Notes

Chapter 1. Introduction


3. These Indians were generally referred to as the Vermillion Kickapoos. They were actually several loosely allied bands that settled along the Wabash River in Indiana and along the Vermillion River in Illinois. The Kickapoo Prophet’s name has been spelled in a number of ways—e.g., The Columbia Encyclopedia spells it Kanakuk—but I have opted for Kenekuk.

4. These words were spoken before an Indian and white audience at a Baptist meeting near Danville, Illinois, on July 17, 1831; see Gurdon S. Hubbard, “A Kickapoo Sermon,” Illinois Monthly Magazine 1 (October 1831): 473–476.

5. Chief is a white term that implies that a leader has been accorded the highest rank or office and may have absolute control over his or her people. Indians had no such designation for their leaders; individuals could choose to follow or to ignore any particular person in the tribe, regardless of that person’s status, without any negative repercussions. The term chief will be used occasionally in this work, however, to identify persons of actual and significant influence within a tribe or band. Governmental officials, missionaries, and businessmen usually knew who these people were but sometimes avoided the influential men (and on rare occasions, women) who resisted their overtures. Instead, these whites designated those Indians who were willing to do the whites’ bidding as chiefs. Quotation marks will be used to signify that a certain Indian was in reality a paper chief—a “chief” who may have accepted bribes or other favors in exchange for tribal lands and rightful possessions.


Chapter 2. The Vermillion Band Kickapoos

1. Anthony F. C. Wallace defines such a revitalization movement as “a deliberate, organized, conscious effort to construct a more satisfying culture” (“Revitalization Movements,” American Anthropologist 58 [April 1956]: 249–263).

2. Ethnologist Fred W. Voget would call the Vermillion Kickapoo movement “positive


7. Gibson is unclear as to what branch of the Kickapoo tribe was most active militarily in the War of 1812 (Kickapoos, pp. 60–77); Callender, Pope, and Pope argue that the Prairie Kickapoos initially opposed Tecumseh, but they offer no substantiation for this contention (“Kickapoo,” p. 622); for Prairie Kickapoo actions see William Henry Harrison to Secretary of War William Eustes, December 4, 1811, in *Governor’s Messages and Letters*, 2:656–667, and George C. McVicker, “A Chapter in the Warfare against the Indians in Illinois during the Year of 1812,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 24 (July 1931): 342–343. For the activities of the Vermillion bands see Harrison to Eustes, June 6, 1811, and “Statement of William Brigham,” in *Governor’s Messages and Letters*, 2:512–513, 703–704.


16. “A Speech Delivered by Governor Posey, Agent for Indian Affairs, to Seven Hundred and Sixty Indians at Fort Harrison,” November 22, 1816, in *Governor’s Messages and Letters*, pp. 738–742. No direct evidence indicates that Kenekuk was there; but as one of the leading men of the Vermillion bands, he probably attended the meeting and heard the speech.

17. *Edwardsville* (Ill.) *Spectator*, October 19, 1819.


19. Edwards to G. Graham, May 12, 1817, in Carter, *Illinois Territory*, pp. 505–506. Although Edwards claimed that the Kickapoos had no legal right to the central Illinois lands, a state newspaper later admitted that the “title of the Kickapoos was indisputable” (*Edwardsville Spectator*, August 7, 1819).

20. Jerome O. Steffen breaks with scholars who find continuity between the ideas of Jeffersonians and the later Jacksonian advocates of Indian removal. According to Steffen, the acquisition of land and Indian assimilation were mutually dependent ideas in the minds of Jeffersonians such as William Clark. These men believed that if quick assimilation failed, removal to the West would provide enough time for the Indians to become civilized. Jacksonians, on the other hand, believed that the Indians were savages, incapable of advancement. Removal served the interests of politically powerful whites, and assimilation became a far-lesser priority. See Steffen, *William Clark: Jeffersonian Man on the Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), pp. 130–142, 166–168, 176. For an opposing view see Francis Paul Prucha, “Andrew Jackson’s Indian Policy: A Reassessment,” *Journal of American History* 56 (December 1969): 527–539.


23. *Illinois Intelligencer* (Kaskaskia), January 13, 1819.


26. Parke to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, August 10, 1819, and Agent William Prince to Calhoun, August 12, 1819, Letters Received, Secretary of War, Bureau of Indian Affairs, record group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microcopy 271, roll 2). Hereinafter cited as Secretary of War, BIA, RG75, M271, R2.


