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CHIEFTAINSHIP AMONG MICHIGAN INDIANS
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The main sources of information about individual Indians of Michigan's past are official documents of a military, civil and ecclesiastical nature. It is largely from these sources that books and articles relating to individual Indians have drawn, and most of these works have dwelt only upon great leaders like Pontiac and Tecumseh whose influence upon their people was sufficient to make them important figures, not only in the history of Michigan but in American history.

In addition, a considerable body of tradition grew up, particularly after the War of 1812, concerning Indian chiefs about whom little if anything is recorded in official documents, and for our knowledge of these men we are almost wholly indebted to this local tradition. A great deal of this information for the period after 1830, when the agricultural settlers came into the state in large numbers, has been collected by various people and published in the volumes of the State Historical Society. Most of these articles deal with separate areas of Michigan, and record information about individual Indians, chiefs for the most part, collected after 1870 from white people who were among the early settlers. Some of the articles name the sources of their information and others do not, but in the main they may be accepted as giving a reliable picture as far as they go.

The present paper is a presentation of some of the information in the State Historical Collections, in county and municipal histories and other publications, and in newspaper articles and unpublished manuscripts collected for the past fifteen years by the Museum of Anthropology of the University of Michigan. The individuals discussed are, with one exception, of Algonquian linguistic stock, belonging either to the Ottawa, Potawatomi or Ojibway tribes. The Ojibway have for cen-
turies occupied the northern peninsula of Michigan and adjacent portions of Canada, and the east side of the southern peninsula of Michigan, where they are known as Chippewa, which is the same word as Ojibway.

It should be pointed out at the start that the word “chief” is an English word, and carries certain definite meanings which are apt to be read into the character of the institution of headship among the Indians. For want of a better word however, the English word will be used in this paper. The Algonquian Indians have a word of their own, but it means nothing to those who do not know the language, and little enough to those who do. The present paper may be looked upon as an attempt to give meaning in English to the Ojibway or Chippewa word *ogemaw*. The Potawatomi and Ottawa word is probably the same, or very similar.

Among many people throughout the world the headship of a tribe, clan or other group is of a formal nature, involving definite relationships to social and religious patterns. But among all peoples the chieftainship functions as a compromise between certain forms set up and maintained by tradition, and the abilities or disabilities of individuals, so that this institution will vary in character within the history of a given tribe.

The chieftainship of the Algonquian Indians of the Great Lakes region is believed to have been of an informal nature as compared to that of the Iroquois, by Vernon Kinietz in *The Indians of the Western Great Lakes, 1615 to 1760*, a forthcoming publication. This conclusion is true also for the chieftainship of the Indians of Michigan during the Nineteenth Century, when it followed a pattern with which English-speaking people are quite familiar.

The leadership was attained, as a rule, as the result of ability or by inheritance, though in the latter case, as Kinietz suggests, acceptance of a majority of the members of the tribe or band was an important element. Among the Ottawa in 1778 there was a distinction between military and civil chiefs. In the title of a document describing a council at Detroit in
that year, they are divided by the writer of the document into
war chiefs and village chiefs.

As to the authority of chiefs, the *Handbook of American
Indians* states with reference to the Sauk that “Politically the
chief was little more than a figurehead, but socially be occupied
first place in the tribe. Not infrequently however, by
force of character and natural astuteness in the management of
tribal affairs the chief might exercise virtually autocratic
power.” On the other hand the Jesuit Marest said concerning
the Indians at Michilimackinac in 1706, “the chiefs are not
masters,” and accordingly it is apparent that in times of crisis
the governed were capable of challenging the power of the
governors.

There are a few references that suggest the association of
certain attitudes and functions with the chieftainship. Perrot,
writing of the Indians of the Great Lakes region generally,
before 1718, said it was a custom of the chiefs to give freely,
citing this as the reason for the Indians’ objections to the
French commandants engaging in trade with them. School-
craft states that Shingwaukonce, a Canadian Ojibway, was
war chief, civil ruler and priest. The functions of chief and
“prophet” were performed by Wemekens, a Huron chief living
along St. Clair river when the first French settlers came in.
This chief’s face was deformed, according to the *History of St.
Clair County*. Other prophets, chiefs and “medicine men” have
also had deformities.

