

Documents

A Continuation of the Journal of an Emigrating Party of Potawatomi Indians, 1838, and Ten William Polke Manuscripts

*Edited by Dwight L. Smith**

According to their tradition, the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi tribes were originally one people, inhabiting regions bordering on the northern reaches of the upper Great Lakes. Under the pressure of the Iroquois from one direction and the Sioux from the other, the tribes began to move southward. The advent of the white man to this region found the Potawatomi on either side of Lake Michigan moving into the Milwaukee River region of Wisconsin and the St. Joseph River territory of Michigan.

After the Treaty of Greenville of 1795, to which they had been a party, the Potawatomi, notwithstanding the protests of the Miami who maintained the whole region to be theirs, announced their intent to move into the upper Wabash River region. Less than a decade later they were in possession of territory around lower Lake Michigan from Grand River, Michigan, to the Milwaukee River, Wisconsin, eastward across southern Michigan to Lake Erie, southward in Indiana to the Wabash River, and southwestward over most of northern Illinois. Approximately fifty of their villages were scattered over this area.

Until 1763, the Potawatomi had been assiduously attached to the French, and their role in the so-called "Pontiac's conspiracy" of 1763 was conspicuous. During the American Revolution, their hostilities were directed against the Americans, and they continued to thus array themselves until 1795. Again, in the War of 1812, the Potawatomi sided with the British.

As the frontier settlements pushed ever westward, treaties were made with the United States. Selling their lands piece by piece, they were forced to move westward, eventually even beyond the Mississippi River. From the Treaty of Fort Harmar, 1789, until the time of their removal, the

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Potawatomi participated in nearly two-score treaties with the United States. It is estimated that the number in the tribe, in 1795, was twelve hundred. By 1812, they had doubled this number, and in 1820, had further increased it to thirty-four hundred. Within the next thirteen years, it is estimated the number decreased about fifty per cent, to eighteen hundred.¹

In 1830, it was made lawful for the president of the United States to cause some of the government lands west of the Mississippi River to be divided into districts for those tribes of Indians "as may choose to exchange the lands where they now reside, and to remove there." Government aid and assistance would be furnished to enable them to remove to, and to settle in, the lands which they would receive in exchange.² Congress appropriated twenty thousand dollars, in 1832, to hold treaties for the extinguishment of the Potawatomi title to lands in the states of Indiana and Illinois and the territory of Michigan.³

In accordance with these acts, Jonathan Jennings, John W. Davis, and Marks Crume, commissioners for the United States, negotiated three treaties with the Potawatomi in October, 1832, by which were ceded their "title and interests" to lands in Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, reserving for themselves, however, numerous sections on which were located their villages, settlements, and agricultural plots.⁴

Two years later, in 1834, a commissioner was appointed to purchase the reservations made to the Potawatomi in the 1832 treaties. He succeeded in purchasing about half of the land for fifty cents an acre. The other half was reserved for individual Indians and whites. President Jackson did not even submit this treaty to the Senate for ratification

¹ Frederick W. Hodge (ed.), *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Bulletin 30*, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology (2 parts, Washington, 1907-1910), part 2 (1910), 289-293.

² "An Act to Provide for an Exchange of Lands with the Indians Residing in Any of the States or Territories, and for Their Removal West of the River Mississippi," May 28, 1830, in *United States Statutes at Large*, IV, 411-413.

³ "An Act to Enable the President to Extinguish Indian Title within the State of Indiana, Illinois, and Territory of Michigan," July 9, 1832, in *ibid.*, IV, 564.

⁴ Treaties of October 20, 26, and 27, 1832, in Charles J. Kappler (comp. and ed.), *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, in *Senate Documents*, 58 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 319 (2d. ed., 2 vols., serial nos. 4623 and 4624), II, 353-356, 367-370, 372-375.

because it did not provide for a complete extinguishment and removal of the Indians west of the Mississippi River. Instead, he appointed Colonel Abel C. Pepper and commissioned him to negotiate the purchase of all the land for the government.⁵

From March 26 to September 23, 1836, Pepper negotiated nine treaties with the Potawatomi, by which he succeeded in buying all their lands for the government, a total of 135 sections for \$95,360, or approximately one dollar and ten cents per acre. The Indians reserved the right to remain on the lands for a period of two years. At the end of this time they had to yield possession and remove west of the Mississippi River with the government bearing the expenses of their removal.⁶

