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Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664

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ON HUDSON'S VOYAGE

Reference material and sources.

Emanuel Van Meteren, On Hudson's Voyage, 1610. In J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (Original Narratives of Early American History). NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

We have observed in our last book that the Directors of the East India Company in Holland had sent out in March last, on purpose to seek a passage to China by northeast or northwest, a skilful English pilot, named Henry Hudson, in a Vlie boat, having a crew of eighteen or twenty men, partly English, partly Dutch, well provided.

This Henry Hudson left the Texel on the 6th of April, 1609, doubled the Cape of Norway the 5th of May, and directed his course along the northern coasts towards Nova Zembla; but he there found the sea as full of ice as he had found it in the preceding year, so that they lost the hope of

effecting anything during the season. This circumstance, and the cold, which some of his men, who had been in the East Indies, could not bear, caused quarrels among the crew, they being partly English, partly Dutch, upon which Captain Hudson laid before them two propositions. The first of these was to go to the coast of America, to the latitude of 40 degrees, moved thereto mostly by letters and maps which a certain Captain Smith had sent him from Virginia, and by which he indicated to him a sea leading into the western ocean, by the north of the southern English colony. Had this information been true (experience goes as yet to the contrary), it would have been of great advantage, as indicating a short way to India. The other proposition was to direct their search through Davis's Straits. This meeting with general approval, they sailed thitherward on the 14th of May, and arrived on the last day of May with a good wind at the Faroe Islands, where they stopped but twenty-four hours, to supply themselves with fresh water. After leaving these islands, they sailed on, till on the 18th of July they reached the coast of Nova Francia, under 44 degrees, where they were obliged to run in, in order to get a new foremast, having lost theirs. They found one, and set it up. They found this a good place for cod-fishing, as also for traffic in good skins and furs, which were to be got there at a very low price. But the crew behaved badly towards the people of the country, taking their property by force, out of which there arose quarrels among themselves. The English, fearing that between the two they would be outnumbered and worsted, were therefore afraid to pursue the matter further. So they left that place on the 26th of July, and kept out at sea till the 3d of August, when they came near the coast, in 42 degrees of latitude. Thence they sailed on, till on the 12th of August they again reached the shore, under 37 degrees 45'. Thence they sailed along the shore until they reached 40 degrees 45', where they found a good entrance, between two headlands, and entered on the 12th of September into as fine a river as can be found, wide and deep, with good anchoring ground on both sides.

Their ship finally sailed up the river as far as 42 degrees 40'. But their boat went higher up. In the lower part of the river they found strong and warlike people; but in the upper part they found friendly and polite people, who had an abundance of provisions, skins, and furs, of martens and foxes, and many other commodities, as birds and fruit, even white and red grapes, and they traded amicably with the people. And of all the above-mentioned commodities they brought some home. When they had thus been about fifty leagues up the river, they returned on the 4th of October, and went again to sea. More could have been done if there had been good-will among the crew and if the want of some necessary provisions had not prevented it. While at sea, they held counsel together, but were of different opinions. The mate, a Dutchman, advised to winter in Newfoundland, and to search the northwestern passage of Davis throughout. This was opposed by Skipper Hudson. He was afraid of his mutinous crew, who had sometimes savagely threatened him; and he feared that during the cold season they would entirely consume their provisions, and would then be obliged to return, [with] many of the crew ill and sickly. Nobody, however, spoke of returning home to Holland, which circumstance made the captain still more suspicious. He proposed therefore to sail to Ireland, and winter there, which they all agreed to. At last they arrived at Dartmouth, in England, the 7th of November, whence they informed their employers, the Directors in Holland, of their voyage. They proposed to them to go out again for a search in the northwest, and that, besides the pay, and what they already had in the ship, fifteen hundred florins should be laid out for an additional supply of provisions. He [Hudson] also wanted six or seven of his crew exchanged for others, and their number raised to twenty. He would then sail from Dartmouth about the 1st of March, so as to be in the northwest towards the end of that month, and there to spend the whole of April and the first half of May in killing whales and other animals in the neighborhood of Panar Island, then to sail to the northwest, and there to pass the time till the middle of September, and then to return to Holland around the northeastern coast of Scotland. Thus this voyage ended.

A long time elapsed, through contrary winds, before the Company could be informed of the arrival of the ship in England. Then they ordered the ship and crew to return as soon as possible. But, when this was about to be done, Skipper Henry Hudson and the other Englishmen of the ship were commanded by the government there not to leave [England], but to serve their own country. Many persons thought it strange that captains should thus be prevented from laying their accounts and reports before their employers, having been sent out for the benefit of navigation in general. This took place in January, [1610]; and it was thought probably that the English themselves would send ships to Virginia, to explore further the aforesaid river.

