

ORIGIN  
AND TRADITIONAL HISTORY  
OF THE  
**WYANDOTTS,**  
AND  
SKETCHES  
OF OTHER  
INDIAN TRIBES OF NORTH AMERICA  
TRUE TRADITIONAL STORIES OF  
TECUMSEH AND HIS LEAGUE,  
IN THE YEARS 1811 AND 1812.

By

Peter D. Clarke

Toronto:

HUNTER, ROSE & CO., 86 KING STREET WEST.

1870.

## PREFACE.

THE lapse of ages has rendered it difficult to trace the origin of the Wyandotts. Nothing now remains to tell whence they came, but a tradition that lives only in the memory of a few among the remnant of this tribe. Of this I will endeavour to give a sketch as I had it from the lips of such, and from some of the tribe who have since passed away.

My sketch reaches back about three centuries and a half, and commences from what is now Montreal.

A remnant of the Hurons or Wyandotts are still living at their ancient homes, within the vicinity of Quebec, and whose ancestors were among the inhabitants of the country along the St. Lawrence, when it was first discovered by the French in the year 1535. Beyond that period all trace of them has been engulfed in the tide of oblivion.

It was in the year 1701 that the first colony of Europeans pitched their tents on the bank of Detroit river, where the city of Detroit now stands, and they were the first French colony the Wyandotts ever met with in this part of the country.

It is no easy task to write a work of this kind, having no chronological guide during the first and second

iv PREFACE.

hundred years. I had to grope my way through the “dark ages,” whilst in quest of the connecting links of this part of the work.

All writers of the early history of this country have, more or less, depended on traditional accounts.

It was like emerging from chaos and darkness when the light of civilization first flashed before me, as I was nearing the place (now city of Detroit), where the Wyandotts I was tracing first met with the colony of Europeans.

To some this work may appear rather strange and new-fledged; but whilst poising over uncertainty before the public, it may have sufficient wings to sustain itself — dodge the missile of the critic who may attempt to knock it into oblivion.

It is a mystery (and always has been, from the first discovery of America), how the red man first found his way over from the other side of the “big waters.” Some historians have endeavored to prove their assertion (from mere supposition), and satisfy the inquiring mind that the Indians of this continent descended from some of the “ten lost tribes of Israel,” who wandered around from Asia to Behring’s Straits and passed over to this continent, about where the “Wandering Jew’s” track was seen many centuries afterwards, which he had made with his iron-shod soled brogans, leaving the “print of a cross” as Eugene Sue says, on the eternal hard frozen snows of that cold and dismal

region. So intense is the cold that larch trees frequently

## PREFACE. v

burst all to atoms! There, he says, a woman appeared at the American side of the Straits to the Wandering Jew, and both were seen viewing each other through the snowy haze; but Behring's Straits seemed to have separated them "to all eternity!"

Ask the red man, in his primeval nature, to what part of the world (besides this continent), can he trace his ancestors, or whether he believes, when told by the white man, that he sprung from some of the lost or scattered tribes of Israel, and he will return you this answer: "the Great and Good Spirit made us, and placed us here."

To the educated Indian, this history may suddenly appear like some phantom from the past, and who may find fault with it. To such, I would say, well then, why don't you write a history of your nation, yourself?

Here, by dint of repeated efforts, I have snatched some traditional accounts from the tide of oblivion, in order to make out some semblance of a history of the Wyandotts, and a desultory sketch of other tribes.

Among the Indian chiefs who took an active part on the side of the British during the war of 1812, was the noted war chief Tecumseh, who will be a subject of notice in different parts of this work. The hostile feeling which he still cherished towards the whites, who were rapidly advancing and spreading over his territory, and that of his kindred race around him, blazed up anew within him, on hearing the news of the declaration of war between England and the United States, and

## vi PREFACE.

forthwith made strenuous efforts to renew his league of 1811, in Indiana, and joined the British in Canada.

Some years ago there was a sketch of Tecumseh's life written in Canada. But some incidents of his life will be noticed in this work that has never been published.

Before the close of the war of 1812, the United States Government redoubled its efforts to wrest from the hands of England, not only Canada, but the whole of British North America.

The different Indian tribes who once inhabited this part of North America to the Mississippi (with the exception of a remnant here and there), have all faded away like shadows of clouds passing over the earth, and the story of their fate has passed into the great history of the world, reminding us of the irresistible fate of nations.

And for what purpose was the red man created here or guided over by the hand of

Providence from the other side of the “big waters” to this continent to multiply, then to give place to another race of people from the Old World, and vanish before the march of civilization, the Almighty Ruler of the universe only knows.

PETER DOOYENTATE CLARKE.

January, 1870.

## Chapter I.

AT some period during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, a rupture took place between the Wyandotts and Senecas, while they were peaceably sojourning together (in separate villages), within the vicinity of what is now Montreal.

There are conflicting traditional accounts of what caused the two nations to become hostile toward each other. Some say that it commenced about a Seneca maiden and a Chief's son.

If women, in olden times, have caused war between civilized nations (or by being connected with an affair that brought about a warfare), why not among savages? "If such things can be done in a green tree, why not in the dry?"

Here is one story how the rupture between the Wyandotts and Senecas occurred; —

A Seneca maiden caused a Chief of her tribe to be slain for withholding his consent from his son taking her for wife. Other young men, afterwards, were rejected. Only on one condition would she give her hand to any one of them, and that was, by slaying the Chief who wronged her.

A young Wyandott warrior hearing of this, visited the maiden; he complied with her condition, and he became her avenger and husband.

The whole Seneca village were enraged — the men flew to arms, to avenge the assassination of their Chief, by destroying the Wyandotts.

### 2 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

The latter broke up their villages, and journeyed westward, while the former were waiting for the return of some of their nation from the hunting ground, to join them in this warfare.

But, for some unknown reason, they did not, at that time, pursue the Wyandotts, who continued their wanderings, westward, until they reached the banks of the Niagara.

The roar of the cataract sounded in their ears, like the distant sound of a tornado — awestruck! when they came in sight they stood at some distance, viewing the great falls, and the frightful chasm through which flowed the turbulent waters at their feet.

Here we will leave the Wyandotts at the falls, and return to the St. Lawrence.

The Algonquins, Hurons, or Wyandotts, and some of the Five Nations\* or Iroquois, as they are called by some historians, first met with the French, on the St. Lawrence, in 1835.

At that time, and back to an unknown period, the Iroquois and Wyandotts had always dwelt in the same region, where the abode and hunting grounds of each were conterminous

But, whatever has been the main source of strife among them, the other four nations of the Iroquois joined the Senecas in their warfare against the Wyandotts, who remained on the St. Lawrence, and which was witnessed by the French, during the 16th and 17th centuries. And the same exterminating malice was cherished by the Iroquois towards the Wyandotts, after the latter had migrated to Western Canada.

\*The Tuscaroras, from South Carolina, joined the Iroquois in 1713, or thereabouts, and from that time forward they were called and considered as one of the Six Nations.

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 3

At some time during the latter part of the 16th century, the Wyandotts at Niagara migrated northward, to where the city of Toronto now stands. There they roamed the primeval forest in peace and security. In those days they were happy and free — free from the white man's vices and immorality — they were unacquainted with the *fiery liquid* manufactured by the ingenuity of the white man.

At this time, some of the Iroquois, or Five Nations, were inhabiting the banks of the Hudson, about where now stands the cities of Troy and Albany, in N. Y. State.

The Wyandotts, fearing lest their enemies might come upon them and destroy them, journeyed thence northward, until they reached the shores of Lake Huron.\* In that region they found game in abundance, and remained there for many years. There were various kinds of furred animals found there by them, viz; — Bear, Racoon, Lynx, Marten, Fisher, Beaver and Otter. The limpid waters of the great lake afforded the Wyandotts the dainty salmon, and other kinds of the finny tribe the year round. In the forest stalked the antlered deer, in their primeval nature.

During this time, a portion of the Iroquois were inhabiting the country between the falls of Niagara, and what is now Buffalo. From there a party of the Senecas started in pursuit of the Wyandotts, for it appears to have been their settled purpose to overtake them, and reduce them to subjection. The former, on finding no further trace of the latter, after reaching their deserted homes, within the vicinity of what is now Toronto, returned to the Niagara river.

A small band of Delawares came with the first Wyandott

\*This lake was named after the Wyandott tribe. They were called Hurons, but Wyandott is there proper name.

### 4 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

emigration from the St. Lawrence to Western Canada. The ships of the first discoverer of Canada (Cartier), were first seen by the Delaware Indians, whom the Wyandotts had sent from about Quebec to the Gulf coast, to look out for the strangers and guard the shores. One day, the “coast guard” observed several objects appearing, one after another, like sea gulls, as they were scanning the gulf far as the eye could reach, and which seemed, gradually, to increase in size, as the strange objects came on toward them, and after a while, the spread sails and dark hulls came in full view filling the Indians with wonder. The Delaware messengers sent to the first Wyandott village to inform them of this; represented the ships as some great dark animals, with broad, white wings — spitting out fire!\* and uttering the voice of thunder.

The Indians on the St. Lawrence had heard, before this, of there being some “great, dark body and white winged animals,” seen north-east and south of them, passing over the “big-waters.”

From traditional accounts, the Wyandotts once inhabited a country north-eastward from the mouth of the St. Lawrence, or somewhere along the gulf coast, before they ever met with the French, or any European adventurers.

\*“Spitting out fire, and uttering the voice of thunder” was the firing of cannons on board the ships, at night fall.

## Chapter II

AT some time during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, a band\* of Wyandotts who had been sojourning on the banks of the Ottawa, rejoined their people on the River Swaba at its confluence with Lake Huron. Here they dwelt together in peace until a separation took place some time in the second quarter of the 17th century. That portion of them belonging to the Bear clan returned to their ancient homes near Quebec, and remained there under the protection of the French, until Canada passed into the hands of the English. A portion of the Huron or Wyandott nation always remained in that country from the time it was first discovered by the French.

About the same time the Bear clan left the shores of Lake Huron, a band of the Porcupine, Wolf, Turtle and other clans migrated from the River Swaba to the Island of St. Joseph, in Lake Huron, and to Michilimackinac. In those days the Wyandotts were numerous.

The Porcupine, Big Snake, Hawk, and some of the smaller or Prairie Turtle and Bear clans, generally kept together, and who were always a wayward and turbulent party.

Shortly after this separation on the River Swaba, another took place. A band of the Big Turtle and Deer clans journeyed southward to the north shores of Lake Erie,

\*A band of Wyandotts was usually composed of two or more different clans. The nation was subdivided into ten tribes or clans, viz.;— Big Turtle, and two different kinds of the smaller Turtle, Deer, Bear, Wolf, Porcupine, Hawk, Big Snake, and some clan who became extinct at some remote period. Four or five others of the ten clans have also become extinct since their migration hither from the St. Lawrence.

## 6 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

erected their village, and made corn fields on the banks of a stream, since named River Aux Chaudiere. Here they sojourned in their primeval nature. Their laws were the laws of nature and of nature's God. They always held the idea that a Great and Good Spirit exists, inhabits a delightful country beyond the skies, and rules the universe, and that this Good Spirit has prepared some happy clime for the reception of his red children after death.

One summer day, whilst a party of these children of nature were sitting and lying around under shady trees on a bank of the stream, one of their old men suddenly exclaimed, "hun-haw!"\* "look here!" said he pointing toward a strange looking insect that was buzzing around some wild flowers near them, "the white man," he continued "is not very far off, and this strange thing you see flying about here was brought over to this country by the white man from the other side of the 'big waters,' and who, before very long, will come and take the whole country from the red man. Like the white man, this



strange thing represents the rapidly increasing and ever busy tribe it belongs to.” The insect that attracted their attention was the honey bee. “Thus you see,” resumed the Wyandott “that what has been foretold by our fathers is now about coming to pass.” Presently the bee came buzzing around them, then darted into the forest. This band remained here in peace until they were discovered by a party of Senecas, who, forthwith returned home to tell their people, then on the Niagara River; but the Senecas were seen by some of the Wyandotts while in the vicinity of their village. The latter broke up their

\*Expressive of regret.

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 7

village and journeyed north-eastward until they reached their former homes at now Toronto. From there they returned to their people on Lake Huron. Their “head-quarters” was then on the River Swaba. Here resided the King, or head Chief of the Wyandotts. The succession belonged to the Big Turtle and Deer clans, and by rule or custom never departed from them. Every heir (in the male line) who fills the vacancy must be of pure Wyandott blood.

About the middle of the 17th century, the Wyandotts on the Island of St. Joseph were suddenly attacked by a large party of Senecas with their allies, and massacred them to a fearful extent. It was at this time, probably, that a Catholic priest named Daniels, a missionary among the Wyandotts, was slain by the relentless savages. During this massacre, a portion of the Wyandotts fled from the Island to Michilimackinac. From there a portion of the refugees journeyed westward to parts unknown, the balance returned to River Swaba.

At some time during the third quarter of the 17th century, and whilst the warriors were absent, news came to their old King or Head Chief that a war party of Senecas were on their way to his village, they having learnt that his warriors were absent.

The old Wyandott Chief conceived the plan of baffling the enemy’s contemplated assault on his village, by having an effigy made representing himself in a sitting posture in his “wigwam,”\* and during the night in which he expected the attack, he ordered all the old and young people to be secreted

\*Among the Indians in their original state, the residence of a Head Chief could always be distinguished from the other habitations around him by a tall pole decorated with some badge of Royalty erected before his door.

## 8 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

with him outside of the village, and the moment he ascertained that the enemy had crossed the stream, he sent some of the boys and women to secrete their canoes. After midnight, or before the dawn of day, the Senecas entered the deserted “village and surrounded the old Chief’s residence. The leader of the invading party perceiving him

through a hole over his door, quietly sitting, as he thought, by his fire which afforded but a dim flickering light, smoking his pipe, his grey head represented with a wig made of the skin of some white-haired animal, "Wauh!" exclaimed the leader of the Senecas, as he broke in, followed by his men upon the old Chief, and with uplifted tomahawk accosted His Majesty thus, "a Wyandott at one time killed a War Chief of our tribe, and the time to have our revenge by slaying you has at last come!" uttering a savage yell as his descending tomahawk came in contact with the wooden head of the Wyandott — diff! — "Whoo!" exclaimed the Seneca "what does this mean?" a roar of laughter succeeded the savage yells of the whole party on perceiving the stratagem, and commenced dancing around the fire, yelling and singing their savage war songs, knocking the effigy of the old King about his "wigwam" with their tomahawks and war clubs.

But their boisterous conviviality was instantly hushed by the distant whoop and yell of Indians. Thinking that it might be a party of Wyandott warriors hurrying home to save their people from being massacred, the Senecas made a hasty retreat, and not finding their canoes where they had landed, they rushed into the stream to swim across.

Owing to the darkness of the night they did not discern a gang of women and boys standing in the water who attacked them with clubs. These, on perceiving that the enemies

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 9

were not of a large party, gave the signal to the Wyandott boys and women at the opposite side of the stream to attack the refugees. Several of the latter were slain.

The distant yell that started the Senecas from the village was uttered by some of the older boys then about home, as they were ordered by the old Chief.

Shortly after the Wyandott warriors returned home, the whole band broke up their village and migrated to Michilimackinac, where some of their people had formerly sojourned. From there they occasionally ventured to their hunting grounds on the St. Joseph, accompanied by some of the Ottawas, then inhabiting the regions about Michilimackinac.

At some time during the last quarter of the 17th century, a portion of the Wyandotts wandered off and dwelt on the banks of Detroit river, on the Canada side, where they found Ottawa and Chippewa Indians inhabiting the country. In the forest of Michigan opposite, was then the abode and hunting grounds of the Fox Indians, and other savage tribes. The former dwelt in villages within the vicinity of what is now the city of Detroit.

About this time a roving band of savages from the northwest made a descent on a Wyandott village at Michilimackinac, and nearly destroyed the whole band; the remnant fled to St. Joseph where some of their nation were then sojourning.

In the friendly Ottawas and Chippewas at Detroit, the Wyandotts found protection from the hostile incursions of the savages inhabiting Michigan; but the Ottawas and Chippewas were sojourners too. Every year, and soon after gathering their corn in Autumn, they were off to their hunting grounds, and never returned before spring.

The Wyandotts had always lived in peace in other parts

#### 10 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

of western Canada, until they were found by their ancient enemies, the Senecas and their allies, from that time forward they became wanderers, and never remained long at the one place until they met with the French colony at Detroit in 1701. This band of Wyandotts, after remaining a few years in different parts of this western frontier of Canada, rejoined their people in the Island of St. Joseph. The remnant of the Wyandotts of the West\* were now sojourning together once more; but here they were not to remain long unmolested. Their old enemy came upon them when they were least expected, as they did once before at the same place; but at this time the invaders found the islanders prepared. A battle ensued and the enemy was driven from the island, leaving many of their friends slain.

The Wyandotts returned to Michilimackinac, where they made it their “head-quarters,” or rendezvous, and continued to make the Island of St. Joseph one of their hunting grounds.

They first met with the Ottawas at the former place, and who were once inhabitants of the banks of a tributary of the St. Lawrence, which bears the name of this tribe.

### Chapter III.

IN the year 1701, the Wyandotts received tidings of the renewed hostility of the Senecas against them, and, as they never expected to live in peace and security about Michilimackinac thereafter, they concluded to migrate

\*I will call these Wyandotts of the west in order that they may be distinguished by the reader from those of their nation remaining on the St. Lawrence.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 11

to some other country — broke up their villages, embarked in their birch canoes, and bid a last adieu to their old homes.

The Wyandott fleet passed out of Lake Huron, and glided down the River St. Clair, whose banks were then inhabited by some Chippewa Indians, with whom they were on friendly terms. When passing out of Lake St. Clair, they descried at a distance, a group of white tents, where the city of Detroit now stands; “Whoo!” exclaimed a thousand tongues; “what can this mean?” The head Chief ordered his bark fleet ashore, and sent some of his men to ascertain what kind of strange beings those were, who had found their way into this part of the world. No sooner did the Wyandotts land, than they were surrounded by the pale faced occupants of the white tents and thatched roof huts. It was a French colony. Prior to this period (1701), these Wyandotts of the West had only occasionally met with French traders, explorers, and Jesuit priests at Michilimackinac and St. Joseph. The governor of the colony received them kindly, and, when the Wyandotts represented to him how they had been threatened annihilation by the Senecas and their allies, he invited them to take shelter under his protection. “Come” said he “under the shadow of my wings, and I will protect you.” The Wyandotts readily accepted this humane protection extended to them, in time of need. They were then in quest of some new place of abode, and hunting grounds, and intended to have passed on down Detroit river, thence to parts unknown.

During the same summer, the Senecas made their appearance in bark canoes. But, when they ascertained that the Wyandotts had found protection at the hands of the

#### 12 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOITS, AND

French, they proceeded on their journey homeward, down Detroit; whence along the north shores of Lake Erie, to what is now Buffalo, or thereabouts.

The Wyandotts and French sojourned peaceably together until the latter were conquered by the English, as will be noticed in another part of this work.

The first French adventurer who passed through this part of the country named this stream Detroit, — a strait between two lakes

It was the policy of the French, at that early period of their western frontier settlement, to cultivate, and endeavor to maintain peace and friendship with neighbouring tribes of Indians, for their own protection — gave them presents, and contracted alliances, and carried on a profitable trade with them, by exchanging goods for their furs and peltry.

The Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies were inhabiting this part of the country before the Wyandotts first came to Detroit. Other Indians from distant parts came to this then great trading post. Here the Wyandotts of the West first obtained arms and ammunition more plentifully.

About the latter part of the first decade of the eighteenth century, a war party of Wyandotts started down Detroit river in twenty canoes, accompanied by two canoes manned by Chippewas, for Long Point, where they expected to find some Senecas. It was the close of a summer day when this fleet came in sight of Lake Erie. Some Islands met the eye in the far off South — beyond rolled the wide expanse of waters. After four or five days, they reached Long Point, on the Canada shore. Here the Wyandotts, for the first time since they left Detroit river, discovered signs of human beings, by footprints in the sand, which, they supposed, might have

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 13

been made by a party of Senecas. Early next morning the war Chief started off two or three of his warriors across the point to look for the enemy. They had not proceeded far, before the signs of the vicinity of their presence began to multiply, and they soon discovered a large party of Senecas embarking in their light canoes. These facts they immediately reported to their comrades, who, in a moment, were in their canoes. All eyes were directed towards the extreme point, which was about half a league distant; and in a short time, the whole party of Senecas made their appearance round the point, and the greater portion of them, pushed directly out into the lake.

The Wyandotts watched their movements with an eagle eye, then leaving their moorings, struck into the lake in a parallel direction with their enemies, whose plan it was to get the Wyandott fleet between them and the land, drive the Wyandotts ashore, and cut them to pieces. But when the Senecas found they could not carry out this scheme, they shaped their course toward the Wyandotts, and both parties prepared for the impending attack.

“Hail! to the war Chief of the Wyandotts,” exclaimed the Seneca Chief. “Hail! to the war Chief of the Senecas,” was the response. “If” continued the Seneca chief, “you will abandon your hostile intentions against us, I will not only grant you and your friends pardon, but will receive you with a heart overflowing with friendship.” “Never!” responded the Wyandott, “so long as you cherish that enmity that now rankles in your treacherous heart against the Wyandotts. “What! treacherous! “eagerly exclaimed the proud Seneca. If then you are so foolish as to entertain for a moment the idea of conquering us, you must abide the

## 14 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

terrible consequences.” “Be it so,” echoed the Wyandott, “the blood of your warriors, and that of mine, shall mingle together in the deep before we will fall into your treacherous hands.” “This deep then shall be thy grave,” returned the Seneca. The Wyandott Chief now donned his conical-shaped panther-skin cap, and addressed a few words to his followers, reminding them of their wrongs, and how some of their nation were destroyed in the east and north by the Senecas and their allies; meanwhile, dropping little by little, bits of tobacco and some substance from his medicine bag into the deep beneath him, invoking the god of battles to be with them during the approaching struggle; and while this red admiral was yet holding a solemn communion with Neptune, whiz-z-z-z came a shower of arrows, as thick as hail, from the enemy, accompanied by some rifle bullets, that whistled over their heads. “Whoo!” exclaimed the Wyandott, “Now for it.” The sharp salute was instantly returned with barbed arrows and firearms; and thus commenced the din of the first “naval battle” probably, that was ever fought on the bosom of Lake Erie. But one regular volley was exchanged, for they were soon at close quarters, with their tomahawks. Shouts after shouts mingled with the savage yells of both parties rent the air, and rendered the deadly conflict doubly horrible. The surface of the blue lake was tinged with the blood of the combatants. The battle lasted but a short time. The Senecas were all killed to a man. Not a Wyandott was slain.

During this conflict, two or three Indians were observed on land, in a tree-top, supposed to be Senecas, watching the struggle, and who disappeared with others that were not in the battle, around the point in canoes, after they saw the

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 15

fate of their friends, and returned home to tell the nation of their disaster. From Long Point the Wyandotts returned to their homes about Detroit.

This chastisement, this severe blow inflicted on the Senecas, only served to exasperate them, and added fuel to the same revengeful feelings which had been cherished by their ancestors towards the Wyandotts, a century and a half before.

And their descendants to this day, as some have before them, would occasionally (whilst under the influence of the fiery liquid), remind the Wyandott, with angry words, of the disastrous encounter (on the part of their nation), on Lake Erie. I once knew a Wyandott who, in a drunken carousal with a Seneca, having his memory jogged of this battle by a glancing blow on the head with a tomahawk, in the hands of the latter.

Thus the Seneca, while he pours down the fiery liquid — the deep latent’ embers of revenge within him, would blaze up anew with all its ancient vindictiveness.

At some time during the second decade, or between the years 1710 and 1721, a party composed of six Wyandott warriors started on a journey westward from Detroit. Each

being provided with a rifle and ammunition, entertained no fears of any wild savage that might cross their path. Onward, was the watchword, through the unknown regions before them. Out of the wide forest, into broad prairies. Out of one prairie into another; through strips of timber, along the stream, it was forward! day after day, toward the setting sun. "Whoo!" exclaimed the travellers, when the great father of waters — Mississippi — appeared before them, as they emerged from a grove of timber at some

## 16 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

distance, the mighty stream of the West that they had often heard spoken of. Being provided with knives and small axes, they had no difficulty in constructing some kind of a craft to cross the river with. And from there they continued their journey westward. "We will march on," said the leader of the travellers, "and, if nothing preventing, we will continue to march on towards the setting sun, until we reach the back bone\* we have heard spoken of." And they did march on, over wide, rolling or hilly prairies. And they were far beyond the Mississippi before they discovered the first signs of human beings, whilst passing through a strip of timber. Presently an Indian village appeared before them, on the banks of a stream. On arriving at the first wigwam they were met by some of the inhabitants, who had been observing them. The leader spoke to the curious group. To his utter astonishment, he was answered in the Wyandott tongue, "Whoo!" he exclaimed, "are you Wyandotts?" "Yes;" was the answer. "We once were Wyandotts;" and they requested the strangers to go and see the Chief of the village. The travellers were kindly received by the old Chief at his "wigwam," and, on being informed of their intention to continue the journey westward, he advised them not to venture any further in that direction, "for" said he, "you will surely fall into the hands of some hostile savages† inhabiting a region west of the next Indian country, which you would have to pass through."

"How," asked the traveller, "come you here in this remote region, west of the Mississippi?" "Many years ago,"

\*The Wyandott meant the "Rocky Mountains." He had been informed by the French, at Detroit, of their being a long chain of mountains, from 'north to south, in the far West.

†It is supposed that the next Indians the chief had reference to were the Siouxs.

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 17

replied the old Chief, "our people were attacked on an island in a lake, and a great portion of them slain by the Senecas and their allies. We are some of those who made their escape from the massacre, and, soon afterwards, wandered from our nation's (then) principal place of abode, between two lakes, (meaning Michilimackinac) and came into this country." "We," he continued "are of the Big Turtle and Deer clan." "my ancestors belonged to the former." The travellers were persuaded to sojourn awhile with these people. Here we will leave them for the present, as they will be noticed again in another chapter of this work.

At the close of the second decade, the greater portion of the Wyandotts were occupying a tract of land what is now called the French Catholic Church property, and all around there, within the vicinity of what is now Sandwich and Windsor.

About this time, the four rations (the French being a fifth party) of Indians having already formed an alliance for their mutual protection against the incursions of the roving savages of the West, the four nations now entered into an arrangement about their country, as follows; —

The Wyandotts to occupy and take charge of the regions from the River Thames, north, to the shores of Lake Erie, south. The Chippewas to hold the regions from the Thames to the shores of Lake Huron, and beyond. The Ottawas to occupy and take charge of the country from Detroit to the confluence of Lake Huron, with St. Clair river, thence north-west to Michilimackinac, and all around there. And the Potawatamies the regions south and west of Detroit. Such was the grand division mutually agreed upon (as was proposed by the Chippewas and Ottawas), by the four nations of the then vast “howling wilderness.” But it was under-

#### 18 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

stood among them, at the same time, that each of the four nations should have the privilege of hunting in one another’s territory. It was also decided that the Wyandotts should be the keeper of the international council fire; the locality of which was to be figuratively represented by a column of smoke, reaching to the skies, and which was to be observed and acknowledged by all Indian nations in and around this part of North America.

