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Author(s): Wendell S. Hadlock

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## WAR AMONG THE NORTHEASTERN WOODLAND INDIANS

By WENDELL S. HADLOCK

THERE is a general opinion, supported by some of the older authors and by much of the modern ethnological data, that the type of Indian warfare as evidenced in northeastern America in the eighteenth century is not an integral part of the aboriginal culture pattern. This view takes the position that warfare of extermination in the area of stress had its roots in abnormal conditions produced by the fur trade and by intensive rivalry of various European nations for domination. On the other hand, some of the earliest accounts of this area describe warlike activities or raids, based upon aboriginal traditions, prior to any European influence. The purpose of this paper is to present an account of the warfare of the period previous to the development of the fur trade and the struggle for supremacy between France and England, and to attempt to establish the significance of these incidents as part of the culture pattern.

The general configuration of the culture of the northeastern area in prehistoric times, as nearly as it can be reconstructed, is the background against which any pattern of aboriginal warfare must be displayed. The accounts of warfare among the northeastern Algonkian as described by the earliest explorers and missionaries will be analyzed in terms of the aboriginal economy and social patterns in the hope that they will shed some light on the meaning and traditional character of aboriginal warfare, and suggest possible influences upon native social life from nearby regions within North America which resulted in the intensification of conflict.

The records of the early explorers and of the first white-contact traders provide a fairly complete story of the economic and social life of the Indians in what was at one time Acadia and the regions of the St. Lawrence river. This region of the northeastern Algonkian was inhabited for the most part by hunting bands bordered on the south and west by agricultural groups.<sup>1</sup>

That man has been greatly preoccupied with war from the earliest times to the present is shown time and again by unwritten and written histories.<sup>2</sup> It has also been pointed out that there are two codes of morals used among primitive societies, one for the outsider and another within the group. This is illustrated in the case of some peoples where it is obligatory for a man to kill someone outside his own group before being permitted to marry or receive social status among his fellowmen.<sup>3</sup>

Thus it may be seen that among primitive tribes the killing of an individual

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<sup>1</sup> Algonquin refers to a specific tribe and should not be confused with Algonkian, which is the name applied to all Indians speaking an Algonkian language.

<sup>2</sup> Davie, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

within the band may be considered a crime, but when such an act is perpetrated outside of the tribal group it becomes a meritorious act. Such deeds do not, however, constitute warfare, for they may be carried out either by groups of men or by a single brave.

Franz Boas says in *An Anthropologist's View of War*:<sup>4</sup>

The most primitive form of society presents to us a picture of continuous strife. The hand of each member of one horde was raised against each member of all other hordes. Always on the alert to protect himself and his kindred, man considered it an act of high merit to kill the stranger.

It seems to me that Dr. Boas implies that among the most primitive societies there is continuous strife which results in defensive or offensive action at all times. This is not necessarily so, for among many primitive societies such as the Australian, the Eskimo, and many Indian tribes of North and South America, armed conflict other than as a means of recreation generally does not exist. It is only when there are collisions which endanger the existence of the group that organized violence is resorted to among the above-mentioned primitive peoples. If these group collisions become frequent, causing a continuous struggle for existence, some form of war almost inevitably follows.<sup>5</sup>

In order to discuss the question of the warlike activities of the Indians of North America, it is first necessary to clarify the meaning of "war," or at least to offer a definition that may be satisfactory to the reader, and also to delimit the usage of the word for the purpose of this discourse.

Among the leading scholars who have written of war we find that, if there is any definition which can be applied, it is, "War is organized continuous conflict of a transient character between or among collectivities of any sort capable of arming and organizing themselves for violent struggle carried on by armies in the field (or naval units on water) and supported by civil and incompletely militarized populations back of the battle areas constituted for the pursuit of some fairly well-defined public or quasi-public objective."<sup>6</sup>

The above definition seems to apply to war as found among the Northeastern Algonkian Indians, for they did organize and in some instances carry on seemingly continuous conflicts which were, however, actually of a transient character between various tribes. Warriors were sent into the field and were armed for the express purpose of waging war. When such parties were organized they were usually supported by civil and incompletely militarized populations back of the battle areas. The definition also excludes individual contests and groups entering on unorganized raids not supported by other members of the tribe.

Dr. Swanton, in one of the most recent treatises on the subject,<sup>7</sup> lists many

<sup>4</sup> Boas, 1912, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Davie, 1929, p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard, 1944, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> Swanton, 1943, pp. 9-17.

of the motives of warfare as viewed by an anthropologist. Those which seem to him to be the most common causes among the so-called primitive tribes or less civilized people of the world are: social advancement, excitement, religious obligation, capture of women, slavery, plunder, appropriation of territory, trade, defense, and fear.

It has been found through examination of the historical narratives available that the Northeastern Algonkian waged minor wars for all of the above reasons, but it was not until pressure from agricultural groups to the south and southwest made itself felt in this area that we note wars taking on a new meaning which seemed to evolve into a life-and-death struggle between various tribes and bands. With the coming of Europeans this struggle was intensified until it was too late for the Indians to unite and become an effective fighting force against a common enemy, the white man.

