

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
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Testimony

Re: H. R. 929 - To establish the Land Between the Rivers National Heritage Area in the State of Illinois

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It is an honor for me to be here today. I appreciate the opportunity to represent Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and the people of southernmost Illinois who reside within the seventeen counties included in the proposed *Land Between the Rivers National Heritage Area*. I wish to thank Congressman Jerry Costello and his staff for taking the initiative in sponsoring this Bill and for SIUC President Glenn Poshard and his staff for stepping forward to provide the people and resources that could make this a reality. Because I so fully support Items 1-6 of *Section 2 – Findings*, a summary of the historical significance of the designated area, I will here today share many of my experiences as design professional, researcher, teacher, and native of this region, to illustrate why I support it so strongly. I will also share some extensively edited writings borrowed from two of my interdisciplinary colleagues: Mark Wagner, an archaeologist with the SIUC Center for Archaeological Investigations, has hands-on experience and has written extensively in professional journals about his findings; and David Koch, Emeritus Director of the SIUC Special Collections Research Center, who was co-director with me on a Library of Congress funded “Lewis & Clark in Southernmost Illinois” SIUC research project and who continues to advocate for the protection and development of this Land-Between-The-Rivers Heritage Area.

Much of my experience is the result of growing up here, raising family here, and practicing architecture here. I was born in Rosiclare (Hardin County) and was raised in Metropolis (Massac County), both on the lower Ohio River. I completed my undergraduate education at SIU Carbondale in 1965 and received my professional Master of Architecture degree from Yale University in 1969. I have been practicing architecture in Illinois since 1973 and was involved in historic preservation and restoration activities in both Springfield (including Lincoln’s home) and in the southernmost part of the state. I retired from active practice in 1999 to become full-time faculty and now Associate Professor in the School of Architecture at SIU Carbondale.

Growing up in Metropolis in the 1940s and ‘50s adjacent to the Ohio River and with Fort Massac in my own backyard, I was aware that our area was somehow significant to the pre and post Revolutionary War period, as well as to the Civil War. In the public schools we were told that the flags of four nations flew over Fort Massac: The Spanish were here in the 1500s, the French constructed a military post named “Fort Massaic” in 1756, rather vague notes that the British took the fort over from the French, and that George Rogers Clark captured the fort for the Americans in 1778 on his way to capturing Fort Kaskaskia and Fort Vincennes from the British. From my father I learned that archaeologists had excavated around the fort in the late ‘30s and that the Metropolis Rotary Club

appreciated its history and were instrumental in convincing the state legislature to reconstruct the fort in the late '50s to early '60s. The state park and the old fort remains were my playground, I heard of the Kincaid Mounds from neighbors who were Indian relic collectors, and I heard stories from old-timers of the paddlewheel steamboats that used to daily take passengers and freight from Metropolis up-river to Paducah, Kentucky, or down-river to Cairo and beyond. The massive Illinois Central Railroad Bridge crossed the river at Metropolis, but to a boy had little meaning beyond its basic purpose of connecting several railroad lines in Illinois to Kentucky to the south. I remember photographs of railroad cars being loaded on a ferryboat to be transported to the Kentucky shore, as well. This is what I grew up with and thought I knew about my home place.

After returning to southern Illinois in 1970, because of my preservation experience I had the opportunity to assist the Cairo Public Library create an environmentally controlled room in their historic structure to house their very "Special Collections" of aged books, papers, maps, clothing, and other artifacts recording the history of the area. In the process I observed documents with original Thomas Jefferson and James Madison signatures, original drawings for the proposed *Plan for the City of Cairo* created in 1836-37 by internationally known Philadelphia architect William Strickland, boxes containing several hundred original photographs of steamboats that had plied the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in the 1800s and early 1900s, stopping at Cairo -- and so much more. Several years later I assisted the City of Cairo with the initial protection and restoration of the U. S. Custom House designed in 1869 by A.B. Mullet, official architect for the U. S. Treasury. I had private clients in Cairo representing the Black community and learned a great deal about the Civil Rights struggles in the '60s and '70s. This was my very real re-introduction to my home, southernmost Illinois.

I soon realized not only how little I actually knew about my region but how truly significant its history is. I have to credit Sheryl Durham of the *Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau* who recruited me to assist the Village of Karnak nominate the offices of the *Main Brothers Lumber Company* to the National Register of Historic Places. Not only did I learn about the Main family who harvested the Cypress and Tupelo forests in the Cache River basin of Johnson County, I also learned this family was one of the first lumber producers (in Illinois at least, and maybe nationwide) to actually replant to create a sustainable source of lumber. . . in the early 1900s.

Most significant to this testimony is that I also learned from Ms. Durham about several historic sites in the very area where I grew up which may well be extraordinarily significant to our nation's history -- something neither I nor most any other resident of southern Illinois and beyond, knew anything about. Three are located on the *Crescent of the Ohio River* between Metropolis and Cairo, which were, and still are, in jeopardy of being lost due to either neglect or demolition or shoreline commercial, industrial, and tourism development. The people I met asked me about historical details and their significance that I could not answer.

