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COVER DESCRIPTION: Charles Bird King painted this portait of White Cloud, an Ioway chieftain, in Washington, DC, in 1824. Greg Olson traces White Cloud's life and his interactions with European Americans during the early nineteenth century in "Navigating the White Road: White Cloud's Struggle to Lead the Ioway Along the Path of Acculturation," beginning on page 93. [SHSMO 026556]

CONTENTS

NAVIGATING THE WHITE ROAD: WHITE CLOUD'S STRUGGLE TO LEAD THE IOWAY ALONG THE PATH OF ACCULTURATION By Greg Olson	93
"I'LL WADE IN MISSOURI BLOOD": **DAGGS V. FRAZIER: A CASE OF MISSOURI RUNAWAY SLAVES By Robert J. Willoughby	115
LIFE WITH FATHER: A SON'S RECOLLECTIONS OF SENATOR STUART SYMINGTON By Stuart Symington Jr.	139
SOCIETY HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING ON OCTOBER 16	156
SHANE PAINTING DONATED TO SOCIETY	167
SID LARSON FUND ESTABLISHED	167
News in Brief	168
MISSOURI HISTORY IN NEWSPAPERS	169
MISSOURI HISTORY IN MAGAZINES	173
BOOK REVIEWS	181
Nelson, Lawrence J. Rumors of Indiscretion: The University of Missouri "Sex Questionnaire" Scandal in the Jazz Age. Reviewed by Alan Havig.	
Moulton, Gary E., ed. <i>The Lewis and Clark Journals:</i> An American Epic of Discovery. Reviewed by W. Raymond Wood.	
Freeman, Frankie Muse. A Song of Faith and Hope: The Life of Frankie Muse Freeman. Reviewed by Antonio Holland.	



SHSMO 026556

Navigating the White Road: White Cloud's Struggle to Lead the Ioway Along the Path of Acculturation

BY GREG OLSON*

Under a clear blue sky in July 1830, an Ioway Indian chief stood to face more than one hundred of his allies and adversaries on a council ground near Prairie du Chien in present-day Wisconsin. Though middle-aged, Chief White Cloud, called *MaxúThka* in his native tongue, still carried the powerful figure and commanding poise he had developed as a young warrior. Yet as he stood before the gathering with his war club at his side, this veteran of eighteen battles delivered a message of peace, not of war.

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In their biography of White Cloud, whom they refer to as "Mahaskah," Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall noted that he was "six feet two inches in height, possessed great bodily strength and activity, and was a man of perfect symmetry of person, and of uncommon beauty." Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, "Mahaskah," *History of the Indian Tribes of North America.* . . . (Philadelphia: D. Rice and A. N. Hart, 1855), 2: 217. White Cloud (ca. 1784-1834) was also commonly known to European Americans as Mahaska. In historical documents, Europeans and Americans spelled his name a variety of ways, including Mak-hos-kah, Ma-has-kah, Mash Ka Ka hi, Man-hoo-skaw, and Macha Karres. In his own Baxoje-Jiwere

He spoke first to those in the delegation whom he considered to be his rivals—the Sauk chiefs Keokuk and Wapello and the Dakota chief Wabasha. "Look upon me," the Ioway leader declared, "and you look upon almost a white man." White Cloud proceeded to chide his foes for breaking a peace treaty they had made on that same council ground five years earlier. He admonished them to end their violent attacks against white settlers and his own people but openly doubted their willingness to do so. Waving his war club, he added sarcastically, "All [the] people you see here, who wear one of these things think themselves very great."

White Cloud then directed his comments toward those he regarded as his friends—Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis William Clark; Andrew S. Hughes, the sub-agent for the Ioway; Colonel Willoughby Morgan, the commander of nearby Fort Crawford; and the rest of the United States military delegation. Reminding Clark of his continued support of government efforts to "civilize" the tribes living in and around the state of Missouri, White Cloud proudly reported, "I have succeeded pretty well in following your advice. . . . I have learned to plough and now I eat my own bread, and it makes me large and strong. . . . I follow your advice in everything. . . . Even my children are at work making cloth."

The Ioway leader then returned his attention to his enemies, once more challenging them to abandon the path of war and to join him in adopting the ways of the *Ma'unki*, or white man. Again brandishing his war club, he concluded, "When I was young, I used to pride myself in one of these things, but now I mean to throw it aside. I know of other things."

White Cloud's challenge, delivered during the council that culminated in the Prairie du Chien Treaty of 1830, was a manifesto in which he outlined the only path he felt would ensure the long-term survival of his poverty-stricken people. In his speech, White Cloud alluded to his own days as a young warrior who had once killed white men. In those days, when Europeans and Americans did not outnumber native people, he had believed resistance was possible. As settlers had flooded into the Missouri Territory, however, White Cloud had understood that the Ioway could no longer live the traditional life they had once enjoyed on the open prairies. In the two centuries since the Ioways' first contact with Europeans, their livelihood had become inexorably entwined—if not always happily—with the newcomers who had moved into

language, his name is *MaxúThka*; *Maxú* meaning Cloud and *Thka* meaning White. Jimm G. GoodTracks, e-mail messages to author, 28 October 2002, 20 February 2003. Baxoje-Jiwere language spellings for the names of other Ioway people mentioned in this article, ibid., e-mail message to author, 29 June 2003.

² "Extracts from Minutes of a Council held at Prairie du Chien, Wednesday, July 7, 1830," 17, Documents Relating to the Negotiation of Ratified and Unratified Treaties With Various Indian Tribes, 1801-1869 (National Archives Microfilm Publication T494, roll 2), Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75.

the tribe's land. Indeed, by 1830 they had become heavily reliant on the white man's annuities, trade goods, and military protection for their survival.

Seeing no other option, White Cloud embraced the "civilized" life of the white man. As he tried to encourage his fellow Indians to follow his example, however, he met a variety of obstacles, not the least of which came from within his own nation. Few in the tribe chose to emulate his later life as a farmer or to send their children to study at St. Regis, the Jesuit school in St. Louis. When violence erupted between the Ioway and the settlers or members of rival tribes, some openly opposed White Cloud's call to seek justice in the white man's courts and to garner protection from the U.S. military.