At the expiration of the two-year period stipulated in the 1836 treaties, the Indians refused to give up the land. In anticipation of the passage of a pre-emption law, squatters had moved into the reservations.⁷ Congress passed such a law on June 22, 1838, by which each head of family or person over twenty-one, who was and had been a resident for four months at the time of passage of the act, was entitled to not more than a quarter section at the minimum price of public lands at that time.⁸

When the Potawatomi refused to accede to the demands of the whites who thereby claimed the land, quarrels ensued, one incident led to another, and troops under Tipton were brought in. A semblance of organization was effected and under duress and escort of the military about a thousand Potawatomi began, on September 4, 1838, their trek to new homes. The removal was under the leadership of Pepper and Tipton. Judge William Polke, who had been appointed

⁵ John Tipton to Joel R. Poinsett, Washington, *ca.* February 8, 1838, in Nellie A. Robertson and Dorothy Riker (eds.), *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1916-), XXIV-XXVI (1942), XXVI, 530-537. Tipton to David Wallace, Encampment, Sandusky Point, Illinois, September 18, 1838, in *Senate Documents*, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 1 (serial no. 338), 467-469.

⁶ Treaties of March 26, 29, April 11, 22 (two), August 5, September 20, 22, and 23, 1836, in Kappler, *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, in *Senate Documents*, 58 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 319, II, 450, 457-459, 462-463, 470-472.

⁷ Tipton to Wallace, Encampment, Sandusky Point, Illinois, September 18, 1838, in *Senate Documents*, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 1, 467-469.

⁸ "An Act to Grant Pre-emption Rights to Settlers on the Public Lands," June 22, 1838, in *United States Statutes at Large*, V, 251-252.

to take them west of the Mississippi, took charge of the movement a fortnight later after the emigrating party had crossed the Indiana-Illinois line.⁹

The daily "Journal of an Emigrating Party of Pottawattomie Indians, 1838," with entries from August 30 through November 10, 1838, is printed in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXI (1925), 315-336, from a copy made by Jesse C. Douglass, enrolling agent. A photostat copy of this is deposited in the Manuscripts Division, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana. Herewith printed, by the kind permission of Mrs. Fanny Scott Rumely of La Porte, Indiana, is a continuation of that journal through December 4, 1838. The handwriting of the first and of that herein printed are not of the same scribe. Neither is written by Polke. The latter apparently was dictated to or kept by a scribe, secretary, or some other member of the emigration. While the orthography and capitalization are unpredictable and erratic, the eight pages of manuscript are quite readable.

The words printed through which a white line is drawn were crossed out in the original manuscript. (of the Agt, etc.)

"Continuation of Journal of occurrences relating to Pattawattamie Emigration from Indiana to Western Territory under the direction of Wm. Polke¹⁰ Conduct[or]"

Sunday Nov 11th 1838

Not completed the settlement as was anticipated on yesturday

Monday 12th

Continued throughout yesturday and to-day—completed about 10 O'clock P. M., and retired to rest ready to seperate on to morrow

⁹ Tipton to Wallace, Encampment, Sandusky Point, Illinois, September 18, 1838, in *Senate Documents*, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 1, 467-469.

¹⁰ William Polke of Knox County had taken charge of the emigration on September 18. He was a member of the Charles Polke family that had moved from Kentucky to Knox County in 1806. He held a county judgeship, was a member of the 1816 state constitutional convention, and a state senator from 1816 to 1821. He was employed as a teacher among the Ottawa in Carey Mission, near present Niles, Michigan, 1824-1825, and later served as a commissioner for the Michigan Road. In 1841, Polke was appointed register of the Fort Wayne land office. He died in 1843. [William H. Polk], *Polk Family and Kinsmen* ([Louisville, Kentucky, 1912]), 391-392. Tipton to Wallace, Encampment, Sandusky Point, Illinois, September 18, 1838, in *Senate Documents*, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 1, 467-469. Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXIV, 468, note 88.

