

INDIAN AGENTS IN IOWA

[This is the third in a series of articles on the Indian agent, written by Miss Gallaher. The first two, presenting a general survey of the work of the Indian agents in the United States from colonial times to the present, appeared in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS for January and April, 1916.—EDITOR.]

I

AGENTS AMONG THE SACS AND FOXES

The intercourse between a conquered people and their conquerors has usually been marked by hope of revenge on the one side and contempt on the other. When the two races are brought closely and constantly into contact these feelings are intensified, and open hostility often results. The relations between the people of the United States and the American Indians have been no exception to the general rule. All the States in the Union have had practically the same experience, although the feeling of the whites towards the natives has varied with the periods of development in each particular region. Conciliation was first attempted, for the traders and explorers were few in number and anxious to establish friendly relations with the Indians. Like the ripples breaking on the shore when the tide is coming in, the first appearance of the white men did not appear formidable to the Indians; but with the increase in the number of settlers friction developed and fighting almost invariably resulted. When the wave of emigration had become so large that the Indians were submerged or swept onward, quiet was once more restored. The white men gradually forgot their hatred for the people they had dispossessed and began to pity them. Missionaries and teach-

ers were sent out to the frontier, only to have their efforts rendered unavailing by the struggles which constantly sprang up anew.

The history of the relations between the white people and the Indians in Iowa has been like that of the country as a whole, although the period of hostility was shorter in this region than in many others. The pioneer days in Iowa came at a time when the Indians had become accustomed to the idea of removal; yet the policy had not been in operation so long that congestion of the Indian population had resulted. At the time of the settlement of Iowa, removal of the Indians was the panacea for all the difficulties resulting from the contact of the two races. Messages of the Governors and reports of agents and army officers were filled with suggestions that the Indians be given a home west of the Mississippi River, where they would be free from corrupting associations with the whites. Acknowledging their inability to restrain the white settlers from the unceded lands, the representatives of the government constantly advocated the purchase of the Indian country and the transportation of the natives to some locality not yet coveted by the whites.

With respect to Indian affairs the history of Iowa may be divided into three periods: the first period, from 1803 to 1832, when the Indians were in possession of the land and the white men visited it only occasionally; the second period, from 1832 to 1848, when the whites held part of the lands and the Indians occupied an ever decreasing portion; and the third period, from 1848 to the present. Although there have been Indians in Iowa almost constantly even since 1848, they have been here contrary to State law and the rules of the Indian Department, or have been permitted to remain here at the will of the State government, as in the case of the Indians at Tama.

During the early period the Iowa country was visited by

four classes of Americans: traders, miners, soldiers, and government agents. The intercourse between the races at this time was greatly influenced by the geographical location of the region. Two great rivers, the Mississippi on the east, and the Missouri on the west, opened a highway on each side, while smaller rivers led into the interior. As a result fur traders and miners pushed their way into the Indian country at a very early date and it was soon necessary to station soldiers and officials on the border to regulate the Indian trade and to enforce the laws. Later, when the settlers crossed the Mississippi, the difficulty of keeping the peace between the two races increased and the duties of the agents became even more burdensome than during the earlier period.

At the time of the incorporation of Louisiana into the possessions of the United States the local administration of Indian affairs was in the hands of agents,¹ who were usually traders residing within the Indian country. The chief villages of the various Indian tribes were, as a rule, situated on the banks of the rivers; and the first government agents, as well as the earliest traders, were located at some point where the Indians collected.

THE FIRST INDIAN AGENT IN IOWA

The first Indian agent who appears to have exercised jurisdiction over the Indians living within the boundaries of what is now the State of Iowa was Nicolas Boilvin, who had been interpreter to the Osages as early as 1804. He was a French-Canadian trader and doubtless had much personal influence over the Indians with whom he came in contact. On April 9, 1806,² Henry Dearborn, the Secretary of War, appointed Boilvin assistant Indian agent for the

¹ THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XIV, pp. 27, 29.

² Letter of Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to the writer, April 23, 1915.

tribes residing along the Mississippi River above the mouth of the Missouri. Dearborn wrote as follows:

You having been appointed an Assistant Indian Agent, will make the Sacque Village, at the Rapids of the Mississippi, above the mouth of the River Lemoin, your principal place of residence, but will occasionally visit other Towns and places, particularly the Iawe [Iowa] Towns on the Lemoin, the other Sacque Towns, and the Prairie due Chien.

You will make every exertion in your power to conciliate the friendship of the Indians, generally, towards the United States, and to encourage a peaceable and friendly disposition among themselves; to prevent any acts of hostility on red or white people, and to cause proper punishment to be inflicted on such individuals as may be guilty of any hostile acts. You will, by all the means in your power, prevent the use of ardent spirits among the Indians. No Trader should be allowed to sell or dispose of any ardent spirits among them; nor be allowed to have any at their trading stations.

You will, by precept and example, teach the Indians such of the arts of agriculture and domestic manufactures, as your situation will admit. You will give all the aid in your power to Mr. Ewing, who has been placed among the Sacques, for the purpose of instructing them in the arts of husbandry. You should early procure Garden seeds, peach and other fruit stones, and apple seeds. A Garden should be established for the most useful vegetables, and nurseries planted with fruit trees; for the purpose of distributing the most useful seeds and trees among such of the Chiefs as will take care to cultivate them. You should also instruct them in the art of cultivating and preserving the fruit trees and garden vegetables.

The cultivation of Potatoes ought to be immediately introduced into your own Garden;— and the Indians should be encouraged to cultivate them, as an important article of food, and the substitute for bread.

As soon as practicable, you will be furnished with a Blacksmith to make and mend the hoes and axes, and repair the Guns of the Natives. Ploughs should be introduced, as soon as any of the Chiefs will consent to use them.³

³ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, pp. 314–316.

Reuben Gold Thwaites located the Sac village on the "River Lemoin", on the site of the present town of Montrose, Iowa.— *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, p. 314, footnote.

The following year another agent was appointed and established his headquarters at Prairie du Chien. This was John Campbell, a Scotch-Irish trader, whose term as Indian agent began on December 9, 1807.⁴ There is not much information concerning Campbell's work among the Indians. His attention appears to have been directed towards the east and northeast. Some time during the summer of 1808 Campbell fought a duel with another trader, Redford Crawford, and was killed, thus serving less than a year as Indian agent.⁵

After Campbell's death, Nicolas Boilvin apparently divided his time between Prairie du Chien and the towns farther down the Mississippi River until about 1812, when he was definitely located at Prairie du Chien and another agent was provided for the Indians to the south. Although Prairie du Chien was across the river from the Iowa country, it was a center to which Indians came from the west as well as from the east, and the work done there is of interest in a discussion of Indian administration in Iowa.

In a letter to William Eustis, Secretary of War, in 1811, Boilvin described this settlement as made up of about one hundred families — the majority of the women being Indians. It was visited by about 6000 Indians every year and the agent recommended that a garrison and factory should be established there in order to counteract the influence of the British traders. The Indians, according to Boilvin, were mining as much as 400,000 pounds of lead annually at

⁴Letter of E. B. Meritt, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to the writer, May 17, 1915.

In a note, Mr. Thwaites states that Campbell was appointed Indian agent in 1802, but a letter from the superintendent of Indian trade dated September 10, 1808, says: "Mr. Campbell resides at Prarie des Cheins on the upper Mississippi and has lately been appointed Indian Agent there for the United States." — *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, pp. 323, 333.

⁵*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, p. 325.

a place about sixty miles below Prairie du Chien⁶—probably in the Dubuque and Fever River districts.

During the War of 1812 Boilvin was compelled to remove to St. Louis, leaving Prairie du Chien and the Indians in that locality under British control. In 1815, however, he returned to his post⁷ and resumed his work among the Indians in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien. Since a completely centralized agency was unknown in those days, Boilvin spent much of his time in visiting the various Indian villages along the Mississippi and its tributaries. The extent of his authority was undefined. Lewis Cass, the Governor of Michigan Territory, informed Boilvin in a letter of March 29, 1822, that his agency extended east to the Fox-Wisconsin portage,⁸ but its northern and western boundaries were not even mentioned. To Prairie du Chien came Winnebagoes,⁹ Chippewas, Menominees, Sacs and Foxes, and Sioux, although the Winnebagoes appear to have been the most numerous during the later period.

The expenditures of the Prairie du Chien agency during these years were not large, considering the number of Indians who frequented the place. The amount required for articles purchased, for express, for interpreters' salaries,

⁶ *The Edwards Papers in the Chicago Historical Society's Collection*, Vol. III, pp. 59-63.

Benjamin O'Fallon became Indian agent for Missouri Territory in 1815. During the year 1816-1817 he spent some time at Prairie du Chien. His headquarters were generally on the Missouri River, opposite what is now Council Bluffs. He retired in 1827.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 24.

⁷ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, p. 314, footnote.

According to information from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Nicolas Boilvin's appointment as Indian agent was renewed on March 14, 1811, March 12, 1815, and April 22, 1818.

⁸ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 248.

