

In 1743 there came to the doorstep of Eleazer Wheelock, a Congregational pastor, at Lebanon, Conn., a Mohogan Indian boy who desired to remain with the minister a few weeks in order to obtain enough knowledge to read the Bible and explain some of its passages to his people. He was a convert of George Whitefield, the famous evangelist from England. The Mohogan proved so apt a pupil that he remained for four years with Wheelock who planned to send him to Yale, but ill health and failing eyesight prevented Wheelock from doing this.

This Mohogan Boy was Samson Occum, one of the most celebrated Indian preachers of America, and the founder of the Christianized Brothertown Indians.

Early in the 18th Century there lived in the seven villages of Conn., N. Y. and Long Island the remnants of six tribes of Indians: the Mohogans, Pequots, Niantics, Montauk, Narragansett and Farmington. These Indians lived in close contact with the whites but most of them still maintained their Indian customs.

Occum on leaving Wheelock applied for the privilege of teaching and preaching among the Montauks on Long Island. This was granted him. He taught and preached in the Indian villages for 12 years. He stayed at the home of James Fowler where he met Mary daughter of James, fell in love with her and married her. Here also he met David, younger brother of Mary, who became his devoted friend and follower, a friendship which lasted through life. When David was old enough to attend Wheelocks school, Occum insisted that he go. This was in 1759. David proved himself worthy, for this is what Eleazer Wheelock wrote of him "A youth of good ability whose activities, prudence and fortitude have much recommended him".

Joseph Brant the celebrated Mohawk chief attended school with David for two years. David finished school in 1765 and began teaching among the Indians, the Oneidas.

In 1766 Occum was sent to England at the suggestion of George Whitefield,

as "a living sample of well directed endeavors to Christianize the Indians". His public appearances created intense interest wherever he went. As a public speaker he won the respect of all classes. The leading pulpits of defferent denominations in England, Scotland and Wales were open to him.

Lord Dartmouth became his patron, and was president of the Board of Trustees for funds contributed to Wheelocks Indian School. When the school was removed to Hanover, New Hampshire it was named Dartmouth in his honor.

Early in his teaching Occum saw that if the New England Indians were to survive as a united tribe, they must be educated, Christianized and above all removed from the influence of the whites. With this idea in mind a meeting was called on March 13, 1775 to select a committee to negotiate with the Oneidas of New York, for a tract of land. On this committee were David and Jacob Fowler, Joseph Johnson and Elijah Wampy.

A treaty with the Oneidas was finally consummated in 1774 in which they were to receive a tract of choice land, 15 Or 20 miles square.

In the spring of 1775 the first company set out for their new home. The party was composed of Jos. Johnson, David Fowler, Wampy, John Skoesuck and some others. They built log cabins and made gardens on their arrival, but the outbreak of the Revolution forced some to return to their old home but about 44 of them moved to West Stockbridge and made their home with the Stockbridge Indians until the close of the war.

The Brothertown Indians returned to Oneida in 1783 and a few of the Stockbridge went with them. The Stockbridge then made a treaty with the Oneidas for a tract of land six miles long and six miles wide. The Oneidas repudiated their treaty with the Brothertown Indians and it ended by cutting the tract of land to 3 miles long by 2 miles wide.

It is interesting to note how well they conducted their affairs after their removal to New York. They adopted stringent laws against drunkenness, immorality, profanity, theft, idleness, neglect of children and marriages to persons of negro blood. To enforce these laws they established a court which was known as the Peacemakers. It consisted of five members ^elected by the tribe on the first Tuesday of April. The court met in the school house the first Monday of every month and cases of every description were heard by them. The state allowed them to assess a fine up to 5 pounds and imprison for one month. This court functioned until 1843 when most of the tribe had moved to Wis.

In 1813 they had cleared 2000 acres had 90 cows, 30 horses, 16 yoke of oxen, 93 young cattle, 55 sheep and a great number of swine. They had a grist mill and 2 saw-mills, 15 framed houses and 18 framed barns. Four of their number were carpenters, two blacksmiths, four shoemakers, two tailors and five weavers. In 1812 they made 320 yards of woolen cloth and 600 yards of linen cloth. By 1823 they were making nearly 3000 yards of cloth a year. They also raised 11300 bushels of grain, 3400 of potatoes in 1812.

They believed in good roads and fences, kept their farms in good condition and were neat and clean. But they did not long ~~enjoy~~ undisputed possession of their land. Thru sharp practices, white farmers acquired long leases and by 1810 were occupying nearly one half of their tract and by 1817 they were convinced that if they were to live as a separate tribe they would be compelled to again hunt a new home.

In 1809 Capt. Hendrick Aupaumut with John Tibie, John Skoesuck, Henry Cushman and Jacob Fowler visited the Miami tribe at White River, Indiana. The Miami offered them a home but the war of 1812 prevented a migration at this time. But in 1817 the town voted to again send a delegation to White River

"in pursuit of a tract of land heretofore sought for by our delegates sent there in 1809, and to get a title to it".

The Stockbridge tribe also were preparing to move. Two families went in 1817 and more the next season, but great disappointment awaited them. Before they reached their destination they heard that the U. S. government by a treaty with the Miamis had bought the land on which they had intended to settle. A few of the Brothertowns returned to New York but the remainder traveled onward until they at length arrived at Kaukauna in Wisconsin.

