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# Tecumseh: His Rhetoric and Oratory

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TECUMSEH: HIS RHETORIC AND ORATORY

(TITLE)

BY

BETTE-JON SCHRADE

**THESIS**

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YEAR

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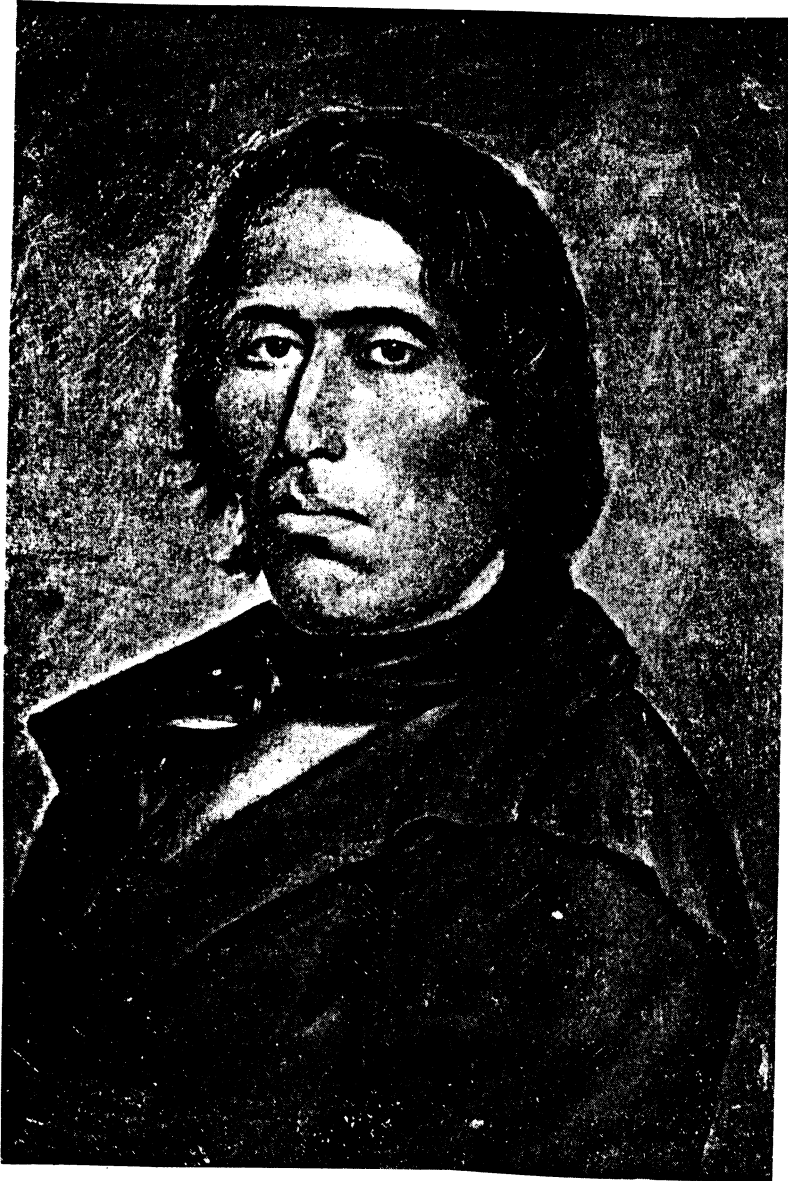
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TECUMSEH

TECUMSEH: HIS RHETORIC AND ORATORY

## TECUMSEH: HIS RHETORIC AND ORATORY

### Introduction

"Every schoolboy in the Union now knows that Tecumseh was a great man. He was truly great--and his greatness was his own, unassisted by science or the aids of education. As a statesman, a warrior and patriot, take him all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."<sup>1</sup>

This quote appeared in the Indiana Centinel on December 2, 1820, only seven years after the great Shawnee Chief, Tecumseh had been killed. It seems ironical that a generation of white men who had fought Tecumseh so bitterly, remembered him in such a gracious light.

Part of the tragedy of the American Indian lay in his inability to understand, or understanding, to resist successfully, the white man's lust for land. The colonist arrived in the New World with preconceived and well defined ideas about property. Land ownership was a civil right, guaranteed to the individual as cultivator of soil or keeper of livestock.

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<sup>1</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: Viking Press, 1961), p. 131.



In sharp contrast was the Indian view that the land was held in common by the tribe. To the Indians, land did not only provide subsistence, it also gave meaning and identity to his very own existence. The Indian belonged to the land.

The land is our Mother, says Iroquois tradition, and we cannot sell our Mother. To the white man this tradition was meaningless. There was a continent to be won, and the Indian could not be allowed to stand in the way.

After the American Revolution, Americans eyed the Ohio River Valley as an area for possible national expansion. To resist encroachment, Tecumseh, a young Shawnee Chief, conceived an idea of a vast Indian confederacy. Most tribes claimed the right to dispose of their own hunting grounds, but Tecumseh claimed that land was held in common by all the tribes and no one tribe could see its particular tract. In Tecumseh's eyes, to sell a country would be like selling the clouds, the air, and the great sea. All of these possessions had been given to all of the Indians by the "Great Spirit," and they were to be used by His children, not sold to the highest bidder for personal gain.

Tecumseh was determined to hold the Ohio River as a dividing line between the races. He tirelessly visited

tribes from Wisconsin to Florida, enlisting support for his movement. Often dispirited elders opposed him, but the Shawnee's proposals had an electrifying effect on the young braves.

Tecumseh joined the British in the War of 1812 and fell in battle on the Thames River on October 5, 1813, at the age of forty-five. When America's greatest Indian leader died, his plan for an Indian nation died with him. But something more important lived on; something of great value remained--the words of Tecumseh: his rhetoric and his oratory (see Appendix 1).

#### Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the rhetoric of Tecumseh in terms of his own mistrust for the "white man." It was through his rhetoric and oratory that Tecumseh attempted to unite an Indian confederacy to act as a buffer state between Great Britain and the United States.

The American Indian was truly the "First" American. His culture and his traditions have been suppressed and pushed aside for a long time. Just as hunting, fishing, and craft work have made up the Indian heritage, so has rhetoric and oratory. To provide these "First" Americans with an honest picture of their heritage, it

is only reasonable that some study should be directed toward an Indian leader who used his rhetoric and his oratory in an attempt to benefit his own people.

In order to study the rhetoric of Tecumseh based upon his mistrust of the American settlers, it is necessary to divide Tecumseh's life into three distinct areas. Each division of Tecumseh's life will be analyzed through a series of questions that will explore his animosity toward the white man, its origination, and its effect upon his rhetoric and oratory.

The first area to be explored would be: Tecumseh as a Child. The following questions would best help indicate the type of background Tecumseh had that determined his overall character.

1. To what extent did the historical era influence Tecumseh as a child?
2. How much of an impact did his parents have on the development of young Tecumseh?
3. What role did the Shawnee tribal atmosphere play in the development of Tecumseh as a child?
4. How did the childhood of Tecumseh differ from that of other Indian children around him?

The second area to be investigated would be: Tecumseh as a Young Brave and Warrior. Through these questions it could be determined if the background of

Tecumseh had any effect upon his rhetoric and oratory.

1. How did Tecumseh's life-style change after the death of his father?
2. What was the education environment to which Tecumseh subscribed?
3. How did contemporary Indian leaders influence Tecumseh?
4. To what extent did Tecumseh's view of the white civilization change?
5. To what extent did the Prophet influence Tecumseh?
6. How could the success of Tecumseh as a warrior be compared to his success as leader?

The final area to be investigated would be: Tecumseh as an Orator. These questions will help determine the significance that Tecumseh's own political and tribal views had on his oratory; and in turn, the significance that Tecumseh's oratory had on his success as a speaker.

1. To what extent did Tecumseh's mistrust for the American settlers influence his rhetoric?
2. Did the failure on the part of Tecumseh to enlist the aid of all Indian tribes to fight the Americans in any way influence his oratory?
3. What was the impact of Tecumseh's rhetoric,

both short and long term?

The method of procedure of this study will be historical-critical. The background of Tecumseh will be dealt with historically; the method of analyzing the rhetorical style of Tecumseh will be critical.

Because Indian oratory is unique, and does not necessarily fit into any category of critical analysis that has previously been applied to a study of rhetoric and oratory, a compilation of criteria for speech evaluation will be used.

The first evaluative instrument to be used will be one developed by Ernest J. Wrage in the article "Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History" (see Appendix 2). The second evaluative instrument to be used will be one developed by T. R. Nilsen in the article "Criticism and Social Consequences" (see Appendix 3). Both evaluative instruments will be used as the criteria for the critical evaluation of Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory.

#### Significance of the Study

The justification for making this study is the impact that Tecumseh's speaking had on the shaping of not only our American history, but also the shaping of the American Indian heritage. This was an extremely volatile

time for the United States. This young country had survived a Revolutionary War, and was beginning to establish itself in the world as a potential national power. As an era of fighting ended, the United States stood on the threshold of yet more fighting.

The rhetoric of Tecumseh had a direct effect upon the shaping of our country's history and its later policies concerning the Indians. Because of the important role Tecumseh played in the early stages of the American Indian movement, it is essential to understand the man behind the issues.

#### Previous Research

Most of the previous research done on Tecumseh has been concerned only with his historical significance as an Indian chief. Nothing has been done to analyze Tecumseh's rhetoric or his ability as an orator.

There are three excellent biographies of Tecumseh, all of which give various and specific details of Tecumseh's life. The most comprehensive early study was made by Benjamin Drake. Drake's book dealt with the history of the Shawnee and was relatively brief. Life of Tecumseh was finished in 1821 and finally published in 1841. A second biography was written by Everett T. Tomlinson in 1896. Tecumseh's Young Braves was a book

that dealt with Tecumseh's strength as a warrior during the Creek Wars. The most recent biography of Tecumseh was written by Glenn Tucker in 1956. Of all three biographies, Tecumseh: Vision of Glory seems to be the most detailed and historically correct.

There were several speeches given by Tecumseh. Two of them--"Sleep No Longer, O Choctaws and Chickasaws" and "Father, Listen! The Americans Have Not Yet Defeated Us By Land"--are contained in the book: Indian Oratory by W. C. Vanderwerth. Research shows that there are other speeches that do exist, but have yet to be located.

There are several articles written about Indian oratory in general, but nothing has been published about Tecumseh as a speaker. Two articles were written by Mabel Morris: "Indian Eloquence" (published in Western Speech in May, 1944), and "Indian Oratory" (published in Southern Speech in November, 1944). A third article that dealt with a specific Indian tribe and its oratory was written by Lois E. Buswell, "The Oratory of the Dakota Indians" (published in Quarterly Journal of Speech in 1935).

The overall conclusion is that while there has been little or no investigation into the rhetoric and oratory of Tecumseh, there has been enough previous

research done on Tecumseh's life, his influence on American history, and manuscripts of his speeches to allow for such a study to be made. The previous research appears to be extensive enough to provide a strong foundation for the study.

#### Availability of Materials

The materials needed to complete this study are not readily available in Booth Library. Some of the books and articles needed to complete this study can be found in the University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign and at the Morris Library at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Research also shows that the University of Oklahoma at Norman has an extensive American Indian Library. It is hoped that additional research materials can be obtained from this library.

#### Preview of the Study

Chapter one contains a library survey of available and related materials. Chapter two of the study contains a historical overview of the United States prior to and during the life of Tecumseh. Chapter three examines the early years of Tecumseh for background information that would help in the analysis of his oratory. The fourth chapter probes the years that Tecumseh



served his tribe as a warrior. This chapter also questions the correlation between his success as a warrior and his success as a leader. The fifth chapter investigates Tecumseh as an orator and the role his rhetoric played in determining his historical impact. The investigation of Tecumseh's historical impact will be subdivided into six basic areas according to a topical pattern consistent with the various speeches delivered by the Shawnee chief.

## CHAPTER I

### LIBRARY SURVEY

There is a popular image of the Indian as a taciturn creature capable of emitting an occasional 'Ugh!' There is also a false notion that Indian languages are devoid of terms for anything other than the most ordinary material objects. Historical literature, however, is filled with allusions to the eloquence of Indian orators, and preserved transcriptions of their speeches reveal not only a capacity for abstraction, but also a penchant for metaphor and poetic imagery.<sup>1</sup>

Many speech critics and members of the field of public speaking regard Indian oratory as an area for extensive research and thorough investigation. While the Indian movement itself has given rise to several eloquent orators throughout history, one speaker stands out in the period following the Revolutionary War--Tecumseh. From Indian brave to Indian warrior to Indian leader to Indian orator, the rhetoric of Tecumseh is well worth studying.

Tecumseh was one of the most renowned of a race of orators. The stately Algonquin language displayed its greatest beauty when spoken by him. His eloquence flowed as freely as a mighty river, or again, thundering like a cataract, it swept everything along on its tempestuous tide. Tecumseh's speech can never reach our ears; we cannot see the light flash from his hazel eye or the smile play upon his bronzed cheek. We cannot watch his

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Thomas Jones, *Aboriginal American Oratory: The Tradition of Eloquence Among the Indians of the United States* (Los Angeles: Southwest Museum, 1965), the introduction.

graceful gestures. His personal presence we may not feel; but behind his recorded words we are still aware of a living force and power.<sup>2</sup>

There are three factors in the racial and personal makeup of Tecumseh that are reflected throughout his rhetoric. The first is the pride Tecumseh had in the Indian people. The second is the sincere desire to keep and protect what was rightfully an Indian possession. The third factor is the deep mistrust Tecumseh had in almost all people who were products of the white society. All three of these factors are vital to the rhetoric of Tecumseh and each is interdependent of the other.

Though Tecumseh was a Shawnee by birth, he was an Indian first by pride and by heritage. Tecumseh used the appeal to the Indian's pride when he spoke to persuade different tribes to unite as one nation. Tecumseh saw beyond tribal limits and he realized that if the redmen were to become a good opposition to the whites, they must act as a unit--as a confederacy of Indians. "He was a Shawnee, but considered himself first an Indian, and fought to give all Indians a national rather than a tribal consciousness, and to unite them in defense of a common land where they might continue to dwell under their

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<sup>2</sup>Ethel T. Raymond, Tecumseh (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Co., 1920), p. 60.

own laws and leaders."<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence to indicate at what period of his life Tecumseh resolved to stop the progress of the whites west of the mountains. One fact is certain, Tecumseh devoted his entire life to that dream.

As Tecumseh retraced the trails of migration that his Shawnee forefathers had forged many years before, the great Indian orator spoke to persuade the tribes from Wisconsin to Florida to join a federation.

His cause was the oldest in human history: to be free. The program he offered was so simple that every Indian could understand it: Save the land! He would unite the red nations and push back the white invasion. Resist! Resist! Resist! By peaceful negotiation if possible--by war in conjunction with a strong ally as a resort.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately for Tecumseh and his people, he never had the opportunity to be the great chief he was during peacetime, but proved to be a valiant and skillful war chief.

Tecumseh believed, as did many Indian leaders, that the land was an Indian possession by nature. For it was the Indian who had inhabited all of the frontier before the white men came to the new country. It was the land that provided for the Indian with food and subsistence. And it was the land that was causing the quarrel with the white men. Some Indian tribes fell to an

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<sup>3</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 132.

<sup>4</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 16.

appeal for material gain from the white society and quickly sold their possessions of ground and territory to the settler with the most valuable offer. But Tecumseh claimed that the individual tribes must act as a whole nation in reference to land sale, and that no one tribe could sell their tract of land without first consulting all the other tribes. This was one way to hold back the white society. If the whites refused to accept the Indians' way of doing business, there was always force as an alternative.

Where today are the Pequot? Where are the Narrangansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and many other once powerful tribes of our people? They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the White Man, as snow before the summer sun.

Will we let ourselves be destroyed in our turn without a struggle, give up our homes, our country bequeathed to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead, and everything that is dear and sacred to us?

I know you will cry with me, 'Never! Never!'<sup>5</sup>

The mistrust of the whites that Tecumseh carried with him was the sum total of all the early encounters with the white man. "He was a product of one of the most critical periods in the history of the American Indians, and from birth to death was involved in conflict and war."<sup>6</sup> Tecumseh had never read the text of any of

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<sup>5</sup> Shirley Hill Witt and Stan Steiner, The Way (New York: Random House, Inc., 1972), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 132.

the treaties that had been made by the United States with the Indians, yet he was aware of the terms that each had outlined. Tecumseh also knew to what extent the United States had honored those treaties. Tecumseh could not erase the memory of the senseless and violent deaths of his father Puckeshinwa and of the great leader Cornstalk. Tecumseh was not quick to put his faith into a white man's promise.

The two noted biographers of Tecumseh, Benjamin Drake and Glenn Tucker, consider all three factors (Indian pride, native land rights, and mistrust of the whites) as being the most important characteristics of Tecumseh as a leader and orator. In studying the speeches of Tecumseh, it becomes apparent that these factors are not mutually exclusive, but build and compliment one another.

The main obstacle that must be overcome in studying the rhetoric of Tecumseh, or Indian oratory in general, is to find complete manuscripts of the speeches. The speeches, in their original form were not scripted. Tecumseh, like most of the great Indian orators, spoke from his heart not his notes. Therefore, the records of the speeches given by Tecumseh were composed by those present at the time the speech was delivered. Many of the recorded speeches cannot be documented and for all serious intentions should be disregarded. But for the

purpose of this paper, six speeches by Tecumseh have been investigated and documented for authenticity. Whether the speeches were recorded word for word is of course, questionable, but the details surrounding the transcribing of the speeches are well known and the people who recorded the speeches have been verified through historical references.

One of the earliest documented speeches given by Tecumseh was an oration delivered before Governor Harrison at Old Vincennes, August 20 and 21, 1810. This particular speech was originally printed in the book: The Shawnee Prophet, or The Story of Tecumseh by Edward Egglestone and Lillie Egglestone Seelye. The speech by Tecumseh came as a warning to Harrison for failure to honor the Treaty of Greenville signed by the United States and the Indians in 1795. The Miami Indians had sold a tract of their land to Governor Harrison, and Tecumseh objected to this sale.

Brother: I wish you to listen to me well. As I think you do not clearly understand what I before said to you, I will explain it again . . .

Brother, since the peace was made, you have killed some of the Shawnees, Winnebagoes, Delawares and Miamis, and you have taken our land from us, and I do not see how we can remain at peace if you continue to do so.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Edward Egglestone and Lillie Egglestone Seelye, The Shawnee Prophet; or The Story of Tecumseh (London: The Authors, 1880), p. 182.

The speech was one of the highlights that marked the first meeting between Tecumseh and Governor Harrison. Harrison had requested that Tecumseh come to Vincennes with but a few "followers" for reasons of security and safety for the white settlement. "This request, however, was wholly disregarded; and on the twelvth of August, the chief, attended by four hundred warriors, fully armed with tomahawks and warclubs, descended the Wabash to Vincennes, for the purpose of holding the proposed conference."<sup>8</sup> Whether it was true mistrust of Harrison, or possibly a way to intimidate the Governor, Tecumseh refused to give into any wish or request by the white man.

When the great chief and his followers arrived at Vincennes, Governor Harrison greeted them and then spoke on the terms of the Treaty of Fort Wayne which dealt with Miami land allocation. It was Harrison's belief that if the Miami's wished to do business with the settlers of the territory, that it was not Tecumseh's concern. Harrison insinuated that the Shawnee leader was sticking his nose into another tribe's business. Tecumseh became angered at what Governor Harrison had to

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<sup>8</sup>Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh (Cincinnati: Anderson, Gates and Wright, 1941), p. 124.



say about land possessions. After the fiery speech was delivered by Tecumseh, Harrison asked the Indian chief to leave. The first meeting between the Governor of the Indiana Territory and the Shawnee Chief was over. However, the next day Harrison visited Tecumseh at his camp. Again, Tecumseh related his plan of an Indian confederacy, and through the aid of an interpreter Harrison acknowledged Tecumseh's idea. Harrison explained that he would relate Tecumseh's plan to the President, though Harrison believed there was little probability of any agreement upon such a plan.

It is interesting to note that there are records of another speech that was supposedly given by Tecumseh during this same meeting at Vincennes. However, Benjamin Drake discounts the speech as being a fabrication. But many other authors of Indian anthologies believe it to be an actual speech by Tecumseh.

It is true I am Shawnee. My forefathers were warriors; their son is a warrior. From them I take only my existence; from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune; and Oh! that I could make that of my red people and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind,<sup>9</sup> when I think of the spirit that rules the universe.

Even Marshall, the author of one of the books in which this speech appears, acknowledges that it is a paraphrase.

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<sup>9</sup>H. Marshall, The History of Kentucky (Frankfort, Kentucky: The Author, 1824), Vol. II, p. 482.

If this particular speech is a "paraphrase" of the speech that appears in Benjamin Drake's book (pp. 182-186), it is a sloppy misrepresentation.

On November 15 of the same year, 1810, Tecumseh visited Fort Malden and invited British aid. Fort Malden was a military post that had been established on the Canadian side of the Detroit River, near its junction with Lake Erie, shortly after the British withdrew from Detroit in 1796. It was known by two names, Fort Malden and Fort Amherstburg. This speech was enclosed with Captain Matthew Elliott's letter to Colonel Claus, from Amherstburg, November 16, 1810. It was described as the "speech of Techkumthai brother to the Shawanese Prophet from the Potewatomas, Ottawas, Wenebegu and Sakies, who four days ago arrived here and received the Presents yesterday being in all 134 Men 28 Women and 8 children."<sup>10</sup>

The speech itself was a plea to the British to help the Indians in their plan for a confederacy. Tecumseh reminded the British that they were willing to aid the Indians once before to fight the Americans, now the Indians are requesting British aid. "Father--I have come here with the intention of informing you that we have not

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<sup>10</sup>From manuscripts in the Public Archives of Canada, "Q" Series, Vol. 114-M.G. II.

forgot (we never can forget) what passed between you English Men and our Ancestors--And also to let you know our present determination."<sup>11</sup>

The speech was received by Captain Matthew Elliott with some anticipation. Elliott was only a middle man and for the request of Tecumseh to be honored it first had to be sent on to William Claus, District Inspector General of Indian Affairs. Captain Elliott did not want to engage in another fight with the Americans, but he quickly perceived that the Indians of the region fully intended all out war if Governor Harrison continued to push them back. Elliott also knew that an Indian war would eventually come about, whether or not the British furnished aid. Therefore, the request of Tecumseh was related to his superiors, with additional comments by Captain Elliott concerning the overall situation.