From that period might be dated the first introduction of the wampum belt system, representing an agreement among the four nations. The belt was left with the keepers of the council fire; From that time forward, until the year 1812, (when the council fire was removed from Michigan to Canada,) every wampum belt representing some international compact, was placed in the archives of the “Wyandott nation. Each belt bore some mark, denoting the nature of a covenant or contract entered into between the parties, and the hidden contents of which was kept in the memory of the Chiefs.

The French, acknowledging the rights of these nations to the soil around them, obtained lands of them by purchase or grant, from time to time, as they required it for cultivation, on both sides of Detroit river. The remnants of superannuated-looking pear trees, on either banks, can now be seen, which were planted by the French, and that have seen a century and a half, still rear their partly deadened branches, as if defying the ravages of time.

During this second decade of the 18th century, a large

\*The term “Council fire,” in a general sense, signified their international archives, which



the Wyandotts had charge of, and who, at the same time, were arbiters in their general council, on any important question that may concern the whole of these combined.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 19

portion of the Wyandotts, as well as some of the other nations, embraced the Roman Catholic religion. The former contributed liberally toward erecting the first church on the ground which they gave to the French for that purpose, in the vicinity of Sandwich; reserving a small tract of land fronting on Detroit river, and adjoining the south side of the ground now called the “French Catholic Church property,” for Indians to camp on, when coming from a distance to attend church.\*

At that early period, the other three nations were not so tractable as the Wyandotts were in the cause of the white man’s religion. But the former always looked upon the catholic priest as a holy man. “Muc-ka-ta cog-ni-ac,” as the Chippewas called him — black man in English — from his dark sacerdotal vestments. From this, also, did the Wyandotts name the priest, in their own tongue, “Haw-tse-hen-staw-se.” All Indians call preachers, of any denomination, the black men, or black habited men, from the black clothes generally worn by them.

The Indian outside of the church, reasoned within himself, in this wise; that he would not be tormented with fire by the evil spirit in the nether region, as the priest tells him, so long as he does not forget the Great and Good Spirit, who made the red man, as well as the white man.

\*This church was named L’Assomption.

## 20 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

### Chapter IV

BEFORE the close of this decade (between the years 1710 and 1721), the Wyandotts had commenced venturing southward through the vast wilderness to the Ohio river, and beyond, occasionally coming into contact with strange Indians. They discovered some Cherokees inhabiting the banks of the Miami who, came from the southwest.

A roving band of savages sojourned in the forest of Michigan, whom the Wyandotts named Foxes, from their predatory raids into the neighbourhood of the French and Indians about Detroit, and who would occasionally return after being chastised and driven away by the French and their Indian allies.

At one time, whilst a party of Wyandotts were gone to their hunting grounds, leaving some of their old and young people to take care of their village, some distance from Detroit, a party of the Fox Indians suddenly made their appearance and encamped near the Wyandott village; and who, on finding that the warriors were absent, commenced annoying the old and young people by taking provisions from them. They would come into their habitations and take a kettle of partly cooked meats or corn off the fire, and carrying it away, or otherwise ill-treating them. In the meantime some of the older Wyandott boys were sent to tell their friends at the hunting grounds. The old Fox Chief of this marauding band had some of his young men on the lookout, and no sooner had he learnt that the Wyandotts were all returning home, than he started with his party westward;

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 21

but the retreating Foxes were soon within rifle and arrow shot of their pursuers. On, on through the wide forest and across plains went the Foxes, who were decimated by the rifle and tomahawk in the hands of their pursuers before reaching the shores of Lake Michigan. Here the Wyandotts turned back and left the remnant of the savages fleeing towards the Mississippi.

Overcome by fatigue they were soon fast asleep. Next morning the party found themselves completely covered up by a deep snow-drift, hearing the cold winds whistling through the branches of the scrubby oaks over their heads, each one dreaded getting up out of his hidden couch, and now and then one would scratch a hole through the encrusted surface of the snow, peep out, and exclaim, "Whoo, noo-ten-de-waugh!" (it is terrible). The Chief of the party losing all patience in waiting for some of his men to get up and start a fire, got up himself and with a poking stick in his hand jumped on them, tramping and scattering the snow about their heads, exclaiming, "Get up out of this you sleepy-headed set!" and thus instantly roused up his men. Such was the Indian warriors regard for his brave leader, that no thought of insubordination ever prompted him to show any resentment, be he ever so roughly handled for being slow to obey his Chief.

During this decade (between the years 1720 and 1731), the Wyandotts and Cherokees became hostile to each other, and their long protracted warfare has been supposed to have originated from kidnapping one another's women and children for adoption. If this was the main source of strife between them there was evidence enough from there being persons of Cherokee blood among the Wyandotts before and

## 22 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

ever since the two nations made peace with one another; but, whatever was the cause, a savage warfare was kept up between them for years through the forest to the Ohio river and beyond.

And such was the nature of the enmity then existing between the two nations, when a party of Wyandott warriors who had made an attack on the habitations of their enemies, were pursued by a party of Cherokees as they were making a hasty retreat. The evening shades overtook them as they came to a river, on the bluff of which they intended to encamp, "My friends, be on your guard, do not let sleep overcome you; our enemy is yet in pursuit of us; dangerous is our situation!" exclaimed Soo-daw-soo-wat, their leader, as his companions were pulling off their moccasins, seemingly preparing for a good night's sleep around a small fire; but they did not seem to heed his admonition more than the idle wind that moaned as it passed through the branches of the lofty oaks over their drowsy heads, unconscious of the awful fate that awaited them. They were about to give way to a sound sleep, when they were suddenly disturbed by the howling of a wolf, "Hark!" exclaimed Soo-daw-soo-wat, with an authoritative tone, "did I not tell you that our enemy was near] This howling sounds like the voice of a human being." Scarce had he uttered these words when the wolf, south of them, was answered by the barking of a fox in a westerly direction; in the north, the quacking of a drake; east, the hooting of an owl. "Now my friends," continued Soo-daw-soo-wat, "we are completely surrounded. I have heard it said by some of our old men that such as we have now heard is the signal used by the Cherokees when surrounding their enemy. The first division that approaches within

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 23

sight of the fire gives notice to the others to halt when seeing the enemy's fire and wait until just before the dawn of day, and then advance to attack. Their usual time to make the onset will soon roll round; keep awake my friends." But his friends seemed to entertain some doubts as to the possibility of the enemy being so near, and concluded by saying that they were out of their reach. Being wearied by constant marches they were soon buried in slumber; all fell asleep except their wide-awake leader, who sat smoking his pipe, ruminating in silence on their dangerous situation, now and then resting himself in a recumbent posture, looking around him far as his eyes could penetrate into the stilly darkness, from which, at every moment, might burst forth upon them the most dreadful calamity.

All was silence; nothing disturbed the still quiet of nature, “save the sound of the running stream.” The moon, with her unfilled horns, had left the starry vault, and disappeared in thy west. The silence continued until the sonorous hooting of an owl, perched on some limb, broke the monotony, as if announcing the near approach of the enemy, when Soo-daw-soo-wat heard the rustling of dry leaves. “It is the footsteps of the enemy,” said he, and in an instant was on his feet, thrust his tomahawk in his belt and seized his rifle. Scarce had he commenced to arouse his sleeping friends when the air was rent with the savage yells of the enemy, as they rushed upon his companions with the vindictiveness of demons. A shower of arrows and gun shots awakened the devoted sleepers, and ere they could all seize their arms, their ruthless enemies were cutting them with tomahawks. Meanwhile Soo-daw-soo-wat and some of his friends were firing at the enemy from the dark. The Wyandotts though out-

## 24 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

numbered, fought desperately until the dawn of day, “when they crept over the bank of the river and betook themselves to flight. Knowing a rule among the Cherokees never to follow the remnant of their enemies after a battle, they halted at some distance from the camp until some time in the after part of the day, when they heard firing — the Cherokees had buried their own slain friends, and after firing a farewell shot over their graves, started for their homes, leaving the slain Wyandotts for their friends to bury them.

At one time, before this disastrous adventure, a party of Wyandotts were overtaken, north of the Ohio river, and attacked in their camp by about double their number of Cherokees, and nearly all slain. But four of the former made their escape after the encounter, and who returned to the camp in two or three days; and as they were nearing the desolated camp a swarm of different kinds of carrion birds flew up and scattered off”. Some with bloody beaks looked down on them from their lofty perch, within gun shot. A strange and frightful sight caused them to shudder whilst gazing about the camp among the fleshless remains of their friends. One lay untouched by the carrion birds, and apparently in the calm sleep of death, tomahawked and scalped! They concluded that their friend lay in a trance, they would see what could be done for him with medicine to bring him back to life.

In his vision he saw carrion birds around him instead of his friends. A bald eagle seemed to be guarding his body, and allowed none of the birds to touch him. He concluded that the rapacious birds would soon commence devouring his carcass in spite of the eagle; but the bald eagle now began to speak, and reasoned with them in this wise, “I think

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 25

that instead of devouring this noble son of the forest it would be doing him a kind and grateful act if we were to bring him back to life. We all know that he was a great hunter; many a deer we have known him to kill — stripped it of its skin and left the carcass for us to eat.” “Never, since I first came here, could I divest myself of the thought that there

is life yet in his body, though apparently dead; let us then all go to work and try to recuscitate him. "Here, Blackhawk, you go get the medicine root, and you," said the eagle, to a large northern hawk, "take a southern course and go to the Cherokee's camp, and you will find his scalp, among others, strung up on a tall pole over their camp, and bring it here." Both birds started on their errand as they were ordered, and both were successful. "Here, Raven, help the hawk put the scalp on this Indian." "But the scalp has contracted," said the hawk, "and does not fit well." "Soak the scalp in water," replied the eagle, "and stretch it to its full size, and you, Blackhawk, steep the medicine in that little kettle over the fire." "Hey, all of you on the ground there, stop pecking at them bones and come rub this Indian's body, his feet, hands, legs and arms. Steady, there, all of you and don't you relax one moment." "I think," said the Blackhawk, "this medicine is steeped enough." "Well, bring it here," said the eagle. "But we have no spoon," said the other. "Take that duck's bill, on the ground there, and use it for a spoon," was the sharp reply. "Here, some of you help me about his head, rub his eyelids, nose and lips with the medicine, put some on his tomahawk wound." "Steady, friends, we can bring him back to life yet, and he will live to kill many a deer, and leave the carcass for us as he has done between here and his home in

## 26 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

the north." The Indian in a trance thought he heard his winged friends around him singing the Indian medicine feast song while they were rubbing his body. "Now Buzzard," continued the eagle, "try and open his mouth a little, so that I can pour some of this medicine down him; easy, easy, don't open his jaws as you would that of a dead deer's head." Little by little the eagle poured the medicine into the Indian's mouth. Fortunately for the Indian it was a glancing blow he received on the head, and did not injure the brain. Presently they heard a gurgling sound, the liquid medicine was forcing its way down his throat, a shout of joy went up from the motley group, "Ye, hey!" "Steady, friends," exclaimed the eagle, "we will soon have this noble son of the forest on his feet again." "Don't stop rubbing him yet." "Hey, you sluggish Buzzards sitting up there, cease craving for some of this Indian's carcass now, and begone.

The evening shades were closing around him again as the Indian thought, and his winged friends still striving to restore him to life, until late in the night when they all suddenly disappeared. He thought he felt the next morning's sun touching his feet, hands and face.

His Wyandott friends now began to perceive unmistakeable signs of returning life, his eyelids began to quiver, and his fingers and toes moving. He suddenly opened his eyes and looked up, then turned and stared at them in mute astonishment. They stood watching their friend in silence, until he was asked by one of them if he was aware of his being yet on earth. This question made him stare the more wildly at them. Presently they observed his lips moving as if trying to speak, at last he uttered in a scarcely audible voice, from

weakness, saying, "If you are on earth my friends I am still with you." Raising up his head and looking around him with surprise, said lie; "where is the bald eagle and the other birds that brought me back to life." "Ha! ha! ha! ha!" "What are you laughing about?" asked the recusitated Indian, who was now sitting up. "Your spirit," said one of his friends, "has been playing pranks on you." "Ha! ha! ha! ha!" "The eagle," he continued, "and his companions you speak of, betook themselves to flight on our approach, and had we not come as soon as we did, they might have pecked a hole through your body and extinguished the last spark of life in you."

"It may seem very strange to you," said the recusitated Indian, "my friends when I tell you that from the moment I first saw the bald eagle here, in advance of the other birds, he seemed to have singled me out from the rest of our slain friends, and from what I heard him say to the other birds, he had often seen me in the forest, and seemed to know that I left deer carcasses purposely for his own and other kinds of flesh eaters of the flying species. It is wonderful to me," he continued, "when I think of the wanderings of my spirit during the last few days. I thought I followed and saw the hawk snatch off my scalp from a tall pole over our enemy's camp; it commenced, from a great height, sailing round and round, down gradually over the open camp of the Cherokees; who were watching the strange maneuvering of the hawk. Suddenly it swept by the pole over their camp, with the keen sound of whistling wind, and snatched off" one of the scalps. In a moment the hawk was high up in the air again, with my scalp dangling from its talons, then flew northward, leaving the group of Indians, at the camp, with upturned

## 28 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

faces and utterly confounded." Putting his hand on his head, "Whoo!" he exclaimed, "what is this? this is not my scalp!" A roar of laughter preceded the response from his friends, when he was told that they had stuck a piece of raw otter skin on his head in the place of his original and missing scalp, and that they went to work as soon as they concluded he was in a trance, instead of burying him, and brought him back to life with medicines.

"I thought one time," he continued, "that the bald eagle and his companions had brought me back to life, and that I returned home, but my mother would not notice me. I told her repeatedly I was her son, and that I had come home, but she would not listen to me. I then thought I pushed her elbow, which caused her to thrust her hand into a kettle of boiling corn and venison, over which she was leaning, giving her great pain from the scald. I thought too, that I left home in sorrow for not being noticed by my mother. All seems like a dream to me now."

The now five surviving Wyandott warriors commenced their journey homeward.

At the close of the first quarter of the 18th century, the Wyandotts and other Indians about Detroit were still annoyed by the savages of the West, and who continued to make hostile incursions against them in the forest of Michigan, occasionally attacking their

habitations on their hunting grounds.

In 1727, or thereabouts, a party of twelve Wyandott scouts ventured to the haunts of the enemy in the wilds of Illinois, and before reaching their hunting grounds, they sojourned on the banks of a stream until some time in the month of February, when they broke up camp and resumed their journey westward, bearing a little to the south.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 29

During their third day's march they discovered the track of an Indian in the snow. On the morning of the fourth day they found a fresh foot-path that led them down a stream on the ice. Presently a scattering smoke appeared before them like that of a large encampment on a bluff of the stream which they were following. On their near approach, they perceived that the sojourners had just broke up camp and had gone down on the ice. Their broad trail in the snow was followed by the Wyandotts, who soon overtook them.

They were a party of Fox Indians who yet depended on their bows and arrows to kill game and fight their enemies with. The Wyandott scouts were all provided with firearms. One of the enemy who was some distance behind his party fixing his pack, was shot down and scalped. The gun firing startled the Fox Indians and caused them to look back with dismay. The men on perceiving but a small party of Wyandotts, sent their women and children on down the stream, then turned on the scouts and attacked them with bows and arrows. The Wyandotts retreated up stream, keeping their enemies at a gunshot distance, and reserving their fire until reaching the camping ground which the latter were followed from. Here the Wyandott warriors felled trees and hastily erected some kind of fortification, firing at the enemy at the same time.

Being thus securely posted, and having the advantage in firearms over the besiegers, they killed and wounded several of them that came within gun-shot.

Their camp fires, at nightfall, indicated their intention to continue the siege the next day. A shower of arrows and the yells of the enemy at dawn of day, aroused up the Wyandotts to a sense of their precarious situation; for they

#### 30 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

found that they could be starved out if not all slain within their fort. One of the Wyandotts was killed during the second day's conflict.

Near the close of the third day the besiegers proposed to make peace. An Indian approached within speaking distance of the fort, having a large, round red spot painted on his naked body, holding up with one hand a painted staff decorated with feathers, equivalent to a flag of truce. A Wyandott boy, who had been taken prisoner by the Fox Indians in Michigan, stood by him as his interpreter.

And whilst the besieged party were holding a consultation over the proposed peace, one of the scouting party, who doubted the sincerity of the besiegers, fired at the flag of truce Indian, and both boy and man disappeared in a jiffy. This outrage roused up the savage host, and they renewed their attack on the fort with the vindictiveness of demons, and night closed the conflict of the third day.

During the fourth day the besiegers appeared to be rapidly increasing in numbers, and continued to make furious attacks on the open fort with bows and arrows.

During night they encircled the fort, at some distance, with bark ropes suspended two or three feet from the ground. To the robes were tied a great number of gourd shells containing loose, hard substance, to make a rattling sound when the besieged party came in contact with the ropes, should they make an attempt at flight in the night, and thus give the besieging party warning.

The evening shades of the fourth night was now closing around the Wyandott warriors, and starvation staring them in the face! They found their stock of provisions reduced down to a few morsels of dried venison.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 31

A gloomy silence had succeeded the shouts and yells of the assailants, who were now gathering around their campfires in the distance. The silence around the fort continued until the sharp screech of a night bird broke the monotony, as if giving the besieged party warning of the advancing enemy to the midnight attack. Presently the ill-fated scouting party heard the tramping of many feet on the frozen snow. The Wyandott war Chief, Ta-yaw-na-hoo-shra, now being conscious of the dreadful calamity that awaited them, started off two of his men to take the news home of what befell their friends in the west. The ropes around the fort having been observed by the Wyandotts at night-fall, the two messengers cautiously crept out from under them.

The rest of the party now began to talk of flight, except the war Chief, who declared that he would not leave his slain bosom friend; and on perceiving that his men were determined to leave the fort, he took hold of the rope and shook it defiantly, making a rattling sound of the gourd shells all round the fort. In an instant, the enemies were upon them; but the Wyandotts choosed rather being cut to pieces fighting than to be taken alive and tortured by the enemy. They fought and slaved all within reach, as they were cut down one by one.

Soon their war Chief was left alone, fighting over the body of his slain friend — finding himself alone — “Here!” he exclaimed, holding his head down, told the enemy to “strike!” — down came the tomahawk! and thus fell the Chief of the twelve scouts!

In this fallen Chief the French commandant at Detroit had always found a true friend and a faithful ally, and the news of his fate stirred up the ire of the commandant, who



### 32 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

vowed vengeance on the Fox Indians and their allies, the Wears, Pe-Yankeeshaws, and other tribes of Illinois, and during the spring following, he sent an expedition into their country from Fort Detroit, and sent some of his troops with cannon, in barges around by Michilimackinac to "Little Fort," some eight or ten miles beyond Chicago,\* on the lake shore. In the meantime a war party, composed of Wyandotts, Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies, journeyed across the country to where they met (according to appointment) the French and some Potawatamie Indians, (of the northern Illinois and Indiana territories) on the Illinois river, some eighty miles from Chicago. From there the whole Franco-Indian army marched to the villages of the enemies, who were driven from their habitations, down the south bank of the river, for several miles, or until reaching the brow of a high rocky hill, up which they were driven from the valley, but the low and scattering ever-green trees on the summit, afforded the refugees a scanty covert.

The rapid current of the river sweeps the base of the high perpendicular rock of this hill or bluff, on the north side; at the south-west side, in a dell, was a grove of timber and among the tops of the trees some of the besieged Indians had cast themselves, to keep clear of the grape-shot which the French were firing among them, from the valley.

Some of the women and children were found lodged among the tree tops, after the siege, still alive, and who were helped down by their friends after their pursuers had left.

A portion of the savages, however, had made their escape

\* This City derived its name from an Indian village that once stood somewhere within the first town plot of Chicago, named and pronounced in the Potawatomie tongue She-ooc-koonh, which signifies Pole-cat Town.

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 33

soon after they were driven from their village. There was but one winding way up to the craggy height by which their covert could be reached, and the besiegers being aware that the refugees could roll down boulders, or start some of the loose shelving rocks upon them, concluded not to venture up, but adopted the plan of starving the enemy out, by close siege. The French had stopped firing grape-shot among them.

It was now the third day's siege, and the great wonder among the besiegers was, how the savages on the height lived so long without water, but the mode of their obtaining it was discovered near sun-set. They let down a bark bucket with a long spliced packing rope, over the steep rock bluff, into the stream, and thus obtained their supply of water. An Indian of the besieging party swam to the bucket and severed the rope; soon a great cry of distress was heard among the Indians on the height — starvation at last started the savages down the hill en masse, — they were fired on again with grape-shot, before reaching the prairie valley. The commandant now ordered his artillerymen to cease firing on the fugitives, and requested his Indian allies not to pursue them any further,

“For,” said he, “the savages are now severely chastised and his slain Wyandott friend, the Chief, amply avenged.” The Franco-Indian army started for their homes.

By this siege of the high rocky bluff, came the name which it now bears, “The Starving Rock,” — afterwards the Potawatamies of Northern Illinois and Indiana, and the Ottawas and Chippewas of Northern Michigan, occasionally made hostile incursions against the Illinois river savages, who finally abandoned their country, and took refuge

#### 34 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

among the Spaniards then at St. Louis. From there, the Fox Indians ascended the Mississippi, to the Sac Indian territory, in North-Western Illinois, and their allies scattered off south-westward from St. Louis.

And for what purpose was the red man brought, if not created here, to multiply and spread over this continent, and then to slay each other. The forest abounded with various kinds of game — the lakes and streams with fish for their food. These children of nature were thus amply provided for, by the unseen Giver, to sustain life, yet the Indian was wont to follow the war-path, that led him from his hunting-grounds to the haunts or abode of his kindred race. For what? Not for territory — not for game, for there was a superabundance of either, and more than enough to sustain the whole race. That same in-born nature of man, the world over, actuated the red man to resent some imaginary insult, or an injury done him by his fellow-being, and thus became hostile towards each other.

During the latter part of the third decade, the party of Wyandotts whom we left at a Wyandott village, west of the Mississippi, returned to Detroit river, after being absent nearly twenty years. The leader of this party, during his sojourn in that distant region, married a Wyandott woman of that village, and brought home with him, two nearly grown-up daughters. The writer’s ancestors, on the maternal side, could be traced to one of the two girls.

During the fourth decade, (between the years 1730 and 1741) a portion of the Wyandott nation extended their habitations down and along the Michigan side of Detroit river, as far as what is now Gibraltar, formerly “Brown’s Tavern; “and thereabouts.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 35

The grand division of the vast regions among the four nations, as we have noticed, was now looked upon as a “mere matter of moonshine.” The Ottawas and Chippewas continued to occupy portions of the territory set apart for the Wyandotts. The Potawatamies silently permitted the Wyandotts to make their villages and cornfields within the territory assigned them, (Michigan.) About this time, a part of the Wyandotts took permanent possession of the River Aux Canord Country, on the Canada side, and extended their place of abode to the mouth of Detroit river and down along the shores of Lake Erie. Point Au Pelee Island, in this lake, was then a common hunting ground, and

the Wyandotts never claimed any exclusive right thereto. If they ever did, their claim was merely nominal.

Some of the Ottawas, Chippewas, and Potawatamies, being always found encamped on that island, and having cornfields there, their exclusive right to the island was conceded by the Wyandotts, and did not interfere in their disposal of the whole island, some time in the latter part of the 18th century.

The Wyandotts secured their right to Fighting Island, in Detroit river, by occupancy.

Gross-isle, in Detroit river, also was disposed of by the three nations, without the Wyandotts being a party to the deed of cession. There was no disposition made of the islands of the rivers and lakes, at the time when the four nations divided the whole country among them. They roamed and hunted in each other's territory, and made it their permanent home, wherever it suited them. Bands of these nations eventually scattered into different parts of Ohio. The wide forest was theirs!

About the latter part of the fourth decade, and whilst a

### 36 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

party of Wyandotts were encamped on the banks of the Ohio, at the mouth of a smaller stream, now called "Scioto," they descried at a distance, a large fleet of canoes coming up, looking like Indians. "Hey!" exclaimed the Wyandott Chief, when the strange fleet came within hailing distance, "of what nation are you?" "Shawnees!" was the response. "where are you bound for?" continued the Wyandott. "We know not where," replied the Shawnee; "we have been driven from one place to another, and some of our people slain by a hostile tribe of Indians, and we have concluded to leave our last place of abode down on the Mississippi, (probably at what is now Natchez) and seek some other country; even now, our enemies may be in pursuit of us." "Come ashore," said the Wyandott, "and we will protect you. You can," he continued, "go up this stream," which he indicated with his hand, "and take possession of the country, for your future homes." And the Shawnee nation did go up the Scioto, and thereafter became occupants of some of the interior portions of Ohio and Indiana territories. From this nation sprung the great war Chief Tecumseh, who will become a subject of notice in other parts of this work.

At this first meeting of the Shawnees and Wyandotts, what passed between them was made known and understood to each other by signs with the hands, and talked to each other in their own tongues at the same time.

It may seem strange to the reader unacquainted with the character of Indians in their primeval nature, how two of different tribes or tongues could converse with one another. It is very simple. One can make the other understand what he wishes to tell him with the eye, and signs with the hand.

At the commencement of the fifth decade, (between the

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 37

years 1740 and 1751) the principal portion of the Wyandotts had taken permanent possession of the country between Fort Detroit, and the River Huron, in Michigan. Their main village was at the place now called Gibraltar, and about opposite Amherstburg, on the main land, where they erected their council house. In this village was kept their archives and international council fire.

At this time lived the last of the ancient line of head Chiefs, or King of pure Wyandott blood, named Suts-taw-ra-tse.

During this decade, the Delawares and Miamis began to make their appearance in this part of the country, from Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. They were, originally, inhabitants of what is now Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey, and along the Atlantic sea-board, at different places, as far as the Gulf of St. Lawrence. At this period, also, some wayward bands of Senecas penetrated into Northeastern Ohio, from about Buffalo. Some Kickapoos, from the wilds of Illinois, began to show their broad faces. Eventually, some of the Shawnees found their way to Detroit. This place became the great thoroughfare between the North and South for Indians, and for European adventurers between the North-western regions and the East. Detroit was a central point of traffic at that period, and, during the 18th century, bands of different tribes of Indians were seen there, going and coming, the year round.

Some Miamis and other Indians inhabiting the Wabash river valley, and its tributaries in now Indiana, occasionally visited Detroit.

We have noticed the four nations about Detroit having formed an alliance for the protection against the hostile incursions of the Western savages.

#### 38 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

Other friendly tribes now joined this confederation with the same view. Shawnees, Delawares, Miamis and other tribes. Representatives or deputations from each tribe were admitted into the general council, occasionally held at the Wyandott council house.

No Senecas, nor any of the Six Nations, although seemingly penitent and friendly, were allowed by the "Wyandott Chiefs into their council. Each treaty concluded between them and the different tribes, was represented by a wampum belt, the stipulations of which was kept in the memory of the parties, and every belt bore some mark to distinguish it from the others.

