

Chief Blackbird (Le Tourneau) Pottawatomie War Chief

As-si-ke-nack / Sikenac / Assiginak / Siggenak / Le Tourneau / Blackbird [born at Wawgawnawkezee, 1768; died at Manitowaning, Manitoulin Island, November 3, 1866], brother of Apawkausegun; **Siggenak / Le Tourneau** was an 18th century Pottawatomie chief at Milwaukee, he left there in 1789 to visit Makinac; **Assiginac** attended the Sulpician Mission School at Oka, Québec where he was baptised as **Jean-Baptiste; As-si- ke-nack**, Odawa/Pottawatomie war chief / interpreter; "a great drunk in his youth"; father of Odawa teacher Francis Assikinack [1824-1863]; possibly took part in the capture of Michilimakinac in 1812; **Blackbird**, northern Ojibwa chief, spoke for 14 hours on July 18, 1812 at Michilimakinac while urging support for the English; he commanded the Indian forces that attacked the column abandoning Fort Dearborn [Chicago] August 15, 1812, and accepted the surrender of the US commander, Captain Heald; leader of Odawa warriors in July 1813 on the Niagara Peninsula after the Battle of Beaver Dams, and participated in skirmishes there; probably took part in the capture of Prairie du Chien in 1814; became assistant to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs; **Chief Assegemach** was sent to proclaim peace to the tribes on the eastern side of Lake Michigan on May 8, 1815; **Assenach** was employed as an interpreter at Drummond Island on December 16, 1815, **Assiginach** was still employed there in 1819; **Sheginark / Black Bird**, Ojibwa chief, signed the US peace treaty at the Miami Rapids, September 29, 1817; **Assiginac** moved to Manitoulin Island around 1836; chief orator and interpreter at the Manitoulin Island council of August 1, 1837; became a Roman Catholic catechist; **J.B Assiginack** supported and signed Surrender #94, for Manitoulin Island, October 6, 1862 (Canada 1891 vol. I: 23, 236-237; US 1837: 216; Armstrong, J.: 17; Berton 1980: 194-195; Clifton 1975: 13, 41; Clifton, Cornell and McClurken: 55; Horsman: 116; Jameson: 500, 502; McClurken: 5-6, 19, 30; Petrone: 27, 73; Schmalz: 114-115; Sugden: 203; Canadian Encyclopedia vol. II: 1341; DCB vol. VII: 821, vol. IX: 9-10; MPHSC vol. XV: 712, 713n, 714n, vol. XVI: 246, 292, 332, 394, 649, 675). *'Brother, I have listened with a good deal of attention to the wish of our father. If the Big Knives, after they kill people of our colour, leave them without hacking them to pieces, we will follow their example. They have themselves to blame. The way they treat our killed, and the remains of those that are in their graves in the west, makes our people mad when they meet the Big Knives. Whenever they get any of our people into their hands they cut them like meat into small pieces. We thought the white people were Christians. They ought to show us a better example.'* —Ten Mile Creek, July 18, 1813 (Schmalz: 115).