END OF "ON HUDSON'S VOYAGE."

LETTER OF ISAACK DE RASIERES

Mr. Blommaert:

As I feel myself much bound to your service, and in return know not how otherwise to recompense you than by this slight memoir, (wherein I have in part comprised as much as was in my power concerning the situation of New Netherland and its neighbors, and should in many things have been able to treat of or write the same more in detail, and better than I have now done, but that my things and notes, which would have been of service to me herein, have been taken away from me), I will beg you to be pleased to receive this, on account of my bounden service, etc.

On the 27th of July, Anno 1626, by the help of God, I arrived with the ship The Arms of Amsterdam, before the bay of the great Mauritse River, sailing into it about a musket shot from Godyn's Point, into Coenraet's Bay; (because there the greatest depth is, since from the east point there stretches out a sand bank on which there is only from 9 to 14 feet of water), then sailed on, northeast and north-northeast, to about half way from the low sand bank called Godyn's Point to the Hamels-Hoofden, the mouth of the river, where we found at half ebb 16, 17, 18 feet water, and which is a sandy reef a musket shot broad, stretching for the most part northeast and southwest, quite across, and, according to my opinion, having been formed there by the stream, inasmuch as the flood runs into the bay from the sea, east-southeast; the depth at Godyn's Point is caused by the tide flowing out along there with such rapidity.

Between the Hamels-Hoofden the width is about a cannon's shot of 2,000 [yards]; the depth 10, 11, 12 fathoms. They are tolerably high points, and well wooded. The west point is an island, inhabited by from 80 to 90 savages, who support themselves by planting maize. The east point is a very large island, full 24-leagues long, stretching east by south and east-southeast along the sea-coast, from the river to the east end of the Fisher's Hook. In some places it is from three to four leagues broad, and it has several creeks and bays, where many savages dwell, who support themselves by planting maize and making sewan, and who are called Souwenos and Sinnecox. It is also full of oaks, elms, walnut and fir trees, also wild cedar and chestnut trees. The tribes are held in subjection by, and are tributary to, the Pyquans, hereafter named. The land is in many places good, and fit for ploughing and sowing. It has many fine valleys, where there is good grass. Their form of government is like that of their neighbors, which is described hereafter.

The Hamels-Hoofden being passed, there is about a league width in the river, and also on the west side there is an inlet, where another river runs up about twenty leagues, to the north-northeast, emptying into the Mauritse River in the highlands, thus making the northwest land opposite to the Manhatas an island eighteen leagues long. It is inhabited by the old Manhatas [Manhatesen]; they are about 200 to 300 strong, women and men, under different chiefs, whom they call Sackimas. This island is more mountainous than the other land on the southeast side of the river, which opposite to the Manhatas is about a league and half in breadth. At the side of the before-mentioned little river, which we call "Achter Col," there is a great deal of waste reedy land; the rest is full of trees, and in some places there is good soil, where the savages plant their maize, upon which they live, as well as by hunting. The other side of the same small river, according to conjecture, is about 20 to 23 leagues broad to the South River, in the neighborhood of the Sancicans, in so far as I have been able to make it out from the mouths of the savages; but as they live in a state of constant enmity with those tribes, the paths across are but little used, wherefore I have not been able to learn the exact distance; so that when we wish to send letters overland, they (the natives) take their way across the bay, and have the letters carried forward by others, unless one amongst them may happen to be on friendly terms, and who might venture to go there.

The island of the Manhatas extends two leagues in length along the Mauritse River, from the point where the Fort "New Amsterdam" is building. It is about seven leagues in circumference, full of trees, and in the middle rocky to the extent of about two leagues in circuit. The north side has good land in two places, where two farmers, each with four horses, would have enough to do without much clearing at first. The grass is good in the forest and valleys, but when made into hay is not so nutritious for the cattle as here, in consequence of its wild state, but it yearly improves by cultivation. On the east side there rises a large level field, of from 70 to 80 morgens of land, through which runs a very fine fresh stream; so that that land can be ploughed without much clearing. It appears to be good. The six farms, four of which lie along the River Hellgate, stretching to the south side of the island, have at least 60 morgens of land ready to be sown with winter seed, which at the most will have been ploughed eight times. But as the greater part must have some manure, inasmuch as it is so exhausted by the wild herbage, I am afraid that all will not be sown; and the more so, as the managers of the farms are hired men. The two hindermost farms, Nos. 1 and 2, are the best; the other farms have also good land, but not so much, and more sandy; so that they are best suited for rye and buckwheat.

