

JOHN BEACH AND THE REMOVAL OF THE SAUK AND FOX FROM IOWA

By Donald J. Berthrong*

The westward rush of American settlers following the War of 1812 created an almost insatiable demand for land. The population of the North Central States had reached a total of approximately a million and a half persons in 1813, but during the next decade the same section more than doubled its population, totaling about three and a third million people.¹ Iowa Territory's inhabitants were estimated in 1836 to be 10,531, and they increased in 1838 to 22,859. By 1840 Iowa Territory had 43,112 settlers, and in the following decade an average of 15,000 pioneers arrived annually.² Among the Indians trapped by the inundation of settlers were the Sauk and Fox, earlier powerful and warlike confederated tribes speaking the Algonquian language and residing in the Wisconsin-Illinois country. Frontier wars had decreased the numbers of warriors, and an aimless life plus disease and debauchery had taken its toll. Once proudly defiant, now abjectly dependent, by 1840 the Sauk and Fox were cleared from Iowa with ease and dispatch, because their leaders had recognized the overpowering strength of the whites.

The Black Hawk War of 1832 was but the culmination of a train of events which led to the final exclusion of the Sauk and Fox from their lands east of the Mississippi River. When the forces of General Henry Atkinson pinned the Black Hawk band against the eastern bank of the Mississippi at Bad Axe Creek, the fate of the tribes was sealed. After the brutal slaughter, only one hundred and fifty of the original thousand of Black Hawk's followers survived; more important, any further resistance was demonstrated as futile.³ Although a majority of the confederated Sauk

*Donald J. Berthrong is assistant professor of history at the University of Oklahoma.

¹ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The United States, 1830-1850* (New York, 1935), 258.

² Cardinal Goodwin, "The American Occupation of Iowa, 1833 to 1850," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 17:101 (January, 1919).

³ Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (New York, 1950), 298-301.

and Fox tribes remained neutral during the Black Hawk War, the subsequent treaty affected the entirety of the tribes as a punishment for "an unprovoked war upon unsuspecting and defenceless citizens of the United States."⁴

At Fort Armstrong, at Rock Island, Illinois, in 1832, the Sauk and Fox confirmed previous treaties of 1804 and 1816 which had ceded their lands east of the Mississippi River to the United States. In addition, a strip of land in Iowa averaging fifty miles in width, from the Neutral Ground on the north to the state line of Missouri, was ceded to the national government. Keokuk's loyalty to the United States during the recent troubles was rewarded by the setting aside for him and his band of four hundred square miles astride the Iowa River within the ceded area of Iowa Territory.⁵ The original cession far from satisfied the demands for land in Iowa Territory. In 1836 Keokuk's Reserve was purchased, and a year later 1,250,000 acres were added to the lands from which Indian title had been quieted.⁶

Although the laws of the United States had prohibited settlement before the public domain had been surveyed, settlers numbered more than ten thousand in Iowa Territory when the initial survey was begun in 1836.⁷ Squatters grouped together in land leagues, land clubs, and claims associations to protect choice sites until the time for purchase arrived. One hundred or more of these organizations existed in Iowa Territory, and they manifested the determination of the settlers to hold and possess the unoccupied public domain and Indian lands in Iowa Territory.⁸ As had happened countless times before on the American frontier, the Indian Agent was caught between his duty to protect the Indian land from intrusion and the incessant demand of the whites for additional cessions. The supervision of the final withdrawal of these tribes from lands in the Mississippi Valley fell to the lot of John Beach, last of the Sauk and Fox Indian Agents in Iowa Territory.

John Beach, the successor of his father-in-law, Joseph Montfort Street,

⁴ Charles J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (3 vols., Washington, 1904-1913), 2:349. (Hereafter cited as Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:349.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:474-5, 495-6.

⁷ Roscoe L. Lokken, *Iowa Public Land Disposal* (Iowa City, 1942), 67-8.

⁸ Jesse Macy, *Institutional Beginnings in a Western State* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Studies in Historical and Political Science, Vol II, No. 7, Baltimore, 1884), 5-38; Lokken, *Iowa Public Land Disposal*, 79-96; Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 476.

inherited the problems which had faced the Sauk and Fox agents since the appointment of Nicolas Boilvin in 1806. Beach was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, February 23, 1812, educated in New Hampshire, and graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1832. After serving on the frontier at Fort Armstrong, Fort Crawford, Jefferson Barracks, and as a recruiting officer in New York City, he resigned his commission on June 30, 1838, because of a partial failure of hearing. At the time of his appointment as Indian Agent to the Sauk and Fox in May, 1840, he was in the United States Land Office at Dubuque. Approximately a year before his resignation from the army, Beach had married Lucy Frances Street at the Street home in Prairie du Chien. According to family tradition, Beach was described as "Talkative, versatile, and instable in character," and was often at odds with his in-laws.⁹ Much to the consternation of his brothers-in-law, one of whom was among the applicants, Beach received the appointment as Sauk and Fox Agent.¹⁰

Squatters and intruders on Indian land were only one of the many problems facing the Indian Agent. Inter- and intratribal conflicts and disputes, regulation of Indian traders, clashes with territorial officials, and supervision of Indian treaties and councils all demanded the attention of the busy Indian Agent. During the five years that Beach was Indian Agent to the Sauk and Fox in Iowa Territory, he encountered all of these problems which on many an occasion caused him no end of trouble.

Hardly had Beach assumed the duties of the office when internal differences broke out into the open among the Sauk and Fox. The difficulties stemmed from a variety of sources, namely: a struggle for Sauk and Fox trade among various Indian traders; jealousy of Keokuk by leaders of the old Black Hawk band; alleged favoritism of Street to the American Fur Company (actually, after 1838, Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company); and the clash between Robert Lucas, Governor of Iowa Territory, and Street and later Beach. Formal charges were sent to the War Department by William W. Chapman, territorial Delegate to Congress, stating that the American Fur Company had "undue influence over the agent," because

⁹ Charles Negus, "Early Times in Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* (1st series), 12:95 (April, 1874); *The History of Polk County, Iowa* (Des Moines, 1880), 40; Ida M. Street, "Joseph M. Street's Last Fight with the Fur Traders," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 17:135 (July, 1929).