⁹ In 1819 Lewis Cass wrote to Boilvin, telling him that the Winnebagoes had recently been included in his superintendency and asking to which agency they should be attached. Evidently they were put in charge of the agent at Prairie du Chien for in 1822 Boilvin reported that they were hostile to the United States.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 248.

and for other expenses, between January and May, 1812, was only \$3,255.31; and in 1820 the disbursements reported by Boilvin amounted to only \$2,537.35.¹⁰

Since there was no fixed residence for the agent, Boilvin was frequently absent, either in the performance of his official duties or for personal reasons. During one absence John W. Johnson, United States factor at Prairie du Chien, acted as agent for several months. According to a letter written by him on April 19, 1820, he had just been informed of the killing of two soldiers at Fort Armstrong¹¹ by Winnebagoes. He also complained that J. H. Lockwood and J. Rolette were selling whiskey to the Indians.¹²

Some idea of the work of the Indian agents at this time, as well as some indication of their difficulties, may be gathered from the following letter written by Nicolas Boilvin to Lewis Cass, Governor of Michigan Territory, in 1823:

Prairie du Chien 3rd Jany. 1823

Sir — Your verry esteemed favor of 7th April and Sepr. 14th. has been received, and note their contents. I have undertaken to prevent the Indians from this quarter to visit Drummond Island and it is with Satisfaction I have to Say none from this place have deviated from the advices given to them on this Subject and must Say that I, sincerely believe, British influence is done away with [for] the Indians residing in the vicinity of this place, as to the queries, or rather vocabulary that you make mention of, I have forwarded it last September by some officers of the United States Army my inexperience in the English Language prevents me to correspond as often as I consider it my duty. However during this long Winter I shall endeavor to procure a Copious vocabulary of the Winebago Tongue, thier Manners, Customs and Religious Ceremonies as well as relates to the Sioux, Sacs, and foxes.

Peace and Harmony now exists with the Indians, altho' large

¹⁰ *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, pp. 32, 369.

¹¹ Fort Armstrong, built in 1816, was on Rock Island. The influence of the Prairie du Chien agent extended at least that far south.

¹² *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 167.

war parties are on Contemplation between the Sacs and Foxes on one part and the Sioux's of the plains on the other part for Next Spring. Unless the Government thinks proper to interfere, I am afraid it will be Severe for those poor ignorant Savages — and no doubt some other tribes will engage — if so, this River will be the Theatre of warfare and no doubt that Commerce will be injured and Some poor innocent people the victim

I Shall do all in my power to obviate the evil as far as my means will go — but the Sum allowed for this Agency when So many Indians visit is not Sufficient. It even requires in Speaking to the Indians Tobacco, Powder etc and a few Blankets to Convey any weight with advice given them With the highest Respect I am Dear Sir Your Ob: Servant

N. BOILVIN¹³

Again, in December, 1824, Boilvin wrote from St. Louis to William Clark, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs to whom he was responsible, giving ill health as his reason for remaining away from his post. He gave a list of trading places: Trempealeau (which he preferred to the Sioux village on the Iowa River), the Falls in the Black River, and the Portage of the Wisconsin. He added that Colonel Morgan, who was acting for him at Prairie du Chien, had probably granted licenses for these places.¹⁴

Just how much authority or influence this French-Canadian agent exerted upon the Indians of the Iowa country it is difficult to determine. Like all early agents, his influence depended largely upon his personality, and, like the ripples around a stone thrown into a pool, went out from the center with ever diminishing force. The confidence of the government in Boilvin's honesty is in striking contrast to the sys-

¹³ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 298, 299.

The letters from Nicolas Boilvin in the Indian Office at Washington number only about thirteen. Mr. Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, states that only two of them, written in patois French, were the work of Boilvin himself. The others were merely signed by him.—Letter of Cato Sells to the writer, April 23, 1915.

¹⁴ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 365, 366.

tem of checking accounts later found necessary. For example, by an order of the Secretary of War in 1811, he was given the authority to expend, in the name of the government, whatever sums he considered necessary.¹⁵

His limitations, however, as well as his superior ability in managing Indians, were recognized by his superiors. As a result Lewis Cass wrote to John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, on July 9, 1822, suggesting that the military commander at Fort Crawford be instructed to report on the conduct of Joseph Rolette and concluded with the words: "Such an enquiry ought naturally perhaps to be made by Mr. Boilvin, the Agent, but you are doubtless aware, that his habits qualify him for managing the ordinary intercourse with the Indians rather than conducting an extra judicial examination."¹⁶

In the summer of 1827 Nicolas Boilvin died on a boat while descending the Mississippi River. The work of the agency was carried on during the remainder of the year by John Marsh, his sub-agent, who, on September 9, 1827, witnessed the articles of convention entered into by General Atkinson and the Indians. On September 28, 1827, General Atkinson reported that Marsh was in charge of the Prairie du Chien agency.¹⁷ When the new agent was appointed John Marsh remained as his assistant.

THE AGENCY ON ROCK ISLAND

In the meantime, a new agent had been assigned to Rock Island and the Indians of the surrounding region. This officer was Thomas Forsyth, who was appointed sub-agent

¹⁵ *The Edwards Papers* in the *Chicago Historical Society's Collection*, Vol. III, p. 138.

¹⁶ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 265.

¹⁷ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XI, pp. 248, 249; *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 20th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 158, 160. Boilvin is described as "of common height, rather stocky, stooped and bow-legged".

in 1812 at a salary of \$600 a year and rations which increased the amount to about \$819.¹⁸ In 1819 he was made agent with a salary of \$1200 a year, and was stationed at Fort Armstrong in charge of the Sac and Fox Indians who lived chiefly on the east side of the Mississippi River. Here he remained until 1830, when he was replaced by Felix St. Vrain.¹⁹

Thomas Forsyth before his appointment had been a fur trader, like many of the Indian agents of this early period, and he thoroughly understood the Indian character. His policy in dealing with the natives was summed up in these words: "Give them what you promise, never threaten, punish first and threaten afterwards."²⁰ Although this policy seems rather severe, Forsyth appears to have been a conscientious officer and well liked by the Indians, who admired justice and firmness more than any other qualities.

The first years of Forsyth's service were chiefly occupied with the counteracting of British influence among the Indians to the east. British officers and traders were everywhere and for a time Americans were almost driven out of the country. When Congress, in 1816, passed the law excluding all alien traders from United States territory, American trade was resumed; and the duty of licensing traders and selecting trading centers became the chief duty of the Indian agent.

These trading stations were usually not permanent, but

¹⁸ *Letter Book of Thomas Forsyth* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XI, p. 352. For a sketch of Forsyth's life see *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. VI, p. 188.

¹⁹ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 227, 228.

According to data received from the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Forsyth was appointed sub-agent in 1811, and agent, on August 17, 1812. The date of his removal is given as June 30, 1830. See also *House Executive Documents*, 2d Sess., 20th Congress, Vol. III, No. 117, p. 116.

²⁰ From a letter to Governor Ninian Edwards of Illinois.—*Letter Book of Thomas Forsyth* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XI, p. 334.

were changed to suit the convenience of the traders and the Indians. Among those listed in 1824 were the Flint Hills, on the west bank of the Mississippi River where the city of Burlington now stands, and the Dirt Lodge, "high up the River de Moine."²¹ These were the centers at which the Sacs were to be supplied with goods. The Winnebagoes were to be supplied at "Rocky Island" and at a place fifty miles east of there; while the trading center for the Foxes was to be on Fever River. Traders were required to have the place at which they intended to do business specified in their licenses. Among the traders mentioned as engaged in the Indian trade in this vicinity were Russell Farnham at the Flint Hills, Maurice Blondeau at the Dirt Lodge, and George Davenport at Rock Island.²²

The lack of definite boundaries between the agencies led to disputes due to overlapping jurisdiction. On April 22, 1825, Forsyth wrote to General Clark to report that a certain Mr. Dubois, a clerk in the employ of Joseph Rolette, had been trading with the Indians between Dubuque's mines and Prairie du Chien under a license from the agent at that place. He declared that it was not just for other agents to permit men to trade at other places than those selected by him for the Indians under his charge, and concluded: "I have to hope, that the business of one agent giving Licences to people to Trade within the agency of another may be remedied."²³

²¹ Van der Zee's *Fur Trade Operations in the Eastern Iowa Country from 1800 to 1833* in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XII, p. 542.

²² *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 363, 365, 366, 367.

²³ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 374, 375.

However, in September, 1825, Forsyth, himself, gave Etienne Dubois a year's license to trade at an island opposite the Little Maquoketa.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, pp. 380, 381.

For a full discussion of the Indian trade in the Iowa country and the important relation of the Indian agents to it, see Van der Zee's *Fur Trade Oper-*

Naturally the authority of the few agents within the Mississippi Valley was far-reaching. In 1819 Thomas Forsyth made a journey up the Mississippi River to assist in the establishment of Fort Snelling, on the St. Peter's River. While on the way he noted the rich lead mines on both sides of the river. There was the usual business of settling murder cases — for the most part by means of presents — distributing annuities and presents, and pouring oil on the troubled waters by means of speeches. On this trip Forsyth carried about \$2000 worth of goods for the Sioux, and they appeared eager for whatever he might have for them.²⁴ Later the Indian agent at Fort Snelling, Lawrence Taliaferro, granted licenses to Joseph Montraville and Joseph Laframboise to trade with the Yankton Sioux at Fort Confederation on the second fork of the Des Moines River.²⁵

The usual difficulty in preventing the sale of liquor to the Indians was over-shadowed during the later period of Forsyth's administration by the question of adjusting the racial quarrels which were caused by the occupation of the Indians' lands along the banks of the Mississippi River by the white settlers. The magnitude and difficulty of this work is evident. In 1823 the agent persuaded part of the Sacs and Foxes under Keokuk to cross the river to the Iowa side, but the majority of the tribe under Black Hawk steadily refused to give up their lands, since they denied the validity of the treaty of 1804.²⁶

The mines at Dubuque, as well as those on the east bank of the Mississippi River, were coveted by the whites, even more than the farming land. A sub-agent, Wynkoop

ations in the Eastern Iowa Country from 1800 to 1833 in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XII, pp. 479-567.