The Wyandott Chiefs had charge of the general repository or archives, as has been noticed.

At the commencement of this decade, (between the years 1750 and 1761) these combined tribes, having driven away the roving savages of the West, now felt secure or safe to venture and sojourn in different parts of Ohio and Michigan territory.

During this period, parties of Wyandott scouts occasionally ventured across the Ohio river, into Virginia, to watch the progress of the white settlements. One of these parties, at one time, brought home to the main. Wyandott village in Michigan, an English boy about eight years of age, they had taken at some new frontier settlement in Virginia, whilst on his way to school. This boy was adopted by a Wyandott family, and was treated as one of their children. And, when he became a man grown, married a Wyandott woman — the writer's maternal grandmother. This Englishman, named Adam Brown, being considered as one of the nation, was made a Chief, and became a useful man among the Wyandotts.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 39

His relatives in Virginia, after he had been married several years, endeavored to persuade him to return to his own people; he was offered a part of his father's estate to live on if he would return, but he preferred remaining with the Wyandotts. He was a Chief, and stood next to the Head Chief of the nation. He was adopted by a family of the Deer clan. The principal chieftanship belonged to the Big Turtle and Deer clans. This Adam Brown's Wyandott name was Ta-haw-na-haw-wie-te.

About the year 1775, a party of Senecas suddenly made their appearance, and came evidently on purpose to provoke the Wyandotts about Detroit, to a renewal of hostilities between them, by reminding the Wyandotts how a large portion of their nation were exterminated in former times, and telling them that they only knew how to kill beaver, and other animals. Upon this, the Wyandott Chief, sent for a member of their tribe, who was a little boy at the time of the battle on Lake Erie; he was in one of the canoes, and remembered seeing, from his concealment, under a large camp-kettle, the war Chief of the Seneca's slain near him. This Wyandott, now an old man, came into the council house, and stood leaning on his staff before a group of Senecas on the ground, and addressed them thus; "You say that we Wyandotts only know how to kill beavers, he-ee!" and with his staff struck one of the middle posts of the council house. "Listen!" said he to them, "I once witnessed a great number of Beavers killed (meaning Senecas) on the lake — indicating the direction with his staff— by the Wyandotts, long time ago." A party coloured bead belt with the figure of a Beaver animal on it, was shown them, which was given to the Wyandotts by their nation, a few years

#### 40 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

after the battle on the lake, as a pledge, or token of peace and friendship, for all time; but which the Senecas now looked upon as obsolete and of no account.

Those of the Wyandotts or Hurons, who remained on the St. Lawrence during the 16th and 17th century, were protected by the French from total annihilation, after being

decimated by the Six Nations or Iroquois.

Sullenly, the Senecas retired from the Wyandott council house, after they were reminded of the battle on the lake, and suddenly they disappeared from the village.

During the first half of the 18th century, the French extended their dominion over a vast portion of North America, In the north-west, to the Straits of Michilimackinac and beyond. Up the Mississippi from New Orleans into the northern regions; up the Illinois and Wabash rivers into the heart of the then wild regions; up the Ohio and into the Mononghela and Susquehanna rivers; and up every tributary of the "*great father of waters*," that could be navigated with barges, and like the fish, the French were continually "poking" up some stream.

In all this time the Jesuit priests were busy among the different tribes of Indians. Out among the wild savages west of the Mississippi; out into the wild regions of the Rocky Mountains, and out to wherever they could find any Indian settlement, or their permanent place of abode, or "headquarters." Jesuit priests have been known (there are some to this day) to sojourn among the wild Indians for years at a time; and their mission have invariably proved successful wherever they introduced the Catholic religion among the Indians of North America, to some extent. Catholic schools were established among some of the wild

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 41

tribes of the west. They were told by the priest that they must believe on the Saviour of all mankind, if they would like to go where He is beyond the skies after death; and how He was crucified and died to save them from the place of punishment prepared for the wicked, the abode of evil spirits in the nether regions. Some of the savages embraced the Catholic religion, while the greater portion of them stood aloof, and reasoned within themselves in this wise, — the first man and woman placed on earth, in the east, must have greatly offended their Maker, the Good Spirit, to deserve such punishment first described by the priest, and if the Son of the Good Spirit died for all the nations of the earth (who sprung from the two first beings, as the priest tells us) to save them from being sent to the evil spirit after death, then, the same redemption must be extended towards the red man. Hence, we will believe on the Saviour, but we will continue to fear and serve the Great and Good Spirit, His father, in our own way, or as our father's have done in the past.

I once, some years ago, travelled with a Sac Indian from the Desmoine, (Iowa), through a wild region to Council Bluffs, on the Missouri, we stayed one night on the way at an Indian village, a commixture of Fox, Sac and Potawatamie Indians. "Mine host" was of the Fox tribe. He was the principal Chief, and several of his people were in the same great lodge with him. In the morning, not a squaw was to be seen. They were off to their camp in the field, and taking care of their corn. It was then about the close of a summer season. The squaws left us some buffalo meat and a kettle of new corn hommany for our breakfast. Half a dozen of us got round a bowlful of hommany on the ground with ladles

in hand. Before we commenced eating, a moment

#### 42 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

of breathless silence pervaded the strange looking group, while the Chief invoked the "Good Spirit" for a blessing, at the close of which all uttered ye-awe! equivalent, (any civilized stranger might suppose), to Amen. Little did this Fox Chief think then that a Wyandott was eating out of the same bowl with him, whose ancestors decimated a party of his tribe in the wilds of Michigan more than a century ago. The set, probably, that took partly cooked meats and corn off the fire at a Wyandott village near Detroit. We have noticed in the beginning of this chapter, schools and churches had been established among Indians by different denominations with success. In fact, all Christian missionaries were making rapid progress, until they were checked by the white man, who dealt out the fiery liquid to the Indians. Soon all the good fruits of the missionary's labour of years, were swept away like a feather before the wind.

It has been clearly seen that whenever a Christian Indian community comes in contact with the vices of the whites around them, from that moment the missionary begins to lose heart in the cause. All the good he has done for the Indians under his care and tuition suddenly disappears, and from that time forward, too, the Indian looks upon vice, rapacity, dissipation and immorality, as inseperable companions to civilization.

Chapter V.

ABOUT the middle of this decade (between the years 1750 and 1761), to the great surprise of the Wyandotts, and all the other tribes around them, the English and French got to fighting with one another in the East, for the mastery of North America.

The French at Detroit, awaited with deep anxiety the result of this contest, and the Indians, with whom they had been on friendly terms for years, now felt apprehensive, lest they might lose their old neighbours. Not being acquainted with the English, these Indians knew not what kind of treatment they might receive from them, in the event of their conquering and taking Detroit from the French. The latter, it has been often remarked, by Indians in this part of the country, was never known to break faith in any treaty between them.

But the Indians, generally, now plainly perceived, that the ruling passion of the white man was self-interest, and that whenever he gets into a dispute with any of his race, which should have dominion over any new country, which they simultaneously held by right of discovery or otherwise, to "*fight it out.*"

The thunders of signal guns at Fort Detroit, announcing a victory of the French over the English, in the vicinity of Fort Duquesne (1755), aroused the war Chief Pontiac, who was encamped with his followers, on the banks of Detroit river.

This Ottawa Chief continued a faithful and an unwavering ally of the French during the war between the latter

#### 44 TRADITIONAL. HISTORY OF THIC WYANDOTTS, AND

and the English, in North America. The Iroquois, or Six Nations were the Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Tuscaroras; this last named nation were originally, inhabitants of South Carolina, as been noticed, and these nations, at this period (1755), were scattered over the vast regions from Quebec to Niagara, and from Lake Ontario to the forks of the Monongahela and Ohio. They were rather vacillating Indian allies to either of the contending armies; they seemed to have been guided by the alternate reverses that attended the French and English arras during the contest. Ever watchful for the winning side, and the moment they perceived the side they are fighting on were losing ground, they were "off like rats deserting a sinking ship."

Not so with Pontiac and his followers, who continued on the side they started with, "*to the hitter end.*" No pusillanimity, nor treachery could be imputed to Pontiac during this war. Friendly intercourse, from boyhood, with the French at Detroit and elsewhere. The kind treatment which he always received at their hands, made him what he was during their warfare with the English. Had the latter come to Detroit and extended their dominion over this part of the country, in advance of the former, and held possession of



the country, Pontiac's faithfulness and gratitude would have, doubtless, stood the same test in war, by kind treatment. Montcalm stood aghast at the horrible slaughter of English prisoners at Forts Ontario and Oswego (1756), by a party of Iroquois, who were with the French forces under his command. And this deed of horror was repeated (by the same party), by slaughtering "over 1,000 Englishmen," (1757), after the latter had surrendered Fort William Henry to the

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 45

same French General, who, to his eternal honour, endeavoured (at the risk of his Indian allies turning against him), to restrain the merciless savages from massacring his prisoners of war. At that time the Tuscarora Indians still harboured a grudge against the whites of South Carolina, for taking their lands from them in that State, after several years of border warfare between them, and which was brought to a close during the first quarter of the 18th century, by the Tuscaroras leaving the country, and emigrating northward.

Pontiac being a noted warrior, and was in nearly every engagement west of Montreal between the English and French, it could be seen in history had he taken any part in the massacre of prisoners of war.

The English forces sent against Fort Duquesne, now Pittsburg, under the command of Major-General Braddock, were attacked whilst "marching through a defile of the Alleghany," by a large party of Iroquois and French, who were lying in ambush some distance from the Fort. The English were terribly cut to pieces; Braddock received a mortal wound; and had it not been for Major George Washington, who conducted a masterly retreat, the greater portion, if not all of the remnant of Braddock's army, might have shared the fate of their comrades. '.

This war ended as it commenced, so far as the Indians engaged in it were concerned, to wit, "a white man's war." The Indian was not fighting to regain any of his country which had irrecoverably passed from his hands into that of the foreigner, to whom he was allied during this contest. Not that he expected to share with the winner of the disputed dominion over North America, that he may find himself

#### 46 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

with at the close; and not that he looked for anything more, after the contest, as his reward for his service, than a blanket, shirt and breechcloth. No; he was merely a savage ally!

One day, whilst Pontiac sat in his tent, near Fort Detroit, silently grieving over the overthrow of French supremacy in North America, and sullenly watching the English taking peaceable possession of the Fort, this Indian Chieftain, this stoic of the forest, conceived the plan of dislodging the English, not only at Detroit, but at all the other French military posts on the western frontier.

“Forts Duquesne, Niagara, Detroit and Michilimackinac proved impregnable to his assaults. He succeeded, however, in capturing six other less strongly protected stations, viz: — Presque Isle, La Boeuf, Sandusky, Miami, Green Bay, and St. Joseph.”

Pontiac at one time undertook to dislodge the English at Michilimackinac, in this wise; dividing his warriors into two equal parties; started them at ball playing near the fort, himself among them conducting the manoeuvring. At a given signal, when near enough, one party was to send the ball over into the fort, then both parties were to rush inside through the gates upon the unsuspecting soldiery, and take them by surprise, But the cunning Chieftain was baffled in this scheme. Strange to say, an Indian woman (of his own tribe), made a timely disclosure of the plot to the commandant, or in common phrase, this Indian woman “let the cat out of the bag.” Seeing the gates suddenly closed, and the officers and men who were on the ramparts looking at the ball play all disappear at once, and the “big guns” silently protruding their muzzles through the port holes, Pontiac con-

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 47

eluded that his plan must have been discovered, and that the sooner he and his sporting party made themselves scarce about the Fort the better.

Pontiac continued to annoy the English for some time after the latter had taken possession of Detroit. He at one time made a night attack on this fort and was repulsed.

The commandant, on being apprised of his whereabouts, up the river, and of his continued hostile intentions, one morning indiscreetly sent a detachment to meet a party of Indians, supposed to be led by Pontiac himself, and as the soldiers were crossing a creek, since called “bloody run,” \* and now within the corporation of Detroit City — they were pounced upon, from a thicket, by an overwhelming number of Indians, and cut to pieces!

Pontiac cherished a love in his heart of hearts for the French, and remained an implacable enemy to the English to his dying day; and had he lived to see the next “white man’s war” in North America (the revolution) and not have been too far advanced in years, he would, doubtless, have offered his services to the French General, Gilbert Motier De Lafayette, ‘

His name, as a deep schemer in war, and as being persevering in the prosecution of his plans, stands unrivalled among the Indian nations in his day. The age in which he lived was an eventful one; great changes had taken place in his own native country; where once stood his wigwam, he saw towns growing up; and where once was the hunting grounds of his fathers, he saw the habitations of a strange people from the other side of the “big waters;” and he saw

\* This run, or creek, derived its sanguinary name from the dreadful calamity that befel

the soldiery. It is said, that its waters ran tinged with their blood for some time after the fatal crossing.

#### 48 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

two different white nations at war with each other in North America.

When news came to Detroit that the French were subdued and had capitulated (1760), the Wyandotts and other tribes received the intelligence with deep regret. They naturally supposed that the French, now that they were conquered, would all be driven from the country by their conquerors. More than half a century of uninterrupted friendly intercourse had endeared them to the French people.

The separation of these tribes and the French was a most affecting scene; for the former had always looked upon the latter as friends and protectors. On the eve of their departure the governor, or commandant called the tribes together and delivered a farewell address. It has been described by an aged member of the Wyandott tribe (long since passed away), who was present and listened to the Governor's parting words, thus — "He was a tall noble looking personage, wearing a surtout, richly trimmed with fur, and standing on the margin of the noble river with the assembled tribes." "My dear friends and associates," said he, "it grieves me to think we must now part forever. I go to see your once great father (meaning the French King), who has always cherished a most friendly feeling for you. I must now go away; the English have conquered us; farewell all, and may God bless. you." Bowing low, he went on board a boat that soon conveyed him out of sight, leaving his *red children* in deep sorrow at his departure. But the greater portion of the French settlers about Detroit remained, and became subject to the English Government.

When news reached Detroit that the English were coming round by Lake Erie to take possession of the old French

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 49

fort, a party of Indians started for Fighting Island, about six miles below Detroit. They entrenched themselves there, and awaited the coming of the strange white people. After a few days, a vessel "hoved in sight." The strange looking craft, with its strange looking streamers, moved along slowly before a light breeze, and when it got about opposite the head of the island, the English were saluted with a volley of rifles and old French musket shots, followed by the whoop and yell of the Indians. Astonished at the silence of the strangers, "Taw, yaw, how, how!" exclaimed the savages, and started in their canoes to board the vessel. Their shots fell harmlessly among the English, who reached down and helped some of them up as they came along side of the vessel. On reaching the deck they found themselves powerless, and felt rather ashamed and abject before the English. They were kindly treated, however, on the way up to Fort Detroit. Like the attack made on Gulliver by the Liliputians after he was shipwrecked and cast upon their shores, it amounted to nothing.

During this decade (between the years 1760 and 1771), the Indians who had been on friendly terms with the French, accepted the hand of friendship held out to them by the English, except Pontiac and his followers. At this period the Wyandotts numbered about 4,000.

England now held undisputed sway over these vast regions of North America, lately acquired by conquest from the French. And the Wyandotts were the first among the Indian nations in this part of the country, to acknowledge their new father, the King of England; but the French still held possession of the territory of Louisiana. The Wyandotts, as well as all the other Indians, received annual

## 50 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

presents in goods at Detroit from the British Government, as they did from the French in former times.

A wampum\* belt was given to the Wyandotts by the British, with a white strip in the middle from one end to the other, *representing their ever free road to headquarters*. Signifying also, the British Government's friendship and protection to them for all time.

In 1770, or thereabouts, the followers of Pontiac had all become friendly to the English, and "buried the tomahawk." Their war Chief got into a quarrel with some Indians in Illinois, and was assassinated.

At the close of this decade (between the years 1770 and 1781), the American revolution was still going on, and the Indians were still watching the progress of this second "white man's war" in North America. In this war they noticed the French under La Fayette, (from the other side of the "big waters,") taking side with the revolutionists, and fighting against England, by way, as they concluded, of revenge for taking this country from them (the French) » about twenty years before. At the commencement, they expected to see the war carried into Canada, and the same scenes enacted over again as it was during the Franco-Indian and Anglo-Indian war; but this time on a more extensive scale. But the Revolutionists, or "Yankees" concluded to abandon their contemplated conquest of Canada (if they did really then), after meeting with reverses in that quarter.

In the Mohawk, Captain Brant, the British found a firm

\*Wampum is manufactured from a species of sea shell, expressly for Indians by Europeans. Perforated (lengthwise) tubes about one eighth of an inch in diameter, and half an inch in length, and of a mixed light and dark purple color. The tubes are fastened together with strong thread or ligament into belts, from five to seven inches in width, and from twenty-four to forty inches in length. This article is generally highly prized by Indians. Chippewa and Ottawa Chiefs have been known to wear it in the fashion that a Free Mason wears a badge of the Order.

and an unwavering ally during the revolutionary war. At the close of which the British Government granted him and his followers (a commixture of a portion of the whole six nations), for their loyalty, a large tract of land in Upper Canada. Within its original limits now stands, on the banks of the Grand river, a flourishing town, named after the Captain, "Brantford," built by the whites.

Before the close of this decade (between the years 1780 and 1791), the Indians had another white nation to deal with in North America. It was now British and "Yankees." The axe of the white man was now rapidly letting in the broad light of day into the dark forests of Ohio and Kentucky. The "Yankees" were encroaching upon the rights of the red man to the soil of his fathers; his hunting grounds were invaded.

Among those who cast their lot with the loyalists when the revolutionary war broke out, was one Colonel Alexander McKee, who left Pennsylvania and came to Canada; and among the relatives he left behind was a nephew, then ten years of age, who came to him at Detroit, after the revolution. Both uncle and nephew became officers of the British Government, in the Indian Department. This nephew was the writer's father.

McLean, Brush, Wigle, Malotte, Quick, Bruner, Fox, Lipps, Ferris, Scratch, Wright, Stewart, Cornwall, Wilcox, Young, were also among the loyalists who took side with England when her colonies revolted in America. They came to Western Canada, some of them came by way of Michigan through the Wyandott villages; and some of their descendants are now among the inhabitants along the north shores of Lake Erie.

## 52 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

For their loyalty, the Indians within the British Dominion, received annual presents in goods, besides paying them for all the land they ceded to the Crown.

The Ottawas and Chippewas, claiming priority of right to the soil, ceded, piece by piece, some of the vast regions of country between lakes Huron and Erie to the Government, reserving tracts here and there for their homes. The division of territory among the four nations, as we have noticed, now became a mere matter of "moonshine." Bois Blanc Island was ceded to the Government, by the four nations for military purposes, and general camping ground for Indians. After the King's stores were removed from Detroit to Amherstburg, before the close of the 18th century, at some period before the cession of Bois Blanc, Point Au Pelee Island, in Lake Erie, was disposed of by the Potawatamies, Ottawas and Chippewas. Subsequently, one William McCormick, then a member of the Provincial Legislature, obtained this Island from Captain Thomas McKee, a son of Colonel McKee, who held a lease of it from the three tribes for the term of ninety-nine years. Some of the descendants of McCormick are now living on this valuable Island.

In 1790, the Ottawas, Chippewas, Potawatamies and Wyandotts, in general council, concluded a treaty at Detroit, with the commandant, Major Murray, and in presence of

all the military commissioned officers at that post on the part of the British Government, and by which treaty the four Indian nations ceded to King George the Third, and received payment in valuable wares and merchandise, by the hand of Colonel Alexander McKee, Deputy Agent of Indian affairs, for a tract of land beginning at the mouth of River Aux Chaudiere, on the north side of Lake Erie, being the western

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 53

extremity of a tract purchased by the Government from the Missasagua\* Indians in 1784, and from thence running westward along the border of Lake Erie, and up the Strait to River Cheniel Ecarté, and up its main branch to the first fork on the south side; thence a due east line to and up the River Thames to the north-west corner of the tract purchased of the Missasaguas; thence following its western boundary due south to the first starting point at Lake Erie. In this treaty was reserved a tract beginning at a small creek, nearly opposite the head<sup>†</sup> of Bois Blanc Island, and running upwards along the border of the strait, and to a short distance above the head of Petit Isle or Aux-Dende (to the French settlement) then a due east line, seven miles, and then south so many miles, intersecting the east line from the mouth of the creek and first starting point at the strait, or Detroit river; and the whole of this tract contained about 23,630 acres, and was named the "Huron Reserve." Some of the Huron or Wyandotts were occupying a portion of this tract when this treaty of 1790 was concluded, and even thereafter claimed the Reserve as their exclusive right. They contended that, inasmuch as the other three nations having sold lands around them, before this treaty, without their being a party thereto, nor shared with them in the payments thereof, they should not claim any of the Huron Reserve. The Chiefs who signed this treaty were Egaush-way, Way-wash-King, and five other Ottawa Chiefs; Wauh-se-an, Te-a cami-ga-se and four other Chippewa Chiefs; Ska-nas-que, Eshaha and four other Potawatamie Chiefs; Sus-tau-ra-tse, Tahau-ne-hau-wie-te or Adam Brown, and two other Wyandott Chiefs.

About this time a large band of the Wyandott nation

\* Chippewas and Ottawas.

#### 54 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

called the Porcupine, Bear and Big Snake clans were inhabiting a portion of the south shore country of Lake Erie, in Ohio. Their main village was on the River Huron and near its confluence with the lake, and between what is now Sandusky City and Cleveland. Some of this band intermarried with the Senecas, although the two nations they respectively belonged to were at enmity with each other.

In 1781, or thereabouts, this Wyandott band were persuaded by a band of the Seneca nation, then in Pennsylvania to emigrate to their country on the Susquehanna river. The Wyandotts had cautiously encamped at some distance from the Seneca villages, when they were informed by a messenger from the latter, to come and encamp at a convenient place selected for them. The Wyandotts sent back word that they would come in a few

days and camp there, if the place suited them. Meanwhile, a young Seneca, who had intermarried with a Wyandott woman of this band, returned from a visit to his people, and told of a plot which he had discovered, and described the ground selected for their encampment. It was at an extreme point, formed by a bend of the river, where the Senecas intended to have made a descent on the Wyandott camp from landward, and cut them to pieces.

Some Indians had lately been massacreing white inhabitants at some place down towards Pittsburg, and their object in persuading the Wyandotts to come to their country, was to make it appear that they were the perpetrators j and, as a pretext, while avenging the massacre of the whites, they would at the same time gratify their avenging feelings towards the Wyandott nation. From the Susquehanna, the Wyandotts turned their faces north-westward, and scattered

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 55

off in parties to different hunting grounds; and about three years after this a portion of the scattered bands met and located on the Sandusky river, at what is now Fremont (formerly called Lower Sandusky), in Ohio, while others of the band had located in and about what is now Upper Sandusky, and on the same stream. Those at the former place had lived there several years, when the smallpox\* broke out among them, and scattered them to different parts; some to Michigan; some to Canada; and the majority of them went southward to Upper Sandusky. From there some of their people had already migrated further south. Other bands of Wyandotts had migrated from Michigan and located in different parts, south and south-west from Upper Sandusky, during the last decade of the 18th century. Their neighbouring tribes were the Shawnees, Delawares and Muncies. At this time, some of the Ottawas and Potawatamies were inhabiting north-western Ohio.

At one time, while the Wyandotts were at Lower Sandusky, one of two Wyandott young women was taken prisoner near their village, whilst they were gathering strawberries, by a party of white scouts who were passing that way homeward. And where they encamped the second night a strange looking Indian appeared to the maiden prisoner in a vision, and spoke to her, thus, "I come to tell you, that to-morrow, about noon, these white men will meet a party of Indians, on the war-path, and have a fight with them. Then will be your chance to make your escape and return home. I am

\* This malady was introduced among the Wyandotts by a member of the band, named Scoo-tush. To gratify his curiosity he obtained a viol from some white physician containing vaccine matter, and who, on perceiving himself infected with the smallpox, and whilst in a high fever, waded out into Lake Erie, imitating the screams of a loon. He lived but a short time after coming out of the water. (This was on the Canada side of Lake Erie.)

#### 56 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

not one of your race," he continued, "I am a *frog* although I appear to you in human shape; your race have often rescued some of our kind from the jaws of the snake, therefore it is with grateful feeling towards you that I come to tell you of your chance of escape from the hands of these snoring white men laying around here." Next morning the scouts proceeded on their journey southward. Probably it was merely to scare the maiden that one of the scouts remarked while smoothing down her hair, saying, "what a pity if this pretty black hair was to get burnt!" The owner of the black hair having a slight understanding what the English word "burn" signified, felt very much afraid of being burnt. The white scouts forgot all about their maiden prisoner, who was walking in the rear of them, when the Indians came in sight; "bang, bang! whoop!" A sharp and desperate conflict took place between the two parties, about noon, as was told to the maiden by the phantom. The shouts and rapid firing of the combatants rendered the woods frightful around her, until she heard them no more in her flight. She never learned how this battle ended, or whatever became of the white scouts. Wearied and faint at nightfall, the maiden crept into a large, hollow sycamore tree, through an aperture near its root; here an Indian woman appeared to her in a dream, and said to her, "The day after to-morrow you will meet a war party of Wyandotts from your village," indicating with her hand the course she must take. "On the day you meet them you will find their war-path; follow it northward. I am not," she continued, "one of your race, I am a hear. Now, I wish to tell you what I want you to say to your people when you get home; and don't you forget it. There are three names (mentioning them) belonging to your clan,

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 57

the Bear clan, which you have not now among you; and I want you to keep up these three names in your clan hereafter."

The famishing maiden passed another night in the wilderness. Starting from her bed of leaves next morning, somewhat refreshed, she found the war-path before mid-day. During her wanderings she found some berries to eat that kept her alive; her clothes were now torn in shreds by bramble bushes. She met the Wyandott warriors some time in the after part of that day, and sojourned with them three or four days where they met. The leader of this war party would not allow her to eat heartily at first, and during her famished condition; but increased her portion of food gradually, until she regained her bodily vigour. Meanwhile their camp was well supplied with fresh venison by the young men. A new pair of moccasins and some clothes was given to the ragged maiden, and was started off with a supply of provisions for a two days journey" homeward. Her friends at the village were not a little surprised to see her, for they never expected to see the maiden again.

In the then great forest of Ohio was the happy abode and hunting grounds of the different tribes we have noticed; but the "Yankees" or "Big Knives," as the Indians now called them, were steadily advancing; the tide of emigration from the East was now rapidly pouring into the "howling wilderness" of Southern Ohio and Northern Kentucky.



Before the close of the 18th century, some of the whites had commenced migrating from the then Western States to the south-western regions, byway of the Ohio and Mississippi, in flat boats, built square at each end, and 35 or 40 feet in length, ten or twelve feet in breadth, and the deck barricaded

## 58 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

with thick planks about six feet in height, leaving a narrow gangway outside and over the gunwales. A sort of a rudely constructed floating fort to protect the emigrants from the attacks of hostile Indians when brought in close proximity, occasionally, with the shore, as the craft followed the main channel of the river. One day a party of Potawatamie Indian scouts led by their war Chief, named Wauh-bun-se, was watching a craft of this description from their covert on the north bank of the Ohio, between, now, the States of Ohio and Illinois; and as the boat reached about opposite to them, they started for another point down the river to attack the floating fort when brought ashore.

