

RANSOM H. GILLET TO COMMISSIONER CRAWFORD  
 (NAHD, OIA, Leta. Recd., Green Bay AGS: ALS)

WASHINGTON January 14<sup>th</sup> 1839.

discovered about  
 Treaty with Oneidas  
 213. enclosed by  
 R.H. Gillet 1/14/1839  
 The above  
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of the United States. They appeared to be necessary to make the treaty complete. This however is not the case with the 8th article, which authorizes the Oneidas of Green Bay & other New York Indians residing there hereafter to relinquish their lands at Green Bay to the United States, & receive others west, & participate in all the advantages of the present treaty. This provision can be struck out by the way I inserted it are the following: From the power of attorney it appears that about one half of the Oneidas at Green Bay now wish to emigrate. I was informed by the delegates that when it should be known to the nation, that such valuable pecuniary advantages were secured in the treaty, & large accession to the immigration, or "Missouri party" might be expected, & especially after the pioneers should become settled & exhibit that prosperity which is contemplated. They also informed me that this would prove true, as to the Stock-ranges Munnese & Brothertowns residing there, & that even now a large number of each of those tribes were in favour of removal—that not like the particular location which the country west, but did was the only tract they could have. Whether they were told so, or not, I do not know, but there are other lands open to them in the New York tract. From these facts, I have no doubt very many of each of these tribes will be restless & uneasy until they are settled with their brethren of the west, & it seemed to me, that no injury could result in making provision for them at once, of which they could avail themselves at any time, without the trouble & expense of separate articles with each.

A copy is present.

Not present. There is no record that this treaty was ever ratified.

WISCONSIN TERRITORY

1147

By the very terms of the Treaty itself, the Indians are to act voluntarily, if at all, under it. Hence those who do not approve of its provisions, have only to let it alone & it will not apply to them, as each of the Oneidas holds his lands separately at Green Bay.

But two of the delegates reached Buffalo. The others were understood to have been detained by sickness. The two who were present at the execution of the treaty claimed to be authorized to sign the names of the other delegates. As I had personal knowledge that the absent delegates were in favour of such a treaty, as that which was made, I did not doubt their authority & permitted them to sign accordingly.

I had them boarded at a distance from the city, & at as cheap a rate as I could. One of the delegates had his wife with him. I clothed them so as to make them comfortable, but with strict regard to economy, & furnished each with the same amount of money to return home with, as I furnished the delegates from Green Bay last winter, which was the smallest amount that I thought would answer the purpose. I had to employ an interpreter who understood their language. The whole expense of the treaty was \$338,57/100 which amount I paid out in money from my own means.

The treaty is in all respects one beneficial to the Indians, & cannot operate upon any except those who choose to accept of its provisions. Hence there can be no reason why it should not be fully approved. It may be proper to remark, that the Senate has heretofore sanctioned all the prominent provisions of this treaty, in passing upon the one made with the New York Indians. The present treaty is more advantageous to the Government than that, by the value of the lands which those who emigrate shall surrender, which will be one hundred acres per head counting only those who joined in the power of Attorney to the delegates, about thirty thousand acres of good land will be disincumbered of its Indian title & may be brought into market. All of which is respectfully submitted by your obt servt.

R. H. GILLET

HON. T. H. CRAWFORD Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Endorsed Oneidas at Green Bay R. H. Gillet Report O. I. A. Green Bay, G. 434, Hon. R. H. Gillet, Washington, 14 Jan<sup>r</sup> 1839, Transmits Treaty concluded by him under instructions of this Office of 4<sup>th</sup> ult. with a delegation of Oneidas from Green Bay; also the power of Attorney under which the Delegates acted—Remarks in explanation of the Treaty &c &c—Dec<sup>r</sup> 19 Jan<sup>r</sup> 1839, File.

After the publication of *Travels in the Interior of North America*, nearly 400 of Bodmer's original studies of North American subjects were deposited at the Wied family estate for safekeeping. They were rediscovered after World War II by an official engaged in research at the Wied archives.

Exhibited in West Germany and the United States in the 1950s, this collection was acquired by InterNorth, Inc. in 1962 and placed on permanent loan at the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha. Acquired at the same time was other material associated with the expedition of 1832-34, including Maximilian's travel diaries, journals and letters.

