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Monuments to a Lost Nation

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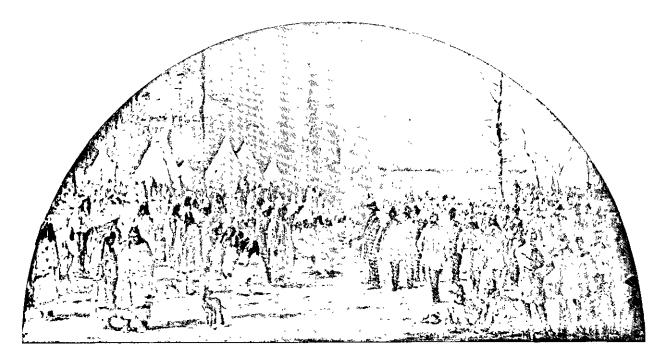


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Monuments to a Lost Nation

Symbolic Native Americans appeared on the Chicago landscape after the city's first inhabitants had faded from the area.

THEODORE J. KARAMANSKI



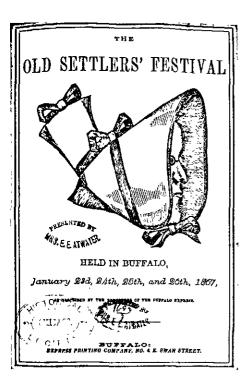
With the Treaty of 1833 (opposite), the Potawatomi tribe, Illinois's largest Indian population, ceded their land to the U.S. government, effectively ending Native American presence in the area. Above: artist Lawrence Carmichael Earle's Last Council of the Potawatomies, 1833.

> ith the bright orange glow of the setting sun at their backs, the chiefs and headmen of the Potawatomi people faced the commissioners of the United States

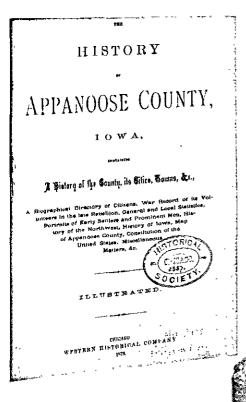
government. Most were grave and morose as they signed the treaty ceding their homelands in the Chicago area and agreeing to removal beyond the Mississippi. The 1833 Treaty of Chicago was one of a series of agreements that terminated the native title to the American heartland and seemed to end Native American presence in the life and culture of Chicago. But a rediscovery of the city's native roots emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This figurative return of the native to Chicago was a symbolic encounter driven by a mixture of nostalgia, guilt, and the need of an industrial metropolis to invent a narrative that offered a common background for a community of widely diverse national origins. On the city's landscape and in its public culture, Chicagoans created statues, monuments, and illustrations—durable visual representations—of how they chose to commemorate the city's exiled first inhabitants.

Symbolic Native Americans appeared on the Chicago landscape only after the genuine article had all but faded from Illinois. During the 1870s and 1880s, when Chicago first began to memorialize its Indian roots, "old settlers" and "pioneer" associations emerged across the prosperous farm belt. The preparation of histories honoring the accomplishments of the pioneers became a major business for commercial public history companies, such as the Western Historical Company based in Chicago. The self-

Articles of a Fran made at Chicago in the Ha on the twenty achiling of September in the year of Our Lord One Moun Aundred and thirty three, between George B Sorter, Thomas & V Ouren and the Weather ford, Course friences on the Part of the United States of the one part in a My United a Valion of Whippeura , CHorare wind Solawatamie Andiens of the . first being fully represented by the Chiefs and Chied men whose name Subscribert - Which Frity is in the following words : to wit : Article 1 the said United e Vation of Chippens, Ottawa, and Cota anic Ondians code to the Mindeel States with his land, along the western shore Lake Michigan, and between this Lake und the land coded to the thirted By the Winnebays nation, at the Fridy of Fort chronstrong made on the 10. timber 1832 - bounded on the etorth by the country lately certax by the Vinces , and on the South by the country ceded at the Frat 1 France de to made on the 24th July 1824 - supposed to contain about Fire mille Attick 2 " _ " hart consider alion of the above is fine it is hereby ago Hat the United Chales shall yound to the suid this led station of Ondiana to be The other Chidian Sands are held which have lately been a fright to anig the fu River to fear Indians, a tract of Country west of the Military of Ele President of the United Clates _ to be not lefs in quantity from Side m Server and to be wented as pollows : Degrining at the mouth Ested of the allipsion Rever the addown the said out and Cate line & the Som West corner of the State Colote line & Hersont where it is intervented a advisable of the hart o



By the mid-nineteenth century, Americans had already begun to immortalize the early frontier with pioneer associations, Old Settlers' Festivals (above, from 1867), and published local histories (below, from 1878).



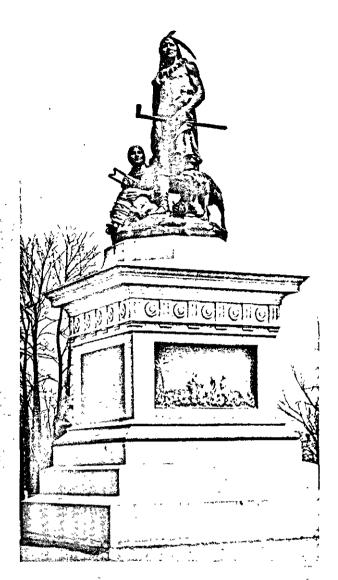


congratulatory tone most commonly associated with these formalistic volumes contained a largely nostalgic view of American Indians. An old settler writing in a 1878 history of the Grand River Valley remembered that "as friends, the Indians and settlers lived together with mutual benefit." Later, when the Indians ceded their lands through a treaty, the settler claimed, "the Indians, knowing they had sold their rights cheerfully gave up their cherished homes to the whites." Although there were occasional attempts to depict the Indian as a savage enemy, most preferred to believe that the settlers had been friends with those whom they displaced.

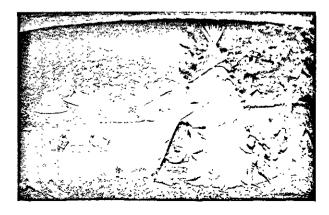
The Chicago lakefront still boasts a statue that represents, like those commercial county histories, a personal-if highly nostalgic-image of the American Indian. In 1884, a four-figure bronze statuary group was unveiled in Lincoln Park. John Boyle's creation, The Alarm, features a male standing alert, eyes fixed intently ahead, tomahawk in hand. At his feet, Boyle placed what the Chicago Tribune called a "wolf-like dog, whose shaggy coat bristles with anger at some approaching danger," while on the ground behind the man an Indian woman protectively cradles her baby. Decorating the base of the monument were four bronze bas-relief depictions of Indian life: The Hunt, Forestry, The Corn Dance, and The Peace Pipe. Wealthy lumberman and fur trader Martin Ryerson donated the group to the city as a tribute to the friendship of the Ottawa and Potawatomi whose trade : helped his business grow into one of the largest fortunes in Chicago. A striking contrast exists between the fate of the Indians depicted in the group, exiled to a bleak Kansas reservation, and their young white friend who helped establish high culture in Chicago.

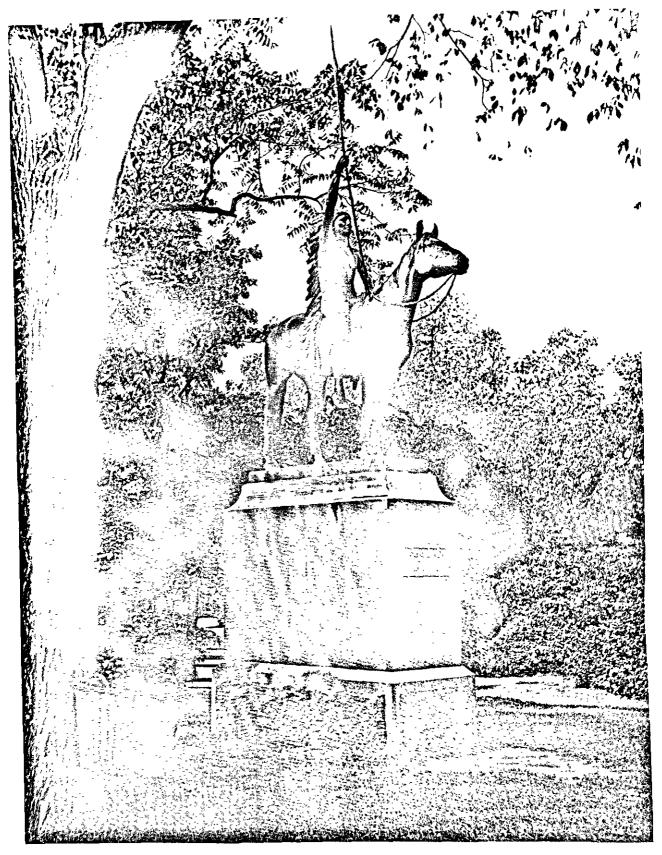
Although *The Alarm* depicts Ryerson's personal memory of a strong, self-sufficient people, Boyle's figures bow to the dominant symbols of late-nineteenthcentury America. The male Indian is not one of the hunters with whom Ryerson worked as a young businessman, but a warrior armed with a tomahawk. The fierce dog at his feet embodies savage nature, while the Indian woman and child, vulnerably exposed on the ground, represent the eventual submission, if not the demise, of the Native American people.