Tecumseh continued his appeal for a confederacy with speeches delivered before the various Indian tribes that inhabited the area from Wisconsin to Florida. In the fall of 1811, Tecumseh delivered a speech to the Choctaw council. The speech was

related by Colonel John Pitchlymn, a white man of sterling integrity, and who acted for many years

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid. (Canadian Manuscripts).

as interpreter to the Choctaws for the United States Government, and who was an eye witness to the thrilling scene, a similar one, never before nor afterwards befell the lot of a white man to witness, except that of Sam Dale, the great scout of General Andrew Jackson, who witnessed a similar one--that of Tecumseh in council assembled with Muscogeas, shortly afterwards . . .<sup>12</sup>

Tecumseh began his journey to the South sometime during the month of August in 1811. The Choctaw council did not take place until sometime in September that same year. The Choctaws had taken a position of either neutrality or loyalty to the United States. During the Creek War of 1812-1814, Apushmatahah, the ruling chief of the Choctaws, kept his tribe and their allies neutral or else actively engaged on the American side. Tecumseh had a rugged job ahead of him if he was to convince Apushmatahah to join in an Indian confederacy to hold back the Americans.

Sleep no longer, O Choctaws and Chickasaws . . . in false security and delusive hopes. Our broad domains are fast escaping from our grasp. Every year our white intruders become more greedy, exacting, oppressive and overbearing. Every year contentions spring up between them and our people and when blood is shed we have to make atonement whether right or wrong, at the cost of the lives of our greatest chiefs, and the yielding up of large tracts of our lands . . .

. . . Then haste to the relief of our common cause, as by consanguinity of blood you are bound;

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<sup>12</sup>H. B. Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), p. 303.

lest the day be not far distant when you will be left single-handed and alone to the cruel mercy of our most inveterate foe.<sup>13</sup>

Continuing with his campaign for unity, Tecumseh visited the Osages sometime during the winter of 1811-1812. The speech by Tecumseh was taken down by John D. Hunter, who was present in the Osage camp when it was delivered. "Hunter claimed that he had been an Indian captive during his childhood and youth."<sup>14</sup> The Osage Indians had made their camp on the Arkansas River, west of the Mississippi--quite far from Tecumseh's home base.

Brothers,--We all belong to one family; we are all children of the Great Spirit; we walk in the same path; slake our thirst at the same spring; and now affairs of the greatest concern lead us to smoke the pipe around the same council fire! . . .

Brothers,--We must be united; we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each others' battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirit; he is for us; he will destroy our enemies, and make all his red children happy.<sup>15</sup>

Although the Osages were impressed with what he had said, they decided against joining Tecumseh's federation.

In June of 1812, Tecumseh returned to one of his camps on the Wabash. The British in Canada were urging

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<sup>13</sup>W. C. Vanderwerth, Indian Oratory (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), pp. 55-57.

<sup>14</sup>John D. Hunter, Memoirs of a Captive Among the Indians of North America (London: The Author, 1824), p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 44-48.

the Indians, specifically Tecumseh, to take a course of neutrality with the Americans. The British urged the Indians to choose a route of peace rather than of war, because too many people on both sides would die. Tecumseh, in his speech to Colonel Matthew Elliott, reminded the British officer that any death and destruction brought upon the Americans, was a result of provocation by the Americans. Tecumseh explained that the Indians were willing to talk peace, if peace was the wish of the Americans. However, violence by the Americans would be met with violence from the Indians.

Father and Brothers! We will now in a few words declare to You our whole hearts--If we hear the Big Knives coming towards our villages to speak peace, we will receive them; but if we hear of any of our people being hurt by them, or if they unprovokedly advance against us in a hostile manner, be assured we will defend ourselves like men.<sup>16</sup>

Over a year after Tecumseh delivered his speech to Colonel Elliott at Machekeithie on the Wabash, the great Indian orator had occasion to address the British commander, General Procter, in charge of operation in the northern part of the country. This speech was delivered in a council on September 18, 1813. Barclay's defeat, the loss of the British fleet on Lake Erie, and

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<sup>16</sup>E. A. Cruikshank, Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812 (Ottawa: Publications of the Canadian Archives--No. 7, 1912), p. 34.

the massive preparations for American invasion of Canada below Amherstburg, made it necessary for Procter to consider abandoning his posts at Detroit and Amherstburg (Fort Malden) and retreating to Niagara. "His (Procter) plan was opposed by Tecumseh, who appears to have compelled him to make a belated stand against Harrison's swiftly moving invaders at Moraviantown."<sup>17</sup> Tecumseh was desperate in his appeal for British aid.

Father--Listen to your children! You see them now all before you. The war before this, our British father gave the hatchet to his red children when our old chiefs were alive. They are now all dead. In that war, our father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our father took them by the hand without our knowledge, and we are afraid our father will do so again at this time.

Father! You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go in welcome, for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.<sup>18</sup>

As stated before in this chapter, these six speeches can be documented for authenticity. Though not many of his speeches remain, one fact has been agreed upon by several historians: Tecumseh was a fine orator. "He was a brilliant orator and warrior and a brave and

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<sup>17</sup>John Richardson, War of 1812 (London: Brockville, Ltd., Inc., 1842), p. 119.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 119-120.

distinguished patriot of his people. He was learned and wise, and was noted among his white enemies, for his integrity and humanity."<sup>19</sup> "His majestic oratorical ability was rivaled, according to judges among the frontiersmen, only by that of Henry Clay. Gifted, studious, abstemious, he was acquainted with Shakespeare and the Scriptures and understood the campaigns of Hannibal and Alexander the Great."<sup>20</sup> And finally, a third historian had this to say:

When speaking on the subject (driving the Americans from Indian lands), his countenance would light up with fiery and haughty pride; his frame would swell with emotion; every posture which he assumed, and every gesture, would be eloquent with meaning. At the same time, his language would flow with glowing eloquence, as it spoke the passionate thoughts of his very soul.<sup>21</sup>

Tecumseh's oratorical ability has been a subject of comments, but never one for research. In writing this thesis, the biggest problem stems from the fact that very little material about the public speaking of Tecumseh has been published. The two well known biographers of Tecumseh, Drake and Tucker, do mention the

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<sup>19</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 132.

<sup>20</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 15.

<sup>21</sup>Chalres H. L. Johnston, Famous Indian Chiefs (Boston: Page Publishers, 1904), p. 310.



great speaking ability of Tecumseh, but there seems to be a need for a more definite analysis of Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory.

Most of the material on Indian oratory that is now available, concerns itself with general tribal oratory or specific tribal orators (i.e., "Indian Oratory" and "Indian Eloquence" by Mabel Morris and "The Oratory of the Dakota Indians" by Lois E. Buswell). All of these articles are either too general or too specific, and are dated. (Very few articles have been written in this area in the last twenty years.) However, these articles can be used to examine the rhetoric and oratory of Tecumseh in terms of racial appeal and continuity.

All of the biographical information that has been written about Tecumseh reflects almost precision in the research. There is very little discrepancy concerning the life and times of the Shawnee chief, Tecumseh. But the present research concerning his rhetoric and his oratory is almost superficial in that no author attempts to delve very deeply into the public speaking of Tecumseh. It is the purpose of this thesis to investigate and analyze the rhetoric of Tecumseh.

## CHAPTER II

In order to study Tecumseh as an orator more carefully, it is important to investigate the period of history that helped introduce and finally host the rhetoric of Tecumseh. The following historical overview is more than a report on the events in American history, it is an account of the American Indian's role in the making of this country's history. The overview will span over two hundred years, from 1620 to 1825.

The period of time which elapsed from the arrival of the first settlers in North America to the beginning of the Revolutionary War is almost as great as the time that has elapsed since that event. For the most part of this period, the Indian held the key to success or failure of the new colonies. In nearly every instance the first arrivals were received with kindness and hospitality. They were offered food and shelter and shown how to survive in the wilderness. Massasoit and Powhatan, principal chiefs in Massachusetts and Virginia, respectively, maintained peace with the whites to the end of their lives.

However, there was a spirit of arrogance and superiority in the colonists which eventually brought them into conflict with the native tribes. It was once

remarked that when the Pilgrims first landed in the new world, they fell first upon their knees and then upon the Indians. The early settlers came to America with no notion that the natives were entitled to any more respectful consideration than caution might require.

The Virginia Indians met the small colony of Englishmen with hospitality rather than hostility. Without the Indian foodstuffs supplied in the nick of time, and without the benevolent attitude of the providers, Jamestown would probably have been another Roanoke. The following account is by John Smith.

. . . and shortly after it pleased God (in our extremity) to move the Indians to bring us Corne, ere it was half ripe. to refresh us, when we rather expected when they would destroy us . . .

. . . Our provisions being now within twentie days spent, the Indians brought us great store bothe of Corne and bread already made: and also there came such abundance of Fowles into the Rivers, as greatly refreshed our weak estates.<sup>1</sup>

In those days of weakness, the English found it convenient to arrange the equivalent of a "dynastic" marriage between John Rolfe and Pocahontas. Though a few intermarriages did occur, the overall idea was unique. Any backwoods adventures with Indian maidens were discretely accepted, but a formal marriage to such a maiden called for a public explanation.

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<sup>1</sup>L. G. Tyler, ed., Narratives of Early Virginia (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1959), pp. 37-38.

While there were among the English a few partisans of intermarriages, this practice with the Indians was never officially encouraged, and was eventually forbidden in many of the colonies. On the other hand, in New France, intermarriage with the natives was encouraged by both civil and religious authorities, and mixture of the races took place there on a wide scale. While the differences in the circumstances of the two colonies (i.e., a small white population based on the fur trade, contrasted to a relatively large white population based on farming) might explain the differences in the extent of intermarriage, there can be no explanation for the restrictive legislation of the English colonies except the presence of attitudes of superiority. The Indians were quick to perceive these attitudes, and it soon became obvious where Indian sentiment would fall if a confrontation between French and English colonists were to arise.

The fact that the English population was much larger than the French, and that they lived in more thickly settled communities, insulated the British from direct contact with the Indians. Intermarriage was probably held in check by this particular pattern of living. The fact that most English settlers were farmers, requiring the aid of the technical skills of

European women, may also have been a factor. But the laws against "mixed marriages" reveal certain attitudes not held by the majority of the French inhabitants. It should also be noted that the French possessions were never torn by the Indian wars which made life periodically hazardous in the English settlements. The French were in need of a firm alliance with the Indians as a barrier against the more populous English colonies, and inter-marriage was apparently considered as one means of accomplishing this.

The pattern of white relations with the Indians that was established in Virginia was, with few exceptions, characteristic of the relations that were to prevail everywhere for three centuries. In the stage of weakness, friendly relations were to be maintained in the interest of self-preservation: (1) a crown given to chief Powhatan by the colonists of Virginia; (2) a hundred Indians invited to the first Thanksgiving feast at Plymouth; (3) recognition of the prior right of Indians to the soil, and negotiations between supposed equals. When settlements appeared to be permanent, the numbers of whites had grown, and their stock of arms was adequate, the attitude shifted to one of overbearing arrogance. The English then took the position that they were not "guests" in the country, but "masters," and that the

Indians were subjects bound to obey their laws, and to submit to whatever demands the English might make of them. If an accommodation was occasionally necessary, it would last only so long as to accumulate strength for another blow.

Fifteen years of peace ended shortly after the death of Powhatan, when his brother and successor, Opechancanough, launched war against the settlements in 1622. When Opechancanough took up the hatchet, he nearly wiped out the English settlements. English arms prevailed and the redman was pushed farther back into the wilderness. It was only sixteen years after the first settlements in New England, that the English felt strong enough to exterminate the Pequots. This gruesome task was made easier because neighboring tribes were either neutral or aided the English.

The life of the respected Massasoit ended in 1662, and his oldest son, Alexander, died that same year. His second son, Metacomet, then became chief of the Wampanoags, and quietly prepared for a showdown. Provocations were numerous enough. Puritans decreed that Indians must not work or carry burdens on the Sabbath. Disputes arose over land titles. Indians were arrested, punished, and sometimes executed for violating laws they had no part in making. English cattle overran

Indian cornfields with no hint of reparation from their owners.

In June of 1675 three Indians were hanged for the alleged murder of Sassamon, a Christian Indian who served as an informer for the whites . . . Within days the Indians struck back by setting homes afire at Swansea, and the greatest Indian outbreak of colonial history was on.<sup>2</sup>

Metacomet had managed to form a confederacy of jealous tribes. "Of ninety English towns, his warriors attacked fifty-two and completely destroyed twelve."<sup>3</sup> The fighting lasted one year, but on August 12, 1676, Metacomet was betrayed and slain, and the fight ended in defeat. Metacomet's head was displayed as a trophy on the palisade at Plymouth; his wife and little son were sold as slaves in the West Indies, along with most other captives. Late in the century sporadic fighting erupted in Maine, but it was too late, and these tribes too sank back into the status of a herd of caged animals.

Prior to the French and Indian War every colony was racked by bloody warfare with the exception of Georgia and Pennsylvania. In the latter cases the founders carefully cultivated friendly relations with the Indians of that region.

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<sup>2</sup>Harry J. Carmen, Harold C. Syrett and Bernard W. Wishy, A History of the American People, Vol. I (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 1952), p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

The Dutch in New York virtually exterminated the small Algonquin tribes of the Hudson Valley and Long Island, but the powerful Iroquois confederacy in the north remained allied to the Dutch, and later, to the English, standing as a powerful wall against French Expansion.<sup>4</sup>

The only Indian attacks that were experienced in New York in this period came from Canada, where tribes allied to the French made occasional assaults against New York and New England. "The Five Nations (six Nations after 1713) were important as tools for fighting the wars of New York against the French and their Indians, and also in the fur trade, which became the principal enterprise of the colony."<sup>5</sup> The bulk of the Iroquois remained peaceful toward New York until the Revolutionary War.

In the American phase of what Europe called the "Seven Years War," a number of Indian tribes (from the Alleghenies to the Mississippi and from Kentucky to Canada) were allied with France. They initiated repeated defeats to the English. For the first time Pennsylvania suffered from the attacks of Delawares and Shawnees.

Wolfe's victory over Montcalm at Quebec put an end to the fighting between the two European powers, and the peacemakers at Paris redrew the

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<sup>4</sup>William McDonald, ed., Documentary Source Book of American History (3rd, ed.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 96.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 109.



map of North America without regard to the aboriginal inhabitants.<sup>6</sup>

The Indians did not lay down their arms for long, but soon attacked again under the able Ottawa chief Pontiac.

All of the frontier was at the Indians' mercy, and the posts recently abandoned by the French fell into their hands. The denial of French support and aid was probably responsible for the ultimate discouragement of the Indians as any decisive military event. The Indians were unable to assume control of the West for two years.

The Lords of Trade, in an effort to avert further trouble with the Indians, induced the Royal edict of October 7, 1763, which forbade white settlement in the region west of the sources of the rivers falling into the sea.<sup>7</sup>

This set in motion a chain of events leading toward the separation of the colonies from the mother country. The frontiersmen and land speculators were unwilling to surrender the West to the natives. His Majesty's government was compelled to station a standing army in the colonies, perhaps to police the Indians, perhaps also to enforce the proclamation against invasion of their domain.

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<sup>6</sup>Harry J. Carmen, Harold C. Syrett and Bernard W. Wishy, A History of the American People (Vol. I; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 1952), p. 90.

<sup>7</sup>James Alton James, "Indian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Revolution in the West," Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1909 (Madison: 1910), p. 41.

When the royal government sought to saddle the colonists with the cost of this venture through a series of taxes, a series of protests followed. These protests initiated a chain reaction which flared into open revolt at Concord Bridge April 19, 1775.

The outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1775 left the colonies without the protection of the mother country against the Indians. Instead, the recent protector "incited" the Indians to war against the colonists. The Indians easily believed that they had more to fear from the land-greedy colonists than from the distant power.

While the Indians were aligned mainly on the side of the British, the first efforts to ally them to either side were probably made by the provincial Congress of Massachusetts.

Early in April 1775, this body (the Congress of Massachusetts) sent an address to the Stockbridge Indians, a Mohican remnant. They also sent a letter to Reverend Samuel Kirkland, a missionary to the Oneidas, instructing him to attach the Six Nations to the American cause, and if this proved impossible, to persuade them to remain neutral . . . The British appointed an Indian superintendent for Nova Scotia to offset the influence of Massachusetts among these tribes.<sup>8</sup>

A delegation of Stockbridges, already active in

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<sup>8</sup>Walter H. Mohr, Federal Indian Relations 1774-1788 (Philadelphia: the author, 1933), p. 29.

the colonial cause, was sent to the Mohawks. It was hoped, that the Oneidas and Onondagas would be won over by the missionaries, Kirkland and Crosby. Dr. Eleazar Wheelock was to approach Joseph Brant, a noted Mohawk warrior. Brant had attended Dr. Wheelock's Indian school and there was a mutual trust and respect built up between the two. However, with the exception of the Oneidas, all of the coalitions fell through. One writer concludes that "here, as elsewhere, encroachments were a prominent factor in making the Indians decide in favor of Great Britain."<sup>9</sup>

"On July 12, 1775, Congress resolved to establish three Indian departments, northern, middle and southern."<sup>10</sup> The commissioners for each were directed to obtain the assistance of men of influence among the Indians; seek alliances with the Indians if the British should use Indians against the colonies; arrest British agents who stirred up the Indians; and report to Congress on their financial affairs and Indian affairs in general. The northern department was to support Canadian Indian students to Eleazar Wheelock's school since these were

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>10</sup>Journals of the American Congress, from 1774 to 1788 (4 Vols.; Washington: Way and Gideon, 1823), I, pp. 112-114.

mainly loyal to the American cause. While there were no such organized fraternities sympathetic to the American cause in either the southern or middle departments, it would have been likely that these fraternities would also have enjoyed the same support as did Eleazar Wheelock's school.

The general policy of the Congress at the outset of the Revolution was to attempt to secure Indian neutrality, since it was much harder to persuade them to join in the colonial cause. In an address prepared and delivered to the Six Nations on July 13, 1775, Congress tried to explain the causes of the quarrel with the king and closed with an appeal for the Indians to remain neutral:

This is a family quarrel between us and Old England. You Indians are not concerned in it. We don't wish you to take up the hatchet against the king's troops. We desire you to remain at home, and not join on either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep.<sup>11</sup>

Later, however, on May 25, 1776, Congress resolved that "it is highly expedient to engage the Indians in the service of the United Colonies."<sup>12</sup> On March 7, 1778, Colonel Nathaniel Gist was authorized to engage two

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 114-115.

<sup>12</sup>Secret Journals of the Acts and Proceedings of Congress (Boston: Thomas B. Wait, 1821), I, p. 44.

hundred Indians on the frontier of Virginia and the Carolinas, and to supply them with goods. The initial engagement of the Indian forces by Colonel Gist was successful, but the arms and various other supplies promised to the Indians soon began to thin out. Because the colonists became lax on honoring their promise, the Indians found it useless to honor their end of the agreement.

During the entire period of the war, "the United States succeeded in arranging only one treaty of alliance with an Indian tribe, that with the Delawares at Fort Pitt, September 17, 1778."<sup>13</sup> In this document the two parties mutually forgave each other for past wrongs, promised perpetual peace and friendship, and free passage through Delaware territory for American troops, with the Indians agreeing to furnish supplies and warriors to reduce the British posts. The United States was permitted to erect a fort for the "protection" of the Indians. Neither side was to inflict punishment for offenses without trial, or to protect criminal fugitives. Trading agents were to be appointed by the United States. Finally, the Indians were offered eventual statehood with

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<sup>13</sup> Charles J. Kappler, ed., Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties (15 Vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903-1941), II, p. 3.

representation in Congress, should they desire it.

The treaty lasted only one year. Unable to furnish the Indians with sufficient goods, and powerless to prevent frontier settlers from murdering Indians, or to offset British threats, Congress lost this potential ally. Certain tribes and bands did give assistance to the United States. Some treaties were also set up with the Indians by individual state governments.

The treaties that were eventually set up came only after most of the fighting had subsided. However, during the actual confrontations, the detailed accounts of the various military engagements in which Indians were employed indicate that support for the conflicting sides (American and British) were as varied as the individual Indian tribes. Indians and Loyalists in 1777 carried out the Wyoming, Pennsylvania massacre. This act was punished in the next year by an expedition which destroyed many Iroquois villages. "Senecas in St. Leger's British army in the Mohawk valley deserted at a critical time thus causing his eventual defeat."<sup>14</sup> Hundreds of Indians were in Burgoyne's army which was captured at Saratoga, as well as in the colonial army which defeated him. The Shawnees raided Kentucky settlements, but Clark's invasion

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<sup>14</sup>John Clark Ridpath, History of the United States (Boston: S. J. Parkhill and Co., 1876), p. 220.

of the Northwest brought neutralization of many tribes in that region. Some of these tribes participated in Hamilton's march to Vincennes, where Clark massacred a group of Indians who were not involved in the conflict. The Southern tribes, especially Creeks and Cherokees, were active for the British in a number of engagements, but the Catawbias aided the Americans.

The causes of the American failure with the Indians at this time were probably: (1) the Indians' conviction that the Americans represented the greatest threat to their land, and (2) the inability of the Americans to win their allegiance by supplying them with goods to match those of the British. In the West, the Ohio Valley, which was the focal point of the advancing frontier, a third cause was the atrocities committed against the Indians.

The Indians in the active service of the American armies were too few to be of any great military importance. They served mainly as scouts and guides. The Indian methods of fighting such as camouflage, fighting from cover, and guerrilla tactics, were adopted by the Americans and proved superior to European military methods.

When the dust from fighting the Revolution had finally settled, it was clear that yet another fight was

emerging. The victory by the Americans over the British was in no way a victory for the Indians. The Indians had welcomed to their homeland the helpless and weak settlers. The friendly redman felt no malice to the early colonists; he offered comfort and guidance and now the whiteman was looking wantingly at what the Indians possessed--land.

In order to enlist Indian support during the war, the British had circulated propaganda concerning the "land-hungry Americans." Yet when the war ended and the British had gone back to England, "land-hungry Americans" was no longer a phrase of propaganda, it was a cold hard fact. The Americans had made many idle promises to the Indians before, during and after the war. It seemed that an agreement was honored by the Americans only long enough to get what they needed from the Indians, then that same agreement became meaningless. It was something quite new for the Indians to encounter lies and dishonesty from people they had once trusted. Both the Indians' land and their pride were slowly being taken away. It soon became quite obvious that the Indians' role in the Revolutionary War was really only one chapter in a long war for survival and possession of their country.

The measure of British defeat is seen in the fact that no provisions for her allies were made in the



peace treaty, in contrast to what was done in the Treaty of Ghent thirty-one years later. The Six Nations were given a reservation on the Grand River. Upper Canada (Ontario) became the new home for some of the New York Indians which migrated to the area after the war.