His attempts to help his people find peace and prosperity on the white man's road to assimilation led to his murder by members of his own tribe in 1834. In the 170 years since his death, White Cloud has been characterized as a noble savage, a martyr, and a faithful friend of the white man.³ Yet given the dire straits the Ioway faced in the years he served as their leader, it seems appropriate to conclude that White Cloud was a pragmatist, determined to help his people adapt to a fate he believed to be inevitable.

The challenge of maintaining a balance between their culture and that of the encroaching European Americans had been confronting the Ioway, or *Baxoje* as they call themselves, for more than two centuries prior to White Cloud's speech at Prairie du Chien. The Ioway had felt the dramatic effects of the Europeans' presence on the continent even before meeting them faceto-face. Ioway stories recall a time when the tribe lived in a large community with their Siouan-speaking relatives, the Winnebago, Otoe, and Missouria, in the Great Lakes region. The stories also relate how catastrophic waves of smallpox, measles, and influenza decimated these people around the beginning of the seventeenth century. These diseases, many of which were introduced by Europeans, spread quickly and widely through native populations well in advance of European inroads into the continent. The high death rate among native people caused large cities such as Cahokia, in present-day Illinois, to be abandoned.⁴ To more easily sustain themselves,

In his brief biography of White Cloud, F. R. Aumann stated, "The story of Mahaska, the Ioway, is not lacking in the dramatic requirements of an old Greek tragedy." See "Mahaska," Palimpsest 41 (May 1960): 276. Major S. H. M. Bryers portrayed White Cloud as a martyr in his 1909 poem, "Chief Mahaska," which reads in part: "Great Chief, brave heart, / This shaft we raise, / The semblance of thy form; / That children's children long may see / And keep thy memory warm. / That down the vista of the years / This sculptured bronze may tell / Of one who loved his tribe, his kind, / And died for them as well." Oskaloosa [IA] Daily Herald, 12 May 1909, 2. Bryers wrote the poem for the dedication of Sherry Edmundson Fry's Mahaska, a sculpture that still stands in the Oskaloosa, Iowa, city square. For more on Fry's romantic portrayal of White Cloud see Greg Olson, "Noble Savage in the Courthouse Square: Patronage and Homage in Sherry Fry's Mahaska," Ioway Cultural Institute, http://ioway.nativeweb.org/history/mahaskaolson.htm. See also McKenney and Hall, "Mahaskah," 213, 216.

Lance M. Foster, "The Ioway and the Landscape of Southeast Iowa," Ioway Cultural Institute, http://ioway.nativeweb.org/iowaylibrary/seiowa.htm; Daniel K. Richter, Facing East

survivors realigned into new, smaller tribal alliances that spread across the land. The Ioway left their relatives and traveled to the south and west to live on their own.⁵

Like disease, manufactured trade goods reached the Ioway well before European traders arrived. During his visit to present-day Illinois in 1673, Father Jacques Marquette was surprised to find natives well versed in the use of firearms, which they had acquired from eastern tribes who traded directly with the French.⁶ Through intertribal trade, items such as guns, glass beads, cooking utensils, metal tools, and knives crossed the Mississippi River into the hands of the Ioway living in present-day southern Minnesota. As they began to adopt manufactured goods into their everyday lives, the Ioway, like many tribes, first used them as raw materials to fashion objects of their own. In time, however, they cast aside many of the traditional tools and weapons previously made by hand in favor of manufactured goods.

When the Ioway first met French traders and missionaries in the 1670s, the newcomers seemed preoccupied with introducing the natives to their Christian god, learning about the existence of a great sea to the west, and acquiring the furs of such animals as the *thinye braxge*, or beaver. The Ioway's fondness for the goods the French offered quickly led them to alter their traditional life of subsistence farming and hunting. They gradually devoted more time and energy to hunting and trapping solely for trade. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Ioway were developing a strong dependency on European goods.⁸

Over the next few decades, the Ioway slowly migrated south into the fertile land that lay between the two great rivers they called the $\tilde{N}iDan$ (great water) and the $\tilde{N}iShoje$ (smoky water)—the Mississippi and the Missouri. If the Ioway found present-day Iowa and Missouri rich in resources, so did a succession of European powers. The French, lured by fur trade and lead mining, also moved into the region, building forts along the two major river routes to secure their position. In 1682, Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle,

From Indian Country: A Native History of Early America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 62.

⁵ Carl Waldman, Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes (New York: Facts on File, 1988), 102; Martha Royce Blaine, The Ioway Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 3.

⁶ James E. Davis, Frontier Illinois (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 29.

⁷ Irving Berdine Richman, *Ioway to Iowa: The Genesis of a Corn and Bible Commonwealth* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1931), 58; Duane Anderson, "Ioway Ethnohistory: A Review, Part I," *Annals of Iowa* 41 (Spring 1973): 1233; Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 17-18.

^{*} Zachary Gussow, Sac and Fox and Iowa Indians (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 1: 47; Blaine, Ioway Indians, 20-21; Richter, Facing East, 50-51.



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Father Jacques Marquette

traveled from the Great Lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi, claimed its entire watershed for France under legal authority granted by the Doctrine of Discovery, and christened the region Louisiana. Thus, in the eyes of the European legal system, the Ioway and their neighbors became tenants on their own homeland and found themselves subject to the benevolent sovereignty of the French crown.

Over the next century, visions of empire enticed the Spanish and British to follow the French into Upper Louisiana, and power struggles between the European nations ensued. To help ensure that Britain did not seize control of Louisiana, France ceded it to Spain in the Treaty of Fontainbleau in 1762. Indigenous tribes increasingly found themselves used as pawns as Europeans vied for dominance in the region. At various times, the French, Spanish, and British each found it convenient to exploit intertribal acrimony in order to punish hostile tribes. For example, the Osage, often at odds with the Spanish, bore the brunt of attacks from their many Indian rivals—the Ioway, Sauk, and Fox among them. On more than one occasion, these attacks resulted from Spanish provocation.¹⁰

First articulated in a papal bull issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1452, the Doctrine of Discovery legitimized the right of European nations to take possession of Islamic portions of the Middle East in the name of Christianity and the Catholic Church. As European nations colonized the North and South American continents, this doctrine allowed them to claim Indian land and gain absolute legal title to it. David E. Wilkins and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 19, 30; Tonya Gonnella Frichner, "American Indians, European Contact, and the Doctrine of Discovery," in Voices From the Battlefront: Achieving Cultural Equity, ed. Marta Moreno Vega and Cheryll Y. Greene (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1993), 92; Steve Newcomb, "Five Hundred Years of Injustice: The Legacy of Fifteenth Century Religious Prejudice," Indigenous Law Institute, http://ili.nativeweb.org/sdrm_art.html.