There were head-chiefs whose authority, greater or less as
the case was, extended over wide areas and included all the
members of a tribal group such as the Ottawa or Patawamoi,
and in at least one case, in the Nineteenth Century, one man
was appointed chief over the Ottawa and Chippewa. This
was set forth in a document dated May, 1835, appointing
Augustin Hammelin, Jr. (Kanapima,—“one who is talked of”)
to represent these two tribes in their dealings with the whites.
The document was signed by 59 chiefs “of the Ottawa tribe of
Indians at L’Arbres Croche, Little Traverse and elsewhere, and
of the Chippewas residing near Mackinac in council assembled."

Augustin Hammelin, Jr., was born about forty miles south of Mackinac on July 12, 1813, and in 1829, with his younger brother, William Blackbird, was sent to school at a Roman Catholic mission in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1832 both were sent to Rome to study for the Roman Catholic priesthood in the College of the Propaganda Fide, where they were represented as half French. William, according to Andrew J. Blackbird, his cousin, was murdered there shortly before he was to be ordained, and Hammelin returned to Michigan. Sometime after the signing of the Treaty of 1836 Hammelin became United States interpreter and held the office until 1861, when he was succeeded by Blackbird.

Another head chief was Topinabee, a noted Potawatomi who first appears as a signer of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, on behalf of the Potawatomi of the St. Joseph river. He was head chief of the Potawatomi of southern Michigan for forty years; lesser chiefs associated with him were Shavehead, Weesaw and Pokagon. Weesaw was Topinabee's son-in-law, and Pokagon's wife was his niece. Topinabee was at the Fort Dearborn massacre in 1812 and is said to have rescued several white people from death. On the removal of the Potawatomi westward, Topinabee, Pokagon and others were able to remain in Michigan. They took up lands in Silver Creek township, Cass county, where Topinabee died in 1840. He was the son of Aniquiba, who was a chief of the Potawatomi who resided in the village where the city of Niles now stands, in 1776.

In the eighteen-thirties two men competed for the chieftainship of the Potawatomi of Nottawa prairie in St. Joseph county. Their names, according to Coffinberry, were Sauanquet and Cusheewes. The former, though he was half French, won out because of his greater influence, though Cusheewes had the better claim by the admission of the supporters of Sauanquet. Coffinberry states that "the fascinating eloquence, the winning manners and impressive presence of Sauanquet carried a ma-
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Majority of the tribe, contrary to their better judgment and equitable convictions, to support his pretentions." Sauanquet undoubtedly had an advantage. He was the oldest of four sons of Pierre Moreau, an educated French trader who came from Detroit and married an Indian woman whose name seems to have gone unrecorded. Cusheesawas however was the spokesman for his tribe during the Black Hawk War scare, when the white settlers met with the Potawatomi band to inquire as to their intentions. His speech at this time was obtained from Cyrus Schellhous, who was present, and in Coffinberry's article it is given in translation. Cusheesawas was then above middle age, somewhat short in stature, but dignified in appearance and quite able to meet point for point in the argument with the whites, who had unjustly accused the band of warlike intentions.

It appears possible, if not probable, that individuals were selected as chiefs because they adhered to policies toward the white people which were felt to be sound by the members of the band or tribe. Such may have been the case with Sagenish, chief of a small village of Potawatomi at the mouth of Crockery Creek, near Grand Rapids. The meaning of his name is "Englishman," and he was reputedly friendly to the early settlers, whether or not he was so named on that account. He may have been the same one whose name is on a granite monument at Eschol, near Three Rivers, accompanied by an inscription to the effect that a Potawatomi chief named Sagenish sacrificed his life in the interests of the settlers.