Warfare in the Northeastern Algonkian area was never waged on a large scale, neither was it carried on continuously throughout the year. This may have been due to the fact that the tribes discussed here were small hunting groups that lacked the resources necessary for intensive warfare.

The population of the area and the cultural status of its inhabitants were undoubtedly restricted by the natural and climatic conditions which prevailed in the coniferous forest zone. Roughly following the forty-fifth parallel of latitude in Maine and the two Maritime Provinces, there is to be found a transitional belt of the coniferous and deciduous trees, with the northern parts of all three areas heavily wooded by pines and spruces. As one nears the southern coastal line of New Brunswick the coniferous forest gives way to groves of birch, beech, and oak. The same is true of the southern portions of Nova Scotia and Maine. The other coniferous and deciduous trees of this zone of the northeastern woodland need not be mentioned, for it is intended only to point out that here the deciduous forest gives way to a vast area of conifers.<sup>8</sup>

The growing season for cultivated plants is short in this region; frosts occur as late as June and as early as September, not giving sufficient time for the growth of a limited supply of corn or other foodstuffs cultivated by primitive methods.

This transitional strip has a direct bearing, as I see it, upon the demarcation of the borders of an agricultural economy southward and a hunting economy northward. And these economies are coordinated with settled versus nomadic group existence which I propose to show to be linked with the habits of society in respect to aggression and defense. In brief, were the hunting-limited nomads uninterested in "war" by contrast with the more sedentary cultivators of the cleared lands?

The best approach to the way the Indian thought and acted about warfare, and to the causes and character of his conflicts, is through the accounts of

<sup>8</sup> See Shelford for a more detailed description of the area under discussion.

the early explorers and missionaries. Among the earliest records of exploration in North America are the journals of Jacques Cartier who made his first voyage in 1534, sailing along the coastal regions of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Labrador. During this voyage Cartier followed along the Gaspé Peninsula and met various Indian groups which he says were on the coast for the purpose of taking fish, and came to the sea only in the season of fishing.<sup>9</sup> In describing their food he mentions a bread made from maize and beans. This bread is again referred to when he saw the natives growing maize and beans near their permanent residence farther up the river.<sup>10</sup>

It would seem at the time of Cartier's contact with these Indians, that they were traveling up and down the St. Lawrence, camping on both sides of the bay, getting a livelihood from the sea during the summer months, and returning up the river for their winter encampment.

William N. Fenton points out from historical source materials and from the similar names of foods mentioned by Cartier, that these people were in all probability Iroquoian-speaking Huron, the Laurentian Iroquois who were known to be in control of parts of the St. Lawrence region during the time of Cartier's Voyages.<sup>11</sup> One may see by Dr. Fenton's map (his figure 10) that a great deal of this territory was thought to be controlled by the Laurentians, but to say that they controlled both sides of the St. Lawrence as far east as Natashkwan river on the north of the St. Lawrence bay, to the eastern tip of Anticosti island, and all the shore line on the south of the bay to the Gaspé seems to be going beyond the meager evidence so far brought to light. It is probable, and the records of Cartier's voyages bear this out, that the Laurentian Iroquois moved over this region seasonally for a number of years to fish along the coast and to trade with the natives on both sides of the St. Lawrence. It does not seem that sufficient data have been uncovered to say that the entire region was under the complete control of the Laurentians. It would appear that these Iroquoian-speaking people Cartier met were the Huron who had migrated into this general region some time earlier, displacing the Algonkian, and using the bay and coastal regions only for summer camp sites. If they had a real desire to retain control of this region, it does not seem that the sparse population of the Algonkian would have been able to oust them before the time of Champlain's appearance in 1603.

During the second voyage of Cartier he mentions that, after his trip up the St. Lawrence to Hochelage he returned to St. Croix, and there Donnacona, chief of the Stadacon, showed him the scalps of five Toudamans.<sup>12</sup> It is not perfectly clear who these Toudamans were. As they came from the south, some writers have thought they were Iroquois. Fenton says that they probably were Algonkian,<sup>13</sup> and since the chief, Donnacona, mentions that they lived

<sup>9</sup> Baxter, 1906, p. 110.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>11</sup> Fenton, 1940, pp. 167-177.

<sup>12</sup> Baxter, 1906, p. 174.

<sup>13</sup> Fenton, 1940, p. 173.

in Honguedo, which Baxter places as the present Gaspé,<sup>14</sup> it would seem probable that Fenton is right.

Hunt, in his *The Wars of the Iroquois*, mentions the retreat of the Huron from this general region but does not attempt to explain it other than to say that here agricultural peoples came in contact with a purely hunting, nomadic way of life. He points out that the Iroquois probably had a southern origin and pushed northward until they reached both banks of the St. Lawrence, and by 1603 had recoiled before the growing Algonkian resistance.<sup>15</sup>

Whatever the causes of the general withdrawal of the Huron from the St. Lawrence may have been—the hostilities of Algonkian, or lack of trade—it is interesting to note that the first Indians encountered on the St. Lawrence waterway were agricultural people, later displaced by the hunting people who were in possession of the St. Lawrence at the time of Champlain.

