HALF KING, SENeca DIPLOMAT OF THE OHIO VALLEY

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Three hundred years ago and more the English referred to the American Indians as native princes of North America. During the next 150 years the name was replaced with barbarians, savages, black caitiffs of the forest, and at times, Indians. The French called them sauvages (savages).

Famous Indian chiefs are known in story as great warriors, most often as great leaders who opposed English colonization. Tikamthi or Tecumseh, the Shawnee hero of many border wars (1794-1813); Michakinikwa or the Little Turtle, the Miami who waged unrelenting warfare against the whites until he was defeated by Mad Anthony Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794); Tah-gan-jute or John Logan, the Mingo who avenged the murder of his kinsmen by the Virginians (1774); Pontiac, the Ottawa who brought death and destruction to Western Pennsylvania (1760's); Guyasuta, the Seneca who led the marauders at the destruction of Hannastown (1782) and who fought at the Battle of Bushy Run (1763); and "Shingas the Terrible," the Delaware whose band laid waste the frontier settlements in Pennsylvania (1754-57), all are familiar names.

This generality does not apply to Tanacharison or the Half King, the Seneca chief sent by the Onondaga Council to watch over their own warriors and over their socage tribes in the Upper Ohio Valley. The reason may be that the Half King was great in the field of diplomacy, not a leader on the battlefield. Little is known of his early life, or of

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his physical features. Recently it has been written that he at one time lived in a village of Mohawk Indians who had been converted to the Roman Catholic faith. This village was along the Ottawa River above Montreal. In 1753 the French wrote of him as a good-for-nothing, insolent, headstrong character who had deserted their cause and had become more English than the English themselves.

Washington referred to him as "the old king.

A "Mingow" named "Tanareeco" signed by his mark the Indians' letter from the Ohio, dated May 1, 1747, recommending their friends, the Miami Indians, to the Pennsylvania authorities in Philadelphia. There is little doubt that Tanareeco was Tanacharison. This early communication evidences fidelity to the English for by it these chiefs at "Aleggainey" described the Miami as western Indians, "unifensife peoppell, Ridey to stop their ears from Harkening to the French Deluding Speeches." Although the letter was taken down by an Indian trader who must have been but slightly literate, its import is clear. The Indian chiefs living in the Upper Ohio Valley were trying to build a defense against French aggression. The letter, addressed to "Brother of Philadelphia," continues: "and farder Sayeth that it is not an nation speaks, but all the nations about, fife Nations and others." Tanareeco and the other "Mingows" who signed the letter were of the Six Nations. Mingo and Six Nations are synonymous.

Up to this time comparatively little was known of the Indian inhabitants of the Upper Ohio Valley. True, for about eighty years the

1 "That is, he came from the Christianized Mohawk village on the lake formed by the widening of the Ottawa River at its mouth, above the Island of Montreal." Donald H. Kent, The French Invasion of Western Pennsylvania, 1753, p. 47n. (Harrisburg, Pa., 1954).

2 Philippe Thomas de Joncaire to Sieur de Marin, September, 1753, as translated in Kent, p. 47; Marin to Joncaire, September, 1753, and Duperont Baby to Marin, September 5, 1753, in Fernand Grenier, ed., Papiers Contrecoeur, 58, 63. (Quebec, 1952).


4 Pennsylvania Archives, 1:737.

French had known of the Indian villages; also for about twenty years they had had special emissaries among the Indians, especially among the Shawnee. Before 1747 they had relocated one band of them near Lake Erie and two on land farther south along the Ohio River and nearer the French post at Detroit. English traders had established themselves along the Allegheny River before the forced Shawnee migrations took place. Peter Bcaillion was trading on the Allegheny by 1715,