29. Milo Custer asserted incorrectly that Kenekuk signed the 1819 treaties ceding the Kickapoos’ Illinois lands (see “Kannekuk or Keanakuk: The Kickapoo Prophet.” *Illinois State Historical Society Journal* 2 [April 1918]: 48). Following Custer’s lead, other writers have made the same mistake; see, e.g., George A. Schultz, “Kennekuk, the Kickapoo Prophet,” *Kansas History* 3 (Spring 1980): 38–39. It is important to note that Kenekuk did not sign any land-cession treaty until 1832.

Chapter 3. Instructed by the Great Spirit


3. The *Illinois Monthly Magazine* reported in October 1831 that Kenekuk “appears to be about forty years of age; is over the ordinary size; and although an untutored savage, has much in his manner and personal appearance, to make him interesting” (see Hubbard, “A Kickapoo Sermon,” p. 473).

4. The Kansas Kickapoos and Potawatomis related this version of Kenekuk’s youth to the anthropologist James H. Howard during the early 1960s. They are quoted by Howard in “The Kenakuk Religion: An Early Nineteenth Century Revitalization Movement 140 Years Later,” *Museum News* 26, no. 11/12 (November/December 1965): 3–5. Although Howard spelled the prophet’s name Kenakuk throughout his article, I changed it to the more accepted Kenekuk in this block quotation for reasons of consistency; minor changes were also made in Howard’s punctuation. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the “priest” may have been a Methodist minister.

5. In a written questionnaire submitted in 1906 by the amateur historian George J. Remsburg, the Rev. John Masquequa, a Kickapoo Indian who was head of the Kenekuk church at the time, reported that the prophet was twenty-five when he began preaching to his people. Since Kenekuk’s signature appears on the Vermillion Band’s 1816 treaty, one may assume that he had taken a position of some responsibility among his people by that time. The treaty, incidentally, was a peace agreement between the Indians and the United States. See “Questions answered by Rev. Masquequa,” 1906, in the George J. Remsburg Collection, file 78:3, Manuscript Division (MsD), Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka. Kansas State Historical Society material hereinafter is cited in the form Remsburg Collection, KSHS. For the treaty, see Kappler, *Treaties*, p. 131.

6. The amateur historian Milo Custer visited John Masquequa in October 1906, at which time the Indian religious leader explained the doctrine of the Kickapoo Prophet. Masquequa was rather sketchy in relating the details, however, and Custer’s version of their discussion is rather confused. The interpretation described here is based on my understanding of their conversations. See Milo Custer to George W. Martin, December 10, 1906, History—Indians—Kickapoo file, MsD, KSHS; and Custer, “Kannekuk or Keanakuk,” pp. 48–56; also see W. Patton to Rev. C. Elliott, May 8, 1843, History—Indians—General, MsD, KSHS, a typed copy of a letter that was originally published in the *Western Christian Advocate*.

7. Charles Augustus Murray, *Travels in North America during the Years 1834, 1835, and 1836*,
Including a Summer Residence with the Pawnee Tribe of Indians . . . 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), 2:78.


9. For descriptions of Kenekuk’s services see John Dunbar and Samuel Allis, “Letters Concerning the Presbyterian Mission in the Pawnee Country, Near Bellevue, Neb., 1831–1849,” Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society 14 (1918): 586; Custer to George Remsberg, December 8, 1908, the George J. Remsberg Collection, file 78:3, MsD, KSHS.


12. There are several similar accounts of the Kickapoo flagellation ceremony. Isaac McCoy, for example, also reported that after each Indian had “received the flagellation, which often brought blood, the penitent would shake hands with the executioner, and others near, returning thanks for the favour done him, and declaring that he felt relieved of a heavy burden” (History of Baptist Indian Missions, p. 458). Also see Jerome C. Berryman, “A Circuit-Rider’s Frontier Experiences,” Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society 16 (1923–1925): 216; Thomas Forsyth, “The Kickapoo Prophet,” in Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1:280–281. For Hopkins’s account see E. Duir, The Good Old Times in McLean County, Illinois (Illinois: McKnight & McKnight Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 677–680.

13. For descriptions of the Kickapoo prayer sticks, see Murray, Travels in North America, p. 79; Dunbar and Allis, “Letters Concerning the Presbyterian Mission,” p. 586; Remsburg to Custer, December 8, 1908, Remsburg Collection, 78:3, KSHS; Howard, “The Kenakuk Religion,” pp. 23–26; Patton to Elliott, May 8, 1843, History—Indians—General, KSHS.