The SIUC School of Architecture responded by assisting me in the development of a unique interdisciplinary and intergenerational ***Preservation Summer*** course started in 2001 that would combine university students with community residents from these affected areas to together attempt to verify and accurately depict their history for the public. The Department of History now jointly sponsors the course. Mark Wagner of the SIUC Center for Archaeological Investigations continues to provide technical expertise and allows our students and community participates to gain hands-on archaeological dig experience. The SIUC Morris Library Special Collections & Research Center under the direction of David Koch, Director (Emeritus) continues to provide expertise and cooperation.

The first research projects included a 1702 French military post and tannery called *VaBache* or *Juchereau's Tannery*, an 1801-02 military post related to the Aaron Burr Conspiracy called

Cantonment Wilkinsonville, and the Civil War history at Mound City including the *Ironclads*, James Eads, and the *Marine Ways*. Research provides answers but also generates many more questions ...and surprises, such as learning about: the *Red Rover* (first hospital ship in the U.S. Navy), the beginning of the *U.S Navy Nursing Corp*, which included African-American women, and the extent and significance of the *Lewis & Clark Expedition* in southernmost Illinois. Interest grew and more projects were added to the research agenda, including the *Pierre Menard Home* near Fort Kaskaskia, the *Thebes Court House*, the barns of Union County, African-American Settlement and the *Underground Railroad* in Massac County, and the 1849 *Kornthal Church and Parsonage* south of Jonesboro in Union County.

The Lewis & Clark project by this class led to a Library of Congress grant to SIUC's Morris Library Special Collections Research Center and myself to continue the research assisting local residents and officials prepare for the November 2003 national Bi-Centennial "Corps of Discovery" celebration by providing permanent museum quality exhibits in several Cairo venues, a memorial sculpture at the Confluence, and additional archaeological research at the Cantonment Wilkinsonville site. The SIUC School of Architecture, the University Museum Program, the Center for Archaeological Investigations, the U. S. Customs House Museum in Cairo, and the Cairo Public Library also were active participants in the Lewis and Clark project.

Description of the Place: *Southernmost Illinois – The Land Between the Rivers* from a National Perspective

Southernmost Illinois was strategic to many nations, including our own Native American cultures, for many centuries. The southern 48-mile long "Crescent of the Ohio" edge continues today to be both globally and nationally strategic as the "hub" of the U.S. inland waterway system and the center of the eastern highway and rail systems. [See Attachments 1 & 2: *Tacaogane at the Top of the Crescent of the Ohio on the 1684 French Map* and *The Confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers at Cairo, IL with 1800 Nation Ownership indicated.*] The adjacent land is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the country and is on the migratory *Mississippi Flyway*.

The Ohio River drains much of the eastern portion of the United States and the Mississippi River drains much of the northern plains and the western Great Lakes regions, merging at Cairo where the Mississippi continues on to the Gulf at New Orleans. The French and the British understood this in the 1700s, General Wilkinson understood this in 1800, and President Lincoln and General Grant understood at the beginning of the Civil War that the country that could claim southernmost Illinois and these river intersections would control the rivers and the central part of the nation all the way to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico.

Biologically, geographically, and culturally southernmost Illinois is part of the Lower Mississippi Delta, but politically, historically, and socially, it is connected to all parts of the United States. These rivers were the "interstate highways" for the Indian nations and for the three European nations, and for our developing new nation as well in the search for a route to the Pacific as they competed for control and development of the "New World". Marquette and Joliet documented their passing the Confluence of the Ohio with the Mississippi in 1673 for France.¹ Just eight years later, Tonti and LaSalle passed along the western edge several times during their trips through Indian and Spanish territories along the Mississippi eventually reaching the Gulf of Mexico in 1681 and claiming all of this territory for France.² By 1702, the French had settled into the lower Illinois country along the Mississippi and the lower Ohio as well at the Grand Chain of Rocks, just a few miles from the Confluence.³ Here the French could control the rivers to prevent the British from coming down into the Mississippi from the

southern Appalachians and the Spanish from coming up into the Ohio River from New Madrid and their other settlements on the lower Mississippi.

Probably one of the MOST significant facts about our region is that in 1778 the Continental Congress designated this area of southernmost Illinois as "Army" land to be available as payment to those who served in the Revolutionary War.⁴ [See Attachment 3: *Partial 1778 Thomas Hutchens Map of U.S.*] Cemeteries throughout the region attest to the fact that many of these soldiers took advantage of this opportunity and settled this region in the late 1700s and early 1800s. [See Attachment 4: *Photo St Johns Church Cemetery, Union County.*] The Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers were primary arteries from the east to facilitate migration and the river landings along the Ohio were where most people began their land journey as they settled into the Northwest Territory. Many also passed through the region or continued on the Ohio and up the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers into the west. Mark Wagner, SIUC Archaeologist, writes:

...for over 12,000 years the river has represented a natural conduit along which people, goods, and ideas have entered into southern Illinois. A particularly important aspect of the lower Ohio River valley system throughout this long history has been the junction where the Tennessee River empties into the Ohio River. The Tennessee and Cumberland River valleys represented natural highways leading from the southeastern United States into southern Illinois. Archaeological investigations have shown that this important early nineteenth century migration route also was used by prehistoric peoples as far back as 10,000 years ago.