²⁴ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. VI, pp. 188-219.

²⁵ *Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 19th Congress, No. 58, pp. 5, 6. This was within the present limits of Humboldt County, Iowa.

²⁶ *Wilkie's Davenport, Past and Present*, pp. 20, 21.

Warner, stated in a letter to Forsyth of June 3, 1830, that there were about one hundred men at work at Dubuque's mines, where they had no right to be; and he declared that if they did not leave when he ordered them to do so, he intended to call upon Colonel Zachary Taylor for assistance. Concerning this matter, Forsyth wrote to General Clark on June 14, 1830, and stated his attitude in the following words:

Permit me to observe to you, that the Sauk and Fox Indians are sufficiently soured against the whites, by their people having been killed going to Prairie du Chien last month, on an invitation of some of the Government agents. You must know what will be the consequence when they are informed that their mineral land is occupied by the whites, and permitted to remain. If drove off the Indians will then say, that the Government is friendly disposed towards them. This, in my opinion, is the moment for the Government of the United States to show their affection towards the Sauk and Fox Indians.²⁷

Forsyth's handling of the situation on the frontier was not satisfactory to the authorities at Washington. It was felt that he had exceeded his authority in making arrangements for the council at Prairie du Chien without orders from General Clark, especially when the result was disastrous, and he was arbitrarily dismissed. On June 21, 1830, William Clark wrote to Thomas McKenney, Superintendent of Indian Affairs: "I have just received your letter of the 7th instant, relating to the removal of Mr. Forsythe,

²⁷ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VIII, No. 512, pp. 64, 65.

Wynkoop Warner, who was working with Agent Street at Prairie du Chien and Thomas Forsyth at Fort Armstrong, had reported on June 2, 1830, that a battle had been fought between the Menominees and the Sacs and Foxes. The Menominees and the Sioux, it was claimed, had influenced their agent to invite the Sacs and Foxes to a council and had then fallen upon the unsuspecting guests and killed almost all of them. To avenge this crime, a body of Sacs and Foxes crossed the river and massacred a number of their enemies almost under the walls of Fort Crawford.— *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VIII, No. 512, pp. 62, 63; *Fulton's Red Men of Iowa*, pp. 138, 139.

and the appointment of Mr. St. Vrain: Mr. Forsythe has just been notified of his removal." Forsyth had been very popular with the Indians and their dissatisfaction over the encroachments of the whites was augmented by the change. Black Hawk is reported to have said:

About this time our agent was put out of office, for what reason I could never ascertain. I thought it was for wanting to make us leave our village, and if so, it was right, because I was tired of hearing him talk about it. The interpreter, [Antoine Le Claire] who had been equally as bad in trying to persuade us to leave our village, was retained in office, and the young man who took the place of our agent, told the same old story over again about removing us. I was then satisfied that this could not have been the case.²⁸

Even after the appointment of the new agent, Thomas Forsyth did not cease to take an interest in Indian affairs. In 1832, shortly before his death, he wrote to Governor Cass, recommending that the Half-breed Tract be divided among the claimants and that a Catholic priest be employed to work among these people whose fathers were usually French Catholics.²⁹

The new agent, Felix St. Vrain, was the grandson of a French *émigré*. He appears to have been respected by both whites and Indians, although the short time during which he served as agent and the events leading up to the Black Hawk War prevented the usual agency work. Mr. St. Vrain was opposed to the use of force in removing the Indians,³⁰ but after the war began he naturally worked with the white

²⁸ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VIII, No. 512, p. 71; Strong's *The Sauks and the Black Hawk War*, p. 239.

The sub-agent, Wynkoop Warner, was removed at about the same time for his part in inviting the Indians to Prairie du Chien.

²⁹ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. IX, No. 512, pp. 21, 22. Forsyth, at this time, had no official connection with Indian affairs.

Thomas Forsyth was born in Detroit in 1771 and died at St. Louis, Missouri, in 1833.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, p. 227, Vol. VI, p. 188.

³⁰ *Governors' Letter Books, 1818-1834*, in the *Illinois Historical Society Collections*, Vol. IV, p. 178.

officers, thereby incurring the enmity of the Indians, although he still believed in their friendship. On May 23, 1832, he was sent by General Atkinson from Dixon's Ferry to Galena with dispatches for Fort Armstrong. On the following day he was met by a party of Indians and in spite of his appeals, he and three of his companions were killed. The body of St. Vrain was horribly mutilated and his heart was cut out and eaten by his blood-thirsty wards.³¹

An echo of this tragedy is to be found in a report of the Committee of Claims, submitted to Congress in April, 1844. From this report it appears that the United States government sued the sureties of St. Vrain in 1838 and obtained a verdict of \$1,428.38 to cover money unaccounted for by the unfortunate agent at the time of his death. The case was submitted to the Senate, the sureties arguing that St. Vrain had always been considered honest and that the vouchers for the sums unaccounted for had doubtless been in his saddle-bags at the time he was murdered and had been destroyed by the Indians. It was also shown that his salary as agent from January 1 to May 10, 1832, amounting to \$427.40, had not been paid. The committee, therefore, reported in favor of indemnifying the sureties of the agent.³²

The treaty at the close of the Black Hawk War shifted the work of the agent at Rock Island to the west of the Mississippi River, and at the same time the cession of the land

³¹ Stevens's *The Black Hawk War*, pp. 169-171. Felix de Hault de Lassus St. Vrain was born in St. Louis, Missouri, March 23, 1799, and was described as "tall and slightly built, with black eyes and black curling hair, worn rather long." St. Vrain was a brother-in-law of George W. Jones, and a nephew of Governor de Lassus of Louisiana under Spanish rule. See also Parish's *George Wallace Jones*, pp. 115-118. There is much dispute as to what Indians killed St. Vrain. One story is that he was killed by a party of Sacs under a chief, The Little Bear, by whom the agent had been adopted as a brother. It is also stated on the authority of Black Hawk that the Indians were Winnebagoes.—Strong's *The Sauks and the Black Hawk War*, pp. 415, 416.

³² *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 29th Congress, Vol. IV, No. 56, p. 123.

west of the agency, isolated the agency from the Indians. It was no longer the center of the Indian population and white settlers began to occupy the land between the Indian country and the agency.

After the death of Felix St. Vrain the duties of the agent at Rock Island were performed by Joshua Pilcher, until the new agent, Marmaduke S. Davenport, was appointed to that position late in the year 1832.³³ Davenport began his work on January 1, 1833, and almost immediately trouble arose over the payment of annuities. Joshua Pilcher accused the new agent of having paid \$6000 of the Indian annuities directly to George Davenport and Russell Farnham, traders to whom the Sac and Fox Indians owed money. Marmaduke S. Davenport admitted that he had paid the money to the traders, but insisted that he had done so only in accordance with the wishes of the Indians themselves. Elbert Herring, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, refused to consider this excuse and on February 19, 1833, he wrote to the agent as follows: "The order heretofore given you must be complied with; and you will be pleased to remember, that your official conduct must in future be governed by instructions from the department, and not by the importunities of your friends. If traders see fit to trust the Indians, they must look to them alone for payment."

Not only was the agent not to dispose of annuities, but

³³ *House Executive Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VI, No. 490, p. 69.

According to information from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Davenport served as agent from June 7, 1830, to 1831, and was reappointed agent on July 10, 1832. He took charge of the agency at Rock Island on December 31, 1832.

In addition to Marmaduke S. Davenport who served as agent, Colonel William Davenport was in command of the fort on Rock Island. George Davenport, the trader, was a well known character in that vicinity, but the similarity of names was merely a coincidence for there is no evidence of any relationship.—Waterman's *History of Wapello County*, Vol. I, p. 24.

the right of the chiefs to do so was also denied.³⁴ In another letter, Herring wrote: "There is no part of the agent's duty, about which the President and the department are more tenacious, than the observance of this rule in the distribution of Indian annuities." Davenport was ordered to get back the money and reserve it for the Indians. "As the agent of the Government", he was also informed, "it will be your duty to investigate all claims or accounts presented against the Indians, to prevent their paying more than fair and reasonable prices for articles which have been furnished to them."³⁵

There could be no doubt as to the attitude of the Department concerning annuities; and on April 12, 1833, Agent Davenport wrote that he had secured the money which he had paid to George Davenport and Farnham, and was ready to pay the Indians whenever they arrived. On June 20, 1833, he reported to Elbert Herring that the Sac and Fox annuities for 1832 had been distributed to the Indians in the presence of the officers at Fort Armstrong.³⁶

Another point of disagreement was over the question of paying the entire annuities to the chiefs or of distributing them to individual Indians. Davenport strongly favored the former plan, for he believed that it "would give to the chiefs more power and influence; make them more respected, and render their people much more tractable, obedient, and respectful." In support of his opinion he quoted the words of Keokuk: "My father, there is but a small portion

³⁴ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. IX, No. 512, pp. 598, 599.

³⁵ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 110, 111; Vol. VIII, No. 512, p. 967.

³⁶ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 176, 441, 442.

This difficulty and similar ones led the Department to issue a general order to Indian agents on April 22, 1833, forbidding speculation in Indian annuity certificates and the payment of annuities to anyone except the Indians entitled to them.— *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. IX, No. 512, p. 673.

of these annuities coming to each of us; and this mode of distributing it *individually* would ruin my people, as there are many among them who would take their money and buy *whiskey*, instead of such articles of necessity as they would otherwise receive."³⁷ This question, however, was not settled until much later.

