

Indian Chief Waubonsie

Authentic Story of Life of Noted Indians After Whom the Trail Was Named, Published for First Time in this Section.

The recent extension of the Waubonsie trail across Illinois and Indiana to meet the old National Pike built by the government in the early fifties has added new interest to the life of the noted Indian chief whose name it bears. U. G. Reininger, president of the Waubonsie Trail association, was in Keokuk Wednesday in attendance at the luncheon given by the Industrial association, and while here told a reporter many interesting stories about the Indian chief, Waubonsie.

The earliest settlers in Page and Fremont counties came in contact with the aged chief, who hunted and trapped along the East and West Nishnabotna rivers and along the shores of the lake in Fremont county that still bears his name.

There is no doubt but that many a time he pitched his wigwam upon the site now covered with the busy little city of Shenandoah. Stories have been handed down from the early settlers and thus it came to pass that when Shenandoah sought a name for its largest park the name Waubonsie was suggested and acted upon unanimously; and later when the movement originated there for an automobile trail across the state and a meeting was held and the route laid out from Sidney to Clarinda, via Shenandoah, there was only one name thought of to designate it, Waubonsie.

Then began the efforts to unravel the history of the old chief from the legendary stories of his life and character and after considerable search and investigation Merze Marvin secured what was believed to be an authentic biography. The story of Merze Marvin was given to The Gate City reporter by President Reininger and is herewith published for the first time in this section.

Born on Banks of Kankakee.

Many years ago when the redskins were making their last stand before the coming of the pale faces drove them from their hunting grounds, a sturdy son was born in the lodge of the chief of the Pottawattamies of the Prairie who dwelt on the banks of the Kankakee river in Illinois. The little papoose grew to be a lusty, rollicking boy, bold and daring above all the courageous young braves of his tribe. He was called Waubonsie and he was destined to become a great leader among the redskins of the prairie. Waubonsie began his war career very early in life, and by the time he was called upon to succeed his venerable father he had acquired a wide spread reputation for his exploits and deeds of daring. To this day the descendants of his tribe recount with pride the stories of the wonderful prowess of Chief Waubonsie. Several of these stories, told by his tribesmen, are given in the History of the Indian Tribes of North America, by McKenney & Hall.

On one occasion the young Waubonsie and his band of braves wandered far to the west while on a hunting expedition and were surprised by a party of Osage warriors. Two of three of the Pottawattamies were slain, one of them being the particular friend of Waubonsie. In accordance with savage custom, Waubonsie claimed the right of revenge. The lands of the Osages lay far to the west of the Pottawattamies and braves from the two tribes seldom met. But time or distance cannot dull the Indian's passion for revenge. Waubonsie waited long for his opportunity. Finally he learned that a small party of Osages were expected at a certain fort and trading post. Thither he bent his steps. He met his enemies as strangers, with cool indifference, but beneath that apathy lurked a smoldering fire. When the Osages heard his name they guessed his purpose and sought means to anticipate or avert the blow. They slept within the fort surrounded by sentries, while Waubonsie pitched his camp without. Along in the night time he scaled the wall, successfully eluded the sentries, crept stealthily to the spot where the sleeping Osages lay, dispatched his victim and made good his escape before the alarm was given. A trusty comrade awaited with a horse outside the walls and by morning Waubonsie and his little band had ridden many miles from the scene of the assault.

An Intelligent Redskin. Waubonsie's talents were not limited.