¹⁰ Blaine, Ioway Indians, 37, 58.

Conversely, the Ioway also exploited the unstable situation in Upper Louisiana. From their villages, they had easy access to both Spanish trade goods coming from St. Louis and British goods from the Great Lakes and Illinois. While they preferred the higher quality of the merchandise and the trade relations offered by the English, the Ioway willingly conducted business with the Spanish when it was in their best interest.

By the time of White Cloud's birth in the mid-1780s, a more assertive group of immigrants had begun to arrive in the Mississippi River valley. During the American Revolution, U.S. armed forces under the command of George Rogers Clark moved near the ancient Indian city of Cahokia to expel British troops stationed there. Clark warned the tribes in the region they would suffer the wrath of the American military if they failed to support the colonies in their war with Britain. Perhaps because Clark's forces were not sizeable enough to persuade them otherwise, the Ioway continued relations with British traders and with British officials in Canada.¹¹

After gaining independence from Britain in 1783, American settlers rapidly spread from the East Coast to the Mississippi River. Spanish officials, hoping to strengthen their control over Louisiana, offered free land grants to encourage settlers to cross the Mississippi River in 1796. Just four years later, however, Spain relinquished control of Louisiana back to France, who quickly sold it to the United States. Meanwhile, settlers continued to flood into the region. By the time Americans hoisted their flag over St. Louis in 1804, as many American and European immigrants as Indians lived in Upper Louisiana.¹²

The arrival of so many Americans proved to be a harbinger of even more rapid and significant changes in the Ioway way of life. Hoping to open land for settlers, President Thomas Jefferson advocated the removal of all indigenous people to the west side of the Mississippi River. To that end, American troops, whom the natives called Long Knives because of their swords, had already displaced powerful eastern tribes such as the Shawnee and relocated many of them near Cape Girardeau. While the colonial governments of France, Spain, and Britain had been content to share the land with natives, the American government quickly set about convincing the tribes to relinquish their claims to land where some of them had lived for centuries. In 1804, William Henry Harrison, the territorial governor of Indiana, which included present-day Missouri, convinced five Sauk and Fox chiefs to agree to the first of a long series of cessions of Indian land west of the Mississippi.¹³

¹¹ Ibid., 62-64.

Walter A. Schroeder, "Populating Missouri, 1804-1821," Missouri Historical Review 97 (July 2003): 263.

[&]quot;Treaty With The Sauk And Foxes, 1804," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), 2: 74-77, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/index.htm.



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Sauk and Fox Indians in St. Louis, 1833

To strengthen their foothold, settlers in the territory established a militia in 1804, and the U.S. military constructed Fort Bellefontaine on the Missouri River north of St. Louis the following year. Hand-in-hand with the construction of military outposts, the government established a series of trading posts, or factories, along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Concerned by the continuing influence that British traders operating out of Canada exercised on the upper portions of those two rivers, the American government created the factories to drive out foreign competition. The factories were also intended to protect tribes from unscrupulous traders whose unfair practices took advantage of Indians and occasionally agitated them to violence. By controlling trade, the government could not only maintain peace but also monitor which goods the Indians could obtain and from whom they obtained them. As an added benefit, the government could take advantage of tribes who might incur debts they could not pay by pressuring them to settle their indebtedness through the cession of land.¹⁴

As the Americans strengthened their control over the Ioway and other tribes throughout the region, White Cloud reached manhood and gained influence as a chief. Born into the *Mun'je*, or Bear, clan, he inherited the mantle of chief early in his life when his father, *MaHága*, Wounding Arrow, was murdered while visiting a Dakota village. Untried as a warrior at the time of his father's death, White Cloud proved himself by participating in a retaliatory raid against the Dakota and killing a Dakota chief.¹⁵

¹⁴ Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 84-85, 87-88; Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 116.

¹⁵ The date and location of the attack on Wounding Arrow is unknown. See McKenney and Hall, "Mahaskah," 211. Also known as the Eastern Dakota or Santee Sioux, the Dakota are

Throughout young adulthood, White Cloud continued to build a reputation as a warrior in battles against other tribes, most notably the Osage, the Ioway's traditional enemy to the south. While returning from a raid on the Osage in 1808, he participated in an incident that would lead to his first personal encounter with the American government's legal justice system and Indian policy. On the banks of the Missouri River near the mouth of the Grand River, White Cloud's war party exchanged gunfire with four French traders. Two of the traders, Joseph Merachal and Joseph Tebeau, died. News of the crime inflamed already tense relations between Indians and settlers. Missouri Territory Governor Meriwether Lewis wanted to make a show of severely punishing those responsible for the murders. Territorial officials quickly arrested White Cloud and another Ioway identified as Mera Nautais and transported them to St. Louis to face trial. Despite Lewis's hard-line approach, the judge, John B. C. Lucas, ultimately ruled that the territorial court did not have jurisdiction to punish the Ioway for a crime that had occurred on lands not yet ceded to the United States. Concerned about a public backlash from freeing the two alleged Indian murderers, Lewis ordered that they remain in jail indefinitely while the case was reviewed. The situation remained unresolved when the two escaped from jail the following year. 16

As White Cloud and Mera Nautais escaped from St. Louis in the summer of 1809, President Jefferson issued a proclamation that planted the seeds of division among the Ioway people. The president awarded the pro-American Ioway chief *Wayi*^{*}*Wèxa*, Hard Heart, with a medal and documents decreeing him to be the sole chief of the tribe. The Such pronouncements were a common tool in the American government's Indian policy. By recognizing a sympathetic chief as the only spokesman for an entire tribe, the government could

divided into four bands: the Mdewakantonwon, the Wahpeton, the Wahpekute, and the Sisseton. During White Cloud's lifetime, the Dakota lived throughout parts of present-day Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Missouri. Guy Gibbon, *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 2, 187.

