Journal of Jacob Hull's Detachment of the Potawatomi Removal of 1838

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ABSTRACT: On August 28, 1838, General John Tipton arrived at the Twin Lakes encampment in Marshall County, Indiana, accompanied by one hundred armed militia, to enforce the provisions of an 1836 treaty with the Yellow River Potawatomi that specified the band's removal from their lands and homes in northern Indiana to the Osage River reserve in Kansas. Eight hundred and fifty-nine Potawatomi were forcibly gathered for the march from Indiana to Kansas, departing Twin Lakes on September 4. A small contingent of Potawatomi, too ill to accompany the main group, were left behind in Logansport, under the command of Captain Jacob Hull. They began the march to Kansas on September 27. Hull's journal, transcribed and edited by Dwight L. Smith, appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History* in 1949, and is published here with a revised introduction and footnotes.

KEYWORDS: Indian Removal, Potawatomi, Potawatomi Trail of Death, Indian treaties, War Department, Office of Indian Affairs, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Indian Territory, Logansport Indiana, Springfield Illinois, Wabash River, Tippecanoe River, Sangamon River, Illinois River, Mississippi River, Osage River, Menominee, John C. Tipton, William Polke, Abel C. Pepper, Jacob Hull

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On August 28, 1838, Gen. John C. Tipton and one hundred armed militia arrived at Twin Lakes camp in Marshall County, Indiana, where a council between Potawatomi chieftains (*wkamek*) and Abel C. Pepper, representative of the federal Office of Indian Affairs, was taking place. The Yellow River Potawatomi band, led by Menominee, had refused to leave their homes and cede their land to the federal government for white settlement. Tipton, Pepper, and Commissioner of Indian Affairs Carey Harris had already agreed that if the Potawatomi failed to comply with provisions of a treaty that many (but not Menominee) had signed in 1836, they would be forcibly removed to Indian Territory. Tipton arrested four of the *wkamek*; his troops gathered up the Potawatomi; and on September 4, over eight hundred Potawatomi, with an armed escort, began their forced emigration to Kansas.[1]

Some of the Potawatomi were too ill to travel. Captain Jacob Hull, who had been appointed assistant conductor of the emigration, was given charge of the small detachment that remained in Logansport. About three weeks after the main group left, Hull started from Logansport with a party of thirty-two Potawatomi, a clerk, an interpreter, and two wagoners.[2]

From Logansport, the party followed the Wabash River southwestwardly. In Fountain County, near Covington, they turned westward towards Danville, Vermilion County, Illinois. The Salt Fork marked their route to the vicinity of Sidney in Champaign County. From there Hull's detachment proceeded westwardly to the Sangamon River and followed it to the vicinity of Springfield in Sangamon County. The Illinois River was probably crossed almost directly west of Jacksonville, and the group probably crossed the Mississippi River somewhere between Quincy, Illinois, and Hannibal, Missouri.[3] From there, the trek continued westward across

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[1] See "Journal of the Forced Removal of the Potawatomi from Indiana, 1838," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 117 (June 2021), 82–151.

[2] Hull's journal appeared in Dwight L. Smith, ed., "Jacob Hull's Detachment of the Potawatomi Emigration of 1838," *Indiana Magazine of History* 45 (September 1949), 285-88. For correspondence among Hull, Tipton (the first conductor of the emigration), William Polke (the second conductor), Pepper, and Harris, see Polke to Hull, September 10, 1838, Polke Manuscripts, 1809-1868, LMC 1852, Lilly Library, Indiana University Bloomington; Tipton to Harris, September 10, 1838, 3:698-99, Pepper to Harris, September 15, 1838, 3:707-708, Hull to Tipton, September 11, 1838, 3:700, Nellie Armstrong Robertson and Dorothy Riker, eds., *The John Tipton Papers,* Volume 3: *1834-1839* (Indianapolis, Ind., 1942).

[3] Henry Tilley (a disbursing agent for the emigration) and Joseph Holman (appointed to join the emigration en route) caught up to Hull and his small group and reported back to Tipton. Tilley to Tipton, October 2, 1838, 3:740-41, Tilley to Tipton, October 10, 1838, 3:746, Holman to Tipton, October 11, 1838, 3:747, Robertson and Riker, eds., *John Tipton Papers*. Hull's group

Missouri, covering an average distance of about seventeen and one-half miles per day. On October 29, Hull's party, reduced in size by an escaped family group, joined the main body, led by William Polke.[4]

Hull kept a journal, which he submitted to Polke.[5] The original manuscript was transcribed and edited by Dwight L. Smith and appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History* 45 (September 1949).[6]

"Journal of an Emigration of a detachment of Indians belonging to the Indian Emigration under the Charge of Jacob Hull."