“What is the reason,” repeatedly exclaimed the pilot at the bow of the boat, “that you can’t keep off from shore?” at the same time motioning with his hand to the man at the helm, signifying keep off from land. “I am trying my best I tell you,” gruffly replied the steersman, but in spite of his redoubled efforts, the boat continued to be mysteriously going towards land. The pilot now began to examine the side of the boat next to land, closely into the water. To his great surprise he discovered an Indian, in a state of nudity, swimming under water like an otter, and tugging away landward with all his might, and holding one end of a rope with his teeth, the other end being fastened to the boat. It was the Potawatamie war Chief himself thus towing the *floating fort* toward land; and, to get breath, he occasionally emerged his head at the side of the boat to avoid detection. The pilot silently left the gangway unobserved by the Indian, and quietly returned with fixed bayonet, and as the latter came up alongside to get breath again, “chug!” went the bayonet into his back! down sank the Indian out of sight, who swam

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 59

and reached shore, scarcely alive from fatigue and loss of blood; but the water washed the blood from his wound whilst making for land, and with some powerful medicinal roots, used by Indians, the leader of the scouts recovered from his terrible bayonet wound.

Where, in the early history of this country, is there any account to be found of another such an adventurer as this Potawatamie Indian, this “red man of the forest,” who conceived the hazardous plan of bringing the *floating fort* ashore on the Ohio?

In 1838, or thereabouts, this daring Potawatamie Chief migrated with his nation from Illinois to Council Bluffs, on the Missouri river. From there they were removed in 1846, south-east into Kansas.

In the winter of that year he, with some of the Chiefs and young men of his nation, went

to “Washington City to close a treaty with the Government, and whilst on their journey homeward, the mail coach they were in upset near Boonville, Missouri. Chief Wauh-bun-se died at that place from the injury he received in his side, by this accident. Thus closed his life at eighty years of age.

At some time between the years 1790 and 1801, the Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies laid claim to their proportional part, as they thought, of the Huron Reserve under the treaty of 1790. A general council of the four nations was called at Detroit by a Commissioner on the part of the British Government, to settle this dispute among them. Here the Wyandotts reminded the Chiefs of the three nations of the understanding between them before they signed that treaty, that they being then the occupants of the land, they were to have the exclusive right to the whole

## 60 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

reserve. This assertion of the “Wyandott Chiefs was acknowledged by Egaush-way, the Head Chief of all the Ottawas, while some of the other Chiefs of the three nations contended for their portion of the Huron reserve; and whose arguments, as put forth by some of the more noisy talkers among them, sounded as when one listens to the rattling of a vehicle out of sight, and which seems to be going away off on the wrong road, entirely from the right one. While other Chiefs and warriors of the three tribes, sat on their haunches silently smoking, as if endeavouring to raise an Indian summer by a profusion of smoke from their pipes, instead of coming to some conclusion on the important matter before them; and others were lying around in a recumbent posture, who seemed to care but little about what was going on. One of the Wyandott Chiefs now addressed the refractory Chiefs thus; “What mean you in your persistency to deprive us of our land and homes, for you seem to claim, from what you assert now, not only a part, but the whole reserve 1 Here,” he continued, “you have already disposed of lands around us, besides receiving your shares of the proceeds from our surrender to the King of the vast tract of land, under the last treaty (1790) we signed together; and which tract of land had been set apart for the Wyandotts by your fathers many years ago; and now, here is all that is left of the land, and you want to take that from us.”

“Listen!” replied one of the opposition party, “when you Wyandotts first found your way here from another country, fleeing from your enemies, the Senecas and their allies, (some of the Six Nations), you found protection here,” suiting the word to the action, “under my arm. The land we have ceded to the French and English belonged to our fathers

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 61

long before you ever came here; and if we were to surrender that reserve, you can leave that side,” pointing towards Canada, “and rejoin your people down on this side of the river; we all have plenty more lands,” indicating it with his hand from a northern direction, round westward to an indefinite point southward. “I have said.”

“Now, listen while I speak a few words,” returned the Wyandott, “we have plenty more lands as you say, is true, but how long will it be before you would have no homes left for your children, if you continue surrendering your lands to the white man as you have done in the past?”

“But, let me tell you,” replied the Chippewa, “It would be useless for us Indians to think of preventing the whole of this country from passing into the hands of the white man. Here we are now on the western borders of a vast region of country that once belonged to our forefathers; but the most of it now in the hands of these powerful strangers from the East; and they are still coming and rapidly increasing around us. The white man cultivates the soil, and requires more land for his rapidly growing family; and can we Indians, now powerless before him, limit his extending dominion towards the setting sun, and say to him; this far you can go, and no further? And what avails it to dispute with him about the price he sets on our lands when he asks us to surrender? He will have our lands when he wants it. I have spoken.”

Here the Commissioner, Sir William Johnson, on perceiving that the Council was going to end in smoke, proposed to the Chiefs and warriors of the three nations, that they leave the matter with the Head Chief of all the Ottawas to decide, and have done with it.

## 62 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

“How, how!”\* broke forth the silent smokers “How, how!” exclaimed the warriors. “How, how!” echoed the vast and impatient concourse around the Council.

The Ottawa Chieftain made a speech in favour of the Wyandotts. This decision was then considered by both, or all parties concerned, as final. His speech was reduced to writing by the Commissioner. Thus closed this general Council, and thus was secured to the Wyandotts the seven mile square “Huron Reserve” near Amherstburg.

Although a precise date when this Council took place is not given here, evidence of the fact can be found that it resulted as we have here noticed.

## Chapter VI.

ABOUT the commencement of this decade (between 1790 and 1801), the Mohawk, Captain Brant, started off two messengers with a glass bead belt, of a dark green color, and having the figure of a beaver animal, made of white beads on it, emblematical of the *secret underground errand* that the messengers were entrusted with. They passed through the Wyandott villages on both sides of Detroit river; thence through north-western Ohio into Indiana; thence into Illinois, and thence to Mississippi, visiting some of the savage tribes of the West. From the Mississippi they shaped their course toward the Chippewa Indian

\* How, how! in their tongue is equivalent to hurrah, hurrah! in English.

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 63

country in Northern Michigan, passing through some Potawatamie villages in Northern Indiana. We will leave the two *Beaver messengers* wending their way towards the Chippewa villages on the Saginaw river, near its confluence with Lake Huron, and return to Captain Brant, who had started from his home on the Grand river, in Upper Canada, for Detroit, with a party of his warriors; these were a commixture of Mohawks, Senecas and other Indians of the Six Nations, or Iroquois. The Captain, when leaving home, enjoined profound secrecy on his people the object of this warlike movement, and left orders for the balance of his warriors to follow when he sent for them. This cunning Indian Chieftain, with his party, encamped within sight of the main Wyandott village in Michigan, where he intended remaining until he learnt the result of his *Beaver mission*.

Captain Brant and his party were kindly treated by the Wyandotts; they visited one another, and smoked the pipe of peace and friendship together; touched nothing of the past that would have a tendency to wake up or stir up any old grudge that might still lay hidden within each other's breast.

The Captain told the Wyandotts that he and his party were going west on a hunt, and to see the country.

"Taw, yaw!" exclaimed the principal Chief of the Saginaw Chippewas, when Captain Brant's Beaver messengers disclosed to him their secret mission, "what does this mean 1 explain yourself 1 what does your Chief want to destroy the Wyandott nation for V Failing to get any satisfactory reply from the messengers, the Chief called a general council of his tribe to decide at once what to do with the Beaver. Aged members of the tribe were sent for to tell the council what they knew from memory about a compact between the Ottawas,

### 64 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

Chippewas, Potawatamies and the Wyandotts, that was entered into at Detroit many years ago, for their mutual protection against the incursions of some western hostile

tribes, who were finally conquered and driven away towards the Mississippi. Meanwhile, some of the young men were having a war-dance outside of the council wigwam; with painted faces and huge bunches of feathers on their heads, each playing his part with the tomahawk, spear, or bow and arrow, in going through the manoeuvres when attacking the enemy; uttering the war whoop and yell. The vociferous singing, accompanied by the sound of the kettle drums, and the rattling of the gourd shells, completed the exciting scene of this savage war dance.

‘Mid the din of this noisy performance, the Council came to a close, and the noise suddenly hushed by one of the Chiefs of the village.

“Listen!” said the spokesman of the Council, addressing the two messengers thus, and holding up the beaver-belt. “We have talked over your Chief’s proposition to us, and his designs on the Wyandotts, as this beaver signifies, and which has passed through their villages under their feet unobserved, and after passing through the different nations south, and around west, came up here amongst us, as it were, from its underground passage; know you then, it is decided in our Council that we do now arrest the further progress of this mischevious beaver, by holding it by its throat,” suiting the words to the action, “and choke it!” “Go tell your Chief,” continued the speaker, “that the Chippewas will not join him in his contemplated warfare on the Wyandotts, with whom we are, and always have been, at peace; you must leave this beaver here, and begone!”

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 65

When the result of this Council was announced, a savage yell went up from the congregated Indians outside of the Council wigwam, signifying their approbation. The two messengers resumed their journey homeward, minus beaver-belt.

A few days after this a deputation of Saginaw Indians was announced at the main Wyandott village. The deputation delivered the beaver-belt and their Chief’s message at the Council house. The Wyandott Chiefs on learning what the figure of a beaver on the belt signified, were startled, as by a clap of thunder! Captain Brant was sent for forthwith, and when his heaver was shown him, he seemed utterly confounded; his scheme was discovered; he was told that his purpose in coming here was to annihilate the Wyandott nation, from the evidence now before them. The Captain broke his silence by telling the Wyandotts that he would go and have a talk with his friends at the camp, and return next day to see them.

Next morning there was no smoke to be seen at the place where Captain Brant and his war party had encamped; they were all gone. The news of the frustrated plot of the Mohawk spread like wild-fire among the Wyandotts, and soon reached their neighboring friendly tribes.

Thus was their enemy again baffled. The same old grudge that was cherished by their forefathers, and that had been transmitted from generation to generation, actuated their descendants to wreak vengeance on the Wyandotts, and destroy them at one fell swoop.

Captain Brant had conceived the plan of bringing this about, by entering into a league with several different tribes. It was supposed that the groundwork of this Mohawk's

## 66 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

scheme was to make his own people the leading Indian nation in this part of North America, by destroying the Wyandotts, who were acknowledged by the British Government and the different Indian tribes, as the leading nation in those days.

It was never ascertained what tribes in the south-west gave their consent to join Captain Brant's league. It was supposed, however, that some of the savage tribes in the west, silently signified their consent by grasping the tomahawk which was held out to them by the beaver messengers, in their mid-night councils.

The Chippewa deputation were kindly treated by the Wyandotts, and returned thanks by them to their Chiefs and nation for their friendly interposition, by throttling the *beaver* whilst on its errand of mischief; and supplied them with provisions for their homeward journey.

This beaver-belt was placed in the international repository, or archives.

About this time the King, or Head Chief of the Wyandotts, Sut-staw-ra-tse, called a meeting at the house of Chief Adam Brown, who had charge of the archive, for the purpose of overhauling them, which consisted of wampum belts, parchments, &c., contained in a large trunk. One by one was brought out and showed to the assembled Chiefs and warriors.

Chief Brown wrote on a piece of a paper, and tacked it on each wampum belt, designating the compact or treaty it represented, after it had been explained from memory by the Chiefs appointed for that purpose. There sat, before them their venerable King, in whose head was stored the hidden contents of each wampum belt, listening to the rehearsal, and

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 67

occasionally correcting the speaker, and putting him on the right track whenever he deviated. Here was an accumulation of documents during a period of about seventy years, and which took them two or three days to examine and rearrange them all in proper order. A sort of a bailiff was also appointed by the Head Chief to preserve order during the rehearsal; and whenever two or more of the young men got to talking or laughing, the bailiff would hit them with his staff. "Listen," he would tell them, "and bear in mind the words of each wampum belt, as they are now recited, otherwise you might say, hereafter, that you did not understand or recollect the contents of some of them."

The old Head Chief, who presided on this occasion for the last time, was the last lineal descendant of his race of pure Wyandott blood; and whose lamp of life went out at the close of this decade (between the years 1790 and 1801). Not one can be now found among the remnant of his nation, but what are either mixed with the whites, or with Indian blood of other tribes.

Chief Adam Brown never approved of Wyandott scouting parties attacking the whites at their frontier homes, as Indians of other tribes were in the habit of, during the early settlement of Ohio, Virginia and Kentucky. He always endeavoured to dissuade them from pursuing such a course, by way of checking, or arresting the further progress of the white settlements westward. He was capable of taking a more comprehensive view of the irresistible tide of emigration from the East.

Tales of Indian hostilities in early times against the white settlers, who were encroaching upon their rights to the soil

## 68 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

of their fathers, have been written and published in America to profusion. Scenes of massacres perpetrated by some band of “savages” along the frontier settlements, sketched by *horror-stricken* writers who, perhaps, never were within hearing distance of the “savage yells” of the red man of the forest, or saw the glittering steel of his tomahawk and scalping knife in actual service. But what American is there that would not pause a moment while perusing such a sketch, to contemplate the dreadful scenes of massacre, without acknowledging the cause that impelled the Indians to arrest the rapid progress of the whites over their hunting grounds? Territories after territories have been wantonly taken from them; treaties after treaties that had been made in good faith, on the part of the United States Government, with the different tribes of Indians, have been violated by the white pioneer settlers, heedlessly passing over the limits, as specified in the treaty, and “squatting” on unceded lands; and what nation is there on earth that would not defend its rights to the land which gave them a living, by waging war against the intruder and usuper? And who would not fight for his rights when all other measures fail?

During Jackson’s administration, it was a settled purpose with the United States Government, that all Indians removed from the east of the Mississippi to the south-west of the Missouri river, should have their permanent homes in (then) Kansas territory, which was set apart for them, after some portion of it had been purchased of the original inhabitants (Indians) or owners of the soil. But the tide of emigration from the East is now sweeping past them, westward; and no sooner the Government commenced extinguishing the Indian title to lands in Kansas (the Indians too, that had been re-

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 69

moved thither from the East), than the whites commenced pouring into that territory like the rush of mighty waters, when the flood gates of some stream are raised.

Not long after the commencement of this decade (between the years 1790 and 1801), the principal portion of the Shawnees, then inhabiting the banks of the Scioto, in the interior of Ohio, were threatened immediate chastisement; and they had scarcely time to vacate their homes, when a large force of Americans came and burnt their villages, or seven towns. These Shawnees were accused of hostile incursions against the white settlements at and beyond the Ohio river. Being now burnt out of their homes they wandered northward.

About this time, a large portion of the Delawares were inhabiting the White River Country, in Indiana. About the latter part of this decade (between 1780 and 1791), the band of Delawares inhabiting the banks of the Muskingum, in south-eastern Ohio, were accused by the whites of supplying the savages of the West with provisions, whilst on their way to the frontier settlements, thereby encouraging them to carry on their warfare against the frontier settlers. These Delawares thus accused were a Christian people, of the Moravian persuasion, and had a Missionary Church and School established among them. They knew enough not to expose themselves to the vengeance of the whites, situated as they were, by harbouring and encouraging the western savages, as they were accused of.

Here was a sample of vengeance wreaked upon an innocent and harmless people for the crime of others. Colonel Crawford never received any orders from the United States Government to destroy this Christian community with fire or

#### 70 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

sword. One Sunday morning they were visited by a military force, led by this Colonel.

Slowly, and somewhat hesitatingly, as the metallic sound of the church bell was ringing in the ears of this community, people were seen wending their way toward their place of worship, viewing the military with distrust. Crawford told the Delawares that he was in pursuit of some savages who had lately been attacking some of the frontier settlers, and they must not think that he had any hostile intentions against them (the Delawares), and not to feel any way alarmed whilst attending their Church. But some of the keen-eyed Delawares who thought they saw evil lurking in the eye of Crawford, kept outside.

To keep from being suspected, Crawford went inside of the Church, followed by some of his men. A large number of the Moravians, men, women and children were in meeting, and whilst attentively listening to the word of God, spoken to them by their missionary, through an interpreter, Crawford, at a given signal, rushed on with his men and fastened the doors of the Church. What became of the missionary preacher American historians give no account, much less this treachery.

What next? one might ask, whilst the cries of the imprisoned congregation were heard imploring the "savage" white man to be let out. What next? after the Christian Indians were shut up in their house of worship, the windows guarded with bristling bayonets.



What next? The house of God was set on fire, and the wailings of the imprisoned Christians regaled the ears of Crawford (until their voice was hushed by the stifling smoke), who, but a moment before, had told them not to feel alarmed whilst attending Church; and

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 71

where the Christians were just heard singing praises to God, was now heard the roar and crackling sound of the consuming element!

Those of this Delaware band who kept away from the Church on that fatal Sunday, betook themselves to flight, and went to Detroit, thence to the River Thames, in Upper Canada, where a tract of land was assigned them by the British Government for their homes; and the place where they built their town on the banks of the Thames, still bears its first name, "Moravian Town."

Thus were a community of Christians destroyed for the crime of selling corn to some strange Indians whilst passing through their village, on the Muskingum river. They were accused of keeping a "half-way place" of entertainment for hostile Indians, between the border settlements and the interior of Ohio.

To satisfy the whites, these wrongfully accused Christian Indians could have been removed by the United States Government, by purchasing their land of them, and they would have migrated westward, or to some other part of Ohio; but they were ruthlessly burnt out.

About this time, the Fox tribe of Indians suddenly made their appearance from the West, and reminded the Wyandotts' exterminating warfare against them in former times, and of their having been reduced to a small band by them, that they had now increased in numbers again and were ready to go to war with them.

But the Wyandotts told the Fox Indians that, as long as they behaved themselves, they would not be molested; and that they would not commence hostilities against them without any just cause or provocation. Moreover, they were

#### 72 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

reminded that shortly after the Wyandotts first came to this country, the Fox tribe commenced hostilities against the former without any reason for it, and which resulted in their own almost total destruction.

The Wyandott Chiefs held a consultation with the commanding officer at Fort Amherstburg about the hostile intention of the Fox Indians against them. He requested them to tell the wild Indians from the West that, if they wanted to fight, they might fight him; but if they wished to make peace with him to come over and he would give them presents. The Fox Indians choose the latter.

After the American revolutionary war, scouting parties of different tribes of Indians continued to bring home, occasionally, white children from the frontier settlement.\*

At one time, a party of Delawares encamped near the main Wyandott village, in Michigan, having a poor sickly looking white boy with them, whom they had taken prisoner. Chief Adam Brown took compassion on the boy, and got him away from the Delawares by giving them some goods. This boy, it was ascertained afterwards, was of a respectable family named Walker, and who remained with his foster-father until he became a man, and married a Wyandott woman, some of whose descendants are now at Wyandott City, in Kansas.

His only surviving son, William Walker, is known both in Canada and the United States, among the Freemasons of the old school.

One day, as the whole village was listening to the distant and peculiar yell of some returning party of Wyandott scouts, "Whoo!" exclaimed some of the villagers, "what kind of a

\* It has been a practice among the Wyandotts and other tribes, to replace a member of their families killed by the whites, during their warfare against the latter, by adopting a white prisoner.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHKR INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 73

prisoner have they got now?" On their near approach they perceived a strange looking boy among them mounted on a pony, his odd shaped phiz was painted in vermillion, streaked with white and yellow ochre; a huge bunch of turkey feathers was stuck on his head, and on his back was fastened their camp kettle. The returning party were greeted with a loud laughter when it was discovered that the boy was of the black race. This kidnapped "descendant of Ham" was the property of some slave-holder in Virginia. His inborn, unruly and muleish nature developed itself as he grew older, so much so that the Wyandott who took him prisoner, concluded one day to get rid of him with the tomahawk!

Chief Brown gave the Wyandott about three hundred dollars in goods, and took the black boy off his hands.

White men, travellers, frequently put up at Brown's house, and this cunning African was in the habit of secreting the traveller's horse at night in some thicket, secured with the halter from the pasture. He thus obtained, frequently, some money from the unsuspecting traveller for *finding the missing horse*.

He had now grown up to be a stout boy. His master at last caught him at his "tricks on travellers," and, to avoid a severe chastisement, he betook himself to flight, and went to Upper Sandusky, in Ohio, among the Wyandotts there.

He declined going with the Wyandotts when they emigrated, in 1843, to Kansas. He was named Johnathan Pointer.

Kansas was then a slave country, or rather slavery was tolerated in that region at that period, and down to the year 1856, or thereabouts.

At another time, a party of Wyandott scouts brought home

#### 74 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THK WYANDOTTS, AND

from some frontier settlement, a white male child they had found creeping about the floor of a desolate and deserted log cabin.

It was supposed by the party that the inmates of the cabin were either massacred, or frightened away, by some savages who had passed that way before them, leaving the child. The Wyandott scouts gave the child candified wild honey to suck, as a substitute for milk. Thus was it kept quiet and alive whilst on their long, homeward journey.

This foundling was adopted by a Wyandott family in Michigan; subsequently he was transferred and adopted by another Wyandott family in Canada; and, after arriving at the age of manhood, he married a Wyandott woman.

Some of his descendants are now among a remnant of the Wyandott nation in Canada.

The United States Government, acknowledging the Indians' right to the territories over which it claimed dominion, dealt with them as being the original owners of the soil; and as the rapidly increasing population of the border States required more territory to spread westward, the Indian title to lands was also rapidly extinguished piece by piece, by treaties with the different tribes.

While the British held some of the old French frontier military posts, the regions west of the lakes were considered by the Indians as being still within the British dominion after the close of the revolutionary war.

Chapter VII.

DURING this decade (between the years 1800 and 1811), land thereafter, the Indian title to the lands in Ohio was rapidly becoming extinguished, and each tribe's possessions dwindling down to a few sections in tracts called reserve, and these reserved lands, were, before the middle of the nineteenth century all gobbled up (figuratively speaking) by "Uncle Sam," and all the Indians removed to the west of the Mississippi into Kansas, now one of the United States of America, where the remnants of the different tribes were removed to, from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Iowa, and these were the Sacs, Foxes, Potawatamies, Kickapoos, Miamis, Peorias, Osages, Iowas, Delawares, Muncies, Shawnees and other tribes; a mixed band of Ottawas and Chippewas, and a band of Senecas. Lastly, the Wyandotts of Ohio; and all these Indian possessions (including the original, or remnants of the different tribes of that country), are now being again, piece by piece, gobbled up by "Uncle Sam" (United States), as the white population increases around them. The tide of emigration from the "Old World" seem to be fast crowding the "white native American" out of the old States, and the latter is now crowding and scattering the Indians throughout Kansas. From there the whites are spreading over, and "spoiling the hunting grounds" of the wild Indians throughout the vast regions, to the Rocky Mountains.

The Cherokees were removed from Georgia to the southeastern part of Kansas territory, and on the north side of Arkansas river, the Choctaws the opposite side, the Creeks

76 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

and Seminoles, from Florida, to the west of the Choctaw nation. The Cherokees, as a nation, was rapidly advancing in civilization, when they were compelled by the whites to leave the land of their fathers.

A large portion of them had well improved farms and comfortable dwellings; but the avaricious whites around them coveted their *rich broad acres*; they were Indians, looked upon as an "inferior race," and they must follow their kindred race towards the setting sun, or west of the Mississippi.

Little dreamed those very whites who had been clamoring for the removal of the Cherokees, and other Indian nations east of the Mississippi, for years, little did they dream then, that in a few years the "besom of destruction" would burst forth upon them from the North and sweep over the same *rich broad acres*, once the abode and hunting grounds of the persecuted Indians. The Southerners occupying these lands were ruthlessly burnt out of their house and homes, and their slaves, of African descent, emancipated during the great rebellion which broke out in the year 1861.

From the shores of the Pacific Ocean, the whites will eventually crowd all the Indians into the defiles of the Rocky Mountains, where they will meet the remnants of the Indian

tribes from the east side, and among these mountains, or back bone of the west (within Uncle Sam's dominion) seems to be their final destination, and their last place of abode and hunting grounds. There, also, the red man's title to his last tract of land (held in common) will become extinguished, as well as his council fire over the deliberation of his wrongs. Truly, the Aborigines of America are a doomed race! But this belongs to the future; we will now return to the first decade of the 19th century when Colonel Crawford was again started

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 77

off with a military force for the purpose of "chastising the hostile Indians" in Ohio. This Colonel's known rule of warfare was an undistinguished destruction of sexes, whether Christians or heathens. About three miles north of Upper Sandusky, in an oak timber grove, on a plain, Crawford found the Indians, who had been retreating before him for several days, northward. He made a desperate effort to drive the Indians from this grove, at the point of the bayonet, when seeing the greater portion of his men killed and wounded in the conflict; but he was defeated and taken prisoner by the Delawares, who took vengeance on him for destroying some of their people with "fire," some years before, on the Muskingum. He was taken to where they encamped, on the banks of a tributary of the Sandusky river, called "Ty-o-mauh-te" (a Wyandott name, signifying a stream around a prairie, or partly bounded by the stream) some distance from the battle ground. His trial spun out through the night, and next morning's sun saw him led to the stake by his executioners, with blackened faces.

A Delaware Chief addressed the assembled Indians of the different tribes at the execution, telling them how Crawford once burnt a Church and congregation of Delawares on the Muskingum river, thus; — "with forked tongue he diverted suspicion from their minds his intention to destroy them; and he turned a deaf ear to their cries whilst declaring their innocence of the crime which he accused them of, when they saw he was going to destroy them. They begged for mercy, but that mercy was denied them at his hands, which he now begs of us to extend toward him. I, myself," continued the Chief, "was among those at the door of our church who had some misgivings as to the truth of his words when telling

#### 78 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

us to not think that he came with any hostile intention toward us; and we who kept outside of the church, were powerless to avert the impending doom over our people when we saw them surrounded, and the doors closed and fastened by this white man," pointing toward Crawford, "and his soldiers." "Ka-ha-lauh!" (yes) exclaimed the Delawares, and cried out, "burn him, burn him!" A white man was present (whom the Americans called a traitor to the Government, the Republic), who interceded for Crawford; but the Delawares were not to be moved by his entreaties; they said he must die. The doomed man, as his last resort, requested his intercessor, Siemon Girty (who could speak the Delaware tongue) to tell them that if they would spare his life, now in their hands, he would give them one thousand dollars in money. "Mut-taw-cooh!" (no)

was their answer to this offer.

Nevertheless Girty continued to plead for him; but when his ears were suddenly cut off by his executioners, he told Girty not to plead for him any more, his fate was sealed. He was tied to a stake in the midst of a bed of glowing coals of quick, consuming fire, made of dry oak bark; and Colonel Crawford was burnt.

Before the close of the year 1810, the long protracted border warfare between the whites and Indians, known as the Shawnee war, now began to assume a more serious nature.

Between the frontier settlements of Western Ohio and the Wabash, in Indiana, was all a wilderness at that period, and a large portion of which was still claimed by the Indians as their hunting grounds.