Notions of Justice: The Case of the 1808 St. Louis Murder Trials," Gateway Heritage 9 (Winter 1988-1989): 10; Clarence E. Carter, ed., Territorial Papers of the United States, vol. 14, The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1806-1814 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 293-312.

Some Ioway tribal members maintain that White Cloud and Hard Heart are two names for the same person. Foster, "The Ioway"; Lance M. Foster, e-mail messages to author, 16, 20 August 2003. The fact that White Cloud was either imprisoned or had recently escaped from prison at the time the government recognized Hard Heart as the sole chief of the Ioway seems to suggest they were not the same person. Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 104. Also, Edwin James writes at length about Hard Heart in his 1819 journal of Stephen H. Long's Missouri Expedition. James mentions that Hard Heart was also known by the names Grand Batture, Sand Bar, and Wang-e-waha. He does not associate the name White Cloud with Hard Heart. Edwin James, "James's Account of S. H. Long's Expedition, 1819-1820, Part 1," in *Early Western Travels*, 1748-1846, ed. Rueben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1905), 14: 265-267.

streamline what seemed to be the unnecessarily cumbersome process of negotiating with a council of chiefs. This practice, however, contradicted the very essence of Ioway society by bestowing a level of power never before given to one chief. Traditional Ioway governance balanced leadership of various tribal functions among a number of chiefs from several clans. The Bear and Buffalo clans, for example, each led the tribe for half a year. This traditional sharing of power decentralized tribe management and manifested the Ioway belief in the balance of forces that existed in the world around them.¹⁸ The government's designation created a rift within the tribe by discounting the credibility of all but one chief.

Tensions caused by this policy escalated in the years before and during the War of 1812. Despite the pro-American leanings of Hard Heart, most Ioway continued to support the British and engaged in anti-American acts of violence. Pro-British Ioway joined the Sauk in committing a series of crimes against settlers in the Missouri Territory's Boonslick region and renewed attacks against their traditional enemies, the Osage, who had allied themselves with the United States. During the war, Hard Heart led the pro-American faction of the Ioway to the west side of the Missouri River to reside with their kinsmen, the Otoe. While it is difficult to determine how many tribal members supported Hard Heart, one account suggests there were enough men among his followers to raise a war party. Captain Horatio Stark, the American commander at Fort Madison, located on the site of the Iowa town that bears its name today, reported that an Ioway identified as Hard Heart's son had visited the fort in April 1813 seeking permission to launch attacks on pro-British Sauk and Fox living nearby.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that White Cloud backed Hard Heart's support of the United States. In 1813, while pursuing a band of pro-British Ioway, Colonel William Russell encountered a friendly camp of "White Cloud's Ioway" on the west side of the Grand River. Since Russell did not suspect the band of aiding the Indians he was chasing, he left them alone.²²

Alanson Skinner, Societies of the Iowa, Kansas and Ponca Indians, Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History (New York: American Museum of Natural History Trustees, 1915), vol. 11, pt. 9: 685.

¹⁹ Mike Dickey, "The Ioway Indians: Britain's Ally In The West?" 1st U. States Infantry and Missouri Rangers, http://usregular0.tripod.com/ioway/; H. M. Brackenridge, "Brackenridge's Journal Up the Missouri, 1811," in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels* (1904), 6:

²⁰ James, "James's Account," 265.

²¹ Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 112; Dickey, "Ioway Indians."

²² Robert E. Parkin, *Tales of Black Hawk, the Red Head, and Missouri Rangers* (St. Louis: St. Louis Genealogical Society, 1974), 138.

His early support notwithstanding, there are indications that White Cloud became frustrated with the U.S. government's interference in intertribal affairs six years later. After losing several hundred men, women, and children in a catastrophic massacre at the hands of the Sauk and Fox in the spring of 1819, the Ioway abandoned their devastated primary village on the Des Moines River and moved to the Missouri River to join the Otoe and Missouria. Soon after their arrival, the Ioway joined their kinsmen and the Omaha in a series of attacks on the Pawnee. This violence, along with similar unrest among the Kansas and Osage, made the lower Missouri River an extremely volatile region. Settlers feared for their property while fur traders found themselves particularly vulnerable to attacks by raiding parties.

In September 1819, the Indians watched as Major Stephen H. Long's Missouri Expedition arrived at Council Bluff. Flaunting an escort of nearly one thousand troops and the first steam-powered boat to successfully navigate the Missouri River above Fort Osage, the expedition hoped to use its fire-power and sheer numbers to "overawe" the Indians.²⁴ As the troops set about building winter quarters, Benjamin O'Fallon, the newly commissioned Indian agent, called the five tribes into a peace council with the hope of ending the hostilities between them.²⁵

David Meriwether, a sutler accompanying the Long expedition, recounted later that the council erupted in a confrontation of words between White Cloud and O'Fallon. Though Hard Heart was the designated speaker for the Ioway, White Cloud apparently demanded that he too be allowed to express his views on the proposed peace treaty. O'Fallon challenged the younger chief's authority to speak for his people by stating acidly that he "had not come to hear boys talk." White Cloud held his ground, scolding O'Fallon for meddling in an affair "between Redmen and in which the white man has no right to interfere." He continued to voice the frustration no doubt shared by many in attendance: "I know that we are not able to cope with the whites. I have seen some of your soldiers and know that they have better guns than we have, and I am told they are numerous as the sands on the riverbank or the great herds of buffalo on the prairies, but if the whites compel us to make peace with the Pawnees, we will, if we can do no better, scratch you with our

²³ Accounts of the massacre vary, and it is uncertain whether it occurred in May 1819 or May 1820. It is clear, however, that many Ioway had moved to the Missouri River valley near Council Bluff by the fall of 1819. Foster, "The Ioway"; A. R. Fulton, *The Red Men of Iowa* (Des Moines: Mills and Co., 1882), 119-121; Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 119.

²⁴ Harlin M. Fuller and LeRoy R. Hafen, eds., *The Journal of Captain John R. Bell: Official Journalist for the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 1820* (Glendale, CA; Arthur H. Clark Company, 1957), 14.

