

21 January 1924

Manuscript, hand-written, six pages; "A Short Unwritten Indian History About Awiskookak, the Mohawk Indian Spies." Enclosed with the previous letter.

{Note by Piers: "By Joe C. Cope, Micmac Indian, Enfield, NS. 21 Jan. 1924."}

"The People of Nova Scotia by reading Parkmans and Murdock's History of Canada. Cannot escape from knowing great deal about the life and customs of Indians of long ago. Especially they like best to read about their old time national sports. Of Tomahawking. And scalping. The latter - as some believe - originated from French Idea. Far from it. That Game is as old as the Indian Race Itself. More scalps more Honor. No scalps. No good. A squaw man. But. The Practice of Spying among Mohawk and Mic- Mac Indians began about two hundred years before Mr. white man unfortunately drifted across the Atlantic to this Country. The Grand Chief James Paul's {Jacques Pierre Peminuit Paul, chief in 1856 until his death in 1899} unwritten Indian History. Says. That. Nova Scotia was inhabited and owned by Mohawk Indians probably Thousand years before Mic Mac Indians of now United States

{Joe Cope uses the term Mohawk, but it should really be the Kwetjek; possibly St. Lawrence Iroquois, but not Mohawk. The Mohawk were introduced in the 1700s by the English, as Indian Rangers, to go out into the wilds and kill the Mi'kmaq. Stories of this were conflated with stories of the Kwetjek wars of earlier times. See additional notes below.}

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took notion to drive them away. Or out of it. And they did drive them away. But History do not say. How long the Battle lasted to do it.

To prove that Nova Scotia was once inhabited by Mohawk Indians Paul says. We have no written proof. But. We have their old stone Relics. He says. More than one half of Stone Relics found in Nova Scotia. Are Mohawk Made. Mohawks were better and neater workers than Mic- Macs. And are so to this very day. Hence. Every neatly Made stone Pipe. Paring knife. Tomahawk. Stone sling &c. May safely be attributed or taken as Mohawk Manufacture. But one certain fact, he says, That stone slings were never used by Mic- Mac Indians. Mic- Mac Indians were spear men. And an expert in Archery Hence. Their easy victory. And expulsion of their inveterate enemies. The Mohawks. From this Country. Paul says. The

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Mic-Macs fought and chased Mohawks up the River St. Lawrence as far as Caugnawaga. Where they are to this day.

Paul says. The last two surviving Chiefs of that greatest of all Indian Wars killed one another some where near Qenebec {Kennebec?, Quebec?}. Mejilapegasijk {Mejilapeka'tasiek} Chief of Mic-Macs. Killed Wasoo-ow the Mohawk Chief in Tomahawk fight, in the Morning. But. He also died. The following day. (Do you see these two names in Parkman and in Murdock's Histories?)

Now, what would we do if some very powerful nation drove us out of our beloved Country? Would we not do our dirtiest? If we could. To make its newly acquired Country as unpleasant as possible? Now, that is just what Mohawk Indians tried their. Best to do, to Mic- macs. {Chief Jacques Pierre Peminuit} Paul says only on too many occasions they succeeded. The Mohawks swore eternal vengeance upon Mic- macs, but luckily, the appearance of Black Robed White Man and His Religion put an end

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to that bad piece of Business, as far as killing and scalping was concerned.

But the sworn vengeance upon Mic- mac Indians was not to be so easily forgotten. For about two hundred years after these two Tribes of Indians were converted to Christianity. Mohawk Indian spies, some say 100 Men. of course divided into parties of 6 or 7. all picked Men. would come down to Nova Scotia every summer, as soon as the leaves and other green stuff grew large enough to hide in. Then and only then the Mic macs had good reason to be a little cautious in their Movements. These Men. visited every Indian village from Yarmouth to Cape North in Cape Breton. They were very annoying, like Night Hawks, disappear during the day. and at dusk, they would let themselves {be} known, by throwing stones at the camps, imitating the warble of Birds, hoot of an owl. and start every dog in a village Barking. But. Many a time they were more than well paid for their sport

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The first few hundred years these spies, were very cruel. Murdering innocent women and children, setting fires to

all the Mic Macs best hunting grounds. (This was the practice of the Mohawk Ranger companies, brought in by the English in the 18th century to exterminate the Micmac.) Paul says that all the old Barrens, all through this Country are the works of Mohawks. But. Since the Christianity came in vogue, although it did not prevent them from Making their annual visits as usual, these spies became more lenient, as civilization grew and spreaded finally. About seventy five years ago They gave up the Idea. As a bad job. One squaw shot three of them along the shore of Bras dor Lake; another is buried at Chapel Island, Potlotek, C.B.

But. old man Noel Lewis, a well-known Indian around Dartmouth years ago had the worst experience with these spies. While camping near Antigonish, one of these Mohawks crept in to his camp while they were asleep, and snatched a one-year-old baby boy from his mother's arms and made off with him But the cries of childs awaken

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the Parents. Old Noel. said. I jumped up. grabbed My Gun. and made after them as fast as my legs would let me I heard the Childs cries, and followed it. As I had nothing to hinder my speed. I soon overtook them. When they saw I was within about twenty yards behind, they dropped the boy, and I thanked them with two big loads of buck shot as they disappeared in darkness. Them fellows did not bother me any more that summer. On a second occasion, about five years after, they did not make another attempt to kidnap any of my children. But. they lured my hunting dog to follow them My dog was lost for a week. When it returned, it was clean shaven from its nose to the tip of its tail, and painted in all the colors of a Rain-Bow.

