

ILLINOIS ARCHAEOLOGY

Journal of the Illinois Archaeological Survey

1997

Volume 9, Numbers 1 & 2

Seasonal Occupation Patterns in Illinois History: A Case Study in the Lower Illinois River Valley

Duane Esarey

The lower Illinois River valley is one of the richest archaeological areas of the Midwest. Yet, treatments of Historic Period occupations in Illinois from the beginning of written records to the ca. 1820 onset of intensive Euro-American settlement make almost no mention of this area. A survey of contemporary records reveals that there were, in fact, numerous historically documented activities and occupations in the lower Illinois River valley. This fact has major implications for post-contact archaeology in Illinois. The cultural practices responsible for these "invisible" occupations are reviewed and their archaeological ramifications explored. Reinterpreted passages from contemporary documents are discussed. Points of revision in the American Indian history of Illinois are presented.

In the midwestern United States, that portion of archaeological time when written documents are available to supplement other sources of information about the past begins in the late seventeenth century. Once available, documentary accounts of Historic Period habitation sites become a primary guide in efforts to discover archaeological sites of that period. Conversely, investigations of these archaeological sites, once interpreted, supplement the information available from a wide variety of sources on the past.

Historians wishing to portray trends and events in time and space, and archaeologists wishing to elucidate aspects of cultural lifestyles from preserved archaeological remains, can and should use each other's data to present the fullest possible picture of the past. However, scholars need to exercise considerable caution in such interchanges.

In the course of organizing a basic corpus of historical documentation to provide a framework for interpreting the Historic Period archaeological record of the lower Illinois River valley, this paper also illuminates one of the pitfalls of relying on mainstream historical syntheses to supplement archaeological research.

Archaeological and Historical Research in Illinois

The American Indian occupants of the central part of Illinois from the earliest written documentation (ca. 1670s) to the middle of the eighteenth century were the Illinois tribe(s). For the purposes of this paper, the terms "Illinois Indians," "Illinois tribes," and "Illinois"

Duane Esarey, *Dickson Mounds/Illinois State Museum, Lewistown, IL 61542*

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are used to refer collectively to the various tribes/subtribes which made up what has been erroneously called the Illinois Confederacy (for organization and component parts of the Illinois Indians, see Brown 1979:233-235; Callender 1978:673; Hauser 1976:129-132). The component tribes of the Illinois Indians are in turn referred to by name (i.e., the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, etc.).

After the middle eighteenth century, the central part of Illinois was occupied by the Potawatomi and the Kickapoo/Mascouten until a virtual flood of EuroAmerican immigrants filled the state (ca. 1820-1835). A number of other tribes occupied peripheral parts of Illinois during this period, but the Illinois Indians, Potawatomi, and Kickapoo/Mascouten dominate the history of the central part of the state.

The locations where archaeological evidence of Illinois Indian occupations in Illinois have been found are in general accordance with two broadly defined regions delineated by mainstream historical documentation. Illinois Indian activities are well-documented in the upper and central Illinois River valley region (the Starved Rock and Lake Peoria areas, respectively). Two other primary loci of Illinois Indian occupations are historically documented at the northern and southern extremes of the American Bottom region of the Mississippi Valley in southwestern Illinois (specifically, the Cahokia/Tamaroa area and the Kaskaskia/Fort de Chartres area, respectively).

The later Kickapoo occupants of Illinois maintained residence in the expansive prairies to the east of the Illinois Valley, while the major Potawatomi villages of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were confined to the central and upper portions of the Illinois River. The upper and central Illinois River and the American Bottom were also primary locations of French and English colonial and American Territorial activities in Illinois.

Occupational locations of American Indians and EuroAmericans in these two geographic areas are prominently featured in all historical, ethnohistorical, and archaeological summaries of Illinois history (e.g., Alvord 1920a; Bauxar 1978; Blasingham 1956; Brown 1979; Callender 1978; Hauser 1973; Tanner 1987; Temple 1966). Directly between these two regions is the lower Illinois River valley (defined for convenience as the lower 115 km of the river, or from the river's mouth to Meredosia). One might assume, based on the historical treatment of American Indian and colonial European occupations in Illinois, that the lower Illinois River valley was very rarely occupied, in spite of its position between the upper Illinois River and the American Bottom. However, this paper shows that the lower Illinois River valley was the site of repeated American Indian, Colonial European, and American territorial activities and occupations throughout the Historic Period. This is an aspect of Illinois history reflected in only a very small number of specialized ethnohistorical research papers (i.e., Jablow 1974; Stout 1974; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974).

Many of the villages of the Illinois Indians were occupied repeatedly or for long periods by populations as high as several thousand individuals. Archaeological remains corresponding to the locations of the various major Illinois habitation sites in the regions both north and south of the lower Illinois River valley have been relocated by archaeologists (e.g., Brown 1961; Brown 1973, 1975; Good 1972; Orser 1975; Walthal and Benchley 1987), with the exception of those in the Peoria and Cahokia urban areas (Emerson and Mansberger 1991; Franke 1995; Norris 1984:8-9). Likewise, the movements and primary

habitations of the tribes that used these areas subsequent to the Illinois Indians are also carefully documented (e.g., Edmunds 1966 and 1978; Spooner 1939; Tanner 1978; Temple 1966). If these sites have not been relocated and investigated by archaeologists, it has simply been because very little attempt to do so has yet been made.

Even the locations of villages occupied for a very short duration by the Illinois Indians or subsequent tribes in these regions have been of concern to historians, ethnologists, and archaeologists alike. For instance, both archaeologists and historians alike have expressed interest in the whereabouts of the 1673 Peoria village visited by Marquette and Jolliet on the Mississippi River in Iowa (Grantham 1993; Temple 1966:17; Weld 1903) and the 1700-1703 Kaskaskia village on the River de Pere in Missouri (Palm 1931:36-41); the 1730 Fox fort and massacre site in central Illinois (Edmunds and Peyser 1993; Peyser 1987; Stelle 1992); or the early nineteenth century Kickapoo villages on the central Illinois prairies (Berkson 1992; Klippel 1976; Parmelee and Klippel 1983; Temple 1966:163-167).

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the reasons that historians, archaeologists, and ethnohistorians are interested in American Indian occupational sites vary significantly. Historians are interested in occupation sites that are historically "important." These sites represent significant or pivotal chapters of history regardless of whether they have been occupied by many people or for a long period of time. In contrast, archaeologists are especially interested in various types of occupation sites because they may represent different cultural activities. For archaeologists, ephemeral village sites may be especially useful addressing problems related to the connection between specific ethnic identities or documented behavioral patterns and material culture.

If archaeologists make the mistake of assuming that all sites mentioned in the documentary record have been given equal treatment by historians, then selected parts of the archaeological record may be systematically overlooked. This is not the result of any shortcoming on the part of historians. Biases are inevitably introduced as selections are made in attempts at historical synthesis. These selections and their justifications are in all probability quite well-known to historians, but can be all but invisible to the consumers of their interpretations. In this paper, I will argue that historians have under emphasized or neglected one specific type of Historic Period occupation site that is of considerable interest to archaeologists (i.e., the winter village sites). The winter "hunting" villages have been generally omitted from historical overviews in favor of what have been characterized as "permanent" occupation sites (i.e., the summer village sites). As an unintended result, archaeologists have also paid less attention to the potential for Historic Period occupations in areas not extensively occupied by summer villages.

The Hidden Record: The Winter Villages

The annual winter dispersal was an integral component of the Historic Period adaptation (Figure 1). In historical documents, these winter occupations are referred to as "the winter hunt," "the winter villages," "winter quarters," "winter camp," or simply as "wintering." Such terms seem to connote transitory activities rather than "permanent" residential occupation. Yet, there is every indication that winter settlement locations were indeed occupied in such a way as to leave an archaeological signature. Because the archaeological remains at such sites are important to archaeologists for documenting a full



Figure 1. "Natives du Nord qui vont en chasse d'hiver avec leur Famille." [Natives of the north who go on the winter hunt with their family.] (DuPraitz 1774:142)

range of seasonal activities of Historic Period Indian groups, it is important that archaeologists maintain an awareness of the biases that account for this oversight.

First of all, there are certainly biases in the initial records created by the observers describing the Indians of Illinois' Historic Period. For a variety of reasons there are far fewer accounts of American Indians' activities during the winter than the summer. Minimizing the importance of the winter villages of American Indians possibly reflected a tendency to view agricultural activities and large population aggregations as reflective of occupational permanence and land tenure. Likewise, much documentation is in the form of administrative contacts, but due to their traditionally egalitarian style of decision making, American Indian groups would have been considerably less politically available when dispersed into their winter quarters.

Above and beyond biases inherent in the contemporary documents themselves, historians have tended to omit references to Historic Period American Indian occupational sites that they consider "non-permanent," a designation often applied specifically (and unjustly, inasmuch as they were occupied essentially half of each year) to the winter villages. To an archaeologist, the activities that took place at the winter villages are certainly as significant as those in the summer village. In fact, the overlapping patterns of archaeological remains correlating to various activities in the repeatedly occupied summer village sites would tend to limit recovery of that information archaeologists would automatically classify as the most significant (i.e., reliable contextual associations).

The omission of "non-permanent" sites by historians relates to the differing goals

of mainstream historical enquiry and archaeology. For instance, the primary interests of a historian in documenting site locations might be to provide a geographic framework for discussing specific events, to illuminate the history of a certain region, or to facilitate the examination of overarching historical trends. It is not necessary to discuss documentation for each site to achieve these goals. Examples of syntheses of Illinois history that contain many such omissions and yet have been heavily depended upon by archaeologists are Alvord (1920a); Bauxar (1978); or Temple (1966). Archaeologists also put undue faith in the comprehensiveness of syntheses presented by historians in introduction to selections of primary historical documents (e.g., Alvord 1907; Pease and Jenison 1940; or Thwaites 1902, 1906).

Ethnohistorical studies more closely address the goals and interests of archaeologists in terms of a primary goal being to elucidate settlement and subsistence behavior. Examples, of those ethnohistorical studies pertaining to the Historic Period occupations of the Illinois River valley are Callender (1978); Callender, et al. (1978); Clifton (1978); and Hauser (1973). Yet, ethnohistorians are still apt to compile only those specific references needed to illustrate or evaluate any particular sequence of events or pattern of behavior. Comprehensive lists of winter occupation locations that would aid archaeologists in locating and interpreting sites would be of lesser use to ethnohistorians. Thus, even between archaeologists and the anthropologically sensitive ethnohistorians we can find evidence of differing goals restricting the usefulness of data synthesized within the perspective of specialized interests. Wilson (1993:19-23) has discussed the problems resulting from attempts to combine the "mixed epistemologies" of history and archaeology, concluding that theoretical orientations of the respective fields influence researchers to finally specialize in one aspect or another.

Only among the studies of those ethnohistorians preparing court documents on Historic Period occupations in Illinois for the American Indian land claims cases (e.g., Jablow 1974; Stout 1974; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974) can one find frequent mention of winter villages. In this case, the ethnohistorians' desire to distinguish between summer and winter villages has also served the interests of archaeologists. Because an explicit goal of the land claim studies was to distinguish between "permanent occupation" sites versus sites used only "for hunting" (e.g., Voegelin and Blasingham 1974:xviii), scholars were required to compile and evaluate references to each and every residential shift. Thus, documentation for all occupations is rigorously reviewed in these studies. Unfortunately, the land claims studies are expansive, duplicative, unindexed, and have been published in their original court document format without editing.

Useful as they are, the studies of ethnohistorians are still not particularly sensitive to the concerns archaeologists have for attempting to extract physical correlates of activities that can be preserved in archaeological sites. Many winter occupations took place at locations that were main summer village sites at a previous or later point in time. These cases are of no particular concern, and hardly worth mentioning to an ethnohistorian but of obvious concern to archaeologists charged with identifying the cumulative record of activities at a given site. Clearly, archaeologists themselves must continually access primary historical accounts in order to establish functionally and geographically comprehensive accountings of all Historic Period occupation sites and develop adequate estimations of the material and contextual correlates to the behavior they seek to investigate.

Documentation of Historic Occupations and Activities in the Lower Illinois River Valley

An attempt to locate all references to the lower Illinois River valley between 1686 and 1820 has yielded documentation for a very specific pattern of the American Indian, Colonial European, and early American activities in that region (Table 1). It is immediately evident that the great majority of lower Illinois River valley Historic Period activities refer to the winter months. In those references describing the nature of the aboriginal activities, the most common terms used are "wintering," "village," and "winter camp." The terms "winter quarters," "hunting village," "village and post," are also used, as are references to more casual encounters.

Based on these references and our knowledge about the patterns of seasonal residence among the Indians inhabiting Illinois (as discussed below) we may conclude that the terms "wintering, winter camp, winter quarters, village, and hunting village" all refer to actual occupations. Specifically, when the Illinois are repeatedly described as being "in their winter quarters" or "on their winter hunt" 20 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois River, it is reasonable to assume that several thousand people are spending one-half of their year (about October through March) in various sized villages in that area. These occupations were perhaps more ephemeral than the summer village to which the conglomerated tribe returned for the other half of the year, but the degree of residential stability indicated for these winter villages is nonetheless considerable.

