

## Documents

### SOME VINCENNES DOCUMENTS OF 1772

Translated and Edited

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The question of the date of settlement of Vincennes is still an active one in the minds of some of our historically minded citizens, and the possibility of unearthing some new and authentic evidence is not to be overlooked. The report of a visit to the William L. Clements Library at Ann Arbor, Michigan, so rich in source material relating to Vincennes, led Mrs. Leo Schultheis, who is well informed on the history of the old French families, to inquire if the original manuscript of the Memorial of the Inhabitants of Vincennes to General Thomas Gage might be among the Gage manuscripts there. Mr. Howard Peckham, Curator of Manuscripts, was appealed to, and he later reported that he had accidentally stumbled upon the Memorial in an unsorted collection of material the day after he received the request. Photostats were at once obtained.

It seemed strange that the Memorial had never been printed, for the incident with which it is connected has been treated by a number of historians,<sup>1</sup> and relevant documents published. A local search failed to disclose any printed copy of the document. The staff of the Indiana State Library was consulted, and Miss Dorothy Riker supplied several valuable references, but could find no printed copies. To make the matter as certain as possible Miss Louise Phelps Kellogg of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Milo M. Quaife, of the Detroit Public Library, and Clarence E. Carter, editor of the *Territorial Papers of the United States*, Washington, D. C., were appealed to, all three of whom replied that the Memorial has not been printed.

The connection of this manuscript with the foundation date of Vincennes lies in the statement contained therein that the settlement was, in 1772, seventy years old. As the statement was known in print only from Gage's repetition of it

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<sup>1</sup> John B. Dillon, *History of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1843), 99-100; Jacob P. Dunn, *Indiana, a Redemption from Slavery* (Boston, 1900), 78; Dunn, *Indiana and Indianans* (Chicago, 1919), 128, 129, 130; Paul C. Phillips, "Vincennes in Its Relation to French Colonial Policy," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Dec. 1921), XVII, 323; Louise Phelps Kellogg, *The British Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest* (Madison, 1935), 123. For a more extended account, see Kellogg, "A Footnote to the Quebec Act," *Canadian Historical Review* (June, 1932), XIII, 147-156.

in his reply,<sup>2</sup> it seemed possible that there might be some elaboration in the original document that would throw new light on the subject. Such is not the case, and the Memorial even contradicts itself, for it further says that the settlement was made by a French officer, and, of course, that officer was Sieur de Vincennes. Jacob P. Dunn once suggested that the Memorial might have been misread because of poor penmanship and spelling.<sup>3</sup> This is not possible, for the photostat of the original shows that it was written by a scribe whose hand-writing is unusually clear for that time and place, judging from that of the signers of the document. There is no mistaking, "*Nostre établissement est de Soixente et dix année.*"

In 1787, a petition of the French of Vincennes to Congress said that they had inhabited this country for upwards of sixty years.<sup>4</sup> That statement would move the date in question to about 1727, probably much nearer the truth. Another communication, sent to Winthrop Sargent in 1790, and signed by two of those who signed the Memorial, Francois Bosseron and Louis Edeline, speaks of the founder, Vincennes.<sup>5</sup> Paul C. Phillips in his article, "Vincennes and French Colonial Policy," says that in 1725 Bienville, the Governor of Louisiana, wrote that the French had no fort on the Ouabache, although they had always had it in mind to place one there.<sup>6</sup> Vincennes established his military post under the orders of the Province of Louisiana, not many years before his death, which occurred at the hands of the Chickasaw Indians in 1736.<sup>7</sup> From these few sources, it appears that the French inhabitants of Vincennes were not justified in their statement in the Memorial, except that, being desperately anxious to present their cause and change Gage's reported opinion of them, they indulged in exaggeration, and added a few years to what was probably a vague date in most of their minds.

Quite apart from any connection with the founding date of Vincennes, the Memorial is of interest as a human docu-

<sup>2</sup> Phillips brief resume cited in the preceding footnote is an exception. His reference is to the copy in the Public Records Office, London.

<sup>3</sup> Dunn, *Indiana*, 79 (footnote).

<sup>4</sup> Clarence E. Carter, ed., *Territorial Papers of the United States*, II, 16.

<sup>5</sup> *American State Papers, Public Lands*, I, 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Indiana Magazine of History*, XVII, 317.