14. The anthropologist James Mooney wrote that the markings “bear some resemblance to the old black-letter type of a [Catholic] missal, while the peculiar arrangement is suggestive of the Catholic rosary with its fifteen ‘mysteries’ in three groups of five each.” Mooney pointed out that neither three nor five were traditional Indian numbers, “while three is distinctly Christian in its symbolism” (The Ghost-Dance Religion and Wounded Knee [New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973], p. 699).


18. “Minutes of a Talk of the Kickapoo Prophet,” May 24, 1828, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748.
Chapter 4. Protector of His People’s Rights

1. “Minutes of a Talk of the Kickapoo Prophet,” May 24, 1828, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748.


3. William Clark to Richard Graham, October 22, 1823, Richard Graham Papers, box 3–12, Missouri Historical Society Archives, St. Louis, hereinafter cited as Graham Papers, with box numbers.


8. Arrell Gibson maintains that Mecina and his followers “were diehard fanatics, choleric and troublesome, and for over a decade they defied the United States to evict them from their village near the head of Peoria Lake” (*Kickapoos*, p. 83). Richard Graham and other agents stated frequently, however, that Mecina and the Prairie Kickapoos were generally peaceful. Indeed, it was the white settlers who caused most of the trouble.


11. Graham to Clark, January 15, 1825, and “Talk of Mecina of Kickapoos to Graham,” January 15, 1825, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R747. Copies of these letters can also be found in the Graham Papers, box 3–12.

12. For a description of the Pine Creek village see *John Tipton Papers*, pp. 275–276.


17. Edwards to the Secretary of War, August 20, 1827, in *Edwards Papers*, pp. 298–300.


20. Graham to Clark, November 8, 1827, and Clark to the Secretary of War, November 15, 1827, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748; for information on Kickapoo locations in Illinois, which is not necessarily accurate, see H. W. Beckwith and J. H. Burnham, *An Ancient Indian Fort: Some Accounts of Its History, with an Outline of the Works* (Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing Establishment, 1881), pp. 6–8.
22. Clark to Barbour, November 15, 1827, ibid.
24. A valuable source of pertinent information, such as the arrival of Indian delegations, the weather, and other data, can be found in ed. Louise Barry, “William Clark’s Diary: May, 1826–February, 1831,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 16 (May 1848): 136-174.
25. “In council with the Kickapoos of Illinois,” May 18, 1828, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748.
26. Ibid.
27. “Minutes of a talk of the Kickapoo Prophet,” May 24, 1828, ibid.
30. Letter of William Clark, June 1, 1828, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748.
33. “In Council with the Kickapoos of Illinois,” May 18, 1828, and “Council with the Kickapoo,” June 13, 1836, LR, St. Louis Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R748 and R751.

Chapter 5. The Storms of War and Removal


17. Quoted by Rogin in Fathers and Children, p. 231.

18. The quotes are from Satz, American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era, pp. 107–108.

19. Quoted by Prucha in “Andrew Jackson’s Indian Policy,” p. 74.

20. Quoted from Hubbard, “A Kickapoo Sermon,” pp. 473–476. Minor changes have been made in the punctuation of the original sermon.

21. William M. Hendrix to E. M. Prince, November 28, 1897, Remsburg Collection, MsD, KSHS.


24. Arrell Gibson suggests that these Kickapoos were part of Mecina’s people, but he offers little evidence to support his conclusion (see Kickapoos, pp. 86–87). The Kickapoos were a highly independent and mobile tribe during the nineteenth century, however, and these particular Indians could have just as easily come from Missouri or other locations to join Black Hawk.

25. Virtually all of the Kickapoo men associated with Black Hawk were killed during the war (see “The Minutes of the Examination of Prisoners of the Black Hawk War.” LR, Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, RG107, M222, R31).

26. Vandalia Whig and Illinois Intelligencer, June 13, 1832; St. Louis Beacon, May 31, 1832.

27. Winfield Scott to Lewis Cass, August 19, 1832, LR, Secretary of War, RG107, M222, R31;
Agent William Marshall signed a pass to allow Kenekuk and his people to hunt on federal lands, dated July 5, 1832, see the Remsburg Collection, 78:3, KSHS; *St. Joseph (Ind.) Beacon*, June 6, 1832, quoted by Ella Lonn in “Ripples of the Black Hawk War in Northern Indiana,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 20 (Sept. 1924): 303–304.