6 In the autumn of 1668 two canoe loads of Seneca Indians came to trade in Montreal. They spent some time with Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, at his seigneur near by. Among other things they talked about Shawnee Indian villages along a river which had its headwaters near their homes in western New York and which flowed southwest into a great sea. The Seneca told La Salle there were fifteen or twenty Shawnee villages to the south along this river which they called the Ohio. The next year La Salle, in company with two priests, Dollier and Gailliene, visited the villages of the Seneca and met some of the Shawnee from the Ohio Country. They had been captured by Seneca war parties who enslaved them in their villages near Lake Erie. Pierre Marqry, ed., *Decouvertes et Etablissements des Francs dans l'ouest et dans le Sud de l'Amerique Septentrionale*, I: 114, 116, 130, 139, 141-142. (Paris, 1879). The French may base their claim for possession of the Ohio River Valley on La Salle's knowledge of the region; also on the two Sulpitian priests' act of taking possession of the land around Lake Erie. According to custom they erected the royal arms at the foot of a cross and to it attached an inscription that they had taken possession of the "countries and land in the environs of Lake Erie." *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 9:787 (Albany, 1853-87).

7 The father and son team, De Joncaires, was the principal French emissary among the Shawnee. In 1724 the Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor of New France, adopted measures to draw the Shawnee living on the Ohio River away from the influence of English traders. Four years later he reported that the operation was successful and that a number of this tribe had gone up the river and settled "in a tongue of land situate between Lake Erie and the River Ohio," nearer the French. Four years later, 1732, Governor Beauharnois adopted similar measures. He ordered Sieur de Joncaire "to locate them [the Shawnee] on the north bank of the river Oyo, with a view to approximate them to the colony, and to detach them from the English." In October, 1736, the governor reported Joncaire's mission completed. In the winter, 1744-45, Peter Chartier, famous Indian trader, led a band of Shawnee from their village near present Tarentum down the Ohio River, possibly as far as the mouth of the Scioto. *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 9: 1013-1014, 1033, 1050; State Historical Society of Wisconsin. *Collections*, 17: 156, 242-243 (Madison, 1906); "Deposition of three traders, George Croghan, Peter Tostee, and James Dunning," May 14, 1745, made before Edward Shippen, mayor of Philadelphia, in the files of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
James La Tort in the 1720's, and George Miranda in the 1730's.  

The Indians' letter of May, 1747, was followed by a visitation of Ohio Indians to Philadelphia in the fall to ask the Pennsylvanians to recognize them as a distinct group with needs different from their kinsmen living in the Mohawk Valley of New York. Heretofore English negotiations with the Six Nations had been at the Council seat at Onondaga (Syracuse, N.Y.) or at some place designated by the Council. The Six Nations were a confederacy of Indian tribes living in the Mohawk Valley. This confederacy consisted of the Onondaga, the Mohawk, the Seneca, the Oneida, and the Cayuga. In 1714 the Tuscarora were admitted into the league. The French called the confederacy the League of the Iroquois.

Conrad Weiser, veteran provincial interpreter and Indian diplomat, conducted the conference in the Ohio Country. At Logstown, on September 8, 1748, the "Deputies in Council" of ten tribes gave him, at his request, the following "List of their Fighting Men... The Senacas 163, Shawonese 162, Owendaets 100, Tisagechroanu 40, Mohawks 74, Mohickons 15, Onondagers 35, Cajukas 20, Oneidos 15, Delawares 165.


9 At this conference the speaker addressed the Provincial Council in behalf of the Six Nations warriors living on the Ohio. He spoke of the Six Nations' long friendship with the English and of their, the Onondaga Council's, policy of strict neutrality in English-French disputes. He added that in answer to the pleas of the English traders "to take up the hatchet" against the French, the warriors on the Ohio were prepared to do so; but they could not unless English supplies were forthcoming. The president of the council thanked the Indians for this expression of friendship, gave them presents valued at about £150, and promised to send an additional gift to the Ohio Country in the spring. Later, the time for the present-giving conference was set for late summer, 1748. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, meeting of November 13, 1747, vol. 5, pp. 145-152, in the series commonly referred to, and hereinafter cited, as the Pennsylvania Colonial Records.

10 On September 25, 1714, the sachems of the Five Nations asked the New York Commissioners of Indian Affairs to accept the Tuscarora tribe as one of the league. In the speech it was explained that the Onondaga Council had "received them." Peter Wraxall, An Abridgment of the Indian Affairs... Transacted in the Colony of New York from the Year 1678 to the Year 1751, edited by Charles H. McIlwain, 101 (Harvard University Press, 1915).
This conference was virtual English recognition of limited autonomy for those tribes represented at the Council. It should be remembered that the Iroquois claimed the valley by right of conquest over these tribes and looked upon the whole population as living there "by permission." The Iroquois they called "hunters"; the Shawnee and Delaware had been "given permission" to live or hunt there.