The small fort, New Amsterdam, commenced to be built, is situated on a point opposite to Noten Island; [the channel between] is a gun-shot wide, and is full six or seven fathoms deep in the middle. This point might, with little trouble, be made a small island, by cutting a canal through Blommaert's valley, so as to afford a haven winter and summer, for sloops and ships; and

the whole of this little island ought, from its nature, to be made a superb fort, to be approached by land only on one side (since it is a triangle), thus protecting them both. The river marks out, naturally, three angles; the most northern faces and commands, within the range of a cannon shot, the great Mauritse River and the land; the southernmost commands, on the water level, the channel between Noten Island and the fort, together with the Hellegat; the third point, opposite to Blommaert's valley, commands the lowland; the middle part, which ought to be left as a marketplace, is a hillock, higher than the surrounding land, and should always serve as a battery, which might command the three points, if the streets should be arranged accordingly.

Up the river the east side is high, full of trees, and in some places there is a little good land, where formerly many people have dwelt, but who for the most part have died or have been driven away by the Wappenos.

These tribes of savages all have a government. The men in general are rather tall, well proportioned in their limbs, and of an orange color, like the Brazilians; very inveterate against those whom they hate; cruel by nature, and so inclined to freedom that they cannot by any means be brought to work; they support themselves by hunting, and when the spring comes, by fishing. In April, May, and June, they follow the course of these [the fish], which they catch with a dragnet they themselves knit very neatly, of the wild hemp, from which the women and old men spin the thread. The kinds of fish which they principally take at this time are shad, but smaller than those in this country ordinarily are, though quite as fat, and very bony; the largest fish is a sort of white salmon, which is of very good flavor, and quite as large; it has white scales; the heads are so full of fat that in some there are two or three spoonfuls, so that there is good eating for one who is fond of picking heads. It seems that this fish makes them lascivious, for it is often observed that those who have caught any when they have gone fishing, have given them, on their return, to the women, who look for them anxiously. Our people also confirm this....

As an employment in winter they make sewan, which is an oblong bead that they make from cockle-shells, which they find on the seashore, and they consider it as valuable as we do money here, since one can buy with it everything they have; they also make bands of it, which the women wear on the forehead under the hair, and the men around the body; and they are as particular about the stringing and sorting as we can be here about pearls. They are very fond of a game they call Seneca, played with some round rushes, similar to the Spanish feather-grass, which they understand how to shuffle and deal as though they were playing with cards; and they win from each other all that they possess, even to the lappet with which they cover their private parts, and so they separate from each other quite naked. They are very much addicted to promiscuous intercourse. Their clothing is [so simple as to leave the body] almost naked. In the winter time they usually wear a dressed deer skin; some a covering made of turkey feathers which they understand how to knit together very oddly, with small strings. They also use a good deal of duffel cloth, which they buy from us, and which serves for their blanket by night, and their dress by day.

The women are fine looking, of middle stature, well proportioned, and with finely cut features; with long and black hair, and black eyes set off with fine eyebrows; they are of the same color as the men. They smear their bodies and hair with grease, which makes them smell very rankly; they are very much given to promiscuous intercourse.

They have a marriage custom amongst them, namely: when there is one who resolves to take a particular person for his wife, he collects a fathom or two of sewan, and comes to the nearest friends of the person whom he desires, to whom he declares his object in her presence, and if they are satisfied with him, he agrees with them how much sewan he shall give her for a bridal present; that being done, he then gives her all the Dutch beads he has, which they call Machampe, and also all sorts of trinkets. If she be a young virgin, he must wait six weeks more before he can sleep with her, during which time she bewails or laments over her virginity, which they call Collatismarrenitten; all this time she sits with a blanket over her head, without wishing to look at any one, or any one being permitted to look at her. This period being elapsed, her bridegroom comes to her; he in the mean time has been supporting himself by hunting, and what he has taken he brings there with him; they then eat together with the friends, and sing and dance together, which they call Kintikaen. That being done, the wife must provide the food for herself and her husband, as far as breadstuffs are concerned, and [should they fall short] she must buy what is wanting with her sewan.

