

Group 2: Original Surveys

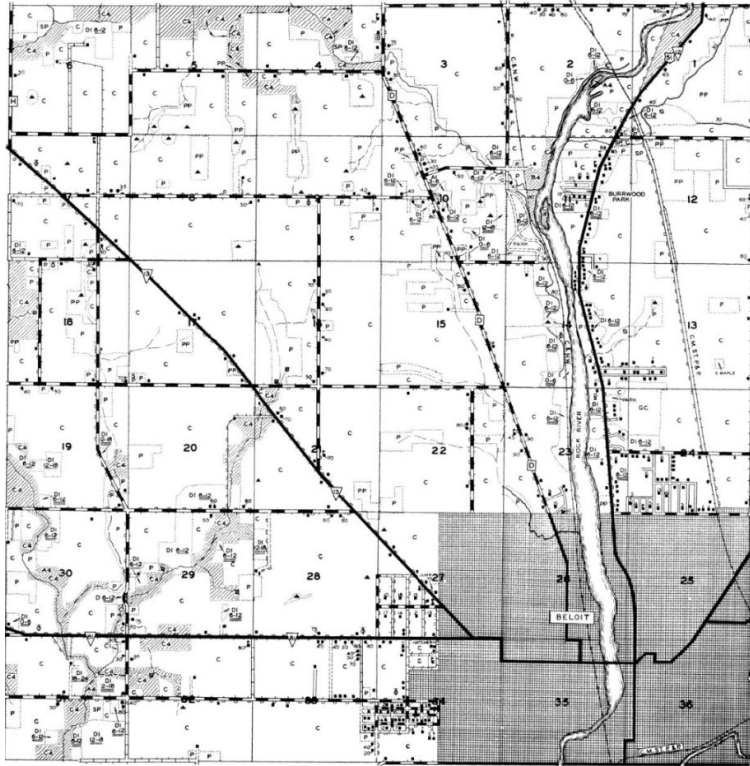
This group used textiles to critique how original land surveys were instrumental in the violence of dispossession. Surveyors, by measuring and gridding the landscape, produced a particular reality, directly contrasting Indigenous ways of knowing. The group focused on a 1830s survey around the area that would become Beloit College, which included a Ho-Chunk village. They began with striped fabric, which was gridded into squares and marked with price-tags to represent land sales. The land around Beloit College was marked with thread to show the way in which the landscape was literally (and violently) cut up through surveying and privatization. Finally, the shapes of effigy mounds, still present on the Beloit College campus, were embroidered over a patch of natural fabric, literally spilling over the edge of the map, and therefore outside reality of the survey. The mounds connect the past to the future, and demonstrate how understandings of the landscape can be reshaped if we imagine them differently.

A group of four young women are seated around a long wooden table in a bright, spacious room with large windows and high ceilings. They are all smiling at the camera. The table is cluttered with laptops, papers, a map of Europe, and other items. In the background, other people are visible working at similar tables. The room has a rustic feel with wooden floors and stone pillars.

