

Informant?
Seneca Nation

Origin of Seneca Clans and Phratries.

Before the whites came there were along the Alleghany River several dangerous places. A Lake. A young man once saw two men come out from the river. One had a paddle, the other a bow and arrow. The one with the bow and arrow said to the young man, "We are here to see you." "Where do you come from?" We are sent down here to see about the dangerous places. There are so many lives lost there now. We are going further north as soon as we get through here and see the people here in the different villages." Then the young man said, "Can I go with you?" "No, we sought to see you and let you know that we are going this way. When we go to those people where so many lives have been lost through bloodshed, we are going to work so they stop. We are going to make peace and friendly." And then he went in the boat.

goniu'g^ue' (name of the lake)

Cayuga lake (?)

The young man went on after the two men. The man with the bow and arrows struck on the bank with the bow and saw right in the center of the lake something black coming up through the air, and then the man with the bow and arrows spoke loud, "We came here to see you. You have to leave this lake or else you die." The young man heard a voice way up in the air which said, "I rather leave here." Then the man with the bow and arrows said, "You better leave here immediately because you have destroyed so many men's lives." Then the black column came down *drinking* and then he noticed it raise up again and move. And then this man spoke out again and said, "You go way north." So they went. Then the young man saw the two men go off. So this young man went to the lake to see what's in there. And he saw in the lake many sick leach (shag^uaxton)(?) So he looked where the men had gone

and saw them come back. "I come back to see you and tell you that what you saw in this lake is the ~~biggest~~ oldest leach in this world and that it has done a great deal of damage. So we got through to move them. That's what we sent for here."

The young man asked, "Who is it that sent you?" And he said, "Hawenliú' (God)." They parted and went further north. They arrived in a little village and inquired who was the head man in the village, and they found out and they went and saw the head man. And the men said, "We arrived here to see you." And the head chief said, "What is the trouble? You are strangers I have never seen you before." So the man said, "We come here to make peace, to be good friends to your people." Then the head man said, "I like to see you become good friends to the people. It is very dangerous for our people, both young and old, kill each other frequently. I wish you to make peace and friendly at once." So the two men said, "Wait a day or two and we come back again. We are going to visit the other villages too," So the head chief, he said, "Can I go with you?" The two men said "Yes." So they went to next village. And the head man said, "I know the head man of this village. Let us go right straight there." So they went right to the place of the head man. So these two men said, "We are glad to see you. We are come here to make a peace and friendly of your people." So the headman said, "I like to see you if you can do that. It is very hard of our people as very dangerous day and night as well, Kill each other frequently." So two men said, "We do immediately. But we want you to go with us to next village." So the headman says, "I go." So they went to next village. They went right straight to the headman and Aceta (the 4th man) said, "I don't see our neighbors. And I go to next village too and am going to tell all about it as you request. So these two men said, "We are going back to the first village

where we came by. So we will expect your people to come on the third day and then we go on to make peace." So they went back. So this man he went back to the other villages. So the third day eight villages (the headmen and the people) came there. As soon as all the people arrived, the two men said, "Are you all here now?" So the head chiefs of all the villages replied "Yes." The two men said, "Well, let us go, and follow us." And the two men then start walking on through the forest. And they came to the river and the two men stopped. And then the two men said, "We must cross this river." So the headmen said, "How can we cross? We have no boat." Then two men said, "Its all ready to cross." And the two men saw a big elm tree towards the river and vines growing way up on the tree. And the two men pulled the vine down and then threw it on the other side of the river. So they walked and said, "Follow us." So the people followed them. And when the two men landed on the other side, then walked down. And the people followed them. Just about half of the people cross and then the two men ahead looked back and then this vine make loose and running down the river on one side. So the people divided. Then the two men stopped and said, "Now as many as have come over, you must make a village here?" So they did start to make shanties (?) and make fire. So the people left on the other side make a village too. These two men said, "We come back early in the morning." So these two men went off. Next morning before sunrise the two men came back, and first shanty they went in. The old woman she just come back, been after some water to the river. When she went to the river it was a kind of foggy on the river, and the woman saw a mud turtle near the shore, and these two men came in and said, "What did you see down to the river when you were after the water?" She said, "I saw mud turtle." Then two men said, "You are sheniáxtu. So your family be hodiáxtu. So your grand and great grandchildren and your

gonyadi

generation be geniarty." Then these two men went out. And the second shanty the two men went in. The old woman just came back, being after some water to the river. And when she got near the river and saw a wolf and then this two men asked her, "What did you see down the river when you were after some water?" She said, "I saw a wolf." The two men said, "You are wolf clan. So your family and your grand and great grandchildren and your ~~snipe~~ generation shall be wolves." So they went off. In the third shanty these two men went in. The old woman just came back being after some water to the river, and when she got near the river she saw a bear. So the two men asked her, "What did you see when you were after water at the river?" She said, "I saw a bear." The two men said, "You are bear clan," etc. And the fourth shanty these two men went in. The old woman just came back being after some water to the river, etc. Deer. The two men said, "Now these your neighbors here, first shanty we call "turtle" and the second shanty we call "wolf" and the third we call "bear" and the fourth we call "deer." These four shanties of your families be friendly and call "brothers." And then the two men went out. They went across the river. Then first shanty these two men went in, the old woman just came back being after some water snipe, (2) eel, (3) duck, (4) chicken-hawk. Then two men said to the second side, "The four clans on this side of the river your families call friendly and brothers. So on the other side these are four clans too, and their families are also friendly and brothers. So hereafter to your generation call your "cousins," the families on the other side of the river. Now hereafter if anything happens between your cousins both sides have duty to officiate to the other."

off
ministry

Division of phratries in camping.

At feasts appointments of offices are made by each side and are

7
1 announced to the other side. Other side then tells the man what his duties shall be.

Never heard of any tabus. (Thinks the question funny.)