

### **The Shawnee In Pennsylvania**

It is not the intention of the author of this brief monograph to give a history of the wanderings of the Shawnee previous to their appearance within the Colony of Pennsylvania. No single tribe in the history of the United States has had a more varied and interesting pathway of migration. Nor has any single tribe had as important an influence in the conflicts with the white settlements in the region east of the Mississippi river.

It seems highly probable that the Shawnee occupied the headwaters of the Ohio previous to the time of their southward migration. Some of the mounds and other earthworks along the upper Ohio and in south-western Pennsylvania seem to have been erected by the ancestors of the historic Shawnee. The author, however, will not at present attempt to cover the history of this most interesting period, but simply to state a few theories and facts as to the relationship with other Algonkian tribes and of their early habitat.

The Shawnee belong to the group of Algonkian tribes occupying the Atlantic region. According to the tradition of the Walum Olum they were united with the Delaware and the Nanticoke previous to the time of the expulsion of the Cherokee from the North. After this time the tribes separated, the Shawnee going southward, hence the designation Shawnee, or Southerners. When first known, in the historic period, they were occupying the Cumberland basin and the region in South Carolina. The history of the Shawnee commences in 1669-70, when they were occupying the regions in Tennessee and South Carolina. The Shawnee in South Carolina, where they were called Savannahs, belonged to the Piqua and Hathawekela clans of the tribe. The Savannah river, which takes its name from the tribe, is noted upon the map of De l'Isle of 1700 as "R. des Chouanons," or "River of the Shawnee."

The Shawnee which came northward into Pennsylvania belonged to the Piqua and Hathawekela clans of South Carolina. They commenced their migration, because of troubles with the white settlers, in about 1677. The movement northward was not a continuous one, as they settled

at various places for some time. These old Shawnee towns were at the sites of Winchester, Virginia, and Old Town, Maryland, and other places along the Potomac river.

The hatred of the Shawnee for the English, who had sided with their enemies the Catawba, continued during the entire Colonial and Revolutionary periods. They blamed the English for being obliged to leave their beautiful Savannahs in the South-land. They carried on their war with the Catawba after their settlement in the North, until that tribe was almost blotted out. After their settlement on the Susquehanna river, in 1698, they were allied with their near relatives, the Delaware, and with them were subject to the Iroquois Confederation. But, the Iroquois were not able to control this war-loving tribe in the period of the Border Wars, nor in the Revolution. The Shawnee were always more favorably inclined to the French during the French and Indian War, and against the British in the Revolution.

The first official appearance of the Shawnee was on February 23, 1701, when their King, Opessah, came before William Penn and the Provincial Council, with the Susquehanna and Conoy chiefs and made a Treaty (*Colonial Records* II. 14-18, 1852.)

In 1755 the Committee appointed to "enquire into the Transactions between the Proprietaries and the Delaware and Shawonese Indians," made their report, in which they state, "We have inspected all the Minutes of Council, and other Books and Papers that we conceived could assist us in the said Enquiry, and find that the Nation of Indians called the Shawonese are (or) Sothern Indians, who being rendered uneasy by their Neighbors came up to Conestoga about the year 1698, making about 60 families, and desired leave of the Sasquehanna Indians, who then lived there to settle on that River. That these Sasquehannah Indians applied to this Government that the Shawonese might be permitted to settle and said that they would become answerable for their good behaviour. That the first Proprietary, William Penn, Esq., arrived soon after this Transaction, the Chiefs of the Shawonese and Sasquehannah Indians came to this City and renewing their said Application, the Proprietary agreed to their Settlement there: whereupon

