



Shawnee 1720

After the Iroquois Wars ended around 1690, many of the Shawnee returned to the Ohio Valley. They established several villages in Kentucky. One grew to become quite large and may have been occupied by them prior to the Iroquois Wars. Indian Old Fields is the site of an Indian village and trading post in Clark County, Kentucky, called Eskippakithiki. The name is Shawnee for "Place of Blue Licks," referring to the salt deposits on Lullbeugrud Creek. The settlement existed in the days between 1670 and 1754. The "thiki" part in the name meant "place," thus "blue-like place." The word "Shawnee" in the Indian language meant "Southerner."

They had been living in the Ohio Valley in ancient times. There is a site in West Virginia on the Kanawha River south of the Ohio that is called the Buffalo Site. That site was home to the Fort Ancient culture. Sunwatch at Dayton is also a Fort Ancient Site. These were the ancestors of the Shawnee. The Shawnee had been in the region for centuries before the Iroquois Wars of the 17th century. Hopewell earthworks near Cincinnati, Ohio are now believed to also be the ancestors of the Shawnee, long before the establishment of the Fort Ancient villages.

The Shawnee reestablished villages in Ohio, at the mouth of the Scioto, and in numerous locations including Clark, Green, Ross, and Logan Counties. They allied themselves with the British and their villages were attacked on the Mad River. They would reestablish their villages further north, trying desperately to avoid the attacks by militia. By the 1760's the Miami had given the Shawnee permission to move further west into what is now Indiana. There were Shawnee living along the tributaries of the Wabash about 30 miles north of Sugar Creek in western Indiana, and at Fort Wayne, and in the cave country of southern Indiana. Near Sugar Creek there were Wea villages in the mid-18th century. There had been a Piankeshaw Village located in that region around 1726 but they had since relocated.

The Shawnee were divided into different groups called septs that directed different parts of the nation's businesses. One group directed the military and acted to protect the families and was called the Kispoktho. Another group acted as record keepers or historians so everyone would always know the history of the Shawnee people. Still others kept the ceremonies, rituals, and knowledge of the healing herbs and remedies along with songs and prayers.

Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatama came to Indiana and established a village called "Prophetstown" along the Upper Wabash near what is now the city of Lafayette. Blue Jacket who came before Tecumseh was even then a recognizable name, along with his friend and co-war captain, Little Turtle of the Miami who together defeated the entire American army at the headwaters of the Wabash in 1791 near the present city of Fort Recovery, Ohio.