Grateful acknowledgment is expressed to the lenders to the exhibition: American Museum of Natural History; The Brooklyn Museum; Buffalo Bill Historical Center; Chardier Institute; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center; Denver Museum of Natural History; Deutsches Ledermuseum; Field Museum of Natural History; Linden-Museum; Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation; The Museum of the Fur Trade; National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada; National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution; Nebraska State Historical Society; The New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations; Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Vögelkunde; The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.



VIEWS OF A  
VANISHING  
FRONTIER

"Views of a Vanishing Frontier" was organized by Joslyn Art Museum/Center for Western Studies and made possible by InterNorth, Inc., Omaha, Nebraska.



The Interior of the Hut of a Mandan Chief  
After Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Engraving with aquatint; hand-colored  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Joslyn Art Museum,  
Omaha, Nebraska

## EPILOGUE

In Europe, Maximilian decided to publish a lavishly illustrated account of the journey, and dispatched Bodmer to Paris to oversee the work of 20 engravers. Several years were spent transforming Bodmer's watercolors and sketches into aquatints, many of them hand-colored.

Prince Maximilian's *Travels in the Interior of North America* was published in German in 1839, and later in French and English editions. This book, accompanied by 81 magnificent aquatints, came to be recognized as the most accurate and definitive portrayal of the Plains Indians of the early 19th century.

### Cover Illustration

Travellers Meeting with Minnitarre [Hidatsa] Indians near Fort Clark  
After Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Engraving with aquatint; hand-colored  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

## WINTER AT FORT CLARK

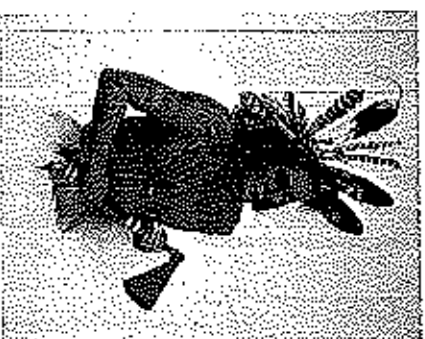
NOVEMBER 8, 1833—APRIL 18, 1834

Indian hostilities around Fort McKenzie prompted Maximilian to return downriver to Fort Clark. Here, the explorer and his artist spent a productive winter observing in detail the daily life of the Mandan and Hidatsa. The Europeans became friends with many Indians, such as the valiant Mandan chief, Mato-Tope, who was a frequent visitor to their cabin. Maximilian and Bodmer often visited the Mandan and Hidatsa villages as well and developed an understanding of their cultures. Maximilian and Bodmer's work now serves as a significant resource for the descendants of these tribes, which were decimated by a smallpox epidemic in 1837. Many of the individuals encountered by the explorers, including Mato-Tope, were victims of the disease.

On April 18 the party set out for St. Louis, arriving six weeks later. They went on to New York and set sail for Europe on July 16, a little over two years after their arrival.



Interior of a Mandan Earth Lodge  
Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Watercolor and ink on paper  
Invent: North Art Foundation/Joshlyn Art Museum,  
Omaha, Nebraska



Mato-Tope (Four Beards), Mandan Chief  
Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Watercolor on paper  
Invent: North Art Foundation/Joshlyn Art Museum,  
Omaha, Nebraska

## INTRODUCTION

In the early 19th century, Europeans were intrigued with tales of new and exotic lands. They made up a diverse band of explorers in what was called the "Second Great Age of Discovery," an era that included Charles Darwin's epic 1831-39 voyage aboard the *Beagle*. Another of these exploring scientists was a German aristocrat, Prince Maximilian Alexander Philipp of Wied-Neuwied. A former Prussian army officer and a trained naturalist, Prince Maximilian had explored the Brazilian rain forests in 1815-17. Intrigued by what he had seen in Brazil, Maximilian decided to explore the North American frontier before it was changed by settlement and civilization. From his earlier experience, however, Maximilian knew he needed the services of a skilled artist to produce reference drawings and illustrate the book he intended to write. Joining him on the North American expedition was Karl Bodmer, a young Swiss artist who had gained a measure of recognition as a landscape painter.

The two men, accompanied by Maximilian's personal hunter and taxidermist, departed for North America in the spring of 1832. Over the next two years they would travel thousands of miles, exploring the land along the Missouri River from St. Louis to the western reaches of the Montana territory.

