

his small band of followers and returned to the British declaring that he would no longer fight against the white man and that the General had a Great and powerful spirit, much like his own Great Spirit.

So here in my painting he is standing alone against a background of lush Michigan fall landscape - Autumn - perhaps the beginning of his own autumn, and against the colorful turbulent sky - symbolizing the ever oncoming storm of the whites - the colonists - the farmers - the lumbermen that were steadily pushing him and his people from their natural heritage and the lands they loved.

The expression upon his face and his whole countenance is that of peaceful submission - a sadness in the realization of what that ever coming storm would mean to all his people.

In reading the many articles, Michigan histories, news paper articles and personal anecdotes about him one cannot help but become painfully aware of the wrongs we have bestowed upon the Indians in exchange for their land - It is also easy to see how the word manifest - destiny came into being by our Great Statesmen - Perhaps later, in our own lives we too may understand its meaning better!

This foreword or Essay to my painting of Chief Okemos is not intended to be an historical analysis, but only to show the reason I chose to paint him as I did.

I have never tried to recreate an historical character before from a demand such as this, that I have put upon myself. It has changed from beginning it and has developed into much more of a comment. I was only to do a painting of Chief Okemos for the Okemos Branch of the Capital Savings and Loan.

I think now that I have painted a painting for my newly found friend and warrior, Chief Okemos the younger. (not to confuse him with his oldest son - Chief Johnny Okemos, so reminiscent with local stories about his intemperate behavior)

I look at what I have painted and realize that I have actually recreated the Chief to a rightful position that he should be remembered as having. A powerful chieftan - a man of exceptional courage - a wise leader of his people and indeed a Chief to contend with as well. — I wish him well forever

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O-Ke-Monse

Chippewa and Ottawa - a celebrated Chief
of the Saganaw and the Chippewas. sometimes even
referred to as Ottawa.
Born - circa 1758? Chief Okemos - Died in 1858

Chief Okemos

In doing the painting of Chief Okemos, I decided to represent him as a younger man - The existing photos and newspaper reproductions show him to be a much older man, not suggesting in the least the formidable person of his younger days. Rather than have him remembered as a broken old Chief of those photos, I chose to portray him more or less at the height of his career.

Even though he was a man of small stature and seemed to have narrow shoulders and to be short, standing about five feet four inches: his stature as a great leader with courage and skill in warfare were well recognized by the tribes he represented. He was an elected chief by all of the 4 or 5 tribes because of his bravery and cunning.

These outstanding facts are worthy attributes to remember him by: though the battle for the future of his tribes and land was lost. — So here in my painting of him I indicate him as a proud younger warrior, perhaps in his early or middle 40's, attired in a Colonial officers coat, or one of a similar design - appealing to his good trading instinct - a medallion of tasteful design and make, a somewhat design perhaps. A formidable war club, painted blue and studded on the sides in a Chippewa or Ottawa design - his favorite bow handeled English Hunting knife, always with him, eppelets adorning the shoulders of his coat - These two were favorite articles of trading worth, much prized when available — His hands are crossed in front of him, perhaps reluctantly, as though they were tied: even so they remained after his failure to do away with Gen. Washington, having been employed by the British to do so - He was a skillful archer, one of the best in his tribe. After however, failing to kill him with the ninth arrow, while the General conveniently knelt at prayer before the fort, at the stump of a tree, he backed away, collected