

LE MOYNE THE PEACEMAKER

(Continued from Page 11)

The Iroquois war party which was hunting... Part of the business of pacifying this Iroquois war party was done at Sillery, a suburb of Quebec.

Then the promised journey to the Mohawks was considered. If Father Le Moyne did not go, they would be... Father Le Moyne arrived in the Mohawk country with peace in his hand.

Speaking to the Mohawk council he said, "These always violated me in anger, I came to them with tokens of peace. When have you put your mind? You promised to send a canoe to bring me to visit you. Instead you sent a band of murderers who killed the Huron at Quebec and you have killed with guns my brother, the Blackrobe. Lay aside the hatchet and consider my words of peace." These a present was given by Father Le Moyne.

One of the elders of the tribe spoke to Father Le Moyne and said, "Do not be angry, Odomsonk, I am thy brother. Our young men have no sense. They strike blindly and without thought of consequences. Take this plaster and put it on thy heart so that it may draw out all the soreness." That which symbolized the pacification was a collar of porcupine beads.

The other human beings these Mohawks loved the ceremonial of the promise of peace rather than the performance of the promise. And so the council was prolonged, and gave the pleasure of dramatic amusement. Father Le Moyne, however, succeeded in pacifying the Mohawks sufficiently so that the colony at Onondaga with missionaries going to all the other Iroquois cantons remained undisturbed for the following year. His business ended, he returned to Quebec.

Father Le Moyne's second embassy to the Mohawks which was undertaken in order to prevent against the murder of Father Leonard Garreau as previously mentioned, took place in 1656, after which he arrived safely in Quebec on November 3 of that same year. The writer has not found evidence that Father Le Moyne went to Onondaga during the existence of the colony there.

He evidently could not be spared from his extra-hazardous duty of reversing the age-long hate of the Mohawks against the Hurons and Algonquians.

On August 26, 1657, Father Le Moyne started on his third embassy to the Mohawks. (JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XLIV, p. 189). Governor Daillebout of Quebec and New France had taken vigorous and prompt action in view of the raids (Sibea, p. 237) perpetrated by the Iroquois and had captured all the Iroquois who, at the time, were in the French settlements, and Father Le Moyne found upon his arrival at the Mohawk villages that the Mohawks were ready to retaliate. So he was held as a hostage with freedom to move about in company with his captives. His fate was subject to the whims of his captors, and to the vicissitudes of war. During this captivity he succeeded in going to New Amsterdam. (New York)

Chapter XIII MEGAPOLENSIS VISITED

Father Le Moyne went to Onondaga and returned Jan. 1657. He was the first to see the Mohawks in their own country. He was the first to see the Mohawks in their own country. He was the first to see the Mohawks in their own country.

Domine Megapolensis saw them. Father Bressani was born in Rome. Honor is due him from his fellow-countrymen in America.

Father Le Moyne said he could not refrain from coming directly to the Domine's house to thank him for helping to save the lives of these his friends and Jesuit brothers.

The Reverend Johannes Megapolensis erected his house on the site of the present 9 and 11 Broadway (N. Y. City) in 1656. He lived there until the time of his death and his widow sold the house in 1674. Letter from Dorothy C. Barck, N. Y. Historical Society, Aug. 15, 1938. Isaac Jogues visited Megapolensis in 1643 evidently in a different house.

During this visit at the residence of Domine Megapolensis, Father Le Moyne told him about the salt well 100 leagues from the sea and said that he had made good salt from it. This is the salt well beside Onondaga Lake. He mentioned a spring of hot sulphurous water, which would set paper or dry material on fire if they were thrown into it. This is the Burning Spring one-half mile west of the Congregational Church in Bristol Valley, southwest of the city of Canandaigua, New York on the farm of Walter B. Case. Father Le Moyne also mentioned the famous Indian Oil Well near Cuba, New York. "Whether all this is true or a mere Jesuit lie, I will not decide." wrote the Dutch minister. How surprised this non-Catholic, good Samaritan minister would be if he could know that his connection with these Jesuits is the only reason for his name surviving in history outside of the locality of New York City.

His son Samuel is listed as a member of the Class of 1656, Harvard College.