From the time of Cartier to Champlain the great sea-power countries of Europe sent explorers to the New World. Many accounts of these voyages are available, but for the most part they do not give a clear picture of the native inhabitants, the territory they inhabit, the tribes with whom they were allied or whom they considered their enemies. With the coming of Champlain we are given detailed accounts of his voyages and of the people who lived in the areas he explored. While buildings were being erected on St. Croix island in the St. Croix river, Champlain sailed along the coast of Maine and entered the Penobscot river where he met Indians and held a meeting with their chiefs, Bessabez and Cabhis, in which he told them he had come to trade and to make friends with them, and hoped they would become friends of his friends, the Souriquois and Canadians, whom they considered their enemies.<sup>16</sup> Champlain and his party were well received. The chiefs said they wished his friendship and would also like to live in peace with their enemies.<sup>17</sup>

Champlain describes the Indians inhabiting Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Maine as being few in number. They lived during the winter by the hunt, killing such animals as the moose, elk, and deer. During the summer months they came to the coast, where they lived on shell-fish and such sea life as they were able to catch. He points out that there were periods when there was little of anything to eat, when they nearly starved and led a miserable life.<sup>18</sup>

The following year, 1605, Champlain again explored the coast. On the eighth of July he met Indians in Casco bay at the mouth of the Saco river. He said they were Almochiquois and their language differed entirely from that of Souriquois and Etechemin.<sup>19</sup> Mention is made of these Indians as being tillers

<sup>14</sup> Baxter, 1906, p. 174 n.

<sup>15</sup> Hunt, 1940, pp. 15-16.

<sup>16</sup> Champlain compared the various Indian tribes south of the St. Croix region with those inhabiting Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

<sup>17</sup> Grant, 1907, pp. 44-50.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55. Note below that it is reported in the *Jesuit Relations* that food from the sea was to be had very easily.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

of the soil, the most northerly group along the coast to practice agriculture. A brief description is also given of their method of planting corn and of their habitations.<sup>20</sup>

From the Saco river Champlain continued his voyage south as far as Cape Cod. He gave a detailed description of this country and its inhabitants. Here he came in contact with an argricultural people who were relying to a greater extent upon agricultural produce than upon game. He remarks upon the great number of people to be found in this region, in contrast with the sparse population to the north.<sup>21</sup>

Champlain explored as far as Massachusetts in September of the following year. They sailed from the St. Croix to the Saco river where their interpreter left them, being afraid of the Indians farther to the south who were enemies of his tribe.<sup>22</sup> Shortly after this, four of Champlain's men were killed by Indians who attacked them when they stayed overnight on shore. This was the second time that Champlain's men had had trouble with Indians. The first encounter took place near Nauset Harbor when some Indians tried to take cooking kettles from his sailors. In the fight which followed one sailor was killed.<sup>23</sup>

On the return trip the rudder broke and, after sailing before the wind for a day and a night, they beached the boat in order to make the repairs. Here they were met by some Etechemin who told them that Iouaniscou and several of his Etechemin companions had killed some intruding Indians, and taken women prisoners, whom they later put to death.<sup>24</sup> Soon after the arrival of Champlain at Port Royal, Indians came to the settlement in a shallow and said that one of their tribe, Panounias, had been killed, they believed, by the Norumbegue and Quinibequy in revenge for the death of the Indians who were slain by Iouaniscou and his friends. Bessabez explained that the death of Panounias had been occasioned without his knowledge and he hoped that Norumbegue and Etechemin would continue to be friends. This incident resulted in the Etechemin deciding to make war upon the Almouchiquois in the spring, for it appears that the Etechemin Indian, Panounias, had been killed at Norumbegue by the followers of Onemechin and Marchin, chiefs of Indians who lived on and south of the river Quinibequy (Kennebec river). On the twenty-ninth of the following June many of these Indians left for Chouaceot, on the Saco river, to engage the Almouchiquois in war. The party of Etechemin did not return until about the middle of August. Very little information relating to this action is available but it is known that in the battle which took place Onemechin and Marchin were killed by Sasinou, chief of the people of the Quinibequy river. Sasinou later was killed by the friends of Onemechin and Marchin.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107-114.

Throughout the writings of Champlain relating to his travels along the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Maine and Massachusetts coasts he emphasizes the similarity of the Indians living north and northeast of the Saco river, and states that for the most part the tribes were friendly with each other and did not war among themselves. In speaking of the Indians south of the Saco river he implies that they were not a hunting people but relied for the most part upon agriculture, augmenting their main food-supply by hunting and fishing.<sup>26</sup> The Indians south of the Saco river known as Almouchiquois were spoken of as being enemies of his Indians, the Etechemin. No reasons were given for this enmity but, from the records and the way in which it is mentioned, one receives the impression that this enmity was of long standing.<sup>27</sup>

After 1607 the writings of Champlain are concerned with the Indians along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes region, and in 1608 we find him in Quebec where he met Indians whom he called Canadians. These Indians, like those of Acadia, did not till the soil. Champlain mentions that they were faced with starvation during the winter months and that as long as they did not till the soil, as did their neighbors, the Algonquin, Huron and Iroquois, they would continue to meet with this difficulty.<sup>28</sup> By 1608, the Huron or Laurentian Iroquois had withdrawn from the St. Lawrence, and the territory was again occupied by Algonkian-speaking people who depended entirely on the hunt as did the Montagnais and Souriquois. There is no doubt that the Canadians, Montagnais and Souriquois knew about agriculture, or that part of it which is concerned with growing corn, for they were in intimate contact with the Algonquin and Huron. No explanation is given for the lack of agriculture among these people. It would appear that they had not taken up agriculture because of the climate or that, since they were a hunting people, they did not seem able at that time to fit it into their culture.