Soon after the treaty of peace which was concluded at Greenville, Ohio, in 1795, between the Indians and the United States Government, some of the Shawnees of the

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 79

different bands, who had been burnt out and driven away from the Scioto by the whites, returned from the North to Ohio, where a tract of land was assigned them by the United States Government within the vicinity of what is now the Town of Piqua; but in a few years thereafter the whites around them wanted this land; and the Shawnees seeing no other alternative but to surrender peaceably and migrate south-westward. They were led forth by Tecumseh to the Wabash where his brother “prophet” had already commenced a settlement and erected his village.

But here they were not to remain long unmolested, for the regions between them and Ohio was rapidly filling up by the white frontier settlers.

Pioneers and “squatters” on unceded lands had given rise to frequent bloody conflicts between them and the Indians claiming the soil, and which has been the main source of strife between the whites and the Aborigines from the first settlement of the former along the Atlantic seaboard.

*A dark page* of the early history of New England has been *suppressed*, that told of treachery on the part of a colony of “Puritans” in some dealings between them and the Indians about land; and this *dark affair* gave rise to that long war known as King Philip’s war, in Massachusetts.

After the revolutionary war, the whites began to spread more rapidly westward. The “squatter,” or pioneer in time, would either purchase the land he occupies, at Congress price, or sell his improvement on it to some one in quest of land and home from the east, and “move himself further west.”

To put an end to the hostile incursions of the Indians against the frontier settlements,

and the “squatters” who had

## 80 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

penetrated into the “howling wilderness,” General Harrison was sent in the Autumn of 1811 with an army into Indiana to chastise the hostile Indians, or make peace with them there, at once.

In Tecumseh, was perceived by the Americans, the leading spirit of opposition to their spreading further westward by the Indians; and this astute son of the forest had conceived the plan of arresting the further advance of the whites over the Indian territories, by entering into a league with the principal Chiefs of several different tribes, and inaugurating a general war against the intruders. Taking into consideration his comparatively slender means to cope with the whites, one might search in vain in the history of North America, to find a more ingeniously gotten up scheme than that which Tecumseh had studied out and adopted.

Harrison halted not far from the Shawnee villages, and made overtures of peace to the Chiefs in league with Tecumseh, November 6. He held a short conference with them, and complied with their request to meet again the next day, and hold a regular council with him. Harrison was accompanied by his staff at this peace conference, and with his force close at hand to give the Indians battle, should they conclude to fight him, instead of complying with his terms of peace.

At this time Tecumseh’s combined tribes were, his own, the Shawnees,\* the Delawares, Kickapoos, a band of Po-ta wa-ta-mies, some Miamis and other Indians forming a mixed band, and several bands of different tribes from the West.

Tecumseh and his brother “the prophet,” and the Chiefs of each band composed the council of war. Some distance

\*Shaw-a-noe is the proper name of this tribe.

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 81

from Harrison’s camp the combined tribes lay scattered around in separate encampment.

Around the council fire were assembled the Chiefs of this combination holding a mid-night council; some of them spoke of Harrison’s “hidden big guns.” Here Tecumseh, on perceiving that some of his Chiefs began to waver, by proposing that they all disperse, and to neither fight nor make peace with the Americans, addressed the council thus, “My friends, this night the spirits of our fathers are listening to our deliberations, and shall it be said by distant nations, whose eyes are now on us, that we met here with an army of “Big Knives,” and got scared at them, broke up our league, and scattered off like cowards? or shall it be said that after having matured our plans, and about to strike in

defence of our homes and hunting grounds, we were intimidated into compliance with the terms of the intruder and usurper, by his holding out to us the hand of peace and friendship, and with the other,” pointing towards his forces. “Who is there, among you here now around this council fire, that would withdraw from our league and go backwards like the crawfish? By being united and all of one mind, we might prevent what is left of our country from passing into the hands of the white man, and in time other nations will join us; rouse up your drooping spirits, my friends, and let us strike in defence of our homes on the morrow.”

A Kickapoo Chief, from Illinois, spoke next, and addressed them thus, “My friends, although the tribe I belong to are yet remote from any white settlement, I came here with my band to join you in defending what is left of our common country around us. I may live to see the day when I will have to fight the intruders at my own home; steadily the

## 82 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

whites are advancing from the South as well as from the East. What, if we disperse, as some propose here to-night, shall we all return to our homes and sit quietly watching the “Big Knives” encroaching upon our rights to the soil of our fathers; think you that if this vast region we are in now was to all pass into the hands of the white man he would be satisfied? I say no; arouse then and fight for your country.”

The Shawnee prophet now spoke, and said to the refractory Chiefs, that they need not let their thoughts about Harrison’s “big guns” trouble them any more, for it was revealed to him that the Good Spirit would, this night, send some of his angels from above to unload and spike all the Americans’ “big guns,” put a spell on their small arms, thereby rendering them entirely useless in their hands.” And these refractory Chiefs having some superstitious notions, believed the words of the prophet, though sounding somewhat ambiguous in their ears. They, however, concluded among themselves, to chastise him in the event of his prophecy proving futile. The tomahawk was now passed around from hand to hand, signifying their mutual consent to give the “Big Knives” battle the next day, and this mid-night war council of the red man broke up.

Harrison having some misgivings as to Tecumseh’s Chiefs coming to hold another peace conference with him, moved his troops to a high ground on the margin of a prairie (near a tributary of the Wabash, named Tippecanoe). Here is a “Yankee” historian’s (Hinton) account of the battle; — “A little before reveille on the 7th November, the left flank of Harrison’s army was fiercely attacked by the Indians; the picquets retired without firing a musket, and the regulars under Captain Burton, and Captain Geiger’s mounted rifle-

## SKETCHES or OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 83

men were furiously assaulted. They formed their lines hastily, on hearing the yell of the foe, and withstood the charge of the assailants till reinforced from the rear. Major Daviess was ordered to charge with his cavalry. He accordingly advanced; but they



resisted with great determination, and forced his dragoons to withdraw, while the commander received a mortal wound. The Indians were strengthened by increased numbers, and when day dawned, Harrison saw his men were nearly surrounded, while a destructive fire was poured with little intermission on the left flank, the front, the right flank, and part of the rear; it was an eventful moment. A charge being made by the companies of Captain Snelling and Major Wells, the Indians were forced to give way. They were pursued by a company of mounted riflemen, and many of the foe were driven into a marsh where escape was almost impossible. Captain Cook and Lieutenant Lorabie were then ordered to charge on the light; their charge supported by the mounted rifleman, and the Indians now fled in confusion. The Americans in this battle sustained a loss of 188 men, including Major Daviess."

Here this historian omitted the name of this battle. It was the famous battle of Tippecanoe. 'Mid the din of this deadly conflict was heard Tecumseh rallying his Indians to a renewed onset, while Harrison's mounted troops were scattering them; but they were finally repulsed and driven from the battle field, and a great number of them killed and wounded.

Thus ended Harrison's peace mission in fire and smoke; and thus was scattered and broken up the confederated tribes and bands of Indians, who had been held together by the all-powerful influence of their leader, Tecumseh. Soon after

#### 84 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

this conflict the survivors of a Potawatamie band, whose comrades were cut to pieces in the action, felt very angry towards the Shawnee prophet. They told him he was a false prophet, and to avoid being assassinated by them, he betook himself to flight and went to Canada.

The victory gained by the Americans over the Indians in this battle of "Tippecanoe" was heralded throughout the Republic as the most important result on record in all their warfare with the Indians since the Revolution, and the signal defeat of the combined tribes with their leader, whose name had spread terror throughout the Western border settlements, was now considered by the whites as the harbinger of the final dispersion of the Indians at no very far distant day, they would all disappear before the march and rapid increase of the whites over the "Western regions to the Mississippi, and beyond.

In 1840, the Whig party reminded the Republic of Harrison's victory over the "savage host" at the battle of Tippecanoe, when they brought him out as a candidate for the Presidency.

At one time during this great political excitement, the Whigs held a "mass meeting" on the Tippecanoe battle ground. The orator on the "stump" went back about twenty-nine years, and dwelt with the glow of patriotism on the scene of carnage that took place between Harrison's army and Tecumseh's Indians; and where once was heard the shouts and yells of battle between the white and red men, the air was now rent with

deafening “hurrahs for General Harrison!” from ten thousand throats, John Tyler was put on the same ticket with “the hero of Tippecanoe” as a candidate for the Vice-presidency; and, during that memora-

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 85

ble presidential campaign it was “hurrah for Tippecanoe and Tyler too! Two dollars a clay and roast beef to the poor man laborer, throughout the United States.”

The jolly Whigs sang songs too, during their boisterous political campaign, of every conceivable variety to suit the occasion.

Here is a piece of one of their jolly songs; —

Tune— “And we’ll all go home in the morning.”  
“The times are hard and want curing;  
They’re getting past all enduring;  
So let us give notice to Martin\*  
To pack up his duds and be startin,  
For, we’ll put in Old Tippacano!” &c.

One month after Harrison was inaugurated, the President’s mansion at Washington City was suddenly turned into a house of mourning. Harrison was gathered to his fathers, and John took the vacant presidential seat.

Three or four months after this sad event, the Whig party, and every body else, were startled as by a clap of thunder, when news came of John Tyler’s treachery. John suddenly left the Whig ranks and went back to the “Locofoco”† party, to which he formerly belonged.

The last President the Whigs elected was General Taylor, in 1848. They have since broken up as a party, and scattered to the four winds.

#### THE CLOSING SCENE OF THE BATTLE OF “TIPPECANOE.”

On a prairie, and within the Tippecanoe battle field, after “the Indians had fled in confusion,” the Americans, after

\*Martin Van Buren was then President of the United States, and who, afterwards, said that “madness swept over the land,” alluding to the political campaign; and General Cass was heard to say that the Whigs in that year, “Deified the coon, and dedicated the log cabin.”

†During the presidential campaign of 1840, the Whigs called their political opponents (the Democrats) “Locofocos.”

## 86 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

waiting a bit to see whether the Indians would return to renew the combat, temptingly placed some flashy articles among a “pile of merchandise,” at some distance from a grove of timber, for to entice the Indians from their covert.

But one Indian at a time ventured to take “a bite at the bait” and retreated, and as the Indian ran towards the “pile of merchandise,” the others would cheer him on, exclaiming, “how, how, how!” — bang! bang! — “Ha! ha! ha! ha!” Instead of cheering words from the Indians in their covert, they were now laughing at him, whilst the white man was scattering bullets about him, in his retreat.

An Indian lived in Canada who was in the battle of Tippecanoe, and had his leg shattered by a musket ball whilst retreating from the pile of merchandise. He got well, but his leg was out of its natural shape; he became bow-legged, and limped some during his lifetime.

Flushed with this victory over the combined tribes, a detachment of about 400 mounted riflemen of Harrison’s army were started westward shortly after, or some time during the month following, in pursuit of Tecumseh and a portion of his Indians, (mostly Potawatamies and Kickapoos) who, on learning that the Americans were coming, retreated across the prairies from Indiana into Illinois. They halted in a grove of timber, and purposely made their track, which the Americans were following, hard by a point of this grove, at a soft spot of ground in the prairie. The Indians came around back from where they first entered the grove, to the left of their track, and awaited in the point of the grove the approach of their pursuere.

In the soft and spongy spot, the Americans horses mired down, and the Indians poured a destructive fire on them from

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 87

their covert, killing a great number of the Americans; and it was with great difficulty that the wounded, and those who escaped death, extricated themselves with their horses, and retreated from the fatal spot.

Among the spoils that the Indians found on the spot, and which they brought with them to Canada in the next year, were the rifles, pistols and swords that belonged to the slain and wounded Americans.

One day, in the month of June, 1812, while Tecumseh was sitting in his lodge, in Indiana, musing on the past, and the irresistible fate of his race, he was suddenly roused up from his deep study, as by a flash of lightning, when news reached him of the declaration of war between England and the United States. Here was another “white man’s war” for the Indians to meditate upon.

The American General, Hull, whilst posted at Detroit, enjoined strict neutrality on the Indians within his military department, telling them to take neither side, as this was “a white man’s war.”

At this time, the Wyandotts of the West numbered about 2,700, and were scattered in different parts, thus, about 1,300 in Ohio, 1,200 in Michigan, and 200 on the Canada side of Detroit river, near Amherstburg. This tribe then, like many others in this country, was decreasing in numbers; and before any of the Wyandotts emigrated from the St. Lawrence to Western Canada, the whole nation, then in different parts of that country (now about three centuries and a half ago), numbered, from vague traditional accounts, some eight or ten thousand.

By wars, small-pox, and other causes, they have been, at different periods, reduced in numbers.

## 88 TRADITIONAL HISTORY- OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

The Indians of this continent never knew what small-pox was before the whites first came among them.

Colonel Elliott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian affairs, at Amherstburg, was instructed to persuade the Wyandott and other tribes on the Michigan side of Detroit river, who may have concluded to remain neutral in this war, to come over to the Canada side and continue under the protection of the British Government.

Elliott appointed a Wyandott Chief, named Warrow, of the band in Canada, as special messenger to those of his nation in Michigan, and hold council with them, and persuade them to come over.

The American General, Hull, daily sent a detachment of mounted troops from Fort Detroit down to the “Wyandott villages, to watch their movements, and if necessary to enforce his neutrality on them.

During these operations, Tecumseh having cast his lot with the British, renewed his league of the same tribes he had the years before, or the greater portion of them, and who were now gathering around his council fire, down on the Wabash, in Indiana.

General Hull started off a deputation of six Wyandott Indians from Michigan to Tecumseh, for to hold a council of peace with him and his Chiefs, and to persuade them to take the neutral ground during this war.

Chief Isadore and his second Chief, named Gould, were the principal men in this peace mission to the confederated bands. They called on the Head Chief, Richardville, (half French and half Miami Indian) of the Miamis, near Fort Wayne, and delivered a message to him from Hull, and received the

pipes from him to be used at the peace council with Tecumseh. This Miami Chief stood on the neutral ground.

Many neutral Indians, of the different tribes, joined the Wyandott deputation as they travelled on down to their destination; and, before reaching the place where the combined tribes were encamped, they had a great number of Indians with them. Here the neutral and hostile Indians met host to host; and such a gathering of the red children of nature as was there then, never was seen before, and never will be seen there again.

The news of Tecumseh having renewed his league again spread terror, and alarmed the frontier settlements in Ohio and Indiana.

In a wigwam, 'mid this great gathering of Indians, was started the peace council fire, by the deputation from Michigan, and Chief Isadore (this Chief was a half-breed, part French and part Wyandott), sent word to Tecumseh to come and meet him. The two parties met, on one side was the deputation and some neutral Indians of the different tribes. Some were drowsily lying around, while others, in a recumbent posture, quietly smoked their pipes. At the opposite side was Tecumseh and his Chiefs.

Isadore, who spoke in the Shawnee tongue, delivered the peace message from Hull to the assembled Indians, and made the following remarks: — "You now all understand, my friends, that we Indians are requested by the "Big Knives" \* to remain neutral during this war between them and the British, it being a white man's war, and which does not

\* "Big Knife," or Big Knives. This name was given to the Republicans by the Indians generally, in order to distinguish them from the British after the revolutionary war. There is no certainty at what period the name "Big Knives" was first given to the whites. Probably this name was derived from the Highland broad swords among General Wolf's force at the taking of Quebec, (1769).

## 90 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

concern us; we are promised protection and friendship by the former if we comply with their request, from any hostile tribes who may take side with the latter during this war."

"I have heard," replied Tecumseh, "of this protection and friendship you speak of, before you left your home to come here, and I don't believe one word of it; and as to Hull advising us to remain neutral during this war between the "Big Knives" and the British, that is all empty talk; and think you, "Wyandotts, situated as you are in Michigan, that you could remain neutral and live in peace on that road of the white man where his armies will be continually passing through your settlements during this war 1 Neutral indeed, and who will protect you whilst the "Big Knives" are fighting the British away off from you, from the attack of your ancient enemy, the Fox\* Indians, and other western

tribes who may become allies of the British? And this neutrality will shortly end as you see (pointing up with his pipe tomahawk) that smoke passing out through that hole of this wigwam, in nothing. Moreover, if you take the neutral ground in this war you will be looked upon by other nations as cowards. And what are we to gain by remaining neutral, or if we were all to take side with the Big Knives 1 Would our rights to the soil of our fathers be respected, or will our hunting grounds that have been wrongfully taken from us, be restored to us after the close of this war? No; as well might you think of recalling some of the years that have rolled over your heads as to think of getting back any of your lands that have passed into the hands of the white man.”

“Tecumseh, listen!” said Isadore, ““we came here, as we

\* The proper name of this tribe is “Mus-quaw-ke,” Redland in English. They derived this name from a district of redish soil they once inhabited in the West.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 91

were requested by Hull, to hold a council, and if we can, to conclude a treaty of peace with you in behalf of the “Big Knives,” and in behalf of the Indians who have concluded to take the neutral ground in this war. Here we are in the midst of a ‘white man’s war,’ and how can we help ourselves? But if, as you have intimated, we should find ourselves at the mercy of our ancient enemies, or some Indian allies of the British, and we look in vain for the Big Knives to protect us, then it will be optional with us what course to take thereafter; and as this proposed neutrality will then end, as you say, in nothing, so would this treaty of peace we now wish to make with you end in nothing also.” And the two parties continued talking and smoking over the subject until near sunset, when the pipe of peace was lit by the second Chief, Gould, and after Chief Isadore had taken a few whiffs from the pipe, it was handed over by the former to Tecumseh, who took and broke the stem and dashed it on the ground, and left the council “wigwam,” followed by his Chiefs. “Whoo!” exclaimed one of the neutral Chiefs, “this looks as if our peace council is going to end in nothing.”

All day the women of both parties were busy cooking meats and corn for the night feast and dance.

By the blazing camp fires could be seen groups of Indians on the ground partaking of their evening’s repast, and dogs fighting over bones around them.

There was a marked difference between the Indian dogs from the West and the dogs of this country; the former, by their long and erect ears, partook more of the wolf than that of the dog. Between them, war was kept up throughout the encampment, and their barking and yelping rendered the night hideous.

#### 92 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

The sound of the kettle drums and yells told that a western savage war dance had

commenced. The dancers were a commixture of some wild Indians of different tribes, and who attracted a vast crowd around them. Buckskin leggings and moccasins, wide cloth breechclout, minus shirt, rattling strings of deer hoofs fastened around each ankle some having hawk-bells tied about them; painted face, and head closely shaven with the exception of a tuft of hair on the crown, to which is attached an oblong shaped head gear, made of the long hair of same animal, dyed in red, surmounted by an eagle's plume, make up the Indian's costume for the dance. In one hand he holds the tomahawk, or spear, while others have bows and arrows in their hands, and quivers of arrows slung over their backs, and the scalping knives, make up their implements of war. Each Indian playing his part whilst going through their manoeuvres when in actual service; now and then uttering the war whoop or a yell.

Thus they performed around a group of the kettle drummers, singers and gourd shell rattlers. 'Mid the din could be heard the vociferous voices of the singers, thus: "Ye, awe! hi, ya! whe, ya, wha! a-a-a-a-a, whe. ya, wha! a-a-a a-a," until the singers' voices was drowned (at intervals) by the more noisy throats of the performers in the dance, with then- war whoop and yells.

Next morning Tecumseh was again notified to attend the peace council. He and his Chiefs were saluted with a war whoop and yell by their friends, who were congregated outside of the council wigwam. The subject was talked over as the day before; but Isadore could get no satisfactory answer from Tecumseh. "I perceive," said the Wyandott, "that you, Tecumseh, there sitting, are determined not to make peace with the Big Knife, and that you intend to

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 93

renew your warfare with him with your warriors." "I have not said," replied the Shawnee Chieftain, "what I was going to do with my warriors; but I would repeat now what I said yesterday, that if you take the neutral ground in this war between the Big Knives and the British, you will be looked upon by other nations as cowards; go home and renew your peace and friendship with the British before it will be too late, as for my own part, I have more confidence in the word of a British than that of a Big Knife." "You intend then to take side with the British in this war," returned the Wyandott. "Neither have I said," replied the Shawnee, "that I was going to join the British." "You Wyandotts," he continued, "who have been highly favoured and looked upon by the King as the leading Indian nation for the last fifty years, in Michigan and Western Canada, and to think of deserting him now when he needs your assistance, I repeat it looks cowardly and ungrateful in you. Here is a chance presented to us; yes, such as will never occur again, for us Indians of North America to form ourselves into one great combination, and cast our lot with the British in this war; and should they conquer and again get the mastery of the whole of North America, our rights, at least to a portion of the land of our fathers, would be respected by the King. Otherwise, we see it plainly, that if the whole country was to pass into the hands of the "Big Knives," it will not be many years before our last place of abode and hunting ground will be taken from us, and the remnants of the different tribes, between the Mississippi and the lakes and to the Ohio river, will all be

driven towards the setting sun. Or if, after the close of this war, we find the British dominion still extended over the country west of the lakes and the vast regions of the north-west, the British would give us a home for our-

#### 94 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

selves and for our children's children hereafter. Look for instance, what the King done for the Mohawk Chief, Brant, after he left his native country, and took with him a large portion of the Six Nations, and went to Canada, when the whites in the East rebelled against their King. These Indians could not then claim one foot of land in Canada as their own, and for their loyalty to the King of England, a vast tract of land was given them for their permanent homes, where they are now."

Meanwhile, the whole vast encampment was astir. Some of the young men were amusing themselves at ball playing, some foot racing and jumping. Here and there might be seen a group of Indians on the ground, playing at the hide and guess game, with bullets under moccasins, and the women busy cooking meats and corn.

"And you, Tecumseh," said Isadore, "call us Wyandotts cowards. Do you not know that at one time the Wyandotts came to rescue your people when they were about to be annihilated by the "Big Knives" on the Scioto, in Ohio? They were about to be overtaken by a large army of the whites, when the Shawnees were found hopelessly holding to the overhanging bushes (figuratively speaking) at a steep bluff, in painful suspense, and crying for the Wyandotts to come to their assistance." "That is all true," replied Tecumseh, "but you saw then that one nation alone could not beat back the intruding whites from their abode and hunting- grounds. Therefore, I have adopted the plan of entering into a combination with several nations as a last resort, by which the intruders and usurpers might be kept back, and if all the other Indian nations would join us, we might, at least, bring the whites to a sense of their wrong-doing in taking our lands from us without paying us nearer the value

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 95

than the mere nominal price which they have been obtaining our vast tracts of lands for." "If," returned the Wyandott, "your scheme could be consummated by all the Indian nations forming themselves into one great combination to arrest the rapid march of the whites over our country, we might check them for a while, but we would all, eventually, be swept away, like feathers before the wind, by the irresistible tide of the white emigration from the east! The weak must give way to the powerful, so goes the world. And as to the price of the lands that has been obtained from the different nations, a few words will explain our position in regard to that. The white man sets his price on the lands he wishes to purchase of the red man, and the latter has to take what he is offered, or get nothing at all. But why do you," continued the Wyandott Chief, "look upon us, who are sent here by Hull, as the main ones who are urging you and your Chiefs to make peace with the Big Knives, and remain neutral during their war with the British ] You see Indians here of the different tribes, between here and Detroit, are with us, and are



still multiplying around us.” “Because,” replied the Shawnee Chieftain, “your nation set the cowardly example.” Here these two Chiefs began to wax warm over the subject, and continued their talk until late in the afternoon, when another pipe of peace was produced and lit by Gould.

Smoking the pipe of peace in a council is an ancient custom among Indians. After the Chiefs of the different tribes who have met have talked over the subject of peace or war, the pipe is then lit by a Chief, (in charge of the calumet or pipes) and started around the council fire. The Chiefs, one after the other, of each tribe will either smoke or decline as

#### TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

the pipe is handed around the circle; and everyone of them who is in favour of peace, will signify it by smoking the pipe.

The bowl of this pipe is made of a red stone found in the west by Indians, and not too hard for the knife. The stem is made of wood, about thirty inches in length, and somewhat flattened in shape, and ornamented with braids made of porcupine quills, dyed in different colours.

All was still and quiet in the council wigwam whilst Gould smoked. All eyes were on Tecumseh when the pipe was handed over to him. Crack! “Whoo!” exclaimed several of the neutral party, when for the second time Tecumseh broke the ornamented pipe-stem, and threw it back towards the Wyandotts on the ground. “You mean then by this,” said Isadore, pointing toward the broken pipe-stem, “that you are determined to go to war.” “I mean,” returned Tecumseh, “that I do not wish to be on the neutral ground with you during this war between the Big Knives and the British,” and walked out of the council wigwam, followed by his ‘friends, leaving the other party utterly confounded.

The latter held a consultation, and it was decided that the Shawnee Chieftain be requested to attend their council again the next day. The two parties met, and had another talk over the matter. The pipe of peace was again handed to Tecumseh, who, for the third time, broke the stem, and dashed the pipe on the ground, and fiercely eyeing the Wyandott Chief, addressed him thus: — “You are a coward; that is the reason you wish to make peace with the Big Knives. Go home, I say, and renew your peace and friendship with the British.” “I will give you,” returned Isadore,

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 97

“until to-morrow noon to think over this matter, and if you, Tecumseh, will not have made up your mind by that time to join us in remaining neutral during this white man’s war, darkness\* will come over us.” It was now near sunset, and the third day’s peace council came to a close.

Until about midnight, a great noise was kept up by the neutral party, while the opposite party remained quiet through the night. Such a night as was seen there then, never was

seen before, and never will be seen there again. A great number of the neutral Indians gathered about the council wigwam, whooping and yelling after having their night feast; and to render the night terrible, some would imitate the howling of wolves, some the hooting of owls, and some the cawing of a great gang of crows. This frightful noise started all the dogs throughout the encampment to barking and yelping; these, with the noise made by the Indians, rendered the night doubly horrible. It was past midnight, and the boisterous revellers and imitators of wolves, owls and crows were buried in slumber, when Tecumseh held a consultation in a lodge, on the outskirts of the encampment, with the principal Chiefs of the different tribes in league with him. The stratagem by which he proposed to baffle the deputation from General Hull was decided on. They were at the council at the appointed time. A number of the neutral party gathered around the council wigwam with blackened faces, as if they were the harbingers of the coming "darkness," at mid-day.

The two parties held another talk on the subject of peace; but this time with seeming friendly spirit on the part of the

\* By the word darkness, was meant that a fight would take place between the two parties on the ground, should Tecumseh continue to be obstinate.

## 98 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

Shawnee Chieftain, but who maintained that same calm and independent look, from the commencement of this council, noticeable only in the Indian possessing an extraordinary gift of nature.

But it was past noon when Gould was ordered to light the pipe of peace. He, after Isadore had smoked, started over with the pipe toward Tecumseh, who met him half way, took the pipe and smoked. Thereby (feignedly) signifying his acceptance of Hull's proposed neutrality during the war between England and the United States.

Other pipes were now relit, and the two parties had a general smoke and friendly talk together. The council fire was covered up and the tomahawk buried. Thus ended Hull's peace council; thus was peace restored to the border settlements. The "*squatter*" thought as nothing now, his dreams of the scalping knife and tomahawk in the hands of the red man, of the "howling wilderness." All the whites throughout the north-western frontier settlements now felt secure, and the once dreaded name of Tecumseh was heard with fear no more.