A great many of the men who attained the chieftainship of bands or other local groups were friendly to the whites, and there are many acknowledgments of that friendship. Such a man was Sashabaw, who is described as "a valued friend of the Pioneers," on a bronze tablet near Pontiac. Boweees, a Potawatomi in Hillsdale County, was much liked by the early settlers. The story of the removal of his band to Kansas, along with other Potawatomi, is a pathetic one. The Indians did not wish to go, and the settlers were sympathetic with
them, but the soldiers collected them by force. N. P. Hobart, in a letter dated December 23, 1878, claims that Bawbeese escaped and went to Canada, where he died. Akosa, a chief in the Grand Traverse region, was known for his good will toward the mission established near his village in 1889. He may have been the same individual as Addison Agosa, who was one of the signers of the Treaty of 1836, in Washington, and the grandfather of Robert Agosa of Traverse City, who died in 1925. Robert Agosa was a tailor by profession, also a missionary, and claimed the title of chief. He was a graduate of Haskell Indian School at Lawrence, Kansas, and later did missionary work in North Dakota and Colorado.

Cobmoosa was another chief who was esteemed by the early settlers. He was an Ottawa, born at the present site of Grand Rapids in 1788. His village was first near the junction of the Flat and Grand rivers, and had about 300 inhabitants. Later it was moved up Flat River to the present site of Lowell. In the Treaty of 1855 this band ceded its lands to the United States, and were given a reservation farther north, and in 1857 or 1858 they gathered at Grand Haven, some going to Pentwater by steamer, and others riding their ponies along the shore. They selected lands in Elbridge and Crystal townships, Oceana County, and in Eden and Custer townships, Mason County. Shawbecoming and Pawbawme were chiefs under Cobmoosa at this time. In 1862 these Indians gave considerable alarm to the settlers, who interpreted a brush fence they had built for the purpose of trapping deer, as an indication that they were about to revolt. In this same year, however, 29 Indians from these two reservations joined the Union Army.

In 1858 Cobmoosa informed William A. Richmond, Indian Commissioner at Grand Rapids, that his father had espoused the cause of the Colonists in the War of the Revolution. A bronze tablet bearing an inscription to this effect was erected by the Stevens T. Mason Chapter of the D.A.R., near Hart, Oceana County. Cobmoosa died on the Oceana County reser-
vitation in 1866. A great-grandson of his, William Negake, lost his life in Siberia as a soldier in the American forces during the World War. Another well-known chief of later years was the Chippewa Shopenagon, who lived in Grayling for some thirty years previous to 1907, apart from his native band in Saginaw County. During most of this period he obtained his living chiefly by hunting and fishing, and was well known to sportsmen from all parts of the country who spent their vacations in the vicinity of Grayling. He was popular with everyone, and several times was the guest of people in New York who had made his acquaintance at Grayling.

Indian chiefs who took the side of the Americans in the War of 1812 were Negwegan, an Ottawa for whom Alcona County was first named, Naokemaw and Oneguged, both Ottawas from the Au Sable river region who joined General Harrison’s army in 1813.

Okemos, among many other chiefs living in Michigan, sided with the British in the War of 1812, and is said to have been second in command of Indian forces under Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames. Marie Anne Marantette-Godfroy of Detroit, as a child remembered seeing Proctor’s army march past her father’s house in 1813, with the Indian allies, under their chiefs Tecumseh and Ogamants.

There were a few chiefs who did not outlive their antagonism to the whites. Shavehead, a Potawatomi who lived in southeastern Cass County, raised about 300 Indians to join Black Hawk in 1832, but it is recorded that they got no further than to hold a council. It is related of this chief that he claimed ownership for the Potawatomi of the portion of Michigan they occupied, and in pursuance of this attitude he once established himself at a ferry on the St. Joseph river near Mottville, demanding a fee from everyone who wished to cross. In this he was successful until dislodged by the white settlers by violent means. Copley says the following about the latter days of Shavehead: “His last appearance in the settlement to my recollection found the shot-gun (one for which he had
previously exchanged a rifle) gone, and in its place he carried a bow and arrow, begged his food and shot at pennies inserted in a cleft stick for a mark, the coin to be his if he hit it. There are differing accounts of the manner and date of his death.