¹⁰ Street, "Joseph M. Street's Last Fight with the Fur Traders," 147; T. Hartley Crawford to John Beach, May 30, 1840, Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent, 28:419 (National Archives). (Hereafter cited, R.O.I.A., Letters Sent.)

Street paid accounts owed to the Company without first checking their accuracy. Chapman further claimed that the Indians were deceived by being allowed to select paper money according to the size of the piles and not according to denomination, thus permitting some of the Indians to receive more money than others. It was also charged that the American Fur Company maintained its favored position with the chiefs by allowing Keokuk, Wapello, Appanoose, and Poweshiek to charge goods to the account of the whole tribe.¹¹ Shortly before the death of Street, however, the War Department found Street's answers to the allegations "perfectly satisfactory," and the episode was seemingly closed.¹²

Undoubtedly with the support of J. P. Eddy, one of the disgruntled traders, Keokuk's rivals, led by Hardfish, and including the widow and sons of Black Hawk, established a new village contrary to the provisions of the Treaty of 1832 signed at Rock Island, Illinois.¹³ The new village was located some twenty miles farther up the Des Moines River from the old villages near the agency which was on the site of Agency City, Iowa. T. Hartley Crawford, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, regretted the establishment of the new village which, he pointed out, was contrary to the eighth article of the Treaty of 1832. Although he had no specific advice to give Beach, he cautioned that the Hardfish party should be given no "pretense of excuse for dissatisfaction."¹⁴

Tensions continued to mount as the time for the payment of annuities approached. Rumors circulated that Beach was to be replaced, Keokuk removed from his position of leadership, and the money distributed as the Hardfish party desired. Beach maintained that most of the trouble arose from the interference "of designing white men and half breeds in their [Sauk and Fox] local and domestic affairs."¹⁵ Contrary to the desires of

¹¹ William W. Chapman to Joel R. Poinsett, Secretary of War, Nov. 29, 1839, in "Letters of W. W. Chapman," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 22:334-5 (April, 1940).

¹² Crawford to Robert Lucas, Apr. 25, 1840, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 28:309.

¹³ Beach to Crawford, June 24, 1840, MSS. Letterbook of John Beach, 2-5. The manuscript letterbook of John Beach is in the possession of the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Okla. (Hereafter cited as Beach Letterbook.) In 1840 there were three licensed traders to the Sauk and Fox: J. P. Eddy and Company at Hardfish's village; Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company, about one-half mile below Eddy's post on the Des Moines River; and W. G. and G. W. Ewings' post at Sugar Creek on the Ottumwa side of the Des Moines River. See Ruth A. Gallaher, "Indian Agents in Iowa," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 14:386 (July, 1916).

¹⁴ Crawford to Beach, Aug. 18, 1840, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 29:154-5.

¹⁵ Beach to Crawford, Aug. 6, 1840, Beach Letterbook, 20-24.

Keokuk and the other recognized chiefs, Francois Labussier, a quarter or half-breed, circulated among the tribes and took a population census which established that the Sauk and Fox numbered only 2,299 as compared with the 4,396 given in Street's last report.¹⁶ Further embarrassment was caused by the action of Governor Lucas who told the Hardfish group when they visited him at Burlington, then the territorial capital of Iowa, that they would be paid individually. Confronted with this statement by the Indians, Beach could only assert that the interpreter had "basely lied" by translating the Governor's words in such a manner.¹⁷

With the Indian Agent opposing the Governor of Iowa Territory, and later also the Iowa territorial legislature in this controversy, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs tried to maintain a neutral position, probably out of respect to the power of the Indian traders among the officers of the national government. Commissioner Crawford noted that the Treaty of 1832 provided that the warriors and the people of the hostile group were to be divided among the villages of those who remained neutral and that no separate village led by a warrior or chief of the Black Hawk band should be established. To hedge, however, the Commissioner could find no bar to the individual payment, if the majority of the Indians so desired.¹⁸ Commissioner Crawford's attempt to maintain a middle ground was also evident when Governor Lucas undoubtedly accused William Phelps, an agent of Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company, of selling whisky to the Indians. In reply to the complaint Crawford defended Chouteau's company, stating that, "The leading men of that concern are persons of good standing and character, who would not individually, I am sure, be concerned in introducing or selling whiskey to the Indians, but they may be deceived by the Subordinate Agents, over whom it is right and proper to keep a strict watch."¹⁹ When Beach opened the cache from which the whisky was allegedly sold, it was found to contain "Hog Lard," convincing him that the agent of the Chouteau company was not selling liquor to the Indians.²⁰

¹⁶ Beach to Crawford, Aug. 7, 1840, *ibid.*, 24-5; Lucas to Crawford, Oct. 23, 1840, in "Indian Affairs of Iowa in 1840," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 15:264 (April, 1926). One can find many variants in the spelling of Labussier's name. In government documents it varies from Labussir to Labussar, and in secondary sources one finds it spelled Labashure, Laboussiere, Labussiere, and Labusier.

¹⁷ Beach to Lucas, Aug. 10, 1840, Beach Letterbook, 25-6.

¹⁸ Crawford to Lucas, Nov. 19, 1840, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 29:376-8.

¹⁹ Crawford to Lucas, Aug. 18, 1840, *ibid.*, 29:155-9.

²⁰ Beach to Lucas, Aug. 21, 1841, Beach Letterbook, 28-9.

Rather than risk further delay in paying the Indians the annuity money due them under treaty, the officials brought the funds to the Agency for distribution. Major Joshua Pilcher, Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, arrived with the money and announced the payment for September 28, 1840, at the latest.²¹ As a last resort, a full council of the Sauk and Fox was called on September 27, when Governor Lucas, Agent Beach, Keokuk, and Hardfish spoke. Neither faction of the Indians would compromise. When the council was breaking up, Keokuk was subjected to a violent harangue by Wa-sa-ma-sa, the second son of Black Hawk. Relating the incident to Commissioner Crawford, Beach said that he had heard from "reputable sources" that Keokuk would have been killed if he had not remained unmoving and unresisting while the abuse was heaped upon him by Black Hawk's son.²² Failure was finally recognized when Major Pilcher left the council grounds on September 28, after Beach feared that any further attempts at payment would only result in bloodshed.²³

After the failure of the payment, Governor Lucas in a lengthy report made clear his views of the causes of the internal strife within the Sauk and Fox nations. At the bottom of the complaints made by the dissatisfied faction was the favoritism and control of the recognized chiefs, Keokuk, Wapello, Appanoose, and Poweshiek, by the Chouteau firm still commonly called the American Fur Company by contemporaries. When the annuity of 1839 fell into the hands of Chouteau's firm, instead of being applied to the debts of the whole tribe with other traders, the division resulted. Hardfish and Pashepaho published a notice in the *Burlington Gazette* warning that the chiefs were no longer to be trusted as leaders of the Sauk and Fox.