28. Clark to Kenekuk, August 31, 1832 and January 31, 1833, both in the Remsburg Collection, 78:3, and the History—Indians—Kickapoo file, KSHS.


31. Clark to Kenekuk, January 16, 1833, History—Indians—Kickapoo file, KSHS.

Chapter 6. Kenekuk’s Village on the Missouri


4. Quoted by Gibson in *Kickapoos*, p. 111.


7. Ibid., p. 40.

8. Ibid., pp. 41–42.

9. Ibid., p. 42.

10. Ibid., pp. 42–43.

11. A council between Henry Ellsworth and the Kickapoos, September 2, 1833, LR, Western Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R921. A transcript of this council can also be found in 23rd Cong., 1st sess., *Senate Documents*, ser. 247 (1833), pp. 640–643.

12. Ibid.

13. The Kickapoos and whites who attended the council referred to this river as the Osage. Actually, it is the same river as the Marais des Cygnes; in Missouri it is called the Osage, but in Kansas it is now called the Marais des Cygnes (river of swans).


15. Ellsworth to Herring, November 8, 1833, LR, Fort Leavenworth Agency, ibid., R300; Ellsworth to Herring, November [?], 1833, and “A Second Talk with the Kickapoos and Potawatomis at Fort Leavenworth,” November 13, 1833, LR, Western Superintendency, ibid., R921. Some of Henry Ellsworth’s correspondence was signed by his son Edward A. Ellsworth, secretary pro tem.


17. Richard Cummins to Clark, April 20, 1834, LR, Fort Leavenworth Agency, BIA, RG75, M234, R300.


19. Ibid.


22. Clark was not present at the council.


24. Ibid.

25. Duncan to Atkinson, June 14, 1836, and Atkinson to Gen. R. Jones, June 28, 1836, ibid.; Clark to Herring, July 8, 1836, LR, Fort Leavenworth Agency, ibid., R300.


27. Cummins to Clark, January 31 and May 16, 1838, and Cummins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs C. A. Harris, September 25, 1838, ibid., R301.


Chapter 7. Kenekuk and the Missionaries


9. See both citations in notes 8, above.


11. Ellsworth to Herring, August 19, 1833, LR, Western Superintendency, BIA, RG75, M234, R921.

12. Ibid.


19. Samuel Allis to Rev. David Green, May 12, 1835, in Dunbar and Allis, “Letters Concerning the Presbyterian Mission,” p. 695. A few corrections in punctuation and spelling have been made in this passage for the sake of clarity. For the most part, however, Allis’s writing (including errors in spelling) is reproduced verbatim.


24. See all citations in notes 23, above.

25. Ibid.


27. Van Quickenborne to Father William McSherry, June 29, 1836, ibid., pp. 395–397.
Chapter 8. A Successful Future Assured

4. Cummins to Mitchell, June 22, 1843, Talbott to Sargent and Davis, May 29, 1843, and Harvey to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 21, 1846, ibid., R302.
5. Cummins to Harvey, March 25, 1844, ibid.
6. “Potawatomi petition to remain with the Kickapoos,” June 8, 1844, ibid.
7. Harvey to Commissioner Thomas Hartley Crawford, June 8, 1844, ibid.
9. Maj. B. F. Roberts to E. F. Sumner, Commander at Fort Leavenworth, February 13, 1849, and a petition signed by Kenekuk, Mecina, and others, December 8, 1850, ibid.
10. A petition signed by Kenekuk, Mecina, and Black Thunder in the presence of John Collier, February 8, 1851, ibid.
11. A petition by the Potawatomi chiefs in the presence of John Collier, February 8, 1851, and Collier to Mitchell, February 10, 1851, ibid.

Chapter 9. The Vermillion People Avoid the Ruinous Road

1. Richardson to D. D. Mitchell, January 31, 1852, and David Vanderslice to A. Cumming, Superintendent at St. Louis, June 30, 1853, LR, Great Nemaha Agency, BIA, RG75, M234, R308.
4. Kookenh told this story to her daughter Louise Green Hoad many years after Kenekuk had died. It was not until the 1940s that Hoad retold the events surrounding the prophet’s death in her book Kickapoo Indian Trails (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1946), pp. 51–53.
6. Ibid., p. 361.