Artist George Winter, “the Indian painter,” in a self-portrait included in Mary Q. Burnet’s Art and Artists of Indiana (1921).
Native displacement and forced removals are deeply troubling chapters in the history of Kansas. They are also complicated. This is especially true of the Kansas Potawatomis, whose original homelands included villages, farms, and hunting grounds in four states—Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The protracted process of their physical removal by the United States to reserves west of the Missouri River and ultimately to Kansas began August 24, 1816, at St. Louis, Missouri—the first of twenty-eight treaty agreements reducing the tribe’s legal claim to their original lands and homes. This legal tangle combined with the abrupt and rapid changes imposed by commission agents on the Potawatomis through arrival at their final destination—from Missouri to Iowa to Kansas—has understandably occupied native historians’ attention. However, how the Potawatomis experienced this upheaval, and how the crisis of removal continued to shape their adaptation to life in Kansas, has been largely overlooked.

The legacy of the Potawatomis who live in Kansas today did not begin with their arrival in the territory but unfolded over centuries as they uniquely accommodated themselves to new circumstances, including the arrival of non-Indians. The tumultuous period for the Potawatomi people following the War of 1812 up to their arrival in Kansas in the 1830s is critical to understanding the initial conditions of that transition and its effects on the tribe afterward. Not all Potawatomi people experienced dislocation in the same way, and reconstructing those experiences are almost impossible from a distance of 180 years. Unlike other tribes, however, the Potawatomis, and their neighbors the Miami Nation, had an eager chronicler in the artist George Winter, whose images and musings surrounding the 1837 Logansport, Indiana, removal provide an intimate window into an exceptional moment in Kansas Indian history.
The Indian Painter

The photographer walked back to his camera to peer through the lens at his customer, a well-known Lafayette, Indiana, figure who always introduced himself as “George Winter, the Artist.” Locals simply called him “the Indian Painter.” The photographs taken that day in 1869—to be sent to George Winter’s daughter and grandson in California—reveal a somewhat stout but hearty sixty-year-old. His clothes were unremarkable: wool suit, black waistcoat, white shirt, and silk tie, but his face demanded the camera’s attention. It was a face accustomed to smiling, made a little softer by the years but still handsome. Curly gray hair receding noticeably suggested the presence of a bald patch behind his crown. Winter’s whiskers, however, were his most prominent feature. Full white sideburns that started above his ears and extended a good two inches below his jawline gave the appearance of a friendly lion. After nearly forty years of posing sitters for the “exercise of the pencil,” no one needed to show George Winter how to pose for the camera.

The youngest of ten children, George Winter was born in Portsea, England, in 1809 to William and Elizabeth Winter. As an adult writing his own memoir, Winter probably idealized his childhood, but we can believe that he was loved and supported by his family during his childhood. In 1850, he wrote to his son, who was nine at the time, “Some of the happiest moments that I now experience are those when I look back to that time when I was a little boy like yourself, when I had no troubles but those that were to be found in the imagination.” Winter was middle class by today’s standards and was educated in a series of private schools until the age of fifteen. Desiring to become an artist, likely due to the influence of his eldest brother, Robert, who was an art collector, he studied for a year with local portrait painter George Honeybourn. This was the same year, 1825, that Winter’s father, his sister Ann and four of his brothers “crossed the Atlantic for the home of the free and the brave, leaving my mother, sister Jane and myself at home, to follow should my father determine to remain in America.” This was a significant event in Winter’s life, as it marked the end of his childhood and the conclusion of his formal schooling in England.

A year later, in 1826, William Winter returned to Portsea with his son Henry, leaving others of the family in the United States. Encouraged to continue his studies as an artist by local painters, young George moved to London to live with his brother John and pursue his ambitions. From his journals, we learn that he did not formally apprentice himself to anyone as an art student, because of the expense, and did very little actual painting. Instead, Winter spent his time in the grand exhibition halls and galleries, cultivating friendships with artists, art critics and actors as he planned his formal application to the Royal Academy of Art. Winter expressed grave disappointment with the great masters, who painted from still life and models, mentioning Van Dyck and Rubens. To his surprise, he preferred several newer watercolor landscapes: “unsullied tints fresh and rich from the inspired pencil.”

Much as he hoped to be a professional artist, Winter was unprepared for the exclusivity of London’s community of artists and patrons. His timidity in approaching the Royal Academy, painful to him at the time, became a source of amusement to him later as an adult. He wrote that at an exhibit of “all or most of the eminent English artists’ works,” he could not bring himself to enter the gallery. “Though I had purchased my ticket, my young heart failed me. I did not have the courage to go up to the rooms, so I went out—took the fresh air—rambled in the Strand—got courage and entered Somerset House again.” While Winter was in London, the rest of his family, including his aging parents, emigrated permanently to the United States, and George began to consider a career in America. When he asked London animal artist Richard Barrett Davis about the state of the fine arts in America, Davis warned him that he considered it “strictly commercial and had not yet had time for the cultivation of art in a national point of view.” Winter was undeterred. He found the openly opportunistic nature of American society perfectly suited to his ambition to paint and draw from life. In typical fashion, Winter turned the move into an adventure, “one that was to make a romantic and interesting event, filled with novelty and curiosity and feeling.”

It was his curiosity and pursuit of the romantic that led the young artist to the United States and eventually

6. Ibid.
to Indiana in 1837. He enrolled as a student at the Academy of Design in New York City shortly after his arrival in the United States, while his family settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. He wrote to them regularly from New York, expressing his pleasure at the “association of so many of us all young, and in the same pursuit—striving for successful achievement in the field of exalted and refining art.”

The techniques and philosophy of art that Winter had begun to formulate in England were refined and reinforced during his studies in New York. He received instruction in mythology from William Cullen Bryant and in drawing from the historical painter William Dunlap. Winter trained mainly as a portraitist and miniaturist but was exposed to a new form of romanticism taking shape in the late 1820s that would emerge as the famous Hudson River school of landscape art. This new school stressed humans’ relationship with nature in much the same way that Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley idealized nature in their poetry.

The new romanticism heavily influenced the curriculum of the New York Academy. It marked the first major effort by a group of professional artists to support American themes. The academy failed, however, to recognize some basic differences between Europeans and Americans in their attitudes toward the fine arts as a profession. In his address to the graduates of the academy in 1835, William Dunlap told the students, “Every artist who is worthy of the name possesses the power of communicating pleasure or instruction to be derived from his works. It is only in a country of barbarians that he can want patronage.”