Tuesday 13th

After early breakfast with extreme reluctance parted with my friends the Officers of the Emigration, To whose zeal and fidelity on all occasions to promptly perform their duties, is to be ascribed the happy termination of the Emigration, begun under such unfavorable circumstances. Traveled 13 miles to Westport,¹¹ put up with my friend the Rev. Isaac McCoy¹² whom I had not seen for some 8 or ten years. Find from letters received by my friend that a ch[ange] is taken place in the office of commissioners of [In]dian affairs by the resignation of the former incumbent &c

Wednesday 14th

Remained at my friends, it be[came] excessively cold. Received much valuable information from my friend on Indian affairs and their new homes: as on these subjects his information is equal to that of any other person in the United States, and his opinions entitled to respect and consideration. He advises me on no consideration to leave before the return of Major Davis¹³ the Agent as he believed the course I had adopted in discharging the party with the exception of my son¹⁴ whom I kept for an assistant. Was a measure of Economy and would meet the approval of the department

Thursday 15th,

Cont[in]ues extremely cold. Passed the day in writing letters to Gen Tipton¹⁵ U. S. Senator from Indiana on the subject of the Emigra-

¹¹ Westport, sometimes known as Westport Landing, is a part of present Kansas City, Missouri.

¹² Reverend Isaac McCoy was a missionary to the Indians. He left a Baptist church pastorate in Knox County in 1818 to minister to some Indians residing a short distance north of Terre Haute. Two years later, with partial support of the Baptist Mission Board, he opened a school at Fort Wayne. In 1821, McCoy moved his school into Michigan Territory, near present Niles, where it became known as Carey Mission. Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXIV, 308, note 14.

¹³ Anthony L. Davis, a native of Kentucky who migrated to Indiana, held offices in Harrison and later Allen County, and also served as state representative, 1829-1830. As a merchant in Fort Wayne, he furnished supplies to the Indian agency. In 1834, Davis was appointed as an agent to reside with and to take care of a group of emigrating Potawatomi. When the Potawatomi of the 1838 emigration settled in the Osage River country, Davis was appointed as sub-agent. *Ibid.*, XXIV, 245, note 48. *Ibid.*, XXVI, 97, note 60. Carey A. Harris to Tipton, Washington, March 21, 1837, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 390-391.

¹⁴ Benjamin C. Polke was a son of William Polke who assisted in the Potawatomi emigration.

¹⁵ General John Tipton (1786-1839) moved from his native Sevier County, Tennessee, with his widowed mother and family, to Indiana. He served as a colonel in the War of 1812, and later attained the rank of major general in the Indiana militia. After holding various offices in Harrison County, he served in the state legislature. Tipton was Indian agent at Fort Wayne, 1823-1831, and for the subsequent eight years a member of the United States Senate. In 1838, Governor Wallace appointed him to organize a volunteer company to effect the Potawatomi removal. *Ibid.*, XXIV-XXVI, *passim*.

tion agreeably to his request. In the afternoon traveled 3 mile to another friend Mr Lykin's¹⁶ just arrived from Michigan whither he had been on public business In conversation with him. He approves of my course and advises me by all means to remain until the return of the Agt. said in common cases he was authorized to transact business for Mr Davis. but this was of such a character and such inportunce to future Emigrations of the same tribe th[at] [he] did not feel willing to act in [the] present case.

Friday 16th

The cold continues extreme for the season about 11 O'clock left my friend traveled 18 miles on my return

Saturday 17th

After early breakfast left Mr Catons the out side farm in Missouri. traveled 25 miles through the lonely prairie and a cold wind arrived in the evening late at Mr Davis' No intelligence received from him by his family. A severe snow storm this evening snow about 3 in. deep

Sunday 18th

At ten O'clock left the agency rode 15 miles to R Polke's¹⁷ who resides as trador near the Pattawattamie Encampment, where I shall take up my quarters until my departure it being convenient to the Indian Camps

Monday 19th

During the day several of the cheifs and others having been informed of my return visited me to make enquiries concerning the Agt and expressing anxiety for his return as they wished to know something about the payment of their ann[manuscript illegible]uities and the prospects of Government making their improvement which they believed they were entitled to by promises made them in place of those burnt on the reserve previous to their being forced from their [manuscript torn] Inreply [*sic*] I observe Whatever was promised them would be performed by their great Father. That for the present I advised them to build for themselves as comfortable winter quarters as they could that it was so cold and late in the season that homes could not be procured that it was so late that boats could not ascend the Missouri River That Mr Davis on his return could give them more information than I could That in the spring what the Government had promised them would be performed much more said to the same amount The Indians appeared satisfied with my explanation

Tuesday 20th

My sons & my horses the last night having broke away or was stolen.

¹⁶ Johnston Lykins served as a Baptist missionary to the Potawatomi, and as a teacher in McCoy's school at the Carey Mission in Michigan. He served as an assistant agent for the Potawatomi emigration. *Ibid.*, XXIV, 427, note 55. Pepper to Tipton, Rising Sun, February 10, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXIV, 537-538.

