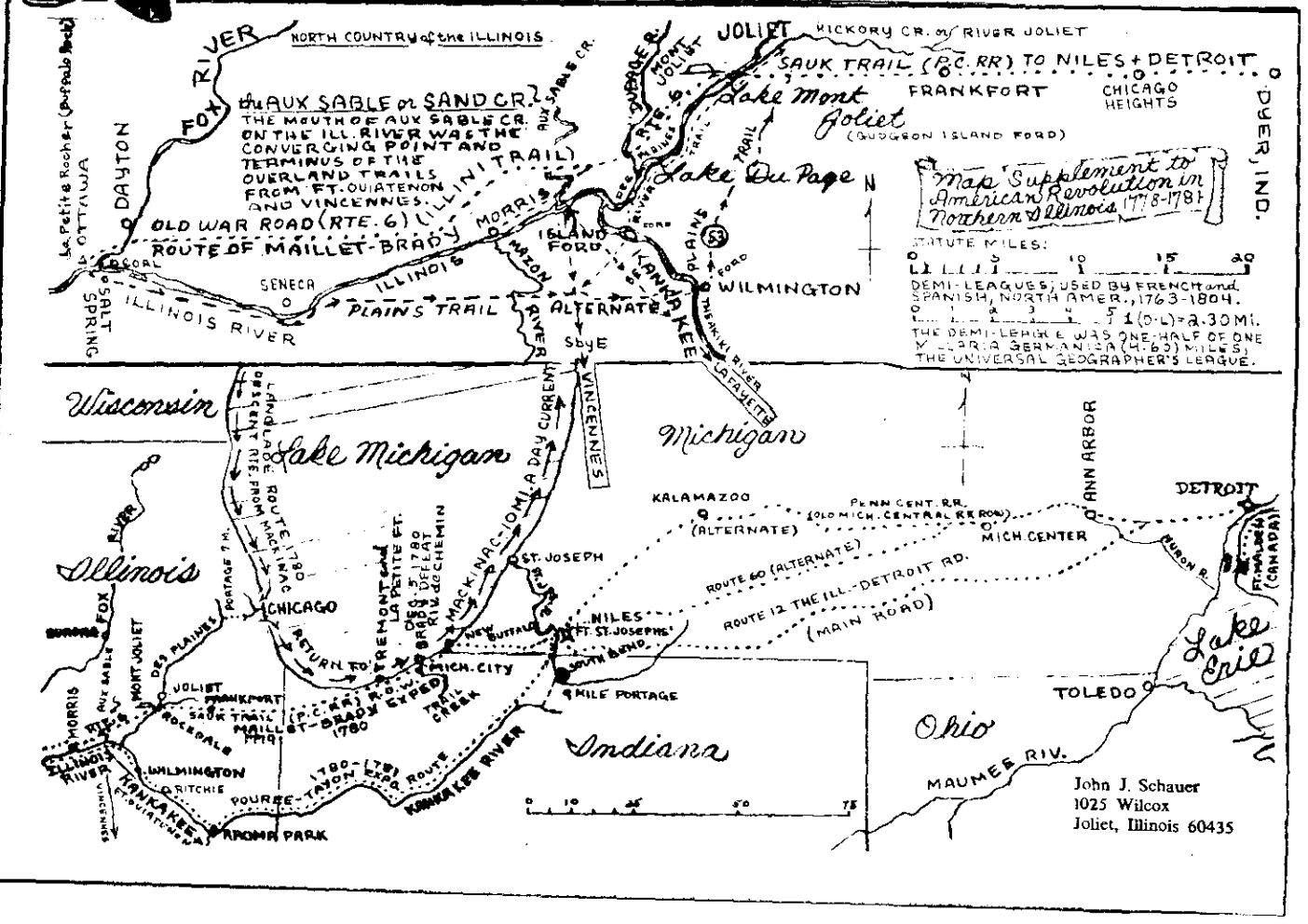
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
IN NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS
1778 - 1781

by

John J. Schauer

(G. A. Embleton, courtesy *Tradition*)



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(An Historical Monograph)
by

John J. Schauer
Phi Alpha Theta
Delta Epsilon Sigma

TO PAT

Joliet, Illinois
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CHAPTER INDEX

HUTCHIN'S MAP 1771

Saint Louis

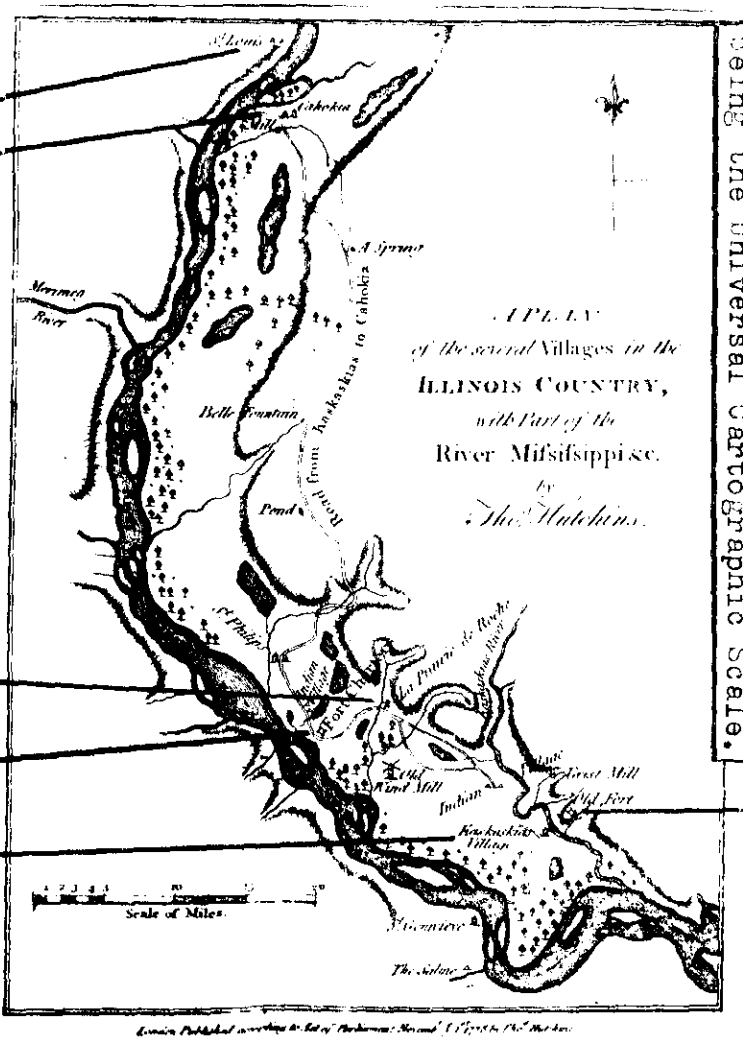
Cahokia

Prairie du Rocher

Fort Chartres (Ft.Cavendish abd.,Spg.1772)

Kaskaskia

Kaskaskia to Cahokia Distance..50 miles.
Cahokia to St. Louis Distance.. 3 miles.



Land League; a precise interpretation; Posted Hydrographic Stds,Jaillot,Paris: 1674-1765 in North America,Fr.-Sp.Maps.
1 Lieues Communes de Espagne...3.83 mi.
1 Lieues Communes de Francia...2.76 mi.

Following Treaty of 1763,and land cessions to Spain,5th Fr. and Sp. adopted 1 Demi-League....2.30 miles,"demi",half of 1 Millaria Germanica...4.60 miles,it being the Universal Cartographic Scale.

Fort Gage (Br.) (burned 1766)

MORSE MAP 1790

Milwaukee River

Prairie du Chien (NS)

Chicago (NS)

Mt. Juliet (Br. Pron.)

Lake Du Page

Rock River

Peoria (NS)

St. Louis

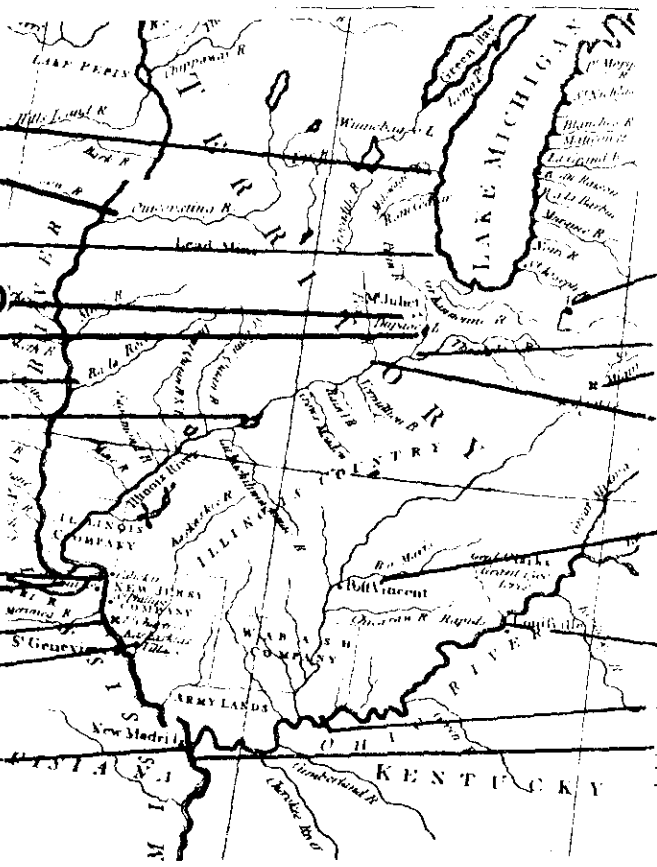
Cahokia

Fort Chartres

Kaskaskia

New Madrid

(NS) Not Shown



Kaskaskia to Vincennes..142 mi.
Vincennes to Detroit....600 mi.
Cahokia to Fort St. Joseph.400 mi.

Ft. St. Joseph (NS)

Forks of Theakiki

Ft. Miami (Wayne)

Le Petite Rocher (Buffalo Rock) (NS)

Vincennes

Ft. Sackville (Br.)

Ft. Ptk. Henry (US)

Falls of the Ohio

Ft. Massac (Metr'pls)

Ft. Thos. Jefferson Est. Feb. 1780 (NS)

Fort Massac to Kaskaskia..102 miles

The legend however that has the most mutual origin in the folklore of the Illinivek, Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa, indicates that Pontiac was assassinated in revenge for his "stoving in the head" of a principal Peoria Chief named Kineboo during a struggle over a runlet of trade whiskey at the Missouratenouy the Summer previous.

The Missouratenouy, the Mont Joliet, or Joliet Mound, was a "neutral ground", and Pontiac's violation of the tenets of neutrality might well have warranted "in kind" retaliation on the part of the offended party, the Peoria.

In the end, those who would suffer most, and whose suffering would seem to endorse the latter theory regarding Pontiac's assassination, were the dwindling remnants of the Illini Confederation, namely the Peoria. During the lull that followed the French and Indian War a good number of the Peoria dared re-settle in the vicinity of "the Rock" at Buica. In early Fall of 1769, the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi fell upon the Peoria at "le Rocher", and following a long siege and battle, destroyed them.

In the Spring of 1770, George Croghan passing down the Illinois River reported that, "the foot of the Rock was piled so deep with the litter of human bones that it appeared as though the victims had been devoured by starving beasts."

It is doubtful that Pontiac in his finest hour could have done more to impede, confuse, confound, and combat British attempts at colonization in the Illinois Country, than one Frenchman could do in the normal conduct of his daily affairs. To the French, bureaucracy was not a momentary stalling, it was a career field. Civil Codes, Church Codes, social protocol, licensing, Holy Days, holidays, tax collecting and fair customs were the immediate stumbling blocks the British encountered. Then the walls of Fort Cavendish began to crumble from flood inundation and years of neglect, so the British were compelled to take over the Jesuit mission house in Kaskaskia and convert it into a barracks.

Initially the French had but one problem; they just simply despised the English, but like all things, that soon changed. It was not long before the French merchants and habitants found that they were going to now be dependent on British goods. Saint Louis, Pancour, St. Louis, or whatever you wanted to call the squalid Spanish settlement across the river was rapidly developing a profitable river trade with the British, and the Spanish, coveting English made goods, were not in turn offering any bargains to the Cahokians and Kaskaskians. It was not long before profit supplanted principle, and merchants began to see the British in a more favorable light.