the Shawonese came under the Protection of this Government. From that time great numbers of those Indians followed them and Settled on Sasquehannah and the upper parts of Delaware. That as they had joined themselves to the Sasquehannah Indians who were dependent on the Five Nations, they thereby fell also under their Protection. That several Treaties were held with those amongst the other Indians at different times by this Government, and from their first coming they were accounted and treated as our Indians. That some of their Young men about the year 1727 committed some disorders in this Province, and tho' the Government had fully forgiven them for these Outrages, yet being on that account threatened by, and therefore afraid of the Six Nations, they removed to the River Ohio in the year 1728 or 1729, and there soon after put themselves under the protection of the French, who received them as their Children. That Messages were sent to this Government from them to return to us, and applications were made to the Six Nations to interpose and prevail upon them to do so. And the better to encourage and induce them to leave the French, a Large Tract of Land was offered them on the west side of Sasquehannah, where they had settled before, and they were desired by all means to return thither. That the Proprietary, Thomas Penn, upon his arrival in the year 1732, again pressed them to return and live upon his Land, which he promised them should be always kept for them and their Children if they would come and live upon it, but they declined it, saying, they were afraid of their Enemies, the Tuteloss, and that it was not convenient for their Hunting, but desired that the Land might be kept for them, which it has ever since been. But we find the Assembly are mistaken in their second Message in saying, that part of the said large Tract was surveyed into the Proprietary Manor of Conedogwainit, for the Fact was, that in order the more effectually to keep off any settlers on that large Tract, the Proprietaries caused the whole of it to be surveyed as a Proprietary Manor. And in looking into many of the Proprietary Indian purchases, we find that this Land has been bought over and over again by the Proprietaries as well as the Sasquehannah Indians as of the Six Nations to whom it did belong.

We thought proper to report these matters thus particularly that it might appear evident that the Shawonese did not originally belong to this Province & never had any right to any Lands in it or made any Pretensions thereto; but the Proprietaries from favour and to encourage those Indians to remove from the neighborhood of the French and live amongst us, offered them the said Large Tract of Land for their Habitation.

We likewise find by the said Treaty, held by the said Commissioners at Carlisle in 1753, that the Chiefs of both of these Nations of Delawares and Shawonese, did, in a solemn manner, renew the Treaties of Amity & Friendship with this province" (*Colonial Records*, Vol. I, 725-727, 1851).

I have quoted so largely from this report, not only because it contains the early history of the Shawnee in the Province but also because of the facts relating to their alienation to the French interest, which I shall notice later.

The place where the Shawnee first settled in Pennsylvania was in the neighborhood of the Susquehannas, near Conestoga, at the village called Pequehan, or Piqua Town. There has been some discussion as to the exact location of this village. Some authorities have placed it at the mouth of Pequea Creek, in Lancaster county. This seems probable, as the creek has always been known as Piqua, or Pequea, creek,—the name being that of the Piqua Clan of the Shawnee. D. H. Landis, of Lancaster, who has made quite a study of the Indian villages in Lancaster county, locates the village on Conestoga Creek, nearly opposite Safe Harbor. It is probable that the Shawnee first had a village near the mouth of Pequea Creek, where they remained for a short time, and then removed to the site which Mr. Landis mentions.

Soon after the Treaty of 1701 many Shawnee removed from South Carolina to the lower Susquehanna and the upper Delaware, where they settled near the Forks, at a village called Pechoquealin. There were some Shawnee at this place previous to this time, having come from the Ohio with their chief, Kakowatcheky, under the leadership of Arnold Viele, the Dutch trader from Albany, in about 1692-3.

In 1727, because of various conflicts with the traders in the Province, and because of the unrestricted sale of rum, the Shawnee commenced their westward migration to the Ohio, to escape from the guardianship of the Iroquois, rather than because of any fear of the Provincial authorities.

In 1728 Kakowatcheky and the Shawnee under him left the upper Delaware for the more distant plains in Wyoming. Shikellamy was appealed to as the Deputy of the Iroquois, to find out why this move had been made. The various troubles with the Shawnee at this time were all due to the sale of rum to the Indians by the traders. In 1731 Shikellamy gave the Provincial authorities to understand that friendship with the Six Nations could not be expected to last unless this traffic in rum with the Shawnee and Delaware was regulated in some way. Many of the Shawnee from the lower Susquehanna and the upper Delaware had removed to Wyoming, from which place they gradually moved to the Big Island and then to the Allegheny and Ohio. Peter Chartier had taken a number of these tribesmen from the mouth of Yellow Breeches and Conedoguinet creeks, to the Allegheny where Chartier's Town was established. Others followed from Wyoming and the Big Island. In 1732 at the Council in Philadelphia, the Iroquois were urged to recall the Shawnee from the Ohio, where they were fast coming under the French influence. The Iroquois replied that it would not be kind to remove them while their corn was growing and the winter coming on, but that in the following spring they would order them to remove back to the Susquehanna. The Proprietary Manor, at the mouth of the Conedoguinet, to which reference has been made, was set aside for the Shawnee when they should return.