"Views of a Vanishing Frontier" commemorates the 150th anniversary of this great adventure. This special exhibition includes more than 120 of Bodmer's original watercolors and sketches. Ethnographic and historic materials, collected by Maximilian during the journey or typical of the same period and region, contribute to the exhibition's overall perspective.

## BOSTON TO ST. LOUIS

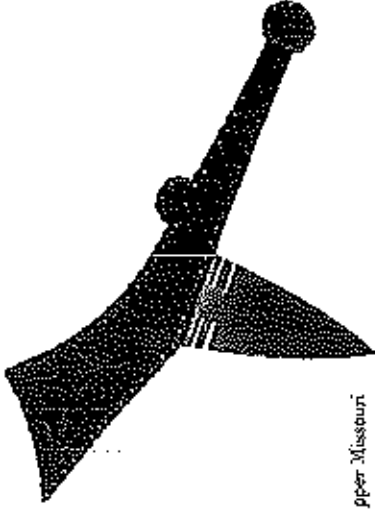
JULY 4, 1832—MARCH 24, 1833

Maximilian's intent was to collect data on native flora, fauna and peoples. Having little interest in urban life, he and his companions quickly passed through the large eastern cities. As they headed west through Pennsylvania, Maximilian began his natural history collections while Bodmer painted. The party wintered in New Harmony, Indiana, in the company of fellow naturalists. During this period Maximilian wrote of his admiration for the material achievements of American civilization but also expressed his disenchantment with American society and the treatment of the Indians. "Unfortunately . . . I have not yet seen a single native Indian. . . . One has to cross the Mississippi to find them; for they want to drive the last scattered remnants of . . . the Cherokees, Choctaws and other people across the Mississippi in the course of this winter—what cruelty! This is the vaunted freedom of America!"

## ST. LOUIS

MARCH 24—APRIL 10, 1833

In March the travelers journeyed by steamboat on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to St. Louis, then the last major settlement on the vast American frontier. Maximilian purchased supplies there—including items to trade with the Indians—procured maps of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and met Sauk and Fox Indians who had come to St. Louis to plea for the release of an imprisoned leader. The Prince arranged to travel under the protection of John Jacob Astor's powerful American Fur Company. At the Company's posts and forts he would be provided with ample opportunity to meet and observe the Indians who came there to trade. On April 10 Maximilian's party boarded the Company's steamboat *Yellow Stone* and set off up the Missouri.



Gunstock War Club, Upper Missouri

Wood, paint, metal

Maximilian Collection at National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa  
Reg. #573-449



Manuscript Journal, Vol. 2 of 3  
Prince Maximilian of Wied (1782-1867)  
Ink, watercolor on paper (bound)  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Levy Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

## FORT UNION TO FORT MCKENZIE

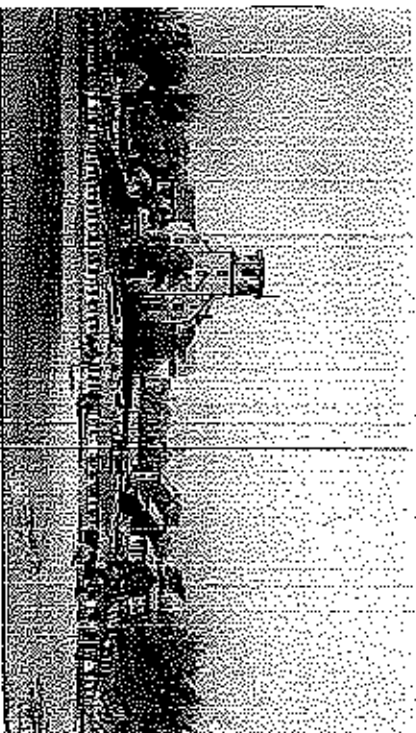
JULY 6-SEPTEMBER 14, 1833

Maximilian's entourage set out by keelboat from Fort Union for Fort McKenzie. Steamboats could not safely navigate the upper Missouri and smaller wind and man-powered keelboats were used instead. Astounded by the geological wonders in this area, Maximilian wrote: "Like a dream these marvelous figures drifted past the view of the astonished traveler. Only by sketching the most striking ones do they later still survive in the rewarding recollection of this distant forgotten world of nature with all its marvels." The White Castles still remain as Bodmer painted them, but much of the Upper Missouri region has changed. Bodmer's watercolors and Maximilian's journals and collections preserve for us a view of these landscapes and of the people who lived there.