For this reason they are obliged to watch the season for sowing. At the end of March they begin to break up the earth with mattocks, which they buy from us for the skins of beavers or otters, or for sewan. They make heaps like molehills, each about two and a half feet from the others, which they sow or plant in April with maize, in each heap five or six grains; in the middle of May, when the maize is the height of a finger or more, they plant in each heap three or four Turkish beans, which then grow up with and against the maize, which serves for props, for the maize grows on stalks similar to the sugar-cane. When they wish to make use of the grain for bread or porridge, which they call Sappaen, they first boil it and then beat it flat upon a stone; then they put it into a wooden mortar, which they know how to hollow out by fire, and then they have a stone pestle, which they know how to make themselves, with which they pound it small, and sift it through a small basket, which they understand how to weave of the rushes before mentioned. The finest meal they mix with lukewarm water, and knead it into dough, then they make round flat little cakes of it, of thickness of an inch or a little more, which they bury in hot ashes, and so bake into bread; and when these are baked they have some clean fresh water by

them in which they wash them while hot, one after another, and it is good bread, but heavy. The coarsest meal they boil into a porridge, as is before mentioned, and it is good eating when there is butter over it, but a food which is very soon digested. The grain being dried, they put it into baskets woven of rushes or wild hemp, and bury it in the earth, where they let it lie, and go with their husbands and children in October to hunt deer, leaving at home with their maize the old people who cannot follow; in December they return home, and the flesh which they have not been able to eat while fresh, they smoke on the way, and bring it back with them. They come home as fat as moles.

When a woman here addicts herself to fornication, and the husband comes to know it, he thrashes her soundly, and if he wishes to get rid of her, he summons the Sackima with her friends, before whom he accuses her; and if she be found guilty the Sackima commands one to cut off her hair in order that she may be held up before the world as a whore, which they call poerochque; and then the husband takes from her everything that she has, and drives her out of the house; if there be children, they remain with her, for they are fond of them beyond measure. They reckon consanguinity to the eighth degree, and revenge an injury from generation to generation unless it be atoned for; and even then there is mischief enough, for they are very revengeful.

And when a man is unfaithful, the wife accuses him before the Sackima, which most frequently happens when the wife has a preference for another man. The husband being found guilty, the wife is permitted to draw off his right shoe and left stocking (which they make of deer or elk skins, which they know how to prepare very broad and soft, and wear in the winter time); she then tears off the lappet that covers his private parts, gives him a kick behind, and so drives him out of the house; and then "Adam" scampers off.

It would seem that they are very libidinous—in this respect very unfaithful to each other; whence it results that they breed but few children, so that it is a wonder when a woman has three or four children, particularly by any one man whose name can be certainly known. They must not have intercourse with those of their own family within the third degree, or it would be considered an abominable thing.

Their political government is democratic. They have a chief Sackima whom they choose by election, who generally is he who is richest in sewan, though of less consideration in other respects. When any stranger comes, they bring him to the Sackima. On first meeting they do not speak—they smoke a pipe of tobacco; that being done, the Sackima asks: "Whence do you come?" the stranger then states that, and further what he has to say, before all who are present or choose to come. That being done, the Sackima announces his opinion to the people, and if they agree thereto, they give all together a sigh—"He!"—and if they do not approve, they keep silence, and all come close to the Sackima, and each sets forth his opinion till they agree; that being done, they come all together again to the stranger, to whom the Sackima then announces what they have determined, with the reasons moving them thereto.

All travellers who stop over night come to the Sackima, if they have no acquaintances there, and are entertained by the expenditure of as much sewan as is allowed for that purpose; therefore the Sackimas generally have three or four wives, each of whom has to furnish her own seed-corn.

The Sackima has his fixed fine of sewan for fighting and causing blood to flow. When any are —[here four pages, at least, are missing in the original manuscript].

Coming out of the river Nassau, you sail east-and-by-north about fourteen leagues, along the coast, a half miles from the shore, and you then come to "Frenchman's Point" at a small river where those of Patucxet have a house made of hewn oak planks, called Aptucxet, where they keep two men, winter and summer, in order to maintain the trade and possession. Here also they have built a shallop, in order to go and look after the trade in sewan, in Sloup's Bay and thereabouts, because they are afraid to pass Cape Mallabaer, and in order to avoid the length of the way; which I have prevented for this year by selling them fifty fathoms of sewan, because the seeking after sewan by them is prejudicial to us, inasmuch as they would, by so doing, discover the trade in furs; which if they were to find out, it would be a great trouble for us to maintain, for they already dare to threaten that if we will not leave off dealing with that people, they will be obliged to use other means; if they do that now, while they are yet ignorant how the case stands, what will they do when they do get a notion of it?

From Aptucxet the English can come in six hours, through the woods, passing several little rivulets of fresh water, to New Plymouth, the principal place in the district Patucxet, so called in their patent from his Majesty in England.

New Plymouth lies in a large bay to the north of Cape Cod, or Mallabaer, east and west from the said [north] point of the cape, which can be easily seen in clear weather. Directly before the commenced town lies a sand-bank, about twenty paces broad, whereon the sea breaks violently with an easterly and east-north-easterly wind. On the north side there lies a small island where one must run close along, in order to come before the town; then the ships run behind that bank and lie in a very good roadstead. The bay is very full of fish, [chiefly] of cod, so that the governor before named has told me that when the people have a desire for fish they send out two or three persons in a sloop, whom they remunerate for their trouble, and who bring them in three or four

hours' time as much fish as the whole community require for a whole day—and they muster about fifty families.