<sup>7</sup> See Jacob P. Dunn, "The Mission to the Ouabache," *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, III, No. 4; Phillips "Vincennes and French Colonial Policy", *loc. cit.*, 323. The editor of the documents published in this article has in her possession an unpublished article by the late Ben F. Sagar of Vincennes, who was a careful student of Vincennes history and a descendent of an old French family. He was convinced (and offered a documented account proving) that Sieur de Vincennes was the founder of Vincennes.

ment and the story connected with it a moving one. The whole incident was an outcome of the general policy of the British Ministry, and particularly that of General Gage, the Commander in Chief of the British forces in North America, in the administration of the French possessions ceded to Great Britain by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The great value of these lands appeared to them, as it had to the French, to lie in the fur trade. Gage wrote that "the country can produce nothing...except Skins and Furs,"<sup>8</sup> a statement which showed a complete lack of appreciation of the agricultural possibilities of this great granary. In order to preserve the fur trade, vast unsettled tracts were necessary, in which wild creatures might propagate and savages pursue them. Furthermore, the French settlements in the Illinois Country and on the Wabash were far away from headquarters, making military garrisons, or even civil government, difficult to maintain. The Illinois settlements did not get along well with the first commandants.<sup>9</sup> Vincennes had no British officer at all, but a French Commandant, perhaps chosen by the inhabitants themselves. Gage reported to Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, that the French settlements, particularly the one at Vincennes, were attracting "strollers and vagabonds," who were dfrirting there in considerable numbers.<sup>10</sup> He further reported that the French were instigating the Indians against the British traders.<sup>11</sup> He wrote earlier to Barrington that the Indians had even "murthered" several traders, and that he feared the French might drive the British traders out of the country entirely.<sup>12</sup> In short, Post St. Vincent appeared to him to be a rapidly growing "Nest of Villians."<sup>13</sup>

The conclusion reached by Gage and Hillsborough, in view of all these difficulties, was that it would be desirable to remove the inhabitants of the distant settlements to some of the established colonies. This was a policy requiring considerable deliberation in the matter of the Illinois settlements, but the growing settlement at Vincennes was showing such

<sup>8</sup> Gage to Hillsborough, Aug. 18, 1770, Clarence E. Carter, ed., *The Correspondence of General Gage* (New Haven, 1931-1933), I, 266; *ibid.* III.

<sup>9</sup> Clarence E. Carter, *Great Britain in the Illinois Country* (Washington, 1910), 60, 146.

<sup>10</sup> Gage to Hillsborough, Jan. 5, 1769, *Correspondence of Gage*, I, 212.

<sup>11</sup> Gage to Hillsborough, Oct. 1, *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Gage to Hillsborough, Mar. 4, 1769, *ibid.*, II, 503.

<sup>13</sup> Gage to Hillsborough, May 14, 1770, *ibid.*, I, 275.

a dangerous tendency that it must be broken up forthwith. Accordingly, Hillsborough officially informed Gage that it was the King's pleasure that notice be given the inhabitants at once to retire from the place.<sup>14</sup>

Gage therefore issued the necessary proclamation, dated April 8, 1772, which claimed that

many persons, contrary to the positive orders of the King upon this subject, have undertaken to make settlements beyond the boundaries fixed by the treaties made with the Indian nations, which boundaries ought to serve as a barrier between the whites and the said nations; and a great number of persons have established themselves, particularly on the river Ouabache, where they lead a wandering life, without government, and without laws, interrupting the free course of trade, destroying the game, and causing infinite disturbance in the country, which occasions a considerable injury to the affairs of the King, as well as to those of the Indians; His Majesty has been pleased to order, and by these presents orders are given in the name of the King, to all who have established themselves on the lands upon the Ouabache, whether at St. Vincent or elsewhere, to quit those countries instantly and without delay, and to retire, at their choice, into some one of the colonies of His Majesty, where they will be received and treated as the other subjects of His Majesty.<sup>15</sup>