Public Understanding regarding Threats to the Heritage of the Region: Because the 48-mile-long broadly curved *Crescent* segment of the lower Ohio River is still globally strategic to the nation in 2007 as the hub of the inland waterway system and home for a number of nationally strategic industrial and electrical power and nuclear energy sites, locks and dams, and rail/interstate highways and bridges, **there is competition for the heritage sites along the shoreline.** In addition, the Illinois shore has higher ground than Kentucky, thus is more **attractive for development.** The Mississippi River side of the region was less developed initially because there is more flood plain and less historic fabric remaining, but significant sites on the higher elevations and bluffs remain.

The public **IS** generally aware of at least some of the significant historic sites within the southernmost portion of Illinois along these rivers – the Shawneetown Bank, the Old Slave House, the Iron Furnace, the town of Golconda, the pre-history Kincaid Mounds, Fort Massac, and Cairo near or on the Ohio, and the Thebes Courthouse, the Thebes Railroad Bridge, the City of Chester, the Pierre Menard House, Kaskaskia, and Fort de Chartres on the Mississippi. However, on and in-between the rivers there are **hundreds more that are not well-known and are either undeveloped or threatened.**

What the general public IS NOT generally aware of is . . . that the French were in the region by 1700-01, 50-60 years earlier than Fort Massac; . . .that although it is the first state park in Illinois, it is not the oldest European settlement on the lower Ohio River; . . . that the region is a key element in the Aaron Burr Conspiracy with General Wilkinson at Fort Massac; . . . that the mapping of the Lewis & Clark Expedition started at the Confluence, not at Alton as is generally presumed; . . . that the ironclads designed by Eads and Pook were built and stationed at Mound City; . . . that the first true Hospital Ship in the U. S. Navy was stationed at Mound City and the first nurses on that steamboat were African-American women; . . . and that Cairo, which began its history on paper in 1818 and again in 1837 when developers from England thought that it would replace Washington, DC as the United States Capitol, was not firmly established until during the Civil War when it became the headquarters for General Grant and Admiral Foote who together used the inland rivers to divide the South and win the war for the North.

Justification: Why “Southernmost Illinois – The Land Between the Rivers” Qualifies for National Heritage Area Designation.

I will now highlight several of the regions' nationally significant historic sites and areas that, based on their connection to significant people, events, places and/or cultural significance, and/or Specific History, support the designation for National Heritage Area Status.

Pre-History includes the Mississippian Indians who constructed the Kincaid Mounds in 1400 AD. This site, 15 miles upriver from Metropolis in the Black Bottoms portion of Massac County and just across from the confluence of the Tennessee River with the Ohio, is considered to be **one of the ten most important archeological sites in the nation.**⁵ It is the second largest Mississippian mound center in Illinois with at least 19 mounds and is undeveloped. Other fortifications, village, and rock art sites that exist throughout southernmost Illinois have been reported but need accurate documentation.⁶ Many have already been plundered and/or destroyed.

Earliest Europeans in the Crescent include Hernando de Soto, who some erroneously believe was at the site of Fort Massac in 1542;⁷ LaSalle, who explored the *Riviere' d'Ouabache* (Ohio River) in 1669; Marquette and Joliet, who were the first to pass the confluence on the Mississippi in 1673⁸ searching for the *Le Sien de Mexique*;^{9, 10} and LaSalle again, who eventually passed the Confluence in 1684 on his way to the Gulf where he claimed the Mississippi River region for France.¹¹ The French also explored and hunted in areas around the *Flueve St. Louis ouChucagoa* (the lower Ohio) in this same time period.¹²

Juchereau's Tannery (Va Bache), the first European settlement on the lower Ohio and on the Crescent, was a tannery and small military post near the confluence with the Mississippi established in 1702 by Sieur Charles St Denys Juchereau, Jesuit Priest Father Mermet, French soldiers, and Mascouten Indian hunters.¹³ Indicated on a 1718 French map as an *Ancien Fort*,¹⁴ men at this post collected and prepared buffalo hides and tongues for shipment to Paris.^{15, 16} Here they also could control the Ohio River for “New France” by preventing the British from coming down-river and the Spanish from coming up-river. Father Mermet held the first Catholic religious services for Indians at a branch mission he called “Assumption” at the same site as future Fort Massac.¹⁷ The Tannery's exact location is thought to be between Mound City and near Grand Chain, possibly overlooking the Grand Chain of Rocks.¹⁸ The communities of Mermet and Rosiclare and the Cache River have French names from the early 1700 period. Locals tell stories about this French military post and tannery, but the general public in southern Illinois and elsewhere is unaware of this place called Va Bache.¹⁹

