

To the Congress of the United States of America.

The petition of the inhabitants of the village of Prairie au Chien respectfully shews—

That in the year 1755 the government of France, then master of all the country upon the Mississippi, established a military post near the mouth of the Wisconsin, of which Mons. de Beauvoir was the commandant; and that many families settling themselves in the vicinity of the post with the assent of that officer, and the approbation of the neighbouring Indians, the rightful owners of the soil, formed there the village of Prairie au Chien, which has continued to this day.

That after the treaty of Versailles in the year 1763 the village and the fort, following the condition of the Canadas and the Illinois, passed to the crown of Great Britain; and three years afterwards when visited by the English traveller, Capt. Barrow, the population of the village was found to have increased under the protection of the French government to the number of three hundred families.

That in the year 1783 the events of the American Revolution again changed their condition; and the village and the fort, by an article in Mr. Jay's treaty were formally surrendered to the Republic of the United States by the crown of Great Britain on the first day of June in the year 1796; and such of the inhabitants as continued their residence for one year thereafter, and did not within that time declare their intention to remain subject to the King of Great Britain, became entitled to the proud and honorable distinction of citizens of the U. States of America.

Your petitioners shew that a great number of the inhabitants, of whom your petitioners are part, continued their residence without electing to remain subjects of the British crown; that others sold their possessions to new comers; and so the population of the village remained with little diminution; and became composed of persons attached to the honor and the interests of the U. States. The American laws went into operation among them; and until the capture of the fort at Prairie au Chien during the

late war, the inhabitants of the village enjoyed the protection of their lives, liberties and property under the administration of a wise and beneficent government.

During all this time the inhabitants, easy and tranquil under the successive sovereignties of France, England and the Republic of the United States, had entirely omitted to secure titles to the village lots and fields which they had inhabited and cultivated for so many years.

In the mean time the position at the confluence of the Osage river and the Mississippi had fixed the attention of the American government; an extinction of the Indian title was effected; a district of country, including the fort and the village, became the property of the United States; and the inhabitants now find themselves without titles to the houses of their fathers, liable to be expelled from their firesides as intruders upon the national domain; and subject to military regulations on the spot where themselves and ancestors have lived for upwards of sixty years.

Your petitioners respectfully suggest that it would ill comport with the ungrudging policy which the government of the Republic has constantly displayed towards the rest of her adopted citizens, to take advantage of the circumstances of your petitioners, and expel them from their homes, because their remoteness and seclusion from the world, their ignorance of tenures, and their confidence in the government, had prevented them from being supplied with bits of parchment to protect themselves in the possessions of their ancestors. On the contrary they presume to hope, as well from the justice as from the generosity of the Congress, that they have only to expose their condition; and the relief to which they are entitled will be immediately extended to them.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the present inhabitants of the village of Prairie du Chien may be confirmed in their possessions of village lots and lands; and that a suitable officer may be appointed to receive the proofs of their possessions, and to decide definitively in their favor, or report the merit of their claims to your Honorable Body.

And your petitioners will ever pray. Signed
at Prairie du Chein by the inhabitants of the village, this
day of in the year 1816.

Berthe Gaud	his x mark	Sever Courtois
M. Brisbois		J. Jompuri
Frans Lacherte	his x mark	Antoine Lachapelle
Chas. Menard	his x mark	Pierre Lefebvre
Joseph Montreuil	his x mark	Pierre Lefebvre
Pierre Courville	his x mark	John Simpson
Joseph Charbonneau	his x mark	Jean Marie Cardinal
J. B. Harte Mis		J. B. Paribault
Pierre Lapointe	his x mark	J. B. Nollet
Claude Gagne	his x mark	J. B. L'Emore
Negushe Gagne	his x mark	J. Chennier
J. Gaborneau	his x mark	Denis Courtois
J. Verletville	his x mark	B. Wilmet
Joseph Lanson	his x mark	B. Wilmet
Aug. Huet	his x mark	B. Lefebvre
J. Poirer	his x mark	Joseph Lefebvre
Frans Ouellet	his x mark	Jat Courtois
Chas. Lapointe	his x mark	B. Duquenois
V. Fraser	his x mark	V. Lafontaine
V. Cotas	his x mark	E. Dymme
Andre Barre	his x mark	Simon Barte
B. Barte	his x mark	Jos. Brunet
Pierre Brunet	his x mark	M. Robert
V. Chennier	his x mark	Thos Lefebvre
J. Duplessis	his x mark	M. Poirer
J. P. Fisher	his x mark	ant. Brisbois
Aug. Barte	his x mark	

The Petition of the Inhabitants
of the Prairie du Chien.

Jan^y 24 - 1817 -

Ref^d to the Committee on the Public Land

Feby. 25 - 1818

Bill reported - N^o 107.

Dec - 12 - 1819

Ref^d to the Committee
on Private Land Claims

Scott
Page 46. 13. private L^d. C^l

Page 46. 13. private L^d. C^l

THE PETITION OF THE INHABITANTS OF PRAIRIE DU CHIEN

53 in number

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(Copy of Petition)

S E A L

To the Congress of the United States of America.