In order to put into perspective whether this pattern of occupation can be implied to hold for the many intervening years in which there was no documentation of winter village locations, Table 2 provides citations on the other documented locations of winter residence for the various groups listed in Table 1. Without drawing any conclusions about occupations in any specific undocumented years, it is obvious that the lower Illinois River valley was a favored and primary location for winter occupations throughout the historically documented tenure of American Indian groups in Illinois. Table 3 clarifies the usage of several key place names repeatedly associated with the lower Illinois River valley occupations. A discussion of the seasonal round and the specific attributes recorded for various winter occupations illustrates the probable nature of these winter villages.

The Nature of Winter Occupations

The Seasonal Round

All of the tribes of the Midwest during the Historic Period practiced a well-documented annual pattern of activities that revolved around planting, hunting, harvesting, and social activities. Hauser describes this pattern among the Illinois Indians:

The seasonal Illinois economic cycle began with the assembling of the tribe into summer agricultural villages early every spring . . . With proper ceremonies, the people planted various crops in fields located fairly close to the village. Then the entire tribe embarked upon its summer communal buffalo hunt. [See Pease and Werner 1934:340 or Quaife 1947:122 for those group

Table 1. Documented American Indian, Colonial European, and Early American Occupations and Activities in the Lower Illinois River Valley: 1673 to 1820.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1680 (Feb.)	Aco & Hennepin (Margry 1876-1886:1:517-518)	When going down the Illinois River, met the Tamaraoa 2 leagues above the mouth returning to their village 6 or 7 leagues below the mouth on the Mississippi.
1680 (Dec.)	LaSalle (Margry 1876-1886:1:561)	Visits village set up by Tamaraoa on "north" side of Illinois River near its mouth just prior their massacre by the Troquois.
1686 (Feb.)	Tony (Mason 1901:65)	Illinois Indians in winter quarters 80 leagues below Starved Rock. (He also says 100 leagues = mouth of Illinois River.)
1689 (Oct.)	Tony (Temple 1966:30 fn. 105)	Tony discovers a village of Illinois at the mouth of the Illinois River.
1698 (Nov.)	Buisson de St. Cosme (Kelloeg 1917:351-354)	Visited six winter camps between Peoria and mouth of Illinois River. In January 1699, Father Binnneau writes a letter from one of these Illinois winter camps.
1699 (Spring)	Tony (McDermott 1949:59)	Says that Binnneau, coming after the Tony/St. Cosme party, "found a hunting village of the Cahokia at the mouth of the Illinois" where he established a mission before ascending the river in search of the Illinois.
1711 (Apr.)	Marest (Thwaites 1900:66:5-77)	Visited Peoria village 25 leagues from the mouth of the Illinois River.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1718	Chief Jouachin (Thwaites 1902:457-459)	In a statement made in 1725, declares that one of their people (the Michigamea) named Nenchwensicwa was killed by the Fox at "la pierre a fleche" in 1718.
1729 (Jan./Mar.)	Boucherville (Thwaites 1906:48-55)	Visits large village of "Peoria and other tribes" on Illinois River 20 leagues from the Mississippi River.
1750	Bellin map (Bussiere 1991:Plate 22)	"Peorias" shown on lower Illinois River.
1750 (Nov.)	Vivier (Thwaites 1900:69:22, 203)	Father Meurin in charge of the Peoria mission "70 leagues from here" (from Kaskaskia?).
1752 (Oct.)	Macarty (Pease and Jenison 1940:747)	Illinois left Kaskaskia October 10 to go winter at "Pierre a' la Fleche."
1752 (Dec. 3)	Macarty (Pease and Jenison 1940:762)	Gives permission for the garrison he had assigned to build a fort at the Peorias (Pease and Jenison 1940:466) to winter with them.
1755	Bellin maps (Alvord 1920a:154; Tucker 1942:Plate 24)	Shows "Peoria: Village Sauvage et Poste Francois" about 20 leagues up Illinois River.

Table 1. Continued.

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1756? (Jan.?)	Bossu (Feiler 1962:107-110)	Went overland from Cahokia through a prairie of 25 leagues to the Peoria. The village was on the edge of a little river. He describes the process of making maple syrup, and its fed syrup, persimmon bread, and dried blueberries. The people were scattered throughout the countryside.
1763 (Dec.)	DeVilliers (Alvord and Carter 1915:50)	Debeaugen winters w/Potawatomi on Illinois River 60 leagues "away" (from Ft. Chartres). Also see Thwaites 1908:259.
1773	Kennedy (Hutchins 1904:123-124)	Describes the "Peorias wintering ground" as "48 miles" up the Illinois River. [Calibration by other figures given makes this about 34 miles.] Further up river is "Pierre a' la Fleche." [Peoria summer villages are in American Bottom region at this time.]
1776-1777 Winter	C. Cerre (Mason 1890:261)	Gives deposition to Rochelave that "having been among the Peorias on the River of the Illinois . . . last winter, having been wintering with the Kickapoo and Mascouten at a place called the bad land . . ." See discussion in text and endnotes.
1776-1781	Map (Tanner 1987:93)	Shows Kickapoo/Mascouten village on Illinois River near Mercedosa. Apparently derives from 1776 Cerre, 1779 McCarty, and 1781 Maillet accounts. Probably should be downstream near Naples (Mauvaise Terre) and Apple Creek (see discussion in text).

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1779 (?)	R. McCarty (Iablow 1974:294)	Says there are Kickapoo and others "at the Pass" (see 1811 and 1816).
1781 (Jan.)	J. B. Maillet (Kinnaird 1949:399-400, 413-415)	Writes to Cruzat from "his home" which he says is at "La Mauvaise Terre on the Illinois River." He is stationed there with a detachment of 12 Spanish soldiers. Maillet normally lived at Peoria, which was reportedly abandoned from 1781-1783 (Alvord 1920b:224, 227). He apparently remained at this post until at least July 1782 (also see Kinnaird 1946:42; Nasatir 1928:334, 345; Thwaites 1908:422).
1786	Claude Paneton (Alvord 1907:247)	Says in court at Cahokia that "M. Duchenaud" had hired "Louis Marchand" to go "from the Mauvaise Terre to Peoria."
1790	H. Heward (Quaife 1931:358-360)	The cabin of a Frenchman named "L'Onion" is two days up Illinois River.
1806	A. LaCroix (Peoria Journal, Dec. 4, 1898)	Says she was born (Dec. 6, 1806) at her father's trading post at "Mauvaise Terre." She believed this meant Peoria, but her father didn't buy the lot where his trading post in Peoria stood until 1808 or 1809 (Alvord 1920b:237-238). Although he was definitely in Peoria as early as 1797 (Alvord 1920b:245), the fact that his daughter was born in December and that he was a fur trader probably indicate he had a winter trading post at Mauvaise Terre in the lower Illinois Valley in December 1806.
1811 (July)	Terr. Governor Clark (Iablow 1974:361)	A band of "Toways" [Ottawa?], who reside near mouth of Illinois River, moved out.
1811 (Oct.)	T. Forsyth (Iablow 1974:364)	Met "Shegunabee's band" at 80 miles below Peoria (would be around Meredosa or Naples). They were going to winter at "Grand Pass," about "60 miles" from the mouth of the Illinois River.
1813 (Jan./Feb.)	LaRoche/Chevalier (Carter 1934:14:652-654)	These spies of the governor were forced to avoid going through the lower reaches of the Illinois River where "many fires" of the Kickapoo (who were very hostile to the Americans) were wintering.
1815 (Dec.)	T. Forsyth (Carter 1934:17:260)	Writes to "Mr. Cameron who winters at the Grand Pass" to acquaint the principal chiefs of the Potawatomi with Gov. Edwards' wishes.

Table 1. Continued.

Table 1. Concluded.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1816 (March)	T. Forsyth (Thwaites 1888:345-346)	Visits two winter camps in the lower Illinois River valley. Main Poc was with eight lodges of Kickapoo and Potawatomi at "the grand pass." Forsyth also visited several lodges of Kickapoo at Arrowstone Creek. Some of these would have been the Potawatomi who passed Peoria on their way to winter in the fall of 1815 (see Table 2).
1816	Paul map (Tucker 1942:Plate 40)	Apparent U.S. fort ("Ft. Chabor") on west side of Illinois River near Pearl.
1818-1819 (winter)	G. Hubbard (Hubbard 1911:49-52, 63)	American Fur Company established posts on Illinois River every 60 mi below Peoria (with last post being 50 mi from the mouth).
1819 (Sept.-Nov.)	P. Cerre (1819 letter, Missouri Historical Society files)	A band of Kickapoo being removed from Illinois pass through "Mauvaise terre" where they receive information from the Potawatomi. They "threaten to winter at every navigable stream."
1820-1821 (winter)	G. Hubbard (Hubbard 1911:121-130)	Kickapoo and Delaware winter villages near his trading post at the mouth of the LaMoine River.

Table 2. Examples of Other Winter Occupations 1673 to 1820 for the Same Groups as Documented in Table 1.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1677 (spring)	Allouez (Quate 1913:29; Thwaites 1900:60:157-159)	80 Illinois (?) in winter camp near the Chicago portage.
1680 (Jan.)	LaSalle (Margry 1876-1886:1:506; Quate 1913:31)	LaSalle (LaSalle/Membre) documents 80 cabins of Illinois in winter camp at Pimiteoui.
1682 (Jan.)	Father Membre (French 1852:166-167)	Illinois wintered at Lake Pimiteoui. Tamaroa gone from their summer village.
1687 (Sept.)	Joutel (Margry 1876-1886:3:461-462)	Abandoned Illinois camps at Pimiteoui and "Les Deux Mammelles."
1691-1697	DeLille (Pease and Werner 1934:394)	"Most of the Illinois" went to hunt each winter along the "Ouabasha" (Ohio River).
1693 (Sept. 26)	Gravier (Thwaites 1900:64:189)	The Peoria left Pimiteoui September 26 for winter camp (downriver?). Many Kaskaskia stayed at Pimiteoui for winter.
1698 (Dec. 7)	St. Cosme (Pease and Werner 1934:356)	The greater part of the Tamaroa were away hunting. The Michigamea had gone to the interior to hunt.
1700 (Feb.)	Berger (Fortier 1909:236)	"The greater part of the Cahokias" wintering 20 or 25 leagues up Mississippi from the Tamaroa summer village.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1769 (Feb.)	Wilkins (Jablow 1974:268; Wilkins 1772)	Peoria (who lived at Cahokia) are wintering "within sight of the smook" of Fort de Chartres. The Kaskaskia and Michigamea return from winter hunt.
1770 (Mar.)	Wilkins (Wilkins 1772)	Parties of Peoria came in March 21-24 from winter hunt. Potawatomi encamped at "Le Grand Isle" (Grand Island) 60 mi below Peoria.
1795 (Mar.)	Edgar/Canis (Carter 1934:14:652; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974:184)	All the tribes of the Illinois River wintered at fort they built at Bureau Creek.
1811/1812	Larchoe/Chevalier (Carter 1934:14:652; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974:237)	Potawatomi winter camp is on the River Sheeshqueuen (Copperas Creek).
1814 (Mar.)	Forsyth (Voegelin & Blasingham 1974:242)	Como wintered near Peoria. Another winter village is 30 mi above Peoria.
1814 (Oct./Nov.)	Forsyth (Jablow 1974:400; National Archives RG107, F-62(8))	Como, Black Partridge, and Pepper with nearly 30 lodges of Potawatomi wintering on Illinois River 20 mi below Ft. Clark.
1815 (fall)	Governor Edwards (Carter 1934:17:319)	Capt. Phillips observed six or seven hundred Potawatomi hunters pass Peoria on their way to winter along the Illinois River (see 1816 in Table 1). Total population of Potawatomi on Illinois River estimated as 1,200 warriors or 6,000 people (see Voegelin and Blasingham 1974:180).

Table 2. Continued.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1700 (Oct.)	Craver (Thwaites 1900:65:103-105)	Cahokia wintering four leagues above and Tamara two leagues below summer village.
1702 (Nov.)	Marest (Thwaites 1900:66:39)	Rouensa is in his winter quarters 30 leagues from the River de Fere village.
1710 (late)	Marest (Thwaites 1900:66:259)	The Kaskaskia's winter camps are spread for at least 40 leagues down the Mississippi from Kaskaskia.
1721 (Oct.)	Charlevoix (1761:2:207)	When he left Pimiteoui October 5, the Peoria were to go to winter camp soon.
1750	Vivier (Thwaites 1900:69:147)	Winter hunt of the Kaskaskia is 40 or 50 leagues from the summer village.
1750-51	Macarty (Pease and Jenison 1940:436, 448)	Kaskaskia, Cahokia, other Illinois wintering at "Prairie de l'Orme", "Prairie à l'heur", and other locations not far from Fort de Chartres.
1760-1761 (winter)	de la Chapelle (Kellogg 1935:67-68)	Illinois Indians wintering around Starved Rock region.
1766 (Nov.)	C. Morgan (Alford and Carter 1916:439)	Kaskaskia were on their winter hunt on "English" side of the Mississippi River 16 leagues downstream of Kaskaskia River.