The account rendered by M. S. Davenport for the nine months from January 1 to September 30, 1833, contained the following items which give some idea of the work of the agent:

Salary of agent	\$900.00
Salary of Antoine Le Claire, interpreter	300.00
Cost of publication of notice concerning intruders at Dubuque's Mines in Galenian	8.00
Wm. B. Green, express	15.00
S. Phelps & Co. presents	11.02
Robert Payne, stationery	16.44
Robert Payne, presents	200.00
John Steele, blank licenses	3.00
Richard Harrison, guard for Sac murders of Mr. Martin	15.00
Transportation of presents from St. Louis to Rock Island	4.10
Farnham & Davenport, presents and provisions	50.87
S. Phelps & Co., provisions	11.00
M. S. Davenport, expenses	160.25
George Davenport, provisions	62.00
Richard Harrison, hauling corn	53.54
M. S. Davenport, traveling expenses, in search of murderers of Mr. Martin	54.50
Antoine Le Claire, traveling expenses, in search of murderers of Mr. Martin	58.00
R. I. Post Office, postage	2.37
Joshua Vandruff, iron, hay, etc.	40.00
Robert Payne, iron, files, etc	84.26

³⁷ In a letter of June 20, 1833.— *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 442, 443.

Louis Lepage, blacksmith, six months	200.00
Benjamin McCann, striker, nine months	150.00
J. B. Labeau, gunsmith, nine months	300.00
Lambert Lapierre, blacksmith, July 12–Sept. 30, 1833	86.40
Farnham and Davenport, corn	17.50
Robert Payne, goods	907.04
Robert Payne, drayage	27.00
“Warrior” (steamboat), transporting annuities	166.79
M. S. Davenport, traveling expenses	15.00
Antoine Le Claire, traveling expenses	15.00
Sacs and Foxes, annuities	7800.00
Sacs and Foxes, annuities	28000.00

\$39,734.08³⁸

This sum Mr. Davenport paid out of the \$41,399.23 turned over to him by Joshua Pilcher.

Occasionally the agent visited the Indian villages at the Des Moines Rapids. On one such visit he reported that he had received from Chief Keokuk four Indians who were given up by the tribe for the murder of a white man named Martin.³⁹

On the whole, however, the whites gave the agent more trouble than did the Indians. Men interested in the rich lead mines rushed into the Indian country without legal authority. In December, 1832, Agent Davenport reported that all these intruders at Dubuque's mines — about one hundred and fifty in number — had removed at his orders, although they had petitioned the general government to be allowed to remain. He also expressed much sympathy with the settlers, many of whom had large families and no money. The miners who had insisted on working the lead mines at Dubuque even before their cession by the Indians, rushed

³⁸ *House Executive Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VI, No. 490, pp. 68, 69, 70.

³⁹ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, p. 176.

back as soon as the war was over, although no arrangement had been made for opening the land to settlement. Davenport reported on February 22, 1833, that his representative, S. D. Carpenter, had found that from eighty to one hundred persons had gone over to Dubuque's mines, and were there engaged in mining and smelting. The agent further expressed the opinion that "Without a small military force is established at those mines, it will be impossible to keep persons from intruding upon them."⁴⁰

THE PRAIRIE DU CHIEN AGENCY

About this time a sweeping reorganization of the Indian Department took place. By an act of Congress passed in 1834, the Rock Island Agency was transferred to Green Bay and the Prairie du Chien agent was to reside at Rock Island until December 31, 1836, when the agency at that point was to be discontinued. No provision, however, was made for the location of the Sac and Fox Agency after this date. The Prairie du Chien Agency included all the Indian country west of the Fox-Wisconsin portage, south of the Michilimackinac and St. Peter's agencies, and west as far as the country of the Winnebagoes extended. For the time being the duties of the agent at Prairie du Chien were to be performed by the commander of Fort Crawford.⁴¹

The agent at Prairie du Chien at the time of this reorganization of the Indian service was Joseph Montfort Street,⁴² who was first appointed Indian agent at that place in 1827. His salary at first was \$1200, but after he was transferred to Rock Island in 1834 it was raised to \$1500. Although

⁴⁰ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. IX, No. 512, p. 561; Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 110, 111.

⁴¹ *United States Statutes at Large*, Vol. IV, ch. 162, p. 736; *Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 258, 259, 260.

⁴² For a biography of Joseph M. Street see *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. II, pp. 81-105; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XI, pp. 356, 357.

Street owed his appointment in the beginning to the political influence of Henry Clay, he was a brave and intelligent public officer, and remained in the service under various Presidents.

At the time of his arrival the Winnebagoes were bitterly hostile to the whites because of the operation of the lead mines on their lands, and the "Winnebago War" was in progress. The temporary peace which followed this war led to new settlements on Indian lands and increased the difficulties of the Indian agent. Henry Dodge with about one hundred other miners settled in southwestern Wisconsin on the land reserved to the Indians; and when Street sent his sub-agent, John Marsh, to order them off, he received the answer that General Dodge would remove as soon as he could conveniently do so. Dodge remained, however, until the land was ceded to the United States by the Winnebagoes in the treaty of August 1, 1829.⁴³

Another difficulty which confronted the new agent was the enmity existing between the various tribes of Indians attached to the agency or living in the surrounding country. In 1829 a quarrel developed between the Menominees who belonged to the Prairie du Chien Agency and the Foxes, who lived on the west side of the Mississippi River to the south. Sub-agent Wynkoop Warner of Galena attempted to secure peace by inviting the Foxes to a council at Prairie du Chien. This invitation he had no legal authority to issue, for he was a sub-agent of the Prairie du Chien Agency, while the Fox Indians were included in the Rock Island Agency. After delivering the invitation, however, Warner started for Prairie du Chien ahead of the Indians and was warned by Agent Street that the meeting would be dangerous to the Foxes, because some hostile Menominees were at Prairie du Chien.

⁴³ Pelzer's *Henry Dodge*, pp. 32-34.

For some reason, in spite of this warning, the sub-agent failed to report this fact to the Foxes and the result was a massacre of the most important men of the Foxes by a party of Menominees. As might have been expected, the Sacs and Foxes retaliated by killing a number of Menominees, almost under the walls of Fort Crawford, in the summer of 1831. According to the law governing the Indian service at this time, the agent was not given any authority to punish Indians for crimes against other Indians, so nothing could be done except to patch up a truce between the tribes.⁴⁴ The approaching conflict between the Indians and the white settlers who had reached the Mississippi River failed to unite the hostile tribes. John Marsh wrote to Agent Street on April 28, 1832, that the Sioux of Wabasha's band were making war on the Chippewas, and this report was confirmed on August 3, 1832, by a letter from a scout, Alexis Baily. A little later, on August 21, 1832, Street wrote to these Indians asking them to bring in their prisoners for whom he offered a ransom.⁴⁵

When the Black Hawk War broke out the civil authority of the agent was naturally overshadowed by the military. Street's position was, nevertheless, one of great importance. It was his duty to keep the Indians of his agency friendly to the whites, or at least neutral, and to assist the military officers. A statement on June 7, 1832, certified that he had purchased from the American Fur Company rifles and guns amounting to \$1032.⁴⁶ These were apparently used to arm a company of friendly Indians under William S. Hamilton. At the close of the War, the party of Winnebagoes to whom Black Hawk and the Prophet had surren-

⁴⁴ Van der Zee's *Fur Trade Operations in the Eastern Iowa Country from 1800 to 1833*, in *THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, Vol. XII, pp. 560-562.

⁴⁵ *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁴⁶ *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

dered themselves, brought their prisoners to Joseph M. Street, who delivered them to Colonel Zachary Taylor in command of Fort Crawford.⁴⁷ Later, General Atkinson wrote to Street to send a man named Carramain to Dixon's Ferry to receive the twenty horses left there as a reward for the capture of Black Hawk and the Prophet.⁴⁸

The regulation of the Indian trade was also a duty which involved innumerable difficulties. Many of the Indian agents had been traders before their appointment and sympathized with the traders. Street had had no such experiences and the traders bitterly opposed every attempt he made to enforce the government regulations. The enforcement of the anti-liquor law made the agent unpopular both with the traders and the Indians, while its non-enforcement resulted in cheating, degradation, and often in murder. Among the enemies of the agent at this period were Joseph Rolette and H. L. Dousman. Something of the attitude of the traders toward the government officials may be seen from the following incidents. John Marsh, Street's sub-agent, wrote to him on April 28, 1832, concerning the Indians of Wabasha's band of Sioux and declared: "One of Rolette's boats passed up the river three or four days since with *Eighteen barrels of whiskey*—this seems a little extraordinary especially at this season when the trade is entirely finished". Later in the summer, Alexis Bailly wrote to Street:

⁴⁷ Strong's *The Sauks and the Black Hawk War*, pp. 477-479; *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. II, pp. 89-93.

William S. Hamilton was a son of Alexander Hamilton.

Reuben G. Thwaites asserts that it was Joseph M. Street who sent Lieutenant Ritner to intercept the non-combatants of Black Hawk's band who were trying to cross the river below Prairie du Chien.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XII, pp. 254, 255.

⁴⁸ *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

This Carramain, mentioned in General Atkinson's letter of September 2, 1832, was a Winnebago chief. The name was usually written Carramanee.—*Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. II, p. 96.