The honeymoon however was soon over. By 1773 the conduct of government and taxation in the Illinois Country, supervised by English speculators, and French bureaucrats proved to be a disasterous blend of the worst aspects of the two systems. Men began to speak in terms of self-rule, independence, and revolution like their "bostonais" counterparts along the eastern seaboard.

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PRELUDE

The Indian town at Ritchie, Illinois, on the Kankakee River above Wilmington, was the last refuge of the Ottawa Chief Pontiac. The hostilities between the French and the British in North America were concluded on paper in 1763. Pontiac and his following of French allied Indians representing the Great Lakes Tribes, did not however release their stranglehold upon the British at Detroit until 1765. Pontiac's prolonged siege of Detroit prohibited the British from making any inroads into the Illinois Country for nearly two-and-one-half years following the formal conclusion of the French and Indian War. From May of 1763 until October of 1765, Captain Louis St. Ange de Bellerive anxiously awaited the arrival of any English officer, or agent, willing to accept the surrender of Fort Chartres, the last outpost of Royalist France in North America.

Lack of French support, or rather the denial of French support, and the appearance of British gunboats on Lake Erie coupled with the Indians tiring of the war, finally compelled Pontiac to sign a separate peace with Great Britain. On October 9, 1765, Captain Thomas Stirling at the head of one-hundred regulars of the 42nd Blackwatch Regiment marched through the couvre port of Fort Chartres, accepted St. Ange de Bellerive's surrender, and immediately rechristened the outpost, Fort Cavendish.

Pontiac, weary of war, but still the most powerful Indian leader in midwest America, promised the British he would fight no more, and retired to the Potawatomi-Ottawa town on the Kankakee River, now called Ritchie. Pontiac remained on the Kankakee from the Fall of 1765, until mid-March of 1769 when he descended to Cahokia at the invitation of his old friend, Captain St. Ange who, following the surrender of Fort Chartres, took up residence in New Spain on the west bank of the Mississippi.

Pontiac left Ritchie wearing the rich blue and gold bullion faced and cuffed French General's coat, and sword, given to him years before at Quebec by an admirer, Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm.

Sometime within the first week after Easter (March 26) in 1769, Pontiac, while drunk, was stabbed to death by "an obscure Peoria Indian" in the street of Cahokia in front of the Baynton, Wharton and Morgan store. Pontiac's Peoria assassin fled, and motive for the attack and murder still remains a mystery. French friends charged that the murder was arranged by British speculators who feared that Pontiac, an unwavering ally of the French, and a champion of pan-Indian unification, would interfere with the orderly colonization of Illinois.

In the Illinois Country a young man could either farm, fish, or trap for a living, that is if he had the proper permit, license or franchise. Of his income the "living" percentage was the few Louis', doubloons, shillings, francs, pence or pounds left over after having met the demands of the King's warehouse, license fees, and taxes. In time of war however the British realized the value of these forest, river, and Indian-wise French as partisan fighters. Rocheblave understood their capabilities even better. He knew that their payment in terms of "spoils of war" would impose no expense or demand upon the King's treasury. Rocheblave lost no time in recruiting partisans and sending them off to Detroit for assignment. For Rocheblave it was just another step toward Detroit, and the office of Lieutenant-Governor, a position now held by a fellow named Henry Hamilton....

LONG KNIVES, STRANGE BANNER

In the early hours of the morning of July 5, 1778, Simon Kenton shook the shoulder of the sleeping Phillipe de Rocheblave, and informed the French born commandant of the Kaskaskia garrisson that Colonel George Rogers Clark of the Virginia State Forces was waiting in the courtyard of the mission-fort to accept from Rocheblave the formal surrender of the Illinois Country.

The twenty-four year old Clark had been commissioned by Virginia Governor Patrick Henry to secure the "western country" for the American Colonies, and to bring to an end the unrelenting and savage raids upon the Kentucky and Ohio settlements by Tory partisans and British Indian allies operating out of Detroit.

In 1778 the "Illinois Country" was an administrative term specifically referring to the Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher area, which later to be known as the "American Bottom", was the "breadbasket" of western America. It was important for Clark to capture and hold Kaskaskia in order that he might provision his Virginia Column once it began its assault upon Detroit by way of the Wabash River, and the Maumee River of Ohio.

Detroit was the stronghold of British Empire in the west, and it was at Detroit that Lieutenant-Governor Henry Hamilton presided, and from which he dispatched the Partisan-Indian raiding parties that had transformed the Kentucky settlements into a blood-drenched, smoke-sooted killing ground in the year 1777.

When Clark's "bostonais", or "long knives" invaded Kaskaskia, the inhabitants, many of them having sons or other relatives off serving as partisan officers and enlisted men in the British "Indian Department", truly believed that Clark's men would destroy their homes, crops, and other property in retaliation for the damage wrought upon the Kentucky settlements during the year of the "bloody sevens". Clark immediately made it clear that his Virginia State Forces, flying a simple stripped banner of seven green, and six alternating red stripes, sought only the support of the people, and not revenge. Vengeance could wait for Henry Hamilton.

As the burden and demands of the British increased, and the profits, travels and wanderings of the French merchants, habitants, and traders became more heavily taxed and ridgidly controlled, the merchants, traders, and habitants, inspired by such vitriolic firebrands as Blouin and Laffont, were demanding not only independence, but French self-rule.

Blouin, a Cahokia merchant, was in constant communication with American patriots in Philadelphia, and members of the Committee of Safety in Boston. Blouin and his associates, a good number of them being "bostonais", American born British subjects conducting business in the Illinois Country, were frequent visitors to the coffee houses and taverns frequented by Hancock, Henry, Jefferson, and Adams.

While Paine, Adams, and Hancock were meticulously designing a format for American Independence, Blouin and his followers were hurling caustically worded challenges and ultimatums at British Colonial Minister, Lord North, and his successor, General Gage. Lord North was willing to make concessions, General Gage however imposed a harsh and demanding Civil Code upon the French in Illinois that even British Parliament deplored as being "tantamount to slavery".

The remoteness of the Illinois Country, and the lack of British manpower, tempered the harshness and enforcement of the Gage policy. The amiable Captain Hugh Lord and his garrisson of seven or eight British regulars avoided confrontations with the habitants, and permitted the French to conduct their own affairs and maintain their own militia. The Civil and Militia officials and officers were however, selected and appointed by the British.

Most typical of the Crown appointed puppet officials was Phillipe de Rocheblave, a former officer in the French army who had served with distinction in the Seven Years War, and in the Indian Wars. An opportunist and speculator, the British maintained Rocheblave's loyalty and allegiance by dangling the office of Lieutenant-Governor before his eyes.

In April of 1775 poorly armed American patriots cast aside all pretense of continued Crown control and colonial subjugation. on Lexington Green, and the Concord Common, and followed up their initial success by laying siege to Boston. The "revolution" flamed, then settled down with all of the theaters and objectives apparently concentrated along the northeastern seaboard. Arnold's assault on Quebec was a failure, the British firmly held Canada, and therefore Detroit would not have to be dependent upon food supplies and provisions, "succor", from the Illinois Country, upon which the French had been so dependent during the Seven Years War. New Spain, west of the Mississippi remained neutral, and the Illinois Country would be held in check by men such as Rocheblave.

The British, feeling secure in their appraisel of the western country, recalled Captain Lord and his handful of regulars to Fort Detroit in the Spring of 1776, and the administration of the Illinois Country was turned over to Phillipe de Rocheblave.

Illinois River. The principal towns during the middle and late historical period were Sand Creek (Aux Sable), all about, and around confluence of the Kankakee and Des Plaines River, and at what is now Wilmington, Ritchie, Custer Park, Rock Creek, several towns in the vicinity of Kankakee, Mt. Langham, Chobar's Crossing, and Aroma Park and its environs.

British maps of northeastern Illinois at their very best, were very poor. The Americans had no maps at all. Both sides however had recourse to the abilities and talents of men who knew this country well, and both used them wisely. These were the French and Canadians, half-breeds, half-castes, mulattoes, maroons, bois-brule, gentleman traders, and rag-tag coureurs who had no equal when it came to prairie pursuits and dirty little fights in the forest. They knew the Indian, they knew the land, but most important they had a high survival instinct and could appreciate the advantage, and value, of a good bluff.

On July 6, 1778, the day following the capture of Kaskaskia, Clark's force marched up the Mississippi to Cahokia which lay opposite the squalid Spanish settlement of Pancour, which the Americans came to call St. Louis.

THE CHEVALIER

At Cahokia Clark met 47 year old, Detroit born, Daniel Maurice Godefroy de Linctot, a wealthy Indian trader, and former Ensign in the French Army. During the French and Indian War, Linctot and his brother had commanded six-hundred French Indian allies harrassing the British and operating out of Fort Miami, which the Americans would later come to call, Fort Wayne.

Godefroy Linctot and his brother were on their way to Quebec with their Indian allies when the news of Montcalm's defeat and death upon the Plains of Abraham reached them. The Linctots rejoined their Royal Regiment, and in keeping with the articles of capitulation, were returned to France. Sometime after 1765, Godefroy Linctot returned to North America and established himself as a merchant-trader in Cahokia. Always impeccable and correct, his fellow fur-traders nicknamed him "the chevalier".

At the time of his meeting with Clark, Linctot had just returned from Vincennes which had recently been French militia garrissoned by the British who christened old Post Vincennes, with a new name, Fort Sackville. Linctot reported his observations to Clark, who was "overwhelmed" with Linctot's thorough and professional manner.

Linctot was not impressed with the militia garrisson at Vincennes, but he was concerned about some two-hundred Piankshaw, led by "Grand Door", who were hanging around Vincennes susceptible to British enticement.

Some historians maintain that Henry Hamilton was wrongfully dubbed with the sobriquet "Hairbuyer"; in that there is no evidence that he paid for individual scalps on a bounty basis, while on the other hand the American Colony, Pennsylvania, so advertised, and did pay for individual "Indian" scalps!

While Hamilton may not have appraised, or paid bounty on individual scalps as they passed over his desk, he did carefully record the grisly Kentucky trophies turned over to him at Detroit by partisan commanders, and Britain's Indian allies. In January of 1778, Hamilton reports to Sir Guy Carleton that over the past sixteen month period, his Indians, principally the Ottawa, had "brought in seventy-three prisoners and one-hundred and thirty-nine scalps". While Hamilton may not have "bought" these scalps with "specie" or "scrip", as did Pennsylvania, he certainly must have acknowledged the scalps with trade goods as part of a macabre incentive program.

The saddest, and most often ignored aspect of the "Hairbuyer" Hamilton affair, an aspect that historians seldom seem to touch upon, is that initially the Ottawa approached Hamilton, the Indian Affairs Superintendent, with a legitimate grievance imploring him to enforce the articles of the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix which prohibited white encroachment, and settlement upon, that land area, an Indian Reserve, called Kentucky.

Hamilton, described as weak and tactless, conjured up a "strategy" that he felt would fulfill his obligation to the Indians, to the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, and at the same time put a check-rein on the notions of rebellion against the Crown, that he, Hamilton, suspected the independent Kentuckians to be entertaining.

At this point, one definite point should be stressed: The American Indian could have cared-less about the American Revolution, who fought it, or who won it, even though in the end, it was the American Indian who lost the most!

On September 2, 1776, Hamilton addressed the Grand Council of the Great Lakes Tribes and sent off fifteen war parties, some two-thousand Indians, commanded by British and Canadians, to ravage the Kentucky settlements. It might be noted that in later years, many pre-Revolution Indian Treaties and land claims were negated, denied, and disqualified by United States legislators who decreed that, "the American Indian was a belligerent during the American Revolution".

The war in Kentucky and Ohio was not so far removed from northeastern Illinois, specifically Grundy, Will, and southern Cook County. This area was the stronghold and crossroads of the British fur and Indian trade from 1773 until 1778. The Indians employed by Hamilton were "principally Ottawa", and a good number of them are statistically accountable as having "gone to the war" from the Ottawa, Potawatomi-Ottawa Towns located between the mouth of the Aux Sable Creek on the Illinois River in Grundy County, east to the junction of the Kankakee and Iroquois River in Kankakee County. The "Fork of the Theakiki", the "fork" of the Kankakee, that being the confluence of the Kankakee and Des Plaines where they form the

The Potawatomi Chiefs, Saquina and Nakioum, representing the Three Fires Confederation, Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa, controlling northeastern Illinois, northern Indiana, and southern Michigan, these particular Chiefs from the vicinity of the British post, Fort St. Joseph, at Niles, Michigan, descended to Cahokia and informed Clark that they had much admiration for him, and that they had come to pledge their absolute and unconditional neutrality, and would permit Clark's forces to pass unobstructed through their lands.

