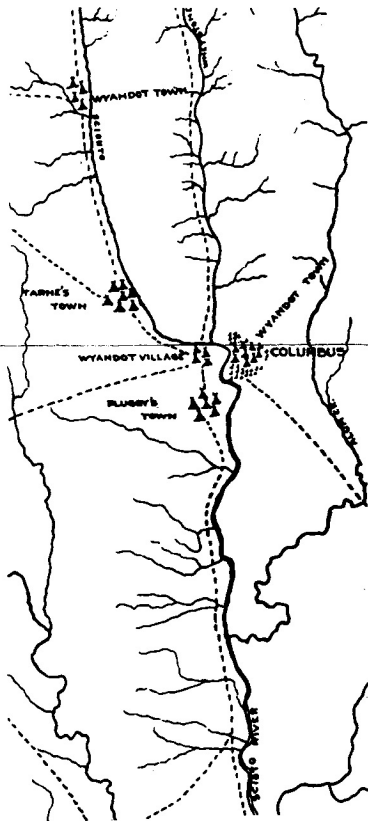


Able to grow more food than they could use, the Wendat often traded with other tribes. In 1609 the Wendat met a new trading partner, French explorer Samuel de Champlain. Soon the Wendat, like many other Native American groups, became dependent on the trade goods provided by the French. Trading corn with other Indians for furs and trading furs with the French for European goods, the Wendat soon amassed great wealth as middlemen in a vast trade network. It was the French and their Jesuit priests who gave the name "Huron" to these Native American traders. To dislodge their competition, the Iroquois launched a fierce war against the Wendat in 1648. These relentless attacks forced the Wendat to flee their homeland two years later. Some Wendat, retaining the French name "Huron" traveled eastward and established villages in Lorette, south of Quebec. Other Wendat, later known as Wyandotte, journeyed westward. For more than two centuries they were compelled by Native American enemies and non-Indian settlers to move first to the western Great Lakes region, then back to the east, eventually to Upper Sandusky, Ohio. In 1858 the Wyandotte finally were settled in what is now Oklahoma.



Huron after European contact, 1700s

The Wyandotte in Ohio



Wyandotte towns, from a map drawn by the principal Surveyor of the Virginia Military District

With the increasing conflict with the Iroquois, some Wendat fled to the west and south, while continuing to trade with the French. Eventually, some settled near the newly established French fort at Detroit. In the mid-1700s they settled near the French fort of Fort Sandoski in towns such as Junandot, Lower Sandusky and Sunyendeand. After the French lost the French and Indian War in 1763 the Huron, or Wyandotte as they were coming to be known, were forced to trade with the British. At the close of the Revolutionary War settlers from the newly formed United States were poised to pour into the fertile Northwest Territory.

By the end of the eighteenth century a number of Wyandotte towns thrived throughout Ohio. Tarhe's town at the junction of the Coshocton Trail on the Hockhocking River, near present day Lancaster and Sandusky Old Town and Half Kings Town in the upper Sandusky region were all settled by the Wyandotte. Many Wyandotte, including Tarhe, or the Crane as he was also called, resolved to battle the rising tide of encroachment. After several skirmishes General Anthony Wayne defeated the western Indian confederacy at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. In the ensuing Treaty of Greenville, the Native Americans were forced to cede two-thirds of their land in Ohio.

During the early nineteenth century the Wyandotte continued to lose land. Many Wyandotte joined the Shawnee leader Tecumseh at his gathering of nations at Prophetstown on the banks of the Wabash River. Even this gathering of nations could not stand against the land hunger of the young American nation. After their defeat in the Battle of Tippencanoe, many Wyandotte returned to what lands were left in northwest Ohio. By 1843 the Wyandotte had been forced to give up the last of the land they held in Upper Sandusky.

Today many Huron live in southern Quebec, while many Wyandotte live in Oklahoma. Although widely separated **geographically, the Huron and Wyandotte today face similar challenges as they both fight to secure their rights and better lives for their people.**



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