military and government officials gained little in terms of control. By erecting factories, the United States garnered a large share of the fur trade in the West from Britain by 1805. Yet these factories had not achieved a monopoly on the trade. Instead, more competition

³⁴ Treaty of Greenville, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 563.

³⁵ Treaty of Greenville, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 563; Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 8 April 1795, *Campaign into the Wilderness*, 4: 20.

³⁶ Treaties with the Wyandot, etc., 3 August 1795, Delawares etc., 7 June 1803, Kaskaskia, 13 August 1803, Delaware, 18 August 1804, Piankshaw, 27 August 1804, Sac and Fox, 3 November 1804, Wyandot, etc., 4 July 1805, Delaware, etc., 21 August 1805, Piankshaw, 13 December 1805, Ottawa, etc., 17 November 1807, Wea, 26 October 1809, Kickapoo, 9 December 1809, *Indian Affairs*, 2: 39-45, 64-65, 67-68, 70-72, 72-73, 74-77, 77-78, 80-82, 89, 92-95, 103-4, 104-5; Supplemental Treaty with the Miami, etc., 13 September 1809, *Indian Affairs*, 2: 103.

for furs existed in the West then there had been since prior to the Seven Years War. British and American private traders alike traveled through western villages gathering furs and selling their merchandise. Upper Canadian and American agents competed to draw Native Americans to their respective fort systems. Even French traders, while comparatively small in number, continued to trade, especially in the Mississippi River Valley. Despite American hopes that loose associations between commercial factories and military forts would bring order and control to the West, it did not. Instead, agents at forts and factories found that they only exerted their economic and social influence in the immediate vicinity of their installations.

Combined, the United States Indian Agency and the factory system suffered from several problems. The Indian Agency and factories largely relied on eastern markets as their supply base, unlike the military, which drew heavily on the western economy for provisional support. Nevertheless, William Linnard, the military agent in Philadelphia who subcontracted to supply these two agencies in the Northwest and the Southeast, still experienced difficulties in collecting materials on time.³⁷ Goods used for annuities and in factories suffered from similar delays in transportation as those experienced by military, merchants, travelers and others. Indian agents arranged with each tribe a date in early autumn and a place when they could receive their annuities. But delays hampered the government's ability maintain good diplomatic relations. Supply deficits often occurred during spring and autumn, when tribes acquired materials for planting and hunting. These irregularities led Native Americans to seek alternative suppliers, such as private merchants.

At times, the policy itself caused problems. Eager to dilute any impact British traders might have on and to corner a larger share of the Native American economy for itself, the United States imposed tariffs on imported British goods. Most of these goods came through Detroit, but

³⁷ Henry Dearborn to William Linnard, 12 August 1802, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, 1800-1824.

a smaller percentage made their way through Presque Isle and later Chicago, among others ports of entry. For villages that maintained strong ties to British trading partners after the war, tariffs meant they had to pay higher prices for British goods they regularly purchased on the American side of the border. One chief complained specifically about a duty placed on goods at Detroit, which he concluded was “intended to impoverish and reduce the Indians.” He continued, confessing the he had heard the United States had “resolved to destroy them, that [they] might take possession of their lands.”³⁸ Most chiefs remained keenly aware of American economic policies in the West. Breaking their ties to British traders and becoming reliant on American factories could measure up to debt and dependency in the long run, putting them at a disadvantage when the United States wanted to discuss land cessions.

Still, even when private traders arrived, most Native American men and women did not feel at a disadvantage or dependent. Traders typically traveled from village to village and built relationships with chiefs and other local leaders. During much of the spring and summer, traders traveled through the region, attempting to time their visits with the end of productive cycles. During the spring, traders arrived eager to collect fresh peltries and maple sugar. During autumn they hoped to collect surplus corn and furs from summer hunts. But throughout the year, traders visited villages, selling goods. Despite a vibrant exchange, few Native Americans would have described themselves as dependent upon traders or their goods. As Richard White argues, it might be better to say these men and women relied upon European trade goods. On several occasions when Europeans withheld trade from villages, those communities resorted to traditional tools and methods. These alternate techniques might have been more difficult or time consuming compared to the ease European goods brought to labor, but they nevertheless served

³⁸ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 19 February 1802, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 38.

as reasonable substitutes.³⁹ Indeed, to many Native Americans, traders appeared dependent upon them. Traders relied almost exclusively on the labor of hunters to provide them with peltry. And Native American men and women *chose* to purchase goods of the traders. Pointing to this sense of control, William Henry Harrison noted, “Their treatment of traders shows that they consider them entirely at their mercy.”⁴⁰ In this case, Harrison intended to highlight robbery and abuse perpetrated by the traders’ Native Americans clientele, but the broader message nevertheless applied. If the United State sought control through trade, they failed to find it.

Another problem derived from an American belief that the Indian Agency and factories could control the region’s Native American population. Annuities provided each tribe with an amount of capital they could use to purchase food, agricultural tools, arms and ammunition, or whatever else they needed. This income acted as an economic stimulus for the tribe and American settlement. Most tribes also viewed annuities as a diplomatic requirement, a fulfillment of America’s responsibility to the tradition of the middle ground which had been such an important element of imperial relations within the region for generations. But the United States viewed these annuities as non-binding gifts that could be rescinded if tribes appeared to violate the terms of any treaty. From their perspective, annuities could be used to punish the whole of a tribe even for the actions of a few. They hoped in this way to obtain some level of influence over populations outside the reach of their immediate disciplinary authority. For example, in September 1802, reports reached Philadelphia that some Potawatomi not only had “an unfriendly disposition” toward the United State, but that some had “actually commenced hostilities.” Secretary of War Henry Dearborn suggested to Indiana Territorial Governor

³⁹ White, *Middle Ground*, 482-85.

⁴⁰ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 26 February 1802, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 44.

William Henry Harrison, “The annuities for the present year ought not to be paid the Pottawattama [sic] until they have made full and ample satisfaction for the murders committed by them.”⁴¹ In 1807, the Secretary of War initially decided to deduct from the Shawnee and Wyandot annuities \$275 and \$95, respectively. Each amount equaled the value of horses allegedly stolen by members of those tribes a decade earlier.⁴² Jefferson’s administration later rescinded these deductions and paid each annuity in full. Certainly Dearborn’s approach could work only if the Potawatomi believed themselves dependent upon supplies of American goods. Unfortunately for policymakers, that proved not to be the case. When faced with smaller annuities, Potawatomi, Shawnee and Wyandot men and women pursued other avenues to supply themselves, including private traders and even British agents. Dearborn, as well as other officials, misjudged their position vis-à-vis the Potawatomi and other tribes in believing that they could control Native American actions simply by turning on or turning off annuity payments as if it were a spigot.

The factory and Indian agency also suffered from internal problems. Goods often did not arrive on time. Sometimes goods had been shoddily constructed or had become damaged during shipment. Also, items in high demand frequently were out of stock. According to their instructions, factors could not sell their goods to private traders. Yet some factors supplemented their income by trading on the side with both private traders and Native Americans. And ultimately, Indian agents confronted budgetary issues created by a parsimonious bureaucracy. Administrators in Washington complained that agents gave too many presents to Native

⁴¹ Henry Dearborn to William Henry Harrison, 3 September 1802, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁴² Secretary of War to William Hull, 24 March 1807, Reel 2, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

Americans who came to the fort, especially in terms of rations.⁴³ Native American men and women who arrived at American forts, either for specific purposes or just in passing, expected some distribution of presents and food as a gesture of reciprocity in their alliance with the United States. But federal officials felt that Native Americans should not receive excessive gifts of food, for fear that provisions for American soldiers would run low. Moreover, issuing these provisions suggested a level of charity that many American officials had been trying to diminish.

Factors and administrators also altered their approach in reaction to the economic realities of life in the West. Jefferson's hope that factories would cater only to Native Americans quickly fell apart when the administration realized money could be made by selling also to officers, soldiers and citizens. Henry Dearborn advised one of his factors, "It was not intended that the goods furnished for the factories should be sold to either Officers or Citizens, but if any particular articles could be spared to the Officers, an advance of 25 per centum over what they are sold to the Indians should be put on."⁴⁴ Yet he ordered that no accounts should be opened for these officers. In 1799, Congress had passed a law exempting all noncommissioned officers and subordinates from personal arrest, for any debt or contract."⁴⁵ The law had been intended to help maintain a stable military force, but by 1803, southern factories in Georgia and at Tellico had suffered from debts to both officers and soldiers. Dearborn did not want the same situation to occur in the Northwest. Instead, goods issued to "white people" should be done "for ready money." Soon, Dearborn added items "as will afford a large profit" to his unspecified list of

⁴³ See for example, Henry Dearborn to William Wells, 7 March 1803, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824; Secretary of War to William Hull, 3 November 1806, Reel 2, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁴⁴ Henry Dearborn to Thomas Peterkin, 24 March 1803, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁴⁵ Section 4, Act of 3 March 1799, 1 *Stat.*, 751.

material that could be sold to people other than Native Americans.⁴⁶ Factories, it seemed, could be economical and profitable.