At the south side of the town there flows down a small river of fresh water, very rapid, but shallow, which takes its rise from several lakes in the land above, and there empties into the sea; where in April and the beginning of May, there come so many shad from the sea which want to ascend that river, that it is quite surprising. This river the English have shut in with planks, and in the middle with a little door, which slides up and down, and at the sides with trellice work, through which the water has its course, but which they can also close with slides.

At the mouth they have constructed it with planks, like an eel-pot, with wings, where in the middle is also a sliding door, and with trellice work at the sides, so that between the two [dams] there is a square pool, into which the fish aforesaid come swimming in such shoals, in order to get up above, where they deposit their spawn, that at one tide there are 10,000 to 12,000 fish in it, which they shut off in the rear at the ebb, and close up the trellices above, so that no more water comes in; then the water runs out through the lower trellices, and they draw out the fish with baskets, each according to the land he cultivates, and carry them to it, depositing in each hill three or four fishes, and in these they plant their maize, which grows as luxuriantly therein as though it were the best manure in the world. And if they do not lay this fish therein, the maize will not grow, so that such is the nature of the soil.

New Plymouth lies on the slope of a hill stretching east towards the sea-coast, with a broad street about a cannon shot of 800 feet long, leading down the hill; with a [street] crossing in the middle, northwards to the rivulet and southwards to the land. The houses are constructed of hewn planks, with gardens also enclosed behind and at the sides with hewn planks, so that their houses and court-yards are arranged in very good order, with a stockade against a sudden attack; and at the ends of the streets there are three wooden gates. In the centre, on the cross street, stands the governor's house, before which is a square stockade upon which four patereros are mounted, so as to enfilade the streets. Upon the hill they have a large square house, with a flat roof, made of thick sawn plank, stayed with oak beams, upon the top of which they have six cannon, which shoot iron balls of four and five pounds, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sundays and the usual holidays. They assemble by beat of drum, each with his musket or firelock, in front of the captain's door; they have their cloaks on, and place themselves in order, three abreast, and are led by a sergeant without beat of drum. Behind comes the governor, in a long robe; beside him, on the right hand, comes the preacher with his cloak on, and on the left hand the captain with his side-arms, and cloak on, and with a small cane in his hand; and so they march in good order, and each sets his arms down near him. Thus they are constantly on their guard night and day.

Their government is after the English form. The governor has his council, which is chosen every year by the entire community, by election or prolongation of term. In inheritances they place all the children in one degree, only the eldest son has an acknowledgement for his seniority of birth. They have made stringent laws and ordinances upon the subject of fornication and adultery, which laws they maintain and enforce very strictly indeed, even among the tribes which live amongst them. They speak very angrily when they hear from the savages that we live so barbarously in these respects, and without punishment. Their farms are not so good as ours, because they are more stony, and consequently not so suitable for the plough. They apportion their land according as each has means to contribute to the eighteen thousand guilders which they have promised to those who had sent them out; whereby they have their freedom without rendering an account to any one; only if the King should choose to send a governor-general they would be obliged to acknowledge him as sovereign overlord. The maize seed which they do not require for their own use is delivered over to the governor, at three guilders the bushel, who in his turn sends it in sloops to the north for the trade in skins among the savages; they reckon one bushel of maize against one pound of beaver's skins; the profits are divided according to what each has contributed, and they are credited for the amount in the account of what each has to contribute yearly towards the reduction of his obligation. Then with the remainder they purchase what next they require, and which the governor takes care to provide every year. They have better sustenance than ourselves, because they have the fish so abundant before their doors. There are also many birds, such as geese, herons and cranes, and other small-legged birds, which are in great abundance there in the winter.

The tribes in their neighborhood have all the same customs as already above described, only they are better conducted than ours, because the English give them the example of better ordinances and a better life; and who also, to a certain degree, give them laws, in consequence of the respect they from the very first have established amongst them.

The savages [there] utilize their youth in labor better than the savages round about us: the girls in sowing maize, the young men in hunting. They teach them to endure privation in the field in a singular manner, to wit:

When there is a youth who begins to approach manhood, he is taken by his father, uncle, or nearest friend, and is conducted blindfolded into a wilderness, in order that he may not know the way, and is left there by night or otherwise, with a bow and arrows, and a hatchet and a knife. He must support himself there a whole winter with what the scanty earth furnishes at this season, and by hunting. Towards the spring they come again, and fetch him out of it, take him home and feed him up again until May. He must then go out again every morning with the person who is

ordered to take him in hand; he must go into the forest to seek wild herbs and roots, which they know to be the most poisonous and bitter; these they bruise in water and press the juice out of them, which he must drink, and immediately have ready such herbs as will preserve him from death or vomiting; and if he cannot retain it, he must repeat the dose until he can support it, and until his constitution becomes accustomed to it so that he can retain it.