At the time of Champlain's arrival at Quebec the wars between the Iroquois and the Huron, which were destined to lead to the extermination of the Huron as a nation, had started, and Champlain, through his friendship with the Huron, Canadians and Montagnais, became involved.<sup>29</sup> The Algonquin, Huron, Montagnais and other Indians along the St. Lawrence considered the Iroquois their enemies and at various times went into enemy territory for the purposes of waging war.<sup>30</sup> Champlain tells us that there were no set rules for carrying on wars and it appears that they were, in reality, retaliatory raids against each other, for very few men are reported killed in his narratives of these wars.<sup>31</sup> Thus it appears that the Indian friends of Champlain were interested in teaching the Iroquois that they were enemies to be feared and were capable of fighting well, and that raids by the Iroquois into their country would lead to retaliation.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 65-68.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97, p. 58.

<sup>28</sup> Bourne, 1922, p. 184.

<sup>29</sup> Grant, 1907, p. 165 n.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.



It is interesting to note that at this time the Algonquin and Huron (agricultural peoples) were uniting with the Montagnais, a hunting people, against a common enemy, the Iroquois, also an agricultural nation. The Huron were becoming increasingly important as traders, and because of their strategic position were able to control the trade coming out of the Great Lakes regions. The same can also be said of the Algonquin, but to a lesser degree. The desire of the Iroquois to gain control of this trade seems to be one of the reasons for their raids into the territories of other tribes of the St. Lawrence valley.<sup>32</sup> The plunder raids made by the Iroquois resulted in retaliations made by other tribes of the St. Lawrence area, which seem to have been for the purpose of upholding their dignity and to teach the Iroquois that they were not to be trifled with.<sup>33</sup>

We should understand that in these raids and retaliations there is no such thing as one tribe rising as a unit to wage war against another, but that groups of men took it upon themselves to avenge a wrong, and they were augmented by others who joined in for the prestige they would gain. As a rule the defenders were not supported by other members of their tribe, for not enough time was given to organize a proper defense and to send for reinforcements before the fight was over.

Neither trespass nor the desire to accumulate land seems to have been cause for war among the Indians of Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, the lower St. Lawrence, and the tribes north of the St. Lawrence. From the accounts of the Jesuit Fathers and early explorers we know that these Indians were hunting tribes gaining their livelihood by the chase, and gathering food from the rivers, lakes and ocean. These small nomadic hunting groups came to the coastal regions early in the spring and stayed until fall. As soon as cold weather set in and the snows began, they went back into the interior to their hunting grounds where they lived until the next spring.<sup>34</sup>

In order to understand these hunting peoples it is necessary to know something about their hunting territories and the way in which they felt themselves attached to or belonging to the land. Throughout this entire area the family hunting territory, with specific areas assigned to certain families, seems to have been recognized and used by the various tribes north and northeast of the Saco river. This system is still in use among the Montagnais-Naskapi bands of Labrador peninsula and was until comparatively recent times found among the Micmac, Malicite and Abnaki.<sup>35</sup>

The Northeastern Woodland Indians had their hunting lands divided into areas assigned to certain families or individuals who held the exclusive right to hunt and trap the wild life found within this area. In some sections of the

<sup>32</sup> Hunt, 1940.

<sup>33</sup> Thwaites, 1896-1901, Vol. 5, pp. 27-29.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 82.

<sup>35</sup> Speck, 1923, pp. 452-471; 1915, pp. 289-305; 1922, pp. 86-138. Cooper, 1938.

country hunting territories were assigned each year for a term of one year, while in other parts the family hunting territory was inherited in one family from generation to generation and passed from father to son. The importance of the family hunting territory among these Indians is shown by the strict confinement of their hunting and trapping activities to their own land by all members of the tribe or band, and the avoidance of trespass on the lands of others.<sup>36</sup>

Each head of a family hunted upon his land, of which he knew the extent by old natural boundaries which had been for generations recognized as the limits of the family—or in some cases individual—hunting territory.<sup>37</sup> He gained a living from this land; although there may have been years in which there were periods of near-starvation, he did not encroach upon the holdings of others. He and his family belonged to his land and the animals thereon were his to hunt and kill. He could not go to other areas and hunt, for he did not belong there. The animals there were not his to take and, accordingly, if he was not successful on the lands which belonged to him and had been hunted by his people from the time of beginning, there was little use in attempting to hunt on the territories of others.

Hence we can infer from such circumstances, in a culture equated with the resources of the natural environment, that the bands of the Northeastern Woodland had little reason for invading or fighting for the lands of others. It was outside the tradition and cultural conditioning of the northeastern hunting bands. The land of another was of little value to him; he could not preempt it at will. Because of this belief he confined himself to his land.

