

Pierre Moran, or Chief Parish of the Pottawattomie Indians

By JOHN WESLEY WHICKER, Attica

About 1750, there were quite a number of Frenchmen, perhaps most of them French-Canadian, buying furs at Post Ouiatanon. Esarey says of Ouiatanon, Volume 1, page 17:

In an official report on the Indians of the Lake Erie country, dated 1718, the agent said five villages of the Ouiatanons or Weas dwelt on the Wabash. In language, customs, and dress they resembled the Miamis. They had a "fort" situated on a high hill from which one could see countless buffalos grazing on the prairie. These Indians had earned an enviable reputation among the traders for their cleanliness. They allowed no dirt or filth to remain on the floor of their "fort" which they kept sanded like the "Tuilleries." They had, at that time, over two leagues of cleared land where they raised corn, pumpkins and melons. The men, numbered one thousand or twelve hundred, wore very little clothing, and played and danced incessantly.

Living about Ouiatanon, on the north side of the Wabash river, were many Pottawattomie Indians; and south of the Pottawattomies, on the same side of the river, were many Kickapoos. The young Frenchmen, that came into the Ouiatanon country to trap, catch fur-bearing animals, and trade with the Indians, quite often married into the Indian tribes.

William Burnett, one of these Frenchmen, married Kaukeema, the daughter of Aniquiba, and the sister of Topenebee. Her father, Aniquiba, was the head of both the state and religion of the Pottawattomie, and at his death, his oldest son, Topenebee, inherited the same position among the Pottawattomie. The elder Cicot married the daughter of a Pottawattomie Chief, who lived most of the time with his tribe near the Big Springs at Independence, Warren county, Indiana, and about the same time, Constant Moran married a Kickapoo squaw, and lived along Pine and Kickapoo creeks, just about straight across the river from Attica. Here, he raised a family, one of which was Pierre Moran, or Chief Parish, the sub-

ject of this sketch, who was born sometime during the War of the American Revolution, in Warren county, Indiana.

Soon after he was grown, he became a chief in the Kickapoo tribe of Indians, but for some cause, a few years later, he was banished from the tribe, and married a Pottawattomie squaw, who was living, at that time, near Black Rock in Warren county. Some time after his marriage to this Pottawattomie squaw, he was exalted to the position of chief among the Pottawattomie, and took up his residence on Flint creek, not far from West Point, in Tippecanoe county. About this time his father and mother both died and their younger children made their home with Chief Parish.

On page 186, Volume 7, *United States Statutes At Large, Indian Treatise*, says:

There shall be granted to Perig, a Pottawattomie Chief, one section of land on Flint River, where he now lives.

This Flint river was Flint creek in Tippecanoe county. At the same time it also says:

There shall also be granted to Mary Chatalie, daughter of Nebosh, a Pottawattomie Chief, one section of land to be located below the mouth of Pine River.

This section of land, granted to Mary Chatalie, was located in Warren county, just across the river from Attica, and Mary Chatalie is buried in the old graveyard at Attica.

Zachariah Cicot married the sister of Chief Parish or Pierre Moran, her Indian name was Pe-say-quot. On page 219, Volume 7, *United States Statutes At Large*, says:

The section of land granted by the Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818 to Peerish, or Perig, shall be granted to Jean B. Cicot, son of Pe-say-quot, sister of the said Peerish, it being so intended at the execution of the said treaty.

And on the same page, says:

To Pierre Moran or Peeresh, a Pottawattomie Chief, one section of land and to his children two sections of land at the mouth of the Elkhart River.

He first signed the Treaty of Peace as a Pottawattomie chief, September 29, 1817, which was made and concluded at

the foot of the rapids of the Miami, at Lake Erie. He signed here, Perish. He fought in the battle of Tippecanoe with the Prophet, as a chief in the Kickapoo tribe. Soon after the battle of Tippecanoe, he was banished from the Kickapoo tribe and about 1813, married a Pottawattomie squaw, said to have been the daughter of a Pottawattomie chief.

He signed the treaty of St. Mary's, October 2, 1818, here his name is Peaneesh, and in this treaty, it is said:

There shall be granted to Perig, a Pottawattomie Chief, one section of land on the Flint River, where he now lives.

He signed the treaty made and concluded at Chicago, state of Illinois, August 29, 1821, here he signs as Peannish, and it was at this treaty that the three sections of land at the mouth of the Elkhart river were granted to him and his children and it was at this treaty that he granted to Jean B. Cicot, the son of his sister, Pe-say-quot, the section of land which was granted to him at St. Mary's in 1818, it having been so intended at the execution of the treaty. After this section of land was granted to Jean B. Cicot, Jean B. Cicot sold it to his father, Zachariah Cicot, and the town of Independence, Warren county, Indiana, is now situated on this Indian grant.

He signed three of the Indian treaties as a Pottawattomie chief.

H. S. K. Bartholomew, in his article on "Early Elkhart History," in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, March, 1926, on page 61, says:

In discussing the two locations for the county seat, the other site was on an Indian reservation, which belonged to a Frenchman, Pierre Moran, who had married an Indian squaw. Moran had sold the site to a man named Godfrey, but had not given a good title to it, and the matter was then in litigation.