The British continued for some years to remain in possession of frontier posts around the Great Lakes. These posts promoted trade between the English and the Indians; English goods including firearms were exchanged for Indian furs. The Spanish in the Gulf carried on a similar trade with the Southern Indians. In both instances, the trade demonstrated that there was probably some political manipulation involved. While these powers "sought to maintain their economic and political influence with the Indians, there is no convincing proof that they sought to induce the redmen to war on the new republic."<sup>15</sup>

The wars in the Ohio country near the end of the century were the direct result of white intrusion on Indian lands. When Marietta was established at the mouth of the Muskingum in 1788, Fort Harmar was built nearby

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<sup>15</sup>Annie Heloise Abel, "The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi River," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1906 (Washington: 1908), I, p. 260.

for the specific purpose of restraining the further advance of settlement. But this was only a temporary measure, and it was soon resolved to push the Indians back. The Shawnees of Ohio allied with the Miamis, Wyandots, Potawatomis, Ottawas, and other tribes to keep settlements below and east of the Ohio. After a series of unsuccessful expeditions culminating in the disastrous and overwhelming defeat of General Arthur St. Clair by Little Turtle, a Miami chief, Washington at last found Anthony Wayne. Wayne was able, with some Indian allies, to subdue the Indians at Fallen Timbers, near Toledo. The Indians were led by a Shawnee warrior, Blue Jacket. The British at Fort Mims denied refuge to the fleeing Indians. The following years, in 1795, the Indians signed the Treaty of Grenville, which pushed them north of a line crossing northcentral Ohio, and secured sites for trading posts and forts.

Successive white advances and additional Indian land cessions which followed convinced the unyielding Shawnee, Tecumseh, and his brother, the Prophet (Tenskwat-awa), that a confederation of all the tribes was a prime necessity for their preservation. With great skill, Tecumseh forged such an alliance, reaching most tribes between the Appalachians and the Mississippi, but its aim was peace not war. Tecumseh hoped to hold his own

by adopting agriculture and raising livestock. But the aggressive governor of the Indiana Territory, William H. Harrison, in the fall of 1811, marched on the village of Prophetstown near the junction of the Tippicanoe and Wabash Rivers. The Indians first asked for a parley, then attacked early in the morning of November 7. There was no decisive victory for either side, but the Indians withdrew in the face of superior numbers, and their village grain and livestock was destroyed. Tecumseh had been absent in the South at the time, but upon his return he attempted to restore peace. Within a few months the American war-hawks, with their lurid tales of British inspired savage attacks, had induced Congress to declare war upon Great Britain. The idea of an Indian buffer state between the United States and Great Britain was once again an unattainable dream.

The sympathies of all the northern tribes were with Britain, a fact most likely related to the aggressive behavior of the Americans toward the Indians in the preceding period. Tecumseh took a leading role in the war, and legend holds that the British gave him a brigadier general's uniform and commission. Black Hawk of the Sauks came east from Rock Island to join the struggle. The great Shawnee leader, Tecumseh, was killed at the battle of the Thames in 1813. Though the body of

Tecumseh was never recovered, it was Colonel Richard M. Johnston of Kentucky who boasted of firing the fatal shot. Johnston used this claim of "bravery" when he bid for the vice-presidency in 1836. The Potawatomi forced the abandonment of Fort Dearborn at the mouth of the Onion (Chicago) River and engaged the retreating soldiers and settlers in battle.

Jackson campaigned against the Creeks in Alabama, and slaughtered hundreds of them at Horseshoe Bend. However, when he fought the battle of New Orleans, hundreds of friendly Choctaws aligned themselves with LaFitte's pirates and other strange components of Jackson's motley army.

At the peace conference in Ghent, Belgium, Britain attempted to reward its red allies and also to save the fur trade and protect Canada from future invasion by demanding that the Americans evacuate the territory north of the Ohio. This section of land was to be erected as an Indian buffer state, just as Tecumseh had once dreamed it to be. Determined resistance to this demand by the delegation headed by John Quincy Adams secured a treaty with no land cessions. Great Britain did insist upon a clause requiring the United States to sign separate treaties with each of the hostile Indian tribes and that the Indians should

not be punished for their participation in the war. To this the Americans yielded.

The ten years (1815-1825) following the signing of the Ghent Treaty found the American Indians caught up in a type of limbo. There were no more wars to fight, therefore, neither side needed their services. Like it or not, the Indians were now a "part" of the growing country of the United States. They were having to share what was once "theirs" with strangers. The Indians were experiencing something quite new, "Manifest Destiny," and they were confused, and they were scared, but mostly they were defensive.

### CHAPTER III

The conflict that the colonists shared with their mother country filled their lives to the point that any danger from the Indians became secondary. Once the larger war had ended, the settlers looked to the Ohio country as a source of future war. This war was not a conflict over "taxation without representation." The Americans saw this war as a conflict with "savages" who refused to give into the white man's wishes. The Indians of the Ohio country saw the conflict as a fight for survival. As more and more settlers of the new frontier were being killed, it became apparent to the young government of the United States that the Indian problem must be dealt with quickly.

The Ohio valley was inhabited by Shawnees and their allies. Fighting among the Indians and settlers was almost constant. Though there was no strong leadership among the tribes, the Indians were able to hold the white men back. It was not until the turn of the century that the name of one Shawnee chief became a word spoken with respect by his fellow Indians, and with fear by the opposing whites. It was Tecumseh, the one Shawnee, who saw beyond his tribal limits and brought leadership to the Indians of the Ohio country.

"Tecumseh always thought of himself as an Indian first, and a Shawnee second."<sup>1</sup> It was with minor concern that Tecumseh looked at strictly tribal affairs. Instead, Tecumseh looked at the breadth of the racial problem faced by all Indians of all tribes. The one fact that may serve to explain Tecumseh's outlook of the red and white situation was his mixed parentage. His father, Puckeshinwa ("something that drops"), belonged to the Kiskopoke clan. The Kiskopoke was one of the four major clans that made up the Shawnee nation. "The Shawnees were originally divided into twelve clans, but as a result of continual wars and wandering, the twelve clans had dwindled to four."<sup>2</sup> Only the Mequachake, Chillicothe, Piqua and Kiskopoke remained.

While the heritage of Tecumseh's father seems fairly certain, his mother, named Methoataske, has a much more questionable origin. Different historians give varying accounts of Methoataske's ("a turtle laying eggs in the sand") tribal origin. In a biography of Tecumseh by Benjamin Drake, evidence is offered that Tecumseh's mother was a member of the Turtle clan, one

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<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother The Prophet (Cincinnati: Anderson, Gates and Wright, 1941), p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Ethel T. Raymond, Tecumseh (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Co., 1920), p. 3.

of the original twelve clans composing the Shawnee nation, and therefore, Methoataske was a Shawnee. However, Glenn Tucker, Ethel T. Raymond and Alvin Josephy, Jr. report that Methoataske was thought to have originally been a Muskogee Creek that was taken from her tribe at an early age and later adopted into the Kiskopoke clan. The later reports of Methoataske's derivation seem to be the most predominant, which lends support to the reason that Tecumseh had a broad understanding of the Indian problem in general, rather than just a tribal concern.

Tecumseh's parents were held in high respect among their clan. Puckeshinwa had been elevated to the rank of chief by his brother warriors, and at the time of Tecumseh's birth was a powerful leader among his people. As chief, Puckeshinwa led a contingent of warriors and braves who responded to the commands of the tribal war chief Cornstalk. Methoataske was noted for her wisdom among the women of her tribe. It was with admiration that the women of the Kiskopoke viewed Methoataske due to her large family. "Her progeny were numerous enough to excite amazement in a race that was not prolific. Methoataske's unusual fecundity gave Puckeshinwa at least eight children, five sons and three daughters."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 20.



Originally, Puckeshinwa, his family and his clan inhabited an area in eastern Alabama. However, through many years of migration, the Shawnee finally settled on the Mad River in the Ohio country. Puckeshinwa's town, Old Piqua, was spread out among the bluffs on the west bank of the Mad River six miles southwest of the present city of Springfield, Ohio. At the time of Puckeshinwa's residence at Old Piqua, it was one of the largest communities of the Middle West. "A population of four thousand Indians was estimated in the early days of the settlement."<sup>4</sup> It was in this Shawnee settlement in March 1768, that a fifth child was born to Puckeshinwa and Methoataske. They named their son Tecumseh.

The name comes from the Shawnee words nila ni tha' mthka, which means 'I cross somebody's path.' Set against a great allegorical background, it may be interpreted as 'crouching panther' or 'panther springing for its prey.' The transition to 'celestial tiger,' and hence 'meteor' or 'shooting star,' is more difficult. But as the whites of his own day altered his name Tecumthe to Tecumseh, so they decreed that he should be known as the 'Meteor,' or 'Shooting Star.'<sup>5</sup>

Whether the name was pronounced Tecumthe or Tecumseh, the man remained the same. Tecumseh grew to become a brilliant orator and warrior and a brave and distinguished

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<sup>4</sup>B. B. Thatcher, Indian Biography (New York: The Author, 1843), II, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 21.

leader of his people.

The early years of Tecumseh were spent in the care of his loving mother. It was during these formative years that Methoataske guided Tecumseh with wisdom and love, helping to mold the character of one of the greatest Indian leaders in history. "During his first six years, while Tecumseh was in his mother's care, that emotional, imaginative woman gave him the dramatic instinct, the ardor and the poetry of words that went to make him one of the greatest orators of his time."<sup>6</sup> Even though her children were many, Methoataske found the time to devote herself to each of her children as an individual. Or perhaps, Methoataske saw in Tecumseh as a child something of the fame he would earn when he grew older.

The physical environment of Tecumseh probably had some effect upon his overall development. Old Piqua was a picturesque location for anybody to spend a childhood. The bluffs along the Mad River were scattered with poplars, elms and chestnut trees. There always seemed to be a brightness of hawthorne and wild plum blossoms that made the hills come alive with color. The

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<sup>6</sup>Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother The Prophet (Cincinnati: Anderson, Gates and Wright, 1841), p. 23.

Indians planted corn that always grew tall and beautiful without the aid of the "spirits" or by burying a fish with each grain at planting. The sound of a bubbling spring echoed along the base of one of the hills, bringing fresh cool water to the Shawnee settlement. It was in this atmosphere that Tecumseh spent his early days, either playing with other Indian children or listening to the tales of the elders. The stories told by the elders gave the history of the wanderings of the Shawnee. Tecumseh and the other Indian children learned of their tribal heritage that would always be a significant part of their Indian pride.

Tecumseh's childhood was no different than any other young Shawnee that grew up in the village of Old Piqua. All of the Shawnee children grew up admiring the beauty of their surrounding, respecting their fellow Shawnees as well as their tribal leaders, and taking pride in being an Indian. In terms of background, Tecumseh was no different, with the exception that his father, Puckeshinwa, was a chief. All Indian children were taught to be proud of their heritage, and the fact that Puckeshinwa was a respected and honored chief must have given even more pride to Tecumseh.

Not only did Puckeshinwa stand as an example of courage and leadership, but Tecumseh also saw in his

father friendliness and sympathy. Puckeshinwa was cordial to the whites that occasionally passed through the Ohio country. In 1773, there was a report of a white man, Captain Thomas Bullit, traveling down the Ohio River making surveys. Bullit encountered Puckeshinwa and told the chief that he was placing his settlement on the other side of the Ohio but that the white village would not interfere with the Indians' hunting. The Shawnee were still welcome to hunt in Kentucky. Puckeshinwa replied with warmth for the white man.

Brother, you have come a hard journey through the woods and grass. We are pleased to find that your people are not to disturb us in our hunting. We must have meat for our women and children, and furs with which to buy powder, lead and blankets. We wish you to be firm in discharging your promises to us, as we will be firm in requiring our young men to be kind, friendly and peaceable toward you.<sup>7</sup>

This comment reflects the warmth and friendship that the Shawnee people were willing to share with the white men. Puckeshinwa believed that both the red man and the white man could live in peace together. This belief was no doubt transferred to Tecumseh. It was not until Tecumseh witnessed treachery and cruelty from the white men that he learned to mistrust them.

Amidst the beauty and the splendor of the village

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<sup>7</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 22.

of Old Piqua, Tecumseh also learned of the white men's lust for land. The Pontiac War had ended before Tecumseh was born, but the door to the West that it had opened became even more visible as Tecumseh grew older. Settlers were encouraged by the outcome of the war to move westward. The defeat of the Indians gave the Americans hope for the further progress of settlement. The Shawnee quickly found that they had to hold their hunting grounds in Kentucky as well as protect their villages in Ohio. The Indians were willing to live in peace with the new settlers, but too many of the pioneers were land hungry and power mad. There was no reason to share anything with the Indians, including land that was by nature a source of livelihood for the Shawnee.

"Border warfare raged steadily in both regions (Kentucky and Ohio), and in 1774, when Tecumseh was six years old, the skirmish erupted in a formal conflict, known as Lord Dunmore's war, between the Shawnees and the colonists of Virginia."<sup>8</sup> Approximately two thousand Virginia colonists marched into Kentucky and Ohio under the leadership of their governor, Lord Dunmore. The Shawnee commander was Cornstalk, a brave and dignified man. The fierce battle at Point Pleasant, West Virginia,

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<sup>8</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 139.

brought casualties to both sides. In an effort to spare his people from further suffering and bloodshed, Cornstalk surrendered the Shawnee claim to lands south of the Ohio River and allowed the Virginians to open Kentucky to settlement. This diplomatic act by Cornstalk was hoped to secure harmony with the settlers and help to save the Shawnee villages in Ohio.

Though Tecumseh was merely a boy when the confrontation began, he saw his father and his oldest brother, Cheeseekau, fight courageously under the command of Cornstalk to protect the land that had been considered a Shawnee possession. Tecumseh also saw many of his people die at the hands of whites. This death and destruction could not help but affect the development of a young Shawnee's personality and nature. As a leader, Cornstalk was admired by Tecumseh. The decision by Cornstalk to surrender to save the lives of many of his people was highly respected by Tecumseh.

The Treaty of Camp Charlotte that Cornstalk signed ending Lord Dunmore's War was only a temporary tranquilizer for the advancing white civilization. It would only be a matter of time before the settlers looked at the rich land north of the Ohio River with vaulting ambition. The Shawnees of the Ohio country were willing to "share" their wealth of land, but it was the white man

who selfishly wanted it all. The young Tecumseh listened eagerly to the tales of warfare with the settlers, and he obviously felt the mistrust and the contempt that the leaders felt for the whites. Yet, there was the kindness and cordiality toward many settlers from the Shawnees that Tecumseh had also witnessed, and this must have caused a dilemma in the mind of the youngster. Possibly, Tecumseh did not know what his true feelings were toward the white men.

However, it did not take long for Tecumseh to form his own opinions of the white men and their ways. Shortly after Lord Dunmore's War had ended, Tecumseh experienced two traumatic examples of the value of a treaty with a white man. Though the Treaty of Camp Charlotte acknowledges the Indians' right to the land north of the Ohio, pioneers and settlers continued to invade the area bringing even more bloodshed as they came. One day, a band of such frontiersmen came upon Puckeshinwa in the woods near Old Piqua and asked him to be their guide. Tecumseh's father refused by asserting that the white men had no right to be that far north of the Ohio. Angered by Puckeshinwa's refusal, one of the men shot Tecumseh's father and left him to die. When Puckeshinwa failed to return home that night, Methoataske and Tecumseh went to search for him. They found

Puckeshinwa dying and learned what had happened. Tecumseh saw with his own eyes and felt with his own heart a sample of the white man's fairness. It was Methoataske that inspired Tecumseh with implacable hatred of whites. The words of the dying Puckeshinwa would echo eternally in the ears of Tecumseh: "Behold the faith of the white men!"<sup>9</sup>

At the impressionable age of six, Tecumseh stood by the side of his mother as he watched Puckeshinwa, a brave Shawnee chief, and a loving father, be buried in a grave near their home beside the Mad River. Methoataske spoke to Tecumseh in a harsh chant of hate as she grieved over her husband's death.

Tecumseh, you shall avenge the death of your father and appease the spirits of his slaughtered brethren. Already you are elected chief of many tribes . . . Your feet shall be swift as the forked lightning; your arm shall be as the thunderbolt, and your soul fearless as the cataract that dashes from the mountain precipice.<sup>10</sup>

Time passed quickly for Tecumseh and the violent death of his father was always on his mind. Three years later, on an annual visit to the grave of Puckeshinwa, the mother once again kindled a fire of hate in her son. Methoataske said:

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>10</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 26.



Today you saw a deer bounding through the forest; he was lovely in strength and beauty, and fleeter than the winds . . . Suddenly the hunter crossed his path, and an arrow cleft his heart. I led you to the spot and bade you look at the dying animal . . . The warm blood that flowed from his wound grew dark and chill. He was stiff and cold, and his beauty had departed. Such is death, and such is the sleep of your father.<sup>11</sup>

Methoataske continued to arouse the emotions of Tecumseh:

My son, you have been told of a people beyond these wilds, who are the enemies of your race. Their souls are dark in treachery and their hands are red in blood. They came with the cloak of friendship to our forest, and smoked the calumet with our nation, but they met your father alone on his hills and killed him.<sup>12</sup>

Tecumseh's emotions reached a climax as he called for immediate revenge. Methoataske told him that he must wait.

Time rolls on without ceasing. The winter passes quickly away, and the summer is here again. You shall soon rejoice in the strength of your manhood and your enemies afar shall hear your name and tremble.<sup>13</sup>

After the death of Puckeshinwa, Tecumseh looked toward his idol, Cornstalk, for comfort and guidance. Cornstalk exhibited strength, courage and wisdom and Tecumseh regarded the Shawnee leader with high esteem. Tecumseh's second traumatic experience with the white men

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-27.

came when Cornstalk was viciously murdered in 1777.

Cornstalk remained at peace with the settlers that had entered Kentucky. The Shawnee chief honored the agreement he had signed with Lord Dunmore in 1774. As the threat of war between the colonies and their mother country became a reality, the wise Cornstalk advocated neutrality for the Shawnee. An offer to take up the British cause was declined. On a friendly visit to Fort Randolph at Point Pleasant, an incident occurred in which a white man, named Gilmore, was killed by Indians while hunting along the Ohio. The next day white soldiers at Fort Randolph formed a mob and blamed Cornstalk for the death of Gilmore. Cornstalk, accompanied by his son, bravely stepped out of his cabin door to meet his attackers and fell victim to seven bullets. So died Cornstalk, another idol and love of Tecumseh had been heartlessly murdered. At the age of nine, Tecumseh had nurtured such a deep mistrust and hatred of the whites that he almost never had any confidence or faith in the words spoken by a white man.

In Tecumseh's later years his aide, Shabbona, would say that 'his enmity was the most bitter of any Indian I ever knew.' And Tecumseh was overheard to declare that he 'could not look upon the face of white man without feeling the flesh crawl on his bones.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

Tecumseh's father, like most Shawnee men, was a forest hunter and a fighter, constantly involved in violence. Puckeshinwa was also a brave, courageous and wise leader. All of these traits were inherited by Tecumseh along with a set of values and pride in being a Shawnee; in being an Indian. The violent deaths of both his father and Cornstalk weighed heavy on Tecumseh's mind. Tecumseh sought vengeance from the white society that had produced the murderers of his two heroes. Tecumseh saw Methoataske, who was by nature a warm, loving and patient mother, turn into a vindictive and spiteful woman over the loss of her husband and the threatening white civilization. It was Methoataske who vigorously urged Tecumseh on to become a warrior with the spirit and courage of Puckeshinwa.

From his parents, Tecumseh gained many qualities. He had the knowledge of the heritage of his people; the wisdom and warmth exhibited by his father; and the love and pride demonstrated by his mother. These qualities mixed with the sense of concern for the welfare of all Indians, along with the hatred he had grown to feel for the whites, gave Tecumseh the character and personality of an Indian leader that would long be remembered in history.

The beautiful and bountiful country that Tecumseh

had grown to love as a boy became the scene of endless attacks by the new settlers followed by reciprocating raids by the Shawnee and their allies. Weapons were being made to kill humans, rather than for hunting the wild-life in the woods near Old Piqua. Tecumseh saw young braves of his tribe grow to valiant warriors only to die in battle leaving their loved ones filled with sorrow and grief. Treaties were signed and then later broken; sometimes within the same month or even the same week. It is certain that Tecumseh was born in a troubled time. The era itself along with the personal and physical surroundings worked to produce the Tecumseh that was to be a great leader to the Shawnee tribe and devoted patriot to the Indian people.

## CHAPTER IV

There appeared to be no doubt that a void was caused in the young Tecumseh over the loss of the two men whom he had both loved and admired. Tecumseh sought to fill the emptiness by focusing his attentions on another brave Shawnee chief--Blackfish. Blackfish was the chief of Old Chillicothe, the sister town of Old Piqua. Old Chillicothe was located near the Little Miami River, somewhat south of Old Piqua.

A type of mutual love grew between young Tecumseh and Blackfish. The Shawnee chief adopted Tecumseh into his family and into his heart. Tecumseh began spending more and more time in Old Chillicothe. His new-found idol and friend probably helped take Tecumseh's mind off of the tragedy he had experienced, but it is doubtful that Blackfish could ever take the place of Puckeshinwa or Cornstalk.

Blackfish was a big, hearty, companionable Indian who laughed often, ruled his village with a code as inflexible as the flint of his arrowheads, formed quick attachments, angrily inflicted corporal punishment with his own hands and lived by a reverse of the slogan of the settlers, holding that 'a good white man is a dead white man.'<sup>1</sup>

The merciless murder of Cornstalk, provoked

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<sup>1</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 29.

Blackfish to renew fighting with the whites. Blackfish sought revenge in his terrorizing of the Kentucky settlers. Though Blackfish never earned a cornerstone in history, he was a feared Indian leader in the Kentucky Territory. Many whites lost their lives attempting to fight the guerrilla tactics of Blackfish. In the later years, it would be Blackfish who would be credited for teaching Tecumseh to use military strategy to the Indian's advantage.

The techniques of warfare were not the sole course taught to young Tecumseh, or to his fellow Shawnee braves. The Indians, like the whites, wanted their children to learn about their heritage, their life styles, their own racial history. The Shawnee provided education for their children just as the white civilization provided schools for their young people. Perhaps the educational format within the two cultural structures was different, the basic objective was the same. All children, red or white, needed to be educated in the ways of their history and culture in order to survive.

Tecumseh was educated in both towns, Old Piqua and Old Chillicothe. Though both Shawnee settlements were similar, Tecumseh drew from two differing fields of tribal experience. As time passed, Tecumseh grew to think of both towns as his home. This fact may seem

insignificant until one considers that few other Indian braves had a "split" life-style between two communities. Perhaps this partially extended field of experience helped Tecumseh see beyond tribal limits.

At both places of learning, Tecumseh received "education in personal conduct, oratory, and tribal lore."<sup>2</sup> The qualifications of the Indian instructors came from the fact that they were the elders of the tribe, skilled in certain areas and highly respected for their wise judgment. As Blackfish demonstrated an uncanny aptitude for guerrilla fighting, other knowledgeable elders exhibited talents in teaching history, handicrafts and oratory. These Indian "professors" used no books. Their knowledge was passed on by word of mouth. It is no wonder that there were so many fine Indian orators considering the main communicative link between cultures, tribes and generations was oratory.