Sept 27th 1838 Left Logansport with Ira A. Fisk, Clerk, Edward McCartney, Interpreter, Peter Dunkle with 2 Teams, and Moses Ram with One, and thirty two Individuals of the Pottowotomy Nation and 12 Ponys Proceeded 16 Miles Encampd at Mr Granthus

28th proceeded 21 Miles Encampd at Daviss Ferry Near Tippecanoe Battle Ground

Kat-tice with her husband and five Children and 5 Ponys left the Emigration being unwell and Could not travel as fast as the waggons I supposed they were in Company with those who were riding and didnot [sic] Miss them untill we arrived near the Camp

29th Went back with Mr McCartney ten Miles and discovered they had taken up the Tippecanoe river the Cause of their leaving I have reason to believe was through the Perswasion of Joseph Baron the Interpreter—we returnd to Camp and Proceeded 10 Miles, 5 Miles west of Lafayette.

30th Proceeded 23 Miles Encampd Near Williamsport

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was decreased when one Potawatomi family escaped. Tilley noted that "Cattiece (of the Family of Packagos) her Husbang & 4 Children left the party near Tippecanoe River, yesterday Packagos & his Brother left also. Capt. Hull is of opinion, Barron is at the bottom of the plot." Joseph Barron had been left behind as an interpreter at Logansport and was traveling with Hull's group. Polke to Pepper, September 15, 1838, 3:708, Tilley to Tipton, October 2, 1838, 3:740-41, Robertson and Riker, eds., *John Tipton Papers*.

[4] The journal of the emigration noted on October 30: "Some time after our encampment Capt. Hull reported himself to the conductor and the number and condition of the emigrants under his charge. They number in all twenty-three, having five horses and three transporting wagons in company. They will be attached to the emigration under the charge of Judge Polke to-morrow." "Journal of the Forced Removal of the Potawatomi from Indiana, 1838," 136.

[5] Hull to Polke, October 30, 1838, ibid., 136–37.

[6] Editor Dwight Smith used a line drawn through a word to indicate text crossed out in the original manuscript. We have retained his editorial marking, as well as some of his original introduction.

Oct 1st Traveled 19 Ms this Morning Pok-Ka-gos and his Brother left the Emigration this Loss was much regreted as they were excellent hunters and appeard anxious to go West they were the Sons of Kattice[7]

2nd Arrived at danville [Illinois] being being 10 miles Travel Let the Indians Wash

3rd Travelled 22 Miles Encampd within five miles of Sidney

4th Proceeded 23 Miles to Sadarus [Sadorus] Grove

Oct 5th Travelled 15 Ms Encampd on account of water Encampd near the Sangamaw [Sangamon] River

6th Travelled 27 Miles Encampd 2 Miles west of Decatur

7th Travelled 16 Ms Encampd Near the Sangamaw River

8th Proceeded 23 Ms Encampd 2 Ms West of Springfield

9th Travelled 14 Ms to Berlin

10th Encamped Proceded 25 Ms 6 of Ms West of Jacksonville

11th Proceeded 19 Ms Crossd and encampd on the Bank of the Illinois River

12th Travelled 18 Miles

13th Travelled 27 do

14th Travelled 10 Miles and Encampd Crossd the Mississippi

15th Lay by to let the Indians wash River

16th Lost 7 Ponys found 2 & proceeded 6 Miles

17th a heavy fall of Snow & rain lay by

18th hired Sent Back a Man to assist in hunting the Ponys Proceeded 10 Ms at Night they Came in with all except one which belongd to the wife of Pok-ka-gos. Worth about $25—

19th Traveled 10 Ms. Topia-Na-bia being too Sick to travel farther

20th Traveled 11 Ms to Encamp there being no water within a reasonable distance

21st Traveled 22 Miles Encampd on Crooked Creek [Missouri]

22nd Traviled 27 Miles Encampd 6 Miles West of Paris

23rd Proceeded 21 Ms Encampd 2 Miles East of Huntsville

24th Proceeded 13 Miles

25th Traveled 18 Miles

26th Proceeded 16 Ms Encampd 7 Ms West of Grand River

27th Proceeded 20 Ms Encampd in a grove in a Peraira

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[7] Pok-ka-gos was probably Po-kah-gause (the pronunciation is identical), a signatory of the Treaty of Chippewaynaung on September 23, 1836. See Charles Kappler, *Indian Affairs, Laws, and Treaties* (7 vols., Washington, D. C., 1904), 2:472.

28th Traveled 22 Ms Encampd 1 1/2 Ms South of the Missourri R
29th Traveled 18 Ms Came up With the emigration
30th Traveled 14 Ms Encampd on Blue river & Reported
The distances get down in the journal was such as we heard from individuals who could not in every instance be relyed upon
[Endorsed] Jounal Jacob Hul Emigratg