Dunlap anticipated that in an enlightened republic, artists would be supported by the public interest. In the real world of nineteenth-century America, however, such enlightenment had not yet materialized. As historian Brian Dippie observes, “the uniqueness of the American character, would emerge only if Americans ‘cut the umbilical cord’... only then would the country see ‘pencils and chisels... ready to echo in color and marble every noble cry of the American voice.’”

Following the War of 1812, exploration and celebration of the nation’s character and progress became the most influential theme in American cultural life. Historian Lillian Miller describes the way Americans were purposefully separating themselves economically and culturally from Europe, and England in particular. In the speeches of politicians and in the editorials of newspapers, “the uniqueness of the American character, would emerge only if Americans ‘cut the umbilical cord’... only then would the country see ‘pencils and chisels... ready to echo in color and marble every noble cry of the American voice.’”

Finished with his formal studies, Winter was ready to ful-

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8. Ibid., 38.
fill America’s need for national cultural expression. All he needed was a vision for his talent, a role model, someone whose career suited his own taste for adventure and who was receiving a great deal of public attention. Winter quickly decided that the artist with the most potential for success in the future was George Catlin.

Leaving New York behind in 1834, Winter enjoyed an extended visit with his family in Cincinnati and then purchased a seat on a stagecoach to Logansport—then the western-most station— for the purpose of “seeing and learning of something of the Indians and exercising the pencil in that direction.” Like most immigrants from England and Europe, Winter had read stories of wild Indians as a child and was anxious to see them in person. “Until my arrival at this place, I had never seen an Indian: and it was with no little delight a long-awakened curiosity was gratified.” He was also thoroughly versed in the political rhetoric of removal as the ultimate solution to the nation’s “Indian Problem.” Only weeks before Winter’s initial arrival in New York City, President Andrew Jackson had successfully maneuvered his Indian removal bill through Congress by a single vote amid a moral and legal controversy that continued long afterward. By 1832, George Catlin had taken up the role of the artist-historian.

“I have flown to their rescue—not of their lives or of their race (for they are doomed and must perish), but to the rescue of their looks and their modes so that phoenix-like they may rise from the stain on a painter’s palette and live again upon canvass.” Like Catlin, Winter believed the Indians’ inevitable demise was at hand and that true images of their looks and modes would appreciate in value as time passed. He had his plan.

**Potawatomi Resistance**

In 1837, the Potawatomis were caught up in the sweep of national and international imperatives for private land-ownership promoted by Thomas Jefferson and culminating in the Indian Removal Act of 1830 under Andrew Jackson. An entire industry of displacement, employing government agents, military appointees, traders, missionaries, and native spokesmen, sprang into place following the Removal Act of 1830. The removal machine was already tearing at the Potawatomis as early as 1816, as they ceded under pressure their ancestral homelands for smaller and smaller reserves within those territories. Concentration of the tribes into legally discrete locations, or reservations, made it easy for the federal government to extinguish native claims to enormous sections of land recently deemed desirable for white settlement. Removal, however, was an entirely different policy from concentration that required the permanent and wholesale dislocation of thousands of people to an entirely new region without option or future agency.

**Neshnabe’**

According to traditional histories of the tribe, the name of the people known as the Potawatomis emerged from an early council of Anishinaabe-speaking peoples at Michilimackinac, the Ojibwa-Odawa-Potawatomi. Each of these three groups agreed in council to go their separate ways, possibly before 1600 but perhaps as late as the 1740s. The term “Potawatomi,” or “the younger brother,” has been additionally translated as People of the Fire, although the Potawatomis call themselves the Neshnabe’. Whatever the origin, the Potawatomis were well established as a tribal entity with as many as 2,500 people by the 1650s, when the French first encountered them and began to employ them as trappers and middlemen. The tribe was highly successful in integrating its lifeways with the needs of the Europeans, and by 1700, the Potawatomis were “entrenched as the favored allies of New France.” For the next thirty years, they were concentrated in Detroit, where the French encouraged several tribes to settle, and also along the St. Joseph River in southwestern Michigan and northern Indiana. This period saw tribal alliances in common defense against the Meskwaki, or Fox Indians, who wished to drive out the French from their hunting grounds in present-day Wisconsin. Although the Potawatomis wintered in Detroit and St. Joseph, they did not abandon their other resources such as fishing points, hunting camps, and maple sugar camps.

Even as the French increased their reliance on the Potawatomis as middlemen and soldiers, the Potawatomis continued to fish, hunt, and raise corn for themselves and for trade with other tribes. The tribe’s prosperity and population grew and with them their ambition for greater control of trade. French traders in Louisiana encouraged the Potawatomis to move southward and east into Illinois.

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12. Ibid., 96.
country by the 1740s as a buffer against English traders moving into the region. By 1750, the Potawatomis had displaced the Illinois around present-day Chicago and Milwaukee and had settled in their place.

The loss of New France to the English did not substantially change the Potawatomi culture or lifeways. Engagement with the fur trade taught the tribe proactive adaptation to strangers, whether other tribes or Europeans. Another major change to the tribe resulting from more than a century of adaptation and negotiation with the French was the use of spokespersons and the emergence of a new class of middlemen of mixed descent, Indian and French, who were fluent in both languages. Additionally, the authority structure in the tribe shifted slightly as European allies created new categories of leadership beyond the traditional and common loyalty to one’s band and village okemek, or leader.

Band organization remained the center of Potawatomi life, with each band identified by a totem: Wolf, Bird, Water, Buffalo, Bear, and Man. Within these clans, specific names were passed down from generation to generation, such as Pool, Eddy, Trickle, and so forth in the Water clan. Some clan-based names overlapped or required some imagination to categorize. This practice was not the equivalent of a European hereditary system of surnames. When an okemek died, a new one was selected and his name passed down—perhaps to his offspring. The object of Potawatomi patrilineal society was to find an effective and respected leader, not just a family member. Also persistent in Potawatomi society was the use of “sides,” or “halves.” This concept divided the entire tribe in two based on birth order. Children born first, third, fifth, and so on were seniors, or “Oshkesh,” and all even-numbered births were juniors, or “Kishko.” This grand division had only a few purposes, such as the organization of a lacrosse team or other rivalry. In Potawatomi society today, the halves system is still used to divide youths into teams, just as it was used during the French period.