¹⁷ Robert Polke was a brother to William Polke. He was a trader and had been licensed to trade with the Potawatomi in the Osage River country. Polke to Tipton, Carlisle, July 28, 1832, in *ibid.*, XXV, 666-667. Davis to Tipton, Fort Leavenworth, May 8, 1837, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 398-399.

I dispatched my son this morning in pursuit to go as far as Independence and return by way of Westport to request Mr Lykins as no Intelligence is yet received from Mr Davis to come out and receive the Indians as I am extremely anxious to get home without farther delay

Wendes 21st

Visited the Indians camp found them busily engaged preparing their winter quarters agreeably to my advice. Re[manuscript torn] their enquiries as to the return of the [manuscript torn] manifest more unwillingness for me to leave them before this return of the Agt They wish me to hear what he has to say to them

Thursday 22nd

This day the cheif Ash-cun¹⁸ visited me as I did not go to the camps. Made some enquiries as to the boundary of their land &c with the same enquiries as the other cheifs. I have no doubt the object of their repeated enquiries on the subject is to extort some promises from me believing what I promised would be fulfilled by the Government for I made it an unvariable Rule on the Jou[r]ney, to make no promises but what I punctually performed. I am careful to make no promises that will embarrass the Agent

Friday 23rd

Visited by the cheif I-o-wa¹⁹ had the same story to repeat and the same request as to my remaining with them until the return of the Agent with an additional request that I would again visit their camps to see how the Indians get along to which I consented

Saturday 24th

Snow Storm this morning after which it became pleasant. visited the camps agreeably to promise find many of them have comfortable camps for winter and the principle part of the men engaged preparing a temporary chapel for the purpose of performing their devotional exercises in. They appeared pleased with my visit named the promise made them by Gen Tipton of building them a chapel had repetition of the same requests an answers as before with an additional one of knowing their boundaries before permanently locating themselves My son returned this evening no intelligence of our horses. Mr. Lykins still insists on my remaining untill the return of the Agent

Sunday 25th

My son and a young man that I employed went in search of our

¹⁸ Ashkum (Ashcome, Ashkom, etc.) was the chief of the Potawatomi village on the north side of Eel River, near present Denver, Miami County, Indiana. His signature was affixed to all the principal Potawatomi treaties made in the period 1821-1837. Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, part 1 (1907), 101. Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXIV, 615, note 18.

¹⁹ Iowa was one of the principal Potawatomi chiefs on the emigration. Chauncy Carter to Tipton, Clinton, Missouri, October 14, 1838, in Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXVI, 749-750.

horses down the Osage River²⁰ thinking perhaps they may be in some of the bottoms of said River. I have to remain to go over the same Road to and from the Indian camps, though the story has been so often told My son and young man has returned but no intelligence of the lost horses I have come to the conclusion that they have been stolen

Monday 26th

The season is so far advanced and no intelligence of Mr Davis I have concluded to return to westport and see if Mr Lykins will consent to act for the agent so I can return home before the Roads become impassible.

Tuesday 22 [*sic*]

This day I attended the issue of provisions by the contractor of corn & beef under the direction of a young man for the agent much attention is necessary in order to prevent frauds being practiced upon the Indians by issueing corn in the year as has been the practice Late this evening the cheif we-wis-sa called to see me and said that part of his family was behind. and hoped that I would Bring them next year as he wanted all his family to move west as he was convinced that it would be to their advantage for them all to remove west. I told him I should use my endeavors to have them come.

Wendesday 28th

Early this morning the chief, Ia-wa called upon me said he was informed that I was a going to leave them that the Indians wished me visit them before my departure he had come at their request and would return and have them assembled at his tent on my arrival I found them assembled after repeating their former requests and expressing their satisfaction of my treatment During my continuation with them many of them stated they had friends behind which they wished to come next year and also expressed a wish that I should conduct the party after which I had to go through the ceremony of shaking hands with men women and children as is the custom of Indians which detained me until late in the day, after which I had to ride 15 miles to the agency

December 1st

The Agent having returned I had to assist in remustering the Indians which was completed on the 3rd Inst as will appear from the muster herewith transmitted

December 4th

Proceded on our Journey to Independence where we expect to take stage for st Louis

Many of the letters written by the various officials during the course of the emigration have been printed in *The John Tipton Papers*, XXVI, *passim*. Ten such letters, how-

²⁰ The Osage River flows from eastern Kansas into Missouri to join the Missouri River near the center of the state.

ever, are now printed from the William Polke collection, in the possession of Mrs. Fanny Scott Rumely, great-granddaughter of Polke, for the first time. Eight were sent by Polke and the remaining two received by him. Polke's script is such as would sometimes tax the faculties of a chirographer. Indeed, "we almost invoked the spirit of our fathers to help us decypher." The letters are herewith reproduced as accurately as possible.