When the factionalism continued, the successors of the American Fur Company staged a council in May, 1840, designed to maintain its pre-eminent trading position. A petition asking for the continuation of the payment to the chiefs was circulated and signed, containing 503 names, but upon examination Lucas claimed that the list included 356 names of women and children not entitled to vote on such matters. Lucas charged that by playing favorites the Chouteau traders had maintained a position of control in the tribe and that the Hardfish party was attempting to break this control. According to Lucas, the appointment of Beach only intensi-

²¹ Beach to Crawford, Oct. 2, 1840, *ibid.*, 56-63.

²² *Idem.*

²³ *Idem.*

fied the hard feelings by "interference with the inhabitants of the new town, his attachment to the interests of the American Fur Company, and the preference that [he] on all occasions shows to the company chiefs (as they are called) frequently insulting and abusing those of the independent party."²⁴ It was obvious that Lucas thought that the payment could have been made except for the interference by the officials of Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company. Pierre Chouteau, Jr., accompanied by Major J. F. A. Sanford and D. D. Mitchell from St. Louis, George Davenport and his brother, Marmaduke S. Davenport, Antoine Le Claire from Rock Island, S. S. Phelps from Oquawka, Illinois, and William Phelps, trader among the Sauk and Fox, represented the firm at the council.²⁵

After the council, Governor Lucas visited Hardfish's village and found that it contained 527 inhabitants from 124 families residing in 27 lodges. S. S. Phelps and Major Sanford accompanied the Governor, but the representatives of Chouteau would not agree to the terms of the independent faction, for they thought their demands too high. Lucas examined the accounts of J. P. Eddy, the Indian trader at Hardfish's village, whom Beach claimed dishonest, and found them correct, indicating Beach's sympathy, like that of his father-in-law, for the Chouteau firm's continued control of the Sauk and Fox trade.²⁶

Despite the recommendation of the Office of Indian Affairs, a memorial from the Iowa territorial legislature, and the order of the Governor that the money be paid to the Indians according to the numbers of individuals in the two factions, Beach still withheld the payment.²⁷ Gathering the Indians at the Agency in January, 1841, Beach found Keokuk, representing Wapello, Appanoose, and Poweshiek, demanding payment to the chiefs, while Hardfish insisted on payment to individuals.²⁸ As the deadlock continued, the feud between Lucas and Beach took on new directions.

Subordinates of Governor Lucas were now accused by Beach of violating Indian Office regulations. Jeremiah Smith, erstwhile miller at the Sauk and Fox mills, and a personal friend of Lucas, was accused of trading illegally

²⁴ Lucas to Crawford, Oct. 23, 1840, in "Indian Affairs of Iowa," 256-60.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 260.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 272, 274.

²⁷ Crawford to Lucas, Nov. 19, 1840, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 29:377; John Carl Parish, *John Chambers* (Iowa City, 1909), 170; Beach to Joshua Pilcher, Oct. 20, 1840, Beach Letterbook, 68-9.

²⁸ Beach to Crawford, Jan. 23, 1841, Beach Letterbook, 94-7.

with the Indians.²⁹ John Goodell, interpreter for Governor Lucas, according to Appanoose, sold the flooring of Appanoose's cabin to a trader without the chief's consent.³⁰ More seriously, Beach accused Lucas of attempting to destroy the influence of the Agent among his charges and of publicly reading letters intended for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs without first acquiring his approval. When Governor Lucas continued to insist upon the payment, Beach regretted "that legal necessity subjects me to the caprices of so unreasonable a superior."³¹

Differences began to abate when Robert Lucas, after a stormy political career in Iowa Territory, was replaced by John Chambers as Governor of Iowa Territory. It became evident that Beach and Chambers could work in close liaison, for Chambers manifested an unmistakable appreciation of the Indian problem and attempted to make himself competent on their condition as rapidly as possible.³² Before the summer of 1841, the factional differences had in large measure been settled, but when Beach went to St. Louis to obtain the annuity money, orders had been issued to Joshua Pilcher to withhold the funds. Since the officials of the federal government anticipated a treaty with the Sauk and Fox for a land cession in the fall of 1841, it was decided to make the payment at that time.³³ When the treaty attempt did occur in the fall of 1841, the annuity was paid to the Indians according to the demands of the Hardfish faction, individuals instead of chiefs receiving the money.³⁴

Congress was periodically petitioned by the Delegates to Congress from Iowa Territory to remove the Indians farther to the west. William W. Chapman, first Iowa territorial Delegate to Congress, inquired on January 15, 1839, what steps had been taken to acquire more land from the Sauk and Fox. He urged immediate removal, because as the Indians enjoyed additional improvements they would be more reluctant to sell and move on.

²⁹ Beach to Crawford, Nov. 13, 1840, *ibid.*, 76-82.

³⁰ Beach to Crawford, Jan. 15, 1841, *ibid.*, 91-3.

³¹ Beach to Crawford, Oct. 6, 1840, Feb. 2, 1841; Beach to Lucas, Feb. 2, 1841, *ibid.*, 66-7, 100-103, 103-104.

³² Beach to Crawford, June 25, 1841, *ibid.*, 138-42.

³³ Parish, *Chambers*, 173-4; Beach to Crawford, June 25, 1841, Beach Letterbook, 138-42; Crawford to Pilcher, Mar. 1, 25, 1841, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 30:146-7, 186.

³⁴ *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1841*, Senate Documents, 27 Cong., 2 Sess. (5 vols., Washington, 1842), 1:275. In the settlement, Keokuk's group received \$24,000, Hardfish's faction, \$16,000. Gallaher, "Indian Agents in Iowa," 386.