Group #1: Original Surveys

Adrian, Aubrey, Laken, Paige

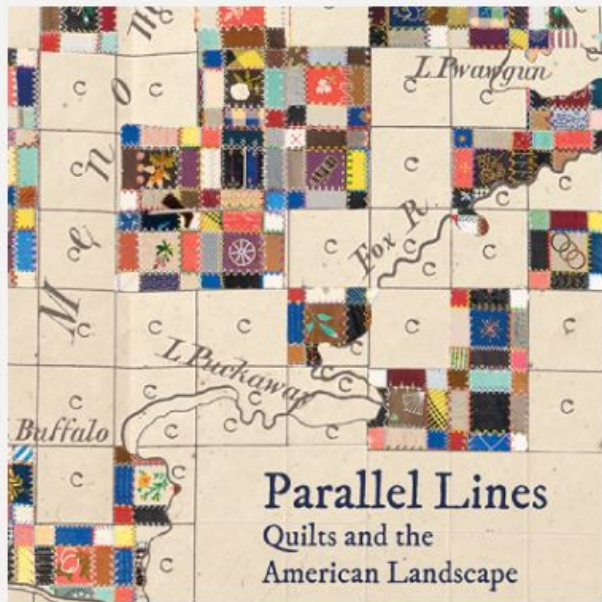
Module #1



Past: the grid

- We are interested in using textiles to visualize the violence of the grid.
- How the violence of the gridding of land through the PLSS is continued in our square pixel-based data.
 - Pixels: loss of information is inherent to raster data. When you lose this information (by generalizing), what do you lose? -> indigenous lives and existence
- The surveyor as an active participant in genocide and dispossession of Indigenous people. Breaking down the framing of PLSS surveys as “observational” and representations of “reality.” The surveyor commits ACTIVE violence (Nathaniel Massie as an example.)
- A theme of “The Cartographer’s Pen” as it creates realities and lives and deaths. The Cartographer’s Pen turns landscapes into property under the guise of permanence, but we can imagine beyond this construct. This is our approach to counter-mapping.

Parallel Lines: Quilts and the American Landscape



Lynn Mecklenburg Textile Gallery
September 3, 2025 – May 10, 2026

Parallel Lines: Quilts and the American Landscape explores the parallel processes of quilt making within the American home and placemaking on the American landscape. Featuring nineteenth- and twentieth-century American quilts drawn from the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, the exhibit examines some of the most familiar quilt forms – such as nine-patch squares, eight-pointed stars, and “log cabin” blocks with cloth strips surrounding a central square

“hearth” – as the basis for individual creativity and innovative design. Visitors will be encouraged to view American quilts through a new lens, by comparing these geometric motifs and strong linear compositions to the boundaries, pathways, and structures of the built environment.

NATHANIEL MASSIE, SURVEYOR

JOHN McDONALD

Before relinquishing its claim on the Northwest Territory, Virginia reserved a tract of Military Lands north of the Ohio, extending between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers. In 1790 the Virginia Military Tract was opened to claimants, the Scioto.

Into this wild country came Nathaniel Massie, already, at twenty-six, a veteran Kentucky surveyor and landlooker. Late in 1790 he chose a site on the north bank of the Ohio and laid out the town that is now called Manchester. Originally the fourth town in Ohio. "The inhabitants," wrote Massie's chairman, John McDonald, "were generally as playful as kittens, and as happy in their way as the heart could wish. The men spent most of their time in hunting and fishing, and almost every evening the boys and girls footed merrily to the tune of the fiddle."

But they had strenuous seasons in the field, surveying a big country of tangled billiards, rich river bottoms, deep and sudden gorges, and streams as sinuous as the great serpent mound above Bush Creek. Between 1790 and 1801 Massie and his men (one of them, the burly Duncan McArthur, later became Governor of Ohio) surveyed 750,000 acres of Military Lands.

The following account of the hazards of surveying in the wilderness is taken from a sketch of Nathaniel Massie by his woodland colleague, John McDonald of Poplar Ridge, Ross County, Ohio.

THE plan adopted by Massie, in his various surveying excursions at that time, was such as to secure safety to the party. Three assistant surveyors, with himself making the fourth, were generally engaged at the same time in making surveys. To each surveyor time was attached six men, which made a mess of seven. Every man had his prescribed duty to perform. Their operations were conducted in this manner.—In front went the hunter, who kept in advance of the surveyor two or three hundred yards, looking for game, and prepared to give notice should any danger from Indians threaten. Then followed, after the surveyor, the two chain-men, marker, and pack-horse men with the baggage, who always kept near each other, to be prepared for defence in case of an attack. Lastly, two men, called the spy, whose duty it was to

keep on the back trail, and look out lest the party in advance might be pursued and attacked by surprise. Each man (the surveyor not excepted) carried his rifle, his blanket, and such other articles as he might stand in need of. On the pack-horse was carried the cooking utensils, and such provisions as could be conveniently taken. Nothing like bread was thought of. Some salt was taken, to be used sparingly. For substitutes, the woods afforded, alone on the game which the woods afforded, alone on the game which the woods afforded, alone on the game which the woods afforded.

