

THE FEDERALIST FRONTIER: EARLY AMERICAN
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE OLD NORTHWEST

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Cabin on Washington Street: Federalists and the Early American State in the Old Northwest	
CHAPTER ONE.....	26
Making a Federalist Frontier: The Northwest Indian War, 1789-1795	
CHAPTER TWO.....	84
The Speculator’s Republic: Federalist Administration in Territorial Ohio	
CHAPTER THREE.....	159
Federalist Frontier Echo: Jeffersonian Administration in Indiana and Illinois	
CHAPTER FOUR.....	227
“Our Strength Is Our Union”: Federalists in Ohio, 1803-1815	
CHAPTER FIVE.....	280
Frontier Federalists, Western Whigs, and Good Feelings in the Northwest	
EPILOGUE.....	315
Up the Capitol Steps: Abraham Lincoln and the New Western Whiggery	
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	334
VITA.....	362

INTRODUCTION

The Cabin on Washington Street: Federalists and the Early American State in the Old Northwest

On initial approach, Ohio's first land office is unimpressive. A fairly plain, one-room, split log cabin of about five hundred square feet, the office now stands in the side yard of a Marietta museum. In a way, the cabin – sitting alone and without much fanfare – is a fitting metaphor for some previous interpretations of the federal government in early American westward expansion. John Murrin argued that the U.S. government was “a midget institution in a giant land” that possessed “almost no internal functions.” Similarly, Robert H. Wiebe argued that the Westerners who settled on the lands such as those offered by the Marietta land office formed “fluid societies of strangers” who often disregarded “distant seats of authority” across the Appalachian Mountains.¹ Compared to the more

¹ John Murrin, *The Great Inversion, or Court versus Country: A Comparison of the Revolution Settlements in England (1688-1721) and America (1776-1816)*, in *Three British Revolutions, 1641, 1688, 1776*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,

physically imposing military sites or even Indian mounds nearby, Murrin's interpretation encourages historians to consider the land office cabin a true midget among giants, physical proof of a puny government presence in the vast expanses of the trans-Appalachian West. For them, the office might be among the oldest extant American buildings in the former Northwest Territory but it is a piece of trivia, an insignificant part of an unimportant government.



Figure 1: The Marietta Land Office, which now sits north of Washington Street at the Campus Martius Museum. The cabin has been remodeled multiple times over its 200-plus years, one of which saw the addition of the large glass windows seen here. Photograph taken by the author.

1980), 425; and Robert H. Wiebe, *The Opening of American Society: From the Adoption of the Constitution to the Eve of Disunion* (New York: Knopf, 1984), 132.

However, the Ohio Company of Associates had much more in mind for their land office. Erected on the south side of Washington Street across from Campus Martius, which was the military camp built for the first settlers of Marietta, the land office was one of the first buildings completed in 1788. Both the land office and Campus Martius were perched on a hill above the main docks for the city. Thus, when people disembarked at Marietta, the Ohio Company planned for them to see immediately above them two symbols of the company's power: Campus Martius presented a clear symbol of military protection and the land office showed civil authority at work. Though the Campus Martius blockhouse may have been more imposing, the land office was the official gateway to acquiring land and thus becoming respectable citizens in the Ohio Company's new, corporate West.

Plans for the rest of Marietta also reinforced regular and orderly settlement, the ideal underlying the Ohio Company. In addition to the land office and Campus Martius, the company laid out sixty rectangular blocks with streets running roughly parallel and perpendicular to the course of the Muskingum River. In all, their plans called for a new Western city containing roughly one thousand lots measuring 90 by 180 feet.² In the center of that planned community lay Washington Street, the main thoroughfare for the unofficial capital of the Ohio Company's venture (and official capital of the Northwest Territory until 1800).

² Ohio Company, meeting, November 10, 1787, in Archer Butler Hulbert, ed., *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company* (Marietta, OH: Marietta Historical Commission, 1917), I: 20; Jervis Cutler, *Topographical Description of the State of Ohio, Indiana Territory, and Louisiana* (Boston: Charles Williams, 1812), 17; Andrew R.L. Cayton, *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780-1825* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1986), 28; and John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 218.

People landing at the town's main docks would disembark to Washington Street, and within a few blocks they would have found the land office on its central block. There, the office sold parcels of company land by company guidelines and the national government's rectangular system. Fittingly, the office was in a planned city meant to represent the new order the Ohio Company was bringing west, and the land office cabin was the nerve center for distributing at once both Western lands and orderly settlement.³

That order created a sense of refinement that often surprised visitors. In 1802, French botanist Francois André Michaux described a vibrant and complaisant Marietta "which fifteen years ago was not in existence" but already contained a shipyard and two hundred houses. Fortescue Cuming was similarly impressed in 1807, declaring, "This town is finely situated" with many houses "large, and having a certain air of taste." Ohioans boasted about Marietta, too. Itinerant resident Jervis Cutler wrote glowingly in his 1812 geographical tract on the region, "The form in which the town is built, adds much to its elegance, and the gentle rising of the city ground back from the Ohio, affords an extended and delightful prospect of the rivers and distant hills." Overall, instead of finding the simplicity many of them expected, travelers to Marietta found sophistication and order that charmed visitors in the 1800s and still continues to impress.⁴

³ See also Andrew R.L. Cayton, "'A Quiet Independence': The Western Vision of the Ohio Company," *Ohio History* 90, no. 1 (Winter 1981): 26; and Cayton, "Radicals in the 'Western World': The Federalist Conquest of Trans-Appalachian North America," in Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, eds., *Federalists Reconsidered* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 77-78.

⁴ Fortescue Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1904-1907), IV: 123; Cutler, *Topographical Description of the State of Ohio, Indiana Territory, and Louisiana*, 17-

Marietta also signified wider ambitions for the Ohio Company. It was to be only the beginning of a new trans-Appalachian West in which, as company leader Manasseh Cutler claimed, the “regular and judicious” settlement of the company purchase would serve as “a wise model for... all the federal lands.”⁵ From Washington Street, the land office was the fulcrum by which that new order would be projected onto the countryside, and in the process the humble cabin cast a figurative shadow across the entire continent. Further, the Marietta office was the foundation for one of the earliest national bureaucracies, as land offices across America led a determined march of mathematical order over the diverse American landscape in mile-long strides, which helped to rationalize American approaches to land and property. Further, the rectangular system left a more concrete – even if accidental – legacy in Western towns and roadways. Many country roads in the Old Northwest followed section lines, and Western planners often designed their towns with parallel, rectangular streets arranged along the township lines. Thus, orderly, state-supervised westward expansion left subtle but definite imprints on many American street corners.⁶

18; Francois André Michaux, “Travels to the West of the Alleghany Mountains,” in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, III: 177; and Reps, *The Making of Urban America*, 225. Reps, as a scholar of urban design and architecture, took note of Marietta’s “sophistication and elegance” and decided that, even in the 1970s, the town “retains some of this early charm and stands as an excellent example of the benefits of sound community planning.”

⁵ Manasseh Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands* (Salem, MA: Dabney and Cushing, 1787), 14. See also Andrew R.L. Cayton, “The Contours of Power in a Frontier Town: Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1803,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 6, no. 2 (Summer 1986), 103; and Cayton, “A Quiet Independence,” 26. Cayton wrote in “A Quiet Independence” that the Ohio Company aimed to “institutionalize order in the physical structure of society.”

⁶ Reps, *The Making of Urban America*, 217. For more on the standardization and bureaucratization of public land sales in the land offices, see also Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business: The Settlement and Administration of American Public Lands, 1789-1837* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

The institutional effects of the Marietta land office are noteworthy, but they occurred because of the men – nearly all of them Federalists and many of them former Continental officers – who built that cabin in 1788. Most Ohio Company members were Federalists, and its leaders were former Continental officers and members of the Society of the Cincinnati.⁷ To them, orderly and efficient land distribution was just the first step in reorienting Western society. Ultimately, they hoped to make a new America composed “of well informed and well disposed Citizens,” declared company leader Rufus Putnam, who also led the first settlers at Marietta and operated the company land office. As he thought, good government would “remove... a State of Ignorance” from white Westerners and help to engineer a new American society that rejected the disorder of the 1780s.⁸

To create that new generation of Americans who loved order and duly appreciated the power of government, Federalists projected their ideals across the trans-Appalachian West through the institutions they created. Though historians often limit effective political influence by Federalists to only the final dozen years of the eighteenth century, the policies and institutions Federalists created in the Northwest Territory echoed throughout the next century. Aging Federalist Jacob Burnet of Cincinnati defended that legacy adamantly in the 1840s, claiming in his memoir that Federalists “established [the nation’s] character – renovated her energy, and laid the foundation of all her subsequent

⁷ For a greater description of Ohio Company founders, see Jacob Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory* (Cincinnati: Derby, Bradley, and Co., 1847), 43; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 16; and Cayton, “A Quiet Independence,” 13.

⁸ Rufus Putnam to Fisher Ames, 1790, in Rowena Buell, ed., *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam and Certain Official Papers and Correspondence* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1903), 244.

prosperity.” Further, he predicted that on some future day, history would “do justice to that abused, persecuted, misunderstood party” and acknowledge that “by their efforts and influence, the country was raised from poverty to affluence.”⁹ This dissertation seeks to recognize those efforts.

Federalists and Their Ideals in American Westward Expansion

To understand how Federalists affected early American westward expansion and the nation overall, especially as Burnet described, this dissertation argues that Federalist-led westward expansion left two distinct legacies. First, Federalists created many new institutions – of which the Marietta land office was only the first – that oversaw the generations-long march of white settlers to the Pacific. Second, settlers in the Northwest felt the effects of those institutions and eventually promoted more energetic government for the whole nation. Thus, the Federalist approach to frontier settlement extended federal power across the continent and altered the relationship between the American state and its Western citizens. In short, Federalism continued to live through the institutions it created, just as the humble log cabin on Washington Street has lived on as well.

Further, by focusing on Federalists in the Northwest, this dissertation offers two contributions to historical understanding of Federalists. First, it pushes the Federalist Party beyond its usual context of late eighteenth-century New England and into places historians have been reluctant to place it. For example,

⁹ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 299.

in studies that focused on New England, Linda Kerber argued that the Federalist Party “had nothing to look forward to but its own disintegration” after 1800, and John Miller claimed that by then, “The sun of Federalism had sunk forever.”¹⁰ More recently, Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick still ended their narrative with Jefferson’s 1802 promise to “sink federalism into an abyss from which there shall be no resurrection for it.” Even David Hackett Fischer, who finds Federalists playing important roles in American party politics after 1800, claimed that the “fresh generation of dynamic young men” of his new-school Federalism could still only bring “new life to a lost cause” that faded away by 1815. In Ohio as well, historians have declared a short life and quick death for Federalism. As Donald J. Ratcliffe argued in *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic* (1998), Ohio was a “bastion of Federalist strength” when Putnam ran the Marietta land office in the 1790s, but by 1804 the Federalists ceased to be an effective party, often failing to run slates of political candidates.¹¹ However, this dissertation argues, Federalist ideals survived and enhanced the Federalist legacy even beyond 1800 and the party’s alleged death during the War of 1812.

Second, this dissertation places the early American state at the fore of westward expansion even at the end of the eighteenth century. Federalists enacted policies and founded institutions to control the course of westward

¹⁰ Linda K. Kerber, *Federalists in Dissent: Imagery and Ideology in Jeffersonian America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), 135; and John C. Miller, *The Federalist Era, 1789-1801* (New York: Harper, 1960), 273.

¹¹ Thomas Jefferson to Levi Lincoln, October 25, 1802, quoted in Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 754; David Hackett Fischer, *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 29; and Donald J. Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic: Democratic Politics in Ohio, 1793-1821* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 21, 122.

expansion. Therefore, they established a tradition of state-led expansion well before the nineteenth-century expansion onto the Great Plains that Richard White has termed the “kindergarten of the American state.” White outlined a clear role for the state in that expansion: “armies of the federal government conquered the region, agents of the federal government explored it, federal officials administered it, and federal bureaucrats supervised (or at least tried to supervise) the division and development of its resources.”¹²

The Ohio Company buildings on Washington Street demonstrate that Federalists pursued all of those activities as early as 1788. Campus Martius and Fort Harmar a mile farther down the Muskingum demonstrated their commitment to conquer the Indians and guarantee safety to new settlers in the Ohio valley. Once that conquest was complete, Rufus Putnam moved into recording and measuring the features of the Ohio valley landscape as U.S. Surveyor General. The cabin on Washington Street remained important, too; even after the Ohio Company went under in 1796, Putnam used the cabin as his personal office until it became the new federal land office in 1800. The federal officers in that cabin signified federal administration that would oversee distribution of Western lands to settlers, too. Thus, this dissertation argues, by White’s measure the Federalists were the true founders of the state he observed, and that state had matured well beyond its kindergarten even when Abraham Lincoln was but a young man in Indiana and Illinois.

¹² Richard White, *“It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”: A History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 57-58.

However, Federalism must be defined clearly before its legacies can be understood fully, and in the Northwest three tenets of Federalist ideology are most salient. First, Federalists wanted energetic government after seeing the Confederation fail in the 1780s. Stated differently, David Hackett Fischer argued that Federalism preached “maximal rather than minimal government.”¹³ Federalists saw decisive and powerful action as prerequisites for an effective national government, and so they pursued policies under the guidance of Alexander Hamilton aimed at enhancing national power in issues like public credit, taxation, a national bank, and promotion of domestic manufacturing. In fact, finance lay at the heart of the Hamiltonian program. His plan for the First Bank of the United States was to provide a solid bedrock of credit for both the federal government and private citizens, while he hoped to lay excise taxes (such as on whiskey) and import duties. In turn, those new revenues would fuel the institutions created and energies expended by the new federal government. To promote such an energetic government, Federalists also wanted Americans to think in national terms. Thus, they tried sought to fill federal offices with men who were both admired in their communities and supporters of a strong national government that could check the “excesses” of democracy.¹⁴

That desire for energetic government migrated to the Ohio valley, too, and Federalist administration made westward expansion a state-building venture.

¹³ Fischer, *The Revolution of American Conservatism*, 17.

¹⁴ Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, “The Paradoxical Legacy of the Federalists,” in Ben-Atar and Oberg, *Federalists Reconsidered*, 4; Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 22; and Miller, *The Federalist Era*, 100.

They hoped to give settlers what speculator and later Congressman Manasseh Cutler termed “examples of government” meant to “revive the ideas of order, citizenship, and the useful sciences.” Further, government would secure the fragile American hold on the region. If “government will forever accommodate them as much as their brethren on the east,” Cutler wrote, Westerners would not be “forming schemes of independence, [or] seeking other connexions.” Those wishes to create a powerful state and loyal population spawned two important developments. First, Hamilton’s new model of American government, described by historian Max Edling as a “fiscal-military state” geared to financing and making war, found a prime theater for construction and operation in the Northwest Indian War of the 1790s. Settlers clearly appreciated those efforts even after the Revolution of 1800. Second, Federalist concerns also caused partisan bickering in the Northwest. As Andrew Cayton has noted, Ohio party contests often involved two sorts of boosters: Federalists supporting national interests and Jeffersonians favoring local interests.¹⁵

Federalists sought to orient government to guide the growth of commercial markets, both a reassertion of mercantilist principles over laissez-faire capitalism and the second important tenet of frontier Federalism. As Hamilton argued in 1787, the Constitution was written to guarantee “the good will of the commercial interest” for government and make it “capable of regulating protecting and

¹⁵ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 21-22; Cayton, “The Contours of Power in a Frontier Town,” 120; and Max Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 222-223. Edling describes the fiscal-military state throughout his book but gives its strongest and clearest definition on these pages.

extending the commerce of the Union.” Four years later, he wrote in the *Report on Manufactures* that large-scale farming, commerce, and manufacturing “not only occasion a positive augmentation of the Produce and Revenue of the Society, but that they contribute essentially to rendering them greater.”¹⁶ In short, Hamilton imagined much more than a fiscal-military state that killed and ran off Indians or assured better treaties with European powers. Under the direction of wise leaders, Federalists hoped to achieve a model for economic development much more predictable than growth based on the vagaries of greed and the undulations of business cycles.¹⁷ Thus, Hamilton planned on building a fiscal-military state as well as – for lack of a better term – a “fiscal-mercantile state” that would guide economic innovation and growth in America.

In the Northwest, Federalist investment and economic thought implied that government would fundamentally shape the region’s economic future. Federalist officials and land speculators sought to engineer a society that attracted capital and men of means by commodifying land, aggressively protecting property rights, and even building internal improvements, all to enhance economic development. Even as internal improvements became an issue contended in Congress during the 1790s, they were desirable to Federalists in the Northwest. Rufus Putnam

¹⁶ Alexander Hamilton, “Conjectures about the New Constitution,” September 17-30, 1787, in Harold C. Syrett, ed., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961-1987), IV: 275; and Hamilton, “Report on Manufactures,” December 5, 1791, in Syrett, *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, X: 249.

¹⁷ Broadus Mitchell, *Alexander Hamilton: A Concise Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976; New York: Barnes and Noble, 2007), 219-220 (page references are to the Barnes and Noble edition). For more on the implications of Hamilton’s economic philosophy, see Ben-Atar and Oberg, “The Paradoxical Legacy of the Federalists,” in Ben-Atar and Oberg, *Federalists Reconsidered*, 6; and Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 260.

called for new roads and canals as well as improved river navigation to aid commerce in the Northwest Territory. He called specifically for a canal from the Potomac River, which was also one of George Washington's pet projects, and Putnam argued for building new post roads that would aid both commerce and mail service.¹⁸ Federalist commercialism portended a bright economic future for the Northwest and, as Putnam indicated, would allow greater penetration of the early American state into civil society in the trans-Appalachian West.

Finally, Federalists shared a strong sense of social order. As Linda Kerber argued persuasively, Federalists were always vigilant against the disintegration of their carefully created and still-fragile social order. They were keenly aware of the upheaval that the Revolution had created, so they stood wary against the creeping dangers posed by self-interest and excess democracy. Such concerns were on display in the Northwest Territory, as Putnam extolled government as "absolutely necessary for the well being of any people, and the General Happiness of Society." Meanwhile, the Ohio Company supported commercial growth and small-scale manufacturing on their lands, but only so long as it was guided by landed elite to guard against the disruptions new economic arrangements may cause.¹⁹

Federalists also believed social order upheld republican liberty by curbing destructive influences from license and lawlessness. As Gordon Wood noted in

¹⁸ Putnam to Fisher Ames, 1790, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 235; and Putnam to J. Habersham, February 26, 1800, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 430-431. For more on internal improvements as a political issue in the 1790s, see John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 19-21, 32-40.

¹⁹ Cayton, "A Quiet Independence," 17-19; and Kerber, *Federalists in Dissent*, 174-175.

The Creation of the American Republic (1969), many supporters of stronger national government worried liberty would give way to license and finally anarchy without strong regulations. By the Whiskey Rebellion a few years later, Thomas Slaughter has argued, Federalists proved themselves “friends of order” by crushing the rebellion. As he noted, they believed “the ignorant, the poor, [and] narrow-minded localists” were great threats to republican liberty, and in attacking the rebels Federalists defended principles of “obedience, deference, and order.”²⁰ In other words, Federalists believed government was the guarantor of liberty, and good government must be trusted to banish the evils of demagoguery and anarchy from the land.

That order flowed naturally, too. For example, John Adams spoke in 1790 of “nobility... founded in nature” as a guiding principle for republican leadership, reflecting his party’s shared belief in an organic wholeness to American society.²¹ Personal gain was perfectly acceptable, but Federalists believed citizens should be committed to securing the general good above all else. Leaders arose not by shameless electioneering but by the force of their natural talent. Those who were destined to follow, they suggested in no uncertain terms, needed to recognize their social stations and behave accordingly. Leaders served a higher purpose than voters could ever confer, and it bred among many Federalists a

²⁰ Gordon Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1969), 411; and Thomas Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Prologue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 133. See also Miller, *The Federalist Era*, 115.

²¹ Adams’s comments were overheard and recorded in Edgar S. Maclay, ed., *Journal of William Maclay: United States Senator from Pennsylvania, 1789-1791* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1890), 349. For Federalist ideas about an organic society, see also Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 61.

negative attitude toward the people. As John Miller noted, they took pride in their “disdain of ‘the vile love of popularity’” because the electorate was fickle but Federalist principles were not, and in the end “order and stability must prevail.”²² Therefore, they consoled themselves after electoral defeats by declaring they would rather be right than popular.

In the Northwest, Federalist leaders operated on those assumptions of an organic social order and disregard for base popularity. Territorial Gov. Arthur St. Clair reflected that attitude by telling the Ohio state constitutional convention of 1802 that he only wanted to ensure “laws have been executed faithfully” to allow government to imbue in settlers “the spirit of obedience... and a love of order.” He also made a point to note his sole concern with the public good by saying, “it has been my only ambition to fulfill that duty.” Similarly, Jacob Burnet later remarked with poorly disguised distaste that “popular motives” led most Federalist convention members to vote in favor of statehood after St. Clair’s speech.²³ Idealizing a lack of interest in voters seems like political suicide, but the stance was sensible to Federalists who loved and guarded social order. After all, if leaders ascended naturally, questioning them meant questioning not only the laws and authority of American officials but the very laws of nature that Americans claimed to hold dear while founding their republic.

²² Miller, *The Federalist Era*, 113, 115.

²³ Arthur St. Clair, “Remarks of Governor St. Clair before the Constitutional Convention,” Nov. 1, 1802, in William Henry Smith, ed., *The St. Clair Papers: The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair: Soldier of the Revolutionary War, President of the Continental Congress, and Governor of the Northwestern Territory: With His Correspondence and Other Papers* (Cincinnati: R. Clarke, 1882), II: 593; and Julia Perkins Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler: Prepared from His Journals and Correspondence* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1890), 69n.

These three ideals – energy in government, a renewed mercantilism, and well-ordered republican liberty – were expressed in many ways in the Northwest Territory. Perhaps most conspicuously, Federalists embraced the military and an active use of it. They extolled a large standing army that they believed would be helpful in attaining policy ends. Presidents George Washington and John Adams believed a powerful, disciplined, and skilled army would guarantee a free and prosperous American people as well as an effective new federal government. While dealing with white expansion in the Northwest, Federalists consistently argued for enlarging the military and for using it against Indians, squatters, and even French New Orleans. In the Northwest, Federalists were happy to see it used in Indian wars and in suppressing rowdy frontiersmen, even sending the U.S. Army to evict squatters door to door. By offering such services to lawful settlers, Putnam declared, the federal government proved its power and became “a terror to evil doers, and a protection to Such as Shall do well.”²⁴ As Putnam’s words suggest, Federalists could use the U.S. Army to prove federal capabilities while preserving social and political order.

However, republics are not built on force alone. A stronger military offered the early American state in the Northwest what sociologist Michael Mann has termed the state’s despotic power, defined briefly as its ability to monopolize force. However, building legitimacy in a republic like the United States requires

²⁴ Lawrence D. Cress, “Republican Liberty and National Security: American Military Policy as an Ideological Problem, 1783 to 1789,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser., 38, no. 1 (January 1981), 74; and Putnam to Ames, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 245. For a much more detailed treatment of the role of military force in the late eighteenth-century Ohio valley, see Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007).

that the state also show its ability to make the rules of society, termed by Mann a state's infrastructural power. After all, Mann states, elites and authorities in a republic cannot "brazenly expropriate or kill their enemies" in a legitimate manner, nor can they "overturn legal traditions enshrining constitutional rule."²⁵ Thus, after it forced squatters and Indians from an area, the U.S. government needed other means and new institutions to maintain settler loyalties.

In the Northwest, those new institutions allowed the new American state to control of the flow of settlement, protect commercial interests, and organize the region. The land office represented the clearest sign of state intervention in civil society, as in the land office Western settlers interacted personally with federal power (through federal land office employees). In time, government confirmation of legitimate ownership and residency became a normal part of moving west for most settlers, and land speculators were the first to benefit. Manasseh Cutler believed overseeing the distribution of Western lands was "Next to its conquest... the most important exercise of governmental power ever exerted in laying solid foundations for the American Republic." With government-backed titles, "every man could sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make him afraid." Thirty years later in Illinois, English immigrant George Flower concurred in his diary, noting of the bureaucratic system that "Disputes about title are avoided by this simple orderly proceeding."²⁶ Overall, the land office was not just

²⁵ Michael Mann. "The Autonomous Power of the States: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results," in John A. Hall, ed., *States in History* (New York: Blackwell, 1986), 114.

²⁶ William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler, eds., *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler, LL.D.* (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1888; Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987), I: 146; and George Flower, diary entry, Oct. 12, 1816, Oversize BV1, Flower Family Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

a business but an agent of social change. Federalist land policy established a bureaucratic institution that standardized land ownership in the West, at once extending federal reach and transforming American ideals of landscape, land ownership, and legal order.

Federalists championed many other causes in order to bring prosperity and order to the frontier as well. As was mentioned earlier, Federalist officials and citizens pressed for a well-developed system of transportation to encourage economic development and spread governmental influence. To preserve peace and discourage sales of liquor, Federalists also pushed for controlling the Indian trade through various means, especially by means of the trade factory system that saw its greatest financial success in the Northwest. Federalists also became staunch advocates for public education in the West, contending that widely available education offered, in the words of Manasseh Cutler, “a most favorable aspect upon the settlement” and led to “the acquisition of useful knowledge placed upon a more respectable footing here, than in any other part of the world.” He took pride in their commitment to education in a speech at Marietta, too, informing settlers that emphasizing education would help to achieve their new West. In addition to being a sign of energetic government and preparing youth for a stronger future, he said, education would “lay the foundations for a well-regulated society” by “mak[ing] subjects conform to the laws.”²⁷

²⁷ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 20; and Cutler, “Sermon Preached at Campus Martius, Marietta, North-west Territory,” August 24, 1788, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, II: 449.

By establishing new institutions throughout the Northwest, frontier Federalism altered the relationship between the American state and civil society. Specifically, settlers in the states and territories carved out of the Northwest Territory expected government to provide aid as citizens required it, seen best in Western attitudes toward internal improvements even after Jeffersonians continually dominated elections. Such demands made Westerners unique in national politics from the early 1800s onward. For example, Ohio and Indiana Congressmen voted nearly unanimously in favor of hotly debated resolutions on internal improvements in the U.S. House in 1818. On statements that Congress should build national roads and canals, that national defense justified public funding for them, and that the elastic clause allowed Congress to build them for commercial development, Ohio and Indiana representatives – though mostly Republicans – were the most reliable supporters of those resolutions. Thus, Western Republicans were the most reliable supporters of internal improvements advocated by House Speaker and later Whig stalwart Henry Clay.²⁸

On the state level, legislatures in the former Northwest Territory embraced internal improvements earlier than the rest of the nation and paid for them with funded debts through state banks, all very clearly Hamiltonian measures.²⁹ As John Lauritz Larson observed, Western Jeffersonians had few qualms about taking on Andrew Jackson directly when they demanded federal aid for local

²⁸ For a state-by-state breakdown of the resolution votes, see the table in Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 118. The actual votes appear in *AC*, 15th Cong., 1st sess., 1385-1389, and debates over internal improvements dominate proceedings in the first half of March 1818, as can be observed in the *Annals*, 1114-1389.

²⁹ For more on the issue, see E.L. Bogart, *Internal Improvements and the State Debt in Ohio* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924); and John H. Krenkel, *Illinois Internal Improvements, 1818-1848* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press, 1958).

internal improvements because Westerners believed almost universally that government should aid economic development as much as possible.³⁰ The real question, it seemed, was not *if* elective representatives should support internal improvements but rather *how much* they should do so. Overall, Westerners embraced government involvement in internal improvements and other services like public education largely because they had become accustomed to the benefits of an energetic government.

Therefore, even though Federalists lost elections, their distinct ideology remained. Western citizens often argued for a more powerful state because they had higher expectations for it, and over time the frontier Federalist strain underwent a series of mutations to evolve into Western Whiggery by the 1830s. Federalists arrived in the Northwest during the 1780s and 1790s to build new societies and a new American state, and Western Whigs ultimately broadcast a political vision back east that embraced government power. Thus, the attitudes behind frontier Federalism were hewn into the new Western Whig politics. Taking cues from Federalist ideology, Whigs promoted energetic government, centralized economic development, and respect for legal and social order against the alleged demagoguery of Jacksonian Democrats.

“The Federalist Frontier” in Outline

Federalist administration and the legacies it left behind are examined in the rest of this dissertation from the beginning of Federalist rule in the 1780s

³⁰ Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 196, 205-210, 218. The quotation appears on 218.

through the rise of the Whig Party in the Old Northwest in the 1830s. Chapter one, “Making a Federalist Frontier: The Northwest Indian War, 1789-1795,” follows the first major project laid out by Richard White for government-led westward expansion: conquering Indians and clearing them from new lands that American settlers would later resettle. As this chapter argues, Federalists revealed their plans for the new American state and formed a distinct political identity through the strategies that lay behind the war and the arguments conducted over the war itself. During the war, Federalists institutionalized what were previously chaotic Indian wars under the U.S. Army to showcase how federal power could open new lands for settlement, protect settlers, and tighten control over the Northwest Territory against the encroaching British.

Chapter two, “The Speculator’s Republic: Federalist Administration in Territorial Ohio,” traces the experience of federal administrators over the Northwest Territory from the Northwest Ordinance through Ohio’s statehood. This chapter focuses especially on Gov. St. Clair, his political lieutenants, and land speculators like the Ohio Company of Associates, whose interests in the Northwest Territory led them to form a public-private partnership in state-building there.³¹ Overall, they aimed – and succeeded, to some extent – in establishing a “respectable public” who respected government authority and the rule of a gentlemanly class, even if that rule did not occur under the Federalist Party.

³¹ William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (June 2008), 769. Novak argues that partnerships between government institutions and private enterprise helped to spread the influence of state power as well as the distribute power more widely among more actors through engendering “the development of a national infrastructure through the delegation of special powers.”

The next two chapters trace the separate legacies of Federalist rule in the old Northwest Territory. Chapter three, “Federalist Frontier Echo: Jeffersonian Administration in Indiana and Illinois,” will consider the legacies of Federalism in Jeffersonian-led administration of the Northwest. Many Western Republicans reflected positive attitudes toward institutional development and the role that government could play in westward expansion. These proponents of a new “salutary activism” argued for refining Federalist programmatic policies that birthed institutions like the General Land Office and Indian trade factories as well as aggressive approaches to Indians and advocacy for positions Federalists had made their own in the 1790s, especially internal improvements and an energetic approach to public education. By the time Indiana and Illinois became states in 1816 and 1818, respectively, their leaders planned for public education systems from the outset, opening the way to further state growth in the ensuing years.

Chapter four, “‘Our Strength Is Our Union’: Federalists in Ohio, 1803-1815,” examines how Federalists adjusted to new political realities after statehood. Though the minority, Federalists still influenced state politics and formed important swing votes between Jeffersonian factions. As a result, their calls for energetic government in commercial growth, transportation, and other issues encountered a surprising level of success. This success came partly from Federalist settlements along the Ohio River and large numbers of Federalist-leaning New Englanders throughout the new state, but it also came from a new center of gravity in state politics established by over a decade of Federalist administration. Even as the national Federalist Party dissolved in the War of

1812, a moment that showed real tension between Federalists in Ohio and the party's New England strongholds, Ohio's most loyal Federalists emerged from the 1810s as a core for a new party in ensuing decades.

The fifth chapter, "Frontier Federalists, Western Whigs, and Good Feelings in the Northwest," discusses the transition from the Federalist to Whig Parties in the Northwest. The merger of the old Federalist Party into the new Whig Party is perhaps most evident in Ohio. For example, Ohio Governor Allen Trimble served in the 1820s while calling himself a Federalist but became a leading Whig in the next decade. Meanwhile, another old Ohio Federalist, onetime state legislator and sharply partisan newspaper editor Charles Hammond, edited a leading Whig newspaper in Cincinnati by the 1830s. Perhaps the clearest example, though, came from Jacob Burnet, who continued to wear the Federalist label even when he rose in December 1839 to nominate William Henry Harrison for President at the national Whig convention. Of course, just as Burnet refused to abandon his old party, those old Federalists did not shed their central political ideals, either.

The Federalists were not alone, though, as the Whigs also drew in former Jeffersonian Republicans and Jacksonian Democrats by advocating government involvement in commercial development. Two governors, Jeremiah Morrow of Ohio and Joseph Duncan of Illinois, both migrated into the Whig Party and recalled Hamiltonian politics in their stances. For example, after being elected governor in 1834 partly for his strong advocacy in favor of internal improvements, Duncan used his inaugural address to lay out an activist program that also

included expanded public education and staunch opposition to preemption bills in the name of both economic development and public order.³² However, these issues all had a Federalist gloss to them. Sounding like Manasseh Cutler when talking about public education, Duncan declared common schools “connected with the virtue, elevation, and happiness of man, and the character and prosperity of our State, and of our common country.” Meanwhile, he believed preemption upset public order and normal commercial patterns, and the revenue taken from government by squatters meant a weakened stimulus for commerce and immigration to the state through his ambitious system of internal improvements.³³ Though once committed Jacksonians, these higher expectations for the state in the Northwest led them into common cause with their former rivals and gave new life to Federalist ideals by the 1830s. Further, a new generation of politicians under the Whig banner brought to these older politicians an infusion of energy and eager candidates for elected office.

The epilogue, “Up the Capitol Steps: Abraham Lincoln and the New Western Whiggery,” focuses on Lincoln’s early political career in the Illinois House of Representatives in context with a new generation of Western Whig politicians. In advocating the American System, public education, and strong social order in Illinois, Lincoln was an exemplary Whig who saw the state as a powerful ally in the Northwest and demonstrated the legacy left behind by the Federalist Party. By the 1830s, Western Whigs were broadcasting back east an

³² Krenkel, *Illinois Internal Improvements*, 62.

³³ *Illinois House Journal*, December 3, 1834, 27-28.

ideology that embraced state involvement in many facets of American life while preaching an absolute respect for order, and Lincoln continued to present that in the ensuing decades. In the end, Abraham Lincoln envisioned exactly the sort of society that Federalists hoped to build when they looked to reform the American westward movement in the Northwest. Thus, the spirit that led to Ohio Company members erecting the land office cabin on Washington Street was far from dead. In the hands of Lincoln and other Whigs, it was quite healthy and spreading across the nation.

Before proceeding further, two items deserve mention. First, to preserve the original flavor and context of the texts used in this dissertation, spelling and grammar inside quotes has remained as they appeared in the original sources. Second, the footnotes contain two abbreviations. Notes containing *AC* refer to the *Annals of Congress* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834-1856), and *ASP:IA* refers to the *American State Papers: Indian Affairs* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832-1861).

CHAPTER ONE

Making a Federalist Frontier: The Northwest Indian War, 1789-1795

On July 7, 1790, Judge Harry Innes of Kentucky analyzed the long-simmering conflict between Indians and white settlers along the Ohio River in a letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox. Innes claimed “Indians have always been the aggressors” in fighting that had killed some 1,500 people since 1783 and was only spreading. Worse, though, was that whites lacked “satisfactory account of the intention of Government for our relief,” and without federal help they would organize their own expeditions “upon the principle of *revenge, protection, and self-preservation*, and Government will not be able to counteract” their attacks which “will not discriminate between the Indians who are hostile and those who have treated.” Thus, he warned, the war would ultimately “not only prevent the intended views of Government, but undo what hath been done.”¹ His plea was

¹ Judge [Harry] Innes to the Secretary of War [Henry Knox], July 7, 1790, in *ASP:IA*, I: 88.

anxious but quite clear. Federal authorities had to bring their new power to bear in the Ohio valley quickly or risk losing the Ohio River valley once and for all.

Innes's letter highlights the three major challenges that confronted the new federal government once it became the supreme authority in the Ohio valley. First, they had to stem the rising tide of violence described by Innes and many others west of the Appalachians as nearly constant and needing a speedy conclusion. Second, they had to solve the "Indian problem" to open new lands and frustrate British and Spanish designs for the Northwest. By Innes's reckoning, though, U.S. officials had allowed violence to continue unchecked and only exacerbated all of the problems in the West. Third, in controlling the Ohio valley's Indians, federal officials had to demonstrate their power to white American settlers as well as European officials in the region. After all, if Innes warned that "Government will not be able to counteract" attacks by Indians and white Kentuckians, then the new federal government would have failed to protect its lands and to prove its legitimacy to the American people.²

In addition, the Federalists who filled the War Department and many seats in the U.S. Congress in 1790 had to overcome political opponents while bringing the U.S. Army to bear against recalcitrant Indians. Innes embodied that opposition. He believed the Constitution did not offer clear solutions for Kentucky's problems of political dominance by eastern interests and a lack of navigation in the Mississippi. He worried Atlantic states would sacrifice the needs of Kentuckians for commercial or diplomatic gains, and therefore he was

² Innes to Knox, July 7, 1790, in *ASP:IA*, I: 88. As Innes wrote, "Repeated informations have been given of these injuries, which continue to be daily perpetrated."

an antifederalist. While he still accepted Washington's appointment as the federal judge in Kentucky, he remained an opponent of the U.S. government's new, expansive powers and thus became a prominent leader in Kentucky's Republican faction.³ Even as Innes described a Kentucky ready to defy federal authority to Knox, he was reporting as a committed opponent of Knox's efforts and his plans to use an enlarged military to confront the Indian-white conflicts along the Ohio River. Overall, Knox and his fellow Federalists had to contend with violence in the region, but as time progressed they also had to handle rising partisan opposition.

Despite the challenges ahead, Knox was already attacking the problems that Innes underlined in his report. Exactly one month earlier on June 7, he ordered Gen. Josiah Harmar on a campaign that he hoped would address all of the federal government's troubles. In order to "extend a defensive and efficient protection to so extensive a frontier," Knox told Harmar to consult with territorial Gov. Arthur St. Clair on how to "extirpate, utterly, if possible" the Indians who were raiding white settlements along the Ohio River. Further, his directive "must be considered as a standing order, until the object... be effected." Clearly, if Indians would not peacefully recognize federal authority, they would be made to feel it before the musket blasts of Harmar's army. Knox wanted white settlers to recognize federal power, too, citing a need to calm "much disquietude in the public mind" as a reason for carrying out the campaign.⁴ In sum, Knox saw the

³ Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau, *Federal Courts in the Early Republic: Kentucky, 1789-1816* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 33-38.

⁴ Knox to Josiah Harmar, June 7, 1790, in *ASP:IA*, I: 97-98.

U.S. Army as a panacea for all that ailed the Northwest Territory, and he would not allow retreat until Indian resistance was vanquished. On Knox's orders, the Northwest Indian War had officially begun.

The U.S. Army ultimately prevailed over the Indians after three major campaigns in five years, but despite the troubles with the Northwest Indian War it was significant for two reasons. First, the war established the new federal government as the leading political presence in the Northwest. In showing its military might as well as its ability to resolve the complaints of settlers, the new federal government filled a long-standing power vacuum in the region. Second, federal officials took operational control over the process of Indian war-making in the Ohio River valley. Rather than entrust the war to frontier whites like British colonial authorities often did, the U.S. government – particularly under the guidance of Henry Knox – planned, paid for, and carried out nearly all of its major operations. Overall, the war allowed Knox to institutionalize the anti-Indian violence on the frontier for the federal government.

The Northwest Indian War also had political consequences, as it became an important issue and a formative experience that helped to solidify Federalist ideology. As Federalists contended with their Jeffersonian Republican opponents over what sort of a republic Americans had just created, the war became a departure point between the parties. In particular, the military that Federalists had built to prosecute the war became a point of contention during and even after the war as other threats arose in the 1790s. In short, the Northwest Indian War presented a two-front war for the Federalists. They would

not only have to attack Indians in the Ohio valley, but they would have to contend with partisan opponents and forge a clearer political identity in the process.

The Road to War and the Question of National Governance

When Americans won nominal control over what became the Northwest Territory from the Treaty of Paris in 1783, they became only the latest entrant into a contest for the Ohio valley that had begun a half-century ago. Complicating matters, the region was far from a settled land with clear Indian or white ownership, as the Ohio valley had become a respite for peoples displaced by American colonization. From the 1730s to the 1750s, the Delaware, Mingo, Wyandot, and many other members of the eventual Northwest Indian confederacy migrated into the Ohio valley from farther east after British colonists penetrated into their territories and upset trading and hunting patterns. By 1750, the Shawnee held major towns along the Ohio and its tributaries, resettling the lands they had called home until the Beaver Wars displaced them in the 1600s.⁵

Further, white American colonists unable to own land or make their fortunes farther east poured into the Ohio valley after Britain forced the French from most of North America in the French and Indian War. By 1774, an estimated fifty thousand squatters lived along the waterways of the Ohio valley (mostly in present-day Kentucky) in defiance of local Indians and the

⁵ Colin G. Calloway, *The Shawnees and the War for America* (New York: Viking, 2007), 8-13; David Dixon, "'We Speak as One People': Native Unity and the Pontiac Indian Uprising," in Daniel P. Barr, ed., *The Boundaries between Us: Natives and Newcomers along the Frontiers of the Old Northwest Territory, 1750-1800* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006), 47; and R. Douglas Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720-1830* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 10.

Proclamation of 1763. A cycle of distrust and violence resulted, yielding a parallel struggle in the trans-Appalachian West during the American Revolution. Such a conflict arose in part, historian Patrick Griffin has argued recently, because British weakness encouraged white Westerners to forget their attachment to the Crown and essentially stop acting like British subjects. It was a behavior they would not forsake after the 1783 Treaty of Paris, too. According to Griffin, “violence, not state authority, controlled the Ohio valley” even in the 1780s, despite Americans gaining title to it.⁶

Hoping to bring American authority to the region after the war but without bloodshed, American treaty negotiators took an aggressive stance with Indian diplomats. By their reckoning, Americans gained a rightful claim over Indian lands after the Revolution based on the right of conquest. George Washington explained the position very well in a letter to New Yorker James Duane in 1783: “after a Contest of eight years... Britain has ceded all the Lands of the United States,” and as British allies, the Indians “share[d] their fortune” by losing all claim to the Northwest. Therefore, he concluded, “their true Interest and safety must now depend upon *our* friendship.”⁷ Essentially, Indians of the Northwest were merely subjects of a superior U.S. government and had no real right to

⁶ Griffin, *American Leviathan*, 52-53, 152-153; and Richard White, *The Middle Ground Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 340. A similar argument to mine about the Ohio valley in the 1780s can be found in Andrew R.L. Cayton, *Frontier Indiana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 98-99.

⁷ George Washington to James Duane, September 7, 1783, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington: From the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), 27: 133-134.

refuse American demands, especially for land. As a result, treaties concluded just after the Revolutionary War show a stilted language that invests all power in the United States. In the 1785 Treaty of Fort McIntosh, for example, the U.S. agreed to “give peace” to the Chippewa, Delaware, Ottawa, and Wyandot while they honored the treaty. The Indian signers also placed themselves “under the protection of the United States, and of no other sovereign whatsoever,” and agreed to negotiate exclusively with the United States. In return, the U.S. agreed to “allot” land between the Muskingum and Miami Rivers to the Indians.⁸ Through such language, American negotiators steadily refused to acknowledge Indian claims in the Ohio valley.

However, Indians of the region hardly accepted American claims quietly, choosing instead to band together and seek help from European officials in resolving their three major complaints. First, Indians objected to the dismissive attitude American negotiators showed to Indian complaints and positions. In council in late 1786, the new Indian confederacy agreed to object specifically to American diplomacy, saying, “You kindled your council fires where you thought proper, without consulting us... and have entirely neglected our plan.”⁹ Second, because of the naked ambitions behind most proposals, Indians saw alliance with one another or even European powers as less harmful, even necessary, alternatives. Negotiation in common motivated the new confederacy and gave it a clear anti-American tincture. As historian Gregory Evans Dowd observed, the

⁸ “Treaty of Fort McIntosh,” January 21, 1785, in *ASP:IA*, I: 11.

⁹ “Speech of the United Indian Nations, at their Confederate Council, held near the mouth of the Detroit river,” Nov. 28 and Dec. 18, 1786, in *ASP:IA*, I: 9.

confederacy differed from Pontiac or Tenskwatawa's pan-Indian movements because this one happily received European goods and was open to European influence, but members ferociously defended their lands and political autonomy, especially against Americans.¹⁰ Finally, despite assurances to the contrary, the U.S. government failed to contain white settlers and the subsequent interracial violence over Ohio valley lands. One resident of Vincennes asked Harmar in summer 1787 for a garrison to ensure residents are no longer "ignorant of what authority we lived under," nor would they "be prey of vagabonds." Maj. John Hamtramck soon agreed that American government was "in great confusion.... I never saw so injudicious administration."¹¹ In every sense, the national government was a failed state in the Northwest. Indians, Europeans, and even American settlers pursued their own agendas without regard to national officials.

With national government policy failing, officials needed a new direction to build legitimacy in the Northwest. Historians have largely seen this policy shift come through kinder diplomacy after 1786. Conquest diplomacy failed, as Dorothy V. Jones argued in a typical example of this interpretation, because Americans could not "Pressur[e] the Indians into agreements that would allow for white expansion and at the same time be acknowledged as just and equitable." Instead, the U.S. made appeals as "one sovereign group to other sovereign

¹⁰ Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 91, 94. Dowd points particularly to Alexander McGillivray, who wrote to a Spanish trader that Indians in the trans-Appalachian West would need to maintain "the formidable Indian Confederacy of the late war against the Americans" in order to be "a great check on the States in... all the western Countrys."

¹¹ J.M.P. Le Gras to Harmar, June 26, 1787, in Gayle Thornbrough, ed., *Outpost on the Wabash, 1787-1791* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1957), 24-25; and John Hamtramck to Harmar, November 3, 1787, in Thornbrough, *Outpost on the Wabash*, 44.

groups.”¹² Indeed, American diplomats offered to buy land and pay annuities to Indian nations after 1786, and in 1787 Congress appropriated \$14,000 (no small amount to the national government) to Arthur St. Clair to secure a new treaty to “extinguish the Indian claim” in the Northwest.¹³ While a few gifts and land purchases represented a cosmetic shift in Indian policy, American officials still did not abandon the underlying assumption that Indians were subordinate peoples. Purchase may have been more equitable than conquest diplomacy, but those purchases were hardly negotiated between equal, sovereign powers.

To lend strength to those assertions of superiority, some national officials argued that greater militarization had to accompany the humbler negotiating style. Calling for a much larger army hardly meant peace and respect for Indians. Henry Knox had argued continually for a larger, professionalized military capable of pacifying the Ohio valley since his appointment as Secretary of War in 1785, and by March 1787 he wanted new posts along the Ohio River to protect against Indian raids and “induce a confidence in the protection of the United States.” By July, Knox took a binary position on the growing violence, declaring that “Either one or the other party must remove to a greater distance.” To defeat the Indians, he wanted the U.S. Army more than doubled to 1,500 men to ensure

¹² Dorothy V. Jones, *License for Empire: Colonialism by Treaty in Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 121-122, 125. For arguments that conquest ended in 1786 (or near then), see Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*; Reginald Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783-1812* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992); R. Douglas Hurt, *The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002); and Francis P. Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

¹³ *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, ed. Worthington C. Ford et al. (Washington, Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1904-1937), 33: 696-697.

“complete protection of the frontiers, and other objects... in the western territory.” Such an army would be stretched along a chain of forts running the entire Ohio River, a show of force that would at once “awe the savages, cover the surveyors and... prevent intrusions on the public lands.”¹⁴ For Knox, Indian-white conflict in the Ohio valley offered a clear opportunity to assert American power and bring order to its unruly West.

However, Knox claimed his plan could not become reality because of the central problems he and other Federalists-to-be identified in the national government. While his plan was “the most rational that can be devised,” Congress suffered an “embarrassed state of public affairs and entire deficiency of funds” that meant “an indian war of any considerable extent and duration would most exceedingly distress the United States.”¹⁵ Though a strong American military would quiet threatening Indians and bring order to the Northwest through strong national authority, Knox found that the national government was simply too ill-equipped to act appropriately. Instead, he would have to make do with six hundred men described in the *Boston Gazette* as “a feeble line... from Fort-Pitt to the [Ohio] rapids” overtaxed and overwhelmed by the flow of white squatters and Indian raiders.¹⁶ The conflict in the Northwest demanded a forceful response, but the weak national government could never offer one.

¹⁴ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 32: 105, 329.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 32: 331.

¹⁶ *Boston Gazette*, August 5, 1793; and Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Beginnings of the Military Establishment in America* (New York: Free Press, 1975), 97. The *Boston Gazette* estimated the army at 500 men, but Kohn placed the army at around 600 based upon multiple primary sources, among them letters from Secretary of War Henry Knox and Secretary of the Northwest Territory Winthrop Sargent.

Other Americans linked Indian policy to a stronger American military, too. In January 1786, a Western correspondent to the *Pennsylvania Mercury* of Philadelphia called for a military solution to the brewing conflicts in the Ohio valley. Even while American diplomats offered to buy land from the Indians, the Westerner argued that "the United States must either keep up such a force against the savages as will awe them to peace and faith." If not, he worried, government officials would have to "abandon their views of surveying and selling the foederal lands on the north-west of the Ohio River." Another writer from Georgia solved the conflicting motivations between a humbler negotiating style and more aggressive military very quickly. As he explained frankly in a letter to the *New-Jersey Journal* in October 1786, his state was ready "to march against the Creek Indians, or... treat with them; but in plain English, to take their lands from them."¹⁷

By 1787, U.S. Army Col. Josiah Harmar argued for greater force to secure the Northwest as well. In May, he reported to Sec. Knox that Indian raids in Kentucky that left settlers "in great dread of the savages" would be best remedied by "a respectable garrison of regular troops established in the heart of the Indian country... [that] would keep the Indians in awe." Further, demonstrating his strong commitment to public order overall, Harmar claimed that an increased military presence would "in a great measure, secure the frontier inhabitants."¹⁸ A

¹⁷ *Pennsylvania Mercury* (Philadelphia), Jan. 13, 1786; and *New-Jersey Journal* (Elizabethtown), Oct. 18, 1786.

¹⁸ Josiah Harmar to Henry Knox, May 14, 1787, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 21; and Wiley Sword, *President Washington's Indian War: The Struggle for the Old Northwest* (Norman:

few months later, he remarked that "troops will have a peculiar good effect" on the public order of the region. After all, he reasoned, soldiers could "deter several people from Kentucky and other parts from taking up the public lands," a practice he blamed for the continued problems between Indians and settlers.¹⁹

Congressional inability to grant their requests created a new sense of urgency among the future Federalist administrators, who argued vigorously that Congress must act quickly and decisively to secure the Western lands it acquired so dearly in the Revolution. In pursuit of their goals, they developed concrete positions in favor of enlarging the military, guaranteeing public order in the Ohio valley, and expropriating Indian lands as quickly as possible. As early as 1783, George Washington called for a stronger military to "give security to our frontiers" as well as "awe the Indians, and more than probably prevent the murder of many innocent families."²⁰ In 1786, the *Pennsylvania Mercury* published similar arguments for stronger government over the Northwest. His demand for a larger army to secure the Ohio valley presaged Knox's advice to Congress, and he also noted in what became a staunchly pro-ratification newspaper that "some confederation" was needed in the national government to "effect this force, and give a tone to our treaties."²¹

University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 89. Sword called Harmar "firm in his concept of discipline and order."

¹⁹ Harmar to Knox, August 7, 1787, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 29.

²⁰ Washington to the President of Congress, June 17, 1783, in Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington*, 27: 17.

²¹ *Pennsylvania Mercury* (Philadelphia), Jan. 13, 1786; and Owen S. Ireland, *Religion, Ethnicity, and Politics: Ratifying the Constitution in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 279. A statistical analysis of items appearing in the *Mercury*

In making a case for the Constitution, future Federalists argued for a government more capable of force in the Northwest and elsewhere. John Jay echoed many of the worries Washington voiced for a broader, public audience. In November 1787, Jay illustrated his complaints about the national government in *Federalist* number 3 by arguing that Congress was impotent in restraining Western violence. According to his analysis, “Indian hostilities having been provoked by the improper conduct of individual States... unable or unwilling to restrain or punish offenses” and led to Indians retaliating with “the slaughter of many innocent inhabitants.” He also believed the Western lands were particularly fragile because of their proximity to British and Spanish colonial authorities. Western settlers would have “a quick sense of apparent interest or injury” and would “most likely... excite war with those nations; and nothing can so effectually obviate that danger as a national government.”²²

While Jay made his case first, Alexander Hamilton proved far more effective in linking the West and the Indian problem to more energetic national government in his *Federalist* essays of 1787 and 1788. Like Washington and Jay, Hamilton considered national power a pacifying influence able to “interpose between the contending parties” in the West. Without it, he worried, the region would become “an ample theater for hostile pretensions without any umpire” in

revealed that 94% of the pieces favored ratification, making it the publication most strongly allied with the Constitution in Philadelphia.

²² John Jay, “No. 3: Jay,” in Clinton Rossiter, ed., *The Federalist Papers* (New York: Mentor, 1961), 44-45. For a chronology of the essays published in newspapers and original editions of the *Federalist Papers*, see Gregory E. Maggs, “A Concise Guide to the Federalist Papers as a Source of the Original Meaning of the United States Constitution,” *Boston University Law Review* 87, no. 4 (October 2007): 842-847.

which “the sword would sometimes be appealed to as the arbiter of their differences.”²³ By December 1787, he interlinked westward expansion, an enlarged military, and energetic government in *Federalist* number 24. To defend the powers over a national military given to the proposed government, he noted potential British and Spanish competition for western territories and because of it, he called for a muscular Indian policy. To prevent “a common interest” from forming between European powers and the Ohio valley’s Indians, Hamilton declared that “The savage tribes on our Western frontier ought to be regarded as our natural enemies... because they have the most to fear from us.”²⁴

Keeping those enemies at bay required a powerful military. Hamilton explained that Americans needed a series of “small garrisons on our Western frontier” staffed by either state militias or a “permanent corps in the pay of the government.” Perhaps recalling the travails he and other Continental Army officers had in fighting the British a decade earlier, he claimed militia would not submit to long terms of service far from home. In addition, he believed that using the militia would be deleterious to economic development; in his words, “the loss of labor and disconcertion of the industrious pursuits of individuals” would prove “ruinous to private citizens.” Therefore, Hamilton argued for a peacetime standing army, even if it was “a small one, indeed, but not the less real for being small.” However, he allowed quickly that threats to Western garrisons might make it “expedient to increase our frontier garrisons in some ratio to the force by which

²³ Hamilton, “No. 7: Hamilton,” in Rossiter, *The Federalist Papers*, 61.

²⁴ Hamilton, “No. 24: Hamilton,” in *ibid.*, 161.

our Western settlements might be annoyed,” and at times that enlarged force would also “facilitate future invasions” to assert American control of the West.²⁵ By Hamilton’s reckoning, the new Constitution meant not only an orderly form of government but also a chance for Henry Knox to finally gain the army he had wanted since becoming Secretary of War.

In a sense, the lack of American control in the Ohio valley provided two benefits to arguments made by future Federalists like Hamilton, Jay, and Knox. First, turmoil proved the need for enhanced national power. In other words, Western problems justified creating the new and more powerful government that Federalists supported. Second, the West offered a convenient theater for building up the power of the new U.S. government. As Max Edling noted, proponents of strong central government had to build one without raising the ire of voters. Thus, the state had to be “both inconspicuous and light.” Quite simply, nothing was less conspicuous than building up federal institutions hundreds of miles away in the Ohio valley, where the U.S. government could prove itself capable of defending its lands and citizens while coming into contact with relatively few citizens.²⁶ Federalists found the Ohio valley a prime location to create their new state made for war, and a Western Indian war was its first test.

The Northwest Indian War under Harmar and St. Clair, 1788-1791

²⁵ Hamilton, “No. 24: Hamilton,” in *ibid.*, 161.

²⁶ Max M. Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 58, 122.

Federalist officials in the new federal government wasted little time in moving against the Northwest Indian confederacy. Between the ratification of the Constitution in 1788 and the new federal government taking power in spring 1789, Gov. Arthur St. Clair of the Northwest Territory attempted to reopen negotiations with the Northwest Indian confederacy and defuse the tension between whites and Indians along the Ohio River. After asking for a treaty council in late fall 1788, St. Clair received hesitant replies from invited chiefs in November after they heard rumors that Americans poisoned the whiskey for the meeting and infested gift blankets with smallpox.²⁷ That such rumors were credible suggests how badly relations had decayed by late 1788.

Nevertheless, by mid-December some two hundred members of the Northwest confederacy had arrived at Fort Harmar (near present-day Marietta, Ohio), even though Mohawk leader and British ally Joseph Brant left the meeting before it began and the Shawnee never showed.²⁸ The Indians reflected many of their previous concerns in recorded discussions, particularly over American designs on the land in the region. Wyandot chief Shandotto complained to Gov. St. Clair, “you have gone on from one step to another, so that we don’t know when you’ll stop” and presented a wampum belt with a black stripe through it to

²⁷ Ebenezer Denny, *Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny, an Officer in the Revolutionary and Indian Wars* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1859), 126-127.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 127; and Arthur St. Clair to John Jay, Dec. 13, 1788, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 106. St. Clair claimed Brant “did every thing possible to prevent the rest from coming forward” and seemed to succeed in getting the Shawnee to turn back before arriving at Fort Harmar, suggesting that St. Clair shared the paranoia that the entire Indian confederacy was a British stratagem to regain the Northwest.

symbolize the Ohio River dividing white from Indian lands.²⁹ Shandotto had essentially restated the position his confederacy held since 1786, that Indians would only accept the Ohio River as the boundary between the peoples. Instead of listening to Indian claims as if they were equal partners in a negotiation, St. Clair reasserted the argument behind conquest diplomacy. Replying to Shandotto on January 6, 1789, St. Clair told the gathered Indians, “you took up the hatchet against the United States, and joined the English in the late war. The English to obtain peace, ceded to the United States all the country south of the great lakes.” They could not refuse American terms, either, or “they should have war.” However, St. Clair promised the Indians that if they agreed to American demands, he would “allow them the privilege of hunting any where in the United States’ territory,” as empty a promise as ever was given to Indian negotiators. Still, on January 11, the Indians and St. Clair agreed to the Treaty of Fort Harmar, described by observer and Army Lieutenant Ebenezer Denny as “the last act of the farce.”³⁰

The Treaty of Fort Harmar was actually two separate treaties, one with amicable Iroquois and the other with the hostile confederacy. While the former established boundaries, the latter attempted to address grievances from Indians over horses, trade, and raiding. The confederacy also retained hunting rights in the lands they ceded north of the Ohio River to the United States so long as they agreed to “demean themselves peaceably, and offer no injury or annoyance to...

²⁹ Denny, *Military Journal*, 128-129.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

citizens of the United States.”³¹ Further, while lands were not directly allotted to the Indian signers, the United States still only quit their claim to the land reserved to the Indians, a subtle but definite distinction from actually recognizing Indian rights to the soil and to occupy their lands in perpetuity. Other historians have pointed to the clauses demanding the U.S. government pay roughly \$9,000 for the land ceded in the treaty – tracts that encompassed hundreds of thousands of acres in present-day southern and eastern Ohio – as proof that Indian policy was truly different.³² While the amount of money that the U.S. paid changed, little else did. St. Clair still refused to treat Indian objections as valid and repeated the arguments that the nations had heard since 1783.

St. Clair reported confidently to Pres. Washington in his enclosure with the treaties on May 2 that through his efforts, “their general confederacy is entirely broken; indeed, it would not be very difficult, if circumstances required it, to set them at deadly variance.”³³ However, St. Clair badly misread the circumstances. The farce at Fort Harmar turned many Indian nations away from treating with the United States altogether. The Shawnee continued their refusal to negotiate with the U.S. after 1786 by boycotting the Fort Harmar negotiations, and other nations quickly repudiated the treaty after it was signed.³⁴ Their disgust with American

³¹ “Treaty of Fort Harmar,” January 9, 1789, in *ASP:IA*, I: 6.

³² See, for example, Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 123. Cayton argues that fairness in the purchase price or how the treaty was written was really beside the point. Instead, “The significance here was not the amount but the shift in American policy.”

³³ St. Clair to Washington, May 2, 1789, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 193.

³⁴ Reginald Horsman, *The Frontier in the Formative Years, 1783-1815* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 39-40; and Isabel Thompson Kelsay, *Joseph Brant: Man of Two Worlds* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 433.

officials turned into action against American settlers as 1789 progressed, too. By September, St. Clair wrote to President Washington that “constant hostilities” between Indians and Kentuckians offered “embarrassing circumstances to the government of the Western Territory.”³⁵ In December, Virginia state representatives from districts along the Ohio River complained to Washington that their constituents were “open to the ravages of the Indians.” They declared their homes vulnerable “until more effective measures are adopted for our defence” and recommended St. Clair “grant all the relief that is necessary for our safety.”³⁶ The new federal government had not contained the Indian threat in the Ohio valley, and Western residents clamored for force to relieve their stresses.

The Washington administration responded inconsistently, being at once conciliatory and dismissive toward the Northwest confederacy. On June 15, 1789, Knox reported to the President that “unless some decisive measures are immediately adopted to terminate these mutual hostilities, they will probably become general” along the Ohio. To defuse the situation, he suggested the U.S. government recognize that Indians “possess the right of the soil,” except if gained “by their free consent, or by the right of conquest in a just war.” To slow the violence and offer more to the Indians, Knox recommended “a liberal system of justice should be adopted for the various Indian tribes.” On September 17, President Washington asked Congress to standardize how the U.S. government made and recognized Indian treaties to make “national proceedings... uniform”

³⁵ St. Clair to Washington, September 14, 1789, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 123.