Fort Massac, “thought to be the last French fort built in America” (Wagner) served three nations over its 105-year history, beginning as “Fort de L'Ascension” (also called “Fort Massacre” and “Fort Massaic”) in 1757 by the French, fifty-five years after Va Bache.²⁰ Intended to be a “deterrent to British activities in the lower Ohio River valley, and a logistical base for French military operations during the French and Indian War” (Wagner), by 1763 Massac had been abandoned and burned by Indians when the British, led by Captain Thomas Stirling gained control of the region taking Fort Kaskaskia and Ft. de Chartres from the French. By 1778 the British relinquished control of the southernmost Illinois region to George Rogers Clark and the Americans.²¹

Ordered repaired in 1794 by George Washington, Fort Massac became the port of entry) for all commerce moving to and from New Orleans.²² Significant figures associated with Fort Massac include Col. “Mad” Anthony Wayne, Zebulon Pike, General James Wilkinson, Aaron Burr, Meriwether Lewis, and William Clark.^{23, 24} In 1908 Fort Massac became the first state park in Illinois with a third

reconstruction completed in the Fall of 2003 in time for the 200th Anniversary of Lewis and Clark's "Corps of Discovery" visit.²⁵ [See Attachment 5: *Fort Massac – Reconstructed 10-2003.*]

Cantonment Wilkinsonville was established in 1801 by General James Wilkinson at a site ten miles down-river from Fort Massac in response to rumors Spain and France were planning to attack the Illinois posts of the new United States.²⁶ Overlooking the Grand Chain of Rocks, Cantonment Wilkinsonville became the **largest military post in our new nation** with over 1,300 troops, including those moved from Fort Massac which joined eleven companies of infantry, a company of artillery, and a full military band.²⁷

Cantonment Wilkinsonville replaced Fort Massac as the port of entry and was considered as a possible site for an officer's training school that was eventually established at West Point.²⁸ The second commander at Wilkinsonville, Col. Jonathan Williams, later became the first Commandant for West Point and the Army Corps of Engineers. In 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase in hand, President Jefferson reorganized the army and moved Wilkinsonville's forces elsewhere, and by 1802 the cantonment had disappeared as fast as it developed. At least 70 soldiers, including the commander, Col. Strong, are thought to be buried at the cantonment.²⁹ Several of the men who joined the Lewis and Clark expedition at Kaskaskia in 1803 had previously been stationed at Cantonment Wilkinsonville.³⁰ It is also thought by serious scholars, that Wilkinson was a spy for Spain and that he provided information to the Spanish authorities that resulted in three unsuccessful attempts to capture Lewis & Clark as they were making their way up the Missouri River.³¹ In September 1803, just a month before Lewis and Clark floated by the Cantonment without stopping, another river traveler reported seeing 200-300 log huts over an extensive site.³²

Given the scale and construction of this facility, it's difficult to believe only a few artifacts have been found and nothing significant remains, except a name on old maps. A series of archeological investigations conducted on a portion of the site clearly indicate that the Cantonment WAS there. Additional investigations are needed to help find the gravesites and establish the layout and the geographic limits of such a large facility. [See Attachment 6: *Archaeology at Cantonment Wilkinsonville.*]

Lewis and Clark and the "Corps of Discovery -2003" was the 200th anniversary of the "Corps of Discovery" when in 1803 President Thomas Jefferson directed Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to travel down the Ohio to the Confluence, then up the Mississippi to the Missouri, and then in 1804-06 out to the Pacific and back to St. Louis. They stopped at Fort Massac for two days in November 1803 before continuing down-river to the Confluence arranging for their key member – scout and interpreter, George Drouillard – and several other men to join the expedition. They then continued on to the confluence of the Ohio with the Mississippi where they camped for five days, longer than any other location on their journey except when wintering over. Clark taught Lewis surveying techniques and Lewis taught Clark celestial observation and mapping skills.³³ They made careful measurements of both rivers and using the sextant, octant, and other instruments determined the longitude and latitude – for the first time – information necessary to begin the mapping of their historic journey to the Pacific.³⁴

The first map of the entire expedition prepared by William Clark represents the confluence of the Ohio with the Mississippi at present day Cairo. [See Attachment 7: *1803 Map of the Confluence by William Clark.*] Several subsequent maps were drawn by Nicholas King from notes and sketches by Lewis and Clark, who very carefully documented their expedition to the Pacific as having started at the Confluence near Cairo.³⁵ In 1805 just two years after Lewis and Clark's visit, William Rector, Deputy U. S. Government Surveyor General, began the first official government mapping of the Illinois

country at the Confluence.³⁶ A. Henri established the 3rd Principal Meridian at the Confluence in 1807, the basis for all N-S section lines in the state of Illinois. All of these actions confirm the significance of the Confluence. [See Attachment 8: *1807 A. Henri Survey Map at the Confluence.*]