Hunting areas could support only a limited number of inhabitants. The near-starving conditions under which the hunting Indians lived is mentioned time and again in the Jesuit Relations.<sup>38</sup> As might be expected from the above discussion, even with starvation facing these inhabitants rather frequently, it is not surprising to find that the Jesuit Relations and other historical records are barren of incidents wherein one family group infringes upon the rights of another. As a rule destitute Indians came to a settlement where they could beg food from the French.<sup>39</sup> To go to another member of their tribe or band in the vicinity might reduce all to the point of starvation, unless their neighbors should happen to have more than enough food animals available to support themselves.

During the hunting and trapping season the families retired to the interior hunting territories, with the nearest neighbor often many miles away.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Speck, 1915, p. 295.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 290.

<sup>38</sup> Thwaites, 1896-1901, Vol. VIII, p. 29; Vol. LX, pp. 233, 243; Vol. XXIII, p. 277; Vol. XXV, p. 107.

<sup>39</sup> Grant, 1907, p. 145; Thwaites, 1896-1901, Vol. VIII, p. 31.

<sup>40</sup> Thwaites, 1896-1901, Vol. II, pp. 73, 201; Vol. III, pp. 87, 245.

There was little if any chance for these people to meet regularly, and all of their time was used in securing food. Because of the strenuous living conditions and relative isolation of each family hunting group, little thought could be given to such things as war, which could hardly be undertaken by one family group.

With the coming of spring the hunting groups moved out of the interior to rendezvous points on lakes and along the coast. Escape from the insects of the interior forests was necessary and food was at this season of the year easily obtained from the sea.<sup>41</sup> This was a time when they could devote their attention to social gatherings and other activities not associated with obtaining the necessities of life. This was the time when retaliatory wars or raids were sometimes planned and executed, but in nearly all instances they were similar to the expedition cited below.<sup>42</sup> "Wars" were planned and carried out, not for

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 231, 251-253.

<sup>42</sup> In the years following the establishment of the French at Quebec we find in the writings of the Jesuit Fathers many references to wars waged by the Indians of Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and other tribes along the St. Lawrence. Before this time there seems to have been little warfare between the northern Indians and the tribes to the south; however, even these later wars were directed in most instances against the Iroquois. With the coming of great numbers of the English colonists to the New England region, the French were able to arouse the northern Indians and lead them in raids against the New England colonists and their Indian allies. It has been previously shown in this paper that there was, however, a lack of friendship between the hunting Indians of Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia and the agricultural peoples living south of the Saco river, and that this distrust sometimes broke out into organized warfare.

Organized warfare between nomadic hunting groups directed by one hunting tribe against another seems to be lacking. Raids in which lives were lost did take place but they were in fact "manhunts," undertaken by the younger members of the tribe for personal glory. Such raids often led to retaliatory raids but amends could be made by payment of skins or other articles to relatives of the slain. The following story written by Father Richard gives a very clear picture of warfare typical among the Northeastern Woodland Indians in the early sixteen hundreds. Father Richard tells of an expedition planned by the people of Gaspé in the winter of 1661 when they proposed in their council to wage war against the Esquimaux. Father Richard says, "These are a people hostile to Europeans, and dwell on the shores of the Gulf Island of Newfoundland. . . . When therefore, some proposed in their Councils and feasts a hostile expedition, they were listened to by one party and opposed by another. But when the Braves and Ruffins ridiculed those peacefully inclined, about thirty young men raised their hatchets in sign of their advocacy of war.

"They moved me deeply because their war is nothing but a manhunt, quite often undertaken merely to fulfill some dreams which come to them in their sleep and make them believe that their departed relatives will not rest in peace unless some human beings are sacrificed to them. After passing the whole winter with this purpose in view, they repaired in the spring to the Bank of a River called Bacadensis, which empties into the Gulf. I was with them and testified to them the grief I felt at so thoughtless an undertaking, strongly suspecting that they would attack and kill the first person they met beyond the Gulf, without heeding whether they were friends or enemies. They spurned my counsels and embarked amid ceremonies that were truly grotesque and superstitious.

"The warriors had not proceeded far in the Gulf when one of them called a halt. 'I have just now recalled,' said he, 'an order given us by one of my relatives when dying. You know that the

territorial gains or for personal property such as furs and hunting implements, but for personal glory, and may have been directed against an allied tribe as well as against a traditional enemy. Lescarbot writes that the Indians made war on one and another so that they could say, "I have beaten you," or for revenge.<sup>43</sup> Such raids were, in most instances, without the sanction of the entire tribe and were engaged in by the younger, irresponsible men or youths who wished personal glory. Many times the offending tribe paid tribute to the relatives of the deceased.<sup>44</sup>

The agricultural Indians lived in groups or tribal bands during the greater part of the year, separating only when hunting or trapping.<sup>45</sup> The women tilled the soil and men supplemented the economy by hunting and fishing. The increased food supply derived from agriculture left the men with more time to devote to other things than gaining a livelihood. This leisure may be responsible for the increased war activity in the form of raids.<sup>46</sup>