Table 2. Concluded.

Year/Month	Source (Reference)	Description
1816 (Oct.)	trade document dated Oct. 15, 1816 (Draper Coll.; Wisconsin Historical Society)	"Memorandum of exports and imports of trade to certain parts of Indian Country showing the name of each Nation of Indians, their places of residence, the different places of trade and different established posts where the trade centers with the St. Louis and Michilimackinac fur and peltry prices current for this year (1816) . . ." lists the trading places for the Potawatomi of the Illinois River and the Kickapoo of the prairies east of the Illinois River as being "different wintering places" on the Illinois River.

Table 3. References Clarifying Place Names Associated With Lower Illinois River Occupations

Place Name	Year	Source (reference)	Description
Pierre a' la Fleche ³	1722	Delisle (Faye 1945:53)	Pierre a' la Fleche (arrowstone) River is at the beginning of a fine meadow (on the left going upstream) 20 leagues from the mouth of the Illinois River.
	1778	Hutchins map (Tucker 1942:Plate 29)	Shows location. [Taken from Patrick Kennedy account.]
	1796	V. Collet (Collet 1909:296)	Pierre a' la Fleche is an island and the bluffs on the west side at 99 "miles." [Calibrating by the actual distance to LaMoine River.]
	1812	Edwards map (Tucker 1942:Plate 35)	River Pierre a' la Fleche (arrowstone) is Flint Creek 20 leagues up the Illinois River.
Peorias wintering ground ⁴	1778	Hutchins map (Tucker 1942:Plate 29)	Shows location. [Taken from Patrick Kennedy account.]
	1796	V. Collet (Collet 1909:296)	The Peorias wintering ground is on the right at 54 "miles." Calibrating by actual distance to the LaMoine River, this distance is 39 mi.
Mauvaise Terre ⁵	1722	Delisle (Faye 1945:53)	Mauvaise Terre River is (on the right going upstream) somewhere between 12 and 20 leagues from the mouth.

members excepted from this hunt.] This summer hunt, a relatively recent addition to the annual economic cycle, was the most important community effort by the tribe each year . . . The Illinois then returned to their more substantial agricultural villages in time to harvest crops and prepare food caches for the leaner times of the year.

The tribe abandoned its summer agricultural villages for a second time early in the fall. The tribe moved to smaller winter villages . . . for the purpose of hunting to better advantage. They occupied these villages for six or seven months of the year. The first three to five months of this period they devoted to communal hunting activities; but these expeditions were . . . much smaller operations than the summertime village hunts. The Illinois devoted the last months of the winter to even smaller hunting campaigns . . . Individual hunters or small groups of men hunted for deer or bear, and spent the rest of the time in gaming, dancing, and singing . . . Even during these slow days at the end of winter, however, women [were] continually occupied. The tribe's migratory routine completed a full cycle during the early spring when the various subtribes abandoned their winter villages and filtered back to the larger summer encampments. While they prepared their fields for the new growing season, the people subsisted on foods they had cached the previous fall [Hauser 1973:70-72].

According to Pierre Charles Delliette⁷ war parties were sent out from the winter camps in beginning in February (Pease and Werner 1934:376). Likewise, late winter (late January through early March) was also the sugar making season, when seasonal camps were set up in the maple groves of the Midwest (e.g., Faragher 1986:15-17; Feest and Feest 1978:781). The only account we have of Illinois Indian's sugar making refers to the Peoria tapping maple trees in January (Feiler 1962:108).

Duration of the Winter Occupation

For the Illinois Indians, the move to the winter quarters took place between late September and late October. Various documented dates of departure are September 26 (Thwaites 1900:64:189), "the end of September" (Thwaites 1900:65:73), late September or early October (Thwaites 1900:65:101-103), sometime after October 4 (Charlevoix 1761:II:207), October 10 (Pease and Jenison 1940:747), "the beginning of October" (Thwaites 1900:69:147), "mid-October" (Thwaites 1900:69:219) and "after October 25" (Pease and Jenison 1940:752).

The return from the winter villages to the summer villages typically took place between late February to early April. Documented dates of their return are "February 18-19" (Wilkins 1772), "mid-March" (Thwaites 1900:69:147), "March 21-24" (Wilkins 1772), "the end of March" (Thwaites 1900:69:219, 64:233), or simply during March or April (Pease and Jenison 1940:450-452, 506-549; Thwaites 1900:64:233, 65:75).

Thus, the period of occupancy for both summer and winter villages was approximately equal. Each were at times nearly completely abandoned for communal hunts. The summer hunt was a major episode lasting from three to six weeks (Pease and Werner

Place Name	Year	Source (reference)	Description
Grand Pass ⁶	1796	V. Collet (Collet 1909:296)	The "Mine River" (LaMoine River) called by the Canadians "bad land" (Mauvaise Terre) is at 117 "miles" [Actual distance to the LaMoine is 83 or 84 ml.]
	1812	Edwards map (Tucker 1942:Plate 35)	River Mauvaise Terre is present day McKee Creek 24 leagues up the Illinois River. [Actual distance is 66 miles.]
	1819	Melish map (Tucker 1942:Plate 46)	Present day McKee Creek is labeled "River Mauvaise Terre or McKees Creek."
	1837	Smith and Stansbury map (1837)	For first time, Mauvaise Terre is used as its present day place name, a creek on the east side of Illinois River.
	1816	Long map (Tucker 1942:Plate 43)	Lake Grand Passe is just above mouth of present day Apple Creek.
	1837	Smith and Stansbury map (1837)	"Grand Passe" Lake and "Grand Passe bar" shown just above mouth of Apple Creek.

Table 3. Concluded.

1934:306; Thwaites 1900:66:253). The winter bison hunt could last from soon after the people arrived at their winter villages until about Christmas, that is, about two months. After this, the men went out alone or in small groups from their winter villages "from time to time, to hunt for deer or bear" (Hauser 1973:71; Thwaites 1900:65:73-75).

Location

The intent of the winter dispersal was to expedite the gathering of furs and spread the population across as wide a resource base as possible during that time which "the people live almost entirely on game" (Thwaites 1900:69:219).

The winter quarters could be distant or quite close to the summer village. Typical distances away from the summer villages might be 25 to 50 leagues. For instance, in late 1710, Father Marest visited three winter camps of the Kaskaskia. These extended along the Mississippi River south of the Kaskaskia River for at least 40 leagues (Thwaites 1900:66:259). In 1750, Father Vivier indicated that the various Illinois Indians in the American Bottom region did their winter hunting 40 to 50 leagues from their village (Thwaites 1900:69:147). In early 1700, the Cahokia winter quarters were 25 leagues from their village (Fortier 1909:236).

Obviously, one primary concern in selecting the winter quarters would be to locate in a region where resources were not depleted by proximity to summer villages. The location of winter quarters would also have been subject to other influences, such as access to trade goods or the necessary state of defense to be maintained. For example, most of the Cahokia tribe, then living in a large summer village in the northern American Bottom, were reported in February 1700 as "in winter quarters twenty or twenty-five leagues . . . up the Mississippi" (Fortier 1909:236). But in the fall of 1700, after the establishment of the Seminarian mission "at the Tamaroa," the Cahokia went into winter quarters only four leagues above their village and the Tamaroa wintered two leagues below the village (Thwaites 1900:65:101). In the winter of 1750-1751, some of the Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and other Illinois Indians were wintering at "Prairie de l'Orme" (Elm Prairie), "Prairie a l'heurt," and other unclarified locations near Fort de Chartres (Pease and Jenison 1940:436, 448). The next fall, after the devastating raid on the Michigamea village, these Illinois tribes went into winter quarters with the Peoria in the lower Illinois Valley (Pease and Jenison 1940:747). In the winter of 1768-1769, the greatly weakened Peoria living at Cahokia wintered within sight of the smoke of Fort de Chartres (Jablow 1974:268; Wilkins 1772:1).

Size

Winter villages consisted of the component parts of the large summer village. Under normal conditions, a large winter village could contain two to three hundred people (Hauser 1973:71). The number of "cabins" (oval structures that were smaller than the longhouses of the summer agricultural villages) in each winter village was highly variable. For instance, the six winter camps of the various Illinois tribes that St. Cosme described in late 1698 ranged from five to 20 cabins (Kellogg 1917:342-361). The smallest Kaskaskia winter village visited in late 1710 by Marest was made up of three cabins, while another was described as "a great number of cabins which formed a sort of a village" (Thwaites 1900:66:259).

Under some circumstances, such as when there was a fear of imminent attack, winter

occupations could be much larger than several hundred people. Boucherville described the large winter village of "Peoria and others" that he visited in January 1729 on the lower Illinois River as several tribes all together "keeping always on the watch and anxious for news of the Kickapoo." In this village there were at least 80 dugout canoes (Thwaites 1906:48-55). Likewise, in what was probably very early 1756, Bossu visited the Peoria at a fortified winter village on the lower Illinois River (This was just after the Peoria had their summer village forced out of the Illinois River valley by enemy attacks; see below and Table 1 for discussion). The whole tribe assembled at the cabin of the chief "because of the defeat of a party of their warriors at the hands of the Foxes" (Feiler 1962:107-110). Undoubtedly, fear of attack could be responsible for some winter villages being much larger than usual.

"Permanence" of Winter Villages

Because European concepts of habitation and land tenure were tied to agricultural activity, there are numerous and detailed accounts of the summer villages. In reality, the European conception of these summer villages as a single social and political unit was largely an illusion, inasmuch as these villages were made up of a number of smaller, but more important, kin-based social units (Hauser 1973:259). In all probability, these sub-groups and their component parts made up the winter camps.

It is difficult to determine whether the same winter village locations were occupied from year to year. Certainly, particular winter village locations were frequently revisited, but locations may also have changed quite often. Because accounts of contemporary winter villages (i.e., winters for which there are entries in both Tables 1 and 2) generally cannot be considered exclusive of each other, we do not even know whether winter villages changed location more often or less often than the summer village locations. References to the "winter quarters" of certain leaders of the Illinois imply sufficient permanence that people knew where to find them (e.g., Pease and Jenison 1940:436, 448), but few statements regarding the persistence of individual winter villages from year to year can be made.

Structures

Structures used for winter occupations contrast significantly with the large, multi-family, bark-covered longhouses of the summer villages. Diron D'Artaquiette, who visited the American Bottom in late April 1723, gave a generic description of Illinois Indian houses that has been interpreted as typical of their winter houses (Hauser 1973:252; Mereness 1916:71-72; also see Walthall et al. 1992:149). Diron said the Illinois houses were "oval in shape, surrounded and covered with mats . . . of rushes they get from the marshes. These huts have only one opening . . . They carry them with them when they go on the hunt, at which they are engaged for at least seven months of the year." According to Le Boulanger, the houses of the Illinois lasted only three years (Hauser 1973:253), but this figure likely refers only to the summer longhouses.

Apparently there was little change through time in this structure type (Hauser 1973:252-256). Diron's description corresponds well with later accounts of structures explicitly identified as winter houses of other tribes residing in Illinois. For example, Ross (1899:50-55) describes the winter structures of Potawatomi occupying the area around the mouth of Spoon River in the winter of 1830-1831. A winter house

for a family of eight or ten persons would be about 12 by 16 feet in size. Small saplings would be cut and set firmly in the ground, big ends down . . . three feet apart, all around the plat . . . to be enclosed. Then the limber tops of the poles would be brought together and fastened with hickory wythes or strips of leather. Then small poles would be tied lengthwise to the saplings, making a cross-barred and solid frame. The whole would then be covered with a heavy matting that had been woven . . . from the coarse swamp grass . . . found on the bottom lands . . . An opening was left as a doorway and this was protected by a blanket. A pit two by three feet in size and eight or ten inches deep would be dug in the center . . . for a fireplace, and there was an opening at the top for the smoke to pass through . . . They usually sat on packages of skins or sacks of feathers [Ross 1899:50-55].

Forsyth (Blair 1912:227-228) describes a very similar winter structure for the Sauk and Fox in the early nineteenth century.

Their winter lodges are made by driving long poles in the ground in two rows nearly at equal distances from each other, bending the tops so as to overlap each other, then covering them with mats made of . . . a kind of rushes or flags, a bearskin generally serves for a door, which is suspended at the top and hangs down, when finished it is not unlike an oven with the fire in the center and the smoke omits thro the top [Forsyth 1911].

The Archaeological Importance of Winter Occupation Sites

Archaeological sites are sometimes considered important because of the historical events that took place there, but archaeologists must continually be aware of the *entire occupational history* of any such historically significant location. For instance, in thinking of the Zimmerman site near Starved Rock as the "Grand Village of the Kaskaskia" in the 1680s, it is easy to overlook the fact that documents indicate that this exact location could also have been occupied by 200 Kickapoo in the fall of 1680, some of the "Le Rocher" band of the Peoria between at least 1711 and 1722, an undisclosed number of Illinois in the summer of 1730, "several cabins" in 1752, and other occupations documented and undocumented throughout that century. Even without considering the additional undocumented occupations at such a site, discrete archaeological deposits for any specific occupational event can be expected to be a challenge to locate and identify.