³⁶ John P. Duvall, et al., to Washington, December 12, 1789, in *ASP:IA*, I: 85-86.

and ensure that Indian policy was “directed by fixed and stable principles.” However, the U.S. Army was still to stand behind those promises of fairness and stable principles in Indian policy. Knox suggested that “raising an army, and extirpating the refractory tribes” would be a viable alternative to making peace with the Indians, though “the laws of nature” dictated that the federal government hear “the cause of the ignorant Indians.” However, if they chose to “persist in their depredations, the United States may with propriety inflict such punishments as they shall think proper.”³⁷ With an Indian confederacy in the Northwest largely unwilling to listen to American overtures by 1789, Knox saw an ever greater opportunity for his army to smash Indian resistance in the Northwest Territory.

While Knox claimed justice prevented his actions, he was also quick to note the temporary shortcomings of the new government. In May 1789, he wrote that building a new fort in the midst of the confederacy as a viable alternative to taking the British forts at Niagara and Detroit, but the U.S. Army could not build it for want of men and money.³⁸ The next month, he declared that “the finances of the United States would not at present admit” a punitive expedition against the Northwest Indian confederacy. Even if he would not have his army, he still insisted on maintaining the focus of Indian policy on dispossessing the Indian nations of the Northwest. Though force was not viable at the moment, he still believed Indians would retreat from the region with time. By keeping peace in the Northwest – whether by negotiation or by the deterrence of a more powerful

³⁷ Knox to Washington, June 15, 1789, in *ASP:IA*, I: 13; and *AC*, 1st Cong., 1st sess., 83.

³⁸ Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 83.

standing army in the Ohio valley – the U.S. could still facilitate its own expansion. As he wrote, “As the settlements of the whites shall approach near to the Indian boundaries... the game will be diminished, and the lands being valuable to the Indians only as hunting grounds, they will be willing to sell further tracts for small considerations.”³⁹ Indian policy early in the Washington administration may have been interested in justice with the Indians, but that concern partially served broader interests in expedience, thrift, and land acquisition.

Despite the reasons Knox had to steer Washington toward conciliation, he never abandoned his ambitions for taking the Northwest by force. In the early days of the Washington administration, he was not alone. From the Northwest Territory, Gov. Arthur St. Clair continually lobbied for an army to turn back raiding Indians throughout the year, asking in June for funds to carry out a new treaty with nations along the Wabash River because “the savages should be brought to peace, either by treaty, or by force.” By September, though, he took a different approach. Raiding between Indians and Kentuckians resulted in “embarrassing circumstances to the government of the Western Territory,” and he asked Washington, “give me the orders you may think proper.”⁴⁰ Knox still wanted his army, and by autumn 1789 St. Clair was desperate to use it, too.

To redress the problems, he asked for temporary powers to activate the Virginia and Pennsylvania militias because resolving the violence along the Ohio required more than the regulars he derided as a mere “handful of troops.” St.

³⁹ Knox to Washington, June 15, 1789, in *ASP:IA*, I: 13-14.

⁴⁰ St. Clair to Washington, June 14, 1789, in *ibid.*, I: 15; and St. Clair to Washington, September 14, 1789, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 123.

Clair said his enhanced defensive efforts would “justify me in holding a language to the Indians which might obviate the necessity of employing force.”⁴¹ In his view, expedience required much more than a mere shift in negotiating style, and St. Clair made a powerful case for an enlarged U.S. Army in the Northwest Territory even if he did not send it into battle. In response, the President relayed to St. Clair a warning in October to stubborn Indians echoing Knox’s warnings from June. According to Washington, if “after manifesting clearly to the Indians the dispositions of the General Government for the preservation of peace... they should continue their incursions, the United States will be constrained to punish them with severity.”⁴² The Washington administration seemed ready and willing to punish by late 1789, but they needed an army to accomplish it.

St. Clair and Washington began arguing for a larger army by September 1789, even if they did not succeed in persuading Congress to grant them a new Northwestern army. St. Clair wrote on September 14 of the growing frequency of Indian raids, “It is not to be expected... the Kentucky people will or can submit patiently to the cruelties and depredations of those savages.”⁴³ In other words, events demanded a larger army to control the Indians and preserve public order. On September 16, the day before Washington asked Congress for a uniform Indian policy, he argued that increased violence along the Ohio River required the Senate to aid the U.S. Army by calling out state militias.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid., II: 124.

⁴² Washington to St. Clair, October 6, 1789, in *ibid.*, II: 126.

⁴³ Arthur St. Clair to Washington, September 14, 1789, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 124.

⁴⁴ Washington to the Senate, September 16, 1789, in *ASP:IA*, I: 57.

However, President Washington provided the strongest call for an army in his First Annual Message to Congress on January 8, 1790. The fomenting Indian war lay at the center of the message's argument, one that could have doubled as a Hamiltonian statement of purpose. Arguing that federal power should be used to encourage domestic manufacturing and commerce, Washington echoed Hamilton's advice but also spoke of building up federal administrative capacities through the post office and education. However, before he spoke of the nation's economic future, he began by discussing a stronger military and more aggressive Indian policy with a clear eye on the Ohio River. Offering a classic Federalist argument, he implored Congress to expand the U.S. Army because "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." Only regular troops would suffice to ensure "A free people... armed, but disciplined," too, so he recommended Congress consider the new army "indispensable." Washington clearly intended to use his new army against the Indians, as he continued with a declaration that the U.S. needed to protect its Western frontiers to "afford protection... and if necessary, to punish aggressors."⁴⁵ Washington outlined a new American state at the center of creating a manufacturing power as well as a well-educated and well-connected population. Nonetheless, military force lay at the foundation of the American future.

On January 11, Congress took up the President's proposal to raise an army for answering Indian raids in the West. Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania recorded his opposition to the Senate's promise in their reply to

⁴⁵ AC, 1st Cong., 2nd sess., 969; and Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 86.

Washington that “our attention shall be directed to the objects of common defence” in his diary, calling it “the most servile echo I ever heard” and decried it as a “stale ministerial trick in Britain.” Further, he described the bill to increase the U.S. Army taken up that week as “a spoiled piece of business” inspired by a Secretary of War who “wants to labor in his vocation.” When the issue came before the Senate again in April, he declared it was “the corner-stone of a standing army.” In debates on the Senate floor, administration allies supplied proof to Maclay. On April 21, he recorded that Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut argued the bill “could mean nothing short of a standing army.” Even 1,200 men were not enough for many budding Federalists; Maclay worried after Sen. Ralph Izard of South Carolina “wished for a standing army of ten thousand men” in his speech and seemingly “feared nothing from them.”⁴⁶ Maclay the administration opponent and soon-to-be Jeffersonian suggested Federalists found Indian warfare a convenient reason to build a new military and a new national state.

In linking together arguments for Hamilton’s financial policies and a powerful army, Maclay was criticizing the entire fiscal-military state that Federalists, especially Henry Knox and Alexander Hamilton, sought to build during the Washington administration. As defined by historian Max Edling, the fiscal-military state was primarily a state designed for waging war. While armies and budgets may grow over time, fiscal-military states grew specifically because states centralized their power over both.⁴⁷ In raising a new national army that

⁴⁶ AC, 1st Cong., 2nd sess., 972; and Maclay, *Journal of William Maclay*, 174-175.

⁴⁷ Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government*, 48-49.

could wage war against foreign and domestic threats by way of the Indian war in the Northwest, Federalists also raised the ire of Maclay. Seeing the spectre of conspiracy for the new fiscal-military state, Maclay outlined what he understood as the Federalist program in his diary. In his view, they argued that “we must have a mass of national debt to employ the treasury,” and shortly after would come “an army for fear the Department of War should lack employment.” Information from the Ohio valley served their purposes only too perfectly to Maclay. Federalists could never build their fiscal-military state through sheer force of argument, he reasoned, but they could through a constant line of threats to the very future of the Union. He summarized his thinking by declaring “New phantoms for the day must be created” to justify the new standing army, and those new soldiers would soon be employed in their new profession. As he fumed about the new army bill of January 1790, “Give Knox his army, and he will soon have a war on hand.”⁴⁸

Despite strenuous objections from Maclay and other anti-administration members of Congress, both houses acceded to Washington’s request in late April by doubling the U.S. Army to over 1,200 enlisted men, plus officers needed to command them. Further, Congress empowered the President to call up state militias at the administration’s discretion to quell Indian uprisings and protect Western settlers.⁴⁹ While the new U.S. Army would be at the core of the forces

⁴⁸ Maclay, *Journal of William Maclay*, 239-240.

⁴⁹ “An Act for regulating the Military Establishment of the United States,” April 30, 1790, in United States Congress, *United States Statutes at Large* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1845), I: 119-121.

fighting the Northwest Indian confederacy for the next four years, Washington was essentially given the freedom to enlarge the military as he pleased – even if only temporarily. Meanwhile, Knox had planned to employ state militias against the Indians but lacked the ability to do so in the Northwest. However, with the new law in April, he saw five years of tireless advocacy rewarded with a powerful new U.S. Army and an opportunity to use the militia as needed.

Knox began to recruit and outfit new soldiers almost immediately. Meanwhile, Hamilton forwarded his sentiments to Gov. St. Clair that Western settlers had to be protected by U.S. government. He reasoned on May 19, “There is a Western Country. It *will* be settled,” suggesting his own commitment to westward expansion. Removing the Indian threat to settlements would also “lay hold of the affections of the settlers and attach them... to the Government of the Nation.”⁵⁰ However, on May 27, Knox compiled a report that suggested federal policy to that date had not attached settlers to the new government. His analysis of the news received about Indian raids along the Ohio River during the winter and spring of 1790 revealed “the inefficacy of defensive operations against the banditti Shawanese... and some of the Wabash Indians.” Citing “The bad effect it has on the public mind,” Knox recommended “extirpating [them]... if any practical measures can be devised.”⁵¹

⁵⁰ Hamilton to St. Clair, May 19, 1790, in Harold C. Syrett, ed., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), VI: 421. Emphasis as in original.

⁵¹ Knox, “Summary Statement of the Situation of the Frontiers by the Secretary of War,” May 27, 1790, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 146.

Two weeks later on June 7, Knox authorized Harmar to use the new army against the recalcitrant Northwest confederacy. The warnings of Judge Harry Innes were addressed before he ever voiced them, and the new federal government embarked on a course of action that Knox determined would only end with the complete defeat of the Indian menace. He ordered Harmar not to cease until the Indians were clearly defeated, and similarly he told St. Clair that “no exertions or pains must be spared” in the war effort. Once the Indians were defeated, they would be ready to negotiate. Knox informed St. Clair in August that he wanted the campaign to “produce in the Indians a proper disposition for peace,” at which point the governor could extract a new peace treaty “under certain circumstances of humiliation.” Federalists in the administration clearly had given up on an amicable solution. As historian Richard H. Kohn wrote of the new policy, “Military strategy now controlled the Indian policy which it was supposed to serve.”⁵² Peace would only come if – or, as far as Knox believed, when – the U.S. Army vanquished the Northwestern Indians.

In his letters to Harmar and St. Clair, the Secretary of War recommended a small force that could be organized and moved quickly. An army of “one hundred continental, and three hundred militia...all picked men” and mounted on horses would allow Harmar to strike before the Indians could react and thus “most probably ensure success.”⁵³ Nevertheless, Harmar chose a larger force of mostly infantry and readied it at Fort Washington (located outside the new town

⁵² Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 104.

⁵³ Knox to Harmar, June 7, 1790, in *ASP:IA*, I: 97.

of Cincinnati) along the Ohio River.⁵⁴ Harmar left Fort Washington, as did a second arm of his offensive under the command of John Hamtramck from Vincennes, on the last day of September. Hamtramck had to turn back two weeks later after only conducting one major raid on an Indian village, meaning that the diversion that Harmar planned from his force essentially failed.

Harmar did not fare much better. On October 20, he ordered his troops to burn the surrounding villages so Indians could not easily resume their lives at the confederacy's principal town of Kekionga (located at the present-day site of Fort Wayne, Indiana). While Harmar and Lieutenant Ebenezer Denny both estimated that the army burned some three hundred homes and twenty thousand bushels of crops in the fields, a fight on the morning of October 22 turned back the American advance at Kekionga. In the battle, the Americans lost 183 men against around forty Indians killed, and afterward Harmar's force retreated to Fort Washington until November 3.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Harmar reported positively of his expedition the next day, writing from Fort Washington that by destroying Kekionga the confederacy's "head quarters of iniquity were broken up." On November 6, St. Clair relayed a similar message to Sec. Knox with a confident statement that "that savages have got a most terrible stroke."⁵⁶ However, their

⁵⁴ For a more detailed narrative of the Harmar campaign, see Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 148-154; William H. Guthman, *March to Massacre: A History of the First Seven Years of the United States Army, 1784-1791* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), 185-198; Howard H. Peckham, "Josiah Harmar and His Indian Expedition," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 55 (1946): 227-241; and Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 89-122.

⁵⁵ Denny, *Military Journal*, 148-149.

⁵⁶ Harmar to Knox, November 4, 1790, in *ASP:IA*, I: 104; and St. Clair to Knox, November 6, 1790, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 190.

optimism convinced neither Washington administration officials nor their opponents. The President wrote on November 19 of his “disappointment” in the Harmar expedition that expended large amounts of federal money “without honor or profit” to show for it all. William Maclay also recorded in December that the tone of Harmar’s claims belied “reason to believe it is unsuccessful.”⁵⁷

Still, Washington argued for a strong response in his Second Annual Message to Congress on December 8, 1790. Inaction, he feared, would allow more frequent raids across the Ohio River by “Certain banditti of Indians from the northwest side of the Ohio... [who] have of late been particularly active in their depredations.” The people of Kentucky, who were applying for statehood at the time, deserved more. Thus, he asked Congress for the power it needed to end the Indian insurrections once and for all. Washington cited two reasons for his request, with the first being that the “sentiments of warm attachment to the Union, and its present Government” from citizens in the prospective state of Kentucky demanded that the U.S. government act to help them. Second, he argued for ensuring “the safety of the Western settlements” that Indians – whether members of the belligerent Northwest confederacy or more peaceful nations – knew “the Government of the Union is... capable of punishing their crimes” when they refused to accept “humane invitations and overtures.”⁵⁸

Washington received a favorable reply from Congress in the ensuing months as well. The Senate promised to comply with Washington’s requests on

⁵⁷ Washington to Knox, November 19, 1790, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 310; and Maclay, *Journal of William Maclay*, 349.

⁵⁸ AC, 1st Cong., 3rd sess., 1771.

December 10, declaring in their official response to the Annual Message that “we shall cheerfully concur in the provisions which the expedition... may require on the part of the Legislature, and in any other which the future peace and safety of our frontier settlements may call for.” Meanwhile, the House replied December 13 with promises to support the President in prosecuting the war to its end. As they wrote, “we sympathise too much with our Western brethren, not to behold with approbation the watchfulness and vigor which have been exerted by the Executive authority, for their protection.” That protection, they apparently decided, would only be secured when the U.S. government “will make the aggressors sensible that it is their interest to merit, by a peaceable behavior, the friendship and humanity which the United States are always ready to extend.”⁵⁹

Also working in the administration’s favor was that opponents could not agree on how to approach the war after Harmar’s defeat. Committed administration foe Rep. James Jackson of Georgia found Washington’s remarks on the Indian war incomplete, arguing that the President also needed to discuss the Treaty of Hopewell that the United States recently signed with the Creek nation. Despite his complaints over treaty provisions that reserved land in the state of Georgia for the Creek and rumored secret provisions within the treaty, Jackson still supported the war effort. As he said in House debates over the Annual Message reply, he was “as fully impressed with the importance of an Indian war, and of extending the protection of Government to our defenceless frontiers, as any man whatever.” Thus, he “had no doubt of the necessity of the

⁵⁹ AC, 1st Cong., 3rd sess., 1776.

measures taken to chastise the banditti on the Ohio.” Despite being one of the most vocal and radical opponents of the administration in the First U.S. Congress, Jackson supported the war.⁶⁰

However, William Maclay was more strident in his concerns. While he wrote of the Senate reply that “The echo was a good one,” he still complained heartily about the war. In his view, the entire war was “undertaken against the Wabash Indians without any authority of Congress, and, what is worse... we have reason to believe it is unsuccessful.” When Washington forwarded news about attacks on Western posts to the Senate on January 27, 1791, Maclay found it intolerable that once again developments were very convenient for the Federalist cause. The state of affairs led him to seethe about the entire affair in his diary, “The wishes of many people are gratified to involve us in war.” It meant an aggrandizement of the fiscal-military state, too, and since “To involve us in expense... seems to be the great object of their design,” Maclay found the Federalists using the Northwest Indian War to their advantage. As he finished his remarks, “had a system been needed to involve us in the depth of difficulty with the Indians, none better could have been devised.”⁶¹

Other anti-administration Congressmen also clearly expressed their views of the Federalist program, of which Indian affairs had become a part. In the First

⁶⁰ AC, 1st Cong., 3rd sess., 1839. For more on Jackson’s pivotal role as an administration opponent in Congress and as a partisan leader in Georgia, see Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 123, 143; and George R. Lamplugh, “‘Oh the Colossus! The Colossus!’: James Jackson and the Jeffersonian Republican Party in Georgia, 1796-1806,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 9, no. 3 (Autumn 1989), 315-334.

⁶¹ Maclay, *Journal of William Maclay*, 349.

Congress, they coalesced around opposition to the standing army Federalists built for the Northwest, the fiscal system that paid for it, the style in which they governed. Maclay shared a deep suspicion of Federalists over a standing army with fellow anti-administration Rep. Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, who had led national opposition to a standing army since 1783.⁶² Jackson and Maclay also criticized Hamilton's fiscal system for its reliance on funded debts and supposed federal overreach. Jackson was especially outspoken, declaring Hamilton's national bank as a monopoly for Northern mercantile interests that would prove detrimental to the nation's future.⁶³ Maclay denounced what he perceived as ministerial tricks, and Jackson exclaimed of secret provisions in the Treaty of Hopewell, "Good God! at this early period," Federalists tried to make the laws of the United States "like those of *Caligula*," engaging emerging suspicions that Federalists meant to recreate the British system.⁶⁴ Still, anti-administration Congressmen were clearer on what they did not like than what they did. Without a positive statement of purpose they could not unite in early 1791, but the war did offer them an outlet to express their concerns.

Whether facing clear opposition or not, Federalists continued to advocate for a new campaign in 1791. In January, Knox reported to Washington that Harmar's defeat led to some four hundred miles of settlements along the Ohio River being "destitute to every kind of support" against Indians who were "flushed

⁶² Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 557, 594.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 229; and Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion*, 142-143.

⁶⁴ *AC*, 1st Cong., 3rd sess., 1839; and Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion*, 116.

with victory” and could strike against the settlers at any moment. In February, a report in the *Providence Gazette* agreed that Harmar’s campaign made “the Indian War...a general one,” while “other Tribes, who heretofore have been neutral, have joined the hostile Indians.”⁶⁵ Other reports of Indian raids showed up in various newspapers in February and March, including the Big Bottom Massacre in January and a series of other raids along the Ohio River republished throughout the Atlantic coast.⁶⁶ Because of the renewed war, settlers were abandoning their new homes in the Ohio valley in fear for their lives, but many reports remained hopeful. For example, the *Providence Gazette* reported that “a force will be sent to Indian country early in the Spring, competent to teach these Barbarians very different Ideas of the Power of the United States.”⁶⁷

To buoy that confidence and demonstrate federal abilities to respond to the needs of Westerners, Henry Knox acted by March to stop the raids through peace offers and war preparations. In doing both at once, he offered what had become a typical approach to the Northwest confederacy. Richard Kohn argued that the Washington administration “slid inexorably into a war, against its will, unknowingly, unwittingly, all the time groping for peace” despite years of “mistakes” made by simultaneously sending out peace offers and enlarging the

⁶⁵ Knox to Washington, January 5, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 107; and *Providence Gazette*, February 5, 1791.

⁶⁶ For examples of these sorts of reprints, see *American Mercury* (Hartford, CT), February 14, 1791; and *Norwich Packet* (CT), March 25, 1791. A longer exploration into the Big Bottom Massacre appears in Patrick Griffin, “Reconsidering the Ideological Origins of Indian Removal: The Case of the Big Bottom ‘Massacre,’” in Andrew R.L. Cayton and Stuart D. Hobbs, eds., *The Center of a Great Empire: The Ohio Country in the Early Republic* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 11-35.

⁶⁷ *Providence Gazette*, February 5, 1791.

military. However, so many years of repeating “mistakes” continually suggests that Knox actually saw credible threats of military force as an effective tool in treaty negotiations. After all, he often spoke of the U.S. Army as a force capable of bringing peace, even if that peace might only come after a march of fixed bayonets. Further, his March 11 orders to diplomat Thomas Procter of Philadelphia revealed that Knox continued to believe in dealing with Indians aggressively at all times. He asked Procter to forward an invitation for peace negotiations at Fort Washington on the grounds that “The white men and the red men inhabit the same country, and ought to be good friends.” Still, he said, only a treaty would “save [them] from ruin.”⁶⁸

While Knox claimed that the U.S. wanted to make a treaty “unmixed with fear, and dictated by pure principles of humanity,” he coupled peace offers with naked threats of violence. He implored belligerent Indians to cease their raids or learn at their peril that “The United States are powerful, and able to send forth such numbers of warriors as would drive you entirely out of the country.” Indians were also given little choice between submitting to American terms and fighting American troops. If the confederacy refused the American offer, Knox predicted that decision “would be absolute destruction to you, your women, and your children.” Listen carefully to the American offer for peace, he suggested even after the confederacy had bested American soldiers in battle, or “your doom must be sealed for ever.” Predictably, the confederacy had little use for American offers and invitations. In a definite understatement, Procter reported back to

⁶⁸ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 95; and Knox to the Miami Indians, March 11, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 146-147.

Knox that the Indians “were not always convinced” that the invitation was genuine, while British agent and Mohawk leader Joseph Brant encouraged the confederacy “to pay no attention to what should be said to them.”⁶⁹ Offers of peace under serious threats to peoples already indisposed to hear from American diplomats essentially meant a half-hearted effort to secure peace but more likely a plan to halt raids along the Ohio River temporarily.

Even as Procter traveled west with an oddly belligerent peace offering, Knox was planning two different expeditions for 1791. On March 9 – even before Knox sent Procter on a fool’s errand – he ordered Brig. Gen. Charles Scott of the Kentucky militia on a campaign designed “to impress the Indians with a strong conviction of the power of the United States” and, with a goal of disabusing “deluded” Indians of their views, “inflict that degree of punishment which justice may require.” To accomplish those goals, Scott was to use a hand-picked squad of cavalry who could move quickly but also take prisoner “as many as possible, especially women and children,” though he should ensure under “positive orders...that all such captives be treated with humanity.”⁷⁰ Scott struck in late May and early June, sacking the Kickapoo town of Ouatennon near the Wabash River with minimal losses. The mobility of the Kentuckians allowed them to strike quickly and kill thirty-two Indians and capture fifty-eight more while Kentuckian casualties amounted to only five men wounded; elsewhere, his lieutenants

⁶⁹ Knox to the Miami Indians, March 11, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 147; and Thomas Procter to Knox, July 9, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 155.

⁷⁰ Knox to Charles Scott, March 9, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 129-130.

captured two other Indian villages without losing any casualties and all of the villages were burned soon afterward.⁷¹

Knox commissioned Gov. St. Clair for a second expedition on March 21, even before Scott could ready his cavalry. St. Clair received funds to build a fort at the old site of Kekionga and strike at the confederacy once again. Like Scott, he was also to take “a considerable number of prisoners...particularly women and children” aimed toward “humbling the Indians, inducing them to sue for mercy.” In sum, Knox said both campaigns were to “show all lawless adventurers that, notwithstanding the distance, Government possess the power of preserving peace and good order on the frontiers.”⁷² Still, despite the great expenses and the experience of the Harmar expedition on his side, St. Clair’s expedition suffered from poor supplies and slow travel.⁷³ After many delays in building Fort Hamilton, located less than twenty-five miles north of Fort Washington near Cincinnati, St. Clair travelled less than one hundred miles in a full month. In that time, his army dwindled from 2,300 soldiers to 1,400, and deserters were so numerous that a full regiment of regulars fell back to prevent further desertion and protect supply trains from attacks by deserters.⁷⁴ On the

⁷¹ Scott to Knox, June 28, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 131; Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 156; and Sword, *President Washington’s Indian War*, 139-141.

⁷² Knox to St. Clair, March 21, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 171-172; and Knox to Washington, January 22, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 113.

⁷³ Complaints about poor supplies can be found in Denny, *Military Journal*, 157, 160; Winthrop Sargent, “Winthrop Sargent’s Diary while with General Arthur St. Clair’s Expedition Against the Indians.” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications* 33 (1924): 245-246; and St. Clair to Knox, November 1, 1791, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 250.

⁷⁴ Denny, *Military Journal*, 162-163. Complaints about the poor supplies during St. Clair’s expedition can be found in Denny, *Military Journal*, 157, 160; Winthrop Sargent, “Winthrop Sargent’s Diary while with General Arthur St. Clair’s Expedition Against the Indians.” *Ohio*

morning of November 4, St. Clair's bedraggled army was ambushed and left all of its cannon, over three hundred horses, and a miscellany of other supplies in such quantities that the Indians could not carry it all away.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, 630 U.S. soldiers lay dead and three hundred more were wounded against twenty to forty Indian warriors lost. It was the worst defeat that Indians ever handed the U.S. Army, as St. Clair lost more men than at Braddock's defeat and three times more men than George Custer at Little Bighorn.⁷⁶

Information about St. Clair's defeat trickled back east in November and December, but it initially sparked an outward show of confidence from the Washington administration and its Federalist allies. On December 12, Washington relayed the news to Congress in a short message but promised, "Although the national loss is considerable... it may be repaired without great difficulty." Henry Knox responded similarly, consoling St. Clair in his defeat on December 23, "The mind, instead of being depressed, must be braced to prepare an adequate remedy." That adequate remedy seemed to be a stronger military and a third campaign. Two weeks after writing to St. Clair, he remained defiant about Indian resistance in the Northwest in a letter to friendly Seneca chief Cornplanter. Knox informed the chief that the war would be "troublesome" to

Archaeological and Historical Publications 33 (1924): 245-246; and St. Clair to Knox, November 1, 1791, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 250.

⁷⁵ Sargent, "Winthrop Sargent's Diary," 265; Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 188-189.

⁷⁶ Denny, *Military Journal*, 168-169; Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 106; Leroy V. Eid, "American Indian Military Leadership: St. Clair's 1791 Defeat," *The Journal of Military History* 57, no. 1 (January 1993), 71; Sargent, "Winthrop Sargent's Diary," 262; and Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 195.

continue, but “in the long run, we must conquer.” National pride may have been a factor in his decision, but he cited a need to protect settlers and because of it, “if much evil befall the bad Indians, they will have brought it upon themselves.”⁷⁷ The administration’s response, it seems, was to stay an unswerving course toward conquering the Northwest confederacy.

The Politics of Conquest: Partisanship and Indian War, 1792-1794

Despite the certitude shown by Washington and Knox, St. Clair’s defeat ultimately represented an ordeal for the new Federalist faithful. The war sparked discussion of a number of issues, among them questions about what led to yet another American failure in the Northwest, how to resolve that defeat, and how to win a war that was becoming unpopular. In addition, Federalist war supporters had to contend not with the vaguely-defined opposition that was unsure of its direction after Harmar’s defeat, but with a clearly more partisan opposition heading into one of the first contested elections in American history. Federalists eventually emerged from these debates with a clearer idea of who they were, meaning that the Northwest Indian War provided a powerful formative moment in party history. Coming out of 1792 and heading toward the Anthony Wayne campaign, Federalists had seized ownership of the war. Further, they defined themselves in national politics and firmly declared themselves as proponents of a powerful military and muscular Indian policy despite the costs.

⁷⁷ AC, 2nd Cong., 1st sess., 242; Knox to St. Clair, December 23, 1791, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 276; and Knox to Cornplanter, January 7, 1792, in *ASP:IA*, I: 226.

News of the defeat spread through the press by December 1791, being reported in a Boston newspaper on December 19, in New Hampshire on December 21, and in Connecticut on December 22.⁷⁸ In the wake of defeat came uncertainty. As Philadelphia's *Federal Gazette* reported on January 3, 1792, Indians had been raiding along the Ohio River throughout 1791 and St. Clair's defeat left them unaffected, as raids "have continued without intermission to the present." On January 6, the paper reported that Pittsburgh residents were alarmed at possible Indian raids against them because "The Seneca Warriors could, in twenty four hours, come down the river perhaps with not less than 5 or 600, and we in our poor defenceless state we now are, could not mass more than 200 raw undisciplined men." Nonetheless, the *Gazette* writer urged the United States to continue the war because "It is our duty." Despite the "calamities... lately suffered," the government had a duty to ensure that "the sword of the enlightened citizen banish from our frontiers the tomahawk of the cruel savage." Similarly, a poem on the war in the January 18 edition predicted an American victory and concluded, "*And when they're ours we'll make them civil,/Or drive them headlong to the devil.*"⁷⁹

However, the burgeoning Republican opposition stated their problems with the war. Western Pennsylvania settler John Badollet wrote to his friend Albert Gallatin after hearing of St. Clair's defeat that he would rather "let the indians capture a few boats now & then, than to convince them at the expence of so

⁷⁸ *Boston Gazette*, December 19, 1791; *New-Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth), December 21, 1791; and *Connecticut Gazette* (New London), December 22, 1791.

⁷⁹ *Federal Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 3, January 6, and January 18, 1792.

much money & blood of our... inability to punish them.” Meanwhile, Republican newspapers were more strident in their opposition. The Boston *Independent Chronicle* asked simply, “Are we... in *immediate need* of unmeasureable tracts of wilderness? Or is it absolutely necessary for them to wage a distressing and expensive war to obtain them?” Repeating arguments common to administration foes in earlier years, the same correspondent to the *Chronicle* also warned against “ambition of those *whose interest* prompts them to war.” Another *Chronicle* piece reprinted in Philadelphia also warned against a new campaign and offered a veiled shot at Knox, saying the entire effort continued “merely to gratify the pride of a few ambitious *overgrown* individuals.”⁸⁰ Vigilance against such ambition was a rallying point for anti-administration Congressmen before the St. Clair campaign, and afterward it would firm up opposition to the war and the larger plans of Hamilton and Knox among the new “republican interest.”

By January 1792, the Northwest Indian War became an early point of contention in that year’s Philadelphia newspaper “war” between Philip Freneau’s Republican *National Gazette* and John Fenno’s Federalist *Gazette of the United States*. It heated up over the Indian war as much as the fiscal policy debates later that year described more fully by other historians. Philadelphia Republicans voiced their opposition to the war in the *National Gazette* and the more neutral *Federal Gazette*, as writers questioned the war for multiple reasons. One piece

⁸⁰ John Badollet to Albert Gallatin, January 30, 1792, quoted in Gayle Thornborough, ed., introduction to *The Correspondence of John Badollet and Albert Gallatin, 1804-1836* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1963), 15; *Independent Chronicle* (Boston), December 29, 1791; *Federal Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 2, 1792; and *National Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 2, 1792.

attacked the Federalist establishment directly, hoping the recent campaign “will caution us from prosecuting any longer a war in that country” and encourage the people to ignore the calls of “a ‘war establishment,’ urging the necessity of recruiting for a similar expedition.”⁸¹

More pieces questioned the tactics and reasoning for the war. On January 26, the *National Gazette* reprinted an essay from Connecticut that asked simply, “Why send *large bodies* of men after *Indians*; and let them know a year before hand what is to be done?” Further, the justice of the American cause was unclear to the writer, asking, “is the land where we go in quest of Indians, ours?” A piece in the *Federal Gazette* claimed merely to ask questions about the war but hoped unsound policies would be abandoned “to the adoption of others more consonant” with principles of “Justice and sound Policy.” Reflecting concerns that Federalist designs might swallow up the republic, he asked, “Has Government any particular Object... in driving the Indians westward – is there any Point at which we are to stop?” By November, a writer signing as “Many” made similar accusations in *Federal Gazette*. Calling the war an “unsuccessful, expensive and tedious irksomeness,” he questioned the utility of taking the Northwest by force when lands were available farther east. In fact, he argued, the war was a Federalist plot, “a pretext of our government to establish oppression and slavery.”⁸² Just as Maclay had suspected all along, the new

⁸¹ *National Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 2, 1792. For more on the newspaper war, see Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 282-292; and Jeffrey L. Pasley, “*The Tyranny of Printers*”: *Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia), 48-78.

⁸² *National Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 26, 1792; and *Federal Gazette* (Philadelphia), January 21 and November 19, 1792.

“republican interest” had come to see something much darker in Federalist support for the Northwest Indian War by 1792.

In response, Federalists attacked their Republican opponents through the *Gazette of the United States* for what they perceived as political opportunism. On January 14, “A Friend to Government” attacked the Republicans for appealing to natural (but perhaps distasteful) human urges “to suspect, to fear, and to hate superior power.” He also accused Republicans of making the war into nothing more than a campaign prop, asking, “why in their zeal for the poor Indians have they withheld them till the second campaign has ended?” Similarly, declaring “Every thing has its season,” a February report observed, “the Indian war seems to have beaten the debt” as a useful issue, and therefore the new Republicans would question the war only until “the public is tired of it.” Federalists were better than that, he implied, defending higher principles that transcended the short-term logic of electioneering. Jeffersonians believed “truth... is to be hunted down like any other enemy.”⁸³ Meanwhile, Federalists remained steadfast in their principles and their pursuit of victory over the Northwest Indian confederacy.

In addition, Federalists attacked the patriotism of the new Jeffersonians who questioned the war. “A Friend to Government” declared flatly that “He that is not with us, is against us.” Further, Indian aggression demanded a response. In opposing that response, he suggested that Jeffersonians preferred that “the tomahawk fall upon the defenceless women and children” of the West. Instead

⁸³ *Gazette of the United States* (Philadelphia), January 14 and February 11, 1792.

of protecting innocent Americans, they preferred to “lie in wait to wound the national government.” When St. Clair reported his defeat, “They have eagerly seized it.” Another accusatory piece a few weeks later expelled Jeffersonian opposition from the nation entirely. Opposition writings “are the productions of *foreigners*,” the author believed, because of “the inveteracy of these writers against the government now so happily established” and “the total want of *sympathy*... to the prosperity, or the misfortunes of our country.”⁸⁴ For these Federalists, it seems, the Northwest Indian War was central to the future of the republic, and opposition to policies formed by the properly-chosen authorities who led the government meant an opposition to the national future overall. In the late 1790s, Federalists followed similar cues in accusing Jeffersonians of importing radical foreign democratic ideas; they even defined criticism of government as dangerous, even treasonous, through the Alien and Sedition Acts.⁸⁵ Federalists may have been accused of trying to recreate British government in the new nation, but they imagined themselves and their policies as the true defenders of the American people and national honor.

If the war must continue – and clearly the Federalists believed it did – then the government had to create an army that could not fail. Knox hoped to build such an army within weeks of St. Clair’s defeat, suggesting to Washington on December 26, 1791, that the U.S. Army should be increased to 5,168 enlisted

⁸⁴ *Gazette of the United States* (Philadelphia), January 14 and February 4, 1792.

⁸⁵ Seth Cotlar, “The Federalists’ Transatlantic Cultural Offensive of 1798 and the Modern American Democratic Discourse,” in Jeffrey L. Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher, eds., *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 276, 298.

men (plus officers) who would receive higher pay and serve on three-year enlistments. The object, he wrote, was to provide a “strong coercive force” that was absolutely necessary for containing the natural aggression within Indians. St. Clair’s army had been recruited too quickly, was too dependent on militia, and was populated by what one Western observer described as the “idle and dissipated, picked up along the shores and grog shops.”⁸⁶ Thus, Knox wanted the new army to be committed, disciplined, and professional but also large enough to crush Indian resistance and maintain order along the frontier. Knox was nothing if not consistent, especially since he had pushed almost continually since 1785 for a larger army he could use in the Northwest. St. Clair’s defeat offered him an opportunity to finally convince the President and Congress that such an army was absolutely necessary.

On January 26, 1792, Congress took up the issue of enlarging the U.S. Army by three additional regiments to the total force above 5,000 men. Opponents immediately moved to strike the section enlarging the army on the grounds that treatment of the Indians and the resulting war was “was, in its origin... unwise and impolitic. The Indians are with difficulty to be reduced by the sword, but may easily be gained by justice and moderation.” In addition, they decried the new regiments as unnecessary. In their estimation, “the frontier militia are not only equal, but infinitely superior to any regular troops whatever, for the defence of the borders, and... in expeditions against the hostile Indians.”

⁸⁶ Knox, “Statement Relative to the Frontiers Northwest of the Ohio,” December 26, 1791, in *ASP:IA*, I: 198-199; and John Adlum, “John Adlum on the Allegheny: Memoirs for the Year 1794,” quoted in Griffin, *American Leviathan*, 216.

Congressmen mirrored the objections that Republican newspaper contributors voiced, too, worried that Congress was soon to “squander away money by millions” while only “those who are in the secrets of the Cabinet” knew why the war was fought from the beginning. Even worse, these new expenses would likely be paid by adding new excise taxes or extending existing ones, like on whiskey, which Republicans had already opposed.⁸⁷

The next day, administration opponent John Mercer of Maryland offered a withering criticism of the entire Federalist fiscal-military state that underlay the bill. He publicly stated what Maclay would only write privately two years earlier. The new army was too expensive for Mercer, and it would “plac[e] the occupations and productive labor of our citizens under the direction of Government.” It did not create new taxes but the immense annual expense, estimated at over a half-million dollars, would require new revenues. Thus, “as long as the Indian war continues... new taxes must be provided.” Worse, a larger force meant the “Administration will not even permit us to defend the helpless women and children of the frontier from the brutal ferocity of a savage foe” unless “Representatives surrender up forever the sacred trust of the Constitution, and place in the power and under the control of the Executive and Senate, a perpetual tax.”⁸⁸ Mercer and other opponents of the new bill staked out their position as one contrary to the themes they identified in Federalist ideology. In

⁸⁷ AC, 2nd Cong., 1st sess., 337-348. Unfortunately, individual speeches were not separated from one another, so the journal is unclear as to who offered which points. Nonetheless, the day’s speakers are listed at the end of the day’s business.

⁸⁸ AC, 2nd Cong., 1st sess., 349-350.

their attack on the bill, they encompassed what they saw as Federalist support for standing armies, intrusive taxation, secrecy, and “ministerial” government.

The bill’s supporters retorted by laying out a case that depended on three primary principles. First, they appropriated what Peter Silver has recently termed the “anti-Indian sublime” in which visions of Indian violence visited upon innocent heads were used to exemplify how authorities failed to protect settlers. As the case for the larger military went, the fighting in Kentucky from 1783 to 1790 led to “murders and depredations... repeatedly committed by the savages, [that] loudly call for redress.” National impotence in the Ohio valley allowed some 1,500 Kentucky settlers to be killed or kidnapped while similar raids on the Virginia and Pennsylvania frontiers may have claimed yet another 1,500. Though they did not go so far as to employ what Silver described as the “horror-filled rhetoric of victimization” to make their case in the House, stories of frontier violence were too common in newspapers to ignore.⁸⁹ Also, while Silver argued the sublime helped to formulate whiteness among frontier settlers on the mid-1700s frontier, in this case the sublime supported the case for extending American authority into the Northwest through military force.

Second, supporters partially tried to embarrass the House into supporting a larger army. Not only did Indians reject American peace offers, but they reported instances of Indians insulting American commissioners. In one instance, the Indians asked why American forces did not take the British posts within American borders. As one member asked of the other Congressmen, “Will

⁸⁹ AC, 2nd Cong., 1st sess., 343; and Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: Norton, 2008), xx.

it be said that we are unable to do it? Is this language to be used within the United States? No!" Such impotence in the eyes of the Northwest's Indians and British colonial officials was unacceptable. So long as "We are still able to prove that the boasted efficiency of the General Government is something more than an empty name," Congress should "raise both men and money sufficient to defend the nation from either injury or insult." Finally, the war that Republicans opposed could end quickly with the help of crushing military force. They claimed (though rather speciously) that purchasing Indian lands would force the U.S. government to do it "again and again, without end," which would only be "squandering the public money, year after year." Further, they found it preferable to "make a vigorous and effectual exertion to bring the matter to a final issue, than to continue gradually draining the Treasury, by dragging on the war."⁹⁰ Despite whatever reason proved most convincing, the Federalists got their army when both houses of Congress passed the bill and Washington signed it into law on March 26.

In the new act, Congress increased the two existing regiments to 960 enlisted men, and three more were created at the same size, meaning Knox could deploy an army of up to 4,800 enlisted men. In May, Congress also passed two militia acts that empowered the President to call out state militias to suppress insurrections and defined members as "each and every able-bodied white male citizen" between eighteen and forty-five years of age who had to

⁹⁰ AC, 2nd Cong., 1st sess., 345-346.

supply their own weapons and supplies.⁹¹ During the 1791-1792 session, Congress laid out a program that would allow Washington and Knox to create a militarized society if they so wished, and over the next two years they would eventually employ both the new U.S. Army and the ability to raise temporary armies from militia to take on rebellious Indians and white Westerners.

First, though, Knox set himself to planning a third expedition against the Northwest confederacy. For this campaign, Washington selected Georgia Congressman and former Revolutionary War General Anthony Wayne. On April 12, 1792, Knox officially appointed Wayne to his post, and the next day Wayne accepted it “in full confidence.”⁹² Shortly after, Wayne left Philadelphia to assume command at Pittsburgh and plan his expedition. Over the next two years, he added new recruits and built a disciplined force. The long delay, however, spurred on one last bill against the war in late December 1792. Moderate Federalist Rep. John Steele of North Carolina offered his bill and argued for reducing the size of the U.S. Army on December 28 because it placed “extreme burdens...on the people.” The next week, the House engaged in a rather contentious debate over the bill, but committed Federalists offered the strongest reasons against it. Thomas Hartley of Pennsylvania offered perhaps the most ringing endorsement for the new U.S. Army, declaring that it had to remain in place in order to complete its objective of pacifying the Northwest.

⁹¹ AC, 2nd Cong., appendix, 1392.

⁹² Knox to Anthony Wayne, April 12, 1792, in Richard C. Knopf, ed., *Anthony Wayne, A Name in Arms: Soldier, Diplomat, Defender of Expansion Westward of a Nation; The Wayne-Knox-Pickering-McHenry Correspondence* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1960), 15; and Wayne to Knox, April 13, 1792, in Knopf, *Anthony Wayne*, 17.

Continuing his remarks and echoing Washington's declaration in the First Annual Message, Hartley encouraged the rest of the House to obey "a maxim, that the nation which is prepared for war can most easily obtain peace." Ultimately, the House rejected Steele's bill by a 36-20 vote on January 8, 1793, and maintained the Federalists' commitment to keeping a strong military presence in the Northwest Territory.⁹³

Wayne spent much of the next eighteen months after Congress gave his army a second vote of confidence advancing slowly and building forts across present-day Ohio and eastern Indiana. By January 1794, Wayne reported that his army had built the new Fort Recovery on the site of St. Clair's defeat and declared proudly the new fortification would be "an object of consequence to our future Operations" and would "afford an additional security to the Western Frontiers." He preferred nearby Greenville as his headquarters, but his army had still retaken the site of the last great defeat for the United States, and the symbolism behind it was surely not lost on nearby Indians who attacked it in late June 1794. However, the American victory vindicated Wayne's methodical and disciplinarian style as much as for the Federalist approach to the Northwest. Where a quickly assembled army had fallen nearly three years earlier, a much smaller but more professional force had won the day.⁹⁴

⁹³ AC, 2nd Cong., 2nd sess., 762, 778-779, 802.

⁹⁴ Wayne to Knox, January 8, 1794, in Knopf, *Anthony Wayne*, 298; and Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 272.

Four weeks later, Wayne led his army of 3,500 men away from Greenville to the north and east.⁹⁵ He insisted on speed with his soldiers to prevent the Indians from preparing for an attack or ambushing his Legion. As he explained his logic to Knox, “Our advance will be rapid & as secret as the Nature of the case will admit – & before the Enemy can be informed...& prepared to meet it.” By August 8, they reached the confederacy’s new principal town along the Glaize River, where they built Fort Defiance and tarried until August 15.⁹⁶ As the Legion approached the trading post of British agent Alexander McKee on August 18 ready for a pitched battle, the Indian army followed its custom of fasting the night before a battle. However, Wayne’s choice to camp two nights instead of one led to many warriors leaving to hunt or forage for food; by the battle, the Indian army dwindled from as high as 1,400 down to roughly 900.

In the Battle of Fallen Timbers on August 20, Wayne’s men implemented the maneuvers in which they had been drilled since the autumn of 1792. Rather than frenzied retreats like under Harmar and St. Clair, Wayne saw Fallen Timbers become a rout for the U.S. Army. In full flight, the Native Americans ran to nearby British Fort Miamis, where they expected aid but instead discovered

⁹⁵ William Clark, “William Clark’s Journal of General Wayne’s Campaign,” ed. R.C. Magrane, *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 1, no. 3 (December 1914), 419; and Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 156. Clark estimated the force at 2,000 regulars and 1,500 militia, a figure that Kohn accepts as accurate. Also, for more detailed accounts of Wayne’s expedition, see Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 161-166; Paul David Nelson, *Anthony Wayne, Soldier of the Early Republic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 259-268; Sword, *President Washington’s Indian War*, 279-311; and James Wilkinson, “General James Wilkinson’s Narrative of the Fallen Timbers Campaign,” ed. M.M. Quaife, *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (June 1929): 81-90. For an account of the campaign from the British and Indian perspective, see Reginald Horsman, “The British Indian Department and the Resistance to General Anthony Wayne, 1793-1795,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (September 1962), 279-286.

⁹⁶ Wayne to Knox, July 27, 1794, in Knopf, *Anthony Wayne*, 350; Clark, “William Clark’s Journal,” 424-427; and Wilkinson, “General James Wilkinson’s Narrative,” 83.

the garrison under full alert and the doors of the fort closed to them. In a moment soaked with symbolism the British, who had refused to supply direct support to the Northwest confederacy, literally shut their doors in the faces of desperate Indians. After the battle, the Legion burned Indian fields and villages during their return to Fort Defiance, essentially leaving the Northwest Indian confederacy friendless and homeless. Finally, the U.S. Army had struck a decisive blow against the Indian confederacy, and by late September Wayne received two requests for peace. In one, a Wyandot chief asked the U.S. government “to bring forth, from the bottom of your hearts, your sentiments respecting to making a definitive treaty of peace, and upon what terms,” and the other came as an unsigned letter to Anthony Wayne stating wishes to “enjoy, the remainder of our lives, the blessings of peace.”⁹⁷

The Legacies of Conquest: The Federalist Frontier after Fallen Timbers

In winning the Battle of Fallen Timbers, Wayne won for the United States government the first of four victories it would gain before the end of 1795 to solidify its presence in the Northwest. Even more importantly, all four were direct outgrowths of federal activity in the Northwest. The second came in fall 1794 when Federalists succeeded in suppressing the Whiskey Rebellion. Even as Wayne was marching toward Fallen Timbers in August, Washington was seeking a peaceful resolution to the insurrection that had brewed (literally and figuratively) in western Pennsylvania all summer. For many Federalists, Hamilton among

⁹⁷ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 157; Tarke to the United States, September 26, 1794, in *ASP:IA*, I: 527; and unsigned to Wayne, September 27, 1794, in *ASP:IA*, I: 528.

them, the rebellion presented an affront to established federal authority and spoke to growing Federalist worries that their Republican opponents were secretly fomenting rebellion.⁹⁸ More broadly, the protests that led to minor incidents of violence in 1794 violated Federalist ideals of social and political order. President Washington spoke directly to these violations in August, proclaiming on one occasion that the rebels were in their actions “subversive... of the just authority of government” and on another that “the circumstances... strike at the root of all law & order.” The only proper response, he reasoned, was “that the most spirited & firm measures were necessary to rescue the State as well as the general government.”⁹⁹ It was clear that Federalists believed white Western settlers as well as Indians were fit subjects for federal chastisement.

Indians had been “lawless adventurers” and “banditti” who defied American control and upset public order in the Ohio valley, and in western Pennsylvania the Whiskey Rebels also refused to recognize rightful and, as they learned, powerful new federal authority. Thus, while Federalists believed Indians deserved the U.S. Army marching against them to ensure peace and public order, they also thought the Whiskey Rebels deserved the 12,000-strong militia force sent against them. Knox spoke of “punishment” for Indians and Hamilton of

⁹⁸ Richard Kohn, “The Washington Administration’s Decision to Crush the Whiskey Rebellion,” *Journal of American History* 59, no. 3 (December 1972), 568-569; Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 133-137, 163; and Hamilton to Washington, September 9, 1792, in *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, XII: 349. As early as 1792, Hamilton imagined the whiskey tax protests as a covert plan from Jefferson and Madison to “subvert the Government.”

⁹⁹ Washington, “Proclamation of President Washington,” August 7, 1794, in John B. Linn and William H. Egle, eds., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd ser. (Harrisburg: B.H. Meyers, 1876), IV: 124; and “Conference at the President’s,” August 9, 1794, in Linn and Egle, *Pennsylvania Archives*, IV: 144.

“prosecuting with vigor delinquents and offenders” who openly flouted federal authority over internal taxation.¹⁰⁰ When the militia put down the Whiskey Rebels that October, the Washington administration did so under the Militia Acts of 1792, an apparatus of the new American state created partly to confront the Northwest confederacy. In these first two victories at Fallen Timbers and in the Whiskey Rebellion, Federalists established that the newly-minted American military would be a powerful agent in the new nation’s Western lands.

The final two victories were diplomatic ones, but they were still partially the after-effects of the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The third American victory, which came as treaties with Britain and Spain, came after the American show of power in the Northwest. John Jay concluded a treaty with Britain in November 1794 that was hardly fair to merchants on the Atlantic coast, but it was a boon to Western settlers. Article two of the treaty included a British promise to evacuate its posts on American soil before June 1, 1796, leaving the U.S. unrivaled control over the Northwest for the rest of the 1790s.¹⁰¹ The Western articles proved one of the more convincing points in favor of the treaty in the bitterly divided debates over the treaty in the House of Representatives in April 1796 as well. Arch-Federalist Fisher Ames of Massachusetts took to the floor on April 28 to defend the treaty, and his defense was most dramatic when discussing the Western articles. While the rest of the speech was full of Federalist red meat – especially

¹⁰⁰ Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government*, 136; and Hamilton to Washington, August 5, 1794, quoted in Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion*, 177.

¹⁰¹ “Jay’s Treaty,” November 19, 1794, in Samuel Flagg Bemis, *Jay’s Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy*, revised ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962), 444-445; Horsman, “The British Indian Department,” 286.

in rebuking Republicans for their attachments to France – he argued forcefully that rejecting the treaty would throw the Northwest back into open warfare.

Ames's reasoning was simple but clear and powerful. Opposing Jay's Treaty meant that for Westerners, "it will not be peace, but a sword; it will be no better than a lure to draw victims within the reach of the tomahawk." Borrowing from the anti-Indian sublime to dramatize his case, Ames wished he could bellow to "every log-house beyond the mountains... Wake from your false security! Your cruel dangers – your more cruel apprehensions – are soon to be renewed; the wounds, yet unhealed, are to be torn open again" by Republicans killing the treaty. He continued by imploring his fellow Congressmen and the members of the gallery to think of those innocent Westerners. He wished to tell every Westerner, "You are a father: the blood of your sons shall fatten the corn-field! You are a mother: the war-whoop shall wake the sleep of the cradle!" The Northwest without Jay's Treaty and the British retreating from the frontier posts was, quite simply, "a spectacle of horror which cannot be overdrawn."¹⁰²

Ames also leaned on a basic Federalist tenet of Western administration by claiming that settlers deserved and demanded an assertive government to look after them, and Federalists did just that in Jay's Treaty and the Treaty of San Lorenzo with Spain. Ames remarked rather simply that Jay's Treaty had to be accepted because it protected the lives of settlers, and "Protection is the right of

¹⁰² AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 1258-1259. The entire text of Ames's speech is on 1239-1263. Ames so moved many members of the House that the Federalists rose and demanded "The question," essentially asking for a vote after Ames roused their spirits.

the frontier: it is our duty to give it.”¹⁰³ Meanwhile, the Treaty of San Lorenzo protected their commercial prospects. Concluded in October 1795 by Federalist Thomas Pinckney of South Carolina, the treaty opened the Mississippi River to American trade and allowed Americans the right of deposit at New Orleans. Other historians have cited fading Spanish military prowess on the Mississippi and rising American power as important factors in the decision by the Spanish government to accommodate American commerce instead of resist it.¹⁰⁴

These American diplomatic gains led residents in Kentucky and western Pennsylvania toward greater loyalty by 1795. In Kentucky, federal Judge Harry Innes had inquired into what the Spanish could offer to Kentuckians while other Kentuckians protested the whiskey excise. However, by the next year Innes had abandoned his interest in Spain. In western Pennsylvania, residents shifted from vociferously protesting federal action to demanding that their representatives accept the Federalist treaties by late 1795. Guaranteeing safety for settlers and opening markets for their produce led them to contentment with federal administration. Part of that satisfaction came through increased property values brought by Federalist policies. As the *Pittsburgh Gazette* proclaimed proudly of western Pennsylvania, “land that two or three years since was sold for ten shillings per acre, will now bring upwards of three pounds.”¹⁰⁵ Federalist victories

¹⁰³ Ibid., 1259.

¹⁰⁴ Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 439-440.

¹⁰⁵ Tachau, *Federal Courts in the Early Republic*, 48-51; and *Pittsburgh Gazette*, November 21, 1795, quoted in *ibid.*, 484.

in the Northwest again opened the way to further gains by the United States and its citizens.

The final victory also came at a bargaining table, as Anthony Wayne extracted a large land cession from humbled Indians at the Treaty of Greenville. Scholars have praised the treaty for its fairness in dealing with the Indians. For example, Dorothy V. Jones remarked that the Treaty of Greenville was a “landmark...in the diplomacy of the new American nation” in which the U.S. gave up the claims of conquest diplomacy for “only the right of purchase when the Indians wanted to sell,” and the text that includes clauses for laying out Indian lands and purchasing the land cession makes such a conclusion understandable, even somewhat convincing.¹⁰⁶ Still, negotiations were hardly fair, and Wayne treated the process as little more than empty theater. While opening negotiations on July 15, 1795, Wayne told the Indians, “Should you have any well grounded objections...come forward and speak your minds freely.” Though many Indian negotiators protested treaty provisions, Wayne rejected nearly all of their claims and largely dictated the treaty to them. In fact, Wayne had already drafted a tentative treaty before negotiations began, and he based the final treaty on this initial draft.¹⁰⁷ By refusing to genuinely revisit nearly all of the treaty’s provisions, Wayne reasserted the old belief that the Indians had little right to object to American demands. Nonetheless, the treaty was signed on August 3, securing

¹⁰⁶ Jones, *License for Empire*, 174.

¹⁰⁷ “Minutes of a Treaty,” July 15, 1795, in *ASP:IA*, I: 567; and Horsman, “The British Indian Department,” 289. As Horsman wrote, “There was no negotiation in the real sense of the word, for the American government had already drafted the treaty it desired.”

much of present-day Ohio for white settlement and quelling any concerted Indian resistance until the rise of Tecumseh's confederacy.

Patrick Griffin recently described the Treaty of Greenville as the moment when "Jefferson's famous 'empire of liberty'... took shape." but events leading up to Greenville – and the treaty itself – were hardly a Jeffersonian achievement.¹⁰⁸ Rather, it was the culmination of a war that Federalists carried out. Over the course of the war, Federalists claimed ownership of its successes and failures, and they discovered and articulated their own partisan identity through it. They also left a clear legacy in U.S. Indian policy. William Henry Harrison received an education in fighting Indians and negotiating with them while serving under Anthony Wayne.¹⁰⁹

The war was also a primary engine in developing the new American state from the formation of the Constitution through the 1790s. To paraphrase Charles Tilly, Indian war made the early American state, and the early American state made war on Indians.¹¹⁰ From the Confederation army of less than six hundred to an army authorized to be as large as 5,000 in 1795, the Northwest Indian War was the primary factor in the growth of the American military and with it, American power in the Northwest. Outlays by the U.S. government for that army

¹⁰⁸ Griffin, *American Leviathan*, 259.

¹⁰⁹ Robert M. Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer: William Henry Harrison and the Origins of American Indian Policy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 35.

¹¹⁰ Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State Making," in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 42. Tilly said that "War made the state, and the state made war."

grew exponentially as well. St. Clair received a paltry \$14,000 in October 1787 to govern the Northwest Territory for two years, and only five years later a three-year commission for Wayne's Legion expended over \$1,000,000 in total.¹¹¹

As the war ended, the Federalists needed new outlets for the energies of their government. Knox had a recommendation ready in his final report as Secretary of War on December 29, 1794, government had to control "desires of too many frontier white people, to seize, by force or fraud, upon the neighboring Indian lands" to secure a lasting peace in the Northwest. In other words, federal order had to come to the whites who resettled the lands that the Northwest confederacy would cede and vacate. Washington foretold a similar turn in his Seventh Annual Message to Congress on December 8, 1795. While he reported that "our affairs with regard to the foreign powers... and with regard also to those of our Indian neighbors with whom we have been in a state of enmity or misunderstanding, opens a wide field for consoling and gratifying reflections," directing white settlers would ensure the tranquility that the U.S. Army had brought. Better administration of white settlers was needed because control over "the lawless part of our frontier inhabitants are insufficient."¹¹² With the Indian threat removed and the U.S. Army at the head of settlement, Federalists had to approach their next task of administering their conquest.

¹¹¹ "Report of the Board of Treasury," October 22, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 77; and Sword, *President Washington's Indian War*, 51, 204.

¹¹² AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 11-13.

CHAPTER TWO

The Speculator's Republic: Federalist Administration in Territorial Ohio

July 15, 1788 was an important day for the inhabitants of the Northwest Territory and their new governor Arthur St. Clair. After printing copies of the Northwest Ordinance at Marietta, Gov. Arthur St. Clair said the ordinance and the government it helped to establish would mark a new era for the young nation's westward expansion. In that new era, Congress would preserve "the welfare of the citizens of the United States, how remote soever their situation may be." He declared "good government, well administered, is the first of blessings to a people," and under it, "the passions of men are restrained within due bounds; their actions receive a proper direction... and the beautiful fabric of civilized life is reared and brought to perfection." He hoped sincerely to oversee "vast forests converted into arable fields, and cities rising in places which were lately the habitations of wild beasts" with the aid of the settlers in the territory.¹

¹ St. Clair, "Governor St. Clair's Address at Marietta," July 15, 1788, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 53-55.

St. Clair was speaking not to a ragtag band of itinerant migrants at Marietta but to members of a corporate settlement who planned to build a new society with him. Rufus Putnam, the leader of Marietta's settlers with the Ohio Company of Associates, offered a rapturous reply on behalf of the residents that suggested they saw St. Clair's new government as a partner in their enterprise. Putnam declared, "our efforts can succeed only under a wise government," and if St. Clair provided that government, "then indeed are we mutually happy." Thus, Putnam promised, "whatever difficulties may oppose the progress of your noble and beneficent designs, we will, as far as in our power, share in the burdens, alleviate your cares, and, upon all occasions, render a full obedience to the government and the laws."² The Ohio Company, it seems, saw a real partner in St. Clair; with his help, the company could enhance its profits as well as government control over settlement in the Northwest.

That partnership became a tangible one, too, as the Ohio Company resolved in late 1789 to appoint a committee of five to welcome St. Clair upon his return to Marietta after a leave of absence. At his landing, the committee would "inform him of the House prepared for him, & request his Acceptance thereof" as well as "attend to the clearing & putting it in proper Order." By the end of 1790, St. Clair was living in the house provided by the Ohio Company – which had two-stories and measured thirty by thirty-five feet – and owned nearly 1,200 acres of

² Putnam, "Reply of the Citizens of Marietta," July 15, 1788, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 56-57n.

company lands.³ Other officials purchased stock in the Ohio Company as well: Gen. Josiah Harmar and Washington's cabinet members Henry Knox and Alexander Hamilton all invested in Ohio Company stock. In turn, company executives gained federal offices; Marietta leader Rufus Putnam was appointed territorial judge in 1790 and U.S. surveyor-general in autumn 1796, and the company's unofficial lobbyist Manasseh Cutler was elected to Congress from Massachusetts in 1800.⁴

Such partnerships between government and business might be seen as rank corruption today but was unremarkable for St. Clair and the Ohio Company speculators. Government was merely one half of a symbiotic public-private partnership between speculators and officials aimed toward overseeing settlement and building up national power in the Northwest. They also encouraged, according to William J. Novak, "the development of a national infrastructure through the delegation of special powers."⁵ In territorial Ohio, the speculators took over the distribution and settlement of land while officials secured the region with the military, combining to establish a Western society

³ Linda Elise Kalette, "Arthur St. Clair," in *The Papers of Thirteen Early Ohio Political Leaders: An Inventory to the 1976-77 Microfilm Editions* (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society, 1977), 9; Ohio Company, meeting, October 26 and November 21, 1789, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, I: 126; Rufus Putnam, "Lands in the Ohio Company purchas [sic] drawn in the Name of Arthur St. Clair Esquire," September 10, 1790, Box 8, Folder 6, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; and St. Clair to John Cleves Symmes, December 7, 1790, Box 3, Folder 6, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio. To be accurate, Putnam listed six different tracts of land held by St. Clair, which included a total of 1,173 acres and House Lot 294 in Marietta.