The hunting territories for the many tribes in New England south of the Saco river have never been worked out so as to enable one to understand clearly the hunting rights of an individual. Tribes of the agricultural Indians recognized certain areas as the exclusive hunting territory of their own or of other tribes.<sup>47</sup> Hunting of food animals on these tribal hunting grounds was carried on by hunters who went to these areas in groups, killing as many animals as they thought necessary.<sup>48</sup> The drive hunt was employed for the

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commands of the dying are important, and that, the deceased having been a man of influence among us, his wishes must be executed. Now as they are opposed to the undertaking in which I have inconsiderately joined, from a lapse of memory, I am obliged to turn back, and abandon all thought of warfare.' Those who had engaged in this expedition simply from fear of their comrades' opinion, told the speaker that they would accompany him, as being relatives or friends of the Deceased. Accordingly, the Band was divided in halves, one . . . returning to the shore, the other, manned by fifteen Hunters, proceeding forward.

"They at length reached the Island of Anticosti," . . . and proceeding to the north, "they perceived a canoe issuing from another Island, coming from a hunting expedition. The wind favoring them, they gave chase with sail and oars; and without inquiring its Nationality, overwhelmed it with a discharge from their arquebuses. It was enough that it contained human beings; that was the prey and game they were seeking. The canoe bore a man and a woman, a girl and a little boy. At the first volley the man, woman, and girl were killed, and the little boy wounded. Immediately the enemy pounced upon the slain, cut the skin around their heads, removing their scalps, and took the little boy into their boats, wounded as he was; and their war and hunt were accomplished. . . . As a matter of fact, I was told that they had killed some Papinachioueki, good friends to the French and to the latter's allies." (Thwaites, Vol. 47, pp. 221-231.)

<sup>43</sup> Grant, 1914, p. 263.

<sup>44</sup> The story written of the irresponsible warfare of the savages of the Gaspé by Father Richard illustrates very well the nature of warfare for the hunting tribes.

<sup>45</sup> Willoughby, 1935, pp. 283-291.

<sup>46</sup> Kroeber, 1939, p. 148.

<sup>47</sup> State Archives, Hartford, Conn., Indian Papers, Vol. I, p. 7, 1666, an agreement on bounds of hunting territories between various tribes.

<sup>48</sup> Williams, 1643, p. 141.

most part by hunters in these districts and this method, if employed too often, soon depleted the food animals in a given area. Such a method of hunting seems to have been used by the Northeastern Woodland Indians also but was employed to a much greater extent to the southward.<sup>49</sup>

With the coming of agriculture, a much smaller area was capable of supporting a much larger population than under more primitive hunting conditions. South of the Kennebec river was an agricultural people who did not depend solely on the hunt for a living. There also seems to have been a different concept of the control of land. Although land was bought and sold by the sachems, there do not seem to have been less spiritual ties to the land of their fathers. Roger Williams, writing about the Indians of New England, says, "The natives are very exact and punctuall in the bounds of their Lands, belonging to this or that Prince or People, (even to a River, Brooke,) &c. And I have known them make bargaine and sale amongst themselves for a small piece, or quantity of Ground: notwithstanding a sinful opinion amongst many that Christians have right to Heathens Lands."<sup>50</sup>

In some instances it would seem that the men hunted freely over the general area under the control of the whole tribe without any one family group being assigned to a definite hunting tract with exclusive rights.<sup>51</sup> We find references in which it appears that sachems had control of hunting lands which were used exclusively by their tribe.<sup>52</sup>

With the introduction of agriculture also came an increase in tribal population which brought about a desire to expand and control new lands. This new desire to expand exerts a force in all directions from the nucleus or center of such growth. Such a force set in motion among the Eastern Algonkian could go only in two directions, north or south. The Atlantic Ocean was to the east, and larger, more powerful tribes prevented westward movement. How long this motion had been in force we have no way of telling, but it was in motion at the time of the earliest colonizations in North America. The Algonkian had only recently pushed south into Virginia, having come from the north.<sup>53</sup> In Massachusetts agricultural Indians seem to have been exerting pressure on their northeastern neighbors who apparently were newcomers to Maine and the Maritime Provinces.<sup>54</sup> The points of origin for the various tribes living in

<sup>49</sup> Schoolcraft, 1847, p. 285; Williams, 1643, p. 151; Speck and Eiseley, 1942, p. 237; Speck and Eiseley, 1939; Grant, 1907, pp. 288-289.

<sup>50</sup> Williams, 1643, p. 89.      <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>52</sup> Leete, William; Willis, Samuel; Chapman, Robert. Manuscript Letter, State Archives, Hartford, Conn., Indian Papers, Vol. I, p. 5, 1665, a letter which deals with the complaint of Uncas, Mohegan sachem, concerning trespass of Connecticut Indians on his territory.

<sup>53</sup> Bushnell, 1934, Vol. 89, No. 12, pp. 8-9.