Clans had specific responsibilities within the larger tribal organization, and different families had roles to

Watercolor depicting an Indian couple on a white horse with another man leading a grey horse titled, Logansport, Indiana, July 8, 1837. Courtesy of Tippecanoe County Historical Association, Lafayette, Indiana, and Purdue University Digital Archives.
play within the clan. This arrangement gave Potawatomi society great flexibility in terms of marriages, inheritance, mobility, and the incorporation of new members. Interaction with powerful outsiders presented the greatest challenge to Potawatomi society—who would speak for the larger tribe? This question was resolved through the Kiktowenene, which literally meant imposter. This was the speaker, who was selected on behalf of the tribal community to speak for it—but not to make decisions autonomously. This approach worked well when there was general consensus in the tribe and time for deliberation. When time was short, the Kiktowenene started to be appointed as “chiefs” by French priests and civil leaders, then British agents, and finally American commissioners for expediency. This designation created a new class of Potawatomi leaders who were beholden to an external authority, not their clan or the tribe overall. As historian R. David Edmunds writes, “these individuals’ stature within the tribe appreciated because of their ability in negotiating with the government and because they began to control the flow of government presents and annuities.”

This weakness in the Potawatomis’ decentralized political structure would have a direct bearing on the tribe’s negotiations for removal and in its adjustments to life in Kansas.

**Black Hawk War**

The Black Hawk War, described by a future president of the United States as his bloody battle with mosquitos, was far more consequential for the Potawatomis’ future than it was to Abraham Lincoln’s. According to Edmunds, a majority of Potawatomis in 1815 occupied villages in the Fort Wayne and Detroit areas, but a significant number moved westward to establish new villages along the Saint Joseph, and the Wabash. These distinctions broke down after the retreat of the tribe’s French and British allies after the War of 1812, as families and entire clans moved to new villages and changed band affiliations.

The Huron Potawatomis split into two groups and drifted east into Ontario and south along the St. Joseph River in present-day Michigan. The original St. Joseph band remained in place but took in members from the Wabash and western ‘prairie’ bands. Treaty commissioners Colonel John Tipton, Lewis Cass, and Alexander Wolcott, charged with negotiating with all the Indians of Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana, began referring to all the western Indiana/Eastern Illinois Potawatomi villages collectively as the Prairie Potawatomi. As Edmunds notes, other descriptors crept into the official record, such as the Potawatomis of the Lakes or the Potawatomis of the Prairie and of the Woods, without much specificity regarding location, leadership, or clan. What frustrated officials in terms of the tribe’s constant rearrangement, however, became a tribal advantage, as villages were able to protect and absorb new members as well as claim annuities in more than one location.

On the eve of the Black Hawk War, the Potawatomis enjoyed peaceful relationships with numerous other tribes in the region, including the Sac and Fox (Meskwaki) and Ho Chunk (Winnebago) peoples. A treaty signed in 1804 by members of the Sac and Fox to remove to Iowa from Illinois was put into motion in 1830. Sac leader Black Hawk and his band, who had not signed the earlier treaty, were forcibly removed to Iowa in 1831. In April 1832, Black Hawk led a group of two thousand, mostly women, children, and old men, back across the Mississippi to reoccupy their ancestral village of Saukenuk near Rock Island. The Potawatomis’ ties to the Sac ran deep through mutual support. At a council he hosted on May 14, 1832, Black Hawk clearly expected the Potawatomis to support his efforts. The attending Potawatomis were polite but noncommittal. Hoping to avoid removal themselves, they did not want to give American officials any reason for retribution and in fact sent a delegation to the agents at Chicago, assuring them of their loyalty to the United States. In spite of Potawatomi assurances, however, and an official inquiry after a deadly attack on a group of white settlers in

17. As anthropologist James Clifton notes, “By the opening years of the American period, the appointment and management of faithful chiefs was to become a device used by many for subverting special interests within the tribe and for subverting the loyalties of men who came to neglect the needs of their *niktotem* for the new prestige and power to be obtained for this loyalty to outsiders.” Clifton, *Prairie People*, 121.
20. Ibid., 235.
LaSalle County, Illinois, that exonerated the tribe, white anger at the Sacs was transferred to the Potawatomis, and their loyalty was quickly forgotten.

Logansport

Winter left Cincinnati via the Michigan Road in May 1837. He knew from newspaper articles exactly where he could find Indiana’s remaining bands of Indians. Although Logansport looked like any other frontier community in 1837, the circumstances that marked its development were quite unlike those of any other small Indiana town. The traditional Indian/fur trade economy was giving way to a white agricultural subsistence economy, but only grudgingly. The complex and lengthy negotiations between representatives of the federal government and the Potawatomis and local Miamis for their land and the eagerness of white squatters to obtain the last government tracts led to a period of years during which the two cultures lived not just side by side but virtually on top of one another. As a consequence, internal tensions already in play in the native community were exaggerated and magnified by an onslaught of non-native voices pressing for costly internal improvements (such as canals and the Michigan Road), surveys, municipal services, and government-backed currency. Although most of Winter’s observations of this period dealt with Indians, he was a recent arrival in the United States and curious about the non-Indian members of Logansport society. In fact, Winter’s comparisons of the two cultures often produced his most insightful observations.

In this painting, Scene on the Wabash, Winter portrays Potawatomi women engaged in activities related to everyday living along the Wabash River near Logansport, Indiana, in the 1830s, including washing. Courtesy of Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.
Arriving at a small collection of wooden and brick structures strung out unevenly along the water’s edge at the confluence of the Wabash and Eel Rivers, Winter described Logansport as “unpretentious and frontieresque in character.” He noted stables, stores, and “pleasant” brick homes. With a population of almost two thousand in 1837, Logansport exhibited every sign of becoming an important commercial center. As the headquarters for the federal Indian Affairs territorial office, the town served resident Indians, fur traders, missionaries, and government agents. In 1837, a nascent middle class of shopkeepers, merchants, and specialists was still vastly outnumbered and overshadowed by the town’s original inhabitants.