Since "we have a population of forty thousand upon what is called the 'Black Hawk' Purchase," Chapman assumed that additional land was necessary to satisfy the land hunger of the incoming settlers.³⁵ When Augustus C. Dodge became Iowa Territory's Delegate to Congress, he urged the removal of the Indians on more altruistic grounds. Dodge emphasized that the country around the Indians was rapidly filling with pioneers, the presence of whom led to evils and the degeneration of the Indians.³⁶ Apparently, by 1841, the Office of Indian Affairs conceded the validity of the arguments expressed by Iowa Territory's representatives. Commissioner Crawford acknowledged that "the necessity of this movement, at no remote day is manifest. The interest of the Indians' require that they should be rid of the contaminating influences which attend proximity to rapidly increasing settlements of whites. The citizens of the Territory have a right to expect that, its growth will not long be retarded by the occupancy of so large and valuable tract of land within its limits by a people not amenable to their laws, whose wild and savage character render them dangerous neighbors."³⁷ Pilcher, therefore, was instructed to initiate negotiations for land south of the Missouri River to which the Sauk and Fox could be removed.³⁸ Within a month the Washington officials changed their minds, and the Indians' removal was planned to a Northern Indian Territory in which it was hoped many tribal remnants from the North Central States could be concentrated.³⁹

Iowa's pioneer settlers knew the value of the Sauk and Fox lands which, in the opinion of Beach, were the equal if not the superior of any lands north of the Missouri River, since they contained all the requisites of a frontier agricultural economy: water, timber, and fertility.⁴⁰ As Indian agent, Beach had little sympathy for the settlers encroaching upon the Sauk and Fox lands. In the middle of the summer of 1840, Beach suggested the sale or lease of the Sauk and Fox mills on Soap Creek to William Phelps, Chouteau's agent, rather than allow the property to fall into the hands of "the hosts of vagabonds who are daily crowding into the Indian country in

³⁵ Chapman to Crawford, Jan. 15, 1839, "Letters of W. W. Chapman," 332-3.

³⁶ Augustus C. Dodge to Joel R. Poinsett, Feb. 15, 1841, in *Bloomington Herald*, May 7, 1841.

³⁷ Crawford to Pilcher, Mar. 1, 1841, R.O.I.A., Letters Sent, 30:146.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 146-7.

³⁹ Crawford to Pilcher, Mar. 25, 1841, *ibid.*, 30:186.

⁴⁰ Beach to Crawford, Sept. 3, 1840, Beach Letterbook, 41-6.

defiance of all law, many of whom with a sole view to be ready to pounce upon the property whenever the land shall be relinquished by the Sac and Fox."⁴¹

In the fall of 1840, Beach initiated one of his many efforts to protect the Sauk and Fox lands from intrusion. Notices were prepared and posted, warning that any person found on Indian lands after October 20, 1840, would be expelled by troops.⁴² Beach had no antipathy for those whom he called the "hardy pioneer," but many of the intruders were in his opinion of "depraved and lawless character" who sold the Indians whisky while plundering them of their horses and other necessities.⁴³

Beach's action received the hearty approval of the Washington officials, but when he made a survey of the reservation to ascertain the effectiveness of the warning he found that it had enjoyed varying degrees of success. The Agent quickly established the fact that while some families had moved as requested, others were prevented from moving by inclement weather and sickness, and many had "determined not to remove until forcibly expelled." In addition to intruders in the Des Moines River valley, clusters of settlers were also found living along the Iowa-Missouri boundary, where they claimed a right to residence because of Missouri's title to the land. Even if taken to court under the law which provided for a thousand dollar fine, Beach doubted if the fine could be collected, because the settlers were poverty stricken.⁴⁴ Conditions were not much improved when Chambers took office, for the squatters continued to cause difficulties. Increased contact between the Indians and the whites, Beach told Chambers, "affords ground for many outrages against the Indians, and I am sorry to add that some of these settlers are believed to have carried on the nefarious practice of furnishing the Indians with whiskey, often robbing them, in exchange for it, of their most necessary possessions." Only a few of the settlers, warned late in the fall of 1840, abandoned their clearings, but Beach could make no further attempt, because the Department had issued no new instructions to implement the law's intent.⁴⁵

With additional pressure being created yearly for the removal of the

⁴¹ Beach to Crawford, Aug. 1, 1840, *ibid.*, 15-18.

⁴² Beach to Crawford, Sept. 7, 1840, *ibid.*, 48-50. Many contemporaries and Beach used the spelling of Sac, which is acceptable.

⁴³ Beach to Crawford, Sept. 3, 7, 1840, *ibid.*, 41-6, 48-50.

⁴⁴ Beach to Crawford, Nov. 18, 1840, *ibid.*, 82-4.

⁴⁵ Beach to John Chambers, May 20, 1841, *ibid.*, 120-27.

Indians from Iowa, the federal government began to develop its policy of creating two Indian Territories in the West upon which to place the Indians. One Territory would approximate the present area of Oklahoma and would be balanced by another Territory centered between the Minnesota River, then named St. Peter's River, and the northern boundary of the state of Iowa. As a preparatory step to treating with the Sauk and Fox, James Duane Doty, newly appointed Governor of Wisconsin Territory, was commissioned by the United States officials to obtain a cession of land from the Sioux on the Minnesota River.⁴⁶ It was anticipated that when this preliminary move had been taken, the Sauk and Fox, the Winnebago, the Chippewa, and the Potawatomie could be placed upon those northern lands, in addition to other Indians who had once resided in the Old Northwest. Doty was instructed to obtain enough land for slightly more than thirty-six thousand Indians for whom the Secretary of War estimated five million acres would be required.⁴⁷

When Doty completed his mission to the Sioux, he joined Governor Chambers and T. Hartley Crawford as commissioners to negotiate a treaty with the Sauk and Fox.⁴⁸ Urged to complete the treaty with as much speed as possible, the commissioners met with the confederated tribes on October 15-17, 1841.⁴⁹ Many obstacles arose in the councils. The Sauk and Fox were reluctant to move so near their traditional enemies, the Sioux, with whom they had carried on long and bloody intertribal wars. Assurances that the government would build a string of forts to maintain the peace did not dispell the Indians' fears. Keokuk, in addition, said that the Sauk and Fox were well acquainted with the area which the government offered them and called it a "country in distress."⁵⁰

Acting unanimously, the Sauk and Fox chiefs rejected the government's offer to buy their Iowa lands for a million dollars.⁵¹ In rejecting this treaty

⁴⁶ Alice Elizabeth Smith, *James Duane Doty: Pioneer Promoter* (Madison, Wisc., 1954), 257.