Abel C. Pepper²¹ to William Polke [ALS]

Emigration of Indians
Forks Wabash Sept 15, 1838

Sir,

Your report of the 12th inst,²² has been received and its contents carefully examined. It would give me pleasure to appoint your son an assistant Conductor, but I had previously promised Capt. Hull²³ an appointment if the services of an additional assistant should be required.

And as he in my opinion possesses all the qualities required to constitute an efficient, capable and energetic officer; I have the fullest confidence that he will discharge the duties assigned him with entire satisfaction to yourself and all concerned. Gen. Tipton has recommended the Suspension of Luther Rice²⁴ as assistant Conductor—You

²¹ Abel C. Pepper, a native of Kentucky, emigrated to Indiana Territory in 1815 and settled in Dearborn County. He served as a private in the War of 1812 and later rose to the rank of brigadier general in the militia. He is generally referred to, however, as a colonel. Pepper held various county offices, served in the state legislature, and was a candidate for lieutenant-governor in 1828. He was appointed sub-agent at Fort Wayne, promoted to agent, and finally became superintendent for the removal of the Indians in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. From 1845 to 1849 he served as a United States marshal. Pepper was active in the state constitutional convention of 1850. He died in 1860. William Wesley Woollen, *Biographical and Historical Sketches of Early Indiana* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1883), 407-411.

²² See Polke to Pepper, Pleasant Run Encampment, September 12, 1838, in Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the Indiana Historical Collections, XXVI, 701-702.

²³ Captain Jacob Hull was appointed assistant conductor of the Potawatomi emigration to succeed Luther Rice. He had charge of a small detachment that remained in Logansport until September 10 because of sickness. Pepper to Harris, Forks of Wabash, September 15, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 707-708. Polke to Harris, Camp near Independence, Missouri, November 10, 1838. See *ante* pp. 407-408.

²⁴ Luther Rice acted as interpreter for a Potawatomi emigration from within the Chicago agency to the vicinity of Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri River in 1835, and for a delegation of these Indians to Washington in the winter of 1835-1836. He was appointed assistant conductor for the 1838 emigration, but was later suspended and demoted to interpreter. Rice to Tipton, Washington, April 23, 1836, in Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the Indiana Historical Collections, XXVI, 265-266. Pepper to Harris, Forks Wabash, September 6, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 696-697. Pepper to Harris, Forks of the Wabash, September 15, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 707-708. Tipton to Pepper, Pleasant Run Encampment, September 12, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 703-704.

will tell him that he is therefore suspended; but that he may if he chooses continue to act as interpreter, and if he does he will be paid accordingly.²⁵

You will be punctual in making your weekly reports to the Commr. of Indian Affairs²⁶ and to this office—no excuse will be taken for a neglect of this part of your instructions—not even sickness, for in that case you can employ some one to write for you.

Your Muster Roll properly certified will I hope soon come to hand.

I would recommend to you the perusal of your instructions and of the "regulations No. 5" upon all occasions of leisure until you understand them perfectly.

I am sir, very respectfully your obt. servt.

A C Pepper
Superintendent

William Polke Esq.
Conductor.

[Endorsed] A C Pepper to W Polke Sept 15 1838

William Polke to Carey A. Harris

Encampment near Danville [Illinois]
16 Sepr 1838

Hon C A Harris
Sir

Knowing the anxiety you must feel respecting the numerous party of Potys recently placed in my charge to be transferd to thier new homes in the west I beg leave to submit for your inspection a copy of my communication of this day to Col A C Pepper.²⁷

The time is no much sickness prevails in our Country the Indians have been unhealthy but are improving in health, the whites are I think as unhealthy or more so than the Indians

Yr obt Sert.

Wm Polke

[Endorsed] C. A Harris 16th Sept

William Polke to Carey A. Harris [ALS]

Encampment near Danville
16 Sepr 1838

Sir

With this I have the honour to transmit to you a roll of the Potta-

²⁵ See Pepper to Harris, Forks of the Wabash, September 15, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 707-708.