There is no documented evidence to indicate the scholarly quality of Tecumseh as a student. In looking at the record Tecumseh compiled as a man, it seems fairly obvious that Tecumseh was attracted to his educational opportunities and benefitted very well because of them. One of the best informed Indians of his day,

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<sup>2</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 140.

Tecumseh's speeches were rich in an abundance of allusions of the past. The confidence exhibited by Tecumseh could come only from someone proficient in such a skill as oratory.

During these formative years when Tecumseh was being educated in the ways of his people, he was also learning more about the white culture. Tecumseh came to know more white men; some better than others. It is obvious that Tecumseh had formed some type of opinion about whites due to the early experiences with them. Yet these additional experiences with whites must have had some impact upon Tecumseh. While some of Tecumseh's contact with the white society was pleasant, it is doubtful that all of the good contact could outweigh the bad.

A male child was a very valuable asset to the Indian tribe, even if the child was not an Indian. Many tribes were willing to pay highly for the acquisition of a male addition to their population. Before his death, Puckeshinwa had acquired such an addition to his own family. The white boy was approximately the same age as Tecumseh. Most of the accounts of the white child report that his name was Richard Sparks and that he was taken captive at the age of four. Richard's parents had come from Pennsylvania to Kentucky. It is not



certain that Richard Sparks was originally taken by the Shawnee. Puckeshinwa did adopt him and change his name to Shawtunte. "The strongest proof of friendship of an Indian was the adoption of him as a brother. Only the foulest offense, usually against the tribe, could break the bond of brotherhood."<sup>3</sup>

Shawtunte lived with his Shawnee family for almost twelve years. During this time he attracted no great attention, but lived pleasantly with his Indian family and friends. When later in life, Sparks returned to his white civilization, he had only fond recollections of his life with the Shawnee. Puckeshinwa had treated Shawtunte as a son rather than a captive. Although Tecumseh and Sparks had once lived as "brothers," when the white boy left the Shawnee tribe, Sparks would never meet with Tecumseh again.

Richard Sparks was not the only white that Tecumseh had the opportunity to observe. A second example of the white society came in the famous form of Daniel Boone. It was the war that Blackfish was waging with the Kentucky settlers that brought Tecumseh and Daniel Boone together.

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<sup>3</sup>Albert Britt, Great Indian Chiefs (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), p. 129.

In 1778 Blackfish invaded Kentucky, struck at some of the settlements, and captured Daniel Boone and twenty-six other whites. He brought the frontiersman back to Old Chillicothe, where Tecumseh saw him.<sup>4</sup>

In the time that Daniel Boone spent as a captive of the Shawnee, Tecumseh had the occasion to witness the actions of the noted white man. Tecumseh noticed that this white man had adopted the ways of the Indians. Daniel Boone had learned to live in harmony with nature, as did the Indians. At times, Boone even appeared sympathetic to the Indian's cause. Tecumseh observed the honesty and sincerity with which Boone spoke of the need for the Indians and the whites to live in peace. Even though Daniel Boone was white and was fighting on the side of the Americans in the Revolution, it is probable that Tecumseh admired this frontiersman. The fact that during Boone's stay with the Shawnee, Blackfish adopted him into his family gives an indication of the respect that the Indians felt for Daniel Boone.

The observations that Tecumseh made concerning Boone must have had a confusing impact upon Tecumseh. Boone was a white man who lived like an Indian, felt empathy for the Indians and yet, this man fought on the side of the Americans. Tecumseh must have questioned his

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<sup>4</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 140.

own opinions about the white society. Perhaps if the Indian and the white man sat together and peacefully discussed a rational solution to this racial problem, everyone could enjoy tranquility and happiness. This question that must have been raised in the mind of young Tecumseh was the seed that would later sprout into the substance that nourished the rhetoric of Tecumseh.

A youth by the name of Benjamin Kelley was another Kentuckian who had been captured along with Daniel Boone. Kelley was also adopted by Blackfish. It seems ironic that a young Indian like Tecumseh, who had cultivated such a strong hatred for the white society, should have as many white foster brothers as he did. Because of the age factor, there was an almost immediate attraction between Kelley and Tecumseh. Both of the young men expressed warmth, trust and even brotherhood toward one another. Each boy was gaining insight into the other's culture and life-style. Though Boone later escaped from the Shawnee, Benjamin Kelley remained behind.

Not much time had elapsed from when Daniel Boone escaped from his forced adoption to when yet another white man came into Tecumseh's life. The white man was Simon Kenton, another famous frontiersman. Kenton left home in Virginia under questionable circumstances and

became a scout and Indian fighter in Kentucky and Ohio. Simon Kenton did not possess Daniel Boone's amicable attitude toward the Indians. It was for the purpose of stealing horses that Kenton had entered Old Chillicothe. The hostile treatment that Kenton received could only be expected when Blackfish caught up with him.

Tecumseh saw in Kenton the White Man that the young Shawnee had grown to hate and mistrust. It was the "Simon Kentons" of the white civilization that were causing the Indians' problems; stealing what they wanted and killing what they did not. Simon Kenton was subjected to various types of Shawnee punishment for the crime which had been committed. Tecumseh, as young as he was, participated in Kenton's retributions. The life of Mr. Kenton was spared and he was finally released after much torture. The experience with the Shawnee taught him nothing, because Simon Kenton later became a spy for George Rogers Clark in a campaign to destroy Indian villages.

The example set by Simon Kenton was one that Tecumseh would always remember. Tecumseh realized that there would always be bad with the good. In order to establish any type of agreement with the white society, Tecumseh realized that some men could never be trusted.

The respect and friendship that Tecumseh had

displayed toward Richard Sparks and Benjamin Kelley could not be compared to the brotherly love that Tecumseh felt for Stephen Ruddell. Stephen was one of two white brothers captured by the Shawnee. What happened to Stephen's brother is not known, but Stephen entered the family of Blackfish. Thus, Stephen became an adopted brother of Tecumseh. The records of the extent of involvement of Sparks and Kelley in the Shawnee tribe are somewhat vague, but the commitment of Stephen Ruddell to his adopted red family seems clear.

The Shawnee named Ruddell Sinnamatha, or 'Big Fish.' He married a squaw, learned to speak Shawnee fluently and became one of the staunchest warriors of the tribe, accompanying Tecumseh on many of his youthful expeditions that led to encounters with the whites.<sup>5</sup>

Puckeshinwa and Cornstalk had been cruelly taken out of the young Tecumseh's life. Methoataske had encouraged Tecumseh to hate all whites for the criminal acts against the Indian people, though records indicate that Tecumseh had called at least three white men "brother." The great Shawnee chief proposed a life-style for his people that would enable both Indians and whites to live together in harmony.

It was all of the favorable experiences that

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<sup>5</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 41.

Tecumseh enjoyed with the white men that later instilled a true desire to live peacefully with the whites. Yet it was all of the trauma that had been induced by the whites that made Tecumseh skeptical of any encounter with such a threatening race. Because Tecumseh saw both sides of the racial situation at an early age, it was easy to see how such a great chief acquired the knowledge and wisdom needed to produce the rhetoric for which Tecumseh was remembered.

It has been recognized that the impact that the adopted white brothers had on Tecumseh was great, but not as great as the influence of Tecumseh's natural brother Cheeseekau. Blackfish was not the only person who contributed to the young Tecumseh's training and education. Cheeseekau, Tecumseh's oldest brother, had fought beside their father under the command of Cornstalk in Lord Dunmore's War. It was the wish of Puckeshinwa that if anything were to happen to him, Cheeseekau would take on the responsibility of raising his younger brothers to be courageous warriors and reputable members of the Shawnee tribe.

Cheeseekau saw to it that Tecumseh developed his skills with the bow and arrows and tomahawk. It was by choice that Tecumseh refused to master the use of a rifle. A gun was the white man's invention. Tecumseh

excelled in his ability to use his native weapons. Later in his life, it would be Tecumseh's dexterity and personal skills that would single him out as a chief.

From his boyhood, Tecumseh seems to have had a passion for war. His pastimes, like those of Napoleon, were generally in the sham-battlefield. He was the leader of his companions in all their sports, and was accustomed to divide them into parties, one of which he always headed, for the purpose of fighting mimic battles, in which he usually distinguished himself by his activity and strength.<sup>6</sup>

The transition from the make-believe battlefield to the real one, was not easy for Tecumseh. When Tecumseh was thirteen or fourteen, he accompanied his brother Cheeseekau into battle against the Kentucky settlers. This first encounter with a "real" war was not a distinguished one for Tecumseh, but it was certainly a memorable one. Tecumseh saw Cheeseekau wounded and though his brother did not die, this brought back the memory of other loved ones dying in battle. The unnerved and frightened Tecumseh ran from the battlefield. "That night he (Tecumseh), upbraided himself for his cowardice. He had finally been tested by fire, and had been found wanting, but it would be the last time anywhere that he would show fear."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother the Prophet (Cincinnati: Anderson, Gates and Wright, 1941), p. 61.

<sup>7</sup> Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 141.

Many other small battles occurred after Tecumseh's initial debut into the racial war. Tecumseh fought valiantly alongside his brother Cheeseekau. The young Tecumseh compiled no outstanding records during his early battles, but Tecumseh never again displayed any lack of confidence in his own ability as a warrior.

At the age of nineteen, Tecumseh journeyed south with Cheeseekau and his band of Shawnee warriors. As leader and the Shawnee band, Cheeseekau chose to join the Cherokees as an ally in fighting the whites. It was during this campaign that Cheeseekau was killed and Tecumseh assumed his brother's role as leader of the Shawnee. Tecumseh made the decision to remain in the South for three years to supply the Cherokees with continuing military aid. It was not until about 1790, that Tecumseh and his warriors returned to Shawnee country. Tecumseh attracted no great attention from the white society during his early endeavors of leadership. It was not until Tecumseh made efforts to cultivate his dream of an Indian Confederacy into a reality, that whites focused their attention on the great Shawnee chief.

Though Cheeseekau provided much guidance and supervision in the education of Tecumseh as a Shawnee and a warrior, there was another brother that provided a great deal of influence on Tecumseh. Lalawethika (Loud Voice),



was nearer Tecumseh in age than was Cheeseekau, but the influence of Lalawethika came to Tecumseh only after Cheeseekau's death. A few reports indicated that Lalawethika and Tecumseh were actually twins. However, more substantiated evidence has shown a difference of approximately six years in the ages of the two Indian brothers and it was apparent that they were not twins.

Very little was known about the formative years of Lalawethika. His life prior to becoming "The Prophet" seemed totally insignificant in comparison to the outstanding records compiled by Cheeseekau and Tecumseh. There were no early indications of the impact Lalawethika would have on his tribe or on his brother the great chief Tecumseh.

While Tecumseh was battling the whites in Ohio and the Deep South, his youngest brother Lalewaskia (also called Lalawethika), who became the Prophet, was living in a cloud of obscurity. He was an unprepossessing idler indisposed to hunt or fight. Born after the death of his father, he had been abandoned by his mother when he was four years old and left adrift in a tribe that was suffering merciless punishment from white invaders, which pinched for food and could give little heed to single instances of distress. Such rearing as he received came from his sister Tecumapease, but there was no such affection between the two as existed between her and Tecumseh.<sup>8</sup>

At a relatively early age, Lalawethika lost his

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<sup>8</sup>Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 89.

left eye in battle and consequently wore a handkerchief over the empty socket. Due to his blindness, Lalawethika seemed to be excused from all active sports of the hunt and even from the battlefield. Another tragedy induced by the white society also befell Lalawethika. Many white traders brought whiskey with them to the Indian territories. Indians had a low tolerance to the evil brew and many became totally helpless under its power. Lalawethika was one Indian who could not resist the temptation of the liquor and began to drink heavily. For many years Lalawethika's fellow tribesmen regarded his drunkenness, dullness and laziness with complete disgust.

Lalawethika gained his famous title of "the Prophet" through some very odd circumstances. It was the death of the current Shawnee medicine-man, or prophet that offered the opportunity for Lalawethika to become the new Prophet. With his change in position, Lalawethika changed his name to Tenskwatawa (Open Door), also called Elkswatawa. The old Shawnee prophet, Penagashega (Change of Feathers), was a harmless and inoffensive man. In later years, Tenskwatawa, the new Prophet, could never be accused of being harmless nor inoffensive.

It was difficult to say whether or not Tenskwatawa intended the seizing of the position as Prophet of the Wabash as a deliberate accomplishment. However,

a certain status came with the job, and for Tenskwatawa the newly gained respect by his fellow tribesmen was a welcome response. The complete turn-about in the attitudes of the Prophet's peers seemed to demonstrate Tenskwatawa's possession of great personal magnetism, as an offset to his vanity and boastfulness.

The Prophet during one of his many trances, believed that he had met the Master of Life. The trances grew more frequent and Tenskwatawa's belief in his own powers became more intense. As he preached against the use of liquor, the Prophet drew many followers.

Research shows that the transformation of Tenskwatawa can be directly attributed to the infiltration of the Shaker religion into the Shawnee territory.

The preaching of the Shaker faith in Kentucky and Indiana was one of a number of profound influences brought to bear on Laulewasika that lifted him out of his intemperance and indolence and made him one of the most extraordinary religious leaders of his race or time.<sup>9</sup>

Though the words spoken by the Shakers were not understood by the Prophet, the physical demonstration of dancing and jerking became Tenskwatawa's inspiration. It was the principles of the Shaker religion, as Tenskwatawa perceived them, that gave the Prophet the incentive to crusade among the Indians.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

It did not take long for the fame of the Prophet to spread throughout the Northwest Territory. Tenskwatawa united with Tecumseh to create a dynamic force for opposition to the whites. The Prophet, adopting Tecumseh's views, urged the Indians to return to the ways of their ancestors and end tribal wars.. Tenskwatawa provided lip service for Tecumseh's ideas, because many of the Prophet's sermons were actually the words of his brother. The Prophet advocated that the Indians must maintain their self-respect and dignity if they were to have the strength to halt further advancement by the whites. The union of Tecumseh and his younger brother the, Prophet, proved to be a strong and solid opposition for the aggressive whites. The wisdom and leadership of Tecumseh combined with the mystic attraction of followers for the Prophet became one of the most unifying forces within the Indian culture.

The period following the death of Puckeshinwa was one of readjustment for Tecumseh. For the most part, Tecumseh's life did not undergo any drastic changes. Though, unlike his fellow Shawnee youngsters, Tecumseh divided his time between two different Shawnee settlements. The young Shawnee absorbed all of the experiences and education that were offered by Old Piqua and Old Chillicothe.

It was possible that the experiences he enjoyed in the two separate life-styles helped to open Tecumseh's mind to other differing life-styles. Tecumseh recognizes the need for racial unification over tribal prejudices. Such unity could only have existed if differences in life-styles could be tolerated and accepted. It was from Puckeshinwa that Tecumseh had gained tolerance and patience, and these qualities were the backbone of Tecumseh's dream for an Indian Confederacy.

With the loss of his two greatest personal idols, Tecumseh was in need of guidance, direction and mostly love. These fatherly provisions came from the Shawnee chief, Blackfish. The attachment between Blackfish and Tecumseh was warm and loving, yet it was slight indeed compared to the relationship between Pucheshinwa and Tecumseh. In many respects, Blackfish assumed the parental role to Tecumseh, but it seemed obvious that Blackfish could never replace Puckeshinwa nor erase the tragedy of his death. Tecumseh learned many things from his life with Blackfish. The skills of warfare and the fine military judgment of Tecumseh were but small examples of the knowledge gained from Blackfish.

Tecumseh continued to be thrust into relationships with members of the white society. Having had at least three adopted white brothers, Tecumseh had the

opportunity to gain insight into the opposing race. Even though Tecumseh acquired friends and family from the white culture, his overall view did not sustain any significant changes. Tecumseh recognized traits of honesty and sincerity in many white men, but the greed and selfishness of the whites were too often the more predominant characteristics. Tecumseh would remain skeptical about the actions of the white men.

The early skills of leadership demonstrated by Tecumseh were determining factors in his later campaign to unite his people. Even though he was frightened in his first battle and ran from the confrontation, Tecumseh exhibited courage and valor from that first incident to the day he died. The shock of participating in his first battle was not strong enough to obliterate his boyhood training in leadership and Indian warfare. Tecumseh's miserable demonstration during his initial conflict was definitely not a preview of things to come. An Indian could not become chief if he was not respected and admired by his tribe for his courage and wisdom. Tecumseh's record as a great chief indicated he was most certainly respected and admired by men of all tribes and both races.

The remaining influences on Tecumseh during this period came from within his own natural family. Two

brothers, one older than Tecumseh and one younger, provided much guidance for Tecumseh. Cheeseekau, Tecumseh's oldest brother, acted in directing young Tecumseh's early education. It was Cheeseekau "who taught him to hunt, led him to battle, and labored zealously to imbue his mind with a love for truth, generosity, and the practice of those cardinal Indian virtues, courage in battle and fortitude in suffering."<sup>10</sup> When Cheeseekau died in battle, Tecumseh must have experienced the same dreaded loss he had felt over the deaths of Puckeshinwa and Cornstalk.

Tecumseh's youngest brother was known as Tenskwatawa, or the Prophet. It was the magnetic powers of Tenskwatawa that gave added impact to Tecumseh's campaign for unification. Though many of the Prophet's sermons consisted of the words of Tecumseh, it was powerful attraction of followers of the Prophet that gave Tecumseh's dream the needed support. "While Tecumseh did not direct the Prophet's activities in detail and was often separated from him, he remained the strong supervisory force and the only repressive influence to

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<sup>10</sup>Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother the Prophet (Cincinnati: Anderson, Gates and Wright, 1941), p. 67.

bridle his less steadfast brother."<sup>11</sup> The leadership and wisdom of Tecumseh together with the preachings and personal magnetism of the Prophet became the integral part of Tecumseh's dream for racial solidarity.

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<sup>11</sup>Glenn Tucker, *Tecumseh* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956), p. 90.



## CHAPTER V

### TECUMSEH'S AMBITION

The tension that existed between the races was like an exposed nerve. Each act of violence by either side, red or white, was a painful shock to humanity. Many people were being killed senselessly and needlessly. Death and destruction had become the common denominator for the Indians and the whites alike. The more war that Tecumseh saw, the more desperately the Shawnee chief worked to bring an end to the fighting.

The white men were not the only opposition that Tecumseh encountered. Tecumseh's brother, the Prophet, brought savagery upon the Indian people. The Prophet seemed to have taken himself more seriously than had his followers. Tecumseh's brother believed a "purge" necessary in order to do away with all those Indians who were not sincerely loyal to the red cause. The Prophet's purge slaughtered thousands of innocent Indians whose strongest crime was that they had been converted to Christianity or that they were too weak to support any cause. The Prophet worked to exterminate anyone within a tribe that had not supported him or Tecumseh. While Tecumseh ended the purge, he continued the idea through

peaceful means. The methods that Tecumseh used consisted of "encouraging and aiding the transfer of power within tribes from weak and venal chiefs who were too friendly to the Americans to young warriors who had promised loyalty to himself and his brother."<sup>1</sup> This tactic helped Tecumseh secure a portion of the credibility he needed to strengthen his campaign for unity.

Grievances between the Americans and the British were once again sprouting into open conflict. Tecumseh saw an old pattern emerging. In order to protect themselves, the Americans would have to push the Indians farther back. Tecumseh knew that it was the time to implement his idea for an Indian confederation.

During the summer of 1808, Tecumseh and the Prophet set out to unite all of the Indian tribes. Tecumseh's idea for an Indian federation could possibly have come from the example set by the Iroquois League and also by the formation of the United States. Tecumseh believed that a unified body of Indians could more effectively maintain the hold on their Indian lands. A chain was only as strong as its weakest link and Tecumseh would have to work hard to strengthen all of the weak links in the Indian tribes.

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<sup>1</sup>Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Patriot Chiefs (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 150.

Tecumseh was considered to be an outstanding war chief of great prestige. For a while, it was believed that the Prophet was the single force behind the Shawnee Nation, but because of countless incidents, Tecumseh gave the subtle indication that he alone was in control of the power. Indians of all tribes admired the great Shawnee warrior. Tecumseh's presence must have excited them just as his oratory must have incited them to rally behind the red man's cause. Tecumseh's oratory was probably as thrilling and patriotic to the Indians that heard him, as any founding father that spoke for the loyalty and support for the United States.

Tecumseh began his speaking campaign by visiting all of the tribes in the Northwest region. The Shawnee chief was received with differing reactions. Some tribes listened to the enthusiastic orator, accepting all of his proposals, and agreeing to whole-heartedly support Tecumseh and his dream. Other tribes were non-committal to Tecumseh's cause due to their own fear of or their loyalty to the white civilization. Even though Tecumseh had converted many of the great Indian chiefs such as Shabbona and Black Hawk, the number of "non-converts" to his cause made Tecumseh realize that a strong Indian alliance would take much time and preparation.

After spending many months visitng the tribes of

the Northwest, Tecumseh headed south. The route that Tecumseh took almost retraced the exact route used by Puckeshinwa and his followers many years before. Whereas Puckeshinwa had gone north for a better way of life for his tribe, Tecumseh was journeying south to bring about a better way of life for the people of all tribes. A small band of followers travelled with Tecumseh as he spoke to the various tribes. From the Osages of Missouri to the Seminoles in Florida, Tecumseh was received with warmth and friendship. Tecumseh managed to enlist the support of most of those to whom he spoke. The tribes agreed to work together as a unified force. There were a few hot-headed young warriors who could become impatient and set off a war with the Americans at any moment. Tecumseh could only "warn" the tribes against such illogical outrages.

As the year 1809 came to a close, Tecumseh was again in the North. This time the Iroquois tribes were the center of Tecumseh's concern. The oratory of Tecumseh fell on deaf ears in Iroquois tribes. They were not ready to enter into any alliance with all of the other Indian tribes. The Iroquois were sharing a peaceful existence with most of the whites of New York state. Other tribes such as the Onondagas and the Senecas were also opposed to membership in an Indian federation.

Though very little information was recorded concerning Tecumseh's initial speaking tour, one fact seems evident, the Shawnee chief had labored hard to lay the groundwork for one of the greatest military alliances in history. The exact speeches delivered by Tecumseh during his campaign from 1808 to 1809 are not available, but the result of his oratory became a part of American history. The area from Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico was to become a buffer zone to be used for the common defense of the Indians' country. Tecumseh was killed before his dream materialized.

#### Tecumseh's Diplomacy

Upon his return to Indiana, Tecumseh was faced with the news of a land sale by the Indians of the territory to General Harrison. As the Governor of the territory, Harrison "persuaded" the older and weaker chiefs with a little liquor and a lot of cohesions. Tecumseh protested the land sale on the grounds that many of those Indians possessing the tracts of land that were sold had not even been represented during the bargaining. Country held by one tribe, argued Tecumseh, was country owned by all tribes. If all the tribes did not agree to the sale of the land, then one tribe had no authority to sell it. Many Indians were outraged by this unauthorized land sale

and they rushed to Tippecanoe to support Tecumseh.

The increase of the Indian population in the territory unnerved Harrison. The governor felt that it was necessary to talk to the leader of the Indians in order to prevent any serious confrontation. Harrison believed the Prophet to be the leader, and it was the Prophet whom he invited to Vincennes to have a peaceful conference. It was Tecumseh who replied to the governor's request and agreed to the conference. On August 11, 1810, Tecumseh, the Prophet and a few hundred warriors journeyed down the Wabash for the meeting at Vincennes.

On August 20, Tecumseh and Governor Harrison met face to face, surrounded on all sides by painted warriors and uniformed militia. Both sides were armed and anxious for fear that hostility could erupt at any moment. As the two central figures looked at one another, each must have seen the other's pride in himself and his race. Each man was probably thinking that the other was wrong. Tecumseh spoke first. Joseph Barron served as an interpreter to provide Governor Harrison with the full meaning of Tecumseh's speech.<sup>2</sup>

Through this particular speech, Tecumseh was

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<sup>2</sup>Edward Egglestone and Lillie Egglestone Seelye, The Shawnee Prophet; or the Story of Tecumseh (London: The Authors, 1880, pp. 182-186. See Appendix 4 for the text of this speech.

attempting to stress the fact that the recent sale of land in Indiana was not valid and would not be recognized by the majority of the Indian tribes. Tecumseh spoke honestly and reasonably about the consequences of the failure, on the part of Governor Harrison, to declare the land sale null and void. The thesis of the speech was: All land possessed by a single tribe was held in common by all tribes. A single tribe could not enter into a land sale without the approval of all tribes.

Brother, I was glad to hear your speech. You said that if we could show that the land was sold by people that had no right to sell, you would restore it. Those that did sell did not own it. It was me. These tribes set up a claim, but the tribes with me will not agree with their claim. If the land is not restored to us you will see, when we return to our homes, how it will be settled.<sup>3</sup>

Tecumseh developed his thesis through at least seven main points.

All of the points related to the white intrusion on Indian lands. (1) Though the Treaty of Greenville had been signed in 1795, whites continued to kill Indians and push them off of their own property. (2) Any trouble that had been caused in the Indiana Territory was caused by whites. (3) The white men were friendly to the Indians only when the friendship was beneficial to

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 184.

the white society. The recent land sale was made through such "friendship." Those Indian chiefs present were softened with liquor then persuaded with force to sell the land. (4) Because the recent land sale would not be recognized by the entire Indian nation, all those white men who crossed the boundary set up by the Treaty of Greenville would suffer the consequences.<sup>4</sup> (5) Those Indian chiefs who made the bargain with the white men would also have to be punished. (6) If Harrison refused to disclaim the land sale, the governor would have had a hand in killing those Indians responsible for the agreement and those white men who crossed into Indian lands.

Brother, I wish you would take pity on the red people and do what I have requested. If you will not give up the land and do cross the boundary of your present settlement, it will be very hard, and produce great troubles among us.<sup>5</sup>

(7) The failure of the white society to recognize the Indian nation would only lead to more violence. An Indian confederacy would be set up and maintained, with or without the white men's approval.

The audience that listened to Tecumseh's speech was almost an even mixture of Indians and whites. While the white audience was predominantly military personnel,

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<sup>4</sup>See Illustration D.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 186.



there were a few concerned civilians gathered to listen to the words of the Shawnee chief. Though Indians were present to hear the speech, the actual intended audience was the white men. The speech that Tecumseh delivered was directed toward the whites.

Tecumseh structured this speech at Vincennes to appeal to the white men's sense of honesty. Until the whites had settled in the New World, the Indians had enjoyed ownership of all the land. When the white society established itself on Indian land, the Indians had been willing to share what they possessed. The white men could not be content with just "sharing" the wealth; the white men wanted it all for themselves. The time had come for the white society to admit that it had no claim to Indian lands. On several occasions throughout history, the white men had signed treaties to insure that the white society would not intrude farther on Indian land. Each time the treaty was ignored. Tecumseh stressed the fact that by simply "ignoring" the Indian nation, it would not go away.

Tecumseh believed that the white men and the red men could live in peace with one another if both made an honest effort. The white civilization had taken more than its share of land, was it not only fair to allow the Indians to live on the land that they chose? The

Shawnee chief repeatedly related the white men's sense of honesty to his own desire of holding the white society back from further invasion.

It seems ironic that Tecumseh made his appeal to the American's value of honesty. It was the white civilization's lack of honesty that caused them to break the Indian treaties and take what they wanted from the Indians. Tecumseh was obviously more than aware of the American's shortcomings in their sense of honesty and fair play. Perhaps Tecumseh had learned enough compassion from Puckeshinwa to allow the Americans one last chance to correct their previous mistakes.

The implications of this rhetorical device used by Tecumseh could possibly have been a tactic to "shame" the Americans into a cooperative state. In comparison to the Indians, it was likely that the Americans considered themselves above savage acts. It must have been a welcome compliment for Governor Harrison and his American supporters to hear an Indian praise the honesty that the white men believed they possessed. Perhaps Tecumseh was using this theme to encourage the white settlers to review their own conscience in matters of dealing "honestly" with the Indians.

The overall tone of the speech was one of quiet desperation. While Tecumseh was working to save Indian

lands, a few of the Indian people had sold more of it to the Americans. In Tecumseh's opinion the recent land sale was not valid, though in the minds of the Americans, it was Tecumseh who was in the wrong, not they. Throughout the speech, Tecumseh reassured his audience that he was speaking the whole truth and that he was being completely honest with them. All that the Shawnee chief asked was that the Americans display honesty toward him and his people. Too much fighting had already taken place, it was time for both sides to come to a peaceful agreement. Tecumseh's speech also contained the subtlety of force from the Indians' side. The great chief was offering a peaceful solution to the problem, but if the peaceful solution was rejected, he was ready to show his strength.

The reference at the end of the speech, to the Shaker religion seems to reflect definite influence by the Prophet. It was the Prophet who was overcome by the religious teachings of the Shakers. Even though it has been shown that Tecumseh was the governing force over his brother, the Prophet, the example of the Shakers indicates that Tenskwatawa did exert some influence in shaping Tecumseh's ideas.

The basic insights into the mind of the speaker that were gained from the analysis of this speech seemed

apparent. The most outstanding quality that was reflected in this speech was the differing parental influence that had been exerted on Tecumseh. First there was the amiable attitude toward whites that Tecumseh had learned from Puckeshinwa. Second, was the underlying mistrust of the Americans that Methoataske engrained in her son. The sincere desire of Tecumseh for the red and white societies to live in peace was accented by his determination to keep what was rightfully an Indian possession, even if it meant a show of force. The strength and unyielding tone which Tecumseh assumed not only reflected his parental influence but also the examples set by Blackfish.

The current social and economic situation was also mirrored through Tecumseh's speech. Tecumseh described the plight of the red man, and the hand that the white society had in contributing to that plight. The white man's greed and selfishness was brought to light. Tecumseh promised a peaceful solution to the explosive situation, if the Americans were willing to halt their criminal advances into Indian lands.

The social and economic state of the Indians was also reflected in the words of Tecumseh. The Indians took no more than was needed to survive. They hunted for food not for pleasure. The Great Spirit had given his Indian children the land for their own self

preservation. To the Indians, the land was their mother and it should be treated with love and respect. The Indians did not believe that the ownership of a tract of land was a demonstration of manlihood, bravery or abundant wealth. The Indians wanted only to maintain their own existence.

This particular speech by Tecumseh seems to be consistent within itself, dwelling on the central thesis of the common ownership of land by all Indian tribes. The statements contained within the speech are also consistent with the observed events of its time. History verifies the extent to which the white civilization had failed to honor any written or verbal agreement with any Indian tribe. It is obvious that Tecumseh's views and opinions would be slanted in favor of the Indian cause. However, he spoke honestly and truthfully about the dangerous racial situation.

It must be remembered, that in studying the speeches of Tecumseh, we have only the translation of his speeches, not the actual text. The extent to which the speech aroused in the minds of the listeners an accurate concept of the events with which it deals can only be surmised.

The intended listeners were the white men. In the minds of these white men, they probably believed that

they had a rightful claim to the land that the Indians occupied. Though Tecumseh spoke only the truth when he described the events leading up to the current racial situation, it is doubtful that his words were perceived as being little more than fantasy. Of course, this was not to say that all whites frivolously regarded the Indians' claim to their own lands. The majority of the white civilization was feeling its growing pains and saw no serious reason why the land inhabited by savages should not be owned by whites.

In "reading" this speech, we have the benefit of considering most of the factors that have been represented throughout history and that contribute to the understanding of the entire situation. By placing Tecumseh's speech in its historical perspective, it becomes clear that the Shawnee chief relates a very accurate concept of the events of the time.

In this speech, as in many others by Tecumseh, he carefully outlines the ultimate goals of the red society. Tecumseh was more concerned about the general welfare of the entire Indian nation as a whole, than he was about an example of how, as separate entities, Indian tribes could be maneuvered to suit the Americans. As a united body, the Indians had a greater chance to survive against the threatening civilization.

The social consequences that Tecumseh described were to become harsh realities. If the Americans continued their course of progression into Indian lands, it would be the Americans who would suffer. Tecumseh was pleading with his audience to reconsider the alternatives. The Americans could halt their advancement and live in peace with the Indian nation, or continue with their lust for land at the risk of further death and destruction. This speech at Vincennes outlined the direct and indirect social consequences for both the Indians and the Americans. It was possible that Tecumseh considered this speech an ultimatum for Governor Harrison and those white inhabitants of the Indiana Territory.

It has been previously noted that there are records that indicate another speech was delivered by Tecumseh during the August 20 meeting at Vincennes.<sup>6</sup> Even though Benjamin Drake discounts this second speech, the speech should be considered in the analysis of the rhetoric and oratory of Tecumseh. Even if the speech was a paraphrase of the original address, insight into the period and an historical perspective could be gained from reviewing the second Vincennes speech.

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<sup>6</sup>H. Marshall, The History of Kentucky (Frankfort, Kentucky: The Author, 1824), Vol. II, p. 482. See Appendix 5 for the text of this speech.

The thesis of the second Vincennes speech is basically the same thesis as the previous speech. In fact, the main points of the second speech are almost similar to those of the first.

The way, and the only way, to check and to stop this evil, is, for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land; as it was at first, and should be yet; for it never was divided, but belongs to all, for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers; those who want all, and will not do with less.<sup>7</sup>

H. Marshall, the author of one of the books in which the second speech appears, acknowledges the fact that the second speech is a "paraphrase" of the first speech. A few authors have even stated that the second speech is actually a part of the first speech. However, evidence indicates this belief to be false due to the fact that if both speeches are one and the same, there is too much variation in the overall tone and too much repetition of the theme. In the second Vincennes speech, Tecumseh seems to be less patient and more inclined to threaten the strength of the Indian nation. Because there is no strong evidence to indicate that this last speech was actually delivered by Tecumseh, the second Vincennes speech will not be the subject of a thorough analysis.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 482.



### A Choice of Allies

Tecumseh realized that the Indian nation would have to enlist some allies if it was to establish itself quickly in order to halt the Americans. The most logical ally for the Indians would be the British. There had been countless verbal and physical confrontations between the Americans and the British. It was because of the ill feelings between the two countries that Tecumseh believed that the British would be eager to enlist the support of the Indians to fight the Americans.<sup>8</sup>

On November 15, 1810, Tecumseh visited Ft. Malden to ask for British aid in fighting the Americans. After an exchange of gifts by both sides, Tecumseh began his address. Of course, the basic theme of this speech was an invitation for British aid. Tecumseh structured his speech around this thesis: The British had been very kind to the Indians when the red men were in need of aid. Now that the Americans were pushing the Indians off of their own land, British aid was needed once again.

The speech at Ft. Malden was relatively short. Tecumseh developed his thesis through four main points. (1) Tecumseh related to the British at Ft. Malden his

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<sup>8</sup>From Manuscripts in the Public Archives of Canada, "Q" Series, Vol. 114--M.G.II. See Appendix 6 for the text of this speech.

plans for an Indian confederacy. The Shawnee chief explained that he must continue his campaign throughout the separate Indian tribes in order to secure unification. It would be a long time before Tecumseh was able to speak to the British at Ft. Malden, but he hoped that when he returned, the confederation would have become a reality. (2) The main reason that Tecumseh had come to Ft. Malden to enlist British aid was the once strong ties between the Indians and the British.

Father--I have come here with the intention of informing you that we have not forgot (we never can forget) what passed between you English Men and our Ancestors--And also to let you know our present determination.<sup>9</sup>

Tecumseh displayed to the British a beaded belt that had been a token of friendship between the Indians and the British. These two allies had always worked well together. Neither side interfered with the other. There had come a time for action. Both the British and the Indians had suffered the attacks of the Americans. (3) The chiefs that had ruled the Indian tribes were weak and sympathetic to the Americans. Now, the warriors of the tribes were in charge. The warriors were looking to the British for support in the defense of the Indians' land. (4) The Indians had wanted peace, but it was the Americans

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

who pushed the Indians into war. The Indians would not be pushed any more.

Tecumseh was well aware of the conflict in interests between the Americans and the British. It was this conflict upon which Tecumseh built his appeal. Of course, an underlying appeal was the fact that the British and the Indians had once been allies in fighting against the Americans. It seemed as though Tecumseh placed more trust in his relations with the British than he did the Americans. However, there was no valid proof that in the end, the British would have been any more honest and fair in their dealings with the Indians than the Americans. The past record of the British in their agreements with the Indians seemed overly favorable, and Tecumseh related this to his own goals.

The entire tone of the speech by Tecumseh was one of friendship and brotherly love. The Shawnee chief did not address the British at Ft. Malden with rebellious rhetoric. Instead, Tecumseh structured his speech around the mutual endearment both sides (Indian and British) had for one another. Tecumseh spoke of the future for all of his red and English brothers. The amiable tone of the speech was obviously most conducive to bolstering Tecumseh's basic objective of enlisting British aid.

This particular speech gives the indication that Tecumseh was not viciously opposed to the entire white civilization. His hatred and mistrust of the Americans came as a "learned" response. This ability of the great Shawnee chief to find friendship and brotherhood in a white society explains the principles that Tecumseh learned from Puckeshinwa. As a young boy, Tecumseh witnessed his father welcoming all travelers with warmth and hospitality. It was not until Tecumseh observed the unforgiveable crimes against his people that he learned not to trust all white men. The skeptical quality in Tecumseh's nature obviously came as a result of Methoat- aske's teachings. There was an internal conflict within Tecumseh. Half of the Shawnee chief wanted to live in peace with all whites; and the other half of Tecumseh felt that he could not trust any of the whites for fear of serious consequences.

This speech provides a good example of the social and economic values and various attitudes that existed during this time period. History gives the best proof of the relationship that existed between the British, the Americans and the Indians. Each member of this social triangle was in possession of various commodities that was of interest to the other two members. The Americans had control of certain areas which prohibited

British hunting and trading. Great Britain would not surrender some of its land possessions to the Americans. The Indians inhabited too much land and the Americans wanted to relieve these savages of their ownership. The British could provide the Indians with aid in fighting the Americans. The Indians could provide their services for the British if war broke out with the Americans. The previous partnership between the Indians and the British was also a matter of historical record. The sincerity of that partnership was described in depth by Tecumseh's warm and earnest address to the British troops at Ft. Malden.

Tecumseh's speech at Ft. Malden seems to be quite consistent within itself, stressing the close relationship between his people and the British. The events of this time period show that the British were more sympathetic to the Indians' causes. Even after the Revolution, the British had managed to continue ties with various Indian tribes. Though Tecumseh's speech was extremely short, the Shawnee chief repeatedly stressed the friendship and brotherhood that the Indians had always felt for the British.

The British who were present to hear Tecumseh's address were mainly associated with the military. Ft. Malden had been established on the Canadian side of the

Detroit River specifically to protect any interests of Great Britain. The British were well aware of the open conflict that existed between the Indians and the Americans. Outright war between the United States and the Indians was inevitable. If Britain were to enter into such a war as an ally of the Indians, defeat by the United States would almost surely cost Britain her stronghold within the United States because of their own conflict of interest. In any event, an ally such as the Indians had proven to be a useful asset for Great Britain once, they could be again. The words of Tecumseh illuminated this aspect of the past relationship quite well.

The goals for society which Tecumseh spoke of, included the goals for both the British society and the society of his people. The main goal for both societies was the retardation of inhabitation by the Americans. The achievement of this goal, preventing the United States to continue to invade unsettled territory, would be a victory for Great Britain and for the entire Indian nation. If this goal was mutually beneficial to both societies, then the partnership between the Indians and the British was the best possible means of attaining such a goal.

The depth at which Tecumseh examined the direct and indirect social consequences of his plan for British

aid seemed to be fairly shallow. Of course, the British had proven to be a desirable friend and ally for the Indians during previous conflicts. However, the Indians had no insurance that they were not opening Pandora's Box by inviting the services of Great Britain. Theoretically, the plan that Tecumseh proposed was seemingly a workable idea. A buffer zone set up by an Indian federation could work. If Great Britain and the United States did not decide to unite and overthrow the Indian federation, peace and harmony would once again be found in North America. Tecumseh's speech at Ft. Malden, because of its lack of depth in discussing future social consequences of the Indian-British alliance, can only be viewed as a "good-will" attempt to strengthen military ties between two friendly powers.

The winter of 1810 brought little comfort to the Indians. Confrontations between the American pioneers and the Indians were on the increase. The great chief Tecumseh made plans for yet another speaking campaign to unite the separate tribes. Tecumseh considered his previous tour of the tribes as merely a foundation builder. This second visitation would rekindle the smoldering fires that Tecumseh had begun earlier and fan the sparks of any potential flames needed to drive the Indian people to form a powerful military alliance.

In the late summer of 1811, Tecumseh once again set out to speak to the various tribes scattered throughout the central and northeastern sections of the country. One of the first tribal councils to be addressed by Tecumseh was the Choctaw Council. By September a point on the Tombigbee River had been chosen for the site of the meeting. Some time after a vast congregation of Choctaw and Chickasaw warriors had gathered, Tecumseh and his small band of traveling companions arrived to speak to the council.<sup>10</sup>

The obvious objective of Tecumseh's speech to the tribal council was to persuade the Choctaws and Chickasaws to enter into an Indian federation. Tecumseh structured his persuasive appeal around this thesis: A convincing military alliance was the only chance that the Indians had of surviving in the white man's world. Even though this thesis was the focal point in most of Tecumseh's speeches, this particular speech was specifically directed toward Apushmatahah and his tribal council. An illustration of Tecumseh's thesis comes directly from the text of the speech:

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<sup>10</sup>H. B. Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), p. 303. See Appendix 7 for the text of this speech.



The annihilation of our race is at hand unless we unite in one common cause against the common foe. Think not, brave Choctaws and Chickasaws, that you can remain passive and indifferent to the common danger, and thus escape the common fate. Your people, too, will soon be as falling leaves and scattering clouds before their blighting breath. You too will be driven away from your native land and ancient domains as leaves are driven before the wintry storms.<sup>11</sup>

Tecumseh advanced his thesis through the use of five main points. (1) Many once powerful Indian tribes had become extinct at the hands of the Americans. Weaker tribes needed the protection and support of the stronger tribes in order to endure. Unless total Indian unity was achieved, more and more tribes would vanish from sight. (2) As each day passed, another Indian tribe was slowly being driven from their land. The white society was pushing whole tribes away from their natural homelands and severing all possible ties to their tribal ancestry. (3) The Indians were no longer in command of their own destinies. The white men were running the country, with the Indians merely unwanted guests. (4) It seemed ridiculous to even consider any friendly relationships with the Americans. The Americans had never given cause to be treated as anything but an enemy. They had wrongfully taken what they desired without regard to

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<sup>11</sup>W. C. Vanderwerth, Indian Oratory (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), pp. 54-55.

rightful ownership. (5) The time for apathy had escaped. The longer the Choctaws and Chickasaws remained passive in their attitude toward the Americans, the more time the enemy had to overcome the Indians.

All the Indians greatly respected their tribal ancestry. It was with enormous pride that an Indian spoke of his parentage and tribal relations. As children, Indians were instructed in the history of their native heritage as a part of their overall education. It was probably no accident that Tecumseh structured his message around the appeal to Choctaws and Chickasaws value of ancestral ties to their natural homelands. If Tecumseh could show the jeopardy in which Apushamatahah had placed the tribal ancestry, it was possible that the Choctaws and Chickasaws would eagerly join the Indian federation.

As Tecumseh addressed the tribal council in September of 1811, the tone of his speech was greatly different from that of the previous speeches. The friendship and warmth that was apparent in the speech at Ft. Malden, seemed to take a back-seat to Tecumseh's vehemence and fanaticism on the subject of American domination. It was with great zeal that the Shawnee chief urged Apushamatahah and his tribe to take up arms against the Americans. This particular speech also contained

more colorful language than the first three speeches that have been analyzed. Tecumseh relied on the use of figurative analogies and harsh realities to drive home his points about the Americans.

The most impressive insight into Tecumseh's mind that was gained from the analysis of this speech, was the dedication and determination with which Tecumseh labored to achieve Indian unity. Tecumseh was completely devoted to the Indian people. The Shawnee chief seemed to have surrendered all consideration for his own personal and tribal achievement in order that he might better the lives of all Indians in all tribes. The awe and respect with which Tecumseh was regarded by men of both races suggests the impact that the Shawnee chief had upon humanity.

The non-committal attitude of many Indian tribes was also reflected in Tecumseh's speech. The Choctaws and Chickasaws probably never experienced the destruction of the Americans. Apushmatahah, the ruling chief of the Choctaws, had maintained neutrality with his tribe and their allies in most conflicts with the Americans. If the neutrality was broken, it was done so in support of the Americans. Tecumseh pointed out that too many Indians had been destroyed through their own ignorance in dealing with the Americans.

Tecumseh's speech to the Choctaw Council was both consistent within itself and with the observed events of its time. There appeared to be no digression from the thesis. Tecumseh supported each of his main points with either examples or analogies. The colorful oratory of the Shawnee chief was alive with the fire and hope for the Indian people. Tecumseh provided endless examples of the white man's treachery that any current historian could verify as being a true reflection of the events of that past period.

But what need speak of the past? It speaks for itself and asks, 'Where today are the Pequod? Where the Narragansetts, the Mohawks, Pocanokets, and many other once powerful tribes of our race? They have vanished before the avarice and oppression of the white men, as snow before the summer sun. In vain hope of defending their ancient possessions, they have fallen in the wars with the white men.'<sup>12</sup>

History gives the implications that while it was doubtful that an entire tribe could have been annihilated by the white settlers, the numbers of the tribes that Tecumseh named were reduced to a minority. The absorption of the small tribal minorities into larger and more dominant tribes, eventually erased the existence of such tribes as the Pequod, Narrangansetts, Mohawks and Pocanokets.

The ability of various white men to gain the Indians' trust and loyalty through a pseudo-friendship

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

helps to explain why many tribes were against joining a federation to fight the Americans. Tecumseh could not make many of the chiefs see that potential harm in any relationship with the Americans. The audience for Tecumseh's speech to the Choctaw Council was composed of those Indians who refused to believe that the word of white man was anything but good. There were a few rebellious young braves who were willing to take up the tomahawk against the Americans, but their number was too insignificant to sway the majority of the Choctaw tribe or any of the allies.

In reading Tecumseh's speech to the tribal council, it seems only logical that Apushamatahah should decide to join the Indian confederacy. The total annihilation of once prominent Indian tribes should have been enough evidence for any skeptic as to the danger imposed by the Americans. However, the loss of a tribes' ancestral ties probably seemed so remote that the Choctaws and Chickasaws ignored the pleas of Tecumseh.

There seems to be little doubt as to the sincerity with which Tecumseh worked to help the Indian people. As the Shawnee chief spoke of war with Americans, he did so out of hope that the Indians would attain a better existence. Tecumseh seems to want nothing for himself personally, but directed all of his time and energy

toward the future of the Indian society.

Tecumseh rose to the honored position of Shawnee chief by exhibiting both wisdom and knowledge. It was probably with judicious review that Tecumseh considered any alternatives before arriving at a plan for a united Indian nation. Such a military alliance could not be formed without loss of Indian life. Tecumseh probably believed that if the Indians fought as one military body, the overall loss of Indian life could be greatly reduced. One aspect that Tecumseh had not considered, was the fact that tribal prejudices were too strong to allow a central governing staff to issue orders to the mass of Indians. It would be asking too much of a tribal chief to surrender his authority to a life-long rival. The pride that was the Indians' heritage, was also their demise.

Tecumseh continued his journey southward. Many tribes were eager to join the federation, many were not so eager. It was doubtful that the Shawnee chief became discouraged. The greater the rejection of the proposal by a certain tribe, the harder Tecumseh seemed to labor to gain that particular tribes' confidence.

During the winter of 1811-1812, Tecumseh's travels brought him to the camp of the Osage tribe. The Osages made their home on the Arkansas River, west of the

Mississippi River. After a warm and gracious welcome by the Osages, Tecumseh addressed the tribal council.<sup>13</sup>

When Tecumseh spoke to the separate Indian tribes, the topic never varied. The Shawnee leader could not over-emphasize the urgency of his pleas. The thesis of Tecumseh's speech to the Osages was very similar to that of most of his speeches: A united Indian nation was the most logical alternative left to the Indians.

Brothers,--My people are brave and numerous; but the white people are too strong for them alone. I wish you to take up the tomahawk with them. If we all unite, we will cause the rivers to stain the great waters with their blood . . .

Brothers,--We must be united; we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each others' battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirit; he is for us; he will destroy our enemies, and make all his red children happy.<sup>14</sup>

Even though all of Tecumseh's speeches to the tribes focused on the same subject, it was doubtful that Tecumseh used the exact speech for more than one tribe. As a speaker, Tecumseh supported each thesis with different ideas. All of the theses and ideas paralleled one another, in that Tecumseh spoke to achieve peaceful coexistence through an Indian confederacy. The speech always seemed

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<sup>13</sup>John D. Hunter, Memoirs of a Captive Among the Indians of North America (London: The Author, 1824), p. 43. See Appendix 8 for the text of this speech.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-48.

to fit the audience.

In the speech to the Osages, the thesis was supported by at least six main points. (1) Indians of all tribes had been created as brothers by the Great Spirit. It was a problem of mutual concern for the separate Indian tribes that necessitated the military alliance. The white society looked upon all Indians with equal disdain and greed. Tribal differences had to be overcome to maintain the heritage of the Indian people. (2) As separate tribes, the Indians had little chance of defeating the Americans. The whites conspired to turn red man against red man. It would be very easy for the Americans to overtake each tribe as a single unit. The united strength of all tribes was needed to face up to the Americans. (3) The Indians desired peace, but as long as the white men desired the possessions of the Indians, there could be no peace. The Great Spirit had given his red children many possessions along with the strength to protect those possessions. The white society must be made to pay for the death and destruction that it had caused. (4) When the white men arrived in the New World, it was the Indians who had given them food and taught them to be self-sufficient. The white men repaid the Indians' kindness with death. Even the Great Spirit had shown his disgust with the Americans by



thunderous attacks that swallowed entire villages. (5) Great Britain was angry with the Americans also. The British were eager to support their red brothers in a war with the United States. (6) All Indians must smoke the pipe together in order to destroy their enemies and live in peace once again.

Tecumseh structured his appeal to the Osages value of Indian brotherhood. The problem of white intrusion was one that must be shared with the Indians of all tribes. Perhaps the white society had not ventured as far west as the Osage camps, but in time the Osages would experience the crowding by the Americans. Tecumseh's appeal was basically "Blood is thicker than water," when it came to matters of white domination. No matter what tribal differences had passed before, the Indians would have to fight together as brothers if they were to defeat the enemy.

The overall structure of this speech resembles that of the speech to the Choctaw Council. The tone of this speech seems to be a little different. The tone of Tecumseh's speech to the Osages seems to be more aggressive and belligerent. The descriptions of the punishment for the Americans seems to be more vivid and explicit. It is possible that because the Osages had not experienced the wrath of the Americans, Tecumseh felt it

necessary to explain in detail both the crime and the punishment.

In the speech to the Osage tribe, Tecumseh uses seemingly Biblical examples. The Shawnee leader describes stories about the Great Spirit that resemble stories from the Bible. Once again, the influence of the Prophet seems to be apparent. Though Tecumseh makes no direct references to the Shaker religion, it is possible that the Prophet related to his brother the stories that the Shaker missionaries told about the "Great Spirit." The insight into the mind of Tecumseh that is gained from analyzing this speech is the extent to which the Prophet influenced Tecumseh. It is apparent that while the Prophet exerted little dominance over Tecumseh in matters of leadership or military prowess, the Prophet did enlighten his brother with intellectual information.

Any insights gained about the era from this speech would probably be repetitious of those gained from analyzing Tecumseh's previous speeches. One point that seems to be stressed more so in this speech, is the fact that all of the ills suffered by the Indians were the doings of the Americans. Tecumseh points out the ignorance with which the white men entered the New World. The Indians were the teachers, the adopted brothers of the Americans. Once the Americans became self-sufficient,

the Indians were no longer of any use. In fact, the Indians became an unwanted commodity. It was the Indians' land that interested the Americans. The people who had shown warmth and compassion for the Americans were now the object of the white men's rage.

The speech to the Osage tribe demonstrates a strong internal consistency. Tecumseh supports his thesis with vivid examples and colorful analogies. Each main point is directly consistent with one another and with the thesis. There seems to be an orderly progression from point to point with smooth transitions.

The events of the time period were reflected quite accurately through the words of Tecumseh. The Indians were not the people who had started the conflict over land inhabitation. The Americans probably thought that savages had no personal rights or any claim to the land. The people who came to America were seeking freedom from a powerful government that treated common people with contempt and disgust. The common people were the weaker class who had to follow the rules set down by the government. When the settlers established themselves in the new country, they rationalized that it was the Indians who were now the "weaker" class, and proceeded to ignore the Indians' rights. The white society took what it desired because it was now the ruling class; the Indians

were only ignorant savages. Perhaps the settlers regarded the Indians as heathens due to their primitive life-style. The settlers may have believed that their own reactions came as a response to the Indians' savagery. Though Tecumseh did not understand the complexity behind the white men's lust for land, he knew that it was wrong.

Tecumseh had but one goal for the Indian society. The Shawnee chief wanted to see his people, all of the Indian people, at peace with life. Every speech that Tecumseh delivered was aimed at that single goal. Tecumseh did not explicitly outline the shortcomings or the advantages of his proposal. His simple desire was to see the Indian society happy once again; no longer troubled by threats of invasion, war or death. Tecumseh did not disillusion himself into believing his goal was an easy one to attain. It seemed that the more obscured his goal became, the harder Tecumseh labored to achieve unity for his people.

When all aspects of Tecumseh's goal are considered, one must realize the monumentous task that lay before the Shawnee chief. At no time did Tecumseh quit out of discouragement. The one source from which Tecumseh possibly drew his strength, was the possibility that the Indian people would once again live in peace. As long

as there was hope for peace, there would be Tecumseh with his rhetoric and oratory.

### Bloodshed, Argument and Warfare

While Great Britain had pledged support to Tecumseh in the struggle against the Americans, many of the British military agents wanted to prolong the peaceful relations as long as possible. By the summer of 1812, Tecumseh was again residing in one of the Shawnee camps on the Wabash. Colonel Matthew Elliott, a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had urged Tecumseh to maintain the peace with the Americans. Colonel Elliott's message to Tecumseh had been delivered by the Hurons. The Hurons waited to take the Shawnee chief's answer back to the British agent. The speech by Tecumseh was a reply to Colonel Elliott's message.<sup>15</sup>

Tecumseh's address to the Hurons was directly related to Colonel Matthew Elliott's initial message. The Shawnee chief used this thesis: The death and destruction brought upon the Americans was a direct result of provocation by the Americans. The speech was relatively short. Tecumseh used three main points to

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<sup>15</sup>E. A. Cruikshank, ed., Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812 (Ottawa: Publications of the Canadian Archives--No. 7, 1912), p. 34. See Appendix 9 for the text of this speech.

support his thesis.

(1) It was best, for all concerned, to remain at peace with the Americans. Thoughtless acts of violence on both sides, prolonged the hate between the Indians and the Americans. (2) It was hard to control all of the Indian tribes when vengeance was fresh in the minds of the warriors. These two points are illustrated in Tecumseh's words:

Our Younger Brothers the Putewatemies (pointing to them) in spite of our repeated counsel to them to remain quiet and live in peace with the Big Knives, would not listen to us--When I left home last Year to go to the Creek Nation, I passed at Post Vincennes and was stopped by the Big Knives, and did not immediately know the reason, but I was informed that the Putewatemies had killed some of their people; I told the Big Knives to remain quiet until my return, when I should make peace and quietness prevail--On my return I found my Village reduced to ashes by the Big Knives--You cannot blame Your Younger Brothers the Shawanoes for what has happened; the Puetwatemies occasioned misfortune.<sup>16</sup>

(3) If the Americans honestly wished to speak of peace, they would be heartily welcomed by the Indians. However, violence and treachery on the part of the Americans would be met with an equal response from the Indians.

If we hear the Big Knives coming towards our villages to speak peace, we will receive them; but if we hear of any of our people being hurt by them or if they unprovokedly advance against us in a hostile manner, be assured we will defend ourselves like men.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

The desires of the British to sustain peace was recognized by Tecumseh and his speech reflected those desires. The Shawnee chief admitted that he too wanted to keep the peace. It was the Americans, Tecumseh reminded, who had incited the Indians. Tecumseh was ready and willing to discuss a truce, if the Americans were sincere in their actions.

The structure of this speech to the Hurons was not of the persuasive nature of most of Tecumseh's previous speeches. The internal consistency of the speech was just as evident in this speech as any previous speech that has been analyzed. Tecumseh structured his clearly and concisely, using specific instances, examples and analogies to advance his thesis.

The tone of this speech is more relaxed than most of the speeches previously analyzed. Tecumseh is addressing the British whom he considers to be both friends and brothers. The relaxed tone seems to help Tecumseh promote his ideas for peace and concord. The fact that the British idea of harmony between the Americans and the Indians coincide with Tecumseh's ideas, also helps to achieve the overall relaxed tone of the speech.

This speech, once again, emphasized the sincere desire by Tecumseh to establish friendly relations between the Americans and the Indians. Tecumseh's speech

to the Hurons also indicated the enormous responsibility Tecumseh had assumed in trying to control the actions of the Indian people. The Shawnee chief was attempting to negotiate with both sides, Indian and American, to achieve an agreement that was satisfactory to all parties involved. It was hard to smooth ruffled feathers, when the acts of violence were so severe.

The fact that the British wanted to sustain friendly relations as long as possible gives insight into the economic status of Great Britain. The British had promised support to the Indians, but it was probable that unless an American defeat was insured, Great Britain could not afford to risk the money or the manpower. Perhaps the British were biding their time in order to gain the military strength needed to overpower the United States. The more time that Tecumseh had to organize his Indian confederacy, the better the possibility for a powerful ally. Of course, the British could have felt honest compassion for the Indians, knowing an American victory would be a serious defeat for them.

The specific instances in which Tecumseh referred to the atrocities caused by both the Indian people and the Americans provides evidence that this particular speech was consistent with the events of the period and was an accurate account of those events. The "actual"



audience for Tecumseh's speech was the Hurons. However, the "intended" audience was Colonel Matthew Elliott and the British military stationed at Ft. Malden.

It is very important to consider the audience to which the speech was addressed. It would be difficult to surmise whether or not the content and tone of the speech would be any different if Tecumseh had addressed Colonel Elliott in person. The fact does remain that Tecumseh's speech is an honest account of the events of the period and it is doubtful that a different audience would change the content of the speech.

It seems probable that Colonel Elliott outlined the hazards of warfare for Tecumseh. All sides, American, Indian and British, would suffer from loss of life due to open conflict. If Elliott wanted what seemed best for his own society, it seems equally reasonable that Tecumseh wanted what was best for the Indian society. Naturally, if the Americans continued their harrassment, then the Indians had no choice but to defend themselves.

This speech to the Hurons, most clearly explores the direct and indirect consequences of all of the actions suggested. Tecumseh did not want any more of his people to die. Peace with the Americans could be achieved if the white society put forth an honest effort. Harmony and accord between the two races could last only as long

as both sides labored to make it last. The first side to break the truce, must accept the responsibility of any future consequences. The Indians were only as violent as those who opposed them.

### The Final Battle

The complex motives that drove all three sides into battle against one another, were more than either Colonel Elliott or Tecumseh could suppress or overlook. While Great Britain inflicted much destruction upon the United States, there were not as many decisive victories for the British as had been hoped. General Procter was the man who had been placed in charge of the British troops stationed at Ft. Malden. Procter had once been a brilliant commander, but the years and the battles had taken their toll and he had become weak and unaggressive.

Tecumseh had proven his expertise at military strategy. It was the Shawnee chief who was the skilled commander of the Indian and British forces along the Canadian border. General Procter feared the impending battle and wished to retreat to Niagara. On September 18, 1813, Tecumseh delivered a speech to a British council at Ft. Malden. Tecumseh's desperate plea for British support was one of the most noted speech by an Indian

orator.<sup>18</sup>

The usual theme of Tecumseh's speeches had centered on an Indian confederacy. While this basic idea was probably still in the mind of the Shawnee chief, the speech to General Procter was centered on another concern. Tecumseh used this thesis: The British troops should remain in their positions at Ft. Malden and Detroit. The reasoning behind Tecumseh's thesis was very basic.

Listen, Father! The Americans have not yet defeated us by land; neither are we sure that they have done so by water; we therefore wish to remain here, and fight our enemy, should they make their appearance. If they defeat us, we will then retreat with our father . . .

Father! You have got arms and ammunition which our great father sent to his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go in welcome, for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.<sup>19</sup>

Five main points supported the thesis in Tecumseh's speech to General Procter. (1) Great Britain had pledged to help the Indians. It was the responsibility of General Procter to keep that promise. (2) The Indians had done their share of fighting. Many brave warriors had advanced on the Americans. It would be a crime for General Procter to retreat without giving notice to those

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<sup>18</sup>John Richardson, War of 1812 (London: Brockville, Ltd., Inc., 1842), p. 119.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

Indians who had already gone to battle. (3) Great Britain had promised to hold their ground and urged the Indians to do the same. The Indians were not strong enough to defend their lands without the British. (4) It was not the time to retreat from battle. There was still hope that the Americans would not defeat the British and the Indian forces. If the Americans did show overwhelming strength, then it would be best to retreat. (5) Great Britain had sent arms and ammunition for the battle. If General Procter was going to retreat, the weapons had to be given to the Indians. The Indians were determined to defend their own land. The defense of Indian land would be maintained even at the cost of Indian life.

The intended audience for this particular speech was the British, specifically General Procter. Tecumseh was attempting to structure the appeals of his speech toward the British sense of pride and self-respect. It was poor military strategy, on the part of the British, to place such a vital command in the hands of General Procter. If General Procter had retreated without making a substantial attack on the Americans, he would have shamefully dissolved the British commitment to the Indians. Tecumseh must have reached Procter's sense of pride and his loyalty to Britain's promise, because the general chose to hold the positions at Detroit and Ft.

Malden.

The tone of the speech reflected the desperation of Tecumseh, a man who was working in a futile effort to attain a dream. This speech did not display the tone of selfishness or personal dissatisfaction about the outcome of events. The tone was indicative of a great leader begging for help to save the lives of his people. Research indicates that Tecumseh was mystically aware of the tragic outcome of the forthcoming battle. It was reported that the great Shawnee chief seemed to sense his destination. The speech revealed that perhaps Tecumseh was not as concerned about his own death as he was concerned about the death of the Indian people's freedom and life-style.

The structure of this speech reflects the orderly progression of thoughts that seem to be characteristic of Tecumseh's style. The instruction in oratory that Tecumseh received as a young boy, was never so brilliantly displayed as it was in the speech to General Procter. The simple structure of the speech was embellished with pathos and logos and the sense of pride that was undeniably Tecumseh.

This speech, more than any speeches that have previously been analyzed, seemed to echo all of the tribal and parental heritage that created Tecumseh. The words

of Tecumseh mirrored the struggle against the white society, the dignity taught by Puckeshinwa, the cunning of warfare learned from Blackfish, the skepticism acquired from Methoataske and the history of the oppression of the Indian people that had been characterized by violence and tragedy.

The degree to which Great Britain suffered military defeat in the area of the Great Lakes was also evident in Tecumseh's speech. General Procter chose to retreat as a result of a decisive battle on Lake Erie in which the British fleet was lost. The massive preparations for an American invasion of Canada below Ft. Malden was also a consideration of General Procter. Great Britain was not financially capable of supplying its own military with arms in addition to supporting Tecumseh and his warriors. The unwavering trust with which Tecumseh accepted Britain's pledge of support, demonstrated the almost blind-faith with which many unsuspecting Indians entered into agreements with members of the white society. Perhaps Britain did not realize the overwhelming amount of military power that would have been needed to defeat the United States. In any event, the Indian people were the true victims of the economic miscalculation.

The overall structure and content of Tecumseh's

speech was the best demonstration of internal consistency. Though none of Tecumseh's speeches were scripted before his delivery, all of the speeches that have been analyzed, show a smooth and even word order. The rhetorical devices (analogies, examples, illustrations, etc.) used by Tecumseh were probably conducive to precision in clarity and purpose for the overall speech.

Honesty, sincerity and frankness were the main qualities of Indian oratory. This fact helped to emphasize the consistency with which observed events were reported within a speech. Tecumseh seemed to be a man of integrity. The fact that Tecumseh could only report the Indian view of the racial situation, did not eliminate the reality of the malicious persecution of the Indian people by the white society. Tecumseh's words could only illuminate the situation that already existed.

Tecumseh aroused his listeners at Ft. Malden with pathos. Tecumseh was a man of his word and he expected no less from his ally. The Americans had to be stopped before their aggression gained even more of the Indians' homelands. Tecumseh wanted a united Indian nation so that his people could once again be free. The foothold that the British troops and Indian warriors maintained in the Great Lakes region, could be expanded to a larger buffer zone. Tecumseh viewed the conflict around Ft.

Malden as a decisive military battle for his people and his dream.

Tecumseh was the military genius behind the command in the Great Lakes region. The Shawnee leader did not object to a retreat if a retreat was necessary. The idea of running from Ft. Malden out of fear of "potential" danger was what Tecumseh refused to accept. It was probable that Tecumseh had carefully examined the physical and social consequences of his proposal to stand and fight Harrison's troops. Perhaps Tecumseh believed that his people had lost so much already, the possibility of further deprivation would scarcely be felt.

### Conclusion

Tecumseh grew up during a period of American history that was blemished by tragic domestic conflicts. At an early age, Tecumseh lost his father, Pucheshinwa, through a heartless act by white settlers. Cornstalk, an honored and revered chief of the Shawnee, was another of Tecumseh's heroes that was cut down inhumanely by the white society. As vicious act followed vicious act, Tecumseh grew to mistrust the American settlers. The mistrust that Tecumseh developed was definitely echoed throughout his speeches.

The great Shawnee chief envisioned a section of



land that would be the property of the Indians; inhabited only by Indians. The Americans had demonstrated the fact that their greed was more powerful than their humanity. Treaty after treaty had been broken by the whites. If an Indian buffer zone was to work, it most assuredly would take strength.

Though Tecumseh often spoke of force, he spoke of peace equally as often. Tecumseh was a product of two seemingly opposed influences. As a young boy, the Shawnee chief gained a compassionate and peaceful nature from Puckeshinwa. From Methoataske, Tecumseh gained a streak of violence that was directed toward revenge for the death and destruction unleashed upon the Indian people by a white society. The two separate influences helped to create one of the most outstanding Indian leaders and celebrated spokesman for the Indian people that history ever witnessed.

The text of Tecumseh's speeches contained the plans for future of the Indian people. The Shawnee chief's speeches also mirrored skepticism about peaceful coexistence between the red and white races. Tecumseh's objective was peace, under any circumstances. Too many instances in which the Americans had broken their promise of peace, reverberated in Tecumseh's mind as he spoke to his various audiences. The mistrust that Tecumseh had

for the white society made him realize that a goal of peace would be a difficult one to attain.

If discouragement or disappointment in the failure to unite the Indian tribes ever took its toll in Tecumseh, his oratory never reflected it. The more rejection that Tecumseh experienced, the more determined he became in seeking total Indian unification. It was difficult for Tecumseh to explain the urgency of a strong Indian confederacy. Too many tribes were content to continue their pseudo-peaceful relationship with the Americans; enjoying a false sense of security in believing that there would always be harmony between the red and white races. For those tribes that were reluctant to join the Indian confederacy, Tecumseh incorporated more colorful and descriptive language into his address. The Shawnee chief was attempting to transfer his own mistrust of the Americans to those overly trusting tribes by means of his rhetoric and oratory.

Possibly, Tecumseh did not take three factors into consideration when he was speaking to promote a united Indian nation. One major fact that Tecumseh seemed to have overlooked, was the fact that too often, tribal prejudices were stronger than the desire for peace. A central body of Indian leaders was to become the governing force over all the Indian tribes. Some

tribal chiefs were too proud to surrender their ruling position to a life-long rival. Though Tecumseh must surely have urged some of the tribal chiefs to overlook their prejudices, no amount of fiery oratory could erase the generations of pride instilled in the chiefs.