The anticipated complete removal of the tribes, Potawatomi and some Miami, however, had plunged the usually quiet town into a transitional crisis that daily threatened to erupt into violence. This crisis was most evident in the desperate transactions of the fur traders, not in their dealings with Indians, but among themselves and with the federal government agents who distributed the Indians’ annuities. The Potawatomis, experienced and effective hunters and trappers, were central to the interests of the fur traders, who vigorously opposed the Indians’ removal, and for good reason. Fur prices had reached an unexpected peak in the mid-1830s, and traders were suddenly hard-pressed to supply their eastern buyers with pelts even before the loss of native trappers and middlemen. Pelts, however, represented only a small portion of the income that traders relied on. As they had been for more than two centuries, the Indians were also the traders’ most valuable retail customers. Provisioning Indians with cloth, guns, tools, knives, hatchets, tobacco, lead, and powder throughout the year, traders gladly extended them credit to retain their loyalty and business. Risk was low, as the annuities paid to the Potawatomis from the sale of their lands constituted a reliable source of cash for debts, even in the midst of a national economic crisis. Traders bought furs from local Indians that they sold to eastern wholesale houses at a phenomenal profit. But when Indians exchanged furs directly for merchandise, the prices that traders commanded for these goods were usurious. Indian trade goods, however, were not cheap or shoddy. After centuries of trade with the French, the English, and now the Americans, the Potawatomis were discriminating and very particular about the quality of the goods they received. Othniel Clark, a commissioner at an 1841 payment on the Wabash, observed, “Individual [credit] accounts ran as high as three thousand dollars with charges of eight to twenty-five dollar for dirks and bowie knives and twenty-five dollars for a cloth blanket one and three quarters yards long. But the quality,” he noted, “was ‘very fine.’” Indians at Logansport fully understood that the value of the furs they sold would not equal the annual cost of their provisions and that they would be in debt to the traders at the end of each year. Asked when they intended to settle their debts, their universal answer was, according to Winter, “after the payment!” In this situation, with removal so close, it was the traders who stood to lose. The annual annuity payments, individual shares of the money paid by the federal government to the tribes for the sale of their land by treaty, were the backstop of the entire enterprise.

As removal crept closer to reality, competition between the traders intensified. They understood that the payments following the removal negotiation would be their last opportunity to be paid in full for the goods they had already distributed to the Indians on credit. For those traders who had married into prominent and wealthy native families, removal was more than just the end of an economy, as it also threatened to undermine their family and social relationships. Both Indians and traders realized, too, that their leverage in demanding the best price for their land would evaporate at the conclusion of the negotiations for removal, and the non-Indian traders used all their influence to encourage the Indians to drive as hard a bargain as possible with the commissioning agents. Tensions in Logansport reached their zenith at the 1836 Potawatomi annuity payment. Agent Abel C. Pepper, anxious to retain the cooperation of the mixed-blood Potawatomi spokesmen, or Kiktowenene, who had already agreed to remove, gave in to their requests to have George Ewing and Cyrus Taber appointed as special


22. For an excellent overview of the causes and effects of the national depression in 1837, see Alasdair Roberts, America’s First Great Depression: Economic Crisis and Political Disorder after the Panic of 1837 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).


24. Clifton, Prairie People, 57–58. Okamek was a universal term to denote a leader in the context of the situation. One could be the okamek of a band or a group of women; even animals could have an okame. The term “chief” does not exist in Potawatomi in the way Europeans used it. Kiktowenene translates literally as a “man who impersonates” but meant spokesperson or speaker.
“commissioners” to calculate all debts outstanding against the Potawatomis. The Potawatomis were to receive $63,000 in annuities, of which $16,000 was retained by them for distribution to tribal members. The remaining $47,000 was set aside for the final payment of their debts in Indiana. Ewing claimed $16,000, and Taber claimed $8,000 the very next day. An additional $8,000 in receipts was claimed by Joseph Barron, who was a government interpreter and a close friend of George and William Ewing.25 These payments left only $15,000 for all of the other traders’ claims combined. Upon the announcement of the commissioners’ decision, the other traders were outraged and threatened to tear down the annuity house with Ewing and Taber inside. Fortunately, Colonel Pepper was quickly summoned to restore order. Climbing onto the roof of the small structure, Pepper calmed the angry crowd by promising a more equitable division the next day. The money was returned, and new commissioners from the town were appointed to review the traders’ books, resulting in several smaller claims being honored.

Ewing and Taber vocally resented the resulting reduction in the payment of their claims. Continued ill feeling among the traders after the distribution led Pepper to order three companies of militia to guard the council grounds and agency for several days.26 The relationship between the Ewing brothers and the government was already strained after a very public and protracted fight in which Ewing accused John Tipton and his son of defrauding the Indians of $10,000 at an earlier payment in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1833.27 The conflict over the 1836 payment did not end with the second distribution. George Ewing, in an attempt to recover some of the money that he had not received, enlisted several Potawatomi spokesmen to sign a prepared letter to President Jackson asking that their “friend” Ewing receive the full amount of his claim. Ewing even wrote a hostile letter to Secretary of War Benjamin Butler, threatening to sabotage the removal of the Indians by any means in his power. The Indian office, embarrassed by Ewing’s accusations of corruption, appointed Judge John W. Edmonds to investigate the Potawatomi payment. Edmond’s final decision at the end of August 1837 reflected Ewing’s ability to influence, and a second $35,000 payment was made to him later that year that was not subtracted from the other traders’ claims. It was during the Edmonds decision that George Winter arrived in Logansport. This timing gave him plenty of opportunity to exercise his pencil in making portraits of the principals in the dispute, although it is clear from his journals that he did not initially understand what had recently transpired. Drawn to romanticism as an artist, Winter was prone to interpret the events of removal unfolding before him not as a matter of policy, but as a tragic event.

As it turned out, Winter received his first artistic commission during the trial. At the judge’s request, Winter completed a life-sized study of a young Potawatomi speaker named I-o-wa. Winter wrote that he was genuinely surprised at the local Indians’ appearance and mannerisms: “The Indian as I found him was not the one I had seen through the imagination or fancy; he was clothed in varied colored draperies, each one in accordance with his own particular conceit. Instead of the shaved head and scalp lock towering from the center of the cranium, his head was wrapped around with a shawl of many colors.”28 Winter’s account confirms what anthropologist James Clifton and historian Richard White describe as the mutually beneficial two-hundred-year-old partnership between the Potawatomis and the original French traders going back to Groselliers. During the Iroquois wars of the seventeenth century, the Potawatomis had formed indelible alliances with French traders. Their adapted modes of mixed dress reflected those early encounters even in 1837.