Some writers seem to lament the fact, that for reader purposes the American Revolution in Illinois, while the setting for a lot of active campaigning and decisive maneuvering, was contrastingly bloodless compared to Kentucky, and the war in the east. It was probably the Indian who spared us the bloodshed, and permitted cunning, guile, and strategy to play its rightful and triumphant role in warfare in the western campaigns. Throughout the American Revolution in the west, the Potawatomi, Chippewa and Kickapoo of Illinois remained neutral, the Ottawa became disenchanted with having initially been pawns of the British, and the Sauk and Chippewa (Sautiers) of Wisconsin spent the duration grinding out tribal grievances, for the most part depriving the British of those sorely needed allies upon whom the white's,in their wars for North American Empire, always counted upon so heavily.

THE NORTH COUNTRY OF THE ILLINOIS

In order to set the stage for things that were to follow, we must acquaint ourselves with another geo-administrative term that the British inherited from the French, that is; The North Country of the Illinois.

This was the land north of the Illinois-Kankakee River complex, and north of an imaginary line running diagonally northwest from Peoria to the mouth of the Rock River. To the north this administrative area wasbounded on the east by the mouth of the Milwaukee River on Lake Michigan, and to the west by the mouth of the Wisconsin River on the Mississippi at Prairie du Chien.

During the British Regime (1765-1780), this area was administered by the commandant of Fort Michilimackinac, Major Arent de Peyster, and was maintained and inhabited solely by British licensed trader, or factors, and the Indians who were the implement of the fur trade. The Indians of the North Country of the Illinois had vascillated between the British and the Spanish in their loyalty and trade preferences in the early days of the British occupation. Therefore the British moved all of their trade points and rendezvous into northeastern Illinois in 1773. The majority of the Indians followed, with the exception of some Sauk and Fox who remained in the west, in the vicinity of Rock Island.

The concentration of the Indians in northeastern Illinois made them more accessible by way of the Des Plaines, Kankakee, and Fox River of Illinois. Pelts and hides were plentiful in this area, tallow was easily transportable, and the area was suited to those

FORT SACKVILLE; PAWN OF EMPIRE

Clark moved swiftly upon the information provided by Godefroy Linctot. Clark dispatched Captain Helm, Father Gibault, Lieutenant Henry, Jean Baptiste Laffont, and one sergeant (an expedition generally described as consisting of "Captain Helm, Father Gibault, and three soldiers"), to capture Fort Sackville. Father Gibault's persuasive abilities enabled Captain Helm to "capture" Vincennes without incident or bloodshed on August 14, 1778. Fort Sackville was renamed Fort Patrick Henry. "Grand Door" and his Piankshaw (Miami) were awed by Helm's audacity, and immediately allied themselves with the Virginia State Forces.

"NEUTRAL SPAIN"

As late as 1826, the Rev. Jesse Walker, and his assistant, Stephen R. Beggs report encountering "spanish traders" living among Parto's Band (Potawatomi) on the Du Page River, opposite Walker's Grove at Plainfield. These "spanish traders" were the last remnant of those "pack traders" who had worked the Illinois fur, and Indian trade, out of St. Louis since 1763.

When France hauled down her colours in North America she ceded her vast holdings west of the Mississippi to Catholic Spain, in order to keep it out of the hands of the British, and to provide something of a refuge for her former subjects. New Spain was no paradise for the former subjects of Louis XV, and the French considered Spanish rule just a step above British rule where oppression, tyranny, and subjugation were concerned.

When Clark reached Kaskaskia he had hoped to purchase arms and ammunition from the "neutral" Spanish at Pancour. The Spanish merchants however tripled their prices on Clark's arrival, stating that the presence of the Virginians had deprived the "neutral" Spanish of their profitable river trade with the English!

When the arrogant Spanish refused Clark credit, Godefroy Linctot dug down into his own pockets, and opened up his fur warehouses, placing his wealth at Clark's disposal. Clark could expect no reinforcements for his Virginia Column until the Spring of 1779, and even with Kaskaskia and Vincennes secured for the time being, Clark knew it wouldn't be long before the British, appraised of his true strength, would mount a counter-offensive upon Kaskaskia and Cahokia by way of the Illinois, Wabash, or Mississippi Rivers; or perhaps all three.

SAQUINA AND NAKIOUM

Just about the time that Helm had captured Fort Sackville, Clark received some good news from an unexpected source.

MARCHING TO PEORIA

In order to off-set the threat of a British counter attack upon the Illinois Country, from Green Bay or Michilimackinac, Clark dispatched Godefroy Linctot and Jean Baptiste Maillet with forty superbly armed and mounted rangers to Peoria on the Illinois River.

Departing Cahokia in late August, 1778, the Linctot-Maillet Column proceeded to Peoria and constructed a fort. This fort, dubbed "La Ville de Maillet", was located between the old Larkin Company buildings and the Illinois River, between Harrison and East Franklin Streets. At Peoria, Linctot divided his mounted command into several patrols with instructions to make a show of strength, and spread exagerrated rumors of Clark's strength and intentions among the British Indian allies throughout the North Country of the Illinois from the Milwaukee River to Prairie du Chien.

Clark's intention was to convince the British that he would advance upon Detroit by way of the Illinois River, and overland from Fort St. Joseph, rather than by way of the Wabash-Maumee River complex.

British spies lost no time reporting Linctot's departure from Cahokia to Henry Hamilton at Detroit. The British immediately snapped at the bait. On September 22, 1778, Hamilton wrote to Governor Haldimand; "I believe the rebels will not omit to secure and fortify the Forks of the Theakiki",

HAMILTON MAKES THE FIRST MOVE

Clark's audacity in taking Fort Sackville, his success in securing unsolicited Indian alliances in the North Country of the Illinois, and the deluge of reports passing over the desk of Henry Hamilton, reporting and puzzling over the activities of Godefroy Linctot, prompted Henry Hamilton to move against Clark. Hamilton did not think that a move against Clark was the wisest strategy, however he knew if he did not take some action, he would be discredited and regarded as a coward by the Indian allies at Detroit.

Historians generally ignore the importance of the Indian as a military consideration, and simply acknowledge him as "also there". Hamilton knew that if he did not give them some action, the rations, clothing and trade goods his partisan commanders had promised them, they would go home and foresake their loyalty to the British, creating a void and situation that men like Clark and Linctot would immediately pick-up on and use to their advantage. It must be remembered that the American Indian, as late as 1814, still had the numerical and military capability both east and west of the Mississippi River, to contain the white man east of the Alleghenies. That is if they had had the determination and foresight to abide by the predictions of the three great disciples of pan-Indian unification, Pontiac, Joseph Brant, and Tecumseh.

who both farmed and hunted.

FORT ST. JOSEPH

The jumping-off point, and wintering ground for the many traders descending and returning from their Spring and Summer sweep of the Indian towns in the North Country of the Illinois was Fort St. Joseph, on the St. Joseph River at present day Niles, Michigan. This fort as a trade rendezvous and mission dated back to the time of La Salle's explorations in the 1680's. It returned to some prominence during the French-Fox Wars of 1729-31, and during Pontiac's Rebellion. While Fort St. Joseph was a satellite outpost of Fort Michilimackinac, its real importance lay in the fact that it commanded all of the major passes, or trails, to Detroit from the Illinois Country.

Fort St. Joseph in its finest hour was little more than a scattering of houses, a chapel, and the commandant, or resident agent's house "surrounded by a poor palisade". The fort was "trade oriented", as opposed to its being military oriented, in that it was located on low ground, surrounded by high ground, fronting and facing on the St. Joseph River, "a few yards from the water". Unpretentious, but important, the site of Fort St. Joseph is today obscured under some eight feet of compacted trash.

THE TRADERS

In 1778, some of the British licensed traders working the North Country were Charles Gautier de Verville, nephew of Charles Langlade, and a Lieutenant in the British Indian Department with headquarters at Prairie du Chien. Working the Peoria-Depue area were Durand, Besoin, and the ageless Deschamps. At the salt springs opposite the mouth of the Fox River at Ottawa dwelled Medore Jenette and his ever growing family, and at Chicago the Dominican black, Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable (de Saible) had just been commissioned as resident fur agent. Louis Chevalier was the forty-year career agent at Fort St. Joseph, and the legendary half-breed partisan, Captain Charles Michel de Langlade, controlled everything from the Milwaukee River north to Michilimackinac, and south down Lake Michigan's east shore to Grand Haven, Michigan.

Some of the major trade points and rendezvous were Chobar's Crossing, at the junction of the Kankakee and Illinois River, the "Forks of the Theakiki", the confluence of the Des Plaines, Kankakee, and Illinois Rivers, the Lac Du Page, Millsdale vicinity in Section 11, Channahon Township, Lac Mont Joliet, Section 19, Joliet Township, La Croix, the site of St. James of the Sag, Buffalo Rock, called "le Petite Rocher", just west of Ottawa, the mouth of the Aux Sable Creek, Aux Sable Township, Isle de Cache, and island of timber at Hampton Park, now occupied by Resurrection Cemetery, Maramech Hill at Plano, Le Gran Bois, Aurora, Oswego, Wilmington, Willow Springs, Riverside, Lyons, Blue Island and Palos.

There was no personal confrontation between Linctot and Langlade at Milwaukee. Langlade at this time was making a tour of the Indian towns between the Milwaukee River and Green Bay, and the two seem to have missed each other by two or three days. That however was not Linctot's fault. If Langlade wanted him, Linctot let it be known where he could be found.

A confrontation between these two resourceful forest fighters would be comparable to a confrontation between Francis Marion and Colonel Banastre Tarleton. Many of Marion's most noted and recounted victories, and acts of daring, were accomplished with less than twenty men.

It is quite possible that Linctot was personally acquainted with Charles Langlade. Both were traders, successful business men, Langlade and Linctot were both wealthy, Langlade perhaps much more so than Linctot, and both had served France with distinction and honor. In the realm of honor and bravery Langlade however had no peer. In the forest below Fort Duquesne, he and his blood-brother, Pontiac, had destroyed the Army of Edward Braddock, and routed Colonel George Washington and his Virginians. Upon the Plains of Abraham it was Langlade alone, with his coureurs and Indians who showed the greatest courage and fought most fiercely as French Empire in North America crumbled around them. When Montcalm fell it was Charles Langlade who was at his side, and it was Langlade who slipped away from the funeral procession and hurried West with the news of French defeat to Michilimackinac where he hustled the fort's garrisson of fifty-four Marines and seventy-eight militia into canoes, and bateaux, off to the Illinois Country, in the Royal Province of Louisiana, where the Lillies of France still flew.

Linctot and Langlade were both approximately the same age, there being only a few months difference, with Linctot being the younger. This however is where the similarity ended. As a young cadet, Godefroy Linctot had initially learned the art of soldiering in the gentlemanly traditions of Guyenne, Languedoc, and Royal-Rouissillon. Charles Langlade launched his career by tearing the living heart from the breast of Chief Unemakemi, "Old Britain", and eating it as a warning to the British allied Miami at Pickawillany in June of 1752.

It might be noted that Charles Langlade, the fiercely handsome halfbreed who would serve both French and British masters as a partisan commander for more than half-a-century, was, when not making history, was, perhaps unwittingly, preserving it. From captives, taken by, or provided sanctuary with Langlade, prior to Braddock's Defeat, Pontiac's capture of Michilimackinac, and other episodes, we have been gifted with frank, contemporary, and first hand accounts of frontier episodes that would have been forgotten, or romanticized in local legend and folklore; as in the case of Clark's capture of Vincennes.

The British did not know what to make of all of this "canadian" and American activity in the North Country of the Illinois during this mild, but wet Winter of 1778-79.

Hamilton's first move was to recapture Fort Patrick Henry, late Fort Sackville, at Vincennes from its two American defenders, Captain Helm and Lieutenant Henry. To accomplish this, Hamilton set out for Vincennes, six-hundred miles distant, with thirty-three British regulars of the King's Regiment, 8th of Foot, one fire-worker Lieutenant. two gunners, and two small artillery pieces, forty-four commissioned and enlisted partisans, eighty-five militia, and seventy Indians, whose number "along the way", swelled to no less than six-hundred.

The expedition left Detroit on October 7, 1778, and on December 21, 1778, Henry Hamilton, with his force of more than seven-hundred, succeeded in capturing Fort Patrick Henry from its two American defenders and a score of uninspired habitant militiamen.