⁴⁷ Crawford to James D. Doty, May 10, 1841; John Bell to John Chambers, May 10, 1841, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 30:259-60, 260-65.

⁴⁸ Smith, *Doty*, 259.

⁴⁹ *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1841*, 270-75, contains a report of the council with the Sauk and Fox.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 271, 273. Doty's treaty with the Sioux was overwhelmingly rejected by the Senate, as it became entangled in Whig politics. See Smith, *Doty*, 259-62.

⁵¹ Without exception the chiefs of the Sauk and Fox rejected the treaty. Hardfish, for example, ended his short statement with the words, "we do not want to hear any new proposals." *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1841*, 273.

a most moving appeal was voiced by Wapello who spoke with simplicity and dignity to the commissioners.⁵²

You said you were sent by our great father to treat with us and buy our land. We have had a council, and are of one opinion. . . . It is impossible for us to subsist where you wish us to go. We own this country by occupancy and inheritance. It is the only good country, and only one suitable for us to live in on this side of the Mississippi River; and you must not think hard of us because we do not wish to sell it. We were once a powerful, but now a small nation. When the white people crossed the big water and landed on this island, they were then small as we now are. I remember when Wisconsin was ours; and now it has our name: we sold it to you. Dubuque was once ours: we sold that to you. And they are occupied by white men who live happy. Rock Island was the only place where we lived happily: and we sold that to you. This is all the country we have left; and we are so few now we cannot conquer other countries. You now see me and all my people. Have pity on us; we are but few, and are fast melting away. If other Indians had been treated as we have been, there would be none left. This land is all we have; it is our only fortune. When it is gone, we shall have nothing left. The Great Spirit has been unkind to us, in not giving us the knowledge of the white men, for we would then be on an equal footing; but we hope he will take pity on us.

The press of Iowa claimed that the Indians came to the council disposed to sell their lands, but that their attitude changed quickly to opposition.⁵³ Among the factors preventing the sale was the elimination of the traders' influence over the Indians by Governor Chambers, who feared they would prevent the successful conclusion of the treaty.⁵⁴ Unable to consult with those whom they trusted, the Indians became suspicious of the motivation of the government. The chiefs and braves had plenty of ready cash for necessities and whisky, for both the annuities of 1840 and 1841 were paid to the tribes. Beach made it clear that he had little hope of ever removing the Indians to an area where they would be in close proximity to the Sioux. Despite the disappointment to thousands of anxious pioneers, the Iowa

⁵² Speech as found in *ibid.*, 273.

⁵³ *Bloomington Herald*, Oct. 22, 1841.

⁵⁴ Parish, *Chambers*, 174; *Bloomington Herald*, Oct. 22, 1841; *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1841*, 275-7; Chambers to Crawford, Aug. 2, 1841, in "Indian Affairs in Iowa Territory," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 5:524 (October, 1902).

City Standard consoled its readers that the prospects of obtaining at least half of the Sauk and Fox lands in the following summer were very favorable.⁵⁵

After the failure of the treaty attempt, Beach settled down into the normal round of agency activity — fighting the disgruntled traders, striving to remove intruders, and caring for his charges. As in the case of his predecessor, Beach was confronted with two alleged infractions of regulations. Enemies of Beach, before the treaty council, asserted that he was attempting to perpetuate the monopoly of Indian trade among some of the licensed traders, but somewhat contradictorily, he was also accused of issuing licenses to persons who, under the guise of trading with the Indians, were in reality identifying and selecting “the most valuable lands, and making settlements on them with a view of holding them, if they can, on the acquisition of the district by cession from the Indians.”⁵⁶ Beach, however, was able to clear himself of the charges by establishing the fact that he had issued two additional licenses both of which were to reputable traders.⁵⁷

Trying to stem the flood of settlers into the Indian country was an impossible task. In his annual report of 1841, the Sauk and Fox Agent noted that “extensive infractions of the Intercourse Act which prohibited surveying, marking of trees, and otherwise designating boundaries in Indian country have been for several months past and are still occurring.”⁵⁸ When a detachment of dragoons was made available to eject the intruders from Sauk and Fox lands, Beach suggested destruction of the squatters’ improvements to discourage immediate resettlement, but the advice was largely ignored by the officers of the dragoons.⁵⁹

Annoyances to the Indian Agent by intruders, although continuous, were less serious than the furor caused by the publication in the *Burlington Gazette* on April 30, 1842, of correspondence between Augustus C. Dodge and Joshua Pilcher, recently removed as Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis. Dodge, casting about for lands in Iowa Territory to which the General Pre-emption Act of 1841 could be applied, found that Pilcher held the convenient opinion “that the Indian title had been fully and fairly

⁵⁵ *Iowa City Standard*, Oct. 29, 1841.

⁵⁶ Crawford to Chambers, July 24, 1841, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 30:465-6.

⁵⁷ Beach to Chambers, Aug. 25, 1841, Beach Letterbook, 157-61.

⁵⁸ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 1, 1841, *ibid.*, 162-9.

⁵⁹ Beach to Commanding Officer, Detachment of Dragoons, Sept. 20, 1841, *ibid.*, 170-71.

extinguished" to the region between the Des Moines River and the northern boundary of Missouri.⁶⁰ Although Pilcher was clearly in error, if judged by the statements and actions of all federal officials, the former Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis based his contentions on the discussions in Washington in 1837, when the Iowa Indians claimed these lands under a treaty of 1825. All that the Sauk and Fox had conceded in the Treaty of 1825 was joint possession with the Iowas of the lands now occupied by the Sauk and Fox in Iowa Territory. Although the Iowa Indians subsequently sold the lands described by Pilcher to the United States, the Sauk and Fox clearly were still in possession of the lands between the Des Moines River, the boundary of Missouri, and the area west of the Purchase of 1837. John C. Spencer, Secretary of War under Tyler, termed the claims of Pilcher and Dodge a "downright absurdity" and charged there was an "utter want of even decent probability for asserting" that the Indian title to the lands in question had been extinguished.⁶¹