In addition to being second in command under Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames, Okemos is said to have been a nephew of Pontiac, and with such connections it is not strange that he is one of the very few early Michigan Indian chiefs of which we have an adequate likeness. In 1879 Mr. O. A. Jenison presented an ambrotype of Okemos to the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, and it now hangs in the Michigan State Library in Lansing. The picture was taken in 1857. According to Mr. Jenison, Okemos was born at or near Knaggs Station, Shiawassee County, and he owed his chieftainship to his part in the Battle of Sandusky. After the War of 1812 he took an oath of allegiance to the American government, but in 1844 claimed the protection of the British flag by going to Malden to collect his annuity. During this trip, on December 21, 1844, he was at the home of Peter F. Brakeman in Algonac, and informed Mr. Brakeman that he was well known in Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Dexter, Jackson and Pontiac. Reverend M. Hickey writes of conversing with Okemos on the subject of Christianity in 1872, but Jenison and others state that Okemos died on December 5, 1858, at his village near DeWitt, Ingham County, and was buried in the village of Mishimnicon in Ionia County. A few years previous to his death he surrendered his chieftainship to his son John, who in 1885 was a farmer in Montcalm County. Jenison states that Okemos’ band broke up in 1837 or 1838. (I can add that my grandfather, James H. Hartwell, often spoke of visits by Okemos and his band, or at any rate a number of Indians, at Hartwellville, seven miles south of Owosso, around the year 1850).

The name Okemos is the Ojibway or Chippewa for Little Chief, that is, lieutenant. Rendered in the Ojibway that is being spoken today at the north end of Lake Huron in Ontario,
this word is ogimans, accent on the last syllable; Okemos is either a dialectical variant or a slightly mutilated form resulting from a century of rough handling in the English language.

Whatever the manner of succession to the chieftainship among the Indians of Michigan in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, the records for the Nineteenth reveal a strong tendency toward inheritance of this function. It is possible that a detailed comparison with earlier practices might show inheritance to be to some extent the result of white influence. But it must be borne in mind that after 1815 the demands upon a leader were different from those before that time. After 1815 the perpetuation in leadership of a great name could have been an advantage; before then, particularly before 1795, courage, energy and military ability must have determined the leadership to a considerable extent. If this view is correct then the predominance of the inheritance of the chieftainship in the Nineteenth Century is largely an impression created by the disappearance of the war chief as the result of the discontinuance of war after 1815.

During the Nineteenth Century the chieftainship was acquired by inheritance, by the unanimous consent of a number of representative individuals, and through recognition or appointment by officials of the American government or of the state of Michigan. The sources providing the basis for this statement are however only written records of fragments of events which, if we knew the complete sequence of incidents leading up to them, would reveal much more about the institution of chieftainship than is known at present. For example, the unanimous consent of 55 chiefs gave Augustin Hammelin, Jr., the head chieftainship of the Ottawa and Chippewa in 1835. Taken by itself this might serve to illustrate a traditional procedure for these two tribes, but if all the politics preceding this unanimous election were known the story might be a different one. Considering the necessity for the Indians to get along with the white people in 1835, and Ham-
melin's excellent education, the manner of his appointment would seem to be a special and perhaps unique case. The element of inheritance was evidently present, however, as Gagnier states that Hammelin received this office in consideration of his grandfather, Kinimigigan.

Recognition of claims to chieftainship by officials of the American government was an important factor in the decades immediately following the War of 1812, when both the British and the Americans were distributing presents to Indian bands in recognition of their allegiance during that War, and to insure their friendship in the future. On the Michigan side, according to the testimony of Schoolcraft, the claims of Indians who by word or act indicated any remaining liking for the British, were not recognized, although they were not in any way persecuted on that account. Under the date of November 16, 1826, Schoolcraft wrote from the Indian Agency at Sault Ste. Marie: "Naugishigome and band. . . . This is an old man, a chief by descent, but has neither medal nor flag from the British or American government. His followers, consisting of some relations, entitle him to some respect, although his foreign attachments have prevented my receiving him as a chief. His visits are, however, constant, and he professes himself friendly. . . ." Under the date of October 26, 1826, the following from the same author throws an interesting light on his relationship with the Indians: "Keewikoance and band, eleven persons. This is a chief residing on the lower part of the river St. Mary. Having visited him last spring, he gave me an ancient clay pot, such as the Indians used before the arrival of Europeans. He told me he was the seventh chief, in a direct line, since the French first arrived. He and his band plant some corn and potatoes upon an island. . . . He is in the British interest, and his feelings are all that way, being always received at D. I. (Drummond Island) with marked attention. He has a British medal, but wishes to keep on friendly terms here."