This proclamation was evidently conveyed to Vincennes through Captain Hugh Lord, then in command at Kaskaskia, who was much more acceptable to the French than the preceding commandants. The consternation resulting from this communication may easily be imagined, for the Vincennes inhabitants had no reason to doubt that the British would carry out the order. The sad fate of the Acadians may have been known to them. They wrote Captain Lord, under date of July 21, that they would send two delegates to General Gage, to present their cause and beg for justice. Lord forwarded a copy of this letter to Gage.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after this, in August, Hillsborough fell from power and was succeeded by Dartmouth. Gage reported to Dartmouth, in his letter of January 6, 1773, that the delegates had not arrived.<sup>17</sup> On March 23 following, he received the letter and Memorial from Vincennes.<sup>18</sup> These were dated September 18, 1772. Just how they were transmitted does not appear. Gage does not mention delegates. It is interest-

<sup>14</sup> Hillsborough to Gage, Dec. 4, 1771, *ibid.*, II, 137-178.

<sup>15</sup> For text, see Dillon, *op. cit.*, I, 99.

<sup>16</sup> Gage to Dartmouth, Jan. 6, 1773, *Correspondence of Gage*, I, 343.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> See endorsement on originals.

ing to note the length of time required for the communication to reach Gage at his headquarters in New York. He forwarded copies to Dartmouth in his letter of April 7, 1773, along with some "Remarks" on the subject of the validity of the Vincennes land titles. He admitted that land had been granted by French Governors of Canada, which grants could be verified by the Registers of the Province. However, as the Illinois Country and Post Vincennes had depended on the Province of Louisiana, their grants would have to be verified at New Orleans, a much more difficult matter. Gage still insisted that many had "strolled" in and "seated themselves without any Colour of Right or Title." However, he had written them to transmit "a List of all the Settlers, to mention each person by Name, the Date of his Grant, by whom granted, by whom confirmed, and where it is registered."<sup>19</sup> In the meantime, Dartmouth, much more sympathetic to the woes of the French, wrote to Gage on March 3, 1773, that he considered that the French held their possessions by right, and that furthermore, the inhabitants of "Post S. Vincent" no longer appeared to be "a lawless vagabond Banditti . . . but in the Light of Subjects claiming the King's protection and countenance in Right of possessions held under regular Titles."<sup>20</sup>

Gage was about to return to England on leave, and Dartmouth expressed the hope of receiving all possible information direct from him.<sup>21</sup> Haldimand, who commanded in Gage's absence, was opposed to the plan of removal, and intimated that most of the accounts of Vincennes had come from "jealous and self-interested traders." He offered the settlers every encouragement to prove their grants, and said he would recognize those that appeared just.<sup>22</sup>

The Verification of Titles asked for was prepared according to the directions of Gage and sent to General Haldimand. Along with it came a letter from St. Marie, the Commandant, and certificates of Phillibert, the Notary, and St. Ange, long-time commandant at Vincennes, under whom most of the grants had been made.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Correspondence of Gage*, I, 374-378.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 156-157.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, note 20.

<sup>22</sup> Phillips, "Vincennes and French Colonial Policy," *loc. cit.*, 337.

<sup>23</sup> Printed in *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, I (Indianapolis, 1879), 421-431.

Gage reported to Haldimand that there was no inclination to deport the settlers, but just what to do about furnishing them with a government was uncertain.<sup>24</sup> The final decision resulted in the Quebec Act of 1774, which added a vast region to the Province of Quebec.

Says Miss Kellogg:

The great extent of country bounded by the Ohio River, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi . . . was for the sake of its French inhabitants joined to Canada and taken from the American colonies, which claimed the rights of settlement therein. As is well known, this was one of the grievances cited by the Americans in their Declaration of Independence. To avoid making exiles of the Western French, the British ministers annexed this great region to their new Province of Quebec.<sup>25</sup>

Upon Gage's return to America in May, 1774, the disturbances in the Eastern colonies demanded all his attention, and there is only one brief mention of the western settlements in his published letters.<sup>26</sup> Vincennes had an interlude of peace until the stirring events of 1778-1779.