When the news appeared in the *Burlington Gazette*, Beach was forced to move quickly. Gathering the Indians at Hardfish's village he assured the tribesmen that the invasion of settlers was not caused by official actions of the United States government. Much to the Agent's relief, the Indians agreed to remain peaceful. Returning to the Agency, Beach found that "crowds upon crowds are spreading over the country thus as they honestly suppose open for settlement." Acting Governor O. H. W. Stull was requested to issue a proclamation by Beach, urging the settlers to refrain from further movement into the Indian country until a final decision was reached in Washington. Unless something was done quickly, the Agent believed that the Des Moines River valley would be settled as high up as Hardfish's village, whisky introduced, and perhaps blood shed in the Indian country.⁶²

The proclamation issued by the Acting Governor of Iowa stated emphatically that the Indian title to the lands south of the Des Moines had not been cleared, and the settlers who had penetrated as high up the Des Moines as the mouth of the White Breast River were so notified by messengers. Apparently the proclamation accomplished its object, because some settlers retreated from the Indian country although Beach thought that the

⁶⁰ John C. Spencer to Chambers, May 31, 1842, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 32:211-15.

⁶¹ Spencer to Chambers, May 31, 1842, *ibid.*, 32:213-14.

⁶² Beach to O. H. W. Stull, Acting Governor of Iowa, May 9, 1842, Beach Letter-book, 211-15.

"more obstinate and adventurous will persevere" until the troops evicted them.⁶³ These new intruders, combined with the settlers already violating the law, necessitated the use of a military force to clear the Indian lands.

A detachment of dragoons arrived at the Agency about the middle of June, 1842, to remove the settlers. Some of them had planted crops north of the Missouri-Iowa Territory line although a majority of them kept their families south of that boundary. Beach and several of his employees accompanied the troops but found the settlers less numerous than supposed. Still, they burned a considerable number of improvements to prevent their immediate reoccupation when the troops left the vicinity.⁶⁴ Thus the incident of the Dodge-Pilcher correspondence ended without further difficulties. Perhaps Dodge undertook this action to gain additional popularity among the frontiersmen, through showing them his interest in their welfare by opening new, fertile land of the Territory for their benefit. Another motive might have been an attempt to convince the federal officials of the necessity of the removal of the Indians from Iowa Territory because of population pressure upon them.

Early in 1842 the Sauk and Fox indicated their willingness to sell their lands or at least a portion of them. Keokuk, Appanoose, and Wapello visited the Agency, with the concurrence of Hardfish, and suggested that a treaty be negotiated in Washington, where "the crowd of half breeds and claimants who surround them begging for presents and the payment of dishonest claims," would not disturb the proceedings.⁶⁵ In preparation for removal, which Beach felt would occur if the government did not insist on northern lands as their new home, the lower villages on the Des Moines River were already re-established in the vicinity of the White Breast River. Where the Indians still remained on the lower Des Moines, whisky peddlers plied their trade, and the Sauk and Fox were unable to resist the raids of horse thieves on the pony herds. Only Ewings' trading post near the old settlements kept the Indians there.⁶⁶

During the summer of 1842 the settlers of Iowa became less subtle in expressing their desire for the removal of the Indians from Iowa Territory. Chouteau's old trading post was burned down, and the Agent and the

⁶³ Beach to Chambers, May 16, 1842, *ibid.*, 218-21.

⁶⁴ Beach to Chambers, June 19, 27, 1842, *ibid.*, 225-6, 226-7.

⁶⁵ Beach to Chambers, Feb. 26, 1842, *ibid.*, 186-8.

⁶⁶ Beach to Chambers, Mar. 4, 1842, *ibid.*, 189-93.

Governor were shot in effigy.⁶⁷ Returning from St. Louis, where he had obtained the annuity money, Beach found the mills on Soap Creek destroyed by fire. He knew that the incendiary action was "the undoubted work of some scoundrels in the neighborhood. Indirect threats, intimations have been uttered for some time, that these, and the Agency buildings should be burned."⁶⁸

The pressure of population constantly building up along the Indian boundary and the steadily increasing poverty and indebtedness to the Indian traders manifested to Beach the untenable position of the confederated tribes. In his annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Beach reported that the Indians were much more poorly clad than ever before and that many suffered from the want of food. The only article in sufficient supply among the Indians was whisky, the consumption of which appeared to be on the increase, supplied by "the most abandoned and unprincipled wretches." Although exaggerating for effect, Beach made his point when he stated that at the time of his first contact with the Sauk and Fox in 1832, he doubted if a "confirmed or habitual drunkard belonged to their nation, while at this time except when far distant upon their hunting grounds, the whole nation without distinction of rank, or age, or sex exhibits a continual scene of the most revolting intoxication."⁶⁹

Writing to Governor Chambers on August 31, 1842, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs informed him that he had been appointed to represent the United States in a treaty with the Sauk and Fox. Chambers was instructed to seek all the Sauk and Fox lands in Iowa, the purchase price to be a million dollars, representing about ten cents an acre. If it was impossible to obtain all the lands, half of their lands should be bargained for in exchange for five hundred thousand dollars. To prevent exorbitant claims, the Governor was instructed to determine the debts prior to the treaty, but later this portion of the instructions was modified to prevent the traders from jeopardizing the chances of a successful treaty. Half of the traders' claims and the expenses of the mills, schools, shops, gunsmith and building, the Washington officials thought should be paid out of the treaty's purchase money, but it was evident from the instructions that Chambers could compromise on these points if necessary.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Parish, *Chambers*, 179.

⁶⁸ Beach to Chambers, Aug. 28, 1842, Beach Letterbook, 237-8.

⁶⁹ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 1, 1842, *ibid.*, 238-41.

⁷⁰ Crawford to Chambers, Aug. 31, 1842, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 32:415-18.