The state of Michigan itself has had little formal contact with the Indians.
with its Indian inhabitants, such contact being formerly and at present the interest of the federal government, although there are now no reservations in Michigan. But at least one Indian was recognized as chief by being officially commissioned. Governor Warner during his second term gave official recognition to Makhakongh, at a meeting held for the purpose at Long Lake. This Indian, who died in 1830 at Hale, was the son of a Chippewa chief.

In the majority of instances of succession to the chieftainship known to the writer, the position was inherited, and in many cases it is definitely recorded that the father announced his wish that a certain son, often the oldest, be the recipient. It is apparent also that the symbols of chieftainship were sometimes, if not always, inherited. Schoolcraft said in 1828 of Wasingke, a son of the famous Waaqua, that he inherited from him "a broad wampum belt and gorget, delivered to his grandfather (also a noted chief) by Sir William Johnson, on the taking of Fort Niagara in 1759." Wasingke lived in 1828 along St. Mary's River near Sault Ste. Marie and, with Shingabawassin and Shevebekeaton was one of the three principal chiefs of what Schoolcraft called "The Home Band." He had a wife and nine children, and in 1825 had come to Sault Ste. Marie from La Pointe, at the west end of Lake Superior. There is a headstone in a small Indian cemetery in the present Indian village of Bay Mills (Kinooshkong in the Ojibway), bearing the name Wasingke. This may mark the burial place of the chief described by Schoolcraft, although inquiry among the Indians of this village brought no historical information.

The chief Miechewis, probably a Chippewa, living in Alpena County in the first half of the Nineteenth Century, in his old age called his children and the members of his small band around him to announce that he was blind, and no longer of value to them. Oliver, in the Centennial History of Alpena County, says "He then gave one of his sons, whom he had educated for the purpose, his regalia, and installed him in his office as council chief, and presiding over all their religious
ceremonies. He then distributed his goods among his children, and never after was he seen dressed in anything but a common Indian blanket.” This is the only reference known to the writer mentioning the wearing of blankets by Michigan Indians. Michekewis was born about 1757 and died about 190 years later.

A bit of Indian genealogy still further illustrates the principle of inheritance. On the death of Sauauquet, the half French chief of the Potawatomi of the Huron near Athens, John Magnago became chief. At Magnago’s death in 1863 the chieftainship passed to his cousin, Pampotee. Pampotee died a year later, to be succeeded by Phineas Pampotee. Phineas, also known as Messick, died a few years previous to 1925 according to a newspaper article. The Battle Creek News of July 3, 1924, states that by the written request of Phineas, the chieftainship went in that year to Steve Pamp, one of the three sons of Jacob Pamp who died about July 1, 1924. Whether Jacob Pamp inherited the leadership from his father, and was chief until his death, is not stated. In 1925, however, there was competition for the title. One faction supported Samuel Mandoka, and the other Steve Pamp, whose claim was regarded as the more legitimate. Two methods of obtaining the chieftainship are here illustrated as in conflict with one another; one, the succession through inheritance, being regarded as the strictly legal way; the other resting upon individual ability and in its application using the methods of the insurgent group, as was the case previously in the history of this Calhoun County band, with Sauauquet. Samuel Mandoka was well educated, and one of the few Michigan Indians to enter politics. In 1925 he was chosen constable of Indiantown on the Republican ticket, receiving 64 more votes than his opponent. He died on July 9, 1934, in the Calhoun County Hospital, leaving four sons and two daughters.

Other sons who inherited the chieftainship from their fathers were Nanaquiba, a Potawatomi living near Paw Paw, whose father was Pepeyah, John Okemos, from his famous father Okemos, though John probably exercised none of the

prerogatives of the chieftain. Michel, of Michigan, died in 1919, and is interred on the reservations.

It is possible that before 1880 the sons of the last chief, who lived not through 1900, did not succeed at any time as chief, for this is the only reference to anyone else as the chieftain of the tribe. The name of the last known chief is not known, and he was buried in a cemetary.