ed to the war path and the hunting expedition. His intelligence and sagacity about the council fires and in dealing with the agents of the government were well known. He was a polished orator and maintained the interests of his people with untiring zeal. In the war of 1812 Waubonsie and his tribe were among the allies of Great Britain and engaged in active hostilities against the United States. When the treaty was signed at Greenville in 1814 Waubonsie was one of the seventeen chiefs who buried the tomahawk and ever since then he was the unfailing friend of the American government. He was one of the chiefs who negotiated the treaty of 1826. After the close of the treaty the Indians who were encamped on the banks of the river near which the town of Huntington now stands, engaged in frolic and indulged rather too freely in fire water. In the course of their savage revel a friend of Waubonsie's plunged his knife deep into the side of the chief, severely wounding him. General Tipton, the agent secured for the wounded chief the best of medical attention and nursing obtainable and he survived. Waubonsie's friend, the innocent perpetrator of the accident, fearing the wrath of his chief, fled as soon as his recovery was evident. In the spring Waubonsie called upon Gen. Tipton to announce his recovery and thank the latter for his kindness. General Tipton sought to make peace between Waubonsie and his fugitive friend. He explained the accidental nature of the wound and cleverly depicted the friend's sorrow. Waubonsie quickly replied: "Tell him to come back. A man that will run off like a dog with his tail down for fear of death is not worth killing. I will not hurt him."

At the time of the treaty of 1823 was closed the chiefs and the braves in council assembled agreed to the terms. Later one of the braves, who was thought to be under the influence of a trader, refused to sign the treaty unless the commissioners would give him a large sum of money. Waubonsie waxed very indignant when he heard of this circumstance. Said he, "An Indian who will lie is not worthy to be called a brave. He is not fit to live. If he refuses to sign what we agreed to in council I will cut his heart out." His comrades with difficulty prevented his carrying out the threat.

During the Black Hawk disturbance in 1832 Waubonsie and his warriors joined the United States army, thus proving their allegiance to the great white father. In 1833 the Pottawattamies traded their lands in Illinois and Indiana to the government and in return were allotted new lands west of the Mississippi. Waubonsie and his band took up their abode in Mills county and roamed through all the country which now comprises the counties of Pottawattamie, Mills, Montgomery, Page and Fremont. A favorite haunt was the peaceful sylvan lake in northern Fremont county, and to this day the lake bears his name. In 1815 Waubonsie made a journey to Washington, D. C., for the purpose of taking his great white father by the hand, he said.

After the final treaty was made in 1842, many of the Pottawattamies, loathe to leave their familiar hunting ground and game trails, lingered on until the influx of settlers in 1846. Waubonsie was one who remained until the last. During his sojourn here Waubonsie had contracted some debts and after the manner of some of his white brethren, prepared to leave without paying. Thus he became entangled in the meshes of the law. The following writ of attachment is among the oldest records of Fremont county: State of Missouri vs. Fremont county of Atchison

Before me, James Cummings, a justice of the peace, of the county aforesaid, this day personally came Rufus Hitchcock, who being duly sworn saith that Waubonchey justly owes him twenty-two dollars, and that said Waubonchey is leaving the country without paying him, and that he wants a writ of attachment against the goods, chattels, monies of Waubonchey and further saith not, this November 14, 1846.

Rufus Hitchcock. Sworn to and subscribed to before me, this 14th day of November, 1846. (Seal) James Cummings, Justice of Peace. That is the last that is certainly known of Waubonsie. Presumably he

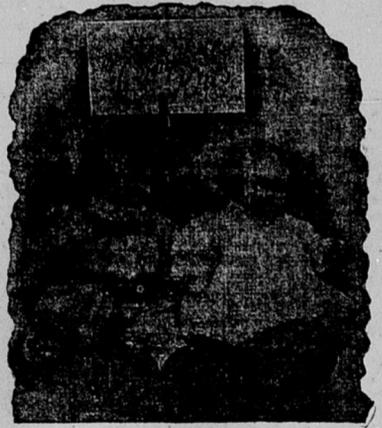


Toyland Headquarters



Ask any boy or girl in Keokuk where Santa Claus headquarters are and they will tell you the Golden Rule.

And who knows better than the children? They know each year the mysterious old fellow brings them the very things they have seen here, talked about and wished, which is proof to them that he gets his supplies of us. Realizing that old Santa is becoming more liberal each year with his gift giving we have provided a greater supply than usual that he may have enough to go around. We suggest that the children be brought in soon that old Santa may know their wishes and his selections can be made before the wished article is gone.



