

# **rites of conquest**

The History and Culture of  
Michigan's Native Americans

Charles E. Cleland

166

#62

*Ann Arbor*

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

aliation of tribes and tribal factions sought to stop American expansion by political and, if necessary, armed resistance. Although the northern line set by the Treaty of Greenville in 1794 was to be a permanent boundary between the United States and Indian country, the cession filled so rapidly with settlers that, by 1802, the United States government was pressing Indians for even more land to expand its agricultural frontier. By 1810 Ohio had nearly a quarter-million inhabitants and settlers who were pushing into Indiana and Illinois.<sup>5</sup> The event that focused Indian hostility was the Treaty of Fort Wayne, negotiated by Governor William Henry Harrison and chiefs representing the Delaware, Miami, and Potawatomi.

With this treaty, the United States acquired nearly three million acres of land in Indiana and Illinois for an annuity in the form of money and trade goods amounting to a few cents per acre. The cession was negotiated by chiefs including *Winamek* (Catfish) and Five Medals of the Potawatomi, Little Turtle and Pecan for the Miami, and *Tarhe* (The Crane) of the Wyandot. These men, as well as others (such as Black Hoof of the Shawnee and the Wyandot Walk in the Water) who tended to be impressed with American power, urged peace and accommodation with American interests. They also rejected the teachings of *Tenskwatawa*. As occupation of their hunting lands by American settlers created severe food shortages, these village chiefs increasingly relied on their ability to procure supplies and services from the American government to support their people.

The opposing factions in these same tribes had similar problems but rejected accommodation as the solution. Wyandot led by Roundhead, Potawatomi under *Main Poche*, the hostile *Winamek*, and the Shawnee who followed *Tecumseh* and *Tenskwatawa* as well as most of the Indians of the west shore of Lake Michigan, especially the Winnebago and the Ottawa and Ojibwa of Michigan, were decidedly anti-American. It was among the people on the northern and western margins of the American invasion that the exhortations of the Shawnee brothers had the most appeal. Still in control of their lands, they were witness to the consequences of the onslaught of the American farmer on their southern kinsmen. They were, for the first time, able to clearly observe the meaning of the American idea of land ownership and to see that it meant exclusive possession rather than shared use. No wonder that those who rejected accommodation had such strong feelings—following the Treaty of Fort Wayne, *Tecumseh*

and his followers threatened document.

The threat of American country and the division it within each tribe also led to The movements led by *Tecumseh* new in concept, succeeded in the lineage, clans, and band foundation of tribal politics. sible within these social instit these old social units produce kin or ethnicity. Now, Potaw political persuasion became against fellow Potawatomi and of new, extratribal factions can such as *Tecumseh* and *Main* from traditional means as by encourage consensus among political action.

New residential groups also such, Prophetstown, located at the Wabash River in northw anti-American activity. Indian hear the teachings of the prop

In these meetings, *Tecumseh* dinated attack to drive the A the summer and fall of 1811. bring the Creeks, Choctaws, a Long Knives. Failing in this, Prophetstown destroyed. Taki had moved troops against the seeking to enhance his own p American army in defiance of the village, Harrison's army l and beans and, finding thirty- and scalped and mutilated th Battle of Tippecanoe was a dr stores and the fact that *Ten* magical power he claimed to h