In the fall of the year 1793, Massie determined to attempt a surveying tour on the Scioto river. This, at that time, was a very dangerous undertaking; yet no danger, unless very imminent, could deter him from making the attempt. For that purpose, he employed

about thirty men, of whom he chose three as assistant surveyors. These were John Beasley, Nathaniel Beasley, and Peter Lee. It was in this expedition, Massie employed, for the first time, a young man by the name of Duncan McArthur as a chain-man or marker. This man had distinguished himself remarkably on several occasions, and particularly in Harmer's unfortunate expedition. He was one of the best woodsmen of his age. He was a large, strong, and muscular man, capable of enduring fatigue and privations, equal to the best trained Indians. His courage was unquestioned, to which was added an energetic mind, which soon displayed its powers. He afterwards became a surveyor, and was one of the most acute land speculators in the western country. Such a man Massie desired to have on an expedition of this character.

In the month of October, some canoes were procured, and Massie and his party set off by water. They proceeded up the Ohio to the mouth of the Scioto, thence up the Scioto to the mouth of Paint creek. While meandering the Scioto, they made some surveys on the bottoms. After reaching the mouth of Paint creek, the surveyors went to work. Many surveys were made on the Scioto, as far up as Westfall. Some were made on Main, and others on the North Fork of Paint creek, and the greatest parts of Ross and Pickaway counties in the district were well explored and partly surveyed. Massie finished his intended work without meeting with any disturbance from the Indians. But one Indian was seen during the excursion, and to him they gave a hard chase. He, however, escaped. The party returned home delighted with the rich country of the Scioto valley, which they had explored.

During the winter of 1793-4, Massie, in the midst of the most appalling dangers, explored the different branches to their sources, which run into the Little Miami river, and thence passed in a northerly direction to the heads of Paint and Clear creeks, and the branches that form those streams. By these expeditions he had formed from personal observation, a correct knowledge of the geographical situation of the country composing the Virginia military district.

During the winter of 1794-5, Massie prepared a party to enter largely into the surveying business. Nathaniel Beasley, John Beasley, and Peter Lee were again employed as the assistant surveyors. The party set off from Manchester well equipped to prosecute their business, or should occasion offer give battle to the Indians. They took the route of Logan's trace, and proceeded to a place called the deserted camp, on Tod's fork of the Little Miami. At this point, they commenced surveying, and surveyed large portions of land on Tod's fork, and up the Miami country thence up Massie's creek and Caesar's creek nearly to their heads. By the time the party had progressed thus far, winter had set in. The ground was covered with a sheet of snow, which continued upwards of thirty days, the party had no bread. For the first two weeks, a pint of flour was distributed to each mess once a day, to mix with the soup, in which the meat had been boiled. When night came, four fires were made for cooking, that is, one for each mess. Around these fires, till sleeping time arrived, the company spent their time in the most social glee, singing songs and telling stories. When danger was not apparent or immediate, they were as merry a set of men as ever assembled. Resting time arriving, Massie always gave the signal, and the whole party would then leave their comfortable fires, carrying with them their blankets, their firearms, and their little baggage, walking in perfect silence two or three hundred yards from their fires. They would then scrape away the snow, and huddle down together for the night. Each mess formed one bed, they would spread down on the ground one half of the blankets, reserving the other half for covering. The covering blankets were fastened together by skewers to prevent them from slipping apart. Thus prepared, the whole party crouched down together with their rifles in their arms, and their pouches under their heads for pillows; laying spoon-fashion, with three heads one way and four the other, with their feet extending to about the middle of their bodies. When one turned, the whole man turned, or else the close range would be

broken. The party would then leave their comfortable fires, carrying with them their blankets, their firearms, and their little baggage, walking in perfect silence two or three hundred yards from their fires. They would then scrape away the snow, and huddle down together for the night. Each mess formed one bed, they would spread down on the ground one half of the blankets, reserving the other half for covering. The covering blankets were fastened together by skewers to prevent them from slipping apart. Thus prepared, the whole party crouched down together with their rifles in their arms, and their pouches under their heads for pillows; laying spoon-fashion, with three heads one way and four the other, with their feet extending to about the middle of their bodies. When one turned, the whole man turned, or else the close range would be