When Chief Parish sold this land, he and his tribe came back to Independence, Warren county, Indiana, where they lived, for a while with his brother-in-law, Zachariah Cicot.

About 1826, he took up his permanent home in a grove containing about two sections of land in Benton county, Indiana, still known as Parish Grove. This location seemed to be more pleasing to this roving Indian chief, and his tribe, than any

that they had previously had, and here in the Parish Grove he and his tribe were living when Benton county was surveyed and opened to settlers for entry.

On April 18, 1926, Jesse S. Birch, of Oxford, Indiana, wrote me a letter in regard to Chief Parish, in which he says:

I have examined my manuscript and find that Parish's mother was a Kickapoo and his father a French trader. That being the case how should he be recognized as a Pottawattomie chief?

According to Jacob P. Dunn, Parish was known as Parish Constant; why the latter name I do not know unless it was the name of his father. The Indians called Parish, "Patash," meaning that he stuttered and in his speech was like a wagon stuck in the mud. They pronounced it "Pa-ta-sha."

It seems possible that the name Peerech could easily be corrupted or anglicized into Parish, but I am of the opinion that they were different red skins.

The story of Parish climbing a tree in the forks of which he had built a platform on which to sleep and escape mosquitoes is generally believed and the glamour about it keeps it alive.

I have it that Parish lived in the woods of Fountain and Warren part of the time and in the grove that bears his name part of the time. Parish took a dislike to James McCord, who had settled in Warren in the early '20's, and in going to and fro threatened the women and children. McCord asked one of the Indians what he could do to secure Parish's friendship. The Indians told him to give Parish a plug of tobacco and tell him he wished a pact of friendship. McCord did so. Parish called for a cup of whiskey, took the liquid in his mouth and spat it back into the cup; he then handed to another Indian who did likewise. This was done by all the Indians present. Parish then handed the cup to McCord and told him to drink it, which he did, although he said afterward it was the bitterest dose he ever swallowed. To this ceremony the Indians meant that as he "drank of their breath" they were brothers.

Parish was a "bad" Indian and got drunk on every possible occasion. McCord was authority for the statement that a few days after the cup incident Parish got drunk and fell off his pony and broke his neck.

I am prone to the latter account of the ending of Parish, although as I said in the start, the platform story will survive.

I cannot reconcile my belief that Peeresh and Parish were the same Indian. It will take some digging to get at the facts and it will fall upon you, Elmore Barce and myself to do the digging. I am willing to do my share, but am at a loss to know where to sink my spade elsewhere than where I have.

Yours respectfully,

JESSE L. BIRCH (Signed)

Elmore Barce has sent me two letters, both prior to 1846, addressed to Parish's Grove, Indiana. One of them is addressed to I. H. and V. H. Robertson, Parish's Grove, Benton county, Indiana.

It is evident that Peresh, Perig and Parish are one and the same person. He signed the treaty of 1817 as Peresh, he signed the treaty of 1818 as Peaneesh, but his name in the body of the treaty is signed Perig, and his name is written in the treaty at Chicago in 1821 as Peannish.

In the treaty of 1818, it is said:

there shall be granted Perig, a Pottawattomie chief, one section of land on the Flint River where he now lives.

October 2, 1818, he was living on the Flint river or Flint creek in Tippecanoe county.

Previous to this time he had lived in Warren county and Fountain county. He moved from Tippecanoe county to his grant at the mouth of the Elkhart river in Elkhart county, from there back to Independence, in Warren county, and from there to Parish's Grove in Benton county.

The reason that the name was changed so often was that the scribe wrote the interpretation from the interpreter according to the phonetic sound, and no two interpreters sounded the name the same.

It is said that a large basswood or Linden tree, with two forks at the top, about equal in size, had been blown over; and the two forks of this tree straddled the largest walnut tree in the grove. On the side where the Linden tree fell there were no limbs, on the walnut tree, but on the opposite side was the first limb, and it was a very easy matter for the Indians to walk up the body of the leaning linden tree and then climb the walnut. In the top of this walnut tree, which was the largest tree in the Parish Grove, Chief Parish lived most of his time, and slept there always. That soon after the McCord incident, mentioned by Birch, Parish got drunk and fell from the tree. It is agreed by all the early settlers that Parish was addicted to drink and that he met an accident, while drunk, in which he was killed.

At the Battle of Tippecanoe, he took an active hand with the Indians, while Zachariah Cicot took an active hand with William Henry Harrison. The marriage of Cicot and the sister of Parish, Pe-say-quot, was performed first as an Indian marriage and probably all their children were born before they were re-married by the Christian marriage ceremony, on October 2, 1818. Here she married under the name of Elizabeth Moran, and it is said that Pierre Moran and his wife were witnesses to this ceremony. Zachariah Cicot and Pierre Moran were both adherents of the Catholic faith, and this marriage of Zachariah Cicot and Elizabeth Moran was a Catholic ceremony.