Letter to A. M. Stewart from Harvard University, Office of the Alumni Directory—David W. Bailey, Editor, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"The records of temporary students in Harvard College during the 17th century include the doubtful name of Samuel Megapolensis as a member of the Class of 1656. He left without receiving a degree."

Possibly this young man was at home when Father Le Moyne visited there. Later he became a pastor at Albany Zwitertin—Religion in New Netherland.

Father Le Moyne remained eight days in Manhattan. He talked with everybody and saw everything, especially did he minister to the religious needs of Catholic residents of the infant city.

One of the purposes of Father Le Moyne's visit to New Amsterdam was to arrange for a peaceable exchange of shipping privileges between Quebec and New Amsterdam with exchange of all commodities except fur.

After this Father Le Moyne went back to the Mohawk country and remained all winter, 1657-1658.

In Megapolensis' letter, page 405 concerning Father Le Moyne, he says that on his journey from New Amsterdam returning to the Mohawk country, he (Father Le Moyne) did not forget me (Megapolensis) but sent me three documents, the first on the Succession of the Pope; the second on the Councils; and the third was about heresies all written out by himself. Quotation from a letter of the Reverend Jan Megapolensis, the Dutch Reformed minister in New Amsterdam (New York City) to the Classes or governing body of his church in Amsterdam, Holland dated September 28, 1658, from a translation in the Original Narratives of Early American History, Narratives of New Netherland—1609-1664. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons; New York; 1909; pages 403-405. What a versatile, tireless man was Father Le Moyne. In the midst of an arduous journey to the Mohawk country he could write learned theses on theology for the conversion of the amiable heretic, Reverend Jan Megapolensis.

What he heard Father Le Moyne had returned with during this winter of 1657-1658 while in the Mohawk

country is shown in a letter recorded in New York Dutch Historical Manuscripts, page 315; Ithaca Library. The record is dated June 16, 1657. It is a proposition of the three Mohawk castles renewing the ancient covenant chain and requesting in case they go to war with the Senecas, (Senecas) they might be permitted to bring their wives and children to Fort Orange also requesting guns to defend their castle and horses to draw their palisades thither. Iroquois had no horses of their own until after 1700. The Dutch called all the Iroquois west of the Mohawks, Senecas (or Senecas).

Megapolensis said these Mohawks went to war with the French. By this proposed war is meant an attack of the Mohawks on the French colony which was then living at Onondaga and on the western Iroquois tribes who were allied with French colonists. The Mohawks were enraged at the French and the other Iroquois tribes. Ultimately the Mohawks did not accede, but all the Iroquois came into such a turmoil that the French colony was compelled to escape.

Father Le Moyne, he it remembered, had taken the lead in opening the way for the colony at Onondaga which only had put his Mohawk hosts of this winter of 1657-1658 into such fear and fury. Just what personal fascination or almost magic power he exerted over them so that he could live amongst them that winter while they were fermenting war against his creation of French and Iroquois friendship at Onondaga may better be pictured by wonder and admiration than by words. While during this year he was thus allaying the fury of Mohawk resentment he was walking on the very ground wet with the blood of the martyrs, Saints Isaac Jogues, Rene Goupil and John Lalande. Tomahawks and torches were in the hands of the Iroquois. By what quality did he escape? He was at this time working more than two hundred miles from the Seneca country, and the Rochester region, yet without his influence among the Mohawks, at this time, Father Rene Menard could not have blessed the area of this Diocese with a memory of devotion in his mission beside Cayuga Lake, 1656-1658.

The Onondaga colony which made possible the first proclamation of Christian religion and civilization from Onondaga Creek to the Genesee River in New York State could not have endured for its twenty months without the presence of Father Le Moyne among the Mohawks.

Chapter XIV THE YEARS FROM 1657 TO 1659

At the end of May 1658, Father Le Moyne was brought to Montreal with Mohawk Indians guarding him as a prisoner of war. He was then exchanged for two important Mohawks whom the French had held as hostages of the war. (JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XLIV, page 233.) The Journal of the Jesuits (JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XLIV, p. 97) on the date May 21, 1658 reports this arrival of Father Le Moyne in Montreal. A long parley occurred in which the first present given by the Governor was three coats, to grease the feet of the conductors of Father Ondessonk (Father Le Moyne). The method of Indian parley is well illustrated by the gift-speeches of this council. Persons desiring a model for dramatic purposes of a genuine Indian council will find it in Thwaites' Jesuit Relations, Vol. XLIV, pp. 97-98.