broken. The party would then leave their comfortable fires, carrying with them their blankets, their firearms, and their little baggage, walking in perfect silence two or three hundred yards from their fires. They would then scrape away the snow, and huddle down together for the night. Each mess formed one bed, they would spread down on the ground one half of the blankets, reserving the other half for covering. The covering blankets were fastened together by skewers to prevent them from slipping apart. Thus prepared, the whole party crouched down together with their rifles in their arms, and their pouches under their heads for pillows; laying spoon-fashion, with three heads one way and four the other, with their feet extending to about the middle of their bodies. When one turned, the whole man turned, or else the close range would be

broken and the cold let in. In this way, they lay till broad day light; no noise and scarce a whisper being uttered during the night. When it was perfectly light, Massie would call up two of the men in whom he had the most confidence, and send them to reconnoiter, and make a circuit around the fires, lest an ambuscade might be formed by the Indians to destroy the party as they returned to the fires. This was an invariable custom in every variety of weather. Self-preservation required this circumspection. If immortality is due to the names of heroes who have successfully labored in the field of battle, no less honors are due to such men as Massie, who ran equal risk of life from danger with less prospect of elate, and produced more lasting benefit to the country.

Massie proceeded to survey up Caesar's creek, nearly to where its waters interlock with the waters of Paint creek. Late one evening, he came upon the tracks of Indians in the snow. Some of his men were despatched to search out the Indian encampment, while others were sent in pursuit of the assistant surveyors, in order to collect the force into one body, that he might be prepared to attack or defend as circumstances might direct. A short time before sun-down, his force was collected. In a few minutes after, the two men returned who had been sent to discover the Indian camp. They reported, that they had proceeded as near the Indian encampment as they could with safety, and that it consisted of eight or ten tents, and that from the noise about the camp, they had no doubt but that there was a large number of Indians. Massie, thereupon, concluded that it would be too hazardous to attack them while the snow was on the ground, believing it would endanger the whole party if they would be compelled to retreat, encumbered with any wounded. He therefore resolved to desist from surveying, and make a rapid retreat to his own station, not doubting but that he would be pursued, as the Indians would have no difficulty in tracking them through the snow. The line of march was formed for home by the party, who traveled until ten or eleven o'clock at night, when they halted and remained until morning, when they again resumed their march, moving

in a southern direction. About twelve o'clock, they came to a fresh trail, which was made by four horses and eight or ten footmen. This struck upon after traveling a few miles. After a consultation with some of the most experienced of his men, Massie concluded the Indians, whose trail had been crossed, knew nothing of them, and determined to pursue them so long as they kept the direction in which they appeared to be going. The pursuit of the Indians was kept up as fast as the men could walk, until dusk without overtaking them. The party then halted to consult as to their future operations. In a few minutes, the Indians were heard at work with their tomahawks, cutting wood and tent poles, within a few hundred yards of the place where the party had halted. It was put to vote, whether the Indian camp should be attacked immediately, or whether they should postpone it to day-light. A majority were for lying by and attacking them in day-light. Two or three men were then sent to reconnoiter their camp and bring away their horses. The horses were brought away, and preparations made to lie by for the night. Massie, who was more thoughtful than the rest of the company, began to reflect on the critical situation of the party. He told them, he did not approve of the idea of lying by until morning, as there was no doubt they were rapidly pursued by the Indians from the head of Caesar's creek, and that by waiting until morning, the pursuing Indians might come up in the course of the night, and when day-light appeared, they would find themselves between two fires. He said it was true the Indians might be destroyed more effectually in day-light, but that it was dangerous to loiter away their time on a retreat, and advised that whatever they did to the Indians should be done quickly, and the march continued towards home. It was resolved to follow his advice.