Hull's peace messengers found, on their return home, the Wyandotts all in confusion. Whilst they were holding peace council with Tecumseh and his Chiefs, in Indiana, Chief Warrow, from Canada, was holding council with the Wyandotts in Michigan, and endeavouring to dissuade them from remaining and taking the neutral ground in this war. He urged them to go over to Canada and continue under the protection of the Government of England, as he was instructed by Colonel Elliott.

Shortly after Hull's messengers had returned home, news came that Tecumseh, with his Indians, were in Canada, and

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 99

encamped two miles below Amherstburg, near Colonel Elliott's residence. By his eloquent appeal, he prevailed over some of his confederate bands, who hesitated on going, and persuaded them to follow him to Canada, while some of his Indians turned their faces westward whence they came. Consequently, when he reached the British shore, he had less wild Western Indians with him, and less wolfish-looking dogs about his encampment.

Besides his own band, the Shawnees, the Kickapoos, Potawatamies, Delawares, and some broken bands of Indians, followed him to Canada.

At this time, he probably had between six and seven hundred warriors with him. Some of his Indians came over afterwards.

About this time, also, Chief Black Hawk came to Canada with a band of Sac and Fox Indians from the Mississippi to join the British, and remained until the close of the war.

In 1832, Black Hawk,\* on perceiving his territory (in North-Western Illinois) invaded by some white settlers, commenced hostilities against the intruders. At that time the Sac nation were divided into two parties, to wit: the Black Hawk and Ke-o-kuck (a chief) party.

The latter, at or before the commencement of this warfare, concluded that their attempt to beat back the whites would prove unavailing, and migrated with his band to the west side of the Mississippi. A band of Fox Indians sojourned with them in Iowa (then a territory). Some of this tribe had, some years before, migrated south-westward, into Kansas, on the Missouri river.

\*This Chief was a Sac (pronounced Sock), and his Indian name was Muc-ka-ta-cha- caw-kake, or Black Hawk in English. In their own tongue it is Sockee, instead of Soc.

#### 100 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

In the summer of 1832, the United States Government sent a military force to put an end to the strife between the border settlers and Indians, in Illinois, and the result of this warfare, known in history as the "Black Hawk war," was, that all the remnants of the Sac and Fox tribes in North- Western Illinois, and the Winnebagos and a portion of other Indians of Wisconsin, were removed by the Government west of the Mississippi. A tract of land was assigned the Winnebagos, in Iowa, some fifty miles west of Prairie Du-chien, and a large tract in the same territory was set apart for the Sac and Fox Indians in the Desmoine river country, south-west from Galena. Their last title to lands east of the Mississippi was now extinguished.

When Black Hawk commenced hostilities against the white intruders upon his territory, he was warned by the United States Government that he must desist, or suffer the consequence. His reply was that he would never acknowledge any treaty that might have been concluded between some Chiefs and warriors of his nation and the United States Government, as the negotiation was carried on, and the treaty made behind his back. He told the commandant of the military force sent against him, how the base purpose of some United States commissioner was consummated, by imposing a treaty on his people, purporting to be signed by some of the Chiefs and warriors, who, as he learned afterwards, were under the influence of "*fire-water*" when persuaded by the Commissioner to sign the deed of cession, either at Prairie Du-chien or St. Louis, thereby defrauding and depriving him and his people of their land and home at one swoop.

But the deed was done, and notwithstanding the treaty

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 101

being made as the Sao Chieftain said, "behind my back," it was irrevocable.

When once an Indian Chief touches the pen that affixes his mark + to his already written name to a treaty, that moment his tribe's title to the tract of land he thus signs away becomes extinguished forever.

Therefore, Black Hawk, expostulating with the commandant about the treaty being imposed upon him, was of no avail; he was made to feel the power of the whites, and taken prisoner after having a few skirmishes with the military force sent against him.

And, in order to convince him of the rapid increase and power of the whites, and the irresistible tide of emigration westward, he, with his son, was taken at the expense of the Government, around to some of the large and populous cities of the United States.

A portion of the Shawnees who did not follow Tecumseh from Indiana to Canada, in 1812, returned to one of their former places of abode, named Wapakonetta,\* on the Auglaze river, in Ohio, and where their ancient claim to a tract of land (then a wilderness) was acknowledged by the United States Government.

These Shawnees were removed to Kansas in 1837, where they rejoined some of their nation who had migrated thither from the southern part of Illinois, on the Ohio, some years before.

\*A Shawnee name.

## Chapter VIII.

THERE were two leading Chiefs of the Wyandotts in Michigan, namely, Roundhead and Walk-in-water.\* The former lived at the main Wyandott village, where a small town called Gibraltar now stands; and the latter at what is now Wyandott, 12 miles below Detroit City. These two Chiefs took opposite sides at the commencement of the war of 1812, or rather Walk-in-water stood on the neutral ground, while the other took an active part on the side of the British, as did Warrow, who was the leading Chief of the Wyandotts on the Canada side of the Detroit river.

The commanding officer then at Fort Amherstburg sent for Roundhead and his Chiefs to come over and meet him in council. On their arrival. Colonel Elliott, Superintendent of Indian affairs on this frontier, was requested to notify Tecumseh and all the other Chiefs then about Amherstburg to attend the Council.

The commandant told the Chiefs, through his interpreter, his object in calling them together was to know how many of them were for the British, and how many for the opposite side in this war. He censured the Wyandotts, of Michigan, for taking the neutral ground, and refusing to come over to the Canada side, and said that it was an indication of their disloyalty to the Government of England. "Chief Warrow here, whom we have appointed as a special messenger to you, tells us," continued the commandant, "that you Wyandotts over there are divided; some are for our side, but the greater

\* Walk-in-water's name in Wyandott, was Mey-ye-ra, and that of Roundhead, Staw-yeh-tauh.

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 103

portion of you have concluded to remain neutral in this war. Neutrality, if you have taken that ground, and situated as you are, amounts to this; either you will have to — and that before long — take sides with the 'Yankees,' or be at the mercy of some of the savage tribes from the West, who may take sides with us, as Tecumseh said to Chief Isadore, at a peace council in Indiana a few days ago."

"When you hear of me," replied Roundhead, "or any of my friends here with me, taking sides with the 'Yankees,' and fighting against you, then you will have good reason to find fault with us, and not before. Our people over the river have been loyal to the King of England ever since he took this country from the French. And when some of your people in the East rebelled, and fought against him for several years, our nation were loyal to the King during that time. A new nation sprung up from that long war, whom you now call 'Yankees.' Now, here you are angry because we do not abandon our homes, leave everything we have, and come over here forthwith. Who assisted you whilst you were endeavoring to keep back the Yankees from Michigan and northwestern Ohio? And who, when this servant of the King (Superintendent Elliott) was on the Miami, and there, at

one time, securely shut himself up in a fort,\* whilst we, with other Indians, were outside, and at

\*What the Chief meant by the Colonel shutting himself up in a fort was, that at the time when General Wayne met, and had a battle with the “2,000 Indians” on the Miami, in 1794, Colonel Elliott did not lead the Indians against the Americans in that battle: he remained with the force at the British garrison, some distance from the battle-ground — but urged on the Indians to fight and drive back the “Yankees,” and prevent them, if possible, as he told them, from taking their country. But he allowed some of his militia force to join the Indians in their conflict with the “Yankees.” The Colonel claimed for the British the country north from this military post, on the Miami. At that time England and the United States were at peace. Chief Roundhead was aware of this. But neither the British nor the “Yankees” had any just claim to the soil itself west of the lakes, and at that period it was a wild Indian country. France once claimed it by right of discovery. England claimed it by right of conquest from the French; and at the close of the Revolutionary War the United States claimed it,— the Indians still claiming it. Take it all round, it was a mixed up affair!

#### 104 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

some distance from him, fighting and endeavoring to drive back the Yankees? Did we ever refuse to go when you required our service? Here stood two men of different races, who were both of high temper, face to face.

“I admit,” returned the commandant, “that your nation have always been loyal to the Government of England; but you must not now think of deserting us when we need your assistance. I wish you to tell me now what is your intention, or what you have concluded on; take your choice; but I will say this, that if you conclude to remain on the other side, I will withdraw my protection from you, stop your annual presents and your supply from the Government. “And is this what you say?” replied Roundhead. “Yes; that’s what I say.” “Well, then,” resumed the Wyandott, “I will tell you this much; that you must not think of intimidating me into compliance with your wishes by such threats. No! The sooner you dismiss all such thoughts the better for both of us. I and my friends came here under the impression that you were desirous of having a friendly talk with us, and endeavor to adjust all differences between us, since this war has come suddenly upon us, situated as we are, on disputed ground (Michigan), between you and the Yankees. But here you have received us with a frown, plainly indicating your unfriendly feeling towards us. Think you that you can compel me to comply with your terms by threats? I say no! and not unless you meet us in a friendly spirit, can we come to any mutual understanding with regard to the matter now before us.” These rebuking words of the Chief stirred up the ire of the officer so much so that he suddenly grasped the hilt of his sword, as if to draw the weapon of war, and cut the Wyandott to pieces, who stood

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 105

coolly eyeing him, and showing not the least sign of fear, while thus angrily addressed by

the officer:

“If you are loyal to the Government of England, as you express yourself to be, I want you and your people to come over to this side of the river, and if you make up your minds to do so, the sooner you come the better. I will send over some of my troops, with boats, to bring your families in to this side. You will be paid by the Government after this war, for all the moveable property that you may sacrifice or leave behind.”

“Well, now,” replied Roundhead, “you begin to talk reasonable if you are mad. I came here to have a friendly talk with you, and it is of no use your getting into a rage. I had made up my mind to continue on the side of the British, before I came over, during this war, and as long as I live. And I now take hold of this tomahawk,\* — “and you!” — fiercely eyeing Colonel Elliott, “must never shut yourself up in a fort again, as you did, on the Miami, some years ago, — don’t you do so again! — You and the commandant here, now know my sentiment, and see where I stand in this war, between you and the ‘Big Knife,’ and such, also, I believe, are the sentiments and position of my friends, now in your presence, from the other side of the river. “Well,” replied the commanding officer (Colonel St. George), whose rage had now somewhat cooled, “I am pleased to see that you are loyal to the British government, and that we now understand each other.” “All our angry words could have been avoided, had you met us in a friendly spirit, at the out-set,”

\*Taking hold of the tomahawk in a council of war, is an Indian custom, by way of ascertaining how many there are present for war.

## 106 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WVANDOTTS, AND

said the Chief. “It is true “he continued, in a milder tone, as you have been informed, that we are divided on the other side. Some of our nation, who migrated into Ohio, years ago, are now surrounded by the ‘Yankees,’ as we are now, where we live.” As when the face of nature assumes her wonted cheerfulness, after the fitful scowls of a dark storm-cloud has passed away, — in the sunny month of June, — so did these two warriors, of different races, now appear calm and pleasing, after their angry passion had subsided.

They all had a friendly talk with one another, Tecumseh’s brother, “the prophet,” was present, — of battle of Tippecanoe” notoriety, — and some warriors, of different tribes, were also present, at this council, besides the Chiefs.

Colonel Elliott superintended, in person, the removal of the loyal Wyandotts, and other Indians, from Michigan to the Canada shore. On his arrival, he found the Wyandott settlement all in confusion; Hull’s mounted troops, led by Captain Wilkinson, had been dashing through their villages during the day, as if they were suspected of their intended exodus, to Canada. Meanwhile, Roundhead and Warrow were endeavouring to persuade all they could to join the party who were preparing to cross over, during the night Elliott had some Indians with him and his military force, and with these he threatened to attack the neutral Indians, if they did not make up their mind forthwith, to join the loyal

party who were now leaving for Canada. But the neutral Indians, were fast disappearing, and making for parts unknown. Next day Wilkinson returned from Detroit again, and found that the Wyandotts were nearly all gone from their villages. Some had

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 107

gone into Ohio, while others followed Chief Walk-in-water to the interior of Michigan territory.

On the 12th of July, 1812, General Hull crossed Detroit river, and took possession of Sandwich.

His advance forces found the bridge across the river Aux Canards demolished, five miles from Amherstburg. Some British militia and Indians were at the opposite side of the stream, watching the Americans, who were constructing rafts and flat-boats to cross with, and occasionally firing grape shot at the militia and Indians, — killed one Chippewa warrior, in the skirmish. The Americans were now rapidly increasing in numbers, preparing to cross the narrow stream and make a descent on Amherstburg. But on Hull hearing of General Brock's\* movements, he collected his forces and retreated back to Fort Detroit. Tecumseh and his Indians was with General Brock and his force at the taking of Detroit, (August 16.)

Michigan being now restored to the British, some of the Wyandotts returned to their villages from Canada — remained there, until they saw that country, again passing into the hands of the Americans, September, 1813. In January, 1813, Colonel Proctor, with an army of about 2,000 — made up of regulars, militia and Indians, met with a part of Harrison's army, under General Winchester, at the river Raisin. The latter were defeated in a battle between them there. The weather being cold and snow on the ground, some of Proctor's army were conveyed in sleighs to the battle field; the killed and wounded were hauled back to Detroit and Amherstburg. It was supposed that Winchester intended to

\*The British General left York with a reinforcement for the western frontier of Canada.

#### 108 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

have crossed over the lake on the ice to Canada from river Raisin.

Chief Tecumseh, Roundhead, Splitlog, with their Indians were in this battle.

Hinton, the American historian, here makes an egregious blunder in his account of the Wyandott Chief Roundhead's treatment towards General Winchester, when that officer was taken prisoner by the Chief, after the battle of river Raisin or Frenchtown.

Hear what the American historian says; —



“It was his (Winchester’s) lot to be captured by Roundhead, a Wyandott Chief, whose connection with the English had not taught him much of the courtesy which the officers of civilized nations ordinarily show to a vanquished enemy. He stripped the General to his shirt and trousers, and arrayed himself in his uniform coat, waistcoat and hat. Delighted with the grand and dignified appearance he considered to make in these spoils, he was not easily induced to relinquish them, which, however, was eventually accomplished, in favour of their former owner.”

Chief Roundhead had long been gathered to his fathers when this account of him appeared in Hinton’s history of the United States. Captain William Caldwell, John Brush and others, of the British Militia, from Essex, Canada, who were in the battle of River Raisin or Frenchtown, and knew this Wyandott Chief, pronounce the historian’s account of him thus, as being unfounded. They did not see nor hear of the General being “stripped to his shirt and trousers” by Roundhead, who, with one of his warriors, took General Winchester prisoner at some distance from Frenchtown, after the battle; and whilst they were taking him to this

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 109

town, he was beset by a gang of straggling Indians, who threatened to take the General out of their hands and massacre him. But Roundhead warned the savages that lie would tomahawk the first one that attempted to take his prisoner from him, or touch the General. “Stripped the General,” hey! When other straggling savages were now making their appearance, before Roundhead reached Frenchtown with his prisoner. The savages, who were yelling around him, and threatening him, were such as were never seen on a battle field, until after the conflict had taken place. Winchester was finally safely handed over by his protector to Colonel Proctor.

From Frenchtown, General Winchester, and about 500 of his men were taken to Fort Amherstburg, as prisoners of war.

Before General Winchester was brought in and delivered as prisoner of war to Colonel Proctor, at Frenchtown, and the Americans still hesitating within their stockade, on surrendering to the British, four of the former were observed by some of the British militia, making an attempt to fire a French barn, that stood a short distance from the stockade, regardless of their wounded men (if there were any) in the barn, which the Americans used for a storehouse. Three of the four Americans were shot down by the British militia, one after the other, at intervals, whilst running towards the barn with torch in hand; but the fourth one accomplished his purpose; meanwhile a wounded Frenchman, of the British militia, named Pascal Reaume, had crept into this barn for shelter, when it was burnt by the American. Some of his bones, and that of other human beings, were discovered in different parts, among the cinders of the burnt barn.

#### 110 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

Captain Caldwell was among the last of the British militia, who left Frenchtown, and he

saw but one wounded American, a Captain Hart, in an old house; here some drunken Indians threatened the life of a Frenchman, who was taking care of the wounded officer, if he refused to kill him. The Captain was taken out of doors and despatched with a tomahawk, in the hands of the Frenchman; and the house was then burnt.

During this war, between England and the United States, houses, property, and towns were burnt and destroyed by both armies.

In all ages of the world, plunder and devastation has been among the concomitant evils of war.

In the year, A.D. 400, or thereabouts, commenced that dark era, known as “the dark ages,” and during which long period of about one thousand years, all Europe was one vast theatre of awful events. By wars, for conquest, among the different nations, and by civil and religious wars, some part or other of that country, was repeatedly, during that eventful period, drenched in blood; since which, the same scene of warfare, for conquest, has been enacted in America, to some extent. War, between civilized nations, and between the whites and the Indians, while the latter were driven from the shores of the Atlantic, before the advancing and rapid increase of the former, towards the setting sun.

In the southern portion of the Great Republic of America, was witnessed, during the late great rebellion, the evils attending a civil war, as in “the dark ages.”\* To wit: the burning and destroying of habitations and property throughout the Southern States, by the northern armies, and differ-

\* During this period, the Germans had a war God, they called Woden.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 111

ent parts of that land, — south of “Mason and Dickson’s line” — was drenched in blood during this fratricidal war!

To the dark historic pages scattered over the civilized world, giving accounts of Indians massacreing (as described by American writers) the white intruders on their territory in the past, will now be added the scenes of carnage and destruction of homes, during this civil war in America.

In April, 1813, Colonel Proctor advanced into Ohio with his army, and laid siege to Fort Meigs, on the banks of the Miami. Tecumseh and his Indians went with this expedition; but General Harrison (in command of the United States army of the north) was securely posted there, and was receiving supplies preparatory to a contemplated advance with his whole army into Michigan, and over into Canada from Fort Meigs.

Proctor, on finding his efforts to reduce Fort Meigs unavailing, gave up the siege, and returned to Detroit.

In June (1813) a British force of about two hundred regulars, under command of Captain Short, accompanied by a detachment of the British militia, led by Lieutenant Thomas McCormick, and a party of Indians, laid siege to the American garrison at Lower Sandusky (in Ohio), now called Fremont.

The American troops, under Colonel Croghan, were securely posted within their palisade, surrounded by a deep ditch, into which the gallant Captain Short led his men, and was mortally wounded, whilst his sappers and miners were attempting to make a breach through the palisades with axes, under a raking fire of small arms and grape shot. This siege ended with the life of the brave captain, and the

#### 112 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

remnants of the besiegers retired, leaving the Americans masters of the place.

The defeat of the British fleet, commanded by Captain Barclay, on Lake Erie (September 10), rendered Detroit, in the hands of the British, insecure. Harrison crossed over Lake Erie with his infantry, in barges and sailing vessels, and landed about four miles below Amherstburg, unopposed, while his cavalry proceeded from the Miami to Detroit.

When news came that General Harrison was coming over the lake, Tecumseh proposed to Colonel Proctor that if he would send him and his Indians, and the militia then in Amherstburg, to where he said Harrison would land — about four miles below town — he would attack him before he touched shore, and told Proctor that he must not think the Americans would be so foolish as to venture up in their boats into the mouth of the river to come to the town, and pass under the “big guns” — the battery. But Proctor declined adopting his plan; thereupon Tecumseh reproached him for taking no steps towards preventing Harrison from landing.

Colonel Proctor, when evacuating Fort Amherstburg, ordered the barracks, King’s store-houses, and the council-house to be burnt, and they were burnt.

Harrison encamped, with his infantry, on a common in the rear of the town, and remained three days. Meanwhile, he warned his men to commit no violence, or molest any of the inhabitants around them. He asked some of the town people where Tecumseh had gone to with his Indians.

From Amherstburg, Harrison advanced with his troops to the River Thames, in pursuit of Proctor.

Nearly all of the British troops were taken prisoners by

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 113

the Americans soon after they evacuated Fort Detroit, and whilst retreating up the

Thames in their boats.

Proctor, on learning that Harrison's mounted riflemen were in close pursuit of him, on the north bank of the Thames, and near Moravian Town, halted, and showed some disposition, as Tecumseh thought, of finally making a stand, after a long retreat, and give the Americans battle. But here the Shawnee Chieftain was again disappointed; for no sooner did the Americans approach near enough to be heard, than Proctor started off again with his regular force on his retreat towards Burlington Heights, leaving Colonel Elliott and Tecumseh, with some of the Indians and militia, behind him. It was in a tract of woodland. The scattering shots heard all round, fired by unseen friends and foe, the yell of Indians in the distance, and bullets whistling through the air in all directions, indicated confusion throughout. The Americans retreated after this first encounter or skirmish with the Indians and British militia, some distance, or to where they met Harrison's infantry, who had now come up. Here a second encounter took place between the Kentucky mounted riflemen, led by Colonel Johnson, and the Indians, who had pursued them in their retreat, on foot.

The latter were soon overpowered and routed. Among the retreating Indians was a Potawatamie brave, who, on perceiving an American officer (supposed to be Colonel Johnson) on horse, close upon him, turned to tomahawk his pursuer, but was shot down by him with his pistol. Thus closed the second or last encounter. The fallen Potawatamie brave was probably taken for Tecumseh by some of Harrison's infantry, and mutilated soon after the battle.

#### 114 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

A half-Indian and half- white, named William Caldwell,\* whilst retreating, after the last encounter, overtook and passed Tecumseh, who was walking along slowly, using his rifle for a staff — when asked by Caldwell if he was wounded, he replied in English, "I am shot" — Caldwell noticed where a rifle bullet had penetrated his breast, through his buckskin hunting coat. His body was found by his friends, where he had laid down to die, untouched, within the vicinity of the battle ground.

There was but five or six Indians killed in the two short and quick fought battles; and not 500, as some Americans have been h yard to tell.

Thus was fought, the "Battle of the Thames," according to the brave, half Indian Caldwell's account, who was in both actions. He went a short time after the war to Chicago, from thence to Council Bluff's, on the Missouri, when the Potawatamies migrated thither. He was a Chief among this tribe, when he died in 1841.

I will here add a Captain Alley's account of himself, who belonged to the cavalry from Kentucky, under Colonel Johnson, in the "Battle of the Thames."

Captain Alley was unhorsed, during their retreat from the first encounter, and he concealed himself under a fallen tree, on the route. He heard the yell of the pursuing

Indians, and their footsteps, while passing over him. Shortly afterwards, he heard footsteps passing over him again, but in an opposite direction, — presently he heard familiar voices, and the tramp of horses, and concluded at once that his men were in search of him, “ha!” exclaimed several of them, “what

\*This Caldwell was a half-brother to John William and James Caldwell, of Essex, Ontario.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 115

the day — I am you doing here? “as he came forth from his concealment, and learned the result of their second combat with Tecumseh and his Indians.

Several of Harrison’s army claimed to have killed Tecumseh. “I killed Tecumseh; I have some of his beard” one would say; “I killed Tecumseh,” another would clamour; “I have a piece of his skin to make me a razor strop!” none of these bragadochias were in the last battle, in which the brave Chief received his mortal wound. Harrison returned from the Thames to Detroit; meanwhile, a part of his army were posted at Amherstburg. He issued a proclamation, extending his protection to the scattered inhabitants, if they returned from the interior, to their homes, on the western frontier of Canada; and urged the Wyandotts to return to their homes, in Michigan, promising them protection, so long as they remained neutral during the war between the United States and England.

Whilst the territory of Michigan was in dispute, during this war, Chief Adam Brown, at one time, turned over to the British commissariat, 100 head of beef cattle, worth then, \$12 per 100 pounds. A large portion of this number of cattle were of his own raising, and had the British Government obtained a correct or full statement of his own, and that of other members of the Wyandott tribe, of their war losses, they undoubtedly would have been paid accordingly, when all war losses sustained by the loyal people of Canada and Michigan, were paid by England some years after the war of 1812.

Chief Adam Brown, then somewhat far advanced in years, was in a barge, behind all the retreating parties, with his daughters and grand children, and was overtaken before

#### 116 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

reaching Moravian town, by the advancing American cavalry, and ordered to stop until Harrison came up, who, before passing on up with his infantry, gave orders to his men who were left to guard Brown and his family and others, as prisoners, that they should not be molested or ill-treated.

After the “Battle of the Thames,” they were taken back to the frontier, Brown was taken over to Fort Detroit, while his family were left on the Canada side.

Chief Brown was accused, — from mere rumour of supposition, — by the Americans at Detroit, of being one of the party who set fire to the hospital, in which some of the

wounded Americans were placed, after the battle of River Raisin or Frenchtown.\* He was wounded in the battle and had left Frenchtown with some of the British forces, when the hospital was burnt, which he was now accused of, and undergoing a trial by court-martial.

An American happened to be in Detroit, who, on hearing of Brown about to be executed for the crime wrongfully alleged against him, went into the fort, and found that he was the same man who saved his son from being massacred by some savages, and took him to the British garrison as prisoner of war. This occurred at the time Colonel Proctor besieged Fort Meigs — May, 1813. The young man belonged to Colonel Dudley's command, who was defeated in a battle with the British, near the fort. His father told General Harrison and his officers the whole circumstance, and requested Brown to show the certificate his son gave him, of his protection, whilst they were beset by the ruthless and straggling savages. Chief Brown produced his document

\*According to the American historian's account.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 117

again to the court, and General Harrison ordered his release forthwith.

Some of the Wyandotts who lived on Detroit river, near Amherstburg, on their return, found their homes in ruins, and the Americans still occupying the fort. Some of those from Michigan, and others from this frontier, sent back word from the interior to Harrison that they would return in the spring. It was now late in the fall of 1813.

But on learning, in the spring of 1814, that the British were preparing for a renewed contest with the Americans, a part of each band went to Burlington Heights, and joined the Indians who were with Superintendent Elliott. The men leaving their families there, joined the British Indian allies on the Niagara frontier — the Chippewas and some of the Six Nations. After the close of this war, and peace was declared, December 24th, 1814, the Wyandotts returned to their homes, near Amherstburg; some to Michigan, others to Ohio.

From that time forward the Wyandotts, of Ohio — until they broke up as a nation (by the treaty of 1855), where they were removed to, in the West — whenever any of their people of Canada came to live among them, they were always considered by the United States Government as members of the Wyandott nation, whether they were born on British soil or not; and whenever any of the Ohio Wyandotts went to Canada, they enjoyed the same privilege.

Among the Wyandott Chiefs who joined Colonel Elliott's Indians at Burlington Heights were: Warrow, Splitlog,\* Isadore; and among the Wyandott warriors was Samuel

\*Splitlog was a brother to Chief Roundhead, who died in August, 1813.

and Adam (jr.) Brown, Mudeter, Gould, John Clarke, Mathias (a brother to Splitlog), Hunt and others.

On their arrival, Colonel Elliott said to them, that if they had joined those of the Wyandotts who returned to Michigan, as requested by Harrison, or not have come to where he (Elliott) was then, there would have been no more "Huron Reserve" near Amherstburg — the Wyandotts would have forfeited their rights thereto for all time.

After this war, the British Government continued to give annual presents in goods to different tribes of Indians, from the American side, until the year 1836, and after the year 1848, the Indians on the British side received no more presents at Amherstburg.