⁴ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 25, 47; and Griffin, "Reconsidering the Ideological Origins of Indian Removal," 18.

⁵ William J. Novak, "The Myth of the 'Weak' American State," *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (June 2008), 769.

conducive to federal rule and relying on the federal government to guarantee private property rights. Thus, when Manasseh Cutler spoke of the “design of Congress and of the settlers” in a single breath, it was a frank recognition that private profit and public prerogatives dovetailed quite nicely for the new settlers in the Northwest Territory.⁶

Further, instead of being “Jefferson’s virtuous laborers” promoting an egalitarian, agrarian republic as historian Andrew R.L. Cayton has claimed, this partnership in supervised settlement was distinctly Federalist. The speculators and officials – and some men acting as both simultaneously – sought to realign American society along their own vision of the new republic in the West. Alan Taylor has identified the West as the site where Americans engaged one another over the American Revolution’s social implications, and Federalist administration of what became Ohio reflects Taylor’s assessment.⁷ While squatters sought to extend their new equality and rights to their individual farms, Federalists tried to reign in the Revolution with careful expansion. Remaking the Northwest Territory, therefore, meant making new institutions to resolve conflicts, reorient Western societies, and, most importantly, protect speculator interests and enhance American state power. They did not create a reliably Federalist state, but frontier Federalists still left clear legacies in Ohio politics and society.

⁶ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 13.

⁷ Andrew R.L. Cayton, “A Quiet Independence,” 24-25; and Alan Taylor, *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Vintage, 1995), 5.

Meanwhile, the institutions they created were the foundation for continued white expansion into the rest of the Northwest Territory.

Planning for the Ohio Company: State and Society in the Confederation

As the Revolutionary War was ending, Col. Rufus Putnam was already at work with other Continental Army officers on plans to remake the Ohio valley to strengthen the new American government. In a report for the postwar United States and its military, he recommended to his superiors a series of Western forts “To keep the Western savages in awe, [and] to protect and regulate our Trade with them.” However, he also suggested that a clear military presence along the frontiers “would give Such Incouragement not only to those who have lands on this Side the Ohio but also to Such as may obtain grants on the other Side,” and overall “within a few years the Country west of the Alleghany Mountains would not only be able to Feed all our Garisons in the Western World but render that whole Frontear perfectly Secure against every forreign Enemy and the Savages.”⁸ Years before he headed west leading the settlement party at Marietta, Putnam was already agitating for a powerful military – and thus national government – presence in the trans-Appalachian West.

That June, Putnam also forwarded a petition to Gen. George Washington signed by 288 officers, in which Timothy Pickering – later to serve as Washington’s Secretary of War in 1795 and as Secretary of State from 1796 until 1800 – called on the Confederation Congress to grant Continental officers land

⁸ Rufus Putnam, “Thoughts on a Peace Establishment for the United States of America,” 1783, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 202-204.

occupying roughly the eastern half of present-day Ohio. The officers wanted land to offer "to Such of the army as wish to become adventurers in the new government, in Such quantetys and on such conditions of settlement, & purchess, for public securities" with hopes of forming a new state in the near future to make the new American West "of lasting consequence to the *American Empire*." To support their efforts, they called for a factory system to regulate the Indian trade and encourage commerce for the new white settlers. They also recommended a new system for settlement by dividing the land into a rational grid of townships six miles square and grants to aid teaching and ministry. Washington seemed pleased with the plan as well, forwarding the petition to Congress on June 17 with a letter extolling "the advantages to be expected from this plan" that would "connect our Governments with the frontiers, extend our Settlements progressively, and plant a brave, a hardy and respectable Race of People" in the Ohio country.⁹ The petition and Washington's endorsement suggests that even from the earliest moments of looking westward, future Federalists envisioned the Ohio valley as a model for creating a commercial empire and a venue for expanding American state power.

Furthermore, Putnam and other Continental officers had reasons beyond Washington's recommendation to hope congress would accept their plan. It would be of material advantage to Congress, since granting land to Continental officers could conceivably offset debts that the national government owed to

⁹ "Copy of Petition for the Ohio Country," [1783], in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 216, 218; and George Washington to the President of Congress, June 17, 1783, in Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington*, 27: 17.

many officers. Arthur St. Clair, for example, spent \$1,800 of his own money on re-enlistments in 1776, and many Continentals demanded either back pay or a pension fund for them.¹⁰ Land in the Ohio country could conceivably be used in lieu of cash payments from a deeply indebted U.S. government. In addition, their upbringing taught them that they could reasonably expect gratitude from a Congress and a nation they had selflessly served for years. As Gordon Wood has summarized well, Americans of the Revolutionary era regarded service to government as “a personal sacrifice required of certain gentlemen because of their talents, independence, and social preeminence.”¹¹ Socially and politically, those sacrifices made the officer corps into gentlemen worthy of respect from Congress and their fellow citizens. As 1783 wore on, those men had good reason to be hopeful – even confident – that their plans for new Western settlements would be accepted and a land grant given. Unfortunately, their hopes were false. Congress never approved the request, and enthusiasm for the plans dissipated after most of the Continental officers were sent home.

After their plan was rejected, these prospective Ohio valley speculators faced the indignity of watching idly as Western squatters occupied the Ohio valley in ever larger numbers and attempt to build alternative states there. As early as 1776, squatters had been settling north and west of the Ohio River and even sending petitions to Congress, and those squatters along the Muskingum River and in Kentucky were talking about forming new states by 1782. In

¹⁰ Kalette, “Arthur St. Clair,” in *The Papers of Thirteen Early Ohio Political Leaders*, 8.

¹¹ Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 83.

response to the discussions, William Irvine warned Gov. Benjamin Harrison of Virginia that without “regular administration of civil government... everything will be in utter confusion.”¹² A more serious attempt to create a new state came in 1785, when an advertisement dated March 12 informing settlers of an election for a May constitutional convention. Though they were in open defiance of a 1783 order from Congress that no Americans could legally settle on land claimed by Indians without express Congressional permission, the advertisement’s author – a man named John Emerson – claimed the squatters had a right to form a state anyway. As he reasoned, “All mankind... have an undoubted right to pass into every vacant country, and there to form their constitution.” Further, he argued that “Congress is not allowed to forbid them, neither is Congress empowered... to make any sale of the uninhabited lands to pay the public debts.”¹³ Their attempts at statehood were ignored by the Confederation Congress, but it had proven largely inert against their intrusions. Thus, many Ohio valley squatters seemed fairly secure in their positions and presented a clear challenge to Congress and to the friends of orderly settlement.

From the Atlantic states, the former officers and future frontier Federalists saw the squatter invasion of the Ohio valley as a microcosm of the broader loosening of the ties that bound in Revolutionary-era American society evidenced

¹² Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 3; Randolph C. Downes, “Ohio’s Squatter Governor: William Hogland of Hoglandstown,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (July 1934): 274-275; and William Irvine to Benjamin Harrison, April 20, 1782, in C.W. Butterfield, ed., *Washington-Irvine Correspondence: The Official Letters which Passed between Washington and Brig.-Gen. William Irvine and between Irvine and Others Concerning Military Affairs in the West from 1781 to 1783* (Madison, WI: David Atwood, 1882), 267.

¹³ John Emerson, “Advertisement,” March 12, 1785, in Smith, *St. Clair Papers*, II: 5n. For more on the statehood movement of 1785, see Downes, “Ohio’s Squatter Governor,” 273, 277.

in three primary developments. First, Congressional failures to seize control over a deteriorating situation along the Ohio River frustrated observers who hoped for an orderly settlement there. The Congressional attempt to recreate the Proclamation of 1763 (and with just as much Western supervision) in autumn 1783 was a failure. Squatters simply ignored Congress's declaration against white settlers occupying any lands still claimed by Indians, and the squatters continued to move in against American law after the Ordinance of 1785. Worse, the first seven ranges of townships that the Ordinance of 1785 allowed for survey were not offered for sale until September 1787, as troubles with increasingly hostile Indians in the Ohio valley continually interrupted the surveying crews.¹⁴ Even its attempt to control trade with Indians in an August 1786 law, which required anyone who wished to trade with the Indians to obtain a recommendation from his home state's governor and post a \$3,000 bond, was a definite attempt to assert national control in the trans-Appalachian west. However, the law was almost completely ignored.¹⁵

Still more galling, Congress dithered while Continental veterans' requests for aid or regular pensions went largely unheeded. During the 1780s, many of those veterans went broke during the postwar depression or were forced to depend on government positions for their livelihood. For example, after losing his wealth in the war effort Arthur St. Clair came to depend on his salary as the

¹⁴ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 7. For the full text of the Ordinance of 1785, see Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 12-18.

¹⁵ United States Congress [Confederation], "The Regulation of Indian Affairs," Aug. 7, 1786, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 21; and Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 46-47.

vendue-master of Philadelphia overseeing the receipt of city revenues. Even toward the end of his tenure in the Northwest Territory in 1802, he wrote that he needed his government salary because of his debts. Showing his belief that public service involved private sacrifices (and that those sacrifices should be appreciated), he informed President Jefferson that his work as Governor “swallowed up much, indeed, nearly all, of my private funds.... I may have been sacrificing to vanity, though I have not been sensible of it.”¹⁶

The lack of opportunities in a society apparently turned on its head and crippled by an economic depression represented the second primary problem that future Federalists in the Northwest saw during the 1780s. Upon returning home, many former Continentals found poor prospects. After he “served with credit” as an officer, Robert Oliver of Massachusetts, who later served in the Northwest Territory legislature, returned to a weak economy that left him “destitute of the means of subsistence, and without an occupation,” according to Jacob Burnet.¹⁷ Meanwhile, veteran Solomon Drowne of Rhode Island invested “the best years of my life to study, and spending a pretty good estate” to become a doctor, but poor prospects led him to run a pharmacy with his sisters during the 1780s. Drowne particularly bristled at a station he found degrading, finding

¹⁶ *St. Clair Papers*, I: 116-117; and St. Clair to Thomas Jefferson, February 13, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 574.

¹⁷ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 296-297; and “A Brief Sketch of the Life of Solomon Drowne, M.D.,” *The Drowne Papers*, Rhode Island State Historical Society, Providence, quoted in Cayton, “A Quiet Independence,” 11.

himself “superseded or supplanted in so many instances, or to experience almost every species of slight and neglect” in 1780s America.¹⁸

Solomon Drowne spoke as a man not only victimized by hard times but insulted by his social inferiors as well. He believed there was worth in his status as an educated gentleman who served his countrymen during the Revolution. As Gordon Wood pointed out, men in colonial and Revolutionary America became gentlemen by distinguishing themselves in education, occupation, or public service, and Drowne had done exactly that. Once he became a gentleman, a man like Drowne had to guard his reputation jealously to save the economic power and psychological advantages behind elevated status.¹⁹ However, in postwar American society, he found no value in his status, and his seeming helplessness against hard times only upset him further. He may have survived years of warfare, but postwar life was apparently a minefield that many veterans like Drowne and Robert Oliver simply could not navigate.

If a helpless Congress and waning fortunes were not enough, these Revolutionary gentlemen suffered a final indignity when the trans-Appalachian West was seemingly overrun by squatters who exemplified the most subversive developments of the American Revolution. In short, speculators and American authorities in the Ohio valley found squatters too unprincipled and self-interested to be an acceptable foundation for a new society. Curing the problem meant cleansing the West of the squatters and the corrosive effects of their unprincipled

¹⁸ “A Brief Sketch of the Life of Solomon Drowne, M.D.,” quoted in Cayton, “A Quiet Independence,” 11.

¹⁹ Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 22, 38.

self-interest. To resolve those problems, George Washington prescribed a program of internal improvements and more energetic government to secure the Ohio valley. In an October 1784 letter to Benjamin Harrison that ended his short retirement from public life, Washington declared, “The Western settlers... stand as it were upon a pivot – the touch of a feather, would turn them any way,” largely because “they have no other means of coming to us but by a long Land transportation & unimproved roads.” They also lacked “excitements to labour,” and without improved transportation and reliable markets, the West’s potential would go unfulfilled. Canals from the Potomac River to the Ohio and along other waterways, he reasoned, would accelerate communication, invigorate commerce, and compel Western settlers to both work harder (thus maximizing the region’s economic potential) and recognize the U.S. government.²⁰

Washington suggesting that squatters needed encouragement to industry and loyalty also implied that they not yet overcome self-interest and license. Both vices shaded Federalist characterizations of squatters, especially when they were compared to Indians. In eighteenth-century America, Indians lay at the boundaries of civilization and outside of European-style states, defining what was savage against the refinement and civilization of white Americans. Further, Indians took on new meaning in post-Revolutionary America as a “generic,

²⁰ Washington to Benjamin Harrison, October 10, 1784, in W.W. Abbot and Dorothy Twohig, eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Confederation Series* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 2: 92. Washington communicated the same thoughts in very similar words to George Plater, October 25, 1784, in Abbot and Twohig, *The Papers of George Washington: Confederation Series*, 2: 108.

inhuman, savage Other,” according to Philip Deloria.²¹ Thus, when Indian commissioner and later Northwest Territory Judge Samuel Parsons denounced Western squatters as “our *own* white Indians of no character... without Regard to public benefits to Serve” in 1785, he was criticizing them on two fronts.²² He obviously denounced their self-interest – a disqualifier for republican gentlemen – but his choice to call them Indians also connoted that the squatters were less than civilized and had transgressed the boundaries of respectable society.

Other writers about the trans-Appalachian West connected squatters and Indians more explicitly. U.S. Army officer William North wrote during his service along the Muskingum River in 1786 that the Westerners were “back woods men, as much savages as those they are to fight against.” Worse, their disobedience meant “Foederal lands will remain unsold & the little measures of the United States be made less, by the Destruction of the frontiers” if squatters were left to will remain unsold & the little measures of the United States be made less, by the Destruction of the frontiers” as they consciously decided to flout national authority. Writers also used a common term, “banditti,” for both Indians and white squatters who ignored national policy. For example, Manasseh Cutler did not hide his hostility in 1787 when saying the West was “exposed to be seized by

²¹ Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 21, 26, 44; and Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 48. For another view on the perceived self-interest and “Indianness” of squatters, see Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 239.

²² Samuel H. Parsons to William S. Johnson, November 26, 1785, quoted in Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 8.

such lawless banditti as usually infest the frontiers."²³ As an infestation, squatters did not present so much a social or cultural problem to be corrected as much as a pest to be swept away from the Ohio valley.

To remove that infestation, the U.S. Army treated squatters like it eventually would treat the Indians of the Northwest: they were rebels who, by ignoring the wishes of national officials, had become fit subjects for American military aggression. Those efforts began as early as autumn 1779, when Col. Daniel Broadhead reported from Fort Pitt that sixty men "cross[ed] the River... to apprehend some of the principal trespassers and destroy the[ir] Hutts."²⁴ By 1785, the Army escalated its enforcement. In March, commanding officer of the U.S. Army Col. Josiah Harmar ordered Ensign John Armstrong to "dispossess sundry persons, who had presumed to settle on the lands of the United States on the western side of the Ohio River." The party also, Armstrong reported, posted broadsides against further settlement from Harmar, but the squatters were still "moving to the unsettled counties by the forties and fifties." By autumn, the Army built Fort Harmar along the Muskingum River to dissuade new squatters and hopefully quell rising Indian-squatter violence. Still, officers reported many settlements were already rebuilt, and the next summer Capt. John Hamtramck led another expedition to evict squatter banditti and destroy their homes.²⁵

²³ W[illiam] North to unsigned, Aug. 7, 1786, Box 1, Folder 26, Northwest Territory Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana; and Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 13.

²⁴ Daniel Broadhead to George Washington, October 26, 1779, quoted in Downes, "Ohio's Squatter Governor," 274-275.

²⁵ Josiah Harmar to Congress, May 1, 1785, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 3; John Armstrong to Josiah Harmar, April(?) 1785, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 4n; and Downes, "Ohio's Squatter Governor,"

Successfully removing an infestation requires not only removing pests but removing the source of their arrival, and that task required an active state response. John Armstrong suggested as much in his spring 1785 report, explaining that many “sensible men” in the West told him, “if the honorable the Congress do not fall on some speedy method to prevent people from settling on the lands of the United States... that country will soon be inhabited by a banditti whose actions are a disgrace to human nature.” Secretary of War Henry Knox also fretted over the history of the trans-Appalachian West from Philadelphia, believing of the squatters, “If such audacious defiance of the power of the United States be suffered with impunity a precedent will be established, to wrest all the immense property of the western territory out of the hands of the public.”²⁶ Without such an assertion of authority, many other future Federalists worried, the Ohio valley could be lost entirely to European rivals or breakaway republics. Worse, with too few soldiers stretched too far to handle many problems between whites and Indians, Congress could not stop it.²⁷

By 1787, speculators and national officials interested in changing the tenor of westward expansion and of American postwar society overall had formulated two interlinked solutions that reflected Putnam and Pickering’s original plans in

281. For a longer account of the U.S. Army’s attempts to evict squatters from present-day Ohio, see Downes, “Ohio’s Squatter Governor,” 278-282.

²⁶ John Armstrong to Josiah Harmar, April(?) 1785, in *The St. Clair Papers*, II: 4n; and Knox to Congress, April 16, 1787, in *Journals of Continental Congress*, XXXII: 213.

²⁷ Alfred B. Sears, “The Political Philosophy of Arthur St. Clair,” *Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 49 (1940), 47; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 11. Cayton stated quite succinctly that there were “Too many squatters, too many miles, and too few troops” for the U.S. Army to be the only effective state institution in the Ohio valley.

1783 and would guide decisions once they came to control national institutions with the new Constitution being drafted in Philadelphia. First, with no state apparatus to enforce the laws and proclamations of Congress, Josiah Harmar and Henry Knox argued for enhancing the American military presence in the Ohio valley. The growing problems that birthed the Northwest Indian confederacy also encouraged national officials to act against the white squatters who they believed were the primary source of tension with the Indians. As Harmar argued from the Ohio valley as commander of the U.S. Army, “a respectable garrison of regular troops established in the heart of the Indian country... would keep the Indians in awe, and, in a great measure, secure the frontier inhabitants.” Knox agreed with Harmar’s assessment and lobbied Congress for a more radical solution. With violence spreading in the region, Knox argued only a new 1,500-man army could ensure against the development of a wider war. The new army would then occupy a “chain of posts... which at once would awe the savages, cover the surveyors and prevent intrusions.” Though Congress could not implement his plan because of its “embarrassed state of public affairs and entire deficiency of funds,” Knox presented a clear vision for the future of the U.S. Army aimed at exerting control over both Indians and the Indian-like squatters who threatened the future of the Ohio valley.²⁸

However, military force alone could not replace those evicted squatters with a more peaceable and law-abiding white settler population, and New England gentlemen acting as private citizens wanted to fill the vacuum. After all,

²⁸ Harmar to Knox, May 14, 1787, in *St. Clair Papers*, 21; and Knox to Congress, July 10, 1787, in *ibid.*, XXXII: 327-330.

the despotic power of the United States Army had to be balanced with institutions that could offer the infrastructural power to build a more virtuous republican society in the West. In other words, the national government would have to engineer a new Ohio valley society that could ensure squatters would never again be pretenders to power who could undermine national prerogatives. However, without the resources and Congressional inclination to reform the Ohio valley, future Federalists from New England took the initiative. As gentlemen who possessed republican virtue and had high hopes for the national government, they would form a land speculation outfit to do the work Congress could not and make a handsome profit, too. Organized in 1786, this group of New Englanders organized as the Ohio Company of Associates with a plan of, their founding document read, “purchasing LANDS in the western territory (belonging to the United States) for the benefit of the company and to promote a settlement in that country.”²⁹

Of course, settlement hardly needed promotion; what they thought it really needed was firm guidance, and the Society of the Cincinnati members who founded the Ohio Company would offer just that. Respectability and citizenship had an admission fee: shares cost \$1,000 in badly depreciated Continental certificates or ten dollars in specie, a reasonable price for men of means but prohibitive to squatters seeking free or very cheap land. With a purchase limit of five shares no man would own too much, either, preventing the speculation

²⁹ Ohio Company, *Articles of an Association by the Name of the Ohio Company* (New York: Samuel and John Loudon, 1787), 3.

mania others observed in the region earlier.³⁰ In essence, they planned to return to a society that prized the rule of law and the rights of property. These New Englanders were planning a new errand into the wilderness, but with a humbler quest. Instead of saving the world from apocalypse, these westward voyagers merely sought to save the new nation from the excesses of revolution.

Presenting their plan to Congress as the Constitutional Convention met in the summer of 1787, Ohio Company leaders produced two important results from their lobbying at Philadelphia. First, Cutler's lobbying efforts secured the Ohio Company a purchase of 1.5 million acres and opened the Northwest to Federalist-led development. Cutler pitched his company in terms of their social standing at first, writing in March 1787 for Congressional help for the "men of very considerable property and respectable characters, who intend (for the Company admit no other) to become residents in that country." Cutler was also careful to comport himself as a gentleman, a decision that marked him as a fine representative of his class and his company but also helped to gain him greater access to Congressmen on the Ohio Company's behalf.³¹

Cutler's appeals won very advantageous terms in July 1787. A contract offered on July 20 did not meet his wishes, but he was so confident of receiving better terms that he still left Philadelphia. After all, he claimed in his diary, "I had many friends in Congress who would make every exertion in my favor.... [and]

³⁰ See also Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 16.

³¹ Cutler to Nathan Dane, March 16, 1787, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 195; and Pasley, "Private Access and Public Power: Gentility and Lobbying in the Early Congress," in Kenneth R. Bowling and Donald R. Kennon, eds., *The House and Senate in the 1790s: Petitioning, Lobbying, and Institutional Development* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 73, 87.

obtain conditions as reasonable as I desired.” Soon after, treasury commissioner Samuel Osgood told Cutler the company plan was “the best ever formed in America” and promised “every exertion” in their favor.³² That help came quickly, too. On July 23, a committee offered favorable terms, suggesting Congress sell to the company for no more than a dollar per acre and a one-third discount on “bad lands,” and by July 27 the full Congress agreed. By October, when the final contract was written, terms were even more favorable, as Congress charged the company one million dollars for its grant, payable in specie or Continental certificates. By letting them pay in depreciated certificates, Congress essentially sold a vast expanse of the Northwest for as little as ten cents per acre.³³

The sale even sparked another one to Judge John Cleves Symmes of New Jersey. Symmes had been considering large-scale speculation in Western lands for much of 1787, first looking into lands along the Wabash valley and then in Kentucky, even going so far as to inform Kentuckians in a circular letter that he would seek a grant there.³⁴ However, he turned his attention to the river valleys

³² Cutler, July 20-21, 25, 1787, “Diary of 1787,” in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 295-296, 300.

³³ United States Congress [Confederation], “Committee Report on the Sale of Lands,” July 23, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 54-55; United States Congress [Confederation], “Report of Committee: Proposals of Cutler and Sargent,” in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 63-64; United States Congress [Confederation], “Indenture between the Board of Treasury and the Agents of the Ohio Company,” in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 80-81; and Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 11. Rohrbough claimed the depreciated certificates sold the land for as little as ten cents per acre, and of the whole affair, he claimed that it showed “the willingness of Congress to rid itself of the expense and difficulty of administering a large section of the public domain and to the need for immediate revenue of some kind.... The whole affair was a tribute to the lobbying skill of the Reverend Manasseh Cutler.”

³⁴ R. Douglas Hurt, “John Cleves Symmes and the Miami Purchase,” in Warren Van Tine and Michael Pierce, eds., *Builders of Ohio: A Biographical History* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2003), 14.

along the two Miami Rivers in present-day southwest Ohio after an associate reported positively on their situation. By August, he wrote to Congress requesting a purchase of one million acres there, wanting a deal like that concluded with the Ohio Company and “differing only in quantity and place.”³⁵ By October, Symmes had his purchase ready and was even mentioned by a third speculation outfit who tried unsuccessfully to buy up to two million acres in present-day southern Illinois.³⁶ With their purchases in hand by autumn 1787, these gentlemen speculators revived their hopes to restore American society and roll back the radical and destructive implications of the Revolutionary message.

The Ohio Company’s other important legacy, the Northwest Ordinance, passed that summer as well. Historians have praised the Ordinance – renewed in 1789 and extended in parts to govern other federal lands – for its extensive legacy in the westward movement, but it is also noteworthy for Federalist influence upon it among Congressmen and Ohio Company leaders.³⁷ Congress

³⁵ John Cleves Symmes, “Petition of John Cleves Symmes for a Grant of Land,” August 29, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 70.

³⁶ United States Congress [Confederation], “Report of the Board of Treasury: Proposal of Royal Flint and Joseph Parker,” October 22, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 77; and Charles J. Bayard, *The Development of the Public Land Policy, 1783-1820, with Special Reference to Indiana* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 136-137.

³⁷ For historical works praising the Northwest Ordinance, see Beverly W. Bond, Jr., “An American Experiment in Colonial Government,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 15, no. 2 (September 1928), 222; Andrew R.L. Cayton and Peter S. Onuf, *The Midwest and the Nation*, 9-11; Peter S. Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), xiii; and Theodore C. Pease, “The Ordinance of 1787,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 25, no. 2 (September 1938), 167. Bond praised the Ordinance’s genius in maintaining the loyalty of Western settlers by promising eventual equality with the rest of the nation through statehood, and its prohibition of slavery “established in the Old Northwest the northern industrial system of free labor, small farms, and a varied agriculture.” Meanwhile, Pease argued in an essay meant to commemorate its sesquicentennial that the Northwest Ordinance was the most important document in American history other than the Constitution. Cayton and Onuf took more muted stances, with their cooperative effort suggesting that the Ordinance made economic growth possible in the Northwest, and Onuf wrote in his own

discussed aspects of the ordinance since September 1786, but the Ohio Company forced them to move quickly in July 1787. “We found ourselves rather pressed,” Nathan Dane of Massachusetts explained, when “the Ohio Company appeared to purchase a large tract of the Federal lands... and we wanted to abolish the old system, and get a better one.” Dane became a Federalist state legislator in the 1790s and attended the Hartford Convention in 1814, but in 1787 he was crucial to writing the ordinance. The final draft of the ordinance was in his handwriting, and he assumed credit for the late insertion of the sixth article that prohibited slavery in the new Northwest Territory. Dane even proclaimed himself the father of the ordinance in his commentaries on American law, and Westerners honored him as the founder of the Northwest for decades.³⁸ Well into the nineteenth century, then, residents of the Old Northwest celebrated an old Federalist as their founder.

Manasseh Cutler influenced the passage of the Northwest Ordinance as well. As company lobbyist, Cutler presented himself in two lights. He spoke to Congressmen as a member of his company in search of a land grant, but as a virtuous republican gentleman he also had to show he was interested in extending public interests at the same time. He linked the two in 1787, seeking not only a purchase but a system of government and law that would enhance his

book that the Ordinance articulated a powerful national vision for a young nation rife with sectional jealousies. In all of these instances, however, it is important to note that the historians pointed to specific pieces that place national government at the center of westward expansion.

³⁸ Dane to Rufus King, July 16, 1787, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 371-372; and Onuf, *Statehood and Union*, 58, 141-142. As he stated at the time, the prohibition against slavery was not in the original bill before Congress, but “finding the House favorably disposed on this subject, after we had completed the other parts, I moved the art., which was agreed to without opposition.”

company's opportunities for profit. The Northwest Ordinance, he believed, would establish such an administration by continuing the rectangular system established in 1785 that, Cutler thought, encouraged systematic settlement. Further, he hoped, it would delegitimize squatter claims to the lands they occupied illegally, a primary obstacle to Ohio Company profits.³⁹

Overall, Cutler was satisfied with the ordinance and recounted his own involvement in its creation to his diary on July 19, 1787. On the new ordinance, he wrote, "The amendments I proposed have all been made except one" which would have exempted settlers from national taxes until statehood, but he forsook that last wish for the good of a republic that needed tax revenue.⁴⁰ Despite the minor failure, Cutler had achieved his objectives: he had procured a contract for the Ohio Company, helped bring the national government west with the speculators, and fulfilled the frustrated wishes that Putnam and other company adventurers had harbored for years. The path westward was staked for national officials and gentleman speculators; their next task was to realize their visions for a new Northwest.

Land Speculation Outfits in the Federalist Frontier

When settlers and speculators under the Ohio Company and John Cleves Symmes headed west in 1788, they were the shock troops for a new Federalist

³⁹ Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 121, 130, 370. Of a list of seven priorities for Cutler's mission to Congress, his grandchildren and biographers had listed "The importance of a systematic occupation of the west by a large colony of industrious men."

⁴⁰ Cutler, July 19, 1787, "Diary of 1787," in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 293.

vision and a cardinal shift in westward expansion. Corporate adventurers took a four-part plan with them to the Northwest, and those goals both reflected Federalist ideals and included government institutions. First, they believed strong central authority would make the Northwest part of a healthy and virtuous republic. Second, they planned to create a rational society, and the U.S. government would be crucial in creating it. Third, speculators pursued commercial development vigorously in order to help the Northwest realize its economic potential. Through that development, they hoped to mold respectable and industrious Westerners who could surpass their counterparts farther east. Finally, the Ohio Company encouraged social order by strictly enforcing national law, closely following company policies, and encouraging education and religion. They hoped that social order would ultimately provide economic benefits and redeem society from its post-Revolutionary problems.

Looking west from Massachusetts, Manasseh Cutler explained the logic behind the Ohio Company's plans and the role of national government power in their efforts. Once the national government cleared Indians and squatters from the wilderness of the Northwest, company adventurers would proceed into a renewed nature. Speculators believed such a development was an advantage. For example, Manasseh Cutler wrote of a deserted wilderness in his tract on the Ohio valley that was half scientific work and half advertisement, "In order to begin *right*, there will be no *wrong* habits to combat, and no inveterate systems to overturn – there is no rubbish to remove, before you can lay the foundation." That foundation would also bring government west with the settlers, thereby

eliminating the “distance from the old States” that he believed left the people of Kentucky and the Illinois country “in danger of losing all their habits of government, and allegiance to the United States.”

To Cutler, the United States government would be a stabilizing force in settlement and strengthen settler loyalties. If “government will forever accommodate them” as it did farther east, Westerners could be “happy, under one jurisdiction.” Thus, “every act of Congress under the new constitution” would have to be “looking forward to this object” of engraining new understandings and expectations of federal control in the Ohio valley. Andrew Cayton sees “overheated rhetoric” in those words, but Cutler clearly saw in the new federal government proposed in 1787 an essential partner to the success of his company.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Ohio Company would a powerful ally for federal aims; in Cutler’s view, westward expansion was a true public-private partnership.

Similarly, John Cleves Symmes laid out plans in his own promotional literature suggesting that his Miami Purchase would be settled by strict guidelines and enforced by centralized control. Symmes wrote openly of preventing speculators from “engrossing large tracts of land,” and therefore he outlined rules that would force purchasers on his land grant to settle on those lands within two years or forfeit up to one-sixth of their land. Rather than allow lands to lay dormant and prove “very prejudicial to the population” of the region, he wanted to use those forfeited lands to place eager settlers who would be given deed to the

⁴¹ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 20-22; and Cayton, “The Significance of Ohio in the Early American Republic,” in Cayton and Hobbs, *The Center of a Great Empire*, 1.

land after seven years of continuous occupation.⁴² Symmes was more populist than the Ohio Company in his approach, offering smaller purchases starting at 160 acres and even proposing to offer settlers six months of food supplies to new settlers, but they would still have to obey the property laws and repay him for the food supplies – with interest, of course – within two years.⁴³ Despite the differences, both speculator groups expected to direct settlement from above and offer settlers the salutary benefits of authoritative supervision.

Further, both the Ohio Company and Symmes bowed quietly but significantly to American authority by choosing town sites near U.S. forts already existing within their respective purchases. Richard C. Wade argued decades ago that “towns were the spearheads of the frontier,” but the military often preceded even those towns in the early Northwest.⁴⁴ As was stated earlier, the Ohio Company’s unofficial capital at Marietta was built near Fort Harmar and included a blockhouse for the first settlers to defend themselves. Meanwhile, Symmes planned his principal town of Columbia at the edge of his purchase replete with a fort, and the purchase’s eventual principal city of Cincinnati was founded near Fort Washington. Further, the U.S. military was a selling point for Symmes, who promoted his purchase with promises that garrisons from Fort

⁴² John Cleves Symmes, *To the Respectable Public* (Trenton: Isaac Collins, 1787), 15-18.

⁴³ Hurt, “John Cleves Symmes and the Miami Purchase,” in Van Tine and Pierce, *Builders of Ohio*, 16-17.

⁴⁴ Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington, Louisville, and St. Louis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 1.

Finney would be available to protect settlers from Indians.⁴⁵ Partly out of necessity, the earliest and most prominent settlements in the present state of Ohio were located near military installations, but it meant that the U.S. Army was the true spearhead of the Federalist frontier. White settlers filled in Ohio near army forts, placing national power at the fore of the new Northwest.

Speculators looked to government and central planning to guide their settlements in part to engineer a rational society in the Northwest. They would begin pursuing that rationalized society through the methods they occupied the new purchases. Cutler noted it “a happy circumstance that the *Ohio Company* are about to commence the settlement... in so regular and judicious a manner,” which would proceed westward from Pennsylvania evenly with “no vacant lands exposed.”⁴⁶ Systematic settlement was also a selling point with Congress in 1787. Samuel Osgood seemed overtaken with the concept, saying “much on the advantages of System in a new Settlement, [and] said System had never before been attempted,” wrote Cutler. Osgood further suggested hopefully that “if the matter was pursued with spirit... it would prove one of the greatest undertakings ever yet attempted in America.” With the U.S. government behind them – particularly through officials like Osgood – the speculators hoped their new regular system would be the catalyst for a better, more logical American West.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 27.

⁴⁶ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 13-14.

⁴⁷ Cutler, July 25, 1787, “Diary of 1787,” in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 300; and Cayton, “The Contours of Power in a Frontier Town,” 106.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of their plans for rational settlement was their redefinition of property ownership. Legitimate ownership would only come by titles from the speculation outfits, which flowed directly through the national government. Symmes advertised his lands for their federally-backed titles while in Kentucky, "titles of land are not easily ascertained, frequently very doubtful, and too often not well founded."⁴⁸ Ironically, Symmes's own malfeasance in land sales later on would create similar problems in the portions of the million acres for which he failed to pay, but initially his claim was valid: those who bought from Symmes or the Ohio Company and properly recorded those purchases would enjoy an unmolested claim to their own small piece of the Northwest Territory. New property definitions also marginalized alternative ideals about property held by white squatters, and Manasseh Cutler's descendents noted that the new property regime helped to transform the Northwest. In "a transition from 'tomahawk' to systematic, permanent improvement," settlement led by speculators ushered new conceptions of property creation and ownership into the Northwest that depended upon American state power.⁴⁹

Ohio Company investors also saw themselves as exemplars of a new order in which settlers embraced the logic of a new Federalist frontier. Their attempts to alter the environment presented the clearest example of reorienting the Northwest. Like many intelligent men of the late eighteenth century, they believed that people were products of their environment, and that environment

⁴⁸ Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 26.

⁴⁹ Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 133.

needed serious reform in the Northwest. Through land office registries for purchases on the rectangular surveying system, called by John Reys "a giant gridiron imposed on the natural landscape," they could encourage Westerners to put away the hatchet used to blaze trees and take out the surveyor's chain in marking their lands.⁵⁰ Rectangular townships brought a logical, even scientific regularity to rural space that appealed to early American gentlemen steeped in Enlightenment ideals, and in turn they hoped those environmental changes would make their way into the settler's psyche. Cutler wrote of his hopes that the new systematic settlement would "inbosome many men of the most liberal minds," and settlers, "on seeing examples of government, science, and regular industry... would favor their children with these advantages, and revive the ideas of order, citizenship, and the useful sciences."⁵¹ In short, the example of the company men would help to transform the vulgar masses of settlers into gentlemen.

Speculators also wished to serve the new Western public by promoting commercial prosperity with their resources. They were meant to forward Federalist goals of obedience and order, but Cayton argued the speculators were "aggressively self-interested" so that they could prosper.⁵² In his view, the investors spoke of republican virtue on one side while chasing material interests on the other, a problematic contradiction. However, company members would disagree heartily. They risked two thousand dollars of company money "on Acc^t

⁵⁰ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 14; and Reys, *The Making of Urban America*, 216-217.

⁵¹ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 20-21.

⁵² Cayton, "The Contours of Power in a Frontier Town," 111.

of the great Scarcity of Cash... that Two Thousand Dollars be immediately Ordered” to lend to men who would “transact Business that Shall be of Public Utility.” Requiring loan applicants to work for the greater good is telling, and they also restricted loans to “Worthy industrious Persons.” Meanwhile, Cutler spoke of commercial development in advertising pamphlets, hoping to bring in “companies of manufacturers... under the superintendence of men of property.”⁵³ Federalists were wary of overt self-interest and acquisitive spirits since both smacked of license, so they pursued alternatives that emphasized public good and deference to the “better sort” of the new Northwest.

Nonetheless, the Ohio valley was the newest land of opportunity for many company boosters. After all, speculators could talk of public good all they liked, but their venture in westward expansion was to be profitable, too. Thus, the Ohio Company pitched its purchase as a business opportunity. While poor Bostonians were encouraged in newspaper advertisements to “dispose of live teeth, for cash” in the depression of the 1780s, Cutler was confident that since “almost every kind of business is stagnated here,” New Englanders of greater means “would become adventurers in our company, and immediately remove” westward.⁵⁴ Cutler seemed to be right too, shown particularly by the story of Dudley Woodbridge of Connecticut. In several queries to eventual business

⁵³ Ohio Company, meeting, July 1, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 48; Ohio Company, meeting, December 8, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 65; and Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 20.

⁵⁴ *Massachusetts Centinel*, 16 August 1786, quoted in Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007) 26; and Cutler to Winthrop Sargent, March 16, 1787, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, I: 193.

partner James Backus about Marietta in late 1788, his first question concerned “the prospects of Business,” largely because business farther east grew “more gloomy and dull” and therefore wanted any “particular & Minute Information... [that] may Relate to the Merchantile Line.” Clearly, opportunity prompted Woodbridge’s curiosity about moving west, and his impatience showed in a letter three weeks later that declared his “intentions of becoming an inhabitant of your new world and requesting a particular description of the Country and the prospects of Doing Business.”⁵⁵ For migrants like Woodbridge, profit was as much a pull factor as the good of the republic.

In their search for private wealth and the public good, speculators also used their resources to promote commerce. They used two primary means; first, the Ohio Company used its resources to promote the creation of new industries to promote a robust, diversified economy within their purchase. Once he arrived in Marietta, Dudley Woodbridge petitioned to build a grain mill, and in February 1790 he was granted 120 acres to build it. In the same meeting, the company also agreed to “give sufficient encouragement to any Person or Persons who will Erect Iron Works” on its purchase and invited applications for that purpose.⁵⁶ Combined with their desires to encourage businesses of public utility, the Ohio Company planned for commercialism to remake Western society and help it attain its full economic potential.

⁵⁵ Dudley Woodbridge to James Backus, December 9, 1788, Box 1, Folder 1, Backus-Woodbridge Family Papers, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; and S. W[oodbridge] to James Backus, December 29, 1788, Box 1, Folder 1, Backus-Woodbridge Family Papers, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

⁵⁶ Ohio Company, meeting, February 18, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 2-3.

Symmes preferred an alternative: he would aid commercial growth with a rudimentary internal improvements plan so his settlers would enjoy new economic opportunities. As settler Jacob Burnet recalled, the Miami Purchase lands were priced at one dollar per acre, but Symmes did not object to selling at a higher price if the market allowed it. Should prices rise, Symmes planned to invest any money paid above one dollar per acre “in opening roads, and erecting bridges, for the benefit of the settlement.” Symmes also proposed laying responsibility for transportation systems onto purchasers who did not settle on their lands within two years. “The difficulty of opening and making roads in the country,” he reasoned, made it necessary to make them finance road constructions, “thereby rendering... their land more valuable” while benefitting the economic prospects of all settlers.⁵⁷

Speculators seemed to find the greatest public utility not in commercialism but in their pursuit of social order through political and cultural institutions, the final tenet of the social vision behind Federalist speculation in Ohio. Both Symmes and the Ohio Company demanded obedience to their directives. For example, Symmes set stiff penalties against non-resident speculators that aimed to bring them westward. Seeking to prevent purchasers from “engrossing large tracts of land, whereupon no families are settled for a long space of time,” Symmes wanted to lay duties for road construction but also to take one-sixth of their purchase if they did not arrive within two years. In place of the non-resident speculators, he proposed settling volunteers on the taken land for free and allow

⁵⁷ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 416; and Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 19.

them to gain title once they occupied the land for seven consecutive years.⁵⁸ The Ohio Company offered similar punishments at Marietta for settlers who did not clear their town lots, deemed “essential to the saf[e]ty of the Inhabitants,” by allowing anyone else who cleared and improved the lot to stay there rent-free until the occupant was repaid for his expenses.⁵⁹ Speculators hoped such rules would remind settlers of the authority over them in Ohio and make them conform to their carefully conceived visions for a new Northwest.

Meanwhile, the Ohio Company wanted supervised settlement to inculcate a love for order and the company’s objectives. As Rev. James Varnum reminded Marietta settlers during the 1788 Independence Day celebration there, they had gone west to save Americans from themselves. In the wake of the war, he said, they were “sullied and dishonored by the control of ungovernable passions.” However, with the aid of the Ohio Company and greater state guidance, “Reason and philosophy are gradually resuming their empire in the human mind.” Eventually, he hoped, “the restraints of law will cease to degrade us with humiliating distinctions; and the assaults of passion will be subdued by the gentle sway of virtuous affection.”⁶⁰ For Varnum and so many other company adventurers, those “restraints of law” were the font from which reason and virtue would flow in the Northwest. Obedience to the law was a paramount concern for speculators in the territory, and it was a clear signal of a new social order.

⁵⁸ Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 15-16.

⁵⁹ Ohio Company, meeting, July 2 and August 14, 1788, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, I: 46.

⁶⁰ James M. Varnum, *An Oration, Delivered at Marietta, July 4, 1788, by the Hon. James M. Varnum, Esq. One of the Judges of the Western Territory* (Newport, RI: Peter Edes, 1788), 7.

Their insistence upon a new order extended to their concerns for encouraging religion as a corrective against the problems they had seen in earlier Western settlements as well. In order to mold the people who settled in the Ohio valley, speculators were sure to make ministers feel welcome and encourage the founding of churches. Symmes trumpeted section 29 being reserved for churches in his townships, as decreed by the Northwest Ordinance, and promised that "Ministers of gospel of every denomination of Christians, are cordially invited into the country" to use the land set aside to them. Varnum also noted in July 1788 that the Ohio Company was "conscious that our being as well as prosperity depend upon the Supreme will," and therefore they "have not neglected the great principles and institutions of religion." Later in the month, St. Clair praised the Ohio Company's settlers as "men who duly weigh the importance to society of a strict attention to the duties of religion and morality." They proved St. Clair right, too, as the town had its first church built by month's end. They had not forgotten God in their new Western world, but religion was not a liberating force to the Federalist planners. Instead, it was a necessary social institution that would increase property values and encourage settlers to follow the strictures of their new society. After all, St. Clair followed his praise, such men found that "love of liberty and of order is a master passion."⁶¹ Following the laws of God went closely with following the laws of territorial officials. The

⁶¹ Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 20; Varnum, *An Oration*, 5; St. Clair, "Governor St. Clair's Address at Marietta," July 15, 1788, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 54; and Boorstin, *The Americans: The National Experience*, 53.

spiritual would aid the temporal in creating the orderly society speculators wanted so badly to replace what they saw as the chaos of life in the Atlantic states.

However, education was the linchpin to speculator plans to remake the Northwest. Symmes advertised that he saved one township to fund a new academy or college, and like with ministers he invited teachers to take section 16, set aside by the Northwest Ordinance, "so long as they shall severally pursue the business of educating the children of the parish."⁶² Ohio Company investors were also quick to point out their commitment to education, too. On July 4, 1788, in the same sentence that he spoke of promoting religion, James Varnum also pointed out that the company "made provision, among our first institutions, for scholastic and liberal education." They also did more than Symmes by offering two full townships – a total of over 46,000 acres, the company's meeting notes clearly stated – for a public university "as near the centre as may be, so that the same shall be of good land."⁶³ Of course, good land meant better prices, and so the company hoped to endow their university as much as possible and making it an institution in which speculators and Westerners overall could take pride.

The Ohio Company went much further in their efforts and attached great significance to their efforts, too. Even before their first adventurers went to Marietta, a company committee recommended that the company "pay as early attention as possible to the Education of Youth and the Promotion of public Worship among the first Settlers." "These important purposes," they reported,

⁶² Symmes, *To the Respectable Public*, 3, 21.

⁶³ Varnum, *An Oration*, 5; and Ohio Company (of Associates), *Articles of an Association by the Name of the Ohio Company* (New York: Samuel and John Loudon, 1787), 10, 16.

required “an Instructor eminent for literary accomplishments and the Virtue of his Character.” In July, as with their church, the new citizens of Marietta followed through on company wishes by building a school to serve the community.⁶⁴ Their commitment to education continued over the years, shown especially by their resolutions in 1791 to encourage new schools. On April 4, a company committee proposed to give 160 dollars of company funds to pay for public teachers in three towns on the company’s purchase, and the full company agreed two days later.⁶⁵

Company members hoped those schools would have two clear effects in the new settlements. First, it would cast, in the words of Manasseh Cutler, “a most favorable aspect upon the settlement” by encouraging “the acquisition of useful knowledge” among the new Westerners. Education was central to their social vision for Ohio, and remaking the region’s future began with remaking its future inhabitants. Second, education was an important part of their state-building scheme in the Northwest. Cutler explained it well, writing in promotional literature that settlers in Kentucky and the Illinois country were isolated from finer schools back east, and distance “prevent[ed] their sending their children thither for instruction.” Such a development was unacceptable to Cutler, who worried that allowing those settlers to continue without education might mean “losing all their habits of government.” To remedy the problem, he made the company’s university into his hobby and expended so much energy on it that his

⁶⁴ Ohio Company, meeting, March 6, 1788, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, I: 39; and Boorstin, *The Americans: The National Experience*, 53.

⁶⁵ Ohio Company, meeting, April 4, 1791, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 91-92.

grandchildren claimed the university was likely his favorite pursuit during his tenure with the Ohio Company.⁶⁶ He pursued education with such vigor to maintain the habits of government among settlers and to retain their obedience and appreciation of authority. Education was not to free the mind but to control the impulses of license and cultivate a docile population.

While the speculators worked to implement their social and political vision in the Northwest, other Federalists pursued national policies that supported the goals of speculators. Through various means – regular public land sales, a stronger transportation network, strengthened regulations, and an enhanced military presence – Federalist policies aided the objectives of speculators and demonstrated a shared partisan vision for the trans-Appalachian West.⁶⁷ Their efforts to survey and dispose of public lands reflected speculator aims to entrench central authority and a rational society in the Northwest and beyond. Meanwhile, Federalists tried to aid commercial development through diplomacy and internal improvements. Finally, Federalist officials invested a great deal of effort in ordering society in the Northwest Territory, particularly through using the military for law enforcement and in passing and enforcing laws that were meant to alter the behavior of Westerners.

⁶⁶ Cutler, *An Explanation of the Map of Federal Lands*, 20-21; and Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, II: 33.

⁶⁷ Andrew R.L. Cayton, “Radicals in the ‘Western World’: The Federalist Conquest of Trans-Appalachian North America,” in Ben-Atar and Oberg, *Federalists Reconsidered*, 91. Cayton offered a slightly different set of priorities (regular land sales, uniform laws, territorial government control, diversified commerce, and improved transportation and communication) but focused heavily on Western Federalist officials. Nonetheless, the similar priorities between territorial and national authorities are worth noting.

Federalists saw public lands disposals as a way to reorient Westerners toward federal power. Thomas Scott of southwest Pennsylvania was the leading proponent of an energetic land policy in Congress, arguing that doing so would establish an effective federal presence in the trans-Appalachian West. As he said on the floor in May 1789, land offices would “increase the public income,” but more importantly they would accommodate “a great number of people on the ground, who are willing to acquire by purchase a right to the soil they are seated upon.” After all, he reasoned, settlers wanted merely “well grounded hope that the lands they cultivate may become their own,” and federal land offices obliged those wishes. Careful not to roil speculators, he was clear in a July speech that the new land office would still allow “your million acre purchasers,” but he also noted it would open “the sale of smaller quantities; and to that kind of people who stand in need of land.”⁶⁸ By his reasoning, the land office could build legitimacy by sating the demands of the new Westerners, thus encouraging them to be loyal citizens and look to federal officials to solve other problems, thereby establishing a respect for central authority among the settlers.

Scott also envisioned the land office as a method for the new federal government could grow its infrastructural power. He stated in May that the offices would offer the settlers “a government among them, and derive advantages from them which are now totally lost.” After all, he claimed, “They wish for your Government and laws, and will be gratified with the indulgence; but they wish also to acquire property under them.” In July, he noted the symbolism

⁶⁸ AC, 1st Cong., 1st sess., 428-429, 654.

behind the new land offices in the trans-Appalachian West, calling on his fellow House members to pass the bill. “Much will depend upon the energy and force of the Government established in that country,” he said, and the land office was an important first step toward showing the new government can “furnish sufficient power for its own internal purposes.”⁶⁹ In other words, the land office was an effective means for the United States government to embed itself into the civil society of the Northwest by defining property and laying boundaries between neighbors. By tying land titles to the federal government, too, it allowed government to set the limits of lawful citizenship and, in a West where legal land ownership connoted status, respectability there. Overall, the land office would prove the federal government responsive to settlers’ needs and make it the font from which legitimate property ownership would flow.

Meanwhile, Theodore Sedgwick of Massachusetts argued for the land office by declaring it an important locus for engineering a better society in the Northwest. Sedgwick, who served in the House as a Federalist until 1802, argued in July 1789 to create the land office and locate it in the nation’s capital. Doing so, he argued, would “check the enterprising spirit which might grow up” in the trans-Appalachian West without federal supervision. To restrain the passions of the men heading west, Sedgwick argued that settlers needed the guiding hand of government. Further, the rationalized land surveying system would create an optimum market for the government. Whether dealing with other speculation outfits or people “of that class who had little money or property,” he said the U.S.

⁶⁹ AC, 1st Cong., 1st sess., 429, 651.

government “should be happy to serve both, if it would enable Congress to get the best market and highest price for their lands.” Alexander Hamilton agreed in a 1790 report on the public lands, telling Congress an office at “the seat of Government” would be best as the site at which “contracts for large purchases can be best adjusted.”⁷⁰ Obtaining optimum prices in a rationalized land market was as important to organizing Western society as changing the behavior of its inhabitants, and Sedgwick and Hamilton knew it well.

Hamilton also planned the land office as an agent of state penetration into the trans-Appalachian West. By his reasoning, the office would answer two needs: to facilitate “advantageous sales” and accommodate “individuals now inhabiting the western country, or who may hereafter emigrate thither.” In raising revenues – some of which undoubtedly would be used in the Northwest Indian War and other needs for Westerners – Hamilton could include Western lands into his fiscal-military state structure while satisfying new settlers. He also recommended extending the new state apparatus westward. As he said, Westerners and new migrants seemed “to require that one office, subordinate to that at the seat of Congress, should be opened in the northwestern, and another in the southwestern Government.” Doing so, he claimed, would offer flexibility. Speculation outfits could fashion contracts for large purchases at the national capital, and smaller purchasers could use the credit system he proposed to buy land on installments, further enriching the national coffers.⁷¹ For Federalists who

⁷⁰ *AC*, 1st Cong., 1st sess., 656; and Hamilton, “Plan for Disposing of the Public Lands,” July 20, 1790, in *ASP:PL*, I: 4.

⁷¹ Hamilton, “Plan for Disposing of the Public Lands,” July 20, 1790, in *ASP:PL*, I: 4.

looked rather than went west, the land office was a prime opportunity to extend American central authority into the Northwest and aid the extension of a speculator's republic there.

Like the Ohio speculators, Hamilton and President Washington hoped to use state power to promote commercial growth. Washington first looked to improving the Potomac River as a fulcrum for projecting American influence and markets into the Ohio valley, and his plans for the Potomac reflected a loose construction of the Constitution. Similarly, Hamilton believed strongly in the helping hand of government to develop the capital-poor national economy. To him, federal power was the best engine to drive market growth and national improvement, and he promoted that view in his interaction with Congress.⁷² That attitude showed in his Report on Manufactures, which presented a comprehensive vision for state-led commercial development. Sounding like Ohio Company stockholders, Hamilton spoke of the importance of “diversify[ing] the industrious pursuits” of the people. However, ventures like the Ohio Company needed protection and aid from government, too. “The existence or assurance of aid from the government of the country,” he wrote, “may be essential to fortify adventurers” against potential failures if left alone to be buffeted by market forces or, in the case of the Northwest's speculators, Indian and European rivals.⁷³ In

⁷² Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 14, 19; and Mitchell, *Alexander Hamilton*, 217, 222. Larson summarized Washington's views on internal improvements and the Constitution in a pro-business light: “Washington's vision of a rising empire, guided from the center by benevolent government and striving toward some splendid republican future, derived from habits of thought that he shared with most of America's politically conscious elites and many small proprietors.”

⁷³ Hamilton, “Report on Manufactures,” December 5, 1791, in Syrett, *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, X: 260, 269.

Marietta and in Philadelphia, Federalist leaders had decided upon a course of government-driven commercialism by 1791, and any national program the Federalists developed would surely help new Westerners.

Federalists looking to implant the new American state into the Northwest formed partnerships with the speculators to promote a common vision of social order, especially through Gov. Arthur St. Clair, an excellent liaison between national and local Federalists in the Ohio valley. St. Clair approached his administration with three important attitudes that were interlinked to Federalist aims and the development of the Northwest Territory under Federalist auspices. First, St. Clair was undoubtedly an elitist and imagined himself an ambassador of gentility and intelligent government to its inhabitants. Outside of the Ohio Company lands, St. Clair clearly held low opinions of the French and American settlers who had occupied the region before 1788. He described them in a May 1790 letter as “the most ignorant People in the World” and universally illiterate, even if they were “the gentlest well disposed People that can be imagined.” Cast into the wilderness, St. Clair often wrote of his sense of alienation, telling Alexander Hamilton he was “a poor devil banished to another planet.”⁷⁴

Such comments have led other historians to claim St. Clair was an aristocrat and perhaps a monarchist at worst or a representative of a bygone paternalist attitude toward society at best, but his writings suggest he believed himself a proper gentleman who would bring the benefits of refined society to

⁷⁴ St. Clair to Knox, May 1, 1790, in Box 3, Folder 4, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; and St. Clair to Hamilton, August 9, 1793, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 318.

Westerners.⁷⁵ After all, he flatly denied accusations that he maintained “hostility against all republican government, and that a monarchy was the only government that could be endured.” Even ignorant old Western settlers could be saved by good administration. It was the product, he claimed, of a “want of proper Government, and the grievous Oppression” they experienced before his arrival there.⁷⁶ Once given the benefit of his administration and the respectable example of other settlers, such as that provided by the Ohio Company, those settlers could change their detestable ways. In short, wise government and Federalist beneficence would save the settlers from their savagery.

Gentlemen and good government would aid settlers as one aspect of energetic government in the Northwest Territory, the second important aspect of St. Clair’s political philosophy. To support that energy, he approved of a national system of taxation for Hamilton’s fiscal-military state. In 1802, St. Clair declared Jefferson’s plan of “abolishing the internal taxes... was an experiment I did not wish to see made.” He fretted that “public credit [would] be destroyed,” touching off “a new revolution... and where that might land us no man could possibly tell.”

⁷⁵ See especially Sears, “The Political Philosophy of Arthur St. Clair,” 45, 56; and Jeffrey P. Brown, “Arthur St. Clair and the Establishment of U.S. Authority in the Old Northwest,” in Van Tine and Pierce, *Builders of Ohio*, 39. In 1940, Sears imagined St. Clair as an “unreconstructable aristocrat” who harbored monarchist sentiments at heart. Sears seems to suggest that St. Clair’s disdain for the people he governed led to some of the partisan strife that later struck Ohio and that his firing by Jefferson ended the Adams-Jefferson contest in Ohio; though that conclusion is disputable as well, it is one best treated later in this study. More recently, Brown tempered Sears’ image of St. Clair, describing him merely as an anachronism, a paternalist in a post-Revolutionary American frontier that would not tolerate paternalism. However, as this study suggests, to single out St. Clair for a paternalistic attitude seems a bit unfair, and the successes that Federalists had even after St. Clair’s ouster in 1802 (with which Brown is well acquainted) seem to argue against envisioning St. Clair a relic of a bygone political era.

⁷⁶ St. Clair to George Tod, April 21, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 582; and St. Clair to Knox, May 1, 1790, in Box 3, Folder 4, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

He supported other means to raise revenue as well, advocating to President Washington in August 1789 that it would offer land to many prospective settlers who could not afford to buy large tracts of land with cash. Thus, he argued, the land office should be able to sell lands “in small Quantities, and where, upon the payment of the purchase Money, which should run upon Interest, they should receive Patents.” Overall, he argued, the land office would allow the federal government to “derive nearly the same Advantage as if the Lands had been paid for in the first Instance; for an Interest would accrue.”⁷⁷ Raising public money and spreading government power through the Northwest was clearly a priority, and his policy prescriptions supported those goals.

That new government power would also create an orderly and obedient population, the final priority that St. Clair showed during his work as territorial governor. He imagined the land office as a fulcrum of change in the political culture of the Northwest, telling Washington that the new Westerners would learn “of Obedience and Respect” through the new bureaucracy. As he explained further, “they would learn to reverence the Government; and the Countless multitudes which will be produced in that vast Region would become the Nerves and Sinews of the Union.” He also rewarded loyal European settlers by appointing them to local offices to further entrench federal authority among those

⁷⁷ St. Clair to George Tod, April 21, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 582; and St. Clair to Washington, August 1789, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 211.

established settlements.⁷⁸ Apparently, St. Clair understood the power behind infrastructurally strong government in his new territory.

However, disobedience required stern correction in St. Clair's worldview. He tried, though in a spectacularly unsuccessful manner, to punish the Indians for their perfidy in 1791, and he believed unruly whites could deserve the same treatment. He wrote to Hamilton approving of his handling of complaints about the whiskey excise, telling the Secretary of the Treasury in August 1793 that they should be made "to comply with the Excise Law." After all, he claimed, the excise "was their real interest before the opposition began with the distillers, who were in a combination against the people." He promised whatever aid he could offer, including a law disallowing "all ardent spirits into the Territory, the duties upon which have not been either paid or secured."⁷⁹ His comments reveal his commitment to what can only be characterized as an orderly republic. It was orderly because obedience to federal law would be absolute and – as the suppression of the Whiskey Rebellion shows – that obedience would be extracted if necessary. However, obedience was also best for republican virtue. If opponents did not realize the excise was in the best interests of the republic, then federal officials would demonstrate why they should obey.

St. Clair's hopes for a new alcohol regulation fit a larger pattern of cooperation among Federalist leaders, too, as controlling the importation and

⁷⁸ St. Clair to Washington, August 1789, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 212; and Brown, "Arthur St. Clair and the Establishment of U.S. Authority in the Old Northwest," in Van Tine and Pierce, *Builders of Ohio*, 29.

⁷⁹ St. Clair to Hamilton, August 9, 1793, in Smith, *The St Clair Papers*, II: 317.

sale of alcohol in the Northwest Territory showed the commitment to social order held in common by Federalists at all levels. In Congress, Thomas Scott of Pennsylvania was a leading voice for frontier Federalist interests once again. He spoke in July 1789 of the need for “due observance of the treaties heretofore entered with the Indian tribes,” and that required that “the guidance of the United States must go with the settlers.”⁸⁰ The next April, Scott rose during debate on a new Trade and Intercourse Act to demand “competent regulations to secure the peace of the frontiers” by passing a new comprehensive act, which ultimately included a prohibition on unlicensed trading to curtail the effects of what Francis Paul Prucha termed the “whiskey menace” on the frontier.

To affect those regulations, some Federalists in the House proposed adding the U.S. Army to regulation efforts with the Indians. Primarily, they argued that the law should require new appointees as Superintendent of Indian Affairs to be military officers. Opponents objected on constitutional grounds and the measure failed, but supporters argued for the military officers because of their effectiveness and the discipline structure in place. Officers, they claimed, were “most easily called to account” because they could be court-martialed for malfeasance and would “probably have the greatest influence with the Indians.”⁸¹ It would have possibly deputized the Army, too, as military officers could dispense men to enforce the new laws, including the prohibitions on unlicensed alcohol dealing, and in turn promote a well-regulated Western society.

⁸⁰ AC, 1st Cong., 1st sess., 648.

⁸¹ AC, 1st Cong., 2nd sess., 1575; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 98-99.