The list of photostats obtained from the William L. Clements Library includes: the original letter; the Memorial; and the retained copy of the letter of the inhabitants of Post Vincennes to Captain Lord. As before stated, the penmanship of these documents is clear enough, but not so much can be said of the signatures. Part of them are much faded, as well as badly written. Copies of the Memorial and letter were retained with Gage's papers, and so photostats were sent for, in order to see what the guess of the copyist might be as to the signatures. With these and several available lists of the inhabitants (such as the census of 1769), the Verification of Titles, and lists of names in the *American State Papers, Public Lands*, most of them were deciphered. Mrs. Schultheis supplied several. Finally, through the kindness of the late Very Reverend James Gregoire, pastor of the St. Francis Xavier Parish (the Old Cathedral at Vincennes), one of his assistants checked the list by copies of the early parish register, thus clearing up all but one name. The signatures on both documents are the same, and in practically the same order, except that the Memorial has one fewer than the fifty-six of the letter. There was no room on the page for the last man

<sup>24</sup> Louise Phelps Kellogg, "A Footnote to the Quebec Act," *loc. cit.*, 155.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Gage to Dartmouth, March 4, 1775, *Correspondence of Gage*, I, 394.

to sign the Memorial. As usual, the spelling varies from that of other lists.

As will be seen, the Memorial is an eloquent document. With the serious charges of Gage's proclamation to refute, the settlers were faced with a real task to find convincing answers and to express them forcefully. As is often the case, the language becomes flowery at times, and punctuation is omitted. This makes it somewhat difficult to decide just what idea it is intended to convey. Mr. Anton Reinbold, professor of French at Vincennes University, and Dr. Bruno Roselli helped greatly in clearing up obscure passages.

An effort was made to discover whose might be the hand-writing of the original documents. They were checked by the Francis Vigo Papers in the Harrison Mansion at Vincennes, but no comparable script was found, although there are several documents of the time. Either the copyist took such pains that the result lost all resemblance to his every-day hand-writing, or he is not represented in the Vigo papers. There seems to be no resemblance between the hand-writing of the documents and that of Etienne Phillibert, Gabriel Le Grand, or Antoine Gamelin, early notaries.

[THE DOCUMENTS AND TRANSLATIONS]

[Endorsement]

Letter from the settlers at Post Vincent on the River Ouabache, to Capt. Lord of the 18th Regt. Commanding at Kaskaskias in the Illinois Country.

To Right Honble. Earl of Dartmouth, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretary's of State.

No. 5. 6th: January 1773

(Pour Copie)

Monsieur,

Nous avons reçu les Ordres du Roy, que vous avez eû la Bonté de nous envoyer, pour sortir du Pâis; Nous donnerons à sa Majesté dans toutes les occasions des Marques de notre Fidelité et de notre Obeissance; mais il nous paroît que le Roy notre Maitre n'est pas instruit des Titres de Concessions que nous avons sur ces Terres. C'est ce que nous engage à envoyer a Monsr. Le General Gage deux Deputés pour l'instruire de nos Droits, afin de supplier sa Majesté de nous faire Justice.

Nous avons l'Honneur d'etre avec un tres profond Respect,

Monsr

Votre très humble et très

Obéissant Serviteurs,

Au Poste Vincent, le 21<sup>e</sup> Juillet  
1772

P. Hilliber [Phillibert?]  
LEDeloin

Marque+de Noyon  
Marque+Cardinal  
Marque de+La Deroute  
Marque de+Bienet  
Veudroite  
Francois Barrois

Ste Marie  
Barellon  
C Luru [Olivier] Santiez  
Jean Bape. St. Aubin  
Bat Caunaux  
Pierre Gosselin [Gamelin?]

[Translation]

Sir,

We have received the orders of the king, which you have had the kindness to send us, to leave the country. We shall give to His Majesty at every opportunity proof of our fidelity and of our obedience; but it seems to us that the King our master is not acquainted with the titles of concession which we have to these lands. It is this which obliges us to send two delegates to General Gage to inform him concerning our rights that he may entreat His Majesty to render justice to us.

We have the honor to be with very profound respect,

Sir,

Your very humble and very obedient servants,

At Post Vincent, July 21st, 1772.

[Endorsement on outside wrapper]

Indian Dep. 1.

Letter from the Inhabitants of Poste Vincenne, on the ouabache to General Gage-

Septr: 18<sup>th</sup>: 1772

Received March 23<sup>rd</sup>:1773.