Another factor that seemed to have escaped Tecumseh's thinking, was the head-strong attitude of many of the young warriors. Tecumseh labored to prevent premature conflicts with the Americans. An early battle with the Americans could have resulted in a monumentous loss for the Indians. The Americans outnumbered the Indians, if a tribe attacked as a single unit. As a united force, the Indians would have had the overwhelming advantage of strength. As a small band of irate warriors attacked here and there, they were usually wiped out by the American settlers. This action decreased the overall fighting force of Indians and reduced the Indian morale, while increasing the possibility of a powerful counterattack by the whites. Tecumseh realized that if the Americans made an assault on the separate Indian tribes before the Indian federation was complete, the Indian people would once again be at the mercy of the white men.

Tecumseh overlooked one final act in his campaign for an Indian confederacy. Even as a united force, the Indian people would need the added support of a strong

ally. The past relationship between the Indians and the British gave Tecumseh the idea to enlist Great Britain's help once again. What Tecumseh did not realize was the overall economic state of Great Britain prior to the beginning of the War of 1812. Britain did not have the financial capability of providing adequate money and manpower to the Indians. The economic state as well as the mismanagement of command by General Procter in the Great Lakes area, could have only added poor support for the bad situation of the Indian people.

The long term impact of Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory seemed to outweigh the short term effects. The task of bringing together, as a confederacy, all of the Indian tribes was one of gigantic proportion. The fact that such a confederacy did not materialize, was not necessarily an indication of the impact that Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory had upon the people it reached. There were many outside factors contributing to the failure of the united Indian nation. One of the biggest reasons the federation did not come about was the fact that Tecumseh was killed before he completed his work.

Tecumseh, the great warrior, the mighty chief, the eloquent orator, was killed during the Battle of the Thames.<sup>20</sup> After the fighting subsided, the American

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<sup>20</sup>See Illustration F.

forces scouted around looking for Tecumseh's body. The search ended with no sign of the remains of the Shawnee chief. Even though Tecumseh's dream of an Indian federation disappeared along with his body, the rhetoric and oratory of an eloquent and wise Indian orator lived on to reflect the hopes and desires of the Indian people.

The large number of supporters that Tecumseh gained for his cause, was indicative of the rhetorical impact of Tecumseh and his eloquent oratory. The spirit and loyalty with which men of both races followed Tecumseh into his final battle gives an implication of the impact Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory had on those people who heard it. Because Tecumseh spoke honestly about what he believed to be best for both races, many people listened and believed as he did. The Shawnee chief's speeches reflected the desires of an entire nation of people that had been subjected to prejudices and persecution, while slowly being stripped of their pride.

The long term impact that Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory had was evident in the fact that the Shawnee chief earned a place in American history through his patriotic work for the Indian people. The majority of Tecumseh's rhetoric and oratory was directed toward the betterment of the lives of all Indian people. The

determination and dedication with which Tecumseh labored to help his people was revealed through his failure to fall to defeat or discouragement. The despiration of the Indian people was alive in the words of Tecumseh.

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## APPENDIX 1

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "RHETORIC"  
AND "ORATORY"\*

In order to analyze the speeches of Tecumseh, two very important terms must be identified and defined: "Rhetoric" and "Oratory." Throughout the history of the study of public speaking, many educators and philosophers have attempted to distinguish between rhetoric and oratory. Though in ordinary language rhetoric and oratory are often used as synonyms, many definitions have been offered to explain the degree of distinction between the two terms.

The discussion concerning rehtoric and oratory would not be complete without the definitions provided by Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian. Aristotle defines rhetoric in terms of the "invention" of persuasion in discourse. This definition excludes the qualities of elocution and disposition; both seemingly essential to affective rhetoric. Cicero also defines rhetoric in terms of persuasion. Both Aristotle and Cicero were concerned with the persuasive aspect of rhetoric. While persuasion may be one of the principle ends of rhetoric, it is not necessarily the single end. A third definition comes from Quintilian, who simplifies the definition of rhetoric by explaining that "Rhetoric is the science of speaking well." Of the three educators, Quintilian provides the best working definition of rhetoric.

For the distinction between rhetoric and oratory, it will be helpful to examine the theories on rhetoric and oratory by John Quincy Adams. Adams states that rhetoric refers to the "theory" of speaking well, and that oratory refers to the "practice" of speaking well. John Quincy Adams closely identifies with Quintilian in defining the two terms. In defining oratory in more depth, Adams rephrases Quintilian's definition of rhetoric

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\*Taken from the lecture notes of graduate classes in speech-communication at Eastern Illinois University.

by replacing the word "science" with the word "art."  
John Quincy Adams defines oratory as the "art" of speaking well. In other words, rhetoric may be defined as the study of the elements used in public speaking, while oratory is the use of those skills and styles in a formal address. Oratory is public speaking.

## APPENDIX 2

Ernest J. Wrage, "Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 33:451-457, December, 1947.

1. What was the speaker trying to do?
2. What idea(s) did he develop?
3. How did he relate (connect) audience values with his desires?
4. How do structure and tone of speech help delineate the ideas?
5. What insights into the mind of the speaker can be gained from an analysis of this speech?
6. What insights into the life (social ideas, economic values, and attitudes) of the speaker's era can be gained from an analysis of this speech?

APPENDIX 3

T. R. Nilsen, "Criticism and Social Consequences,"  
Quarterly Journal of Speech, 42:173-178, April, 1956.

1. To what extent is the speech consistent within itself and with the observed events of its time?

2. To what extent does the speech arouse in the minds of its listeners, and later readers, as accurate a concept of the events with which it deals as possible?

3. To what extent does the speech place foremost the ultimate goals of society and relate its immediate purpose to these goals?

4. To what extent does the speech examine explicitly, as far as reasonably possible, the social consequences, direct and indirect, of the actions it urges?

## APPENDIX 4

## TECUMSEH'S SPEECH AT VINCENNES, 1810

Edward Egglestone and Lillie Egglestone Seelye,  
The Shawnee Prophet; or The Story of Tecumseh (London:  
The Authors, 1880), pp. 182-186.

Brother: I wish you to listen to me well. As I think you do not clearly understand what I before said to you, I will explain it again. . . .

Brother, since the peace was made, you have killed some of the Shawnees, Winnebagoes, Delawares, and Miamis, and you have taken our land from us, and I do not see how we can remain at peace if you continue to do so. You try to force the red people to do some injury. It is you that are pushing them on to do mischief. You endeavor to make distinctions. You wish to prevent the Indians doing as we wish them--to unite, and let them consider their lands as the common property of the whole; you take tribes aside and advise them not to come into this measure; and until our design is accomplished we do not wish to accept of your invitation to go and see the President. The reason I tell you this, you want, by your distinctions of Indian tribes in allotting to each a particular tract of land, to make them to war with each other. You never see an Indian come and endeavor to make the white people do so. You are continually driving the red people; when, at last, you will drive them into the Great Lake, where they can't either stand or walk.

Brother, you ought to know what you are doing with the Indians. Perhaps it is by direction of the President to make those distinctions. It is a very bad thing, and we do not like it. Since my residence at Tippecanoe we have endeavored to level all distinctions--to destroy village chiefs, by whom all mischief is done. It is they who sell our lands to the Americans. Our object is to let our affairs be transacted by warriors.

Brother, this land that was sold and the goods that were given for it were only done by a few. The treaty was afterwards brought here and the Weas were

induced to give their consent because of their small numbers. The treaty at Fort Wayne was made through the threats of Winnemac; but in future we are prepared to punish those chiefs who may come forward to propose to sell the land. If you continue to purchase of them it will produce war among the different tribes, and at last, I do not know what will be the consequence to the white people.

Brother, I was glad to hear your speech. You said that if we could show that the land was sold by people that had no right to sell, you would restore it. Those that did sell did not own it. It was me. These tribes set up a claim, but the tribes with me will not agree with their claim. If the land is not restored to us you will see, when we return to our homes, how it will be settled. We shall have a great council, at which all the tribes will be present, when we shall show to those who sold that they had no right to the claim that they set up; and we will see what will be done to those chiefs that did sell the land to you. I am not alone in this determination; it is the determination of all the warriors and red people that listen to me. I now wish you to listen to me. If you do not, it will appear as if you wished me to kill all the chiefs that sold you the land. I tell you so because I am authorized by all the tribes to do so. I am the head of them all; I am a warrior, and all the warriors will meet together in two or three moons from this; then I will call for those chiefs that sold you the land and shall know what to do with them. If you do not restore the land, you will have a hand in killing them.

Brother, do not believe that I came here to get presents from you. If you offer us any, we will not take. By taking goods from you, you will hereafter say that with them you purchased another piece of land from us . . . It has been the object of both myself and brother to prevent the lands being sold. Should you not return the land, it will occasion us to call a great council that will meet at the Huron village, where the council-fire has already been lighted, at which those who sold the lands shall be called, and shall suffer for their conduct.

Brother, I wish you would take pity on the red people and do what I have requested. If you will not give up the land and do cross the boundary of your present settlement, it will be very hard, and produce great troubles among us. How can we have confidence in



the white people? When Jesus Christ came on earth, you killed him and nailed him on a cross. You thought he was dead, but you were mistaken. You have Shakers among you, and you laugh and make light of their worship. Everything I have said to you is the truth. The Great Spirit has inspired me, and I speak nothing but the truth to you. . . . Brother, I hope you will confess that you ought not to have listened to those bad birds who bring you bad news. I have declared myself freely to you, and if any explanation should be required from our town, send a man who can speak to us. If you think proper to give us any presents, and we can be convinced that they are given through friendship alone, we will accept them. As we intend to hold our council at the Huron village, that is near the British, we may probably make them a visit. Should they offer us any presents of goods, we will not take them; but should they offer us powder and the tomahawk, we will take the powder and refuse the tomahawk. I wish you, brother, to consider everything I have said as true, and that it is the sentiment of all the red people that listen to me.

## APPENDIX 5

## TECUMSEH'S SPEECH AT VINCENNES, 1810

H. Marshall, The History of Kentucky (Frankfort, Kentucky: The Author, 1824), Vol. II, pp. 482-483.

It is true I am a Shawanee. My forefathers were warriors; their son is a warrior. From them I only take my existence; from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune; and oh! that I could make that of my red people and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of the Spirit that rules the universe. I would not then come to Governor Harrison, to ask him to tear the treaty, and to obliterate the landmark: but I would say to him, Sir, you have permission to return to your own country. The being within, communing with past ages, tells me, that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent; that it all belonged to red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race--once a happy race; since made miserable by the white people; who are never contented, but always encroaching. The way, and the only way, to check and to stop this evil, is, for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land; as it was at first, and should be yet; for it never was divided, but belongs to all, for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers; those who want all, and will not do with less.

He said, That the white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first, it is theirs; they may sell, but all must join; any sale not made by all, is not valid; the late sale is bad; it was made by a part only;--part do not know how to sell; it requires all, to make a bargain for all. That all the red men had equal rights to the unoccupied land; that the right of occupancy was, as good in one place as in another; that there cannot be two occupations in the same place; that the first excluded all others; that it is not so in hunting, or travelling; for there the same ground will serve many, as they may follow each other all day;

but the camp is stationary; and that is occupancy; it belongs to the first who sits down on his blanket or skins, which he has thrown upon the ground; and till he leaves it, no other has a right.

## APPENDIX 6

## TECUMSEH'S SPEECH TO THE BRITISH AT

FT. MALDEN, NOVEMBER 15, 1810

From manuscripts in the Public Archives of Canada, "Q" series, vol. 114-M.G.II.

Father--I have come here with the intention of informing you that we have not forgot (we never can forget) what passed between you English Men and our Ancestors--And also to let you know our present determination.

Father--We were about five years settled near Grenville when the Big Knife suspected us of plotting some mischief. We moved from thence and settled on the Wawbache.

Father--We have a belt to show you, which was given to our Kings when you laid the French on their back. Her it is, Father; on one end is your hand, on the other, that of the Red people (both hands in black Wampum, but the Indian end of the white belt darker than the other) and in the middle the hearts of both.--This belt, Father, our great Chiefs have been sitting upon ever since, keeping it concealed, and running our Country. Now the Warriors have taken all the Chiefs and turned their faces towards you. You never again look towards the Americans; and we the Warriors now manage the affairs of our Nation; and we sit at or near the Borders where the Contest will begin.

Father--It is only five Years ago that I discovered this Belt and took it from under our Kings. You Father have nourished us, and raised us up from Childhood we are now Men, and think ourselves capable of defending our Country, in which cause you have given us active assistance and always advice--We now are determined to defend it ourselves, and after rising you on your feet leave you behind, but expecting you will push forwards towards us what may be necessary to supply our Wants.

Father--I intend proceeding towards the Mid Day and expect before next Autumn and before I visit you again, that the business will be done,--I request Father that you will be charitable to our King, Women and Children. The Young Men can more easily provide for themselves than they--He ordered the Belt to be passed round and handled and seen by every person present, saying they never would quit their Father or let go his hand.

## APPENDIX 7

TECUMSEH'S SPEECH TO THE CHOCTAW  
COUNCIL, 1811

H. B. Cushman, History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians (Greenville, Texas: Headlight Printing House, 1899), pp. 303-305.

But have we not courage enough to defend our country and maintain our ancient independence. . . . But what need is there to speak of the past? It speaks for itself and asks, 'Where today is the Pequod? Where the Narragansetts, the Mohawks, Pocanokets, and many other once powerful tribes of our race? They have vanished before the avarice and oppression of the white men, as snow before a summer sun. In the vain hope of alone defending their ancient possessions, they have fallen in the wars with the white men. Look abroad over their once beautiful country, and what see you now? Naught but the ravages of the pale-face destroyers meet your eyes. So it will be with you Choctaws and Chickasaws! . . . The annihilation of our race is at hand unless we unite in one common cause against the common foe. Think not, brave Choctaws and Chickasaws, that you can remain passive and indifferent to the common danger, and thus escape the common fate. Your people, too, will soon be as falling leaves and scattering clouds before their blighting breath. You too will be driven away from your native land and ancient domains as leaves are driven before the wintry storms.

Sleep not longer, O Choctaws and Chickasaws . . . in false security and delusive hopes. Our broad domains are fast escaping from our grasp. Every year our white intruders become more greedy, exacting, oppressive and overbearing. Every year contentions spring up between them and our people and when blood is shed we have to make atonement whether right or wrong, at the cost of the lives of our greatest chiefs, and the yielding up of large tracts of our lands. Before the pale-faces came among us, we enjoyed the happiness of unbounded freedom, and were acquainted with neither riches, wants, nor oppression. How is it now? Wants and oppressions are our

lot; for are we not controlled in everything, and dare we move without asking, by your leave? Are we not being stripped day by day of the little that remains of our ancient liberty? Do they not even now kick and strike us as they do their black-faces? How long will it be before they will tie us to a post and whip us, and make us work for them in their corn fields as they do them? Shall we wait for that moment, or shall we die fighting before submitting to such ignominy?

. . . Have we not for years had before our eyes a sample of their designs, and are they not sufficient harbingers of their future determinations? Will we not soon be driven from our respective countries and the graces of our ancestors? Will not the bones of our dead be plowed up, and their graves be turned into fields? Shall we calmly wait until they become so numerous that we will no longer be able to resist oppression? . . . The white usurpation in our common country must be stopped, or we, its rightful owners, be forever destroyed and wiped out as a race of people. I am now at the head of many warriors backed by the strong arm of English soldiers . . . Let us form one body, one heart, and defend to the last warrior our country, our liberty, and the graves of our fathers.

Choctaws and Chickasaws, you are among the few of our race who sit indolently at ease . . . Let no one in this council imagine that I speak more from malice against the pale-face Americans than just grounds of complaint. Complaint is just toward friends who have failed in their duty; accusation is against enemies guilty of injustice. And surely, if any people ever had, we have good and just reasons to believe we have ample grounds to accuse the Americans of injustice; especially when such great acts of injustice have been committed by them upon our race, of which they seem to have no manner of regard, or even to reflect. They are a people fond of innovations, quick to contrive and quick to put their schemes into effectual execution, no matter how great the wrong and injury to us; while we are content to preserve what we already have . . . Then haste to the relief of our common cause, as by consanguinity of blood you are bound; lest the day be not far distant when you will be left single-handed and alone to the cruel mercy of our most inveterate foe.

## APPENDIX 8

## TECUMSEH'S SPEECH TO THE OSAGES

John D. Hunter, Memoirs of a Captive Among the Indians of North America (London: The Author, 1824), pp. 43-48.

Brothers,--We all belong to one family; we are all children of the Great Spirit; we walk in the same path; slake our thirst at the same spring; and now affairs of the greatest concern lead us to smoke the pipe around the same council fire!

Brothers,--We are friends; we must assist each other to bear our burdens. The blood of many of our fathers and brothers has run like water on the ground, to satisfy the avarice of the white men. We, ourselves, are threatened with a great evil; nothing will pacify them but the destruction of all the red men.

Brothers,--When the white men first set foot on our grounds, they were hungry; they had no place on which to spread their blankets, or to kindle their fires. They were feeble; they could do nothing for themselves. Our fathers commiserated their distress, and shared freely with them whatever the Great Spirit had given his red children. They gave them food when hungry, medicine when sick, spread skins for them to sleep on, and gave them grounds, that they might hunt and raise corn.--Brothers, the white people are like poisonous serpents: when chilled, they are feeble, and harmless, but invigorate them with warmth, and they sting their benefactors to death.

The white people came among us feeble; and now we have made them strong, they wish to kill us, or drive us back, as they would wolves and panthers.

Brothers,--The white men are not friends to the Indians: at first, they only asked for land sufficient for a wigwam; now, nothing will satisfy them but the whole of our hunting grounds, from the rising to the setting sun.



Brothers,--The white men want more than our hunting grounds; they wish to kill our warriors; they would even kill our old men, women, and little ones.

Brothers,--Many winters ago, there was no land; the sun did not rise and set: all was darkness. The Great Spirit made all things. He gave the white people a home beyond the great waters. He supplied these grounds with game, and gave them to his red children; and he gave them strength and courage to defend them.

Brothers,--My people wish for peace; the red men all wish for peace; but where the white people are, there is not peace for them, except it be on the bosom of our mother.

Brothers,--The white men despise and cheat the Indians; they abuse and insult them; they do not think the red men sufficiently good to live.

The red men have borne many and great injuries; they ought to suffer them no longer. My people will not; they are determined on vengeance; they have taken up the tomahawk; they will make it fat with blood; they will drink the blood of the white people.

Brothers,--My people are brave and numerous; but the white people are too strong for them alone. I wish you to take up the tomahawk with them. If we all unite, we will cause the rivers to stain the great waters with their blood.

Brothers,--If you do not unite with us, they will first destroy us, and then you will fall an easy prey to them. They have destroyed many nations of red men because they were not united, because they were not friends to each other.

Brothers,--The white people send runners amongst us; they wish to make us enemies, that they may sweep over and desolate our hunting grounds, like devastating winds, or rushing waters.

Brothers,--Our Great Father, over the great waters, is angry with the white people, our enemies. He will send his brave warriors against them; he will send us rifles, and whatever else we want--he is our friend, and we are his children.

Brothers,--Who are the white people that we should fear them? They cannot run fast, and are good marks to shoot at: they are only men; our fathers have killed many of them; we are not squaws, and we will stain the earth red with their blood.

Brothers,--The Great Spirit is angry with our enemies; he speaks in thunder, and the earth swallows up villages, and drinks up the Mississippi. The great waters will cover their lowlands; their corn cannot grow; and the Great Spirit will sweep those who escape to the hills from the earth with his terrible breath.

Brothers,--We must be united, we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each others' battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirit; he is for us; he will destroy our enemies, and make all his red children happy.

## APPENDIX 9

## TECUMSEH'S SPEECH AT MACHEKETHIE

E. A. Cruikshank, Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812 (Ottawa: Publications of the Canadian Archives--no. 7, 1912), pp. 33-35.

Father, & Brothers Hurons!

Brother Hurons,

You say you were employed by our Father and Your own Chiefs to come and have some conversation with us, and we are happy to see You and to hear Your and our Father's Speech. We heartily thank You both for having taken the condition of our poor Women and children to Your considerations: We plainly see that You pity us by the concern You shew for our welfare; and we should deem ourselves much to blame if we did not listen to the Counsel of Our Father and our Brothers the Hurons.

Fathers and Brothers! We have not brought these misfortunes on ourselves; we have done nothing wrong, but we will now point out to You those who have occasioned all the mischief--

Our Younger Brothers the Putewatemies, (pointing to them) in spite of our repeated counsel to them to remain quiet and live in peace with the Big Knives, would not listen to us--When I left home last Year to go to the Creek Nation, I passed at Post Vincennes and was stopped by the Big Knives, and did not immediately know the reason, but I was soon informed that the Putewatemies had killed some of their people; I told the Big Knives to remain quiet until my return, when I should make peace and quietness prevail--On my return I found my Village reduced to ashes by the Big Knives--You cannot blame Your Younger Brothers the Shawanoes for what has happened; the Putewatemies occasioned the misfortune. Had I been at home and heard of the advance of the American Troops towards our Village, I should have gone to meet them and shaking them by the hand, have asked them the reason for their appearance in such hostile guise--

Father & Brothers! You tell us to retreat or turn to one side should the Big Knives come against us; had I been at home in the late unfortunate affair I should have done so, but those I left at home were (I cannot call them men) a poor set of people, and their Scuffle with the Big Knives I compare to a struggle between little children who only scratch each others faces--The Kikapoos and Winibiegoes have since been at Post Vincennes and settled that matter amicably.

Father and Brothers, The Putewatemies hearing that our Father and You were on the way here for peaceful purposes, grew very angry all at once and killed Twenty-seven of the Big Knives.

Brothers!--We Shawanoes, Kikapoos and Winnibiegoes, hope You will not find fault with us for having detained You so long here; We were happy to see You and to hear Your and Our Father's words; and it would surely be strange if we did not listen to our Father and our eldest Brothers.

Father & Brothers! We will now in a few words declare to You our whole hearts--If we hear of the Big Knives coming towards our villages to speak peace, we will receive them; but if We hear of any of our people being hurt by them, or if they unprovokedly advance against us in a hostile manner, be assured we will defend ourselves like men.--And if we hear of any of our people having been killed. We will immediately send to all the Nations on or towards the Mississippi, and all this Island will rise like one man--Then Father and Brothers it will be impossible for You or either of You to restore peace between us.

## APPENDIX 10

TECUMSEH'S SPEECH TO GENERAL PROCTER  
BEFORE LEAVING FT. MALDEN

John Richardson, War of 1812 (London: Brockville, Ltd., Inc., 1842), pp. 119-120.

Fathers--Listen to your children! You see them now all before you. The war before this, our British father gave the hatchet to his red children when our old chiefs were alive. They are now all dead. In that war, our father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our father took them by the hand without our knowledge, and we are afraid our father will do so again at this time.

Summer before last, when I came forward with my red brethren, and was ready to take up the hatchet in favor of our British father, we were told not to be in a hurry--that he had not yet determined to fight the Americans.

Listen! When war was declared, our father stood up and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was now ready to strike the Americans--that he wanted our assistance; and that he would certainly get us our lands back, which the Americans had taken from us.