After the hurried escape of the Onondaga colony down the tumultuous rapids of the St. Lawrence River in March 1658, and between the release of Father Le Moyne by his Mohawk keepers in May of that same year and May 7, 1659, there were no Jesuit missionaries in the Iroquois cantons, and there was no Christian teaching by any

ordained member of any Christian body being given to the Iroquois, beyond the terrain of the Dutch settlements in the Hudson River Valley. Instead of peaceful communities of Iroquois, each having in its center a church, and instead of the inhabitants being led by the teaching of such churches into the path of peace on earth and into the hope of an everlasting heaven, the whole Iroquois democracy was in a turmoil and no path or portage or river leading out of the French settlements was safe for the French and their Huron and Algonquin allies. Men were struck down as they worked in the fields, scalps were taken, and prisoners were carried off to the Iroquois villages to slavery or fiery torture.

It looked like a failure of all the gospel of peace Father Le Moyne, who had been the chief agent in this outstanding example of an attempt to make peace by persuasion, forgiveness and religious teaching, must have felt defeat, if, at all, his heroic soul could feel defeat, and yet,—and let all students of peace without war take notice,—due very largely to his efforts there had been no organized combined attack of the Iroquois, which would have destroyed defenseless French Canada during the five years in which he had been laboring to prevent it. Even at this time which historians call a period of war between the Iroquois and the French, the Iroquois were so divided among themselves, some loving the French and the religion which they taught and some wanting to go to war against them, that the Iroquois could send no coordinated army of their more than 1500 warriors against the French, but only erratic kidnap parties of two hundred men or less. And while the Iroquois filled New France with tragedy and horror, French Canada survived these scattered attacks, and lived a hundred years thereafter. Indeed, out of the welter of Iroquois confusion frequently came envoys asking for peace and demanding the return of the blackrobe missionaries to their villages. A leader in the Iroquois league was Father Le Moyne's friend chief Garacantie, loyal to the French and of a prayerful Christian spirit. He and others who had been won by Father Le Moyne and his colleagues, and who held the French in friendly regard, were better than a protecting wall around the French settlements.

If there is nothing magnificent in Father Le Moyne's share in this achievement of defense by persuasion let all study of history be anathema. But Father Le Moyne had yet many days of peacemaking before him, with the value of his efforts intensified by all his past experience.

Even though Iroquois passed hurriedly by the mid river town of Three Rivers where he resided with human scalps dripping blood at their belts, Father Le Moyne on May 7, 1659 set out fearlessly from Three Rivers with Jean Noyon, on his fourth embassy to the Mohawks, taking with him four Mohawk prisoners from the number of those hostile Iroquois whom the French had taken and held as hostages at Quebec.

On June 27, 1659 it was reported that three Frenchmen who were hunting on the Richelieu River were taken prisoner by Onondaga Indians. The Algonquin who had come with Father Le Moyne to the Mohawks, fled through fear, making his way through the pathless forest to Montreal. But Father Le Moyne did not flee although he could have stumbled on charred human bones as he walked in the Mohawk village.

On July 3, 1659, at ten o'clock at night, Father Le Moyne arrived back at Quebec with the Algonquin, whom he had found in Montreal, and with four Mohawks who demanded the return to them of their friend, Chief Big Spoon, (Grande Caillier) and other hostages. Such efforts in behalf of peace and life saving were all in his day's work. The amazement of it heightens as we chart out his canoe voyages and foot journeys on a map, and realize that he has always contending with the in-no-ways-pampering hospitality of the wilderness.

Four councils were held in Quebec to decide who should go home with these envoy Mohawks who had returned to Quebec with Father Le Moyne. Depending largely on the state of affairs in the Mohawk villages as seen and reported by Father Le Moyne, it was decided that only Chief Big Spoon should be released and the other hostages were kept.

Perhaps after all this work there was some time of resting for Father Le

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