Winter village locations may have been occupied only a single season or used repeatedly for decades. They also may well have hosted occupations decades apart. Yet, because of the occupation by fewer people, the presumably restricted range of activities, and the possible lesser permanence that characterized winter villages, archaeological deposits there would tend to yield discrete data sets and functionally determinate information. In short, although winter villages can be much more difficult to locate than summer villages, they can be expected to contain significant archaeological information not easily recovered elsewhere.

Habitation and History of the Lower Illinois Valley: 1673 to 1820

Many of the references in Table 1 have been overlooked, deemed unimportant in the larger scheme of regional or ethnic history, or interpreted in alternative modes based on the assumption that phrases such as "at the Peorias" were indicative of location as well as ethnicity. Because some of the references in Table 1 have not been discussed in mainstream historical syntheses and others have been interpreted in alternative ways, it is important to discuss and defend their use here. Revisions to the history of occupational locations are noted as they are presented.

As indicated above, the primary assumption behind these interpretations is that the winter dispersal, in spite of often being referred to as a "hunt" still constituted a legitimate occupational presence in the sense that small villages were set up and occupied for approximately one-half of the year. Both winter and summer villages were temporarily abandoned for a semi-annual bison hunt and the winter dispersal was specifically organized around the wider-ranging collection of furs as well as the less abundant winter subsistence resources. There is every indication, however, that winter villages were, in fact, "site occupations" in the sense with which the term is used by archaeologists.

Earliest Illinois Indian History—Prior to 1673

Prior to the early 1670s, the locations of even the summer village sites of the Illinois are unknown. From at least 1640 to the visit by Marquette and Jolliet in 1673, most of the Illinois Indians were undoubtedly resident in either central Illinois or the adjoining portions of Iowa and Missouri. Jablow (1974:47-74) gives by far the best account of contemporary evidence for the activities and locations of the Illinois Indians during this interval.

The century-old debate over the location of the 1673 Peoria villages visited by Marquette and Jolliet has only recently been settled. Beginning in 1992, excavations at a site near the confluence of the Des Moines/Mississippi rivers in Clark County, Missouri have verified the presence of a major Illinois village that fits all of Marquette's descriptive requirements (Erhardt and Conrad 1994, Grantham 1993). With the location of this major Illinois Indians village verified, archaeological information on pre-1670s winter occupations may eventually be obtained, but there is little or no contemporary documentation on that subject.

Wintering From the Grand Village—Late 1670s to 1691

Between 1675 and 1677, the majority of the Illinois who had been living beyond the Mississippi River relocated to the Illinois River. Alouez (Thwaites 1900:60:159-160) visited a huge summer village of the Illinois Indians ("the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia") in April 1677, after visiting an Illinois winter camp near Lake Michigan. He returned to the Grand Village for the next two consecutive years (Thwaites 1900:60:167), but we have no other information regarding the specific pattern of Illinois Indians residential mobility for those years. Likewise, it has been strongly suggested that Michel Accault was trading in the Illinois Country on LaSalle's behalf during 1678 and 1679 (Wedel 1986:31). Unfortunately, there appears to be only incidental references to his activities during these years, rather than an account that might shed light on winter occupations of the Illinois Indians.

With the establishment of a full-time French trading presence among the Illinois in the winter of 1679–1680, documentation improves. First of all, it is important to clarify that the Illinois Indian village at Pimiteoui (Lake Peoria) first visited by LaSalle's party in the winter of 1679–1680 was a winter village. This village was occupied by only a small part (80 cabins) of the Illinois Indians whose aggregate summer village (460 lodges) was at that time at the Grand Village near Starved Rock. This fact has been recognized by Quafie (1913:31) and others, and is validated by the fact that the Pimiteoui group moved to the Grand Village in April of 1680. Nonetheless, the identity of the 1680 village at Pimiteoui as a winter village rather than a year-round or summer occupation has not been explicitly recognized in most historical or archaeological discussions (e.g., Emerson and Mansberger 1991:150; Temple 1966:21). Some of the Illinois from the Grand Village were also documented as wintering at Pimiteoui in 1681–1682 and probably 1686–1687 (Table 2).

There are only a few clues as to where the remainder of the Grand Village Illinois were wintering in 1679–1680. The same day (February 28 or 29, 1680) that Father Hennepin and Michael Accault began their descent of the Illinois River from Pimiteoui, they met "several parties of Isinois returning to their village with their pettiaguas or gondolas, loaded with meet" (sic). Seven days later, two leagues from the mouth of the Illinois River, they found 200 families of the Tamaroa, who wanted to take them to their village "lying west of the river Colbert [Mississippi], six or seven leagues below the mouth of the Seignelay [Missouri]" (Shea 1880:191–194).

This large assembly of Tamaroa were probably just ending their winter occupation. It may very well be that the location where Hennepin and Accault met the Tamaroa is along the Illinois River two leagues above its mouth, rather than two leagues below the mouth. This would be in accordance with location where the Tamaroa set up their winter village the following November after being assured by the Iroquois that they were safe (e.g., Temple 1966:24). LaSalle visited that site December 4, 1680 soon after the ensuing massacre (Margry 1876–1886:1:561). He described its location as "near the outfall of the river . . . on a plain on the north side."

In February 1686, Tonty found the Illinois Indians at a winter village 80 leagues below Fort St. Louis at Starved Rock.⁸ Mason (1901:165) apparently deduced this from an August 24, 1686 letter to the Minister of the Marine (Margry 1876–1886:3:541) in which Tonty recounts "After dragging our baggage over the ice and then going in our boats a distance of eighty leagues from the fort, we came to the village of the Illinois on the 27th of February." Because Tonty's later account of the years 1678–1690 (Kellogg 1917:302) describes the Illinois River as flowing 100 leagues below Fort St. Louis at Le Rocher and Douay gives this same figure in 1687 (French 1852:224) the indicated location would be roughly 20 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois River, a locale that was to be documented as a wintering place repeatedly in the coming century.

In September, less than two years later, Joutel's party did not describe any occupation sites along the Illinois River until they reached some abandoned camps near "Les Deux Mammelles."⁹ More winter camp sites were noted at Pimiteoui (Esarey 1993a:8; MacLaughlin 1902:185; Margry 1876–1886:3:461–462). Unfortunately, details of the Illinois River portion of Joutel's journal were among the many omissions in the version published in England (French 1846:183; Joutel 1714:166). Joutel had complained of the changes made

to his journal when it was first edited in 1713 (Griffin 1906:230), but the only full account is still that published by Margry.

St. Cosme's Voyage (1698–1699) and "Woman Chief's" Winter Village

The letter of Buisson de St. Cosme describing a voyage down the Illinois River in the winter of 1698–1699 is the best known and most explicit description of Illinois Indian winter villages (Kellogg 1917:351–354). The major summer village of the Illinois at this time was at Pimiteoui and several of these winter villages were probably in the lower Illinois Valley. Because Father Binneteau, who remained in one of these winter villages ("Woman Chief's" village), wrote an account of the winter occupation, and upon leaving this village, visited the winter village of the Cahokia at the mouth of the Illinois River before returning to Pimiteoui for the summer, we have three accounts of Illinois Indians wintering practices that season (Table 1).

Walshall et al. (1992:Table 5.4) have interpreted archaeological remains recovered alongside the Illinois River at Naples, Illinois using the account of Buisson de St. Cosme. Their work stands as one of the few attempts to locate and interpret winter occupations of the Illinois. Walshall et al. (1992) argue convincingly that the remains at Naples date to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, are almost certainly Illinois Indians (based on the presence of ceramics that correspond well with the Zimmerman site ceramic assemblage), and appear to derive from a winter occupation.

Walshall et al. (1992) also present a second set of highly specific conclusions. These are that the specific Illinois tribal group responsible for these remains can be identified as the Kaskaskia, that the occupation episode responsible for the remains is the historically documented "Woman Chief's" winter village, and that the time span of this occupation can be assumed to fall within the seven year interval of 1693 to 1700. This second set of conclusions was based primarily on the following assumptions: 1) that there was a lack of other winter occupations documented in the region; 2) that no Illinois groups would have wintered in the lower Illinois Valley after the Kaskaskia left the Illinois Valley in 1700 to live in the American Bottom region; and 3) that the Illinois Indians would not have gone into winter dispersal during their wars with the Iroquois and Fox (specifically, prior to 1693 and after 1714).

I must take issue with this second set of conclusions and assumptions. Nowhere is "Woman Chief's" village explicitly identified as Kaskaskia versus any other Illinois tribe. More importantly, since each of the assumptions supporting the second set of conclusions is entirely contradicted by the data given here in Tables 1 and 2, the identifications of the remains at Naples as being the Kaskaskia tribe, being the village of "Woman Chief and her people," and being restricted to the 1693–1700 interval are far from secure. The archaeological remains at Naples could just as easily be any late seventeenth or early eighteenth century winter occupation by any one of the Illinois groups who apparently spent most winters living in the lower Illinois River valley.

Where were the Peoria 1706–1717?: The Significance of Marrest's April 1711 Account

From spring of 1683 through the fall of 1690, numerous summer villages of the Illinois Indians, (exclusive of only the Cahokia, Tamaroa, and Michigamea) had been at and around the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia near Starved Rock (e.g., Blasingham

1956:199). Most of this huge Illinois occupation removed to Lake Peoria (Pimiteoui) for their summer occupations from spring 1691 until fall 1700. With the split that took place between the Kaskaskia tribe and the Peoria and "other Illinois" tribes (Shea 1861:116) in late 1700, the large concentration of Illinois groups at Lake Peoria broke up. From this time on, documentation of Illinois Indian activities in the Illinois Valley diminished markedly.

Most accounts (Blasingham 1956:202; Jablow 1974:137-159; Temple 1966:36-40) have identified the summer villages of the Peoria and other small Illinois groups (hereafter referred to simply as "the Peoria") who remained in the Illinois River valley after 1700 as being at Lake Peoria continuously from 1691 until the spring of 1722, with a factional village (the "LeRocher" village) forming at Starved Rock after 1712 and persisting until the summer of 1722. The question of the continuity of the summer village at Peoria throughout this period and a determination of the initial date of occupation for the LeRocher village are critically interwoven with what is interpreted here as documentation for an occupation in the lower Illinois Valley during the winter of 1710-1711. In other words, the locations and periods of occupation of the summer settlements during this time must be closely scrutinized and reinterpreted in order to understand the 1711 reference to the winter occupation in Table 1.

After 1706, when an attempt was made on Father Gravier's life (Thwaites 1900:66:53-61), the Peoria tribe was without a missionary until 1712. Between Gravier's departure and Marest's two 1711 visits to the Peoria (Thwaites 1900:66), we have no account of their activities. Exactly where the Peoria village(s) that Marest visited were has seldom been examined critically (e.g., Alvord 1920a:139; Blasingham 1956:202; Brown 1979:230; Stout 1974:361; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974:39). When the location of the village is mentioned at all, Marest's April 1711 visit ascending the Illinois River and August 1711 visit descending the river have usually been blended together and it is generally stated (or the impression given) that the only village was at Lake Peoria (Jablow 1974:144-145; Temple 1966:37; except see Walthall 1993:499). However, Faye (1945:43) has argued that a split of the Lake Peoria village leading to the formation of the LeRocher village at Starved Rock took place in 1705, inexplicably citing as support Marest's 1711 account of two village locations.

Since there is documentation of a Peoria village occupied at Starved Rock the year after Marest's visit (Thwaites 1902:285), most historical discussion has focused on when the LeRocher village was born out of the one supposedly persisting at Lake Peoria. Examining Marest's and several other accounts more closely, the interpretation that there was any kind of summer village at Lake Peoria in 1711 is unsupported.

On "Friday of Easter week" in 1711, Father Marest left Kaskaskia on a journey to Michilimackinac, intending to stop enroute with the Peoria. Marest's party arrived at the "Village of the Tamarouas" (the vicinity of present-day Cahokia, Illinois) on the second day after he left Kaskaskia (Thwaites 1900:66:267-269) and departed the next day to go to the "Peourias." Their progress was slow and cautious, as there were traces of war difficulty in the area and Marest's feet became very sore. After considerable danger and difficulty, they reached the Illinois River. Marest stated "having reached the Illinois River, and being only twenty five leagues from the Peourias" they sent ahead for help. Marest struggled along for two more days, then was carried the rest of the way by some Frenchmen in canoes who had come from the Peoria village to retrieve them.

Marest remained at this village for a fortnight. He had hoped that he could then accompany the Frenchmen who had been staying in this village when they went "back about that time" to his destination (Michilimackinac). Since "no rain had yet fallen, it was not possible for them to go by river" so Marest proceeded on an overland route (Thwaites 1900:66:275-279). When Marest returned from Michilimackinac in August 1711 and began to descend the Illinois River, he soon came to the Peoria village (Thwaites 1900:66:287-289). He described it as adjacent to "the Fort, which is placed on a rock on the bank of the river" 150 leagues from Kaskaskia (emphasis added).