Monsieur

Nous avons reçu avec autant de Respect que de Surprise laproclamation dont Vostre Excellence a ordonné qu'on nous fit la publication; plains de respect pour tout cequi porte l'emprunte de Lauthorité Nous aurions obeis sens differer Sil Nous avoit été possible et Si Nous Navions Roconnue que La chauze ne regardoit que des Vagabons et Non des habitans paisibles Cultivateurs ayent des possessions sur des tittres sacrées,et que Nostre obeissance Même seroit injurieuze a Sa magesté et contraire a Ses Interest,Dailleurs Vostre Exelence,Monsieur peut Mieux que personne Connoistre L'impossibilité absolue Ou Nous Nous trouvons de transporter au loüin Nos fêmes et Nos enfants Sans autres ressources qu'un Vaine esperence destre reçu Comme les autres Sujets,cequi Nous fairoit effectivement meriter le titre de Vagabons, Nous Vous supplions Monseur de prendre En consideration tout cette lettre que Les respectueuzes representations que Nous avons lhonneur de Vous adresser cy joüint que Nous Vous prions de faire parvenir



a un prince pour lequel Nous Serons toujours prêts a sacrifier Nos Vies  
et Nos Biens lors que Son Service le Requerrera reellement.

Nous avons lhonneur destre avec leplus Profound Respect  
De Vostre Exelence

Monsieur

Vostres humbles et tres  
obeissents Serviteurs

Vincenne Le 18e 7bre 1777

Ste marie Commenden

baullon

marque de+Laderoutte Capt

Bosseron Baptts chapau marque+de Chabot marque+de Cornoye

huberdeau

milliet

veuve Mallet

marque de+plichon St.aubien disy ducharme

Olivier Santiez Chabot+Lejeunne marque de+Berromehe (?)

marque de+Latulipe marque+Millet Cardinal marque+de paget

chine marque+de Desloriers marque de+perron

marque+de Danis

LEdeline fr Bosseron

marque de Brunet

marque+de Neaux

peron+fil

marque+de Corneau

Mariè

francois goderré

marque de+Cartier

marque+de Veaudre

chalbaunaux

ipolite bolon fils marque de+Boye louis Crepo

marque de+Lavigne marque de+Jeanmarie Barrois

marque de+jib Laviolette marque+allaire marque de+Villeneuve

marque de+charle Bonneau fils louis Mallett

francois barrois vudroite J B+Valcour

marque de+St yzier marque+de Binet joseph peridot

rene Codere marque de+Deshtre marque de+Latrimouille

marque de+Denoyon lejeun marque de+Denoyon Laine

marque de+Morrin

[Translation]

Sir:—

We have received with as much respect as surprise the proclamation which Your Excellency has ordered to be issued to us. Filled with respect for whatever carries the imprint of authority, we would have obeyed without delay if it had been possible, and if we had not recognized that the matter would apply to vagabonds and not to peaceful agrirultural settlers, holding possessions based upon sacred titles, and that our very obedience would be injurious to His Majesty and contrary to his interests. Furthermore, Your Excellency, you can understand better than anyone the absolute impossibility in which we find ourselves of transporting afar our wives and children without other resources than a vain hope of being received as other subjects, which would indeed cause us to deserve the title of vagabonds. We implore you, Sir, to take into consideration this entire letter as well as the respectful representations which we have the honor of addressing to you herewith and which we beg you to forward to a ruler for whom we shall always be ready to sacrifice our lives and our property

whenever his service shall in reality require it.

We have the honor to be with the most profound respect for Your Excellency, Sir,

Your humble and very obedient servants,  
Vincennes, September 18, 1772.

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[Endorsement on outside wrapper]

Indian Dep 2

Memorial of the Settlers at Post Vincenne to Genl Gage  
Sept. 18 1772

Received March 23rd 1773

Tres humbles Representations quont Lhonneur de faire a son Exelence, Monsieur Major General Gage Les Habitants de Vincenne Sur le ouïabache-au Sujet de la proclamation du huit avril dernier.

Monsieur

Le desespoir serois l'unique ressource des Malheureux supplient Sil navoient la confiance la plus assurée dans la Justice de Sa Magesté Britanique,dans la droiture de Ses Intentions et dans les Bons offices que vous vouderois Bien leurs rendre aupres Du trone.

