

THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIANS IN THE WAR OF 1812.

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From the end of the American Revolution the importance, and, indeed, the necessity, of preserving the friendship of the Indians of the Northwest was steadily kept in mind by the officers intrusted with the administration of Canada. The organization of the Indian department which had been formed during the war was carefully maintained. Sir John Johnson, whose family name was still a word to conjure with in the Indian world, was appointed superintendent, and Alexander McKee and John Butler resident deputies at Detroit and Niagara. No better choice could possibly have been made. McKee and Butler were men of great force of character and undaunted courage, whose long experience, consummate tact, and intimate knowledge of Indian customs and dialects had gained unrivaled influence. In 1787, when war seemed imminent, Lord Sydney, secretary of state, remarked in a dispatch that the treatment of the Indians had always been liberal, but as the security of the province might depend on their conduct the supplies to them should be augmented rather than leave them discontented.

Butler and McKee both died in 1796; the former was succeeded by Johnson's nephew, William Claus, and the latter by Matthew Elliot, who was remarkably well qualified for the post by experience, local knowledge, and influence.

In 1808, when war again seemed almost inevitable, Claus was sent by Lieutenant-Governor Gore to Amherstburg to ascertain the intentions of Indian tribes residing between the Ohio and Mississippi. On his arrival at that place he dispatched an interpreter to bring in the Shawanese chiefs and prophet, who took the lead in resisting the farther advance of settlers into the Indian territory. The chiefs obeyed the summons in