At the time Thomas Penn, the proprietor of Pennsylvania, expressed disapproval of the conference. He believed that it was best for Pennsylvania to keep the authority of the Six Nations where it always had been, in the Council of Onondaga. But the young warriors in the Ohio Valley had become irked by the inertia forced upon them by the Onondaga Council—the principle of strict neutrality in the English-French feud in North America. Their decision to deviate from the parent authority was hastened by the increased activity of both French and English who by 1748 traded along the Ohio regularly. Recently the Half King had been given authority over the Indian population in the region, for at the end of the conference the Half King, Scarouady, the Oneida chief sent by the Onondaga Council to watch over the Shawnee especially, and two other leading men "informed me [Weiser] that they often must send Messengers to Indian Towns & Nations, & had nothing in their Council Bag, as they were new beginners, either to recompense a Messenger or to get Wampum to do the business, & begged I wou'd assist them with something." Weiser also recorded in his journal: "I had saved a Piece of Strowd, an half Barrell of Power, 100 lb. of Lead, 10 Shirts, 6 Knives, and 1 lb. of Vermillion, & gave it to them for the aforesaid use; they return'd many thanks and were mightily pleased."14

After the conference "incidents" developed rapidly in the French-English race to take possession of the Ohio Valley. Both England and France had begun their explorations of it before 1700. In the ensuing quarter century there had been sporadic movements on both sides. In 1726 the French had taken significant steps to extend their jurisdiction

over the Shawnee who lived on the Allegheny River; in the early 1730's the Pennsylvania traders had become increasingly active; in 1744 by the Treaty of Lancaster the Six Nations had given Virginia the right to exploit the land west of the Allegheny Mountains; in 1744-45 George Croghan, "king of the traders," had begun his long trading career in the Ohio Valley and at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River (Cleveland); in 1747 the Ohio Company had staked out (on paper) a great claim west of the Allegheny Mountains; and in 1749 Celoron de Blainville had taken possession of the entire valley for Louis XV of France.

From 1749 to 1752 George Croghan and Andrew Montour, on the part of Pennsylvania, and Christopher Gist, representing Virginia and the Ohio Company, kept alive diplomatic relations with the Ohio Indians. At the same time the Six Nations sent several messages to the Western Indians and made alliances with them. Minutes of several of these conferences record the names of Indian chiefs but the spelling is so varied that one is unable to follow Half King's part in the negotiations. However, it is evident that he did continue in the field of diplo-
macy, for at Virginia's conference with the Ohio Indians at Logstown in 1752 he emerges a seasoned diplomat. This conference took place without the official sanction of the Onondaga Council, but the French peril was a threat to the very existence of the Ohio Indians and the Half King knew that without English arms and ammunition they were helpless. The Miami, whom he had recommended to his "Brother of Philadelphia," had been massacred by French-incited Indians; the French had established trading houses along the Allegheny and Ohio rivers; and Sieur de Joncaire had alternately cajoled and threatened his kinsmen at Logstown.

On the English side of the equation there had been no violence. Properly, the Virginians had adhered to the Treaty of Lancaster and were at Logstown to fulfill one of its stipulations—that when they were ready to exploit the land west of the mountains the Six Nations would be given a further consideration (gifts). But the Half King, a man of integrity, was not a traitor to the Onondaga Council. In answer to Virginia's request for land upon which to make settlements and build fortified storehouses he replied in the name of the Ohio Indians: "We assure you of our willingness to agree to what our council does, or has done, but we have not the full power in our Hands here on Ohio." In refutation of Virginia's argument that land was required in order to support a settlement the Half King answered: "In regard to our request, to build a strong house at the Monaungahela, you told us it would require a settlement to support it with provisions, and necessaries; it is true, but we will take care that there shall be no scarcity of that kind, until we can give a full answer; altho' in all our wars, we dont consider provisions, for we live on one another, but we know it is different with

