

Family names

It is given to a few only to bestow family names. The father and mother seldom name their own children. Some persons are well versed in the names which belong to each clan, and these are the persons who are looked to to bestow names upon the children.

Among the Shawnees near the Quaker Mission, Ga-che-qua, the mother of Mrs. Rogers, is one who gives most of the names. She is familiar with this subject, the names are all significant. The prohibition of marriage in ancient times extended beyond fourth cousin, but of late is not so rigorous, but Mrs. Chouteau knows of no instance of first cousins marrying. They might as near as third or fourth cousin. The name given determined the clan, as the tribal names were distinct, but the child is named into the clan of one or the other. The chiefs do not know interiere in this matter of bestowing names, although they might formerly. The Shawnees now marry into their own clan if they are not related.

Naming children.

After a child is born, word is sent to the chief of one of the other clans, and the name comes from one of the other clans. Thus Blue Jacket is of the Rabbit Clan. He looks to the Wolf clan. His wife is Owl. She would look to the Raccoon or the another clan. These other clans or the chief of the clan decides which clan name is to be given, and thus a balance is preserved between the tribes clans. The names of each clan are distinct, and any one can tell the clan of the individual from his name. In case of divorce there is now law about the children. They can put the children out of the other clan but it is not usual. Each clan has one or more chiefs, whose duties are confined to the affairs of peace. As they say, or Blue Jacket said to me, the braves make war, and the Chief makes peace. The son succeeds the father as Chief, and it is in the power of the clan who has the naming power, by naming his children into his wife's or some other clan to cut off the inheritance.

Religious System of Shawnees.

The Supreme Being anciently worshipped by them was a woman, and was worshipped as grandmother, Go-gome-tna-na, (our Grandmother). Some of them in ancient times used idols made of wood. Mrs. Chouteau was not able to give much account of the ancient system of the Shawnees, and was afraid to say much about it. They believe in an evil spirit, and in other inferior spirits, but she could not give the names of any of them. Bluejacket confirms the statement about the worship of a spirit whom they call our Grandmother.