In 1824 the town again voted to buy land, this time at Green Bay, and the following Indians were appointed to act in the matter with their Indian agent Thomas Dean, Wm Dick, Rhodolphus Fowler, Paul Dick Benjamin Fowler, Thomas Dick, David Toucee, George Scipio, George Sampson and Samuel Scipio. Some of these went to Green Bay with Thomas Dean and bought a tract of land on the Fox at South Kaukauna, 8 miles wide, 30 miles long for which they paid \$950. In 1830 at the laying out of lands for the N. Y. Indians they were represented by Wm. Dick, Rhodolphus Fowler and John Johnson.

The remnants of the tribe at White River moved there at once and the others made ready to go, but the Menominees had repented their bargain; they denied the claim and the controversy was settled in 1831 by Stambaugh treaty by which the Brothertowns received one township of land and the Stockbridges, two, on the east shore of Lake Winnebago.

The first real migration began in 1831 and consisted of nearly 40 persons mainly the large families of Wm. and Elkanah Dick and Randall Abner, also Thomas Commuck, Isaac Scipio and David Johnson. They lived at Kaukauna until the spring of 1832 when they moved to Brothertown.

In 1832 the Schooner "President" brought Alex Dick, Thomas and Daniel sons of Elder Thomas Dick the Baptist preacher, Wm. Johnson, John Seketer, John Adams and Nathan Paul. In 1834 the Rev. Thomas Dick arrived with his Baptist followers. He conducted the first Baptist Church services in the State at the home of Wm. Dick.

Among the last to arrive was Benjamin Garrett Fowler the Free Will Baptist Minister who could trace his ancestry to Momojoshuck the first known Grand Sachem of the Mantic tribe of Indians in Conn.

We of this generation fail to realize what these Christian Indians had to contend with in making a home on the shores of Lake Winnebago. All their goods must be boated from the Bay. They had no doctors and nothing of what we now think of as essential. The country they were to live in is best described by Colvert Pier in 1836. He wrote that it was the most dismal and desolate forest he had ever seen. The sun could rarely be seen through the trees and it seemed like coming into a strange country when he reached Pipe Village where there was prairie with oak groves scattered thru it.

All this did not discourage them and they began immediately to clear the land and build homes. By 1835 they were well established and that year employed Moody Mann a millwright to erect a grist mill. It was the first mill on the lake and the second between the Bay and Milwaukee.

1836 was an eventful year; the Military Road was started from Green Bay. It was not much of a road as it could only be used in dry weather or after it was frozen. Cutting Marsh established a Mission at Stockbridge. Colvert Pier passed through to build the first home at Fond du Lac.

The first crime was committed Joseph Palmer a Brothertown, was returning from Green Bay on July 3 with a jug of whiskey. Two Stockbridge Indians by the

#Colvert Pier was the first settler and founder of Fond du Lac.

name of Konkapot endeavored to take it from him and in the fight that followed Palmer was killed. On July 5th Konkapot was arrested and a joint trial was held by both tribes. Konkapot was found guilty and sentenced to be hung on the 24th of October. The place of hanging was to be on the division line between the two reservations. We believe this to be the second verdict of death in the state. But Justice was cheated. On the night of Oct. 23 some of Konkapot's friends rowed up the lake and liberated him.

In 1838 the first mail route was established between Green Bay and Fort Winnebago near Portage Wis. The first post office at Brothertown was called Pequot. Before this the town was known as Deansborough, in honor of the Indian agent Thomas Dean.

A Methodist Church was erected with a seating capacity of 150 and standing room for 100 more. It was made of logs hewn square and crevices filled with plaster and looked very good. The first pastor of whom we have any record was H. W. Frink.

By an Act of Congress in 1839 citizenship was conferred on the Brothertown Indians. They were given a tract of land 4 miles wide and 8 miles long containing 23040 Acres. This tract was surveyed by G. W. Featherstonhaugh and divided in 100 acres lots and each Indian was allotted 60 acres. The land had been surveyed in 1834 by Jeremiah Manchester under the supervision of Thomas Dean and the township was known as Manchester until 1856 when it was changed to Brothertown.

They held the first county election in 1840. The census at this time placed the population at 270 of whom 250 were Indians.

Peter Hotaling brought the first steamboat from Buffalo to Green Bay. It was dismantled at Kaukauna and taken to Brothertown where it was rebuilt and named the "Manchester".

Three of the tribe served as assembly men and all county offices were held by them until 1852. Their records in office are a credit to any people. But again the same conditions had arisen which had forced them to move from New England and New York. The whites were buying up their land and they were gradually being forced out, but they had expected this for this what John Collins Fowler wrote 80 years ago "It is not for the Indians to have anything. They should never live in the same community with the whites for they will soon be stripped of all they have and left by the wayside. Ah! yes, my people are dying away and we shall soon be gone." And this what Thomas Commuck their poet and historian wrote. "Here we have taken our stand and resolved to meet manfully that overwhelming tide of fate which seems destined in a few short years to sweep the Red Man from the face of Existence". How true are these words; for today all that remains of this tribe in Brothertown are eighteen souls and most of them have already reached old age and in a few more years the Brothertown Indians will be but a memory.

Otto E. Heller

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Wis.

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