The Potawatomis had also intermarried with the French freely and strategically to strengthen their bonds and gain access to the fur trade economy that was quickly growing up and down the tributaries of the Mississippi River to New Orleans. Contact with the French and eventually British and American traders in turn was clearly reflected in the Potawatomis’ material culture. What Winter did not comprehend at the time was that most Americans made a distinction between the “wild” tribes of the West, whom Catlin had vowed to rescue for posterity and American art, and the so-called civilized or domesticated tribes of the middle border. The Potawatomis, Miamis, and other Algonquin-speaking peoples had not been overlooked by Catlin—they had been rejected outright as imperfect examples of the truly noble savage.

Catlin wrote in 1840, “About 1,400,000 Indians are already the miserable living victims and dupes of white man’s cupidaty, degraded, discouraged, and lost in the bewildering maze that is produced by the use of whiskey

26. Trennert, Indian Traders on the Middle Border, 61.
27. Logansport Canal Telegraph, January 14, 1837.
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and its concomitant vices; and the remaining number are yet unroused and unenticed from their wild haunts or their primitive modes.” Winter, in contrast, was perfectly content to reproduce what he saw, without flourish, which remains his most enduring contribution to Potawatomi history. What Winter witnessed was anything but a degraded people, and he reproduced the Potawatomis as he saw them in his paintings and journals.

Oblivious to his almost certain failure as a painter of “corrupted” native peoples, Winter painted furiously during the summers of 1837 and 1838. He sketched Indian council scenes, death rituals, family camp life, and dozens of life-sized images of those he believed were the most important or interesting Potawatomi and Miami tribesmen and -women. These sketches served as the basis, along with copious notes taken on site, for his completed watercolors. His talent for realistic portraiture is clearly evident in comparing his preliminary sketch of okamek Ash-Kum with his finished watercolor. But his most accomplished likeness of any native person in Logansport was a woman, D-Mouche-Kee-Kee-Awh. Winter was painstakingly concerned with preserving his sitters’ facial expressions and clothing exactly as he saw them. As he wrote in his journal, “Other artists may have seen Indian life under another phase—and felt uninterested in faithfully delineating it. Fidelity to the subject must give real value to all the efforts of the artist.”

What Pepper, his assistant Lewis Sands, and Samuel Milroy soon learned from the 1836 payment debacle was that “federal policy and federal planning were one kind of thing, execution of policy on the local level quite another.” The Logansport agency was facing a difficult task. In the tough negotiations for large tracts of Potawatomi lands in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin, numerous small reserves had been set aside for individual Potawatomis in the Wabash country in exchange for their cooperation in the Tippecanoe Treaties of 1832. By 1836, Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark wanted the agency at Logansport to purchase all of these individual tracts in anticipation of a complete removal of all the Potawatomis to the west. Some of these tracts, only recently surveyed and conveyed, had already been lost to creditors for the payment of debts. Even locating enough tracts for the small reserves had been difficult given that virtually every section of the Wabash River region already contained a white squatter at work making improvements. American traders correctly predicted that these small tracts of land set aside for individual Indians in fee simple title, in exchange for their cooperation in signing away the Potawatomis’ community land, could

Watercolor over pencil sketch of Potawatomi chief, Ash-Kum, an example of Winter’s skill at realistic portraiture. Courtesy of Tippecanoe County Historical Association, Lafayette, Indiana, and Purdue University Digital Archives.

30. Winter’s striving for true representation is a contrast to the stereotypical images that were then starting to circulate throughout the country in the illustrated news: “Many native antebellum paintings owe as much to artists—and the public’s—deeply seated ethnocentric assumptions and ideas about Indians and their lives as they do to the artists’ real world observations of Indians.” John M. Coward, Indians Illustrated: The Image of Native Americans in the Pictorial Press (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 47.
32. Clifton, Prairie People, 296.
later be purchased for a fraction of their real value. Lewis Cass warned the agents at Logansport that “the whites and half-breeds press upon the Indians and induce them to ask for these gratuities to which they have no just pretensions; and for which neither the United State nor the Indians receive any real consideration. The practice . . . is a bad one, and should be avoided as far as possible.”

The commission agents at Logansport could not circumvent the traders completely because of the Indians’ trusted friendship with and reliance on them. In addition, the traders were the only vendors available to provide the United States with the supplies needed for removal. The result, at the time of Winter’s arrival, was an uneasy truce. Agents were also under a great deal of pressure from local merchants and speculators eager to purchase Potawatomi lands. A May 20, 1837, editorial in the Logansport Canal Telegraph blasted the creation of individual Indian reserves, as “the Indians will of course select the most valuable lands—and the government will offer the refuse for sale. The reserves will never be brought into market for fair competition.” Some traders, such as George Ewing, took matters into their own hands by running for political office to more effectively ensure their speculative ambitions.

Potawatomi okamek paid close attention to the dynamics of the frontier community to put off or avoid removal. For band leader Menomini of the St. Joseph community, the most promising pathway seemed to be conversion to Catholicism and ownership of land in fee simple title. This approach was supported by local Catholic missionary Father Louis Deseille, who believed in assimilation rather than removal as a solution to the so-called Indian Problem. He did his best to encourage the Potawatomis at his mission to give up the hunt and become full-time agriculturalists. Deseille did not openly resist the efforts of Pepper for removal, but he encouraged the Potawatomis to remain in Indiana and advised them to gain title to their individual plots. In keeping with the Potawatomi tradition of utilizing spokespersons, Menomini recognized that the priests at St. Joseph were articulate and well educated and so “provided the literary and legal expertise necessary to thwart removal.” With Deseille’s support, Menomini adamantly refused to sell the land he had been granted in an 1832 treaty. Agent Pepper, under orders to purchase all of the individual reserves belonging to the Potawatomis, forced Deseille’s removal from the mission at St. Joseph in May 1837. Father Benjamin Petit replaced Deseille, but by then, Menomini and his band were staunchly opposed to any sale of their land.

This same circumstance led to a contested land cession treaty in September 1836. Unable to secure the title to several small sections of land belonging to okamek Kinkas, Checawkose, Ash-Kum, and Weesionas, Pepper held a council with a more tractable group of Potawatomis whom he identified in the treaty as the “Chief warriors, and headmen of the Pawattamies of the Wabash.” Even though these “headmen,” led by I-o-wa, Pashpoho, We-wis-sa, Kee-Wau-Nay, and Pepinawah, did not have any legal claim to the lands owned in common by the Potawatomis under the okamek, Pepper bribed them into selling their fellow tribesmen’s land. Senate ratification was swift, and the treaty became legal and valid. Pepper then used the same tactic in his negotiation for Menomini’s land. The original treaty had been signed by four other Potawatomis, but Menomini refused to sell his portion of the reserve. Agent Pepper then negotiated the sale of the reserve with the other three without notifying Menomini.