Dearborn and others misjudged their position vis-à-vis Native Americans when it came to issues of control also in part because they did not understand fully the dynamics of tribal politics in following Wayne's campaign. The Treaty of Greenville had ended the war, but anti-American sentiments remained in many villages throughout the West. Many chiefs returning from Greenville, and even those who never attended, acknowledged that the war had ended, but that did not mean they had to like their situation. Still, some chiefs returning north and west recognized that adopting aspects of American agriculture might be their best chance at maintaining their land and competing better with American settlers. Other chiefs thought so too. To the south, chiefs among the Five Civilized Tribes had already begun planting cotton, purchasing slaves, and slowly altering gendered notions of work, though not without internal dissent among chiefs and the people.⁴⁷

In the years following the Treaty of Greenville, members of the former confederacy debated how they should reconcile the growing American economic presence in the West. Some leaders, such as Little Turtle (Miami), Black Hoof (Shawnee), Tarhe (Wyandot), and Five Medals (Potawatomi), supported adopting elements of American farming techniques. Others, such as Pecanne and Richardville (Miami), Main Poc and Turkey Foot (Potawatomi), and ultimately Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh (Shawnee), rejected such ideas, and often expressed hostility toward the United States and accommodationist chiefs. Other chiefs like Blue Jacket

⁴⁶ Henry Dearborn to William Irvine, 11 April 1803, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁴⁷ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

found some middle ground between these positions. Blue Jacket traded extensively and farmed in a European style in his village near Detroit, but maintained hope for Native American autonomy and the (re)growth of a pan-Indian confederacy.⁴⁸ Few Native Americans supported the accommodationist tendencies of the first group.

Yet the accommodationist factions often had the loudest voice and positioned themselves to have the greater influence over how to use annuities. Little Turtle took advantage of his close relationship with Indian agent William Wells—who had married his daughter—to garner agricultural tools and some training for the Miami.⁴⁹ Wells too believed that the best interests of the Miami lay in economic assimilation. Little Turtle, with the help of a group of Quakers, recruited Philip Dennis—a Quaker himself—to move near the Miami villages in Indiana and spend a year demonstrating how to plant, grow and harvest crops using horse-driven plows and other technologies. During 1804, Miami men watched Dennis work, but nobody helped and few if any began to champion an integration of those techniques and technologies into Miami agricultural life.⁵⁰

Black Hoof, who lived at the Shawnee village Wapakoneta, convinced some of his villagers in 1802 that adopting elements of European agriculture would benefit them all.⁵¹ His decision came during a drop in prices for furs. Falling prices resulted from both waning European demand and declining game populations. To earn the same amount of money, hunters brought more pelts to American factories, the consequence of which sent prices down further.⁵²

⁴⁸ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 241.

⁴⁹ Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 103.

⁵⁰ Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 199; Rafert, *Miami Indians of Indiana*, 70.

⁵¹ R. David Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 17.

⁵² Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 103-4.

As the fur market stagnated, the economy of Wapakoneta, situated at the headwaters of the Auglaize River, stagnated. Meanwhile, American settlements to the south and east seemed to blossom.⁵³ Black Hoof lobbied for assistance from the American government, which he eventually received in 1807. Eager to answer Black Hoof's call, Indian Agency officials arranged with Quaker missionaries to send William Kirk.⁵⁴

Kirk had been active in the West, creating a framework for two agricultural programs. One had been with some Potawatomi villages in northern Indiana and southern Michigan who suffered from the same drop in fur prices as Black Hoof's villages. The mission with the Potawatomi never got off the ground despite efforts made by Five Medals, Topinbee and Winamek to acquire requisite tools.⁵⁵ The other attempt had been with the Miami. There, Kirk arrived and began a training program, but he met stiff resistance from Little Turtle and Wells. Neither appreciated Kirk's presence, probably because when he had spent half of the tribe's annuity on supplies and equipment without consulting Little Turtle or Wells.⁵⁶ Because Kirk directly challenged their control of annuity usage, they pushed him out the door. In 1806, despite these previous disappointments, Kirk arrived in Wapakoneta and was well received. But discrepancies in accounting procedures caused the program to be dismantled by the end of 1808.⁵⁷ Black Hoof nevertheless remained resolute and lobbied to restart the program.

In the case of accommodationist Potawatomi, their efforts at bringing agricultural training to their villages suffered because they failed to control annuities. After the Treaty of Greenville,

⁵³ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 231.

⁵⁴ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 18.

⁵⁵ Edmunds, *Potawatomis*, 162-63.

⁵⁶ Carter, *Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 200-1.

⁵⁷ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 18-19.

the United States hoped to dispense annuities to each tribe at Detroit during the autumn. But most tribes viewed traveling to Detroit as an expensive inconvenience that interfered with their productive rhythms. For years, Wells argued on behalf of Little Turtle and his supporters to have Miami annuities distributed at Fort Wayne instead of Detroit to save on expenses. More to the point, chiefs who directly received annuities decided how to use the money or goods and how to distribute it. This scenario meant tribal factions often apportioned for themselves and their supporters a disproportionate share of the annuities. Black Hoof repeatedly complained to the Indian Agency that he received a lesser share of annuities compared to his rival Blue Jacket, who lived close to Detroit.⁵⁸ Among the Potawatomi, annuities mostly went to eastern villages closer to Detroit, who usually received the money first. Potawatomi villages from northern Indiana stretching through Wisconsin—Five Medals’ villages among them—rarely saw any benefits from government money. For this reason, Five Medals and other Potawatomi chiefs joined Little Turtle in advocating Miami and Potawatomi annuities be distributed at Fort Wayne, where fewer tribes would have a strategic advantage for receiving the funds.⁵⁹ By the distribution of annuities in 1807, tribal leaders who advocated assimilation—though they represented a minority of their Potawatomi, Miami, and other tribes—controlled the use and distribution of their federal monies.

Although accommodationists controlled federal annuities, few Native Americans felt an exclusive economic attachment to the United States government. Private traders, legally and illicitly, continued to play a large role in the western economy. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, Secretary of War Henry Dearborn constantly tried to limit illegal traders in the West. In April 1803, he ordered William Henry Harrison, Territorial Governor of Indiana, to

⁵⁸ White, *Middle Ground*, 495.

⁵⁹ Edmunds, *Potawatomis*, 159-58

find “foreign agents” without licenses and to have them deported. If Harrison found “mischievous” licensed traders, he also had authority to rescind their licenses and deport them.⁶⁰ Traders could easily obtain a license by paying a bond.⁶¹ As a part of his office, Harrison could issue or revoke licenses at his discretion. Some British, French and American traders applied for and received trading licenses, but others did not. Applying for a license placed a trader under the observation of the American government and made illegal trafficking more difficult, especially if duties needed to be paid when transporting furs and other goods across the Canadian border. So, in 1808, individuals and companies trading in the West continued to avoid obtaining a license in part because of expense and in part because they could get away with it.⁶²

In the long term, the border proved extremely problematic to American control of western trade. Traders who wanted to meet Native Americans in the United States without a license could use the border to escape capture and prosecution. Not only did it make enforcement of law difficult, but some British officials supported illegal trade, or at least turned a blind eye to the matter, because they disagreed with United States policy.⁶³ The United States knew how to play this game too. As Henry Dearborn acknowledged, if someone committed a crime in Upper Canada and the criminal escaped into the United States, he claimed that “our laws do not take cognizance of the offense.” If a Native American fell victim to crime, then American agents would do what they could to “procure redress” for him, but could do little for

⁶⁰ Henry Dearborn to William Henry Harrison, 15 April 1805, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁶¹ For an example of an license see, Trader’s License, Francois Busseron, 8 October 1801, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 34.

⁶² George Hoffman and Samuel Abbott to William Henry Harrison, 15 August 1808, *ibid.* 1: 301-2.

⁶³ J.G. Simcoe to Alexander McKee, 3 May 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 258.