There has been some consternation among those natives who have not yet joined the temperance Societies, it was caused by the seizure of some whiskey in Messrs Moreaus & Leblanc's Boat, it has completely prostrated all their hopes of drunken frolicks and they cannot be made to comprehend that it's all for their benefit. How friend Rolette will relish the seizure of his whiskey & the detention of one of his Boats in no very favorable weather uncovered is more than I can properly tell but I may safely augur from a knowledge of the good feeling I know he bears to all military folks that Mr. Burnett may safely prepare himself for Law.⁴⁹

Indian agents and military officers not infrequently found themselves involved in expensive litigation by their attempts to enforce the indefinite regulations of the Department. For example, the traders claimed that the Mississippi River and the islands in it were not Indian country and that the Indian agents had no authority over it. On October 4, 1832, Street wrote to Lewis Cass, asking that he be reimbursed the sum of \$800 and costs which he had been compelled by a court to pay for timber seized on an island where the agent believed it was unlawful for white men to cut timber.⁵⁰ This was probably Street's share in the case reported on by the Committee of Claims, from which it appears that Jean Brunett had started secretly with a party of men to cut timber on Indian land, and at the request of Joseph M. Street had been arrested by Stephen W. Kearny. Brunett, although a foreigner, obtained a verdict of \$1200 damages and costs amounting in all to \$1,373.56 $\frac{1}{4}$, in a United States Circuit Court for the counties of Crawford and Iowa, Michigan Territory. Although the claim was

⁴⁹ Letter of Bailly to Street, August 3, 1832, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

Lawrence Taliaferro, the agent at St. Peter's and a relative of Joseph M. Street, declared that Rolette was an habitual liar.

The Burnett mentioned by Bailly was T. B. Burnett, a sub-agent under Street, appointed October 15, 1829.

⁵⁰ Letter of Street to Lewis Cass, October 4, 1832, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

frequently made that the Indian agent had no legal authority on the Mississippi, this case was decided on the ground that the power to remove intruders from the Indian country was vested in the President and could be exercised by agents and military officers only when officially delegated to them by him. The attitude of the frontier courts towards the attempts to enforce the laws for the protection of the Indians, and the handicaps under which the agents worked are evident from this decision, for it was not argued that Brunett was innocent. The Committee of Claims, however, deciding that the officers had acted in good faith, recommended that Congress should appropriate money to pay the costs of the suit.⁵¹

In general, it may be said that the traders opposed the civilization of the Indians or their removal because of the possible loss to the trade. The only argument in favor of removal in the eyes of the traders was the possibility of increased annuities, which would fall into their hands. An example of their opposition to the agent and the means employed to make it effective is to be found in a letter from Joseph Rolette to G. B. Porter, Governor of Michigan Territory, on December 6, 1832. Street had advised the removal of the Indians from the vicinity of Fort Winnebago to the country west of the Mississippi because he believed they would advance in civilization more rapidly if removed from association with the whites. Rolette preferred to have them remain in the fur-producing locality and insinuated that Street had personal reasons for wishing the change. "But, I have to remark," he wrote, "Gen. Street's son is a trader at this place, and has the store in the agency house. Rumor says father, son, and the sub-agent are all concerned. What motives can a man have in wishing himself additional trouble for the same pay? He certainly must

⁵¹ *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, pp. 9, 10.

wish to have them removed west of this to have payment of the whole annuities, and by that favor his son's trade, or their own, if the report is correct."

In addition to this charge Rolette asserted that the blacksmith paid by the annuity money was working three-fourths of the time for citizens.⁵² This charge concerning the blacksmith was repeated in 1835 by H. L. Dousman, a member of the American Fur Company, who wrote to Elbert Herring, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that the Indian blacksmith at Prairie du Chien was permitted to do private work and was at that time building the schoolhouse on Yellow River. His son was also paid as a striker, but did little work. As a result, declared Dousman, the American Fur Company was obliged to do blacksmith work for the Indians.⁵³

On the other hand, Street insisted that it was the fur traders who were selfish in preferring trade to the well-being of the Indians. He asserted that the interpreter at Fort Winnebago was in their pay and the sub-agent there, John Kinzie, reported to the officers of the American Fur Company instead of to him. Street advocated the payment of the larger part of the Winnebago annuities at Prairie du Chien or west of the Mississippi River, in order to attract the Indians in that direction. A letter, dated April 2, 1833, had already been received from the Department, directing that an Indian school should be erected west of the river. It was a mistake, Street maintained, to distribute at Fort Winnebago the larger part of the 60,000 rations furnished the Winnebagoes, as Superintendent Clark had ordered.⁵⁴

In the end, however, a treaty was made with the Winne-

⁵² *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, p. 95.

⁵³ Letter of Dousman to Herring, March 26, 1835, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁵⁴ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 475, 478.

bagoes by which they promised to move to the Neutral Ground in the Iowa country.⁵⁵ In 1833 Agent Street wrote to William Clark describing the new location of his wards, the Winnebagoes, in what is now northeastern Iowa. It was a fertile country, well watered, and with fine mill streams. At that time, game was plenty. The Winnebagoes moved reluctantly, but finally a part of the tribe established themselves at an old Sac village on the Turkey River, about twenty-five or thirty miles west of Prairie du Chien. A site for the school had been selected about ten miles west of Fort Crawford on the dividing ridge between the Yellow and Gerrard's rivers.⁵⁶

The report of the Prairie du Chien agency for the period from October 1, 1832, to September 30, 1833, illustrates the items of expenditure in an agency where no educational or industrial work was attempted. The chief items were as follows:

J. M. Street, agent	\$1,200
Thomas B. Burnett, sub-agent	500
“ “ “ counsel and attorney's fees	500
Amable Grignon, interpreter	400
John Dowling, rent for agency building	400
Winnebago annuities for 1832	3,000
Winnebago annuities for 1833	4,500
The total expenditure was \$13,785.38 ⁵⁷	

⁵⁵ The treaty of September 15, 1832.—Kappler's *Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, pp. 345-348.

⁵⁶ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. X, No. 512, pp. 651-653.

The school had been provided for by the treaty of 1832. It was to be maintained for twenty-seven years, but was not to cost more than \$3000 per annum. Inspections were to be made by the Governor of Illinois, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, the Winnebago Indian agent, any officer of the United States army above the rank of major, and by the commanding officer at Fort Crawford.—Kappler's *Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, p. 346.

⁵⁷ *Executive Documents*, 1st Sess., 23rd Congress, Vol. VI, No. 490, pp. 142, 143.

THE AGENCY OF THE SACS AND FOXES

The revolution in the Indian Department, following the reorganization law of 1834, affected the position of Joseph M. Street as it did that of Marmaduke S. Davenport, and he was ordered to Fort Armstrong as the agent of the Sacs and Foxes. In August of 1834, he paid the Sac and Fox Indians their annuities in bank notes at Rock Island and reported that they appeared grateful to him and to P. Chouteau, the trader, who had given them credit.

The change was not at all pleasing to Mr. Street. He had just completed a two-story stone house for the Indian school, and \$2,500 had recently been appropriated for the purchase of an agent's house. In a letter to Lewis Cass, the Governor of Michigan Territory, written on September 12, 1834, he protested against his transfer to Rock Island. He urged that his acquaintance with the Winnebagoes made him more valuable among them. Besides, there were no Sacs and Foxes within one hundred and fifty miles of Rock Island. Furthermore, there were no schools nor churches at the latter place and Street had a family of children to educate. Finally, there were no agency buildings at Rock Island fit for occupation.

Agent Street also appealed to friends at Washington to use their influence to have him returned to Prairie du Chien, but protests and influence were unavailing. Possibly the Department had sufficient reason for the transfer, but none was given, and on March 5, 1835, Street received a letter from Elbert Herring, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, which reads as follows:

You have been appointed by the President and Senate, Agent for the Indian tribes attached to the Prairie du Chien Agency. I enclose a bond, which you will please to execute in the penal sum of Two thousand dollars. The sufficiency of the sureties must be attested by the District Judge or District Attorney. When it is re-

turned to the office your Commission will be forwarded. In conformity with the instructions of 28th of October last, you will deliver all the public property of every description at Prairie du Chien to the Commanding Officer at Fort Crawford, on the first day of April next, and repair to Rock Island, which has been selected as the site of your agency.⁵⁸

The period between 1834 and 1838 was one of uncertainty. Part of the time Street's family lived at Prairie du Chien and part of the time on Rock Island, where the military buildings of Fort Armstrong were turned over to the agent in 1836. At the time of this order, Street was informed by Commissioner Herring that he would not be returned to Prairie du Chien, but in spite of this statement the agent and his friends persisted in their efforts to secure his return.⁵⁹

In 1837, Thomas P. Street, a son of the agent, who lived at Prairie du Chien, wrote to his father giving an account of a visit of Governor Henry Dodge to the Winnebago school on the Yellow River. The younger Street declared that Governor Dodge, who was Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had promised that Joseph M. Street might have his choice of the Sac and Fox or the Prairie du Chien agencies.⁶⁰

In the meantime the business of the agency had been carried on as usual, although the distance of the Indians from Rock Island made the work difficult. In 1837 Agent Street conducted a party of about thirty Sac and Fox Indians, in-

⁵⁸ *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

It is difficult to explain why Rock Island was selected as the site of the Prairie du Chien agency. Street apparently retained supervisory authority over the Winnebagoes until 1838, when he gave up hope of being returned to Prairie du Chien.