Marest's account unequivocally states that the Peoria village he visited in April 1711 was 25 leagues from the point his party reached the Illinois River. This seems to imply that in April, the Peoria were 25 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois, but might possibly be interpreted to mean that Marest's party traveled overland and struck the Illinois River 25 leagues below the Peoria village. Because other Illinois Indian winter camps are so often specifically described as being 20 to 25 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois (i.e., in 1686, 1729, 1750s, 1770s), it seems most likely the April 1711 village was in the lower Illinois River valley.

It is reasonable to conclude that the Peoria village Marest visited in April 1711 (whether 25 leagues from the mouth of the Illinois or somewhere else) was a winter habitation. Although the preferred time for returning from the winter village was during March, remaining in winter quarters until April was not unheard of. For example, during the severe winter of 1679-1680 the Illinois waited until April to move from Pimiteoui to Starved Rock (Temple 1966:22). In this vein, it is of interest that Marest cited the lack of rainfall as why "the Frenchmen" were not able to ascend the river during April of 1711. In all probability, the same conditions restrained the Peoria from ascending the river to their summer village until after Marest's visit in April.

Marest's August 1711 Peoria village "by the Fort" located 150 leagues from Kaskaskia was certainly the Le Rocher summer village adjacent to Starved Rock, although Temple (1966:37) resisted that interpretation. Likewise, Blasingham (1956:202, 220, note 50) refused to accept Marest's figure specifically because the distance was too great for Lake Peoria: "Because the generally accepted distance to the Starved Rock area from the mouth of the Illinois River (230 actual river miles) was 100 leagues (see discussion of 1680s above), and the distance from the Missouri River to Kaskaskia is given by Marest in this same document (Thwaites 1900:66:293) as 30 leagues, then 150 leagues is a very reasonable estimate for the distance from a village at Starved Rock to Kaskaskia. Temple's and Blasingham's interpretation that there was a Peoria village at Lake Peoria in 1711 appears to be unfounded.

Because it is clear that the summer Peoria village visited by Marest was at Starved Rock, it becomes reasonable to question whether there was any Lake Peoria summer village at all between 1706 and 1717, the first time the Pimiteoui village is solidly documented after Gravier's departure. Since the LeRocher village at Starved Rock documented by Marest in 1711 was also documented in 1710, 1712, 1715, and 1717 (Anonymous 1718; Kellug (sic) 1721; Michigan Historical Collections 1904:33:550; and Thwaites 1902:278, 285, 324) and especially because comments by Joseph Kellogg referring to 1710 and Marest referring to 1711 (Kellug 1721:60; Thwaites 1900:66:229, 265) imply that there was at that

time only one village occupied by the Peoria in those years, the existence of a Lake Peoria summer village for at least the first six years after Gravier left in 1706 is very doubtful.

Reestablishment of the French garrison for the Peoria was ordered in 1715 (Thwaites 1902:333), supposedly at the location of "old Fort Crevecoeur," although that garrison was not immediately appointed (Giraud 1974:350-351, 1993:175). A 1717 contract between Pierre Deliette and Jean B. Dupre for trade at "Illinois pimitouy" (Kellogg 1925:292) also indicates a French presence at Lake Peoria in these years. Likewise, when it was observed in June 1720 that the garrison for the Illinois River had been withdrawn (Giraud 1991:484), it was specified that it had been at Pimitouy.

To summarize, there is no documentation for any occupation at the Pimitouy summer village from 1706 through 1715/1716 and one may infer that only one summer village (at Starved Rock) was occupied by the Peoria in 1710 and 1711. By 1717, however, it is clear that there were summer villages at both Lake Peoria and Starved Rock, a situation that appears to persist until the end of the summer 1721 (see discussion below). In this context, Marest's April 1711 account describes a winter occupation which was probably located in the lower Illinois River valley.

During the Fox Wars—Winters in Illinois Valley 1712-1730

Documentation of the various encounters of the Fox Wars (1712-1730) accounts for several references to the activities of the Illinois in the lower Illinois River valley. After 1700, the Kaskaskia joined their relatives, the Cahokia, Tamaroa, and Michigamea in the American Bottom region and generally wintered south of the Kaskaskia River along the Mississippi River. Nevertheless, there is continued evidence that some American Bottom Illinois groups continued to winter in the Illinois Valley, as they had in previous decades.

An account given in 1725 by a Michigamea chief named Jouachin (Thwaites 1902:459) claimed that in 1718 the Fox had killed "one of our people named Nenchwien-sicwa" at "la pierre a' fleche" (arrowstone) which is in the lower Illinois Valley.¹⁰

As noted, the French garrison at Pimitouy had been withdrawn before June 1720. Charlevoix (1761.2:205-213) found a Peoria village and four French Canadians, but no garrison at Pimitouy in the fall of 1721. We know that by May 1722, Fox attacks had caused the inhabitants of the Peoria summer village at Pimitouy to "make their village" with their relatives at Starved Rock (Faye 1945). The latter summer village was itself abandoned by April 1723 (Mereness 1916:71). Technically, the abandonment of the Lake Peoria village had probably taken place with the seasonal dispersal in the fall of 1721 immediately after the departure of Charlevoix in early October. The inhabitants of Pimitouy had probably commenced to "make their village" at Starved Rock at the end of that winter dispersal (that is, spring 1722). The abandonment of the village at Starved Rock supposedly took place immediately after the Peoria were besieged on Starved Rock sometime after June 18, 1722. The Peoria are known to have been living in the American Bottom settlements at several times during the ensuing seven summers (Temple 1966:41; Walthall and Benchley 1987:8-9), but there has been very little discussion of the locations of their winter villages.

Late in the 1720s there is evidence the Peoria were still spending their winters in the lower Illinois River valley. A party headed by French officer Pierre Boucher, Sieur de Boucherville visited a considerable winter village of the Illinois in January and March of 1729. This village, located on "the river of the Illinois, twenty leagues from the Mississippi,"

was composed of all the Peoria and unquantified contingents from several other Illinois tribes. In this winter village they were "keeping always on the watch and anxious for news of the Kickapous" (Thwaites 1906:48-55).

Boucherville's 1729 visit to this Peoria winter village initiated a series of events leading to the most brutal episode of genocide in the history of Illinois. Prior to very recently (Edmunds and Peyser 1993:126-127), this linkage has not been discussed (e.g., Blasingham 1956:204; Temple 1966:41). Boucherville's journey to the 1729 Peoria winter village and the peace eventually concluded here between the Kickapoo and the Illinois Indians were pivotal to dismantling the Fox/Kickapoo alliance. This in turn led directly to the devastating defeat and massacre of the Fox little more than a year later (see Edmunds and Peyser 1993; Peyser 1987; Stelle 1992).

The actual location of the winter 1728/1729 Peoria village is discussed only in the ethnohistorical land claims literature (e.g., Jablow 1974; Stout 1974; Voegelin and Blasingham 1974). Unfortunately, Stout (1974:317) garbles the details of Boucherville's document terribly, combining the various comings and goings to conclude that the Kickapoo from their village on the Mississippi, all the Illinois, and all the French from the three American Bottom settlements were living in three villages along the Illinois River! Although Boucherville's locational reference for the winter 1728/1729 village seems clear in the context of previous and later winter villages (Table 1), the phrase "on the river of the Illinois, twenty leagues from the Mississippi" has been debated as meaning either 20 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois River or on the Illinois River at that point where it is 20 leagues from the Mississippi. Voegelin and Blasingham (1974:126) interpret the site's location as either near the mouth of the LaMoine River (50 mi east of the Mississippi River) or near "Plum Creek" (50 mi above the mouth of the Illinois River). Their preference for the former location is based on their assumption that Boucherville traveled overland from the Mississippi to the Illinois, which is impossible to accept. Jablow (1974:170) merely concludes the village was in the lower half of that part of the Illinois Valley below present day Peoria (i.e., no further upstream than about Meredosia).

Boucherville's mention of swollen feet from walking in cold water and losing one's way certainly do not preclude a winter voyage by river. Boucherville specified that when he left the Kickapoo village in March, Father Guignas was waiting him "on the road," yet he departed in two French canoes and seven pirogues. Since this party was also met on the Illinois River near the Peoria's winter village by 80 Illinois pirogues, interpreting this as a voyage overland from the Mississippi and thus to a winter village "near the mouth of the LaMoine" seems unlikely, if not ridiculous. Additional proof that the Peoria's 1728/1729 winter village location was 20 leagues from the mouth of the Illinois, rather than further north, is Boucherville's mention in March that his journey to Fort de Chartres from the Peorias was 40 leagues. This figure can hardly allow for the Peoria village being any more than 20 leagues up the Illinois River from its mouth.

The number of cabins or inhabitants of this large village of "several tribes gathered together" was not given. In this same document Boucherville estimated the total number of Illinois men in their three villages was 600 (Thwaites 1906:55), but it is unclear what proportion of the American Bottom Illinois were present in the winter village on the lower Illinois River. That the village was of substantial size is supported by it having at least 80 pirogues. In any case, the point is, if there were winter occupations in the lower Illinois

been interpreted to mean that the Peoria had not yet returned to Pimiteoui in 1731. That passage reads thus:

Sieur Perier by his letter of the fourteenth of the month last May has rendered an account to the effect that M^{re} Machime, a chief of the Peoria Indians, one of Illinois Indians, had a request made to him to grant him some Frenchmen to go and settle with his people at Pimitoui from which they had been driven by the Foxes. He wrote that without waiting for orders he will grant him his request inasmuch as this settlement will facilitate communication between Canada and the Illinois but that he will not grant any troops until he has received orders from his majesty or Marquis de Beauharnais . . . [Rowland and Sanders 1932:555-556].

Temple (1966:43) interprets this passage in part to be a request from M^{re} Machime that he and his people be *allowed* to leave Kaskaskia, which seems overly formal. However, since we already know that some of the Illinois have been documented in the upper parts of the valley in the summer of 1730 and the lower valley in the winter of 1728/1729, this request should be interpreted as being only for the presence of French soldiers and/or traders at their summer village at Pimiteoui. It does not preclude an interpretation that the Peoria had already reoccupied the valley.

Once the Peoria tribe reestablished their summer villages in the Illinois Valley, they became even less well documented than they had been before the Fox Wars. The known activities of the Peoria during the next two decades are limited to a handful of references to repeated skirmishes with northern tribes and Peoria participation in raids against the Chickasaw at the instigation of the French (e.g., Blasingham 1956:204-205; Temple 1966:43-45). No overt references to their winter villages during this time are known, but it seems likely they, as well as some of the Illinois in the American Bottom, would have continued to winter in lower Illinois Valley throughout the 1730s and 1740s.

A 1750s Peoria Village and French Post in the Lower Illinois Valley

Father Vivier, who resided at Kaskaskia, mentioned the Peoria indirectly in two 1750 letters. In a summer 1750 letter, he described the five French and three "sauvage" villages in the American Bottom and then mentioned a fourth village of the same nation (necessarily referring to the Peoria tribe) "eighty leagues from here" (Thwaites 1900:69:145-149). In a November 1750 letter, Vivier described the missions at Kaskaskia and Cahokia and then mentioned that a third mission (the Peoria) is 70 leagues "from here," apparently meaning from Kaskaskia, where he was stationed (Thwaites 1900:69:203). If Vivier spoke of the distance from Kaskaskia to Lake Peoria, then 70 leagues is by far the shortest figure ever given. The distance from Kaskaskia to the mouth of the Illinois had been conceived of as over 30 leagues by Marest in 1712 (Thwaites 1900:66:293) and Boucherville's conservative estimate of the distance from Fort Chartres to the 1728/1729 Peoria winter village 20 leagues up the Illinois River was a total of 40 leagues. If the Peoria village mission Vivier describes was the Peoria village at Lake Peoria, an estimate of at least 100 leagues would have been in order. If Vivier were referring to a Peoria village 20 leagues up the Illinois River, an estimate of no more than 50 or 60 leagues from Kaskaskia would be in order. The

Valley during this very tense winter, then there is every reason to assume there were winter occupations there throughout the Fox Wars. The relocation to winter villages was not an optional strategy reserved for times it was convenient, but an essential component of the Illinois Indian economy and culture.

Peoria Reoccupation of the Valley—The 1730s and 1740s

By any measure, the 1730s and 1740s are poorly documented decades in the history of the Illinois Indians. It is generally accepted that the Peoria had abandoned their summer villages in the Pimiteoui and Starved Rock regions during late 1722 and maintained their summer villages in the American Bottom during the remainder of the Fox Wars (e.g., Blasingham 1956:378; Temple 1966:43). Although Brown (1979:230) placed the Peoria back at Pimiteoui and Starved Rock in 1723 and 1728, she was in error in each case. Her 1723 reference was the date that Father Rale finally wrote an account of his experiences among the Illinois (Thwaites 1900:67:133), but his tenure at Pimiteoui was actually during the 1690s (Thwaites 1900:67:16-17). Brown's 1728 reference is based on her interpretation that Boucherville visited the Lake Peoria (summer) village, rather than a Peoria winter village in the lower Illinois River valley, as discussed above.