Upper Canadians except “on principles of friendship.”⁶⁴ Such rivalries along the border helped foster and protect a degree of lawlessness that destabilized the region, and constantly exacerbated tensions between Native Americans, traders, and settlers, as well as between British and American colonial officials. Soon after the American acquisition of Detroit in 1797, James Wilkinson wrote to Upper Canadian political leaders, warning them not to intensify the instability of the border, otherwise his “Civil Authority will be found too feeble to repress the inclinations & to control the caprices of the great Mass of the Inhabitants, who will be followed in every excess by their numerous friends & relatives among the Savages.”⁶⁵

But within this disorder, some Native Americans and settlers also found solace. As the United States and Upper Canada vied politically and largely refused to enforce the other’s laws, Native Americans and settlers used the border to protect themselves from creditors. In 1795, John Askin, a Detroit merchant and British, for example, believed that a man indebted to him, Amable Latour, whose loyalty to the crown had been called into question, would abscond once he crossed from Detroit to Ohio. “I never got a penny from him nor ever will if you do not find the means of stopping it,” he wrote his associate.⁶⁶ In 1804, Askin convinced himself that the possibility of collecting debts owed to him in the United States would be next to impossible because American juries would rather support their neighbors than him, a British subject.⁶⁷ In another case, between 1804 and 1805, Presbyterian missionary Joseph Badger traveled in northern Ohio, scouting Wyandot villages on the on the outskirts of the Connecticut land reserve,

⁶⁴ Henry Dearborn to Jasper Parish, 18 January 1805, Reel 2, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

⁶⁵ James Wilkinson to The Justices of His Britannic Majestys[sic] Western District Upper Canada, 16 July 1797, *Askin Papers*, 2: 115.

⁶⁶ John Askin to John Anderson, 4 November 1795, *ibid.* 1: 585.

⁶⁷ John Askin to Alexander Henry, 30 April 1804, *ibid.* 2: 411.

gathering information, and visiting new settlers.⁶⁸ While in one Wyandot village at Lower Sandusky, he observed “The rabble of those who have escaped their creditors, or are here to make [the] same thing out of the Indians are the greatest disadvantage to those people, and I may say with propriety, the greatest curse.”⁶⁹

Private merchants and the factory system brought debt to the West. Settlers and Native Americans accrued debt by purchasing more than they paid for. Over time, accumulation of debt became a vicious cycle out of which escape became difficult or impossible. When that occurred many settlers left the region and their debt behind. The geographic mobility of debtors made being a creditor a risky venture. Just as Americans deserted their creditors, so too did Native Americans. Badger’s observations reveal a space where absconders could find some safety. Few federal enforcement mechanisms extended to Native American villages and if they ever did, those living at Sandusky needed only to travel down the Sandusky River and across Lake Erie to safety. Nevertheless, once debtors left, they became difficult to find and prosecute.

For government officials, merchants and others seeking to create a market economy in the West, weak economic and political control threatened that end. Badger’s letter went on to critique a set of vices plaguing Lower Sandusky, including drunkenness, lewdness, gambling and blasphemous profanity.⁷⁰ Each of these characteristics—all typically associated with an overarching concept of idleness—represented an antithesis of what comprised an ordered economy because each interfered with production and exchange. But while urban, market-oriented elites despised these behaviors, men and women in rural subsistence economies often

⁶⁸ Amy DeRogatis, *Moral Geography: Maps Missionaries, and the American Frontier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 34.

⁶⁹ Joseph Badger to William Hull, 30 July 1805, Reel 1, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870, RG 107, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁰ Joseph Badger to William Hull, 30 July 1805, Reel 1, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870.

embraced and celebrated idleness. Rural labor operated on a cyclical basis. At the crudest of levels, farmers planted in the spring and harvested in the fall, with downtimes, or periods of less work, during the summer and winter. The following year the cycle repeated itself. Rituals and celebrations usually occurred during these downtimes in both American and Native American traditions. Strong parallels can also be drawn to early manufacturing cycles in the urban West where cyclical periods of rainfall that controlled river depth and the ability to transport goods often helped dictate rhythms of production.

Alcohol became an integral component to both rural and urban downtimes for Native American and American settlers alike, especially in communities which elites viewed as mired in poverty. And elites often drew parallels between the poverty of settlers and Native Americans. “Our people are all so poor (a few excepted), that they can barely live in a wretched manner,” expressed Arthur St. Clair, continuing, “there is scarce a habitation to be seen better than Indian wigwams.”⁷¹ For many rural and urban Americans, alcohol and idleness existed as a natural part of their yearly work rhythms. An alcoholic culture at the end of the eighteenth century encouraged drinking and revelry as expressions of manhood. Downtimes for agricultural and urban laborers also often meant relaxation and anticipation for the next period of labor. In a subsistence economy where a poor crop could spell hard times for a family, alcohol also became a way to escape anxieties.⁷²

In this sense, little difference existed between many Native American communities and their American counterparts. Throughout many Native American villages, alcohol was incorporated into rites and celebrations. Over time, drinking often came to be associated with

⁷¹ Governor St. Clair to Paul Fearing, 25 December 1801, *St. Clair Papers*, 2: 550.

⁷² W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 127-28.

expressions of manhood, as much as spirituality. Still some Native American leaders viewed the consumption of spirits as self-destructive and dangerous. Much like rural and urban laborers, alcohol consumption occurred largely during downtimes: lulls in the agricultural cycle; upon returning from hunts; and during their stays at forts for trading and diplomatic purposes. It should come as little surprise that during these downtimes Native Americans came under observation by British and American elites who recorded and hyperbolized their fondness for and scope of addictions to alcohol.

Native American and American settlers associated downtimes with celebrations, entertainment and relaxation. But this idleness and its associations with alcohol opposed a vision of industry bent on order and discipline. In cities, opposition to alcohol ultimately gave birth to temperance societies during the early nineteenth century. In rural areas, critiques of alcohol use predominantly focused on Native Americans. Concepts of control and regional stability that buttressed not only the factory system but a larger American military presence beyond areas of settlement seemed to lead many Americans to focus on Native American alcohol use. At the local level, military officers and other American observers blamed inebriated hunters and traders for disrupting fort and factory life, and disrupting diplomatic proceedings. More generally, travelers and commentators used what they saw as uncivilized behavior—alcohol use, apparent idleness, and their attachment to hunting—as cultural justifications for American expropriation of their land. In other parts of the country, politicians and speculators deployed similar tactics to justify taking land from Appalachian farm families during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁷³ Many Americans viewed unjustified appropriations of land—from Native

⁷³ Katherine Ledford, “A Landscape and a People Set Apart: Narratives of Exploration and Travel in Early Appalachia,” in *Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes : Back Talk from an American Region*, eds., Dwight B. Billings, Gurney Norman, and Katherine Ledford (Lexington : University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 47-66.

Americans or poor Appalachian farmers—as unconscionable. Culturally and economically delegitimizing those inhabitants claims to land made doing so more defensible.

As competition for the region’s resources steadily grew, many Americans began to devalue Native American claims to land. After the Treaty of Greenville, the American population in the Ohio Valley ballooned. Lands opened up by the treaty attracted emigrants from the East. Log cabins and hewed-log houses sprang up amid newly cleared fields which pocked the region’s deciduous forests. Towns emerged along navigable rivers and along the many roads already constructed. By the first years of the nineteenth century, pips on maps of the Northwest crept closer to the boundary established in the treaty. In 1805, Kickapoo in the Illinois country ran afoul of settlers over the use of fire. In this case, Kickapoo hunters used fire to drive deer during the autumn hunting season, a practice used by many of the regions tribes, including the Miami and Shawnee. Well-practiced hunters managed low-intensity, controlled burns to great effect. Settlers accused Kickapoo hunters of setting fires to destroy their property, especially fences and haystacks.⁷⁴ Kickapoo hunters claimed they had a right to use fire granted to them not only by the Master of Life but also as a condition of the fur trade. “Why do you reproach us of setting fire?” asked Oulaqua, a Kickapoo chief. “You are glad to receive our skins, without which [fire] we would have none.” Besides, Oulaqua pointed out, whites in the region also used fire to hunt. Oulaqua argued that Kickapoo hunters tried avoid American settlements but could not be responsible for monitoring every new homestead. “The whites arrive every day, they settle, we know nothing of it, and if they suffer in the fall, it is rather their fault than ours, because we do not know where they are.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ William Henry Harrison to Secretary of War, 24 December 1805, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 180.