This theme of the "vanishing Indian" reappeared a decade later when Lincoln Park featured another Native American statue. *The Signal of Peace* depicts a mounted Plains Indian in full-feathered headdress holding a coup stick aloft. American sculptor Cyrus E. Dallin created the monument in Paris, and it won an award at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Although Dallin had seen Indians in Utah during his boyhood, he based his sculpture on Native Americans brought to Paris in 1889 by Buffalo Bill's *Wild West Show*. Philanthropist Lambert Tree donated the bronze statue to the Lincoln Park



Chicagoans began to memorialize the area's Native American roots with public art. One of the first, The Alarm (above, in 1902, and opposite), depicted a man with a tomahawk, a dog at his fect, and an Indian woman cradling her baby. The base of the monument fcatured four bronze scenes of Native American life, including The Hunt (below).





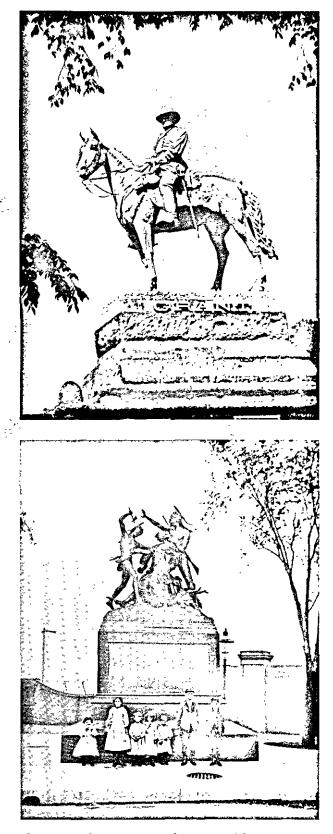
The Signal of Peace, showed a Plains Indian in full headdress. In the statue's original placement, it faced a monument to war hero General Ulysses S. Grant (opposite top).

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Commission. "I fear the time is not distant," Tree explained in a letter, "when our descendents will only know through the chisel and brush of the artist these simple and untutored children of nature who were little more than a century ago, the sole human occupants and proprietors of the vast northwestern empire of which Chicago is now the proud metropolis." Tree blamed the government for the demise of the Native American: "Pilfered by the advance guards of the whites, oppressed and robbed by government agents, deprived of their land by the government itself, with only scant recompense; shot down by soldiery in wars fomented for the purpose of plundering and destroying their race, and finally drowned by the ever westward spread of population." The original placement of The Signal of Peace was ironic, if not symbolic: The mounted Indian, gesturing peace, faced the center of the bustling city yet remained dominated by the giant bronze figure of General Ulysses S. Grant, the sword of the republic. The Signal of Peace now stands near the lakefront between Belmont Avenue and Fullerton Parkway,

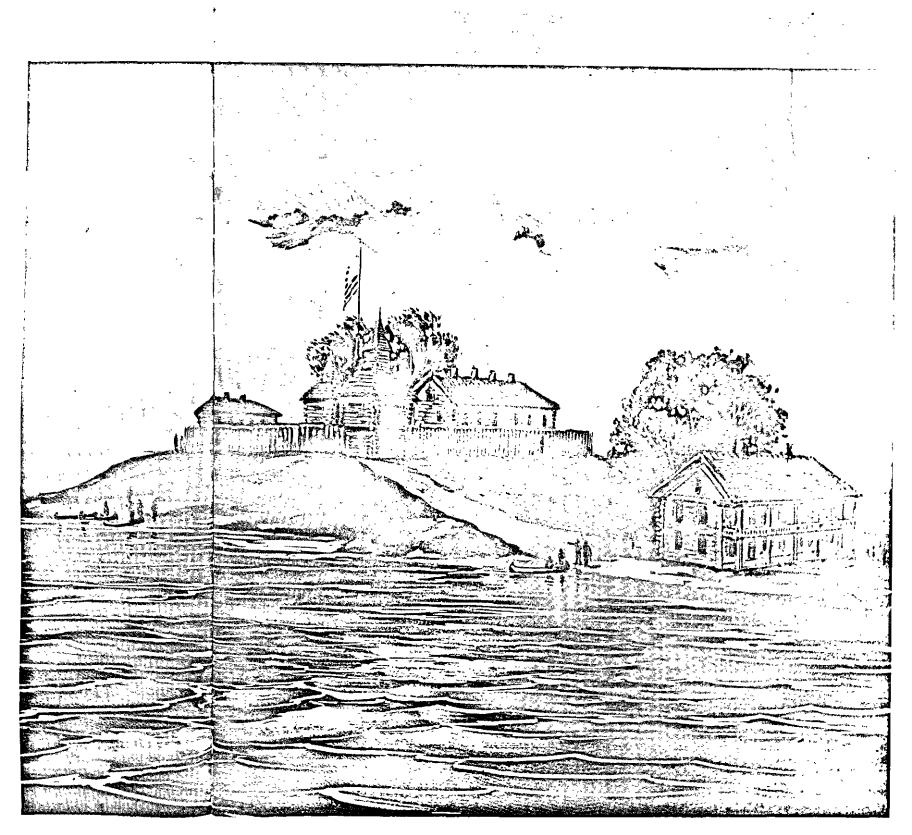
While The Alarm and The Signal of Peace both portrayed the Indian as a vanishing but noble savage, the other stock image of the Native American was that of the warrior, dramatically represented in Chicago's public space by the Fort Dearborn Massacre. This monument memorialized the Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa attack on the inhabitants of Fort Dearborn during the War of 1812. The battle occurred among the sand dunes about a mile and a half south of the abandoned fort. In the rout that followed, fifty-three men, women, and children were killed. The bodies lay where they fell for three years after the battle. For several generations, the site was marked only by the "Massacre Tree," a dead cottonwood looming over the sand dunes. George Pullman, controversial industrialist and inventor of the railroad sleeping car, purchased the site and built a mansion on the old battlefield in 1873. By the 1880s, the Prairie Avenue location had become the most elite neighborhood in Chicago and the faux castles of Gilded Age industrialists surrounded the Massacre Tree. "Methinks the place is haunted," a journalist speculated, "and a subtle spell woven of dead men's bones attracts to the scene of the massacre the present representatives of a system doomed to vanish like that of the redskins before the advancing civilization of the new social era." As if to ward off that prospect, Pullman donated the bronze sculpture group to the Chicago Historical Society in 1893 to memorialize the dramatic incident "for posterity."

The sculpture was the work of Carl Rohl-Smith, a Danish artist drawn to Chicago to complete a commission for the World's Columbian Exposition. Rohl-Smith captured one of the most famed legends of the Fort Dearborn disaster, when Potawatomi Chief Black



The Fort Dearborn Massacre (above, c. 1912) became the most famous of Chicago's Native American memorials. It depicts Black Partridge coming to the defense of Margaret Helm during the massacre.





Some Chicagoans' view of Native Americans as savage fighters (left, from 1878), might have stemmed from the aftermath of the Fort Dearborn Massacre, in which Native Americans attacked the area's first army post during the War of 1812. Above: Watercolor painting of Fort Dearborn by C. E. Petford, 1803.







