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## LE MOYNE THE PEACEMAKER

(Continued from Page 8)

points which required several miles of carrying. "This road seems very long to a poor man who is thoroughly tired out," wrote Father Le Moyne.

August 1, 1654. On Lake Ontario Father Le Moyne's party came upon a Huron captive of the Iroquois, whom Father Le Moyne had baptized in the Huron country. The poor Huron was so overjoyed when he saw Father Le Moyne that he could hardly believe his eyes.

Skirting along the eastern shore of Lake Ontario with its sand bar and sand dune shore, their little canoe looking like a crawling waterfly in the vast Lake Ontario, they came to the mouth of the Salmon River near modern Selkirk Shores State Park. The site is reached today by motor car by way of Pulaski, New York. It is a good place to camp. An Iroquois Indian whom he had befriended in Montreal took Father Le Moyne across the river in a canoe and then the Indian carried Father Le Moyne on his shoulders through the shallow water to the fishing camp.

After a comfortable rest and plenty of food at the fishing camp, Father Le Moyne started over the trail to the principal village of Onondaga. The nephew of the principal chief (Garacontie of Onondaga) had been sent to come and meet Father Le Moyne with orders to show him every kindness and to guide him on his way. The young Indian gave Father Le Moyne a camp fire feast of roasted corn on the ear and of cornbread. At night these travellers slept out under the stars smelling the unsmelled ground and the sweet, cool odors of the forest at mid summer. The writer urges upon him whose soul is jaded by too often repeated religious exercises to try such an encampment under the passing pageant of the heavens as a restorative of awe and of reverence for God.

The Onondaga capital, also the capital or central council fire of all the Iroquois League, was moved several times during the early period of contact with white men, but at this time it Bitternut Creek on the Keough farm, one mile south of Jamesville, New York.

(Anyone having conclusive information as to this or any other locations in this story will please address the writer in care of the Courier. Statements or corrections must be supported by evidence sufficient to offset the considerable study which has gone into this subject.)

While approaching the principal village of Onondaga, Father Le Moyne was met by many Indians who came to greet him. He told them that he drove war afar off and that peace walked along with him.

In the first meeting in the council, he gave two presents, and with each present as was customary, according to the formal courtesy of the Indians, he explained that the first present was to wipe their faces, so that they might look upon him with friendliness. The second present was given to remove any bitterness which might yet remain in their hearts.

After this preliminary meeting, Father Le Moyne was kindly led to the house of Garacontie, where he was hospitably entertained during his visit. A life-long friendship began between these two great men who were so extremely different in acquired knowledge and in early home training, yet so much alike in the fundamental stuff that strong, true men are made of.

Garacontie told Father Le Moyne that all the Iroquois except the Mohawks had promised peace, and Garacontie thought that the Mohawks would soon join in the treaty. But the Mohawks had sent a messenger to Quebec who had arrived just after Father Le Moyne had left. This Mohawk messenger made an official protest in behalf of his tribe that Father Le Moyne had gone to the central council fire of the Iroquois (to Onondaga) by climbing through the smoke hole in the roof of the longhouse like a thief, instead of entering politely like a gentleman by the Mohawk eastern door of the League. The Mohawk courier to the Governor at Quebec was given letters to deliver to Father Le Moyne, which directed Father Le Moyne to proceed to Onondaga by way of the Mohawk country. But the courier could not

catch up with Father Le Moyne, and the French Governor smiled at his own ruse by which he had gotten rid of this troublesome Mohawk courier. We guess that the Mohawk courier was purposely kept waiting in Quebec several days for those letters, which shrewd trick guaranteed a late start.

Despite the hopeful words of Garacontie, the Onondaga chief, to Father Le Moyne, the Mohawks remained unsatisfied and bided their time until they could overthrow the pro-French councils at Onondaga.

On August 7, 1654 at Onondaga, Father Le Moyne met a good Christian Huron captive named Terese. Terese had with her a captive girl of the Neutral nation, whom she had instructed so thoroughly, that Father Le Moyne found the Neutral maiden carefully observing all the rules of Christian morality and godly living. "My God!" exclaimed Father Le Moyne, "what sweet consolation to witness so much faith in savage hearts, in captivity, and without other assistance than that of heaven!" Father Le Moyne baptized this young woman of the Neutral tribe, without the usual long, probationary delay. She was the first adult baptized at Onondaga. She probably was the first adult baptized in the Syracuse and Rochester areas of New York State. This happened August 7, 1654. Adult baptism is of special interest to some non-Catholic, Christian groups who are well represented in the above mentioned areas. This earliest adult baptism should interest them.

Huron Christian captives, especially Huron women who found Christian marriage most desirable had aroused the demand for Christian instruction among their Iroquois captors. And so instead of Father Le Moyne forcing an unwelcome Christianity upon the Iroquois as some enemies of missions would like to believe of all mission aries, or as has further been said "with a cross in one hand and a sword in the other," the plan to have Christian instruction came from the Iroquois themselves, expressed with a sincere desire despite the intricacies of Iroquois diplomacy and despite the modern calumny issuing from nearby academic sources that the French missionaries of Onondaga were only tools of the fur trade.