Adopted into his band were the Clarks and the Parks.

Clinton Parks was the last known chief to live near the Calhoun County seat and probably lived near the river. He was a half-blood. He chose his name Steve after the name of his old chief. Parks died in 1922.

Many of the Tittabawassee chiefs in the early years died from the cases of the smallpox. Pepeyah, Okemos, and Michko Smith all died. Pepeyah especially, their band, and were interred in their band, and were interred in the same burial place as their father, Okemos.
prerogatives of the office; Showanabe, from his father Sawgoma, who lived in Kalamazoo County; and one of the sons of Michekweis, of the Thunder Bay band, who had been educated for the purpose.

It is probable that the chieftainship sometimes passed to the sons of men who had acquired it by their ability rather than through inheritance. This was the case with John Okenos, at any rate so far as the title itself was concerned, and it is the only instance known to the writer. There is no record, on the other hand, that the title passed to any son or other relative of Ogemakeketo, a Chippewa chief of the Saginaw region, who was chosen for general intelligence and oratorial ability. His name is translated as “Chief Speaker.” He is said to have been head chief of the Chippewa in 1819, at the age of twenty-five years, and never to have been the leader of a single band until later in life, when he became chief of his own band, on the Tittabawassee river. He died in 1839 or 1840, and was buried in Bay City.

Adopted sons have inherited the chieftainship from their fathers. This is illustrated in the case of a white man, Peter Parks. As a child he was stolen from the Rochester Colony in Clinton County by the Chippewa chief Fitcher, whose band lived near Chesaning, Saginaw County. Fitcher himself was a half-breed, and at his death Peter Parks, bearing the Indian name Shonekayzhick, became chief. He refused to claim part of his own father’s estate when he found it would be necessary to relinquish his tribal relationship. He died about the year 1902.

Many of the Indian bands broke up on the death of their chiefs in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century. Such was the case with the bands under the leadership of Sinegowa and Pepeyah, Potawatomi chiefs who lived near Paw Paw. E. S. Smith says of these two men that “they succeeded in keeping their bands together, visiting backwards and forwards, and enjoying life reasonably well. But following their death there seemed to be no head or system to their management.”
In dress, the chiefs appear to have been easily distinguishable from other Indians. Smith states the following on this subject: "The men, particularly those of any note, wore huge silver rings in their nose and ears, and a large plate made from the same material pinned to their shirt front." Reverend M. Hickey, a pioneer Methodist missionary, said in 1881 that Okemos wore a large silver ring in his nose. Warren informs us that Sassaba, of Sault Ste. Marie, wore a scarlet uniform with epaulets when Governor Cass visited him in 1820, but that "he used to walk about Sault Ste. Marie naked, except for a large gray wolf's skin with the tail dangling on the ground." For this he received the nickname Mycengun, or The Wolf. He was also known as The Count. The name Sassaba is translated "hairy." Sassaba was drowned in 1822 in the rapids of St. Mary's river, along with his wife and child and the wife of another Indian. Afterwards, Schoolcraft says, "it was found that he had in his tent, which was of duck, a set of silver tea and tablespoons, knives, forks, cups and saucers, and a tea tray. Besides his military coat, sword, and epaulets and sash, which were presented to him, he had some ruffled linen shirts, gloves, shoes and stockings, and an umbrella, all of which were kept, however, in the spirit of a virtuoso, and he took pride in displaying these articles to visitors."

Another chief, well known around Detroit and Mount Clemens was Maconce, or Cumekimanow, who committed suicide by drowning in the Clinton river in 1816. Farrand states that when his body was found "it was wrapped in blue broadcloth, bound together or clasped with silver brooches, his hat ornamented with bands of silver, a string of sixteen silver crescents and armlets decorated his body, and he was buried in the orchard of John Tucker, in the southeast part of Chesterfield (township)." His reservation (Treaty of 1807) was in this township of Macomb County, and included Salt Creek and Riviere au Vase. There is some doubt whether Maconce was Ottawa, Chippewa or Potawatomi. His name is variously
The spelling of this chief's name is the subject of much discussion. In a letter, the term was misspelled as "Machonoe, Machonoe, Makonoe, and he may have been the same individual as Maskeash. In an official letter a Potawatomi chief by the name of Macone is listed as attending a council in Detroit in 1778, as one of several "Poutcoulamies of St. Joseph." Macone's son Francis succeeded him.