Settlement along the Lower Ohio increased significantly after George Rogers Clark's victories made settlers feel more safe, and again after the Louisiana Purchase, and again when accurate property descriptions based on the early government surveys were possible, and then yet again with the ending of the War of 1812. Southern-most Illinois became the center of the new nation and the Ohio River became the "interstate highway" to the west. As immigrants in flatboats, "Kentucky Broadhorns", and keelboats floated down the Ohio in the late 1700s looking for a place to land and begin their inland journey and settlement, the first community they encountered in southernmost Illinois was Shawneetown. SIUC Archaeologist Mark Wagner writes:

"Shawneetown was perhaps the most important landing on the Ohio River during the early nineteenth century. It was located upon several routes leading into interior southern Illinois including roads extending to Kaskaskia, Vincennes, Edwardsville, and Albion. Goods as well as people landed at Shawneetown and were transported overland across the Shawneetown-Kaskaskia Trail and other less well-known roads. Because of the difficulty of traveling upstream on the Mississippi River prior to the advent of steamboat travel in 1811, immigrants destined for early settlements in the American Bottom opposite St. Louis, Missouri, first landed at Shawneetown and then traveled overland to Kaskaskia or St. Louis."

If the immigrants decided to go on down-river, they had other worries, as they needed to safely pass Battery Rock and the notorious "Cave-in-Rock" inhabited by a gang of outlaws who preyed on relatively helpless families floating downstream in very difficult to maneuver flatboats. Mark Wagner writes:

"In addition to natural hazards, immigrants in the early 1800s also were preyed upon by "wreckers" who had established themselves between Battery Rock and Cave-in-Rock along the Ohio River. The constriction of the Ohio River channel below Battery Rock required that a local pilot be hired to successfully navigate the river from this point to Cave-in-Rock. Dishonest pilots often intentionally wrecked the vessel they had been hired to navigate near Cave-in-Rock where other gang members then looted the cargo of the stranded boat. Various gangs of outlaws also periodically established their headquarters at Cave-in-Rock where they posed as tavern keepers, robbing immigrants unfortunate enough to stop at this location."

Not everyone settling southern Illinois came in by boat. At Golconda, a ferry business flourished allowing settlers on land routes through Kentucky direct access into Illinois. Regardless, when they came on shore, many were surprised that Illinois country was basically wilderness and unsettled. Archaeologist Mark Wagner points out a story by Illinois Governor John Reynolds who entered Illinois in 1797 as a young child who recorded his apprehension in his diary:

"At Lusk's Ferry we reached the beautiful and noble Ohio River in the evening...But the pleasure we enjoyed at the site of this beautiful river soon vanished, when we cast our eyes across it to the...wilderness that extended indefinitely from its north-western shores...I well recollect that the west side of the Ohio River was then called "the Indian Country". I recollect asking Mr. Lusk how far to the next town? and he laughed and said, "one hundred and ten miles to Kaskaskia, which is the first settlement on the route."

Another example of a unique experience in the Illinois wilderness was reported by famous naturalist John James Audubon, who was camped on the Ohio near the Cache River (present day Mound City) in 1811-

12. Not only did he experience the violent New Madrid Earthquake, he had an interesting experience with a group of Shawnee Indians. Mark Wagner writes:

While on a trip from Henderson, Kentucky, to Saint Genevieve, Missouri, Audubon and his party camped at the mouth of the Cache River west of present-day Cairo. A party of approximately 50 Shawnee Indian families had established a winter village at this same location. The Shawnee were engaged in hunting bears, deer, raccoon, and other animals for their furs as well as nut collecting. Audubon accompanied the Shawnee on a swan hunt at a nearby lake, the purpose of which was to obtain swan feathers used in the manufacture of European ladies hats. Ice in the Mississippi River forced Audubon and his party to camp at a second location west of Cairo for an additional six weeks. Once again, families of Shawnee and Osage Indians engaged in a winter hunt camped with the stranded travelers for several weeks.

By 1818, when Illinois became a state, settlements along the lower Ohio included Shawneetown, Cave-in-Rock, Elizabethtown, Rosiclare, Golconda, New Liberty, Fort Massac City, Napoleon, Wilkinsonville, New Caledonia (now Olmsted), America (established to replace Washington, DC as the nation's capitol), Trinity (now Mound City), and at least a "paper" town called Cairo.³⁷ Steamboats first navigated the Ohio in 1811, so were still in their developing stages by 1818. Mark Wagner writes:

*Because it [Shawneetown] was at the junction of several routes leading into interior southern Illinois, it developed into a major early nineteenth century riverport. Shawneetown also increased in importance as large numbers of immigrants descended the Ohio River following the War of 1812. By 1818 Shawneetown had blossomed into a community of over 100 homes, twelve stores, two banks, the United States Government land office, newspaper, taverns, and post office. Traffic through the town was so heavy during this period that one 1818 visitor remarked "The number of wagons, horses, and passengers crossing, and waiting to cross, the Ohio was so great, that a great part of the morning was spent in waiting for my turn". Shawneetown's diverse business community at this time included tailors, shoemakers, bakers, coopers, hatters, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, cabinet makers, and other craftsmen. An indication of Shawneetown's regional importance during the early 1800s is that it was only one of two Illinois towns to host the **Revolutionary War hero the Marquis de Lafayette** during his tour of the United States in 1825. On April 14, 1825, Lafayette landed by steamboat at Shawneetown where he was given a reception hosted by Judge James Hall, editor of the Illinois Gazette and author of numerous books on the western United States.*

In addition, the first paper money available in this part of Illinois country were "Bank of Cairo" bills distributed in 1818 by the first two banks and land offices in Illinois at Shawneetown and Kaskaskia. The beautiful Greek Revival Shawneetown Bank was constructed in the mid 1830's and is now owned by the State of Illinois and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. [See Attachment 9: *Shawneetown Bank*.]