On August 6, 1838, the date on which the government received legal title to Menomini’s village, white squatters, anxious to preempt the best land, overran the reserve. Surprised and angry, some of Menomini’s followers destroyed a squatter’s hut and threatened him verbally. In retaliation, whites burned down a dozen Indian log cabins. This incident gave Agent Pepper the excuse he needed for a show of force, and he called for Menomini’s arrest and forced removal at gunpoint to Kansas. This conflict, and the chaotic events surrounding the endless delays in Logansport for the start of the removal of the tribe, created deep divisions within the Potawatomi leadership. Some bands feared retaliation for their role in the negotiations and petitioned for lands far from their tribal enemies. Some retreated north to Ontario, while others secreted themselves in the woods, where they suffered from starvation and exposure.

34. Logansport Canal Telegraph, May 20, 1837. The Canal Telegraph was owned by two of Logansport’s wealthiest merchants, Hyacinthe Lassalle Jr. and John B. Dillon. The Canal Telegraph regularly featured editorials calling for all the land ceded by the Indians to be “brought into market; and fairly sold to the highest bidder.”
35. Trennert, Indian Traders on the Middle Border, 50–52.
In spite of the bad feelings generated by the unscrupulous actions of the traders, agents, and some Potawatomi spokesmen, George Winter was immediately impressed with the optimistic and unreserved atmosphere that he encountered along the Wabash. There was no sign of economic depression. In fact, the opposite climate prevailed. The combination of anticipated cash payments to the Indians and the sudden rise in fur prices caused an influx of people mingling on the streets. He observed that “Indian trade was the basis of prosperity. The annual payments of the Indians were a medium through which a great deal of ‘hard cash’ was put into circulation.”

Canal-front property, anticipating an extension of the Erie Canal’s construction, soared in value and added to the speculative fever of the town.

Winter was soon caught up in the excitement of the activities of a town in which “the civilized and savage man so strangely commingled.” He set up his studio in a building next to the Ewing and Walker trading post and store. George Ewing had enclosed a courtyard and erected a small shanty behind the building. Winter quickly noticed that the shanty served as a headquarters for the Indians camped nearby. From the vantage point of his studio, Winter wrote that “the Indians were always visible on the streets sometimes riding on their ponies, bobbed tailed, always in Indian file.” The presence of horses was significant. Over the long period of Potawatomi occupation in the Middle West and Great Lakes regions, the ability of village bands to move their belongings had been limited by their use of travois pulled by dogs. This work fell almost entirely to the women of the tribe, who cared for the family possessions and set up new camps as they moved. The use of horses greatly increased the inventory of belongings that could be moved from place to place and greatly reduced the burden on women, leaving additional time for handicrafts, decoration, and other leisure pursuits. Horses were carefully tended to and hobbled at night to keep them close by.

One of the less appealing aspects for Winter of his new frontier home was alcohol. Whiskey flowed freely in spite of strict regulations against the trade with Indians. Drinking sprees of many days were common around the trading posts, and not just among the Indians. The situation worsened at annuity time and increased again at council events as traders tried to negotiate preemptive land sales with the soon-to-be-removed Potawatomis: “The nocturnal and drunken revelry, accompanied with whooping and yelling disturbed the reposeful citizen from his slumber. But he had no redress. The free life of the ‘white man’ of the day made him a wild and unrestrained rival of the red man.”

Ironically, Winter was better prepared for the sight of drunken Indians than he was for his encounters with the multilingual, well-dressed, generous, and po-

38. Winter Collection, “Reminiscences.” Also in Winter, Journals and Indian Paintings, 40.

39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.; Andrew R. L. Cayton, Frontier Indiana (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 292. Cayton notes that among the upland Southerners who settled north Central Indiana, “Drinking, gambling and fighting were... critical components of a traditional masculine culture that valued competition and personal honor. Imbibing alcohol, betting on sporting events, and having a good time were long standing customs for southern rural males.”
He regarded the boys’ rejection of the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky and walked home to Potawatomi youths who had recently fled from the port his thinking on this matter, he related the story of two Indians by white squatters. In his mind, the Indians’ binge tous sale of the tribe’s land without the members’ consent. Ash-Kum’s credible threat against his life for his duplici-

Winter observed may have been more directly related to grounds, in Kee-Wau-Nay’s case, the dark looks that weeks at a time in temporary camps near the council happy about removal, and especially about being kept for prospective change that he must eventually realize.” While it profound silence and thought—brooding over the pro-

wrote, “the feeling of rivalry and jealousy and the thou-

sand other things among us which make us the oppres-

sor of each other are unknown.”

Assimilation for Winter was a dead end, and to sup-
port his thinking on this matter, he related the story of two Potawatomi youths who had recently fled from the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky and walked home to Logansport. He regarded the boys’ rejection of the boarding school in the same light as the Indians’ humility self-destructive. In their more natural society, he wrote, “the feeling of rivalry and jealousy and the thou-

sand other things among us which make us the oppressor of each other are unknown.”

Winter refrained from allegory in his paintings but did insert some images as symbols of the Indians as a dying race—in his case, a dying tree. This symbol can be seen in several of his paintings, such as Spanceling the Ponies. It is clear from his notes, however, that Winter was confused drinking was a sign of their biological weakness. As Dippie comments, “Drunkenness was, in microcosm, the entire Indian problem: upon contact with the white race, the Indian exchanged his virtues for civilized vices. Against these vices the Indian had no defense.” He also notes the division of labor between Potawatomi men and women as one in which men seemed to have little to do. This situation had to do with the fact that the Potawatomis had been summoned to Logansport by Pepper and then kept waiting for weeks while he negotiated for the pur-

chase of several small reservations that had been granted to individual Potawatomis in 1834. 