21 Although the French plan for a general attack on the Miami Indians at Pickawillany in 1751 was not carried out, the French killed thirty Miami warriors during the winter of 1751-52. George Croghan to James Hamilton, February 8, 1752, in Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 5:568-569.
22 Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 5:530-531.
23 At the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744, "Canassatego desired they [the Virginians] would represent their Case to the King, in order to have a further Consideration when the Settlement increased much further back. To which the Commissioners agreed, and promised they would make such a Representation faithfully and honestly."
24 Minutes of the Logstown Conference, June 13, 1752, in Mulkern, George Mercer Papers, 136.
our brethren the English."\textsuperscript{25}

Finally, Half King and other chiefs at the conference signed a confirmation of the Lancaster deed giving their consent to British settlements "on the southern or eastern Parts of the River Ohio, called otherwise the Allagany" and promised "that the said Settlement or Settlements shall be unmolested."\textsuperscript{26} Also, by the deed the Virginians were assured of all possible Indian protection. Thus the Half King had not acted in direct discord with the desire of the Onondaga Council, yet he had gained English good will, warlike supplies, and the promise of assistance against French aggression. And for this—selling the land to the English—the French called him worthless.

Shortly after the conference the Ohio Company began preparations to build the "fortified storehouse" sanctioned by the Half King. Day by day the French threat to the Ohio Indians became more real. Again, the Miami were attacked and their village at Pickawillany (near Piqua, Ohio) was destroyed.\textsuperscript{27} Although Marquis Duquesne, governor of New France, had tried to keep French troop movements a secret from the Indians, he was unsuccessful. Therefore, he ordered his commandant to inform them that the land on the Belle Riviere (Ohio River) belonged unequivocally to the French and that they intended to settle it.\textsuperscript{28} By midsummer in 1753 John Fraser, the Englishman who had

\textsuperscript{25} Mulkearn, \textit{George Mercer Papers}, 136.

\textsuperscript{26} For confirmation of the Lancaster deed, see facsimile reproduction of \textit{The Case of the Ohio Company}, in Mulkearn, \textit{George Mercer Papers}, Part 2, Appendix, pp. 20-21.

\textsuperscript{27} On June 21, 1752, about two hundred Chippewa and Ottawa Indians led by Charles Michel Langlade, a Frenchman, swooped down upon flourishing Pickawillany. The village lay practically undefended for most of the Indian men and boys were working in their cornfields. There were several English traders in and about the village. The French offered the Miami (Twightwee) a truce if they would deliver the English traders to them as captives. The Indians were defenseless, and so they pretended to acquiesce and delivered all except two Englishmen, Thomas Burney and Andrew McBryar, whom they hid. Four of the traders taken captive were later sent to France and were returned to Philadelphia in May, 1753. Thomas Burney, who carried the news to the English settlements, related that "in the Skirmish there was one white man and fourteen Indians killed, and five white men taken Prisoners." One of the Indians killed was their chief, La Demoiselle, or Old Britain, who was boiled and eaten on the spot. A short and concise account of this disaster is in Lawrence H. Gipson's, \textit{The British Empire before the American Revolution}, 4:221-224 (New York, 1939).

\textsuperscript{28} Duquesne to Contrecoeur, April 14, 1753, in Fernand Grenier, ed., \textit{Papiers Contrecoeur}, 31-32 (Quebec, 1952).
been trading and blacksmithing on the Allegheny River at the mouth of French Creek (Franklin, Pa.) for more than ten years, had been dispossessed by the French.29 Also, they were building a fort on French Creek30 (Fort Le Boeuf at Waterford, Pa.) and establishing a supply base at present Franklin.

