

NATIVE AMERICAN ORAL TRADITION

Many of those born in this country, who's families have been here for a long time have an Indian heritage that they can't document, but which was passed down by oral tradition, and in many cases it was whispered. Our parents and grandparents were cautioned not to speak of it to strangers. As a result, much of our heritage is only able to be told by remembering the stories of our grandparents. Attempts to document our heritage is very, very difficult. Not only are there few records, but some of the records document our ancestors by their Indian names and not by their English names.

My grandmother was Flora Pearl Grace. Her mother was Rachel Ummel, and her mother was known as Savilla Wolf. I know that Savilla was an Indian, because my grandmother gave me that information from about the time I was five, and then confirmed it again a few years before she died at the age of 97. We never knew Savilla's Indian name. I am still searching for that. I know that great-great grandmother Savilla married a Swiss farmer in Canton, Ohio (this is documented). I know that her last name was Wolf.

My grandmother told me that she had great aunts who were not married who had to hide in the "swamps" to keep from being sent off to the West.

When I was little I remember my grandmother (Her grandmother was Shawnee on one side, and I believe she had a Cherokee grandparent as well.) saying to babies, "Gitchee Gitchee Goo." I was surprised to learn that Gitchee means good in Shawnee, and Goosah means boy. I would imagine that at some time Goo by itself became a way of saying baby in the phrase Gitchee Goo.

Many of the homemade remedies in our family came from my great grandmother (the daughter of Shawnee mother and a Swiss farmer father, who were married in Canton, Ohio near the Mogadore Reserve.) My grandmother told me her mother "birthed 'em and laid 'em out". She related that many called her a "swamp doctor". Unfortunately, the "receipts" for those remedies have been lost. I remember particularly a black concoction that was applied from a pot with a feather. It smelled terrible, but when it went onto a cut or scrape, you survived without scars. I also remember my grandfather telling me "works good on horses, too."

My grandfather was Miami Indian. He always claimed to be "Scotch Irish, but he would wink when he said it. His mother was an Elliot, a family in the Miami tribe, and his grandmother was a Waters, also of the Miami tribe. Since the Miami spent a lot of time inventing European heritage in order to hide their roots and pass for white, its very difficult to find ones roots. However, these families are listed on the Miami Indian Rolls of the people who were sent West. The families who remained passed for white. For many years we wondered if the name Terman was Jewish since the only other Termans to be found were Jewish. But on the Miami Indian rolls I found the name Tierman, which, coincidentally, is the way most of the older people referred to my Grandfather's family...pronouncing it "tear-man" rather than "ter-man". On that list I found the name of my great-grandfather, Charles Tierman, as well as his father, Samuel Tierman. Both had been on the list of Miami Indians who were to have gone to Kansas. I don't know if they actually did.

If one studies the traditions of the Shawnee who had been from around the Canton, Ohio area, one will find they lived at a place called the Mogadore Reserve. One will also learn that the name Wolf was taken by those of the Chief's clan, which was the wolf clan.

My grandmother told me that her grandmother was told by her Uncle to marry a white man so that they could keep their lands and not be taken off to the West. Coincidentally, it is said that Tecumseh advised the young to inter-marry with the whites.

I cannot document from whom I heard this, but I was told by a someone in my travels about, that Tecumseh said in so many words, "if we can't beat them, we should join them."

I am told that Tecumseh had a dream that some day the Indian would take back this country by the sheer force of numbers of us who are both red and white.

RACIAL BEGINNINGS

I constantly look into the eyes of everyone I meet, looking for signs of the inter-racial mixture of red and white. It can be seen in the hazel eyes that seems to occur with the mixture of Native American and European peoples. When I see someone with hazel eyes, I ask "are you part Indian?" Most of the time, they will answer that they are, and ask how I knew. Other times, some will say "No, but my grandmother was." I raise my eyebrows at that, and say, "well, then, so are you." Which they acknowledge. In the hundreds of people I've questioned about this, only a couple have declared that they were not any part Indian, but then hedged and said, "at least not that they were aware." One of those has come back and said they asked their older relatives and found that they had native American ancestors, and thus the blood of the red man.

In order to understand some of the features to look for in those of Native American descent one needs to understand that there are three major races in the world. There is the Negroid, the Caucasian, and the Mongoloid. The Negroid race has the largest frame, the Caucasian race has a medium sized frame and the Mongoloid race has the smallest frame. Native Americans are of the Mongoloid race, and most of those who now claim Native American heritage are a combination of the Caucasian and Mongoloid races. The Indians on the West Coast and in Alaska are the closest to China, Japan, etc., where the Mongoloid races pre-dominate. And they most closely resemble those people. If you've read about the Navajo Code talkers or seen the movie, you will remember that they were often mistaken for Japanese. The Plains Indians are a combination of the Indians on the West Coast, and the Woodland Indians. The Woodland Indians were further removed, and many of them, from the most easterly tribes, seem to have been mixed with Caucasians very early on. (Perhaps there is some truth to the legends that there were visits by a pre-Columbian Caucasian race.) Although the Woodland tribes still exhibit the smaller frames, and the eye shape, they are somewhat altered and their features are not the same as those on the West Coast. It would be interesting if DNA could somehow explain the racial mixture in the different areas of the country. By this time, nearly every tribe has been mixed with another, or with another race.

One of the traits of the Mongoloid race is a smaller skeletal structure, smaller features, smaller teeth, fingernails, etc. Many of the fractional-breed Native Americans are of smaller stature. This can be seen most prominently in the Mexicans, who are a

combination of Indians and Spanish (which also has mixtures of the Moors who invaded Spain, and perhaps further back the Moors were invaded by the “Mongol hoards”, so they come from both the East and the West...I tried to do a diagram, but found it impossible and very complicated!). Most of the Mexicans are of a smaller stature. If they don't have brown eyes, their eyes will be hazel. However, most of them do have brown eyes, inasmuch as their ancestors also had brown eyes, and the full-blooded red Indians have brown eyes. I don't remember my biology classes very well, but do recall that brown eyes will predominate.

As much as the Red Man has been ignored and largely remains unstudied with regard to their racial beginnings, it has been established that they are of the Mongoloid Race.

DIFFERENT, BUT THE SAME

As I compiled the dictionary for the Shawnee, I often came across words which I recognized as possibly of French origin. As I often study other languages (knowing a little about many, but hardly enough to speak any...) I notice similarities between certain words in other languages. I also noticed such similarities between the Shawnee and other languages I've become acquainted with. For instance, the word “yes” in Shawnee, Ah-ya, and in Arabic Aye-wa.

There are many other examples, which lead me off in wondering all sorts of things; like perhaps there really was an Atlantis, and perhaps it was populated by the Red Man, and they were very advanced, everything was on plastic, and for some reason it melted...and then Atlantis sank, and the people fled in all directions, some of them going East and some of them going West, and South and North, and that perhaps the gentle, civilized Red Man that survived in this country was an example of that earlier civilization...and then I realize there is too much for one to consider, too much for one to study, and too much for one to absorb, so I go back to the simple process of perhaps recording for all to remember the language, as it remains, of the Shawnee.

To Order Your copy of Shawnee Dictionary, please go to <http://thewishfactory.com/dictionary.html> . Also check out my Native American Synchronicity Cards at <http://thewishfactory.com/cards.html>

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