²⁶ Carey A. Harris was United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs until succeeded by Thomas H. Crawford, October 22, 1838. *Ibid.*, XXVI, 785, note 12.

²⁷ See note 22.

wotimie Indians Emigrating under my charge from Marshall County
Indi to the osage rive[r] in the western Territory

Yr obt Sert

Wm Polke

Hon C A Harris

Com Indn Affair

[Endorsed] C. A. Harris Sept. 16

William Polke to Carey A. Harris [AL]

Sandusky Encampmen[t]²⁸

19 Septr 1838

Sir

It is known to you that volunteers to prevent difficulties between the Pottowotimy Indians & our own Citizens 100 volunteers were ordered into service by the Govr of Indiana,²⁹ no doubt was entertained that they would effect a removal of the Indians and as the volunteers were on thier march to the Indian village I was requested to accept the appointment of conductor should there be an Emigration not one day not an hour was left me to examine your instruction or forms I entered the service and in three days had the management of between seven & eight hundred Indians my Clerks & all assistants were to select nether disburseing officer of money except that furnished on the credit or from the pocket of a private citizen.

The volunteers acted as common labourers in hauling Indian Poneys collecting thier other property & doing camp duty. These men were (many of them) of the first citizens of the State they refused to use the Indian ration. Bread bacon, Tea coffee & sugar were purchased for thier use and forrage for thier horses.

I have never yet been furnished with a copy of the contract for transportation. The contractors believing that no Emigration would be got up had no wagons ready until hundreds of Indians were ready to move they then hired some all the wagons and I was compelled to hire wagons to transport sick Indians the first 5 days of our march I hired wagons every day & paid them off in a day or two or as soon as others could be procured I find by examining the roll which I send you to day that I have discharged ten wagons that have rendered service for short periods, to day I will prepare and get the wagoners on the 15 Inst the contractors for furnishing transportation abandoned their contract & I have entered into a contract with another Mr George Smith³⁰ to furnish transportation the ballance of the Journey, to day

²⁸ Sandusky Point was six miles west of Danville, Illinois.

²⁹ David Wallace to Tipton, State of Indiana Executive Department, August 27, 1838, in Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the Indiana Historical Collections, XXVI, 675.

³⁰ George Smith was a mail contractor in northern Indiana and a wagoner on the Potawatomi emigration. Elias Murray to Tipton, Lagro, Indiana, June 24, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 646. Tipton letter, August 28, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 680.

I will prepare and send you a roll showing the signature of the persons authorized to receive pay for thier services

heretofore it has not been possible for the disburseing offecir or myself to conferm to your forms and instructions with that accuracy that we coud wish but hereafter I will pursue the forms and instructions given me by the superintendant or yourself

With great respect Yr obt Servt

[William Polke]

C A Harris

Comr Indians

[Endorsed] To C. A. Harris 19th Sept

William Polke to Abel C. Pepper [LS]

Camp at Sandusky Point 6 miles west of
Danville Ill. Sept 19th 1838

sir

The Blanks Inclosed have been filled as follows. Thomas C Slaughter³¹ Assistant conductor sept 1st 1838. John R Calder³² Assistant conductor sept 1st 1838 J. C. Douglass³³ Enrolling Agent sept 4th 1838. I herewith Return the appointment of Thomas C Slaughter as enrolling Agent and Joshua shields³⁴ with a request that Mr Shields appointment be changed to that of assistant conductor from the date of his former appointment of Assistant superintendant herewith returned. I repeat the request that B. C. Polke be appointed assistant Conductor commencing the 10th instant the day his services commenced in camp From the number of waggons employed in the Emigration it is Indispensibly necessary that a waggon master be appointed which will advance the progress of the Emigration. After consulting Genl Tipton who coincides with me in opinion we have assigned that duty to Mr

³¹ Thomas C. Slaughter was employed by John B. Duret in the Cass County clerk's office. Duret to Tipton, Logansport, December 16, 1837, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 475-476.

³² John R. Calder was assistant to Major Henry W. Tiley, disbursing agent for the Miami annuity payments of 1838. Pepper to Tipton, Logansport, September 5, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 691.

³³ Jesse C. Douglass was one of the publishers of the Logansport, Indiana, *Herald*. He was appointed as an enrolling agent and as adjutant for the Potawatomi emigration. Receipt, J. C. Douglass to John T. Douglass and Tipton, April 27, 1837, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 397. *Ibid.*, XXVI, 713, note 25. Tipton to Wallace, Sandusky Point, Illinois, September 18, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 713-718.