Fortunately, Winter’s stereotypical explanations of the Potawatomis’ behavior were an aside to his intended pur-
pose of describing the physical appearance and habits of the people. His watercolor illustrations of Indian life and customs are highly detailed. They show the skills of the Potawatomi women in incorporating the most decorative elements of European dress into their own clothing, such as silk ruffled shirts, woolen sashes (as the French had worn a century before), gorgets, silver chains, earrings, and topcoats. Women sought out combs and colorful blankets, and everyone wore beaded moccasins. The practicality of leggings (often heavily decorated with silk ribbon) rather than woolen pants worn underneath a long shirt is evident in Winter’s Resting on the Trail and Indian Women. Even Winter’s depiction of tools, lodges, harnesses, and saddles give the viewer a clear understanding of the daily habits of these future Kansans and the degree to which they had knitted together a pattern of culture and custom over more than two centuries. Clearly, Winter’s depiction of a Potawatomi burial was inspired by Catlin’s sketches of Mandan and Sioux death rituals. The difference between Winter’s sketches and Catlin’s, however, are clear: Sioux rituals were unlike anything that non-Indians had previously recorded or witnessed, while the Potawatomis’ funeral procession leading to a cemetery burial largely resembled a Christian burial with the exception of a small white flag planted in the ground.

Winter refrained from allegory in his paintings but did insert some images as symbols of the Indians as a dying race—in his case, a dying tree. This symbol can be seen in several of his paintings, such as Spanceling the Ponies. It is clear from his notes, however, that Winter was confused

41. Winter, Paintings and Journals, 40.
44. Edmunds, The Potawatomis, 256.
by the sophisticated Potawatomis and Miamis who agreed to sit for him. Even as he tried to explain their behavior as innocent children of the forest, he was aware of the deviousness of the politics being played out before his eyes. The crisis of leadership between the okamek and the appointed chiefs was clear to him even as a recent arrival. In the notes that Winter wrote to accompany his sketch of I-o-wa, Winter observed that “his eminence in the councils of this tribe was remarkable in one so young . . . [and] by small hidden strategy, assumed influence over and above older men.” After one particular council, I-o-wa and another man attempted to take some baggage from a visiting headman. Colonel Pepper discovered it, “gave him a severe reprimand and threatened to break him of his chieftainship. It appears the government of the United States assumes the power of creating chiefs.” Unfortunately for Pepper, the Indians he had bribed into signing treaties on behalf of others felt no particular loyalty to him afterward. While Pepper and his assistant Lewis Sands tried to persuade the Wabash Potawatomis to remove to Kansas at the end of the summer of 1837, Winter wrote that the “paper chiefs” refused to emigrate. I-o-wa encouraged the other bands to remain in Indiana because the treaties ceding their land permitted them another two years of occupancy. No doubt Winter could have predicted the federal government’s continued difficulty with I-o-wa and the other “paper chiefs” after removal to Kansas.

Following an illness that struck him on the way back from a reconnaissance trip to Kansas, Pepper was replaced by a new removal agent, William Polke, in 1839. Polke wrote to his superiors in the Indian Department that he was continuously harangued by I-o-wa to provide his band with provisions and to bring the remaining Potawatomis to Kansas. Polke’s journals clearly state that he was irritated by I-o-wa’s insistence that Polke shake hands with everyone in the band each time he visited. Not surprisingly, in November 1839, as the tribe was making its way west on the same evening as Polke’s visit to I-o-wa’s camp, the agent reported that all of his horses had been stolen.46

As Winter followed the Potawatomis from camp to camp, his written observations of the traders became colored by his conviction that removal from Indiana was in the best interest of the Indians. He blamed the traders for “conspiring against the emigration and exerting an influence which is injurious to the Indians and to the best interests of the people.” Winter had nothing but contempt for the traders, “as they assume to the Indians the garb of philanthropy over a heart of blackness that bears nought of goodness or love.” Historian Robert Trennert’s account of the Ewing brothers during the Potawatomi removal echoes Winter’s flat statement that they “respected no one but themselves.”47

Winter reserved his most caustic comments not for the traders but for the white squatters who hung about the Indian camps and homes, waiting for them to remove. Unlike other elements of Logansport society, the settlers had no use for the Indians themselves and wanted only their fields and farms. Winter described them as “obtruding whites” who made life impossible for the Potawatomis in their own homes. Winter’s disapproval was evident in his use of epithets such as “squatter” and “husier” instead of referring to them by name, as he consistently did with his Indian subjects. In his description of the area around Logansport, Winter admitted that “there were a thousand inducements for the farmer to locate west.” What Winter could not understand or respect was the indifference of the white settlers to the rights and feelings of the Indians, and he often remarked on the contrast between the materially successful Indians and the “homely” white squatters.

On one of his rambles along the Wabash River, Winter became lost and eventually asked for directions from a squatter’s wife. “The good woman was communicative.” She told Winter she had no fear of the Indians nearby, “but a few minutes before I came she said a young white man had entered her cabin and acted very rudely.” On another trip to the Indian village at Kee-Wau-Nay, the settler whom Winter was riding with pulled over to the side of the road as they arrived at the village. “A keg which was in the wagon, and which our sly friend said was powder for the Indians, was soon in our company at the spring and which proved to be whiskey.”

In his localized history of Indiana farmers from 1810 to 1870, Richard Nation relates the tendency among some early Hoosier farm communities to practice safety-first agriculture and to be wary of commercialism, progress, and government intervention. In creating and participating in self-regulating closed economies, early Indiana farmers embraced the “logic of localism.” Nation asserts

47. Trennert, Indian Traders, 206.
that the local farmers Winter encountered had no use for the romantic goals of reform and rehabilitation of the native people living in their midst.48

In addition to being rude and indifferent to the Indians’ welfare, Winter experienced the local settlers as extremely miserly. He complained that while at Crooked Creek, he and the Indian agents were obliged to board with a settler in a one-room cabin where they were provided “fare of a mean character at the rate of .75 cents per diem.” In his most scathing indictment of Indiana’s pioneers, he wrote, “The Indians may be considered dirty in their habits, and it’s true I have witnessed many a dirty scene among them, but I doubt whether white people under the same circumstances would be as clean—, I have seen dirtier white people than I have Indians.”

Winter freely admitted that before he arrived in Logansport, he expected the Indians to paint themselves and to live in wigwams. What he found instead was an intelligent and capable people wearing turbans and topcoats, speaking French, and living in frame homes. In the story of meeting Jean Broulliette, a métis Miami whose wealth was equal to that of any other Indian resident. Winter wrote that Broulliette had a hog’s head tied to his elegant saddle. In explanation, Broulliette told him “that there were some bad white men who had settled in his neighborhood and had stolen some hogs from him; and that he found the head of one that they had killed, and that he was going to take it to Peru and complain before a magistrate of their aggressions on his property.” Winter’s

frequent comparisons left no doubt that he preferred the company of the well-dressed and hospitable Indians to the “husier whose hair appeared a perfect stranger to a comb.”