Here, on this frontier of Canada, for nearly a century, goods and rations had been annually issued to Indians, which cost England millions upon millions of pounds sterling. During the latter part of that long period, it became more and more evident to the Home Government (from representations), that the goods given to a large portion of the Indians were only a detriment to them, as they would give it in exchange for whiskey. Some would disappear soon after receiving their presents, and return to their homes, while others would remain until king alcohol had stripped them of every thing, and sent them off almost naked.

The Indian wakes up from his last drunk, looks about him, and finding himself very miserable, and nothing left to get more whiskey with, struts off to his canoe to commence his journey homeward, with his long-tailed breech-clout, looking somewhat like a turkey.

In 1817, Lewis Cass, then Governor of Michigan, was commissioned to conclude treaties with Indians. He made

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 119

a treaty at Fort Meigs, in Ohio, with the Wyandotts of that State, by which they ceded a large tract of land, and reserved a tract twelve by fourteen miles, in the Sandusky river country. And before the Wyandott delegation signed the treaty, one of the Chiefs, named Between-logs, requested the Governor to add six miles (making it 14 by 18 miles reserve), for the Wyandotts in Canada, who, he said, might, in the course of time, become homeless, could come and become our neighbours. His request was listened to, and the six mile tract was added in the treaty for the Canada Wyandotts, for that was the intention at the time; and all the stipulations in that treaty were approved of by the President and ratified by the United States Congress. About twenty years after this, and when a new set of Chiefs had taken the place of the old hereditary chiefs — for the Wyandott people had taken pattern from their republican neighbors — adopted a sort of a republican form of government — elected their chiefs and councillors once a year.

They sold, in 1837, the six mile tract which was set apart in the treaty of 1817, for the Canada Wyandotts. It was sold for the Wyandotts in Ohio, by the United States Government, at public sale.

The republican Chief had also taken pattern from the vices of whites. To wit: rapacity and dissipation. To heal their wounded feelings, as they termed it, they gave each of the old hereditary ex-Chiefs, one thousand dollars extra, out of the proceeds of the land sale (of the six mile tract) for subverting their ancient right of holding their Chieftainship by succession, and adopting the election system. The ex-Chiefs, who received the one thousand dollars each, were the signers of the treaty of 1817.

#### 120 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

Between-logs, and some of the other Chiefs, who signed that treaty, with him, were not living when this money was distributed, their heirs, however, received the bonus or reconciliation funds. About this time, the Wyandott republican Chiefs, passed a Law to punish any Indian found instigating or agitating the surrender of any of their reserved lands (which the nation held in common); any Indian violating this law, thus, — was to be imprisoned for one year, and if any Indian proved guilty of signing any treaty, outside of their Council, he was to be punished by having his ears cut off.

What caused the Wyandott Council to make such a law, was to put a stop to their being continually annoyed by some commissioner appointed by the United States Government, who would negotiate with any party of the Wyandott nation, outside of their limits. The Chiefs compared such commissioner, to a hungry wolf, to wit; prowling about their borders to get a bite, then retreat and return again. One of the ex-Chiefs of a hereditary line, named Warpole, who had been shrewd and eloquent in Council, but had become now rather dissipated, was arrested and thrust into prison, for violating their law, against negotiating with any commissioner. But when the whites around them heard of this, the Wyandott Chiefs were threatened with violence or imprisonment, if any of them should be seen outside of their limits, so long as they kept Warpole in prison. The republican Chiefs now began to see their authority, even within their own territory, interfered with by the white man; they were powerless to resist the encroachment of their republican neighbors upon their rights to make and enforce such laws as they saw fit, without being molested in their outgoings beyond their limits. Warpole was let out of prison. The United States

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 121

Government, however, would allow no commissioner thereafter, to negotiate with any of these Wyandotts, for the surrender of any of their nation's reserved lands, outside of their reserve or council.

In 1842, the Wyandotts ceded all of their lands in Ohio. In the same year, it was decided in their council, at Upper Sandusky, to send an invitation to those of their nation in Canada, to join and emigrate with them to Kansas. But five families accepted this



invitation. The emigration thither, took place in the summer of 1843; they then numbered about 800. In 1855, the Wyandots made their last treaty with the United States Government; it was a final settlement. At this time, their number was reduced down to about 560, their lands, what they had then, in common, were parcelled out to each head of families, and all of their funds in Government trust, the accumulation (by several different treaties) of about sixty years, and from which they had derived their annual income, was all paid over to them in three years, from the date of this last treaty. They broke up as a nation, and became under this treaty, citizens of the United States; but they were not required to swear allegiance to the Government of the United States. A portion of this remnant of the Wyandott nation, still adhering to their ancient custom and mode of living, migrated some two hundred miles southward, in Kansas, from now Wyandott city, and obtained a tract of land from the Senecas. The Wyandotts, at one time, gave this Seneca band a tract of land in Ohio, when they were wandering about and had become homeless, or rather, the former permitted the latter to occupy temporarily, a tract of their land on the Sandusky river, but who ceded it to the United States Government,

## 122 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

without the consent of the Wyandotts, and emigrated west, to where a large tract of land was assigned them.

From the first, the administration of the United States Government itself, had always meant well towards the Indians, east of the Mississippi, encouraging the missionary cause among them as the first step towards civilizing thorn.

All went well until they were surrounded by such of the whites who did not care (any more than they did of their own) for the welfare of their souls. They sold whiskey to the Indians, making them drunk first, then cheated them.

## Chapter IX.

FROM the close of the last war between England and the United States, until the year 1829, the Wyandotts held peaceable possession of their Reserve in Canada. An Ottawa chief, named Charloe, then occupying a tract of land, with his band, within the vicinity of now Toledo, in Ohio, commenced annoying the Wyandotts, by setting up his claim to a part of this Reserve. Some of the Chiefs of the Chippewas and Potawatamies joined Charloe in urging their claim also, to a portion of the same Reserve, and laid their claim before Governor Colborne, at Toronto, then York.

They were requested to meet him at Amherstburg, whilst on his Western tour. On his arrival, the Governor notified

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 123

the Wyandotts to meet him, and the three nations, in general council, and have an investigation of each party's claim to the disputed tract of land. The meeting was held on a common, between the fort and town. At some time during the last decade of the 18th century, these same three nations met with the Wyandotts in general council, at Detroit. There and then, it was decided that the Wyandotts should have the exclusive right to the "Huron Reserve," near Amherstburg. Now the validity of their claim to the same was brought to a test, by the descendants of the three nations ignoring the decision of the Chief of all the Ottawas, who had long since followed his forefathers to the Shades. And here, now, stood Sir John Colborne, amidst the assembled Chiefs and warriors of the four nations, listening to what they had to say with regard to the disputed tract, through their interpreters, Seirs and Saunders. Chief Charloe stood foremost on the side of the three nations, in the strife between them and the Wyandotts. The latter produced their written document, purporting to be the decision of the Ottawa Chieftain, in favour of the Wyandotts, as we have notified.

From this, the Governor at once perceived that the Wyandotts had the best right to the Reserve, as set forth in their document, and decided in their favour, after calmly listening to the long stories of the disputants.

Thus closed the general council (August, 1829), and slam went the door — figuratively speaking — in the faces of the three nations, that shut them out from any further claim to this Reserve.

In 1833, Sir John Colborne concluded a treaty with Warrow's party.

### 124 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

At this time the Wyandott band, in Canada West, numbered about 150.

Chief Splitlog and his party were opposed to the surrender of any of the "Huron Reserve."

By this treaty, each male member of the band was to have 200 acres, and the balance to be sold at public sale, by the Government, for the benefit of the Wyandotts.

Whilst the surveyor was in Splitlog's neighbourhood, when laying out the Reserve into lots, the Chief, with his party, came and pulled up the surveyor's corner posts or stakes. Twice the stakes were replaced, and as often pulled up. Upon this the surveyor applied at the fort for military aid, but the commanding officer refused to send any of his soldiers to prevent Splitlog from stepping on his chain, and pulling up the stakes, without an order from the Governor.

His Excellency, however, never resorted to any coercive measures to carry out that treaty.

Two or three different times after this, Colborne appointed a commissioner to negotiate with this band, for a part of their Reserve. But Splitlog and his party continued to reject all fair and liberal propositions from the Governor.

Thus matters stood, with regard to the disposal of a part of the "Huron reserve," until the year 1836. In March, 1835, Sir John Colborne handed over the government of Upper Canada to Sir F. Bond Head, and the three nations commenced annoying the Wyandotts again, as in former days, by their persistency in claiming a portion of this Reserve.

Chief Charloe, with some of his band, went from Ohio to Toronto, to see the new Governor. Bond Head told them that he would meet them at Amherstburg.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 125

The Governor went leisurely round through the country, with his suite. Passing through Essex, he stood a moment on a great high bluff of Lake Erie, contemplating the wide expanse of the blue waters before him, into which terminated his south-westerly dominion. In October, 1836, he made his appearance at Amherstburg; rode on horse-back part of the time during his western tour. He wore dark pants, light vest, blue swallow-tail coat, with gilt buttons, and a white hat. In stature, he was about five feet nine inches, and of a rigid physiognomy — every body noticed his white hat. His Excellency put up at a first-class "Coffee House," kept by Arwison. It was the only house of entertainment in Amherstburg convenient, at this time, for Governors and officers of the Government to sojourn at; and after resting himself a day or so, he sent word to the Wyandott Chiefs and warriors to come to his quarters. After the usual greeting and shaking of hands, the Governor shewed the Wyandotts his plan of the surrender of a portion of their Reserve, already mapped out on paper for them to sign. This unusual mode of dealing with Indians on such an important matter, took the Wyandotts aback some; they looked at one another — looked at the Governor — in mute astonishment — all looked at one another.

But what could the Chiefs and warriors do? There lay the Governor's plan — his

ultimatum — on the table before them. Their Eeserve divided into three parts, designated by letters. Thus, A, B and C. There stood among them their noble-looking war chief, Splitlog, but now somewhat advanced in years, who wore on that day, and for the last time, his old fashioned scarlet military frock coat, an old fashioned sword being at his side, and holding in one hand

## 126 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

an old fashioned cocked hat. This coat, sword and hat was presented to his deceased brother, Chief Roundhead, by the commandant St. George, at Amherstburg, in 1812.

Splitlog was asked to sign the treaty, or rather the surrender, but he positively declined. Bond Head at the same time censured him for sending some of his party to Quebec instead of sending them to see him at Toronto, about their land matters, and remarked, that when this country was wrested from the French, all the Indians were included with the vanquished — equivalent to telling the Wyandotts that when England conquered the French, in this country, their rights to the soil, at the same time, became merely nominal thereafter. He ordered Captain Ironsides, Superintendent of Indian affairs on this frontier, to stop their annual presents, and asked him if there was a son of Chief Warrow, of former times, present. “Here he is, your Excellency,” replied Ironsides. “Well, then,” resumed the Governor, “If Mr. Warrow,\* and all those of the band who will take side with him, and sign, I will close this treaty with them at once.”

Splitlog was asked again to sign; he replied, stamping his foot on the floor, “I will not sell my land, I am determined to hold it; the day is now far advanced, and I am getting hungry; I am going home.” Indicating it by running his hand down his front; retired, followed by his party. Meanwhile, the Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies, who were congregated in front of the “Coffee House,” were patiently waiting to know the result of the Governor’s interview with the Wyandotts, and were expecting to be called in, to make

\* This Warrow was a brother to Francis Warrow, who was a Chief before him, and after the death of their father.

## SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 127

the surrender, in the event of the latter rejecting the Governor’s proposition. At this juncture, Chief Joseph Warrow held a consultation with his party, who all coincided with him in his conclusion, that there was no other alternative left to them but to sign the treaty, otherwise the three nations would be called in, to make the surrender of a part of the “Huron Reserve.”

One of Splitlog’s party (Thomas Clarke) had come over to the consenting side, and who, with others of Warrow’s party, discovered, on looking over the plan of the surrender, that the Wyandott’s stone quarry was included in block C, to be sold with the whole block of land, for the benefit of Indians in general, in Western Canada.

Block B, or middle third, to be reserved for the Wyandotts exclusively, and block A, to be sold for their exclusive benefit.

Warrow requested the Governor to give them back the stone quarry. His request being granted, he, with all those who took side with him, signed the treaty with Bond Head.

Thus ended the strife between the three nations and the Wyandotts, over the "Huron Reserve." Thus closed the treaty of 1836, and slam went the door again in the face of the Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies, that shut them out from any further claim to the Wyandott lands. This time, it was for all time. When the result was announced outside, all the representatives of each of the three nations, who stood in groups before the "Coffee House," suddenly disappeared, as if they were swept away by a tempest. Some found themselves at the tavern, where they drowned their sorrow in the intoxicating bowl.

## 128 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

There has never been such a gathering of Indians since. (There were Indians then of several different tribes, besides the four nations, at Amherstburg.) With the close of this year (1836) ended the issue of annual presents to Indians, from the American side, or United States.

In the month of December 1835, Chief Splitlog sent a deputation of five of his party to Quebec, to see the Governor General, and request him to interpose in their behalf, by annulling the last treaty, which was concluded between Sir John Colborne and the consenting party of this Wyandott band in that year. But their mission thither ended in nothing.

"Whilst the deputation were at Quebec, they visited the Hurons or Wyandotts, near the city. They were kindly received by the head Chief, who remarked — "I am very glad to see you — you and I are of the same house."\* He conversed with the deputation in the Wyandott tongue. No sooner was it announced that some Wyandotts from the West were at the Chief's house, than his people came hurriedly to see the strangers. About three centuries ago, then, a part of their nation migrated from now Montreal to the West, and now, here met some of their descendants for the first and last time. The Wyandotts who composed the deputation, have all since passed away. Splitlog died in 1838.

Originally, the "Huron Reserve" contained 23,630 acres. In 1800, the Wyandotts ceded to the Government a strip 500 yards in width, of the south end of the reserve, containing 1,240 acres. Subsequently, a tract, fronting on the Detroit river, containing 130 acres, was obtained of them, in

\* What the Chief meant by "the same house," was that they were of the same origin.

addition to the 500 yards front for military purposes, making it altogether 1,370 acres,

By the treaty of 1836, the old "Huron Reserve" was reduced to 7,770 acres, designated by B; block A containing 7,550 acres — the north part — was sold, as has been noticed, by the Government at public sale, for the exclusive benefit of the Wyandotts, and block C was sold for the benefit of Indians in general in Western Canada.

In 1857, Thomas Worthington, then special commissioner of Indian Affairs, met the Wyandott band of Anderdon in Council, and laid before them a proposition from Government, under a Legislative Act of June, in that year. Among which was, to give every male member of the band, at the age of 21 and upwards, who are capable of managing their own affairs, the privilege of having 50 acres allotted to him out of the Reserve — secured to each by a *bona fide* deed — withdraw from the band, and become enfranchised. But the proposed allotment of land did not suit them; therefore, not one has taken the benefit of that Act.

In 1858, Government sold Fighting Island, in Detroit river, to Thomas Paxton, for the benefit of the Wyandotts.

In 1863, Government sold the remnant of the oak and walnut timber on their Reserve (on the unoccupied lots), and the proceeds of which was added to their land funds.

Besides all this, they receive a rental income from their stone quarry. Upon the whole, their income now amounts to about thirty-four hundred dollars per annum, and increasing. There are now about seventy members of this Wyandott band in Anderdon. The Government has endeavoured to redress the grievances (not only the Wyandotts) of the different tribes of Indians in Upper Canada, who had been dealt

### 130 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

with contrary to usage and precedents, as Sir F. Bond Head did, when he divided their reserves into parcels, and made such dispositions of their lands as he saw proper.

No administration since can be held responsible for his acts. He was invested with the treaty making powers with Indians, by the home Government. Therefore, all Indian treaties that he made during his administration, stands irrevocable to this day.

I once asked Wm. Spragge, Esq., at Ottawa, then Superintendent General of Indian affairs, what would have been the consequence, had all the Wyandotts rejected Bond Head's plan of the treaty or surrender, in 1836? He replied — "That he (Bond Head) would have closed a treaty with the Chippewas of Canada, and the proceeds of block A would have been placed with their funds in Government trust, and the Wyandotts of Anderdon would have shared with them in the semi-annual distribution of income accruing from the whole fund." And that such would have been the result, cannot be

disputed.

The Chippewas between Lakes St. Clair and Huron, being so much more numerous than the Wyandotts, the dividend would have been much less than what the latter now receives from the Government.

In 1842, when some of the Wyandotts had left Canada to join their nation in Ohio, and to emigrate with them to Kansas the year following, the trunk containing the wampum belts and documents, was left in the care of a member of the Wyandott band in Canada, who, it was supposed, intended to follow the emigration party. Upon this, George Ironsides, then Superintendent of Indian affairs, and residing in Anderdon, within the Wyandott reserve, demanded the

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 131

trunk of him, but he refused to give it up, and soon afterwards sent it to the Wyandotts, in Ohio, who took it with them to Kansas. In 1864, his son having some private business at Wyandott City, in Kansas, was authorized by the band to bring back what he could find of the then broken up archives and scattered documents which his father had sent away from Canada in 1842; but he found only a part of the wampum belts and some papers.

Thus was broken up and scattered to the four winds, the archives of the Wyandott Nation. Captain Brant's *Beaver Belt* is now (or was) in the hands of the Senecas, in Kansas, some 200 miles south of Wyandott City.

The archives were held, when entire, by the Wyandotts in Canada, as something sacred left to them by their fathers.

In the summer of 1846, after the Wyandotts from Ohio had settled on their land in Kansas — having the Shawnees and Delawares for their neighbours, as in olden times — it was announced, one day, that a General Council would be held on the Delaware land. Here was represented the remnants of the different tribes of Indians who once inhabited a country east of the Mississippi and north of the Missouri rivers; and these were the Wyandotts, Shawnees, Delawares, Muncies, Potawatamies, Kickapoos, Peorias, Weas, Ottawas, Sacs and Foxes, and other tribes. The object of this general Council being called was for them to renew their ancient compact for their mutual protection against the wild savages of the West, who might make a descent upon them.

Many years ago, some of these tribes, now in Kansas, used to meet on the same occasion east of the Mississippi.

#### 132 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

At this gathering was rehearsed the hidden contents of each wampum belt — representing their international compacts, &c. — which the Wyandotts exhibited by

spreading them on the ground in the midst of the assembled tribes, for the last time.

This scene reminded the older Chiefs and warriors of olden times, to wit: the women busy cooking meats and corn for a general feast, and dogs fighting over bones all around them.

A group of Fox Indians were noticed to be rather reserved and distant at this general Council, and who knew of a certain dark bead belt then in the hands of the Wyandotts, with the shape of a tomahawk of a red colour on it, indicating some contemplated warfare whenever it was exhibited in a general Council. They knew, too, of the hostile incursions their forefathers used to make against the Wyandotts and other tribes about Detroit, over a century ago; how they were chastised by them at different times, and that they never made peace with each other.

The group of Fox Indians watched the Wyandotts with an eagle eye, and no sooner than they observed the crimson tomahawk exhibited, than they were off to their homes on their ponies, followed by wolfish-looking dogs.

In 1853, whilst sojourning on the south-western borders of Missouri, I became acquainted with a noble Cherokee Indian, named Stan Watie, at his residence, in the Cherokee country, west of Arkansas State and on the north side of the Arkansas river, to where his nation was removed from Georgia.

Once, in our conversation about olden times, he spoke of the warfare between his people and the Wyandotts, and how

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 133

some of his forefathers sometimes followed their enemy's track in the wilderness.

Where an enemy had just passed, his keen-eyed pursuer could faintly detect his track by the trodden grass or leaves, and by the broken net-works of the spider, which he would notice, now and then, was just done by the enemy whilst passing through some copse or underbrush. At some time in the latter part of the 18th century, a deputation of Wyandotts was sent to the Cherokees (then in Georgia) to conclude a treaty of peace with them. The deputation were kindly treated whilst sojourning among the Cherokees, and the two nations have been on friendly terms ever since.

In 1866, Colonel Rankin, of Windsor, then Member of Parliament, was sent from Ottawa and came to Anderdon, in company with Superintendent McKenzie, who called a meeting of the Wyandott band, in order to ascertain whether they were desirous of having a part of their reserve lands sold by the Government for their benefit. A petition had been sent to the Colonel from some of his constituents in Essex, to present to the Government, praying that a portion of the Huron Reserve, in Anderdon, might be obtained and brought into market.



Colonel Rankin, after delivering his message, retired — leaving the assembled bands to consult with one another on the subject, and their reply to him was, in substance, as follows, and as summed by a member of the band who acted as spokesman: “It is decided in our Council to send a deputation of three (including himself) to Ottawa, to confer with the Head of the Indian Department with regard to our grievances, and to have a settlement with the Government of the old score before surrendering any more of our

#### 134 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

reserved lands.” Among the “*old score*” this spokesman had reference to were, firstly, the one fourth (\$10,000) of the amount that the lands in Block C, as he says, were sold for, under the treaty of 183G; secondly. Point au Pelee Island, in Lake Erie (the McCormicks have since obtained a patent for this island from the Government); thirdly, Bois Blanc Island, in Detroit river, opposite Amherstburg. Nearly a century ago the British Government obtained this island from the four nations, to wit; “Wyandotts, Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatamies, for military purposes, and for a general camping ground for Indians when they came to receive their annual presents from Government, as has been noticed. Arthur McKee Rankin (son of the Colonel) has since purchased Bois Blanc Island from the Government — the Government reserving two acres of the lower part of this island, where the Light House stands. Captain James Hackett is now keeper of the Light House. Fourthly, the old Wyandott camping ground, next to the “French Catholic Church Property,” within the vicinity of Sandwich. About one and a half centuries ago, the Wyandotts, or Hurons, as they were called then, reserved this camping ground at the same time when they gave the adjoining grounds for the use of the Church.

As to the proceeds of Block C, it has already been noticed what it was intended for under the Bond Head Treaty.

About one month after this meeting, the Head of the Indian Department — still expecting the arrival of the delegation of three, as was decided on in Council — and the Governor-General still in Canada, who was on the eve of going to England — to the utter astonishment of the Department, the “spokesman” made his appearance at Ottawa

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 135

alone, with his old claims! He was told that they would be considered, and the lone delegate, or “spokesman,” left his claims against the Government with the Indian Department, which proved, afterwards, (with regard to the Islands) to be a myth, or unfounded! The affairs of Block C and the old camping ground, will be *looked into* by the new Indian Department, for the satisfaction of the band.

In March, 1867, the writer was authorized by Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Wm. Spragge, Esq., to call another meeting of the Wyandott band of Anderdon, in order to ascertain how many of them wore desirous of surrendering the surplus lands of their

reserve to the Government. The result was, a majority were in favour of it. One Charles W. Thomas, J. P., witnessed their signatures.

But owing to the Departmental changes which took place in that year, the Government itself was in a state of *intransitu*. This negotiation between the consenting party and the Chief Superintendent was lost sight of.

Ever since the Revolutionary War, it has never been the policy of England to drive the Indians out of her North American Provinces, after purchasing any of their lands of them. But they have been encouraged to cultivate their reserved lands by furnishing them with agricultural implements—to turn their attention to tilling the soil instead of depending on hunting game for their livelihood.

In short, all the inducements necessary have been held out to the Indian to adopt the life of civilized man.

In 1860, a scion of Royalty, the Prince of Wales, visited the Dominion of his forefathers in North America. When news came of his intended visit, the same feelings of gladness that pervaded the hearts of all true and loyal

#### 136 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

British subjects of the Anglo-Saxon race, was felt by the Indians throughout the Provinces, for they loved their “Mother,” the Queen of England. Her son, the Prince, whilst on his tour through the Provinces, met with several different tribes of Indians, and held a “talk” with them.

Since the formation of the new Constitution of the Dominion of Canada, the Indian Office, at the seat of Government, has become a branch of the Office of the Secretary of State for the Provinces, now in charge of the Hon. Joseph Howe.

This year, (1869) many of the Indians in British North America had the pleasure of seeing another son of the great and good Queen of England. Prince Arthur was received by her subjects here with hearts overflowing with gladness, as when the Prince of Wales visited the country in 1860.

## Chapter X.

### A DESULTORY SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF SPLITLOG.

IN justice to Chief Splitlog\* I will here give a brief sketch of his life. There being no register of his birth (unless it can be found among the records of the old French Catholic Church at Sandwich,) I will say he was born between the years 1755 and 1765. He was somewhat far advanced in years, when he died, in 1838.

\* To-oo-troon-too-ra was his Indian name. In English, Splitlog.

### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 137

His brother, Chief Roundhead, who died in 1813, was two or three years older than him.

These two brothers were, by birth, one quarter Delaware and three quarters Wyandott.

The age in which they lived was full of exciting and stirring events in North America. The whole country was one vast field of strife. War between the French and English for conquest, then followed, soon afterwards, the Revolutionary war, at the close of which was renewed the march and rapid increase of the whites westward, over the Indian territory; the border warfare between them, which finally resulted in a general overthrow of the red man's mastery over the country, from the lake to the Ohio river and beyond, and west to the Mississippi.

In November, 1791, an army of the Young Republic, under the command of General St. Clair, marched into the heart of the north-western wilderness of Ohio and encamped within the vicinity of what is now "Fort Recovery."

St. Clair had always been an unfortunate military leader, and that same fatality which had always attended him was now dogging his footsteps whilst marching into a hostile country with his army, accompanied by several families of women and children.

It has been remarked by Indian scouts who watched the movements of this army, that it appeared to them more like an emigration party escorted by a military force, than a regular army or military campaign, and that during the night, until they were attacked, some of St. Clair's men who were sitting around their camp fires, appeared sad and ill at ease, while others hung their heads, apparently brooding over the uncertainty of their situation. The whole encampment was

### 138 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

inclosed with brush piles, and in the center of which was St. Clair's quarters, and all their flour, in bags, was extemporized for breastworks during the deadly conflict.

During the day, the Americans saw unmistakeable signs of there being "Indians about,"

and night rendered the forest around them still more dismal and fearful.

The yells of a thousand Indians broke the ominous silence of the night, just before the dawn of day, and the battle of the forest commenced. All now was confusion in the camp. The bags of flour used for breastworks were soon riddled by bullets, scattering the flour over the encampment as if whitened with snow.

Here is Hinton's (the American historian) account of this battle, and of the warfare between the whites and Indians the year before, in 1790; —

“Pacific overtures were also made to the hostile tribes inhabiting the banks of the Scioto and the Wabash. These being rejected, an army of 1400 men, commanded by General Harmer, was despatched against them. Two battles were fought near Chillicotte, in Ohio, between successive detachments from this army and the Indians, in which the latter were victorious. Emboldened by these successes, they continued to make vigorous attacks upon the frontier settlements, which suffered all the distressing calamities of an Indian war.

“Additional troops were raised, and the command of the whole, amounting to nearly 2000 men, was given to General St. Clair. By desertion and detachments, this force was, however, reduced to 1400, when, on the 3rd of November, 1791, they encamped a few miles from the village on the Miami. But before sunrise the next morning they were at-

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 139

tacked, unexpectedly, by the Indians. The new levies, who were in front, rushed back in confusion upon the regulars. The latter, however, with great intrepidity, advanced into the midst of the enemy, who retired from covert to covert, keeping always beyond reach, and again returning as soon as the troops were recalled from pursuit.