The capture of Fort Patrick Henry by Hamilton was bloodless and bizarre. Hamilton and his prisoner, Captain Helm, got along famously, although Helm spent most of their time together vexing Hamilton with stories of Clark's daring, resourcefulness, and numbers.

Hamilton immediately deployed spies, snipers, and patrols to harrass Clark's Kaskaskia garrisson. He even deployed a kidnap party to snatch Clark, and they were within yards of accomplishing their assignment, when for some reason they lost their nerve.

Clark, following this last mentioned brush with disaster, knew that come Spring, Hamilton would descend upon Kaskaskia from Vincennes. Clark's force had diminished from one-hundred-seventy-five, to eighty men between July and December of 1778. No reinforcements were expected from Williamsburg until the Spring of 1779, and predictably these reinforcements would arrive two-thirds under promised strength. Clark had no recourse but to strike first and let the chips fall as they may.

LINCTOT CONFRONTS LANGLADE AT MILWAUKEE

On February 1, 1779, Captain Linctot and twenty of his "canadian" rangers, rode casually through the Milwaukee Indian town right under the nose of Captain Charles Michel de Langlade, and offerred to buy any horses that the Potawatomi and Chippewa had available. Linctot told the Indians, who had been forced to eat many of their mounts due to the poor rations furnished them that Winter by the British, that he needed the horses to mount the three-hundred men who were "coming through this way in Spring to capture Green Bay."

These were the Indians upon whom the legendary Langlade, who had destroyed Braddock's Army in the forests below Fort Duquesne twenty-five years before, was depending to lead the attack upon Clark at Kaskaskia come Spring!

At 100 yards everyone in buckskin looked alike. Clark used the incident to his best advantage, and deployed Captain John Williams Company to "escort" the warparty in. Beating their chests and "halooing in the Indian manner", William's Company rushed out to "greet" the warparty. Clark's capture of Fort Sackville was not to be the bloodless and bizarre reenactment of Hamilton's capture of Fort Patrick Henry.

SCHIEFFELIN'S STORY

The story is best told in the words of Lieut. Schieffelin of the British Indian Department; "At the time our flag was sent out from Fort Sackville, an Indian party that had been on scout, returned. The rebels, along with the inhabitants of the town, ran out to meet them. The Indians, not being apprized that the townspeople had joined with the rebels, imagined that everyone had turned out to salute them."

"To their great misfortune, after they had discharged their pieces into the air, they were fired upon by the rebels and citizens. Several were killed on the common in sight of our fort, others were brought in and kicked by the rebels; then marched through the streets."

"Several Indians, and two partisans, Frenchmen in His Majesty's Service, were seated in a circle when Colonel Clark, the commandant of the rebels, took a tomahawk, and in cold blood knocked the Indians brains out, dipping his hands in their blood, and rubbing his cheeks with it; while yelping as a savage."

"The two Frenchmen and one Indian who were to share the same unhappy fate, were sergeants in the Detroit volunteers, and were saved from this bloody massacre, one by his father, Lieutenant St. Croix, who was an officer with the rebels, who did not know his son until they informed him that he was one of those in the circle in Indian dress, and that he was to undergo this cruelty exercised by the Americans. The other Frenchman was taken by his sister whose husband was a merchant in Vincennes. One of the Indians was spared (by Captain Richard Mc Carty), he was the eighteen year old son of Pontiac, who many years before on another battlefield, had spared the life of this rebel officer".

"This treatment is unprecedented even between savages - to commit hostilities at the time a flag has been sent out."

(It might be noted here that in this, and in times prior to it, the flag of truce sent out was red, rather than white; for white in North America, and on the battlefields of Europe was still the colour of Bourbon France, the flags sometimes bearing the fleur de lies, and sometimes not.)

Schieffelin's account continues; "The dead carcasses of these unhappy fellows were dragged to the river by the rebel soldiery,

But then, thought De Peyster, what other recourse did these Americans have? Hamilton at Vincennes held the Wabash. The Americans had no alternative but to assault Detroit by way of the Sauk Trail, or the Kankakee, and Fort St. Joseph.

If De Peyster still entertained any uncertainties about the intentions, or disposition of the Americans on February 20, 1779, his mind was put at ease by a dispatch from British fur agent Louis Chevalier at Fort St. Joseph. The dispatch read; "The canadian Linctot and a company of mounted rangers have built a fort, and are buying horses in the vicinity of Chicago."

De Peyster had no way of knowing that Linctot had just implemented the diversion that would deprive Great Britain of all of her holdings that lay between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi River. While Hamilton basked in the security of the palisades of Fort Sackville, and De Peyster at Michilimackinac, and Lernoult at Detroit prepared to intercept Clark between Chicago and Fort St. Joseph, Clark was marching on Vincennes...

CLARK CAPTURES VINCENNES

While Linctot and Maillet harried, harrassed and confused the British and their Indian allies in the north, George Rogers Clark put together an expeditionary force of eighty Americans, and ninety French, some armed with nothing more than pikes, and prepared them for an assault on Fort Sackville, at Vincennes, 142 miles distant. Clarks column left Kaskaskia on February 5, 1779, and treked some 142 meandering miles through marshland, quagmires and flood plains, arriving before Fort Sackville to confront Henry Hamilton on the morning of February 24, 1779.

Clark declined Indian offers of assistance, assured the safety of the habitants and their property, and demanded Hamilton's immediate and unconditional surrender. Fort Sackville could have withstood a time killing siege, even though Hamilton had sent most of his regulars and Indians home to Detroit. Although initially awed by Clark's audacity, Hamilton regained his composure, took stock of the situation, and began to concern himself and address Clark in terms of conditional surrender, immediate parole, and the "honors of war". Clark knew that these unregenerate parleys with Hamilton could go on forever. Hamilton was buying time, and time would bring the partisans, and the British Indian allies rushing to Hamilton's relief. Time could temper Clark's personal anger, compromise his demands, and make Hamilton's terms sound reasonable to the habitants of Vincennes, and possibly to Clark's own men, especially those with relatives among Hamilton's forces.

Suddenly, as negotiations reached their lowest ebb, there burst from the forest and onto the Vincennes common, a British warparty with scalps and prisoners in tow, fresh from a raid on the Falls of the Ohio at Louisville. The warparty, led by two French partisans dressed as Indians, had not been appraised of Hamilton's situation and naturally thought Clark's Virginia Forces were a welcome party.

NOT EVERYONE GETS THE WORD

Shortly after the capture of Fort Sackville, Godefroy Linctot, who had been bivouaced at the mouth of the Aux Sable Creek, on the Illinois River in Grundy County, descended directly south by east by way of the "great prairie trail" to join Clark at Vincennes. Linctot remained at Vincennes for only a short time and was then dispatched once again to the Peoria Fort to take full advantage of the psychological impact that Clark's capture of Vincennes would have upon the British.

Captain Lernoult at Detroit was perhaps the first British commander to receive news of Hamilton's capture. This however did did not perplex Lernoult so much as did the rumor that Clark, with five-hundred men on horseback, and a thousand men on foot, were advancing upon Detroit from Vincennes. Lernoult did exactly what Clark expected him to do. Rather than launch a counter-offensive with the many regulars, partisans, and Indians he had at his disposal, the predictable Lernoult continued to build the walls of Fort Detroit a little higher, and a little thicker.

However, as so often happens in times of war, not everyone got the word.

On April 4, 1779, Lieutenant Charles Gautier de Verville, Langlade's nephew, had still not heard the news of Hamilton's defeat and capture. Verville was on his way to Kaskaskia from Prairie du Chien to attack Clark, as part of the Spring Offensive of 1779, an offensive which the British had called off, without notifying young Verville. Over the Winter, Verville had captured two of Maillet's rangers, who revealed to Gautier de Verville the true and desperate situation that Clark was in regarding munitions, supplies, and manpower, an appraisel based on their last visit to Cahokia sometime before Clark had decided to march on Vincennes.

Verville was confident that his force of several Canadians and two-hundred Indians, combined with his uncle's force coming down the Illinois, could overwhelm Clark's positions. The truth is that they could have, since Kaskaskia and Cahokia were at this time defenseless with Clark off at Vincennes. With Spain still neutral, and with Langlade and Verville holding Kaskaskia and Cahokia, Clark might just as well return to Virginia. However that is not the way that fate would have it. Linctot had so intimidated the Indians in the Milwaukee towns that Langlade could find none willing to follow him. The capture of Hamilton compelled De Peyster and Lernoult to deploy their regulars and partisans defensively, rather than offensively, depriving Langlade of the token white cadre required to lead and maintain order among the Indians, the Indians that in this instance, Langlade was unable to recruit in the first place, because Linctot had told them that "Clark was coming through in Spring with three-hundred horsemen to capture Green Bay!"

The "coup de grace" to the Great British Offensive of 1779 however was delivered by an Indian. The Verville Expedition got off to a good start and was rapidly descending the Mississippi

some still struggling for life after being thrown into the river.

"An Indian Chief by the name of Muckeydemengo, of the Ottawa nation, after Colonel Clark had struck the hatchet into his head, did with his own hands draw the tomahawk out of his head, presenting it again to the inhuman butcher Clark, inviting Clark to repeat the stroke, which he did. After the Governor and his officers were put on parole in Vincennes we viewed the bodies of those killed in the initial skirmish. The bodies lay on the common, stripped naked, and left for the wild beasts of prey."

Hamilton capitulated following this incident and surrendered Vincennes to Clark on February 25, 1779. Shortly thereafter, Hamilton and his lieutenants were marched off to Williamsburg, Virginia in chains...paraded through the streets of each community through which they passed.

Clark's humiliation of Henry Hamilton had lowered the Indian esteem for the British. Hamilton's capture however, only prompted British commanders to release more regulars and experienced partisans for western service, and provided richer presents, better rations, and more incentives for the British Indian allies.

In Illinois the war went on. There was no principle at stake, no conflict of political ideals was involved. The war was merely a contest to determine who would control the fur trade in the Northwest Territory.

On February 25, 1779, Fort Sackville at Vincennes once again became Fort Patrick Henry.

SIDELIGHT TO SACKVILLE

The "spoils of war" were few and far between in the Western Campaign. A decent gun, a brass pipe tomahawk, or a good steel knife taken from a dead Indian, or a waylaid British trader might well represent the total of ones rewards for a season of campaigning. Vincennes was quite another story.

Immediately following the capture of Vincennes, Captain Leonard Helm captured a British "supply train" on the Wabash River above Vincennes. The cargo yielded fifty-thousand dollars worth of "negotiable" booty that was later, in terms of scrip, divided equally among the eighty Americans and ninety French who had participated in the assault on Vincennes.

This incident brings to the fore an interesting insight into official British concern regarding the loss of Hamilton and Vincennes. Governor Haldimand's correspondence indicates that he was not so much grieved or concerned by the loss of Hamilton and Vincennes, as he was officially outraged by the fact that the booty captured from the British on the Wabash by Captain Helm, "is being sold back to British traders at Michilimackinac by individuals who are unquestionably American agents."

far east as English Lake, Indiana on the Kankakee River, and then north to a landmark called Oak Point which was located in what appears to have been southern Michigan, a short distance south of Niles, where Fort St. Joseph was located. The rangers made their reconaissance, distributed their presents, found no British, and returned to the Peoria Fort. One of the "hangers-on" at the Peoria Fort was a Monsieur Babie, a British spy in the employ of Major Arent Schuyler de Peyster, commandant of Michilimackinac.

Babie's information that Godefroy Linctot was at Peoria reached De Peyster at Mackinac on June 27, 1779, but long before the news reached De Peyster, Linctot's close friend, black Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable, rushed from Chicago to Peoria to inform Linctot of Babie's treachery.

THE REAL JEAN BAPTISTE POINTE DU SABLE

In his reports to Colonel Clark, Captain Godefroy Linctot memorialized the Dominican black, Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, as "a great influence among the French and Indians for the American cause".

During the American Revolution Du Sable served only one cause, and that was the American cause, even though he held the Crown appointment of British fur-factor at Chicago, and would later receive what was either a warrant, or commission in the British Indian Department placing him militarily under the command of Charles Langlade.

Du Sable personally envisioned himself as a self-styled messiah among the Potawatomi, Ottawa and Chippewa in the Chicago area from about 1778 or 1779, on through 1799. This hurt no one, but certainly helped many, especially white captives, women, children, soldiers and civilians brought to Illinois by these tribes, as well as the Kickapoo, Sauk, Fox and Winnebago from as far distant as Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky.