A great many of the chiefs, particularly the more important, were given medals by the British and American governments. Among those in Michigan who possessed medals were Okemos, Waishky, Ogemakeke, Oshkinawaw, and Waubojee 3. This Waubojee was, on the authority of Warren, given a medal in 1826 by Governor Cass "solely for the strikingly mild and pleasant expression of his face," but the possession of a great name may have had something to do with it. Many of these medals are still in existence, in museums, in private collections, and in possession of individual Indians. The writer was told recently of an Ojibway chief of northern Ontario who, six or eight years ago, attended a meeting of chiefs on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, after a journey of some weeks. He spoke no language but Ojibway, and wore the medal given long ago by the British to an ancestor.

A reading of the source literature concerning the Indian chiefs of Michigan and the Great Lakes region leaves one with the impression that they were mainly men of outstanding personality and often of commanding appearance, intelligent, and able to express themselves. Some scholars have made great claims for the oratorical powers of the Indians, and others have objected, with justice, because those claims were based upon translations into English. A notation of Schoolcraft's leaves the present writer in no doubt that the Indians understood at least the uses of oratory: "August 18, 1828. Visited by Little Pine (Shingwaukone), the leading chief on the British shore of St. Mary's, a shrewd and politic man, who has united, at sundry periods, in himself the offices and influence of a war chief, a priest or Jossakeed, and a civil ruler. The giving of public presents on the 5th, had evidently led to his visit... He made a speech well suited to his position, and glossed off..."
with some fine generalities, avoiding commitments on the main points and making them on minor ones, concluding with a string of wampum. I smoked and shook hands with him, and accepted his tenders of friendship by re-pledging the pipe, but narrowed his visit to official proprieties, and refused his wampum." Shingwaukonce lived in the vicinity of what is now the Garden River Reserve, about eight miles southeast of the Canadian Sault Ste. Marie. A small Episcopal Church built by this chief, still stands on this reservation, and on its wall hangs a painting, from life, of Shingwaukonce.

The collection of material concerning chiefs is fascinating, and has definite historical, scientific and genealogical value. There is an immense amount of material, some of it published and some not. No doubt much more is still to be found in attics and old chests in the form of contemporary letters and documents. In addition there are local traditions concerning these men which should be collected, and compared with the written material. One such tradition was collected before 1888, and published in the History of St. Clair County. It concerned the former occupation of Saginaw County by the Sauk, and was secured from an old chief by the name of Puttasmine, who was born about 1729. He heard the legend from his grandfather about the year 1744 and in 1834 he told it to Peter Gruette, a French-Indian well known around Detroit and Mount Clemens. This is of great interest, for outside of this and a mention of the Sauk in the Jesuit Relations there is nothing to show that they were ever residents of Michigan.

It remains to add to a question raised at the beginning of this paper concerning the native Indian use of the term ogemaw. The records that have been examined indicate that forms of this word appear in the names of but two individuals, Okemos and Ogemawkeket. The latter is translated as "chief speaker," and ogemaw here is an adjective. Okemos is translated literally as "little chief," but by custom and probably white influence came to mean "lieutenant." It is interesting that ogemaw has been applied only to one man, and he
second in command of military forces during the last great crisis in Indian affairs in the middle west. Not once, so far as the records go, has the term ogeenaw been unqualifiedly applied to any of the other leaders discussed in this paper. The term chief has always been conferred by speakers of English without any attempt to give it a meaning which would fit accurately into the native Indian office of leadership.

I must apologize for the sketchy nature of this paper. There has been no time to verify all of the statements made, and if inaccuracies are found they will be mainly those of the original sources. I have accepted statements in these sources not so much as representing historical facts or events (many of which never will be completely verified), but as the personal impressions or legendary accounts of facts or events.

If someone asked me to recommend a hobby, or some group of people asked for a project, I certainly would suggest the collection of information concerning individual Indians of Michigan, chiefs and their wives, commoners, men, women and children.

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