The Struggle for Land. The Battle of Pleasant Point

BATTLE OF POINT PLEASANT.

American History - 1774
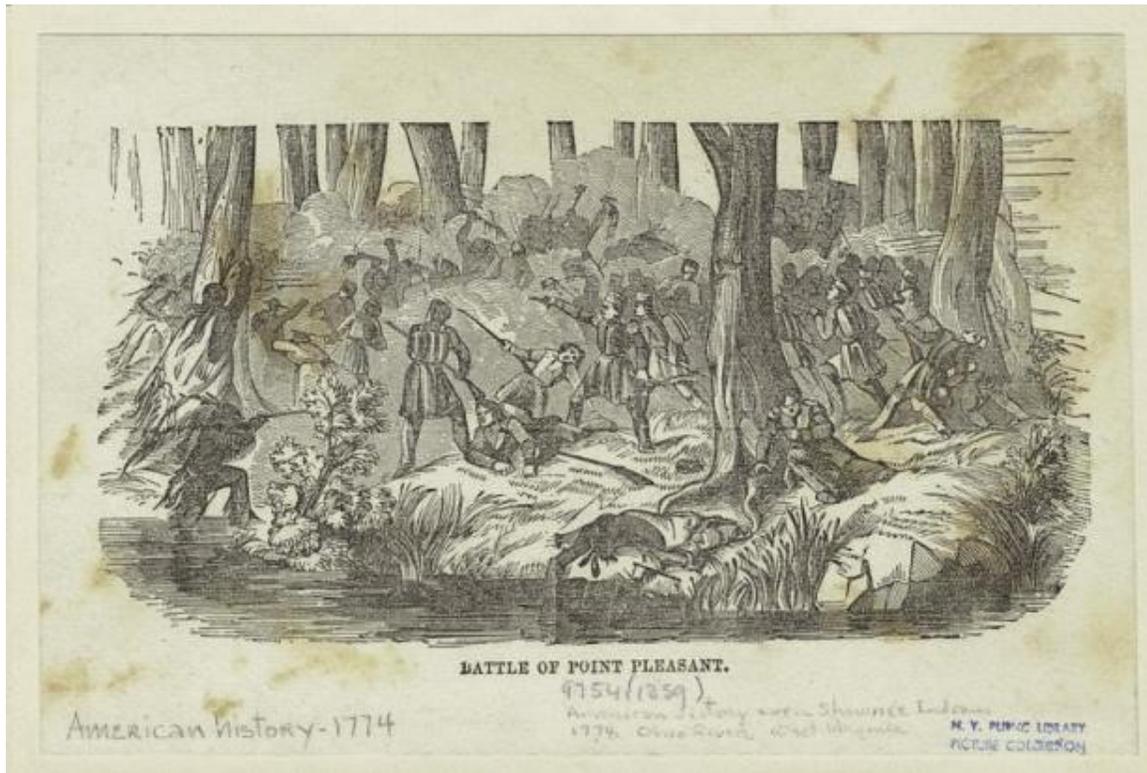
Battle of Pleasant Point

For those genealogists who have not yet unraveled their family histories during the early to mid 18th century, it is wise to explore the Alleghany mountains. Most of those families were of German descent and came down through Pennsylvania into the mountains of North Carolina and Virginia. However, it is worthy to note that a number of settlers on the east coast also applied for land patents in the mountains. See the Northern Neck Land Grants.

After the French and Indian War, the plan was to grant land patents to settlers who wished to settle in western Virginia. But there was a problem. Native American tribes viciously protected their territories from the white

man. As the struggle continued in the mountains against Native Americans, they scalped white men and took white women as prisoners. The Royal Governor, Lord Dunsmore, decided to take military action to rid the mountains of Indians once and for all. First, in 1768, after the Iroquois and the British signed the Treaty of Fort Stanwix giving all of their lands east and south of the Ohio River to the British. White settlers immediately moved into the region. Although the Iroquois agreed to give up this land, most of the Indians in the Ohio did not, including the tribes of the Delaware, Seneca-Cayuga, and Shawnee. War erupted during the spring of 1774 when violent encounters occurred in the disputed area.

The American Indians, especially the Shawnee, tried to drive the British colonists back to the eastern side of the Appalachian Mountains. In May the British colonists retaliated by killing eleven Seneca-Cayuga. When it was discovered that several of these natives were relatives of Chief Logan, the chief of the Seneca-Cayuga at Yellow Creek (near modern-day Steubenville), the natives demanded retribution. However, the Shawnee leader Cornstalk, who had promised to protect the British fur traders in the Ohio County from attackers, urged conciliation. Chief Logan, however, was not convinced and the Shawnee and Seneca-Cayuga leaders did not stop him from attacking British colonists living south and east of the Ohio River. Chief Logan and two dozen warriors sought revenge on the colonists in western Pennsylvania whereby they killed thirteen settlers.

It was then that the commander of Fort Pitt, Captain John Connolly, prepared to attack the Ohio Country Indians and the royal royal governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, offered the assistance of the colony of Virginia. During August of 1774, the Pennsylvania militia entered the Ohio Country and quickly destroyed seven Seneca-Cayuga villages being abandoned while the soldiers approached. Meanwhile, Lord Dunmore sent one thousand men to the Kanawha River in modern-day West Virginia to build a fort to enable them to attack the Shawnee and met the force of Lord Dunmore on October 10, 1774. Chief Cornstalk wasted no time in sending his warriors

into the Ohio country to drive out the British. The forces met on October 10, 1774 at Point Pleasant for a bloody battle with many casualties on both sides.

The British succeeded in driving Cornstalk north of the Ohio River while Dunmore the Shawnee across the river. As Dunmore neared the Shawnee villages on the Pickaway Plains (north of Chillicothe, Ohio), he stopped and made camp (Camp Charlotte) and sent a message to the Shawnee to come and discuss a peace treaty.

The Shawnee agreed, but while negotiations were under way, Colonel Andrew Lewis and a detachment of Virginia militia from Point Pleasant crossed the Ohio River and destroyed several Shawnee villages. Fearing that Dunmore intended to destroy them, the Shawnees immediately agreed to terms before more blood was shed.

As a result of this war, some Shawnee natives agreed to the terms of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix which they had made in 1768, thereby promising to surrender certain of their lands east and south of the Ohio River and to return their white captives. Indian Villages, etc. Massacre and Torture of the Moore Family