### Chapter IX

## THE COUNCIL AT ONONDAGA

This council called to meet in the long cabin of "Ondessonk." Ondessonk was the name given to Father Le Moyne by the Iroquois. Formerly Saint Isaac Jogues had had this name. It means bird of prey. It is intended to emphasize the noble qualities of such a bird as the eagle, as does Adler, the German surname. Among the Hurons Father Le Moyne had been called WANE.

All the Iroquois delegates but the Mohawks, attended the council in "Ondessonk's house" at Onondaga. Father Le Moyne opened the council with prayer in the Iroquois language. It was not an extempore prayer, for having prepared in advance a written list of all the persons of influence and importance who were to be present at the council, he surprised them by praying for them all by name. The effect upon Indians who knew nothing of writing and who stood in awe of persons of superior qualities, was most desirable.

Then followed the long council speech with Father Le Moyne pleading for peace and emphasizing each paragraph with a present. The fifteenth present was given to harmonize all their hearts. It was a porcelain collar, some glass tubes and a moose skin.

The result of Father Le Moyne's council with the leaders of the four Iroquois tribes was a plan for peace seems to have been on the east side of

with the French, a request for mission aries and an invitation for the French to plant a colony amongst them. This certainly was a happy outcome.

Most of the plans were to be realized within the next two years. Meanwhile the Mohawks who in former times could tax the other Iroquois tribes who went through Mohawk territory to trade with the French in Quebec or with the Dutch at Fort Orange (Albany) were disgruntled at their loss of prestige in the League of the Iroquois and at the loss of the profits of the trade which might now go by the St. Lawrence River around them and they nursed their grudge and bided their time. Mohawk hostility to the French and to the other members of the Iroquois League in the years following the wreck of Huronia by the Iroquois probably had its chief cause in this fact which the writer proposes for the first time.

The victory over the Hurons had brought scores (maybe over 200) Huron captives among the Senecas. These became slaves of the Senecas and faithful followers in war. Contrast the great advantage to the Senecas with what the results of the Huron war brought to the Mohawks. The chief result of the Huron war for the Mohawks was that the Hurons and Algonquins in large numbers had come from their old homelands to villages on the St. Lawrence and being so much closer the Mohawks were subject to Huron and Algonquin attacks and interference with hunting and fishing on the St. Lawrence more than ever before. Moreover these Hurons and Algonquins had the French close at hand as allies.

The Huron War had cleared Lake Ontario and the country north of it of enemies so that the Senecas had opened up partly by the assistance of the Mohawks vast fishing and hunting territory to the north.

The Mohawks, who seem to have been the leaders in the Huron war had exactly the opposite results from the Huron war as did the Senecas. Because of the protection which the French gave to Hurons and Algonquins the country north of the Mohawks was more than ever made dangerous to them by the presence of these enemies. Victory over the Hurons had brought advantage to the Senecas and disadvantage to the Senecas and disadvantage to the Mohawks.

Thus hemmed in on all sides by New France, New England, New Netherlands (N. Y.) and the Andastes, the Mohawks outdid themselves in torture and furs but gradually they lost their preeminence in the Iroquois League to the Senecas.

The Senecas, however who were keepers of the western door of the Iroquois League sent delegates to this council. These Seneca delegates probably came from villages south of Victor, New York. This Rochester region was well represented at this council.

On August 15, 1654 a group of elders of the Iroquois came forth as Father Le Moyne departed from Onondaga "to put him on his road" and to say an affectionate goodbye. His homeward way was by a different route than that by which he arrived. It took him through the site of the modern city of Syracuse and down Onondaga Lake parts of which are now within the city. He stopped his canoe about midway of the northeast side of the Lake to drink from a spring. He drank very little, because the water was so very salty. He boiled some of the water in his camp kettle and it made very good salt. In this manner he discovered the salt springs of Syracuse. The springs and bored salt wells became and continued to be a major source of wealth to Syracuse until very recent times. The salt spring which Father Le Moyne discovered is on the Onondaga Parkway between Syracuse and Liverpool, New York. It is adequately surrounded by monumental masonry which preserves the spring from desecration. Nearby is the rebuilt French fort representing the fort of 1656-1658, built two years after this first visit of Father Le Moyne to Onondaga. Today a chapel in the fort invites worshippers. A guide in the fort gives scholarly information. It is reached by good highways, and there is broad parking space.

Father Le Moyne left Onondaga Lake by way of the outlet and thence he went by way of the Oswego River to Lake Ontario and to the St. Lawrence River. On the way he again camped near Selkirk Shores Park. He was a pioneer visitor on the sites of Fulton, New York and at Oswego, New York where appropriate commemorative markers should be erected. Father Le Moyne arrived in Quebec