There was a marked and much traveled trail from the Parish Grove in Benton county, where Chief Parish lived, to the trading post of his brother-in-law, Zachariah Cicot, at Independence, Warren county, Indiana; and with the exception of what time Parish lived on his reservation at the mouth of the Elkhart river, he and his sister, the wife of Zachariah Cicot, always lived near each other and the friendship of this brother and sister, was as binding as that of any brother and sister of the white race.

He secured the section of land by treaty, for Jean B. Cicot, his sister's son, and he gave his consent that his nephew should convey to Zachariah Cicot, his father, with the understanding that it was to be laid about the Big Springs at the trading post of Cicot, near the Pottawattomie ford across the river, where it would become the permanent home of Pe-say-quot.

After the battle of Tippecanoe and the War of 1812, he and his brother-in-law, Zachariah Cicot, remained on intimate and friendly terms until their death, and Parish is the only Indian who was a chief in this locality, whose life and deeds we are, at this time, able to trace from his birth to his death.

It is certain that his mother was a Kickapoo; and that Pe-say-quot, the wife of Zachariah Cicot, was his sister; that Zachariah Cicot's mother was a Pottawattomie; that the Kickapoos, for some cause, banished Parish from their tribe; that the Pottawattomies adopted both Parish and his sister, Pe-say-quot into their tribe; and that afterwards the Pottawat-

tomies exalted Parish to the honorable position of chief in the tribe.

In 1823, when Price L. Kellog was designated to survey and locate the six sections of land, as the outline plat of Burnett's Reservation, at the mouth of Flint river, Parish was then living on his reservation at the mouth of the Elkhart river. Upon the request of Zachariah Cicot and the Burnetts, Parish met Price L. Kellog at Cicot's trading post, and together Parish, Cicot and Kellog, rowed up the Wabash river in a canoe to the Flint Bar, here they met Peter Weaver, the first white settler in Tippecanoe county, and his son, Patrick Henry Weaver. They asked Parish where this reservation should be laid out. He took Kellog to a spring of clear water that flowed out from between the shale rock on the east side of the river, showed him the spring and then said "Ugh", pointed up the river and then down the river. This spring still flows from between the shale rock on the banks of the Wabash river near Flint Bar. Price Kellog went down the river about one mile, making the spring about the center of the point where the reservation would front along the Wabash, then he measured up the river two miles; crossing Flint river, then came back a mile down the river from the spring and ran off the reservation in the direction Parish pointed. Kellog didn't see the Flint river, until he crossed it about ($\frac{1}{4}$) a quarter of a mile up the Wabash from the spring, as he ran the east line of the reservation near Flint river the Flint river runs clear through the east portions of the Burnett reservation. The home of Parish, until he left Tippecanoe county for his reservation at the mouth of the Elkhart river, was adjoining the Burnett Reservation.

Parish was born in Warren county, Indiana, and while like all the other Indians, he was a nomad, moving from place to place, he lived all his life in Indiana and died and is buried in Benton county, Indiana.

When John Robertson and his two sturdy sons, Henry and Samuel, left Kentucky in 1834, and crossed the Ohio river at the mouth of the Kentucky river, and followed the trail that General Charles Scott and his army had made in 1791, as far as Crawfordsville and followed the Kickapoo trail from there,

crossing the ford of the Kickapoo and continuing to follow the Kickapoo trail until they arrived at Parish's Grove in Benton county, where they stopped to make their permanent home. These were the first settlers in Benton county, and here in this grove, standing out in the prairie, Parish had, in his mature years, chosen his permanent home.

In the treaty of 1818, the Parish Grove was just about one mile south of the boundary line and north of this boundary line was Indian territory, until the treaty of peace on the Tippecanoe river in 1832, but in 1834, but little of this land had been entered from the government by actual settlers, it was still the hunting ground of the Pottawattomie.

In an address delivered by Elmore Barce, of Fowler to the Benton, Fountain and Warren Historical Societies, in Parish Grove, on August 24, 1924, (see *Indiana Magazine of History*, March, 1926, page 23) Barce described the grove and locality thus:

In 1834, the great prairies stretching onward to the next slope were entirely devoid of trees and houses, except where the course of some small stream was marked by a narrow strip of foliage on either side. If you could have ridden the paths here with Henry and Samuel Robertson in the month of June, 1834, you would have seen from right to left, at your very feet and leagues beyond, a rolling sea of grass filled with flowers and blossoms. To relieve the eye, and add a pleasing variation to these grassy stretches, little groves nestled here and there on the bosom of the prairie, that on a bright summer morning, resembled an island of blue in a sea of green. To enter these groves, filled with the songs of the thrush and gay with the blossoms of the crab-apple and the wild plum, to swing on the vine that entwined its ends about the tallest limbs, to listen to the chatter of numberless birds and the caw of the great black crows that nested and raised their young there, to climb into the tallest hickory or walnut and catch glimpses of the prairie through the vistas of the woods, was to realize the pure joy of living. An old man who saw these green savannas in 1852, once told me: "It's almost the same today as when it first came from the hands of God." To us, it is a garden beautiful, basking in the sunlight of abundance and plenty, the glorious ripening and harvest of years of peace.