Before the famous bronze statue group (above), the Fort Dearborn Massacre was memorialized only by a tree, which stood at the spot where the fighting occurred (left). The tree was cut down in 1894

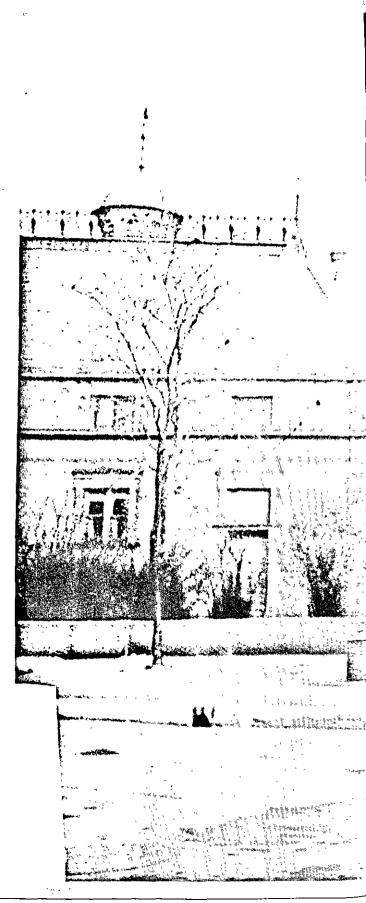
Partridge reportedly intervened to save the life of Margaret Helm, wife of an officer in the doomed garrison. The bronze group continued the "savage warrior" imagery popular in the era. Although Black Partridge is depicted as strong, commanding, and decisive, the attacking warrior figure dominates the group. His tomahawk is raised, poised to come down on the helpless white woman. His gaze, riveted on his victim, seems pitiless, and his action unstoppable; his fury overshadows Black Partridge's mercy. The foreground figures underscore the violence of the moment: a wounded white soldier stabbed by an Indian and a white toddler, vulnerable and helpless on the ground, reaching his arms out for help. Rohl-Smith included this haunting figure to represent the dozen white children killed in the battle. As if to draw the viewer to the image of the noble (instead of the savage) Indian, Rohl-Smith inscribed a legend on the base of the monument: "Fort Dearborn Massacre/Black Partridge Saving Mrs. Helm."

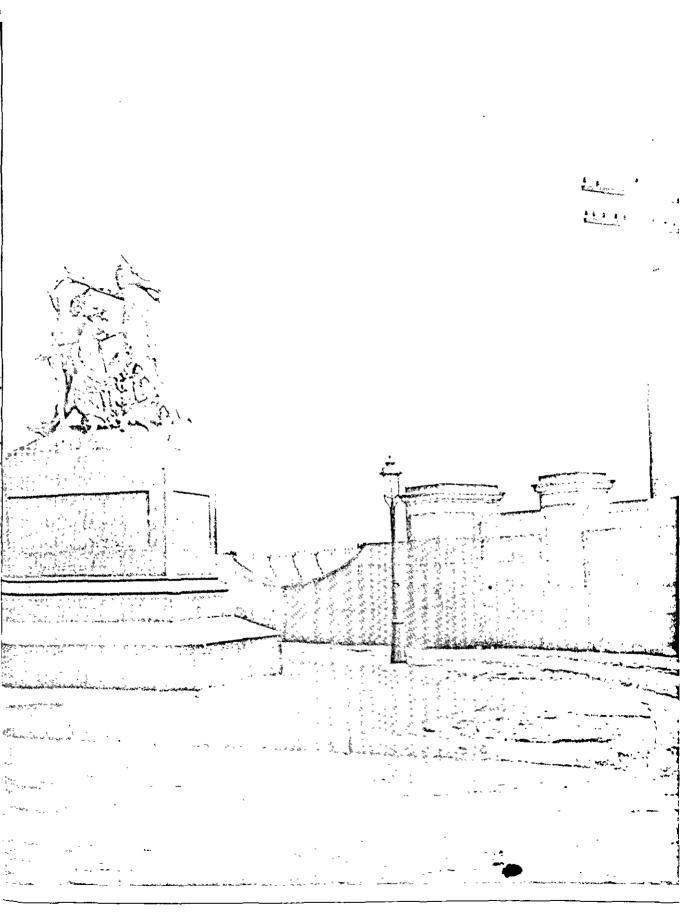
The statue enjoyed great public recognition and acclaim. Former President Benjamin Harrison (grandson of former president and War of 1812 hero William Henry Harrison), Robert Todd Lincoln, and many of the city's meatpackers and merchandisers attended the dedication ceremony. The art critics of the time looked favorably upon the bronze, declaring: "It is one of the greatest pieces of realistic sculpture . . . in this or any other part of the world." At first, the egotistical Pullman was gratified that the public liked the monument, which for years after was referred to as "the Pullman statue." Many residents included a stroll to the monument during their afternoon promenade. No one objected when the traffic of elegant carriages increased on the street, but just two months after the dedication of the monument, Pullman regretted his philanthropic action as it became clear that the monument's crowds included "workmen with their wives and children and occasionally an Italian or a Russian Jew from Canal Street." Citing the clutter of paper left by picnickers and his trampled lawn, Pullman petitioned unsuccessfully to have the monument moved. The statue remained where history happened, across the street from Pullman's house.

The dedication of the Fort Dearborn Massacre lacked any expressions of guilt over the eventual fate of Black Partridge and his people. Instead there was a triumphalist tone to the proceedings, as the tragic moments depicted in the statue contrasted with the progress and power of Chicago in the 1890s. The splendor of the World's Columbian Exposition's White City, just a few miles south of the battlefield, underscored the triumph of white America in the four hundred years since Christopher Columbus's voyage. In keeping with the "vanishing Indian" stereotype, the Chicago Herald intoned, "The race of American aborigines is rapidly melting away, and the time will come when groups of statuary carved after typical specimens will be permanent objects of great value and interest." But the monument also contains a subversive quality. The hero of the group is not one of the representatives of white America but a member of the doomed race. The dominant image of the bronze is the ferocity of the Indians, shown to be overwhelming the civilized order, not an image in which a "robber baron" such as Pullman might take comfort as he looked out his library window.

In this sculpture, the myths and realities of the American frontier collided with the anxieties of an urban nation in social and economic conflict. The cultural diversity, economic stratification, and general instability of life in late-nineteenth-century cities such as Chicago made many residents yearn for an established order. Even while industrialists such as Pullman used monuments to demonstrate how far the city had come in less than a hundred years, Chicagoans had their own memories that underscored how fragile and transitory such material progress could be. The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 had quickly swept away a large portion of the city.

In 1873, George Pullman purchased the site of the massacre and built his home there. He then commissioned the Fort Dearborn Massacre and had it placed in front of his house, but he soon tired of the constant foot traffic by curious passersby. This 1911 photograph shows the statue and a portion of the Pullman mansion.







Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show (above and opposite) colored many Chicagoans' perceptions of Native Americans.

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The sudden panics and depressions of 1873 and 1890 wiped out the fortunes of many men seemingly of substance. The Haymarket Affair of 1886 revealed the depth of class resentment and the potential for violence that simmered beneath the surface of Chicago. Pullman and other members of the city's elite could look at the Fort Dearborn Massacre as an "enduring monument" (according to the Chicago Tribune) in a sea of troubled change, a social anchor. That Pullman so quickly became disenchanted with the monument when the working class appropriated its public space for its own purposes reveals the degree to which he valued social control. This predilection was best demonstrated, of course, in his model industrial town: Pullman, where the industrialist's desire to control almost all aspects of his workers' lives contributed to the violent 1894 strike that rocked the entire nation.

The connection between urban labor unrest and the last gasps of formal Native American resistance to the United States was both ironic and disquieting to men such as Pullman. Art critics praised Carl Rohl-Smith's sculpture for the realism of its figures. The artist obtained his models by visiting Fort Sheridan, the United States Army base established in Chicago's northern suburbs after Haymarket to maintain urban order. At the fort, Rohl-Smith encountered survivors of Wounded Knee, whom he described as "Indians of the most untamed sort." The men who fought what was perhaps the last organized effort against American continental expansion served as the fierce models for the Fort Dearborn Massacre, making the figures an unstated tribute to Native American resistance.

Some Americans compared newly arrived, workingclass immigrants to the land's first inhabitants. The *New York State Sun*, writing in the wake of Haymarket, intoned, "Such foreign savages, with their dynamite bombs and anarchic purposes, are as much apart from the rest of the people of this country as the Apaches of the plains." The association became even more apparent a year after the statue's dedication when the Seventh Cavalry, which had fought Indians so fiercely at Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee, came to Chicago to quell the Pullman riots of 1894.