⁷⁵ The Answer of Pawatamo, Chasso and Oulaqua, the Speech Pronounced by the Latter, 16 December 1805, *ibid.* 1: 178-79.

Despite Oulaqua's claims, the Kickapoo hunters probably knew the precise location of these new settlements. Itinerant hunters, surveillance parties, and passing traders all carried information of American settler activity in the region. These Kickapoo hunters most likely used the fire strategically. They ruined property while invoking their hunting privileges. Other hunters took a more direct approach by killing settler livestock. Harrison pointed to "difficulties" created by Piankshaw, Wea, and Eel River men in the vicinity of Vincennes who broke into settlers' homes, killed their hogs and cattle, and destroyed fencing.⁷⁶ And just as during the wars of the 1780s and 1790s, horses became important targets. Harrison reported the lengths to which Kaskaskian and Potawatomi men would go to capture or destroy these key work animals. "The Indians frequently steal horses that they are unable to catch by shooting them through the upper part of the neck, which only stuns them a little—but if the shot is a little too low the horse is killed."⁷⁷ That did not matter to the shooters, the damage had been done.

The growing proximity of settlers and Native Americans began to produce a competition for resources that earlier had exacerbated, if not caused, the only recently concluded war. For the Shawnee, Delaware, Miami and others living closest to American settlements, competition for fur-bearing animals represented one of the most pressing issues. The Treaty of Greenville established a boundary between Native American and United States controlled territory and prevented settlers, surveyors and unlicensed traders from crossing that border. But the seventh article of the treaty stipulated that signing tribes would "be at liberty to hunt within the territory and lands which they have now ceded . . . without hindrance or molestation, so long as they

⁷⁶ Harrison to the Secretary of War, 15 July 1801, *ibid.* 1: 27-28.

⁷⁷ Harrison to the Secretary of War, 23 May 1807, *ibid.* 1: 217.

demean themselves peaceably.”⁷⁸ By 1799, competition for animals among Americans and Native Americans had grown considerably and tensions rose. During the autumn of that year, rumors of mutual hostilities led settlers along the frontier in southwest Ohio, as well as Shawnee and Wyandot villages in the Maumee River Valley, to brace for a collision.⁷⁹

Although these rumors did not lead to direct conflict, they did little to resolve a steady stream of complaints that arrived at the territorial offices. Territorial Governor William Henry Harrison received complaints from Delaware chiefs and others in 1801, saying that settlers—especially from Kentucky—regularly passed onto their lands to hunt. Harrison acknowledged that the “practice has grown into a monstrous abuse,” but until a boundary line could be completely surveyed he thought it “impossible to tell when encroachments are made.”⁸⁰ Within three years, a party of Shawnee and Delaware chiefs, unsatisfied with the territorial and state leadership in Indiana and Ohio, respectively, traveled to Philadelphia “to complain loudly of the white people hunting and killing game on their lands and of having their horses stolen by white people.”⁸¹ Settlers yet again had acted outside the control of their respective governments. Even the territorial legislature of Ohio admitted that a culture of violating Native American rights existed in the territories. Writing to Governor St. Clair, legislators announced, “We view with extreme anxiety the spirit too prevalent among a certain class of the inhabitants of the Territory

⁷⁸ Article 7, Treaty of Greenville, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 563.

⁷⁹ Governor St. Clair to the Secretary of War, 10 August 1799, *St. Clair Papers*, 2: 445-46.

⁸⁰ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 15 July 1801, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 26-27.

⁸¹ Henry Dearborn to William Henry Harrison, 23 February 1802, Reel 1, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824.

to invade the rights of our Indian neighbors.”⁸² Dearborn ordered Harrison to do what he could to prevent these trespasses from reoccurring.

Settlers who killed game in Native American controlled territory represented a serious threat. Not only did this hunting violate the Greenville treaty, it also depleted game populations upon which Native American villages subsisted and with which they traded. Deer, bear, and especially buffalo populations declined in the middle Ohio Valley.⁸³ By 1805, reports indicated that game had again become scarce as far west as St. Louis.⁸⁴ Along with fur-bearing animals, the entire semi-subsistence trade economy began to decline. For the Jefferson administration, any reduction of fur-bearing animals meant good news. By “[t]he decrease of game rendering their subsistence by hunting insufficient,” Jefferson argued, “we wish to draw” men to agriculture and women to spinning and weaving. In combination with debt producing factories, Jefferson reasoned, Native Americans “will in time either incorporate with us as citizens of the United States or remove beyond the Mississippi.”⁸⁵ In his vision, the Northwest could not be made of two competing economies; it needed to be all of one and the other removed.

During first decade of the nineteenth century, the United States compounded pressures already placed on Native Americans through their attempts to acquire control of mineral resources throughout the region. Acquisition of salt had been one of the primary motivations for early colonial incursions into Kentucky. With relative economic and political stability returning to the Ohio Valley economy, politicians and entrepreneurs began again to look for salt springs

⁸² Answer of the House of Representatives, nd (November 1800), *St. Clair Papers*, 2: 513.

⁸³ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 15 July 1801, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 27.

⁸⁴ J. Bruff [?] to James Wilkinson, 19 March 1805, Reel 2, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870.

⁸⁵ Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 27 February 1803, William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 15 July 1801, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 70-71.

and salt licks. Shortly after Christmas 1802, a body of influential government officials, headed by William Henry Harrison, petitioned the federal government to alter its ordinances for governance of the new Indiana Territory. Much of this petition addressed issues of land, schools and the construction of roads, but one section highlighted a need for salt extraction. “[O]ne of the most indispensable articles of life (Salt) is very Scarce [sic] and difficult to be obtained,” they argued, “for the want of a sufficient number of Salt Springs in their [the memorialists’] country.”⁸⁶ They requested territorial acquisition of salt springs at Saline, near Shawnee town, just below the mouth of the Wabash River.

Earlier in the year, some influential chiefs who subscribed to greater assimilation, including Little Turtle and some other Miami, Eel River, Wea, and Piankshaw leaders, attempted to lease the salt springs at Saline either to the federal government or to private investors.⁸⁷ Harrison and his peers worried not only that other tribes might claim the land, but also that leasing the land would keep the springs out of the control of the territorial elite. Not only did the petitioners want to acquire an unused resource, they also hoped to keep independent settlers from freely taking salt that could be sold for a profit. They warned if “methods are not taken to secure the Timber in the neighbourhood of the Salt Springs from being willfully and carelessly wasted and destroyed, they will in a very few years indeed be utterly destitute of that very valuable article.”⁸⁸ At the time, they claimed that Saline had one of the few salt sources in the region. By September 1802, Little Turtle (Miami) and Winamek (Potawatomi), along with chiefs from the Kickapoo, Eel River, Kaskaskia, Wea and Piankshaw tribes, relinquished to the United States

⁸⁶ Petition of the Vincennes Convention, 28 December 1802, *ibid.* 1: 65.

⁸⁷ Harrison to the Secretary of War, 25 March 1802, *ibid.* 1: 47.

⁸⁸ Petition of the Vincennes Convention, 28 December 1802, *ibid.* 1: 65.

both Saline and a four-mile surrounding tract of land.⁸⁹ After some Shawnee and Delaware chiefs assented to the sale, tribal representatives signed a treaty at Fort Wayne in June 1803.⁹⁰ In return, the signing tribes received up to one hundred fifty bushels of salt to distribute amongst themselves as they saw fit.⁹¹

The Saline Works on Saline Creek began production in 1805 and became an important source of salt for the territory.⁹² By 1810, the works employed almost two thousand men.⁹³ When Harrison appointed the first Superintendent of the Salt Works, he chose local businessman Isaac White to fill the position.⁹⁴ As conflict began to increase between Native Americans and settlers in the West, Harrison made protection of the Salt Works, as well as the road popularly dubbed the Salt Route, a priority.⁹⁵ Entrepreneurs developed other springs during the early nineteenth century. For example, in 1802, Congress assured Ohio that it could control the salt spring at Scioto, one of the few in the state.⁹⁶ These sites, along with others in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, offered less salt than the salt works along the Kanawha River in western Virginia. At the Kanawha salt springs, one salt maker produced about one hundred fifty pounds

⁸⁹ Minutes of Indian Conference, 17 September 1802, *ibid.* 1: 56-57.

⁹⁰ Articles of a Treaty made at Fort Wayne, 7 June, 1803, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, 1: 688.

⁹¹ Thomas Jefferson to the House of Representatives, 18 January 1803, *ibid.* 1: 683; and Article 4, Articles of a Treaty made at Fort Wayne, 7 June 1803, *ibid.* 1: 688.