It was about two hours in the night when this occurred. The day had been warm, and this melted the snow which was eight inches deep, and quite soft on the top. At night it began to freeze rapidly, and by this time there was a hard crust on the top. In this situation, the crust when broken by a man

NATHANIEL MASSIE, SURVEYOR 127

128 LAND SEEKERS

NATHANIEL MASSIE, SURVEYOR 129

walking on a calm night could be heard at the distance of three hundred yards. Massie, under these circumstances prepared to attack the Indians forthwith. The men were formed in a line, in single file, with their wiping sticks in their hands, to steady them when walking. They then commenced moving towards the Indian camp in the following manner—the foremost would walk about twenty steps, and halt; then the next in the line would move on, stepping in the tracks of the foremost, to prevent any noise when breaking the crust of the snow. In this cautious and silent manner, they crept within about twenty-five yards of the Indian encampment, when an unexpected interruption presented itself; a deep ravine was found between Massie and the camp which was not perceived by the reconnoitering party. The Indians had not as yet laid down to rest, but were singing and amusing themselves round their fires, in the utmost self-security, not dreaming of danger in their own country, in the depth of winter. The bank of the ravine concealed Massie and his men, who were on low ground, from the light of the Indian fires. After halting a few minutes on the bank of the ravine, Massie discovered, a few paces above him, a large log which had fallen across the ravine. On this log he determined to cross the gully. Seven or eight of the men, on their hands and knees, had crossed, and were within not more than twelve or fifteen paces of the Indians, crouching low, and turning to the right and left, when too many men at the same time got on the log; and as it was old and rotten, it broke with a loud crash. This startled the Indians. The whites, who had crossed over before the log broke, immediately fired into the Indian camp, shouting as they ran. The Indians fled, naked, and without their arms. No Indian was killed in the camp, although their clothing and blankets were found stained with blood. No attempt was made to pursue them. Their camp was plundered of the horses and arms, making altogether considerable booty. The party traveled that night and until noon the next day, when they halted to cook some provisions, and rest their wearied limbs. After taking some refreshments, they loitered about the fires a short time, and again commenced

their march through snow and brush, and about midnight of the second day, arrived at Manchester, after a fatiguing march of two days and nights from the head of Cass's creek.

On the last day of their march, about a mile north of where West Union now stands, one of the men who carried a bag of Indian plunder, and rode one of the horses, dropped the bag, and did not miss it until they arrived at Manchester. Sometime in the succeeding day, two of the men took fresh horses, and rode back on the trail, to look for the bag. They found the bag some distance south of the brow of the hill, and concluded they would go to the brow and look over for deer. When they reached it, they were astonished to find the spot where a large party of Indians had followed the trail to the foot of the hill, and there stopped to eat their breakfast, leaving some bones and sinewy jerk, that was too hard to eat. Had the Indians pursued the trail one hundred yards farther, they would have found the bag, and laid in ambush for the whites to return, and would doubtless have killed or taken the men who returned for the bag. This was truly a narrow escape.

The winter of 1794-95 was attended by no disturbances from the Indians, as the defeat they had sustained the summer before from General Wayne, had completely checked them in their depredations. In the spring of 1795, Massie again prepared a party to return to the waters of the Little Miami, Paint creek, and the Scioto, for the purpose of surveying. He employed three assistant surveyors, with the usual complement of men. Every man carried, as usual in these surveying tours, his own baggage on his back. No one, indeed, was exempt from this service; and when the weight is taken into consideration, and the encumbrance from it, there seems to be little ground for the complaints, which have latterly been made, about the inaccuracies of early surveys. Indeed, it is really astonishing, how they could be made so accurate as they are found to be.

Early in March the party set off from Manchester. The weather was fine, and the spring appeared to have commenced in ear-