For all of its unsettling symbolism, the Fort Dearborn Massacre stemmed from a fictionalized account of the past. Some historians regard the incident as the product of romantic imagination instead of eyewitness testimony, stating that Margaret Helm was not the beneficiary of Black Partridge's dramatic rescue. In fact, before the battle turned into a massacre, Mrs. Helm rode her horse to the shore of Lake Michigan where she found refuge. The legend of Black Partridge's rescue, however, excited the statue's admirers by bringing them in the midst of savage war. Rohl-Smith's figures may have owed more to

641221 62P WILD BUFFALO BILL'S WEST. W. F. CODY & NATE SALSBURY, . . . PROPRIETORS PROGRAMME_ ORATOR. FRANK RICHMOND, OVERTURE. 1-GRAND PROCESSIONAL REVIEW. 2-ENTREE, Introduction of Individual Celebrities, Groups, etc. 3-RACE between Cow-boy, Mexican and Indian, on Ponies. 4-PONY EXPRESS. Illustrating the Mode of Conveying Mails on the Frontier. 5-ILLUSTRATES AN ATTACK on an Emigrant Train by the Indians, and its Defence by Frontiersmen. After which A VIRGINIA BEEL on Horseback by Western Girls and Cow-boys. 6-WING SHOOTING by Master Johnnie Baker. 7-COW-BOYS' FUN. Throwing the Lariat. Picking Objects from the Ground while Riding at Full Speed. The Riding of Bucking Ponies and Mules by Cow-boys. 8-LILLIAN SMITH (The California Girl). Rifle Shooting. 9-LADIES' BACE by American Frontier Girls. 10-ATTACK ON THE DEADWOOD STAGE COACH by Indiana. Their Repulse by Scouts and Cow-boys, commanded by BUFFALO BILL. 11-BACE between Sioux Indian Boys on Bareback Indian Ponies. 12-AN EXHIBITION OF FANCY RIDING by Miss Emma Hickok. 13-PHASES OF INDIAN LIFE. Nomadic Tribe Camps on the Prairie, followed by Scalp, War, and other Dances. -BUFFALO BILL (Hon. W. F. Cody). America's Practical All-round Shot. Shooting on Foot and on Horseback. 15-GERUINE BUFFALO HUNT by BUFFALO BILL and Indiana. 16-ATTACK ON A SETTLER'S CABIN by Hostile Indians. Repulse by Cow-boys, under the leadership of BUFFALO BILL. 17 BALUTE.

Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show than to actual research. William F. Cody brought his famed Wild West Show to Chicago for the world's fair. Denied a space within the White City, he situated his spectacle near the Midway and drew millions of customers. Cody's show featured furious fake Indian attacks, with a last-minute rescue of beleaguered white men and women by Buffalo Bill himself. The show, like Cody's entire career, transformed fading nuggets of historical reality into archetypal stories. The show's program book described the Indian as "The Former Foe-Present Friend" of the American. Rohl-Smith's statue captured this formula in his representations of the fierce attacking warrior and Black Partridge as protector. The violence of the scene, similar to the staged violence of the Wild West Show, became the heritage of the frontier, an integral element in the American character. A reporter for the Chicago Inter-Ocean felt that watching Cody's troupe reenact Little Big Horn made him sensible to "the aboriginal ancestor" that lingered "in us after the long generations of attempted civilization and education."

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Public art such as the Fort Dearborn Massacre and The Alarm played a major role in transforming the very real image of the "vanishing Indian" of the turn-of-the-century into an enduring symbol of regional identity. But twodimensional art also had a resounding effect. In 1907, the *Chicago Tribune* published a pair of sketches titled "Injun Summer." These newspaper cartoons also distorted the realities of the Native American experience to tell a story that became an evocative contribution to public memory and resonated among Midwesterners for generations.

"Injun Summer" began on an early fall afternoon in the office of Chicago Tribune cartoonist John T. McCutcheon. Years later, McCutcheon remembered gazing out his window in the Fine Arts Building while his mind wandered to scenes of his boyhood in rural Indiana. During the 1870s, stories of the Sioux War out west mixed in his young imagination with local tales of the Fort Ouitenon trading post and the legendary Tippecanoe battlefield. McCutcheon caught glimpses of his childhood past in the omnipresent fields of corn. "The early fall," he recalled, "saw the tasseled rows of corn like waving spears of Indians, and a little later came the corn shocks, much like the tepees in the haze of Indian summer. Undoubtedly in my boyish imagination, all these things were registering. Then, when I was hard up for an idea, they came out." The resulting cartoon consisted of two sketches. The first depicted an old man and a young boy burning a pile of dead leaves beside a harvested field enclosed by a rail fence. In the second sketch, the stacked shocks of corn are transformed by the harvest moon into a village of tepees and the smoke of the smoldering leaves into the forms of dancing Indians. A folksy narrative accompanied the sketches ("Yep, sonny, this is sure enough Injun summer. Don't know what that is, I reckon, do you?") as the old timer explains to the young boy the meaning of the term "Indian summer": the last warm days of a Midwestern October, when the leaves turn bright red and one by one float down from their trees and the ghosts of the long departed Indians return to their old campgrounds. There is nothing to fear from this fleeting return, as the oldtimer assures the boy: "Don't be skeered-hain't none around here now, leastways no live ones. They been gone this many a year." The tone of the piece is wistful, not identifying the Indians with a living dynamic culture but imaginatively rooting them in the landscape, similar to the trees, hills, and streams.

McCutcheon's cartoon first appeared at a time when there was a growing interest in the Native American history of the heartland. Major archaeological studies explored effigy and burial mounds throughout the region. Even within the Chicago metropolitan area, amateur diggers explored the city's prehistoric past to the dismay of professional archeologists because of the amount of site disturbance. Some collectors simply used the pots and points they discovered as decorations. One North Side tavern owner decorated his watering hole



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Cartoonist John McCutcheon (above) was inspired by his rural roots to create "Injun Summer" (opposite). After the cartoon's debut in 1907, it became an annual, though controversial, tradition.

with thousands of prehistoric pieces. One of the most assiduous of these amateurs was Karl (also known as Charles) A. Dilg, a journalist who devoted several decades to collecting Indian artifacts and studying sites in the Chicago area. Dilg had grander aspirations and assembled his findings into a massive study he titled *Archaic Chicago*. Another German American, Albert F. Scharf, amassed a huge artifact collection of his own and also aspired to write the definitive work on Chicago's Indian past. Dilg disparaged Scharf as "a mere relic hunter," and claimed, "what little knowledge he has, and God knows it is very limited, he received at our hands."

Neither man ever completed their grand documents, although Dilg published many newspaper articles about Indian sites, and Scharf produced a map of Chicago's Indian trails and villages. Their work raised public consciousness of the area's Indian roots and preserved important information for future generations of scholars. Even more influential was the support department store millionaire Marshall Field gave to permanently establish a natural history museum in Chicago. By 1900, the Field Columbian Museum displayed one of the largest collections of Native American artifacts in the world. This collection, exhibited in the same building as dinosaur bones and other exotic and extinct animals, emphasized that,

INJUN SUMMER

Yep, sonny, this is sure enough Injun summer. Don't know what that is, I reckon, do you?

Well, that's when all the homesick Injuns come hack to play. You know, a long time ago, long afore yer granddaddy was born even, there used to be heaps of Injuns around here--thousands-millions, I reckon, far as that's concerned. 'libways, Pottawatomics, Iroquois, an' lots o' others-reg'lar sure 'nough Injuns-none o' yer cigar store Injuns, not much. They wuz all around here-right where you're standin'. Don't be skeered-hain't none around here now, leastways, no live ones. They ben gone this many a year. They all went away and died, so they ain't no more left.

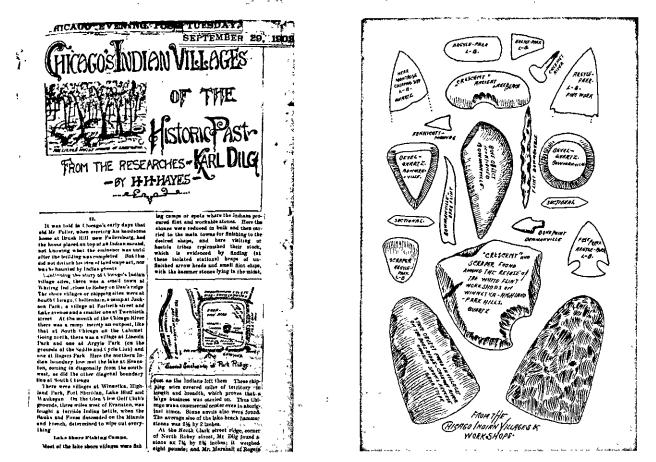


But every year, long about now, they all come back, leastways, their sperrits do. They're here now. You can see 'em off across the fields. Look real hard. See that kind o' hazy, misty look out yonder. Well, then's Injuns-Injun sperritsmarchin' along and dancin' in the sunlight. That's what makes that kind o' haze that's every where-ti's jest the sperrits of the Injuns all come back. They're all around us now. See off yonder, see them tepees. They kind o' look like corn shocks from here, but them's Injun tents, sure as you're a foot high. See 'em now? Sure, I knowed you could. Smell that smoky sort o' smell in the air? That's the campfires a-burnin' an' their pipes a-goin'. Lots o' people say it's jest leaves burnin', but it ain't. It's the campfires, an' th' Injuns are hoppin' round 'em t' beat the old Harry.

You jest come out here tonight when the moon is hangin' over the hill off yonder an' the harvest fields is all swimmin' in th' moonlight, an' you can see the Injuns and the tepees jest as plain as kin be. You can, eh? I knowed you could after a little while.