The actual date of the Peoria's reoccupation of the middle and upper part of the valley for summer villages is difficult to assess. It has generally been assumed that the Peoria were in permanent residence in the American Bottom from late 1722 until it was safe to reoccupy the Illinois River valley. In this vein of thought, the massacre of the Fox in the summer of 1730 would have been the pivotal event leading to their eventual reoccupation of the Illinois River valley. Palm (1931:48, Footnote 42) and Thwaites (1906:183) cite separate documents indicating the Peoria were definitely living at Pimiteoui and Starved Rock by 1733. Jablow (1974:182-183) and Thwaites (1906:172-174) provide documentation that some of the Illinois were back in the Starved Rock area late in 1732. Because Temple (1966:43, Footnote 170) and Schlarman (as cited in Walthall and Benchley 1987:8) cite evidence that implies the Peoria were still settled at Cahokia in the summer of that year, it has been assumed that they renewed their occupations in the Illinois Valley in the fall of 1732.

If the Peoria had no summer villages in the Illinois Valley from 1722 until after the end of the Fox Wars, it would seem strange that a sizable force of the Illinois were in the vicinity of Starved Rock in the summer of 1730. Yet, when the hostilities that culminated in the massacre of the Fox began, the "Illinois of le Rocher" were on location to work with the Kickapoo and Mascouten to "make themselves masters of the passes on the northeast side" of the Fox to prevent their escape (Thwaites 1906:110). Edmunds and Peyser (1993:137) identify these "Illinois of Le Rocher" as the Cahokia and document the establishment of their village at Starved Rock in the spring of 1730. Edmunds and Peyser also imply that another Illinois village was present at Lake Peoria this same summer. The most likely scenario of Illinois Indian reoccupation of the upper parts of the Illinois Valley would have the Peoria moving back to their summer village(s) in the spring of 1729 or 1730 following the pivotal conclusion of peace between the Kickapoo and the Illinois, which substantially weakened the threat of violence from the Fox.

A passage from a French military communication in February 1732 has previously

problem of Vivier's ambiguous distance figures could easily be dismissed were it not for a series of maps made at this time and the fact that other references verify that there was certainly a major village of the Peoria present in the lower Illinois Valley during the early 1750s.

As early as the 1730s map by Henry Poppo (e.g., Balesi 1991:153; Buisseret 1991:61; Temple 1975:Plate LXVII), there was a dichotomy indicated between "Pimiteoui" and "Peoria." Amidst considerable confusion, Poppo's map shows village symbols labeled Pimiteoui and Peoria separated by some distance on the Illinois River. Given the secondary sources of information and the plethora of other errors on this map, no real credence could ordinarily be attached to this dichotomy. Yet, on a 1750 map (Figure 2), the first of a series of Great Lakes/Illinois Country maps produced by Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (Buisseret 1991:49), this dichotomy is repeated, with the geography of the Illinois River being much clearer. From upstream to downstream, the prominent features along the Illinois River are "La fourche" (the Kankakee/DesPlaines juncture), "Le Rocher" (Starved Rock), a village symbol labeled "village Illinois" (presumably Pimiteoui), two eastern tributaries, and then a village symbol labeled "Peourias."

Bellin subsequently produced at least three maps dated 1755 that show details of the Illinois River. One map of the Great Lakes entitled "Partie Occidentale de la Nouvelle France ou du Canada" shows very little detail in the Illinois Country (Figure 3). This map shows the entire Illinois River and has "Village d'Illinois" at Lake Pimiteoui as the only habitation on that river. The other two 1755 Bellin maps are both entitled "Partie du Cours du Fleuve St. Louis ou Mississippi." One (Figure 4) is a draft map, the original of which is dated 1755 (Tucker 1942:8), that has handwritten corrections. This map portrays only that part of the Illinois River downstream from LaSalle's old Fort Crevecoeur at Lake Peoria. One of many handwritten corrections indicates "peoria" (and other illegible text) at a west bank location 22 leagues above the mouth of the Illinois River and downstream of the mouths of two eastern tributaries identified as "Saguimont" and "Macopines."

The third "1755" Bellin map (Figure 5) is the version subsequently published by Neyon de Villiers. It incorporates the corrections from Bellin's correspondents. Since the original, uncorrected map was also dated 1755, this published version would necessarily date to after the copy had been corrected and returned to Bellin for printing (Tucker 1942:8). On this map the Illinois River is shown only as far north as the lower of the two eastern tributaries (again labeled "Macopin"). Downstream of this tributary and on the west side of the Illinois River is a village symbol labeled "Peoria" and "Village Sauvage et Poste Francois" (Indian village and French post). The scale indicates that this post and village is 20 leagues from the mouth of the Illinois River. Because this map was apparently based on contemporary first-hand information out of the Illinois Country, because the other two 1755 Bellin maps assure that the Peoria village is clearly far downstream of Pimiteoui and below the two eastern tributaries of the Illinois River, and because the map has an accurate scale there should be little doubt that a French post and a Peoria village were indeed present in the lower Illinois River valley in the middle 1750s.

French administrative correspondence supports this conclusion. Beginning in the late 1740s, the encroachments of the English into the Illinois Country led to greatly increased attention to affairs in Illinois, which translated directly to increased documentation on the activities of the Illinois Indians. Although the Peoria had wanted a military

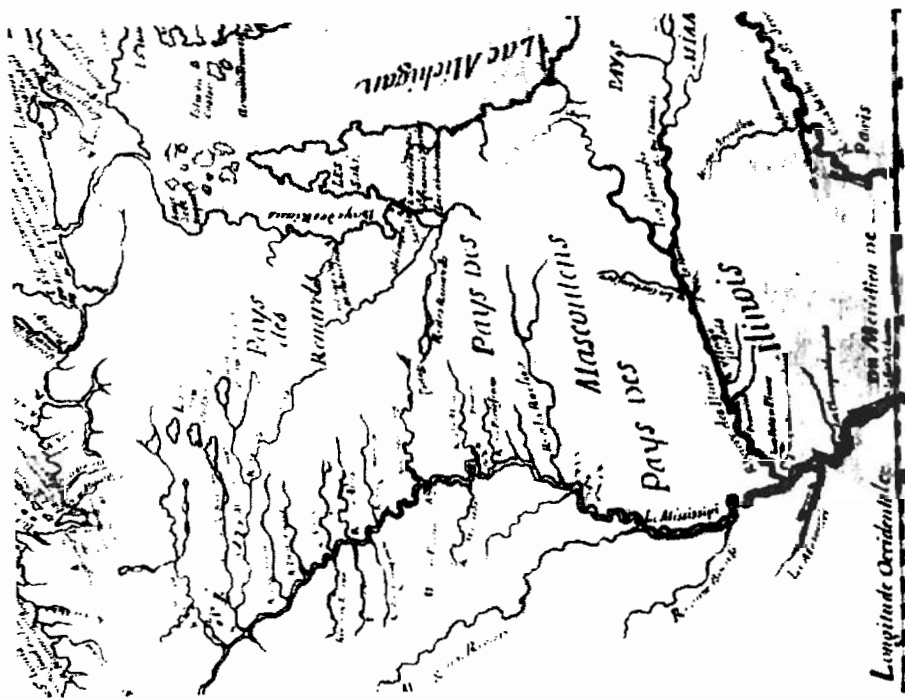


Figure 2. A portion of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's ca. 1750 "Partie Occidentale du Canada." (after Buisseret 1991:48) showing Illinois River geography.

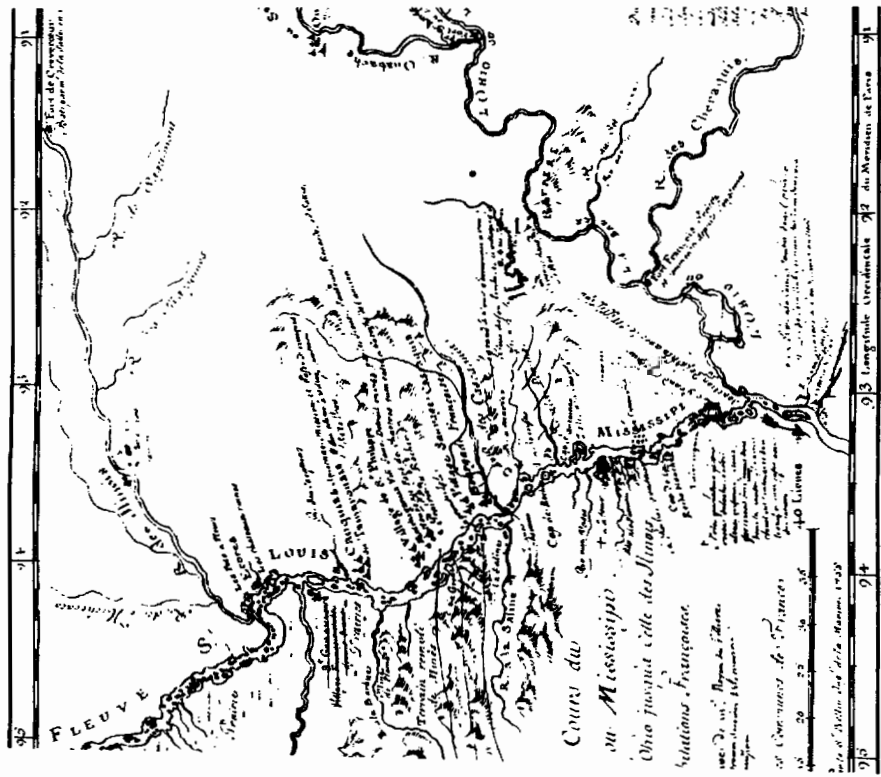


Figure 4. A portion of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's 1755 draft map "Partie du Cours du Fleuve St. Louis ou Mississippi" (Tucker 1942:PL XXIV) with a handwritten correction indicating a Peoria Indian village and French post on the lower Illinois River.

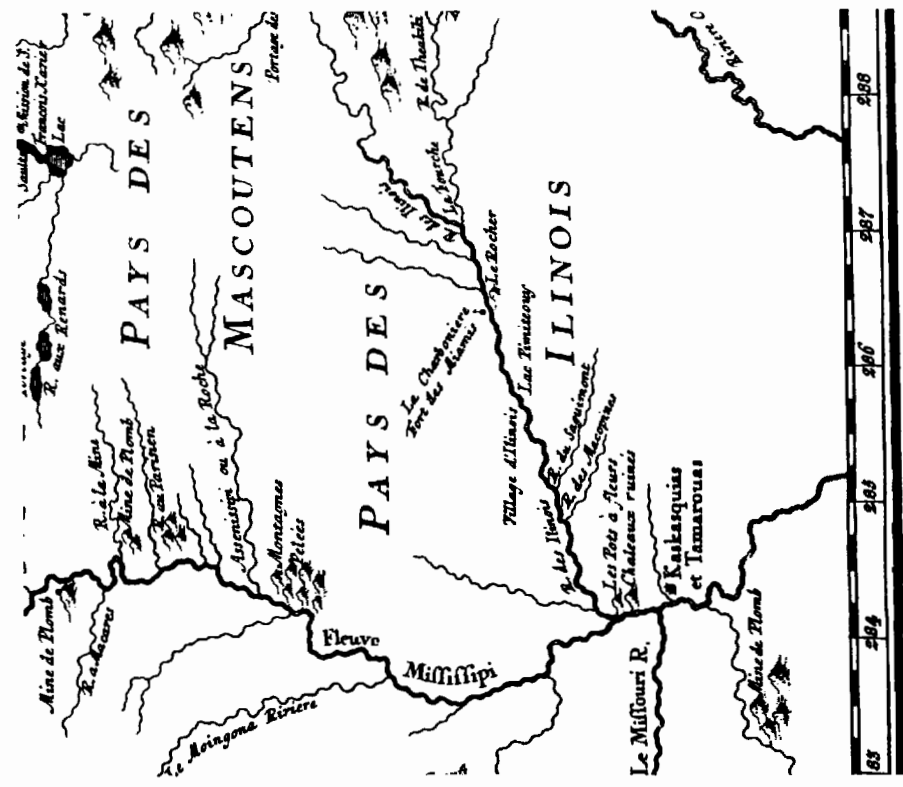


Figure 3. A portion of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's 1755 "Partie Occidentale de la Nouvelle France ou du Canada," (reproduced from an engraving in the collection of Historic Urban Plans, Ithaca, NY).