Above: The Ohio River above Madison. Below: Dettlaff's Clearing, near Piqua, Ohio. Both drawings by Thomas K. Wharton. Courtesy New York Public Library and Ohio Historical Society



nest. Massie commenced surveying on the west fork of Ohio Brush creek. The woods then furnished game in great abundance, such as turkeys and bears, of the finest quality. A description of the method in which bears were taken, although familiar to the old back-woodsmen, will be perhaps interesting to their descendants, as these animals have become scarce since the settlement of the country. It is well known that bears retire to the hollows of rocks or trees, about the last of December, and remain in a dormant state until the winter breaks, be it early or late. When the weather becomes warm, they will bustle out of their holes to the nearest water, once in two or three days. In walking from their holes to the water, they are careful to step in the same track; and as the earth at that season of the year is soft and spongy, the feet of the bear, in passing and repassing, make a deep impression. These impressions are called by the old hunters, "the bear's stepping-place." When the hunter finds the stepping-place, he can easily follow the track, until he finds the tree in the hollow of which, or in some cave or hole in the rocks, the animal lies at ease. They are then, by various means used, driven from their holes, and shot. During this expedition, a young man, by the name of Bell, who was very active in climbing trees, exhibited great boldness in driving them from their holes. When a bear was tracked to a tree, this man, when the tree was not very large and smooth, would climb up and look into the hole, and punch the bear with a sharp stick until it would come out. Bears at this season are very lazy and difficult to move. By punching them, however, for some time, they will move heavily to their holes, and slowly drag themselves out. As soon as they were clear of their holes, some one or two picked marksmen would shoot them. Bell, so soon as he would provoke the bears to come out, would slip out on a limb, and wait with perfect composure until the marksmen would shoot them. These feats are specimens of Bell's daring. He was, altogether, one of the most hardy, fearless, and thoughtless men of danger, I ever saw. In this way numerous bears were found and killed. The fat part of the meat, boiled or roasted with turkey or

venison, makes a very luxurious repast. The rest is used for manure.

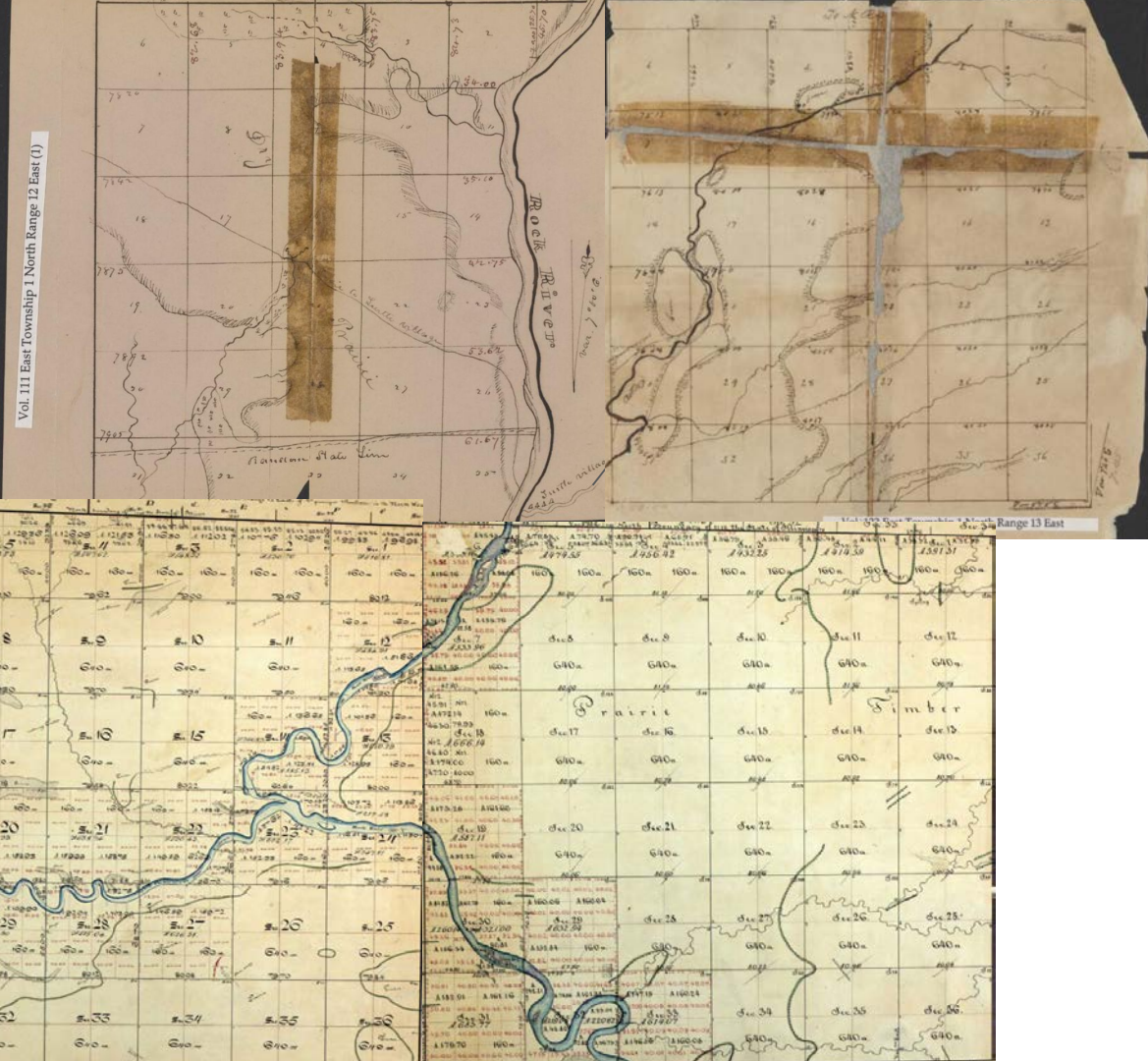
The weather, for some time, continued quite pleasant, while the party surveyed towards the head waters of Brush creek. Thence passed to the Rocky and Rattlesnake forks of Paint creek; thence crossing Miami "the old town," on the north point of Paint creek. While surveying in this section of the country, the weather became cloudy, and commenced snowing and hailing. The snow continued to fall and drift for two days and nights, and when it ceased, the ground was covered between two and three feet deep. The camp was on the ground, at this time the farm of Colonel Adam Mallow, four miles above Old town (or Frankfort, as it is now called). About the time it ceased snowing, the weather became warm, and a soft rain fell for a short time. Suddenly it became intensely cold, accompanied by a frost, which soon formed a strong crust on the snow, which had been previously softened by the rain. The snow, although somewhat settled by the rain, was at least two feet deep, with a crust that would bear about half the weight of a man. This was the deepest snow I ever saw, before or since, in the western country. The turkeys, and other small game, could run on the crust of snow, which disabled the hunters from pursuing and killing game, and as the party had no provisions with them, the doleful prospect of death by starvation stared them in the face.