Jean Baptiste took his surname, Pointe du Sable, from the jargon term for Chicago itself, that being "sand point", which in the litany of the voyageur was the enormous banked and barren sand and gravel bar jutting out into Lake Michigan, marking, obscuring, and at some times totally concealing, the mouth of the Chicago River.

Du Sable was conversant in English, French, and several Indian dialects, and the legends regarding him are legion. However there are too few known facts about him that overshadow the fact that he was unique, because he was black. In truth Du Sable was unique as a frontiersman, a patriot, and as a man. The nature of the frontier demanded that there be a certain equality among men, and understanding if they were to survive. The elements made no distinction between black and white, and the redman looked upon all intruders as figures done in shades of gray, casting the same dark shadow upon the land.

when at the mouth of the Rock River the brigade was stopped by La Main Casse (Broken Hand) and his American allied Sauk who told Verville of Hamilton's capture, and demanded that Verville surrender his prisoners and return up river. Verville, puzzled, if not dumbfounded by the news, and Broken Hand's authoritive ultimatum, complied and returned to Prairie du Chien and thence to Michilimackinac, perhaps to find out first hand exactly what the heck was going on!

MAILLET SACKS FORT ST. JOSEPH

In mid-April, 1779, with Verville out of the way, and Lernoult busy building a new fort at Detroit, Jean Baptiste Maillet, with ten Cahokians and "reportedly" some three-hundred Indians, probably a greatly exagerrated figure, left the Peoria post where Clark had assigned them, and by way of the Illinois River and the Sauk Trail, passing through Grundy, Will, and southern Cook County, northern Indiana, and into southern Michigan, Maillet's force captured and razed old Fort St. Joseph, and returned to Cahokia with a few prisoners, a swivel gun, and several bales of pelts. Maillet had personally dispatched one wounded prisoner on the return trip.

Maillet had undertaken the expedition against Fort St. Joseph on his own. As you will recall, Linctot hastened to Vincennes from the Aux Sable Creek when news reached him of Hamilton's defeat. From Vincennes, Clark dispatched Linctot to repair to the Peoria Post, to insure that everyone there was on their toes just in case De Peyster and Langlade were still entertaining notions about an assault upon the Illinois Country by way of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. Having secured the Peoria Post, Linctot returned to Cahokia to attend to personal and business matters, more than a month prior to the Maillet Raid.

When Maillet returned to Cahokia, fresh from his raid on Fort St. Joseph, Linctot could only surmise that the Peoria Post had been left unguarded, although Maillet assured him that it was secure. Linctot descended to Kaskaskia where he informed Clark of the situation. On May 28, 1779, Clark directed Linctot to organize a force to reconoiter the upper reaches of the Illinois River to determine whether the British were making any attempt at pursuit, and to insure, through the media of presents, that Maillet's actions had not breeched Potawatomi "neutrality". Quite frankly Maillet's "three-hundred Indians" were in all liklihood, Potawatomi.

Linctot left Cahokia on June 8, 1779, with thirty freshly mounted, and fully equipped rangers; mounts and equipment paid for out of Linctot's own pocket. Clark had no money to finance the organization of this Ranger Company, so Linctot had parleyed some $3,836.00 worth of pelts into arms, equipment, supplies and trade goods on June 5, 1779 at Cahokia. Linctot placed the appreciable cash balance at the disposal of the Virginia State Forces.

Linctot's column split up into several reconaissance, or "spy" patrols which apparently probed as far west as Rock Island, and as

Lt. Colonel George Washington and his Virginians and regulars from that rude stockade called Fort Necessity in the midst of The Great Meadow.

The road to Ouiatenon passed east from Peoria to West Lafayette on the Wabash by way of Bloomington and Hoopeston, passing through Kickapoo Country following La Hotan's old Iroquois War Road that would later become the Illinois, New York, and St. Louis Railroad right-of-way, with Illinois Rte. 9, and Indiana Rte. 26, running parallel to it.

This route took Linctot's column along the upper reaches of the Sanguimont, "bloody hill", River that the Americans would later anglicize to Sangamon. The trail passed just north and above the Old Town Timber and the place called Etnataek by the Potawatomi, and Sanguimont, "the bloody hill" by the French. The "bloody hill" lay seven miles to the northeast of the Old Town Timber, three miles east of present day Arrowsmith, Mc Lean County. It was here in September of 1730 that the forces of New France and Louisiana, led by Lieutenant De Villiers, Lieutenant De Noyelles, and the fifty-year veteran of the King's service, Ensign Groston de St. Ange, found the "Renard Savages", who had forted up on this peculiar meander of the Sangamon River awaiting the arrival of their Iroquois allies, who would never come.

Following a twenty-two day siege and battle in which the Fox were reduced to eating their footgear and shields, the Fox slipped out of their fort during a storm in the dark of night, and in three columns, to protect the women and children, and to confuse French pursuit, the Renards attempted to reach the the Old Town Timber.

Burdened by the aged, wounded, women, and children they were overtaken almost at dawns first light by the French and their Sauk, Peoria, and Piankshaw allies who destroyed almost all of the captives by shooting, burning and torture. The number reported "destroyed", while perhaps somewhat exagerrated, was in the vicinity of six-hundred.

The reader might well consider the last few paragraphs as totally unrelated to the subject at hand, the American Revolution in Northern Illinois. It is not right however to leave the reader with the impression that frontier warfare was one succession of blundering, bloodless, fiascos in which the Indian was always the victim, and the white man always the villain. The Fox had preyed upon the Illini and other tribes, as well as the French for some twenty-six years before the French contained, and destroyed them. The French attempted a multitude of pacification policies, and made no demands upon the Fox other than being asked to be left alone. The Fox did not "play fair" by Indian, or white rules and they were considered as "outlaws" by everyone of the Indian Nations, to include the Sioux, who were not even much in the picture yet.

The opportunity for bloodshed and carnage, burning and torture, was omnipresent and always a possibility in the Illinois Country, however men both red and white like Tecumseh and Simon Kenton seem to have gotten their fill of barbarism in Kentucky and Ohio between 1775 and 1778. Again however, the opportunity was always there. Perhaps the stories that a young Linctot had heard from Coulon de

On the frontier it was possible for a man to profit quickly or die slowly. A man's success or failure depended upon his ability, or inability, to get along with other men, red, white, black, and shades between.

When America found it needed black heroes, Du Sable was there. What is more important however is that when America needed men, blacks and whites like Du Sable were there.

One of the most creditable descriptions of Du Sable's influence and industry is gleaned from the Journal of John Upp, the narrative of two young Kentuckians, John Upp and George Sprinkle, captured by the Kickapoo while playing in the canebrakes along Ohio River in the Spring of 1793. Traded to the Potawatomi these boys spent their last year of captivity in an Indian town in the vicinity of Millsdale in Channahon Township, where they survived a small-pox epidemic, and eventually came to the attention of two Canadian traders working out of Vincennes. Du Sable secured the release of Upp and Sprinkle and delivered them to Fort Wayne in the Spring of 1795. As it turned out, the ransom promised the Indians, a fine rifle for the two boys, wound up coming out of Du Sable's own pocket.

Upp describes Du Sable; "The Negro was considered a very "big man" among the Indians. He could speak English, Algonquian, French and Spanish. Besides he was the owner of a large tract of land, and he had not only a trading post, but a blacksmith shop, a horse mill where he made a poor quality flour, and a number of looms on which he turned out bolting cloth." Upp's narrative indicates that Du Sable had a "black servant" of his own!

It might be noted here that during the 1780's, on thru Harmar and St. Clair's Defeat, and the Battle of Fallen Timbers in the 1790's, that the Mont Joliet, the Joliet Mound in Section 19, Joliet Township was a notorious trading ground for white captives.

LINCTOT ELUDES VERVILLE

Informed of Babie's communique to De Peyster, Linctot thanked Du Sable for his information and directed him to return to Chicago, and if questioned, instructed Du Sable to conceal no information that might jeopardize, or compromise his appointment, or usefulness as an American agent. Linctot, and his Lieutenant, De Gras, would be well out of harms way before the British could organize any pursuit.

On July 6, 1779, Linctot and De Gras, and the better part of the Ranger Company left Peoria and proceeded due east and overland to Fort Ouiatenon, on the Wabash River, at West Lafayette, Indiana.

The road to Ouiatenon was dotted with the landmarks that had highlighted the stories told Linctot as a boy, by Captain Coulon de Villiers, "Le Grand" Villiers", who as a teen-age Cadet had accompanied his father, Nicholas Antoine, into the field against the Fox Indians in 1730, and who, twenty-four years later, routed

SOME SAND IN THE GEARS

The information pretaining to the abandonment of the Shelby Expedition came to light when a Sergeant Chapman of the British Indian Department intercepted a letter from Colonel Clark, addressed to Thomas Jefferson, dated August 24, 1779, in which Clark explained his predicament, and need for reinforcements and supplies.

This letter proved to be sand in the gears of Linctot and Clark's rumor mill, and made the British realize that the Americans were operating on guts and a shoestring. As a result the British became a lot braver, and daring in their strategy.

BENNETT AND DU SABLE

As the reader will recall, De Peyster dispatched his second in command, Lieutenant Bennett, to Fort St. Joseph in mid-July, 1779, to intercept Clark's "four-hundred horsemen", marching on Detroit from Chicago.

Bennett and his substantial force of regulars, traders, and Indians arrived at St. Joseph on July 23, 1779. Bennett found the "fort", that is the stockaded agents cabin, in ruins, devestated by the Maillet Raid the past April. Bennett immediately threw up another stockade, one mile west of the river and occupied it.

By August 9, 1779 Bennett still had had no success in raising any of the Potawatomi around Fort St. Joseph to scout the Illinois, Kankakee, and Des Plaines River area for some sign of Clark's four-hundred horsemen. These Potawatomi, led by Saquina (Blackbird), and Nakioum, had pledged their "neutrality" to Clark at St. Louis shortly after the capture of Kaskaskia. Bennett was getting no where with the Indians, and even the arrival of Charles Langlade with sixty Chippewa (Sautiers of Wisconsin), and Ottawa, did nothing to change the Potawatomi attitude of indifference toward the British.

It is not known what became of Verville after he sacked the Peoria Fort, taking one captive, on July 19, 1779. Verville was certainly "behind the lines", and would certainly have been aware of the presence, or movements of "four-hundred horsemen". Then of course the rumor was that the offensive against Detroit was scheduled for August, which would leave Verville out of the picture after all. Langlade's being dispatched to St. Joseph indicates that Verville did not return to Chicago and Michilimackinac at all, but most likely proceeded northwest and overland to the Rock River, then north to his own agency at Prairie du Chien on the Wisconsin River.

Bennett dispatched twenty of Langlade's newly arrived Chippewa and Ottawa to reconoiter the Illinois River and the old Illini and Sauk Trail complex passing through Grundy, Will, and southern Cook County, and northern Indiana. The scouting party returned in two days having proceeded no farther west than Michigan City, Indiana, where the Potawatomi threatened to annihilate them if they insisted

Villiers had made an older Linctot a wiser man.

Lieutenant Gautier de Verville was dispatched from Michilimacinac to capture Linctot at Peoria. Verville arrived at Chicago on July 10, 1779, and descended the Des Plaines and Illinois River, reaching Peoria in the early hours of the morning of July 19, 1779. Verville found the post garrissoned by five rangers, four of whom escaped, while one was captured. Verville burned the Ville de Maillet to the ground.

While Verville was pursuing Linctot, De Peyster, in mid-July, 1779 was notified that a large contingent of Americans were on their way to attack Detroit by way of the Illinois River, the Sauk Trail, and Fort St. Joseph. De Peyster dispatched his second in command, Lieutenant Thomas Bennett, with twenty regulars, sixty traders, and two-hundred Indians to Fort St. Joseph, at which point they were to intercept the "400 horsemen" rumored to be "advancing upon Detroit from Chicago."

It must be remembered that at this time, and well into the 1830's, "Chicago", and the "Chicago Country" was just about everything in northeastern Illinois north of the Kankakee River, and east of the Fox River.

While De Peyster was tying up his partisans and regulars in pursuit of Linctot, and in attempting to intercept Clark's "fabled four-hundred", the well geared Linctot rumor mill was turned now upon Captain Lernoult at Detroit. On July 18, 1779, the British Indian agent at Fort Miami (Fort Wayne), a Monsieur Lorraine, reported to Lernoult that "the bostonais, four-hundred strong, with seven cannon and four mortars, will be at Detroit in August." The report continued "they will be advancing upon Detroit from Vincennes by way of the Wabash and Maumee Rivers". Lernoult just kept building the walls of Fort Detroit higher and thicker.

WE'D LIKE TO GO, BUT WE GOT NO SHOES

The truth of the matter is that during the Summer of 1779, George Rogers Clark did not have the money, men, or munitions to competently defend his own holdings, no less attack Detroit by way of the Illinois or Wabash Rivers.

That is not to say however that no attempts were made to organ- an assault upon Detroit. Captain James Shelby at Clark's direction organized an expeditionary force of 150 French and a small contingent of Americans to march on Fort St. Joseph, and thence to Detroit from Vincennes. For this expedition Godefroy Linctot is mentioned in dispatches as having had "secured the support of nearly six-thousand Indians", meaning most probably that the chiefs and headmen representing many nations, tribes, clans and bands had pledged their support, neutrality, or non-opposition to the Shelby expedition as it advanced upon Detroit. When it came time for the expedition to get underway, the Americans and French refused to go because they had no shoes!

LINCTOT GOES TO WILLIAMSBURG

Over the Winter of 1779-80, Captain Linctot, accompanied by thirty Piankshaw and Potawatomi went to Williamsburg, Virginia to collect supply bills and meet with Governor Thomas Jefferson. Linctot's company was just one of a legion of provisional and regular units present in Williamsburg and scheduled to meet with Jefferson in the Guard Room of the Governor's Palace.

Following the meeting, Jefferson, in a note to Clark that is still preserved in the Virginia Papers, comments that "of all the Indians and provisional troops that I have interviewed, Linctot's are the only ones with any manners."

Linctot returned to Vincennes and Clark immediately dispatched him to Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh, Ohio), to recruit Indian allies for a joint attack on Fort Detroit, more properly called by now Fort Lernoult, from both Fort Pitt and Vincennes during the Spring of 1780. Linctot travelled through the Moravian and Deleware towns, in many instances right under the nose of the British, sometimes even in their company.

Linctot left Fort Pitt on May 4, 1780 and returned to Cahokia. No sooner did Linctot dismount than he was informed that the British were poised for a major invasion of the Illinois Country and the Spanish and American forts along the Mississippi, Wabash, and Ohio Rivers. Clark ordered Linctot to recruit a force of two-hundred whites and Indians to organize the defense, and reinforce Fort Thomas Jefferson on the Mississippi River, three-and-one-half miles below the mouth of the Ohio River. Clark himself repaired to the Falls of the Ohio at Louisville to superintend the construction of defenses there. Colonel John Montgomery, commanding the Illinois Regiment, Virginia State Militia, organized at Williamsburg in December of 1778, was left in charge of the defense of Kaskaskia and Cahokia during Clark's absence. It should be understood that the Illinois Regiment, Virginia State Militia, and Clark's Kentucky Riflemen, Virginia State Forces, which came to include Linctot's Rangers and other partisan French-American-Indian commands, were two separate, and distinct units both in organization and administration.

Previously neutral Spain, inspired by Clark's successes, declared war upon England in May, 1779, and now, in May, 1780 the British lay poised at Prairie du Chien and Chicago to destroy St. Louis, St. Genevieve, Kaskaskia and Cahokia, after which they intended to rendezvous with another British force coming down the Wabash and the Ohio and proceed down river to New Orleans, where they would join with a Royal Navy squadron which by this time would have supposedly captured every Spanish fort along the Gulf Coast.

Again however, that is not the way that fate would have it. The success of the "Great English Offensive of 1780" was dependent upon Captain's Hesse and Langlade securing the Illinois Country and St. Louis. This would signal the commencement of the Detroit and seaborne aspects of the 1780 Offensive against the Spanish and Americans in the western theater, and along the Gulf Coast.

upon proceeding any farther west. Between August 9, and September 1, 1779, Bennett's scouts reported that the area immediately south of Fort St. Joseph, that is the vicinity of present day South Bend, Indiana, was being patrolled by Lieutenant De Gras and a company of horse mounted French and American rangers operating out of Fort Ouiatenon. This was of course Linctot's ranger company that had left Peoria for Ouiatenon on July 6th.

Following his return to Chicago from Peoria, after informing Linctot of Babie's treachery, Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable moved out of Chicago and reestablished his operations on the River de Chemin, "Trail Creek", at Michigan City, Indiana. In that this was the point at which Langlade's Chippewa and Ottawa scouts were threatened with annihilation, Bennett became suspicious of Du Sable's activities and dispatched a Corporal Tascon to the River de Chemin, to arrest Du Sable and bring him to Fort St. Joseph for questioning.

Bennett interrogated Du Sable and could find no fault with his answers, Langlade however, eternally suspicious of the Dominican black, did not relent in his accusations that Du Sable was an American agent in Clark or Linctot's employ. Du Sable was sent to Michilimackinac where he was personally questioned by the American born, New York Tory, Major Arent Schuyler De Peyster. De Peyster exhonerated Du Sable, presented him with what was either a warrant or commission in the British Indian Department, the latter perhaps to spite Langlade, whom De Peyster had come to regard with desdain, and bade Du Sable to return to Chicago. If De Peyster had any reservations regarding Du Sable, he was wise enough to let it pass, for Du Sable was so influential among the Potawatomi along the Illinois River, at Chicago, and Fort St. Joseph; as indicated by the indifference and hostility of the Potawatomi toward Langlade and Bennett, that De Peyster knew that if he detained Du Sable it could well lead to open war with the Potawatomi and deprive the British of both Chicago, and Fort St. Joseph, the last two footholds other than Prairie du Chien, that the British still held in the North Country of the Illinois.

After Bennett returned to Michilimackinac in September of 1779, things quieted down somewhat throughout the western theater. The Winter of 1779 was clear, but bitter cold, and there was very little field activity on the part of the British or the Americans. It was over this Winter of 1779-80 that Clark made the environmental impact statement that historians and naturalists still quote to this day; late in the Winter of 1779-80 the last of the great herds of black buffalo in Illinois made their exodus to the west by swimming, and walking the ice floes across the Mississippi River. Sometimes we regard such statements too emphatically, and employ them with too much stress on finality. The fact is that isolated herds of buffalo were roaming the Homer and New Lenox Township area of Will County as late as the Winter of 1826-27, when these herds, and just about all of the large game animals were wiped out by a dreadful Winter of deep snows and bitter cold. The deer of course, and some antelope made a comeback for they found some shelter and forage in the forest. The prairie roaming buffalo however would not be seen again, but their bones and flaking horns littered the prairie well into the 1830's.

What it pretty much boils down to is that Hesse and Wabasha were to have invested and captured St. Louis, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia on their own, backed up somewhat by those partisans and Indians that Langlade had dispatched overland to "come in through the back door" of Kaskaskia and Cahokia. Langlade was apparently under instruction not to move until he was notified of the success of the Hesse invasion. Upon notification Langlade would then move down river with his "reserve" force, those who had not already been dispatched overland, and deliver the "two vessels", large scows probably mounted with swivel guns, to Hesse, for service on the Mississippi River against the American and Spanish forts, mostly outposts, that the British would encounter enroute to New Orleans. The scows were probably intended to be manned by regulars, the majority of whom were with Hesse. Why did Langlade get saddled with the scows, and not Hesse? It was easier to bring the scows down Lake Michigan, and the Des Plaines and Illinois River than it was to carry them across Wisconsin. More explicitely and correctly it was much easier and more practical to bring them down Lake Michigan to Chicago from Michilimackinac than it was to take them from Michilimackinac to Green Bay, thence by way of the Fox River of Wisconsin thru De Pere and on to Portage, Wisconsin, over that arduous portage to the Wisconsin River, and down the Wisconsin River to Prairie du Chien. In April it was not unusual for these rivers to still be choked with ice, or so flooded as to be treacherous.

In the end Langlade's sole function would be to cover Hesse's retreat from St. Louis to Chicago; Du Sable would note that Hesse and Langlade returned to Chicago in great haste, and without the "two vessels", these skiffs, or scows, scuttled between Peru and Ottawa.

The English Offensive of May 26, 1780 was a total failure. The Spanish at St. Louis dug in and fought well under the supervision of their rheumatism wracked commander who had to be shuttled around in a wheelbarrow. Hesse's Indians were unnerved by the entrenched Spanish, and contented themselves with sniping at defenseless field hands from the safety of the riverbank. Clark had arrived at Cahokia from the Falls of the Ohio, twenty-four hours before the British attack on St. Louis began. A few British units did slip past St. Louis and undertook an assault on Cahokia but were immediately repulsed. The British broke off their attack upon St. Louis when Clark arrived with a flying column, however it was the dogged determination of the Spanish militiamen that truly saved Pancour; the one particular aspect of the offensive and its failure that the English resented the most. The Spanish had not fought that bravely, or with that much determination even on the battlefields of Europe for more than a century.

Captain Hesse, in his report to Captain Sinclair and Major De Peyster reported more than seventy Spaniards killed at St. Louis. The still extant parish records of Pancour for May 26, 1780 reveal that the Spanish losses for that day totaled but seven, with the note that they were killed while working in their fields, six shot and one tomahawked, the latter being a French lad and not a Spaniard.

The Spanish would not forget this day, although I am certain the British had wished they could.

THE GREAT ENGLISH OFFENSIVE OF 1780

Captain Emmanuel Hesse, an experienced soldier and Indian trader, and a Chief Wabasha were the spearheads of the 1780 Offensive poised at Prairie du Chien ready to sweep down upon Clark. Hesse's effective force numbered 950 regulars, partisans and Indians. Charles Langlade, with 500 regulars, partisans and Indians descended the Des Plaines and Illinois Rivers in "two vessels and several canoes", then set up camp on that great island in the Illinois River below the "bluffs of the Illinois", just east of Peru, due south of the junction of Route 6 and 351. From this place Langlade's force launched several diversionary raids upon Cahokia and Kaskaskia by coming down through Kickapoo country, that is overland through Bloomington, Springfield, and Litchfield.

Why Langlade never even attempted to advance further is not known. It is presumed that he was to have joined with Hesse in a joint assault upon the Illinois Country and New Spain. However we may be presuming too much. Langlade may have been situated where he was, so that as the situation demanded he could support a force in distress on the Wabash or the Mississiopi River, or at Fort St. Joseph. Langlade was apparently the British team's "shortstop" in the Offensive of 1780.

Interestingly enough all of the information pretaining to the Langlade Expedition, both Linctot and Clark credit to Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable. Du Sable, much to Langlade's displeasure was an appointed member of Langlade's military command holding as I said, either a warrant or commission in the British Indian Department.

When Langlade arrived at Chicago in mid-April, 1780, he, Langlade immediately set to either erecting a fort, or repairing one previously built, on the same site where Fort Dearborn would later stand. The fort completed, Langlade told Du Sable to leave Chicago and repair to Trail Creek at Michigan City, Indiana. With Du Sable out of the way, and out of his hair, Langlade descended to Peru, Illinois, where by the way, the "deep water" of the Illinois River commenced, capable of supporting his "two vessels" which other sources list as having been "chassieus", large scows. Quite frankly the month of April was about the only month of the year in which the Des Plaines River could have supported the draft of vessels this large. After the Spring thaw had ebbed, and the river returned to its normal level, these scows would have to have been carried down the Des Plaines and Illinois River to Peru.

Seemingly perhaps, the question,"What were the two scows for?" is unimportant. However considering that historians tend to impune Langlade's reputation for not supporting Hesse at St. Louis, venturing that Hesse's Indians failed him because of Langlade's absence, it would appear that the "two vessels" might be a partial solution to the question of Langlade's conduct. The scows were apparently meant for river service, and not just transportation. Clark notes that in early-May of 1780 there were accelerated raids and unprecedented incidents of sniping, burning and murder in the vicinity of Kaskaskia and Cahokia. One aspect perhaps of Langlade's "diversion".

The attack on St. Louis found Linctot at Fort Jefferson, three and one-half miles below the mouth of the Ohio River. Linctot hurried to Cahokia with what men he could spare, and when he arrived Clark directed Linctot to organize a column to reinforce Montgomery. Even with Linctot's facility for expediting matters, recruiting, and provisioning took several days. Linctot left Cahokia with something less than two-hundred men, and Hesse and Montgomery had almost a weeks on Linctot.

Linctot pressed his column hard, his scouts reported that Montgomery appeared to have cut-off his pursuit of Hesse at Peoria, however Linctot does not appear to even have paused long enough to puzzle over this. He pressed on day and night, sometimes affording his column only two hours sleep and followed the Hesse-Langlade trail right up the east bank, and over and around the portages of the Des Plaines River right into Chicago where the imperturbable Du Sable, long returned from his "exile" at Trail Creek, informed Linctot that he, Linctot, had missed Hesse and Langlade's hurried departure for Michilimackinac by five days. Montgomery's perfidious conduct in abandoning the pursuit of Hesse and Langlade was never officially challanged, nor questioned, however, to be sure, Linctot did privately inform Clark of the situation and Montgomery knew it.

Before wrapping-up the "Great English Offensive of 1780", we should reflect just for one moment upon Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable. The historian comes to wince when in his reading he is entreated to that tired, over-simplified pseudo-statistical accolade pretaining to Du Sable; "The Indians say that the first white man to settle in Chicago was black."

The true nature of Du Sable's contribution to the American cause was this. Du Sable was a British subject, employed and appointed by the Crown as a licensed fur-factor at a British post. His commitment to the French and Americans had to be a commitment by force of conscience, because there sure was no profit, personal or otherwise to be gained, through an alliance with the Americans. The somewhat overt assistance that Du Sable had tendered the Americans could have well earned him a prison term, twenty years on the oar galleys, or in his case forfeiture of freedman's papers and commitment to indentured servitude, or just plain black slavery. Keep in mind that in both the British and American Army of the time, hangings and the firing squad were used to remedy much lesser offenses than "consorting with the enemy".

Quite frankly there was no advantage to being an American, an American ally, white, black, or red, or an American business man in northeastern Illinois until after 1818. Five outfits of the British Southwest Company controlled the fur trade as late as 1818 in Illinois and Wisconsin, tolerating the miniscule American Fur Company only so the Indians could realize through contrast, the better deal they were getting by continuing to trade with the British. The British continued to control Lake Michigan, the Indians here still held "gorget" commissions in the British Indian Department, came to the aid of the British at their bidding throughout the War of 1812. The Sauk, perhaps still smarting over Montgomery's cruelty so many years before, continued to fly the Union Jack over their towns as late as 1832,

RETREAT TO CHICAGO

When the assault on St. Louis collapsed, Hesse and his forces beat a hasty retreat up the Illinois River, headed for Chicago, "pursued" by Colonel John Montgomery and some 350 American and French. At Peoria, Montgomery broke off his pursuit of Hesse, perhaps fearing a headlong encounter with Charles Langlade further up river, and proceeded northwest and overland to the mouth of the Rock River, where for some inexplicable and unwarranted reason, Montgomery, who Linctot was to describe as "a coniving poltroon and a coward", burned the temporarily vacated, American allied Sauk Indian towns of La Main Casse, who had, just the year before compelled Gautier de Verville to abandon what could have been a crippling raid upon Cahokia.

Montgomery's force of 350 was horse mounted and could have easily overtaken Hesse and Langlade between Peoria and Chicago. He did not. Montgomery ignored his orders and proceeded northwest where he burned some vacated American allied Sauk Indian towns at the mouth of the Rock River, a deed for which he is remembered in history books, and children's stories, as "having fought the westernmost battle of the American Revolution." Actually the Sauk, La Main Casse did; the year before when he turned back Verville.

That is not however the end of the indictments against folk-hero Montgomery; just in this one campaign. Montgomery had avoided a confrontation with Hesse and Langlade, he also knew darn well that he wouldn't find any Indians, American allied or otherwise, dumb enough to still be hanging around the mouth of the Rock River. That was the first place the "white eyes" were going to come looking for Indians. All Indians didn't look alike, but their scalps did. But then perhaps it was not the Rock River towns that were initially Montgomery's destination, or the ones he intended to burn! Every evidence seems to indicate that his objective was actually Prairie du Chien. However when Montgomery reached Rock River he was informed that all of the Sauk and neighboring tribes had gone to Prairie du Chien to feast the British, which they had in the hope of securing through trade, whatever supplies the Hesse Column had left behind.

It is difficult to imagine what fantasy the phrase "gone to Prairie du Chien to feast the British", conjured up in Montgomery's mind. "The British" were in fact nothing more than a handful of clerks and a small cadre of warehouse guards, but Montgomery did not even bother to stick around long enough to find this out. He returned to Cahokia. Had Montgomery advanced up river and captured Prairie du Chien as a good soldier would have, he would have found his efforts well worthwhile. At Prairie du Chien was a large warehouse, Verville's, bulging with prime pelts. As it was, nine canot du nord, the great north cargo canoes, had to be dispatched from Michilimackinac to haul the all but abandoned fortune back to Michilimackinac from Prairie du Chien.

THE BRADY - HAMELIN DISASTER

Before he left Cahokia,for his date with disaster on the Eel River, La Balme directed the organization of what he called "The Western Division of the Continental Army", the principals of which were a Canadian half-breed, Jean Baptiste Hamelin, and a former British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, an Irish adventurer by the name of Thomas Brady. "The Western Division of the Continental Army", comprised of sixteen men, to include Hamelin and Brady, set out for Fort St. Joseph some 400 miles distant on October 21, 1780. It was a rather piteful undertaking to say the least. The column departed Cahokia on foot, the only horse known to have been among their number at the onset was one ridden by Hamelin which he had recently secured from a Cahokia trader on the promise of several gallons of taffia upon the expeditions return. As it was the trader had to seek payment from Hamelin's "estate".

Speed was certainly not the forte of the Hamelin-Brady column. They advanced upon Fort St. Joseph by the "short route", the Sauk Trail, and fell upon the fort and its sleeping occupants in the early hours of the morning of December 3, 1780. This Fort St. Joseph was a new and substantial structure rebuilt upon the site of the original, on the east bank of the river. The raiders siezed some twenty-one British traders, several horses, and some fifty bales of goods, "killing one negro who attempted to escape for fear of being returned to slavery".

Laden with prizes and prisoners, the raiders retreat from Fort St. Joseph was slow and fatal. On December 5, 1780 they were overtaken on Trail Creek, the River de Chemin, at Michigan City, Indiana by a band of some thirty to fifty Potawatomi led by Indian Agent Etienne Champion. A skirmish ensued writing the final chapter into the brief history of the "Western Division of the Continental Army". Of the Hamelin-Brady force, four were killed, two wounded, seven taken prisoner, and three escaped. Hamelin was killed, Brady captured, two prisoners were later tomahawked, and three of the prisoners, one of whom was Brady were sent to Detroit for interrogation.

Some historians conjecture that the Maillet-Brady Expedition had perhaps hoped to reach a small abandoned British stockade dubbed "La Petite Fort" near the mouth of Fort Creek at Tremont, Indiana, eleven miles west of Michigan City, hoping their pursuers would be turned back by Du Sable's "Chicago Agency" Potawatomi as nad been Bennett's Ottawa and Chippewa scouts the year before. This could only have been a presumption on their part, and not a plan.

It is far more reasonable to conjecture, due to the total absence of information pretaining to the conduct and intrigues of this expedition, that Hamelin and Brady, depending upon the "Potawatomi Neutrality" promised to Clark, expected no pursuit at all. What they had not taken into consideration was that the bales of goods and furs that they had stolen were the life's blood of the Potawatomi community, the fruits and rewards of Indian labor, and not that of the whites. Therefore Etienne Champion had little difficulty in securing Potawatomi assistance in pursuit of Hamelin and Brady.

East of Joliet, Joseph Gougar who in 1831 had a cabin on the Sauk Trail, later the Michigan Central, now the Penn Central right-of-way, remembered the Sauk passing east for the last time, on their way to Fort Malden, Canada, opposite Detroit, to collect presents from the British. The Gougars were among the few who had made any effort to learn the fine points of frontier etiquette from their Indian neighbors. Several Sauk braves dismounted and just stood there in the dooryard of the Gougar cabin. Joseph Gougar threw some four or five chickens out into the dust of the dooryard, the Sauk shot them thru with arrows, picked them up, and were once again on their way, having received the "tribute" from the white man to which they considered themselves entitled.

All of these facts and conditions considered, Du Sable, in espousing and assisting the American cause, could have only been one of two things; a patriot, or a madman. In either case the fact that he was black was his least unique distinction.

COLONEL AUGUSTIN MARTIN DE LA BALME

The failure of "The Great English Offensive of 1780", was the death knell of British Empire in the Illinois Country. All that presumedly remained to be accomplished was the capture of Detroit. Clark's success in Illinois, De Leyba's determined defense of St. Louis, and Galvez capture of the British Forts Manchac, Natchez, and Baton Rouge, coupled with a rapidly developing French self-rule movement once again emerging, gave Spanish, French, and Americans, notably Clark, ideas of expanded and private American Empire.

One of the first opportunists to arrive on the scene was the foppish, hair-brained schemer, Colonel Augustin Martin de la Balme, who appeared in Cahokia during the Summer of 1780, complete with silver spurs and a silver mounted double-gun, claiming that he had been appointed, then resigned, as Inspector General of Cavalry by General Washington before coming to the Illinois Country.

Not much more need be said about La Balme other than that he espoused French take-over, and self-rule of the Illinois Country, and all of those lands west of the Alleghenies that had been New France and Louisiana prior to Montcalm's defeat upon the Plains of Abraham.

Needless to say, La Balme did not attract much of a following even among the French. La Balme did undertake an expedition against Detroit, and in order to "impress any Indians who might oppose him", La Balme burned and looted the village of Little Turtle, a neutral Miami living on the Eel River, twenty miles northwest of Fort Wayne. La Balme went to bed, satisfied with what he had accomplished, and during the night the Miami attacked, killed La Balme, scattered his army, and sent La Balme's silver spurs, double-gun, and cuff links to Major Arent De Peyster as a Christmas present.

East of the Des Plaines River the Sauk Trail is easy to follow because it has become permanently incorporated into the Michigan Central-Penn Central Railroad right-of-way almost without any deviation whatsoever. From Joliet it passes east through Frankfort, Chicago Heights, Illinois, Dyer and Michigan City, Indiana (Trail Creek), and on through to New Buffalo, thence to Niles, Michigan, passing through Niles a short distance to the north of old Fort St. Joseph. Through northeastern Indiana, and southern Michigan, Routes 12 and 20 that parallel the Penn Central are perhaps the "truer trail", but they are so close that the variation is of no consequence. At Niles, Michigan the Illinois-Detroit Road of Colonial days ceases to be the Penn Central right-of-way, and the Sauk Trail now becomes Route 12, a "true trail" with three distinct meanders and one major ford exactly as depicted on early nineteenth century maps.

In wrapping up the Sauk Trail it is necessary to note that in the preceeding paragraphs we have been concerned with its "eastern aspect". The Sauk Trail was actually a well established, well defined land route linking the Rock Island, Prairie du Chien area of Illinois and Wisconsin with Detroit and the Indian towns around Lake Erie. Therefore the "major trail" ran from the Rock River, southeast to the "fords of the Aux Plein" at Joliet, and northeast to Detroit. If you arrived at Joliet and were going to the mouth of the Rock River you forded the Desplaines at Ruby Street, followed Ruby Street, Route 30 right past St. John's Cemetery to Six Corners, and on through the "big slough" which is now Hillcrest Shopping Center and Molaschi Redi-Mix and its rapidly growing environs, and then onto Plainfield and the ford of the Fox River at Oswego, etc.

The old trails and war roads became plank roads and railroads, and later paved highways. There was no reason to change their route, or their course because more often than not they were the most direct route from here, to there, and could not be improved upon. If travelling these roads seems long, tiring and arduous in an automobile going 55 mph., imagine what the trip might have been like on foot or horseback, the trail nothing but a narrow corridor through prairie and marsh grass that stood nine feet tall in some places. With beauty and danger so omnipresent I doubt that they found time to be bored.

LOS SOLDADOS SIN CUERA

While La Balme, Brady and Hamelin were mulling over plans for a "filibustering crusade" against Detroit and Fort St. Joseph during the Fall of 1780, Captain Godefroy Linctot, work-horse of the war in the west, was traveling alone through Pennsylvania and Virginia attempting to arrange a great pan-Indian alliance against the British that would bring peace in the west. On January 1, 1781, Linctot was back in Vincennes attempting to explain Indian demands, and smooth out some of the problems that had arisen threatening to dissolve the French and American alliance in the west that had worked so well in war, but which was now deteriorating with the promise of peace.