The Unbreakable Wonders



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Corner Eighth and Main Streets

The Golden Rule

Keokuk, Iowa

went with his band to the reservation set aside for them by the government in Kansas, although legendary stories, impossible to verify, state that he chafed under the restraint of the reservation and that he retraced his aged steps to Fremont county that he might die amid the scenes he loved and that his bones now rest in the hollow of a great tree under whose branches he had slept and meditated while the younger braves of his tribe followed the chase.

FUNERAL TODAY FOR MRS. MARY J. WILSON

Keokuk Woman Died Friday Evening At the Residence of Her Daughter, Mrs. J. M. Alberts.

Mrs. Mary Jane Wilson died Friday evening at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. J. M. Alberts, 1714 Palean street. Death was caused from paralysis from which ailment the deceased had been confined for two weeks previous to her demise.

Mrs. Wilson leaves two daughters and a son, Mrs. J. M. Alberts and Mrs. Charles Alberts of this city and James F. Wilson whose residence is unknown.

The husband of Mrs. Wilson died about fifteen years ago and was known to a number of Keokuk residents during his life here. Mary Jane Wolkit was born at St. Clair, Ill., January 28, 1844. Her marriage to Geo. W. Wilson took place at Quincy, Ill., February 18, 1875. Four children were born to the union, the three named, living.

Funeral services will be held this afternoon at three o'clock from the residence, 1714 Palean street and friends of the family have been invited to participate in paying final tribute to this good woman.

Professor Will Submit. [United Press Leased Wire Service.] PARIS, Dec. 2.—That Prof. Paul Langevin will not resist his wife's suit for divorce, is the statement printed here tonight. It is said he will allow his wife the custody of their children, provided there is no further exposure of his alleged relations with Mme. Curie, the famous scientist.

COMMISSION FOR CEMETERY

City Council Will Appoint Three Men to Look After the Affairs of That Department.

FIRST OF NEW YEAR

Burial Ground Commissioners Will be in Office, Two, Four and Six Years Respectively.

The city council is soon to pass upon the names of three men whose names have been suggested for cemetery commissioners. This commission will have absolute control of the cemetery.

One of the commissioners will be appointed for a term of two years, the second, four, and the third, six years. As in the department of public safety where fire and police officers are chosen by a commission and according to the results of examinations through which the candidates for such positions pass, the cemetery employes and all matters in that department would be absolutely controlled by the commission.

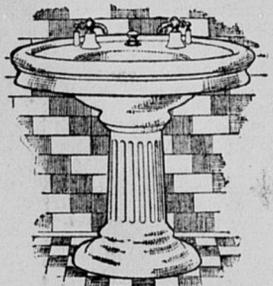
Who the cemetery commission is to be has not yet been made known but it is expected that three men, logically capable of rendering the city the best services there and in an office that has no salary attached will receive the appointments from the city commissioners. The term of the two year cemetery commissioner will expire January 1, 1914, the four year January 1, 1916, and the six year commissioner, the first of January, 1918.

A Bathroom as a Christmas Present

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Ain't it Awful? Mabel? Yes. [United Press Leased Wire Service.] CHICAGO, Dec. 2.—What was described at the time as the most ardent courtship of the stage saw the beginning of the end in the superior court here this afternoon, when Mrs. Frederick Thompson, otherwise Mabel Tallafiero, the well known theatrical star, applied for a divorce from her husband, the originator of Luna Park and successful producer and manager. Repeated and extreme cruelty is alleged by Mrs. Thompson.

Spiders Aid Scientists. Certain species of spiders are cultivated by scientists on account of the fine but durable thread they weave, the thread being used on delicate astronomical instruments.

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Original "Yeggman." The word yeggman is said to have originated from the criminal exploits of John Yegg, who, according to criminal tradition, was a Swedish desperado who operated in the Pacific coast at sea in the late seventies.

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