In 1735 the Iroquois reported at a Council in Philadelphia that they had sent a number of chiefs to the Ohio to request the Shawnee to return. The Shawnee listened to all that the messengers had to say and then replied that it was "more commodius for them." Shortly after this conference with the Shawnee, a Seneca chief pressed the Shawnee so hard to return, that after the other messengers had left, he was killed by the Shawnee. As a consequence the

Iroquois were determined to avenge this crime and act of rebellion against their authority. When asked what tribe had committed this deed they replied, "the Tribe of Shawanese complained of is called Shawweygira (Hathawekela, or Assiwikale) and consists of about thirty Young Men, ten Old Men, and several Women and Children; that it is supposed that they have returned from the place from which they first came, which is below Caroline." The French were not slow to make use of all of these incidents and movements by which the Shawnee were becoming alienated, not only from the English, but also from the Iroquois.

In 1732 the Shawnee on the Ohio sent a message to Governor Gordon, written by James Le Tort and Peter Chartier, in which they explain the reasons which influenced them to remove to the Ohio. The Iroquois had said, "you Shawanese look back toward Ohio. The place from when you Came, and Return thitherward, for now we Shall Take pity on the English and Lett them have all this Land." Other reasons were given, among which was the fact that several slaves had run away from the south, seeking refuge among them, and they were afraid that the English would blame them for having given protection to these. They promised to send some chiefs to Philadelphia during the coming summer. Later in the spring these chiefs sent a letter to Governor Gordon, in which they complained of the sale of rum on the Ohio, and asked that permission be given to Peter Chartier to "break in pieces all the Cags" brought into their villages. Evidently there was as much trouble about the enforcement of the prohibition laws in 1730 on the Ohio as there is in 1920. Again in 1738 a resolution signed by a number of the Shawnee on the Allegheny river was sent to the Governor, in which they state that all rum brought into their villages will be spilt. This resolution was signed by Laypareawah, the son of Opressa, the former Shawnee King, and a large number of chiefs. In 1738 Kakowatcheky and 20 other Shawnee from the Ohio held a Council with Governor Thomas Penn in Philadelphia. At this Council the history of the various dealings of the Province with the Shawnee, from the time of their entering into it were gone over. Their Treaty

with William Penn was read and the various steps of their wanderings from place to place in the Province were gone over, and the danger of their residence on the Ohio, where they were under French influence, was again mentioned. Finally Articles of Agreement were signed, by Thomas Penn, George Thomas and Thomas Fraeme, Jr., on behalf of the Province, and by a number of chiefs on behalf of the Shawnee.

At the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744 there was but one Shawnee chief present. After an investigation had been made as to the cause of the absence of the Shawnee, it was discovered that the real reason was because they were not on good terms with the Iroquois, who feared that in case of war with the French that the Shawnee and Delaware would both go over to the French side in the struggle.

There is no doubt but that the growing feeling of hostility of the Shawnee towards the Iroquois, and the influence of the Shawnee over the Delaware, had as much to do with the alienation of the Delaware and Shawnee from the English interest, as had the land sales or the traffic in rum. The Shawnee had gone to the Ohio in order to get away from the oversight of the Iroquois and had been flattered by the French, who had always treated the Indians more kindly than had the English. The French realized that there was no hope of gaining the friendship of the Iroquois—their hatred being too deep seated and long standing—and so they were making every possible use of the feeling of revolt of the Shawnee against the Iroquois and the English. The Shawnee were seeking to draw away the Delawares from Shamokin and other places on the Susquehanna to the Ohio. Conrad Weiser was in complete control of the Indians policy of the Province at this time, and Weiser had no use for either a Delaware or Shawnee. He was an adopted Iroquois and all of his feelings were with the great Confederacy of the Six Nations. The land sales, the traffic in rum, the Shawnee hatred for the Iroquois, the Delaware friendship for the Shawnee, Weiser's favoritism for the Iroquois, were all factors driving the Shawnee away from the English and into an alliance with the French.

In 1745 Peter Chartier left the villages on the upper Ohio, taking with him the majority of the Shawnee. They settled at the Lower Shawnee Town, where they were brought directly under the influence of the French on the Mississippi.

Shikellamy was given full power, by the Iroquois, to deal with the Shawnee on the Susquehanna and Scarouady was given the same power on the Ohio. In a short time Scarouady had won back the greater part of the Shawnee who had gone down the Ohio with Peter Chartier.