⁵⁹ Letter of Herring to Street, April 12, 1836, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁶⁰ Letter of Thomas P. Street, February 16, 1837, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

cluding Black Hawk, Wapello and his wife and son, to Washington, D. C., and other eastern cities. Among the attractions of the trip were visits to such places as Faneuil Hall, a military parade, and a reception by Governor Edward Everett of Massachusetts. Mr. Street who was a strict Presbyterian was unwilling to attend the theater, so John Beach, his son-in-law, accompanied the Indians to the Tremont to see Forrest, the noted actor.⁶¹ It was during this visit to Washington that the chiefs made the treaty of October 21, 1837, by which additional land in Iowa was ceded to the United States — the first treaty with these Indians in which it was stipulated that interest on a certain sum should be paid to them, as annuities, instead of the principal in installments. The country remaining to the natives after this treaty was an irregular rectangle about one hundred and forty miles each way. The northern line was the longest, the southern the shortest. The eastern boundary, which was not in fact a straight line, but two lines forming an obtuse angle, was some one hundred and fifty miles long.⁶²

Governor Dodge's promise that Street might choose between Rock Island and Prairie du Chien was apparently not considered by the authorities at Washington, for on March 10, 1838, Carey A. Harris, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, sent the following instructions to Street:

The treaty with the Sacs and Foxes of October 21, 1837, having been ratified, you will proceed without delay to select sites for the Agency house, and appurtenant buildings, which shall be at least 10 miles from the exterior line of the late cession. Having done this, you will make contracts for the erection of all the buildings, not exceeding your estimate of \$3500, and at as much lower rates as will be consistent with a judicious economy; and you will bear in

⁶¹ Waterman's *History of Wapello County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 24, 25.

⁶² Kappler's *Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, p. 495; *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 25th Congress, Vol. II, No. 1, pp. 490-494.

mind the fact, that these must be temporary establishments upon which no avoidable expenditures should be made. Every circumstance indicates, that the Indians cannot remain in their present country with comfort or propriety, after the settlement of the whites shall have multiplied around them.⁶³

These instructions were later modified by the requirement that the agency should be located on a navigable stream.

The change was acceptable to the agent who, as early as 1836, had advocated the removal of the Sac and Fox Agency to some point on the Des Moines River near the Indian boundary line, fifty or sixty miles from Fort Des Moines and near the proposed military road to Fort Leavenworth.⁶⁴ Rock Island was out of the question as a site for the agency, for the Indians were entirely separated from it by settled lands.

Early in the spring of 1838 Agent Street, accompanied by Poweshiek and a party of Indians, selected a site for the new Sac and Fox Agency on the Des Moines River near what is now Agency, Iowa. A council house, agent's dwelling house, shops, and other necessary buildings were soon erected by a contractor from Clarksville, Missouri. A farm was begun under the direction of Richard Kerr, who came out as farmer at a salary of fifty dollars a month; and by April, 1839, Mr. Street moved his family from Prairie du Chien to the new agency.⁶⁵ The home of the agent was a two-story frame building and grouped about it were the

⁶³ Letter of Harris to Street, March 10, 1838, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁶⁴ Letter of Street to G. W. Jones, January 25, 1836, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

Street at this time was visiting at Prairie du Chien. He congratulated Jones on his election as Territorial Delegate in spite of the opposition of Rolette, Dousman, and Lockwood, the traders who were also bitterly hostile to Street.

⁶⁵ Fulton's *The Red Men of Iowa*, pp. 349, 350.

homes of the agency employees.⁶⁶ Two mills were also built in accordance with the provision of the treaty of 1837: one on Soap Creek, across the Des Moines River and about seven miles from the agency; and another on Sugar Creek between the present sites of Ottumwa and Agency. The latter was built by the agent at the request of Appanoose who lived in that vicinity, but it proved a bad investment because of lack of water.⁶⁷

The establishment of the new agency coincided with the organization of the Territory of Iowa and henceforth the Sac and Fox agent was subordinate to the Governor of the Territory of Iowa, who was ex officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs for that Territory.

According to Street's estimate in 1839, the Indians under his charge numbered about 4546.⁶⁸ They were divided into five bands: three under Appanoose, Wapello, and Keokuk on the Des Moines River; a division of Wapello's band on the Skunk River; and Poweshiek's band one hundred miles away on the Iowa River. It was planned that each group was to have a farm, and a contract was let for breaking and fencing 1439 acres of prairie; 640 acres on the Iowa River, and 799 acres on the Des Moines. Two hundred acres had

⁶⁶ Waterman's *History of Wapello County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 29, 30.

The first employees were Richard Kerr, the farmer; Josiah Smart, interpreter; Charles Withington, blacksmith; and Harry Sturdevant, gunsmith. Additional laborers were often employed.

⁶⁷ *House Executive Documents*, 1st Sess., 26th Congress, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 498-500.

⁶⁸ *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 25th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 490-494.

This included 1300 Sacs under Appanoose, 800 members of the same tribe under Keokuk, and 2446 Foxes under Wapello and Poweshiek. The number was probably too large.

In 1840 John Beach reported between 3800 and 4200 Indians. A census of the Sacs and Foxes, completed on September 19, 1842, gave the number as 2348. The decrease was partly due to the more careful enumeration, although dissipation and hardship were undoubtedly diminishing the membership of the tribe.—*Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 26th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 328; *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 423-427.

already been broken for the Sacs and 250 for the Foxes, upon which they raised considerable corn.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, Agent Street was much discouraged. Whiskey was brought to the Indians and white men settled on the Indian lands, either ignorantly or intentionally. The results were always disastrous to the Indians. One settler, Reason Jordan, had built a house on the reservation and refused to remove. He had, furthermore, taken a cow which the agent had given to Black Hawk and had later seized a yoke of oxen belonging to Keokuk. These animals, he declared, he intended to kill and eat in order to cancel a debt which the Indians owed him. The agent appeared to be helpless. There was no civil authority to support him and no military force near at hand. On September 14, 1839, Street wrote to Governor Lucas of Iowa Territory of this difficulty. "It is in vain", he said, "that authority is given me to forcibly act in case of the introduction of intoxicating liquors, or with respect to the being or residing in the Indian country, for without *force* to call to my aid I am less able than an ordinary man, within a State or Territory, to do anything."⁷⁰

At the payment of the annuities in 1839 Mr. Street reported that one hundred white men crowded the Indians out of the council house, and when ordered out they pulled the chinking from between the logs and watched the distribution of the money they hoped soon to secure. The Indians immediately turned over to the traders \$12,000 in payment of debts and the Foxes gave them \$3000 more to pay some absent creditors. It was no wonder that Street wrote to the Department: "I have, under the instructions of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, located their agency among them within their own country, and within an hour's ride of their principal town, [but] I have little hope that any good

⁶⁹ *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 25th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 490-494.

⁷⁰ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 26th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 499.

can be done the Indians, unless some more efficient plan can be adopted to exclude whiskey and the white people from the Indian country."⁷¹

On the other hand, the fur traders disliked Street and attempted to drive him from office. He was charged with favoritism to certain traders and with failing to account for public funds. On October 17, 1839, E. A. Hitchcock wrote to Street commenting on the charges that the agent had embezzled one hundred dollars of Sac and Fox funds, and in addition had acted dishonestly in connection with the Half-breed Tract. He declared, however, that Secretary Crawford did not believe the charge and added: "The only wonder expressed in regard to the business has been, that you had the courage to brave a parcel of sharpers who 'as a matter of course' would attack you." The most specific charge against Street was that he had given the annuity money to the agent of the American Fur Company instead of to the Indians, thus leaving the other creditors without a proportionate share of the payment.⁷²

In answer to these charges Street secured letters from various people who had been present at the distribution of annuities in 1838 and 1839. Among these was William Phelps, the representative of the American Fur Company, who wrote a public letter to Street on January 20, 1840, giving a detailed account of the annuity distribution as he saw it. The annuities for 1838, Phelps declared, had been in the hands of Dr. Reynolds, the military disbursing agent — and had been given by him to the chiefs. A large sum was immediately paid by them to the agent of the American Fur Company. The Indians then asked Street to assist them in settling their other debts and this the agent and

⁷¹ *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 25th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 490-494.

⁷² Letter of E. A. Hitchcock to Street, October 17, 1839, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

Dr. Reynolds tried to do. In 1839 the office of military disbursing agent had been discontinued and the regular agent gave the annuity money to the chiefs, who again paid the American Fur Company before paying the other creditors. Street was not a party to this transaction, but, on the contrary, had urged the Indians to pay all their creditors equally. These statements were corroborated by William B. Street, a son of the agent, and by Josiah Smart, the interpreter, who declared that Joseph M. Street was ignorant of the intentions of the chiefs to favor the American Fur Company.⁷³

Agent Street, himself, also denied any knowledge of an agreement between the agent of the American Fur Company and the Indians but added: "I did not consider it a part of my duty to compel the Inds. or the Company or any individual to submit their private affairs to my investigation unless there was some violation of law & propriety." Whatever the basis of the charges, Street's superiors evidently did not consider them as well founded. Governor Lucas wrote on February 18, 1840: "In justice to Gen'l Street I will state that as far as I have had any intercourse with him

⁷³ Letter of William Phelps to J. M. Street, January 20, 1840, in the *Letters from the Correspondence of Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clark, Territorial Governors and Superintendents of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846*, Vol. I, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

Josiah Smart, furthermore, declared that Street was always careful in the management of public funds, and that he had reduced a bill of Smart's for breaking land before he became interpreter, because he believed the \$800 charged was too much for the work performed.