Jever notice how the leaves turn red 'bout this time o' year? That's jest anuther sign o' redskins. That's when an old Injun sperit gits tired dancin' an' goes up an' squats on a leaf t' rest. Why, I kin hear 'em rustlin' an' whisperin' an' creepin' round among the leaves all the time; an' ever once in a while a leaf gives way under some fat old Injun ghost and comes floatin' down to the ground. See here's one now. See how red it is. That's the war paint rubbed off n an Injun ghost, sure's you're born.

Purty soon, all the Injuns'll go marchin' away agin, back to the happy huntin' ground, but next year you'll see 'em troopin' back-th' sky jest hazy with 'em and their camplires smolderin' away jest like they are now.



In the early 1900s, many local archeologists scoured the ground for Native American artifacts. Karl Dilg sketched many of his findings (above left and right).

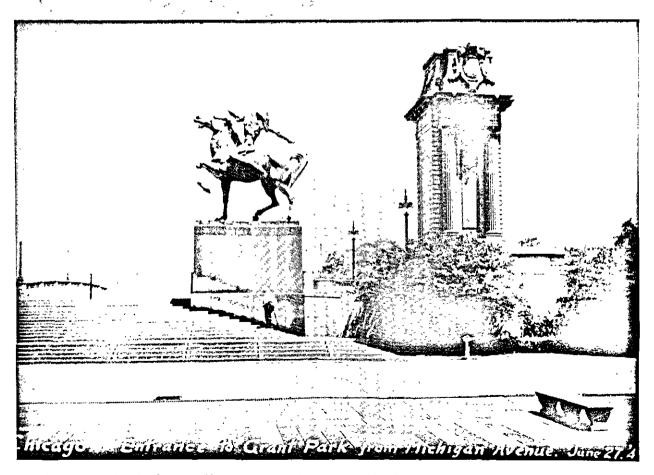


While Chicago created myths with statues and cartoons, some Indians who lived in the city, such as Dr. Carlos Montezuma (above), became activists who fought for Native American rights.

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however rooted the Indian was in the region's history, as the old timer in the McCutcheon cartoon put it, "They all went away and died, so they ain't no more left."

"Injun Summer" proved extremely popular with Midwesterners. Newspapers across the country reprinted it, and it appeared annually in the Chicago Tribune from 1912 to 1992 as a cherished and anticipated seasonal ritual. Unlike the statue The Alarm, which accurately depicted Ottawa Indians and was based on personal memory, "Injun Summer" displayed little connection to the genuine Native Americans of the Midwest. McCutcheon dressed the ghostly Indians in the long feathered headdresses of the Plains Indians; the lodges that appear in the harvest moon are not the bark wigwams of the Great Lakes Indians but the buffalo hide tepees of the far west. More importantly, the Native Americans depicted in "Injun Summer" are identified as a furtive part of the landscape, cloaked from normal view by the light of day and hiding in the shadows, awaiting the harvest moon to make their appearance. The Indian figures rise up from the smoke of the burning leaves, appearing to emerge from the very ground. This close identification of the Indian with nature had long been part of the European American image of Native Americans, from Jean Rousseau to James Fennimore Cooper to Frederick Jackson Turner. "The Indian is a true child of the forest and desert," Francis Parkman wrote. "His unruly pride and untamed freedom are in harmony with the lonely mountains, cataracts, and rivers among which he dwells; and primitive America, with her savage scenery and savage men, opens to the imagination a boundless world, unmatched in wild sublimity." The turn-of-the-century Midwest, however, had lost not only most of its Indians but also its "wild sublimity." The sense of loss, perhaps even guilt that emerges from the cartoon Indians may well be the emerging nostalgia of an urban people for their own loss of the rural American heartland. From McCutcheon's day to the present, virtually every train arriving in Chicago carried a migrant from the countryside to the city. No sooner had the generation that had dispossessed the Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Illinois died off than many of their descendents themselves were dislodged from the land by mechanization and market changes, a process that continues to this day. It is ironic that the Chicago Tribune, the voice of the urban business establishment that made such changes



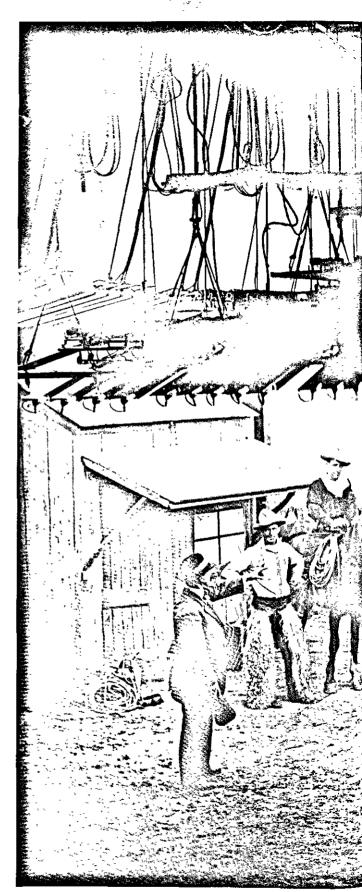
One of Ivan Mestrovic's Indian horsemen (shown above in 1949) at Grant Park's Michigan Avenue entrance. Photograph by Carl P. Richards.

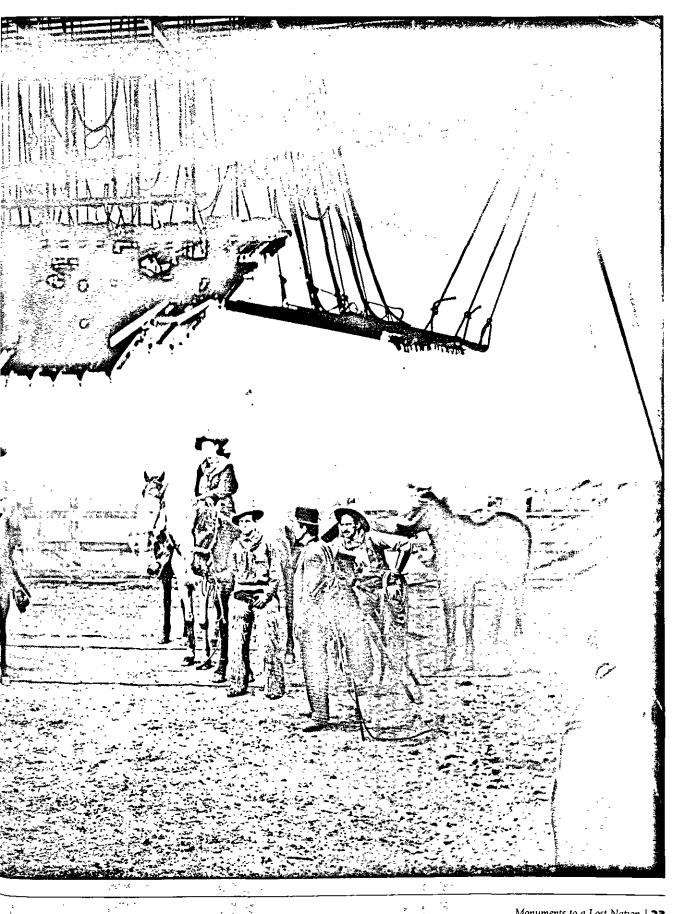
inevitable, would create the image that for thousands of city dwellers symbolized their loss of a landed heritage.

