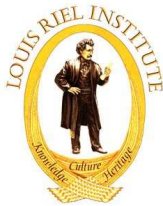


## **The Osage Half-Breed Tracts; Missouri Metis Reserve**

1825 marks the creation of the Osage Half Breed Tracts: In 1825, a treaty was negotiated with the Osage Indians, for their lands in Missouri. At the same time land was set aside separately for their Half Breed relations. Two reserves were allotted to the Half Breeds, one along the Marais de Cygnes River in Western Missouri and the other at the Three Forks of the Arkansas River, were established in the 1825 treaty ceding the Osage's remaining lands in Missouri. Each of these reserves was near a Protestant missionary establishment as well as a trading post operated by the sons of treaty commissioner Pierre Chouteau. In the same month, the Kansa tribe negotiated a similar treaty, listing "half-breeds" of their nation to whom they wished to donate a reserve. Thirty-eight Osage "half-breeds" and twenty-three Kansa are enumerated. The year before the Sac-Fox had made a similar provision for their "half-breeds" at Keokuk; here several families lived clustered around the American Fur Company's store and the tavern and farm of mixed-blood Maurice Blondeau.

William Clark (who had taken on the education of Baptiste Charbonneau, the son of Sacajawea and Toussaint Charbonneau) defended the special treaty entitlements for mixed-bloods: "Each of the treaties contains several reservations of a mile square in favor of half breed Indians and their children. Reserves of [this] kind have been heretofore made in behalf of such persons and in my opinion have a good effect in promoting civilization, as their attachment is created for a fixed residence and an idea of separate property is imparted without which it is in vain to think of improving the minds and morals of the Indians, or making any progress in the work of Civilization."

In addition to allegedly promoting the cause of civilization, the reservations recognized preemptive rights of traders' mixed-blood families and those of their loyal employees in the vicinity of the post establishments. In the Osage treaty, these were the Chouteau family's loyal friends, relatives, and employees. By insisting on reserves for these persons in the Osage treaty, Commissioner Pierre Chouteau, Sr., reinforced the loyalties of the important mixed-blood lineage's to Chouteau interests, one of the many manifestations of reciprocity that characterized the paternalistic role that the Chouteaus maintained with their mixed-blood retainers and allies



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