³⁴ Joshua Shields was a brother-in-law and cousin of Tipton. About 1807 he emigrated from Sevier County, Tennessee, to Harrison County, Indiana. He received wounds at Tippecanoe and served in the War of 1812. Shields was assistant superintendent of the Potawatomi emigration. *Ibid.*, XXIV, xvii, and 87, note 55. "Spier Spencer's Company: Pay Roll," September 12 to November 23, 1811, in *ibid.*, XXIV, 84-88. "Tipton's Company: Muster Roll," September 5-20, 1812, in *ibid.*, XXIV, 97-99. Pepper to Harris, Forks Wabash, September 6, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 696-697.

John Hamilton³⁵ a Gentleman well qualified for the appointment and request that you confirm the appointment and that his salary be two Dollars and fifty cents per day; With a view to Economy and to prevent dissatisfaction I would respectfully suggest the propriety of discontinuing Luther Rice as assistant conductor and appoint him first Interpreter—indead [*sic*] of Andrew Gosline³⁶ assistant Interpreter Instead of Principal all which is respectfully submitted

Your Obt servant

Wm Polke Conductor

Col A C Pepper
Superintendant
Emigrating Indians
[Endorsed] To Col Pepper 19th Sept

William Polke to Carey A. Harris [LS]

Encampment, at Sangamon River³⁷
23d Sepr. 1838.

Sir

Two days since, one of the principal chiefs, I-o-weh, who has assisted and taken an active part in forwarding the present emigration of the Pottawattamie Indians, was found to be without his horses, they having strayed away from the encampment. It was thought that to compel him to walk among those over whom he exercises such supreme control might prove unpopular to the cause of the emigration, and be the cause of such serious discontent as to effect much the ends and objects of the government, so far as his connection with his people might be brought to bear upon this and cases of a like character.—A horse, for which the Disbursing Officer paid \$62.50, was accordingly purchased and given to him.

I have to hope that you will see the necessity of the course which has been adopted. I-o-weh has lately been zealously engaged in assisting the Officers of the government in the collection of the Indians, and aiding all in his power to bring about the present Emigration.

Wm Polke Conductr

Hon C. A. Harris.
[Endorsed] To C. A. Harris 23d Sept.

William Polke to Carey A. Harris [AL]

Camp Quincy west Bank of Mississippi
octobe[r] 9th [1838]

sir

on yesterday about 10 o Clock A m the front of the Emigration

³⁵ John Hamilton was a wagoner on the Potawatomi emigration. "List of Wagoners, Potawatomi Removal," September, 1838, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 738-739.

³⁶ Andrew Goslin (Gosland).

³⁷ The Sagamon River of central Illinois flows into the Illinois River at the juncture of Cass, Mason, and Schuyler counties.

Reached the Mississippi and before sunset we had all the Indians and part of our waggons across we shall have to Remain here to Day and probably to morrow in order to give our waggonersers [sic] & others an opportunity of Repairing their getting thier horses shod and other necessary Repairs I had supposed that at this p[lace] I could have Dispensed with the servceis of the VolunTERS that have been attached to the Emigration but the Experience of the last week has Convinced me of thier use in husling the Indian groups Each morning and guarding against Impositions from suspicious persons who are following the Emigration with a view as is supposed frequent our Camps with a view of swindling the Indians of thier ponies and other property and another very Important Duty they perform by guarding the grogshops with [which] Each village abounds through which we pass to prevent the Intoxication of the Indians in which we have succeeded thus far with but few Exceptions, under these Circumstances I have Concluded to Retain them in service during the Remainder of the Emigration as the Weather is Becoming Cool with frost we shall be Compelled to purchase shoes for a Num[ber] of the old men and squaws who are Destitute of Mocasons owing to the great Number of weak and Infirm we have frequently to Employ waggons for a Day or two at a time which Does not appear on the Roll of waggons and in the absence of Instructions from Col Pepper the superintendant I have Exercised what I beleeve a sound Discession in forwarding the Benevolent Views of the governme[n]t and [illegible] towards these Indians

I am sir your obe

[William Polke]

[Endorsed] To C. A. Harris Oct. 9th

[William Polke?] to _____

Cantsville³⁸ Missouri, Octr 18 1838.