<sup>54</sup> From archaeological reports, which do not give a complete picture of this region by any means, there seem to be definite southern influences and indications of a general northeastern movement. See Willoughby, 1935, Figures 1, 2, and 3.

the northeast have provoked some discussion, but we are mainly concerned with pressures applied upon the various groups after they arrived in their respective areas. It is probable that the hunting bands of the Northeastern Woodland Indians migrated from the northwest and pushed down into this region until they met a line of resistance formed by the more numerous agricultural Indians.<sup>55</sup> The probable migrations of these people are of importance in themselves only insofar as they might show movements of various bands, points of origin and areas from which pressure was being exerted. What we are mainly concerned with is that in the Northeastern Woodland area we find hunting tribes roaming over vast tracts and living in comparative peace with one another but looking to the south at the Almouchiquois, an agricultural people, as their enemies.<sup>56</sup> How far back this enmity and distrust go in time we have no way of telling, but Lescarbot, writing of conditions in 1610, says that "there has always been war between the Souriquois and Armouchiquois."<sup>57</sup> The same distrust was held by the Massachusetts Indians toward their northern neighbors, and in *Bradford's History "Of Plimoth Plantation"* we find mention of the "Tarentins," Indians who lived to the eastward, of whom the Massachusetts Indians were much afraid, for the "Tarentins" had in the past made raids into Massachusetts in the time of harvest, taking the Indians' corn and killing people.<sup>58</sup> It would seem that wars carried on between the hunting and agricultural Indians were retaliations against each other which had started early in their history and were going on at the time of white contact.

Wars between the various tribes of southern New England were in progress at the time of white contact and continued well into the seventeenth century. Here again were wars of retaliation and revenge. We find instances wherein war is looked upon as very serious, and Roger Williams writes that their wars were less bloody than those of Europe and seldom were more than twenty killed. He also writes concerning wars, "This Mocking (between their great ones) is a great kindling of Warres amongst them; yet I have known some of their chieftest say. What should I hazzard the lives of my precious Subjects, them and theirs to kindle a Fire, which no man Knowes how far, and how long it will burne, for the barking of a dog," which illustrates that there were Indians who looked upon war as a very serious matter.<sup>59</sup> Captain John Smith, writing of the Indians of New England, says, "They did nothing but spoil and destroy one another" before the arrival of the English.<sup>60</sup>

It would appear that the agricultural Indian was more active in warfare than his northern neighbors, the hunting groups. The explanation for the in-

<sup>55</sup> Jenness, p. 268.

<sup>56</sup> Parkman, 1899, p. 61 n.

<sup>57</sup> Thwaites, 1896-1901, Vol. I, p. 105.

<sup>58</sup> Bradford, 1898, p. 126.

<sup>59</sup> Williams, 1643, pp. 148-153.

<sup>60</sup> Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Cambridge, Vol. III, p. 104.

creased war activity seems to be that he had more time to devote to it and a desire to control larger areas in which to hunt and carry on agriculture.

Turning to the west we find in the historic period a large agricultural group of Indians, the Iroquois, made up of five nations. The Mohawk, the most eastern nation of the league, was feared by all the New England and Maritime Province Indians.<sup>61</sup> From the time of Cartier to the close of the French and Indian Wars, historical records mention that raiding parties of the Mohawk went into the New England and Maritime Provinces, and north into the St. Lawrence regions.<sup>62</sup> The purposes of such raids were to secure furs from their hunting neighbors—a form of tribute—to hunt and secure food animals, and to subjugate neighboring tribes by instilling fear and dread into them.<sup>63</sup> By this latter means they seem to have been able to secure themselves more firmly in their territory, for no one tribe dared to venture unaided into the area of the Mohawk. This method appears to have been to a certain extent a defensive means whereby the Mohawk hoped to keep other tribes at a distance from their established fortified villages.

Here, as in the case of the agricultural Algonkian, we find large concentrated agricultural populations which seem to have been maneuvering for position at the time of contact by white men. From the historical material previously cited concerning the Mohawk we may conclude that they were aggressive and that many raiding parties were directed against their Algonkian neighbors, but the raids were of such a nature that we cannot think of them as anything more than raids for personal glory and booty.

If we turn to the legends written about the Northeastern Woodland Indians, our first impression may be that these Indians were very warlike and had been so throughout their legendary history. From an analysis of the legends, it will be seen that most of the stories dealing with warfare do not go back into history beyond colonial times, and a single occurrence in history has been told in varying ways so as to appear like many incidents. The events and motif of these legends are so similar over such a great area that one is forced to conclude that various tribes adopted the original legend, changing place, names and other details to fit into their local setting. Such legends appear to have diffused rapidly. They give us a picture of an attitude at the time of the telling, not necessarily of an earlier period nor of an actual occurrence. Thus we can find but little help in legends insofar as throwing light upon the warlike tendencies of the Northeastern Woodland Indian is concerned.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Speck, 1915, p. 493.

<sup>62</sup> Thwaites, *op. cit.*, Vol. XLVII, p. 279; Vol. XLIV, pp. 203–205; Vol. XXVIII, p. 275.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 36, p. 79; Vol. XL, pp. 211–213.

<sup>64</sup> An example of an incident in which local variations have entered into the story is given concerning a war party of Mohawk into the lands of the Malecite.