At the Council at Lancaster in 1748 Kakowatcheky and a number of Shawnee from the Ohio, from Logstown, came before the Commissioners and in the most abject manner confessed their folly in being mislead by Peter Chartier, and asked to be forgiven. They presented the Agreement of 1739 and asked that it be signed afresh and all former "crimes be buried and forgot." Now was the time for the Province to win these independent warriors. But, the influence of Weiser was supreme. The Commissioners refused to sign the Agreement. It was handed back to the Shawnee chiefs with the statement that it would be time enough to sign it when they had "performed that Condition." The English revealed in this utterly foolish refusal to sign the Agreement, the lack of the very quality of wisdom which was revealed by the French in all their dealings with the Shawnee. Through the eyes of Conrad Weiser, the English were able to see and understand the Iroquois, but after the time of William Penn the Province was utterly blind in all of its dealings with the Delaware and Shawnee.

It was well, in the long run, that this folly won the Iroquois, even at the expense of the Delaware and Shawnee, but it nevertheless drenched Pennsylvania in blood. The Indians at the Treaty of Lancaster all received presents from the Province, save the Shawnee, who had their guns mended. The proud Shawnee went back from the Treaty of Lancaster, humiliated and angry because they had been humiliated in the presence of the Iroquois. They were welcomed with open arms by the French and told how abused they had been by the English.



In 1745, when at the Council at Onondaga, Conrad Weiser learned that the Iroquois were in favor of a war against the Shawnee.

In 1753 Neucheconneh, the Shawnee King, and a number of other chiefs were present at the Treaty at Carlisle. All of the facts relating to the French movements on the Ohio were narrated, especially those relating to the various warnings given to the French army by the Half-King and Scarouady. These warnings had all been disregarded. As a consequence the only thing to do was for the Delaware and Shawnee to declare war against the advancing French army. The little army of Col. George Washington was defeated by the French army at the battle at Fort Necessity in 1754. At a Council at Aughwick in the fall of 1754, at which a few Shawnee chiefs were present, George Croghan and Conrad Weiser both discovered that the French had been making presents to the Delaware and Shawnee who were united very closely in interest.

There is no doubt but that both the Delaware and Shawnee on the Ohio were simply waiting to see how matters would turn out between the French and English before taking sides. After the defeat of General Braddock, July 1755, the Delaware and Shawnee went over bodily to the French, declaring their independence of the Iroquois. Many of the Delaware on the Susquehanna remained faithful to the English interest, but the great body of both the Delaware and the Shawnee on the Ohio went over to the French and took up the hatchet against the Province and the English.

During the entire period of the French and Indian War the Shawnee were allied with the French, and during the Revolution they almost as a body were on the side of the British.

As has been mentioned Kakowatcheky was the leading chief (called by the English, King) of the Shawnee on the upper Delaware, in the region of the Water Gap, from about 1709 until 1728, when he and his clan removed to Wyoming, at Shawnee Flats. He removed from this place in 1743 to the Ohio, where he continued to live until about 1755.

He was succeeded as chief at Wyoming by Paxsinosa in 1743. This chief remained faithful to the English during the entire period of hostility. He removed to the Ohio, where he had been born, and attended a conference at Fort Pitt in 1760.

During the entire period of Indian hostility during and following the Revolution, the Shawnee, then living in Ohio and Illinois, were the most warlike tribes with which the American Army had to deal. It was not until after the Treaty of Greenville, 1795, that the hostility with this tribe ended in peace.

I have gone into this somewhat detailed account of the history of the Shawnee in Pennsylvania, not only because of its own interest, but also because of its great influence upon the development of the settlement of the Province. It seems somewhat strange that the very regions in which these warlike Indians settled have become the most rich and populous in the state. Their villages were always made upon land which bore a resemblance to the "savannas" of the south from which they were driven into Pennsylvania. The Shawnee Flats along Conestoga and Pequea creeks, the flats at Wyoming, at the Big Island, at Logstown, below Pittsburgh, and the plains which they occupied in Ohio and Illinois all have the same topographical characteristics and agricultural advantages.

Their attitude towards the white settlers in Pennsylvania was influenced because of their relation to the Iroquois. Being considered a conquered tribe by the Iroquois, because of their relationship to the Delaware, as soon as opportunity came for a breaking away from this vassalage they took advantage of it. It so happened that the Iroquois, their masters, had hated the French from the time of Champlain's alliance with the Huron, so an alliance with the French became a means by which they could break away from the Iroquois.

Harrisburg, Pa.  
Sept. 29, 1920.

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