⁹² An act of 3 March 1803, ch. 28, 2 *Stat.*, 235.

⁹³ Eskew, *Salt, the Fifth Element*, 99.

⁹⁴ George Fauntleroy White, "Memoir of Colonel Isaac White of Knox County, Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History* v. 15 (December 1919), 332.

⁹⁵ William Henry Harrison to William Hargrove, 12 September 1807, and William Henry Harrison to William Hargrove, 27 September 1807, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 252, 260.

⁹⁶ Section 7, An act of 30 April 1802, ch. 40, 2 *Stat.*, 175.

of salt each day, making it the second most valuable spring behind the one at Salina, New York.⁹⁷

Salt was not the only resource catching the eye of the new westerners. The growing population in the Ohio Valley in the years after Fallen Timbers encouraged early industrialism. By 1799, a new blast furnace and a forge began to meet a growing regional demand for iron products.⁹⁸ Others looked to build on these efforts. Early in 1802, Harrison sent Secretary of War Henry Dearborn a sample of copper ore mined near the Vermillion River, about eighty miles from Vincennes. He reported that information led him to believe “a considerable quantity [existed] at the place whence this piece was brought.”⁹⁹ Harrison’s actions fit within a larger American policy to discover valuable minerals in their territories. Jefferson exercised this policy when he sent Louis and Clark on their famed western journey with an expressed mission to discover marketable resources in the newly purchased Louisiana Territory. While the journeys of other explorers in the Northwest Territory have not garnered the same place in the popular memory, they nevertheless served a similar function. In the spring of 1800, Congress appropriated \$1,500 for an agent to explore for copper mines and their viability on south of Lake Superior.¹⁰⁰ In 1805, William Hull reported “an abundance of Clay, suitable for bricks, in many places” near Detroit. Clay of a lesser quality also existed nearby at places, such as the River Rouge, “which has as yet been discovered.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Eskew, *Salt, the Fifth Element*, 76, 79.

⁹⁸ Arthur Cecil Bining, *British Regulation of the Colonial Iron Industry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), 95 n. 55.

⁹⁹ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 26 February 1802, *Governors Messages and Letters*, 1: 46.

¹⁰⁰ Section 9, An act of 13 May 1800, ch. 65, 2 *Stat.*, 84.

¹⁰¹ William Hull to Henry Dearborn, 22 September 1805, Reel 1, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870.

In Upper Canada too, settlers craved extractive resources. Just as in the United States, salt there proved to be one of the most important, locally produced and consumed resources. As a consequence of British withdrawal from posts south of the Lakes, they lost access to some important salt springs, most notably the salt works at Onondaga in New York.¹⁰² Upper Canada still had many quality springs for its use, such as a salt works at Louth, which had been in operation since 1793. Initial production remained small. But after construction of a new works in 1795, workers processed just over thirty bushels a month during the first seven months. The 452 ¼ bushels made there sold for three hundred sixty pounds, New York currency.¹⁰³ The search continued for other sites. In 1795, surveyors discovered a large salt spring near the mouth of the Grand River (River Ouse), which feeds into Lake Erie from the north.¹⁰⁴ Yet despite the presence of these salt springs, both the United State and Upper Canada realized they did not have enough skilled people to develop them. To remedy this situation, managers of salt works on both sides of the Lakes appealed to England to send knowledgeable instructors. Managers in the United States attempted to use their connections with Upper Canadian officials to help in their appeal.¹⁰⁵ Simcoe and other Upper Canadian government officers helped American companies because of their mutual interest. Salt springs north of the Lakes, while prolific, did not always produce enough to meet demand, leading some salt to be imported, especially from New York.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Memorandum, n.d., *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3:108.

¹⁰³ Angus MacDonell to J.G. Simcoe, 10 March 1796, and Return of Salt Made at his Majesty's Salt Springs in the Township of Louth, Since They Have Been Yielded up to the Government in the Month of July, 1793, 10 March 1796, *ibid.* 4: 214-15, 215.

¹⁰⁴ Peter Russell to J.G. Simcoe, 9 July 1795, *ibid.* 4: 38-39.

¹⁰⁵ J.G. Simcoe to John King, 31 October 1794, *ibid.* 3: 165; J.G. Simcoe to Charles Long, 3 November 1795, *ibid.* 4: 120.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Clark to E.B. Littlehales, 18 June 1796, *ibid.* 4: 306.

Interest in extractive metals also grew in Upper Canada. During the 1790s, Britain had a small group of people actively searching Upper Canada for “Salt Springs and other Minerals.”¹⁰⁷ The British government reserved for itself any gold and silver veins found in Upper Canada.¹⁰⁸ These expeditions also found veins of iron ore in various parts of the region. Simcoe appealed on a consistent basis during the 1790s to the Duke of Portland to help him develop iron production in Upper Canada, pointing to the abundance of water power “necessary for this manufacture.”¹⁰⁹ But despite cautiously positive feedback often issued by the Duke of Portland, other British officials seemed reluctant to do so. In 1750, Parliament passed an act prohibiting the development of new iron and steel mills and furnaces in their colonies. Moreover, by the turn of the century, Britain had reached a balance in terms of domestic production of iron and imports from the United States, Sweden, Spain and Russia. No reason existed to promote colonial development of the industry.¹¹⁰

By 1807, the United States’ acquisition of mineral and ore resources in the Northwest seemed to signify successful colonization of the region. At the same time, it seemed clear to American officials that the Indian agency and the factory system had failed to exert a firm control over the members of the former confederacy. Although some villages had attached themselves to factories, such as near Detroit and Fort Wayne, villages and chiefs outside of these spheres continued to hold ambivalent or outright hostile attitudes toward the United States. Still,

¹⁰⁷ J.G. Simcoe to John King, 31 October 1794, *ibid.* 3: 165.

¹⁰⁸ J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 21 December 1794, *ibid.* 3: 237.

¹⁰⁹ J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 8 November 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 132. See also, J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 21 December 1794, and J.G. Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 22 January 1795, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 3: 237, 267; Duke of Portland to J.G. Simcoe, 20 May 1795, and Duke of Portland to J.G. Simcoe, 3 March 1796, *Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 4: 13, 207.

¹¹⁰ By 1750, colonial production in North America had begun to match British production. Bining, *British Regulation of the Colonial Iron Industry*, 55, 85-86, 120-21.

these agencies managed to keep a reasonable level of peace in the region. As a result, western populations expanded rapidly in Upper Canada and the Ohio Valley. Federal agencies, though they had failed to assimilate Native Americans, managed to gain territory and scout out valuable resources. In the eyes of many chiefs, the search for iron, salt and other extractive resources further demonstrated that the United States, and to a lesser extent Upper Canada, meant to drive Native Americans from their lands. Some chiefs hoped to balance American growth with their own autonomy. Most Native Americans dismissed assimilation, preferring to retain control of their own productive power and their authority over resources in their territory. Unfortunately, land cessions made after 1800 made that scenario a less realistic option in the Old Northwest. Since 1795, an economic war of attrition had been waged in the Northwest. As 1807 began, the United States appeared to be on the winning end. That year, a school of Native American prophets began to warn of approaching dangers in the economic war. The Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa took a lead role in the effort. During the next few years he began to lead the formation of a new pan-Indian confederacy designed to purify Native American cultures of the American disease represented by the market economy.

Epilogue:

Wars of Economy Redux

As the first decade of the nineteenth century passed its midpoint, Native American agitation against the changing economy of the Northwest began to increase. Tenskwatawa, a Shawnee spiritual leader, took the reigns of this movement and worked to create a pan-Indian confederacy that embraced what he viewed as “traditional” productive practices. By 1807, Tenskwatawa found open ears among tribes closer to the Mississippi River who had been fighting a property war for a number of years. Convincing tribes in Ohio and Indiana Territory proved more difficult. But by 1810, continued land cessions convinced many of in these reluctant tribes that the United States represented an impending danger to their economy. What had been a war of words became a military conflict in 1811 when William Henry Harrison moved against Tenskwatawa’s settlement at Prophetstown, the opening salvo of the War of 1812. When the dust settled in 1815, the new Native American confederacy and its British allies had been defeated, but the former suffered more by the loss. The results of the war left little land in the Northwest for the tribes to pursue their semi-subsistence fur trade economy. Most of the defeated villages in Ohio and Indiana decided to move West. The disruption of their part of the region’s economy, as in 1794, again led to the expansion of the market economy in the Northwest as speculators, merchants and settlers capitalized on seized lands.