May, 1753, marks the beginning of Half King's final struggle to keep the Ohio Valley for the Six Nations Indians. George Croghan and his partner, William Trent, who was also in the employ of both Virginia and the Ohio Company, were at their trading house at the mouth of Pine Creek (Etna, Pa.) when the news came that Fraser had been dispossessed and that the French army was advancing toward the fork of the Ohio. The Half King was at his home at Logstown. The traders summoned him to Pine Creek. There the Indians listened to the words of William Trent, spoken in the name of Virginia. He told the Half King that the governor of Virginia "look'd upon the Ohio Lands to belong to them the Indians, and that if the French attempted to settle them or build any Forts, the Virginians would supply them with Arms and Ammunition." Half King and his comrades "counselled all that night and next day till about two o' the Clock in the afternoon." In a speech worthy of a deputy of the Onondaga Council whose policy was one of strict neutrality in this white man's feud, the Half King told Trent that if the French came "peaceably they would receive them as Friends, but if they came as Enemies they would treat them as such." And to uphold further the policy of the Council he, by a veiled suggestion, asked the English traders to leave.31 However, the Half King did not refuse Virginia's offer of arms and ammunition.

Before the promised warlike stores arrived from Virginia an Indian who came from Montreal remarked that the whole earth was trembling from the marching of the French toward the Ohio.32 Andrew Montour, who was on a mission to Onondaga for the governor of Virginia, re-
ported back that "after he had come to Onondago, there arrived there seven French Indians with a Belt of (all) black Wampum, six feet long and twelve granes of Wampum in breadth, to inform the Six Nations, by order of the Governor of Canada that they intended early this summer to be at Ohio's River, with a large body of men, two hundred and fifty of which were now (and has been upwards of two months) at a carrying place that leads from Niagara to the heads of the Ohio's building canoes & making other preparations for the reception of the remainder of their army." 33 Although his mission ended in failure on one part, Montour did receive from the Onondaga Council official sanction for Virginia to assist their "Hunters at Ohio" if they "shou'd be struck." 34

Already the Half King had acted according to Indian protocol. When Joncaire dispossessed John Fraser at Venango, the Delaware living at the place issued a warning to the French to stop building forts on Indian land, "at least not to presume to come farther than Niagara." The French refused. Now Half King took a second step, according to custom, and sent another delegation to the French. 35 They returned to Logstown during the time that William Trent was holding his conference with the Half King and other chiefs of the Ohio Indians and reported a second refusal. Not only had the French refused to leave but they had informed the Indians that they were under orders to build four forts along the river. It was agreed then that Half King and half of the Indians would go to the French commandant to give him the third and final warning to stop trespassing on Indian lands. 36 If this warning were disregarded the Half King was duty bound to make war on the French. Scarouady, the Oneida chief sent by the Onondaga Council to watch over the Shawnee living on the Ohio, told the Pennsylvanians treating with the Indians at Carlisle "the great Being who lives above, has ordered Us to send Three Messages of Peace before We make War; And as the Half King has before this Time delivered the third and last

34 This message from the Onondaga Council to the governor of Pennsylvania, July 31, 1753, is in Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 5:637.
Message, We have nothing now to do but to strike the French.”

Half King’s speeches at this conference as reported by the French commandant, Sieur de Marin, were firm but not belligerent; the commandant’s likewise. Nevertheless, the French refused to stop the expedition, and the Half King in a final sentence warned Marin that his refusal was the third and final one. It is doubtful if Marin understood the meaning of Half King’s statement. When Major George Washington, en route to the French fort on a mission for the governor of Virginia, conferred with the chief at his home at Logstown in December, 1753, he heard of the conference from the Half King himself. He told Washington that the French likened the Indians to “Flies, or Musquitos” and told them, as for owning the land “there is not the Black of my Nail yours.” Washington was under “Orders to make all possible Dispatch” to deliver Governor Dinwiddie’s letter to the commandant of the French expeditionary force to the Ohio, but the Half King begged him to stay at Logstown for about three days for he intended “to send a Guard of Mingo’s, Shannoahs, and Delawares, that our Brothers [the English] may see the Love and Loyalty we bear them.” The young Virginian’s business was urgent and he refused to wait until the Half King could get the “French Speech-Belt” which was in his “hunting-Cabbin” some distance away and until certain Indians who were out hunting would return. His decision to push ahead without an escort displeased the Half King and he told Washington “that he could not consent to our going without a Guard, for Fear some Accident should befal us, and draw a Reflection upon him.” The Half King was taking advantage of this opportunity to visit the French camp and to consolidate his position with the Delaware and Shawnee. The third and final refusal of the French to stop building forts on the Ohio River left the Indians no alternative but to war against them, and the Half King intended “to deliver up the French-Speech-Belt, and make the Shanoahs and Delawares do the same.” He sent for Shingas, king of the Delaware, to bring the Delaware wampum to his cabin; he ordered two Delaware warriors to be ready to attend the entourage scheduled to leave Logstown on Thursday morning. Before the Half King went