Then he comes home, and is brought by the men and women, all singing and dancing, before the Sackima; and if he has been able to stand it all well, and if he is fat and sleek, a wife is given to him.

In that district there are no lions or bears, but there are the same kinds of other game, such as deers, hinds, beavers, otters, foxes, lynxes, seals and fish, as in our district of country. The savages say that far in the interior there are certain beasts of the size of oxen, having but one horn, which are very fierce. The English have used great diligence in order to see them, but cannot succeed therein, although they have seen the flesh and hides of them which were brought to them by the savages. There are also very large elks here, which the English have indeed seen.

The lion skins which we sometimes see our savages wear are not large, so that the animal itself must be small; they are of a mouse-gray color, short in the hair and long in the claws.

The bears are some of them large and some small; but the largest are not so large as the middle-sized ones which come from Greenland. Their fur is long and black and their claws large. The savages esteem the flesh and grease as a great dainty.

Of the birds, there is a kind like starlings, which we call maize thieves, because they do so much damage to the maize. They fly in large flocks, so that they flatten the corn in any place where they alight, just as if cattle had lain there. Sometimes we take them by surprise and fire amongst them with hailshot, immediately that we have made them rise, so that sixty, seventy, and eighty fall all at once, which is very pleasant to see.

There are also very large turkeys living wild; they have very long legs, and can run extraordinarily fast, so that we generally take savages with us when we go to hunt them; for even when one has deprived them of the power of flying, they yet run so fast that we cannot catch them unless their legs are hit also.

In the autumn and in the spring there come a great many geese, which are very good, and easy to shoot, inasmuch as they congregate together in such large flocks. There are two kind of partridges; the one sort are quite as small as quails and the other like the ordinary kind here. There are also hares, but few in number, and not larger than a middle-sized rabbit; and they principally frequent where the land is rocky.

This, sir, is what I have been able to communicate to you from memory, respecting New Netherland and its neighborhood, in discharge of my bounden duty; I beg that the same may so be favorably received by you, and I beg to recommend myself for such further service as you may be pleased to command me in, wherever you may find me.

In everything your faithful servant,

ISAACK DE RASIERES.

END OF "LETTER OF ISAACK DE RASIERES."

MEGAPOLENSIS ON THE MOHAWKS (Part 1)

Harmen Meyderts van den Boagaert (?), Narrative of a Journey Into the Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635. In J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (Original Narratives of Early American History). NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

Praise the Lord above all—Fort Orange, 1634.

December 11. Journal kept of the principal events that happened during the journey to the Maquas and Sinnekens Indians. First, the reasons why we went on this journey were these, that the Maquas and Sinnekens very often came to our factor [commis] Marten Gerritsen and me

stating that there were French Indians in their land, and that they had made a truce with them so that they, namely, the Maquas, wished to trade for their skins, because the Maquas Indians wanted to receive just as much for their skins as the French Indians did. So I proposed to Mr. Marten Gerritsen to go and see if it was true, so soon to run counter to their High Mightinesses; and, besides, trade was doing very badly, therefore I went as above with Jero[ni]-mus [de] la Croex and Willem Tomassen. May the Lord bless my voyage! We went between nine and ten o'clock with five Macquas Indians, mostly northwest above eight leagues, and arrived at half-past twelve in the evening at a hunter's cabin, where we slept for the night, near the stream that runs into their land and is named Oyoge. The Indians here gave us venison to eat. The land is mostly full of fir trees, and the flat land is abundant. The stream runs through their land near their (Maquas) castle, but we could not ascend it on account of the heavy freshet.

December 12. At three hours before daylight, we proceeded again, and the savages that went with us would have left us there if I had not noticed it; and when we thought of taking our meal we perceived that their dogs had eaten our meat and cheese. So we had then only dry bread and had to travel on that; and, after going for an hour, we came to the branch that runs into our river and past the Maquas villages, where the ice drifted very fast. Jeronimus crossed first, with one savage in a canoe made of the bark of trees, because there was only room for two; after that Willem and I went over; and it was so dark that we could not see each other if we did not come close together. It was not without danger. When all of us had crossed, we went another league and a half and came to a hunter's cabin, which we entered to eat some venison, and hastened farther, and after another half league we saw some Indians approaching; and as soon as they saw us they ran off and threw their sacks and bags away, and fled down a valley behind the underwood, so that we could not see them. We looked at their goods and bags, and took therefrom a small [loaf of] bread. It was baked with beans, and we ate it. We went farther, and mostly along the aforesaid kill that ran very swiftly because of the freshet. In this kill there are a good many islands, and on the sides upward of 500 or 600 morgen of flat land; yes, I think even more. And after we had been marching about eleven leagues, we arrived at one o'clock in the evening half a league from the first castle at a little house. We found only Indian women inside. We should have gone farther, but I could hardly move my feet because of the rough road, so we slept there. It was very cold, with northerly wind.