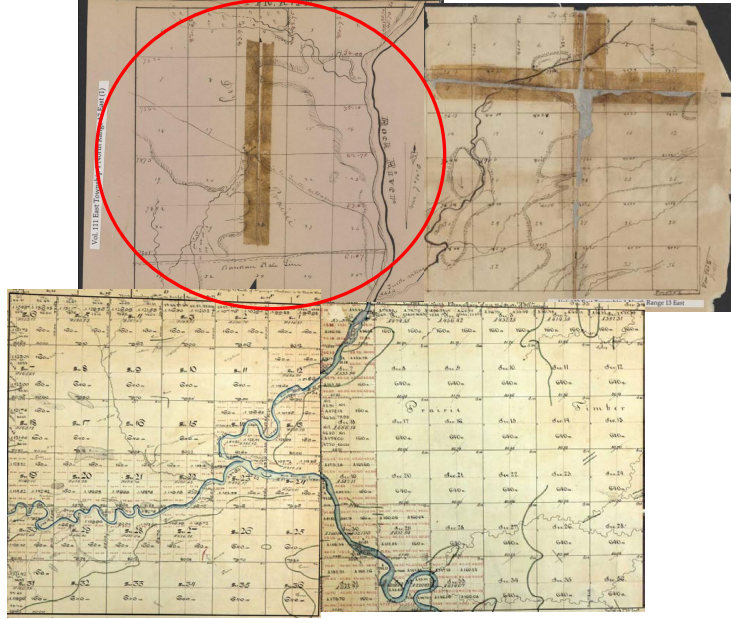
This tour was subsequently called the starving tour; and the remnant of those who are on this side of the grave, yet remember with horror their situation at that time. The prudence exercised by them, however, of sleeping away from their fires, was not attended to. The party lay around their fires by day and night, anxiously praying for a change in the weather. Some of the strongest and most spirited among the party, several times made ineffectual attempts to kill game. Among these hunters, General Duncan McArthur, of Fruit hill, near Chillicothe, and William Leedom, of Adams county, were conspicuous. On the third day of the storm, they killed two turkeys. They were boiled, and divided into twenty-eight shares or parts, and