The Town of America was purchased and platted in 1818 by businessmen from St. Louis and Cincinnati, who, because Washington had been burned during the War of 1812 and had not yet been rebuilt, envisioned it as being the new Capitol of the United States.³⁸ Disease and constantly changing sandbars along the Ohio prevented the project from developing, however, stories, footprints on the landscape of this venture, and artifacts remain.

The Village of Thebes was established in the 1830s as a river landing and for several years served as the Alexander County seat. The Thebes Courthouse was originally constructed between 1846 and 1848 by Architect/Builder Henry Arndt Barkhausen, a Prussian immigrant. According to a local

historian, the architect was the King's Architect in native Prussia. It is considered an example of Greek revival architecture that was most prevalent at this time in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Not only was it used as the county courthouse, but it took a larger role in regional judicial affairs by also housing the third judicial circuit of Illinois. The courthouse was used for an extremely short period of time before the county seat was moved to Cairo, Illinois. Thebes is also known for its massive dual track railroad bridge spanning the Mississippi River from Illinois to Missouri. Built in 1901, the unique stone and steel structure is still in use as a major east-west rail artery. [See Attachment 11: *Thebes Courthouse and RR Bridge*.]

Important if proven, local residents claim Abraham Lincoln practiced law in the courthouse and that Dred Scott, after his unfavorable Supreme Court decision, was held in the jail for one night. The presence of neither man can as yet be conclusively proven; however, another figure, John A. Logan, significant in both regional and national history, undoubtedly tried cases in the Thebes Courthouse. Furthermore, the courthouse was the site of the Illinois Democratic Party convention in 1858, one that was certainly attended by Stephen A. Douglass, well-known for his role in Civil War Era politics and even more notable for his rivalry and famous debates with Abraham Lincoln. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the status and the condition of the Court House are in jeopardy.

Mound City is one of the most significant undeveloped Civil War sites along the Crescent. Three of the nine ironclads (USS Cairo, USS Cincinnati, and USS Mound City) comprising the "Mississippi Squadron",³⁹ used by General Grant in his campaign to divide the South by controlling the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, were built at the Mound City Marine Ways.⁴⁰ James Eads, famous St. Louis bridge designer/builder and ship builder, assisted in their design and construction.⁴¹ The remains of one of the gunboats thought to be the USS Cincinnati may be buried in the old Cache River channel, immediately south of Mound City.⁴² The USS Cairo was sunk on the Yahoo River in Mississippi and was excavated, its remains preserved and on display at the Vicksburg National Historic Site.

Mound City was homeport for the *USS Red Rover*, "the first hospital ship in US naval history, on-board which women were employed on a U.S. warship for the first time. Catholic nuns and African American midwives recruited from Pulaski County and women escaping slavery from the south were among them."⁴³ These African American women became the first female nurses in the US Navy and received pensions.^{44 45} [See Attachment 12: *U.S.N. Red Rover Hospital Ship*.]

Mound City was also home of the largest United States Military Hospital in the west, which at one time cared for over 2,200 sick and wounded from the Battle of Shiloh.⁴⁶ One of the first military cemeteries in the United States located at Mound City and recently underwent a multi-million dollar restoration by the Veterans Administration.

The City of Cairo was in the planning stages when the Bank of Cairo was established in 1818, and lots were surveyed and available for purchase.⁴⁷ In 1837, still undeveloped because of flooding and disease, the Cairo City and Canal Company owned by eastern and London entrepreneurs commissioned William Strickland, prominent Philadelphia architect, and his engineer partner to prepare formal plans for a raised City of Cairo and harbor near the confluence.^{48 49} A "Capitol City" was still envisioned in 1850, as indicated by a proposed New Orleans to Great Lakes Railroad map.⁵⁰ [See Attachment 13: *1850s Railroad Map*] To alleviate annual flooding and following the report and recommendations of William Strickland, the Illinois Central Railroad built a levee around Cairo in the 1850s, allowing Cairo to be formally established in 1857 and was to become the largest city on the

lower Ohio for many years.⁵¹ [See Attachment 14: *Proposal By William Strickland, Philadelphia Architect.*]

Cairo was secured by Federal troops within days of the shelling of Fort Sumter to prevent the strategic location of the Confluence being seized by the South.⁵² Fort Prentiss (later called Fort Defiance)⁵³ was established as the headquarters, training camp, supply depot, and embarkation point for Brigadier-General Ulysses S. Grant. And where he planned and launched his military campaign into the South “divided the Confederacy, and marked the turning point of the war”.⁵⁴ Over 35,000 Confederate prisoners were shipped through Cairo to prison camps in the north.⁵⁵ Many Civil and Post War era structures remain.