Meanwhile, territorial officials opposed the alcohol trade in the name of peace. As early as 1788, Arthur St. Clair complained that “desire for spirituous liquors” motivated Indian raids. Worse, their efforts were rewarded with “every boat [on the Ohio] carrying more or less of that commodity.” Rufus Putnam also blamed alcohol for Indian troubles, lecturing the settlers at Vincennes in 1792 that “none of you are Ignorent... of the law that prohibits the Selling any Spiritous liquors to Indians.” With treaty negotiations fragile, he reminded them that at that critical moment it “out at all times most religiously to be observed,” and called on civil and military officials to enforce the law “in an especial maner.”⁸² Again, controlling Indians coincided with controlling white settlers, and Federalist officials brought national and territorial power to bear against both groups.

Other Northwestern officials were more strident in their efforts to control the alcohol market among white settlers. Judge John Cleves Symmes praised the whiskey excise in a letter to friend and New Jersey Congressman Jonathan Dayton in 1791, but he hoped for more. “I wish that congress had... made it felony,” he said, for anyone other than clergy “who should transport even the smallest quantity of any kind of wine over the Alleghany mountains.” In Marietta, Thomas Wallcut was even clearer in his complaints about alcohol. In early February 1790, he argued for and secured an ordinance in Marietta to regulate the establishment of taverns in the name of the public peace.⁸³ For both men,

⁸² St. Clair to Knox, July 5, 1788, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 48; and Putnam, “Copy of an Address to the People of Vincennes,” September 16, 1792, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 334-335.

⁸³ Symmes to Jonathan Dayton, August 15, 1791, in Beverley W. Bond, Jr., ed., *The Intimate Letters of John Cleves Symmes and His Family* (Cincinnati: Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, 1956), 149; and Thomas Wallcut, journal entry, February 2, 1790, in Thomas

alcohol seemed to have societal effects too corrosive to be tolerated and therefore it required more careful government regulation than higher authorities were willing to provide. However, their advocacy had a clear tenor. Only strong measures would reform the ways of white Westerners, and the success of the new Western society required guidance by the West's better sort.

Meanwhile, Wallcut described controlling alcohol in Marietta in terms of Federalist notions of republican virtue. Writing privately, he complained of an unruly inn “destructive of peace, good order, and exemplary morals,” and he wanted regulations for taverns because, he decided, society needed “sufficient checks... to restrain and punish the inordinate passions of oppressive, cruel, and avaricious men.” Thus, regulating alcohol was necessary because it undermined the morality “upon which not only the well-being but the very existence of society so much depends.”⁸⁴ This talk of restraining passions mirrored St. Clair's calls to restrain passions in July 1788. To them, human nature required firm authority, and in a republic that meant a corrective hand for government. Thus, they imagined a twofold mission: they were to be not only energetic in government but also to steer American society with that energy.

Despite their clear social vision and their cooperation with national and territorial authorities to obtain it, Ohio valley speculators were not successful

Wallcut, *Journal of Thomas Wallcut in 1790*, ed. George Dexter (Cambridge, MA: University Press, John Wilson and Son, 1879), 12.

⁸⁴ Wallcut, “To His Excellency Arthur St. Clair, Esq., Governor and Commander-in-chief of the Territory of the United States North-west of the River Ohio,” 1790 [undated but inferred], in Wallcut, *Journal of Thomas Wallcut*, 13n. Dexter explains in footnotes that the address was likely never given since Wallcut never recorded giving the speech to St. Clair and nothing suggests that Wallcut moved the speech beyond an initial draft.

businessmen because they still could not guarantee safety during the Northwest Indian War. “Our Settlement does not encrease,” Marietta resident Return J. Meigs, Jr. complained in 1792, because “we are circumscribed within narrow Limits... [by] the Indian War.” The population statistics recorded by Rufus Putnam testify to the same problem. By 1790, the Ohio Company’s main settlement at Marietta had grown to 312 men, but growth stalled and by the end of the war only 226 of them remained.⁸⁵ Without new settlers, naturally, the Ohio Company could not raise new revenues to pay for its purchase.

Worse, the company had little choice but to pay to defend its settlements. In July 1790, the company passed resolutions to complete the well (with the company covering half of the costs) and to repair the defenses at Campus Martius. At later meetings, the company agreed to raise a thirty-man militia to defend the company and to erect stronger defenses against Indian attacks, once again at company expense. To help staff those defenses, the company even agreed to allow settlers to settle without purchasing shares in the company. “All Persons... who now reside, or may during the present troubles,” the resolution read, “and who shall continue, with us to defend the purchase through the present Indian War, each & every one of them shall be intitled and shall receive... 100 Acres as the Standard.”⁸⁶ Their situation was obviously desperate. The

⁸⁵ Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 107-110, 122; and Return J. Meigs, Jr. to Nathaniel Hubbard, Jr., August 30, 1792, in Box 1, Folder 38, Northwest Territory Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

⁸⁶ Ohio Company, meeting, July 29, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 52; Ohio Company, meeting, September 7, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 58; Ohio Company, meeting, January 5, 1791, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*,

company offered essentially to allow squatters onto its lands, and they could make their purchases with service. In other words, the Ohio Company decided to mortgage its future (and its possible revenues) to shore up its lowly defenses.

Clearly, the expenses of defending against Indians threatened the future of speculators in the Northwest Territory, and in turn they begged the federal government for reimbursements. The Ohio Company agreed in January 1791 to petition the federal government for money to pay their expenses, choosing to do so because, the company resolution read, “we place the highest confidence in the General Government.”⁸⁷ Meanwhile, Ohio Company leader Rufus Putnam lobbied for aid by appealing to other Federalists’ sense of duty to their fellow citizens and their republic. In 1790, he begged arch-Federalist Congressman Fisher Ames for aid to prevent “an infinite mischief to the United States.” Speculators bought their lands “in full confidence that Such protection would be afforded,” he claimed, and their success depended on that protection because “*of what value are lands without inhabitants, and who will wish to inhabit a country where no reasonable protection is afforded.*”⁸⁸

The war also gave reason to fret over the future of westward expansion. Putnam warned George Washington in early 1791 that without effective

II: 68, 70; and Ohio Company, meeting, March 21, 1791, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 85-86.

⁸⁷ Ohio Company, meeting, January 5, 1791, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 70. The Ohio Company repeated its concerns in its petition “To the Court of General Sessions of the Peace for the County of Washington,” 1791, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 71-73.

⁸⁸ Putnam to Fisher Ames, 1790, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 244. Emphasis as in the original.

protection, the new Federalist Northwest would melt away to “privit adventurers who will pay little or no regard to the laws of the United States.” After all, those squatters only left before “federal Troops at the point of the Bayonet,” and if the rightful owners of the land vanished, the squatters would “flood & Seize the country to them Selves, and... the United States will ever be able to reduce them to obedience without incurring a much greater expence then the chastizeing the Indians in a proper manner.”⁸⁹ Knox agreed, telling the President that administering justice and teaching Westerners “proper habits of submission to the laws” required that settlers “be effectually protected against indian depredations... and on this point it behoves government to be inflexible.”⁹⁰ To preserve that public-private partnership in frontier Federalism, government needed to protect the interests and investments of Western speculators.

However, the war forced speculators and settlers into deeper desperation. By 1792, Congress had reduced the purchases of both the Ohio Company and John Cleves Symmes to acreage commensurate to what they had already paid. Meanwhile, Ohio settlers had to alter daily activities to remain secure. In fall 1792, Territorial Secretary Winthrop Sargent ordered Cincinnatians to attend church while armed or face “most serious and melancholy circumstances” from Indians. His proclamation warned that anyone who attended “deficient in the arms or accoutrement required by law” could have their neighbors “make report thereof upon oath to a justice of the peace.” Meanwhile, Symmes took an

⁸⁹ Putnam to Washington, February 28, 1791, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 338.

⁹⁰ Knox to Washington, March 19, 1791, Box 1, Folder 36, Northwest Territory Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

angrier tone when asking Jonathan Dayton for help. He complained that “Instead of favor, to which we are fully entitled,” settlers were left to fend for themselves. They had done service to “extend the empire of the United States and reclaim from savage men and beasts a country that may one day prove the brightest jewel in the regalia of the nation,” but now they were ignored. Apparently out of patience, he asked bluntly, “Is this what you call fair, sir?”⁹¹

By war’s end in 1795, the Ohio Company and Symmes were effectively finished. The Ohio Company made its last grants in February 1796 and Symmes saw his land sales challenged more often as the 1790s progressed. For those failures, Symmes has borne the brunt of criticism in the historiography, discussed recently as an impractical dreamer at best and a criminal at worst.⁹² However, it seems unclear how speculators were going to succeed in an environment that was unsafe for settlement and incredibly hostile to economic development and white expansion. With the new American state yet to effectively place its armies at the head of westward expansion, speculators would never be able to pay off their large purchases by attracting adventurers in sufficient numbers. Poor business practices did not kill speculation efforts in the 1790s, but the long Indian

⁹¹ Ohio Company, meeting, June 30, 1790, in Hulbert, *Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company*, II: 33; “An Act authorizing the grant and conveyance of certain Lands to the Ohio Company of Associates,” April 21, 1792, in United States Congress, *United States Statutes at Large* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1845), I: 257; “Contract with John Cleves Symmes,” February 9, 1797, in *ASP:PL*, I: 66-67; Winthrop Sargent, “As to Assembling at Public Worship without Arms,” Sept. 18, 1792, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 309-310; and Symmes to Dayton, August 15, 1791, in Bond, *The Intimate Letters of John Cleves Symmes*, 153.

⁹² See especially John D. Barnhart and Dorothy L. Riker, *Indiana to 1816: The Colonial Period* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1971), 273; Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 249; and Hurt, “John Cleves Symmes and the Miami Purchase,” in Van Tine and Pierce, *Builders of Ohio*, 18, 24.

war denied them a chance to succeed. Simply put, the Ohio Company and Miami Purchase were the last casualties of the Northwest Indian War.

The Aftermath of the Speculator's Republic

The Northwest speculations were a business failure but not a political one. John Cleves Symmes, Rufus Putnam, and others did not reap financial rewards but continued to affect the direction of settlement through their political service.⁹³ Under the guidance of the original speculators and Arthur St. Clair, the rest of Ohio's territorial period saw Federalists continue to implant the early American state. However, their efforts did not go unnoticed by new settlers, many of whom objected over time to what they saw as overreaching Federalist-led authority. In the process, the Federalists ultimately lost the partisan battles when the Jeffersonians wrested control from them. Still, Federalists won their war on a disorderly West by successfully making government part of westward expansion and engineering a society in which gentlemen led. They failed to make Ohio a Federalist bastion, but they turned back the radical implications of the American Revolution and restored the Northwest from a region where loyalties were fragile into a full part of the Union.

Partisan fractures were first evident during the Northwest Indian War, especially over the Federalist approach to alcohol regulation. In hopes of controlling the trade in alcohol and the character of drinking establishments in the territory, laws required would-be tavern owners to license their businesses and

⁹³ Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 248-249; and Reys, *The Making of Urban America*, 225.

pay a fee of sixteen dollars. However, the measure met opposition in Cincinnati, attested by letters against it in the first editions of Cincinnati's Jeffersonian organ, the *Centinel of the North-Western Territory*, in 1793. Essays from a "Manlius" railed against the tavern licensing law, declaring in the first issue of the newspaper that the reason "sixteen dollars must be paid... cannot easily be known unless we suppose them to be less virtuous than their fellow citizens." Cayton argued that the essays of Manlius argued against restraining local authority and the area's economic development, but the latter was also asserting a competing ideology with Federalist leadership, too.⁹⁴ By implying tavern owners were no less virtuous than anyone else, "Manlius" had taken the implications of the Revolution into the social sphere of Cincinnati. All men's virtues were created equal, he said, a direct challenge to Federalist assumptions about Western settlers. Thus, by rejecting the regulation, "Manlius" also rejected the Federalist ideology behind it.

Opponents began talking of more than mere resistance, too. "Manlius" was even more strident in a later essay, warning that "the American revolution fully prove[d]" that Americans would not tolerate "taking away their money without their consent." In early Cincinnati, taxes and business regulations took on greater implications, as Jeffersonians tried to extend Revolutionary promises of equality and representation to all aspects of their lives and Federalists sought a more stratified and harmonious social order. Some even sought to reenact the Revolution in their efforts to topple Federalist attempts at building a new Western

⁹⁴ *Centinel of the North-Western Territory* (Cincinnati), November 9, 1793; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 64-65.

society from the top downward. In October 1794, one opponent compared St. Clair's administration to King George III. The governor held the same control over the military and the civil administration, the writer claimed, and King George at least required his decrees be obeyed and commissions last "under good behavior," while St. Clair offered them "during pleasure." Such statements attest to Alan Taylor's argument that the social aspects of the American Revolution were contested along American frontiers.⁹⁵ In the Northwest, Jeffersonian opponents would continue the Revolution, at least in their own minds, and push for a more egalitarian social vision. It was on this question that political struggles in Ohio turned for the next twenty years.

The explosive growth of white settlement in the territory after the Northwest Indian War only exacerbated the new partisan problems. With security guaranteed more firmly, the white population of Ohio grew exponentially from a few thousand in 1793 until the achieving statehood (which required 60,000 people) ten years later.⁹⁶ That influx only made the extension of state power more important in the opinion of Gov. St. Clair, who worried in 1796 that without sufficient federal action to extend land sales and update policies for the public lands, "such numbers of people will take possession of them as may not easily be removed, should that be thought necessary."⁹⁷ Among those migrants

⁹⁵ *Centinel of the North-Western Territory* (Cincinnati), November 30, 1793, and October 4, 1794; and Taylor, *William Cooper's Town*, 5.

⁹⁶ For more precise figures and other accounts of population growth in present-day Ohio after 1795, see Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 36, 52; Cutler, *Topographical Description of the State of Ohio, Indiana Territory, and Louisiana*, 9-11; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 8; and Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 17.

⁹⁷ St. Clair to Timothy Pickering, January 1796, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 548.

were some Federalists, including Jacob Burnet, who moved from New Jersey to the Miami Purchase in 1796, but many more of them came from Virginia and Kentucky and were more likely to be Jeffersonians. Many of them settled into the river valleys between the Ohio Company lands and the Miami Purchase, giving them a clear base of political strength from which to assail the Federalist establishment in the territory. Ironically, the guarantee of security that came from defeating the Indians in Ohio even worked against Federalists. As Donald Ratcliffe pointed out, settlers who may have opposed St. Clair during the war could not effectively do so with others too worried about their safety. Quite simply, safety allowed settlers to worry about battling partisan enemies more than battling Indians.⁹⁸

Despite the new resistance, Federalists pushed ahead with their state-building plans in 1795 and 1796 with more responsive institutions and, when necessary, shows of military strength to preserve public order. In their plans, the fiscal-military state would continue after the Northwest Indian War. They even hoped to extend the system of taxation into the territories, as Attorney General William Bradford told Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott, Jr. that a law requiring licenses to sell imported wines and liquors should be extended into the Northwest Territory, noting that “all the laws of Congress... are in their operation coextensive with the Territory of the United States” and the Northwest Ordinance “explicitly directs that they shall be subject to all the acts and ordinances of the

⁹⁸ Cayton, *Frontier Republic*, 52; David R. Contosta, *Lancaster, Ohio, 1800-1820: Frontier Town to Edge City* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999), 14; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 17.

United States.” St. Clair objected, but national leaders were moving to ensure Westerners would remain obedient and even provide revenues to pay for the expensive war waged on their behalf.⁹⁹

Meanwhile, Federalists at territorial and national levels pressed for a continued military presence. Shortly after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, territorial judge Rufus Putnam asked Timothy Pickering for a fort along the Scioto River to guarantee regular mail service in the area. He argued mail was essential because of “the knowledge diffused among the people by Newspapers, by correspondence between friends and other communic[a]tions with these remote parts of the American Empire may be of infinite consequence to the government.” Meanwhile, new Secretary of War Timothy Pickering urged Gov. St. Clair in March 1795 to consider keeping an active militia “as the reasonable protection of the inhabitants may require.” In order to offer that protection and occupy new and existing forts in the Northwest, he argued as Secretary of State in 1796 that the military should be maintained “even in time of peace, in order to preserve peace with the Indians, and to protect theirs and the public lands.”¹⁰⁰ Federalists hoped to maintain the fiscal-military state in the Northwest Territory after the war for various reasons, but most importantly to maintain and extend federal authority over the quickly growing settlements.

⁹⁹ Oliver Wolcott, Jr. to Arthur St. Clair, June 19, 1795, Box 4, Folder 8, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; and St. Clair to Wolcott, Dec. 5, 1795, Box 4, Folder 8, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

¹⁰⁰ Putnam to Timothy Pickering, August 30, 1794, in Buell, *The Memoirs of Rufus Putnam*, 394; Pickering to St. Clair, March 25, 1795, Box 4, Folder 8, Arthur St. Clair Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; and Pickering to the House Committee of the Military Establishment, February 3, 1796, in Charles W. Upham, *The Life of Timothy Pickering* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1873), 3: 144.

In addition, they looked to extend a system of public land sales and settlement to accommodate the quickly arriving settlers. Urged by worrisome comments from Western officials like St. Clair, who suggested offices “where any person might locate, [and] purchase land in small quantities” to keep the new settlers loyal to the Union, Congressional Federalists moved to answer those concerns.¹⁰¹ When the House of Representatives debated a new land bill in February 1796, the cause found a champion in Jonathan Dayton, Speaker of the House and close friend of John Cleves Symmes. Answering multiple speeches from Republicans against the bill, Dayton stood behind carefully supervised, systematic settlement and measured expansion with expensive lands and large purchase requirements, both of which were hallmarks of the speculators’ original plans. He attacked the Republican approaches to westward expansion for their “loose manner” and suggested a firmer plan of contiguous settlement to regulate settlement and enhance land values. Further, he said, government could annually offer “a fresh quantity of land” to keep pace with demand.¹⁰²

In the end, Dayton won. The new law provided auctions for Northwestern lands at offices in Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, with sales beginning at 640 acres and only as the Surveyor General – a newly created office – would be able to provide them. Further, it offered sales on credit; settlers could pay only one-

¹⁰¹ St. Clair, “Some Considerations as to the Dangers that Beset the Western Territory, and How It May Be Preserved as an Important Part of the Union,” in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 419-420.

¹⁰² AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 353.

twentieth of the total price and settle the balance within a year.¹⁰³ Federalists also opposed renewed squatter threats to public order in the Northwest. Federalist Congressman William Smith of South Carolina argued against offering preemption rights to squatters because “illegal settlements on the lands of the United States ought not to be encouraged... as yielding to the said claims would interfere with the general provisions for the sale of the said lands.”¹⁰⁴ Ultimately, no preemption provisions appeared in the 1796 land act.

Upon passage of the act, Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott, Jr. and the Washington administration moved quickly to place the new offices in Federalist hands. Wolcott appointed John Neville, the tax collector attacked by the Whiskey Rebels, as receiver of public money in the Pittsburgh office. Meanwhile, Rufus Putnam became surveyor general, a clear signal that the speculator’s republic was still alive even if his company had withered away.¹⁰⁵ The new system also seemed to pay quick dividends. Wolcott reported to Congress that the new Pittsburgh land office brought in over \$110,000 in land sales by January 1797, and over one-third of it had already been collected. However, he warned of further intrusions on public lands and possible forfeitures in the next year.¹⁰⁶

Nonetheless, Federalists in Congress had succeeded in creating a system that

¹⁰³ “An Act Providing for the Sale of the Lands of the United States, in the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio, and Above the Mouth of Kentucky River,” May 18, 1796, in *United States Statutes at Large*, I: 466-467.

¹⁰⁴ “Pre-emption Rights Northwest of the Ohio,” May 12, 1796, in *ASP:PL*, I: 60.

¹⁰⁵ Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 19, 21. As he notes, Washington and Wolcott also chose them because they were distinguished Westerners who enhanced the profile of those offices and reflected good character upon the federal government overall.

¹⁰⁶ “Pre-emption Rights Northwest of the Ohio,” May 12, 1796, in *ASP:PL*, I: 60; Wolcott, “Extension of Credit on Lands Sold,” Jan. 30, 1797, in *ASP:PL*, I: 65.

extended the reach of government and brought more new Westerners into face-to-face contact with federal power through land office clerks.

Still, when Federalist plans for a benign state distributing its lands to settlers failed, force could still maintain public order. Pickering listed saving “lands of the United States, from intrusions, and to remove the actual intruders” among his reasons to maintain the U.S. Army. Pickering also hoped they would be a rudimentary intelligence service in which commanding officers wrote regular reports that would pass up the chain of command and give the President a comprehensive picture of frontier developments. Meanwhile, when settlers sent by Putnam to found Athens in 1797 discovered squatters “came to take possession of these lands, many of whom seemed disposed to practice the principle that, might makes right,” they took “forcible possession of the land and improvements.” Doing so, they hoped, would “keep the peace, and give an effectual check to these outrages.” Meanwhile, Athens authorities gained a reputation for treating criminals strictly, leaving unruly locals “frightened” in Ephraim Cutler’s description. When judges threatened to send disorderly citizens to Marietta, a court known “for firmness and strict justice,” the thought, Cutler recorded with apparent pleasure, “filled them with terror.”¹⁰⁷

Other officials agreed with treating squatters roughly, and to justify it they fell back to criticizing their lawlessness and lack of republican virtue. St. Clair

¹⁰⁷ Pickering to the House Committee of the Military Establishment, February 3, 1796, in Upham, *The Life of Timothy Pickering*, 3: 144-145; Ephraim Cutler, “The First Settlement of Athens County, with Biographical Notices of Some of the Early Settlers,” in S.P. Hildreth, ed., *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of the Early Pioneer Settlers of Ohio, with Narratives of Incidents and Occurrences in 1775* (Cincinnati: H.W. Derby, 1852,) 410, 412.

railed against squatters in 1796, seeing them as threats to his power and castigating them as men with minds “little tintured with Justice or humanity.” Instead, he said, they “have a pretty strong sympathy with their Pockets,” and thus he believed they needed correction. Meanwhile, Territorial Secretary Winthrop Sargent fell back upon comparing squatters and Indians, declaring they wished “to be as free as the Natives.”¹⁰⁸ The desires of those squatters for preemption were especially galling to frontier Federalists. After all, squatting in hope of gaining free land was the epitome of lawlessness and self-interest that characterized American society in the 1780s and the West that Federalists hoped to avoid. By squatting, they violated Federalist principles of orderly settlement, and their hope of acquiring land without buying it meant stealing from the public revenues. In a sense, the new round of squatters represented everything that Federalists had attempted to turn back in Ohio.

The attacks on squatters for their self-interest translated quickly into attacks on the new Jeffersonians who poured into Ohio in sufficient numbers to help the territory move into the second stage of government laid out by the Northwest Ordinance in 1798. Again, Federalists fell back on describing their opponents – though they were more respectable this time – as self-interested and less virtuous. Jacob Burnet of Cincinnati, a Federalist and member of the upper house of the territorial legislature in 1798, picked on the Jeffersonian representatives of Ross County in his memoirs. He described their contingent as a group who had “not excelled in talent and energy,” but the county likely chose

¹⁰⁸ St. Clair to Pickering, January 1796, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 543; and Sargent to Pickering, January 20, 1797, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 587.

them as “her strongest men as guardians of her interest.” Overall, he said, the Republicans in the legislature during the first two years were “influenced by motives of ambition,” the great enemy of republicanism, “and were more anxious to gain power, than to reform abuses.” They were willing to say anything to win, too. As he wrote, the Republicans told their constituents that “Federalists were *aristocrats*” who wanted to recreate “the substance, as well as the form, of the British government.” Worse, people often believed it, leaving “framers and fathers of the Constitution... as its worst enemies.”¹⁰⁹ In Burnet’s view, Ohio’s Republicans were usurpers against the rightful and deserving Federalist leaders.

While Burnet spoke poorly of the Jeffersonian Republicans from a safe distance of decades, Gov. St. Clair went on the partisan offensive whenever he could. He accused political rivals Thomas Worthington and Edward Tiffin, both of whom migrated into the Miami valley in 1798 and settled at Chillicothe, of trying to locate the territorial capital at their adopted home in order to augment their property values. As the center of political power in the territory, the location of the capital was a legitimate issue that animated the imaginations of town boosters throughout Ohio, but to St. Clair it was a simple question of self-interest. He said similarly that self-interest and economic situations affected the voting habits of many citizens. The new citizens were “indigent and ignorant,” he complained in 1799, and “ill qualified to form a constitution and government for themselves.” However, of greater concern were their lack of political principles and their economic ties to the great landowners of the area. If the voters of the

¹⁰⁹ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 292, 298.

Miami valley were to control the political future, he worried, government would become “democratic in its form and oligarchic in its execution” with creditors supporting their political careers by dictating votes to debtors.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, St. Clair and other Federalists imagined themselves paragons of republican virtue and gentlemanly leadership in the Northwest. St. Clair believed himself the final defense against the forces of self-interest and license, leading him to veto bills quite frequently to preserve the Federalist mission in the territory.¹¹¹ For example, he rejected a 1798 petition from settlers living in unincorporated lands they bought from John Cleves Symmes by pointing out the proper methods to obtain land in the territory. As he explained, the petitioners did not have valid title to their lands without Congressional blessing, the only legitimate source of land deeds. Without government-backed titles, he told them, “You stand... on the same ground as those who have sat down on the public lands that are not claimed, and who have not pretended a right to vote.” He also continued Federalist patterns of regulating the alcohol trade carefully. On the last day of the territorial legislature’s meetings in December 1799, he informed them that he vetoed an “act to regulate taverns and other public-houses, especially in country places” because they have “the worst effects upon the industry and the morals of the people.” Further, he explained, the requirement that prospective owners receive only nine recommendations on their character was too low, and the law failed to regulate where taverns could and should

¹¹⁰ Cayton, *Frontier Republic*, 52; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 32.

¹¹¹ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 306. As Burnet notes, St. Clair’s opponents argued that he should be removed because he vetoed so many bills.

operate.¹¹² St. Clair rejected the petitions and bills not because he was a tyrant, as claimed by his opponents, but because he could not accept the consequences. Giving in to the whims of his opponents meant risking all the work he and other Federalists had done to implant state power and encourage white settlers to respect the law.

His efforts to expand federal power and ensure an obedient populace are especially clear in his Indian policies. St. Clair agreed to allow Moravian missionaries to work with Indians in the territory, swayed by their promises to spread Christianity among the Indians, establish schools on their lands, and to “inculcate habits of industry and sobriety, and instruct them to live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” On the insistence of the missionaries, St. Clair encouraged and signed the bill to outlaw the alcohol trade in Indian towns as well. He did so, Burnet explained later, because the missionaries had converted many Indians; St. Clair wanted to preserve their “considerable progress in agriculture, and the arts.”¹¹³ His hopes for the Indian population mirrored the hopes he expressed during his landing at Marietta in 1788. With the Indians, he wished again to see wilderness tamed and good government allow the better angels of human nature to prevail. With an active government presence among the Indians and another partnership, this time with the Moravian missionaries instead of the Ohio Company, he could do just that.

¹¹² St. Clair to Joseph Parks, December 13, 1798, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 436; and St. Clair, “Speech of Governor St. Clair to the Legislature,” December 19, 1799, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 475-476.

¹¹³ David Zeisberger, et al., to St. Clair, October 28, 1798, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 433-434; and Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 312.

However, St. Clair's hopes to control the direction of settlement faced two primary problems at the dawn of the new century. First, he faced an opposition that was starting to threaten Federalist control of the territorial legislature as well as the federal government in the fall election. Second, he faced a population growing too quickly for him to effectively control and that was soon to reach the Northwest Ordinance's threshold of statehood. In 1800, the population topped 45,000, and it was clearly soon to eclipse the required 60,000 inhabitants to apply for statehood.¹¹⁴ Thus, St. Clair pushed for a territorial division to slow the march to statehood. Doing so, he explained to Ohioan James Ross, would allow more time "for the cultivation of a disposition favorable to the General Government... and the influence of the few wealthy would cease entirely." Partition was a panacea for his problems: citizens would gain time to appreciate federal power and he could counter the wave of self-interest spread by Jeffersonian elites in the Miami valley. However, he noted, "not every division... would answer these purposes," so he wanted the partition to divide the Jeffersonian stronghold in present-day central southern Ohio. As a result, he said, there would remain a "colonial state for a good many years to come" and the state ultimately formed from the eastern section would be "surely Federal."¹¹⁵

However, St. Clair would not get his wishes as party influences had shifted in Congress by 1800, and Republicans gained more of their wishes and even hoped to oust St. Clair in their own Revolution of 1800. Territorial Republicans

¹¹⁴ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 33.

¹¹⁵ St. Clair to James Ross, December 1799, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 482.

offered a response to St. Clair's rule centered on two objectives. First, they called for universal white male suffrage, prospectively to boost their influence in the territory. Territorial law dictated that men had to own fifty acres of land to vote, but in its place they wanted to extend voting rights to all men who paid taxes to their county or to the territory.¹¹⁶ Second, they wanted a system of land distribution to encourage new settlers but also to make land ownership more easily available to existing residents. In doing so, they addressed the worries of settlers like those along the Scioto who petitioned Congress for a new system in 1798, complaining of "enormous prices" for land that must be purchased in large quantities. It left them, they said, "Disappointed in getting lands on easy and equitable terms in hopes of which we adventured our lives."¹¹⁷

The Republican petitioners saw their wishes realized by their delegate William Henry Harrison, who engineered a new land law in 1800 that aimed to reorganize the land offices to better serve the wishes of smaller farmers.¹¹⁸ The law, which reduced purchase requirements to 320 acres and opened more land offices for the convenience of purchasers, meant a new era for prospective landowners in the Northwest. Afterward, Jacob Burnet recalled, the 1800 law offered opportunities of purchase to "men of limited means" who in turn "flocked... from every part of the Union" and made statehood possible all the

¹¹⁶ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 306; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 34.

¹¹⁷ "Petition to Congress from Inhabitants of the Scioto," February 1, 1798, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 638. Albert Gallatin presented a similar petition for Northwestern lands: see "Applications for Land at Reduced Prices," May 19, 1798, in *ASP:PL*, I: 73.

¹¹⁸ The Land Law of 1800 will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

more quickly. Despite the promise behind the law, though, those farmers were not guaranteed clear access to land. Eric Hinderaker has noted that a bad harvest undid many farmers, and the need to profit quickly or forfeit their payments still only left farmers an illusory control over their futures.¹¹⁹ The 1800 law did not live up to all of its promises, but along with the new partition along the state lines of present-day Ohio, Congress had enhanced the position of the Republicans there.

Even while St. Clair stayed in office after Adams reappointed him in 1800, Republicans continued to gain strength and saw statehood as their escape from Federalist rule. Casting themselves as members of a new revolution against the tyrannical rule of “King Arthur” or “Arthur the First,” they picked up momentum after one of St. Clair’s leading opponents, Thomas Worthington of Chillicothe, spent much of his time in Washington lobbying unsuccessfully for a new governor during the winter of 1801-1802. To circumvent St. Clair, they had to make a new state.¹²⁰ In response, Federalists recommitted to their notions of a carefully guided, almost paternalistic style of politics in national oversight of Northwestern settlements. One clear signal of that commitment came from the old Federalist stronghold at Marietta, where a town meeting passed a resolution against statehood in favor of continued territorial government that shielded new settlements “from the storms of party and the agitations of intrigue.” In addition,

¹¹⁹ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 395-396; and Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 249.

¹²⁰ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 75-76; Mary Alice Mairose, “Thomas Worthington and the Quest for Statehood and Gentility,” in Van Tine and Pierce, *Builders of Ohio*, 62; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 42, 44, 57.

the territory was too chaotic for statehood. Only when they were no longer “a mixed mass of people, scattered over an immense wilderness” would the settlers be ready to join the Union fully.¹²¹ In essence, they suggested, settlements in the Northwest simply needed time to mature. Until then, the immature society of the Northwest required the fatherly hand of national government, led by gentlemen like St. Clair.

Federalist resistance did not deter Ohio Republicans from pressing for a new law to allow them to call a statehood convention, and Federalists had to resist them from a curious, strict constructionist position. When first presented with a bill to make a state of the Northwest Territory in the House in late March 1802, Northwest Territorial Delegate Paul Fearing, a loyal Federalist who had settled in Marietta and practiced law there since 1788, rose against the bill by appealing to the Constitution. By the letter of the Constitution and of the Northwest Ordinance, he pointed out, “Congress had nothing to do with the arrangements for calling a convention.” Further, he claimed, the proponents of statehood did not speak for the entire territory, and he suggested once again that Jeffersonians in the territory were merely self-interested and ambitious. Roger Griswold of Connecticut added that Congressional action in the statehood process was the start of a slippery slope of federal interference, saying, “If we interfere with the first, we may interfere with the last.”¹²²

¹²¹ *Scioto Gazette*, January 29, 1801, quoted in Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 73.

¹²² "Remarks of Mr. Fearing and Mr. Griswold in the House of Representatives on the Report of the Select Committee Respecting the Admission of the North-western Territory as a State into the Union," Mar. 31: 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 576-577, 580.

Federalist settlers and former speculators agreed the enabling act was unconstitutional. The original Ohio Company advocate Manasseh Cutler, serving in 1802 as a Congressman from Massachusetts, fumed about unconstitutional interference from Congress when considering the “Bill for erecting N.W. Territory into a State.” As he said in his diary, “Never was a bill passed so opposed to so many constitutional, just and equitable principles. It tyrannizes over every principle of liberty and freedom.” Meanwhile, young territorial legislator Jacob Burnet described the bill as “unauthorized... by any legitimate authority.” Complaining that the act “prescribed the boundaries of the State, fixed the number of members of which the Convention could consist, and apportioned the number to be chosen by each county,” he stated plainly that Congress had made “assumptions of power, not warranted by the Constitution, or the Ordinance.” Nonetheless, he noted that the bill was “silently submitted to” and signed into law on April 30, 1802.¹²³

Once the Enabling Act passed, St. Clair attempted to shape the convention in a Federalist direction. Speaking in Cincinnati, he explained his view of an ideal candidate for writing a constitution. “A Constitution fitted to the habits, the manners, and the genius of the people... requires strong minds, improved by a thorough acquaintance with the faults as well as the excellencies of all the Constitutions that exist, not only in the United States, but in the whole world,” he said. In essence, education and a gentleman’s sophistication made a

¹²³ Cutler, diary entry, April 7, 1802, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, II: 105; and Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 350-351. For the full text of the Enabling Act of 1802, see *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 173-175.

candidate worthy, meaning that St. Clair sustained his Federalist commitment to rule by the “worthy” men of society. He continued that good candidates “should be well informed” on matters of “rational liberty” and “true republicanism.” Showing old Federalist worries, he noted that liberty “is not an unbounded license to do what every one sees good in his own eyes. It requires direct study and deep reflection, with a facility of speaking readily and convincingly.”¹²⁴

However, St. Clair was flailing helplessly at the political current that brought the constitutional convention and would soon sweep him away from the Northwest Territory. When the convention opened on November 1, 1802, twenty-six of the thirty-five delegates elected to the convention were committed Republicans. Only seven were clearly Federalists, and many hopefuls – among them Jacob Burnet – were handed humiliating defeats in the election.¹²⁵ Still, before them stood Gov. St. Clair to give his opening remarks, in which he seemed oddly satisfied with his work despite the fact that he was speaking to a wide Republican majority. He opened by noting that when he looked back “fourteen years, when the affairs of this country were committed to me; when your numbers were only about thirty men; a wilderness before them to subdue, and surrounded by numerous tribes of savages,” he was amazed at the progress Ohioans had made. He reported proudly that he had reached his goal of bringing

¹²⁴ "Speech of Governor St. Clair at Cincinnati," 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 589.

¹²⁵ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 77; and Mairose, "Thomas Worthington and the Quest for Statehood and Gentility," in Van Tine and Peirce, *Builders of Ohio*, 62.

to the territory “morals and... the institutions of religion” as well as “the spirit of obedience... and a love of order, without which civil society can not exist.”¹²⁶

St. Clair then pivoted to attack the convention and the Republicans who spearheaded it. He condemned the “party rage... stalking with destructive strides over the whole continent.” Such partisan attitudes “destroyed all the ancient republics, and the United States seem to be running the same career,” he warned, and he clearly thought Republicans were guilty of bringing that partisanship westward and across the nation. He also claimed one more time that the Enabling Act was unconstitutional, “an interference with the internal affairs of the country, which they had neither the power nor the right to make.” Further, he complained about the conditions placed upon Ohio’s statehood, especially that the road funds promised by Congress would not be given easily and that the rush to statehood had cost Ohio an opportunity to lay taxes on recently sold lands to cover state and local needs.¹²⁷ Rather than stay any longer, he left shortly after his speech and did not make another contribution to the convention. Upon his exit, the convention largely ignored St. Clair’s invective and moved to begin writing a constitution. The convention agreed by a 32-1 vote, with only Ephraim Cutler, Manasseh’s son, standing in opposition.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ “Remarks of Governor St. Clair before the Constitutional Convention,” November 1, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 592-593.

¹²⁷ “Remarks of Governor St. Clair before the Constitutional Convention,” November 1, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 594-596.

¹²⁸ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 352-353; Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 68; and Ohio Constitutional Convention, *Journal of the Convention of the Territory of the United States North-west of the Ohio, Begun and Held at Chillicothe, on Monday the First Day of November, A.D. One Thousand Eight Hundred and Two, and the Independence of the United States the Twenty-Seventh* (Chillicothe, OH: N. Willis, 1802),

With Federalists badly outnumbered for the rest of the convention, they exerted little influence over the constitution itself, but the constitution echoed long-term Federalist influence in three passages. First, Federalists succeeded in altering the third article, outlining the state judiciary, to their ends. Ephraim Cutler was the pivotal figure in altering the article, advising that it was “the duty of the convention, and a wise policy, to provide a mode of administering justice that would bring it as near every man's door as was practicable.” He spoke of making courts accessible to all citizens, a form of state penetration in Ohio that would extend the Federalist vision for an orderly Northwest. He failed to sway the convention at first, but with the aid of a number of Republicans he ultimately swayed the convention in his favor. The new article reflected Cutler’s intentions, too, requiring each county to carry at least two associate judges and the state supreme court to meet in each county once per year. Cutler reflected on the moment with pride, noting that his influence unexpectedly gave the Federalist delegates more respect, who “were listened to with respectful attention by those who had before manifested something bordering upon contempt.”¹²⁹

The final two passages appear in the final article, the bill of rights. Section two affirmed the Northwest Ordinance ban on slavery, for which Cutler assumed much of the credit in his records. Abolishing slavery in Ohio hinged on John

9. Ephraim Cutler explained his vote by pointing to his principles. As he recorded and his descendent Julia later published, he ignored the advice of other Federalists because “it would be inconsistent for me to vote [yes].” In doing, so, “I said *No*, and found myself ‘solitary and alone,’ but was not dismayed, being certain that I was expressing the will of my constituents, as well as complying with my own judgment and convictions of duty.”

¹²⁹ Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 71, 73; and Ohio Constitution of 1802, Art. III, sec. 3, 10.

Milligan, who voted against slavery in the territorial legislature. Thus, Cutler aimed his speech specifically to Milligan, and Milligan voted against introducing slavery in a one-vote majority. “It cost me every effort I was capable of making,” Cutler claimed, but he clearly had no regrets. Finally, Cutler also claimed credit for section three, which in hallmark Federalist language declared “religion, morality and knowledge... necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind.” To assure those qualities and good government, the constitution required that “schools and the means of instructions shall forever be encouraged by legislative provision.”¹³⁰ Because of these victories, he wrote, even Federalists were pleased with the final outcome of the convention. “I very much doubt whether any of the members of the convention were, at the conclusion, better, if so well, pleased with the result of our labors, as General Putnam and Messrs. Gilman and Wells,” he claimed.¹³¹ Though Federalists made their voices heard, the constitution still meant Federalists were resigning their control to a Jeffersonian majority all but certain to seize power in the state’s first elections.

As the convention continued until November 29, the other death blow to Federalist rule of the Northwest Territory came in St. Clair’s firing seven days

¹³⁰ Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 74-77; and Ohio Constitution of 1802, Art. VIII, sec. 3. Cutler claimed personal credit for both parts of Article VIII, writing, “I prepared and introduced all that part which relates to slavery, religion, and schools or education.”

¹³¹ Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 70. For another Federalist opinion on the 1802 constitution, see Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 358-359, 363-364. Despite Cutler’s claims, it seems that other Federalists had reservations about the 1802 convention. Burnet complained that it was “formed under such circumstances, by an authority so remote from the people” and noted that “it was feared that, in some particulars, the equalizing principle was carried too far for the safety and stability of our institutions.” Meanwhile, he wrote with clear disapproval, the governor was “so limited and restricted, as to be almost nominal.” Still, he did not fully condemn the 1802 constitution but rather offered meek praise that it was “met with general approbation.”

before. St. Clair received the news and offered a final address to the people of the soon-to-be state on December 8 before he returned to his Pennsylvania home. He began the address by justifying his approach to governance, telling citizens that he presided over “a period that necessarily required your Governor should be vested with a considerable portion of power, and that power was applied to your benefit only.” He noted with pride, “You have been protected from dangers from abroad, and made happy at home.... your liberties and your property were guarded by wholesome laws, executed with exactness and at the same time with mildness.” With his unceremonious end, St. Clair seemed to be raging at an ungrateful people he had steered through trying times. In perhaps his last official act, he rejected the office itself; he told Secretary of State James Madison that the governorship was “an office I was heartily tired of,” and his dismissal meant leaving “about six weeks sooner than I had determined to rid myself of it.”¹³² Manasseh Cutler also greeted statehood glumly. As Congress approved Ohio’s constitution and it officially became a state on March 1, 1803, his diary was silent. Apparently, he found moving trunks and barrels to be of greater importance.¹³³

Federalists no longer led Ohio in 1803, but their rule left two important legacies. First, they secured the Northwest for the United States, as decisive

¹³² “Address of Governor St. Clair to the People of the North-western Territory,” December 8, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 597-598; and St. Clair to James Madison, December 21, 1802, in *St. Clair Papers*, II: 599-600. In the letter to Madison, St. Clair had noted November 22 as the date Jefferson had terminated him.

¹³³ Cutler, diary entries, March 1-3, 1803, in Cutler and Cutler, *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, II: 118.

actions in the Northwest Indian War and in establishing a territorial government quieted worries about the region's attachment to the Union by 1803. Second, Federalists constructed a state in which gentlemen ruled. Delegates to the 1802 constitutional convention owned an average of 1,537 acres in 1810, more than five times the state average and worth ten times the average landholder's estate in the 1810 Census. Even Jeffersonian leaders were major landowners. For example, the first Speaker of the Ohio Senate, Nathaniel Massie, held over 78,000 acres in the Miami valley, and future Ohio Governor and Senator Thomas Worthington owned 18,000 acres. Overall, historian Lee Soltow has observed, the land barons in Ohio – twelve of whom controlled 7.5 percent of the state's resident acreage in 1810 – also controlled state politics for the next decade.¹³⁴

In sum, Federalist administration also left two important legacies in the former Northwest Territory. First, Federalists had built a series of institutions that their Jeffersonian successors would enlarge and refine during the succeeding decades. In a sense, the Jeffersonians who followed Federalist administration in the Northwest only extended the state power Federalists established there.¹³⁵ Federalists also left another important legacy: a generation of young Federalists who would continue the partisan fight well after St. Clair headed back to

¹³⁴ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 53-55; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 103; and Lee Soltow, "Inequality Amidst Abundance: Land Ownership in Early Nineteenth Century Ohio," *Ohio History* 88, no. 2 (Spring 1979), 137, 147.

¹³⁵ For a similar point, see Cayton, "Radicals in the 'Western World,'" in Ben-Atar and Oberg, *Federalists Reconsidered*, 92-93. As Cayton noted, William Henry Harrison served as a committed servant and emissary of national authority, and the reforms he and other Jeffersonian leaders pursued in the 1800s were continuations of Federalist ideas. He pointed especially to the land office, saying Congress only liberalized land laws in 1800 and after within the context of Federalist laws passed in the 1780s and 1790s.

Pennsylvania. Ultimately, both legacies intertwined as Jeffersonian Republicans in the Northwest moved toward state-building and as aging Federalists sought new political allies. However, the history of that legacy comes first. The new American state in the Northwest did not die with Federalist administration in Ohio. It merely assumed new management under a series of enterprising Western Jeffersonians who saw the value in the state leading westward expansion. Their leadership would usher in a new era for the early American state in the nineteenth-century Northwest, as Jeffersonians offered a new articulation of state-driven westward expansion. However, it should be noted, those articulations were made within bounds of Federalist institutions and original Federalist visions for the future of the Old Northwest.

CHAPTER THREE

Federalist Frontier Echo: Jeffersonian Administration in Indiana and Illinois

In 1787, as the Ohio Company was laying out its plans and the convention at Philadelphia ironed out the Constitution, the residents of present-day Indiana and Illinois were clamoring for more energetic government. In July, the residents of Vincennes (on the east side of the Wabash River) asked Congress for help because they were “addicted to the Indian trade,” and wanted the United States to grant them land to erect public buildings and aid new industries. Meanwhile, the people of Kaskaskia, which was located by the Mississippi, were hoping for similar aid. They had little shame about it, too, informing U.S. Army commanding officer Josiah Harmar that “The people of this district Sir do not refuse to be under the Administration of a salutary police, and a good government.”¹ In

¹ “Petition of the Inhabitants of Post Vincennes,” July 26, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 58-59; and Magistrates of Kaskaskia to Harmar, August 25, 1787, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, II: 67. The petitioners from Vincennes wanted land grants for all male inhabitants as well as common lands to raise money for “Court houses, Jails, churches, bridges, repairing roads – &c.”

advocating for stronger government, the people of these Western towns suggested a paradigm shift in American politics. Twenty years earlier, colonists pined to see salutary neglect return, but these settlers were part of a new generation of Americans who were pursuing energetic government – a salutary activism, as it were – to meet citizens’ needs and improve their lives.

Within fifteen years, stronger government arrived under Republican leadership, and those officials pursued four objectives as salutary activists. First, they believed government should be active in westward expansion. By pursuing better education, transportation, and government institutions for Western settlers, salutary activists spread state power in Indiana and Illinois. Second, they differed from Federalists in their style of government, choosing to make that state more accessible to Westerners so that government would be a helpmeet for Westerners to advance economically and socially. Third, Western Jeffersonians continued hard-line Indian policies, as they supported both a strong U.S. Army and aggressive negotiation with Indians. Ultimately, they hoped to secure land for settlers and drive away the British and Spanish influence many settlers saw behind every Indian action. Finally, salutary activists tried to attain their goals relatively cheaply, thereby minimizing tax burden on the American people. William Henry Harrison summarized their hopes well, telling the Indiana Territory legislature in its opening session in summer 1805 that he wanted a “system which would unite simplicity with energy.”² In short, salutary activism came from

² William Henry Harrison, “Harrison’s Address to the General Assembly,” July 29, 1805, in Logan Esarey, ed., *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Commission, 1922), I: 156.

Westerners who worked within Jeffersonian Republican politics to enlarge rather than shrink the state.

Those officials overseeing Indiana and Illinois during the 1800s and 1810s often supported Federalist institutions in the 1790s and articulated them once they were in office. William Henry Harrison is a prime example. The son of a former Virginia governor, he moved to the Northwest after Washington commissioned him as an 18-year-old U.S. Army officer in August 1791. Fourteen months later, he assumed his first command after a court martial of his superior Capt. Ballard Smith in Wayne's Legion that involved stolen pistols, drunkenness, and one of the stranger moments in the recorded history of philandering.³ After fighting in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, he was one of twenty-seven American signers at the Treaty of Greenville and later oversaw the reporting of treaty infractions.⁴ After being elected Congressional delegate for the Northwest Territory in October 1799, Harrison supported Federalist policies like maintaining

³ Robert Gray Gunderson, "William Henry Harrison: Apprentice in Arms," *Northwest Ohio Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 11; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 15; and C.M. Burton, ed., "General Wayne's Orderly Book," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Historical Collections* 34 (1904): 396-397. Smith was convicted of "behavior unlike a Gentleman and Officer and repugnant to the dignity of the army," violation of orders, contempt of commanding officers, resisting arrest, and "laboring under the Character of a Drunkard in General." The problems arose after a late-night disturbance among himself, the sentry Sergeant Thorpe, and Smith's date for the night (the wife of a Sergeant Sprague within his own company). The alcohol-fueled argument led to Mrs. Sprague erupting in a manner "riotous, abusive, and... destructive to discipline and in particular in the abuse of Sergant [sic] Thorpe," and carrying the argument all the way to Capt. Smith's tent "in the face of all the encampment. Worse, Smith had already been ordered to stay away from Mrs. Sprague because she "threaten'd to take the Captains Pistols, with an intent to take the life of Sergant Thorpe." Because of the embarrassment to his efforts to create a disciplined army, Wayne ordered the trial and Smith's conviction resulted in a six-month suspension without pay and the promotion of Lieutenant Harrison to the head of his company in the First Sub-Legion.

⁴ Freeman Cleaves, *Old Tippecanoe: William Henry Harrison and His Time* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), 24; Gunderson, "William Henry Harrison," 21; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 35.

the standing army, saying on the floor of Congress that “nine-tenths of his constituents... would with much more readiness bear the proportion of the expense which would be necessary to maintain these forces” and hold back Indian threats.⁵

Harrison even tried to grow Federalist institutions as a Delegate to Congress. He grew the land office, fulfilling a promise he made to the Republicans in the Northwest Territorial Assembly, with the Land Law of 1800. With the help of other Jeffersonians – including Albert Gallatin of western Pennsylvania – Harrison shepherded the Land Law of 1800 through the House of Representatives and into law. The bill, which was known widely as Harrison’s, cut minimum purchases from 640 to 320 acres, created a credit system that allowed settlers to pay for their purchases within four years, and opened four new regional offices in Ohio.⁶ By the time John Adams signed the land bill on May 10, Harrison was a staunch advocate for strong federal institutions in the Northwest and happily took on allies from both parties to achieve his goals. Even though he declared himself a Republican, William Henry Harrison found such approval among Federalists that John Adams named him Governor of the new Indiana Territory on May 13, 1800, a choice that only fueled rumors that he was also a Federalist or at least a moderate who stood between the parties.⁷

⁵ AC, 6th Cong., 1st sess., 316.

⁶ Cleaves, *Old Tippecanoe*, 28-30; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 45, 48; and Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 23.

⁷ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 302; Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 13n; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 50; and St. Clair to Adams, in Smith, *The St. Clair Papers*, II: 488.

In maintaining the early American state at the fore of westward expansion, salutary activists like Harrison ensured a strong state remained to oversee American expansion in the Northwest. Federalist policies and institutions in education, public lands, and Indian trade spread into the territories of Indiana and Illinois with Jeffersonian administration after 1800. Salutary activists like Albert Gallatin and William Henry Harrison drove that growth, and federal appointees helped to execute their designs in the territories. Men like John Johnston in the Indian trade factories and John Badollet in the land offices set those extensions of the state into operation. In the factory at Fort Wayne, Johnston was successful as a trader but was so much more to Indians and the U.S. government, also gaining power as a payer of Indian annuities, a confidant of Gov. Harrison as well as Indian leaders, and ultimately as an Indian agent and negotiator. Meanwhile, land officers like Badollet were direct outlets of federal power who were government auctioneers, real estate agents, mortgage brokers, and on a voluntary basis after 1817, even meteorological record keepers.⁸

Meanwhile, Harrison, Illinois Territory Gov. Ninian Edwards, and other Western officials continued to press an aggressive Indian policy in the Northwest that followed Federalist patterns in the Northwest Indian War. Once again, the “Indian problem” demanded aggressive negotiations, provoking Indian resistance and ultimately a military solution that forced Native Americans away from white

⁸ For more on the meteorological records of the General Land Office, see also the Maryland Weather Service, “The Sytem of the U.S. Land Office, 1817,” in *Maryland Weather Service 1* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1899), 355; and Redfield Proctor, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1891* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), IV: 334.

settlements in the Northwest. Also, after the War of 1812 cleared Indian challenges from before white settlers, the state that salutary activists created was in place to oversee the new settlements. Rather than a period of drawing down the state in the West, the Revolution of 1800 brought a new era of state growth and a new life for the institutions that lay beneath the Federalist frontier.

The State in the Territory: Salutary Activism and Its Operation in Indiana

Jeffersonian administration in Indiana and Illinois was built upon institutions created by Federalists in the 1790s. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Federalists – including western Pennsylvanian Thomas Scott – argued in Congress for creating a federal land office, but contrary to Scott's wishes his party favored setting the office at the national capital and not in Western locales. Further, Federalists sought new institutions to oversee the Indian trade. George Washington had argued for government-run trading posts since the 1780s to alleviate fraud, attach Indians to the new republic, and boost American influence in the fur trade. He continued to make his case as President in his Annual Messages of 1791, 1793, and 1794, and Congress agreed on the final day of the Third Congress, March 3, 1795, by creating Indian trading houses and appropriating \$50,000 for the task.⁹

⁹ "An Act Making Provision for the Purposes of Trade with the Indians," March 3, 1795, in *United States Statutes at Large*, I: 443; Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 63; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 115-116. The act was vague about how those first Indian trade factories would be established and read in its entirety: "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of American in Congress assembled, That a sum, not exceeding fifty thousand dollars, be appropriated to the purchase of goods for supplying the Indians within the limits of the United States, for the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five; and that the sale of such goods be made under the direction of the President of the United States."

By the Fourth Congress of 1795-1797, Republicans made their growing influence known when future members of Jefferson's administration argued for new bills on the land office and trade factories. In the first session, the House discussed expanding the trade factory system, and a bipartisan, multiregional coalition emerged behind it. Federalists Josiah Parker and William Vans Murray, representing Virginia and Maryland, respectively, rose quickly to favor expanding the trade factories. Parker extolled the plan's "humanity and benevolence" as well as its economic sense of "cost[ing] much less to conciliate the good opinion of the Indians than to pay men for destroying them." Meanwhile, Murray struck a Hamiltonian note, arguing that only the federal government possessed the necessary capital and influence to compete directly with British influence. "Small capitalists, and adventurers," he declared, "would certainly prove unequal."¹⁰ These Federalists saw two important innovations in the trade factory. It would be a new outlet for an energetic government, and it was a new method to oversee Western economic activity so only men worthy of political and economic influence would gain it along the frontiers of Indian-white interaction.

On the other hand, Republican supporters emphasized not power but rather economy and expedience in their view of trade factories and of energetic government overall. John Swanwick of Pennsylvania supported the bill as "a change from our usual system of Indian affairs" that would allow "the fruits of commerce, that beneficent power which cements and civilizes so many nations" to pacify the Indians cheaply when compared to the Northwest Indian War.

¹⁰ AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 230, 232.

Further, he suggested, they were temporary expedients that could close once American private traders grew stronger and British influence in Indian affairs weaker. Jefferson's future Secretary of War Henry Dearborn and Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin also supported the factories but only if the money spent on them meant a concomitant reduction in military spending.¹¹ The bill passed with 58 votes in favor, roughly corresponding to the number of Republicans in the House, but supporters like Parker and Murray and its passage by the Federalist-led Senate suggest the bill garnered bipartisan support.

Similarly, Republicans from western Pennsylvania argued for making the land office system more accessible to Western settlers in early 1796. William Findley argued that the Federalist plan to sell public lands in 640-acre minimums meant "inviting people into a snare" of debt. Instead, he spoke artfully of giving "every man to have an opportunity of purchasing fifty or one hundred acres" from a land office that would be "not only... a wholesale but a retail store." Gallatin agreed, arguing for policies meant to make speculation unprofitable, encourage purchases only from actual settlers, and enhance federal revenues. Further, he pressed for a compromise program that would maintain wholesale land sales in Philadelphia and retail sales of public lands in Western offices, maximizing convenience and accessibility for all.¹²

¹¹ AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 230, 241, 284. Swanwick estimated the cost of the Northwest Indian War at \$1.5 million per year, and Dearborn declared himself "in favor of the general principle of the bill; he thought it economical... but should vote for the bill only on condition of a reduction of the Military Establishment."

¹² AC, 4th Cong., 1st sess., 329, 339, 405-406; Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 18-19; and Raymond Walters, Jr., *Albert Gallatin: Jeffersonian Financier and Diplomat* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), *Albert Gallatin*, 95.

In doing so, those Jeffersonians of the 1790s were intent on tearing down centralized authority, but they actually stretched the state across space. Such was the supreme irony of their salutary activism. In the name of widening public access to federal power, they helped federal institutions to penetrate more effectively into the daily lives of settlers. By the “Revolution of 1800” that swept Jefferson into the Presidency and wide Republican majorities into Congress, Western Republicans clearly developed their own ideology by the “Revolution of 1800.” They welcomed state activity in the West and already had commenced a program to steer Federalist institutions away from centralized power and toward catering to the needs of Western settlers. With efforts already made to grow the land office and the Indian trade factories, Jeffersonian officials who were friendlier to state power had more opportunities to reshape the early American state in the former Northwest Territory to their liking.

Those opportunities would not be squandered. Once sworn in as Secretaries of the Treasury and of War in March 1801, Albert Gallatin and Henry Dearborn were in prime positions to advance state projects for which they had advocated in the 1790s. Dearborn became the supervisor of the Indian trade factories he had promoted while in the House in 1796, and he set himself to work calling for their revival in the Southwest and expansion into the Northwest after the system was neglected – but still turned a slight profit – during the Adams administration. He claimed they were useful beyond mere dollars, too. Reports had suggested the factories “had a very salutary effect on the minds of the Indians” and that “a much more extensive distribution of the fund, among the

several Indian nations, would be attended with all the good effects that were originally contemplated.”¹³ Meanwhile, Gallatin ran a sizeable Treasury office as soon as he took his oath. He often took work home in the evening to effectively manage his 1,285 employees in customs offices, the internal revenue service, financial capacities, and other administrative offices, but he took special interest in the land sales under his purview. Overall, he hoped to bring in half a million dollars of revenue per year from land and post offices.¹⁴

Their partner in the Indiana Territory, Gov. William Henry Harrison, found a very different situation when he began his administration at Vincennes on January 10, 1801. Left to build a territorial government from scratch, he began by adopting Pennsylvania laws on taxable property, adding a territorial treasurer’s office, and issuing a proclamation on May 9 that forbade “all persons from settling, hunting, and surveying on any of the Indian lands” and required “all officers Civil and Military to remove any that should have settled, and prevent... any such attempt in future.”¹⁵ While Dearborn and Gallatin expanded their respective departments into Indiana, Harrison oversaw their implementation personally while friends or fellow Republicans like John Badollet in the Vincennes land office and John Johnston at the Fort Wayne factory became willing foot

¹³ Henry Dearborn to Jefferson, December 8, 1801, in *ASP:IA*, I: 654; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 118-119. Dearborn told Jefferson with a measure of pride that the two existing factories in Tennessee and Georgia had managed “the business... not only to save the original stock from diminution, but even to increase it about three or four per cent.”

¹⁴ Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, 143-145.

¹⁵ John D. Barnhart and Dorothy L. Riker, *Indiana to 1816: The Colonial Period* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1971), 323-325; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 46. Harrison, “Proclamation: Forbidding Settling, Hunting, and Surveying on Indian Lands,” May 9, 1801, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 24.

soldiers of salutary activism. In such diverse issues as public education, public lands, and the Indian trade, Jeffersonian administrators ensured the continuation of initial Federalist efforts to build a state in the Northwest, even though it came with new management.

In his first year of administration in the Indiana Territory, Harrison drew clear parallels to the Ohio Company while securing education in Vincennes. An 1801 petition to Congress signed by Harrison (as well as the town's French leaders and even the territory's Federalist Attorney General John Rice Jones) asked Congress to alleviate the "Inconveniences arising from the total want of an Institution for the Education of Youth." They needed aid because "however strenuous their Endeavors, a sufficient fund cannot be raised for a permanent Establishment, without the benevolent Aid of the United States." That aid, they wished, would come as a township of land donated like "that made for a similar Institution in the Ohio purchase."¹⁶ Using the Ohio Company as a precedent was an interesting but pragmatic choice. Referencing the company helped make their case, but they also suggested they would place a similar stress on education. Schools were a central part of Harrison's vision for Indiana, and he hoped federal action would help him establish educational institutions there.

The petitioners from Vincennes would have to be patient, though. Congress did not grant their request until March 26, 1804, when a new public lands law allowed a township to be donated for higher education. Congress went one step further, too, giving a similar township to each of the three land office

¹⁶ "Petition to Congress by Trustees of Jefferson Academy," December 31, 1801, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 44.

districts created by the new law. Thus, Vincennes received a township for the purpose of funding higher education, but the new offices at Detroit and Kaskaskia received the same donation. Two years later, the Indiana Territory legislature established Vincennes University within the township, and five years of effort was rewarded. Harrison's personal reward was his appointment as the university's first president.¹⁷ They continued to press for revenues, though, asking Congress unsuccessfully in November 1807 for new taxes on salt works and Indian trade licenses to build up university funds.¹⁸

Harrison also found other ways to encourage education in Vincennes. He was an important part of a library company created in the town in 1806, which boasted nearly 250 volumes within three years. The library was dedicated to educating the public, too, as its collection featured informative and scientific works rather than books intended for entertainment. In addition, Harrison served as president of the Vincennes Society for the encouragement of Agriculture and the Useful Arts. Robert M. Owens has suggested recently in his biography of Harrison's early career that the Governor took on these pursuits in his pursuit of sociopolitical status, but he also seems driven by a broader social vision.¹⁹ Good societies required learned populations and ready access to a good education,

¹⁷ "An Act Making Provision for the Disposal of the Public Lands in the Indiana Territory, and for Other Purposes," March 26, 1804, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 279; Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 44n; and George E. Greene, *History of Old Vincennes and Knox County, Indiana* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1911), I: 893-894.