December 13. In the morning we went together to the castle over the ice that during the night had frozen on the kill, and, after going half a league, we arrived in their first castle, which is built on a high hill. There stood but 36 houses, in rows like streets, so that we could pass nicely. The houses are made and covered with bark of trees, and mostly are flat at the top. Some are 100, 90, or 80 paces long and 22 and 23 feet high. There were some inside doors of hewn boards, furnished with iron hinges. In some houses we saw different kinds of iron work, iron chains, harrow irons, iron hoops, nails,—which they steal when they go forth from here. Most of the people were out hunting deer and bear. The houses were full of corn that they call onersti, and we saw maize; yes, in some of the houses more than 300 bushels. They make canoes and barrels of the bark of trees, and sew with bark as well. We had a good many pumpkins cooked and baked that they called anansira. None of the chiefs were at home, but the principal chief is named Adriochten, who lived a quarter of a mile from the fort in a small house, because a good many savages here in the castle died of smallpox. I sent him a message to come and see us, which he did; he came and bade me welcome, and said that he wanted us very much to come with him. We should have done so, but when already on the way another chief called us, and so we went to the castle again. This one had a big fire lighted, and a fat haunch of venison cooked, of which we ate. He gave us two bearskins to sleep upon, and presented me with three beaver skins. In the evening Willem Tomassen, whose legs were swollen from the march, had a few cuts made with a knife therein, and after that had them rubbed with bear grease. We slept in this house, at heartily of pumpkins, beans and venison, so that we were not hungry, but were treated as well as is possible in their land. We hope that all will succeed.

December 14. Jeronimus wrote a letter to our commis (factor), Marten Gerritsen, and asked for paper, salt, and atsochwat—that means tobacco for the savages. We went out to shoot turkeys with the chief, but could not get any. In the evening I bought a very fat one for two hands of seewan. The chief cooked it for us, and the grease he mixed with our beans and maize. This chief showed me his idol; it was a male cat's head, with the teeth sticking out; it was dressed in duffel cloth. Others have a snake, a turtle, a swan, a crane, a pigeon, or the like for their idols, to tell the fortune; they think they will always have good luck in doing so. From here two savages went with their skins to Fort Orange.

December 15. I went again with the chief to hunt turkeys, but could not get any; and in the evening the chief again showed us his idol, and we resolved to stay here for another two or three days till there should be an opportunity to proceed, because all the footpaths had disappeared under the heavy snowfalls.

December 16. After midday a famous hunter came here named Sickarus, who wanted very much that we should go with him to his castle. He offered to carry our goods and to let us sleep and remain in his house as long as we liked; and because he was offering us so much I gave him a knife and two awls as a present, and to the chief in whose house we had been I presented a knife and a pair of scissors; and then we took our departure from this castle, named Onekagoncka, and after going for half a league over the ice we saw a village with only six houses, of the

Canowarode; but we did not enter it, because he said it was not worth while, and after another half league we passed again a village where twelve houses stood. It was named Schatsyerosy. These were like the others, he saying they likewise were not worth while entering; and after passing by great stretches of flat land, for another league or league and a half, we came into this castle, at two good hours after dark. I did not see much besides a good many graves. This castle is named Canagere. It is built on a hill, without any palisades or any defense. We found only seven men at home, besides a party of old women and children. The chiefs of this castle, named Tonnosatton and Tonewerot, were hunting; so we slept in the house of Sickarus, as he had promised us; and we counted in his house 120 pieces of salable beaver skins that he captured with his own dogs. Every day we ate beaver meat here. In this castle are sixteen houses, 50, 60, 70, or 80 paces long, and one of sixteen paces, and one of five paces, containing a bear to be fattened. It had been in there upward of three years, and was so tame that it took everything that was given to it to eat.

December 17. Sunday we looked over our goods, and found a paper filled with sulphur, and Jeronimus took some of it and threw it in the fire. They saw the blue flame and smelled the smoke, and told us they had the same stuff; and when Sickarus came they asked us to let them take a look at it, and it was the same; and we asked him where he obtained it. He told us they obtained it from the stranger savages, and that they believed it to be good against many maladies, but principally for their legs when they were sore from long marching and were very tired.