37 Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 5:668.
38 “Conseil Tenu Par Des Tsonnontouans Venus De La Belle-Riviere,” September 2, 1753, in Grenier, Papiers Contrecoeur, 58.
39 According to royal instructions to Governor Dinwiddie it was necessary to send a message to the commandant of the French forces on the Ohio asking him to stop encroaching “on his Majesty’s Lands on the Ohio.”
40 Washington’s Journal, 1754, p. 11.
to bring the French speech belt from his hunting cabin he sent runners to bring Shawnee chiefs to the conference scheduled for Wednesday evening.

It is apparent that Washington was not fully conversant with Indian protocol, nor could he have been fully aware of the true character of the Half King, for he was suspicious of the chief's fidelity to the English on more than one occasion. After he finished his mission he was eager to deliver the French answer to Governor Dinwiddie, but the Half King was not in such a hurry. His mission at Fort Le Boeuf was of utmost importance to the Indians and had not been completed. The Shawnee chiefs refused to return their speech belts to the French, and the Delaware belt sent from Logstown by King Shingas was yet in the hands of their chief, Custaloga. St. Pierre, the French commandant, knew the return of these belts meant severance of diplomatic relations, and he was too wily to be caught in such a trap. When the Half King offered him the wampum he "evaded taking it, and made many fair Promises of Love and Friendship; said he wanted to live in Peace, and trade amicably with them, as a Proof of which he would send some Goods immediately down to the Logg's-Town for them." The Indians always welcomed trade goods. Undoubtedly, the Half King's real reason for not returning with the Virginians was related to this promise although he made other excuses to Washington. He did, however, accompany the Virginians to the French storehouse at the mouth of French Creek. Here, he stayed for about two weeks.

On January 15, 1754, "Five Canoes of French came down to Log's Town in Company with the Half King and some more of the Six Nations, in Number an Ensign, a Serjeant, and Fifteen Soldiers." Although he came down the river with the French he soon displayed his status with them. George Croghan and John Patten were at Logstown on a mission for Pennsylvania—the return of Shawnee captives to their kinsmen. The day after the French arrived they took John Patten prisoner when he was walking past the officer's tent. By the time George Croghan and the interpreter, Andrew Montour, got to the French camp Half King was already there. As a result of the "high Dispute" between the chief and the French officer, Croghan and Montour were informed that the French "meant no hurt to Mr. Patton, but wondered he should pass backward and forward without calling in." The Indians were so "uneasy at the French" that the French left in their canoes to go to an Indian town about two miles farther down the river, there to stay until

41 Washington's Journal 1754, p. 22.
reinforcements came. Although George Croghan, who reported this incident, made no mention of trade goods brought by the French, it may be assumed that the old chief insisted that they live up to the promises made at Fort Le Boeuf. Nevertheless, the French advance troops had a Six Nations' escort on their way to take possession of the Indians' land.

February, March, and April, 1754, was the critical time in the Half King's career. He was the Onondaga Council's deputed ruler over the Upper Ohio Valley; he cast his lot with the English and lost the Indians' lands to the French. The English gave him all the help within their power, but it was too little and too late. In February William Trent had brought to Logstown the arms and ammunition given the Indians at the Winchester Conference in September, 1753. Also he brought the news that Governor Dinwiddie had acted quickly on Washington's report of French strength and aggression on the Ohio. The governor had sent Trent a captain's commission and orders for him to enlist one hundred frontiersmen and to build a fort at the fork of the Ohio, the place recommended by Washington. The same month Monsieur La Force, the French officer at Logstown, had issued the Indians an ultimatum. He said that in twenty days the English and all the Indians who were with them would be killed. The speaker for the Six Nations replied that they were not afraid of the French and if they attempted to kill them they would soon find out who were the "best Men, You or We." When Trent began to build at "the Point" the Half King and other Indians, true to the promise made the Virginians at the treaty at Logstown in June, 1752, helped in the work. Unfortunately, about April 12, Captain Trent was forced to leave his command and go back to Wills Creek (Cumberland, Md.) for food for his men. No sooner had he left than intelligence came that the French were coming down the Allegheny River and were scheduled to arrive before the storehouse in four days. Ensign Ward, third in command, tried in vain to induce John Fraser, second in command, to return from his trading house at the mouth of Turtle Creek. Half King then advised Ensign Ward to