Although railroads were established to Cairo from both sides of both the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers in the 1850s, riverboats remained the most significant means of travel and commerce until 1888 when the first railroad bridge west of Louisville was completed across the Ohio to Kentucky connecting the south to the north. Until the Great Depression, Cairo was home to one of the largest Sears Roebuck Homes prefabrication facilities in the United States,⁵⁶ the Bruce Hardwood Flooring Company, and a Singer sewing machine cabinet manufacturing facility. In 1952 there were four railroads with 26 passenger trains a day to, from, and through Cairo; four bus lines; and four daily airline flights to St. Louis, Louisville, and Nashville.⁵⁷ Of these, only Amtrak remains, passing through Cairo without stopping.

Architecturally, Cairo’s heritage reflects the south through the early 1900s and includes large intricate Italianate manors surrounded by Gingko and Magnolia trees and “shot-gun” style housing reflecting Caribbean and New Orleans influences. After 1900 Cairo began to reflect the north with bungalow and prairie style homes, included simple designs by Chicago and St. Louis architects. Also obvious are many Sears Roebuck homes manufactured in Cairo. [See Attachment 15: *Riverlore and Chicago Style Houses.*]

Cairo also has significant African American history. Recent research indicates that at least 20 well known Blues musicians played Cairo on a regular basis in the 1930s through the early 1950s. The *Southern Illinois Nightclub*, one of the largest music venues in the region was located at Mounds, just north of Cairo, and often featured bands like Duke Ellington and Lionel Hampton. Because the region’s hotels did not cater to Blacks, the musicians and other personnel stayed with local residents, a very special event for many. Cairo also has significant early 1900s and 1960s civil rights history, including business boycotts, marches, shootings, the Illinois National Guard, a young lawyer named Thurgood Marshall, and our own, then Lt. Governor, Paul Simon. This history was photographed and documented by Cairo activist and author Preston Ewing.⁵⁸

A Graveyard of Ships - The Ohio and Mississippi Rivers were the interstate highways of the 18th and 19th Centuries when flatboats, keelboats, and eventually steamboats were the mass transit carriers of the time. Flatboats were generally dismantled for their materials at their final destination because it was impossible to take them back upstream. Steamboats, on the other hand, were constructed of wood and had wood & coal burning firebox and steam boiler systems. The average life of a steamboat was five years – because if a boiler explosion didn’t destroy a ship, river snags did. [See Attachment 16: *Remains of Riverboat “City of Peoria on the Ohio across from Cairo.*] In 1999 the remains of an 18th Century flatboat appeared in the riverbank adjacent to America and at the next opportunity in late summer of 2003, SIUC Archeologist Mark Wagner and School of Architecture faculty, students, local residents, and other volunteers uncovered and documented the remains.⁵⁹ Thousands of these vessels were constructed and used, but according to Army Corps of

Engineers archeologists, **this is the first flatboat that has been seen or documented.**⁶⁰ [See Attachment 17: *Ohio River Flatboat "America" Excavation in Progress.*]

The "**Trail of Tears**" follows the Cherokee path across southernmost Illinois from Golconda through Vienna and Jonesboro to Ware where they wintered before crossing the Mississippi into Missouri. Thousands of Cherokee from the Appalachians were marched across the Midwest to Oklahoma, with many wintering and dying on the portion of the Trail of Tears through southern Illinois. Significant research, archeology, and documentation is still needed to tell this story of their forced march though southern Illinois. Mark Wagner wrote:

"The rising tide of Euro-American immigration in the 1830s in both the southeastern United States and the Old Northwest resulted in conflicts between Native Americans living in those areas and settlers hungry for land. Pressure quickly built for the removal of all eastern Native Americans groups to new lands west of the Mississippi River. In 1838 United States Army troops under the command of Winfield Scott began forcibly removing those Cherokee who had refused to voluntarily leave their homes in Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama. The "Trail of Tears" followed by approximately 15,000 western-bound Cherokee in 13 separate detachments entered Illinois at Dixon's Ferry at Golconda. The ferrying of people, horses, oxen, mules, and wagons across the Ohio River to the Illinois shore required many days for each detachment. Many died of exposure, illness, or exhaustion and were buried along the way before the Cherokee journey to Oklahoma was complete."