Although the Treaty of Greenville brought peace to the Ohio country and most of Kentucky, the property war that had characterized much of the conflict continued in the upper Mississippi Valley. Anti-American Potawatomi villages took a leading role in this clash. The treaty had compressed the populations of several tribes, especially the Shawnee and Delaware, into a more circumscribed region in the Ohio country. Some members of these and other tribes

had chosen to move west. As a result, Potawatomi villages found greater competition for the region's resources than had existed before the war. From their villages on the eastern side of the Mississippi River and encouraged by Spanish-Louisiana traders and government officials, Potawatomi men assaulted Osage settlements in the Missouri River Valley during the 1780s and 1790s. By the opening years of the nineteenth century, Sac, Fox, Kickapoo and Shawnee men participated in the raids.¹ The Osage reciprocated in this property war, attacking east of the Mississippi River, though to less effect.² Americans living in the Upper Mississippi Valley found themselves targeted by both sides. In an effort to gain a larger share of the Osage fur trade and affect more control in the region, the United States solicited Osage chiefs for a greater portion of the fur trade and asked to establish a fort. Still, Americans near Kaskaskia and Cahokia saw their cattle, horses, clothes, household furniture, and "such articles as were not portable" destroyed.³ By 1808, constant warring led the United States to rescind all promises of protection, hoping the Osage would find themselves on the losing side of the conflict.⁴ Not until the construction of Fort Osage on the Grand River in 1811, could the United States exercise coercion to any meaningful extent.⁵

The Potawatomi-Osage conflict encouraged western chiefs to construct confederations. During the early spring of 1805, chiefs living in the Illinois country met and discussed forming a

¹ Edmunds, *Potawatomis*, 154.

² Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 16 January 1806, *Letters and Messages*, 1: 185.

³ Newspaper extract, 26 July 1808, Reel 3, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, 1789-1861.

⁴ William Henry Harrison to the Secretary of War, 12 July 1808, *Letters and Messages*, 1: 296.

⁵ Tanis C. Thorne, *The Many Hands of My Relations: French and Indians on the Lower Mississippi* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996), 119.

confederacy against the Osage.⁶ By that summer, the Sac had managed “to form a grand confederation against the Osage” with Shawnee and Delaware living near Cape Girardeau.⁷ Reports indicated that some Fox, Kickapoo, Ottawa, Potawatomi and Ojibwa might also join the Sac.⁸ The idea of a confederacy rattled American settlers in the region and government officials throughout the chain of command. Few Americans doubted the animosity of the Illinois tribes toward them and understood how fragile peace had become. Since the Treaty of Greenville, both the United States and Upper Canada had attempted to prevent the reformation of the northern confederacy because dealing with tribes on a smaller scale provided them with a strategic advantage by easing land cessions and preventing large-scale conflicts.⁹ For a decade following the councils at Greenville, most tribes had preferred to eschew the idea of a confederacy to seek greater land rights for themselves. But by 1805, land cessions to the United States and increased settlement in the West had begun to alter the dynamics of the regional economy. Villages from the Wabash River to the Mississippi River found greater competition for resources both from rival tribes and from American settlers. More chiefs began to feel a need for a new northern confederacy to protect land and resource rights. The property war along the Upper Mississippi had failed to coalesce the tribes but it had started a discussion to find common ground.

The necessary ingredient to tie together a confederacy proved to be spiritual. By 1805, spiritual leaders became more vocal in their dissatisfaction with the state of their communities. Among the Seneca, Handsome Lake preached sobriety and a restructuring of their economy to

⁶ James Bruff to James Wilkinson, 19 March 1805, Reel 2, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870.

⁷ William Henry Harrison to Henry Dearborn, 10 July 1805, *Letters and Messages*, 1: 151.

⁸ Robert Forsyth to Prideaux Selby, 19 May 1805, v. 10, Indian Affairs, Superintendent General's Office, RG 10, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 134.

⁹ Duke of Portland to Peter Russell, 4 November 1797, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 3.

MAP 4. Native American Land Cessions, 1795-1809

SOURCES: MAP 4 IS BASED IN PART ON A SIMILAR MAP IN SUGDEN, *TECUMSEH*, 186; UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO, (10 DECEMBER 2004), <http://nmviewogc.cr.usgs.gov>;

sedentary agriculture. His alliance with Quaker missionaries who supplemented his spiritual and economic message helped Handsome Lake gain his ascendancy.¹⁰ In the Ohio country and westward where economic tensions tore at the strands of community, many spiritual leaders largely preached against federal government and missionary assimilationist policies in favor of “traditionalist” practices. These messages often had a millennialist message attached to them, claiming that an apocalypse would soon come because of a general spiritual degeneration among the tribes. Claims of spiritual degeneration often worked as code to describe forces creating or fostering economic change in their communities. The Munsee-Delaware prophetess Beata, who

¹⁰ Robert S. Cox, “Supper and Celibacy: Quaker-Seneca Reflexive Missions” in *The Sixty Years’ War for the Great Lakes, 1754-1814*, eds., David Curtis Skaggs and Larry L. Nelson (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 259-60.

lived on the White River, preached such a message and claimed to be able to identify witches, that is, individuals who brought spiritual damage in their wake. Beata found broad appeal. A party of Wyandot arrived in 1805 seeking her help in identifying witches in their own communities.¹¹ In 1806, she led a purge of her own Delaware communities, putting to death a broad array of people, including Moravian converts and tribal leaders. Men and women who violated “traditional” gender roles and practiced sedentary agriculture likewise found themselves targeted. Tetepachsit and Chief Hackingpomska fell as a part of the political and economic coup to eliminate influential individuals who sympathized with assimilation or associated too closely with the United States government.¹²

The Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa, who lived adjacent to Fort Greenville, became an even more powerful spiritual voice against assimilation and for “traditional” practices. Like Beata, Tenskwatawa embraced a millennialist vision, but he attempted to use his religious mission to create a pan-Indian culture and confederacy designed to thwart assimilationist supporters in the West. As a prophet, he claimed to have communed with the Great Spirit who had “looked round the World and saw [his] Red Children had greatly degenerated. That they had become scattered & miserable.” Disappointed, the Great Spirit announced: “I have closed my Book of Accounts with man, and am going to Destroy the Earth.” But when Tenskwatawa convinced him otherwise, the Great Spirit directed him toward principles that would save the western tribes from American expansion and its concomitant growing market economy. To drive home this point, the Prophet claimed that the Great Father identified himself as the “Father

¹¹ Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 114.

¹² Jay Miller, “The 1806 Purge among the Indiana Delaware: Sorcery, Gender, Boundaries, and Legitimacy” *Ethnohistory*, 41 (Spring 1994): 245-66.

of the English, of the French, of the Spaniards, and of the Indians,” but “the Americans *I did not make. They are not my children, But the children of the Evil Spirit.*”¹³

The core of Tenskwatawa’s message hinged on economic changes that affected most of the region’s tribes during the years following the Treaty of Greenville. In the vision of the Great Spirit, this policy seemed to transform the Native American economy on two fronts. On one front, internal improvements increased the flow of trade into and out of the region, and brought more trading competition, especially from Americans. An intensification of existing trade patterns involving fur, corn, maple syrup, and other Native American products had resulted. The Great Spirit admonished Native Americans for engaging in this trade and advised them on how to proceed. “My children, you are indebted to the white traders. But you must pay them no more than half their Credits, Because they have cheated you. You must pay them in skins, guns, canoes, &c But not in Meat, corn or sugar.” Instead, the Prophet invoked “traditional” labor practices where men hunted and women planted only a “necessary” amount of crops, not commercially for the market.¹⁴ Despite the Prophet’s professed “traditionalism,” some of the changes he suggested would alter what had been well-established roles for women. Women lost the ability to engage in trade and found some of their spiritual practices reduced. As a result, the new “traditionalism” removed economic and religious power from the hands of women and concentrated it in those of men.¹⁵

On the other front, the United States government had, since the Treaty of Greenville, begun installing a policy of assimilation in the West. The Great Spirit warned against taking this

¹³ Substance of a Talk delivered at Le Maioutinong entrance of Lake Michigan by the Indian Chief Le Maigouis or the Trout, 4 May 1807, Reel 2, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, 1789-1861.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Peter C. Mancall, “Men, Women, and Alcohol in Indian Villages in the Great Lakes Region in the Early Republic,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, 15 (Autumn 1995): 447.