“At length, after a contest of three or four hours, St. Clair, whose ill health disabled him from performing the active duties of commander, determined to withdraw from the field the remnant of his troops. Fortunately, the victorious Indians preferred the plunder of the camp to pursuit, and the vanquished continued their retreat, unmolested, to the frontier settlements.

“Of the whites, the slaughter was almost beyond example. Six hundred and thirty were killed and missing, and two hundred and sixty were wounded— a loss which proves at once the obstinacy of the defence and the bravery of the assailants.

“On receiving information of this disaster, Congress resolved to prosecute the war with increased vigour; made provision for augmenting, by enlistment, the military force of the nation to 5,000 men.”

Immediately after the conflict, an officer was found slain within the flour bags breast work, whom the Indians took for General St. Clair, and always believed afterwards to

have been the officer who commanded that ill fated army. And among the plunder of the camp was found a considerable quantity of farming utensils— ploughs, harrow-teeth, hoes, &c.

From this it was evidently the intention of the emigrants who were under the military escort of St. Clair, to commence

#### 140 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

a settlement somewhere in North-western Ohio before the lands were surrendered by “the red men of the forest” to the whites.

And it remains a mystery to this day what could have possessed this American general to venture so far as he did from the frontier settlements, at that early period, with several families of women and children among his army, into the “howling wilderness,” and haunts of the red man.

The same savage warfare was then kept up in Ohio to some extent, by the Indians against the whites, as was carried on in Kentucky, and which gave the name (in early history) of that vast region, bounded north by the Ohio river, as “the dark and bloody ground!”

Two or three years after St. Clair’s defeat, “mad Anthony Wayne” marched his army to the fatal spot (or within its vicinity) and erected a block-house, and inclosed a piece of ground around it, with logs and tree tops, and named it “Fort Recovery.” And whilst he was securely posted there parties of Indian scouts went to watch his movements. Wayne had been there some months, when Splitlog and his brother Roundhead started from Michigan, accompanied by some of their warriors, to go and reconnoitre this military station in the wilderness.

A wide open space in the forest suddenly appeared before them as they were nearing the station, every tree for about two hundred yards around the block-house was felled. Leaving their horses to pick around in the woods, they proceeded on foot towards the fort, and whilst cautiously approaching the margin of the opening, they discovered a picket guard peering into the forest, seemingly in dread of some lurking enemy.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 141

The Wyandotts could have shot the picket had they been so minded, but they concluded to have some sport with him. As soon as he spied the “Injuns” dodging behind trees, bang went his old-fashioned flint-lock musket, he fired a random shot into the forest towards the “Injuns,” and whether it was an overcharge or fright that caused him to drop his musket, he did not stop long enough to be questioned by the Indians, but forthwith made “tall and rapid strides,” leaving his firelock behind him. Away he went, crying “Injuns!” “Injuns!” and tumbling over logs and tree tops that strewed the ground. “Hello! — hey! — Injuns! — coming!” — his nether extremities appearing, now and then,

where his bewildered head ought to have been. Meanwhile the “Injuns” were amusing themselves at the frightened picket, until he disappeared at the block-house. Presently the Wyandotts heard a loud laughter which they supposed to be at the expense of the scared picket.

Next night Splitlog ventured alone, and cautiously crept through the logs and tree-tops inclosure around the block-house.

Owing to the darkness of the night, he could but faintly discern a sentinel standing a short distance from him, and whilst moving about “on all fours” his hand came in contact with something round— he was in a “melon patch,” — he took some of the melons and commenced a retreat, and on reaching the outside of the inclosure, “crash! crash!” the breaking of dry limbs under his feet caused him to make a rapid retreat. And as he started off, imitating a buck, thus, “e-yerh,” bang! went the sentinel’s musket, firing a random shot *at the supposed buck*.

Next day Splitlog ventured out (on horse back) alone,

#### 142 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

again, in a southeast direction from the block-house. He saw a white man coming on horseback, who, the moment he discovered Splitlog, wheeled around and commenced a hasty retreat. Stop, “Yankee,” vociferated the Wyandott, but the “Yankee” preferred widening the space between him and his pursuer. “Stop, Yankee,” repeated the Wyandott, who, in passing under a lodged tree across the path, had the cock of his gun broke off, by coming in contact with the tree. The American now halted a moment and aimed to shoot his pursuer, but owing to the rainy weather, the powder in the pan of his old fashioned flint-lock rifle was dampened, consequently, it missed fire. The American’s horse now began to tire down in the long chase. He dismounted, and whilst leading his jaded animal up the bank of a creek, the “Injun” came upon him — who had also dismounted, and aimed to strike the “Yankee” with his broken gun, but the latter warded off the blow with his rifle, and struck the “Injun” a glancing blow with it from the head to the shoulder, then started off, muttering — “you d — n Injun,” leaving his horse. Meanwhile, the two horses had left the path and were feeding around, together. The American disappeared, and Splitlog got his horse. Soon after this he saw the same white man, with others, driving several pack horses towards the fort, from this he concluded that he had been chasing and having an encounter with a contractor who was supplying General Wayne’s army with food. Soon after the party were out of sight he heard them shouting, as if exulting over something. “Ha!” exclaimed the Americans — it was where he had dropped his broken gun, and which they had found on the path. Splitlog’s brother came to him where he was, and both started together for their camp.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 143

Splitlog was one of the most expert among the Indian scouts in those early days who watched the progress of the white settlements in Ohio and Kentucky. He was one among

the Wyandotts who hesitated a moment about abandoning their homes in Michigan and going over to Canada at the sudden breaking out of the war of 1812. Situated at they were, on disputed grounds, between the British and the Republicans, he, however, at this trying time, was guided by the counsel of his brother. Roundhead, who concluded to continue loyal to the Government of England. The declaration of this war was a result towards which unforeseen events (to the Indians) had for some time been tending, hence were they thrown into confusion when suddenly finding themselves (in their own country) in the midst of war between the British and the Americans.

It was a final resort to arms in earnest between them for the mastery of the long disputed regions west of the lakes.\*

The United States claimed these regions at the close of the Revolutionary war, and whether it was conceded to them by treaty or not by England, the strife for the mastery between the two governments continued until the close of the war of 1812. The Indians at the same time within the disputed country claimed priority of rights to the soil, and such of them as believed that their rights would be more respected and fairly dealt with by the British, concluded to cooperate with them in keeping back the Americans from Michigan.

The United States, after the last war, still acknowledged the Indian's right and title to their yet unceded lands, in Michigan, Ohio, and in all the other Western territories, to

\* Such was the view then taken of it by the Indians, generally.

#### 144 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

the Mississippi, and obtained their territories by treaties, piece by piece, until the whole country, — with the exception of the lands still held by the Chippewas, about Saginaw, on Lake Superior — east of Mississippi, passed into the hands of the Americans.

There are still a remnant of the Miami Nation\* (who were once very numerous) holding a few sections of land in Indiana. The greater portion of this Nation — what was left of them — were removed in 1846 to Kansas. Their title to lands in Indiana, which they held in common, was now all extinguished; they were dissatisfied with the tract of land assigned to them in Kansas, by the United States Government, and they became disheartened, and abandoned themselves to vice and dissipation. The wreck of a small remnant of the Miamias, is all that can now be seen in that country.

The whites had endeavoured to civilize the Miamias when they were in their native country; but these, as well as other tribes, could not be induced to change their life and habits. It seems to be their inborn nature, to cling to the tribal customs of their forefathers.

Some, however, of the Indians, east of the Mississippi, who were more tractable than others, embraced the religious and moral habits of some of the whites, were contented

and happy, until they were led away by the vices which keep pace with the march of civilization. The most of them were consumed by the *fiery liquid*, dealt out to Indians by the white man.

General Wayne left “Fort Recovery,” and marched with

\* When this Nation were numerous and in their primeval nature, some of the finest looking men and women that ever was seen among the children of the forest, were among the Miamis.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. .145

his army down the St. Mary’s, to what is now the City of Fort Wayne,\* in Indiana. A stream comes in here from the north, called St. Joseph, which mingles its waters with the St. Mary’s river; from this junction begins the Miami, which empties into Lake Erie.

From this post “Mad Anthony” marched down the Miami river, some fifty miles, and pitched his tent where a stream comes in from the south, called Auglaze, and forms a junction with the former. Here, on the banks, between the two streams, he intrenched himself, and named this post “Fort Defiance.”

After remaining here awhile, without being attacked by the Indians, “Mad Anthony”† pulled up stakes again, and marched down the Miami some forty-five miles, to a place known afterwards as “Gun Settlement,” at the rapids; here he met and fought with about 2,000 Indians.

Wayne, after leaving some of his troops at the different military stations he had established on his route, had now but about 900 men with him, according to “Hinton’s account. Here a pitched battle took place; the Indians were defeated, 36 Wyandotts slain — 10 of this number were Chiefs, and several of this tribe in this battle were wounded. Splitlog and his brother Roundhead were in this conflict.

The Wyandotts firmly stood their ground during this deadly conflict, while many of the other Indians wavered, broke, and disappeared, leaving the Wyandotts and some of the others to stand the brunt of the battle.

The “bone of strife” was, at that period, as we have noticed, which should have dominion over the region west of

\* This place was named after General Wayne, who built a fort within its vicinity.

† General Anthony Wayne, was called “Mad Anthony,” by the frontier settlers, from his seeming determination to subdue the hostile Indians.



the lakes, — the British or the United States Government. Here, figuratively speaking, “Mad Anthony” Wayne, after gnawing the “bone of strife” a moment, threw it at the British, and retired from near the borders of Michigan.

Here is Hinton’s account of General Wayne’s battle with the Indians we have just noticed: “On the 20th of August, 1794, an action took place in the vicinity of one of the British garrisons, on the banks of the Miami. A rapid and vigorous charge roused the ‘savages’ from their coverts, and they were driven more than two miles at the point of the bayonet. Broken and dismayed, they fled without renewing the combat.

“In this decisive battle the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded, including officers, was 107. Among the slain were Captain Campbell and Lieutenant Fowles, both of them fell in the first charge. The American troops, engaged in the battle, did not amount to 900.”

On the 28th of August Wayne returned with the army to Auglaze, having destroyed all the villages and corn fields within fifty miles of the river. At that period it was all a wilderness within fifty miles from either banks of the Miami river up to Fort Wayne, in Indiana. And the deserted villages and corn fields were few and far between along the river valley.

About the junction of the Auglaze and Miami was a few corn patches and broken up villages at that time.

Therefore, the destruction of corn fields by Wayne’s army was not quite so extensive as that of the Philistines when Sampson tied fire brands to the tails of the foxes and sent them into their wheat fields.

While General Wayne was fighting the Indians in the vicinity of one of the British garrisons on the Miami, Colonel

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 147

Elliott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, was at this garrison with a military force under his command. Among the British militia with the Indians, was one Thomas A. Clark, a sub-agent of the Indian Department, who was wounded in this battle. Colonel Elliott endeavoured to prevent the Chippewas, Ottawas, and other Indians from leaving the battle ground, but they concluded, as the Wyandotts remarked afterwards, that the Americans were “scattering too much fire among them to stand their ground.” The Wyandotts and the few British militia were left to fight it out or follow the retreating Indians, but being overpowered by the Americans, who now outnumbered them, they were driven and forced from the field. Subsequently, at the siege of Fort Meigs, in 1813, Thomas A. Clark was captain of a company of British militia in Proctor’s army, and was taken prisoner by the Americans during the siege.

Splitlog always believed that the few Wyandotts in Canada could hold the whole of their

Reserve for all time. Hence he was always averse to a surrender of any portion of it to the Government, and continued to prevent the carrying out of the treaties that had been concluded at different times, between the consenting party of the Wyandotts and the Government, until Sir F. Bond Head came along (as has been noticed), who took the middle ground — he concluded a treaty at once with the consenting party. His predecessor, Sir John Colborne, had been importuned time and again during his administration by the white inhabitants of Essex County, more particularly of Amherstburg, to have a portion of this Huron Reserve brought into market. He appointed a commissioner at different times to make a treaty with these Wyandotts. But he never used any coercive measures (as

#### 148 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

has been noticed) to have any treaty carried out that was rejected by the opposing party.

So vexed was Splitlog at seeing two-thirds of the Huron Reserve disposed of without his consent, or against his will, that when Bond Head called to see him at his house, on his way to Toronto, he declined shaking hands with the Governor; he would not even look up whilst his Excellency stood before him, but kept silent and sullen, fixing his moccasin.

Splitlog was a Roman Catholic, and continued a firm believer in that religion to his dying day. But he always adhered to the custom of his forefathers. To wit: he believed in a god of the forest, to whom his nation are required by nature to devote a part of their time in feasting and dancing. The God of Heaven he looked up to as the ruler over all, and the giver of all with which the human race sustains life whilst on earth.

Every Indian tribe have their customs and different kinds of feasts. And all tribes devote one day in each year to the goddess Ceres in feasting and dancing, through whose hands their ancestors received the first corn, or maize, from the Good Spirit, and were taught by the goddess how to plant it. The season in which their descendants appoint a day for this feasting and thanksgiving to the Unseen Giver, was when the ears of the new corn fills and becomes fit for use — known as the new corn feast. Venison was brought into requisition on such occasions. This feast was generally held by the Wyandotts on the 15th of August, being the day on which they were first received into the Catholic Church, soon after they first met with the French Colony at Detroit.

At this anniversary, the yet unnamed children of the tribe

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 149

were named. Occasionally, adults wishing to lay aside their old name can have a new one given them on that day. Also children or adults of another tribe or nation, lately adopted into the Wyandott tribe, were named.

Other kinds of feasts were kept up and held at certain times the year round. Once a year

a night feast was held, in memory of the departed. On such occasions, dancing was dispensed with, but all joined in a condolence with some lately bereaved family of the tribe — a tribute of respect to the dead.

Chief Splitlog was one among the last in Canada who kept up the customs of their forefathers. One day, a few years before he died, and after the last council “wigwam,”\* in which they held their feast and dancing, had been demolished, and the ground on which it stood was ploughed up, he called together at his residence the few who still adhered to the ancient custom of their tribe. It was his last feast, and the last dance-song† of this feast sounded mournfully in the ears of the distant passer by who knew what it was. But the joyous feelings at such a feast as in former days was wanting. It was the departure of the custom of his forefathers, never to return.

At one time, during Colborne’s administration, Splitlog, with some of his warriors, had occasion to visit the seat of Government, and while there, the head of the Indian Department wished to have his portrait taken, but the eccentric chief declined.

I will here describe him as near as I can.

\* Wigwam, or we-go-wam, is a Chippewa Indian name for any kind of house.

† Two Indians, each with a whole snapping-turtle-shell, having some round and hard substance inside to make a rattling sound, sits on the ground with two folded deer skins (pelt side out) between them, on which they beat with their turtle-shells while singing for the dance. The neck of the turtle is stretched out to its utmost extension and stiffened with some hard substance for a handle. After the dance the two Indians are allowed to walk off with the deer skins as their compensation.

## 150 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

In stature he was fully six feet; rather inclined to corpulency, after passing the age of forty; features faultless, and full-faced, with a well formed Roman-shaped nose; eyes, when in his calm and quiet mood, were of a light brown, but when excited, they assumed a darker hue, and were piercing. A more noble-looking red son of the forest, nor a braver warrior, never was seen in his day. Fierce in battle, but humane and merciful to a prisoner of war.

The god of the forest, or Nature, the Indians called in their own tongue, “Te-zhu-ska-hau,” and their war god, “Sken-ri-a-tauh.”

## AN INDIAN’S IDEA OF THE FATE OF NATIONS IN OLDEN TIMES WHO FORGOT GOD.

The educated Indian who reads the Old Testament, perceives that among some of the remarkable events that has rolled on, through the successive ages of the world, since the great flood, was the fate of such tribes or nations as had entirely forgot God.

The children of Israel, whilst journeying through the wilderness, came into contact before reaching the “promised land,” with a race of giants, before whom they were “as grasshoppers;” and these heathen giants worshipped idols.

Their ancestors at some period, doubtless, worshipped the true, living God, until they became a rebellious and wayward people. God said to them: “If you forget me, I will forget you.”

Instead of being the people of God, as in the past, they were, now, the followers of Belial, (an emissary of Satan.)

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 151

But, one god alone did not satisfy these heathens, they worshipped different kinds of gods in the image, viz; the god of the sun, of the moon, and of the stars. And other gods they also worshipped as time rolled on; according to their whimsical notions.

The last of the giants of Bashan, and other nations of heathens, or idol worshippers, undertook to prevent the children of Israel from passing through their country, to the land assigned them by the Almighty. And what was the consequence? Not a “grease spot” was left of them, after the children of Israel had passed over their country.

The great, (probably eight feet or more in height) overgrown human beings were totally destroyed, with fire and sword, by the people of God. Such was their fate for entirely forgetting the true God, and opposing his chosen people.

But there were other heathens inhabiting some portions of the vast wilderness through which the children of Israel journeyed, who, doubtless, had also entirely forgotten God, and worshipped idols. In course of time, these heathens too, became great, unsightly giants, and probably turned into monsters. Finally, the Almighty caused them to be swept away from the face of the earth. Such was their fate!

Various tribes of the descendants of Ham have been found (and are to this day) by travellers and explorers in Africa, who are entirely ignorant of the existence of God; probably their ancestors forgot God before they wandered across the arid plains of Northern Africa into the interior regions, where their descendants worship strange gods to this day. But the gospel light has of late years flashed on

#### 152 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

some of the benighted black tribes of that dark and mysterious portion of the globe. The missionaries are now unfolding to them the word of the true living God, contained in the sacred volume.

The Indians of North America, in their original nature, although of a reddish copper

colour, from some cause or other, still retain the faith of their ancestors, who believed, as their descendants now do, that a great and good spirit exists who rules the universe.

The wild Indian of the plains has been observed to look up and wave his calumet, with grateful feeling, toward the Good Spirit, before he takes a smoke by his camp fire.

The great back-bone (the Rocky Mountains) of the West, has lately been cut through by the white man, for his iron track across the continent, and the Indians now hear the thunders of his "*fire waggon*"\* that sends its startling whistling sound through their habitations in the defiles of the mountains; their bunting ground is now ripped through into two great divisions, and the buffaloes — their principal game, and main staff of life — are scattered to the right and left by the "fire waggon," as it rolls along the iron track with its train. A great portion of the buffaloes of the plains have been frightened away southward by the locomotive on the Pacific Railway, probably never to return.

\* Locomotive.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OP N. A. 153

##### THE WHITE PANTHER— A LEGEND

In a boggy spot on the margin of River Huron, in Michigan, and not many miles from its confluence with Lake Erie, was a sulphureous spring, in the form of a deep pool, that discharged its surplus waters by an outlet into the river. (The locality of this spring may not now be found, as it was nearly a century and a half ago, or the pool itself may have long since disappeared, and the bogs now entirely overgrown with marsh grass and flags.)

Some of the Wyandotts then inhabiting the banks of the Huron river, who were inclined to be superstitious, concluded that a mysterious spirit, or some kind of monster lay hidden in this spring, from the strange action of the water. It had been noticed by the passer-by, to rise and fall, as if caused by the breathing of some animal beneath its surface. Sometimes the water was seen bubbling or spouting up about a foot and a half high — then suddenly the pool would become calm, and as smooth as the surface of a bowl of melted grease. Many of the Indians shunned it, as the abode or haunt of some evil spirit.

A Wyandott was known to describe what he and his companion once saw and heard there, whilst passing by, one dark and calm summer night, thus: Suddenly a great light flashed over the spring, looking like the phosphorescent lights of a great number of fire-flies close together, and all at once; then followed a rumbling, subterranean sound; feeling the earth trembling under their feet, "weet-se!"\* they exclaimed, and started homeward with rapid strides, as if the evil spirit was at their heels.

\*An utterance of alarm and horror.

A party of the superstitious Wyandotts belonging to the Prairie Turtle Clan,\* met one day, and encamped at the haunted spring, fully determined to know its hidden mystery.

These devoted seekers after a strange god, like the sons of Belial in ancient days, dedicated their heathen altar to this mysterious spirit, and offered burnt offerings, and signified their sincere devotion, by casting valuable articles into the spring, which consisted of various kinds of ornamented silver works, such as are worn by Indians, and which were obtained from the French at that period. They also cast wampum belts, beads, and other articles into the pool, as sacrifice offerings to the strange god.

A leader, named Ce-zhaw-yen-hau was chosen among them, to call up the spirit or wizard,† in whatever shape it might be, and whilst he stood on the bogs by the spring, chanting a song made by one of their party for the occasion, his friends at the altar offered burnt offerings of tobacco, and medicinal substance of some kind to the strange god, at the same time chanting their devotional song.

The leader stood as if transfixed, where he posted himself, holding in one hand his bow, and with the other a bunch of arrows;†† and with a firm mind, invoked the spirit beneath him. “Come forth!” he exclaimed, “you wizard

\* This clan or tribe, like some of the wayward and refractory tribes of Israel of old, were always inclined to be rebellious against the Good Spirit, and who were led by their evil thoughts and superstitious notions, to seek after strange gods. The very substance they obtained from the evil spirit (as will be described) in the sulphureous spring, which they used in their witchcraft and evil practice on their fellow beings, seemed to have consumed themselves. Not one of this clan can now be found living.

† The term wizard, among Indians, was applied to any person known to be a sorcerer, and who was sometimes accused of taking the life of his fellow beings, to gratify his revengeful feeling. Hoo-ke is the Wyandott name given to a wizard.

†† His arrows were of a species of the red willow, cut as they grew, to the common size of an arrow, and the sharpened end hardened with hot embers.

#### SKETCHES OF OTHER INDIAN TRIBES OF N. A. 155

that sit in here!” A loon came up, uttering its sharp screams, and flapping its wings, on the surface. “Not you!” said the Indian — forthwith, the loon disappeared. An otter came up next, when the spirit was called again. “Not you” repeated the Indian; “begone!” “Come forth! you wizard that sit in here!” repeated the Indian. Presently, the water began to rise, as if caused by some huge animal moving upward; a white panther emerged from the spring, its body partly remaining under water, and looking eastward. The Indians at the altar, started anew their songs and burnt offerings, when the panther was pierced in its side, with an arrow from the bow of their leader. Some of the blood

trickled down the arrow from the animal's side, into a small pan which the Indian was holding, with a long handle, and the moment it filled, the blood-tinged surface of the pool closed over the white panther's head; then a rumbling sound was heard, and the turbid waters seen by the Indians, rising in volumes to the surface, indicated the course the white panther had taken down the river. No sign of it was ever seen afterwards by the Indians at the spring.

And these members of the Prairie or Land Turtle Clan, now formed themselves into a secret society, and deified the white panther, some of whose blood (in their possession) became coagulated and somewhat hardened in a short time. Part was broken up in small bits, and distributed among them, to be kept in their *medicine hags*\* reserving the main or a whole piece, to be broken off in bits, and given to new members, after being admitted and initiated

\* The Indians generally use a whole skin of some furred animal, unripped, their medicine or conjuring bag— Otter, Mink, Fisher, &c.

#### 156 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTTS, AND

into the mysteries of their association. With this substance a member could obtain anything he may wish for that he could not acquire before; good luck always attended him on his hunting grounds; good luck attended his wife when making maple sugar; good luck attended him whilst on the war path, and he was always successful whenever he used the substance, either for good to himself, or for evil purposes to others.

The principal portion of this association were of the Prairie Turtle Clan. And they were repeatedly warned by the Catholic priest, then at Detroit, what would be the consequence, if they did not renounce the evil spirit or strange god they worshipped. "Throw away the baneful substance, which came to you from the devil, by one of his emissaries in the shape of a panther "he said to them," for just as certain as you continue to keep it among you, the time is not far distant when you will be all ruined by it, both body and soul." But the admonition of the priest was unheeded by the wayward Wyandotts, who continued to deify the white panther, and practised their sorcery with its concremented blood, until not one of them was left living.

The very moment a member divulged the secrets of this heathen association his fate was sealed, and whenever his (two) executioners were started off from their midnight consultation with a decree that he must die, there was no escape for him, unless he had received timely warning, and betook himself to flight, to become a fugitive among some distant nation.

A few years after the white panther appeared to the Wyandott at the spring, the Wyandott who called it up, and received its blood, turned traitor to his nation, and joined

their enemy, the Senecas, then inhabiting the banks of Niagara, and he, at one time, led a war party of that tribe to a Wyandott village in Michigan, while the men were absent. The leader of this war party slew two young Wyandott women in a corn field near the village; then flew northward with his men, and crossed Detroit river at the next island, just above the French fort; thence marched through the woods towards Lake Erie. In the meantime, a party of Wyandott warriors had started from their homes on the River Huron, crossed Detroit river below the Fort, and pursued the enemy. A Chippewa Indian happened to be passing by, who saw their leader slay the two Wyandotts, and carried the news to the next Wyandott village up the Huron. The traitor and his party were overtaken whilst crossing a miry creek, at some distance from the lake. They slew the renegade and his followers, but spared the lives of two Senecas, to carry the news to their people.

The eyes of one of the two Senecas left living were put out, and the thumbs of the other cut off. This ended the career of the Wyandott renegade who worshipped the white panther and received its blood.

During the first decade of the 19th century, the followers of the white panther god were rapidly decreasing in numbers, and the small remnant of this heathen association were finally broken up, and nearly all destroyed at once; like the white Salem witches, in Massachusetts, two centuries ago or more, who were hunted up and burnt, without distinction of sex, so every Wyandott accused of being a member of the association of sorcerers, and kept some of the concremented blood of the white panther for evil purposes, were killed outright,

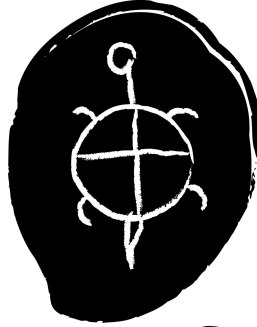
#### 158 TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF THE WYANDOTT.

on refusing to throw away the baneful substance and re-renounce the evil god.

Such was the fate of the remaining followers (that were then found) of the evil spirit in the white panther.

This traditional story of the white panther may seem incredible to the reader, nevertheless, some of the Wyandotts believe it to this day, and it was believed by many of their nation who have long since been gathered to their fathers.





# **Wyandotte Culture**

*Preserving the future of our past!*

ORIGIN  
AND TRADITIONAL HISTORY  
OF THE  
**WYANDOTTS,**  
AND  
SKETCHES  
OF OTHER  
INDIAN TRIBES OF NORTH AMERICA  
TRUE TRADITIONAL STORIES OF  
TECUMSEH AND HIS LEAGUE,  
IN THE YEARS 1811 AND 1812.

**Prepared for Culture Days 2012**

**Wyandotte Nation**  
Tribal Heritage Department  
Culture Committee

64790 E. Highway 60  
Wyandotte, OK 74370

918-678-2297  
**[www.wyandotte-nation.org](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org)**