ETHNOHISTORY IN THE MIDWEST*

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Interest in the history of the various Indian tribes of North America has gathered renewed force in recent decades, starting with the Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act of 1934 and the publication of the Handbook of Federal Indian Law by Felix Cohen (1941). In addition, the Indian Claims Commission Act (1946) established a tribunal before which the claims of various Indian tribes might be heard and adjudicated. Our interest here is in the various individual tribes identified within the area classified as the Midwest - Ohio, Indian, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.

The first edition of George Peter Murdock's Ethnographic Bibliography of North America (168 pages) appeared in 1941, a subsequent edition in 1953 comprised 280 pages. By 1975, when the 4th edition appeared, it had expanded to five volumes with two additional compilers, Timothy J. O'Leary and John Beierle. Using the culture area divisions, Volume One deals with North America; Volume Two encompasses Arctic and Subarctic tribes, Volume Three discusses Far West and Pacific Coast groups, Volume Four includes the Eastern United States and Volume Five lists Plains and Southwestern Indians. The fourth and fifth volumes include the tribes of the Midwest which are of concern to us here.

Thirty of the books cited in this bibliography were published by the Garland Publishing Company of New York in 1974. They constitute the findings and ethnohistorical documentation for the Indian tribes of the Midwest whose claims had been filed with the Indian Claims Commission. Twenty-two of the other books cited concern ethnohistory and represent current thinking on this subject, i.e., forensic anthropology. Conjoined with the Midwestern archaeological and ecological bibliographies which follow, they relate to the current state of knowledge in the tribes under consideration.

*See Editor's note, page 17
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