This interpreter, Josiah Smart, was a romantic pioneer character. Though a man of considerable ability and education, he had married an Indian woman and when among the Indians adopted their dress. Just before the outbreak of the Black Hawk War he had made a visit to Keokuk's village on the Iowa River, disguised as a Sac brave and narrowly escaped death at the hands of Black Hawk and his followers.—Strong's *The Sauks and the Black Hawk War*, pp. 235, 236, 238; *The Sac and Fox Indians and the Treaty of 1842*, in *THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, Vol. X, p. 265.

he has manifested a deep interest for the welfare of the Inds. under his charge".⁷⁴

While it is, of course, possible that Joseph M. Street was really unfair and dishonest, his enemies have apparently failed to leave proof of any specific offenses, and the reputation of most of the traders of that period is hardly sufficient to convict a man on their unsupported charges. They succeeded, however, in annoying and humiliating the agent and in arousing insubordination against him among his subordinates. One of his interpreters, Josiah Smart, was loyal throughout, but the other, John Goodell, was opposed to him.

Before the charges against Street had been completely refuted, he died at the agency house on May 5, 1840. His son-in-law, John Beach, was appointed agent in his place, and immediately took up the work of the agency. Amid the mourning Indians, Joseph M. Street was buried at the agency. By his side, two years later, the Indian chief Wapello was buried, at his own request, in order that he might be near his "white father".⁷⁵

The new agent, Lieutenant John Beach, was a graduate of West Point and in character and ability a worthy successor of Joseph M. Street. When he reached the agency in the summer of 1840 he found about 2300⁷⁶ Indians on the reservation. They were divided into six villages, over

⁷⁴Letter of J. M. Street, February 6, 1840, in the *Letters from the Correspondence of Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clark, Territorial Governors and Superintendents of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846*, Vol. I, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁷⁵Letter of Thos. P. Street to Wm. Street, March 24, 1840, in the *Street Papers*, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

These men were Joseph M. Street's sons. John Goodell had been nominated by Governor Lucas on January 27, 1840. Even before the elder Street's death, his family had asked that Beach or one of the sons be appointed temporary agent during Mr. Street's illness.

⁷⁶*Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, p. 426.

which various chiefs presided. About five miles north of the agency and on the opposite bank of the river, was the home of Keokuk's band. Here, half-way up the bluff at the rear of the Indian village was the chief's wigwam, with his little patch of corn and beans. Wapello and Appanoose had villages a short distance above Keokuk's, about a mile apart. The lower half of the slope above the river was cultivated by the squaws in a rude way, but the tribe was absent a large part of the time and permanent improvements were not possible. A fourth village was situated twenty-five miles northwest on the Des Moines River. Ten miles beyond, on the Skunk River, was the village of Kishkekosh; while the sixth village was sixty or seventy miles away on the Iowa River.⁷⁷

The agricultural work of the agency was maintained under discouraging conditions. In 1840 Governor Lucas reported that the pattern farm contained about thirty acres and the regular agency farm about one hundred. In addition to these farms, three fields near the Indian village had been plowed by the white farmers for the Indians, but Appanoose's band was the only one which had cultivated the crop. They had some eleven acres of wheat stacked.⁷⁸ Lieutenant Beach reported in 1841 that the farm contained 177 acres, including two acres planted in watermelons, the only things the Indians preferred to whiskey.⁷⁹

In 1842 the agent reported that the farm had been in-

⁷⁷ *House Executive Documents*, 2nd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 327-330; Evans's (Editor) *History of Wapello County*, pp. 19, 20.

⁷⁸ *Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 26th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 323.

George Wilson, another son-in-law of Joseph M. Street, and likewise a graduate of West Point, was appointed farmer on November 1, 1842, and served until the Indians were removed in 1843. His wife received \$240 as matron. Besides the farmer, about ten laborers were employed between 1841 and 1843 at about \$240 a year. When the treaty was made Wilson received a preëmption claim to the pattern farm.—*Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. XII, p. 96.

⁷⁹ *House Executive Documents*, 2nd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, pp. 327-330.

creased to 234 acres and produced 300 barrels of flour, between 1300 and 1800 bushels of corn, and about 800 bushels each of potatoes and turnips. None of the work, however, was performed by Indians, and Beach declared: "That the Indians can be induced to cultivate it, or to resort to any other than their customary imperfect mode of tillage, it is not to be expected, under their present circumstances; and while such is the case, there is no way in which a small portion of their means can be more judiciously applied, than in the employment of a few competent persons for purposes of agriculture."⁸⁰ Not only did the Indians refuse to work, but they tore down the fences and turned their ponies in to feed on the wheat stacks, rather than to be put to the trouble of catching them when turned out to feed.

The payment of the annuities was the occasion for much dispute. The two payments preceding that of 1840 had been made to the chiefs, but some of the Indians were dissatisfied, especially those belonging to Hardfish's band, which was largely composed of followers of Black Hawk. The Indians who opposed this method of distribution claimed that the chiefs showed partiality to the American Fur Company. Indeed, Governor Lucas reported, in 1840, that Keokuk, Wapello, and Appanoose had turned over \$40,000 of the annuity money, as well as a draft for the \$5000 reserved for education, to the agent of this company.⁸¹ The Washington authorities favored the former method for two reasons: first it was simpler and secondly, it increased the authority of the chiefs, a desirable influence in dealing with the tribes. On August 18, 1840, it was ordered that the annuities for that year should be distributed by the agent as usual, but when the Indians assembled the opposition became so great that Beach hesitated and sent Major Pilcher,

⁸⁰ *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 424-427.

⁸¹ *Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 26th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 324.

the disbursing agent, to secure specie instead of paper money. Finally, Governor Lucas ordered Beach to send for the money, pay the annuities to the chiefs and braves to whom it had been paid the previous year and not permit any interference by white men.⁸² Governor Lucas, however, was removed from office before the payment was made.

John Chambers, the new Governor, and Lieutenant Beach made arrangements by which the annuity for that year was divided, \$16,000 being paid to Hardfish's band and \$24,000 to Keokuk's followers. It was further agreed that the annuity for 1841 should be paid to the heads of families instead of to the chiefs.⁸³ A memorandum made by John Beach in 1842 gives a detailed report of the distribution of the annuities under this arrangement. The name of each Indian is given; the number of men, women, and children in his family; and finally, the amount paid him — about seventeen dollars for each individual.⁸⁴ Thus the question of the method of distributing the Sac and Fox annuities was finally settled as John Beach had advised.

Aside from the government employees the only white men who were permitted by law to reside within the reservation were the licensed traders. The Sac and Fox Agency had a number of these. J. P. Eddy, licensed by Beach in 1840, had a trading-house at what is now Eddyville, then the home of the Indians under Hardfish or Wishecomaque. Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company had a post about a quarter of a mile below Eddy's, and W. G. and G. W. Ewing were assigned a station at the mouth of Sugar Creek, on the Otumwa side of the river. The character of these men was reported as rather above that of the average Indian trader,

⁸² Shambaugh's *Executive Journal of Iowa, 1838-1841*, pp. 257-259.

The chiefs and braves to whom the money was to be paid numbered about thirty.

⁸³ Parish's *John Chambers*, pp. 173-175.

⁸⁴ Manuscript in Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

yet when the investigation of the claims against the Indians was made in 1841, the men who were conducting the investigation found that some of the accounts, especially those of the Ewings, included such appropriate items as Italian cravats and forty-five dollar dress coats.⁸⁵

Although Beach appears to have had less difficulty with these traders than the former agent had, their influence was recognized as formidable and was feared by men higher in authority than the Indian agent, as may be seen from two letters of Governor John Chambers — both written to Secretary Crawford of the War Department. One dated September 17, 1842, asserted that he had no favorites among the traders but had “always referred the subject of granting and changing licenses to the Agent, well knowing that if I exercised it in any case and should have occasion to revoke the licenses of others, it would be said that I was promoting the interest of favorites in doing so, *tho God knows* I have *no favorites among them*, and wish most sincerely the system could be so changed as to dispense with them altogether.” Again, on February 24, 1843, he wrote: “I acknowledge that (altho personally I am not a timid man) officially I fear these ‘regular traders’ because I cannot, by any power I possess, or influence I can obtain or exert, control, treat with, or influence the Indians in opposition to their interests or wishes.” These traders, declared Governor Chambers, brought letters from members of Congress, recommending them “as gentlemen of integrity, high standing, and great influence, and I suppose they might, in great truth, add, what would be equivalent to all the rest, distinguished *for their great wealth*, acquired in the Indian trade.”⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Parish's *John Chambers*, p. 182; Evans's (Editor) *History of Wapello County, Iowa*, p. 21.

⁸⁶ *Letters from the Correspondence of Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clark, Territorial Governors and Superintendents of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846*, Vol. II, Historical Department, Des Moines.

When the Governor of the Territory of Iowa thus admitted that he feared the power of these traders it is not difficult to understand how unpleasant they might make the work of the agent, with whose character and ability few people had an opportunity to become acquainted. In addition to the licensed traders, the frontier was infested with men whose chief stock in trade was whiskey.

Although John Beach appears to have had less trouble with the traders than Joseph M. Street had experienced, he believed that they were opposed to him and to the civilization of the Indians. Soon after his appointment, he wrote to Governor Chambers: "The imposition and rascality practiced upon my charges is increasing to an alarming degree from the prospect of a treaty. God grant that the wretches concerned may then receive the reward of their iniquity, though in a different mode from that anticipated by them. Whiskey is pouring into the villages by every avenue and the poor drunken creatures are daily seen stretched senseless along the roads."⁸⁷ To remedy this condition Beach advocated, in his report of September 2, 1840, that one trader should be appointed for each tribe and the prices of goods regulated by the agent. This would prevent the Indians from wandering about to various places to trade where the chief attraction was whiskey, and would also prevent the sale of unnecessary and high priced goods to the Indians, who would buy anything, at any price if they could get it on credit. Among articles of this kind Beach listed side-saddles and cloth at eight and ten dollars per yard.⁸⁸ It is needless to say that this recommendation was not carried out and the traders remained to reap their golden harvests at the time of the Indian annuity payments.

