

### *The Other Trail of Tears: The Removal of the Ohio Indians*

By Mary Stockwell

(Yardley, Pa.: Westholme Publishing, 2014. Pp. xi, 388. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

In *The Other Trail of Tears*, independent scholar Mary Stockwell seeks to broaden our understanding of Indian removal beyond the famous story of the Cherokees and the Trail of Tears. Focusing on the Delawares, Ottawas, Senecas, Shawnees, and Wyandots who lived in present-day Ohio, Stockwell joins a growing body of scholarship that explores the long history of dispossession and removal in the Northwest Territory.

*The Other Trail of Tears* makes its greatest contributions as a political history and as an account of the experience of removal. In the first half of the book, Stockwell discusses an immense number of negotiations, treaties, and land cessions in the decades between the 1795 Treaty of Greenville and the final removals of the early 1840s. In doing so, she underscores the unrelenting force of American colonization in the region, as settlers, confident that the federal government supported them, repeatedly violated treaty boundary lines and coerced new land cessions. In her final chapters, Stockwell offers compelling accounts of the removal of the Ottawas, Senecas, Shawnees, and Wyandots from Ohio. Forced to sell most of their possessions before walking hundreds of miles to a foreign land, deportees suffered greatly due to a combination of incompetence, neglect, and malfeasance on the part

of federal officials who were charged with escorting and supplying them. Although unprepared for winter weather, parties repeatedly began their long journeys in the fall, and disease and malnutrition took their toll. Hundreds died. Through these stories, Stockwell embeds Indian removal in the broader context of decades of policy designed to push Indians onto smaller and smaller parcels of land.

Unfortunately, Stockwell fails to recognize the dynamism and complexities of Native peoples in the Old Northwest and often misunderstands the motivations behind their different responses to U. S. colonialism. Numerous scholars have demonstrated that Native peoples adapted to “civilization” policy by incorporating new industries into existing cosmologies and social norms. Change in subsistence or economic practices did not mean “becoming ... like the Americans,” as Stockwell states, and was often a strategy to retain sovereignty and avoid both assimilation and land loss (p. 141). At the same time, Stockwell heaps blame on Indian leaders who resisted the federal government. Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee prophet and brother of Tecumseh, rose to prominence for his message of pan-Indian unity in the years before the War of 1812, and he resisted assimilation until his death

in 1836. Stockwell misconstrues his fight for independence, and in the epilogue, she shockingly includes Tenskwatawa as “first and foremost” on a list of those most responsible for removal (p. 322). In other instances, her analysis echoes the ethnocentric statements of missionaries and officials, as in her assertion that Christianity helped Indians “overcome the worst parts of the traditional Indian way of life” (p. 119). Stockwell would have benefited from consulting studies by John Bowes, Adam Jortner, Susan Sleeper-Smith, Stephen Warren,

and others and avoiding the older, often outdated scholarship upon which she relies so heavily. These flaws undermine the valuable contributions of *The Other Trail of Tears*, and readers should approach it aware of its shortcomings.

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*Slavery's Borderland: Freedom and Bondage Along the Ohio River*  
By Matthew Salafia

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. Pp. viii, 318. Notes, index. \$55.00.)

Historians of the central United States have begun to probe their region's geographic and cultural boundaries. No matter how they have demarcated its cultural and political identity, however, scholars usually draw the antebellum dividing line between slave and free states. Matthew Salafia's new work on slavery and freedom in the Ohio River valley explicitly blurs those boundaries, both in geographic and methodological terms. The author raises important new scholarly questions: How do historians talk about conflicted borders, particularly when those borders required political and economic accommodation? How do historians describe the experience of unfree labor and human bondage in a region that was legally, if not actu-

ally, closed to slavery? Salafia's study of the Ohio River border—which functioned both as a natural geographic frontier and a political, economic, and cultural boundary—now enriches our understanding of the way a river can function as a conduit for new ideas, and also as a “seam” (to use his metaphor) that ties together sharply opposing communities (p. 7). The Ohio River was the central artery that carried goods, crops, people, ideas, conflicts, and (perhaps most important for Salafia) economic and political conciliation across both sides of the border.

Rivers are notoriously changeable and unreliable boundaries. *Slavery's Borderland* examines the Ohio River borders between Kentucky and the