The White Castles on the Upper Missouri  
Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)

Watercolor on paper  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Jewlyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska



View of New Harroon  
Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)

Watercolor on paper  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Jewlyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska



Broadsheet Advertising the Steamboat Yellow Stone  
Paper  
InterNorth Art Foundation/Jewlyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

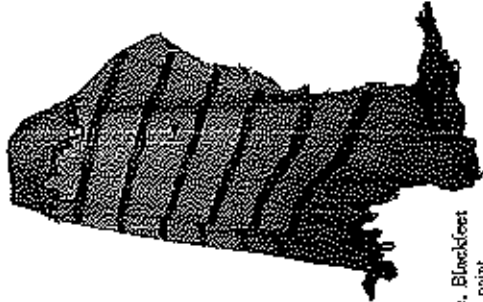
# ST. LOUIS TO FORT UNION

APRIL 10-JULY 6, 1833

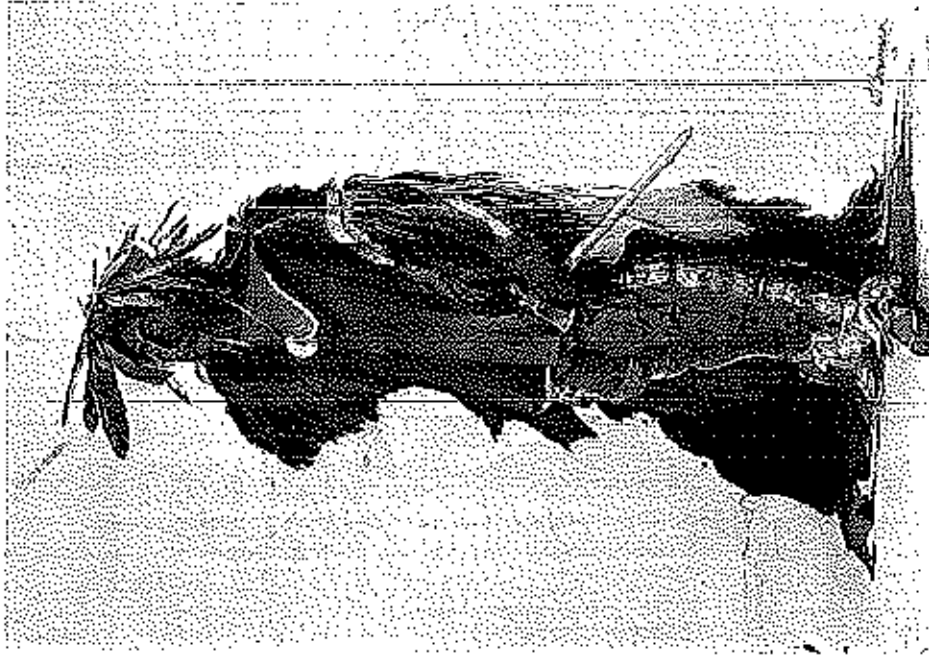
The steamboat made many stops to load supplies, make repairs and conduct business at the trading posts and forts. Near present-day Omaha, Nebraska, the Prince and his companions visited an Omaha Indian camp where, for the first time, they saw large numbers of Indians in their natural environment. Encounters with Indians became more frequent, and the Prince's observations of them included descriptions of their clothing and ornaments; tipis and pack animals; food and medicine; marriage customs; age societies; and accounts of warfare. Images of the Ponca, Sioux and Assiniboin in native dress were captured on paper by Bodmer. Most tribesmen readily agreed to pose in return for beads, tobacco or ribbons. Bodmer's subjects showed great interest in the paintings: "Whenever the Indians recognized a likeness, they would burst out in hand-clapping and other obvious signs of enthusiasm."



Fort Union on the Missouri  
After Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Engraving with aquatint hand-colored  
Johannes/Arth. Fournard/John/John Art Museum,  
Omaha, Nebraska



Robe, Buckskin  
Hide, paint  
Maximilian Collection at Deutsches Luthermuseum,  
Oberbach/Munich, West Germany



Wahkiagei (Gallant Warrior), Yankton Sioux Chief  
Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)  
Watercolor and pencil on paper  
Johannes/Arth. Fournard/John/John Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska