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KETHTIPPECANUNK, A MIXED 18TH- AND EARLY 19TH-CENTURY TOWN ON THE BANKS OF THE TIPPECANOE RIVER- RECENT RESEARCH

Early aboriginal, and later, mixed Euroamerican-Indian occupations near the mouth of the Tippecanoe River are reported in documents during the latter two-thirds of the 18th century, and continue until the early 1800s. Inhabitants or users of the area included Native Americans such as the Wea, other Miami groups, the Potawatomi, and Euroamericans such as French traders. By the late 1700s, the mixed French-Indian town of Kethtippecanunk (site 12 T S9) was flourishing there, and consisted of a large number of substantial structures and a predominantly Euroamerican settlement style, until destroyed by militia in 1791. Analysis of past surface artifact collections from the site (1984-present), and controlled archaeological and magnetometer reconnaissance by IU-Indianapolis in 1987, reveal an occupation quite different from the downstream sites of the Wea Village (12 T 6), Fort Ouiatenon (12 T 9), and the "Kickapoo Mascouten" area north of the fort. Given its cultural "mix" and utilitarian emphasis upon trading, artifacts from Kethtippecanunk were expected to reflect a predominantly Euroamerican pattern, especially in terms of architectural, construction, hardware, and kitchen items. Comparison of 12 T S9 to the other 18th-century sites in the region should help reveal differential patterns of acculturation and historic development for the various early historic cultures in Tippecanoe County. An ethnically mixed town such as this one is especially important for studies of the influences of different cultures upon one another.