The final removal of the Potawatomis from Indiana’s Wabash River valley was no less dramatic than any other Indian removal in the 1830s and clearly reflected the dynamics of the tribe before it arrived in Kansas. The leadership of the several bands behaved in typical Potawatomi fashion in their desire to be independent of the other villages. Agents felt obliged to make several scouting trips to Missouri, Iowa, and Kansas in the years leading up to removal and their eventual choice of a reserve along the Kansas River. Okamek drove a hard bargain in terms of land, the boundaries of the settlements, government support for building materials, schools, equipment, and continued annuities. After initial promises that they could settle in the Platte region of Missouri, representatives of the state balked, and the mixed bands of villagers were redirected to Iowa in 1838. While they were on their way to Iowa, however, the Indian office had yet another change of heart. Concerned about precipitating an intertribal war with the Sioux, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Carey Harris instructed the removal agent to redirect the Illinois Potawatomis to Kansas near the Marais de Cygnes River.

Back in Logansport, Pepper had already made a trip in 1834 to Kansas to locate a new reserve for the several bands in the area. Most of the Wabash Potawatomis were resigned to having to go, but Menomini’s band remained steadfast. When the old man’s village was overrun by white squatters on August 6, Pepper called for military support, and Senator John Tipton raised one hundred volunteers to remove all the Potawatomis by force. Menomini was arrested while the army rounded up the remaining Potawatomis from his village and the surrounding villages near Logansport over the next several days. At last, on September 4, 1838, 850 Potawatomis began the disorganized and difficult trip to Kansas. The food was so poor that the militia volunteers refused to eat it and were given money to purchase rations. Typhoid fever had become epidemic in Illinois country, and nearly three hundred of the migrants fell seriously ill, splitting the migration into two camps. By the end of the trek, forty-two Potawatomis lay buried between Indiana and Kansas. Today, their route is known as the Trail of Death.

The trek was not the end of their ordeal. Three years later, Alexis Coquillard, who had earlier supported Menomini’s resistance to removal, was engaged by the Indian office to round up all of the Potawatomis left behind in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan and take them to Kansas. He eventually had more than six hundred Potawatomis under his care, many of them migrants from earlier removals or those who had tried to stay behind on their own but were now destitute and starving. These groups arrived safely in Kansas in September 1851.

The problems that hampered the Potawatomis’ ability to act in concert as a tribe in the Old Northwest followed them to Kansas. As in Indiana, the Potawatomis in Kansas found themselves surrounded by white settlers who were jealous of their riverbank location, personal possessions, and annuity money. Adding to the fray, the state was undergoing a tremendous upheaval as the vanguard of the Civil War. In the same year that Kansas became a state, in 1861, the Kansas Potawatomis were forced into yet another land cession treaty that split the tribe into the Prairie Band and the Catholic “mission” band, also known as the Citizen Band (from their desire to receive their land in fee simple title and obtain U.S. citizenship).

Back in Indiana, this group’s experience had taught them that willing assimilation and legal ownership of individual lots had staved off removal longer than for some other groups although the Miamis would avoid removal for an additional two years. Of the original 575,000 acres provided the Potawatomis in 1838 as their permanent home in Kansas, the Prairie Band was given 77,358 acres in common, whereas the Citizen Band received 152,128 acres of land allotted in severalty. The majority was opened for white settlement. Within six years, most of the Citizen Band Potawatomis had lost title to their lands, and the federal government purchased another, smaller reserve for the landless in Oklahoma in 1867. As before, this final treaty was signed by only eight men, and three of them were appointed as signatories by the government.

The Potawatomi people continued to adapt to new circumstances, in accordance with their habits and traditions, just as they had in the centuries and decades leading up to their removal to Kansas and Oklahoma. George Winter, an accidental visitor during a pivotal

49. Winter Collection, “Reminiscences.”

52. Clifton, Prairie People, 351.
53. Ibid.
54. Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men, 3. Sleeper-Smith notes, “The way in which Indian people responded to the challenges
moment in Potawatomi history, provides us with a rare pictorial document that bridges time and space and humanizes a group of people who are too often seen only through the lens of despair and displacement. Winter’s usefulness was his devotion to “seeing and learning something of the Indians, and exercising the pencil in that direction.” As an outsider, he had a sincere if romantic interest in the Indian, which gave him a measure of objectivity not often found in contemporary descriptions. Winter’s curiosity led him to record both the unusual and the ordinary aspects of Potawatomi life. Realism was his objective, and he faithfully recorded what he witnessed. His images of the councils were not simply subjects for a large canvas. He genuinely admired the sophisticated diplomacy of the tribal spokesmen. He recognized that hard negotiation and compromise were important features of Potawatomi life and culture. He also recognized the Potawatomis’ acceptance of mixed-ancestry leaders as traditional tools of survival in an increasingly competitive world.

Nearly two centuries later, Winter’s tender portraits of women and children remind us that these were individuals with a unique past, grappling with the end of an era and facing an unknown future. Winter’s illustrations of their daily routines speak of family and community. The carefully arranged turbans and expensively decorated leggings and the women’s elaborate toilettes indicate a proud, successful people secure in their own society’s values.

George Winter came to Indiana to observe native culture, and his impressions of traders, merchants, agents, and settlers were confined to their interactions with the Indians. He understood that the common denominator in Logansport society was exploitation of the Indian. Competition and greed had deeply divided the Indian and non-Indian community—always at the Indians’ expense. Winter clearly described and disdained the methods that government agents, particularly Abel Pepper, used to manipulate tribal leadership to fulfill the directives of the federal government and enhance their own careers. The common goal was to rid Indiana of Indians. Winter’s goal was to capture them forever.

Had Winter not taken a stagecoach to Logansport in search of adventure, the defiant Ash-Kum and beautiful D-Mouche-Kee-Kee-Awh would be featureless names mentioned in newspapers and on treaty parchment. Through Winter’s earnest efforts, we can imagine Ash-Kum playing coy critic to the young artist’s work, always “ready with his spicy joke.” The Potawatomi people were forcibly removed from their homes to begin a new chapter in Kansas, but their images remain as vibrant today as they were in the spring of 1837, when Winter stepped down from his carriage into a country of barbarians, ready to see something of the Indians and exercise the pencil in that direction. [KH]