“Two Maliseet families away above the Grand Falls on the Oolastook (St. John River), had

It has been previously shown that, among various hunting tribes of the Northeastern Woodland Indians, groups of men occasionally raided other bands or tribes for no apparent reason other than to achieve personal glory. When raids resulted in death to members of both parties, it appears that very little thought was given to such losses. Amends were often made by the aggressors giving condolence compensation in the form of furs to the relatives of those killed. There seems to have been a spirit of vigorous sport in which the intent to kill was not dominant. Such wars also can be said to have been brought about by one tribe insulting another. These occurrences often led to a series of reprisals. Among the incidents which set various tribes at war with each other one finds all of the motives mentioned in the introduction of this study, as a desire for territorial expansion was manifested in the more populated agricultural groups. It appears that this new motive gave more emphasis to war, intensifying warfare between the sedentary agricultural and the nomadic hunting people.

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gone to the hunting-ground in the fall, and had taken up their residence there for the time being. The men were out in the woods hunting, and the women were keeping camp, when a Mohawk war-party came upon the camp and took the women captive. As the women were acquainted with the river below, and the Mohawks were not, they compelled the women to act as pilots to the fleet. This consisted of a large number of canoes; and as the day was fine, these were all lashed together in a body, forming a sort of a raft, and were left to drift with the current.

"As night approached, the warriors inquired if the river was as calm and placid below as it was there. They were assured that this was the case; but the women knew well where they were, and that the Grand Falls were not far below. Night settled down upon them, and the men were soon all asleep; but the two pilots kept wide awake. When they had approached sufficiently near to insure the success of their bold enterprise, and sufficiently far off to insure their own safety, the two women quietly slipped down into the water and swam ashore, leaving their captors to the mercy of the river. Their fleet was soon carried over the rapids and dashed to pieces. Some of them were awakened before the final plunge; but they were too far in to extricate themselves and all perished.

"The women were soon joined by some of their friends. They stripped the slain of their clothing and ornaments, and gathered much spoil; then they danced all night for joy, and were highly honored by their nation." (Rand, 1894, pp. 342-344.)

Various versions of this story are to be found among the reports of different authors, and this legend has become a deeply imbedded tradition in each locality where it is found. Authors who have reported this legend are: Davidson, 1928, pp. 266-267; Speck, 1915, pp. 26-27; Raymond, 1910, pp. 54-55.

The rapidity of the diffusion of this story is shown by present-day ethnologists doing historical research on the Iroquois. They place the coming of the Iroquois into the Northeastern area as of recent date, that is, about the time of white contact. This dating of the advent of the Iroquois is further strengthened by early historical accounts, for at the time of Cartier the Huron were in control of much of the territory later occupied by the Iroquois. Thus it would seem that in the years following the explorations of Cartier this legend diffused over a wide territory.

Other war legends which seem to have a wide distribution are the strategy of the long wigwam on the peninsula, the old woman who killed the Iroquois fur traders by fire, and the ambush of the Iroquois. Variations of these stories are found throughout the area under discussion and do not have any generally accepted titles.



With the coming of the European the differences between the hunting and agricultural Indians were made greater by a new motivating power—trade. From that time onward the Iroquois endeavored to control trade routes and extorted furs in the form of tribute from their neighbors. Raids by the Mohawk in former times for purposes of glory became raids for plundering of furs and other trade goods.

As competition for trade and control of land became a life-and-death struggle between the French and English administrations who built up alliances with various tribes of Indians, the old distrust and contention between the hunting and agricultural Indian were played upon by both the English and French. With the introduction of arms supplied by their respective backers, the Indians entered upon a new phase of warfare which made all of their previous wars appear insignificant. It is this phase of warfare brought about by white men that is recorded and which has given us a distorted picture of the Indian and his purposes of war.

It appears from available historical material that all Indians in the area under discussion were warlike in that they did carry on raids against each other in which individuals were killed. Aggressive warfare as well as defensive warfare was resorted to by all tribes under discussion, as has been shown. It seems that the following conclusion might be made: the nomadic hunting Indians of the Northeastern Woodland area were not belligerent but did understand warfare and were capable and prepared to defend themselves by warlike methods. They were not belligerent for there were but few incidents in which organized forces were assembled for the purpose of making war on other bands or tribes. In the few instances in which preparation for war did occur we find it was in retaliation for a previous offense committed against them by other groups. There was no desire to gain new territory, and such wars as they did enter into against the Alouachiquois and the Mohawk seem to have no other purposes than to uphold their dignity and avenge a wrong committed against them.

This non-belligerent attitude among the hunting tribes seems to be a result of their concept concerning property vested in the tribal family and individual hunting territories which they could not preempt at will. Their economy was such that one hunting tribe did not possess wealth in material things which could be seized by the others; thus the hunting tribes seem to have been lacking in motives for warfare. The absence of an organized government in the hunting tribes seems to have been largely responsible for the warfare among the various tribes carried on as an outlet for energy and entered into as a pastime.

To the south and west of the hunting tribes there was organized government among the agricultural peoples, and warfare also was more organized. Even among these tribes an outlet for energy seems to underlie their wars.

They were not fought for the purpose of extermination as much as for humbling their adversary. This concept of war seems to have been carried over from former times.

The warfare of the hunting tribes seems to have been without economic reason, but to the various tribes and groups involved it was a means of gaining prestige and an outlet for their emotions, a vigorous game in which lives were lost.

ROBERT ABBE MUSEUM  
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

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