44 Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 6:22.  
45 Case of the Ohio Company, in Mulkearn, George Mercer Papers, Part 2, p. 16.
build a stockade around the little building. This he did, and before the French appeared it was finished. When the French summoned the Virginians to capitulate the Half King bargained with them and asked them to wait until the commanding officer returned. The French would have none of it. Ensign Ward in the deposition of their withdrawal paid tribute to this great chief. He told of Half King's assistance and advice. He related that when the French took possession of the stockade the old chief shouted defiance in their faces and said that he himself had ordered it and had laid the first log.46

Half King's fidelity to the English and to his duties as the Six Nations' chief deputy on the Ohio did not diminish before the display of French might. Before Ensign Ward and his men left the next day, April 18, 1754, the Half King gave him a message to the governors of Virginia and Pennsylvania. In this message47 the Half King did not ask the English to come and dislodge the French from the little fort the Virginians had built. He asked for assistance from them for the Indians "are ready to strike" the French; he told the governors that the Indians had been waiting a long time for the French to show their hands and now they saw "what they design to do with Us"; he spoke for a people who had been dispossessed of land rightfully theirs; he addressed the governors as his equals. Just as Governor Hamilton and Governor Dinwiddie were held responsible for the integrity of their colonies by the proprietors and the crown, the Half King was held responsible for the integrity of the Six Nations' land on the Ohio by the Onondaga Council. Although addressed to both the governor of Virginia and the governor of Pennsylvania, undoubtedly he looked more to Virginia for assistance. There had been almost continuous negotiations between the Half King and that colony from June 1, 1752, when the Logstown Conference convened. At that conference the Virginia commissioners asked the Half King "for the lands at Monaungahela" upon which the Ohio Company wished "to build a stronghouse or fort very soon." The Half King informed the Virginians that it was not within his power to grant this permission for all matters concerning lands must be settled finally with the Onondaga Council.48 Later, negotiations between Virginia and the Council at Onondaga show that Virginia for the most part re-

48 Minutes of the Logstown Conference, In Mulkearn, George Mercer Papers, 135.
spected that authority.\(^49\) In May, 1753, William Trent told the Half King that the governor of Virginia looked upon the Ohio lands as Indian lands; also that he would supply the Half King weapons to fight French aggression.\(^50\) At another conference, August, 1753, Trent made the following speech at a council held at Logstown: “Friends & Brethren I am come here to brighten the Chain of Friendship so long subsisting betwixt us, & to assure You I will build a Trading House on that Piece of Ground which you appointed the Commissioners last Spring; which House shall serve as a Nursery for You, & at the same Time be a Place of Defence, where you may defend yourselves from Your Enemies, & Shelter your Women & Children in Time of Danger; to confirm what I have said, & to shew the Goodwill I bear You, I present You with this String of Wampum.”\(^51\)

With the assistance of the Half King and his followers the Virginians had built the fort. Now this “Place of Defence” against French aggression, the shelter for their “Women & Children in Time of Danger,” was wiped away. Time has shown that the Indians’ right to the lands passed with it.

About a month later the old chief was at his camp in Fayette County, known to us as the Half King’s Rocks, near the appointed place of meeting with the English, the forks of the road. From here he sent the warning to George Washington, encamped at the Great Meadows, that a French force was in the vicinity. The Indians scouted the French. Washington came and conferred with the Half King, and upon his recommendation the Virginians sought out the French force and defeated them. In the skirmish Coulon de Jumonville, the leader, was killed.\(^52\) For this, French wrath against the old chief reached its

\(^{49}\) As soon as Governor Dinwiddie had received the minutes of the Logstown Conference he set in motion machinery for a conference with the chief representatives of the Onondaga Council in New York. Unless representatives of this parent council accepted “a gift” for the lands along the Ohio River Virginia’s right to the land would not be valid. The Six Nations from New York would not come to Winchester in 1753, and by the time of the scheduled 1754 conference the French had descended upon the valley. However, Governor Dinwiddie expected the conference to take place. He spent sixteen days at Winchester “in great Expectation and Uneasiness,” waiting in vain for the Indians to come. Mulkern, George Mercer Papers, 428-30, 648-49.