²⁵ David Meriwether, My Life in the Mountains and on the Plains, ed. Robert A. Griffen (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 45-47; James, "James's Account," 230-247; Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 120.



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Artist Samuel Seymour's Engraving of the Meeting at Council Bluff

toe and finger nails and gnaw you with our teeth." After he finished, White Cloud stalked out of the council, followed by his supporters among the Ioway delegation.²⁶

By 1824, as he neared forty and rose to become a head chief, White Cloud's enthusiasm for challenging his "white fathers" diminished. The fortunes of the Ioway had significantly declined during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In addition to the 1819 massacre, the Ioway had lost as much as one-quarter of their slightly more than one thousand population to smallpox in 1803.²⁷ The few hundred Ioway who remained were no match for the more than sixty-six thousand white settlers who had poured into the Missouri Territory by 1820.²⁸ While not a fervent supporter of the American government, White Cloud seemed to have resigned himself to accepting the Americans' overwhelming presence.

Because of their scant population, the Ioway found it difficult to protect themselves from the aggressions of neighboring tribes. Moving often to avoid hostilities prevented the Ioway from maintaining their traditional annual cycle of hunting and farming. This disruption compromised their ability to produce food and to hunt for the hides that they traded for necessities.

²⁶ Meriwether, My Life, 46-47; Blaine, Ioway Indians, 119-121.

²⁷ James Owen Dorsey, "Iowa," in *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, ed. Frederick W. Hodge, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30 (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1905), 1: 612-614, Ioway Cultural Institute, http://ioway/nativeweb/org/iowaylibrary/dorseyiowa.htm.

²⁸ Schroeder, "Populating Missouri," 268.

Destitute and hungry, White Cloud's people scattered into several bands to scratch out a meager existence between the Grand and Missouri Rivers.²⁹

As they continued to be embroiled in violent struggles with settlers and with their enemies, the Kickapoo, Sauk, Fox, and Dakota, the Ioway also found themselves surrounded by an increasing military presence. Not long after acquiring the Louisiana Territory, the United States began building a series of military compounds along the Missouri River. With each successive installation—Fort Osage in 1808, Cantonment Martin in 1818, Fort Atkinson in 1819, and Fort Leavenworth in 1826—the military extended their control deeper into native territory and, thus, into Indian lives.

When Missouri achieved statehood in 1821, its first senators, Thomas Hart Benton and David Barton, both of whom served on the Congressional Committee on Indian Affairs, demanded that settlers and fur trading interests be adequately protected from Indian violence. They suggested that the military forts should be augmented by an increased number of Indian agents to better control indigenous people on the frontier. While agents such as Benjamin O'Fallon had previously been assigned to oversee a number of tribes living in a single region, the new agents would act as liaisons between the government and individual tribes.³⁰

In 1824, William Clark arranged a council with the Ioway that he hoped would defuse the increasingly hostile atmosphere on Missouri's western border. Not only did the government plan to require the Ioway to renew their vows of loyalty to the United States, the officials also wanted to facilitate the first cession of Ioway land. Though Missouri had achieved statehood, Indian tribes still held legal claims to much of its land. For example, the Ioway, Sauk, and Fox jointly asserted ownership of the land north of the Missouri River and west of the Mississippi River.

To resolve these claims, Clark accompanied White Cloud; his fellow Ioway chief *MáñiXáñe*, Great Walker; and a delegation of Sauk, Fox, and Piankashaw to a treaty council in Washington, DC. While in the capital, the Indians were entertained at a number of Washington social events, and White Cloud's wife, *Rut^ánweMi*, Female Flying Pigeon, became an object of fascination among the social elite. White Cloud, on the other hand, may have been best remembered in Washington for the broken arm he suffered in a drunken fall from a second-story window of the Indian Queen Hotel.³¹ The delegates visited factories and a shipyard, and noted artist Charles Bird King painted their portraits.

²⁹ Blaine, Ioway Indians, 130, 139.

Thomas Hart Benton, John Scott, and David Barton to the Secretary of War, 7 January 1821, Carter, *Territorial Papers*, vol. 15, *The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1815-1821* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1951), 689.

³¹ McKenney and Hall, "Mahaskah," 212-213.



According to Thomas McKenney and James Hall, Female Flying Pigeon was killed in a fall from a horse not long after her return from Washington, DC.

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When they met with President James Monroe and Superintendent of Indian Affairs Thomas McKenney in early August, the two Ioway chiefs complained that the Sauk and Fox had no claim to the land in question—nor, for that matter, did the United States. When he addressed the president, White Cloud pointed out that the Ioway had been "deceived by the Spaniards and the French—for they had no right to the Country which they sold to the Americans." Recognizing, however, that his people did not have the power to contest American possession of the land, he and Great Walker agreed to sell all Ioway rights to the northern half of Missouri for \$5,000. The treaty also provided the tribe with a blacksmith, agricultural tools, and cattle, which the government hoped would induce the Ioway to renew their pursuit of agriculture and to regain their self-sufficiency.³³

By affixing their marks to the treaty, White Cloud and Great Walker appeared to have fully committed themselves to helping their people adjust to the white world. Their sincerity seems evident in the fact that the two chiefs had stopped to visit St. Regis as they made their way to Washington. During their visit, White Cloud and Great Walker agreed to send five Ioway boys, including Great Walker's son, to be educated at the school.³⁴

³² Blaine, Ioway Indians, 142.

³³ "Treaty With The Iowa, 1824," in Kappler, *Indian Affairs*, 2: 208-209.

³⁴ G. J. Garraghan, *The Jesuits of the Middle United States* (1938; repr., Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1983-1984), 1: 147-169; Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 143-144.

Soon after their return, however, a serious rift developed between the two leaders who had once called themselves brothers.³⁵ Great Walker regretted his part in signing away Ioway land. Over the next few months, the chiefs went their separate ways, each taking a portion of the tribe with him. White Cloud moved west of the Missouri state line to live near the newly created Ioway Agency on the Platte River, where he attempted to live like his white neighbors. Great Walker, known by the late 1820s as *TáseXáñe*, Big Neck, ignored the treaty and refused to leave the ceded land by the January 1, 1826, deadline.³⁶ He and his followers, known as the Pouting Party, continued to live and hunt near the Chariton and Grand Rivers.