Sir,

By the enclosed statements of the officers of the Emigration you will discover that a novel occurance has transpired in this Emigration To have complied with the request of the chiefs and other Indians would have been subversive of good order in the Emigration, and to pass Doctr Jerolaman's³⁹ improper Conduct course in silence, would be equally improper.⁴⁰ Under these circumstances I have thought proper to submit the whole case to the Department.

I am, Sir, Your obedt. Servant

[Endorsed] Copy to mr Harris October 18th

³⁸ Cantsville is present Coatsville, Schuyler County, in northern Missouri.

³⁹ George M. Jerolaman (Gerolomun) was a physician on the Potawatomi emigration.

⁴⁰ The Potawatomi demanded "the dismissal or suspension of Dr. Jerolaman . . . whom they had ceased to like, and did not wish him longer to accompany the emigration." See entries for October 14 and 15, 1838, in "Journal of an Emigrating Party of Pottawattomie Indians, 1838," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1905-), XXI (1925), 329-330.

Jacob Hull to William Polke [ALS]

Emigration

Little Blue River⁴¹ Encampment
Oct 30 1838

Honrd William Polke
Sir

in compliance with your request I send there in enclosed a copy of my journal the Original contracts with the Wagoners the number of Persons Employed the number of Teams and Emigrants &c &

The wole [*sic*] No of Emigrants was 32 who started from Camp Logan⁴² Consisting of the following famalies

Topia malica and Lewis Burnett ⁴³ - -	9
Mek-Seek-Waga	9
Pok-ka-qos	12
To-Pice	2
—	—
	32

the number who ar[e] now in camp ar[e] 23 as follows

Topa-ma-lica & Lewis Burnett - -	8
Meek-Seek-Waga	6
Pok ka qos	3
To Piase	3
Jo-Wa-Qua	3
—	—
	23

The reasons of the famalies differing in name and number from what thiy [*sic*] were at the time of Starting is occationed by some leeving one famaly and joining others and Seperating for themselves

The journal will explane how the Number was diminished—
Moste Respectfully Your Odt Servt

Jacob Hull

[Endorsed] Jacob Hull Muster Roll October 30, 1838

William Polke to Carey A. Harris [LS]

Camp, near Independence, Mo.
10th Nov. 1838.

Sir

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit you the conclusion of the

⁴¹ The Little Blue River runs from southern Nebraska into north-eastern Kansas to join the Big Blue River, a tributary of the Kansas River.

⁴² Logansport.

⁴³ Lewis Burnett (Topenebee) was a noted Potawatomi chief in southern Michigan. He signed the Treaty of Greenville and eleven others in behalf of the Potawatomi. A biographical sketch is given in Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, part 2, p. 785. See also Hull to Tipton, Logansport, September 11, 1838, in Robertson and Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, in the *Indiana Historical Collections*, XXVI, 700.

Journal of the emigration of the Pottawattamie Indians, brought up to this date—the day of final settlement with the officers and teams attached to the party.⁴⁴

It affords me pleasure to say that the emigration has been conducted and finally concluded with the greatest promptitude. Not an unpleasant circumstance occurred during the whole of the journey, to affect the character or retard at all the progress of the party. All went off, and was settled with that harmony and good nature, which was and is best calculated to subserve the interests of government.

By the Journal you will observe that the Indians after arriving at their homes, preferred complaints against government for its non-performance of the stipulations of the treaties concluded with them for their removal west. Houses have not been built for them—lands have not been cultivated. They murmur at this, and perhaps with propriety. I would respectfully suggest that the promises made them both by government and Gen. Tipton, in regard to the improvement of their homes in the west, receive early attention. Such course may prevent future trouble and perhaps difficulties.

In a day or two, according to a promise extorted from me, I shall return to the Indians, and remain with them until the return of Mr Davis, the Agent, whose absence I have earlier neglected to notice. In consequence of Mr D's absence, the Indians have not yet been formally delivered.

During my stay with the Indians, I shall do all in my power to harmonize their feelings, and hope that the Department will see the necessity of an immediate compliance with its promises.

I am very respectfully Your obt Servt

Wm Polke Conductor

PS. I also enclose the Journal of Capt. J. Hull, kept during his march with a small detachment of Pottawattamies, left sick at Logansport, of the 10th Sept. last.

W. P. Com

Hon C. A. Harris
Comi of Indian affairs
Washington
[Endorsed] To C. A. Harris 10th Nov 1838

⁴⁴ See "Journal of an Emigrating Party of Pottawattomie Indians, 1838," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXI, 315-336.