The Underground Railroad is known to have passed through the western edge of southernmost Illinois through Cairo and/or on the Mississippi River. There is a well documented UGRR route leading from Missouri to Randolph County that passes through Rockwood and on to Sparta.⁶¹ New research is indicating that the eastern part of the region may also have been an important route to freedom. Archaeology at Millers Grove in Pope County is conclusive that it was part of the system and Brownsville on the Pope/Massac counties line and New Liberty, Shady Grove, and Unionville in the Black Bottom area of Massac County. Several communities near Metropolis created prior to the Civil War by freed slaves still exist. [See Attachment 18: *Massac County African-American Settlement*]

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT – The region was first known for its salt and wildlife, but iron and lead mining, ironwork, fluorspar, timber, steamship building, railroad tie production, street and building-brick manufacturing, coal mining, furniture, industrialized housing, shell buttons, and many other industries that followed achieved a point of prominence as well. Mark Wagner writes about the early years:

Limited industrial development occurred [in the region] prior to the Civil War. The largest of these was salt manufacturing at the government-owned U.S. Salines or salt springs in Gallatin County. During the early nineteenth century a number of individuals leased the salines from the government for the commercial production of salt. The brine was pumped from the salt springs into double rows of large iron kettles contained within large wooden buildings with a chimney at one end. Fires beneath the kettles gradually reduced the brine to salt. Salt manufacturing helped boost the growth of Shawneetown which was connected to the salines by the Shawneetown-Kaskaskia Trail. At its peak in 1827 the southern Illinois salt industry reportedly employed 1,000 individuals and produced over 100,000 barrels of salt a year. However, the various operators of the salt works found it impossible to compete with rival salt manufacturers in Virginia whose use of slave labor enabled them to sell salt at a cheaper price. By the early 1840s salt production at the various Ohio Valley salt works declined as steamboats introduced a purer salt from Michigan into the valley. The Gallatin Salines continued to manufacture salt for local use until 1873 at which point production had fallen to 500 bushels a day.

Other early industries within the byway corridor included iron, lead, and fluorspar mining. The Illinois Iron Furnace (1837-1873) and Martha Iron Furnace (1848-1857) in Hardin County were blast furnaces that processed locally mined iron-bearing limonite into pig iron. The discovery of fluorspar and lead deposits in Hardin County in the late 1830s and early 1840s led to the opening of a fluorspar mine and the establishment of the Rosiclare Lead and Fluorspar Mining Company in 1842.

Natural Environmental Heritage – The southern half of the proposed National Heritage Area is recognized as one of the most biologically diverse regions in the United States. The Shawnee National Forest (SNF) extends from river to river through the mid-section of the proposed National Heritage Area. David Koch notes that “*The prominence in the Land Between the Rivers space is of special (additional) importance. It in itself assures a certain amount of natural beauty, a recognition by the US government of the importance of the area as an area to be preserved for all Americans to enjoy, while at the same time limiting commercial opportunities which this new natural resources legislation would address by encouraging regional cooperation and recognition of the area's historical, cultural, and economic past, present, and future.*” Its most well-known sites include the Garden of the Gods, Lusk Creek Canyon, Belle Smith Springs, Pine Hills, and many others. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages other unique sites within and adjacent to the SNF, including the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge and much of the Cache River featuring the largest and oldest Cypress tree east of the Mississippi. The State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources manages extensive natural resources as well, including Heron Pond, one of the state's most pristine and unique nature preserves that is also part of the Cache River wetlands area. Ducks Unlimited and the Nature Conservancy own and manage additional delicate and threatened wetland areas.

Land use conflicts historically were related to what the land produced and what the steamboats and railroads needed. The buffalo are gone; the old growth trees within several miles of the river have been burned by the steamboats; much of the hardwoods and the cypress have been used up by the furniture and building industry which is also gone, as are most of the people. The beaver are coming back as they are generally now left alone and the Canadian Geese, ducks, deer, and smallmouth bass remain as the current quests of sportsmen.

Land Between the Rivers National Heritage Area and SIU Carbondale

The current proposal as embodied in H.R. 929 represents an incredible opportunity for enhancing the SIUC's relationship with the region in very meaningful ways. To be able to connect our students with the people of the region will provide new and accurate knowledge as well as generate serious interest in the extraordinary significance of the undeveloped historical resources of our own region and the potential for additional research and economic development. This will address and enhance the development of our region's historic resources through cooperative efforts among Southern Illinois University academic and service units, area community colleges, community organizations, county historical societies, libraries and museums, and with state and federal agencies focusing on these issues as well. We will also be able to focus on community development, regional planning, architecture, history, archeology, and preservation, and be able to support and coordinate efforts throughout the university directed at the southernmost counties of Illinois and the Upper Delta multi-state region. This project would provide a continuing presence to partner with agencies and universities in adjacent states to link professional expertise, historical and archeological research, and service-learning opportunities for faculty, staff, and students with non-profit and community groups and agencies in the region. It is very exciting to realize that SIUC would house this initiative for multi-university and interdisciplinary approaches to research, planning, and problem solving within the southernmost Illinois and upper Delta region.

The goal is that public awareness of the significance of these sites and the development of creative planning proposals that encourage their protection and development will allow planning agencies and economic development groups to make more informed and considered decisions on a regional planning level. As a result, it is expected that that declaring this region as a National Heritage Area will be a catalyst for academic and historical research that will result in economic development opportunities for the entire region.

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