⁸⁷ Letter of John Beach, August 14, 1840, in the *Letters from the Correspondence of Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clark, Territorial Governors and Superintendents of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846*, Vol. II, State Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

⁸⁸ *Senate Documents*, 2nd Sess., 26th Session, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 326.

The white settlers and illegal traders became so defiant that Agent Beach asked for a military force to remove them. At first detachments were sent from Fort Atkinson, but as soon as the specific work assigned them had been done they returned to the fort, and almost immediately the intruders were back again. The grist mill on Soap Creek, built under Beach's direction after the first mill had been destroyed by a flood, was burned in the summer of 1842 and the agent reported that the incendiaries were men who were angry because they had been driven off the reservation.⁸⁹ With men of this sort watching every opportunity to enter the reservation the agent in charge had neither a safe nor an easy post, nor could he hope to arouse much enthusiasm among his charges for improving lands which white men were already staking out as claims. As the time for the making of the proposed treaty approached, the activity of the frontiersmen increased. Both Beach and Governor Chambers wrote to ask for troops. Governor Chambers directed the following appeal to General Atkinson on September 16, 1842: "I beg that you will despatch the company required without delay, as the return of Lieut. Grier with his command will leave the public property at the agency exposed to much hazard of destruction. The Indian mills near the agency have already been destroyed by fire, and the Agency houses publicly threatened."⁹⁰

The whites had been exasperated when the Sacs and Foxes refused to make a treaty in 1841; they now threatened violence if again thwarted in their designs. At last Captain Allen, in charge of a company of the First Dragoons was sent to keep order at the agency under the orders

⁸⁹ *Senate Documents*, 3rd Sess., 27th Congress, Vol. I, p. 425.

⁹⁰ *Letters from the Correspondence of Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clark, Territorial Governors and Superintendents of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846*, Vol. II, Historical Department, Des Moines, Iowa.

of Agent Beach. The men went into camp four miles west of the agency in some deserted cabins of the American Fur Company. This post, which was never a real fort, was named Fort Sanford by Captain Allen, but was referred to by the War Department simply as the Sac and Fox Agency.

At last, the Indians assembled to meet Governor Chambers and to consider the ceding of their lands in Iowa. A large council tent had been erected by the agent, and here the chiefs met the official representatives of the United States. There surrounded by agency employees, white traders, settlers, officers, and soldiers, they made the treaty of October 11, 1842. The Indians loved Iowa, but the pressure of the white pioneers was unbearable. Their debts to the traders, which the commissioners appointed by Governor Chambers had approved, amounted to over \$250,000 and they realized that resistance was useless.⁹¹

The treaty provided that the Sacs and Foxes might remain in their present location until May 1, 1843, when they promised to remove west of a line running north and south through the painted rocks on the White Breast Fork of the Des Moines River. Here they were permitted to remain three years, but at the end of this period all their land east of the Missouri was to be vacated. It was also provided that the section of land on which the agency house was located and on which Wapello and Joseph M. Street were buried should be given to Mrs. Street, the Indians paying \$1000 out of their annuity money for the buildings. The treaty was signed by John Chambers and by forty-four Sac and Fox chiefs and braves, and was witnessed by Agent John Beach, Antoine Le Claire, and Josiah Smart (inter-

⁹¹ Parish's *John Chambers*, pp. 178-185; *Journal of Captain Allen* in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XI, pp. 70, 71; Van der Zee's *Forts in the Iowa Country* in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XII, pp. 191, 193.

preters), Captain Allen, Lieutenant Ruff, Arthur Bridgman, Alfred Hebard, and Jacob O. Phister.⁹²

In the spring of 1843, the Indians began their reluctant march to the new center higher up on the Des Moines where Lieutenant Beach had located a temporary agency. The site selected was a mile east of Fort Des Moines which had been established between the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers by Captain Allen. This fort was established for the protection of the Sacs and Foxes from the Sioux and from the white settlers, and was garrisoned by about one hundred men. By about the middle of May both soldiers and Indians were established in the new quarters and John Beach resumed agency work.⁹³ Since this post was temporary, however, no attempt was made to resume agricultural operations nor to establish schools for the children.

From this new center the Indians wandered about, hunting or visiting their old haunts on the Iowa and Des Moines rivers, their visits to the whites being induced largely by the hope of securing "firewater". Early in the spring they moved to their sugar camps to make sugar and molasses, but later they returned to their permanent camps where the squaws planted a few acres in corn, beans, and melons.

Reverend B. A. Spaulding, who visited the Des Moines agency in 1844, reported that the agency corps consisted of the agent, an interpreter, two gunsmiths, and two blacksmiths, with their families and servants. About two hundred whites, including the garrison of the fort, lived within the reservation, and on the banks of the Des Moines River was an Indian village with two or three hundred inhabit-

⁹² Kappler's *Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, pp. 546-549.

The interpreter, Josiah Smart, had a large log house near the agency house and ran a farm on the reservation. He had an Indian wife and two daughters. He was also the owner of two slave women.—*Annals of Iowa*, Vol. XII, p. 96.

⁹³ Brigham's *History of Des Moines and Polk County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 22, 47, 48.

ants. The huge bark wigwams stood in the midst of desolation. Trees, shrubs, and even grass had been destroyed by the horses and the people so that dust was everywhere. He estimated the total number of Indians at 2200.⁹⁴

Agent Beach realized that the change in location had not freed the Indians from temptation and declared that, "it is not a subject of astonishment that the education, the civilization, and especially the glorious religion of the white man, are held by them in so little estimation. Our education appears to consist in knowing how most effectually to cheat them; our civilization in knowing how to pander to the worst propensities of nature, and then beholding the criminal and inhuman results with a cold indifference — a worse than heathen apathy; while our religion is readily summed up in the consideration of dollars and cents." In this same report Beach complained that the site of the agency was unhealthful and declared that in the preceding year seventy-nine Indians, including Pashepaho, had died.⁹⁵

The agent, however, was not the only one who described the effect of the whites on the Indians. A witness of the distribution of the last Sac and Fox annuities at Fort Des Moines in 1845 asserted that the soldiers gave the Indians liquor in the presence of their officers and declared that "the location of Fort Des Moines among the Sac and Fox Indians (under its present commander,) for the last two years, has corrupted them more and lowered them deeper in the scale of vice and degradation, than all their intercourse with the whites for the ten years previous. Captain Allen thinks nothing of *Treating* the Indians to *Liquor*, and the night before the payment he sent a bottle of liquor to Pow-e-shiek with his compliments."

⁹⁴ *Ottumwa Courier*, August 10, 1912, Sec. 3, p. 4.

⁹⁵ *Senate Documents*, 1st Sess., 29th Congress, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 485, 486. Pashepaho was a brother of Hardfish.

“It is said by those living near the garrison that Captain A. and the Sutler had a particular object in view in making the Indians drunk about the time of the payment.” After severely condemning the military officer for not enforcing the law excluding liquor, the writer added: “Captain Beach made the second order on Captain Allen to clear the country of at least the whiskey peddlers, but he paid no attention to what Mr. Beach wished done.”⁹⁶

An inhabitant of Des Moines described the old agency house in 1861, just before it was torn down, as follows:

This building is a log-cabin of a ‘story and a half’ high, weather-boarded, and containing two rooms below and one above. Here all the business with the Indians was transacted during the three years intervening between the time of the treaty at Agency (which was near the western line of the first cession of land made by the Sac and Fox Indians after the Black Hawk war), when their remaining lands in Iowa were ceded to the general government, till their title expired.

The house is now within the corporate limits of Des Moines, formerly Fort Des Moines, and stands about a mile from the city, at the south eastern limit of the grove in which it (the city) is located. It is situated on elevated ground, on the south side of the road leading to Iowa City, the former capital of the State, and faces to the northwest. The ground falls abruptly, just back of the building, a short distance, and then slopes to the shore of Spring Lake, beyond which the prairie extends eastward three miles to a belt of timber known as Four-Mile Timber, from a stream of that name along which it grows.⁹⁷

At last the end of the three-year reprieve was at hand. Many people believed that the Indians would refuse to leave; but convinced of the hopelessness of resistance, the Sacs took up the march and by the last of September, 1845, the last of this tribe had crossed the Missouri. The Foxes

⁹⁶ Van der Zee's *Forts in the Iowa Country* in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS, Vol. XII, pp. 195, 196.

⁹⁷ *Harper's Weekly*, February 9, 1861.

followed slowly but stopped on the way to visit the Pottawattamies and did not reach the rendezvous until after Beach made his report in September, 1846. The history of these tribes is henceforth not connected with Iowa history except for the few who later straggled back to dwell upon the banks of the Iowa — a pitiful remnant of a vanished race.⁹⁸ After conducting the Indians to their new homes, John Beach returned to Iowa and made his home at Agency City, where he died on August 31, 1874.⁹⁹

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⁹⁸ *Executive Documents*, 2nd Sess., 29th Congress, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 299, 300.

⁹⁹ For a brief biography of John Beach see Fulton's *Red Men of Iowa*, pp. 351, 352.