Listen! You told us at that time to bring forward our families to this place--we did so, and you promised to take care of them, and that they should want for nothing, while the men would go and fight the enemy--that we were not to trouble ourselves with the enemy's garrisons--that we knew nothing about them, and that our father would attend to that part of the business. You also told your red children that you would take care of their garrison here, which made our hearts glad.

Listen! When we last went to the Rapids, it is true we gave you little assistance. It is hard to fight people who live like ground-hogs.

Father--Listen! Our fleet has gone out; we know they have fought; we have heard the great guns; but know nothing of what has happened to our father with one arm.

Our ships have gone one way, and we are much astonished to see our father tying up everything and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know what his intentions are. You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands; it made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish. Our great father, the kind, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us you would never draw your foot off British ground; but now, father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal, that carries its tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops it between its legs and runs off.

Listen, father! The Americans have not yet defeated us by land; neither are we sure that they have done so by water; we therefore wish to remain here, and fight our enemy, should they make their appearance. If they defeat us, we will then retreat with our father.

At the battle of the Rapids, last war, the Americans certainly defeated us; and when we retreated to our father's fort at that place, the gates were shut against us. We were afraid that it would now be the case; but instead of that we now see our British father preparing to march out of his garrison.

Father! You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go in welcome, for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.

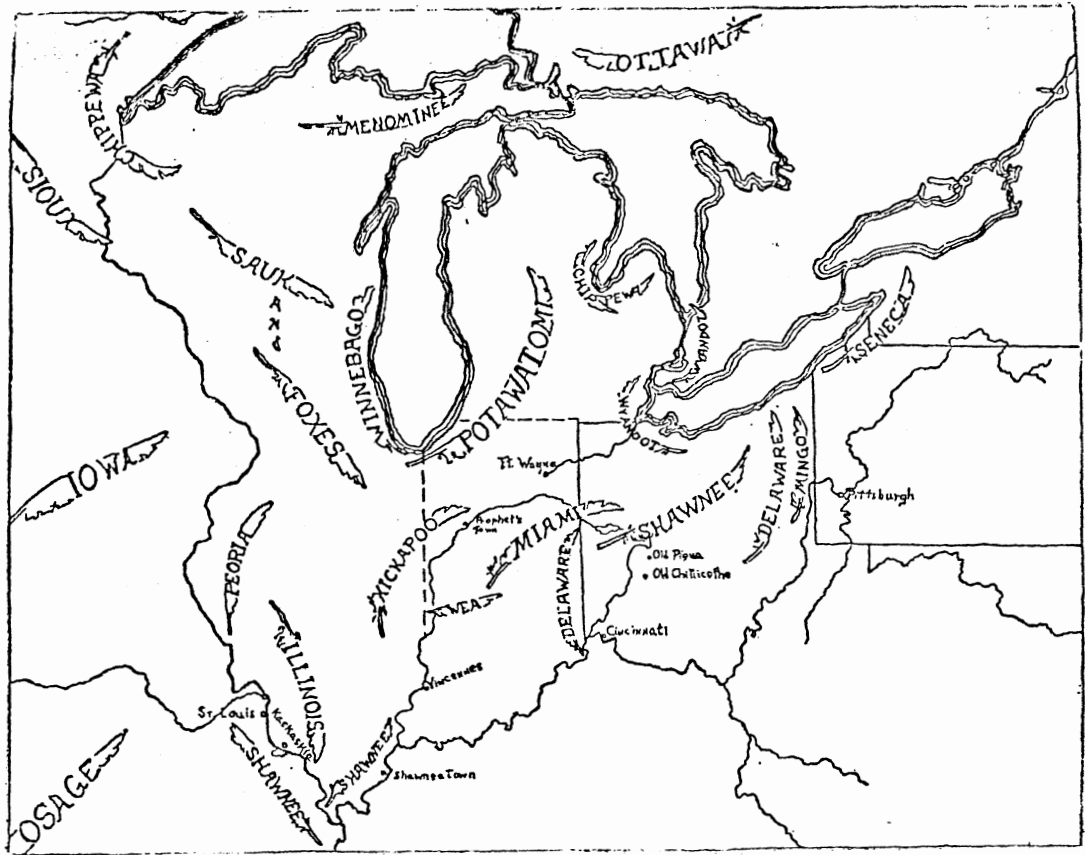


ILLUSTRATION B

Location of Indian Tribes at the  
Time of Tecumseh's Confederation

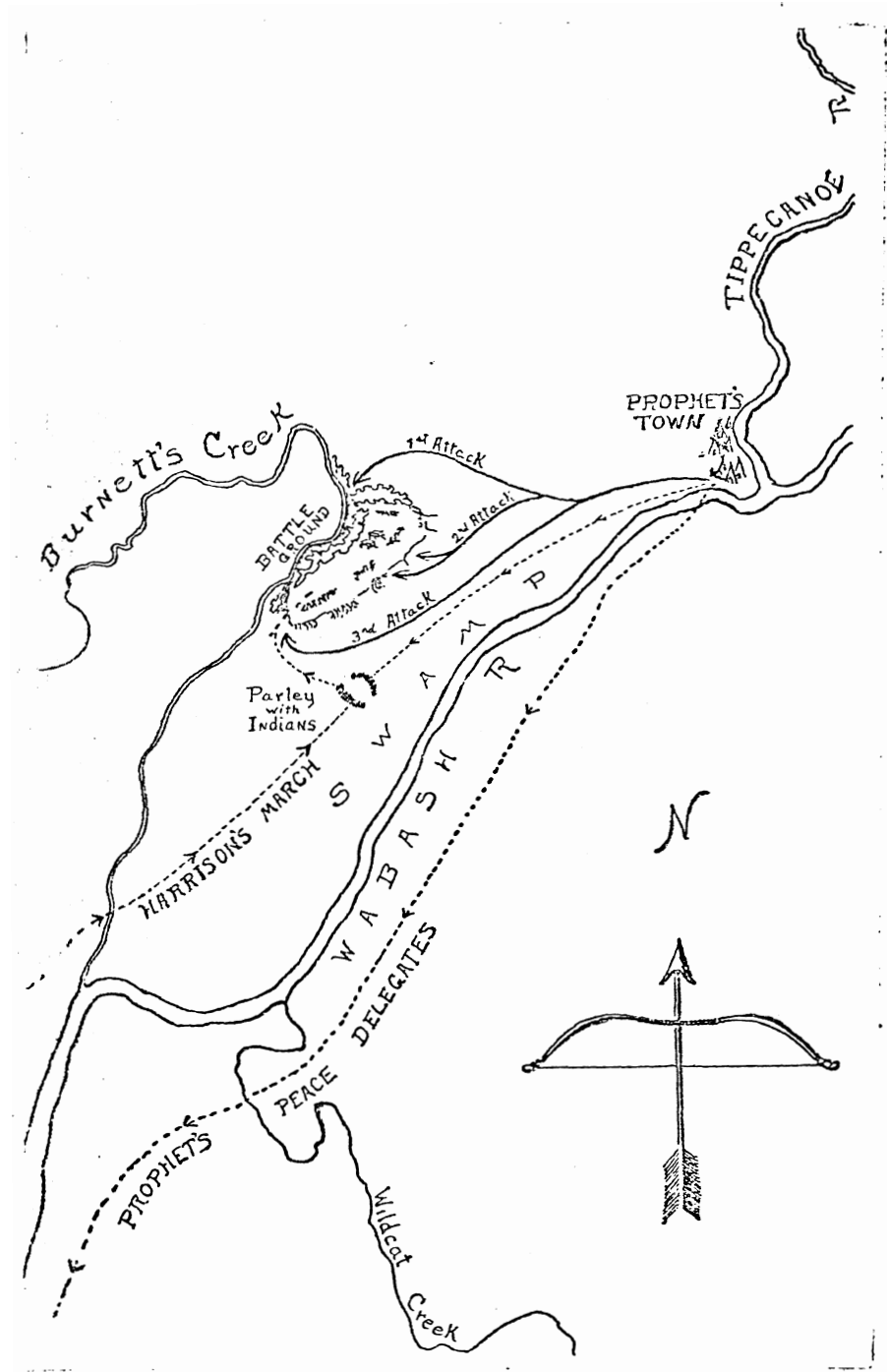


ILLUSTRATION C

Battle of Tippecanoe



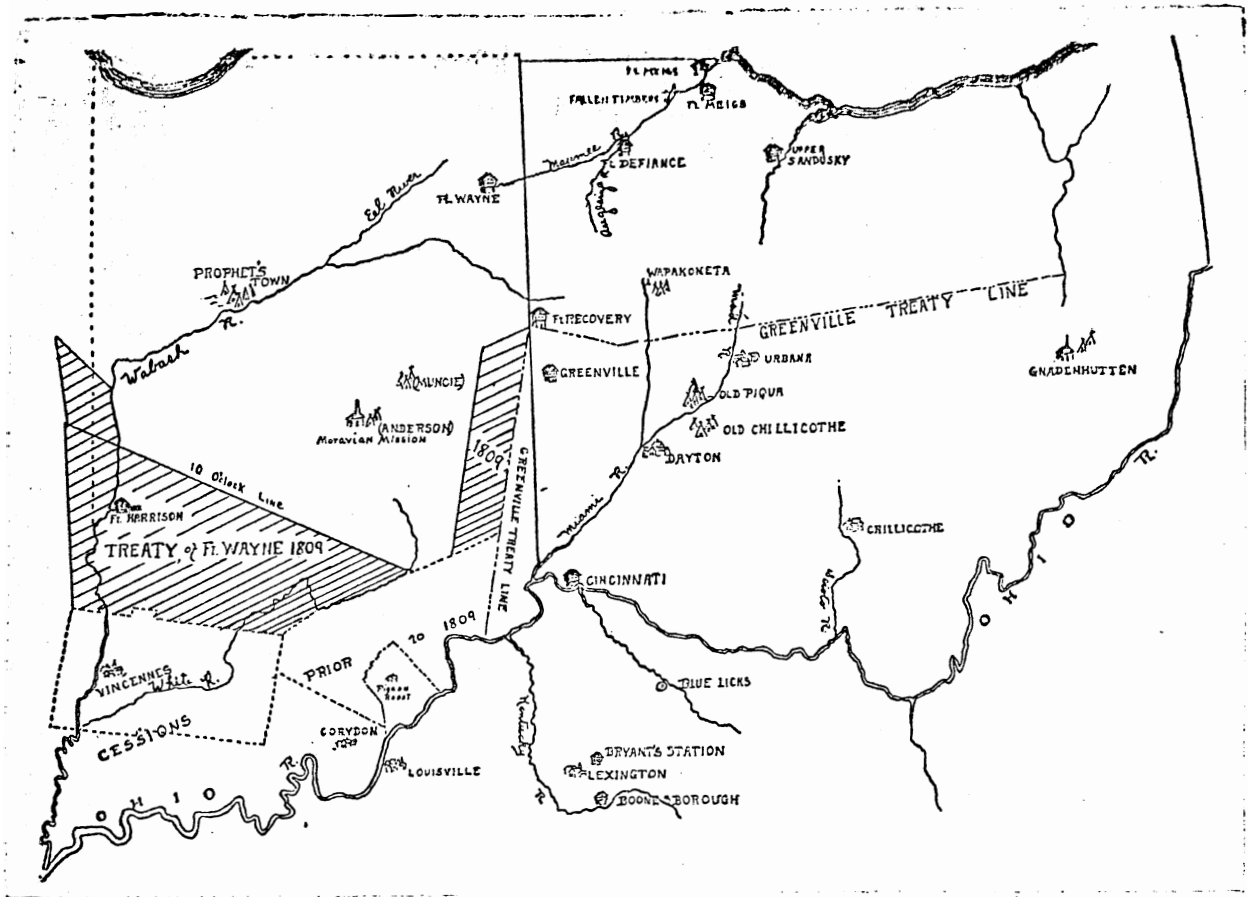


ILLUSTRATION D

Ft. Wayne Cessions  
and Greenville Treaty Line

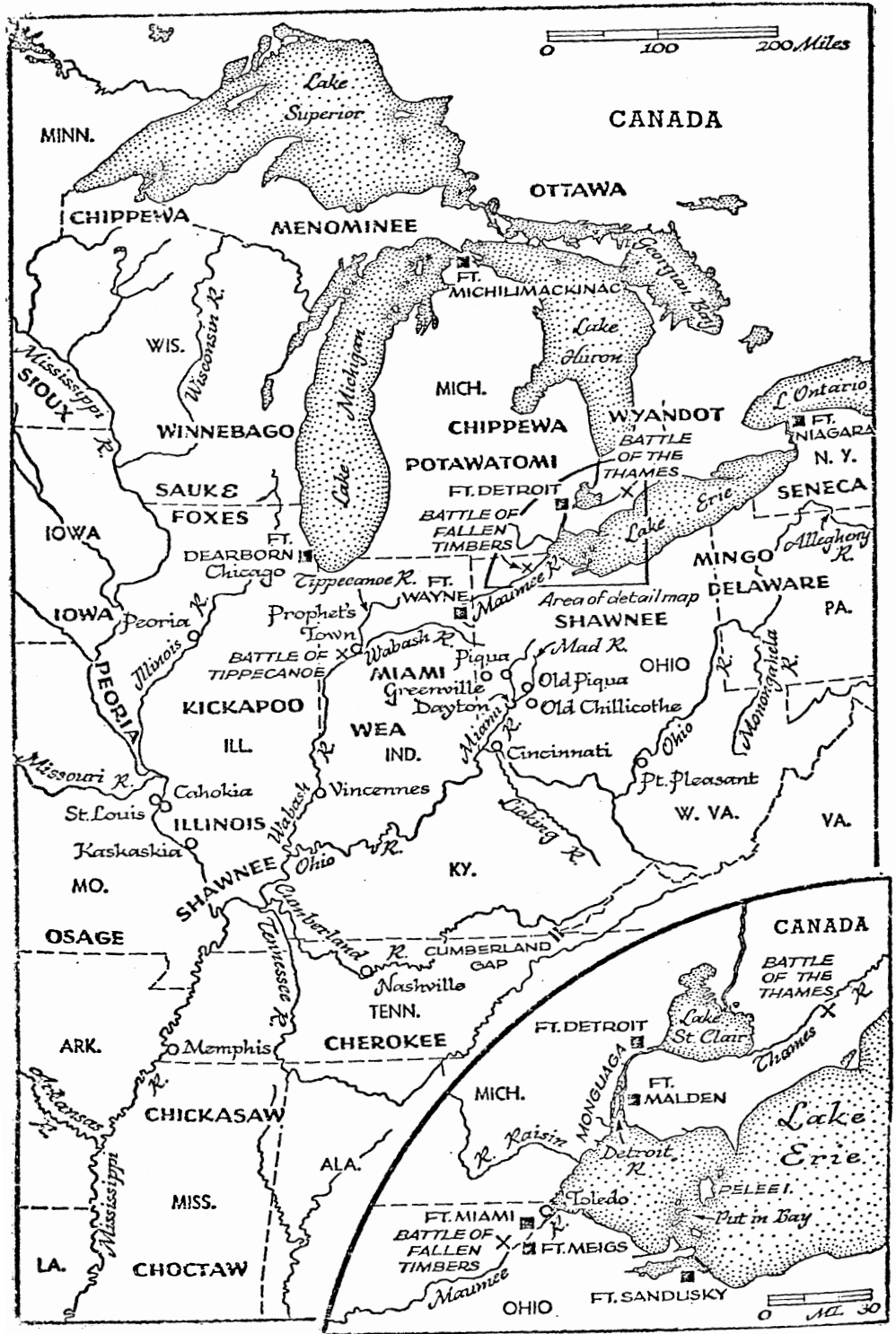


ILLUSTRATION E

Major Battles  
and Boundaries of Present States

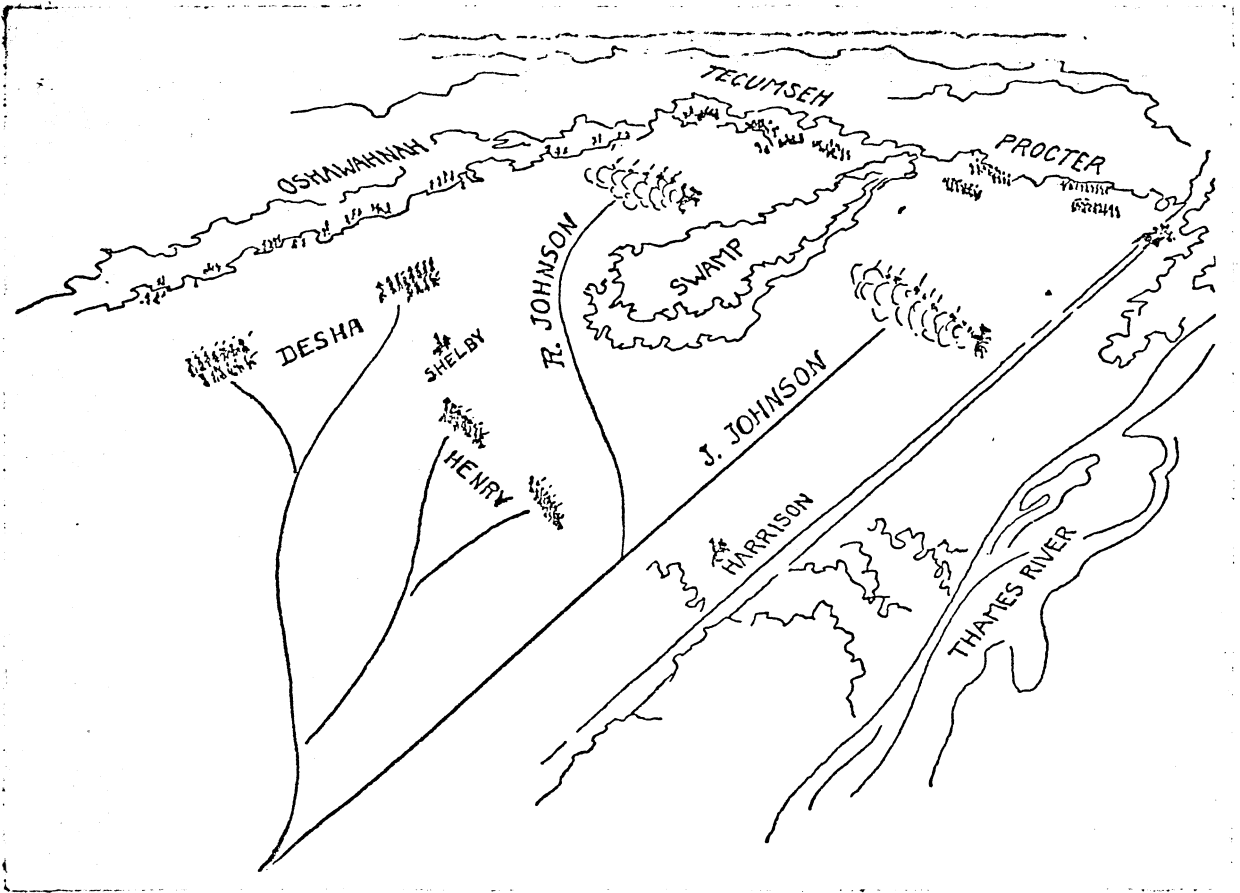


ILLUSTRATION F

Battle of Thames

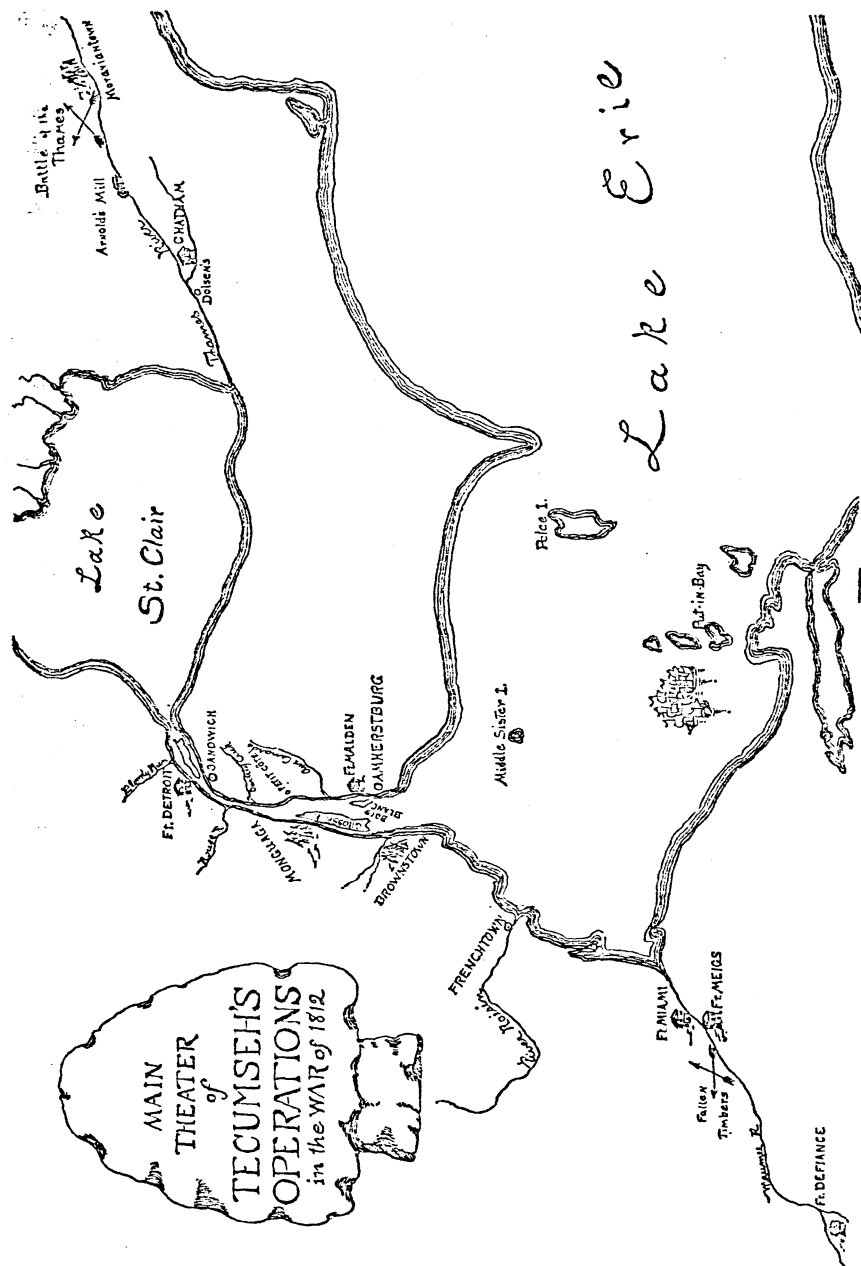


ILLUSTRATION G

Tecumseh's Main Theater of Operations  
in the War of 1812



ILLUSTRATION H

Tecumseh and the Prophet