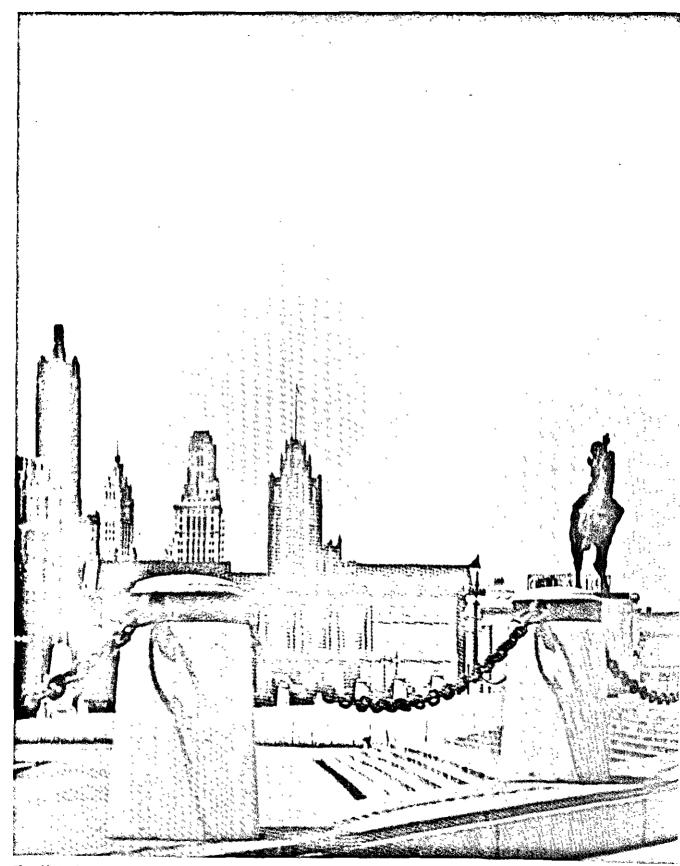
Genuine Great Lakes Indians still lived just a few hundred miles north of Chicago in Michigan and Wisconsin. Traditional Indian birch-bark crafts and guillwork became popular with summer vacationers at Mackinac. Charlevoix, and other northern resorts. Native Americans also lived in the city itself. While McCutcheon warmed readers' hearts with his cartoons, Dr. Carlos Montezuma, outspoken critic of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, edited a national publication for Indians from his Chicago office. But by the early twentieth century, actual Native Americans ceased to register with a public engaged with what had become a popular culture icon. The Indian had gone from being the "vanishing American" to becoming an effective symbol for all of America. In multiethnic cities such as Chicago, the Indian symbolized a common, mythic past for all Americans, regardless of national origin. The Indian, by being portrayed as having no particular living heritage, could serve as America's common heritage.

American popular culture promoted a generic Indian, locked in time and space. From 1910 to 1918, Chicago's Essanay Studios helped to pioneer the film industry by producing scores of westerns. Central to the generic Indian image were the Plains Indians' feathered headdresses, the very icon used to decorate the entrance to Essanay's North Side studio. The University of Illinois football team, led by Red Grange, adopted the name the "Fighting Illini," thereby blending the heritage of a local Indian tribe with a mascot sporting a Plains costume. The Eternal Light Christian Spiritualist Church manifested the religious universalizing of the Indian. The church, an exotic blend of spiritualism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and voodoo, was founded by Leafy Anderson, one of thousands of Louisiana African Americans drawn to Chicago during the Great Migration. When Anderson learned of the story of Chief Black Hawk, the Sauk Indian who led the last military resistance to white rule in Illinois in 1832, she made him a major figure in her church as a protective, guardian spirit. The church grew quickly during the 1920s, spreading to Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. Today it continues only in New Orleans. "Black Hawk will fight your battles," Reverend Jules Anderson declared at a recent service, "because Black Hawk stands for righteousness." Most Chicagoans identify Chief Black Hawk with their National Hockey League team, established in 1926.

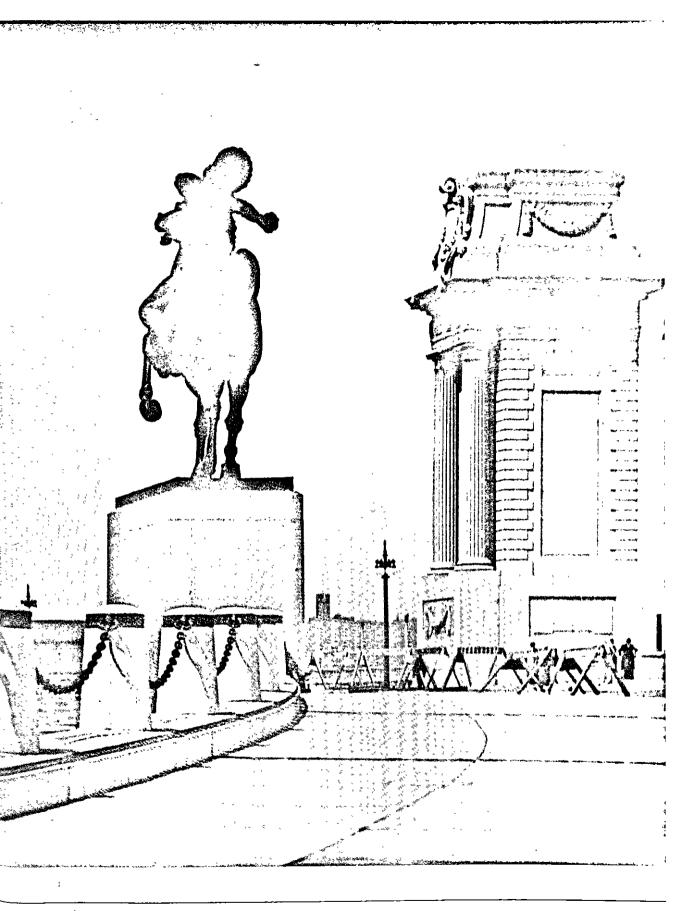
Chicago's own Essanay Studios, established in 1907, produced many movies that popularized the "cowboys-and-Indians" myth, especially the Broncho Bill western series (right).







These Native American equestrians stand as two imposing statues at Congress Plaza.

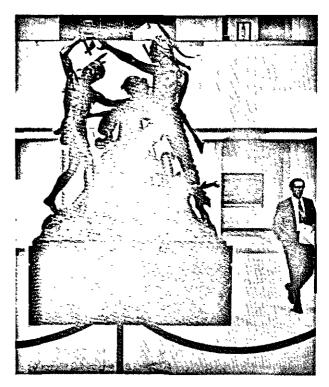


Not surprisingly, two of the most important artistic additions to Chicago's public space during the 1920s were Native American figures. As part of Daniel Burnham's 1909 plan for Chicago, a formal entrance from the Loop commercial district to Grant Park would be ornamented with two large sculptures. The commission for the project went to Yugoslavian artist Ivan Mestrovic. His original plan for the statues called for one Indian and one "Buffalo Bill-like" depiction of the conquering white pioneers. This triumphalist conception evolved into a pair of Indian horsemen, known as The Bowman and The Spearman. Despite these fierce titles the figures appear anything but warlike; they even lack the weapons for which they are named. Standing seventeen feet high and placed on eighteen-foot-high granite pedestals, the bronze Indians, in the art moderne style of the 1920s, dwarf the downtown stream of pedestrians and automobiles. The figures illustrate the degree to which Indians had been appropriated as symbols of nature, and show Chicago's isolation from its roots as a woodland Indian center.

The second great addition to the city's public space in the 1920s was architect Edward Bennett's Michigan Avenue Bridge. Also part of the Burnham Plan, the bridge sat amid the most impressive architecture of 1920s Chicago: the Wrigley Building, the Chicago Tribune's gothic tower, the Jewelers' Building, and the London Guaranteed Insurance Building. The location was the site of the original Fort Dearborn, so Bennett choose a series of bas-reliefs depicting the early history of Chicago to decorate the massive Indiana limestone pylons of the bridge. One of the four sculptures documents the Indian's role in Chicago. The Defense by Henry Hering captured a violent moment in the battle of Chicago, as Captain Nathan Heald is shown locked in combat with an Indian warrior. While Mestrovic's Grant Park bronzes fall back on noble savage imagery, the Michigan Avenue Bridge art presents a stylized return to the image of the Indian as the fierce enemy. Yet a generation separates the fury and menace of the Rohl-Smith's Fort Dearborn Massacre from the muted, almost classical vision of the Indian threat presented on Michigan Avenue. While the Rohl-Smith monument was meant to be displayed on a battlefield, the bas-reliefs marked the gateway to what was emerging as the city's most elite retail district, the so-called "Magnificent Mile," itself a symbol of a confident, comfortable era.

With the closing of the 1920s, Chicago muted its public dialogue with its American Indian roots. The statues The Alarm, The Signal of Peace, and the Fort Dearborn Massacre all moved to new locations. The Fort Dearborn Massacre suffered from vandalism after the elite Prairie Avenue neighborhood waned in status and factories and warehouses replaced its mansions. In 1931, the

Chicago Historical Society (CHS), to which George Pullman had left the sculpture upon his death, moved the figures to its North Side museum, separating the monument from its base. Rohl-Smith's bronze group became the dominant image of pioneer Chicago for schoolchildren visiting the museum. In the 1950s and 1960s, when young television viewers mimicked Davy Crockett by sporting mock raccoon-skin hats and brandishing cap guns, the statue was proudly and prominently displayed. The shift in social tenor triggered by the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War brought new sensitivities to the fore. In 1972, the Chicago Historical Society added a subtitle to the statue, The Potawatomi Rescue, in an attempt to mute a groundswell of criticism of the bronze's dated imagery. The relabeling did not prevent a protest rally at CHS in 1973 by dozens of American Indians. The protestors lamented the overall depiction of Native Americans in the Historical Society's exhibitions, and they singled out the Massacre for its negative view. While Rohl-Smith had used survivors of Wounded Knee to accurately depict the American Indian, eighty years later the Native Americans invoked the memory of the event to attack the iconography of the monument: "Why don't they show our side of it?" complained one protestor, "Wounded Knee was a massacre too." Despite such protests, the monument remained on display for more than a decade but became an increasing source of embarrassment for CHS. In the early 1980s,



The Chicago Historical Society displayed the Fort Dearborn Massacre for many years.