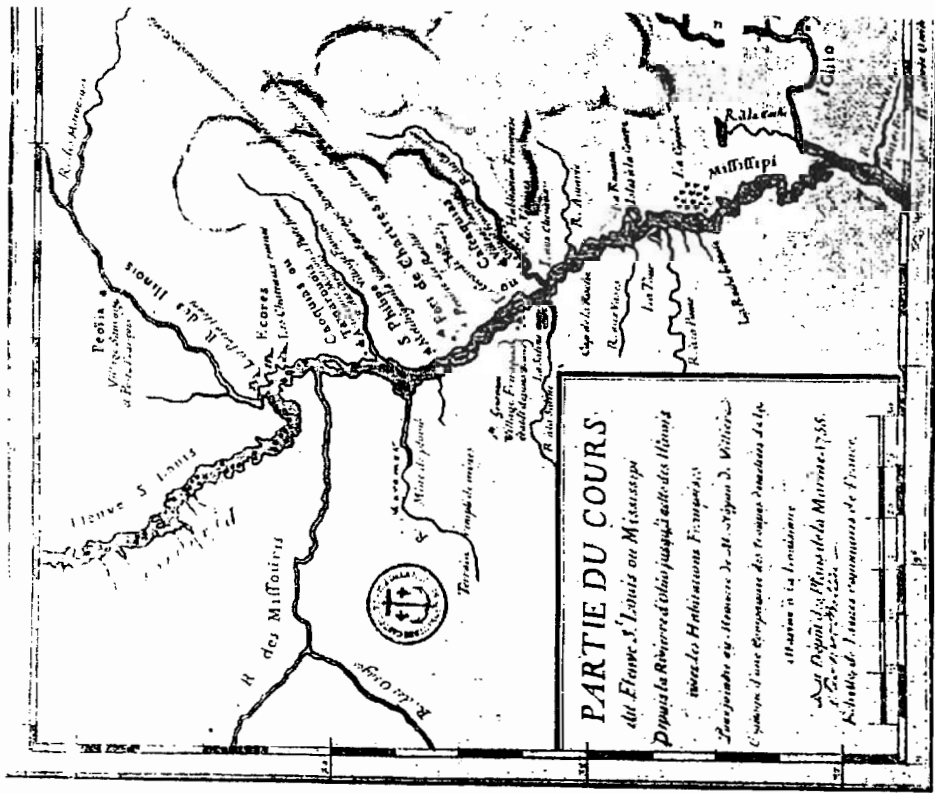


Figure 5. A portion of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's 1755 published map "Partie du Cours du Fleuve St. Louis ou Mississippi" (Altord 1920a:154-155) showing "Peoria, Village Sauvage et Poste Francois" at twenty leagues up the Illinois River.

garrison among them since the early 1730s (Rowland and Sanders 1932:555-556), there is no firm documentation that they were given any satisfaction until the late 1740s. Then, DeBeret, commandant at Fort de Chartres from 1742 to 1749, allowed the exclusive trade of the Peoria to a trader named Descaris, who built a fort among them a "few years" before 1751 (Pease and Jenison 1940:317).

In spring of 1752, the new commandant of Fort de Chartres (Macarty) promised the officer Adamville as commandant "with some soldiers" to the Peoria Indians. When he joined the Peoria that summer, Adamville's work included making repairs to the fort built by Descaris, attempting to curb the Peoria's frequent warfare with the Chippewa, preventing further Peoria intrigues against the French, and controlling the Canadian traders (Pease and Jenison 1940:466-467, 538-541, 600, 655, 663-667).

The ensuing fall (October 15) the Illinois near Fort de Chartres left to go winter at Pierre a la Fleche on the Illinois River, and ten days later Macarty sent a messenger after them in an attempt to prevent warfare with the Sauk, Fox, and others. He was able to contact them "as they had not yet gone to their winter villages" and they replied that they would heed him and were "going on to look for their brothers the Peoria." Part of the Cahokia had already gone to join the Peoria earlier in the fall (Pease and Jenison 1940:687, 718, 747-753). Then, on December 1, the Peoria sent two chiefs to request that the French stationed "at the garrisoned post" (Pimiteoui?) be allowed to winter with them, which Macarty granted (Pease and Jenison 1940:762). The activities of the Illinois in this year must be viewed in the context of distress related to a severe drought, a poor summer buffalo hunt, late arrival of trade goods, political intrigues with the Miami (who had been won over to English interests), and a series of raids by the Chippewa, Sioux, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Mascouten, including the devastating attack on the Michigamea near Fort de Chartres.

It might be assumed that the summer village of the Peoria in 1752 continued to be at Pimiteoui. This is certainly where the fort/"garrisoned post" was as well. A June 1757 letter by Bougainville (which is said to be based on secondary sources and refers to a period a few years prior to its date) is unequivocal about a French commandant residing at a fort named Pimiteoui where the Peoria traded (Thwaites 1908:177). The 1757 muster roll of Fort de Chartres, which lists one lieutenant and two riflemen as detached to "the Peorias" (Ekberg 1994) further verifies the garrison but does not shed any light on location.

Nevertheless, the available documentation suggests that there must also be at least seasonal 1750s French post and Peoria village located in the lower Illinois Valley. As documentation we have not only the dichotomy between Pimiteoui and Peoria ("Village Sauvage et Poste Francois") in the Bellin 1750s maps and the distinction in Macarty's correspondence between the location of Adamville's station and the permission granted for the garrison to take up winter quarters with the Peoria, but Bossu's account (Table 1) of his visit to a palisaded village of the Peoria. Internal evidence would seem to place the village visited by Bossu in the lower Illinois River valley during late winter (after the first war parties had been sent out and after maple syrup became available) in one of the middle years of the 1750s (1756?). At that village, Bossu was fed maple syrup, persimmon bread, and dried blueberries. He observed that the people came from "throughout the countryside" for a religious dance (Feiler 1962:107-110).

The Last Years of the Peoria in the Illinois Valley: A Revised History

Contra Temple (1966:47-48) and all other historians, the Peoria did not maintain their summer villages in the Illinois Valley after the mid-1750s. A very significant reference to the Peoria moving out of the Illinois Valley has only recently been published (Rowland et al. 1984:205). In a letter dated December 1758, an official in New Orleans related that:

the village of the Peorias, previously established 80 leagues up the river of the Illinois . . . on the shore of Lake Pimitoui, formed their settlement three years ago [1755] opposite the mouth of this same river on the port side of the river. This change had no other object than that of withdrawing from the Sauks, Sioux, and Foxes, their enemies.

From this we can infer that the Peoria had withdrawn at least their summer villages from the Illinois Valley by the mid-1750s, contrary to previous interpretations, which placed them at Pimitoui as late as the 1760s and 1770s. The later references that have been used to support Illinois Indian activities in the Illinois River valley after 1755 can all be explained as winter villages or refuted. Given a 1755 withdrawal of the Peoria's summer village from Pimitoui to escape their enemies, Bossu's early spring 1756 (?) account of going from Cahokia through a prairie of 25 leagues to visit the Peoria in a stockaded village makes perfect sense as a winter village in the lower Illinois River valley. As in the 1720s, there is no reason to assume the winter villages in the lower Illinois River valley ceased because the summer village was moved to below the mouth of the Illinois River.

The only other irrefutable reference to the Illinois in the Illinois River valley after 1755 pertains to the winter of 1760-1761, when some of the Illinois were using the area of Starved Rock for winter quarters (Kellogg 1935:66-67). Voegelin and Blasingham (1974:144) concluded that the Starved Rock area had not been used for summer villages after 1741.

In 1763, when a Mr. Hamburg visited "Epec" ("Au Pe," i.e., Peoria), he described it as a French post of very little importance with an officer and five men, but made no mention of an Indian village. He further noted that the Potawatomi's hunting ground extended as far down the Illinois River as Le Rocher and that a Peoria Indian village was to be found at Fort de Chartres (Mereness 1916:363). Hamburg's observations were apparently made prior to June of 1763 (Mereness 1916:359). Later that same year (between October 10 and December 1) when the French garrison "at the Peoria" was withdrawn (Alvord and Carter 1915:53) there was no indication that the Peoria Indians were present at that post. If they had been, their reaction to the French withdrawal certainly should have been worth noting. This, taken with DeVilliers' reference (Alvord and Carter 1915:50) to Debeaujeu spending the ensuing winter with the Potawatomi on the lower Illinois River 60 leagues from Ft. Chartres (contra Jablow 1974:231), implies that the Peoria no longer had summer or winter villages in the Illinois River valley by 1763.

The supposed massacre of a large number of Illinois at Starved Rock in 1769 after the murder of Pontiac has been an often repeated account (e.g., Osman 1911:171:184), but after over a century of research there still has been no contemporary documentation found. A map of the Cahokia/St. Louis area that was apparently made just after 1768 shows two

groups of the Peoria living on the west bank of the Mississippi just south of St. Louis and on the east bank just south of the French village of Cahokia (Tucker 1942:Plate XXVII). Jablow (1974:268-271) details the documented activities of the Peoria and other Illinois along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers in the 1768 to 1771 interval finding no evidence that the massacre at Starved Rock took place. Most probably, the account of the 1769 Starved Rock massacre is a version of the 1722 siege of the Peoria at Starved Rock by the Fox that has been altered as it was handed down (see Edmunds and Peyser 1993:240, note 18).

Patrick Kennedy's account of a journey on the Illinois River in 1773 (Hutchins 1904:123-124), offers valuable information about a "wintering ground of the Peoria" as well as several other locations.¹¹ This account was published by Thomas Hutchins in 1778 and presumably is the source of the entry "Peorias Wintering Ground" on Hutchins' famous map (Figure 6). Kennedy's locational reference *might* be taken as indirect evidence that the Peoria (now definitely living in summer villages to the south of the Illinois River) were still occupying their traditional wintering grounds in the lower Illinois River but given the English commandant Wilkins' documentation (Wilkins 1772) of Peoria activities during the winters of 1768-1772 (Table 2), their continued occupation of the Illinois River in winter or summer after the 1760s seems very unlikely.

One last reference, wherein Gabriel Cerre' (Mason 1890:261) testified that he was "among the Peorias on the River of the Illinois" in 1776/1777, is likewise difficult to interpret. Cerre' continued to say he spent that winter with the Kickapoo and Mascouten at "Mauvaise Terre."¹² Is it conceivable the Peoria were occupying the valley north of, or anywhere close to, tribes so recently hostile to them? More likely, Cerre' was speaking of being among the French "habitants" at Lake Peoria, who had definitely established their village by this time (although there is no documentation of such a village prior to 1760, contrary to popular belief).

Summary: Illinois Indian Winter Occupations in the Lower Illinois Valley

To evaluate Illinois Indian winter use of the lower Illinois Valley region relative to their overall history of winter occupations, it is necessary to interpret the references in Tables 1 and 2. There are 18 references to Illinois Indian activities that seem to pertain to the lower Illinois Valley in Table 1. Excluding non-specific, secondary, and questionable references (i.e., Vivier 1750, the 1750 and 1755 Bellin maps, Kennedy's 1773 account, and Cerre' 1777) and adjusting for multiple accounts (the winters of 1698/1699 and 1752/1753), there are accounts of 10 separate Illinois winter camps in the lower Illinois River valley (i.e., the winters of 1679/1680, 1680/1681, 1685/1686, 1689/1690, 1698/1699, 1710/1711, 1717/1718 or 1718/1719, 1728/1729, 1752/1753, and 1755/1756).

Allowing for the probability that there were no Illinois occupations in the Illinois Valley after 1763, Table 1 contains accounts covering 10 of the winters since 1679. During this same time span, Table 2 documents 10 Illinois winter camps specified as being somewhere other than the lower Illinois River valley during this same interval. Two of these are during the same winters that some Illinois are also documented in the lower Illinois Valley, so we have specific information on Illinois wintering practices for a total of only 18 seasons between 1679 and 1763. Thus, locations of *any* winter occupations are known for only about 20 percent of the time the Illinois occupied the region. In about

one-half of the cases, these winter occupations were in the lower Illinois River valley. There is, of course, every reason to think that the documented pattern holds true for those years when there is no record of Illinois wintering activities. In sum, references to Illinois winter occupations in the lower Illinois Valley are roughly as common as for all other regions combined.

Other Winter Activities in the Lower Illinois Valley: 1763–1820

Kickapoo, Mascouten, and Potawatomi Winter Camps

After the end of Illinois Indian presence in the Illinois Valley, a pattern of winter occupations by the Potawatomi and the Kickapoo/Mascouten commenced. In this period there is far less confusion over the locations of summer versus winter villages.

The 1763 account of Debeaujeu wintering with the Potawatomi: "60 leagues away" appears to refer to distance from Fort de Chartres, but is difficult to account for because it is nearly 200 miles down the Illinois River from the documented Potawatomi summer villages of that time. If this reference is valid, it was nearly 30 more years before they were again to winter in this region (Table 2). Nevertheless, this reference is more plausible because there is little reason to believe that the Illinois were wintering anywhere on the Illinois River that year.

English and Spanish administrators record that these latter day Illinois River valley tribes were frequent visitors to St. Louis and the American Bottom after the end of the French regime (Alvord and Carter 1915; Kinnaird 1946; Nasatir 1952). After expanding their summer villages into the central Illinois prairies, the Kickapoo and Mascouten began wintering in the middle and lower reaches of the valley by the 1770s—a pattern that persisted for the next 50 years. After the Peoria were forced out, Potawatomi groups progressively moved their summer villages down the Illinois River from the "forks" (Kankakee/Des Plaines junction), but they are not known to have consistently wintered south of Peoria until after 1810. Increased documentation of Indian activities in Illinois accompanied the tensions of the War of 1812. After that war, Potawatomi winter camps in the lower Illinois Valley appear to have been an annual practice (Table 1).

Within another decade, a flood of American immigrants from the east began to settle in the lower Illinois River valley. Their strong preference for the land along the margins of the lower Illinois River valley floor and the lower courses of the secondary streams in this area (Esarey 1980, 1982:89–102) would have had immediate impact on the winter occupations to which this region had traditionally been host. Likewise, after 1832, the large summer villages of the Potawatomi were forced out of the area above Lake Peoria and the summer villages of the Kickapoo were forced from the Illinois prairies.

