

COLONEL CLARK'S MEMORANDUM TO A WINNEBAGO CHIEF.

By George Rogers Clark Esq^r Colonel and Commandant of the Eastern Illinois & its Dependencies &c &c &c.¹

Whereas Chourachon Chief of the Puans and his nation Living at the Rock River have entered into Alliance and

¹ Gen. George Rogers Clark was born Nov. 19, 1752, near Monticello, Albemarle county, Va. At the age of twenty he was practicing his profession as a surveyor on the upper Ohio, and afterwards became a farmer. In 1774, he participated in Dunmore's campaign against the Shawnees and Mingoës. Early in 1775, Clark went as a surveyor to Kentucky, where he acquired marked popularity, and in 1776 was elected as "a delegate to the Virginia convention, to urge upon the state authorities the claims of the colony for government and defence." He secured the formation of the new county of Kentucky and a supply of ammunition for the defence of the border. In 1777, Clark, now a major of militia, repelled the Indian attacks on Harrodsburg and proceeded on foot to Virginia to lay before the state authorities his plan for capturing the Illinois country and repressing the Indian forays from that quarter. His scheme being approved, he was made a lieutenant colonel and at once set out to raise for the expedition a small force of hardy frontiersmen. He rendezvoused and drilled his little army on an island in the Ohio river, opposite the present city of Louisville. June 24, 1778, he started, and after passing the rapids landed near the deserted Fort "Massac," which was on the north bank, ten miles below the mouth of the Tennessee; thence marching across country, much pressed for food, reaching Kaskaskia in six days. The inhabitants there were surprised and coerced during the night of July 4-5, without the firing of a gun. Cahokia and Vincennes soon quietly succumbed to his influence. Governor Hamilton, on hearing of this loss of the Illinois country and the partial defection of the tribes west and southwest of Lake Michigan, at once set out to organize an army, chiefly composed of Indians, to retake the Illinois. He proceeded via the Wabash and Maumee, with eight hundred men, and recaptured Vincennes, December 17. The correspondence we are here publishing has largely to do with Hamilton's negotiations, through De Peyster, Langlade and Gautier, for the mustering of savage allies for his expedition, from the country west of Lake Michigan and his attempt to thwart the intrigues of Clark's agents, who were very busy among the Indians north and northwest of the Illinois country, even penetrating as far north as the Wisconsin river. The intelligence of this movement of Hamilton was not long in reaching Clark at Kaskaskia, and he at once set out for Vincennes to recapture it. Hamilton surrendered to him, February 25, and was forwarded to Virginia as a prisoner. The weakness of his force and the poverty of Virginia alone prevented Clark from moving on Detroit. Early in 1780 he established Fort Jefferson, just