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This detail of The Defense, from the Michigan Avenue Bridge, commemorates the Fort Dearborn Massacre and its casualties, who "will be cherished as martyrs in our early history."

the museum updated its Fort Dearborn gallery to present a more balanced picture of the pioneer era; in 1986, the Chicago Historical Society took the Fort Dearborn Massacre off display.

CHS gave the monument to the city of Chicago, which returned it to Pullman's old Prairie Avenue neighborhood. A single half-block of elegant old homes remained of what was once the most elite area in the Midwest, a historic district island in a declining industrial belt. Pullman's old mansion had long since been replaced with a railroad office building, so the city placed the statue group approximately a half-block away from its original location. For nearly a decade, the monument sat forgotten in a small, unimproved green space. In 1997, it became an embarrassment once more, as the city sought a site to honor the First Lady of the United States. The unnamed green space occupied by the Massacre was landscaped in preparation for its dedication as the Hillary Clinton Women's Park. Not only was the statue considered racist, but even more embarrassing to those planning a women's park, it depicted a helpless woman in distress. The city packed up the statue; it currently sits shrouded in a blue plastic tarp at a city storage facility.

McCutcheon's "Injun Summer" occupied a more visible and enduring place in Chicago's public memory, but in the 1990s, it too became the focus of controversy. Complaints, particularly concerning McCutcheon's dialect text, mounted in the 1970s and 1980s. On October 25, 1992, the paper printed "Injun Summer" for what was thought to be the last time. "It is literally a museum piece, a relic of another age. The farther we get from 1907, the less meaning it has for the current generation," commented editor Douglas Kneeland. The decision drew another batch of letters from people across the country who longed to see the illustration reprinted, including a woman in Orlando, Florida, who begged the editor to print it just one more time for her husband who was dying of cancer. Many others in favor of "Injun Summer" were older readers who remembered the cartoon from childhood. In 1997, the Tribune celebrated its 150th anniversary, and a new editor decided to fly in the face of criticism and reprint "Injun Summer." Likening the cartoon controversy to banning Tom Sawyer because of the racist characterization of "Injun Joe," editor Howard Tyner commented, "There will always be people who are offended. . . . But you have to look at these things in a broad context and my feeling is that 'Injun Summer' is really very benign." On November 5, 1997, "Injun Summer" appeared on the cover of the Tribune's weekly magazine in full color and with its original accompanying text.

A flood of letters-to-the-editor responded to the reappearance of "Injun Summer." Gone completely was the

old frontier era stereotype of the Indian as a savage enemy. Among Chicagoans, the "red devil" was instead replaced by the "white devil." Complaints of the "horror of the genocide suffered by Native Americans throughout United States history" were typical. Instead of a reference to the so-called "Fort Dearborn Massacre," Chicagoans expressed concern for "insensitivity to a people that we Americans massacred and exiled." One reader even likened McCutcheon's illustration to the "toxic ramblings of the Third Reich." Other stereotypes, such as that of the "noble savage" and the "vanishing American," however, were more enduring. One Chicagoan so admired Native Americans, he claimed, "I would have given anything to be an American Indian," while an Indian woman from New Mexico reminded readers that there were still thousands of Indians in the United States. Inevitably Tribune readers interpreted the cartoon in light of late-twentieth-century culture wars; as one reader commented, "["Indian Summer"] has all the charm of Chief Wahoo, Stepin Fetchit, Uncle Ben, and Tonto." Others applauded the newspaper's decision to again print the cartoon: "The Tribune has done its part to help end the dark era of political correctness." Perhaps because of the strong response, both for and against, the Chicago Tribune announced in 1997 that it would again print "Injun Summer" annually.

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Chicago is an Indian word. Depending on which source you believe, or how you feel about the city, the word means wild onion or stinking place. Men and women of Indian descent were among the founders of Chicago. Chief Billy Caldwell served as a justice of the peace; the city's first sheriff was half-Potawatomi. The federal government's removal policy in the 1830s, however, severed the city's Indian roots at a very early date. For the rest of the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century, Indians were regarded as exotics upon whom the nation's three great stereotypes could be hung: "savage enemy," "noble savage," and "the vanishing American." Indians became a convenient symbol of the primitive and formative pioneer era. They were portrayed as a people locked in the past, a benchmark against which Chicago could measure its progress. The heated public debate over the Chicago icon "Injun Summer" obscured an important area of common ground shared by all Chicagoans. Whereas in the nineteenth century, many people of goodwill, such as the former fur-trader Martin Ryerson, pitied the Indians for the loss of their lands, by the twentieth century the majority of Chicagoans responded to the nostalgia of "Injun Summer" because what the Indian had lost earlier was now lost to all residents of the city. Neither the friends nor the foes of "Injun Summer" in the 1990s could regard all that had transpired in their city during their lifetimes as "progress."

The charm and the challenge of 'Injun Summer'

By Douglas E. Kneeland

Life does not get simpler for newspapers these days any more than it does for their readers. Now I'm not just talking about such things as the difficulty of explaining black holes—either in the universe, the economy, our educational system or the National League East. What actually provided this rumination was the

What actually provoked this rumination was the recent mixed response to a Tribune tradition of long standing

Stationg. For most of eight docades this newspaper has been reprinting each fail the late John T. McCutcheon's famous "Injun Summer" cartoon, a huge blowup of witch adorns the wail outside the editorial page editor's office. On Sept. 15, on the last page of its

Inside the paper

special fall issue, the Chicago Tribune Magazine again presented a color reproduction of the work. The page was labeled "Midwest favorite" and the carton was described as "John T. McCutcheon's classic celebration of autumn, first published an The Tribune in 1907 "(The annual reprints started in 1912) Fine print at the bottom noted that "the original of this cartoon hangs in the Chicago Histonical Society." But as has happened with somewhat more frequency in meent autumns, the work so chershed by generauons of Tribune readers attracted a flurry of letters from those offended by the 1907 sensibilities of its kreighty captions. This year the objections about matched the prase from those in whom it stus warm methones.

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Indenois the prace from those in whom it suts warm methones. As sure as one which would doclare that the cartoon "never misses touching the heart with its nostalgor message of the 'spanis' of the season," another would condern in 18 "an embarrassing relic of a time when it was acceptable to use words and phrases like 'heaps of Injuns' and 'redsins' and 'happy huntin' ground " "That's sort of how it's been going these years. And it's understandable. "Injun Summer" is out of joint with its times 41 is literally a museum proce, a relic of another age. The farther we get from 1907, the less meaning it has for the current generation. Even the com shocks and burning leaves that feed the imagination of the boy in the drawing are foreign to most of today's youngsters. The Pulitzer Prize-wrining McCutcheon, who came to the Tribune in 1903 and was considered the dean of the nation's cantoonistis agten in terned 43 years later, was a genite practitioner of the art, but words like "fujion" or "redshers" are, of course, generally unaoceptable these days.

Like "Injuns" or "recisions" are, of course, generally unacceptable these days. Even the Redskuss of Washington, D C., find themselves assaled from burne to time for their archaic nom de football. And the Stanford University sports teams long since have abandoned the name "Induars" for "Cardinal" (So far as I know this has brought no protests yet on behalf of burds or princes of the Roman Catholic church.), But current inappropriateness in itself is not a strong enough argument to clunch the case for

but current hiappropriatelets in fact is not a strong enough argument to clinch the case for dropping forever what is considered by many to be a classic bit of Amencana, especially one so much a part of the Tnhune's own institutional traditions. It would be akin to bannum "Tom Saver" because of Mark Twain's "Injun Joe" character



Chicago Tribune Magazine LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Injun Summer' returns

Some 40 years ago, this Eimhurst boy looked forward to "Injun Summer's" annual appearance. No other words and pictures conjured autumn so well, and I absorbed it completely, my 10-year-old eyes misty with emotions.

I grew up, moved Downstate and stopped reading the Tribune for a few years. When I resubscribed, I could not wait for the next appearance of "Injun Summer," so anxious was I to re-experience that warm emotion and be reminded of my youth.

It finally came [Oct. 5]. Expectantly, I read it, and I was ummediately in tears The cartoon moved me, not to nostalgia, but to shame that I had ever enjoyed the cheap and offensive stereotypes, and to sympathy for your many Native American readers.