¹⁸ "Petition to Congress by Trustees of Vincennes University," November 20, 1807, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 492-493.

¹⁹ Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 369; Cleaves, *Old Tippecanoe*, 51; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 41.

and Harrison lent his political and social prestige to enhance the territory's educational institutions.

Harrison worked in Vincennes as Dearborn, Gallatin, and the Republican Congress looked to extend federal control to the Indiana Territory and promote Jeffersonian ends. As Secretary of War and thus the direct supervisor of Indian affairs, Dearborn promoted trade because he saw three immediate benefits to Indian relations: government-run trade encouraged peace, guaranteed honest trade with U.S. factors, and traded in goods that encouraged Indians to adopt white models of farming and domestic production.²⁰ Further, taking over the Indian trade helped to internalize Indian affairs. Federalists used the army to force out European competition, but Dearborn hoped federal Indian factors would dissuade them much more cheaply. After all, he told Jefferson in late 1801, trade would aid in “detaching [Indians] more and more from the influence of neighboring Governments.” In a slight departure, Harrison argued for a mixed solution, as he told the President the same month that a new fort on the Illinois River would “prevent the Spanish Traders from Monopolising the valuable Trade of that River” and end “the falsehoods propogated by these & the British traders.”²¹ Whatever their chosen means, Jeffersonian administrators clearly believed controlling economic activity was central to governing the West.

²⁰ Dearborn to Jefferson, December 8, 1801, in *ASP:IA*, I: 655; and Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 108. Dearborn reported to Jefferson of the trade factories that “The intercourse... has a powerful tendency towards strengthening and confirming the friendship of the Indians to the people and Government of the United States.”

²¹ Dearborn to Jefferson, December 8, 1801, in *ASP:IA*, I: 655; and Harrison to Jefferson, December 30, 1801, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 42.

Early the next year, Dearborn offered Harrison good news that their wishes would be granted, and they would soon have more trade factories. By late February, Dearborn informed Harrison that Congress was likely to pass bills banning the sale of alcohol to Indians (welcome news for settlers worried about Indian attacks) and, more importantly, to allow Jefferson to open new trading houses in the Northwest. The agents in those factories, he detailed further, would “make correct returns of the state of the factory, of the sales and receipts, etc. to the governor of the territory... once in three months, noticing all circumstances proper to communicate.”²² Overall, Dearborn had already laid detailed plans for overseeing new factories when Congress extended the life of the Indian factory system in April 1802 and February 1803. However, Congress simply continued the existence of the factory system, so its expansion into the Northwest through factories at Fort Wayne and Detroit (later moved to Chicago) came by the prerogative of Dearborn and Jefferson.²³

While Dearborn sought to better manage trade and relations with the Indians of the Indiana Territory, Gallatin pursued a new law for the sale of public lands there in 1804. After Harrison secured new Indian land cessions in 1803, Gallatin noted to Rep. Joseph Nicholson of Maryland that “No provision has yet been made by law for the sale... of the tracts lying below the mouth of the

²² Dearborn to Harrison, February 23, 1802, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 49; and Dearborn to Harrison, February 23, 1802, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William* 39-40.

²³ Prucha, *The Great Father*, 119. For the text of the renewals, see “An Act to Revive and Continue in Force, an Act Intituled ‘An Act for Establishing Trading Houses with the Indian Tribes,’” April 30, 1802, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 173; and “An Act for Continuing in Force a Law, Intituled ‘An Act for Establishing Trading Houses with the Indian Tribes,’” March 26, 1804, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 207.

Kentucky river, and lately purchased from the Indians.” Thus, Gallatin suggested, Congress must act quickly. He suggested selling those lands at the same two dollars per acre minimum and the same terms of credit that applied in the new state of Ohio. In response, Congress passed and Jefferson signed a new public land law in 1804 that extended the terms of the Land Law of 1800 to the Indiana Territory and created three new offices at Vincennes, Detroit, and Kaskaskia. In addition to giving away the townships for colleges in those three districts, Congress also appropriated \$20,000 to help enact the new measures.²⁴

Dearborn and Gallatin moved quickly to create new offices once they could do so in the territory, and they filled the offices in the future state of Indiana with two immigrants they trusted well. Dearborn chose War Department clerk John Johnston for the Fort Wayne factory. Emigrating from Ireland at age eleven, Johnston eventually won a job under Dearborn for his ability to copy neatly, and eventually he ascended in Dearborn’s favor. As the factor there, he gained power and prestige quickly in present-day northwest Indiana because he instantly became a sizeable trader in the region with his office and because he ultimately controlled the payment of annuities to Indian nations.²⁵ For the land office at Vincennes, Gallatin picked his old friend John Badollet from Switzerland

²⁴ Gallatin to Joseph H. Nicholson, January 2, 1804, in *ASP:PL*, I: 167; and “An Act Making Provision for the Disposal of the Public Lands in the Indiana Territory, and for Other Purposes,” March 26, 1804, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 277-283.

²⁵ Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 203-204; and Charlotte Reeve Conover, *Concerning the Forefathers: Being a Memoir, with Personal Narrative and Letters of Two Pioneers, Col. Robert Patterson and Col. John Johnston* (Dayton, OH: National Cash Register Co., 1902), 25-27. Other brief biographies of John Johnston can be found in Leonard U. Hill, *John Johnston and the Indians in the Land of the Three Miamis* (Columbus, OH: Stoneman Press, 1957), 22; and introductory materials to the Benjamin Parke Papers (SC 1692), Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

to serve as its register in 1804. Gallatin had turned to Badollet a year earlier, too, appointing him to survey and lay out roads northwest of the Ohio that would be most conducive to public land sales. Badollet also served another important purpose: Gallatin recommended him because of his staunch Republicanism, and Badollet joined Harrison's campaign to bring education to the territory by being among the founders of Vincennes University and the Vincennes library.²⁶

During his service in Indiana, Johnston and other trade factors along the frontier served as the nerve endings for the Jefferson administration's new sinews of federal power. Johnston took on a number of other responsibilities as he worked to integrate his factory with existing policies and institutions. His main duties included buying Indian furs, selling them federally-supplied products, and distributing Indian annuities, but he took on other duties by necessity. Lacking doctors (and with their surgeon descending into alcoholism), Johnston learned to assist and then conduct simple surgeries. Ultimately, he became Fort Wayne's assistant surgeon in addition to being Indian factor and, after 1809, Indian agent. Further, Johnston planted and kept an orchard for himself and the Indians in the area, reporting with pride that in fall 1804 he already had "Twenty five Peach Trees.... [and] intends next spring to procure from the State of Ohio or Detroit a quantity of young Trees to consist of as many kinds as can be had."²⁷

²⁶ Thornbrough, introduction to *The Correspondence of John Badollet and Albert Gallatin*, 9-13, 19; and Findley and John Smilie to Jefferson, March 28, 1804, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 188. Findley and Smilie recommended Badollet based on their "high opinion of his Integrity and talents" and assured the President that the Swiss man's "prudence and Industry will do honor to the appointment."

²⁷ Conover, *Concerning the Forefathers*, 39; John D. Haeger, "The American Fur Company and the Chicago of 1812-1835," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 61, no. 2

Johnston was not only the federal government's man for all seasons at Fort Wayne but the region's primary agent of the Jeffersonian state. As the factor, Johnston had the duty of not only supervising trade but also furthering Jefferson's Indian policies. The President stated as much in a January 1803 message to Congress, telling them the first of his two goals in Indian policy was "to encourage them to abandon hunting, to apply to the raising of stock, to agriculture and domestic manufacture." Second, he wished "to multiply trading houses among them, and place within their reach those things which will contribute more to their domestic comfort than the possession of extensive, but uncultivated wilds." The two objects dovetailed, too. As Jefferson continued:

"In leading them thus to agriculture, to manufactures, and civilization... and in preparing them ultimately to participate in the benefits of our Government; I trust, and believe, we are acting for their greatest good. At these trading houses we have pursued the principles of the act of Congress, which directs that the commerce shall be carried on liberally, and requires only that the capital stock shall not be diminished."²⁸

Clearly, Jefferson imagined trade factories like Johnston's as the linchpin of his Indian policy, and Johnston worked to oblige the prerogatives of his President. He carried carpentry tools and spinning wheels in his store as early as 1803, and even his orchard was intended as a model for Indians to observe.²⁹

(Summer 1968): 123; and John Johnston to unnamed, September 30, 1804, John Johnston Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

²⁸ Jefferson, Message to Congress, January 18, 1803, in *ASP:IA*, I: 684.

²⁹ Johnston, "Colonel John Johnston's Indian Agency Account Book, 1802-1811," in Bert J. Griswold, ed., *Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West, 1802-1813: Garrison Orderly Books, Indian Agency Account Book* (Indianapolis: Historical Bureau of the Indiana Library and Historical Department, 1927), 409, 421, 427.

Further, Jefferson and Dearborn planned on Indian trade factories forcing Indians into new cessions, and thus the factory partnered with other institutions in forging the path to further westward expansion. Jefferson told Dearborn in August 1802 that the factories were “the cheapest & most effectual instrument we can use for preserving the friendship of the Indians,” and he hoped to use their consumer temptations against them. “There is perhaps no method more irresistible of obtaining lands,” he explained, “than by letting them get in debt, which when too heavy to be paid, they are always willing to lop off by a cession of land.” Jefferson said similarly to Harrison six months later that trade factories would allow “good & influential individuals among [the Indians] run in debt,” and as a result “when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lob th[em off] by a cession of lands.”³⁰ However, factories like Fort Wayne encountered success not because of the snare of debt they laid but rather because of their proximity to regular army posts. As Francis Paul Prucha noted, the presence of the U.S. Army so close to the factories lent prestige – and sometimes critically important man-hours – to factors and their stores.³¹

Similarly, Badollet was at Vincennes an agent of federal power and Jeffersonian ideals. Land officers like him were implementing a system with two primary purposes. First, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin sought a consistent, efficient, and above all profitable land office system that would reap the financial windfall that he believed lay in the public lands. Land revenues

³⁰ Jefferson to Dearborn, August 12, 1802, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 68-70; and Jefferson to Harrison, February 27, 1803, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 91.

³¹ Prucha, *The Great Father*, 123, 125.

were an important component of Gallatin's plan to pay off the national debt in sixteen years. On that goal the Swiss financial wizard was singularly focused, even seeking a reduction but not elimination of the Federalist system of internal taxes on goods like whiskey. With such a focus, Badollet and other land officers in the West would not escape careful supervision, evidenced by the regular audits made of the register and receiver's records as per the Land Law of 1804.³²

Second, Gallatin and other Jeffersonians oriented land policies and the land office to make land ownership accessible to all Americans, accomplished through both more generous sales terms and hostility to large-scale speculation. As Secretary of the Treasury, Gallatin worked to make owning a farm in the Indiana Territory a realistic possibility for most Americans, arguing for and getting in the 1804 land law a reduction of the minimum purchase to 160 acres. Further, he offered discounts for those who made their payments on time or in cash, reducing the cost to \$1.64 per acre to those buyers. The overall goal, said Ninian Edwards (later the Governor of the Illinois Territory) in 1806, was "that every man might have an opportunity of procuring a freehold of his own; that there might be as few tenants as possible."³³

³² Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, 145-146; and Gallatin to Joseph H. Nicholson, January 2, 1804, in *ASP:PL*, I: 167; and "An Act Making Provision for the Disposal of the Public Lands in the Indiana Territory, and for Other Purposes," March 26, 1804, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 282. Section 14 of the Land Law of 1804 required examinations of the register and receiver's records at least once per year.

³³ "An Act Making Provision for the Disposal of the Public Lands in the Indiana Territory, and for Other Purposes," March 26, 1804, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 281; Ninian W. Edwards, *History of Illinois, from 1778 to 1833; and Life and Times of Ninian Edwards* (Springfield: Illinois State Journal Co., 1870), 104; and Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, 175.

Consequently, Jeffersonian leaders set out to minimize the baleful effects of land speculation. Gallatin wanted Badollet to slow speculation, a stance that shows especially well in their letters about the Illinois and Wabash Company that claimed two million acres in southern Illinois based on a 1770 agreement with local Indians. When Badollet asked for advice about their claims, Gallatin rejected them outright with clear distaste. He noted that the company's purchase was illegal under the Proclamation of 1763 and was never recognized by other governments. Thus, he concluded, the company had "not the shadow of a title to support their claim, which has been repeatedly before Congress." Not only had the company been rejected before, it was wasting everyone's time.³⁴ Even worse, Western Jeffersonians like Edwards suggested, speculators were a danger to the republic. They often became large-scale landlords, gobbling up not only good land but the independence of Western small farmers. After all, he claimed, landlords were "so much disposed to abuse that influence as to render it dangerous and highly inimical to republicanism." To "ameliorate the situation of the citizens of the district, and to promote the general prosperity of the State," therefore, speculators and landlords had to be thwarted by state power.³⁵

In practice, Johnston and Badollet were strong and effective agents for the Jeffersonian state in the Northwest, operating their offices effectively as their superiors made frequent changes. Johnston managed the Fort Wayne factory in

³⁴ Badollet to Gallatin, August 31, 1805, in Thornborough, ed., *The Correspondence of John Badollet and Albert Gallatin*, 47-48; and Gallatin to Badollet, October 23, 1805, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 312.

³⁵ Edwards, *History of Illinois*, 104.

an exemplary fashion, dutifully recording his business from the first shipments of goods he received in May 1803. After taking his first inventory of goods in 1805, he complied with regulations requiring annual inventories and turned in multiple reports in some years.³⁶ Meanwhile, Johnston turned a profit – as did the entire factory system – inspiring Dearborn to seek from Congress another \$100,000 in funding to open new factories at Chicago and Belle Fontaine (St. Louis). In April 1806, Congress acquiesced by allowing the administration to create new factories as it deemed necessary along both sides of the Mississippi and creating the Office of Indian Trade to oversee the factory system. In doing so, the Jefferson administration and Congress opened the first government agency devoted solely to carrying out Indian policy.³⁷

The factory system also exerted a great deal of influence among the Indians of the territory, and it became a form of federal power that some Indians even welcomed. Nearly as soon as they were opened in the Northwest, factories became part of treaties and their negotiations. Jefferson boasted of the system in January 1803 that even at that early point, “Indians, perceiving the advantage of purchasing from us, are soliciting, generally, our establishment of trading houses among them.” He was proven right, too, as the Sac and Fox had a factory written into the treaty they concluded with William Henry Harrison in November 1804. In Article 9, the United States agreed to “put a stop to the

³⁶ Hill, *John Johnston and the Indians*, 40. Johnston’s full account book appears in Griswold, *Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West*, 405-663.

³⁷ “An Act for Establishing Trading Houses with the Indian Tribes,” April 21, 1806, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 402; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 120-121.

abuses and impositions which are practised upon the said tribes, by the private traders” by building a new factory in their country “at a convenient time... where the individuals of the said tribes can be supplied with goods at a more reasonable rate than they have been accustomed.” With the economy of scale that government enterprise could offer and private traders could not – and a decreased profit motive – Indians like the Sac and Fox saw promise in gaining equitable trading and cheaper goods. Farther west, the Osage nation of present-day Missouri asked for and received promises of a factory, too.³⁸ This success in Indian relations in the Northwest spoke well of the institution that Jeffersonians had developed, as the Indians essentially came to request a greater state presence among them through new factories.

John Johnston and a number of Indians also saw salutary benefits in the trade system even as British-American relations deteriorated. Johnston wrote to Superintendent of Indian Trade John Mason in early 1808 asking for more goods if war was declared. He deduced that war meant “British Traders will of Course be prevented from entering our Territory with Goods.” Without other options but a need for many European-style goods, “the Indians would have to rely on the public store.” In requesting greater quantities of rifles and ammunition, Johnson also seemed to believe quietly that his factory could dissuade many Indians from fighting the United States.³⁹ Even on the cusp of war in April 1812, Indians in the Illinois country asked for greater government involvement. In a negotiation with

³⁸ Jefferson to Congress, January 18, 1803, in *ASP:IA* I: 684; “Treaty of St. Louis,” November 3, 1804, in *ASP:IA*, I: 694; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 134.

³⁹ Johnston to John Mason, February 4, 1808, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 521.

Gov. Ninian Edwards of the Illinois Territory, Potawatomi chief Gomo admitted that “I thought of asking you to place a factory in our town of Peoria.” However, with war brewing and the neighboring Winnebago “roving about, should any be killed, we might be blamed; therefore I will not, at present, ask for one.”⁴⁰ Only threats of war and death could interrupt the flow of federally-backed commerce, it seems, and suggests the depth of influence that trade factories held.

While trade factories spread and even gained a measure of popularity among Indians in the Old Northwest, John Badollet was the Vincennes register as the land office grew in two ways until the War of 1812. First, the system grew by adding offices that encompassed a greater space in the Northwest after 1800. The office at Vincennes was part of the land office’s first expansion into the Indiana Territory, and Congress added offices at Jeffersonville in present-day southeast Indiana in 1807 (commencing sales in 1808) and Shawneetown in the Illinois Territory in 1812. Even before opening the Shawneetown office, the offices at Kaskaskia, Vincennes, and Jeffersonville were but the farthest west of the nearly dozen offices that sold almost 2.5 million acres of land from 1804 to 1812.⁴¹

Land offices also grew in complexity under the credit system within the Land Law of 1800. Credit on land sales, perhaps the hallmark Jeffersonian innovation in the land office, demanded a great deal of land officers like Badollet

⁴⁰ Gomo, speech to Ninian Edwards, April 16, 1812, in Edwards, *History of Illinois*, 63.

⁴¹ Jefferson, "Proclamation of Public Land Sales," November 19, 1807, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 491; and Payson Jackson Treat, *The National Land System, 1785-1820* (New York: E.B. Treat & Co., 1910), 410. For a map of the land offices and their districts in the trans-Appalachian West, see Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 28-29.

and receiver Nathaniel Ewing in Vincennes. Like the other land offices across the trans-Appalachian West, settlers saw Badollet first in order to buy sections, half-sections, or quarter-sections of land (per the Land Law of 1804), and in turn Badollet marked the claims as taken on his township plats. Next, Ewing collected their down payment of at least one-twentieth of the total price and created an account in his ledger. He also marked the other required payments within forty days and then two, three, and four years while calculating interest charges for late payments and discounts for early or on-time payments.⁴² With regular audits of the land offices after 1805, too, Badollet and Ewing sold land and collected payments at the Vincennes office but also had nearly continually to calculate, check, and recheck their records to assure accuracy and appease federal auditors. Those audits revealed the diverse backgrounds of the region's new settlers, too. For example, the audits of the Vincennes and Jeffersonville offices in late June 1810 showed that payments came in paper money from the Bank of the United States, Bank of North America, other banks from as nearby as Kentucky and Ohio and as far as South Carolina, and insurance and commercial enterprises. With paper notes unreliable because of market

⁴² The credit system is summarized well by Rep. Andrew Gregg in "Credit on Public Lands," April 5, 1806, in *ASP:PL* I: 265. For more on the specific duties (and compensation) for land officers, see Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 31-32. Rohrbough noted that registers represented "a direct link between the purchaser and the government," while receivers controlled funds and the credit system involved with many sales. The complicated system of interest and discounts, he pointed out, meant that "calculation of the accounts alone was a burdensome and exacting chore."

instability and widespread counterfeiting, Ewing also had to know exchange rates and recognize fake bills to do his job well.⁴³

While Ewing oversaw a complicated system of exchanges and credit, Badollet coordinated a standardization of land office practices on orders from Albert Gallatin. To maximize revenues, Gallatin looked to develop an auction system when public lands entered the market, and his correspondence to Badollet concerning the land auction of spring 1807 is a prime example. After Jefferson announced in October 1806 an auction at Vincennes, Gallatin wrote the Vincennes land office with deeply detailed instructions on carrying out the sale. Before the sale on the last Monday in April 1807 (the 27th), Badollet was to publish advertisements once per month until May 1807 about the new lands for sale in the newspapers of the Indiana Territory as well as at Cincinnati, Chillicothe, Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington.⁴⁴ Thus, such advertisements meant federal money going to the respective newspapers. In addition, Badollet had to hire a crier to announce the lots for sale and, as Gallatin said, “fix on their plan... in all its details, so as to proceed regularly & without interruption.”⁴⁵

When the sale began, Gallatin asked for bureaucratic precision from Badollet and his fellow officers. He recommended uniformity by telling Badollet in March 1807 about the “mode adopted in other Offices,” which included

⁴³ John D. Hay to Gallatin, August 1, 1810, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VIII: 36; Richard Ferguson to Gallatin, August 3, 1810, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VIII: 38; and Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 32.

⁴⁴ Gallatin to Badollet and Ewing, October 11, 1806, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 396; and Jefferson, “Proclamation of Public Land Sales,” October 10, 1806, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 397.

⁴⁵ Gallatin to Badollet, March 9, 1807, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 436.

“call[ing] aloud for each quarter section successively in each Township; and if no person bids for such quarter section during half a minute to pass to the next.” If no bids came, Badollet and the Vincennes officers could offer up a full township in seventy-five minutes by following Gallatin’s guidelines. With a five minute break to allow purchases in the township just offered, Gallatin noted that the officers could go through seven townships in a single day of auctioning. When attendees wished to bid on quarter-sections, he recommended keeping bidding to five minutes. Even if the full five minutes were needed for each quarter-section, they would be able to sell 160,000 acres in just ten days.⁴⁶ Badollet did not sell 160,000 acres in an auction, but the Vincennes land office sold 45,265 acres during the fiscal year of 1806-1807, a figure it would not match for seven years. However, Gallatin’s efforts to standardize land office practices and grow the land office made it an important institution in westward expansion. As Malcolm Rohrbough observed in his study of the land office system, the processes behind auctions, retail sales, and federal credit for the public lands were widely known. In the end, a trip to the local land office became a significant event in the life of white settlers, an event that ranked with marriage as a passage to adulthood and independence.⁴⁷

In sum, John Badollet and John Johnston were important parts of growing federal administrative capacities in the Indiana Territory at Vincennes and Fort Wayne, respectively. By 1812, Jeffersonians like Gallatin and Badollet made the

⁴⁶ Gallatin to Badollet, March 9, 1807, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 436.

⁴⁷ Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 75; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 406.

land office an institution ready to advance west along with and even ahead of white settlers. After Congress created the Illinois Territory in 1809, the land office expanded into it with the opening of the Shawneetown land office in 1812. Meanwhile, the offices stretching from Ohio to Kaskaskia in the Northwest and along the edge of white settlement in Old Southwest sold more than 575,000 acres in 1811, and their records were contained in 173 different ledgers. The job of administering the land office had simply become too enormous for Gallatin. He asked Congress to fund another clerk to handle public land sales, but Congress responded by creating the General Land Office to oversee operations.⁴⁸ Afterward, the GLO led a very long life. It remained an independent agency until it became the backbone of the new Bureau of Land Management after World War II, and the BLM remains a powerful federal agency in the Great West today. However, its roots lay in the work of Rufus Putnam, Alexander Hamilton, and other Federalists with later help from Western Jeffersonians who sought to make federal power more accessible in the trans-Appalachian West through land offices.

At Fort Wayne, Johnston had made his factory into the jewel of a system that extended federal influence among the Indians. Over the course of his administration from the first purchases of Indian furs in 1804 until his resignation in 1811, he bought from Indians 6,765 deer skins and over 50,000 raccoon skins, among other animals, and paid out more than \$31,000 for them. However, he

⁴⁸ Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 35, 48-49. For the full law, see "An Act for the Establishment of a General Land-Office in the Department of the Treasury," April 25, 1812, in *United States Statutes at Large*, II: 716-718.

sold his goods at more than double his costs.⁴⁹ Johnston's methods made the Fort Wayne factory a lucrative venture, as he turned a profit of \$10,502.77 from late 1807 to September 1811. In fact, the profits from Fort Wayne and Chicago were higher than the overall profits of the whole factory system during that period.⁵⁰ In other words, effective administration and profitable trade in Indiana and Illinois were decisive in making the factory system a success before the War of 1812. The Indian trade factories at Fort Wayne and Chicago were unbridled successes in finance and administration, but it was not a guarantee of peace. Another continuation of Federalist policies, William Henry Harrison's aggressive approach to Indian policy, sowed the seeds of discord and required yet another war to secure the rest of the Old Northwest for white settlers.

The Regional Security State and Harrison's Indian War of 1811

While the trade factories affected Indian relations and economic activities, and the land office helped to direct white settlement, the new territories of Indiana and Illinois ultimately required a crushing national military force to attain security for new settlers. The lives of Indians changed markedly between the Treaties of Greenville in 1795 and 1814, and they responded – as did Indians in the Ohio valley in the 1780s and 1790s – by forming a confederacy. While political

⁴⁹ Griswold, introduction to *Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West*, 23-25; and Hill, *John Johnston and the Indians*, 41. According to Griswold, Johnston paid \$1.25 for skins from bucks and \$1.00 from does, 50¢ for raccoon skins, and as much as \$5.00 for bear skins.

⁵⁰ Conover, *Concerning the Forefathers*, 41; and John Mason to William Eustis (enclosure), January 13, 1812, in *ASP:IA*, I: 784. According to Mason's report, the entire factory system turned a total profit of \$14,171.30 between December 31, 1807 and September 30, 1811. In comparison, Chicago and Fort Wayne made \$14,228.23 in profits in the same period.

confederacies and spiritual movements allowed Indians to voice their criticisms and assert their collective power in the face of continued white expansion, they faced unrelenting aggression under the leadership of William Henry Harrison. In pressing hard-line negotiations for Indian lands and later leading military forces to subdue the confederacy, he assured that federal officials would continue to lead American westward expansion. By the end of the War of 1812, Harrison secured the Northwest for American settlers once and for all, and his efforts fell into the patterns set by the Northwest Indian War and his mentor Anthony Wayne.

Indians in present-day Indiana and Illinois faced a host of new problems after the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, especially as white settlers streamed into the region in the ensuing years. The migration that led to statehood in Ohio also brought a population of more than 5,000 to present-day Indiana and Illinois by 1800, largely scattered along the Ohio, Wabash, and Illinois River valleys and small French enclaves at Green Bay and Peoria. However, when the territories split in 1809 the white population had grown to roughly 28,000 and was spread over a much wider area.⁵¹ That spread across space tested the patience of Indians in both their daily lives and their negotiations with land-hungry American treaty commissioners. Worse, they lost power in the intercultural politics of the region since their British allies deserted them for European wars and their

⁵¹ Population figures vary slightly among numerous sources, but the figures given here reflect those stated in Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 166. For other sources for population in the territory, see Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 320; Arthur Clinton Boggess, *The Settlement of Illinois, 1778-1830* (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1908), 91; and "Census Schedule," July 4, 1801, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 25.

populations shrank during influenza and smallpox epidemics.⁵² In short, after 1795 Indians inhabited a region where their space and population were shrinking.

Those settlers also upset normal environmental relationships between Indians and their land in two ways. First, white encroachments meant competition in hunting for game animals on Indian lands, and Gov. Harrison blamed the problem on a lack of clarity. Where surveyors had not yet run boundaries, Harrison reported to Secretary of War Dearborn that “it is almost impossible to punish... persons who make a practice of Hunting on the lands of the Indians in violation of law and our Treaty.” Worse, he said, “This practice has grown into a monstrous abuse.” As a result, Harrison argued that marking clear Indian-white boundaries in the territory was a priority and would allow the state to interpose on behalf of the Indians. Second, white settlers were more aggressive hunters who threatened the sustainability of Indian hunting in areas where whites had penetrated. Harrison estimated that whites killed five times as many animals as did Indians.⁵³ While Harrison may have overstated the difference, white encroachments still placed real stress on ecosystems and Indian economies.

That stress showed markedly in declining fur harvests for Indians, a trend obvious to Indians but that takes on an epic scale when viewed over the long term. When Francois-Marie Bissot Vincennes established Vincennes in 1732 to enhance the French presence in the region and cut into English domination of

⁵² Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 199 and R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 4-5.

⁵³ Harrison to Dearborn, July 15, 1801, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 26-27.

the fur trade in the Wabash River valley, he estimated that the new post could bring in from the Indians some 30,000 furs per year, a figure in addition to the trade carried on between Indians and the British. However, by 1800 Indian sales of valuable beaver skins declined sharply, and in turn they turned to less profitable animals like deer, raccoons, and bears. The new furs did not bring the same rewards, though. In many cases, Indian men living in the Indiana Territory had difficulty providing sufficiently for their families with both the meat of game animals and the products they purchased with pelts.⁵⁴ Thus, when trade factories offered fair prices, fair dealing, and stable prices, some nations had good reason to welcome the federal system and ask for them in negotiations.

Indians also suffered from malignant effects of the liquor trade and injustices committed by settlers, and Indian chiefs sought relief from both by 1802. Shawnee chief Little Turtle, the military leader at St. Clair's defeat and the Battle of Fallen Timbers, asked Jefferson to ban liquor sales to Indians, and Jefferson's administration complied. Dearborn informed Harrison in September that traders were not to sell liquor to Indians and "disturb the peace and harmony, which has subsisted between the white people and the Indians." By October, Harrison issued a proclamation against licensed traders selling liquor under penalty of losing their bonds paid to the U.S. government.⁵⁵ However, those laws did little to alleviate the problems Indians had with white trespassers.

⁵⁴ Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 80; Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 4; Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana: From Its Exploration to 1850*, second ed. (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen and Co., 1915), 23; and Griswold, introduction to *Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West*, 24.

⁵⁵ Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 201; Dearborn to Harrison, September 3, 1802, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 74; and Harrison, "Proclamation: Selling Liquor to Indians," October 24, 1802, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 60.

While the laws were meant to treat whites and Indians equally, Harrison complained that “that there is a wide difference in the execution of those laws. The Indian always suffers” while whites stole from and murdered Indians with impunity because they were invariably acquitted by frontier juries.⁵⁶

With life growing more precarious, Indians in the Ohio valley became restless and federal officials sought remedies through active intervention. In August 1800, Arthur St. Clair expressed worries that new depredations and horse thievery were signs of a new war. Continued problems prompted Dearborn to note in February 1802 that Delaware and Shawnee visiting the new capital at Washington “complain loudly of the white peoples hunting and killing game on their lands, and of having their horses stolen.” Thus, he passed orders from Pres. Jefferson to Gov. Harrison to “take every means in your power to prevent such abuses and to punish the offenders.”⁵⁷

Harrison already noticed those problems and issued a series of orders aimed at controlling Indian relations in 1801. In May, he forbade “all persons from settling, hunting, and surveying on any of the Indian lands and requiring all officers Civil and Military to remove any that should have settled.” That summer, he issued two other proclamations that outlawed selling liquor to Indians within a mile of Vincennes and warned against trading with Indians without a license or in Indian hunting camps. As he noted, “in the future the said regulation would be

⁵⁶ Harrison, “Message to Legislature,” Nov. 3, 1806, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 199; and Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 4-5, 20.

⁵⁷ St. Clair to John Marshall, August 5, 1800, in Smith, *The St. Clair Papers*, II: 497; Dearborn to Harrison, February 23, 1802, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 49.

strictly Enforced,” and thus Indiana Territory citizens should “govern themselves accordingly.”⁵⁸ Though his orders on the liquor trade were widely ignored, Harrison still made a clear statement of purpose about his administration.

Hampered by these problems, Indians in the region fell into patterns of dependency that posed a new set of challenges when dealing with Americans. The politics of intercultural interactions shifted in the Northwest as annuities grew in importance. Arguments over dates, locations, and even the worth of goods used in federal payments became more prominent in Indian relations and treaty discussions. In turn, control over annuity goods and payments offered a prestige to officials like Harrison and John Johnston that could be attained by no other means. Further, Jeffersonian officials actively pressed civilization policies when negotiating with Indians. Even from Washington, Jefferson noticed the growing problems. As he observed to Harrison in February 1803, “the decrease of game [is] rendering their subsistence by hunting insufficient,” and that meant opportunity to Jefferson. Americans could thereafter “draw them to agriculture, to spinning & weaving.” Similarly, John Johnston hoped his orchard would be a fine example to teach new forms of agriculture to the Indians, explaining that he “took

⁵⁸ Harrison, “Proclamation: Forbidding Settling, Hunting, and Surveying on Indian Lands,” May 9, 1801, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 24; Harrison, “Proclamation: Forbidding Traders from Selling Liquor to Indians in and around Vincennes,” July 20, 1801, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 31; and Harrison, “Proclamation: Against Trading with the Indians,” August 31, 1801, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 32.

much pains to instruct them in the manner of... saving the seeds themselves in future.” His primary motivation was “that they might not have to depend on us.”⁵⁹

The policy also sent to Indians confusing messages that encompassed the difficult conflicts always simmering beneath U.S. Indian policy. On one side, civilization sounded enlightened with talk of Indians plowing fields and joining American society. For example, Henry Dearborn explained in glowing terms to an Indian agent that federal officials would “instruct the Indian women in the arts of spinning and weaving, to introduce among the men a taste for agriculture and raising of stock, and to infuse into the nations generally a spirit of emulation in industry.” Thus, Indians would, as Jefferson described, “withdraw themselves to the culture of a small piece of land,” and thus plows and spinning wheels would be the new weapons of conquest. Indians would retreat quietly to their plots of land and into their farmhouses, not in chaos before the fixed bayonets of the U.S. Army. To secure their happiness and prosperity, Jefferson continued, Indians would sell their lands for necessities of farm and home. Jefferson painted a harmonious picture of an interracial society, too, telling a gathering of Indian chiefs in January 1809 that “In time you will be as we are,” imagining a future in which Indian and white farmers lived side by side all over the continent.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 204; Jefferson to Harrison, February 27, 1803, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 90; and Johnston to unnamed, September 30, 1804, John Johnston Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

⁶⁰ Dearborn to William Lyman, July 14, 1801, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 26; Jefferson to Harrison, February 27, 1803, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 90-91; and Jefferson to chiefs of the Wyandot, Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Shawnee, January 10, 1809, quoted in Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 108. To promote the civilization policy, Dearborn also noted that his War Department would provide “wheels, cotton cards, and other necessary apparatus for the manufacture of linen and cotton clothing; implements of agriculture, sheep and cattle, and, if the Indians should testify a disposition to meet the views of

“Civilization” sounded peaceful but implied a defeat as emphatic as the one assumed by conquest diplomacy in the 1780s. This defeat was cultural, though, and such implications could not be missed despite the best efforts of Jefferson and Harrison. For example, in August 1802 Harrison told Indians at Vincennes that whites and Indians should “live in peace with each other,” and that Jefferson had passed along an “ardent wish to see you prosperous and happy.” However, that happiness required Indians to cede lands and alter their lives radically to achieve intertwined goals. After all, Jefferson explained, “It requires an immense extent of country to supply a very few hunters,” but farming on family plots needed much less land. When those goals conflicted, American officials like Harrison urged land cessions first, even at the cost of the civilization program. As his biographer Robert M. Owens has explained, government officials simply prized the needs of settlers above those of Indians.⁶¹ No matter the exact message, though, Indians heard the same message: their only choice was to adapt to the onrush of white settlers and give up most of their lands.

Those new demands bore fruit for the U.S. in treaties signed during Jefferson’s first term in office. In June 1803, nine nations relinquished to the U.S. their claims to lands around Vincennes that totaled over a million acres. August 1803 saw a treaty between Harrison and the Kaskaskia nation that included a cession of over eight million acres in present-day southern Illinois. In November

the government, handicraftsmen, particularly carpenters and smiths, will be engaged to reside in their country and give them all necessary instructions.”

⁶¹ Harrison, “Address to Indian Council,” August 12, 1802, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 53-55; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 59.

1804, the same treaty in which they received promises of a trade factory, the Sac and Fox ceded a massive tract along the Mississippi River and as far north as the Wisconsin River. Also contained within those treaties was language that encouraged the Indians to adopt Jeffersonian civilization policies. For example, Article 4 in both the 1803 treaty with the Kaskaskia and an 1804 treaty with the Piankeshaw allowed the United States to split annuities among individual families.⁶² In promoting civilization but more in securing land cessions, Harrison was a successful negotiator. By the end of 1804, he had secured Indian cessions for most of present-day Illinois to the United States.

In his negotiations, Harrison used an aggressive style as well as a combination of bullying and bribery, much like Anthony Wayne did when Harrison observed him at Greenville, to get his way. That approach showed especially well in the treaties of 1805. Just as American negotiators (including Wayne) ignored or dismissed Indian objections until 1795, Harrison began negotiations for a new treaty in August 1805 by tossing aside Indian complaints about the June 1803 treaty. Harrison called it “a fair bargain with the Delawares and Piankeshaws, who were the owners of the land,” so “not a six pence would be given... in consideration of that purchase.” “A further annuity” would require “further cession of land.” Dismissing Indian claims was not new for Harrison,

⁶² “Treaty of Fort Wayne,” June 7, 1803: in *ASP:IA*, I: 688; “Treaty of Vincennes,” August 18, 1803, in *ASP:IA*, I: 687; “Treaty with the Piankeshaw,” August 18, 1804, in *ASP:IA*, I: 690; Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 145-146; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 80; Tachau, *Federal Courts in the Early Republic*, 133; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 404.

either; historian Reginald Horsman observed that Harrison often “rode roughshod over Indian resistance” in negotiations for new cessions and treaties.⁶³

Harrison also leaned on friendly chiefs and bribed others to get his desired cession. For example, Little Turtle gained a black slave and personal annuity of fifty dollars to assure that he would accept the treaty and not speak against it in council. Meanwhile, Harrison gave annuities for lands that the Delaware and Potawatomi did not occupy or claim realistically. That style of ignoring Indian claims, offering bribes, and dangling greater annuities before Indians growing ever more dependent upon them worked, too. On August 21, the assembled Indians agreed to a cession that encompassed two million acres and confirmed American title to land between Vincennes and the Greenville line in southern Indiana.⁶⁴ Harrison followed it up with another treaty with the Piankeshaw on December 30, affirming earlier cessions for an increased annuity, satisfied that the deal was “highly advantageous to the United States; nor is it by any means a bad bargain for the Indians themselves.” Further, the Indians gained more in annuities, “a certain resource to them, when they shall be no longer able to procure subsistence from the chase.”⁶⁵

⁶³ Harrison to Dearborn, August 26, 1805, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 162-163; Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 144; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 104, 107.

⁶⁴ Harrison to Dearborn, August 26, 1805, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 164; Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy*, 151; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 105. For the full treaty, see “A Treaty between the United States of America and the Tribes of Indians Called the Delawares, Pattawatamies, Miamies, Eel River, and Weas,” August 21, 1805, in *ASP:IA*, I: 696-697.

⁶⁵ Harrison to Dearborn, January 1, 1806, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 184. For the treaty, see “Articles of a Treaty Made at Vincennes,” December 30, 1805, in *ASP:IA*, I: 704-705.

While Harrison acted as if Indians acquiesced to his demands happily, he could not make a new Indian treaty for four years. Indian discontent with the treaties showed during the negotiations of December 1805, as voiced by Kickapoo chief Oulaqua. "Since we have known our father the Long Knife," he said, settlers "arrive every day... [and] we know nothing of it." Borrowing the language of Neolin's teachings over a generation ago, Oulaqua noted that the "master of Life gave us this land... whilst you were on the other side of the Great Lake" and yet it was "the Long Knives who complains."⁶⁶ The speech was especially prescient because it expressed two major developments at once. First, even the chiefs negotiating for treaties were tiring of seemingly continual American demands for land, and the barely-hidden hostility suggested Indians would not remain submissive to American prerogatives. Second, Oulaqua's reference to the Master of Life suggested at least some Indians were seeking divine help by 1805 for solace and, if necessary, redress for their problems.

That relief came for hundreds of Indians through a Shawnee medicine man's messages of personal renewal and political change. In early 1805, Lalawethika passed out an alcoholic, insignificant medicine man but awoke as Tenskwatawa, a prophet of Indian renaissance in the Northwest. God was apparently in a very social mood at the time, as Tenskwatawa was one of many Indians – and frontier whites, for that matter – with religious visions. No matter the source of his inspiration, Tenskwatawa (or simply, the Prophet) offered a message based on earlier Indian revivalists Neolin and Handsome Lake as well

⁶⁶ Oulaqua, "The Answer of Pawatamo, Chasso, and Oulaqua," December 16, 1805, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 179.

as Roman Catholicism that rejected emphatically any attempt to accommodate American demands for land and cultural adaptation. Through 1805 and 1806, Tenskwatawa rounded his teachings into a compelling three-part message that stressed revitalizing Indian cultures, cleansing communities and political leaders of corruption, and creating a pan-Indian alliance to halt the white intruders.⁶⁷

In practical terms, the teachings implied radical challenges to Indians' daily lives and to Indian political leadership. Cultural renewal meant rejecting alcohol as well as European and American clothing, tools, and even guns (at least when hunting). Further, Tenskwatawa taught that the Master of Life required confession of past sins, a clear nod to Catholicism but also a continual reminder for followers to remain diligent in their ways.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the final two points presented a clear challenge to Indians who were pro-American or simply agreed to further land cessions, and that challenge became a physical one by 1806 and 1807. In one 1806 incident, the Prophet led a group of Indians who burned to death unfriendly chiefs and a Christian Indian, an act that repulsed Harrison. The Prophet also challenged Harrison's authority that year by erecting his first spiritual center within a few miles of the old fort at Greenville, Ohio.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Alfred A. Cave, "The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe: A Case Study of Historical Myth-Making," *Journal of the Early Republic* 22, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 641, 644; Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 205; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 123, 186. Cave describes the three-part message quite well in his article, but for a longer account of Tenskwatawa's vision and teachings, see Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 28-40.

⁶⁸ Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 37.

⁶⁹ Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 371; and Cave, "The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe," 644.

Harrison and other officials reacted by threatening the Prophet's followers and attacking his character. Early in 1806, Harrison told the Delaware that the Prophet was "an imposter. Drive him from your town, and let peace and harmony once more prevail amongst you." If they did not, Harrison indicated that following the Prophet could mean war with the United States. The next year, the governor told Shawnee chiefs that Tenskwatawa was "your deceiver" and would bring the Indians of the region to ruin. Fort Wayne Indian agent William Wells picked up the same language in an 1807 report to Secretary of War Dearborn, referring to Tenskwatawa as "the Shawnese Impostor" and warning that "if He is not Interrupted He will Bring a bout a war between the Indians – if he cannot git them to go to war against the whites."⁷⁰ For American officials, they had a clear task: eliminate the Prophet and the threat he represented to white settlers.

Harrison feared Tenskwatawa not only because he challenged federal authority, but Harrison also fell into his old pattern of Anglophobia in claiming that Tenskwatawa was a tool of British intrigue. From the earliest days of his administration, Harrison seemed to imagine any Indian opponents as British agents, and that pattern continued with the Prophet. For example, Harrison said in August 1807 that the Prophet was "a fool, who speaks not the words of the Great Spirit but those of the devil, and of the British agents." Even after assurances from the Prophet himself that he was not a British spy, Harrison still warned him in summer 1808 against being "seduced by the British agents."

⁷⁰ Harrison to Delawares, early 1806, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 184; Harrison to Shawnee chiefs, August 1807, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 248; and William Wells to Dearborn, December 5, 1807, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 498.

Because of tension with federal officials and alarms raised by settlers of western Ohio, Tenskwatawa decided in January 1808 to move to a new principal town, Prophetstown, near the confluence of the Tippecanoe and Wabash Rivers.⁷¹

There, the movement shifted in a secular, political direction that would forever alter life for the Indians of the Northwest. When growing numbers and dwindling food stores forced them to look elsewhere for supplies, Tenskwatawa's brother Tecumseh traveled to Fort Malden (or Amherstburg) in Canada to visit British officials. Meeting with them in June and July, Tecumseh declared he would fight the Americans if necessary, but it was not the right moment. Nonetheless, the British were satisfied by Tecumseh's declarations of friendship and sent him away with food and other gifts to sustain the new settlement at Prophetstown. While he was gone, too, Tenskwatawa had his new capital built while new followers streamed in from all around the former Northwest Territory. Soon after, Tecumseh commenced in sending lieutenants or traveling personally among surrounding nations in search of political and military allies while also spreading his brother's religious messages. By 1809, the brothers had won over many Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Wyandot, and Winnebago Indians.⁷²

Alarmed by the movement, Harrison and Jeffersonian officials ripped away the benevolent mask of civilization policies and revealed an American state that still demanded Indians submit or face destruction. In June 1808, Harrison wrote

⁷¹ Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 209; Harrison to Shawnee chiefs, August 1807, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 251; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, xiv, 62.

⁷² Cave, "The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe," 647; Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 70-72, 92-93; and John Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 171-175.

to the Prophet about the rumors that he was allying with the British, confessing that “I have myself given credit to this report.” He told the Prophet that he could only hope those reports were false, but he still left a clear warning that President Jefferson decided that “in any case of the Tribes who became his children at The Treaty of Greenville should lift up the Tomahawk against him that he will never again make peace as long as there is one of that Tribe on this side of the Lakes.” Further resistance to American expansion and demands, he concluded, “would conduct you to certain misery and ruin.”⁷³ Whether by the arts of civilization or the rights of conquest, thinking about Indians and their rights had changed very little. Like the Federalists of the 1790s, Harrison offered Indians no right to resist the American advance across the Northwest.

The deteriorating situation coincided with worsening relations between the U.S. and Britain, so Indian resistance often mingled with war scares in the Northwest. Thus, Harrison pressed for an improved militia. At the opening of the Indiana Territory legislature in 1807, Harrison urged them for a “perfection of the militia system... [as] an object of the first importance.” Citing the need for “efficient and competent protection to our country in time of war,” he requested a law to provide for a stronger and more organized militia or to require settlers who can afford their own arms to furnish them for militia duty. The situation was important, he claimed, because Indiana was “peculiarly interested in the contest which is likely to ensue; for who does not know that the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage are always employed as the instruments of British

⁷³ Harrison to the Prophet, June 24, 1808, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 293-294.

vengeance.”⁷⁴ For Harrison, his worries about Indian relations and his Anglophobia combined into a powerful and abiding reason to ready the territory for war. The next September, even after telling Henry Dearborn that he hoped “the Prophet... will prove rather advantageous than otherwise to the United States,” he still wanted to improve the militia through a new law to force citizens to fulfill their military obligations.⁷⁵

Harrison remained cautiously optimistic about the Prophet becoming a friend to the United States through the spring of 1809, and he began seeking a new cession to encourage more whites to settle in the territory. In May, he told the new Secretary of War William Eustis, serving in the new administration of James Madison, “Our settlements here are much cramped by the vicinity of the Indian lands” and would be “feeble for a considerable time unless a further extinguishment of title is effected.” Receiving permission to do so three weeks later, Harrison called a treaty conference and commenced it at Fort Wayne on September 15.⁷⁶ Once there, Indians heard from Harrison that they were only being asked to sell “land which was exhausted of game and which was no longer useful to them.” Further, he said, the increased annuities would allow the

⁷⁴ Harrison, “Message to the Legislature,” August 17, 1807, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 232-233; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 77. For more on relations between Harrison and the Prophet in relation to the British, see also Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 213-214.

⁷⁵ Harrison to Dearborn, September 1, 1808, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 302; and Harrison, “Annual Message, Second Session, Second Assembly,” September 27, 1808, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 305.

⁷⁶ Harrison to Eustis, May 16, 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 346; Eustis to Harrison, June 5, 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 347; and “Journal of the Proceedings of the Indian Treaty at Fort Wayne and Vincennes September 1 to October 27, 1809,” in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 362.

assembled Indians – of whom the treaty signers were almost universally pro-American – to “procure the Domestic Animals necessary to commence raising them on a large scale.”⁷⁷ On September 30, Harrison and the Indians agreed to the Treaty of Fort Wayne, and the next three days saw Americans passing out gifts and annuities. In the end, the United States acquired a cession of at least 2.5 million acres in the southern portions of the Indiana and Illinois Territories from the Miami, Delaware, and Potawatomi in exchange for \$5,200 in goods and a total increased annuity of \$1,750.⁷⁸

The Treaty of Fort Wayne was meant to restore peaceful relations and reopen negotiations for land in the region, but instead it was the wedge that tore apart Indian communities and brought the U.S. closer to war with the rising Indian confederacy. At first, Harrison saw it as a victory. He bragged to Eustis that the treaty was “a better one for the United States than any that has been made by me for lands south of the Wabash,” and he told the territorial legislature that the cession “laid the foundation for a great increase of wealth and

⁷⁷ “Journal of the Proceedings of the Indian Treaty at Fort Wayne and Vincennes September 1 to October 27, 1809,” in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 364.

⁷⁸ Cave, “The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe,” 648; Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 215; Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 80; Harrison to Eustis, November 15, 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 392; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 404. For the full treaty, see “A Treaty between the United States of America and the Tribes of Indians called the Delawares, Puttawatamies, Miamies, and Eel River Miamies,” September 30, 1809, in *ASP:IA*, I: 761. The estimates on the land cession vary widely. Cayton claims the cession incorporated 2.5 million acres, Harrison claimed with an attached sketch of the cession that it was “upwards of 2,900,000 acres,” Cave and Edmunds place the cession at more than three million acres, and Treat lists the cession at exactly 3,257,600 acres. Since the numbers vary so widely, the figure given here is not meant to be a final accounting of the cession but rather a conservative estimate based on existing claims.

population.”⁷⁹ Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa saw it far differently. After hearing of the treaty and its cession, Tecumseh threatened to kill the chiefs who agreed to it and began to travel farther north to the Great Lakes and south to the shores of the Gulf of Mexico in search of new allies. French trader and American spy Michel Brouillette reported further that after the Treaty of Fort Wayne, the Prophet “was not friendly to the United States and particularly that he was very much exasperated at the cession of lands made last Winter.” As a result, “the Prophet certainly intended to make a stroke on the white people and when asked where intended to strike he pointed toward Vincennes.” The responses unsettled Harrison and Eustis. Harrison began speaking of a military solution to the problems caused by the Shawnee brothers, and Eustis recommended imprisoning both of them in order to assure peace.⁸⁰

After a council between Harrison and Tecumseh in August 1810, the governor planned a military strike against Prophetstown to quiet the confederacy. As early as October 1810, he called for a new post north of Vincennes to hold back the Indians, and in June 1811 he warned Eustis that intelligence from Prophetstown proved Tenskwatawa’s “determination to commence hostilities as soon as he thinks himself sufficiently strong.” Fearing that “a crisis is fast

⁷⁹ Harrison, “Annual Message to the Third General Assembly,” October 17, 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 381; and Harrison to Eustis, November 3, 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 389.

⁸⁰ Michel Brouillette, affidavit, June 30, 1810, Box 2, Folder 25, Albert Gallatin Porter Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana; Eustis to Harrison, November 1809, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 387; Cave, “The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe,” 648; Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 216; Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet*, 81-82; and Edmunds, *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership* (New York: Longman, 1984), 123.

approaching,” he begged for a commission to attack Prophetstown because as he reasoned, “If our government will submit to this insolence, it will be the means of making all the tribes treat us with contempt.” Eustis agreed. On July 17, 1811, he commissioned Harrison to call out regular troops and the militia “to attack the prophet and his followers, the force should be such as to ensure the most complete success.”⁸¹ In a sense, they had done the Federalists one better. While Knox and St. Clair pressed for war in response to Indian raids on white settlements, Harrison and Eustis raised an army to crush Indian resistance based upon mere threats of resistance.

Harrison wasted little time in using his commission. During a last attempt to restore peace in July and August 1811, Harrison met with Tecumseh at Vincennes but made sure to call in eight hundred militiamen in order to show as much force as possible.⁸² Much as Wayne did at Greenville and St. Clair at Fort Harmar in 1788, Harrison found it good policy to negotiate with an army behind him. If there remained any mystery among the Indians about the American approach, it was removed by the militarization of Vincennes. Tecumseh was not swayed, and if anything he was reminded of the urgency to maintain his new confederacy. After the conference produced no peaceful resolution, he set out to find allies among the Creek and other nations in the South.⁸³

⁸¹ Harrison to Eustis, October 5, 1810, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 474-475; Harrison to Eustis, June 19, 1811, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 520-521; and Eustis to Harrison, July 17, 1811, in Esarey, *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, I: 536.

⁸² Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 220.

⁸³ Prucha, *The Great Father*, 77; and Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 237-249.

While Tecumseh was traveling, Harrison seized the moment for his advantage and marched from Vincennes on September 26 with 1,225 troops. On October 1, they stopped near the present site of Terre Haute to build a new post, Fort Harrison, as a base of operations. Four weeks later, Harrison marched his men north, stopping within a mile of Prophetstown on the afternoon of November 6. At about 4:30 the next morning, Indians fired on the camp under Tenskwatawa. They inflicted real losses, killing 62 American soldiers and wounding 126, but Harrison rallied a powerful counterattack that dispersed the Indian force and gave the town to Harrison's army by 7 a.m. The rest of the day was spent burying the dead, burning the town and some of its surrounding fields, and setting barricades for a counterattack that never materialized. Two days later, they returned to Vincennes as victors.⁸⁴

The Battle of Tippecanoe won fame for William Henry Harrison and was hailed initially as a decisive stroke against the confederacy, but it was really the opening battle of the Northwest War of 1811. Harrison declared his win over Tenskwatawa "a complete and decisive victory," but it was nothing of the sort. As Robert M. Owens wrote so well of the battle's effects, "In cleaving the hornet's nest with his sword, Harrison had simply loosed enraged hornets." In the months after Tippecanoe, angry Indians commenced a series of raids on settlers in the Indiana and Illinois Territories and turned to the British for trade and continued

⁸⁴ For particularly well-written accounts of the march from Vincennes and the Battle of Tippecanoe, see Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 221-223; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 214-222; and Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 226-236.

aid.⁸⁵ Tippecanoe might have been an American victory that broke up the Prophet's religious community, but it only signaled the start of a major conflict between the new Indian confederacy and the United States.

Decaying U.S.-British relations soon embroiled the British in that war. By the start of 1812, some Americans spoke of war with Britain as inevitable, and Gov. Ninian Edwards of the Illinois Territory was no exception. In peace conferences in March, he told a Potawatomi chief flatly that in the coming war with Britain, "We do not want you to fight for us" since, Edwards claimed, "We can whip the English ourselves." However, if they decided to fight the Americans, Edwards warned, "We will never suffer a British trader to go among you again.... Consider how you are to live without any trade, when you are at the same time harrassed with war." In April, he said in Cahokia that the Prophet "promised his followers victory at the battle of Tippecanoe; but the American chief, Gov. Harrison, proved that he was a liar." Repeating his warning, too, he declared that "if you join them in the war against us.... British traders and English goods will never be suffered to go among you again" and the U.S. "will strike such a blow as will be sufficient to prevent the red people from ever going to war with us again."⁸⁶ Thus, territorial leaders had prepared and warned the Indians about war with Britain and – because of continued Indian raids – were dealing

⁸⁵ Harrison to Eustis, November 1811, quoted in Prucha, *The Great Father*, 78; and Owens, *Mr. Jefferson's Hammer*, 222.

⁸⁶ Edwards to Gomo, March 1812, in Edwards, *History of Illinois*, 55-56; and Edwards, address at Cahokia, April 16, 1812, in Edwards, *History of Illinois*, 56-57.

with a Northwest War of 1811 already aflame by the time Congress declared war against Britain on June 18, 1812. The new war with Britain only widened it.

Functionally, the war that proceeded in the Northwest was more with Indians than with Great Britain. In fighting the war, American settlers and soldiers faced more Indian than British enemies overall, and American defeats at Fort Mackinac on July 17, Fort Dearborn on August 15, and Detroit on August 16, 1812, came to British-led but mostly Indian forces. Settlers also seemed to fear the Indians more than the British. When Gov. Edwards wrote to Gov. Charles Scott of Kentucky in early August 1812, he worried that “The combination of indians appears to be universal, thousands that belong to it could attack the settlements of this territory and Missouri in fire.” However, he did not mention the British at all. Neither did Maj. Martin D. Hardin of Kentucky – who was also the Kentucky Secretary of State at the time – when describing the aims of the war in the Northwest in May 1813. As he saw it, Americans planned to “to strike a blow, take an imposing attitude, and awe the Indians into respect and neutrality.” However, in the wake of the three defeats that came before the United States could mobilize and reinforce its Northwest posts, he lamented, “These objects are now lost – perhaps entirely beyond our reach.”⁸⁷

In order to salvage the war effort and push back the British and Indian forces from American soil, Westerners looked to Congress and the Secretary of War for enhanced protections as well as to Harrison for leadership. As the

⁸⁷ Edwards to Charles Scott, August 4, 1812, Folder 1, Ninian Edwards Papers (SC 447), Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois; M[artin] D. Hardin to Edwards, May 25, 1813, in Edwards, *History of Illinois*, 100; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 78. The British and Indian victories at Detroit and Fort Dearborn are described well in Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 294-306.

British and Indians were taking forts in the Northwest in August 1812, Harrison analyzed the course of the war in a letter to William Eustis. As he saw it, “Two species of Warfare have been used by the United States in their Contests with the Tribes upon the North Western frontier.” The first was “rapid and dessultory expeditions by mounted men” to destroy villages, the old model in which mounted frontier rangers protected their homes with offensive strikes. The second, which he called “more tardy but more effectual,” involved a large trained infantry “penetrating the Country of the Enemy and securing the possession by a chain of Posts.” Noting that the previous Indian war terminated with the use of the latter approach, he advocated for it by calling for the United States to build forts on the Illinois River from the Mississippi to Chicago as well as “to march immediately a Considerable body of Troops to Fort Wayne.” As a result, he said energetic defenses would be “a Considerable check upon the tribes” of the region.⁸⁸ In other words, Harrison asked Eustis to prosecute the war in the same fashion that Federalists carried out the Northwest Indian War.

In the Illinois Territory, Gov. Edwards and Delegate to Congress Shadrach Bond pursued a powerful army to crush Indian resistance and secure the lives of their constituents. Until that army came, Edwards implored the legislature in late 1812, the territory had to reform the territorial militia system “to render it better adapted to the present conjecture” as well as “to secure... prompt obedience to such requisitions as emergencies may from time to time require.” He also suggested adding a corps of mounted rangers to protect against and respond to

⁸⁸ Harrison to Eustis, August 12, 1812, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VIII: 190-191.

any Indian attacks. By February 1813, he also reported that he had begun recruiting a naval militia to patrol the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers in armed boats. Meanwhile, the territorial legislature sent resolutions to Congress asking for more cavalry, and Bond declared he had “been urging the necessity of a strong force on our frontiers” from his first day in Congress. By mid-February 1813, he secured ten new cavalry companies for Western defenses – seven of them for Indiana and Illinois – that he also saw renewed the following February.⁸⁹

Westerners also took up defenses under Harrison. The state of Kentucky named him their militia general, and with the advice of Rep. Henry Clay of Kentucky and Sen. Thomas Worthington of Ohio, Pres. Madison named Harrison a major general in the U.S. Army. As a result, Harrison resigned as the Governor of the Indiana Territory in December 1812 and assumed his command. Moving north from the Ohio River, Harrison broke up a British and Indian siege at Fort Wayne, the last major American post between Canada and frontier settlements in the Northwest, and on April 28, 1813, he successfully defended Fort Meigs in northwest Ohio against a force of over 2,000 British and Indian troops with a much smaller force of roughly half regulars and half Ohio and Kentucky militia.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Edwards, address to the Territorial Legislature, November/December [undated] 1812, in Edwards, *History of Illinois*: 81, 83; Edwards to Isaac Shelby, February 16, 1813, Folder 1, Ninian Edwards Papers (SC 447), Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois; Shadrach Bond to Edwards, February 7, 1813; February 25, 1813; and February 12, 1814, all in E.B. Washburne, ed., *The Edwards Papers: Being a Portion of the Collection of the Letters, Papers, and Manuscripts of Ninian Edwards* (Chicago: Fergus, 1884), 94, 97, 109.

⁹⁰ Beverley W. Bond, Jr., “William Henry Harrison in the War of 1812,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 13, no. 4 (March 1927): 501-502, 510; Owens, *Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer*, 223-227, 283n; and J.C.A. Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783-1830* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 213.

However, Harrison maintained a goal of retaking Detroit and the British Fort Malden some twenty miles away. Through the summer of 1813, Harrison marched northward methodically, gaining reinforcements from Kentucky and dispatching British and Indian resistance in Indiana and Ohio along the way, until Oliver Hazard Perry won for the U.S. control of Lake Erie on September 10. In the wake of Perry's victory, Harrison's men followed the retreating British troops under Sir Henry Procter and the Indian forces under Tecumseh into Canada, occupying Detroit and Fort Malden on the way.⁹¹ By October 5, Harrison's army of 3,500 men caught up to Procter and Tecumseh. In the short fight of the Battle of the Thames that followed, the Americans surrounded the British troops and forced them to surrender after a short fight. Far more significant, though, was that Tecumseh died during an Indian charge on the Kentucky militia. The Indians broke rank quickly as news spread of his death, and in the wake of the defeat the British forsook the Indians of the Northwest.⁹²

After Tenskwatawa fled to Canada in late 1812 Tecumseh took over the Northwest confederacy, and his death at the Thames effectively broke it. The Indians of the Northwest did not fight another major battle during the rest of the War of 1812. Even by October 25, Harrison told John Johnston that Indians had begged for an armistice, and he ordered Johnston to provide them with food and even "a sufficiency of ammunition to support their families."⁹³ Nine months later

⁹¹ Bond, "William Henry Harrison in the War of 1812," 503; and Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War*, 328-329.