A whole Book could be written about these spies. But. strange thing about them. They never molested the white people, and were very little known by them.

Glooscap the second. J. C. Cope.

{Nova Scotia Museum Library, Harry Piers Papers. Mi'kmaq Ethnology: Memoirs & Manuscripts, Joe C. Cope, 7 a-f. "A Short Unwritten Indian History About Awiskookak, the Mohawk Indian Spies."}

{ADDITIONAL NOTES on the Kwetjkk Wars, collected by Ruth Whitehead:

There are many Mi'kmaq stories of their wars with the people to whom they refer as the Kwetjck (singular, Kwetjck). It is not certain whether this term refers to the St. Lawrence Iroquois, the people Cartier found on the Gaspé in 1534, or to some other Iroquoian people; it is a term which came to include both the earlier Iroquoian-speakers, and the Mohawk Rangers brought in by the English in the eighteenth century to subdue the Mi'kmaq. In early incidents of these wars, recorded in Silas Rand's *Legends of the Micmac*, bows are in use; later, the combatants have muskets, obtained from Europeans. Two of the most famous Mi'kmaq fighters were L'ki'mu ("He Sends"), and his brother Mejilapeka'tasiek ("Tied in a Hard Knot").

"I cannot learn," wrote Rand, "how long the Mohawk war lasted. I have already obtained several of the intervening incidents. The winding up of the war...was related to me today by my friend Louis Benjamin Brooks {grandson of Chief Jacques Pierre Peminuit Paul}, Sept. 3, 1869."

"Tabasintak {Tabousintac} is the place pointed out on the map by Ben Brooks as the identical spot {where Mejilapeka'tasiek killed Wohooweh}. He has been there, and seen the rock on which tradition says the Kwedeck's head was smashed; it lies about in the centre of the sand-bar that stretches along in front of the mouth of the river, outside of the lagoon...The stone...is of a singular form - hollow on the top, like a dish; and from this stone, and the circumstance related, the place has ever since borne the name Batkwedagunuchk, which no one English word can easily translate. It indicates very poetically that on this rock a fellow's head was split; an anvil comes nearest to it. My informant has not seen the rock since he was a small boy; but the form, and the associations connected with it are indelibly fixed upon his memory." (Silas Rand. *Legends of the Micmac*. 1894: 215, 212. His informant, Ben Brooks, was the grandson of Grand Chief Jacques-Pierre Peminuit Paul, who was also Joe C. Cope's authority.)

"In 1639, the Mohawks of Canada were at war with the Micmacs of Acadia, and a bloody battle is said to have been fought between them near the mouth of the Restigouche. The former were victorious, and the warlike character of the tribe was such that the war-whoop of the Mohawk was to their enemies the signal for flight. Even at the present day, the Indians of New Brunswick have a superstitious dread of the spirit that led the 'hungry wolves of Canada' to battle." (Abraham Gesner. *New Brunswick with Notes for Emigrants*. 1847:113.)

"During those wars a celebrated chief arose among the Micmacs, whose name was Ulgimoo {L'ki'mu}, of whom many strange things were related. He drove the Kwedeckes out of the region on the south side of the Bay of Fundy, they having been compelled to cross the bay in their flight from the enemy; and he urged them on farther and farther towards the north, finally driving them up to Montreal....The Kwedeckes having retired to Fort Cumberland, and thence on to Tantama {Tantramar}, before their enemies, and thence on beyond Petcootweak {Peticodiac}, Ulgimoo built a mound and fortification at the place now called Salisbury, where the mound still remains.

This war lasted for many years, since, when many of the men had been killed off, time was required to raise another race of warriors, who were carefully educated to keep alive the spirit of retaliation. This brought Ulgimoo into the field after he had become very old....Being a magician {a puoin, a shaman}, he could hear and see what was going on very far off....Thus, when he was about one hundred and three years old, he learned by means of his mysterious art that a war-party {of the Kwetjck} was on the move to attack his village. {L'ki'mu sent his warriors away, and let the Kwetjck capture him}the old man was tied, bound to a tree, a quantity of dried wood piled round him, and the torch applied. As soon as the fire began to blaze, he made one spring, and was clear of all cords and green withes, tall, straight, young, and active, and ready for fight.

"There!" said {the Kwetjck shaman}, "didn't I tell you it was Ulgimoo? Will you not believe me now? In a moment your heads will be off." It

was even so. One blow despatched him, and similar blows fell upon the rest; and only three of the whole army of several hundred men escaped. Ulgimoo did not receive a scratch. The three that were not killed he took prisoners; he cut their ears, slit their noses, and their cheeks, then bade them go home and carry the joyful tidings of their defeat, and be sure to tell that they were all slain by one Micmac, one hundred and three years old." (Thomas Booniss to Silas Rand. *Legends of the Micmacs*. 1894:295-296.)

This is a fascinating topic for further research.