If the Treaty of 1824 contributed to the further factionalization of the Ioway, it fared no better in bringing peace to Missouri's western border. Indians continued to travel inside the state's boundaries to trade and hunt while settlers could not resist the lure of the open land west of the border. Faced with similar unrest throughout the region covered by his superintendency, William Clark called more than one thousand delegates from nine Indian nations to a peace council in Prairie du Chien in 1825. At the council, Clark tried to convince the various nations to agree to boundaries for their respective land claims. White Cloud and nine other Ioway chiefs signed a treaty on August 19 that verified their claim to a large portion of what is today western Iowa. The treaty failed, however, to distinguish the Ioway claims from those asserted by the Sauk and Fox for the same land. Instead, the treaty stipulated that the longtime adversaries share the land until their claims could be sorted out.³⁷ Disagreements soon reemerged among the Ioway, Sauk, Otoe, and Nakota, and the treaty quickly broke down.³⁸

As subsequent efforts at intertribal peace councils failed, Clark advocated the removal of all indigenous people to the west side of the Missouri River. He believed all territories and states should be made available to settlers, with specific sections of land west of the river reserved for Indians. Only then would natives have the space, safety, and stability necessary to become self-sufficient. Meanwhile, Clark suggested that the government help them to establish schools and encourage the tribes to adopt American-style civil government. To help institute these changes, the government would pay annuities to the tribes for a fixed amount of time.³⁹

³⁵ Blaine, Ioway Indians, 187.

^{36 &}quot;Treaty With The Iowa, 1824," 208-209.

³⁷ "Treaty With the Sioux, etc., 1825," in Kappler, *Indian Affairs*, 2: 251.

Also known as the Yankton Sioux or the Yanktonai, the Nakota (so called because of their dialect) comprise three bands: the Yankton, the Upper Yanktonai, and the Lower Yanktonai. These bands lived west of their relatives, the Dakota, in present-day South Dakota. Gibbon, *The Sioux*, 2, 187.

³⁹ Blaine, Ioway Indians, 148.

White Cloud and his small band of followers became a rare model of success in the struggle to assimilate natives into European American ways. He moved into a log house, near present-day Agency, Missouri, and encouraged his followers to farm and to learn to make tools and cloth. White Cloud also wanted his young people to be educated in the same manner as white children and made arrangements to send loway boys to study at the Choctaw Academy in Blue Springs, Kentucky, after St. Regis closed.⁴⁰

In his 1829 annual report of the Ioway Agency to Superintendent Clark, Andrew Hughes boasted:

Indian civilization need no longer exist in theory. It is a matter of *fact* that *they* can *be civilized* by taking *matter* of *fact* and energetic steps *with them*. The White Cloud's band have received all the instructions that I deem necessary for them to receive. *They* have raised plenty of corn and other vegetables and will have considerable of a surplus. The women can spin and weave. All of the Indians residing on the Missouri and within the vicinity of this post have raised an abundance of corn and other vegetables. Many of the Indians who have been receiving instructions are at this time capable of giving like useful instructions to the rest of the Nation.⁴¹

While Clark and Hughes were pleased with White Cloud's progress, an incident in the summer of 1829 indicated that not all Ioway shared his

⁴¹ Hughes to Clark, 14 November 1829, Iowa Agency Records, ibid.



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Big Neck never reconciled himself to the fact that he and Mahaska had sold the Ioway lands to the American government.

⁴⁰ Andrew Hughes to Peter B. Porter, 25 December 1828, Iowa Agency Records, 1825-1837 (National Archives Microfilm Publication M234, roll 362), Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1881, Record Group 75.

enthusiasm for assimilation. An altercation between a small group of settlers and Big Neck's band of Ioway near Missouri's northern border, in what is now Schuyler County, ended in the deaths of three white men. As an expression of remorse and cooperation, White Cloud, who had not been involved in the incident, agreed to travel to Jefferson Barracks with General Henry Leavenworth to be held as collateral, along with a group of Sauk, Fox, and Missouria Indians, until Big Neck could be apprehended. Hughes traveled more than two thousand miles before finally apprehending Big Neck and seventy-five men, women, and children north of the Missouri border. The following spring, Big Neck and at least four other Ioway stood trial in Huntsville, Missouri, for the murders. The court acquitted them, in part because it judged that the Ioway believed they were on their own land at the time of the incident. Perhaps more importantly, the court found that the whites had provoked the Indians to violence.42 Even after the trial, Big Neck continued to regret his part in the Treaty of 1824 and spent the remainder of his life outside the Ioway Agency.

With the passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830, the United States succeeded in mandating the banishment of Indian tribes to lands west of the Mississippi River. By pushing eastern tribes such as the Shawnee, Piankashaw, Wea, Seneca, Quapaw, and Cherokee into the region, the government compounded the pressure that the encroachment of white settlements was placing on tribes living west of the river. While White Cloud reacted to this pressure by turning to the government for aid and protection, some tribes responded with violence. Among those who openly defied the American military along the Mississippi River, none was more feared than Black Hawk, the notorious Sauk chief. In the spring of 1830, Black Hawk had returned from the winter hunt to discover that surveyors had platted and sold some of the large Sauk village of Saukenuk, located at the site of present-day Rock Island, Illinois. The coming of white towns had already sent many Sauk and Fox west of the Mississippi River, where they increasingly came into conflict with the Otoe, Ioway, Omaha, and Yankton Nakota.

Working in tandem with Colonel Willoughby Morgan, commander of Fort Crawford, William Clark again called a peace council with members of the Sauk, Fox, Ioway, Otoe-Missouria, Wahpekute Dakota, Yankton Nakota, and Santee Dakota nations near the fort at Prairie du Chien. Clark's first objective was to settle the land disputes in western Iowa and southwest Minnesota left unresolved by the 1825 treaty. After the delegates signed an agreement on these issues, Clark pushed the matter one step

⁴² Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 154-159; *History of Randolph and Macon Counties, Missouri* (St. Louis: National Historical Co., 1884), 787-789; *Fayette Missouri Intelligencer*, 21 July, 7, 28 August, 18, 25 September, 23 October 1829; Dorothy J. Caldwell, "The Big Neck Affair: Tragedy and Farce on the Missouri Frontier," *Missouri Historical Review* 64 (July 1970): 391-412.