Quite frankly the Hamelin-Brady expedition was doomed from the start. It possessed more of an aura of a crusade than a military expedition. It was poor and carried none of the necessary presents to "buy off" the Indians along the way, or in the vicinity of Fort St. Joseph. It was in fact a filibustering expedition more oriented to personal gain than military objective, and those attracted to it, other than Hamelin and Brady were not truly aware of its motives or possible consequences. Brady alone appears to have profited from this debacle. Following his capture, Brady was either paroled by, or escaped from the British, and according to his account spent the rest of the war commanding a company of scouts in Ohio. Following the war, Brady returned to Cahokia and married a well to do, and landed gentlewoman, and in 1790 he was elected Sheriff of St. Clair County.

Even had the Potawatomi at Fort St. Joseph not pursued and delivered the coup de grace to the Hamelin-Brady Column on December 5th, the end would have come the next day, December 6th, when Lieutenant Dagneau de Quindre of the British Indian Department arrived on the scene at Trail Creek with forty Chippewa and Ottawa recently arrived from Michilimackinac. This force had been camped some distance from Fort St. Joseph when the raid occurred. As per usual the British preserved little information as pretaining to the raid itself, or the names and disposition of the "rebel" participants; but they do preserve a substantial sheave of materials in the Haldimand Papers debating whether it was Agent Champion, or Lieutenant de Quindre, who overcame and captured the Hamelin Expedition on December 5, 1780, effecting the destruction of "The Western Division of the Continental Army".

THE SAUK TRAIL

The route to Fort St. Joseph and Detroit was substantially the "short route" generally referred to as the "Sauk Trail". We will strictly concern ourselves with the routes used solely by men on foot and horseback, and not confound the issue by a needless description of the seasonal variables, alternatives, and routes dictating to, or accomodating waterborne traffic.

Expeditions coming up from Cahokia, Kaskaskia, etc., followed the Illinois River along its west-north bank as far as "La Petite Rocher", Buffalo Rock, just west of the mouth of the Fox River at Ottawa, Illinois. Here the trail left the Illinois River and passed upland northwest to the ford of the Fox River at Dayton. Here an expedition would pick up the old "Illini Trail", Route 6, which, as a matter of record, is a "true trail", west of the Des Plaines River, and follow Route 6 straight to the Gudgeon Island Ford northwest of the Mont Joliet, the island then lay in the Des Plaines River immediately below the mouth of the Hickory Creek. It might be noted that just southwest of the Mont Joliet, the Illini Trail, Route 6, forked. The Sauk passed to the northwest of the mound, and the Illini passed to the southeast, of this elongated northeast to southwest running landmark, and the trails joined again at the Gudgeon Island Ford, only to separate once more east of the Des Plaines.

The night of February 11, 1781 found the Pouree-Tayon Column camped two demi-leagues (4.60 statute miles) south of Fort St. Joseph. In the early hours of the morning of February 12th, the expedition passed down the ice bound St. Joseph River and took the Fort by surprise, without a shot being fired.

Eight prisoners were taken and the "loot of the town", the fort's booty, was divided among the Indians. It is interesting to note that the British Superintendent at Fort St. Joseph was the forty year King's Service veteran Louis Chevalier, and that the interpreter for the Spanish Column, selected by Governor Cruzat personally, was Louison Chevalier, the son of Superintendent Louis Chevalier. The senior Chevalier was taken later to Montreal on suspicion of duplicity, but was of course exhonorated. The younger Chevalier unabashedly accepted an Ensign's commission in the Spanish Colonial Service upon his return to St. Louis.

The Spanish flew their flag over Fort St. Joseph for twenty-four hours, and then on February 13, 1781 they razed the Fort, sparing only the chapel, and began their long march back to St. Louis, arriving there on March 6, 1781.

On February 14, 1781, "day late" Dagneau de Quindre arrived at Fort St. Joseph not only to find it sacked, but this time leveled. For the second time in three months De Quindre looked a fool. What repeatedly saved him from personally being "sacked" by the British "high command", was that he had some five brothers and several cousins of the same name, serving as officers in the British Indian Department. De Quindre wisely made no attempt to even suggest a pursuit of the invaders.

The motives for the somewhat redundant Pouree-Tayon Expedition, and the capture of Fort St. Joseph in February of 1781 did not become clear until the peace commissioners, representing the United States, Great Britain, France, and Spain sat down to work out the Treaty of Paris in 1783, the instrument that concluded the British-Colonial hostilities in North America.

BY RIGHT OF CONQUEST

At the peace table in Paris, Spain, supported by France, claimed by ancient "right of conquest", all of the land traversed by the Pouree-Tayon Expedition of 1781, and all of those lands that lay between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River. Spain was attempting to maneuver the American Commissioners, Jay, Franklin, and Adams, into a position where they would have to coerce England into surrendering Gibralter to Spain in order to clear American title to the lands that lay between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi.

As absurd as this claim might sound, Jay, Franklin and Adams lost no time in secretely concluding a separate peace treaty with Great Britain. Spain did not acquiesce in her claim to the lands east of the Mississippi River until 1795, and it was not until the

On February 12, 1781, by way of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers, we see the grand finale of the American Revolution in Northeastern Illinois played out as the complicated ensign of Catholic Spain is raised over Fort St. Joseph by Captain Don Eugenio Pouree, and Sub-Teniente Don Carlos Tayon of the Second Militia Company of Pancour.

The presence of this flag, here, on this day in early 1781, would force certain compromises at Paris in 1783 that would result in the American Revolution in the Northwest Territory not being finally resolved and concluded with Great Britain and Spain until 1796.

Every so often there would appear in St. Louis an escort detail of Spanish regulars up from New Orleans, or from Santa Fe. These were the splendidly accoutered "soldados de cuera", the "leather jacket soldiers", wearing bull hide cuirass' capable of stopping an arrow, thigh high cavalier boots, and wearing a cup hilt rapier suspended from an ornate baldric slung diagonally across the chest. Large rowel Spanish spurs, a lance, and a wide brimmed, flat crown black hat gave the the appearance of Musketeers in the service of Louis XIII.

In contrast to these regulars of the Spanish Colonial Office, we might nickname Pouree's Spanish forces "los soldados sin cuera", the "soldiers without leather jackets", for like their French and American counterparts they affected the somewhat nondescript blanket shirts, capotes, and animal hide parka's that the bitter weather demanded.

The Pouree-Tayon Expedition left St. Louis on January 2, 1781 with 65 Spanish, 30 French and American militia, and 60 Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Sautiers (Chippewa of Wisconsin), led by "Heturno" and "Naguiquen" (who De Peyster indentifies as Seguinac and Makewine, who in reality, are in fact, our old friends, Saquina and Nakioum.).

At Meredosia the column came upon Jean Baptiste Maillet and a scouting party of ten horse mounted Canadians who joined them. It took Pouree eighteen days to reach Peoria. The Winter was most severe, and a freeze that set-in in November, 1780 did not temper nor abate until mid-April, 1781. Pouree's column reached Peoria on January 20, 1781 and departed Peoria on January 21st. The expedition had ascended the Illinois River in batteaux and pirogues accompanied by Maillet's men on horseback. Above Peoria the Illinois River was a solid frozen sheet of ice, and the expedition was forced to abandon their pirogues and continue on to Fort St. Joseph on foot, with only five pack horses, loaned by Maillet, to carry extra ammunition and presents for the Indians they would encounter.

It took the Pouree-Tayon Expedition twenty more days to cover the distance between Peoria and Fort St. Joseph at Niles, Michigan. They were taking the "long route", La Salle's old route to Fort St. Joseph, that being walking the ice of the Illinois and Kankakee River through Will and Kankakee County, Illinois, and northern Indiana, through the English Lake, thence to the Oak Point Portage, and a short distance overland to Fort St. Joseph.

A concerned George Rogers Clark summoned Major Godefroy Linctot to confer with him on all of these various problems. Linctot received Clark's letter on July 31, 1781, and immediately replied to the summons, informing his friend that he was ill from exhaustion, and under a physicians care in Spanish St. Louis, but would meet with Clark as soon as his health permitted.

The conclusion of the Linctot story is as mysterious as it is abrupt.

A note in the Kaskaskia Papers states; "Major Linctot died in St. Louis during the Summer of 1781."

A note in the Virginia Papers states; "Major Godefroy Linctot was killed in the Summer of 1781."

The brave Linctot, broken physically and financially by the war, dies under mysterious circumstances in Spanish St. Louis during the Summer of 1781.

JE ME SOUVIENS

The War in the East traditionally overshadowed the Campaigns in the West. In the West there were no clearly defined strategies, battlelines, alliances, or victories with the exception of Clark's capture of Vincennes; and that is all that history cared to remember. This signal acknowledgement obviated the necessity of recounting half-a-hundred prairie pursuits and skirmishes in which friend could seldom be distinguished from foe.

The War in the East concluded with the Battle of Yorktown, fought in the Fall of 1781. The War in the West was not in the least bit effected by this great battle that virtually ended hostilities in the East; not until the British Captains at Michilimackinac and Detroit received word of the Treaty of 1783 did the Tory, partisan, and Indian raids into Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois come to an end. Clark spent 1782-83 pursuing the demonic Simon Girty through Kentucky and Ohio.

George Rogers Clark in his lifetime would never receive the recognition that he deserved. In the years that followed the war, Clark came to consider Illinois and the Northwest Territory as his own personal empire, and perpetrated acts and undertakings that bordered on sedition, if not treason. In his wanning years Clark did receive a sword from the State of Virginia, which he promptly and arbitrarily buried in his back yard. Today George Rogers Clark is more often than not confused with his much younger brother, William Clark, who co-captained the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804 under the sponsorship of a Thomas Jefferson, much older than the one who wrote to Clark from Williamsburg in March of 1780 saying; "Of all the Indians and provisional troops that I have interviewed, Linctot's are the only ones with any manners."

It is to that partisan legion of American allied French and Indians whose names would never appear upon the pension roles in Washington that this book is dedicated....je me souviens.

following year, 1796, that the British finally surrendered Detroit to the Americans, moving across the strait to Fort Malden at Windsor, Ontario, Canada where the Sauk and Fox would come to collect presents from the British as late as 1831.

COME THE CARPETBAGGERS

In June of 1781, Colonel John Montgomery ascended to the command of the Illinois District which included Vincennes, Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and Prairie du Rocher. Godefroy Linctot was promoted to Major and appointed Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien, about as far-flung an outpost as one could be appointed to. Clark personally made these appointments, and they were the democratic version of "seigniories", spheres of influence and profit granted for extra-ordinary service. Clark may have had in mind to keep Linctot and Montgomery out of each others hair, however the appointment of Linctot to "prairie of the dogs", as Clark so awkwardly referred to Prairie du Chien, was a wise one for Clark and the American cause, and a profitable one for Linctot. Linctot's type of war however was still going on and Clark needed him in the field, and Montgomery, who both the war and Linctot could do without, would not let a sleeping dog lie.

When Montgomery took over the administration of French inhabited southern Illinois and Indiana, he immediately opened the area up to American carpetbaggers and speculators. At Vincennes he proceeded to incurr and pay debts with worthless scrip, and notes, and siezed the cattle, livestock, real and personal property of French habitants when it served his purpose or profit.

Many of the debts incurred by Clark's Virginia State Forces during the years 1778 thru 1781 were personally vouched for and underwritten by Godefroy Linctot, and Linctot felt obliged and honor bound to repay them. In early February, 1781 Linctot had been dispatched to Fort Jefferson, a few miles below the mouth of the Ohio, with 200 Piankshaw to checkrein Chickasaw hostiles around New Madrid. Late February thru June of 1781, found Linctot back in the east continuing his efforts to dissuade the Indian Nations from assisting the British, and swearing either their allegiance or neutrality to the American cause.

Linctot returned to Illinois in July of 1781, exhausted, plagued by debt, and dangerously ill from exposure. His travels had taken him from Pennsylvania, far south into the Carolinas. Upon his return he traveled first to Cahokia, where he appears to have been made to feel unwelcome. Collecting his papers Linctot took up residence with a physician friend in Spanish St. Louis. From there he wrote several letters and petitions attempting to subscribe contributions to pay-off Virginia's war debts, debts owed to Illinois and Spanish merchants, outfitters, farmers, etc., for munitions, supplies, animals and forage used by the Virginia State Forces, and the Illinois Regiment, Virginia State Militia. While in St. Louis he was informed of Montgomery's activities at Vincennes.

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