The petition of the inhabitants of the village of Prairie Du Chien respectfully shows---

That in the year 1755 the government of France, then master of all the country upon the Mississippi, established a military post near the mouth of the Ouisconsin, of which Mons. de Marvin was the commandant, and that many families settled themselves in the vicinity of the post with the assent of that officer, and the approbation of the neighbouring Indians, the rightful owners of the soil, formed there the village of Prairie Du Chien, which was continued to this day.

That after the treaty of Versailles in the year 1763 the village and the fort, following the condition of the Canada's and the Illinois, passed to the crown of Great Britain; and three years afterwards when visited by the English traveller, Capt. Carver, the population of the village was found to have increased under the protection of the French Government to the number of three hundred families.

That in the year 1783 the events of the American Revolution again changed this condition; and the village and the fort, by an article in Wm. Gays treaty were formally surrendered to the Republic of the United States by the crown of Great Britain on the first day of June in the year 1796; and such of the inhabitants as continued their residence for one year thereafter, and do not within that time declare their intention to remain subject to the King of G. Britain, became entitled to the and honorable distinction of Citizen of the U. States of America.

Your petitioners show that a great number of the inhabitants, of whom your petitioners are part, continued their residence without electing to remain subjects of the British crown; that others sold their possessions to new comers; and so the population of the village remained with little diminution; and became composed of persons attached to the honor and the interest of the U. States. The American laws went into operation among them; and until the capture of the fort at Prairie Du Chien during the late war, the inhabitants of the village enjoyed the protection of their lives, liberties and property under the administration of a wise and beneficent government.

During all this time the inhabitants, easy and tranquil under the successive sovereignties of France, England and the Republic of the United States, had entirely omitted to secure titles to the village lots and fields which they had inhabited and cultivated for so many years.

In the mean time the position at the confluence of the Ouisconsin and the Mississippi had fixed the attention of the American government; and extinction of the Indian title was effected; a district of country, including the fort and the village, became the property of the United States; and the inhabitants now find themselves without titles to the houses of their fathers; liable to be expelled from their firesides as intruders upon the national domain; and subject to military regulations on the spot where themselves and ancestors have lived for upwards of sixty years.

Your petitioners respectfully suggest that it would ill comport with the magnanimous policy which the government of the Republic has constantly displayed towards the rest of her adopted citizens, to take advantage of the circumstances of your petitioners, and expel them from their homes, because their remoteness and seclusion from the world, their ignorance of tenures, and their confidence in the government, had prevented them from being supplied with bits of parchment to protect themselves in the possession of their ancestors. On the contrary they presume to hope, as well from the justice as from the generosity of the congress, that they have only to expose their condition; and the relief to which they are entitled will be immediately extended to them.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the present inhabitants of the village of Prairie du Chien may be confirmed in their possessions of village lots and lands; and that a suitable officer may be appointed to receive the proofs of their possessions, and to decide definitively in their favor, or report the merit of their claims to your honorable body.

And your petitioners will ever pay . . .
 . . . Signed at Prairie Du Chien by the inhabitants of the
 village, this _____ day of _____ in the year
 1816.

Basile Girard	his X mark	Denis Courtois	
M. Brisbois		& J. M. Queri	
Frans Lapointe	his X mark	Antoine Lachapele	
Chas. Menard (Minard)	his X mark	Pierre Lessard	his X mark
Joseph Montreuil	his X mark	Pierre Lariviere	his X mark
Pierre Courville	his X mark	John Simpson	his X mark
Joseph Chalifous	his X mark	Jean Marie Cardinal	
J. Bte Hurte Bis		J. B. Faribaut	his X mark
Pierre Lapointe	his X mark	Jos. Rolette	
Claude Gagne	his X mark	J. B. L'Emere	his X mark
Registre Gagne	his X mark	F. Chennever	his X mark
F. Galernau	his X mark	Denis Courtois Junr	his X mark
F. Vertefeuille	his X mark	B. Wilmet	his X mark
Joseph Janson	his X mark	B. Wilmet Junr	his X mark
Augt. Hebert	his X mark	B. Cadotte	his X mark
F. Prevost	his X mark	Joseph Ouilette	his X mark
Frans. Ouillette	his X mark	Jas. Courchenie	his X mark
Chas. Lapointe	his X mark	B. Duquette	his X mark
V. (Veuve, Widow, French pronounciation)			
V. Fraser	her X mark	V. Lafantaisie	her X mark
V. Colas	her X mark	Etne. Dyonne	his X mark
Andre Basin (Bazin)	his X mark	Simon Barte	his X mark
B. Barte	his X mark	Joe Menet	his X mark
Pierre B. (Bruneau?)	his X mark	M. Robert	his X mark
C. Cherrier	his X mark	Theo Lupien	his X mark
Jos. Duplessis	his X mark	M. Penaud	his X mark
Jos Rocher	his X mark	Ant. Brisebois	
Augt Rock	his X mark		

Endorsements

Jany. 24, 1817 Refd. to the Committee on Public Lands
 Feby. 25, 1818 Bill reported No. 107
 Decr. 13, 1819 Refd. to Committee on Private Land Claims
 Scott 46.13 Private L. C. Scott Pope (?) H 24 Pub Lands