⁹² Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War*, 330; and Sugden, *Tecumseh*, 372-375.

⁹³ Harrison to Johnston, October 25, 1813, quoted in Hill, *John Johnston and the Indians*, 75.

on July 22 – and six months before the Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812 – Harrison and Johnston were among the American treaty commissioners who signed a new Treaty of Greenville to end the war. The simple treaty of four articles declared hostilities over and guaranteed the Indian signatories the lands they held before the war commenced in return for their support against a new British invasion that never came.⁹⁴

Concluded on July 22, the proceedings around the new Treaty of Greenville were a stark reminder of the earlier treaty. In the summer after a crushing defeat to an Indian confederacy, the Indians once again submitted to American power in the form of the general who had overrun them. The resemblance even took on a spatial significance. As Johnston later recalled of planning the gathering at Greenville, Harrison requested:

“A flagstaff erected... on the spot where Gen. Wayne's quarters were in 1795, at the date of his celebrated treaty with the Indians. He said the ground was consecrated to him by many endearing recollections, which could never be effaced from his memory, and that he wanted all the details of the great treaty about to be held, to conform as near as could be to the one which had preceded it nineteen years before.”

Johnston was happy to comply, and as he recounted, “our flag waved over the spot on which General Wayne's quarters stood.”⁹⁵ In nineteen years, Indian relations had literally come full circle. In the same place, Indians from many of the same powerful Northwestern nations accepted American control of their

⁹⁴ For the full treaty, see “A Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the United States of America and the Tribes of Indians called the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanese, Senecas, and Miamies,” in *ASP:IA*, I: 826.

⁹⁵ Johnston, “Recollections of Sixty Years,” in Hill, *John Johnston and the Indians*, 168-169.

former homes. After this new treaty, however, Indian nations of the Northwest would never again seriously threaten the future of American settlers and federal control over the region.

New States under the American State: Statehood for Indiana and Illinois

After another military solution to the “Indian problem” cleared hostile Indians from before settlers in the Northwest, territorial government for the few years after the War of 1812 and before statehood for Indiana and Illinois involved a reimplementation of the state that Jeffersonian salutary activists built up before the war. The Indian factory system spread farther to the north and west – albeit temporarily – well ahead of white settlers, and the land offices did much brisker business after the Battle of the Thames. By the late 1810s, settlers in Indiana and Illinois had come to depend upon the early American state to provide them an orderly expansion through guaranteed land titles, improved transportation, and other services that Hoosiers and Illinoisans came to expect and support. In the end, Jeffersonian salutary activism had spawned a generation of politicians and citizens in the two states who had come to rely upon and advocate greater state involvement in aiding economic growth and social development.

The United States government was not done with the Indian trade, nor did it abandon assuring a clear military presence ahead of white settlement among the Indians. By 1816, the War Department had ordered U.S. Army troops to reoccupy Fort Dearborn and to build Fort Howard at Green Bay and Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien in present-day southwest Wisconsin. Near to all of

them, trade factories were opened (or reopened, in Fort Dearborn's case). After assuming office in October 1817, Secretary of War John C. Calhoun wanted to expand the American military presence even further to keep away British traders and influence with new posts at Sault Ste. Marie in the Michigan Territory, at the mouth of the Minnesota River and even along the Missouri River among the Mandan nation. With military aid and effective policing against British traders, the system showed real promise. After all, despite being essentially shut down during the War of 1812, the factory system turned an overall profit of \$12,500 from 1811 until 1815. Soon after the war Thomas L. McKenney, director of the Office of Indian Trade, lobbied for more trade factories and more funding for them. He also hoped to build government-supervised schools for Indians that would ultimately be run by Indians.⁹⁶ In a way, the end of the war allowed federal officials to renew the factory system and even offer new wrinkles aimed at continuing to "civilize" the Indians.

However, optimism never translated to prosperity for the Northwestern factories because of three major problems. First, they were no longer profitable ventures. The factory at Chicago – which made over \$3,000 in profits from 1807 to 1811 – lost \$2,000 from 1816 to 1818, and the Green Bay factory fared even worse. Matthew Irwin, Jr., the U.S. Factor at Green Bay, complained frequently about the poor prospects of the factory, telling McKenney that "so little business has been done at the Factory during the winter" of 1816-1817. By summer 1818,

⁹⁶ John D. Haeger, "The American Fur Company and the Chicago of 1812-1835," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 61, no. 2 (Summer 1968): 125, 129; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 83-84.

he reduced the prices of many goods to attract interest from the Indians, telling his supervisor that “if I did not do it I should do little or no business.” Second, the factories worked at a competitive disadvantage against private traders like the quickly spreading American Fur Company. For example, Irwin blamed his need to cut prices on traders, especially British citizens, who “under sell the goods in the Factory,” and elsewhere he blamed British traders allowed to do business in the United States and their habit of selling whiskey to the Indians. Irwin also complained frequently about the American Fur Company, which was competing directly with (and beating) the trade factories but also hiring too many British traders.⁹⁷ Finally, factories lacked institutional support because of poor enforcement of trade regulations and then the disillusionment of government officials. Because Indian testimony could not legally be accepted in court, private traders who broke federal and territorial law by selling alcohol to Indians could not be prosecuted without traders (many of whom were allied under Astor’s

⁹⁷ Haeger, “The American Fur Company and the Chicago of 1812-1835,” 124, 124n; Matthew Irwin to Thomas L. McKenney, March 10, 1817, in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay 1816-21,” *Report and Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* VII (1873-1876): 270; Irwin to McKenney, September 29, 1817, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 275; Irwin to McKenney, June 18, 1818, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 276; Irwin to McKenney, August 10, 1818, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 276; Irwin to McKenney, February 15, 1820, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 279; and Jedediah Morse, 1820, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 283. Irwin was frequent and specific in his criticisms of British traders and especially John Jacob Astor’s choice to hire them. Irwin wrote in September 1817 that he did not expect “Mr. Astor would... do business with the Indians with none but British subjects, and those, too, so exceptionable in every particular.” In June 1818, he accused Astor’s men of buying and selling furs in company of British troops, clearly a violation of American control of the region. Irwin was also particularly upset about the sale of liquor to Indians, telling McKenney that “the Indian trade is confined to the British traders, who, from selling whisky privately, and from the ties of relationship, etc. with the Indians, will continue to enjoy it” without strong federal intervention. Jedediah Morse also agreed after his tour of the West, telling McKenney in 1820 that for whiskey, “Indians sell their kettles, guns, clothing, horses, etc., for that article, the excessive use of which sometimes leading to the destruction of property, and the loss of lives.”

company) turning in one another. Indian agents also issued licenses that worked at cross-purposes against the factory system. The conflicts in administration and problems in execution of the factory's objects undermined the system to the point that some Western officials like Gov. Edwards opposed the factory system because it was unprofitable and intellectually inconsistent.⁹⁸

Frustration with the system boiled over into the Office of Indian Trade and its employees, too. Irwin let his frustrations get the best of him in an 1817 letter, telling McKenney after the problems he encountered, "I can promise nothing from this Factory" and thus he declined "any more merchandise here, unless the Secretary of War can correct the irregularities which I have alluded to." In July 1821, he recommended closing the factories at Chicago and Green Bay because they were "for three years... useless to the Indians, and, in a pecuniary point of view, to the Government also."⁹⁹ By 1822, Congress decided to close the factory system once and for all, ending the experiment in a federally-controlled Indian trade in the trans-Appalachian West and along the Mississippi River. However, the factory system had served its purpose. Before surrendering to private traders, it gained Americans a foothold in the fur trade upon which John Jacob Astor and others capitalized, and it even provided aid to white settlers and American officials. As Jedediah Morse reported of the factory at Green Bay, for example, goods sold to Indians totaled only about \$1,600 annually, but it also

⁹⁸ Haeger, "The American Fur Company and the Chicago of 1812-1835," 123; Irwin to McKenney, [1819], in Thwaites, "The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay," 278; and Prucha, *The Great Father*, 126, 134.

⁹⁹ Irwin to McKenney, September 29, 1817, in Thwaites, "The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay," 275.

sold \$3,500 to whites and mixed-blood Indians, \$500 to Indian agents, and \$2,450 to the military detachment at nearby Fort Howard.¹⁰⁰

While the factory system withered away, the land offices flourished in the wake of the War of 1812. The war had essentially halted new settlement, as new settlers and new surveys on public lands diminished quickly in the face of British and Indian threats. Further, citizens of the Indiana Territory complained to Congress that the same threats made them unable to pay for lands because of lost planting or because they had to “erect forts to save their women & children from that ruin and distruction which has for some time past threatened our frontier.” Land sales in Indiana showed a slow market for land since the embargo and the rise of the Prophet and Tecumseh. Sales at Vincennes had been slow since 1807, and the period from 1811 to 1813 saw only 27,000 acres sold. Meanwhile, sales at Jeffersonville were also slow but steady after 1807 until the war led them to drop by more than ten percent in 1812-1813.¹⁰¹

However, settlements grew quickly for two reasons after the British and Indians were defeated at the Battle of the Thames. The first, an 1813 order from Congress that gave preemption rights to settlers, led many settlers to travel to legitimize their settlements at a federal land office. Preemption kept business so brisk until late in 1814 that the Kaskaskia land office “could do little more than make the Entries of Lands applied for and Journalize the Accompts,” but clearing

¹⁰⁰ Morse, 1820, in Thwaites, “The Fur Trade and Factory System at Green Bay,” 285.

¹⁰¹ “Petition to Congress by Citizens of the Territory,” June 15, 1812, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VIII: 184; Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 58; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 407. To be exact, Vincennes sold 13,366 acres in 1812-1813, and Jeffersonville sold more than 35,000 acres in 1810-1811 and 1811-1812 but 31,655 in 1812-1813.

the Indian threat had a greater effect on the pace of settlement.¹⁰² The Battle of the Thames seemed to affect settlement almost immediately. As Benjamin Parke of Vincennes reported on November 23, 1813, “Emigration to the Territory is recommencing – I suppose it to be the supposed favourable aspect of our Indian affairs.” The uptick in land office sales proved Parke’s assessment. Sales in Indiana grew from 45,000 acres to 166,000 acres from 1812 to 1814, and the Vincennes office saw its sales quadruple from the fiscal year of 1812-1813 to 1814-15, rising from 13,366 acres to 53,236 acres. By war’s end, the head of the General Land Office, Edward Tiffin of Ohio, also oversaw a further standardization of practices to increase operational efficiency.¹⁰³ Just as occurred after the Northwest Indian War in Ohio, decisive federal action to clear Indian opposition led directly to a rapid growth in the pace of white settlement.

That sudden growth intensified during the latter half of the 1810s. With the war over and American control over the Northwest and its Indians secured, settlers purchased over 2.2 million acres from the General Land Office in Indiana and Illinois between 1814 and 1819, and land officers complained of still more settlers intruding on the public lands that were not yet surveyed. To hold them back and maximize eventual revenues, they demanded energetic federal measures what would ensure a survey of the land or a removal of squatters. Despite the squatters, federal land revenues from the former Northwest Territory

¹⁰² Michael Jones and Bond to Edward Tiffin, October 28, 1814, quoted in Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 60.

¹⁰³ Benjamin Parke to James Brown, November 23, 1813, Box 1, Folder 11, Albert Gallatin Porter Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana; Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 61, 63; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 407-408.

more than doubled over the same period. Indiana was at the epicenter of that growth, with the land offices selling nearly 1.3 million acres during the period and over half a million acres for more than a million dollars in 1817 alone.¹⁰⁴

The purchasers of that land were part of a population explosion that quickly created a new state out of Indiana. The territorial population grew by 150 percent from 1810 to 1815 (from 24,520 to 63,897 inhabitants) and to 147,178 in 1820, another 150 percent gain. With more than the 60,000 residents required by the Northwest Ordinance and petitions presented for statehood by Indiana's Delegate to Congress Jonathan Jennings, Congress passed an enabling act for a state constitution in April 1816. Jennings headed the convention held June 10-29 and attended by forty-three men, including John Badollet, and Congress officially accepted Indiana as a state on December 11, 1816.¹⁰⁵

Statehood for Illinois required more careful manipulation. The then-new territory contained 12,282 white citizens in 1810 and grew very slowly to 1815, but the next three years saw Illinois's population grow by roughly 160 percent. Still, it still lacked the 60,000 residents required for statehood, and gaining an enabling act in 1818 required Del. Daniel Pope Cook to push for – and gain – the right to lower the requirement to 40,000 residents and to allow Illinois to conduct its own census. The massaged numbers revealed a population of 40,258, but its

¹⁰⁴ Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 92-93, 131; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 408-410. Treat's figures from the Jeffersonville and Vincennes offices in Indiana and the Edwardsville, Kaskaskia, and Shawneetown offices in Illinois show a total of 2,282,134 acres sold from 1814 to 1819, and Indiana accounted for 1,296,328 acres in all.

¹⁰⁵ Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 361, 427; Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 252, 258, 267. For a detailed narrative of the convention and analysis of the Indiana Constitution of 1816, see Barnhart and Riker, *Indiana to 1816*, 439-460.

real population was likely closer to 36,000. Nonetheless, Illinois won an enabling act in April 1818.¹⁰⁶ In August, an elected convention wrote a constitution, and Congress accepted Illinois into the Union on December 3, 1818.

The new state constitutions embraced two primary components of salutary activism. First, the Indiana constitution included support for building a system of education. Article IX declared, “Knowledge and learning generally diffused” were “essential to the preservation of a free Government.” Thus, “the opportunities, and advantages of education through the various parts of the Country” required the state legislature to provide “as soon as circumstances will permit... a general system of education, ascending in a regular gradation, from township schools to a state university, wherein tuition shall be gratis, and equally open to all.” To do so, they established a fund for education based on sales of the public lands set aside for educational purposes as well as funds based on the sales of town lots for public libraries in every new county created by the state legislature.¹⁰⁷

In addition to education in the Indiana constitution, both state constitutions allowed for creating central state banks, an idea that originated with Albert Gallatin, but they were also smaller versions of the Hamiltonian plans for national banking. Article X of the Indiana constitution explicitly allowed for “a State Bank, and branches, not exceeding one branch for any three Counties.” The Illinois constitution also prohibited “other banks or moneyed institutions in this state than

¹⁰⁶ James E. Davis, *Frontier Illinois* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 155-163. For the full text of the Enabling Act, see “An Act to Enable the People of the Illinois Territory to Form a Constitution and State Government,” April 18, 1818, in *United States Statutes at Large*, III: 428-431.

¹⁰⁷ Indiana Constitution of 1816, art. IX, sec. 1-2. 5.

those already provided by law.” However, it allowed “a state bank and its branches, which may be established and regulated by the general assembly of the state as they may think proper.”¹⁰⁸ State banking would become a contentious issue in the ensuing decades, but in the conventions of 1816 and 1818, central banking was hardly controversial.

As Indiana and Illinois joined the Union, its political leaders found two new outlets for salutary activism based on their enabling acts and constitutions. First, the governors of Indiana and Illinois both used their inaugural addresses before each state’s First General Assembly to emphasize educational systems for their states. On November 7, 1816, new Gov. Jonathan Jennings emphasized education as a political and a moral good in his inaugural speech to the Indiana legislature. His message echoed Federalist sentiments about education voiced by Ephraim Cutler, as Jennings declared that “Under every free government, the happiness of the citizens must be identified with their morals,” and to that end, “useful knowledge will be indispensably necessary as a support to morals and as a restraint to vice.” To promote that useful knowledge, he continued, “it will only be necessary to direct your attention to the plan of education” as soon as possible.¹⁰⁹ In short, Jennings desired a more energetic approach to education and found a clear goal for future political activities.

Similarly, education garnered special attention in Illinois shortly after statehood. Schools were not part of the state constitution, but Congress set

¹⁰⁸ Indiana Constitution of 1816, art. X; and Illinois Constitution of 1818, art. VIII, sec. 21.

¹⁰⁹ *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Indiana*, 1st sess., 10-11.

aside in the enabling act three percent of public land sales in the state for education, of which one-sixth went for a college or university. Gov. Shadrach Bond also used his inaugural address to implore the General Assembly that it was the state government's "imperious duty" to create a system of public schools. With those schools, he envisioned a future in which "all classes of fellow citizens" would have "means of wisdom and of knowledge, which... will make the child of the poorest parent, a useful member of society, and an ornament to his country." The legislature did not establish a full system of public education, but it did charter three academies during its first session and instructed the heads of the academies to offer charity education for poor children.¹¹⁰ Bond did not get his way, but by the 1820s politicians like future Gov. Joseph Duncan were seeking more active government in Illinois through a comprehensive system of education.

While education weighed upon Gov. Bond and Gov. Jennings, they and other political leaders pursued internal improvements as an important engine to drive economic growth through state activity. Friends of internal improvements in Indiana found support from Congress, as the Enabling Act passed in 1816 gave three percent of land sales in Indiana to a fund for internal improvements. Indiana also sent to Congress as its first representative William Hendricks, whose first proposal as a member of the House involved federal investment in an Indiana canal company. As he explained it, the canal intended to go around the

¹¹⁰ "An Act to Enable the People of the Illinois Territory to Form a Constitution and State Government," April 18, 1818, in *United States Statutes at Large*, III: 430; *Illinois House Journal*, 1st sess., 8-9; and W.G. Walker, "The Development of the Free Public High School in Illinois during the Nineteenth Century," *History of Education Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (December 1964): 267.

falls of the Ohio River was “intimately connected with the commerce and the general prosperity of the whole Western country” that federal expenditures were justified. Afterward, the rest of the House agreed to his resolution to purchase shares in the Jeffersonville Ohio Canal Company. Meanwhile, in Illinois, Bond complained about the lack of federal funding for internal improvements and urged the General Assembly to adopt a system, especially for river navigation, to encourage new settlers and enhance land values.¹¹¹ Just as with education, political figures in both states – especially William Hendricks and Jonathan Jennings – looked to internal improvements as an essential component to economic development. In advocating for internal improvements, they quietly accepted and even widened state involvement in Western society.

In addition, federal institutions continued to influence life in the Northwest, perhaps best seen in two purchases from land offices in Indiana and Illinois. The first involved Kentucky farmer Thomas Lincoln, whose experiences with land ownership in Kentucky and Indiana are a study in contrasts that highlight the influence of federal supervision in the Northwest. Kentucky lacked a coherent system to survey and sell its public domain, instead developing a convoluted four-part process for land ownership that still led to land claims and patents overlapping so often that one observer quipped that purchasers of land in Kentucky also bought a lawsuit. Kentucky’s federal court dockets testify to that comment, as nearly half of all federal cases filed in Kentucky (712 of 1,515) revolved around land disputes. Thomas Lincoln felt the sting of that system,

¹¹¹ AC, 15th Cong., 1st sess., 1113-1114; “An Enabling Bill,” April 1, 1816, in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, VII: 407; and *Illinois House Journal*, 1st sess., 9-10.

being ejected from two farms he bought and holding clear title for less than one-fourth of the land he purchased during his life in Kentucky.¹¹²

In Indiana, though, federally-backed land titles offered security to Thomas Lincoln. After settling in the southwest corner of Indiana in late 1816, he planted and harvested one crop before he traveled to the Vincennes land office to purchase 160 acres, located plainly and marked on the maps as the southwest quarter of Section 32 in Township 4 South, Range 5 West. Whether he brought along his eight-year-old son Abraham is not known, but on October 15, 1817, Thomas Lincoln registered his claim with John Badollet. By the bureaucratic routine already set, Badollet marked the claim as taken on his plats before sending Lincoln to receiver Nathaniel Ewing, to whom Lincoln paid the required minimum of one-twentieth of his \$320 purchase price and then paid another \$64 in late December 1817. Overall, Thomas and all of his children benefitted from a clear, unimpeachable title to his 160 acres. Although later deals reduced his holding to 100 acres, he never again had to worry about losing a lawsuit based on an overlapping survey or a claim from a nearly forgotten speculator.¹¹³

Another purchase by Englishmen turned Western settlers Morris Birkbeck and George Flower showed customers quite pleased with the maturity of the

¹¹² William E. Bartelt, "The Land Dealings of Spencer County, Indiana, Pioneer Thomas Lincoln," *Indiana Magazine of History* 87, no. 3 (September 1991): 211; Lowell H. Harrison, *Lincoln of Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 23; Tachau, *Federal Courts in the Early Republic*, 167, 175; and Louis A. Warren, *Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, 1816-1830* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 1959), 12-13. Warren laid out Thomas Lincoln's struggles, noting he ultimately held onto only 200 of the 816.5 acres he purchased in Kentucky.

¹¹³ Bartelt, "The Land Dealings of Spencer County, Indiana, Pioneer Thomas Lincoln," 213, 218-221; David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 24; and Harrison, *Lincoln of Kentucky*, 28.

American state in Illinois. After registering at the Shawneetown land office a claim to thousands of acres around their eventual settlement of Albion, Illinois, Birkbeck encouraged settlers to make the pilgrimage to the land office among their first acts upon their arrival in the West. As he explained, making a claim to a quarter-section of federal land and buying it on credit from the land office allowed settlers an unmolested right to their land. As a result, he argued, new arrivals to Illinois and elsewhere could look “to the land to reward your pains” because the fruits of earnest labor would pay off the balance of financed lands.

George Flower found the experience almost sublime. He rhapsodized in his diary that the land offices formed “a valuable Institution” for not only his interests but for the nation as a whole. While laying out the various terms of land purchases and credit, he noted that the land office prevented conflicting claims and resultant legal disputes. Overall, he noted of the land office, “The whole territory to the pacific Ocean may be considered as belonging to it. The savage Tribes cannot maintain themselves against the intelligence of civilization.”¹¹⁴ Birkbeck, Flower, and Lincoln all found in the American state a helpmeet for them to attain the lands they wanted and to assure an orderly expansion of American society across the continent. The American state had clearly matured by the time the new states of Illinois and Indiana joined the Union in the late 1810s, and the federal government matured with those old Federalist institutions and ideals

¹¹⁴ Morris Birkbeck, Letter XV, February 24, 1818, in *Letters from Illinois* (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1818), 67; and Flower, diary entry, Oct. 12, 1816, Oversize BV1, Flower Family Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

that helped to make many Westerners into advocates for education, industrial growth, transportation, and orderly expansion.

By statehood in Indiana and Illinois, Westerners saw a much different state than existed in 1800. The United States government and its territorial representatives had overseen Indian policy, the conquest and removal of hostile Indians from lands that whites coveted, the settlement of that land through land offices, and even the development of a political culture that prized state involvement and wished to see it infiltrate American society even more deeply. By 1819, the General Land Office had been formed from a branch of the Department of the Treasury and operated some twenty offices throughout the trans-Appalachian West that sold more than four million acres of land during the year leading up to September 30, 1819.¹¹⁵

Reflecting on those changes in the Northwest, Indiana resident John Dumont found much to celebrate in his Independence Day speech during the celebration held at Vevay in 1817. As he told the assembled crowd, “The sons & daughters of Columbia are all equal partakers in the blessings of our Government.” After offering plenty of praise to the Declaration of Independence, he also noted that Americans had “witnessed the growth of the arts & the progress of the sciences, more than thirty years experience has taught them that ours is a good practical Government established on the Solid foundation of Union

¹¹⁵ Joshua Meigs to Henry Eddy, August 28, 1819, Box 1, Folder 1, Henry Eddy Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 410-411.

& Equality.”¹¹⁶ Salutary activists who oversaw the expansion of white settlement and the early American state dispersed their ideas and institutions throughout the Northwest with a new generation of Jeffersonian Republicans who expected much more of their government by the end of the 1810s. Those raised expectations of state activity led to a new Western style of politics after 1820 in which those old Jeffersonians found surprising allies from Ohio: old Federalists who survived the partisan battles that raged until the War of 1812. How those Ohio Federalists first survived and then united with the proponents of their institutional creations will be considered in each of the final chapters.

¹¹⁶ John Dumont, speech at Vevay, July 4, 1817, Box 1, Folder 14, Harlow Lindley Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

CHAPTER FOUR

“Our Strength Is Our Union”: Federalists in Ohio, 1803-1815

After taking the oath of office before the Ohio General Assembly on December 8, 1810, Gov. Return J. Meigs, Jr. offered a message of pride and unity in his inaugural address. While “The world-convulsing contest for power” of the Napoleonic wars in Europe brought “the wreck of nations,” Americans still found themselves at peace and “governed by institutions, emanating from our own choice.” To maintain that freedom and the republic, he asked legislators to remember one principle, that “our strength is our union: to cultivate sentiments of union is then a duty, and worthy of being cherished with a holy zeal.”¹ In other words, Ohioans would get the good, fair government they deserved if legislators trusted federal leadership and worked together for the best interests of Ohio. While a timely message with the War of 1812 approaching, Gov. Meigs began his administration with a version of Jefferson’s inaugural message. In his own

¹ Ohio House Journal, 1810-1811, 42-43.

way, Meigs was reminding the Ohio General Assembly that they were all Republicans and they were all Federalists.

Meigs had multiple reasons to call for unity. From a practical standpoint, Meigs had to overcome divisions among Jeffersonians to govern effectively. In that fall's election Meigs defeated Thomas Worthington, a leading figure in the opposition against Arthur St. Clair and the head of the state's most powerful wing of Jeffersonian Republicans, and the party had been torn by divisions since 1803. The first few years of statehood saw a divide between Worthington's wing and a more working-class Republican faction led by Michael Baldwin of Chillicothe. By 1810, Meigs was leading a group of conservative Republicans who opposed Worthington and his allies in a new party schism.² Thus, as governor, unity meant power for Meigs. Gaining agreement from the General Assembly for his prerogatives would give his faction more power, so his statement in the inaugural address against "Fluctuations of design, and changes of legislative construction" had real implications for fellow Republicans.³

Gov. Meigs had another reason to push for unity: he was a Federalist who turned Republican after 1800 but remained popular among Federalists in statewide races. In 1807, Meigs ran for Governor and won handily where Federalists remained strong. Cincinnati voted for him by a three-to-one margin, Dayton favored him by a tally of 161-6, and he was the unanimous choice in

² Jeffrey Paul Brown, "Frontier Politics: The Evolution of a Political Society in Ohio, 1788-1814," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1979), 305; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 88.

³ Ohio House Journal, 1810-1811, 45.

Marietta. Meigs also won over 90 percent of votes in Athens County, part of the Ohio Company purchase. However, the Ohio House of Representatives declared him ineligible for living outside Ohio as a federal judge in other territories.⁴ He would not be deterred in 1810, though, and Federalists continued to find him a palatable choice. In the counties housing the Federalist strongholds of Cincinnati, Dayton, and Marietta, Meigs trounced Worthington, winning Dayton (in Montgomery County) by a particularly high 200-2 margin even with popular local resident and Congressman Jeremiah Morrow endorsing Worthington. Overall, the three counties keyed his victory, giving him 1,867 of his 1,942-vote majority.⁵ In a sense, Meigs forsook the Federalists, but they never left him.

Meigs also took policy positions in his inaugural that reflected the influence of the early American state on American expansion in Ohio, and he even took outright Federalist positions. He sounded like a Federalist when calling for a public school system in Ohio, quoting Ephraim Cutler's passage in the state constitution that education promoted "Religion, morality and knowledge being essentially necessary to a good government" and expanding upon it. He declared public schools "the auxiliaries of virtue" that promote "respect for religion, purity of morals, and love of country." Meigs also spoke of building federal roads

⁴ "Ohio 1807 Governor," *NNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1807 (last accessed January 29, 2011). According to Philip Lampi's tabulations, Meigs won 115 votes in Marietta while competitors received none, and 225 Cincinnatians voted for him while only 76 voted for competitor Nathaniel Massie. Meanwhile, Athens County voted for Meigs by a 134-2 margin, and Trumbull County residents, many of them from Connecticut, preferred Meigs over Massie by a tally of 879-62. For more detailed accounts of the controversy surrounding Meigs's eligibility for office during the 1807 election, see also Brown, "Frontier Politics," 347-348; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 99-100.

⁵ "Ohio 1810 Governor," *NNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1810 (last accessed January 29, 2011); and Jeffrey P. Brown, "The Ohio Federalists, 1803-1815," *Journal of the Early Republic* 2, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 273.

in Ohio, following up on positions first advocated by Rufus Putnam in the early 1790s. Finally, Meigs spoke in his 1811 address of expanding the system of inspections on Ohio's exports that was first established under St. Clair and the Federalist-leaning territorial legislature ten years earlier.⁶ For Meigs, taking strength in union meant including Federalist ideals that prized an obedient populace and commercial expansion, even in the midst of Jefferson's embargo.

A former Federalist governor promoting Federalist programs to the Ohio General Assembly in 1810 should not be possible by present understandings of early Ohio political history, yet there stood a living, breathing anomaly. Recent historians have claimed alternately that in Ohio Federalists lost hope after 1800, quit operating as a party by 1804, and that Ohio was a one-party state in its early history to the point that accusations of being a Federalist were enough to silence opponents.⁷ However, the success of a former Federalist like Meigs, not to mention the support he received from Federalists, suggests that the party still had real influence even after statehood for Ohio.

Federalists influenced Ohio politics in two important ways. First, their programs for political development and westward expansion found new life in Ohio, as both Federalists and Jeffersonians adopted Federalist ideas for internal improvements and other policies that aimed to stimulate economic development.

⁶ Ohio House Journal, 1810-1811, 44-45; and Ohio House Journal, 1811-1812, 10-11.

⁷ Brown, "Frontier Politics," 305; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 79; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 122, 138. Brown declared in his chapter title that early Ohio was a one-party state, while Cayton argued that Federalists had lost and were fading from the scene by 1800 (and typified by Meigs's shift to Jeffersonian Republicanism) and Ratcliffe said that Federalists ceased to be an organized opposition by 1804 and even the name became a powerful epithet by the latter half of the decade.

Second, and more conspicuously, Federalists continued to seek offices and exert legislative pull through the War of 1812, especially after Jefferson's embargo enlivened Federalist politics in Ohio and led to new successes for a number of Federalist politicians. The war also brought Federalists – among them Jacob Burnet, Ephraim Cutler, and Charles Hammond – to public service and stayed there until well afterward. Between statehood and war's end, Ohio's Federalists developed clear differences from their counterparts to the east that helped them to continue their careers in Ohio and as Federalists well beyond 1815.

A Controlled West: Education, Inspection, and Louisiana

The first few years of statehood were the times that tried Federalist men's souls. As Federalists in Ohio noticed their political fortunes waning, they pursued two primary courses of action. On one side, younger and more ambitious politicians among them continued to seek office and otherwise advance their political careers but with limited success. However, with losses in the legislature and at the polls mounting quickly, many more Federalists left politics for many years, if not permanently. Immediately after statehood, Ohio Federalists wielded little influence in elected offices but remained committed to developing a refined Western society through education and other institutions outside of political office. Further, they remained friendly to national westward expansion in a clear difference from other Federalists nearer to the Atlantic.

Voters greeted Federalist candidates coldly in the 1802 constitutional convention elections, but they fared even worse in the first statewide contests of

1803 and 1804. Perhaps the clearest hostile signal came in the election for the state's first governor in early 1803. Arthur St. Clair received 234 votes (mostly from the Ohio Company home of Washington County), and Benjamin Ives Gilman of Marietta picked up 246 votes around Cincinnati. However, Jeffersonian candidate Edward Tiffin of Chillicothe won with nearly ten times as many votes as were received by all of his Federalist opponents.⁸ The legislative election was nearly as discouraging, as only a handful of Federalists won seats and all of them came from Jefferson or Belmont County. Both counties lay in the eastern part of the state along the Ohio River and were populated heavily by Quakers who tended to side with Federalists in national issues. A few other Federalists, especially Philemon Beecher of Lancaster, carried the party's torch in the Ohio General Assembly during the next few years, but being badly outnumbered by Republicans meant those Federalists had few, if any, moments of real impact during the first sessions of the General Assembly.⁹

Despite their lack of numbers, the Louisiana controversy of 1802-1803 offered Philemon Beecher a moment of political stardom and other Federalists in Ohio an opportunity to develop a separate political identity. With commerce threatened by the transfer of New Orleans to France and without a vote in

⁸ "Ohio 1803 Governor," *NWV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1803 (last accessed February 21, 2011). Overall, Tiffin picked up 5,377 votes, and he was the unanimous choice of Belmont, Clermont, and Jefferson Counties. In addition to the Federalists discussed above, Bezaleel Wells received 89 votes in Fairfield County while Ohio Company members and Marietta residents Rufus Putnam and Paul Fearing picked up three votes and one vote, respectively.

⁹ Brown, "Frontier Politics," 316; and William T. Utter, "Ohio Politics and Politicians, 1802-1815," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1929), 30, 42. Brown and Utter listed Ohio Sens. Bezaleel Wells and Zenas Kimberly and Reps. Rudolph Blair, Zacheus A. Beatty, Thomas Elliot, and Isaac Meeks among the Federalists of the first session of the General Assembly.

Congress for the time being, Ohio was largely inert in the initial Congressional discussions of February 1803. However, Federalists to the east tried to take up their cause by arguing for an attack on New Orleans. In the *New York Evening Post*, Alexander Hamilton wrote as “Pericles” that a French Louisiana “threatens the early dismemberment of a large portion of our country.” Already assuming Napoleon would not listen to diplomatic offers, Hamilton argued Congress should enlarge the U.S. Army to ten thousand men and allow President Jefferson to call up forty thousand militia to conquer and defend New Orleans. Such a force “would astonish and disconcert Bonaparte himself,” Hamilton suggested.¹⁰ Overall, the Revolution of 1800 seemed not to chasten him. As with the Whiskey Rebellion and the Northwest Indian War, enemies needed to learn that resisting American growth in the trans-Appalachian West had dire consequences.

Federalist James Ross of western Pennsylvania also demanded force to resolve the Louisiana controversy during U.S. Senate debates on the matter. After arguing for the importance of Western commerce for American prosperity and federal revenues on February 14, he offered a resolution on February 16 that declared “the United States have an indisputable right to the free navigation of the river Mississippi, and to a convenient place of deposit” at New Orleans. If that right was interrupted by the new French colonial government, “it materially concerns such of the American citizens as well on the western waters, and is essential to the union” to the point that Congress needed to authorize Pres.

¹⁰ *New-York Evening Post*, February 8, 1803; and Betty Houchin Winfield, “Public Perception and Public Events: The Louisiana Purchase and the American Partisan Press,” in Peter J. Kastor, ed., *The Louisiana Purchase: Emergence of an American Nation* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2002), 43. Winfield attributed the “Pericles” articles in the *Post* to Hamilton.

Jefferson to call up fifty thousand militia to take the city and “obtain complete security for the full and peaceable enjoyment of such their absolute right.” Debating matters a week later, Federalist Samuel White of Delaware warned that failing to resolve the situation in favor of the United States could lead to Westerners detaching themselves from the Union.¹¹ However, their arguments did not lead to legislative success or a new American force capable of menacing European opponents to Western commerce and American expansion.

Even as James Monroe and Robert Livingston were negotiating for the Louisiana Purchase in March 1803, the *New York Evening Post* printed news from New Orleans that underlined the need for federal intervention. A letter from there complained that renewed French rule would leave Americans “obliged to submit peaceably to any halter which they may impose on our trade.” The correspondent blamed Jeffersonian resistance to the Federalist plan, too, noting that “If the government of the United States had authorised a descent on this place, as a pledge for negotiation... they would have been joined and applauded by the principal part of the inhabitants.” Not only would force have been the preferable course, the Americans would have been greeted as liberators. In a sense, the letter was self-congratulation, too, as it cast Federalists as the true guardians of Western interests. Less than a week later, the *Evening Post* ran a piece from Kentucky stating that Americans had to demand “every exertion” from the federal government “to obtain one entire side of the river Mississippi.” Hoping for swift, decisive action, the editor’s remarks declared that if Jefferson

¹¹ AC, 7th Cong., 2nd sess., 95-96, 113.

sent troops he “will be doing something, and we stand ready to give him all the credit such an act would deserve; but... we cannot join his democratic friends, and bestow it in advance.”¹²

As news broke about the Louisiana Purchase, though, Federalists hardly congratulated Jefferson. For hard-line Federalists, the Louisiana Purchase was by turns too large, too expensive, and negotiated too secretly. The harshest criticism emanated from New England Federalists who fretted over their waning political fortunes and the dilution of their region’s influence over the rest of the nation.¹³ The Federalist *Columbian Centinel* from Boston took a more specific tact by attacking the Louisiana Purchase in July because of the supposed low quality of land purchased. Articles published in its pages called the new purchase “an aukward and heavy trouble” and “a great waste, a wilderness unpeopled with any beings except wolves and wandering Indians.”¹⁴ Whether they thought the purchase too much, too broad, or simply of a Great American Desert, Federalists in New England seemed convinced the Louisiana Purchase was foolhardy and the latest example of irrational exuberance from Jefferson.

Further, the *Columbian Centinel* argued, the purchase violated Federalist ideals of careful, well-supervised westward expansion. As “Fabricus” observed on July 16, the Louisiana Purchase offered “empire that is boundless, or whose

¹² *New-York Evening Post*, March 17 and March 22, 1803.

¹³ Jerry W. Knudson, *Jefferson and the Press: Crucible of Liberty* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 88, 98-99; and Winfield, “Public Perception and Public Events,” 44-45. Knudson points to Federalist newspapers that declared fifteen million dollars an outrageous price for restoring American trading rights at New Orleans that they rightfully possessed anyway.

¹⁴ *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), July 2 and July 13, 1803; and Knudson, *Jefferson and the Press*, 96.

bounds are yet unexplored.” Such an inland empire brought pride to European monarchs but a curse to the Federalist writer. “So vast a machine as the government of the whole empire” would escape the Jeffersonians, he wrote, and if they kept Louisiana “an untrodden waste.... they have not the vigor, and they dare not use the means to prevent the ‘squatting’ of hosts of renegadoes, and outlaws, and fugitives” until those disreputable characters formed a breakaway republic.¹⁵ Overall, Louisiana threatened to undermine the energetic government and social order Federalists worked so hard to establish. The Louisiana Purchase would ultimately destroy the United States, they decided, and thus Federalists must save the Union by opposing it.

However, that opinion was not shared by the *Evening Post*, especially after its sponsor Alexander Hamilton declared that Louisiana offered commercial advantage and economic opportunity through new markets. That decision seemed to shape editorial reaction in 1803, especially seen in a piece published July 5. Declaring the situation “terminated favourably to this country,” the writer called New Orleans “essential to the peace and prosperity of our Western country, and as opening a free and valuable market to our commercial states.” Therefore, he argued, “there is all the reason for exultation which the friends of the administration display, and which all Americans may be allowed to feel.”¹⁶ The Louisiana Purchase was essential to overseeing mercantile growth

¹⁵ *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), July 16, 1803.

¹⁶ *New-York Evening Post*, July 5, 1803; and Winfield, “Public Perception and Public Events,” 48.

throughout the nation, and backing the purchase held consistent with the Hamiltonian philosophy of using state power to stimulate economic growth.

In Ohio, Federalists supported the Louisiana Purchase because it opened new economic opportunities. Jeffersonian newspapers in the Ohio valley welcomed the news with talk of future commercial prosperity. Chillicothe's *Scioto Gazette* heralded an end to "ruinous fluctuations in commerce" for the state, and a Frankfort, Kentucky editorial declared the purchase promised "perpetual union of the states, and lasting prosperity to the Western country."¹⁷ Meanwhile, Ohioans celebrated the purchase as news spread throughout the state in the fall. In Lancaster, residents celebrated with a candlelit parade featuring a four-foot lantern inscribed "THOMAS JEFFERSON, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE" on one side and the acquisition of Louisiana on the other. Chillicothe offered bonfires and toasts to Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase. Overall, the purchase was so popular that Samuel Huntington remarked of his opponents that even if they dared, "Federalists of Ohio do not presume to oppose it although they have not remitted their opposition to the administration in other respects."¹⁸

That opposition showed in Philemon Beecher's actions when the Ohio House of Representatives discussed a resolution congratulating and supporting Jefferson for the Louisiana Purchase. On December 17, Beecher argued against it and rallied fourteen votes to his side from a Jeffersonian supermajority, but the

¹⁷ *Scioto Gazette* (Chillicothe, OH), October 1, 1803, and *Guardian of Freedom* (Frankfort, KY), July 20, 1803, both quoted in George Rogers Taylor, "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi Valley Preceding the War of 1812," in Harry N. Scheiber, ed., *The Old Northwest: Studies in Regional History, 1787-1910* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 28-29.

¹⁸ Samuel Huntington to Thomas Worthington, October 3, 1803, quoted in Utter, "Ohio Politics and Politicians," 44.

resolution's supporters won by a single vote. Promising a message of protest against the resolution, Beecher presented the opposition case on December 19. Above all else, he was careful to note that they supported Jefferson's efforts "to acquire and secure to the people of the United States, the free and uninterrupted navigation of the river and waters of the Mississippi, and to procure... the province of Louisiana." However, he offered two objections. First, he found it "inconvenient, useless and absurd" to give "faint and unavailing encomiums on the agents of constituted powers for performing that which they were required to do." Second, he was concerned by the implication behind the resolution that "for the state governments to be silent... is an evidence of their disapprobation."¹⁹ For Beecher, obedience was simply expected, so offering support from the state of Ohio was redundant at best and sycophancy at worst.

While Beecher enjoyed momentary importance, other Federalists noticed mounting electoral defeats in the first year of statehood. In turn, these Federalists – many of them formerly prominent in territorial politics – left politics for years, and some never returned. Their former leader Arthur St. Clair was already moving to Pennsylvania by the first gubernatorial election, and the first major Federalist candidate for governor, Benjamin Ives Gilman, decided his time was better spent managing his businesses at Marietta until he moved to Philadelphia in 1813. Still, he never abandoned his Federalism as shown by the *Rufus King*, a 300-ton ship built in his shipyard and named for the New York

¹⁹ Ohio House Journal, 1803-1804, 36-37, 39; and Jeffrey P. Brown, "The Political Culture of Early Ohio," in Jeffrey P. Brown and Andrew R.L. Cayton, eds., *The Pursuit of Public Power: Political Culture in Ohio, 1787-1861* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1994), 13.

Federalist.²⁰ In Cincinnati, Jacob Burnet quit politics and focused on his law practice when he could not organize an effective Cincinnati Federalist ticket for the state legislature in 1803. He did not return until the War of 1812. Even Rufus Putnam, the administrator of the old Ohio Company land office, pursued his work as a trustee of Ohio University and retired from active political life.²¹

Those Federalists faced a dilemma after 1803, in that they wanted to continue overseeing Western development but they felt real antagonism toward the people they wished to lead. The dichotomy showed well through the experiences of Ephraim Cutler, whose frustration with electoral defeats ultimately boiled over into contempt for many of the people he hoped to represent. Cutler began his political career in 1801 with a term in the territorial legislature and won a seat at the Ohio constitutional convention the next year. Even so, changes in Marietta distressed him, and he responded by denigrating his neighbors and potential constituents. He complained that poorer voters chose the delegates, and another Federalist complained similarly that foreigners had become Jeffersonian tools in local elections by 1802.²² In rejecting the leadership of gentlemen like Cutler, Marietta voters committed an affront to the assumptions behind the Federalist frontier. Federalists like Cutler saw their socioeconomic

²⁰ *Trenton Federalist*, May 4, 1807; and S.P. Hildreth, *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of the Early Pioneer Settlers of Ohio, with Narratives of Incidents and Occurrences in 1775* (Cincinnati: H.W. Derby, 1852), 310. The newspaper described the *Rufus King* as “an elegant vessel, and in point of workmanship and good materials a bare comparison with any in the United States.” As the *New-York Evening Post* reported on March 8, 1808, another Marietta shipbuilder (a Col. Abner Lord) built the 165-ton brig *Rufus Putnam* in honor of the town’s founding father and staunch Federalist.

²¹ Brown, “Frontier Politics,” 312-314.

²² Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 77-78, 95.

standing as their qualification for political leadership, but lower-class voters choosing Republicans usurped that sense of organic social order.

For Cutler, his unsuccessful 1804 candidacy to become brigadier general in the state militia was the final insult. As he later recalled, officers in Washington County preferred him by “a clear majority of five votes in the brigade, and yet the major-general returned my opponent... as elected, and Governor Tiffin commissioned him!” Disgusted, he said the decisions against him proved “Democracy was in the ascendant,” a sin he could not easily forgive, and afterward “nothing in the political drama” interested him. His defeat was simply too pernicious to bear. Rampant democracy and Jeffersonian demagoguery doomed the fortunes of Federalists like him, and for the next decade he found his time better spent as a local justice of the peace and as a leader of new settlements around Marietta and Athens.

While Cutler joined Rufus Putnam, Benjamin Ives Gilman, and many other Federalists in abandoning politics, they still affected the early history of their adopted home state, particularly through promoting new educational institutions. By turning to education, they could still change Western society without holding political office. New schools and colleges would help to make the Ohio valley a center of learning and virtue while bringing economic opportunity, and that attitude showed especially as Federalists tied to the Ohio Company focused on Ohio University. In December 1801, Ephraim Cutler introduced the bill that would create a new university from the two townships promised by the Ohio Company for a new college. The next month, a new law created it (as American

Western University), but the college trustees – including Marietta Federalists Rufus Putnam, Paul Fearing, and Dudley Woodbridge – waited to act until the Ohio General Assembly chartered Ohio University on February 18, 1804.²³ Progress was slow but steady afterward. Paucity of funds delayed the completion of the first building and creation of the first academic department until 1808, but Ohio University opened an academy offering high school-level courses in June 1809 and granted its first bachelor's degrees in 1815.²⁴

From its founding, Ohio University bore the fingerprints of Federalism. The acts to charter the university reflected Federalist ideals for education, with both the 1802 and 1804 versions including a blunt declaration in the preamble that “institutions for the liberal education of youth, are essential to the progress of arts and sciences, important to morality, virtue and religion.” Such a statement echoed the plans of Federalist speculators from the 1780s and other Federalist plans for education. To them, schools were to serve greater social ends and to imbue a spirit not of free inquiry but of obedience and deference to authority. The rest of the preamble also showed Federalist influence, as it said education, and Ohio University in particular, was to be “friendly to the peace, order, and prosperity of society, and honorable to the government.” The act also stated in

²³ “An Act Establishing an University in the Town of Athens,” in Ohio University, *Resolutions and Acts Passed by the Ohio and Territorial Legislatures, Relative to the Ohio University, at Athens* (Zanesville, OH: Putnam and Clark, 1816), 5-6; “An Act Establishing an University in the Town of Athens,” December 18, 1804, in Ohio University, *Resolutions and Acts Passed*, 12-13; Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 177; Thomas N. Hoover, *The History of Ohio University* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1954), 17-18; and William E. Peters, *Legal History of the Ohio University, Athens, Ohio* (Cincinnati: Western Methodist Book Concern, 1910), 88-89. Hoover and Peters reported the date as February 18, and Ohio University calls February 18 its founding date. The December date in *Resolutions and Acts* seems to be a misprint.

²⁴ Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 177; Hoover, *History of Ohio University*, 24; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 386; and Peters, *Legal History of the Ohio University*, 89, 113.

its first section an interesting priority list for the university that included “promotion of good education, virtue, religion, and morality, and for conferring all the degrees and literary honors granted in similar institutions.”²⁵ Listing the granting of degrees so far down the list is telling: the Federalist university was to produce exemplary citizens first and well-educated students thereafter.

The early years of Ohio University also reflected the values of its Federalist leaders. Rufus Putnam informally led the university trustees, as he surveyed the town of Athens, established a leasing system for college lands to raise revenue, and oversaw the initial construction and curriculum for the college. In addition, the first code of conduct for university students in 1814 stressed good behavior and punished misconduct harshly. Student reading was supervised, as rules prohibited having or showing “any lascivious, impious or irreligious book or ballad.” Meanwhile, trustees stressed social harmony in disallowing any student to “quarrel with, insult or abuse a fellow student” and requiring students who visited “a Tavern, Alehouse, Beerhouse, or any place of like kind” to receive “special permission from someone of the faculty.” Once the professor gave students written permission to drink, they were still not to “keep company with a person whose character is notoriously bad” without facing official punishment or, if the offense was habitual, expulsion.²⁶ As the first code of conduct stressed in classic Federalist style, controlling conflicts, alcohol consumption, and even

²⁵ “An Act Establishing an University in the Town of Athens,” in Ohio University, *Resolutions and Acts Passed*, 5-6; and “An Act Establishing an University in the Town of Athens,” December 18, 1804, in Ohio University, *Resolutions and Acts Passed*, 12.

²⁶ Brown, “Frontier Politics,” 312; and Hoover, *History of Ohio University*, 21-23, 27-28.

one's emotions were integral to becoming an educated gentleman and a worthy leader in the young nation and new state of Ohio.

While those older Federalists pursued the university the Ohio Company had promised in the 1780s, Ephraim Cutler also promoted education and community development during his self-imposed exile from elective politics. Establishing homesteads in the area around Marietta, Cutler made his homes the center of civic activity and took interest in local education. In Amesville about thirty miles west of Marietta, Cutler hosted the town school in a room of his house in 1801. After citizens pooled their harvest of animal skins to create the so-called Coonskin Library for the town, Cutler hosted it in his home and was its librarian when it opened in 1804. By 1809, he was living in Warren Township just north of Marietta and again volunteered his home for the area's first school in 1809 before having a church and a schoolhouse, which was also the public meeting house, built on his property. The plan behind supporting schools and other political and social institutions, he wrote later, was to aid the "progress of improvement in morals, intelligence, and property."²⁷ While making a prosperous farm, Cutler continued the Federalist plan to make the West prosper not only economically but culturally by improving the morals and education of Western citizens.

The efforts of Ephraim Cutler and the university trustees bore fruit in time, as the Amesville school helped to educate one of the first two graduates of Ohio

²⁷ Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 88; Sarah J. Cutler, "The Coonskin Library," *Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 26 (1917): 59, 68; and John B. Nicholson, Jr., "The Coonskin Library: A Legend of Books in the Wilderness," *Aspects of Librarianship* 9 (1955/1956): 6.

University.²⁸ Thomas Ewing was born in 1789 and moved to Amesville in 1798, attending school at Cutler's home during three winters. Those first classes whetted his appetite for learning, and in 1802 fifteen-year-old Thomas "contributed ten Raccoon skins – being all my hoarded wealth" to the Coonskin Library. When the first fifty-one books returned, he wrote, "It seemed to me like an almost unbounded intellectual treasure – the library of the Vatican and all other libraries of which I had read were trifles – playthings – compared with it." As it grew, he enjoyed "abundant and excellent reading for the seven or eight years that I afterwards remained at home."²⁹ Overall, Ewing was a success story for Federalist leadership, receiving an education from their efforts that later propelled him to the U.S. Senate and multiple Presidential cabinets. Further, perhaps an illustration of Federalist ideals spreading to him, Ewing joined many old Federalists in the Whig Party during his political career.

Overall, the early years of statehood may have meant fewer electoral victories for Federalists, but they capitalized on new opportunities to promote westward expansion and their ideal of a well-ordered republican society. While Federalists farther east still pursued office actively and fought Jefferson even on such popular issues as the Louisiana Purchase, Ohio's Federalists chose more promising forms of public service that let them advance their political and social visions for the future of Ohio and the rest of America. Thus, Ohio Federalists had

²⁸ Clement L. Martzloff, ed., "The Autobiography of Thomas Ewing," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (January 1913): 161. Ewing received his degree despite not knowing Greek, which was a requirement of Ohio University graduates.

²⁹ Martzloff, "The Autobiography of Thomas Ewing," 141, 150-151.

begun separating themselves from their brethren to the east. Their efforts to improve education in the state also allowed Federalists to continue their mission to reform Western society even outside of political office. The first few years of statehood may have brought many defeats that tested the resolve of many Federalists, but they found ways to stay relevant in Ohio politics and society.

The State of Fiscal-Mercantilism: The Pro-Business Politics of Ohio

The Federalists who forsook politics for business were among the most enterprising of Ohioans who harbored grand commercial ambitions. Those ambitions could only be realized, many of them reasoned, through active aid to commerce from the state. Before statehood, Federalist officials pursued multiple policies to guide and brighten Ohio's commercial future, and Jeffersonian leaders followed by continuing to place the state within economic development. On two issues, an inspection service for exports and internal improvements, Jeffersonian Republicans in Ohio maintained Federalist ideas and even pressed national leaders to keep the state ahead of economic development. Meanwhile, after 1807 Federalists made political hay of Jefferson's embargo and staged a minor comeback while continuing to seek an active role for government in economic development. The Federalist approach to developing markets bore fruit between statehood and the War of 1812, as overall Ohio's political leaders saw salutary reasons to maintain and even extend a close relationship between government and growing commerce.

Even before statehood, Ohioans held far-reaching economic ambitions. New settlers tended to raise corn and hogs for subsistence, with corn grown on partially cleared fields and hogs sent to forage in wooded areas. Selling excess pork and making whiskey from corn presented the first opportunities for Ohioans to sell to wider markets, too. As they rose above subsistence levels, farmers moved to products meant almost entirely for export. They planted apple and peach orchards, cleared pastures for cattle, and planted new fields with wheat because it sold better and preserved much longer than corn.³⁰ That produce spread quickly, as French traveler Francois Andre Michaux reported in 1802 that Marietta produce had already been shipped to Jamaica, and the next year Ohio exported more than Delaware, Vermont, and New Jersey. Some of that cargo even left Ohio on ocean-going vessels built at Marietta; the *Muskingum* and *Eliza Green*, both built in 1801, sent cargo to New Orleans and then carried cotton to Liverpool in 1802.³¹

During those early years, Federalists were in the midst of commercial activities. As mentioned earlier, Benjamin Ives Gilman spearheaded a nascent shipbuilding industry at Marietta that brought goods down the Ohio River to New Orleans and beyond. Overall, Marietta produced at least a dozen oceangoing merchant vessels between 1800 and 1806, and other shipbuilders in town built

³⁰ Kim M. Gruenwald *River of Enterprise: The commercial Origins of the Ohio Valley, 1790-1850* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 49; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 217, 259.

³¹ *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), February 16, 1803; Samuel P. Hildreth, "Ships Built at Marietta, 1800-1806," vol. 2, item 33, Samuel P. Hildreth Collection, Marietta College Library, Marietta, Ohio; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 213; Michaux, "Travels to the West," in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, III: 177.

gunboats for the United States Navy.³² The Putnams, especially Rufus and brother Israel, helped to introduce apple orchards to Ohio, bringing in 1796 a wagon with some forty different apple varieties to establish the first tree nursery west of the Alleghany Mountains. Until its closure in 1821, the Marietta nursery offered Ohio valley farmers seeds to start their own orchards to raise apples (often made into cider) for export. Ephraim Cutler also took the lead in exporting cattle from Ohio to the east, beginning cattle drives to Baltimore in 1800 and continuing them annually for thirty years. While he said “Small profit generally resulted to me,” his leadership in this new market led him to record with pride that through his business, “many poor families were placed in very flourishing circumstances.” Overall, he estimated that he “aided some two hundred families to acquire homes.”³³ Once again, the absence of electoral majorities did not deter Ohio Federalists from taking important social and economic roles that still let them take the lead in their adopted home state.

The rising wishes and abilities of Ohioans to connect with outside markets led them to realize that their economic future depended upon state involvement in three key forms. Further, in all three areas they adopted Federalist or at least state-friendly positions to include government in building markets. First, Ohio depended on a growing population for healthier internal markets and greater production overall, and that growing population required land sold by the U.S.

³² *Trenton Federalist* (New Jersey), May 4, 1807; Hildreth, “Ships Built at Marietta, 1800-1806,” vol. 2, item 33, Samuel P. Hildreth Collection, Marietta College Library, Marietta, Ohio; and Michaux, “Travels to the West,” in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, III: 177.

³³ Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 89-90; and Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 243-245.

government. Second, Federalists and Republicans alike recognized that economic growth in Ohio depended upon access to distant markets and became leading proponents of internal improvements. Third, a bright economic future depended upon a good reputation for Ohio produce, and they attempted to assure one through a statewide inspection service first established under Federalist territorial rule. In all three aspects, Ohio voters and politicians relied on a vision of the state in which finances would be used to develop American commerce; this fiscal-mercantile state had a strong basis in Federalist ideology and would greatly influence politics in Ohio for decades.

Its population grew rapidly during its first years, and a good deal of it came with federal land office sales and the security of federally-backed titles. Ohio's population quintupled from 1802 to 1808, from slightly above 40,000 to around 200,000, and its representation in the U.S. House grew from one to six after the 1810 Census. Cincinnati exhibited that rapid growth, increasing from around 500 inhabitants to 2,540 in 1810 and up to 4,000 in 1814. Ohioans spread across space, too, as many Ohioans lived within a few miles of waterways in the southern end of the state in 1802 but had moved throughout most of the state by the War of 1812. All of that growth provided real opportunity for longer-tenured Ohioans. Not only did statewide agricultural production rise, new settlers offered a ready market for goods and economic growth. New immigrants bought seed, livestock, food, and other important supplies from their neighbors until they

cleared enough land and gained reliable self-sustaining yields. Until then, new settlers meant that money was to be made inside Ohio.³⁴

The federal government aided that growth, too. New land offices opened at Zanesville and Wooster in 1803 and at Canton in 1807 to sell public lands in the central part of the state, joining offices established by the Land Law of 1800 at Steubenville, Marietta, Cincinnati, and Chillicothe. Between 1802 and 1807, settlers bought 1.9 million acres from the land office. Much of it was enabled by the credit system enacted by the Land Law of 1800, as settlers took on one million dollars of new debt to the federal land office between October 1803 and October 1805.³⁵ Federal land sales also helped Ohio to overtake Kentucky in population and economic importance during the first five years of statehood. As Kim Gruenwald has noted in her study of the Ohio River valley, the security of federal land office titles made Ohio more attractive to many new Westerners.³⁶ In sum, federal backing helped Ohio grow in numbers, across space, and in overall importance in the early nineteenth century.

Ohioans could make some wealth from new immigrants, but their greatest prospects lay in markets across the nation and abroad. Therefore, they consistently supported internal improvements to make transportation faster and cheaper. Within the state, Ohioans used the three percent of public land sales

³⁴ Brown, "Frontier Politics," 306; and Gruenwald, *River of Enterprise*, 81-83, 88-90.

³⁵ Andrew Gregg, "Credit on Public Lands," April 5, 1806, in *ASP:PL*, I: 265; Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business*, 30; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 406. To be exact, Treat's figures show land sales of 1,904,085 acres from 1802 until 1807, and Gregg's report showed that settlers in Ohio owed the federal land office \$1,092,390 on October 1, 1803, and \$2,094,305 on October 1, 1805.

³⁶ Gruenwald, *River of Enterprise*, 83.

promised in the Enabling Act of 1802 to build 1,030 miles of new roads in Ohio by June 1805, most of them to connect waterways in the state. Counties also improved existing roads in the state as shown by the improvement of Zane's Trace, the first major road through Ohio built in 1797, by widening it to twenty feet and making it a suitable road for wagon travel from Wheeling in western Virginia to the Ohio state capital at Chillicothe. As driving cattle and hogs east to markets became a growing part of the state economy, supporting transportation into and throughout the state took on even greater importance.³⁷

Ohioans took the initiative on internal improvements and found Federalist allies. The Cumberland Road Bill, offered to connect the Ohio and Potomac Rivers, also passed because of Federalist and Western support. That bill, the *Washington Federalist* declared in April 1806, was an "important Law... far beyond any calculation yet formed on the subject" that held out "great Commercial Benefits," especially for Ohio.³⁸ The arch-Jeffersonian Sen. Thomas Worthington apparently agreed by late February 1807, when he offered a flurry of resolutions culminating in a request that Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin look into a national system of roads and canals "as objects of public improvement, [which] may require and deserve the aid of Government." Further, the same week saw the Senate approve a commission for a new canal around the dangerous Ohio River rapids, a surefire stimulus to exports from both Ohio and

³⁷ Ernest Ludlow Bogart, *Financial History of Ohio* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, 1912), 20-21; and Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 222, 255, 257.

³⁸ AC, 7th Cong., 2nd sess., 85; *Washington Federalist* (DC), April 2, 1806; and Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 56.

Kentucky.³⁹ Overall, Ohioans found Federalists and the federal government to be allies who would help them realize their ambitions for economic prosperity.

Part of that growth had greater requirements than more access and more people, as Ohioans also turned to a Federalist example in protecting their growing export business through an inspection system designed to maintain standards of quality for Ohio products. Arthur St. Clair originally proposed the inspection system to the Northwest Territory legislature in late 1801, declaring that “it is of the very first importance, that the articles sent to foreign markets should be of the best quality.” To assure such quality, he wished to intertwine governmental oversight with Ohio’s economic development through “some public stamp” affixed on packages to tell purchasers that the regulations were followed. Not only would inspections be “indispensably necessary” for enterprising Ohioans, but he wanted them “guarded by very strong sanctions” to discourage low-quality, clandestine exports that would undermine the purpose of the system.⁴⁰ Thus, St. Clair proposed a system that would begin a fiscal-mercantile state in which the resources of government were directed to encourage as well as control economic activity. In essence, the state would serve as a stimulus to and guardian over Western development, and the inspection offices were to be an important element of that fiscal-mercantile state.