path, arguing that he meant “whites” and “Indians” to rely on different animals. “To them I have given Cattle, Sheep, Swine, & poultry for themselves only. You are not to keep any of these animals, nor to eat of their meat. To you I have given the Deer, the Bear, and all wild animals, and the Fish that swim in the rivers.” When hunting, men could ideally use only bows and arrows. Gun could be used for defensive purposes, but not as a hunting tool. The Great Spirit also that Native Americans should eschew wheat for corn, and he forbid them “on any account, to eat Bread, It is the Food of the Whites.” In sum, he wanted Native Americans to embrace a “traditional” lifestyle, encompassing their economy, their dress and even their food.¹⁶

Millennialist movements, regardless of race or ethnicity, typically occur during time of sweeping economic and social change.¹⁷ This case in the Northwest during the first decade of the nineteenth century followed the same pattern. Tenskwatawa’s message found willing ears among men and women eager to assert more control over their economic destinies. He traveled to the Delaware White River settlements and aided Beata in her purge. He visited Wyandot villages in northern Ohio seeking converts. Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa envoys, mostly from the Illinois and Indiana Territories, traveled to meet him. By 1807, Greenville had become a religious mecca from which the prophet’s message emanated throughout the Northwest.¹⁸

¹⁶ Substance of a Talk delivered at Le Maiouitong entrance of Lake Michigan by the Indian Chief Le Maigouis or the Trout, 4 May 1807, Reel 2, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, 1789-1861.

¹⁷ During the first decade of the nineteenth century the Second Great Awakening was beginning to emerge, especially in the West. In 1801, an annual Presbyterian meeting at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, grew into a spontaneous revival. The drama of the camp meeting was a reaction to deep and broad economic and social changes that came with growth in Kentucky. Later, other revivals would gather momentum in western territories experiencing rapid change, such as in Rochester, New York, with the opening of the Erie Canal. Aron, *How the West Was Lost*, 172, 175.

¹⁸ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 43, 46, 50, 53, 54.

Calls to control economic destiny emanated not only from Tenskwatawa and other Native Americans. In Philadelphia, lawmakers struggled with persistent British interference in American international trade. The Napoleonic wars had opened a door to American businessmen eager to trade to both war-torn France and Britain. Not eager to see its enemy strengthened, Britain established a blockade in 1806 to keep American trade from reaching France. The following year Britain attempted to broaden this policy and prevent American trade from entering all French-controlled ports, even in the Mediterranean. Adding insult to injury, British ships continued to board American vessels seeking to impress British naval deserters. The impressment controversy exploded in 1807 when the H.M.S. Leopard fired upon the U.S.S. Chesapeake because it refused to handover four accused British deserters. The humiliating American defeat did little to quell growing resentment toward Britain. Still, American envoys continued to plead for open trade, claiming neutrality in the conflict, but to no avail. In an effort to regain an upper hand, Congress passed an embargo act against Great Britain in December 1807, hoping that economic pressure would break the impasse.¹⁹

The embargo proved an utter failure. American merchants and farmers suffered alike while Britain appeared little worse for the wear. In the West, prices dropped, as did trade from New Orleans. Despite an immediate negative impact on their agricultural trade, most westerners supported the Embargo Act believing that economic sanctions against Britain would reopen the Atlantic trade. But after three years of erratic trade and British indifference to the embargo, doves turned to hawks.²⁰

¹⁹ Bradford Perkins, *Prologue to War: England and the United States, 1805-1812* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961); Reginald Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962).

²⁰ Perkins, *Prologue to War*, 287; Horsman, *Causes of the War of 1812*, 175-177.

For Britain, the Embargo Act signaled a more aggressive American direction in policy. Fearful that the United States might become belligerent, the empire sought to protect its exposed Upper Canadian settlements by rebuilding their relationships with tribes of the Lakes region. By allying with these tribes, most Upper Canadians hoped to avoid a war, which would only damage further the struggling Lakes border economy. Already the Embargo act had stymied trade across the waters.²¹ But as farmers and merchants pressed for peace, fur traders in Wisconsin and the upper Mississippi Valley pushed for a more aggressive policy toward the United States. These traders wanted to reopen the territory for their trade, which had been reduced sharply as a consequence of the embargo, and also gain better access to the Mississippi River.²² These advocates would eventually get the war they desired, but not the results.

When Britain began to cozy up to the northern tribes, American officials became suspicious of the intentions of both. They often wrongly blamed their imperial neighbor for problems along the frontier, assigning the schemes of British fur traders to Upper Canadians in general. William Henry Harrison asked rhetorically in 1807, “who does not know that the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage are always employed as the instruments of British vengeance.”²³ Actually, conflicts on the American side of the border often had little to do with direct British involvement and more to do with a changing economy wrought by American settlement of the West.

An escalating conflict with Britain did little to improve the image of Tenskwatawa in the eyes of American officials. Men and women flocked to Greenville during the summer of 1807 to

²¹ Horsman, *Causes of the War of 1812*, 159.

²² Julius W. Pratt, “Fur Trade Strategy and the American Left Flank in the War of 1812,” *The American Historical Review*, 40 (January, 1935): 248-49; Sandy Antal, *A Wampum Denied: Procter’s War of 1812* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), 17-18, 21.

²³ William Henry Harrison Message to the Legislature, 17 August 1807, *Messages and Letters*, 1: 236.

hear the prophet speak. Although Tenskwatawa's settlement cultivated extensive fields, so many people came to hear the prophet that the community often called upon the United States for extra issues of provisions. Officials like William Henry Harrison only reluctantly gave aid to what they viewed as hostile warriors assembling to hear fiery anti-American speeches. By the fall, Harrison and others began to pressure the Prophet to disband his settlement and leave Greenville.²⁴ As winter turned to spring in 1808, Tenskwatawa and his followers moved from Greenville to a new settlement on the Wabash River, which came to be called Prophetstown. There, Tenskwatawa's influence grew enormously. There, the Prophet managed his new composite community, helping organize the cultivation of thousands of acres of crops. Still, the large numbers of visitors meant food supplies continued to be an issue. When the Prophet asked for provisions to support himself and his followers, Harrison and others did so but grudgingly. Still, with added distance between the Prophet and the American military, some commanders began to report the arrival of a détente.²⁵

The rise of Tenskwatawa's popularity did not come without conflict among different tribes. Shawnee supporters of an assimilationist policy, such as Black Foot and his settlement at Wampakoneta, despised the Prophet's message because it undermined his local authority and hindered his ability to acquire necessary tools and assistance to train his village in intensive, sedentary agriculture. The Prophet's attempt to usurp established structures of power within the tribe likewise raised the ire of Black Foot. As a Kispoko Shawnee, Tenskwatawa did not have the traditional authority to manage peacetime tribal affairs, which normally went to Mekoche

²⁴ William Henry Harrison to Henry Dearborn, 5 September 1807, *Messages and Letters*, 248.

²⁵ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 69, 72, 73.

Shawnee.²⁶ Little Turtle, likewise chaffed at the Prophet's rising power and apparent arrogance. When Tenskwatawa moved to Prophetstown, he settled on Miami land without his authority. The Prophet argued in opposition to Little Turtle's claims of proprietorship that all the tribes held land in communion and therefore he did not need approval. Moreover, in the Prophet's eyes, Little Turtle had betrayed his people by associating closely with Americans, thereby nullifying any authority he possessed.²⁷ Finally, some Ottawa, Ojibwa and Wyandot questioned the veracity of the Prophet's mystical powers and worried what his rise to power might mean for the future of the region.²⁸

While Tenskwatawa built a pan-Indian spiritual base, his brother Tecumseh worked to organize a political and military confederacy. Tecumseh understood well the influence and power a confederacy could bring. As a young man he had participated in raids and skirmishes as a part of the larger property war following St. Clair's defeat.²⁹ Later, he critiqued intertribal warfare, especially between the western tribes and the Osage.³⁰ But from 1807 through 1811, (re)constructing the former confederacy remained his primary task. To this end, he traveled throughout the Northwest and even to Creek and Choctaw villages in the South in an effort to forge an even stronger confederacy than existed during the 1790s.³¹ Although his efforts to convince southern tribes to join their northern brethren failed, by 1811, he had succeeded in

²⁶ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 56; Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 120-121.

²⁷ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 69.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 47, 77.

²⁹ Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 64-65, 77, 82-83.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 209-10.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 179-80, 193-95, 205-11, 216-17, 237-50, 252-58.

convincing large segments of the major northern tribes that the United States threatened their common “traditional” economy.