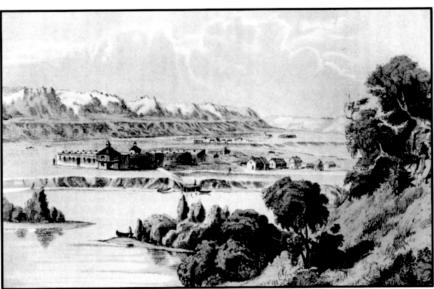
further by convincing the tribes that ceding the land in question to the United States was the best way to forge an everlasting peace.⁴³

The Ioway delegation supported Clark. After White Cloud declared himself to be "almost a white man," the chief *Pécha*", Crane, echoed his assurances that the Ioway sided with Clark in wanting to bring an end to violence. "I can only say as you do," Crane told Clark and Morgan, "I want peace with every body."

Crane also expressed support for the concept of relinquishing land for money. "I don't think 'tis fear of us that induces [the Great Father] to buy our lands," he told the delegation, "but 'tis for our peace and comfort. I hope all the Red Skins here are as well satisfied as I and my people. We only wish to have an equal portion with the [other tribes]." After the signing, however, the Ioway claimed that they did not fully comprehend the amount of land they had agreed to sell because the government had not supplied them with an interpreter. White Cloud, Crane, and eight other Ioway chiefs had, apparent-

Fort Crawford and Prairie du Chien

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⁴³ "Extracts from Minutes of a Council held at Prairie du Chien, Monday, July 12, 1830," 19, Documents Relating to the Negotiation of Ratified and Unratified Treaties, T494, roll 2, Office of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75.

^{44 &}quot;Extracts from Minutes of a Council held at Prairie du Chien, Wednesday, July 7, 1830,"
15, ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 22.

ly unwittingly, signed away all of their land between the Des Moines and the Missouri Rivers in exchange for ten annual payments of \$2,500.46

Though the Sauk had also signed the Treaty of 1830, their chief negotiator had been Keokuk, a rival of Black Hawk. Black Hawk ignored the treaty, and trouble arose the next year when he and his followers refused to be moved west of the Mississippi River. His resistance and the resulting buildup of eighteen hundred American militiamen along the river fueled tensions that reverberated all the way to the Ioway Agency.⁴⁷ Hughes was especially concerned because of his responsibility for overseeing a small band of Sauk and Fox who had moved to the Missouri River to live near his agency. In June 1831, a rumor circulated that one of Black Hawk's Sauk raiding parties had traveled west from Illinois to hide on the Ioway Agency with their kinsmen. According to the rumor, the party had come to attack and rob the Omaha Indians of the annuities they had just received at Fort Leavenworth. The Ioway sent a messenger to warn the Omaha. As they transported provisions to their agency, the Omaha altered their return route to avoid the Sauk war party. As they traveled up the west side of the Missouri River, the Omaha stumbled onto a small party of Ioway. Perhaps because the Omaha mistakenly believed the Ioway to be members of the rumored Sauk raiding party, a skirmish ensued in which the Omaha killed Crane's son.48

⁴⁸ John Dougherty to William Clark, 8 August 1831, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362; Fulton, Red Men, 114-116.



Chief Black Hawk had distinguished himself as a warrior by the age of fifteen. He died in 1838, after having twice traveled to the East.

^{46 &}quot;Treaty With the Sauk and Foxes, Etc., 1830," in Kappler, Indian Affairs, 2: 306.

⁴⁷ Parkin, Tales of Black Hawk, 139.

The murder heightened tensions in the region. While John Dougherty, the Omaha Indian agent, blamed the Sauk for inciting the excitement that led to the killing, he also suspected that the tragedy might have been committed in retaliation for the Ioway killing of an Omaha boy several months earlier. Andrew Hughes, meanwhile, claimed Crane's son would not have been killed if Dougherty had arrested the suspect in the earlier murder.⁴⁹

The Ioway immediately demanded justice. While White Cloud and his chiefs struggled to keep their young warriors from attacking the Omaha in revenge, they appealed to Hughes and the government to quickly punish the guilty Omaha. The Ioway are "looking to the United States for protection," Hughes informed Clark, and he warned there would be "no end to Indian outrage and murder—our treaties . . . [will] become a dead letter" if the government failed to deliver justice. 50

Reining in his young warriors proved impossible for White Cloud. By refusing to allow them to organize a war party, the chief was denying them an important traditional method by which Ioway warriors proved their bravery and saved their honor. In defiance, nearly one hundred young Ioway warriors set out on an unsuccessful retaliatory raid against the Omaha. The agent appealed to Clark for advice while Clark, in turn, requested Secretary of War Lewis Cass for additional troops to help quell this and similar unrest in the Missouri River valley. "I see no means by which the wars between those Tribes can be prevented but by an effective force of troops authorized to act, and I am inclined to believe that in addition to the Infantry now on our western frontier, *one* or *two* Regiments of mounted men armed and equipped for active service, stationed at such points as to enable them to act with effect, we could be able to repress the reckless spirit of the Indians."

While the controversy surrounding the murder of Crane's son simmered, the Ioway suffered another staggering loss. Big Neck was killed while trying to retrieve stolen property from a band of Dakota in early September 1831. The Ioway chiefs again appealed to Hughes and the government to quickly arrest and punish the offenders. Hughes worried that the government's failure to do so would leave the Ioway and the Missouri band of the Sauk and Fox no choice but to launch a retaliatory war. "I am well satisfied," Hughes warned, "that it will be a more protracted and bloody contest, than any heretofore witnessed." ⁵²

In the spring of 1832, panic among settlers in and around the state of Missouri reached a peak as the militia pursued Black Hawk and his followers

⁴⁹ Hughes to William Clark, 30 September 1831, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Clark to Lewis Cass, 19 September 1831, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.