Dans la Consternation qua genneralement rependue parmi Nous lapublication de Vostre proclamation du huit avril Dernier Nous avons inutilement cherché les Cauzes dordres Si affligentes et Si Rigoureux et dapres le jugement leplus Severe de Nos actions depuis queNous Vivons Sous lheureux Gouvernement de sa Magesté nous avons crié quil faloit en chercher la Source Dans laavidité de ceux qui ont Envie denvahir Nos heritages, et qui pour y parvenir ont cherché a Noircir Nostre conduite.

Pourions Nous En effet Sens menquer au respect due ala Justice de Sa Magesté,a Sa parole Sacrée et a Ses Serments inviolables,donner Une autre Source a un ordre (quil Nous Soit permis delelire avec respect) Si inhumain et qui Sape dans son principe Son droit de Souveraineté, Dans Ces contrées,puis que le mesme acte qui le luy assure promet de respecter nos possessions? depuis quand Sous le Gouvernement le plus equitable Se Joueroit on de la propriété qui ne peut pericliter quil ne Soit luy mesme en denger.

Nous nous Sommes Meconues dans les termes de la proclamations de Vostre Exelence et ces mesme termes Nous rassurent Sur lavenir puis quil paroist quon enveut qua des Vagabons, aulieu que nous formons un peuple D'habitent tranquil cultivent des terres que Nous avoit concédé Sa Mageste tres Chretienne,ou que Nous avons acheté et Souvent arozé de Nostre Sang tous titres aussi Sacré quinviolable Sous un Gouvernement dont le fondement innebrenlable est assis sur La Justice et Lequité

Nous ne nous sommes point etablie icy a laventure et Contre les ordres du Roy ainsi quon la insinué a Sa Magesté et peut estre mesme avostre Exelence,Nostre etablissement est du Soixente et dix année et par Consequent Bien Enterieur au Gouvernement de sa Magesté pour laperpetuité du quelle nous formons de Voeux seinceres Il a été fait par ordre et sous la protection de sa magesté tres Chretienne par un of-

ficier de Ses troupes qui y Commendoit en Son Nom, apres luy nous avons toujour Eu deautre Commendent francais jusqua la paix qui En a assuré la possession a la Grand Bretagne.

Les Traités qui fixent Les limittes Entre les Indiens et les Blancs ainsi que les ordres de Sa magnesté dont Vostre proclamation fait mention Nous ont toujour été tres In connues Dailleurs ils Sont ou enterieurs, ou posterieurs a la dernieres paix avec la france dans le premier Cas Ils Ne pouvoient Nous concerner puisque Nous Netions point sujet Bretons dans le Second Ils N'ont pu etre fait que Sous la reserve de Nos droits;quant au reproches qu'on Nous fait de Vivre Sens loix et Sens Gouvernement,Cest Une perre qui les fait a des enfants incabable de Se conduire Euxmesme cest aluy dy pourvoir;

Nostre ignorence en cette partie et Nostre Soumission Exigeoit que le Gouvernement y pourvûe et repondoit du succes,quelle Interruption avons Nous apporté au Comerse amoin quon Neveuille Nous rendre responsable de la langueur ou il est generellement tombé dans ces Contrées Soit par Ledeffaut deVente de Nodanrées comme par le passé soit par une surcharge de Marchandize exedente de Moitié Célle qui peuvent estre consommé et payées Soit par la façon de traiter et encaure plus par le deffaut decontenir et de Conduire les Seauvages qui Se portent a toutte Sorte dexex et qui traite a Sa fentaizis—

Qu'on nous envoie des troupes on vaira toutte chauze Rentrer dans l'ordre le comerse renaitre et Nous devenir des hommes hutils et que de tout les endroit celuy cy est le plus necessaire quoique le plus Negligée etent le centre entre ledetroit et le fort pitt et les Illinois,le passage des Nations et la Sureté de la belle rivierre et du Missisipie quil Nous Soit permis de Representer a Son exelence que si Samagesté est dans le dessin détablir cepays il faut toujours commenser par le haut qui fait la sureté du Bas auquel il peut prester promptement Secour aulieu quil ne peut en recevoir que de tres tardiffe par la difficulte de remonter celuy qui Sera maistre du haut par cette Raison le Sera toujours du bais,-