³⁹ *AC*, 9th Cong., 2nd sess., 92, 95; and Ernest Ludlow Bogart, *Internal Improvements and the State Debt in Ohio* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924), 12. For Worthington’s resolutions offered on February 25 and 26, see *AC*, 9th Cong., 2nd sess., 88-90. The first resolution requested the Secretary of the Treasury to report on building a canal from the Chesapeake to the Delaware River, while the second asked for turnpikes emanating from the national capital to the extreme corners of the nation.

⁴⁰ *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Territory of the United States, Northwest of the Ohio*, 2nd General Assembly, 1st sess., 14-15.

The territorial House agreed, appointing a committee that included Republican Jeremiah Morrow, Ohio's lone Congressman during its first decade of statehood, to draft a bill shortly after the speech. The act "Providing for the Inspection of Certain Articles of Exportation," signed into law on January 11, 1802, required counties to appoint inspectors to oversee "as many deputies or packers, to pack and inspect under him, as the nature of the case may require."⁴¹ They were given power to collect prescribed fees for each inspection, stamp approved items, and even pack (if necessary) all flour, meal, corn, biscuit, butter, lard, pork, and beef leaving the territory. The act even standardized size, construction, and sealing for containers of all types. For example, for the export of pork and beef:

"Barrels shall be made of good, sound, seasoned white-oak materials, clear of sap, tightly bound, with fourteen sufficient hoops, or ten flat hoops, at least two inches broad, secured in all cases with four nails, at least, in each chine hoop, and four wooden pins or pegs in each outward bilge hoop, and shall be packed with good, sound meat, with not less than two hundred nor more than two hundred and twenty-five pounds weight of meat in each barrel."⁴²

Anyone avoiding inspections risked a fine of five hundred dollars, and counterfeit stamps were treated as forgery. Like the Trade and Intercourse Acts passed by

⁴¹ "An Act Providing for the Inspection of Certain Articles of Exportation Therein Enumerated," January 9, 1802, in Salmon P. Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio and of the Northwestern Territory, Adapted or Enacted from 1783 to 1833 Inclusive, Together with the Ordinance of 1787; the Constitutions of Ohio and of the United States, and Various Public Instruments of Congress; Illustrated by a Preliminary Sketch of the History of Ohio* (Cincinnati: Corey & Fairbank, 1833-1835), I: 333; and *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Territory of the United States, North-west of the Ohio*, 2nd General Assembly, 1st sess., 16, 131.

⁴² "An Act Providing for the Inspection of Certain Articles of Exportation Therein Enumerated," January 9, 1802, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, I: 334.

the U.S. Congress in the previous decade, the act also deputized the public by rewarding informers with half of the fines collected.

After statehood, the Republican majority in the Ohio General Assembly passed a series of laws that elaborated on the inspection system and regulated commercial activity. In early 1805, laws passed that nearly replicated the 1802 inspection law and capped milling fees, both aimed at better supervising the business of agriculture. In one week in February 1812, the state legislature passed an act to regulate the founding of manufacturing companies and another to amend the inspection system by adding exported potash, lime, and fish to the regulations. Even so, records related to the inspections are scant, meaning that either the law was widely disregarded or the service's decentralized form – with county-appointed officers keeping private records – helped to lose the records in the fog of history.⁴³ Nonetheless, the renewals and refinements of the service suggest inspections were taken seriously. Taking cues from the Federalists, leaders in Ohio stood guard against unprincipled greed with regulations and offices clearly intended to guide economic growth and development.

With such expectations, many saw the embargo of 1807 as an affront to their assumptions and the embargo had three important effects in Ohio. First, it hindered the flow of commerce and stymied population growth. By late 1808, the

⁴³ “An Act for the Inspection of Certain Articles of Exportation Therein Enumerated,” February 20, 1805, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, I: 474-476; “An Act for the Incorporation of Manufacturing Companies,” January 11, 1812, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 764-766; “An Act to Amend the Act for the Inspection of Certain Articles of Exportation Therein Enumerated,” January 15, 1812, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 766; and Bogart, *Financial History of Ohio*, 22. Bogart, the only scholar to discuss the inspection service at any length, declared the lack of records showed the law was “Probably... a dead letter,” but such a conclusion simply cannot be proven with a lack of evidence.

entire nation was in economic turmoil. That year, American exports (at least officially) dropped from \$108 million to \$22 million, and agricultural exports fell from roughly \$30 million to only \$5 million. Second, falling demand for agricultural produce led to a steep drop in commodity prices. Finally, many businesses closed and merchants often fell on difficult times.⁴⁴ The depression created problems for two Federalist-leaning sectors of Ohio's economy, as Cincinnati merchants struggled to keep, let alone expand, their business after 1807. In Marietta, the shipbuilding industry died during the embargo. The industry was declining by 1805, but the embargo closed off most of the foreign trade that demanded new ships. Thus, no new oceangoing vessel left the town after 1808. Overall, the embargo brought Ohio, as Rufus Putnam groused, "scarcity of money & the stoppage of business."⁴⁵

As fortunes waned, so did the flow of settlers into Ohio, with both public land sales and population growth slowing considerably with the economic depression after 1807. After all, potential settlers lacked the funds to migrate west and the trade prospects to raise enough money to pay off public land purchases. Without sufficient circulating currency and new residents, the market for all lands collapsed. Rufus Putnam complaints came from his inability to sell off land entrusted to him, and his son William explained the same while

⁴⁴ R. Carlyle Buley, *The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1951), I: 107; Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 21; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 141; and Taylor, "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi River Preceding the War of 1812," 42, 51.

⁴⁵ Brown, "Frontier Politics," 396; Putnam to John May, May 7, 1808, in Elbert Jay Benton, ed., "Side Lights on the Ohio Company of Associates from the John May Papers," *The Western Reserve Historical Society* no. 97 (October 1917): 202; and Taylor, "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi River Preceding the War of 1812," 36, 41.

remarking, “land at this time is of no value.” Fewer immigrants also dried up a major market outlet for Ohio farmers who often sold excess produce to new neighbors. A petition printed in the *Dayton Repertory* underlined the interlocked nature of the economic problems from the embargo, with farmers complaining to Congress that they could not pay for public lands without the specie needed to pay their mortgages, reliable markets for their goods, and new immigrants who often brought money with them.⁴⁶ Even so, the Jeffersonian state legislature was committed to the embargo, declaring in a February 1809 resolution that British perfidy led Ohioans to “highly approve of the firm, patriotic conduct of the general government, in adopting the pacific measures... for the preservation of our property, our seamen and our national honor.”⁴⁷

That Republican allegiance to the embargo offended Federalists and reenergized their party in Ohio, as members criticized the measure viciously and argued that government needed to return to the side of Western business. In all of its iterations – the act of 1807, non-intercourse, Macon’s Bill No. 2, and the wartime embargoes against Britain – Federalists saw the deleterious effects of the embargo upon commerce and, ironically in the face of an economic depression, their future prospects. To fight back, Federalists in Ohio pursued a number of avenues. Taking a cue from their Atlantic brethren, Federalists in Marietta, Zanesville, Springfield, and rural southeast Ohio established four of

⁴⁶ *Dayton Repertory* (Ohio), December 14, 1809; Gruenwald, *River of Enterprise*, 84; William Rufus Putnam to May, September 22, 1808, in Benton, “Side Lights on the Ohio Company,” 203; and Taylor, “Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi River Preceding the War of 1812,” 30, 42.

⁴⁷ *Acts of Ohio*, Seventh General Assembly, 1st sess., 223-224.

some two hundred Washington Benevolent Societies throughout the nation that promoted Federalist principles, opposed the embargo, and celebrated the life of George Washington through a fraternal organization. As publications indicate, the chapter in Marietta remained active during and even after the War of 1812.⁴⁸

Federalists also reemerged from self-imposed exiles to make their cases publicly. Enough Federalists won office in the 1807 legislative elections that they elected Philemon Beecher as Speaker of the House and some Ohioans wondered if Federalists were the majority in the General Assembly. Beecher also had built enough goodwill among Republican legislators and loyal Federalists to run for the U.S. Senate in 1806 and the U.S. House in 1808, both unsuccessfully.⁴⁹ The frontier Federalist press was also revitalized. In October 1808, Federalists founded the *Supporter* at the state capital Chillicothe, and early 1810 saw the first issue of Dayton's *Ohio Centinel* edited by Isaac Burnet, brother of Jacob Burnet. Both papers attacked the embargo as well as the Jeffersonian foreign policy behind it, with Burnet's *Centinel* especially pressing for neutrality modeled on the foreign policy of George Washington. The embargo continued to draw rancor and ridicule through the end of the War of 1812, as Federalists – especially Charles Hammond in his *Ohio Federalist* newspaper

⁴⁸ Brown, "The Ohio Federalists," 266, 271-272. The Marietta chapter remained active through at least 1817, as shown by George Turner, *An Oration Pronounced before the Washington Benevolent Society of the County of Washington, State of Ohio, on the 22d. February, 1817* (Marietta, OH: Royal Prentiss, 1817).

⁴⁹ Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 140-143.

from St. Clairsville – used the trade restrictions as a cudgel to attack the Madison administration and the war itself.⁵⁰

The *Pittsburgh Gazette*, the most prominent Western Federalist paper, used the controversy surrounding the embargo in 1807 and 1808 to outline a policy program of commercial development and a strong military familiar to long-tenured Ohioans. Through reprints and original content, the Federalists working in Pittsburgh praised past Federalist administrations for the salutary effects of their policies in the Northwest. Federalists recognized, one piece shortly before the embargo said, that “the United States was naturally a commercial country, as its commerce was the grand source of its prosperity,” and as a result they found it best to maintain a powerful navy to defend American ships. However, the Revolution of 1800 brought an administration for whom, according to a February 1808 piece, “Affection for our merchants is all a farce.” The *Gazette* was quick to note when the embargo undercut business around the nation and printed reports that prices for American produce were actually quite high in the Caribbean and Europe. Normally, they noted, “*there is a tide in the affairs of men of industry and business, which, taken at the full, leads on to fortune,*” but Jeffersonian misrule forced Americans to accept economic depression instead.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Brown, “Frontier Politics,” 403; Brown, “The Ohio Federalists,” 267, 272-273; and Douglas C. McMurtrie, *Early Printing in Dayton, Ohio* (Dayton, OH: Printing House Craftsmen’s Club of Dayton and Vicinity, 1935), 14-17. For particular examples of Hammond attacking the war by attacking the embargo, see *Ohio Federalist and Belmont Repository* (St. Clairsville, OH), April 13, 1814, August 24, 1814, and March 23, 1815.

⁵¹ *Pittsburgh Gazette*, August 11, 1807 and February 2, 1808. In the edition of March 8, 1808, the *Gazette* offered a stinging critique that asked of the embargo and its depression, “what does all this mean?” The answer was simple: “The *Mechanic* is obliged to dismiss his journeymen – his customers desert him... on account of the embargo,” while “The *Farmer* finds no market for his produce.... his oats, hay and corn were to be sold, but no body will buy.”

The remedy, prescribed by the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, involved a return to Federalist policies favoring a strong commerce and military. They wished first to end the embargo, which “bound their fellow citizens, hand and foot” with restrictions “so unexpected, so pregnant with mischief,” so that prosperity and immigration could resume in the Northwest. By allowing commerce to resume its natural course, the nation would recover quickly. Further, they favored internal improvements, an issue that had excited Federalists since the early 1790s. The paper declared one Republican legislator’s plan for turnpikes throughout Pennsylvania deserved “the applause of every patriot,” even if funding was “greatly inadequate to the magnitude of the object.”⁵² In addition, the United States needed, as Federalists had advocated since the late 1780s, a strong military prepared to confront threats even during peace. “Let the page of folly... be turned over forever,” they said, and “let us act from the conviction that... POWER is more respected than REASON. Let us possess the one to enforce the other.”⁵³ Overall, the paper sought more energetic government, from seeking a stronger military to greater funding for Republican road projects.

Even with new energy and a bad economy to exploit, Ohio Federalists could not muster a majority in statewide elections and had to find new allies among Republicans to form a new political faction, the final effect of the embargo. Some historians have claimed that Federalists claimed up to one-third

⁵² *Pittsburgh Gazette*, March 1 and 8, 1808.

⁵³ *Pittsburgh Gazette*, August 11, 1807, and March 1 and 8, 1808. For more on Federalist defense policy, see Donald R. Hickey, “Federalist Defense Policy in the Age of Jefferson, 1801-1812,” *Military Affairs* 45, no. 2 (April 1981): 64-67.

of the state's voters, but election data from 1808 suggests they had less. Only about one-quarter of voters supported the Federalist electors for President that year, and Philemon Beecher won Fairfield County (around Lancaster) and Washington County but received only 28.5 percent of the vote against Jeremiah Morrow in the U.S. House election.⁵⁴ With such weakness, they turned to a coincident development in Ohio politics: the collapse of the state's Jeffersonian consensus. The Republicans were splitting over the supposedly chaotic nature of democracy, with one side seeking to strengthen party organization to make election results predictable and the other turning to the court system as a higher authority for citizens and a guardian of public order.⁵⁵

A new faction of Republicans interested in preserving public order from democratic mobs naturally interested Federalists, who joined the pro-court Jeffersonians in a new political faction that was quite effective by 1808. While Beecher and the Presidential electors failed to make headway with the voters of Ohio in the 1808 elections, the pro-court Republicans running for Governor and Senator who enjoyed Federalist backing fared much better. Federalist meetings endorsed conservative Republican gubernatorial candidate Samuel Huntington in meetings at Marietta and Cincinnati led by Rufus Putnam and Arthur St. Clair, Jr.,

⁵⁴ "Ohio 1808 Electoral College," *NewNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.presidentialelectors.1808 (last accessed April 26, 2011); "Ohio 1808 U.S. House of Representatives," *NNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.ushouseofrepresentatives.1808 (last accessed April 26, 2011); Brown, "The Ohio Federalists," 264; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 96. To be exact, the victorious Jeffersonian electors collected between 3,307 and 3,645 votes against the leading Federalist elector (Rufus Putnam) receiving 1,174 votes. In the House election, Morrow defeated Beecher by a tally of 11,852-4,724 with eight stray votes, including a seemingly mistaken vote for "Jonathan Morrow."

⁵⁵ For more on the Jeffersonian Republican schism, see especially Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 95-109.

respectively.⁵⁶ Once the Ohio General Assembly met in December, it elected Huntington's ally and ex-Federalist Return J. Meigs, Jr. to the U.S. Senate by a wide margin. The difference between Federalists and conservative Republicans was not so clear outside the state, either, as the *New York Evening Post* listed Huntington alongside Beecher on Ohio's "Federal ticket," and reported in December that Huntington, "a federalist, is elected Governor."⁵⁷

Federalists and conservative Republicans allied with each other for two primary reasons. First, Federalists heard messages from Huntington and other conservative Republicans emphasizing morality and public order, ideas that naturally appealed to Federalists. In his inaugural address to the Ohio General Assembly, Huntington offered a tolerant message to them, declaring that "diversity in political sentiment is neither pernicious nor useless" while sounding like a Federalist in decrying "the malignant spirit of party, disturbing private friendship and social harmony, and dissolving the ties of moral obligation." Such public references to morality reinforced Federalist ideals of an organic social order, and his annual message to the General Assembly the next year made it much clearer. Sound more like St. Clair than Jefferson, Huntington warned against "unprincipled characters; men of restless, ambitious and mischievous dispositions... who are perpetually fomenting discord among the people."⁵⁸ Public worries about demagoguery were normally the provenance of Federalist politicians, but apparently some Jeffersonians migrated toward their positions.

⁵⁶ Brown, "The Ohio Federalists," 267-268; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 102.

⁵⁷ *New-York Evening Post*, September 12 and December 10, 1808.

⁵⁸ Ohio House Journal, 1808-1809, 43; and Ohio House Journal, 1809-1810, 28.

While talk of order and morality appealed to Federalists, they also shared an affinity for pro-business policies. Huntington spoke vaguely of government backing economic prosperity in his addresses, stating in December 1808 that government needed to aid prosperity “by the wisdom and justice of our laws.”⁵⁹ However, successor Return J. Meigs, Jr. was more specific about placing state power behind commercial development. In his December 1810 inaugural address, he spoke optimistically about negotiations with Indians that might soon produce the right to build new roads that would link Ohioans with the Great Lakes and elsewhere. In 1811, he urged the legislature to pass a bill regulating new manufacturing companies so that “capital might associate... under the sanction of law” as well as for some kind of action action to support the planned Erie Canal. The General Assembly complied on January 15, 1812, becoming the only state outside New York to offer public support for the Erie Canal.⁶⁰ Overall, the alliance between Federalists and conservative, pro-business Jeffersonian Republicans proved powerful, winning statewide elections on programs meant not only to use state power to bring back prosperity in Ohio but to encourage obedience and public order in a fashion that would make Federalists proud.

The newfound alliance between the two groups faltered as the War of 1812 drew nigh, but overall it was a testament to the legacy of Federalist rule in Ohio and a signal of future developments. In the first decade of statehood,

⁵⁹ Ohio House Journal, 1808-1809, 43.

⁶⁰ Ohio House Journal, 1809-1810, 45; Ohio House Journal, 1811-1812, 13; and Ohio Historical Society, *History of the Ohio Canals: Their Construction, Cost, Use and Partial Abandonment* (Columbus, OH: Fred J. Heer, 1905), 9.

Ohioans of both parties clearly benefitted and even came to demand that government be active in developing the region's economy. Federalists supported internal improvements since the 1790s, and many Republicans joined them by the embargo. This new bipartisan vision of government embraced a state able to power economic growth, and it drove an alliance of Federalists and conservative Republicans between the embargo and the War of 1812. That alliance also embraced Federalist ideals of morality and order in a respectable public order, showing that Federalists could encounter a great deal of success even if the Federalist name had become political anathema. The short-lived Federalist-Republican alliance also portended the Whig Party in the trans-Appalachian West that developed by the late 1820s. Overall, Federalist ideas continued to do well in Ohio even if the party faced serious challenges with voters nationwide.

The Ordeal of 1812: Ohio Federalists and the War with Britain

The War of 1812 tested the young United States in many ways. Charged with fighting off the world's most powerful empire a second time as well as Indian resistance throughout the trans-Appalachian West, national leaders also struggled with resistance from political opponents and many citizens who did not understand (or sometimes support) the explanations and strategies for the war. While historians normally speak universally when assessing American experiences in the War of 1812, Ohioans experienced the war very differently from Americans farther east. The war raised immediate questions of security for Ohio, and it ultimately helped to resolve the economic woes brought on by the

embargo. Those differences showed in the way the people of Ohio reacted to it, and the Federalists were no exception. Ohio's Federalists stood apart by often supporting the war, and even those against it pursued moderate tactics in order to remain patriotic Americans. That new innovation – of a vigorous but above all loyal opposition – keyed the political survival of Federalists in Ohio while party members elsewhere destroyed their political futures by playing with treason. In sum, Ohio dissenters preserved themselves and their political visions by simply remaining loyal.

Historians have long told a familiar political history of the War of 1812. After years of supporting a stronger military and preparedness for war, Federalists suddenly switched course as the War of 1812 neared. They united against the war from its beginning to be Madison's greatest obstacle, and their organized opposition was unfortunate at best and treasonous at worst. Every Federalist in Congress voted against the declaration of war, and from there they obstructed with funding requisitions and calls for troops while complaining about the taxes used to pay for the war and the tactics used by Madison's military leadership. For its duration and across most of the nation, Federalists remained monolithic opponents of the war until they graduated to open treason with the Hartford Convention in the final months of the war. That final, desperate grasp at power by a waning party assured its destruction. By war's end, the Federalist Party was never to be seen again, a fitting punishment for its betrayal of the republic when Americans most needed unity from their leaders.⁶¹

⁶¹ Raymond W. Champagne, Jr. and Thomas J. Reuter, "Jonathan Roberts and the 'War Hawk' Congress of 1811-1812," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 104, no. 4

However, Ohio was an outlier from this narrative, as party politics there hardly followed the supposedly universal patterns described by other historians. While enthusiastic about the war, Republicans were not unanimous in their support for the administration and the war, as evidenced by the opposition of Thomas Worthington. Concerned that the nation was not ready for a new war with Britain that would leave Ohio open to Indian attacks, Senator Worthington told Madison personally that he would not support a declaration of war.⁶² Many Federalists in Ohio also broke the expected patterns by lining up behind the war. They leveled off their criticism of the Madison administration once the war began and some even supported it. For example, the newly-established Federalist newspaper at Franklinton (near Columbus) called on all patriots to rally behind the flag and the war effort despite party labels. An even greater sign of Federalist support came from the *Chillicothe Supporter* on July 4, 1812, when it announced the declaration of war. Once accused by a Republican competitor of promoting “*England and tory principles*” while it was “echoing and re-echoing, rebellion and treason,” the *Supporter* threw its weight behind the new war. “However we may differ in political sentiments,” an editorial declared of the news, “it now becomes the duty of every citizen to cling to his country and rise or fall

(October 1980): 447; Donald R. Hickey, “Federalist Party Unity and the War of 1812,” *Journal of American Studies* 12, no. 1 (April 1978): 24-26, 38; Hickey, “Federalist Defense Policy in the Age of Jefferson,” 64; Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 53, 255; and Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War*, 90-91, 111-114. Pointing to Congressional voting records and letters from Federalist leaders along the Atlantic coast, Hickey declared flatly that “the Federalist party presented a united front” against the war for its duration, a choice that led them to carry on the “most vigorous and sustained party opposition to a war the United States has ever experienced.”

⁶² Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War*, 114. For a more detailed discussion of Worthington’s stance on the War of 1812, see Alfred Byron Sears, *Thomas Worthington, Father of Ohio Statehood* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1958), 159-174.

with it.”⁶³ Far from a binary partisan issue, the War of 1812 presented Ohioans an intellectual and political quandary not easily resolved or categorized.

The war played differently in Ohio for three primary reasons. First, it directly affected the lives and lands of Ohioans who lived near the battles between American forces and Tecumseh’s confederacy allied with Britain. Even territory in Ohio was at stake, as western portions of the state were at risk if Britain was able to create the Indian buffer state they had pursued between the U.S. and British Canada since 1783. However, the fighting affected Ohioans more directly. Ohio lay very near the Indian war that accompanied the War of 1812, and a British invasion through Detroit naturally threatened the state. In northwest Ohio, which Indians ceded only in 1805, many settlers abandoned their homesteads in fear of their lives during the first year of the war.⁶⁴ Overall, the War of 1812 meant direct threats to Ohioans from the outset, and those threats altered how they reacted to the war regardless of party labels.

The other two reasons related to economic concerns. The frustration Ohio citizens felt toward British actions formed the second reason that they responded differently to the war. Ohio’s Federalists deplored the embargo, but Britain did itself no favors in the *Chesapeake* incident of 1807, when the British *Leopold* attacked an American frigate. Upon hearing the news, Federalist Jacob Burnet

⁶³ *Chillicothe Supporter* (Ohio), July 4, 1812; *Cincinnati Whig*, May 4, 1809; Brown, “The Ohio Federalists,” 277; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 171-173.

⁶⁴ R. Douglas Hurt, “The Firelands: Land Speculation and the War of 1812,” in David Curtis Skaggs, and Larry L. Nelson, eds., *The Sixty Years’ War for the Great Lakes, 1754-1814* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 305, 311-313; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 171. These circumstances led Ratcliffe to declare the war a “disturbing experience for Ohioans.”

of Cincinnati helped to author the city's anti-British resolutions. By 1812, many Ohioans of both parties had seen enough from Britain. An anti-British resolution passed by the state legislature on January 1, 1812, attests to their concerns, as Republicans and Federalists alike backed the declaration that "The conduct of Great Britain towards this country, is a gross departure from the known and established law of nations." In turn, they promised President Madison to "rally round the standard of freedom" and "not shrink from the dangers of war."⁶⁵

Finally, Ohioans responded to the war differently because it presented them unique economic opportunities. Despite the restrictions on British trade, Westerners could still export to Spanish colonies in Florida and the Caribbean, and flour exports to those colonies grew from 105,000 barrels in 1809 to 939,000 barrels in 1812. That flour sold at high prices abroad, but it also sold well at home. Wheat prices doubled and whiskey prices tripled in Ohio during the war due to both rising exports and growing demand for those products from the U.S. Army in the area. The war also offered internal improvements that stimulated economic activity. The military built a series of roads around the state that eased the flow of commerce and let more Ohioans access the reviving markets for Western produce.⁶⁶ While references to those economic opportunities were very rare, they doubtlessly had subtle effects on the ways Ohio residents reasoned through their positions on the War of 1812.

⁶⁵ *Niles' Weekly Register* (Baltimore), January 18, 1812; Brown, "Frontier Politics," 397; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 172. The *Register* was misdated 1811 on its front page.

⁶⁶ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 117; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 344; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 203.

All of these reasons did not mean everyone united behind the war, as there remained a vocal Federalist opposition. In eastern Ohio, Federalists were more concentrated and emboldened by their numbers to stand against the war, and throughout the state war opponents found outlets for their positions. For example, Cincinnati Federalists found a new forum for their protests when a Republican newspaper, the *Western Spy*, turned politically neutral and began to print Federalist and antiwar items. Charles Hammond's *Ohio Federalist*, begun in 1813 at St. Clairsville on the eastern edge of the state, also was created as the Western voice against the war and the Madison administration. Until its closure in 1818, the *Ohio Federalist* offered critiques of the war as well as of Republican politics and policies while promoting Federalist views and political candidates.⁶⁷

With some of them opposing the war, Federalists in Ohio were still open to Republican attacks on their loyalty, but Ohio Federalists set themselves apart through their tactics. Unlike New England Federalists who obstructed the war effort by all possible legal means, Ohio's party members proudly took up for the war effort even if some of them did not believe in it. Despite being raised in a Federalist household with a father against the war, Thomas Ewing became a mounted volunteer with a handful of other Ohio University students, ultimately becoming the cornet player for his company. When provisions needed to be delivered across the state from Urbana, Federalist and Republican alike turned out with "patriotic spirit" in which "the federalist, the republican, the farmer, the

⁶⁷ Brown, "The Ohio Federalists," 275; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 179; and Barbara Jo Triplett, "A Biography of Charles Hammond" (M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1964), 32.

mechanic, the lawyer, and the merchant indiscriminately determined to shoulder muskets.” This commitment to duty, the *Chillicothe Supporter* first noted, was “that *true* spirit of patriotism, which, when required, steps forth with alacrity, to defend her country’s rights.”⁶⁸ Federalists stated clearly that their feelings on the war were of no importance. Even if they disagreed with the war, their loyalty and patriotism would never falter.

Even with such assurances and differences from their counterparts to the east, Federalist candidates largely failed in their endeavors. Clinton’s promises of a “vigorous” style of government drew the support of the *Chillicothe Supporter* and other Federalists who saw in Clinton a greater chance for victory, but Ohio supporters could not deliver more than 30 percent of the vote or a single electoral vote for him in a surprisingly close election. The gubernatorial election went poorly, too. Clintonian candidate Thomas Scott drew only 38 percent of the vote against the reelection efforts of ex-Federalist Return J. Meigs, Jr., who had backed the war wholeheartedly.⁶⁹ The perpetual unpopularity of Federalists was

⁶⁸ *Greensburg and Indiana Register* (Indiana, PA), August 6, 1812; and Martzloff, “The Autobiography of Thomas Ewing,” 157-158.

⁶⁹ “Ohio 1812 Electoral College,” *NewNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.presidentialelector.1812 (last accessed May 2, 2011); “Ohio 1812 Governor,” *A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns, 1787-1825*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1812 (last accessed May 2, 2011); Brown, “The Ohio Federalists,” 277; Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 101; and Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War*, 83. Hickey called the election surprisingly close and noted that Madison’s victory hinged on Pennsylvania, the state that linked the Clinton-supporting North to the West, which preferred Madison. In Ohio, though, the winning Madison electors from the Tammany faction won 50,976 votes, with support for each of their eight electors ranging from 5,738 to 7,420 votes. Meanwhile, the Clintonian electors received the second-most votes in the slate of electors but only drew 23,948, with the most popular elector getting slightly more than half of the least popular Madison elector with 3,301 votes. The gubernatorial election saw Meigs prevail by a tally of 11,859-7,903. Another 518 votes went to other candidates, mostly to Republican leaders Duncan MacArthur and Thomas Worthington.

partly to blame, but the politics of warfare also worked against them. The war grabbed most of the public interest and attention in summer and fall 1812, when voters normally would have followed political instead of military campaigns. Federalist editor James B. Gardiner of the Franklinton *Freeman's Chronicle* attested that politics that year were not “near[ly] as animated... had not the events of the war given the electioneering gentry something else to do.” Incumbents also won by greater majorities during the war, and in a solidly Republican state that meant Federalist hopes for success grew even dimmer.⁷⁰

Federalists faced a clear challenge in assuring a suspicious public of their loyalty while finding effective new ways to spread their partisan message, and perhaps the finest innovator of that approach was Charles Hammond and his *Ohio Federalist*, begun in 1813. He was no stranger to print, having begun his writing career as “The Plough Boy” for a western Pennsylvania newspaper while still a teenager and catching attention throughout Ohio for letters written in the Republican *Scioto Gazette* of Chillicothe in defense of Gov. St. Clair in 1800. He continued by writing letters in western Virginia as “Richard Rummager” and in Chillicothe’s *Supporter* as “Calpurnius.” He ruffled feathers in Ohio because of attacks on his Republican opponents in 1800 and again in 1811, prompting sharp replies on both occasions but in the latter from ex-Gov. Edward Tiffin. As a

⁷⁰ *Freeman's Chronicle* (Franklinton, OH), September 5, 1812, quoted in Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 171.

result, the Franklinton *Freeman's Chronicle* was the only Ohio newspaper to welcome Hammond's entry into the publishing fray.⁷¹

Hammond provoked such strong reactions because he possessed a sharp mind and a sharper wit capable of entertaining and educating readers on his Federalist ideology, which he promoted well during the War of 1812. In fact, the war was central to his writing as well as his arguments, and Hammond used the events to press his Federalist principles of mercantile development and anti-Jacobinism. Further, he had to defend his patriotism against partisan attacks, casting his opposition to the war in terms of the economy and the French Revolution. In doing so, Hammond was able to take positions on the war that showed him to be both patriotic and unique among antiwar Federalists. Thus, Hammond keyed his own political survival beyond the war.

The politics in the *Ohio Federalist* involved a close relationship between patriotism, partisanship, and republican virtue that represented a blueprint for loyal opposition in American warfare. He stood for American independence from foreign influence when he consistently attacked Republican war supporters as servants of French intrigue. In turn, true independence required Americans to abandon the war and the French intrigue that went with it. Hammond also cast his opposition to the War of 1812 in different terms, blaming the war on the embargo so that he opposed other issues rather than the war itself or the

⁷¹ Brown, "Frontier Politics," 406; and Francis Phelps Weisenburger, "A Life of Charles Hammond: The First Great Journalist of the Old Northwest," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (October 1934): 344-346. For Hammond's articles defending St. Clair that were also his political debut in Ohio, see *Scioto Gazette* (Chillicothe, OH), November 20 and 27, 1800. Weisenburger quotes the *Freeman's Chronicle* welcoming Hammond but with a little worry. "Mr. Hammond... possesses talents of the first grade," said editor James B. Gardiner, but he hoped also that Hammond "will not misapply them."

republic conducting it. Meanwhile, he attacked Republicans for their self-interest, just as Arthur St. Clair had. Hammond often claimed his opponents used the war to either seek or maintain their offices while expanding their influence to corrupt republican institutions that Federalists had carefully constructed. It was a fairly simple message that had overtones of conspiracy theory, but all three aspects let him critique his opponents effectively and advance the Federalist cause.

Hammond expressed his antiwar position often by casting it in terms of economic policy rather than war and national loyalty. For example, in April 1814 he wrote that embargoes against Britain had proved “loathsome and most foolish,” and news suggesting the “anti-commercial plans” of the embargo were soon to be lifted led him to declare, “we shall rejoice that this wretched system will soon be in its grave.” In August, he declared the same in simpler terms. “The commerce of the country was destroyed, & its agriculture withered, by an Embargo, and by non importation laws,” and when they did not alter the behavior of European powers war became necessary.⁷² Therefore, he believed, ending the embargo would end the cause for war. By attacking the embargo that upset Federalists and many Ohioans, Hammond offered an argument with broad appeal that also allowed him to be patriotic. After all, he opposed the war because it obstructed economic prosperity; he was not a traitor but merely a man of different priorities from the Republicans.⁷³

⁷² *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), April 13 and August 24, 1814.

⁷³ James Murray Murdoch, “Charles Hammond: Egalitarian-Whig: An Analysis of the Political Philosophy of a Federalist-Whig Editor and Its Implications Concerning the Traditional Concept of Jacksonian Democracy” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1971), 75. According to Murdoch, Hammond took a bold position in stating that true patriots like himself stood against against the embargo and the war. As Hammond wrote, Americans who truly loved

Hammond also proclaimed his loyalty by making the French Revolution and Napoleon effective proxies for his complaints, thereby promoting opposition to the war as the true path for maintaining American independence. Relying on an old Federalist trope, Hammond accused his Republican foes of being servants to France and used the claims to decry the war effort. The embargo again proved handy, a measure that he paired with Napoleon's Continental System as "more than twin sisters" that fell together in 1814. He took a much clearer tact in June 1814, declaring flatly that "America and England should be at peace" and would be, if only the Jeffersonians had not been "full of the light of French politics" that encouraged anti-British commercial measures. In essence, Hammond claimed consistently, the nation's honor and independence were sacrificed to French prerogatives.⁷⁴ Speaking against the war meant taking on French domination over American politics, so Hammond could cast himself in an honorable and patriotic light.

That suspicion also led Hammond to tap into a common Federalist worry that immigrants – especially foreign-born newspaper editors – held undue influence in the republic. Immigrant editors had been instrumental in Republican victories in 1800 and afterward, and Hammond saw the same problems afoot in Ohio and the rest of the nation during the war.⁷⁵ In the fall of 1813, he ran a

their nation would want the ruin and destruction of war to give way to a prosperous future at the first moment possible.

⁷⁴ *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), April 13 and June 15, 1814; and Murdoch, "Charles Hammond," 58.

⁷⁵ For more immigrant newspaper editors in the 1790s and the Revolution of 1800, see Michael Durey, "Thomas Paine's Apostles: Radical Emigrés and the Triumph of Jeffersonian Republicanism," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser., vol. 44, no. 4 (October 1987): 662-688.

letter that alleged public opinion for war “had been kindled by the newspapers,” and the next spring he accused an opponent of being “one of your thorough bred European jacobins.” He worried Republicans prized the opinions of immigrant editors too highly, too. When an immigrant editor criticized President Madison in another paper, he carped that similar complaints from him “would have amounted at least to moral treason” but from the immigrant editor was “evidence of patriotism and virtue!!” The antipathy toward Republicans and their foreign-born editors led him into a newspaper war during most of 1815 with Irish-born James Wilson working in nearby Steubenville. Hammond barely hid his contempt in the *Ohio Federalist*, calling Wilson a “fool” and “two legged animal without feathers” while saying privately that Wilson was of too low character to treat kindly.⁷⁶

Hammond also believed his opponents lacked the necessary disinterest and selflessness to serve the republic well. Even before founding it, Hammond wrote about his hopes of exposing demagogues in his newspaper. Once he opened it, he derided Republicans often by calling them “designing and unprincipled men” and other names, and he claimed the American people had “suffer[ed] themselves to be misled” by the “wild misrule of their angry passions.” Overall, he offered in a fit of righteous indignation, the nation was “no more stable than the will of mobs and demagouges,” and he and other Federalists would stand against Republican misrule. The assumption behind Hammond’s sense of republican virtue was the same one underlying the strong Federalist

⁷⁶ *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), September 15, 1813 and May 18, 1814; and Murdoch, “Charles Hammond,” 30-33.

sense of public order: the republic best functioned under strong precepts and principled leadership. Virtuous men did not pursue fickle popularity but rather led by force of right. That line of thinking, though politically self-destructive, reassured Federalists who were losing elections with increasing frequency after 1800. After all, Federalists did not need to reconsider their philosophy, but they needed to educate the public about republican truths and Republican demagogues. Hammond's newspaper would help to provide that education.⁷⁷

To offer that education and spread his message widely, Hammond wrapped his criticisms in the flag. Perhaps the clearest example came when he proposed four "American Principles" in July 1814 that buttressed his opposition to the war. First, he argued that the United States should, in obedience to George Washington's Farewell Address, avoid intimate connections with foreign powers. Madison and other Republicans were tied too closely with France, and war had resulted. Second, he argued that Americans should avoid foreign crises like the Napoleonic Wars that had sucked the United States into war against Britain. Third, they should make war only when forced to do so, believing the War of 1812 was anything but a last resort. Finally, in agreement with the common Republican cry of "free trade and sailors' rights," Hammond asserted that American should be free to trade around the globe. However, he believed that aim precluded federal interference via embargoes and other trade restrictions.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), September 29, 1813 and May 18 and August 24, 1814; Brown, "Frontier Politics," 407; Murdoch, "Charles Hammond," 16, 46; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 191-194.

⁷⁸ *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), July 27, 1814; and Murdoch, "Charles Hammond," 24-26.

In those statements, Hammond was offering an innovative view of American freedom while standing against the war. In his formulation, true Americans questioned the War of 1812 and the motives behind it, and thus he was carrying on a loyal opposition that let him remain patriotic and to spread an alternative message while opposing the war.

The success Hammond realized in his new political career suggested that his message resonated with nearby voters. During his first autumn editing the *Ohio Federalist* in 1813, he won a seat in the Ohio Senate. His newspaper allowed him to address voters directly, as he did in the September 29 issue, and it may have made the difference in his victory by just twenty-nine votes. While in the Senate, Hammond tried to put his principles into action. He offered nonpartisan support for new roads, banks, schools, and other projects in order to encourage economic development and serve the public good to his best capacities. Further, he helped to make other candidates more popular; even though Federalist candidates for Congress did not win office in Hammond's district, the margin of victory for Republicans dipped by nearly 75 percent.⁷⁹

However, Hammond struggled with accusations of disloyalty against himself and other Federalists during his term in the Senate. His attacks on the administration and war proponents garnered him such scorn that he had to apologize publicly for some of the remarks and poetry he wrote for the *Ohio*

⁷⁹ "Ohio 1813 State Senate, Belmont County," *NWV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.statesenator.belmont.1813 (last accessed May 7, 2011); Brown, "Frontier Politics," 407; and Triplett, "A Biography of Charles Hammond," 37-39. Triplett claimed a 67-vote margin for Hammond, but the AAS tabulations by Philip Lampi revealed a closer election of 738 votes for Hammond against 709 for opponent Joseph Sharp. According to Brown, the margin of Republican victory in the U.S. House elections in the district shrank from 200 to 53 between 1812 and 1814.

Federalist. Perhaps the greatest challenge to Hammond's loyal opposition came from outside events, as the Hartford Convention of late 1814 involved New England Federalists who talked of secession to solve their problems with Madison, the war, and the overall direction of American politics. This act of obvious political suicide forced Hammond to distance himself from his fellow party members. To do so, he split Federalists during the war into two broad types, the first being the "small but virulent class" of Hartford Convention attendees who obstructed the war by every possible means and the other being "the most numerous and respectable... on the side of their country." Overall, Hammond maintained his right to a loyal opposition to the war to the very end, and that distinction served him well in his political career after 1815.⁸⁰

However, Hammond and other antiwar Federalists did not have to maintain their opposition to the war for long after the Hartford Convention. News of the Treaty of Ghent reached America by February 1815, and on March 2 the *Ohio Federalist* hailed the "propitious event" and conveyed his deepest "gratitude to the Almighty Sovereign of the Universe." Confirming his previous arguments, he reported that upon the news of the peace, markets in New York "experienced a sudden, and to many a shocking change." In the ensuing weeks, he described a "burst of joy" that proved "the real wishes of the people" who he said were almost unanimously celebrating the war's end. Similarly, Ephraim Cutler celebrated the news by hosting a celebration at his home. One resident of the town recalled, "The house was brilliantly illuminated, the word PEACE shining

⁸⁰ *Cincinnati National Republican*, February 13, 1827, quoted in Murdoch, "Charles Hammond," 55; and Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 200.

from the upper windows, and the judge came out upon the door-steps and made us a capital speech, to which we responded with hearty cheers and patriotic songs, and the discharge of our guns” before a celebratory feast.⁸¹

Overall, Federalists hoped the end of the war would bring normalcy. They hoped for a return to principled republicanism but more importantly a return to business as usual. A poem in the *Ohio Federalist* expressed that desire well: “Swelling Commerce opens all her ports.... To grateful industry converting – makes / The country flourish and the city smile.”⁸² With the removal of the threats of embargo and war, Federalists looked forward to a radiant future for the Northwest in which Westerners and their government would embrace mercantile growth once again. For proponents of the war like Jacob Burnet, their political futures remained bright and they were successful for decades afterward. Even opponents like Ephraim Cutler and Charles Hammond succeeded with voters and newspaper readers, with their own careers picking up after 1815. In sum, the War of 1812 was an ordeal to which Ohio Federalists were more than equal. The war may have killed Federalism in other places, but in Ohio it presented an opportunity for Federalists to shine.

The years from 1803 to 1815 severely tested the might and mettle of the Federalist Party in Ohio. Never again did they win elections outright and sweep into power as the Republicans had done in 1803, but they found other ways to

⁸¹ *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), March 2, 9, and 30, 1815; and Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler*, 107.

⁸² *Ohio Federalist* (St. Clairsville, OH), March 23, 1815.

affect the politics and society of their new state. In the first years of statehood, many of them turned to private pursuits or smaller-scale civic projects to continue spreading their ideology to Western settlers, while a few like Philemon Beecher looked to build a new coalition with Republicans that would earn Federalists legislative victories even if they could not win at the polls. The embargoes that ran from 1807 through the War of 1812 hastened the formation of that coalition, as Federalists found willing allies among conservative Republicans in building up a new “fiscal-mercantile state” that would encourage economic growth when the federal government would not do so. In the process, Ohio politicians on both sides of the aisle embraced Federalist policies and programs from enthusiastic support for internal improvements to maintaining an inspection system for state exports, one idea that proved mercantilism was still alive in early nineteenth-century Ohio. Overall, Federalists were alive and well, too, with candidates who competed well and ideas that remained central to state politics.

Even the War of 1812 did not destroy Federalists in Ohio, unlike the fate of their counterparts farther east. In fact, Ohio’s Federalists largely survived and even thrived in wartime with responses to the war that were unique among Federalists partly because of peculiar circumstances, but even war opponents found innovative ways to express their frustrations with the war and with the Madison administration overall. With men like Charles Hammond leading the way, Federalists in Ohio complied with wartime requests and created a new response – as a committed and steadfast but above all loyal opposition – that allowed them to deflect effectively any charges that they were traitors or Tories.

While Republicans were refighting the American Revolution in their own minds during the War of 1812, Hammond and other Ohio Federalists were waging a war for the future by expressing an alternative vision for the republic that offered real promise moving into and beyond 1815. They were never a majority party on their own, but the War of 1812 allowed Federalists in Ohio a real political future.

The return of peace also allowed them to look back to the alliances that they developed during the embargo, and in the next twenty-five years they solidified that alliance to become Western Whigs. They did so because they found strength in their unions, both with conservative Republicans and with the rest of the nation, before 1815. Going forward, Federalists continued to focus on energetic government, tying government to mercantile interests, and a clear sense of order in the republic let Federalists stay true to their principles while attracting new adherents from their old Jeffersonian foes. Perhaps most importantly, Federalist politicians and principles attracted a new generation of politicians in the Northwest. In leaning on the strength of the Union and the ideals of their party, Ohio Federalists not only survived the onslaught of Jeffersonian dominance but found ways to press forward with their message.

CHAPTER FIVE

Frontier Federalists, Western Whigs, and Good Feelings in the Northwest

On July 4, 1825, the forty-ninth anniversary of American independence, a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Ohio Canal drew five thousand – perhaps even more – to the banks of the Licking River a few miles outside of Newark, Ohio. The throng included Ohio’s secretary of state, the state’s entire Congressional delegation, and many members of the state legislature. The distinguished crowd was led by Gov. Jeremiah Morrow and Gov. Dewitt Clinton of New York, the hero of the Erie Canal and “the father of internal improvements.”¹ Crowds jammed traffic on all roads leading into Newark, and travelers filled boarding houses and even private homes for miles around the celebration site. At nine in the morning they poured into the streets of Newark to

¹ *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), July 23, 1825; *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), July 18, 1825; and Caleb Atwater, *A History of the State of Ohio, Natural and Civil*, second ed. (Cincinnati: Glezen and Shepard, 1838), 266. Atwater wrote of the July 4 crowd, “The whole number amounted to many thousands,” while accounts in the *Centinel* estimated “a cavalcade of citizens” numbering at least 5,000, and the *National Intelligencer* stated 8,000 were present.

greet Morrow and Clinton with salutes and, as one newspaper account described, the “congratulations of the assembled multitude.”²

After meeting local dignitaries, Clinton and Morrow proceeded outside of town and arrived at the celebration at about 11:30 a.m. When they appeared, early historian of Ohio Caleb Atwater noted that “thousands rent the air with their loud huzzas of welcome,” followed by celebratory cannonades. Soon after, the governors ascended the makeshift stage, and Clinton offered the keynote address. He told the crowd that he found “a peculiar fitness” in choosing to open the canal on July 4, a date that would soon celebrate not only American freedom but also “the prosperity of the American people, and still further exalt our national character.” He saw it as a day that the nation would be truly united – “the East and the West, the North and the south, by identity of interest, [and] by frequency of communication.” The new canal would be, Clinton said, “a channel of commerce” and “stimulus to manufactures” but more importantly, it would protect Westerners from the vices of idleness. “It will be a guardian of morality,” he assured them, “by rousing the human mind.”³

To the crowd, Clinton’s words sounded perfect for the occasion, drawing such loud cheers that he had difficulties making himself heard at times. After he finished speaking, toasts were read praising Clinton as a man “guided by the unerring light of Science” and the canal as the “great artery of America, which will

² *National Gazette* (Philadelphia), July 12, 1825; and *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), July 18, 1825.

³ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 266; and DeWitt Clinton, address on July 4, 1825, in Henry A. Hawken, ed., *Trumpets of Glory: Fourth of July Orations, 1786-1861* (Granby, CT: Salmon Brook Historical Society, 1976), 119-120.

carry abundance to all the extremities of the Union.” Toward the end of the ceremony, Morrow and Clinton dug the first shovelfuls of earth together to deafening cheers and the joyous firing of hundreds of guns and cannons. At this point, the occasion overcame the former New York Governor and briefly brought tears to his eyes.⁴

According to numerous sources in July 1825, that afternoon in Newark commenced a new era. Clinton remarked two days later in Columbus that the Ohio Canal was “a cause in which every citizen & every state in our country, is deeply interested” and praised its “great centripetal power.” It would soon be “an adamant chain that will bind the Union together in the most intimate connection of interest and communication.” The same day, the *National Aegis* of Worcester, Massachusetts sounded similar approval for the Ohio Canal and what it represented. As the editorial stated in grand terms, “When we talk of the political revolution which derived its origin from that day, let us be able to refer to the same day all the other great revolutions of our country.”⁵

That great revolution was the Market Revolution, and its most energetic apostles were soon to align in the Whig Party of Morrow and Clinton. The two governors standing side by side that day in Newark represented the political marriage that produced the Whig Party in the Old Northwest. Clinton, the Federalist nominee for President in 1812, represented the old guard whose

⁴ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 267-268; and *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), July 18, 1825. As Atwater wrote, “spontaneously... governor Clinton wept.”

⁵ *National Aegis* (Worcester, MA), July 6, 1825; *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), July 20, 1825; and *Norwich (CT) Courier*, July 27, 1825.

members continued their political careers well into the 1830s under the new Whig banner. Most prominent in Ohio, those Federalists remained the proponents of public education, orderly westward expansion, and energetic government in the economic development of the Northwest. The work of those old Federalists culminated in the Ohio Canal, and ultimately their ideals and their actions formed the backbone of energetic policies prescribed by Western Whigs.

Standing next to Clinton, Jeremiah Morrow represented at Newark the former Jeffersonians whose interest in state aid to commerce and agriculture drew them to the Whig Party in the Old Northwest. By supporting more internal improvement projects and enlarged public education systems, Morrow and many other Republicans of the Northwest found the Whigs appealing. Across the region, former Jeffersonians aligned behind their Western champions Henry Clay and William Henry Harrison with programs of schools and canals that they hoped would transform their adopted Western homes into great centers of commerce. These old Jeffersonians formed the largest component of the Western Whigs during the 1820s and 1830s, as men like Morrow in Ohio, Jonathan Jennings and William Hendricks in Indiana, and Joseph Duncan in Illinois all won election to statewide office as Whigs promoting energetic government.

In this new combination, frontier Federalists bequeathed a twin legacy in the young republic. On one side, they were an integral component of the new Whig Party of the West, a party that used programmatic means to propel their new party – and the nation at large – into a new era of industry and capitalism. On the other, they established an administrative state that Whigs sought to

expand. Western Whig programs of tariffs, centralized banking, and internal improvements reflected how deeply Federalist institutional creations had altered relationships between citizens and their government in the Ohio River valley. Western citizens had come to expect government to address their concerns quickly, if not anticipate problems entirely. However, their vision for the nation did not involve laissez-faire capitalism; their plans for protectionism and conscious state action reflected Alexander Hamilton more than Adam Smith. As the Federalists and Whigs continued to achieve policy successes after 1815, they continued to entrench Federalist principles in the American republic, economy, and society.

The Ohio Federalists and the Continued Fight for the Frontier, 1815-1824

By the accounts of numerous historians, the Federalist Party was dead in Ohio by 1815 and its members were left inert during the new Era of Good Feelings.⁶ However, Ohio's Federalists did not slink away quietly after the War of 1812. The party no longer organized tickets, but its old members succeeded after 1815 anyway. Philemon Beecher served multiple terms in the U.S. House from 1817 to 1829, and Jacob Burnet of Cincinnati was a U.S. Senator from 1828 to 1831. The state legislature chose Burnet as Senator in 1828 after hearing the third annual message of Allen Trimble, another Federalist who served in the

⁶ For claims that Ohio Federalists were hopeless in their endeavors after 1815, see Brown, "Frontier Politics," 411; Buley, *The Old Northwest*, II: 8; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 80, 129; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 206-207; and Donald J. Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division: The Birth of the Second Party System in Ohio, 1818-1828* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000), 19.

State Senate starting in 1817 and twice as governor, first in 1822 and again between 1826 and 1830. Federalists also did well in eastern Ohio and the old Ohio Company purchase, with local leading Federalists Charles Hammond, Ephraim Cutler, and William Rufus Putnam all winning seats in the legislature during the late 1810s and 1820s.

These Federalists succeeded in Ohio by staying true to their principles in the years after the War of 1812. From a postwar boom through the Panic of 1819, their advocacy of internal improvements and a public education system matched Federalist causes in place since the 1780s, and their aims were similar as well. In supporting more energetic government that would encourage social and economic development in the Northwest, they hoped to steer citizens away from isolation and self-interest and toward community. Their efforts placed the Ohio Federalists in the midst of an evolution toward a new Western ideology that would soon be broadcast across the nation under the Whig banner.

This political evolution of Ohio's Federalists occurred in a state that saw explosive population growth after the War of 1812. Its population doubled between 1810 and 1820 to nearly 600,000, and virtually all of that growth came after 1815. Cincinnati grew even more quickly, from roughly 4,000 during the War of 1812 becoming more than 10,000 by 1819. Federal treaty negotiators enabled that growth by clearing all Indian title to Ohio by 1818, and federal land offices encouraged white settlement in central and northern Ohio for the first time. The Canton land office shows that expansion, selling more land in 1813-1814 than it sold in all previous years. Meanwhile, overall land office sales in

Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois spiked by 150 percent between 1814 and 1819. Other federal government institutions kept pace with the population growth in Ohio, too. Between 1818 and 1820, for example, the post office expanded from 98 to 301 local offices in the state.⁷ Much like after the Northwest Indian War, Ohio grew by leaps and bounds after Indian threats were neutralized, and the early American state was at the fore.

That influx of men and money underlay a postwar economic boom in the Northwest. New settlers brought money to spend on new homes, tools, implements, and various other needs that longer-tenured Ohioans were happy to provide for the right price. The resumption of regular business after the war and embargoes also allowed Ohio farmers to raise their incomes and, by extension, brighten economic prospects across the state. The new prosperity propelled the Market Revolution along in Ohio, and citizens seemed to be embracing it with gusto. Perhaps nowhere was that fact more salient than in the rising industrial center of Cincinnati, which saw growth in wool, milling, and brewing industries. Pork production dwarfed the other industries after the war, too, with so many packing houses cropping up that outsiders dubbed the city Porkopolis.⁸

Government aided that prosperity, too, especially with the Second Bank of the United States. Chartered in 1816, it offered credit upon which the capital-starved West could open new businesses and develop closer ties to outside

⁷ Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 125; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 112; Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 27-28, 32; and Treat, *The National Land System*, 407-408. By Buley's figures, land sales north of the Ohio rose from 823,264 acres in 1814 to 2,064,177 acres in 1819.

⁸ Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 532-533; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 113; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 348; and Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 28.

markets. The Bank also represented stability against the depreciated currency of state banks; after all, Jacob Burnet recalled of state banks, “no person felt entirely safe, in receiving their paper.” Thus, he continued, Ohio businessmen “united in opinion in favor of a National Bank, as the only agent that could restrain... unreasonable and injurious issues” of state bank notes.⁹ Residents of many Ohio towns showed their excitement for the new Bank of the United States by applying for local branches, though only Cincinnati and Chillicothe were ultimately chosen for branches in 1817. Further, Burnet the old Federalist was named Cincinnati’s branch director, making him one of ten Federalist branch directors across the United States.¹⁰ Bank policies also fed business growth and revived speculation in the late 1810s, with Philadelphia instructing Burnet to offer generous loans and discounts on prompt repayments.¹¹

However, that generous credit was overstretched and brought a financial panic by late 1818. Distressed specie supplies led the Bank of the United States to contract the supply of their notes, but calling in loans in Ohio and elsewhere ruined clients and closed businesses in a steep economic downturn.¹² Ohioans noticed it quickly, as one prominent Cincinnati complained by November 1818

⁹ Burnet, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-western Territory*, 406-407.

¹⁰ Edward S. Kaplan, *The Bank of the United States and the American Economy* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 57.

¹¹ Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 123; and Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 33.

¹² For more on the genesis of the Panic of 1819, see Daniel S. Dupre, “The Panic of 1819 and the Political Economy of Sectionalism,” in Cathy Matson, ed., *The Economy of Early America: Historical Perspectives and New Directions* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 270-272; Kaplan, *The Bank of the United States and the American Economy*, 67-71; and Murray N. Rothbard, *The Panic of 1819: Reactions and Policies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 1-21.

that citizens were “almost in a state of mutiny and insurrection in consequence of the Banks shutting up their vaults.” Sluggish business pervaded throughout the Western economy: commodity prices plummeted, the part-time labor market – which some yeoman farmers had joined – dried up, and land sales effectively halted. As Caleb Atwater explained, during the Panic of 1819 in Ohio, “The farmer was discouraged from raising much more, than what he really needed for his own immediate use; the trader feared to take bank paper, that might be of no value, before he could use it; and his old customers could no longer purchase any goods except mere necessaries.”¹³ Only a handful of years removed from Jefferson’s embargo, a bad economy waylaid the people of Ohio once again.

While they staggered through the resultant economic depression into the 1820s, Ohioans responded in two primary ways that echoed past differences and presaged the political future in the Northwest. The first reaction was populist and somewhat anti-statist in nature, with citizens and political leaders lashing out at the Bank of the United States. In their criticisms, they described a state reaching beyond its properly constituted powers, recalling Jeffersonian attacks on the First Bank of the United States and other Federalist policies. Simultaneously, they lambasted opponents as elites who unduly controlled American politics, a tactic that clearly paralleled Jacksonianism and the Bank War. On the other side, Federalists, old pro-business Republicans, and a new class of entrepreneurs blamed the panic on government doing too little to aid commerce. To them, Ohio

¹³ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 246; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 224; and John C. Short to William Short, November 11, 1818, quoted in Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 33.

and the rest of America needed to embrace the Market Revolution even more tightly if they wanted prosperity. This coalition renewed arguments for internal improvements and a better public education system. They hoped a stronger market economy and a more educated citizenry would ultimately mean an orderly public, a central concern of Federalists and conservative Jeffersonians during their embargo-era alliance. In turn, those concerns over economic growth and public order would continue into the new Whig Party.¹⁴

In the wake of the Panic of 1819, the push for stronger state action began under Gov. Ethan Allen Brown, who studied law under Alexander Hamilton before coming to Ohio. Though he later became a Jacksonian Democrat, the plan Brown offered in his inaugural address of December 1819 reflected the tutelage of Hamilton. In Brown's view, "Manufactories, in the Western States" were the key to a prosperous Ohio in the future. Further, as did Hamilton, Rufus Putnam, and other Federalists who presided over westward expansion, Brown argued that better transportation made for better prospects. By removing "the cost and difficulty of transporting" by way of "forming Canals, and opening the natural channels of internal navigation," Brown noted that products of Ohio would move about more cheaply and receive better prices.¹⁵ The next month, the state legislature showed that it shared the Governor's commitment to making panic into opportunity, offering a resolution supporting "the practicability of connecting

¹⁴ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 130; Bogart, *Internal Improvements and the State Debt in Ohio*, 14; Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 225-226; and Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 35-36.

¹⁵ Ohio House Journal, 1819-1820, 11-12.

the Ohio river and Lake Erie by a canal” and asking the governor to provide additional information on building it.¹⁶ Clearly, the active response to the Panic of 1819 had gained traction quickly in Ohio.

In addition, Ohioans pursued two other programs that they believed would make their state more competitive in the burgeoning national marketplace, and the proto-Whig alliance of old Federalists and pro-business Jeffersonian Republicans placed itself squarely behind both efforts. First, they sought better roads through government aid on multiple levels. As historian Douglas Hurt has noted, poor roads impeded economic growth before 1819, and afterward the Ohio legislature offered liberal charters to private companies who promised new turnpikes or improvements to existing roads. Meanwhile, Rep. Duncan McArthur, a political wild card before the War of 1812, used his single term in Congress from 1823 to 1825 to convince Congress to extend the National Road west of the Ohio River in order to “increase the revenue of the government.” Perhaps more importantly, he sought the National Road extension in order to “increase the manufactures of the country” through government action.¹⁷

In the private sector, Ohioans and other inhabitants of the Old Northwest were smitten by the steamboat and its promise of conquering space, perhaps their greatest economic enemy of the day. The steamboat, Caleb Atwater noted, “roused into activity, the sleeping energies of the Western people” and was “an

¹⁶ Ohio House Journal, 1819-1820, 201.

¹⁷ Atwater, *A History of the State of Ohio*, 245; Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 373-374; and Duncan McArthur to “Citizens of the Counties of Ross, Pickaway, Fayette and Hocking,” Duncan McArthur Papers (VFM 3018), Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio. For more on McArthur’s early career, see C.H. Cramer, “Duncan McArthur: First Phase, 1772-1812,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 45 (1936): 27-33.

inestimable blessing” that turned voyages of months into just days or weeks. The entire West seemingly joined the craze for steamboats, with the number of them on Western waters doubling from 35 to 72 between 1819 and 1820, and they nearly doubled again by 1823 to 130 steamers.¹⁸ Even as markets seemed to collapse around them, forward-looking citizens of the Northwest were embracing new technologies and programmatic economic policies that promised to enmesh the state in those same markets.

While old allies like McArthur and protégés like Brown were important in the push for a more market-driven Ohio, Federalists were centrally involved in three important reforms in the state’s response to the Panic of 1819. First, as Speaker of the Senate from 1817 to 1825 and in his year as Governor in 1822, Allen Trimble worked to secure a new program of internal improvements in the state, especially the Ohio Canal that would stretch from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Second, in the Ohio House of Representatives, Ephraim Cutler promoted tax reforms to pay for internal improvements as well as his pet project, a public school system. Finally, Cutler and ally Caleb Atwater pressed for tax reforms to pay for the other programs. In all three areas in the 1820s, Trimble and Cutler would provide the leadership and determination to realize the old Federalist policy visions for Ohio.

