

FRENCH / FRENCH CANADIAN SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN THE WABASH VALLEY

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ABSTRACT of the
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The "French/French Canadian Settlement Patterns in the Wabash Valley" project is a two phase archaeological investigation of French Canadian habitation sites. Fieldwork was carried out between May 5 and June 23, 1993, under the auspices of the University of Indianapolis. All field and laboratory work was supervised by the author. Dr. Gregory Reinhardt, Director of Archeology, and Dr. Stephen Nawrocki, Director of Osteology, served as Co-Principal Investigators for the project.

Phase one of the project was carried out in Cass County, Indiana. Here the goal was to locate the 19th century trading post and residence of George Cicott, a French Canadian fur trader. Once located, a systematic shovel test survey was conducted over the site in an effort to determine the nature and extent of the deposits at the site. An additional three sites, two prehistoric and one historic, were discovered during this phase of the project. The project moved down the Wabash River to Knox County, Indiana for phase two. Phase two involved the systematic archaeological survey of French long-lots in the vicinity of Vincennes, Indiana. Portions of 29 long-lots were surveyed. Thirty-seven new archaeological sites were recorded and two previously recorded sites were resurveyed. Of these, five sites appear to date to the early 19th century. The remaining 34 sites consist of both prehistoric sites, post-1850 historic sites or combinations of the two.

Data from the six sites which date to the early 19th century are presented in detail. These data are used to formulate some preliminary ideas concerning the French Canadian occupation of the Wabash valley during the 19th century. These sites are thought to represent at least two basic French Canadian settlement patterns, the Fur Trade/Reserve Pattern and the Long-lot Pattern. Site summaries for the remaining 37 sites include locational and environmental information, collections, interpretations and recommendations. All diagnostic prehistoric artifacts are illustrated. Further evaluation of these sites is beyond the scope of the present study.

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