The dignity of the minority should never be sacrificed for the enjoyment of the majority The fact that something is popular does not make 1t right.

FRED SPANNAUS Decatur

I heartily salute the Tribune's decision not only to reprint John McCutcheon's famous "Injun Summer" but also to put it in full color on the front page of the Magazine.

McCutcheon and the Tribune are important forces in the history of American newspaper cartooning, and the work of this master of the medium deserves not to be neglected.

That anyone could be offended by this cartoon is, of course, a matter of perspective. But art inherently has the capacity to offend as well as to stimulate, as witness many a Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition, an American flag displayed on the floor or a crucifix suspended in urine. It would be an empty world indeed if anything potentially controversial were wiped from our walls and from print.

Yes, "Injun Summer" is an artifact of another time, but then so is the "Mona Lisa." Thank you for sharing it with us once again.

DAVID L. APPLEGATE Chicago

So "Injun Summer" is back, and on the cover of the Tribune Magazine at that As an artifact of the magazine's past, I can live with it. But in the accompanying story, you say it may return as a yearly feature. This is totally unacceptable. Maybe some readers feel a misty nostalgia seeing this feature. It's certainly a tribute to their ability to enjoy Norman Rockwellesque faux Americana, if they do, but I don't think that excuses the reprinting of a nauseating piece of insensitivity to a people that we Americans massacred and exiled during our expansion across this continent.

The next time you run this piece of garbage will be the last time I buy the Tribune.

ROB GLASER Chicago

When I was the age of the kid in "Injun Summer," we had a saying for the oversensitive among us: "touchy, touchy!" To anyone who cannot see beyond the context to the human truths deeper than any race, time or country, I say "touchy, touchy!"

ROBERT STANLEY Des Plaines

What next? A cartoon showing cute little Sambo pickin' dat cotton fo' de Massa? And the Overseer assuring a little white boy that it's OK; them slaves like to work all day for no money . . . makes 'em feel useful. . . ?

Since my clan is most definitely Native American, we are somewhat dismayed to find we don't exist. Yes, I know---it's historical. Wow, you just can't believe anyone would get so upset over a little cartoon, right?

Well, in case you haven't noticed-and apparently you haven't --- enshrining racist attitudes and assumptions about "Injuns," fat, red or otherwise, is detrimental.

JENNI NOAH Moline

It was great to see "Injun Summer" back in the Magazine. The Tribune has done its part to help end the dark era of political correctness.

RICK DERER Clarendon Hills

I was raised in Ohio, Ill., just south of Dixon. My parents had little money, but we bought the Sunday Tribune Nostalgia for the simpler times made me happy that my mother sent me the Magazine featuring "Injun Summer." I was devastated when it was no longer published.

MARY JO KNITH Cantoga Park, Calif.

I urge you to reprint "Injun Summer" again next year and the year after, etc. In an era where everything changes, It's nice to see an old, familtar friend such as John T. McCutcheon's drawing. I will treasure this issue.

JOAN E. BIGOS Forest Park

Just a quick note of thanks for printing Mr. McCutcheon's "Injun Summer" After receiving bits and pieces of the Tribune, mainly depressing news of the Blackhawks and the Bears, "Injun Summer" made it to my cot and was most welcome. It made me think of home

SCOTT HEDSTROM O Troop, Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Magazine welcomes letters. Send mail to The Editor, Chicago Tribune Magazine, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, III 60611, or to our Internet address, tribmag@tribune.com.

All correspondence, including e-mail, must include the writer's name, home address and phone number. Let-ters may be edited for space and clarity.

In recent years, the "Injun Summer" cartoon has grown controversial, as some find it disrespectful to Native American culture. Above left: In the 1980s, one Tribune editor explored the cartoon's "charm and challenge." Above right: "Injun Summer"'s return to its annual appearance in the 1990s garnered a flood of letters to the editor, both for and against.



Chicago's city seal prominently features a Native American chief, "representing the discoverer of the site of Chicago, [and] is also indicative of the aboriginal contribution which enters into its history," according to the city's website. Ironically, the Native American pictured on the seal is in Plains dress, which is not representative of the tribes that once lived in the Chicago area.

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The baby-boom generation witnessed the passing of the last relics of Chicago's rural past. In 1950, more than 20 percent of the land within the city had yet to be built upon. Open lots in the city, where young kids would build "forts" and their parents would burn autumn leaves, were universally referred to as "prairies," in a linguistic linkage between the city and the open Midwestern countryside. Yet during the 1960s, these last open spaces were, one-by-one, developed for new construction. The very practice of burning leaves, once a seasonal ritual, was found to be a source of air pollution and banned. The last farms in Cook County gave way to subdivisions. Chicagoans were so resistant to giving up these last connections with a lost way of life that in the late 1980s the Chicago Board of Education established a special agricultural high school on the site of one of the area's last farms.

Ironically, Native Americans were among the thousands of migrants to the city whose presence demanded new construction. During the 1950s, the federal government used Chicago as a relocation center for a program to integrate Indians into the American mainstream. Once a Potawatomi Indian center, Chicago now became the home of Indians from more than eighty different tribes from across the United States. These Indians, largely jammed into the dilapidated Uptown neighborhood, were of less interest to most Chicagoans than the new mythic Indian symbolized by Iron Eyes Cody, the star of the Advertising Council's teary-eyed 1971 anti-pollution commercial. Simple recognition of their persistence as a people and their presence in Chicago was and is all the genuine Indians have demanded. The reality of a living Native American community, composed of people who held jobs and raised families like other Chicagoans, conflicted with the symbolic social function of the Indian. Chicago's public memory sometimes depicted the Indian as savage and sometimes as noble, but always the Native Americans were portrayed as part of the landscape and part of the past. In the public art of our parks and print media, the American Indian becomes a figure of nostalgia. Similar to the ghostly dancers in John McCutcheon's cartoon, the image of the Indian reappears to remind of us what was lost in more than a "Century of Progress."

On the official seal of the City of Chicago a Native American stands expectantly as an immigrant ship approaches on Lake Michigan. Beneath the Indian figure is the city's Latin motto "urbs in horto," a garden city. The figure of the Indian reminds Chicagoans that the city is no longer that garden. Yet the Indian remains locked in the symbolic space of the seal, an icon to express the hopes of one age and the anxieties of another. Theodore J. Karamanski is a professor of history at Loyola University Chicago and the author of several books about Midwestern history including Schooner Passage: Sailing Ships and the Lake Michigan Frontier (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002).

ILLUSTRATIONS 4, CHS: 5, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration; 6 top left, courtesy of the Newberry Library; 6 bottom left, from History of Appanoose County, CHS, ICHi-36554, 6 right, CHS, ICHi-03296; 7 top, CHS; 7 bottom, CHS, ICHi-03294; 8, CHS, ICHi-36555: 9 top, CHS, ICHi-36551; 9 bottom, CHS, ICHi-03334; 10 left, from History of Appanoose County, CHS; 10-11, CHS, ICH1-36556; 12-13, CHS, ICHi-03056; 13, CHS, ICHi-36553; 14-15, CHS, DN-0057971; 16-17, Buffalo Bill's Wild West program, 1888, CHS; 18, CHS, DN-0009949; 19, CHS, "Injun Summer" by John T. McCutcheon, copyrighted September 30, 1907, Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission.; 20 top left and right, from the Charles (Karl) A. Dilg archives, CHS; 20 bottom, CHS, DN-001054; 21, CHS, ICHI-18359; 22-23, CHS, ICH1-16886; 24-25, CHS, ICHi-36550; 26, CHS, ICHi-36552; 27, CHS; 29 left, "The Charm and Challenge of Injun Summer" by Douglas E. Kneeland, copyrighted October 9, 1991, Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission; 29 right, "Letters to the Editor" by Fred Spannaus, David L. Applegate, Rob Glaser, Robert Stanley, Jenni Noah, Rick Derer, Mary Jo Knuth, Joan E. Bigos, and Scott Hedstrom, copyrighted November 16, 1997, Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission.; 30, courtesy of the City of Chicago.

FOR FURTHER READING | For more on Chicago's Native American population, see Indians of the Chicago Arca by Terry Straus (Chicago: NAES College, 1990); Chicago Indians: The Effects of Urban Migration by Prafulla Neog, Richard G. Woods, and Arthur M. Harkins (Minneapolis. University of Minnesota Training Center for Community Programs, 1970); and the Raymond Foundation publication Indians of Early Chicago (1960). For more on the city's monuments, see Chicago Sculpture by James L. Riedy (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981) and Monuments and Memorials in the Chicago Park District (Chicago Park District Dept. of Public Information, 1979). The papers of Charles (Karl) A. Dilg are in the Chicago Historical Society's archives and manuscript collection.