Governor Chambers accomplished his duties successfully. The Sauk and Fox agreed to sell their ten million acres of land in Iowa Territory for eight hundred thousand dollars and payment of the traders' debts. When the Indian traders submitted their schedules of claims, they were rigorously examined by Chambers and his associates who scaled down the fifty-eight claims for \$312,366.24 to \$258,566.34. The Chouteau claim was almost completely validated, Eddy's was approved fully, but Ewings' claim was reduced by about 25 per cent. These three traders received the bulk of the claim money: Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company getting \$112,109.47; W. G. and G. W. Ewing, \$66,371.83; and J. P. Eddy and Company \$52,332.78.⁷¹

Although the Sauk and Fox sold all of their lands in Iowa Territory by the terms of the treaty signed October 11, 1842, they were not forced to move from their lands east of a line running north and south through a site called the Red Rocks near the White Breast River until May, 1843. They were also allowed to remain in the portion of their country west of the above line until October 11, 1845, when it was expected that they would be transferred to some new land set aside for their occupation south of the Missouri River.⁷²

Iowans were ready to move into the new purchase as soon as the title was clear. The *Bloomington Herald* reported that "many old farmers of our Territory, whose sons are growing up to the age of manhood, have resolved to sell the farms upon which they now reside, and retire with their families to the new purchase where the avails of their industry will enable them to settle their sons as independent farmers."⁷³ A correspondent of the *Herald* observed that along the Des Moines River "almost every tree bore the initials of some adventurous pioneer, and by way of indicating to the observer the right to title by which it was to be and would be defended, the representation of a bowie knife, a brace of pistols (crossed at the muzzle), or a rifle was cut in the tree above or below the name of the claimant."⁷⁴ Slightly later Beach made a trip over much the same terri-

⁷¹ Parish, *Chambers*, 182; Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*, 2:546-9; Alfred Hebard, "An Indian Treaty and Its Negotiation," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 1:402-406 (April, 1894).

⁷² Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*, 2:546-7.

⁷³ *Bloomington Herald*, Sept. 9, 1842.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1842.

tory and found no intruders or "claimmakers" but "pens were built and trees blazed in every direction."⁷⁵

Although the Indians expressed a desire to move west of the boundary line to the vicinity of the new agency selected by Beach near the mouth of the Raccoon River, difficulties were encountered. The Indians continued to visit the whisky shops which lined the old boundary, and the degradation of the Indians continued apace. Further, the winter of 1842-1843 had been unusually severe, resulting in the death of two-thirds of the horses belonging to the Sauk and Fox. Even before Beach completed the arrangements for the complete removal of all the Indians, the settlers swarmed into the new lands recently acquired by the United States.⁷⁶ Thousands of settlers gathered at the line, and at the stroke of midnight on May 1, 1843, they swarmed across the line. By torchlight, stakes were driven into the prairie, once the land of the Sauk and Fox but now firmly in the possession of the land-hungry agrarians.⁷⁷

In their desire for land the settlers would do battle with government officials in their attempt to pre-empt or occupy a particularly choice site. One of the more favorable locations in the newly ceded district was a farm maintained for the benefit of the Indians and located near the Agency. The Treaty of 1842 provided for the farm's sale for the benefit of the Indians and thus made it unavailable for immediate settlement.⁷⁸ Soon after the abandonment of the Agency, settlers began carrying off timber from the farm's wood lot.⁷⁹ Threats also were voiced against anyone who would bid more than the minimum price of \$1.25 per acre for the farm's lands. Throughout the summer of 1843, Beach engaged in a verbal battle with settlers over the farm, with the sturdy pioneers advocating the use of "Club Law." Beach was sustained in his action by the Department officials in Washington and firmly maintained his ground even when threatened by one of the trespassers with personal violence.⁸⁰ Although the Agent withstood the menacing attitude of the settlers, the sale price did not add

⁷⁵ Beach to Chambers, Oct. 25, 1842, Beach Letterbook, 248-51.

⁷⁶ Beach to Chambers, Apr. 2, 1843, *ibid.*, 266-8.

⁷⁷ Parish, *Chambers*, 185-6.

⁷⁸ Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*, 2:547-8.

⁷⁹ Beach to Chambers, June 1, 1843, Beach Letterbook, 276-8.

⁸⁰ Beach to Chambers, June 28, Aug. n. d., 1843, *ibid.*, 280-82, 289-92.

enormously to the economic stake of the Indians, for the section of land with improvements brought only \$1,514.51.⁸¹

Conditions hardly improved for the Sauk and Fox during the remainder of 1843. The Indians spread out over the settlements, begging for food and committing occasional depredations. "Women came with tears in their eyes," pleading for food from the Agent. Some of the misery could be accounted for by the curtailment of credit by the traders to the Sauk and Fox.⁸² Now that the confederated tribes had sold all their lands and did not have further means to satisfy large traders' debts, the eagerness to extend credit to the Indians was considerably lessened. Certainly, if Governor Chambers' opinion of the traders was only partially true, the regular traders contributed to the injustices heaped upon the Indian. In an impassioned letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Crawford, early in 1843, Chambers gave full vent to his emotions and anger against the traders. He indicated that the Commissioner, with his information limited to official sources, possessed an incomplete knowledge of the situation. With high indignation he wrote,⁸³

If the vengeance of Heaven is ever inflicted upon man in this life, it seems to me we must yet see some signal evidence of it among these "regular traders." It would be worthy the labors of a casuist to determine whether the wretch who sells a diseased or stolen horse to a poor Indian, or the "regular trader" who sells him goods of no intrinsic value to him at nine hundred per cent advance on the cost, is the greater rascal. . . . I feel painfully the necessity of making the best of things *as they are*, having no power to correct the evils out of which they have grown, and by which they are supported; but I hope to live to see the time in which the necessity of yielding to circumstances will no longer exist, and if so I will certainly endeavor to place some of those "distinguished" gentlemen before the councils of the nation in their true character.

Unfortunately, Chambers would have had to live several lifetimes to see much improvement in the Indian trade — if ever.

By early September, 1843, Beach declared that the Sauk and Fox had moved to the vicinity of the Raccoon River, where the new Agency had

⁸¹ "Letters of Governor John Chambers on Indian Affairs, 1845," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 19:285 (April, 1921).

⁸² Beach to Chambers, Aug. 8, 1843, Beach Letterbook, 293-5.

