

THE PALIMPSEST

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The Ioways

Stalwart wanderers of plain and woodland were the Ioway Indians: they had fished in the waters of Lake Michigan, trapped game in the forests along the Minnesota and Blue Earth rivers, quarried red pipestone in southwestern Minnesota, hunted buffalo beyond the Missouri, basked in the valley of the Platte, and tarried for awhile on the Nishnabotna, the Nodaway, the Chariton, and the Grande. They had dwelt so long on the banks of the Iowa River that their name became forever associated with that stream.

The Ioways were of Siouan stock, like the Winnebago, the Omaha, the Oto, and the Missouri. They were included by J. O. Dorsey in his Chiwere group of southwestern Siouan tribes. Traditional and linguistic evidence, however, proves that the Ioway sprang from the Winnebago stem, which appears to have been the mother stock of other southwestern Siouan tribes.

The Winnebago and their kindred tribes seem to have originated in the region north of the Great Lakes. When their migration began, the Winnebago appear to have stopped in the Green Bay area of Lake Michigan because of the good fishing. The Ioways lingered in their wandering on the Mississippi near the mouths of the Iowa and Rock rivers while their kinfolk — the Missouri, Omaha, Oto — continued in a southwesterly direction to the banks of the Missouri and beyond.

It was while near the mouth of the Iowa River that the Ioways may have received one of their names — Pahoja, or Gray Snow. They have also been called the Pahuchas — or Dusty Noses — which has led to such nicknames as "Drousy Ones," or "Sleepy Ones."

The Ioways first came to the attention of the French in 1676 when Father Louis André recorded the presence of seven or eight families of "aiaoua" living among the "puants," or Winnebago.

Their village, which lies 200 leagues from here Toward the west, is very large, but poor; for their greatest Wealth consists of ox [bison]-hides and of Red Calumets. I preached Jesus Christ to them. They say that they have no knowledge of the Western sea, although they live at a distance of 12 days' journey beyond the great River called Missisipi.

Nicholas Perrot visited with the Ioway at his

camp on the Mississippi below Trempealeau.

The Ioways approached Perrot "weeping hot tears, which they let fall into their hands along with saliva, and with other filth which issued from their noses, with which they rubbed the heads, faces, and garments of the French; all these caresses made their stomachs revolt."

Perrot then visited the Ioway camp.

Twenty prominent men presented the calumet to Perrot, and carried him upon a buffalo-skin into the cabin of the chief, who walked at the head of this procession. When they had taken their places on the mat, this chief began to weep over Perrot's head, bathing it with his tears, and with moisture that dripped from his mouth and nose; and those who carried the guest did the same to him.

The calumet was then passed and the chief fed Perrot pieces of almost raw buffalo meat that had been cooked in earthen pots. According to Perrot:

They have a very artless manner, also broad chests and deep voices. They are extremely courageous and good-hearted. They often kill cattle [buffalo] and deer while running after them. They are howlers; they eat meat raw, or only warm it over the fire. They are never satiated, for when they have any food they eat night and day; but when they have none they fast very tranquilly. They are very hospitable, and are never more delighted than when they are entertaining strangers.

Although Perrot and Father Hennepin placed the Ioways across the Mississippi in Iowa, Le

Sueur failed to find them on the Blue Earth River in 1700 and was told by the Sioux that they had moved on the west side of the Missouri near the "Maha," or Omaha Indians. This is confirmed by William Delisle's map of 1718 which shows an "Aiaouez" village on Lake Okoboji and another near a Maha village on the Big Sioux River.

The Ioway originally were divided into eight gentes, or blood-kindred groups, each gens bearing the title and distinguished by the badge or totem of the particular animal or bird from which they were supposed to have sprung. The Black Bear, Eagle, Wolf and Elk formed one group while the Buffalo, Beaver, Snake and Pigeon formed the other. Their social system was based strictly on caste. Rank was dependent upon birth, quite secondarily upon achievement. The civil chief of each gens was the eldest male lineal descendant of the oldest ancestral brother. As the Bear and Buffalo gentes were paramount, the chief of the Bear gens acted as tribal chief in the fall and winter while the Buffalo chief led the tribe in the spring and summer. Military affairs were directed by the gens war-bundle owners and those braves who had distinguished themselves in battle.

The Ioways were great travelers, the sixteen village sites at which they have been located would require a circle of approximately five hundred miles if drawn from the mouth of the Iowa River.

In addition, the Ioways visited Montcalm in Montreal in 1757 where they "enchanted" the great French Governor and his ladies with their wild dances. In 1845 the Ioways visited the eastern seaboard cities with George Catlin, the noted American Indian artist, and even crossed the Atlantic with him to London and Paris. In these cities they met such notables as Disraeli, Baron Von Humboldt, Victor Hugo, and George Sands.

The rights of the Ioway Indians to a part ownership in the land that is now Iowa was recognized by the confederated Sauk and Fox tribes in the Grand Council of 1825. The Ioways agreed to the arrangement of drawing the Neutral Line between the Sauks and Foxes and the Sioux. The Sauks and Foxes in turn admitted that the Ioways had a "just claim to a portion of the country" below this line. It was agreed that the three tribes should "peaceably occupy" this area.

Meanwhile, in 1824, the Ioways had journeyed to Washington and ceded all claims to their land in Missouri except the Platte District. Twelve years later, in 1836, in a treaty signed at Fort Leavenworth, the Ioways gave up all claims to this triangular piece of land, which lay between the Missouri River and the line running a hundred miles due north from the mouth of the Kansas River. They agreed to move west of the Missouri and settle with the Missouri band of Sauk and

Fox Indians on a small reservation between the Kickapoo Reserve and the Great Nemaha River. The title to their old hunting grounds in central Iowa was thus of no use to them.

The treaty whereby the Ioways gave up their possession of territory in what is now Iowa was signed at the Great Nemaha sub-agency on October 19, 1838. Thirteen Ioways made their marks on the treaty which was negotiated by Indian Agent John Dougherty, and witnessed by Sub-agent Anthony L. Davis, Vance M. Campbell, James M. Croke, and Jeffrey Deroin, interpreter. Frank White Cloud, the dissolute son of Mahaska and Rantchewaime, was the first to sign the treaty for the Ioways. No Heart, who was second in authority and had high regard for the welfare of his fellow-tribesmen, next made his mark. Older than Mahaska, No Heart was an excellent speaker, the real business head of the tribe, and a firm friend of the white man. Next in order came the Plum, the Great Man, He-that-has-no-Fear, Blistered Foot, Little Pipe, Little War Eagle, Cocked Nose, Heard to Load, Speckled Rib, the Iron, and Pile of Meat.

By the terms of the treaty the Ioways gave up their claim to all land lying north of Missouri between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. In a report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs dated October 23, 1839, Governor Robert Lucas de-

clared this region was "not surpassed by any lands in the United States" in fertility of soil.

In return for their rights to this land the Ioways received \$157,500 to be invested by the United States at a guaranteed interest of "not less than five per cent, thereon during the existence of their tribe." Each year such an amount was to be set apart as the chiefs and headmen required for the support of a blacksmith shop, agricultural assistance, and education. After allotting \$50 annually for Jeffrey Deroin during his natural life, the treaty provided that the balance of the income was to be delivered, "at the cost of the United States, to said tribe of Ioway Indians in money or merchandise, at their own discretion, at such time and place as the President may direct, Provided always That the payment shall be made each year in the month of October." The government also agreed to erect ten houses "at such place or places on their own land as said Ioways may select."

Such were the provisions of the treaty whereby the Ioways said farewell to their beautiful land.

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