Trimble represented ambitious Ohio valley settlers of the early nineteenth century, even if his partisan politics did not align so well with most Ohioans. He was part of the wave of new Ohioans after statehood, settling in southwest Ohio

¹⁸ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 249-250; and Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 422.

shortly before his twenty-first birthday in late 1804. He and his brother William volunteered for service when the War of 1812 began, but William eventually convinced Allen to return home to supervise family affairs.¹⁹ After the war, the brothers started successful political careers. William Allen Trimble continued to serve in the Army until his election to the U.S. Senate in 1819, where he remained until his death only two years later. However, Allen Trimble had a much longer and more impactful career, beginning nine years of service in the Ohio House and then Senate in 1816, and further he was not the only Federalist in the state's General Assembly. Cutler, Charles Hammond, and David Jennings all represented counties in eastern Ohio during a brief Federalist renaissance in the late 1810s. Further, Trimble represented the rest of the Ohio Senate well enough to serve as its Speaker from his first term in 1817 until he left it in 1825.²⁰

As state senator, Trimble was a tireless advocate for canals. He pressed for a bill to build a canal between Lake Erie and the Ohio River with the aid of Congressional land grants, and in February 1820 he saw it become law. Meanwhile, William tried to prepare Congress for the canal bill, noting in a February 12 letter that he "succeeded in getting an able committee appointed in the Senate on Roads and Canals... and I have strong reasons to believe that they would favourably receive propositions on this subject from Ohio." Even if the 1820 law did not directly create the Ohio Canal, it laid the groundwork for

¹⁹ Allen Trimble, "Autobiography of Allen Trimble," in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble, Governor of Ohio* (Columbus, OH: "Old Northwest" Genealogical Society, 1909), 65-68, 80.

²⁰ Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 238; and Trimble, "Autobiography of Allen Trimble," in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 99.

future bills that created it. By 1824, Allen Trimble was central to planning that canal on the state canal commission, noting in his memoirs that he personally oversaw surveys and sales from the Congressional land grant for the canal.²¹

Two years later, Allen Trimble was an especially effective canal advocate as Governor. Succeeding Ethan Allen Brown, Trimble argued in his inaugural address that a trans-state canal offered “agricultural, manufacturing and commercial advantages” and, perhaps more importantly, would “engage the attention of our industrious and enterprising citizens and bring into action the latent, *hidden* resources and energies of the State!”²² The legislature agreed and on January 31, 1822, Trimble signed a bill creating a committee to outline the course and expenses of the Ohio Canal.²³ Trimble’s efforts won him praise from many Ohioans, but he returned to the Senate in the next session after losing a close election to Jeremiah Morrow, a member of the canal committee created by the 1822 canal bill.²⁴ Nonetheless, he and Morrow remained close allies in seeing the Ohio Canal to completion.

²¹ “An Act, Respecting a Navigable Communication between Lake Erie and the Ohio River,” February 23, 1820, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1131-1132; Trimble, “Autobiography of Allen Trimble,” in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 100; and William A. Trimble to Allen Trimble, February 12, 1820, in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 118. For more on the legislative wrangling over the Ohio Canal, see Harry N. Scheiber, *Ohio Canal Era: A Case Study of Government and the Economy, 1820-1861* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1969), 15-29.

²² Trimble, “Inaugural Address of Gov. Allen Trimble,” [January 3] 1822, in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 124.

²³ “An Act Authorizing an Examination into the Practicability of Connecting Lake Erie with the Ohio River by a Canal,” January 31, 1822 [misdated 1832], in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1220.

²⁴ “Ohio 1822 Governor,” *NNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1822 (last accessed November 12, 2011); and Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 66. Jeremiah Morrow defeated Trimble by a tally of 27,430-24,361, but as Ratcliffe

While Trimble argued for building canals, fellow Federalist Ephraim Cutler continued his (and his father Manasseh's) quest for a strong public education system in Ohio. Schools were a preeminent concern for the Ohio Company but Manasseh Cutler took special interest, shown by his efforts to preserve public lands for schools and to found Ohio University on the company's grant. Rufus Putnam and Ephraim Cutler continued that Federalist commitment after statehood, and by the Panic of 1819 many Ohioans were coming around to the Federalist plan for broad public education. Cutler joined the Ohio House of Representatives in 1819, and in his first term he offered bills to create a public school system. Other members recognized Cutler's commitment to the issue, rewarding him with an appointment to head the House committee on schools.²⁵

Cutler found his work justly rewarded by Gov. Trimble. In January 1822, the Ohio General Assembly created a committee to report on common schools, and Trimble declared in his inaugural address that he intended to appoint Cutler and close ally Caleb Atwater to that committee. In his memoirs, Cutler described himself as "an enthusiast in favor of the diffusion of education through all ranks of society" and gave the school committee "a willing mind, and... no small degree of personal labor and fatigue." That work soon bore fruit. The committee reported soon after that "the education of our youth, is the first care and highest duty of

claims, Trimble only lost because third candidate William W. Irwin siphoned away crucial votes in the Scioto valley.

²⁵ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 254; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 142, 145.

every parent, patriot and statesman.” Further, the committee said, a good education “polishes the manners, invigorates the mind and improves the heart.”²⁶

Public education was valuable to many Ohioans not because of the freedom it might bring but rather, in classic Federalist terms, because good schools made proper, obedient citizens. Items in the Cincinnati *Western Spy* in 1818 and 1819 reflected as much, with one writer declaring that too many Ohio children grew up “like noxious and useless weeds, without culture, without knowledge, and without principles.” Another argued that proper education would counteract self-interest, “enforc[ing] self-government” by teaching pupils the true nature of republicanism and liberty. Ultimately, he hoped, a well-educated student would “connect his own good with that of society.”²⁷ Cutler’s ally Caleb Atwater, who moved from Massachusetts to Ohio after the War of 1812, often argued that education would assure stability in the republic as well. He went so far as to tie the administration of school lands set aside in the Northwest Ordinance to other causes, including his interests in public order and preventing squatting on public lands.²⁸

To pay for the public schools and internal improvements, Federalists argued their third great cause of the early 1820s: a new tax system to generate revenue. Ohio had been laying taxes solely on land holdings and based those

²⁶ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 254-255; Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 129; Trimble, “Inaugural Address of Gov. Allen Trimble,” [January 3] 1822, in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 126; and Clement L. Martzloff, “Caleb Atwater,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications* 14 (1905): 256.

²⁷ *Western Spy* (Cincinnati), August 15, 1818, and July 17, 1819, quoted in Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 144-145. See also Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier*, 267-268.

²⁸ Martzloff, “Caleb Atwater,” 250.

taxes on fertility but without regard to location. To redress the problems it caused – such as thinly populated rural counties paying more in taxes than did Cincinnati’s Hamilton County – supporters of the canal and school systems also took up tax reforms in the name of fairness. Cutler and Atwater supported an *ad valorem* or as Cutler called it, “equal system of taxation.”²⁹ Their reasoning was simple: not only was *ad valorem* taxation fairer but it would pay for improvements, too. Boosting tax revenue from population centers like Cincinnati would fund canals and roads, while the increased property values from new transportation would further increase revenues. Ephraim Cutler linked the three almost immediately after he joined the Ohio House in December 1819. As he told his wife, he wanted to achieve “a change in our system of taxation,... a law passed for establishing school districts and encouraging schools, and a state road” across southern Ohio.³⁰ New state institutions demanded new taxes, and Ohio’s old Federalists led the way in pressing for both for the improvement of the state’s character and commerce.

Between 1815 until the early 1820s, Federalists in Ohio found success locally even as their party lay in ruins nationally. During the period, they won elections to state offices and ascended to positions of leadership in the state government. They succeeded because, just like in the wake of Jefferson’s embargo, hard times helped Ohio Federalists hit their stride once again. In their

²⁹ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 262; Bogart, *Financial History of Ohio*, 202; and Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 113. For a much fuller account of the push to reform Ohio’s system of taxation, see Bogart, *Financial History of Ohio*, 190-193, 200-202.

³⁰ Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 121; and Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 68.

push for internal improvements, public education, and tax reforms, Federalists were able to gain popularity and, in the case of Allen Trimble, compete in closely contested statewide elections years after the party was supposedly gone. Moving forward, their three causes propelled the old Federalists along and led them into new directions during the 1820s and into the 1830s.

Rumblings of a New Party: The Election of 1824 and Its Aftermath

While the Panic of 1819 helped Federalists in Ohio regain their focus and find new political friends, those bonds strengthened in the Old Northwest during the campaign of 1824 and, in Ohio, the ensuing legislative session of 1824-1825. In this brief period, two elements of a nascent party organization are most salient. First, in the campaign and election of 1824 many residents of the Old Northwest coalesced behind the disparate elements of the American System, and they formed the backbone of support for its architect, Henry Clay. Second, not only did old Federalists join with pro-business Republicans, but the promise of state-powered economic development drew larger numbers, demonstrating that a clear vision for the economic future of the region could underlay future activities. In short, the election of 1824 and its aftermath signaled new, state-friendly political ideology and the rudiments of a new party developing from the Ohio River valley.

The initial steps toward Western Whiggery revolved around Henry Clay. In 1810, the Kentuckian headed to Washington as a staunch advocate for Western interests, taking a great deal of pride in the growing manufacturing prowess of his home state while seeking wider commercial and political

connections for the West. Though known more as a War Hawk in his early years in Congress, Clay supported government sponsorship of economic development, too.³¹ In his first recorded Congressional speech he rejected “converting the ploughshare and the sickle into the spindle and the shuttle,” but he still called for domestic manufacturing to set the U.S. on the road to prosperity. Curiously, though, he sought that manufacturing on Jeffersonian terms. Rather than seek a commercial empire as did Hamilton, Clay wanted to avoid exporting manufactured goods and called for exports of agricultural products only. Doing so, he said, would “enable us to supply our wants without withdrawing our attention from agriculture – that first and greatest source of national wealth and happiness.”³² Overall, Clay entered Congress as a fine example of a pro-business Western Republican. Like Jefferson, he lionized agriculture and was wary of a commercial empire, but he reflected the influence of the early American state by supporting its continued penetration into the economic life of the nation.

It was a viewpoint he espoused more fervently over the next decade. After the War of 1812, he joined the camp of National Republicans who saw merit in federal action to aid commercial growth and backed such measures as Calhoun’s Bonus Bill in 1817, which offered funding for internal improvements. Upon his return to the House for the 1823-1824 session, Clay was promptly elected Speaker of the House and tried to craft an agenda to increase federal aid

³¹ Clement Eaton, *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1957), 20; and Robert V. Remini, *Henry Clay: Statesman for the Union* (New York: Norton, 1991), 57, 61.

³² Henry Clay, “On Domestic Manufactures,” April 6, 1810, in Daniel Mallory, ed., *The Life and Speeches of the Hon. Henry Clay* (New York: Robert P. Bixby & Co., 1843), I: 252.

to commerce. Further, he hoped his measures would propel him to the Presidency in the 1824 election. The centerpiece of his plan was a combination of centralized banking, protective tariffs, and federally-funded internal improvements termed the American system by which Clay sought to insert the state directly into the economic development of the entire nation. With the Missouri crisis recently opening schisms between North and South, Clay saw in the American System an effective tool for both appealing to voters and uniting them behind a common national cause.³³

Biographer Robert V. Remini called the American System “a vision of progress, a bold reformulation of the relationship between government and society,” but Clay really offered a new articulation of Hamiltonian policy.³⁴ In the 1790s, Hamilton planned for a national economic empire through a central bank, internal improvements, and tariffs, and Clay’s plan revolved around the same three elements. Based on Hamilton’s plans for the first Bank, Clay backed the Second Bank of the United States. Clay had changed his thinking on the Bank, having voted against its charter in 1811 but ultimately liking it so much by the late 1810s that he served as its legal counsel during his hiatus from Congress. Second, like Hamilton and Washington in the 1780s and 1790s, Clay argued for a broad system of internal improvements that he said would – just like Federalists argued decades earlier – improve commerce and link disparate

³³ Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 499; Eaton, *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics*, 34-37; and Remini, *Henry Clay*, 219, 225-228.

³⁴ Remini, *Henry Clay*, 225. For a similar but brief claim to the one argued here (that the American System had clear Hamiltonian roots), see Michael Lind, *What Lincoln Believed: The Values and Convictions of America’s Greatest President* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 73.

peoples of the Union much more closely. Finally, Clay believed tariffs would stimulate the growth of American manufacturing and provide the funding to pay for his transportation programs. Those beliefs led him to shepherd the Tariff of 1824 into law, laying a 35 percent *ad valorem* tax on imports that made for the first true protective tariff system in the United States.³⁵

Clay laid out his vision clearly on March 30 and 31, 1824, in a House speech that was at once a statement of political philosophy, Presidential campaign speech, and harbinger of future partisanship. He began by defining the budding four-way Presidential election between himself, John Quincy Adams, William H. Crawford, and Andrew Jackson as a race between two dueling philosophies. The first believed that “American industry should be left to sustain itself” against the competition of cheap, widely available European (especially British) products. Clay stood at the fore of the other side, which believed firmly in protecting manufacturing to “lessen our dependence on foreign nations, by securing a certain and ultimately a cheaper and better supply of our own wants from our own abundant resources.” Such divisions correspond well to Whig claims of their differences from Jacksonian Democrats. From there, he laid out a passionate case for the American System, claiming it “the solemn duty of government to apply a remedy” and avoid seeing “our industry languish and decay, yet more and more.”³⁶ Looking ahead to that fall, Clay set himself at the

³⁵ Clay, “On American Industry,” March 30-31, 1824, in Mallory, ed., *The Life and Speeches of the Hon. Henry Clay*, I: 443, 457; Cleaves, *Old Tippecanoe*, 278; Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 60-61; and Remini, *Henry Clay*, 228, 232-233.

³⁶ Clay, “On American Industry,” March 30-31, 1824, in Mallory, ed., *The Life and Speeches of the Hon. Henry Clay*, I: 441, 457.

vanguard of a new political movement that would use the resources of the state to bring prosperity to the nation.

The message resonated most effectively west of the Appalachians, where federal power was instrumental in settlement and economic development.³⁷ Particularly, the Ohio valley lined up behind internal improvements and protective tariffs. On transportation, Westerns began to see things as the old Federalists had: their future was intimately tied to the rest of the nation, and connections to the Atlantic coast meant a more prosperous future. By 1823, Steubenville, Ohio newspaper editor James Wilson, who had a bitter newspaper war with Federalist editor Charles Hammond during the War of 1812, began saying that local manufacturing and agricultural produce needed protected markets. Meanwhile, newspapers in Cincinnati discussed internal improvements as central to home manufactures. David Trimble of Kentucky also expressed these Western interests plainly before Congress in 1823, noting that canals linking the Ohio and Atlantic were of “very deep interest” to all Westerners because “trade of the Western Country would come Eastwardly for a market.” He predicted a future “not far distant, when this country shall become entirely its own manufacturer.” It was, quite simply, “the natural and irresistible progress of things.”³⁸

Ohio valley states also fervently supported protective tariffs in the wake of the Panic of 1819, giving Clay great hope for Western support. Politicians did

³⁷ For a similar claim, see Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 57.

³⁸ *Eastern Argus* (Portland, ME), December 2, 1823; Ratcliffe, *The Politics of Long Division*, 77-79; and Eugene H. Roseboom, “Ohio in the Presidential Election of 1824,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications* 26 (1917): 163-165.

well while supporting tariffs after the panic struck; for example, William Henry Harrison ran successfully for the Ohio State Senate in 1819 behind protective tariffs and other measures to resolve the economic crisis. After he won, Harrison proposed resolutions backing new tariffs and declaring new revenues should be used in “aiding Roads, Canals and Domestic Manufactures.” In addition to Ohio, Kentucky and Missouri enthusiastically joined the movement for protective tariffs with calls for protecting local products like wool, lead, iron, and salt. Overall, support for elements of the American System in the West led Clay to count on support from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Louisiana. With so many contestants, Clay reasoned that no one would gain a majority of electoral votes and Western support would make him one of the top three candidates. Once the election was in the House, Clay could win by careful politicking with his fellow Congressmen.³⁹

Clay proved popular in the West, as shown by the first steps to the 1824 election in Ohio. Buckeye supporters of Clay had organized a January 1823 convention of state legislators and nominated him for President, a move that seemed rash to even some of his supporters.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, Clay remained a popular choice in Ohio, as his American System seemed to blur old partisan lines as voters backed his plan. James Wilson attested to as much, writing in his *Steubenville Gazette* that “the question is not now whether the candidate be a

³⁹ *New-England Palladium & Commercial Advertiser* (Boston), January 7, 1820; Remini, *Henry Clay*, 212, 237; and Rothbard, *The Panic of 1819*, 219.

⁴⁰ John McLean to Allen Trimble, January 31, 1823, in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 133. “I regret the last caucus of the legislature, not because Mr. Clay was nominated, but because I think the proceeding was premature. Had the legislature nominated any other candidate, my opinion would not have been changed.”

democrat or a federalist.” The real concern, he wrote, is if “he is a friend... to domestic industry and internal improvements.”⁴¹ In Cincinnati, Federalists and Republicans alike were lining up behind Clay. William Henry Harrison agreed to be listed as a Clay elector by March 1824, and Charles Hammond (a new arrival to the city from St. Clairsville in 1823) became Clay’s campaign manager in Ohio. Hammond chose Clay because the American System reflected his political philosophy, and he expressed that support for Clay’s plans for developing manufacturing in an 1824 pamphlet of the candidate’s speeches entitled *An American System for the Protection of Industry*.⁴² For Clay’s backers in Ohio, the old party lines were crumbling in favor of a vision for energetic state support of transportation and mercantile development.

While Clay and his calls for protective tariffs and internal improvements were popular, he faced stiff competition for those votes from John Quincy Adams. Adams had a record of speaking and voting in Congress that placed him squarely behind all three aspects of the American System, and he had special appeal to many voters in the Northwest. Further, his former association with the Federalist Party seemed to appeal to voters in the old Ohio Company purchase, where Adams ultimately carried three counties in the election.⁴³ Meanwhile, in

⁴¹ *Steubenville Gazette* (OH), August 2, 1823, quoted in Roseboom, “Ohio in the Presidential Election of 1824,” 166.

⁴² Murdoch, “Charles Hammond,” 131-132; Roseboom, “Ohio in the Presidential Election of 1824,” 182, 194; and Triplett, “A Biography of Charles Hammond,” 73. Upon his arrival in Cincinnati, Hammond also backed the education system by serving on the Board of Directors for Cincinnati College (now the University of Cincinnati).

⁴³ Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 246; and Roseboom, “Ohio in the Presidential Election of 1824,” 159, 207.

Indiana, where the Federalist Party never truly established itself, voters backing the American System turned their support to Adams, the former Federalist and New Englander who also supported protective tariffs and internal improvements. Adams was particularly attractive because, unlike the slaveholder Clay, Adams opposed slavery and so did most Hoosiers. By the middle of 1824, most newspapers in Indiana backed Adams, presenting him as a man with the experience and character necessary to serve in the nation's highest office.⁴⁴ Thus, the election of 1824 saw a somewhat curious event: the unanimously Republican newspaper editors of Indiana were aligning behind a former Federalist and a New Englander.

The final election tallies in the three states of the Old Northwest showed wide support for Clay and even greater support for the American System. Clay found the least enthusiasm in Illinois, which still boasted a fairly small population and thus had far fewer voters. There, Andrew Jackson carried the election with 1,901 votes, trailed by Adams at 1,542, and Clay in third place at 1,047. Jackson also carried Indiana, winning 7,343 votes while Clay received 5,215 votes and Adams only 3,095, but Clay still carried the most counties.⁴⁵ In Ohio, Clay found his greatest encouragement, as the work of Hammond, Harrison, and his other supporters paid off in a victory. Jackson and Adams won in Ohio 18,849 and

⁴⁴ Donald F. Carmony, *Indiana, 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1998), 452, 463-464, 479-480. Carmony even stated that Indiana voters supported government action in transportation and tariffs because they had benefitted from government energy in clearing Indian land claims and distributing public lands to settlers.

⁴⁵ Carmony, *Indiana, 1816-1850*, 482; and Remini, *Henry Clay*, 248. The election tallies are taken from Remini.

12,280 votes, respectively, while Clay prevailed with a plurality of 19,255 votes.⁴⁶ Ohio was one of only three states that Clay carried in the election, leaving him in fourth place behind Jackson, Adams, and Crawford (and therefore out of the running when the election ended up in the House of Representatives).

Despite Clay's losses, the election revealed that voters in the Northwest truly believed in the American System. In the House of Representatives, the Ohio delegation sided with their state's third-place finisher Adams, the friend of internal improvements and tariffs, over second-place finisher Andrew Jackson. Curiously, political leaders explained the choice in classic Federalist terms: leaders deserved to choose the candidate in the best interests of the people. Republican and former U.S. trade factor John Johnston declared the choice of Adams made by those "who are the best judges of qualification and who have the greatest Stake in the issue," and Federalist Rep. Philemon Beecher had few qualms explaining that "I am convinced that Adams is best qualified, and that is enough for me."⁴⁷ Further, as known friends of the American System, Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams received a wide majority of votes over foe Andrew Jackson, a point not lost on many Clay and Adams supporters. Charles Hammond laid out the reasoning clearly in his *Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette*, explaining that although Jackson advocates noted he "had more votes than Mr. Adams," it did not mean Jackson was "preferred... by the people." As

⁴⁶ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 136; and Weisenburger, "A Life of Charles Hammond," 370.

⁴⁷ Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 136; and Philemon Beecher to Cutler, January 19, 1825, in Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 193.

he explained bluntly, “If we, my friends, who voted for Mr. Clay prefer Mr. Adams... where is the proof that Gen. Jackson is preferred by the people. Eighteen thousand Jacksonians cannot constitute the people of Ohio.”⁴⁸

The American System and the election of 1824 reflected a line of thinking among Westerners very different from other Americans, and Federalists in Ohio saw similar results when the statewide elections of 1824 focused on their tripartite program of internal improvements, schools, and tax reforms. Though Allen Trimble again lost a close gubernatorial election to Jeremiah Morrow, the margin of victory was but two thousand votes out of over seventy-five thousand cast.⁴⁹ Even if Trimble lost, Morrow’s victory meant the state’s governor would continue to support the canal system. Even better, Caleb Atwater wrote years later, the overall election turned out much in Trimble and Cutler’s favor. The legislative elections hinged on “the school system, the canal, and an equitable mode of taxation,” he remembered, and in the end “the friends of all these measures, triumphed over all opposition.”⁵⁰

The ensuing legislative session opened on December 7, 1824, with the re-elected Gov. Morrow sounding an optimistic tone about all three issues. Praising the “zeal and industry” of canal supporters and commissioners, Morrow voiced

⁴⁸ *Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette*, March 15, 1825.

⁴⁹ “Ohio 1824 Governor,” *NNV*, http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/aas_portal/view-election.xq?id=oh.governor.1824 (last accessed November 19, 2011); and Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 116. Trimble’s collected letters and autobiography from a century ago tallied the Morrow victory at 39,526-37,108, but Philip Lampi’s tabulations conducted much more recently show Morrow winning by a closer margin of 39,317-37,454, with 121 votes scattered among many others.

⁵⁰ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 262.

his support for a canal from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. The governor nodded to tax reforms, too, and even talked about new taxes on “judicial process in civil cases – on capital employed in trade – on pleasure and travel carriages – on brass and other clocks, and on gold and silver watches” to pay for transportation projects. Meanwhile, he reminded the legislature that it had an obligation “for the encouragement of learning, and in particular for the regulation and support of common schools.”⁵¹ Morrow’s speech presented a stark truth. Trimble lost a close election but his cause had triumphed, shown not only in the governor’s speech but in the start of the legislative session. The General Assembly was quickly engrossed by canals and revenues; by mid-December state Rep. Ephraim Cutler reported proudly that his finance committee “agree[d] to the substance... for changing the whole revenue system, and adopting an equal one of taxing people according to their property” and that another committee had set the course of what became the Ohio Canal from Cleveland to Portsmouth as well as the Miami Canal from Dayton to Cincinnati.⁵² As the new year of 1825 approached, Ohio seemed on the precipice of major victories for Federalism.

In addition to Cutler’s efforts in the legislature, Charles Hammond’s *Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette* offered old Federalist arguments for their passage. Castigating the self-interested “men so obstinate... as to agree to nothing, that is not immediately beneficial to themselves,” he wrote that following their plans would mean “not a road, not a bridge, nor a canal, could ever be made at public

⁵¹ Jeremiah Morrow, *Governor’s Message, to the General Assembly of Ohio, December 7, 1824* (Columbus, OH: P.H. Olmsted, 1824), 3-4, 8-9.

⁵² Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 153-154.

expense. We should forever remain in a state of poverty, depression, and rudeness.” Of course, staying true to this old Hamiltonian plan would “bring capital into the state” as well as “excite and reward industry, and lay the foundation for other improvements.” In addition, Hammond argued for public education in terms that recalled the Ohio Company’s original plan, because “We need moral as well as physical improvement,” especially to guarantee “the happiness of society, and the perpetuity of our republican institutions.”⁵³ Such an emphasis on disinterest and public morality was not only classical republicanism; it was also classically Federalist. After all, Hamiltonians consistently argued that government used its energies best when it assured that its people were not only prosperous but morally upright and well-ordered.

The old Federalists got their wishes on February 3-5, 1825, when new laws were passed in all three areas. The first law, a tax act passed February 3, made *ad valorem* taxation the state’s new system. In forty sections, the new act created an intricate system of new offices responsible for laying taxes on most real estate, many types of valuable personal property, and even on capital investments of eight different classes of merchants. It also offered a process by which the state would normalize property values to ensure that all parts of the state paid roughly equal rates, precluding overvalued properties by too-anxious boosters or undervaluing to avoid tax burdens.⁵⁴ The new system would

⁵³ *Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette*, January 7 and 21, 1825.

⁵⁴ “An Act Establishing an Equitable Mode of Levying the Taxes of This State,” February 3, 1825, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1476, 1478. The full act can be found in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1476-1492.

guarantee more equitable taxation, as Atwater and Cutler had argued for years, but it also promised to enhance revenues. Ultimately, the new tax system helped to fund other projects, especially in education and internal improvements.

The next day, a bill to provide for construction on the Ohio Canal and the Miami Canal became law. It created a board of canal commissioners that included Ethan Allen Brown and Allen Trimble, and the board was charged with overseeing the funding, construction, and operation of the canals through loans, donations, state appropriations, and stock sales. To cover canal debts, the legislature created a decidedly Hamiltonian system of funded debt that allowed the canal commission to borrow hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.⁵⁵ The canals took eight years to complete and cost more than five million dollars, and the funded canal debt first opened in 1825 was not fully paid off until 1903. Despite the cost, Ohio had a much more direct connection with the Atlantic coast. In tandem with the Erie Canal across New York, by the early 1830s Ohioans were able to bypass the Appalachian Mountains, break their dependency on New Orleans for trade, and dive headlong into the Market Revolution.⁵⁶

Hammond, Atwater, and other friends of public education got their wish in the final law. It enjoyed wide support in both houses, passed in the Senate on January 26 – doubtlessly helped by Trimble’s support and leadership – by a 28-8 tally, and in the House the aid of Ephraim Cutler pushed the final vote on the bill

⁵⁵ “An Act, to Provide for the Internal Improvement of the State of Ohio, by Navigable Canals,” February 4, 1825, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1472-1476; and Bogart, *Internal Improvements and the State Debt in Ohio*, 154.

⁵⁶ Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio*, 275; Bogart, *Internal Improvements and the State Debt in Ohio*, v-vii; and Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 146-147.

to a comfortable 46-24 margin on February 1.⁵⁷ Signed into law by Gov. Morrow on February 5, it placed a one-twentieth of one percent *ad valorem* tax on property to support schools. Further, county school boards were established to create school districts and oversee the operation of local public schools. Even if it took another decade or more for public schools to be established throughout Ohio, the 1825 law was an important step toward fulfilling the promise of public schools for all that Ephraim Cutler placed in the 1803 constitution.⁵⁸

By 1825, Ohio's Federalists had won important political victories and promoted the cause of energetic government to great success, achieving what the Federalists of the 1780s and 1790s could not. Manasseh Cutler and George Washington had seen in canals and public education means that would allow the U.S. government to conquer space, pull people from isolation, and broaden priorities beyond base self-interest, but men like Ephraim Cutler and Allen Trimble achieved those visions. By the end of the 1820s, Ohio was well on its way to creating a public education system and new transportation links to the rest of the nation. In addition, party members were still in the midst of flourishing careers in Ohio, and they had seen the statist approach to westward expansion reap real dividends in the American System, a state-friendly approach to forging economic prosperity that was being broadcast from the Ohio valley to the rest of

⁵⁷ Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 167.

⁵⁸ "An Act, to Provide for the Support and Better Regulation of Common Schools," February 5, 1825, in Chase, ed., *The Statutes of Ohio*, II: 1466-1467; Cayton, *The Frontier Republic*, 146; and Cutler, *The Life of Ephraim Cutler*, 171.

the nation. In a sense, the early American state had been born in the West, and by the 1820s it was beginning to head eastward.

That success would continue, too, especially for Trimble, Hammond, and Burnet. Hammond continued to promote his Federalist views and the emerging Whig Party's cause in the weekly *Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette* as well as his *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* until 1839, dying the next year.⁵⁹ Trimble finally won gubernatorial elections in 1826 and 1828, and once in office he continued to press for more energetic government. For example, in his address to the Ohio General Assembly on December 9, 1829, Trimble exhorted legislators to “creat[e] facilities, for inter-communication, as well as to encourage manufactures, and the mechanic arts – to provide for the diffusion of useful knowledge – and to extend the benefits and equalize the burthens of government.”⁶⁰

Foremost in his mind were the Federalist-turned-Whig hobby horses of public education, internal improvements, and protective tariffs, and he continued to argue for them in the same Federalist terms as before. On public schools, he said continuing to establish a comprehensive system for the state would “shed its enlightening influence on every mind” and prevent citizens from seeing “popular liberty... degenerated into licentiousness and anarchy.” Once again, the Federalist imagined education as a force for inculcating order and reverence. After all, he said, “All men have the right, but the wise and the good, *only*, have

⁵⁹ For a full account of Hammond's years in Cincinnati, see Weisenburger, “A Life of Charles Hammond,” 372-427.

⁶⁰ Ohio Senate Journal, 1829-1830, 10.

the power to remain free.” In addition, while the Ohio Canal was well on its way to completion, Trimble saw much more work on the horizon. The new canals, he claimed, ignited among Ohioans a “spirit... not of a character to be arrested in its march: it cannot be stayed by the rivers Ohio and Potomac, but must and will penetrate beyond them with irresistible force.” He concluded by alluding to both internal improvements and the protective tariffs of the American System, noting of the Ohioans who placed the old Federalist into the Governor’s office twice, “They look to extended improvements, and to the protection of Domestic Industry, against foreign competition, as the basis of the independence and prosperity of our common country.”⁶¹ In short, Trimble saw not only a pleasant moment for his political causes, but he imagined a radiant future for them, too.

During Trimble’s administration, Jacob Burnet also won the acclaim of his fellow men in his election as U.S. Senator in 1828, replacing his friend William Henry Harrison. In a letter to friend and fellow Federalist Wyllys Silliman of Marietta after being elected, he showed the continued drift toward the Whig Party behind the American System. He explained plainly that “Our wealth... cannot be realized, unless we have a market for our produce, and increased facilities for transporting it in other words, unless the American System be sustained and extended by the General government.” He also noted the importance to “create a market at home, which can be effected only by multiplying the number of mouths to be fed in our manufacturing establishments.” He also showed deepening partisan divides, saying with some bitterness of Jackson that “I hope

⁶¹ Ohio Senate Journal, 1829-1830, 10-12; Trimble, “Autobiography of Allen Trimble,” in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 103.

he will exert his influence in favour of the American System – that he will realize the expectations of his friends and disappoint the fears of his opponents – in short that he will feel and act, as the President of the Nation, and not of a party.”⁶² That divide seemed clear to others by the late 1820s, too, with Trimble referring to “The Whig Party to which I belonged... during my term as Governor” from 1826.⁶³

The so-called Era of Good Feelings was a crucial formative period for the Whig Party of the Northwest, and Federalism loomed large in two ways. First, Federalists continued into the new alliance and held many prominent positions, and thus Ohio became the last bastion of the Federalist Party and remained so well into the 1830s. With leaders in the emerging Whig Party like Allen Trimble and Jacob Burnet, direct Federalist influence would remain, too. Second, the American System was a reflection of the Federalist approach to the trans-Appalachian frontier as well as the first broadcast of the Western approach to government. After seeing government provide services in Indian wars and trade, land surveys and sales, transportation, and other areas, Westerners had come to appreciate and even expect energetic government on a regular basis. Those ideas were traveling eastward, but they were also traveling to a new generation of Whigs who were entering the public sphere of the Old Northwest. As time wore on and the Whig Party continued to establish itself, those first two

⁶² Burnet to W[ylyys] Silliman, December 30, 1828, in Jacob Burnet Collection, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

⁶³ Trimble, “Autobiography of Allen Trimble,” in Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Allen Trimble*, 103.

elements were soon to be joined by that new generation, and through them the Federalist frontier would continue to leave its imprint in American politics.

EPILOGUE

Up the Capitol Steps: Abraham Lincoln and the New Western Whiggery

On November 23, 1840, Abraham Lincoln had reason to take pride as he climbed the steps of the then-new capitol building (now called the Old State Capitol) to open the winter legislative session in Springfield, Illinois. As a member of the “Long Nine” in the Illinois General Assembly, he was instrumental in moving the capital north from Vandalia to his adopted home of Springfield in the previous year. On that Monday morning, too, Lincoln was beginning his fourth term as state representative, an office by which he distinguished himself within the Whig Party of Illinois. In October the next year, the Whig newspaper and local party meetings of Fulton (in the northwest corner of Illinois) even suggested Lincoln as a gubernatorial candidate for 1842, citing his “great talents, services and high standing” even if he did not want the office.¹ Most of all, though, Lincoln could be proud of all he had achieved by the age of thirty-one.

¹ *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), October 15, 1841.

Far too often, though, this vision of Lincoln is fleeting. Lincoln escaped the attention of most of the American public until 1858, and ever since then Lincoln's youth has attracted scant attention from scholar and citizen alike. A simple glance at most major biographies of Lincoln show how little attention his early life and career still receives; Carl Sandburg's famous multi-volume biography of Lincoln spent only about one-third of its content on Lincoln before 1860, and more recent biographers have followed suit. For example, two of the more highly regarded biographies of the past generation, by David Donald and Richard Carwardine, only devote about one-sixth of their works to Lincoln before he became nationally prominent as a politician. Even when they focus on Lincoln's early career, historians tend to treat it like – as one book's title has called it – a *Preparation for Greatness*.² This treatment might make for a good story, but it treats the experiences and political stances of the young state legislator as a mere prologue to a future Lincoln never could have imagined.

Rather than ascending to glory, Lincoln was carrying the legacies of the Federalist frontier up those Capitol steps and into the rest of his political career. Far from an American Messiah appearing suddenly on the national scene and set to sacrifice his life to atone for the nation's sins of human bondage, Lincoln the state representative was yearning to use the salutary effects of energetic government to transcend the lawlessness and poverty he saw in Western society. That hope led him to two primary causes. First, Lincoln chose to become a friend of economic development under fellow Whig Henry Clay's

² Paul Simon, *Lincoln's Preparation for Greatness: The Illinois Legislative Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965).

American System to aid the nation's manufacturers. In Illinois, Lincoln pursued policies that he hoped would bring business and manufacturing to his adopted home state, and he remained committed to those ideals throughout his career. Second, Lincoln yearned for his Western home to transcend what he saw as a lawless frontier. He sought to inculcate a respect for law and order among Westerners and, as his career progressed, all Americans. In the process, he joined with ex-Republican converts to Henry Clay's gospel of political economy to continue the evolution of parties in early America. Overall, Lincoln's vision for America was a simple one that shared a great deal with the Federalists of older vintage: of a virtuous, prosperous, and above all orderly people. As the example of Abraham Lincoln shows, Western Whigs of his generation echoed the desires and policy goals of frontier Federalism.

Abraham Lincoln's Illinois and the Whig Party of the Northwest

When examined in light of other Whigs, Abraham Lincoln was a fairly standard member of the party when he climbed those steps in Springfield. Other historians and biographers have noted the same of Lincoln by describing him as a conventional but sharply partisan Whig. As one biographer wrote, "He was a loyal, active, and *regular* Whig as long as there was a Whig Party," and in a more blunt fashion, Joel Silbey summarized the young Lincoln as "an organization builder and political manager," "a total political operator," and even "a party

hack.”³ Indeed, Lincoln shared three defining characteristics with other Whigs. First, Whigs like Lincoln believed in the merits of energetic government, and they advocated new programs and an active government response to resolve problems for citizens of the Northwest. Second, they focused that energetic government on economic development by backing the American System, and Lincoln was no exception. Finally, many Whigs emphasized public order to accompany republican liberty. While other Whigs – particularly in New England and New York – championed moral reform, Lincoln venerated the law and consistently stressed the importance of obedience to authority. In all three areas, Lincoln and other Western Whigs united under a banner that showed the influence of Federalist administration in the Old Northwest.

Lincoln saw the benefits of federal power firsthand throughout his early life. After observing the problems his father Thomas encountered in Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln saw the benefits of the federal system of land surveys and sales. In his 1860 campaign autobiography, he blamed “the difficulty in land titles in Kentucky” for his family’s removal to Indiana, and four years later he recalled bitterly that Kentucky “titles got into such an almighty mess with these pettifoggin’ incumbrances turnin’ up at evry fresh tradin’ with the land.” The obstacles of a complex system in Kentucky led to lawsuits that Thomas Lincoln often lost and resulted in his land holdings whittling from 816 acres to only 200 as well as his

³ William Lee Miller, *Lincoln’s Virtues: An Ethical Biography* (New York: Vintage, 2002), 95-96 (emphasis mine); and Joel H. Silbey, “‘Always a Whig in Politics’: The Partisan Life of Abraham Lincoln,” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 8 (1986), 42.

ejection from two different farms in Kentucky.⁴ Worse, his father was without land or recourse. Once the Lincolns moved to Indiana, though, the federal system of surveying and sales gave Thomas Lincoln the secure title that Kentucky could not.⁵ For young Abraham Lincoln, his father's struggles were an object lesson in the power of government to enact change for the better.

While he took part in the tradition of young Western men of fighting Indians by taking part in Black Hawk's War, his support for the American System displays his belief in state power most prominently. Taken together, Lincoln and his fellow Whigs believed the American System would make government a helpmeet for private enterprise, which clearly appealed to the young legislator's sensibilities about the positive effects of government in the West. His ability to promote the American System was limited because as a state representative he could not propose or vote for tariffs, but he still found ways to support American manufacturing from the very beginning of his career. On his first day in the state legislature in Vandalia on December 1, 1834, a former colleague recalled Lincoln "dressed in a very respectable looking suit of jeans - it was practically carrying out the protective idea of wearing home manufactures." By wearing locally-made denim, Lincoln was joining many Whigs, too; homespun denim had become common attire for Whigs seeking to make a statement in favor of Henry Clay's

⁴ Bartelt, "The Land Dealings of Spencer County, Indiana, Pioneer Thomas Lincoln," 211; Donald, *Lincoln*, 23-24; Abraham Lincoln, "Autobiography Written for John L. Scripps," in Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953-1959), IV: 61-62; Charles M. Segal, ed., *Conversations with Lincoln* (New York: Putnam, 1961), 348; and Louis A. Warren, *Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years, 1816-1830* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 1959), 12-13.

⁵ Bartelt, "The Land Dealings of Spencer County, Indiana, Pioneer Thomas Lincoln," 213, 218-221; Donald, *Lincoln*, 24; and Harrison, *Lincoln of Kentucky*, 28.

plans.⁶ Though he could do little more than make such symbolic gestures in the Illinois House of Representatives, he still clearly supported the American System and was friendly to using government institutions to promote American business and manufacturing.

Like many Western Whigs by the 1830s, Lincoln also lined up squarely behind the second part of the American System, a strong central bank. Based on the First Bank of the United States created, according to Alexander Hamilton in 1791, in order to “extend the active Capital of a Country” and ultimately “add new energies” to nascent American manufacturing, Lincoln and other Whigs promoted central banking as a necessary means to economic prosperity.⁷ On the national level, that meant supporting the Second Bank of the United States created in 1816 and opposing Andrew Jackson’s efforts to close it during the Bank War of the 1830s. On January 8, 1835, during his first session in the state legislature, Lincoln backed fellow Whigs in declaring the Second Bank of the United States “useful and expedient” because of its “salutary provisions... to promote the interests of the country.”⁸ For Western Whigs like Lincoln, the Bank of the United States was especially useful because they lived in a capital-poor region. The Second Bank of the United States provided a steady supply of

⁶ Interview with J.K. Dubois, July 4, 1875, in Michael Burlingame, ed., *An Oral History of Abraham Lincoln: John G. Nicolay’s Interviews and Essays* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 2006), 30; and Michael Lind, *What Lincoln Believed: The Values and Convictions of America’s Greatest President* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 94.

⁷ Hamilton, “Report on Manufactures,” Dec. 5, 1791, in Morton J. Frisch, ed., *Selected Writings and Speeches of Alexander Hamilton* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985), 303.

⁸ *Illinois House Journal*, January 8, 1835.

available capital that would attract new industries to Illinois in the 1830s and beyond. In other words, the Bank was an important stimulus to the Illinois economy, and for Lincoln government existed to promote private enterprise and overall prosperity.

Once it became clear that Jackson and his Democratic supporters would not yield in their efforts to see the Second Bank of the United States closed, Lincoln voted to create the State Bank of Illinois in 1835. When the House of Representatives debated renewing its charter, Lincoln took a more active role by speaking on the House floor on December 26, 1839. In the speech, he defended the re-charter and attacked the Democrats for effectively closing the Bank of the United States and causing the financial panic that threatened to ruin the deeply indebted Illinois state government. He argued the virtues of central banks, saying they kept money in circulation and made credit in the cash-poor West more available, while Democrats would rather have "the revenue... collected, and kept in iron boxes until the government wants it for disbursement; thus robbing the people of the use of it." Instead of using the State Bank of Illinois to make loans and invigorate commerce, Jacksonian Democrats wanted the money, in his words, "performing no nobler office than that of rusting in iron boxes."⁹

Lincoln also saw Jacksonian opposition to central banks as a dishonor to public service, and he was vocal about his feelings. He consistently argued from a position of old-fashioned republican virtue: to him, elected officials were duty-

⁹ Lincoln, "Speech on the Subtreasury," December [26], 1839, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 160; *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), January 3, 1840; and Carwardine, *Lincoln*, 16.

bound to provide their constituents the greatest good possible, even when public opinion suggested another course of action. To Lincoln, central banks were nothing short of essential to a bright economic future, and he thought his opponents were shirking their responsibilities as public servants. As he said in the same House speech in 1839 mentioned earlier, "A National Bank can establish and maintain a sound and uniform state of currency... and we further say, that no duty is more imperative on that Government, than the duty it owes the people, of furnishing them a sound and uniform currency." Here, Lincoln's rhetoric transcended normally sedate economic policy discussions and launched into invective against Jacksonians, whom he believed had breached the public trust. He even said as much in 1837, arguing on the House floor that attacks on the Bank of the United States in Illinois and in Washington were part of a creeping "lawless and mobocratic spirit" that threatened the very nature of the republic.¹⁰

While domestic manufacturing and central banking clearly mattered to Lincoln, he especially liked the American System's call for internal improvements to ease travel and the flow of commerce. On the issue of new transportation projects, the Whigs seemed to draw in their widest support and new adherents to the party, and it proved especially true for old Jeffersonian Republicans who migrated to the Whig banner. In Ohio, for example, Jeremiah Morrow worked alongside Allen Trimble for the Ohio Canal in the 1820s and stood with DeWitt

¹⁰ Lincoln, "Speech on the Subtreasury," December [26], 1839, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 164; and Lincoln, "Speech in the Illinois State Legislature Concerning the State Bank," in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 67, quoted in Daniel Walker Howe, *The Political Culture of the American Whigs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 265.

Clinton at the groundbreaking ceremony in 1825. By the next decade, Morrow was opposing the policies of Andrew Jackson. Similarly, William Hendricks pressed for internal improvements in Indiana during his time as Governor in the 1820s, and in Congress he called for protective tariffs as well as federal funding for Indiana canals and roads. Though he declared himself an independent in the 1830s, he also opposed Jackson's policies and moved closer to the Whig Party largely because of a shared interest in internal improvement projects.¹¹

Similar cases occurred in Illinois, and Lincoln saw one when he joined the State House in December 1834 when the new Governor Joseph Duncan gave his inaugural address. Duncan had joined Congress in 1827 as a supporter of Andrew Jackson but migrated away from the emerging Democratic Party due to his support for internal improvements and the Second Bank of the United States. After he won the 1834 election for Governor – especially because he advocated canal projects like the proposed one between the Illinois River and Lake Michigan – he threw off all signs of being a Jacksonian Democrat and attacked the administration while promoting Whig policies in Illinois.¹² Even before then, Duncan appealed to Illinois Whigs, including newspaper editor Simeon Francis of Springfield, who offered in 1832 his support for Duncan. He deserved that support, the *Sangamo Journal* read, because “his course in Congress, as

¹¹ Carmony, *Indiana, 1816-1850*, 464, 493, 522; and Cayton, *Frontier Indiana*, 283. In his 1822 inaugural address, Hendricks referred to the “fostering hand of government” in Indiana’s growth and, he hoped, its future.

¹² Buley, *The Old Northwest*, I: 505; Krenkel, *Illinois Internal Improvements, 1818-1848*, 62; Theodore Calvin Pease, introduction to *Illinois Election Returns, 1818-1848*, ed. Theodore Calvin Pease (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1923), xxxiii; and William G. Shade, *Banks or No Banks: The Money Issue in Western Politics, 1832-1865* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972), 32.

regards those great interests in which this State is most deeply concerned, to wit, the Bank of the U. States, the Tariff of Protection, and the system of Internal Improvements, has met with our cordial approbation.”¹³ The American System seemed to draw in Duncan, and it drew Whigs to him, too

On December 3, 1834, Lincoln sat with other members of the Illinois General Assembly to hear the new Gov. Duncan, and they all heard a clarion call for internal improvements and other Whig causes. Hoping to see a public education system established in Illinois, Duncan asked the General Assembly to “use all the means in its power.... to establish some permanent system of common schools” as well as to establish public colleges for the good of the state citizenry. However, he spent the most time on internal improvements, declaring it “a favorable time” for them with Illinois “comparatively in its infancy, and if roads, trackways, rail roads, and canals, are now laid out, they can be made straight between most of the important points, with very little expense and difficulty.” Further, he said, the prosperity brought by new roads, canals, and railroads would bring in new revenues that could help to fund public schools.¹⁴

Lincoln was just as excited about internal improvements, as they were his political passion from the beginning. His first public political speech in June 1830 focused on the need to improve transportation on the Sangamon River for the future of Decatur, Illinois, where he briefly settled with his father.¹⁵ Two years

¹³ *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), August 2, 1832.

¹⁴ Illinois House Journal, 1834-1835, 27-28, 32.

¹⁵ Carwardine, *Lincoln*, 15; and Donald, *Lincoln*, 31.

later, he made his first-ever campaign promise about improving the Sangamon River, telling the voters of Sangamon County that improving the river was so "vastly important and highly desirable to the people of this county" that he would support "any measure in the legislature having this for its object." During his first session as a legislator, Lincoln helped to write a bill to charter a Sangamon River canal company that passed in February 1835.¹⁶

Lincoln's support for internal improvements also likely drew a good deal of attention from voters. His first two runs for office in 1832 and 1834 were in the midst of growing enthusiasm for transportation projects. John Stuart, Lincoln's first law partner, described the early 1830s as an era of "Railroad excitement" because "There was to be nothing but railroads. Railroad meetings were held everywhere, and the State was to become a gridiron at once." After his third run (and second win) in 1836, Lincoln spent his term in a legislature that embarked on a system of canals and roads so ambitious that it brought the state to the brink of bankruptcy after the Panic of 1837.¹⁷

In addition to the material gains for Illinois, Lincoln also saw promise in the American System because it would allow reason and order to conquer the lawlessness and poverty of frontier Illinois.¹⁸ As Lincoln believed, central banks

¹⁶ Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," March 9, 1832, in Basler, *Collected Works*, 1: 7; John H. Krenkel, *Illinois Internal Improvements, 1818-1848* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press, 1958), 21; and Simon, *Lincoln's Preparation for Greatness*, 35.

¹⁷ Interview with John T. Stuart, June 24, 1875, in Burlingame, *An Oral History of Abraham Lincoln*, 12.

¹⁸ Daniel Walker Howe, "Why Abraham Lincoln Was a Whig," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 16, no. 1 (Winter 1995), 30-31.

and other measures to encourage domestic manufacturing would allow Illinois and the rest of the nation to not only prosper but become more logical and orderly. After all, the American System was a passionate embrace of the Market Revolution and the methods of rational production that went with it. Roads and railroads sped up overland travel for farmers and manufacturers alike, and canals imposed the logic of the emerging capitalist order onto the landscape. Lincoln heartily supported one canal to link the Illinois River and Lake Michigan, a project that later led to the flow of the Chicago River being reversed (from north into Lake Michigan to south toward the Illinois River) in 1900.¹⁹ Meanwhile, other canals promised to correct the handiwork of God, creating rivers where the Almighty may have forgotten to place them. With internal improvement projects, even nature became more orderly. Waterways were custom-made to carry two-way flatboat traffic, and rivers would be made to flow in the direction of progress.

Such promise for the nation appealed to young Abraham Lincoln because he believed deeply in the power of reason. Rather than follow frontier religious folkways, Lincoln found comfort in the rationalism of the Enlightenment and particularly the brand wielded by Thomas Paine in his *Age of Reason*, an impassioned attack on organized religion.²⁰ Instead of leaning on claims of

¹⁹ For Lincoln's thoughts on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, see Lincoln, "Remarks In Illinois Legislature Concerning a Bill for Completion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal," Feb. 26, 1841, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 244.

²⁰ William H. Herndon and Jesse William Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life* (Chicago: Belford, Clarke, and Co., 1889), 1: 125; Harvey J. Kaye, *Thomas Paine and the Promise of America* (New York: Hill and Wang), 119-120; Ward Hill Lamon, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln: From His Birth to His Inauguration as President* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1872), 2: 493; and Lind, *What Lincoln Believed*, 48-52. Early biographies of Lincoln suggest that as a young lawyer, he was quite the skeptic. Herndon noted that Lincoln denied the deity of Jesus and engaged enthusiastically in religious discussions but doubted Christianity.

understanding from ministers, Lincoln trusted reason and human ingenuity to resolve the mysteries of the universe. As such, he was from the start a friend of education, promoting throughout his adult life the public education that he never properly had and the founding of new colleges that he never attended.

Lincoln's insistence on reason had another component: he revered legal institutions and demanded unflinching obedience to the law and the maintenance of public order. In his demands for obedience, Lincoln came to oppose preemption rights for squatters on the public lands because preemption would allow for chaotic westward expansion and reward disrespect for the law. It would set a dangerous precedent, he and other Whigs worried, and it would ultimately discourage the industrious settlers and men of means whom Illinois Whigs hoped to attract to their state. Further, giving free land to squatters would hurt revenues that could fund transportation projects. Barely a month into his legislative career in January 1835, Lincoln proposed a resolution to instruct the state's Congressional delegation to "procure the passage of any law" that would give the state of Illinois "not less in amount than 20 per cent upon the amount annually paid to the Treasury of the United States, for public lands lying within the limits of the said State of Illinois" in order to build canals and railroads. Though it failed, the resolution clearly showed Lincoln wanted both obedience to the laws and yet another way to further the American System.²¹

²¹ *Illinois House Journal*, January 10, 1835; Olivier Frayssé, *Lincoln, Land, and Labor, 1809-60*, trans. Sylvia Neely (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 76-78; Lind, *What Lincoln Believed*, 60, 99; and John R. Van Atta, "'A Lawless Rabble': Henry Clay and the Cultural Politics of Squatters' Rights, 1832-1841," *Journal of the Early Republic* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2008), 349-350.

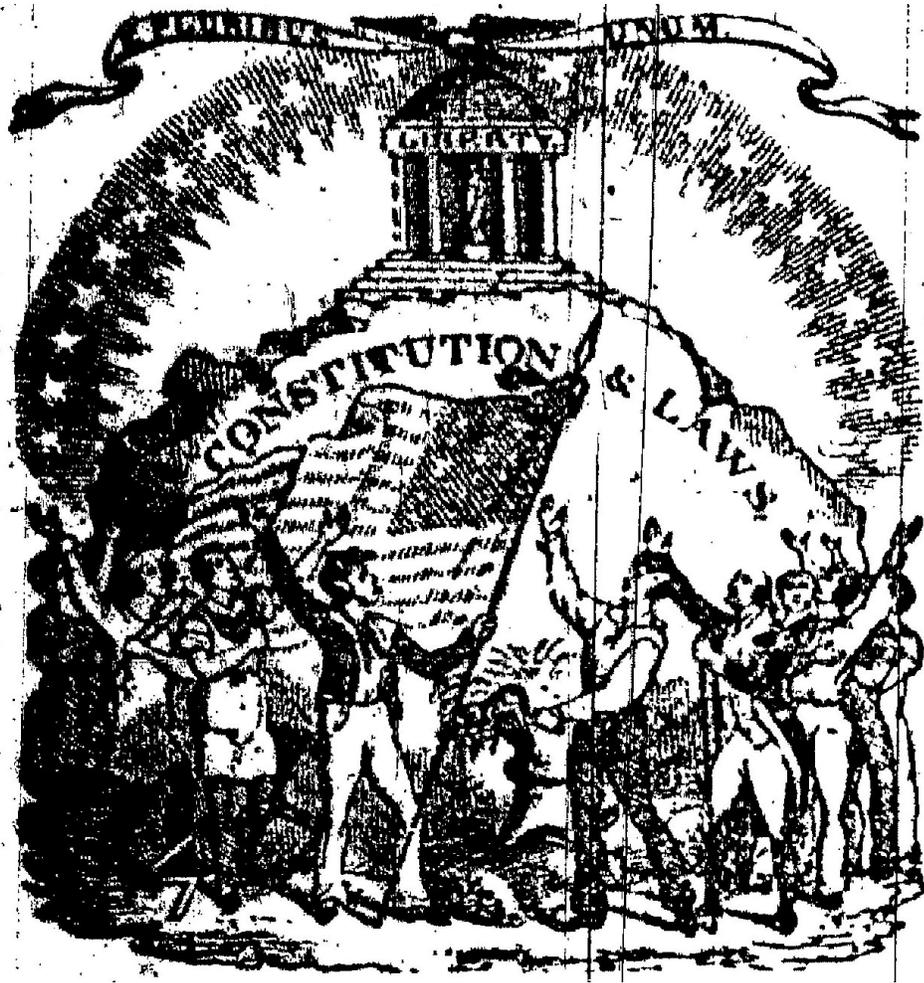


Figure 2: A picture commonly appearing in the *Sangamo Journal* in the late 1830s and early 1840s. Note the placement and reference for “Constitution & Laws,” a clear signal of the importance that Whigs in central Illinois placed upon obedience to republican authority. At times in 1840, the graphic also featured a banner for Harrison and Tyler. Source: *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), November 6, 1840.

Above all else, though, Lincoln demanded reason and public order because only then would Americans be able to reject the violence of Jacksonian-era politics, transcend the lawlessness of frontier society, and calm sectional strife. His speech to the Springfield Young Men’s Lyceum two weeks before his twenty-ninth birthday in 1838 was a plaintive call for reason and civility that was also perhaps his finest hour as a young politician. In a meditation on the murder

of abolitionist newspaper editor Elijah Lovejoy by a mob in Alton just two months before, Lincoln decried “an ill-omen amongst us” that included “increasing disregard for law... the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgment of Courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive ministers of justice.” These crowds were not virtuous republicans but men who “make a jubilee” of chaos and seek the “total annihilation” of government; they were the forebears, he said, of a “mobocratic spirit... now abroad in the land.”²²

Lincoln had a twofold purpose in denouncing the pro-slavery mob in Alton. First, he wanted to denounce his opponents among the Jacksonian Democrats. Even though Lincoln supported universal white male suffrage, he was repulsed by the seeming disorder of Jacksonian politics.²³ Second, and perhaps most importantly to him, he wanted to promote his vision of public order. “Let every American, every lover of liberty... swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others,” he implored. He hoped to see:

“reverence for the laws... breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe, that prattles on her lap – let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; – let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs; – let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the *political religion* of the nation.... Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defence.

²² Lincoln, “Address before the Young Men’s Lyceum,” January 27, 1838, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 109-111.

²³ *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), Feb. 26, 1841.

Let those be moulded into *general intelligence, morality* and, in particular, *a reverence for the constitution and laws.*²⁴

Clearly, a good American to Lincoln was an obedient and orderly American. On this point Lincoln would not yield: not in 1838 in the face of mob violence, and not in 1861 in the face of a broken Union. However, in the 1830s his view reflected the demands for order that went with the Federalist frontier.

Lincoln also was ascending the steps to the Springfield Capitol in the wake of an election in 1840 that saw the old Federalists and young Whigs joining together to back an ex-Jeffersonian convert, William Henry Harrison. After an unsuccessful run for President in 1836, Harrison remained a preferred candidate for many Whigs and was nominated by a national party convention in late 1839. The ensuing campaign has often been dismissed as one in which style triumphed over substance, as the political stunts and imagery of catchy slogans, hard cider, log cabins, and even the Log Cabin Whiskey of E.G. Booz prevailed over major issues.²⁵ However, it is significant in the Northwest because it shows the major branches of the Whig Party in the region working together to elect a man who was also, perhaps more significantly, a product of the Federalist frontier.

Harrison's path to the Presidency officially began on December 7, 1839, when sixty-nine-year-old Jacob Burnet rose to speak at the national Whig Party convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The aging Ohioan and still unrepentant

²⁴ Lincoln, "Address before the Young Men's Lyceum," January 27, 1838, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 1: 112, 115.

²⁵ Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 105-107.

Federalist had been chosen by friends and supporters of Harrison to make the formal nomination for their candidate. Throughout the speech, Burnet gave a short biography of Harrison and spoke in soaring terms of his military prowess, selflessness, and talent shown in various offices. Though they had once been political adversaries in Ohio because of their former party antagonisms, Burnet endorsed Harrison and pledged to support the old war hero and territorial governor. His reasons were simple: under Harrison's leadership the Whigs would continue to "stand for principles instead of men" because he had "talent and virtue enough" to save the nation from Jacksonian Democratic misrule.²⁶

The speech was rousing but not particularly meritorious on its own, but its circumstances make it a curious event. Burnet was standing in that Harrisburg meeting a living disproof of the historians who followed him. The Federalist Party was supposed to be anathema after the War of 1812, and its members were supposed to have scattered in the face of a new Republican consensus.²⁷ There stood Burnet, though. He was a living, breathing legacy of Federalist influence on the Old Northwest who was endorsing Harrison, a product of the institutional approach to white settlement of the lands north of the Ohio River during the late 1700s and early 1800s. Harrison also promised to extend institutional influence throughout the nation as a supporter of the American System. The influence of

²⁶ National Whig Party, *Proceedings of the Democratic Whig National Convention, which Assembled at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on the Fourth of December, 1839, for the Purpose of Nominating Candidates for President and Vice President of the United States* (Harrisburg, PA: R.S. Elliott and Co., 1839), 42. For the full speech, see 34-42.

²⁷ For particular examples of declaring the Federalists extinct, Brown, "The Ohio Federalists, 1803-1815," 281; and Donald J. Ratcliffe, *Party Spirit in a Frontier Republic*, 21, 122.

Federalist-created institutions in the Northwest had finally arrived on its long journey from the Ohio valley.

Abraham Lincoln also took an active part in the campaign of 1840 in his adopted home city of Springfield, Illinois. According to a February edition of the local *Sangamo Journal*, he was one of five local Whigs who served as editors for Springfield's campaign organ, *The Old Soldier*. Running only from February until the fall election in 1840, the newspaper defended the candidate of log cabins and hard cider from attacks on his political and military record as well as promoting the cause of domestic manufacturing. Lincoln even became an elector for Harrison from Illinois, a show of party loyalty as well as ardent support for the candidate.²⁸ However, Lincoln never had a chance to cast his vote for Harrison. The Northwest offered the Whig candidate his widest margins of victory in 1840. Ohio and Indiana delivered majorities of over ten thousand votes each, but Illinois fell to Martin Van Buren by less than two thousand votes.²⁹ Lincoln may have fallen short in his efforts at home, but he could still be happy to see his fellow Whig and Westerner heading into the Presidency.

Lincoln was climbing those steps in December 1840 as a proud Whig and an already distinguished politician, but the involvement of the early American state in the Northwest had its clear influences, too. His family had moved to the

²⁸ *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, IL), February 28, 1840; *The Old Soldier* (Springfield, IL), May 1, 1840; Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), I: 148; and Paul Simon, *Lincoln's Preparation for Greatness: The Illinois Legislative Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 207.

²⁹ Donald Richard Deskins, et al., *Presidential Elections, 1789-2008: County, State, and National Mapping of Election Data* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 119. The final tallies were in Ohio, 148,030-123,905 for Harrison; in Indiana, 65,239-51,655 for Harrison; and in Illinois, 47,398-45,532 for Van Buren.

former Northwest Territory to benefit from federal land distribution, and they had moved in the wake of the United States Army clearing away Indian threats from Indiana and Illinois. Lincoln had even participated in extirpating Indian threats through a short stint in the Illinois militia during Black Hawk's War. There in 1840 and onward, Lincoln hoped to bring those positive effects to the rest of the nation through the American System, another invention from the West that promised to enmesh government even more deeply into the everyday lives of Americans. This friendliness to government institutions from Westerners was the true legacy of the Federalist Frontier, and Lincoln carried that legacy with him into the Capitol and far beyond.

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