Eastman Johnson: Camp Scene at Grand Portage, 1857 (Hills no. 7.1.2). Photo: St. Louis County Historical Society

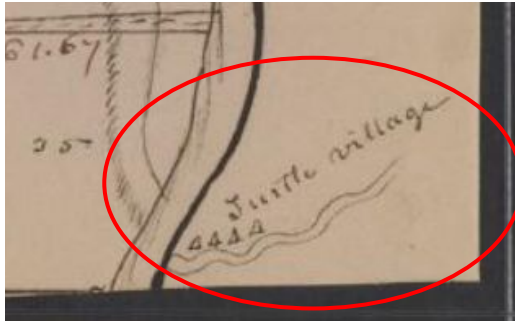
Module #2





We began with this PLSS drawing of Rock County. In the bottom corner, there is an area named Turtle Village. We identified this as Kekak, a large Ho-Chunk community. Kekak means turtle in Ho-Chunk language.

This area is now called Beloit, and the Beloit college campus is exactly where “turtle village” is drawn. We decided to focus on this area in our physical project.



Notes

Striped “mono-cropping” fabric gridded into squares and applied to the other grid with price tags - refer to sale of land, land as property, Homestead Act

- This agriculture is TEMPORARY: it was applied by us and it can be removed by us
 - Cartographer's ink is impermanent
- Beloit college with imposed grid line in thread - land is being ‘cut’ up by settler colonial entities - pain is being endured by the land and its previous occupants
- Natural, organic fabric - mounds embroidered onto it showing Ho-Chunk modification
 - Extending beyond boundary of tapestry and linking past, present, and future

Module #3

- Zoomed out image on connection between Rock River, Turtle Creek and Pecatonica River (corresponding patchwork of townships on opposite side)
 - Turtle Village and its 30 home-structures labeled with charm and pinpoint
 - Avoid the imposed border of WI/IL border, rivers also extend behind area mapped
- Flip in - zoomed into 'Beloit' township
 - Surveyed land parceled into sections
 - Turtle Village as charm again
 - Unceded and unsurveyed land following 1829 Prairie du Chien is stewarded by Ho-Chunk until Chicago Treaty in 1833
 - This is displayed in mesh because this land is treated as invisible by the map, it is unmarked

Future

The layers of the map as points in time

Flipping through the map forward and backwards

- How dispossession happened historically (flipping the book one way) can inform how land can be given BACK (flipping the book the other way)

Challenging western perceptions of time as a line - if we had more time, a zine that could fold fully out into a flat piece

Visible Storage

Logan Museum of Anthropology Beloit College

The Andrew H. Whiteford Curatorial Center, known as the Cube, is the centerpiece of the museum's first floor.

This two-story, glass-enclosed facility simultaneously displays, protects, and provides easy access to Native American ceramics, baskets, and other collections.

Applying the visible storage concept, the Cube allows visitors to get up-close views of hundreds of objects from cultures of North, Central, and South America. On the Cube's first level, the north half contains prehistoric and contemporary pottery from Mexico south to Peru. The south half contains Native basketry from throughout North America. The mezzanine displays archaeological and historic pottery from the American Southwest and Midwest as well as large baskets. A moveable storage system, accessible by way of a staircase to the second level of the Cube, houses North American ethnographic objects.

The interior of the Cube is used by students, faculty, visiting researchers and representatives of descendant communities as a research, teaching, and consultation space. The Cube is a static display, with space reserved for teaching and research projects.



The opposite of dispossession is
not possession











Part
DISCONTINUED
ROOM
DISCONTINUED