⁸³ Chambers to Crawford, Feb. 24, 1843, in "Indian Affairs in Iowa Territory, 1839-1843," *Annals of Iowa* (3rd series), 5:461-3 (April, 1902).

been established. Half of the Sauk and one band of the Fox built their villages within sight of the Agency; the remaining Sauk within eight miles of the new post. The majority of the Fox were located about fifteen miles from the new buildings of the Agency on the Skunk River and refused to establish their village closer to the Agency because of their jealousy of the Agency band and an aversion to the Des Moines country.⁸⁴

Old problems continued without abatement. "Depraved and debased characters" followed the Indians and "whiskey shops" were more numerous along the new line than along the old. An employee seized two barrels of whisky within a mile of the Agency. On one occasion Hardfish sent an urgent message to Beach requesting him to go to the house of a Mr. Turner, a farmer and forage contractor for the garrison at Fort Des Moines. At Turner's establishment, Beach seized three gallons of whisky, but thirty or forty Indians all drunk indicated that a considerable supply had recently been available.⁸⁵

The annuity payment of 1844 was but a repetition of its predecessors. One particular group drew the condemnation of Beach. "A class also here were very busy who during the winter draw the Indians into the settlements at a distance and after fleecing them of what they have complain of them as troublesome and request their removal. These hover like harpies over a payment, their pockets filled with Indian notes of land and promises to pay. They took off a large amount of money and on starting borrowed a few horses without first obtaining leave."⁸⁶

As the final period of the Sauk and Fox occupation of Iowa Territory drew near, the Indians attempted to delay their removal to the last possible moment. Pleading the weakness of their ponies in the spring of 1845 and objecting to the suggested reservation adjacent to the Kickapoo lands, they did not begin their trek to the present area of Kansas in the fall of that year. Whites, attempting to hold the Indians in Iowa as long as possible, continued to jeopardize the welfare of the Indians. The Agent felt that if the Indians did not remove by the specified date, October 11, 1845, they would be overrun by the onrushing settlers.⁸⁷ Beach had good reason for this opinion, because as the Indians prepared for their journey he re-

⁸⁴ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 4, 1843, Beach Letterbook, 301-304.

⁸⁵ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 4, 1843, Aug. 13, 1844, *ibid.*, 301-304, 335-6.

⁸⁶ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 23, 1844, *ibid.*, 341-2.

⁸⁷ Beach to Chambers, Mar. 21, May 6, 1845, *ibid.*, 358-9, 361-2.

ported that the countryside around the Des Moines River was swarming with white men who "are encamped and bivoacked around on both sides of the river. These people have neither right nor legitimate business here; and as curiosity does not attract them, many must have come for purposes which are not lawful. The quantities of whiskey brought into Indian country, and the numbers of Indian horses which are stolen at every payment are additional reasons for authorizing this presumption."⁸⁸

Keokuk, the white man's Indian, led the way out of Iowa on September 10, 1845, followed by Hardfish and the remainder of the Sauk a few days later.⁸⁹ In one last effort seeking to delay the move, Poweshiek asked for permission to allow the weak and poor to remain in Iowa for the winter, but only those too ill to make the journey were granted this request.⁹⁰ Escorted by troops, the Sauk and Fox departed from their native hunting grounds to occupy a reservation in Osage and neighboring counties in Kansas.⁹¹ When his charges were safely on their reservation, John Beach resigned as the Sauk and Fox Indian Agent and returned to Iowa, where he entered the mercantile business in Agency City, Iowa, dying there on August 31, 1874.⁹²

In Kansas, their lands were temporarily safe only until the railroads and land speculators, however, forced the Sauk and Fox to move on again. Part of the Fox returned to Tama County, Iowa, where they purchased lands which they occupy today, but the remainder of the Sauk and Fox made their last removal to Indian Territory, now the present state of Oklahoma. Even in this last refuge of the red men, the Sauk and Fox were not safe from the white man's land hunger, because under the Dawes Act the last tribal lands were opened to white settlement in 1891.⁹³

Later Sauk and Fox agents had little more success than Beach in check-

⁸⁸ Beach to Capt. James Allen, Commanding Officer, Fort Des Moines, Iowa Territory, Sept. 3, 1845, *ibid.*, 382-3.

⁸⁹ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 11, 1845, *ibid.*, 385-7. For the services of Keokuk in facilitating the removal of the Sauk and Fox, the United States government presented him with a sword, "one of suitable kind, but not too expensive." Crawford to Thomas H. Harvey, Oct. 21, 1845, R. O. I. A., Letters Sent, 37:195.

⁹⁰ Beach to Chambers, Sept. 26, 1845, Beach Letterbook, 388-9.

⁹¹ Beach to Chambers, Oct. 11, 1845, *ibid.*, 390-92; Parish, *Chambers*, 186.

⁹² *History of Polk County, Iowa*, 40.

⁹³ Paul Wallace Gates, *Fifty Million Acres: Conflicts Over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1890* (Ithaca, New York, 1954); Muriel H. Wright, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* (Norman, Okla., 1951), 222-8.

ing the iniquities practiced upon their charges. During the 1850's and 1860's the tribes continually declined in number, and by 1869, when they moved to Indian Territory, only 654 remained on the tribal rolls.⁹⁴ As before, whisky-peddlers selling poisonous liquor, bought at twenty cents a gallon and sold for as much as five dollars for the same quantity, abetted the moral and physical decline of these Indians. Frontiersmen in Kansas, as in Iowa, stole timber from the 435,000-acre reservation and encroached upon the vaguely defined boundaries. When in 1859 the advance of the frontier once more caught up to the Sauk and Fox, they ceded all but 153,600 acres of their Kansas lands. Finally, in 1867 the confederated tribes sold the remainder to the national government for one dollar an acre and at the same time agreed to move to a 750-square-mile reservation in Indian Territory.⁹⁵

From the Illinois country to Iowa to Kansas to Indian Territory, the Sauk and Fox retreated before the land-hungry whites, until ultimately they were engulfed by the whites in 1891. The Dawes Act marked the end of the reservations for the Sauk and Fox, "blanket Indians" only a few generations earlier. Now they were placed upon individual allotments of land, but these too, like the reservations, quickly found their way into the possession of the whites. Thus, the Sauk and Fox completed the downward cycle of their decline, speeded on that course by a federal Indian policy which rendered them landless and without hope of being more than wards of the government.

⁹⁴ *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the year 1869* (Washington, 1869), 362.

⁹⁵ Kappler, *Laws and Treaties*, 2:796, 951, 952.