

DRAGGING CANOE
& CHICKAMAUGA'S
1788 -Assisted by
Cheesekau, other Shawnee Warriors, & Tecumseh

Dragging Canoe was a staunch and unrelenting enemy of the American Settlers seeking new lands from Indian Territory. He was well known to Spanish Officials at Mobile, Pensacola, and New Orleans, and he maintained contact with the English at Detroit. Two of his brothers, **Little Owl** and **Badger** were his able aides. His third brother, **Turtle at Home** had a ferry on the Tennessee River at Nickajack Town. (Later owned by **Lowrey**, then **Love**) **Dragging Canoes** two youngest brothers frequent trips representing him representing him as ambassadors to Detroit, to the Shawnees, and to the great Creek chief, **McGilivray**, who was **Dragging Canoe's** firm friend. Also, **John Watts**, the Chickamauga Indian diplomat was frequently in the American settlements, where his bluff friendliness deceived frontiersmen **Sevier** and **Bount**. Thus, through all his contacts, **Dragging Canoe** was kept advised of the progress of affairs in all directions, and which all his might he attempted to organize a confederacy of southern Indians as the only means he knew of checking the white invasion.

1788

In the spring of 1788 a party of Shawnee warriors (11) under the leadership of **Cheesekau (Chicksika)** with his younger brother **Tecumseh** (who later became the great Shawnee Leader) arrived at Running Water Town traveling from their home in Ohio. **Cheesekau** came to spend some time with his wife and daughter, and the brothers were also wanting to visit their Mother **Methotaske**, who was also at Running Water Town visiting relatives. Their father, **Puckeshinwah** had died in battle several years before. (1774)

This was at a time when the Shawnee's were engaged in bitter warfare with the Kentuckians, and they had found an ally in **Dragging Canoe**. **Tecumseh** was still a youth at this time, and learned much from the teachings of **Dragging Canoe**. **Dragging Canoe's** belief that an Indian

Confederacy for all Indian Tribes to band together in the fight to keep their Indian lands later became the life work of **Tecumseh**. The two Shawnee Indian brothers heartily entered into war plans of the Chickamaugas.

1788 February.

In an attack by the Chickamaugas upon an unnamed fort near this Frontier town of Running Water, (perhaps **Bledsoe's**) **Cheesekau** and **Tecumseh** readily joined the war party.

It is written (in the Narrative of **William Hall**, Southwestern Monthly, Vol. 1,335) the fort was a large stockade, the entrance to which was in the runway of a double log cabin. The Chickamaugas stealthily approached the cabin early in the morning. The schoolmaster, **George Hamilton**, was practicing the children in a song. Taking advantage of the noise, the Indians gouged a chinking from between two logs and fired, striking the singer in the chin. A schoolboy, **Hugh Rogan**, sprang to the opening thus made and fired his rifle. **Cheesekau** was killed. The Indians withdrew, taking the body of their leader with them.

The death of his favorite brother, who had been his companion and adviser since childhood, teaching him among other skills to fight bravely but to scorn all little and mean things. **Tecumseh** swore he would not return to his home in Ohio until his brother had been avenged. He assisted **Dragging Canoe** and the Chickamaugas in battles for nearly two years, making his home and headquarters at Running Water Town as he developed his plans for uniting Indian resistance against American settlers.