\(^{50}\) Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 5:615.

\(^{51}\) “William Trent’s Account of his Proceedings with the six Nations,” at Logstown (1753). See note 36.

\(^{52}\) Washington’s Journal, 1754, pp. 88-97.
zenith. Governor Duquesne himself ordered the commandant at Fort Duquesne to find some way to have the Half King killed by the Indians, and in such a manner that the French could not be implicated in the murder.\(^53\) This fact was relayed immediately to the Half King by his spies in the French fort.\(^54\)

Washington relied heavily upon his advice for he called a council of war at the Great Meadows and asked him, Scarouady, and chiefs of the Delaware and Shawnee to attend. But at this council he made a grave error so far as the Half King was concerned. The Delaware were out of favor with the Onondaga Council and were suspected of being in the French interest. Shingas, the impetuous king of the Delaware, won Washington's confidence at the council. He took Shingas' advice in preference to the Half King's. Washington wrote in his journal: "We were to prepare a great war-belt to invite all the warriors who would receive it, to act independently of their King and council," meaning the Half King and the Onondaga Council. That this was an affront to the Half King is evident for he retired from Washington's camp immediately and took his warriors and the women and children to a safe place. George Croghan was so alarmed that he advised Washington to send Andrew Montour after him to try to persuade him to return. Half King's answer was that he was preparing to return but a blow that he had received prevented him. The blow may have been the affront at the council of war.\(^55\)

It is said that after the battle of Fort Necessity the Half King and his men went to Fort Cumberland. By August, however, he was at Michael Teaffe's trading house on the Susquehanna, a few miles from John Harris's (Harrisburg). When Conrad Weiser came to Harris's on August 30, en route to George Croghan's home at Aughwick (Shirleysburg) to confer with the Indians, he sent for the Half King. On the road from Harris's to Croghan's the old chief told Conrad Weiser what he knew of Washington's engagement at Fort Necessity. Although he prefaced his remarks with "the Col. was a good-natured man but had no Experience," he dealt rather harshly with him. Weiser recorded that the Half King accused him of commanding the Indians as slaves, leaving them to attack the enemy themselves, and he did "by no means take Advice from the Indians . . . that had he taken the Half

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\(^{53}\) Duquesne to Contrecoeur, June 24, 1754, in Grenier, *Papiers Contrecoeur*, 192-195.

\(^{54}\) Washington's *Journal*, 1754, p. 78.

King's advice and made such Fortifications as the Half King advised him to make he would certainly have beat the French off; that the French had acted as great Cowards, and the English as Fools in that Engagement; that he (the Half King) had carried off his Wife and Children, so did other Indians before the Battle begun, because Col. Washington would never listen to them, but was always driving them on to fight by his Directions.  

Half King's last statement of fidelity to the English comes from Daniel Claus, New York's Indian interpreter. On September 29, he wrote Richard Peters that the Half King sent word to Onondaga that he "wou'd live and die with the English."  

The old chief never left Pennsylvania. On October 1, Scarouady and other chiefs of the Six Nations brought him and his family to John Harris's. Half King was critically ill and died a few days afterward. When Harris asked about the funeral rites, Scarouady, speaking for all the Indians assembled, replied that "they looked upon him to be like one of our Selves, and as he died among us we might bury him as we thought proper." The Indian trader, ferry keeper, and friend of the Indian, John Harris, buried him, probably by Christian rites. According to Indian custom George Croghan gave his relatives condolence gifts valued at about £20.  

Thus passed Tanacharison, the Half King—a "native prince."

56 Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 6:150-152.
57 Pennsylvania Colonial Records, 6:183.