

# The Way Things Are Shaped

by Stephen Holt

As the torches of the Shawnee  
chiefs sputtered and went to ashes  
in the Firelands, those faded people  
were force-marched beyond the Ohio  
country into a western cloud of dust.  
O, there was little time for them  
to write, and precious few signs  
of the times were left behind  
as they covered their tracks. So  
out of the materials of my mother  
tongue, my *Yengese* words,  
I will show you how  
long ago a Kispokotha girl,  
Tecumapese, sister of Tecumseh,  
knelt by the banks of Paint Creek  
and, humming her own tune,  
scooped up handfuls of wet rich  
clay and molded a copper-  
colored likeness of her brother,  
the wild horse she imagined  
came down to the water  
at sunrise to drink.