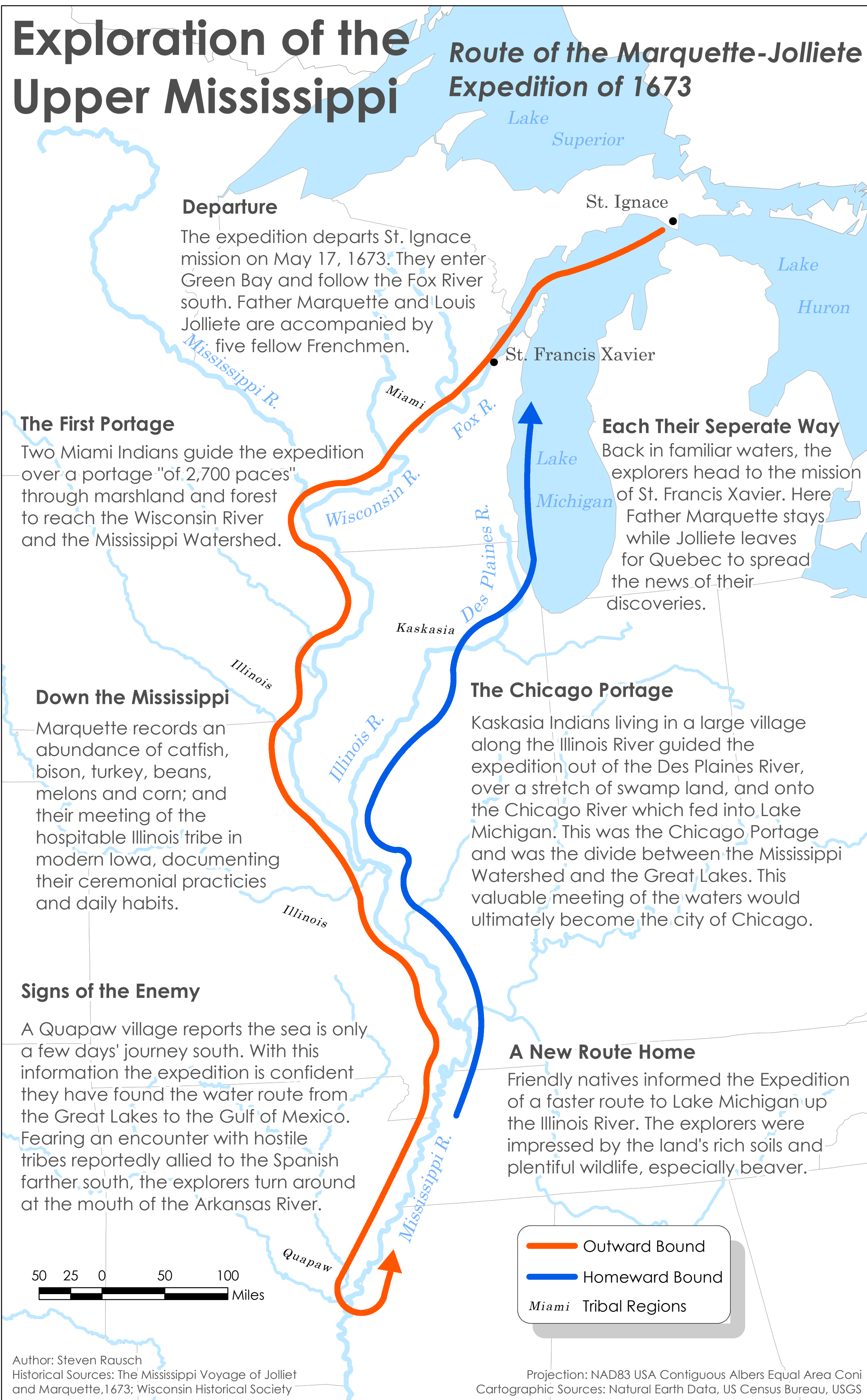


Exploration of the Upper Mississippi

Route of the Marquette-Jolliete Expedition of 1673



Departure

The expedition departs St. Ignace mission on May 17, 1673. They enter Green Bay and follow the Fox River south. Father Marquette and Louis Jolliete are accompanied by five fellow Frenchmen.

The First Portage

Two Miami Indians guide the expedition over a portage "of 2,700 paces" through marshland and forest to reach the Wisconsin River and the Mississippi Watershed.

Each Their Seperate Way

Back in familiar waters, the explorers head to the mission of St. Francis Xavier. Here Father Marquette stays while Jolliete leaves for Quebec to spread the news of their discoveries.

Down the Mississippi

Marquette records an abundance of catfish, bison, turkey, beans, melons and corn; and their meeting of the hospitable Illinois tribe in modern Iowa, documenting their ceremonial practices and daily habits.

The Chicago Portage

Kaskasia Indians living in a large village along the Illinois River guided the expedition out of the Des Plaines River, over a stretch of swamp land, and onto the Chicago River which fed into Lake Michigan. This was the Chicago Portage and was the divide between the Mississippi Watershed and the Great Lakes. This valuable meeting of the waters would ultimately become the city of Chicago.

Signs of the Enemy

A Quapaw village reports the sea is only a few days' journey south. With this information the expedition is confident they have found the water route from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Fearing an encounter with hostile tribes reportedly allied to the Spanish farther south, the explorers turn around at the mouth of the Arkansas River.

A New Route Home

Friendly natives informed the Expedition of a faster route to Lake Michigan up the Illinois River. The explorers were impressed by the land's rich soils and plentiful wildlife, especially beaver.