⁵² Hughes to Clark, 30 September 1831.

across the ceded lands of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Throughout the conflict, Hughes worried that Black Hawk or other members of his band would flee to the Missouri River, bringing violence and bloodshed with them. Many settlers on the western border of Missouri held similar fears and abandoned their farms to seek the protection of nearby towns and settlements. To ensure that so-called "hostile" Sauk Indians did not travel west from Illinois, four companies of Rangers patrolled the region between the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. The tribes along the Missouri were warned not to hunt in the vicinity of the troops for fear of being mistaken for Black Hawk sympathizers.⁵³

Hughes's level of anxiety reached a near frenzy when Sauk Indians from Illinois successfully evaded the troops and made their way to the Ioway Agency. Rumors circulated that Black Hawk was sending warriors farther west to form alliances with the Osage and Kansas Indians. The agent feared that the Illinois Sauk were Black Hawk supporters trying to incite the Indians on his agency to rise up against the white settlers. The discovery that a number of young Ioway and Missouri Sauk and Fox warriors were absent from the agency, allegedly to hunt, exacerbated his fears.⁵⁴

Pressured by his white neighbors to take action, Hughes, with the settlers' help, arrested twenty-two of the Sauk visitors who, he reported, had "made their appearance in questionable shape, with suspicion at their heels." When another group of Ioway and Sauk arrived at his house, demanding to be fed and insulting his wife, the agent took six of them into custody as well. A clearly shaken Hughes informed Clark that, despite their earlier denials, the Ioway and Sauk chiefs at his agency claimed knowledge of a months-old plan to attack settlers near the Missouri River. "They lied to me," Hughes wrote to Clark. "These tribes are in heart and soul with the enemy, and nothing but Annuities restrain them from scalping our people." "55

The arrival of troops in late July pacified the situation to the point that Hughes released some of the imprisoned Ioway and Sauk chiefs. Clark assured Hughes that the Illinois Sauk who had appeared at the agency were friendly toward the United States and were seeking the government's protection. Clark reasoned that the apprehension caused by their presence was unfounded since no violent acts had been committed. Upon learning that Hughes had taken Indian prisoners, Clark's tone became harsher. "I regret very much your have taken those hostages as I cannot perceive any necessity for doing so nor for the alarm which appears to have been felt by the inhabitants on their account." Missouri Governor John Miller worried that

⁵³ William Duncan to William Clark, 12 July 1832, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.

⁵⁴ Ibid.; Hughes to Clark, 15 July 1832, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.

⁵⁵ Hughes to Clark, 15 July 1832.

Hughes's actions would cause more Illinois Sauk to come to the Ioway Agency out of concern for their captive kinsmen.⁵⁶ The tension did not dissipate until settlers along Missouri's western border received word of Black Hawk's defeat and capture in August 1832.

The Ioway remained dissatisfied by the government's failure to bring justice in the murder of Crane's son. To avenge the murder, twelve Ioway men formed a war party in April 1833 and traveled up the Missouri River to attack the Omaha near Dougherty's agency at Bellevue, near present-day Omaha, Nebraska. The party killed six men and took a woman and a child hostage. Dougherty worked quickly to prevent the Omaha from retaliating by sending the much-revered Omaha chief *Onpatonga*, Big Elk, to the Ioway Agency to discuss the issue with White Cloud and his chiefs.

As in previous cases of intertribal violence, White Cloud felt it was the responsibility of the American government, not the Omaha, to bring justice to the Ioway who had committed the murders. He assisted Hughes in capturing eight of the Ioway believed responsible for the murder of the Omaha. Hughes turned over the individuals to Major Bennett Riley, who transported the prisoners to Fort Leavenworth for trial. While there, one of the imprisoned Ioway threatened to kill White Cloud for assisting in his capture. In 1834, after escaping from Leavenworth, he raised a party to track White Cloud down. The group followed the chief up the Nodaway River, catching and killing him in present-day Cass County, Iowa. After the murder, one of the party took

⁵⁷ Maximilian, "Maximilian, Prince of Wied's, Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832-1834, Part I," in Thwaites, Early Western Travels (1906), 22: 256-267.



A native of Kentucky, John Dougherty arrived in St. Louis about 1808 and was active in the fur trading business for over ten years. From 1819 to 1839, he served as an interpreter and an agent for the Department of Indian Affairs. [SHSMO 009145]

⁵⁶ Hughes to Clark, [19?] July 1832; Clark to Hughes, 23, 28 July 1832; John Miller to Clark, 28 July 1832, all in Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.

refuge among the Otoe, who killed him upon discovering his crime. Another of White Cloud's murderers returned to the Ioway village, where he too was killed for his actions.⁵⁸

That October, Hughes submitted a council report outlining the receipt of annuities by the Ioway, Sauk, and Fox under his charge. White Cloud's son, Francis White Cloud, stated that *Na'hjeNing'e*, No Heart, had been given the honor of accepting the annuities on behalf of the tribe upon his father's death and thus would assume White Cloud's role as one of the head chiefs.⁵⁹

To argue that White Cloud had forsaken the traditional culture of the loway to embrace the "civilized" ways of the *Ma'unki*, white people, would be simplistic. As chief, it was his duty to ensure that his people survived, and throughout his life, he faithfully devoted himself to that responsibility. While he was a young warrior and the whites were few in number, it had been possible to fight them. But as battles, diseases, and poverty took their toll on the loway, the European Americans grew more numerous and their weapons more sophisticated. In time, they could no longer be resisted. In his later years, White Cloud came to believe that the Ioway must adapt themselves to the *Ma'unki* way of life to survive and perhaps one day even prosper again.

White Cloud's call for his people to assimilate failed, primarily because there was no place in European American culture for many traditional Ioway beliefs, customs, and folkways. If White Cloud could imagine a prosperous life that compromised important cultural touchstones, many of his people could not.

Of course, acculturation did come to the Ioway, but as with most indigenous people, it came slowly and painfully. Just two years after White Cloud's death, the Ioway ceded the last of their land east of the Missouri River and moved into present-day Kansas. Hoping to live a more traditional life, a portion of the tribe moved to the Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma, in the 1880s. There too, the Ioway could not completely avoid the assimilation that White Cloud had known was inevitable fifty years earlier.

⁵⁸ Blaine, *Ioway Indians*, 201; McKenney and Hall, *History of the Indian Tribes*, 216-217.

⁵⁹ Hughes to Elbert Herring, 11 December 1834, Iowa Agency Records, roll 362.