Le crime qu'on Nous fait de detruire le gibier est de Nul Invention Nous chassons ainsi que nous faisons par le passé pour vivre lors que la culture de nos terres Nous le permet, en cela Nous Ne faisons que ceque font les habitent des Illinois et les Anglais mesme qui y sont, les Seauvages En detruiroie Unpeut plus et tout revienderoit au même Cest parla que sous legouvernement français,Nous Nous sommes trouvé a mesme de fournir des annimeau domestiques pour le services soit icy,aux Illinois,ou au fort pitt,cest par ce moyen que Nous avons été amesme de fournir au troupes englaize aux Illinois-Laplus grande partie des annimeaux quelles y ont Consommé depuis leurs arrivées et que Nous Serons en etat deleurs En fournir davantage alavenir et aux habitants qui pourons venir escala le prejudice qu'on Nous accuze daporter aux affaires du Roy.

Quent aux Seauvages Nous Serions trop heureux Sils avoient pour nous les attentions que labandons ou Nous Sommes nous force d'avoir pour eux cedont nous ne pouvons Nous flatter quantent que Nous Nous pretons Un mutuel Secour avec une garnison que Nour desirons inutillement depuis long temps

Telle sont les motifs dont on a coloré la Surprise faite à la religion du meilleur des Rois que Nous Cherissons et respectons; Son Excellence par état a été obligé d'en faire l'objet de la proclamation dont nous demandons humblement la rétraction Comme Injurieuse à l'équité du Roi à laquelle Nous en appelons, Nous avons la plus ferme Confiance dans les hautes vertus de son Excellence et comme c'est le propre des grandes âmes de s'intéresser pour un peuple malheureux-Lors que la justice est de son côté, Nous la supplions de suspendre la proclamation et enfin d'en solliciter elle-même la réduction elle fera chose digne d'elle et obligera à jamais les sous-signés habitants qui ne Cesserons de former des Vœux pour la prospérité et Conservation. A Vincennes le 18<sup>e</sup> 7bre 1772

Stemarie	Commendant	marque + de	laderouette	capitaine
baillon				
chapau	marque Chabot +	Marque de +	Cornoye	
Bosseron	Bapts	huberdeau		
millet	veuve Mallet	St aubin		
disy	marque + de plichon	Chabot + Le Juene	marque + de	Berrouy (?)
ducharme	Olivier santiez	marque + de	latulipe	
marque +	millet Cardinal	marque + de	paget	chine
marque de +	Desloriers	marque + de	perron	marque + de
LE Deline	fr Bosseron	marque + de	Brunet	
marque de +	Neaux	perrons +	fils	marque de +
marie	francois goderre	marque de +	Cartier	
Chalbauneaux	marque + de	Boye	marque de +	Veaudry
louis crepo	ipolite bolon	fils		
marque de +	Lavigne	marque de +	Jean marie	Barrois
marque de +	Villeneuve	marque + de	jb Laoville	
marque de +	alaire	marque de +	Charle	Bonneau fils
marque de +	styzier	francois barrois	louis Mallet	
marque de +	Binet	joseph peridot	vudroite	J.B. + Valcour
rene Codere	marque de	Latrimouille	marque de	Deshtre
marque de	Denoyon	Laine	marque de	Denoyon Le Jeune

[Translation]

Very humble representations which the inhabitants of Vincennes on the Wabash have the honor to address to His Excellency Major General Gage, on the subject of the proclamation of last April Eighth. Sir:—

Despair would be the sole resource of [your] unhappy suppliants if they did not have the most certain confidence in the justice of His Britannic Majesty, in the righteousness of his intentions, and in the good offices which you will be willing to render them at the foot of the throne.

In the consternation which the publication of your proclamation of last April the Eighth has spread among us generally, we have uselessly searched for the causes of such distressing and harsh orders, and after the most rigid judgement of our actions since we have lived under the felicitous government of His Majesty, we have reached the belief that it would be necessary to seek their source in the greed of those who wish to encroach upon our inheritance, and who, in order to succeed, have sought to blacken our conduct.

May we, indeed, without being wanting in the respect due to His Majesty's justice, to his sacred word, and to his inviolable oaths, give another source to an order (may we be permitted to say it with respect) so inhuman, and which undermines in its principles his right of sovereignty in these regions, since the same act which assures it to him, promises to respect our possessions? How long, under the most equitable government, could one make light of the right of property, which can not jeopardize without being itself in jeopardy?