By 1810, even Native American opponents of the Prophet and Tecumseh began to see themselves on the losing side of an aggressive American expansionist policy. During the previous years, William Henry Harrison had seen the popularity of the two Shawnee brothers grow enormously. As their fame increased, his resolve to assert the strength of the United States in the face their defiance and threats stiffened. When Harrison aggressively negotiated treaties with the Kickapoo and Miami in 1809, he hoped to reveal Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh’s political impotence. Instead, many chiefs and warriors who remained neutral amidst the growing strife, along with some pro-American chiefs, began to believe that the United States intended to acquire all territory in the Northwest.³² Moreover, even chiefs friendly to America had grown increasingly dissatisfied with terms offered them in treaties, especially when it came to compensation for land cessions. As early as 1805, Wyandot and Ottawa chiefs complained that the Connecticut Land Company had promised them six cents an acre but in the treaty they received less than two cents.³³ American policy held that land purchases from Native Americans should “not on any condition . . . exceed two cents per acre,” notwithstanding that that the federal government attempted to sell the same land for as much as eight dollars an acre.³⁴ With each passing treaty, a belief grew that the United States failed to offer them adequate compensation for land cessions. In 1798, to the Upper Canadian Executive Council, Chief

³² Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 92; Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 185.

³³ Chitta to Walk in the Woods, 6 August 1805, Reel 1, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870.

³⁴ Secretary of War to William Hull, 22 July 1806, Reel 2, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, Indian Affairs, 1800-1824, RG 75, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Application for the Sale of the Reserved Lands in Ohio, 30 December 1806, *American State Papers, Public Lands*, 1: 281.

Justice John Elmsley made the following assessment regarding Native Americans and their understanding of European-style economics. “Slow as their progress is towards civilization[,] they are perfectly apprised of the value of money, and of its use, in maintaining them in those habits of indolence and intemperance to which most of them are more or less inclined.”³⁵ To this judgment, one could also add that Native Americans understood land markets perfectly well, a knowledge the United States had underestimated.

The war in the West began when Harrison moved to attack massing warriors at Tippecanoe. The immediate spark for the conflict had been a dispute regarding stolen horses in possession of the Prophet and his followers at Tippecanoe, but both sides itched for war. When diplomacy failed to resolve this proximate crisis, Harrison moved his men near the settlement. Instead of taking a defensive stance, Tenskwatawa hoped to surprise Harrison with an early morning assault on November 7, 1811. The gambit failed miserably and the nascent confederacy suffered a severe defeat. On the ninth, Harrison sent a company of dragoons to Prophetstown where they captured horses, damaged buildings and burned thousands of acres of crops.³⁶

When Harrison destroyed the agricultural fields at Prophetstown, he created a Native American diaspora, much like Wayne had done in 1794. But whereas Wayne’s victory brought an end to conflict, Harrison’s actions only intensified the confederacy’s desire for war. The dispersed warriors launched a broad property war from 1811 through 1814, attacking American property, especially in the Mississippi Valley and western Great Lakes region. Most of this conflict consisted of raids, but in some circumstances, such as at Prairie du Chien, Native

³⁵ Minutes of the Executive Council, 22 October 1798, *Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell*, 2: 291.

³⁶ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 100, 110-11, 114.

Americans completely took over the area, pushing out all Americans.³⁷ Some of these raids included direct assaults on forts, but most incursions targeted civilian and military expeditions, as well as military supply lines.³⁸

In the Northwest, the front-lines of war ebbed and flowed across the international border. The United States officially declared war against Britain on June 18, 1812. In July, both Upper Canadian and American forces attempted to make the first move. On July 12, American forces invaded Upper Canada from Detroit. Meanwhile, in an attempt to secure trade lines to the Mississippi and the West, British forces seized Fort Michilimackinac on July 17, only to march back south to meet an invading American army. The main bodies of both forces met on the battlefield less than a month later where British forces gained an upper hand, forcing an American retreat. Brigadier-General William Hull surrendered Detroit on August 16.

When major combat operations resumed the following spring, the nature of the war had changed. During the first six months, the military and Native Americans on both sides had been well supplied. But after half of a year of war, stores began to dwindle and weakness of supply lines in the Great Lakes economy began to be felt by all.³⁹ The war became more violent and property became a prime target. The following spring, the American army, now under the command of William Henry Harrison, launched another invasion of Upper Canada, capturing the capital York in April. On their way to York, the American army looted homes, appropriated and burned food from fields, and tore apart buildings and fences for firewood. A poorly supplied Upper Canadian military did likewise in an effort to support themselves, as well as to prevent

³⁷ Pratt, "Fur Trade Strategy and the American Left Flank," 259, 260.

³⁸ Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 130, 131, 140.

³⁹ Brereton Grenhous, "A Note on Western Logistics in the War of 1812," *Military Affairs*, 34 (April 1970): 41-44.

their enemy from acquiring those resources. Native Americans also plundered and burned, sometimes for military purposes, sometimes to exact revenge on local populations. As the war progressed and supplies became less available, even Native Americans not directly engaged in the war raided Upper Canadian homes and villages to supply themselves.⁴⁰ Until the war ended, no property in the Lakes region was safe.

For Tecumseh, war seemed to be one strategic disappointment after another. By December of 1812, his warriors and a large contingent of their families needed to retreat to Amherstburg because they lacked enough food to support themselves. During 1813, Tecumseh and other confederacy leaders began to question their alliance with the empire after persistent supply problems and failed tactical efforts on the part of the British. He had hoped to use the British military to his benefit, but after a significant defeat at York, Tecumseh began to believe that the British would not be able to help him secure the victory he desired. After a hard summer near Amherstburg, the American military advanced from Detroit and pushed a retreating British and Native American army, along with their families, up the Thames River. On October 5, the two sides met on the battlefield. By the end of the day, Tecumseh had been killed and the confederacy began to fray.⁴¹

The war continued throughout 1813 and 1814 in both the Lakes region and in the southwest. In both theatres neither side achieved decisive victories despite advancing and retreating lines of engagement. The character of war remained unchanged and property continued to be targeted by all sides. By the summer of 1814, the United States and Britain

⁴⁰ George Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles: A Social History of the War of 1812 in Upper Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 101-2, 105, 107-8, 110; Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 140.

⁴¹ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 132, 141; Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 330.

eagerly to sought a diplomatic solution. Delegations from both sides began to meet in August, and on Christmas Eve 1814 they signed the Treaty of Ghent, ending the war.

The War of 1812 had a mixed impact on the western economy. In Upper Canada, widespread damage hurt production. For a few years following the war, the western province needed to increase its importation of foodstuffs, especially flour and pork. Trade generally declined and prices rose. Moreover, the British government only slowly repaired war damage, leaving this burden largely on local communities, resulting in a postwar economic crash that lasted for several years.⁴² In contrast, the western United States experienced a postwar boom. The tribes of the Northwest had again lost control of the economy in their territory. Cessions at the end of the war opened up new lands for speculation and immigrants poured into the re-stabilized West. Even more important, federal and state governments began to spend large amounts of money on internal improvements and advanced government-backed credit to entrepreneurs. The federal government built and maintained roads and new forts throughout the West. Congress also offered relatively quick restitution to citizens who petitioned, citing damage incurred as a consequence of the recent war.⁴³ In this way, federal dollars again helped shape the western economy.

At the close of war, as in 1794, the tribes of the Northwest had little to show for their efforts. To achieve peace, the United States forced them to cede large amounts of territory. Their relationship with Britain deteriorated quickly in the postwar years. In Ohio and Indiana, most Shawnee and Delaware chose to join those who had moved west of the Mississippi River during the 1790s. Some villages remained through the 1820s on land the United States reserved

⁴² Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles*, 184-85.

⁴³ Sheppard, *Plunder, Profit, and Paroles*, 188; Francis Paul Prucha, *Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest, 1815-1860* (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1953), 131-48.

for them. But during that period they witnessed sharp declines in game and other resources upon which they relied. Villages whose chose to remain in the Northwest rather than move west felt new pressures to do so at the local, state and federal levels. That the United States had greatly abandoned its assimilationist policies in favor of removal also worked to their disadvantage. Even Tenskwatawa became an advocate for removal. On September 30, 1826, the Prophet, along with remaining elements of the assimilationist community at Wampakoneta, departed to start a new life on the Kansas River, west of Missouri.⁴⁴ Wars of military and economy had been fought in the Old Northwest. The United States and the market economy had won.

⁴⁴ Edmunds, *Shawnee Prophet*, 156-57, 161-62, 173-74; White, *Middle Ground*, 519.

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