Conclusion

Histories of Illinois omit a significant portion of the geographical and behavioral range of the state's Historic Period Indian groups. Ethnohistorical studies partially correcting this situation have not been edited, indexed, or widely used by archaeologists. As a result, archaeologists have remained largely unaware that there were significant occupa-

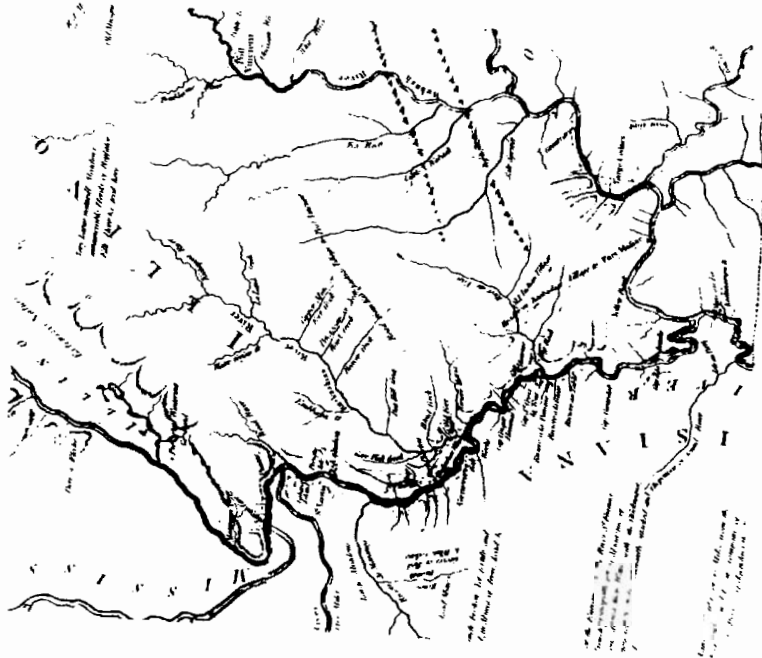


Figure 6. A portion of Hutchins' 1778 "A New Map of the Western Parts . . ." (Long 1977-80; Tucker 1942:PL XXIX) showing "Peorias Wintering Ground" and the "Piere a Fleche" island and bluff.

tions not generally documented or discussed in most histories of these people and this time period.

This case study of Historic Period use of the lower part of the Illinois River valley has shown that frequent, and often considerable, occupations took place in a region generally conceived of as little more than a corridor between areas where more important aspects of history were played out. It may be assumed that a similar situation pertains to other regions of the Midwest. Archaeologists must use a careful and critical approach to document and interpret the historical/archaeological record in these regions. The ethno-historical studies completed for the Indian Land Claims cases, which are attuned to aboriginal cultural practices and their geographical correlates, are the best available guides to those primary documents, but original accounts themselves must be re-examined for the details that are of specific concern to archaeologists.

Acknowledgments

Principal among those who were of critical importance, in terms of access to documentation, review and critique of interpretation, reading the manuscripts, and general encouragement would be Lawrence A. Conrad, Kathleen Ehrhardt, Carl Ekberg, Thomas Emerson, Mark Esarey, Judith Franke, William Green, Andrea Keller, R. Bruce McMillan, Pat and Cheryl Munson, Kelvin Sampson, Sharon Santure, Dawnie Wolfe Steadman, Bonnie W. Styles, John Walthall, Michael D. Wiant, and W. Raymond Wood. I am especially indebted to Judith Franke for her long-term interest and support of this research and to Tom Emerson, Kathleen Ehrhardt, Carl Ekberg, and two anonymous reviewers for providing in depth reviews of the paper. Likewise I am grateful to Gloria LaHood of Peoria, Illinois and to Chief Don Giles and John Froman of the Peoria Indian Tribe of Oklahoma for their long-term interest in this revised and expanded version of Peoria history.

A final caveat is in order. This paper was primarily researched and written in 1992 and 1993 (Esarey 1992, 1993b). Subsequently, Zitomersky (1994) has published an important study on Illinois Indian history (see Esarey 1996). Although Zitomersky's concern was to establish a population geography of the Illinois Indians, many of his conclusions are similar to those reached in this paper. It has not been deemed necessary to retool this paper to take into account Zitomersky's painstaking research, yet his contribution has been far too important to omit reference of, even at this late date.

Endnotes

¹ A conversion of one league to 2.5 mi is favored by Blasingham (1956:219, Note 16) and Temple (1966:14). Several documented usages confirm the apparent accuracy of this as a conversion in some Illinois Country settings, while others support an even lower conversion. For instance, the 100 leagues of Illinois River below Starved Rock is 230 river miles and the 80 leagues of Illinois River below Peoria is 166 river miles. Yet, as Zitomersky (1994:xxiii) points out conversions as high as three miles per league can also be supported. In fact, the actual variation in Illinois Country usage has been so considerable (Ekberg and Foley 1989:29, Footnote 12) that it is clear scholars must always be ready to allow for

individual usage of leagues to vary from two to three actual miles per league. Quibbling over an exact formal conversion is thus futile, if still always entertaining.

² "Les Deux Mammelles" (the two breasts) are the 7 m tall Middle Woodland Period Twin Mounds or Quiver Beach Mounds (IAS# 11Mn7) that stand on the edge of Quiver Lake and the Illinois River just above Havana. They were also mentioned as a landmark in Delisle's 1722 journal (Faye 1945:54). It apparently was easy to lose one's way at this point, as both the Joutel and Delisle's parties did, and the mounds were a useful landmark. The name "Les Trois Mammelles" was applied to some hills on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River near St. Charles and Portage de Sioux as shown on the Defrains' 1797-1798 map and the Victor Collet's 1796 map (Alvord 1907: endplate; Tucker 1942: Plate 30). "The Mammelles" was also used as a place name in 1805 to refer to hills on the east side of the Wabash River near the mouth of the Embarrass River (Esarey 1922:2:163).

³ During the French Period, the place names Pierre a' la Fleche (arrowstone) and Mauvaise Terre (bad land) were used to designate specific locations in the lower Illinois River valley. The location of Pierre a' la Fleche was described in 1722, 1778, 1796, 1812 (Table 3). Delisle's 1722 clue that the river of this name is 20 leagues upstream at the beginning of a fine meadow on the left corresponds exactly with Ninian Edwards' 1812 mapped location (Figure 7) of Pierre a la Fleche River, as present day Flint Creek at Valley City (Illinois River Mile 61/98 km). Collet's 1796 description of "Pierre a' Fleche" as an island and bluff is drawn directly from Patrick Kennedy's 1773 journal (Hutchins 1904:124). Kennedy states "At one o'clock we passed an island named Pierre.—A Fleche, or arrowstone is gotten by Indians from the high hill on the western side of the river, near the above island." This location certainly describes Big Blue Island and the bluff running from Big Blue Creek up to Flint Creek (a distance of approximately 2.5 mi/4 km).

There is also a probable correspondence between the described location of Pierre a' la Fleche with the references to winter villages 20 leagues up the Illinois River. In this locale should be evidence of substantial, although dispersed, Illinois Indian occupations dating from the late seventeenth through middle eighteenth century, a 1750s French post of indeterminate nature, and subsequent Potawatomi and Kickapoo winter occupations.

One notable aspect of this locale is that, as one descends the Illinois River, these are the first outcrops of chert suitable for flintknapping to be found for over 100 mi (Esarey 1983). From here to the south, outcrops of Burlington chert, a preferred chert in the Midwest for thousands of years, become common in the Illinois Valley. In all probability, today's Flint Creek preserves a place name for this chert-procurement locality that has persisted through centuries, if not millennia.

⁴ The source of the term "wintering ground of the Peoria" can in each case be traced directly back to Patrick Kennedy's account of a voyage in 1773. It has been argued here that Kennedy's information was several years out of date and that the Peoria had ceased wintering in the lower Illinois Valley by 1773. Calibrating Collet's very small "mules" by the actual distance of other clearly referenced features places this wintering ground at 39 mi from the mouth of the Illinois River (Table 3). The "Peorias wintering ground" was thus in the vicinity of the mouth of the Apple River, which historically entered the Illinois at Mile 37 (60 km) and which corresponds well with the location indicated for the wintering grounds subsequently known as Grand Pass.

⁵ Contra Vogel (1963:66), the term "Mauvaise Terre" (bad land) has been used as the

Deliette, de Lietto, Liette, and Desliettes. The spelling used here for Pierre Charles is as he signed his own signature (Franke 1995:28-29). Pierre Charles Deliette's aunt (Isabelle di Lietto) was mother to Henri and Alphonse de Tony. Pierre Charles Deliette is especially important to anthropologists and historians as the author of the "DeCannes" memoir, by far the most authoritative source on Illinois Indian culture (Pease and Werner 1934:302-395; Quailie 1947). Unfortunately, many historians have confused him with at least two of his cousins, sons of Alphonse Tony, who began to use his title after his death. For example, compare Alvord (1920a:135, 157-158); Bales (1991:174-175); and Quailie (1947:xxvi) to Edmunds and Peyser (1993:109); Hayne (1969:435-436 and 631-633); and Thwaites (1906:3). Brown et al. (1974:627) partially correct and partially further confuse the various Liette descendants of the Illinois Country with their biography of Charles Henri Joseph Tony, Sieur Deliette. [Also see page 371 of Giraud's as of yet untranslated *Histoire de la Louisiane française, Tome Troisième*.]

To clarify, Pierre Charles Deliette came to Illinois in 1687 and was here much of the time until his death ca. 1721. He was stationed at Pimiteoui, Starved Rock, and Chicago, but as far as can be told, never at Ft. Des Chartres. His cousin, Charles Henri Joseph Tony, became commandant at Ft. Des Chartres and adopted the title "Sieur Desliettes" by at least 1723 and used it until his death in 1729. Subsequently, the title was also held by Joseph Tony Desliettes (possibly a younger brother of Charles Henri Joseph Tony), second in command at Green Bay in 1737 and 1738 (Kellogg 1925:339). Such transfers of title were not uncommon, as seen by the transfer of the title "Le Moyne" from Francois Le Moyne de Bienville to his young brother Jean Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville (founder of Louisiana) in 1691 upon the death of the former (Brown 1967:463; Brown et al. 1974:627).

⁹As in the usage of Deliette, the name of Henri de Tony is spelled here as he himself signed his name (Franke 1995:18), although another conventional spelling of the name is Tonti.

¹⁰See endnote 2 above.

¹¹See endnote 3 above.

¹²See endnote 4 above.

¹³See endnote 5 above.

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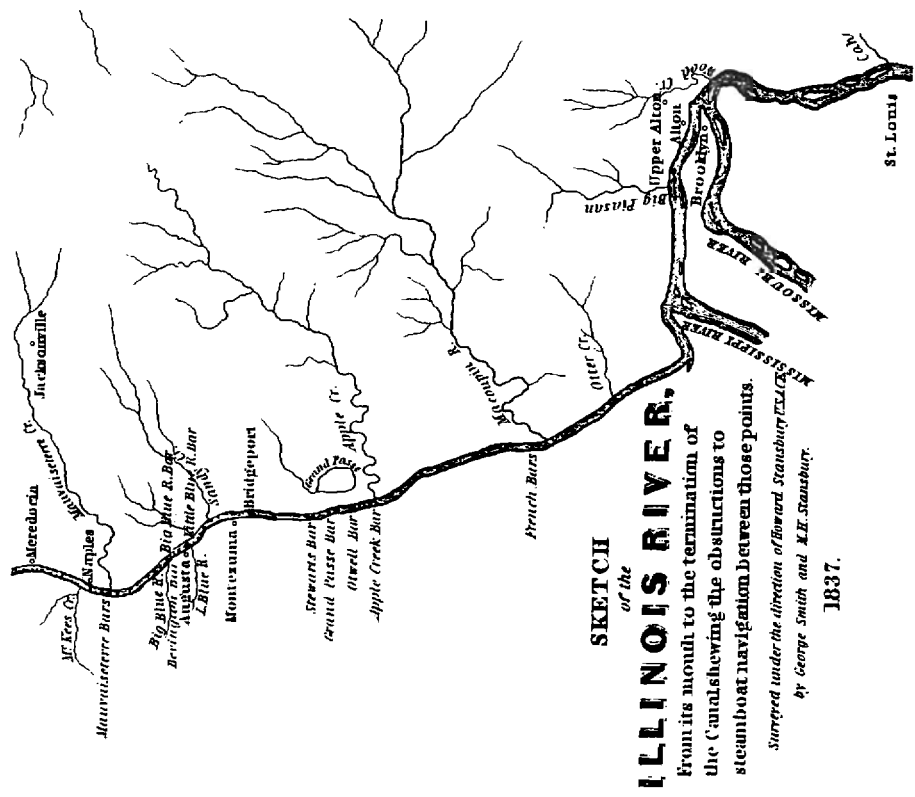


Figure 8. A portion of Howard Stansbury's 1837 "Sketch of the Illinois River" showing Grande Passe Lake and Mauwatseterre Creek.

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