We do not recognize ourselves in the terms of the proclamation of Your Excellency, and the same terms reassure us with reference to the future, since it would appear that we are complained of as vagabonds, whereas we are a group of peaceful settlers, cultivating the lands which His Most Christian Majesty granted us, or which we have purchased, and often watered with our blood, all titles as sacred as they are inviolable under a government, the unshakable foundation of which is seated upon justice and equity.

We did not establish ourselves here by chance, and contrary to the orders of the King, as has been insinuated to His Majesty and perhaps even to Your Excellency; our settlement is seventy years old, and consequently long preceding the government of His Majesty, for the perpetuity of which we offer sincere prayers. It was made by the order and under the protection of His Most Christian Majesty by an officer of his troops who commanded here in his name; after him we have always had other French commandants, up to the time of the peace which assured its possession to Great Britain.

The treaties which establish the boundaries between the Indians and the Whites, as well as the orders of His Majesty of which your proclamation makes mention, have always been entirely unknown to us. Furthermore, they either precede or are subsequent to the latest peace with France. In the first case, they could not have concerned us, since we were not British subjects; in the second, they could not have been made except with the reservation of our rights; as to the reproaches which are made to us of living without laws and without government, it is a father who makes them to children incapable of taking care of themselves; it is his duty to provide for them.

Our ignorance in this business and our submission would require that the government make provision for it and be answerable for success. What interruption did we bring to trade unless some one wishes to make us responsible for the decline into which it has in general fallen in these regions, either through the want of sale for our commodities as in the past, or by a surplus of goods, exceeding by half that which might be consumed and paid for, or by the manner of dealing with, and still more by the want of restraining and guiding the savages, who give themselves over to all sorts of excesses, and who act according to their whims.

Let troops be sent to us. You will see everything returning to order—trade reviving, and ourselves becoming useful men; and of all places this is the most necessary, although the most neglected, being the center between Detroit, Fort Pitt, and the Illinois country, the thoroughfare of the nations, and the security of the Beautiful River and the Mississippi; may we be permitted to represent to His Excel-

lency that if His Majesty is planning to establish this region, he must always begin with the upper part, which makes for the security of the lower, to which it can lend aid promptly; whereas it can receive help only after a long delay because of the difficulty of going up [against the current]. He who will be master of the upper part will always, for this reason, be master of the lower.

The crime of destroying the game, of which we are accused, is a fabrication. We hunt to live, as we have done in the past, when the cultivation of our lands permits. In this we do only what is done by the inhabitants of the Illinois country, and by the English themselves who live there. Should the savages destroy a little more, the result would be the same. It is in that way that under the French government we were able to furnish domestic animals for the service, either here, in the Illinois country, or at Fort Pitt; it is by this means that we have been able to furnish to the English troops in the Illinois country the greater part of the animals which they have consumed there since their arrival, and we will be in a position, moreover, to furnish them, and the settlers who may come, still more in the future. Is that the injury we are accused of bringing to the business of the King?

As to the savages, we would be only too happy if they had for us the care which our state of neglect compels us to have for them, a situation which we cannot enjoy unless we exchange mutual help with a garrison, which we have fruitlessly desired for a long time.

Such are the motives with which has been painted over the betrayal of good faith of the best of kings, whom we love and respect. His Excellency on this account has been obliged to make this matter the object of the proclamation of which we humbly request the retraction, as prejudicial to the justice of the king, to which we appeal. We have the strongest confidence in the superior virtues of His Excellency, and as it is the characteristic of the great to interest themselves in an unhappy people when justice is on its side, we beg him to stay the proclamation, and in short to urge even its withdrawal; he will perform an act worthy of him, and will oblige forever the undersigned inhabitants, who will not cease to offer prayers for his prosperity and preservation.

Vincennes, the 18th of September, 1772.

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## SERGEANT-MAJOR BLANCHARD AT GETTYSBURG

NORMA FULLER HAWKINS

With whispered word and softened tread,  
We walk today where sleep these dead  
As brothers, 'neath a hallowed sod  
In endless peace with man and God!

The flag was stained, full of holes and soiled, and as a very small child, I could not see why my mother cared so much for it when there were so many pretty new ones to be had. With the years came understanding, and I grew to share her