December 18. Three women of the Sinnekens came here with dried and fresh salmon; the latter smelled very bad. They sold each salmon for one florin or two hands of seawan. They brought, also, a good quantity of green tobacco to sell; and had been six days on the march. They could not sell all their salmon here, but went farther on to the first castle; and when they returned we were to go with them, and in the evening Jeronimus told me that a savage tried to kill him with a knife.

December 19. We received a letter from Marten Gerritsen dated December 18, and with it we received paper, salt, tobacco for the savages, and a bottle of brandy, and secured an Indian that was willing to be our guide for the Sinnekens. We gave him half a yard of cloth, two axes, two knives, and two awls. If it had been summer, many Indians would have gone with us, but as it was winter they would not leave their land, because it snowed very often up to the height of a man. To-day we had a great rainfall, and I gave the guide a pair of shoes. His name was Sqorhea.

December 20. We took our departure from the second castle, and, after marching a league, our savage, Sqorhea, came to a stream that we had to pass. This stream ran very fast; besides, big cakes of ice came drifting along, for the heavy rainfall during yesterday had set the ice drifting. We were in great danger, for if one of us had lost his footing it had cost us our lives; but God the Lord preserved us, and we came through safely. We were wet up to above the waist, and after going for another half league we came thus wet, with our clothes, shoes and stockings frozen to us, to a very high hill on which stood 32 houses, like the other ones. Some were 100, 90, or 80 paces long; in every house we saw four, five, or six fireplaces where cooking went on. A good many savages were at home, so we were much looked at by both the old and the young; indeed, we could hardly pass through. They pushed each other in the fire to see us, and it was more than midnight before they took their departure. We could not absent ourselves to go to stool; even then they crawled around us without any feeling of shame. This is the third castle and is named Schanidisse. The chief's name is Tewowary. They lent me this evening a lion skin to cover myself; but in the morning I had more than a hundred lice. We ate much venison here. Near this castle there is plenty of flat land, and the wood is full of oaks and nut trees. We exchanged here one beaver skin for one awl.

December 21. We started very early in the morning, and thought of going to the fourth estate, but after a half league's marching we came to a village with only nine houses, of the name of Osquage; the chief's name was Oquoho—that is, wolf. And here we saw a big stream that our guide did not dare to cross, as the water was over one's head because of the heavy rainfall; so we were obliged to postpone it till the next day. The chief treated us very kindly; he did us much good and gave us plenty to eat, for everything to be found in his houses was at our service. He said often to me that I was his brother and good friend; yes, he told me even how he had been travelling overland for thirty days, and how he met there an Englishman, to learn the language of the Minquase and to buy the skins. I asked him whether there were any French savages there with the Sinnekens. He said yes; and I felt gratified and had a good hope to reach my aim. They called me here to cure a man that was very sick.

December 22. When the sun rose, we waded together through the stream; the water was over the knee, and so cold that our shoes and stockings in a very short time were frozen as hard as armor. The savages dared not go through, but went two by two, with a stick and hand in hand; and after going half a league we came to a village named Cawaoge. There stood fourteen houses, and a bear to fatten. We went in and smoked a pipe of tobacco, because the old man who was our guide was very tired. Another old man approached us, who shouted, "Welcome, welcome! you must stop here for the night"; but we wanted to be on the march and went forward. I tried to buy the bear, but they would not let it go. Along these roads we saw many trees much like the savin, with a very thick bark. This village likewise stood on a very high hill, and after going for another league we came into the fourth castle by land whereon we saw only a few trees. The name is Te notoge. There are 55 houses, some one hundred, others more or fewer paces long. The kill we

spoke about before runs past here, and the course is mostly north by west and south by east. On the other bank of the kill there are also houses; but we did not go in, because they were most of them filled with corn and the houses in this castle are filled with corn and beans. The savages here looked much surprised to see us, and they crowded so much around us that we could hardly pass through, for nearly all of them were at home. After awhile one of the savages came to us and invited us to go with him to his house, and we entered. This castle had been surrounded by three rows of palisades, but now there were none save six or seven pieces so thick that it was quite a wonder that savages should be able to do that. They crowded each other in the fire to see us.

December 23. A man came calling and shouting through some of the houses, but we did not know what it meant, and after awhile Jeronimus de la Croix came and told us what this was—that the savages are preparing and arming. I asked them what all this was about, and they said to me: "Nothing, we shall play with one another," and there were four men with clubs and a party with axes and sticks. There were twenty people armed, nine on one side and eleven on the other; and they went off against each other, and they fought and threw each other. Some of them wore armor and helmets that they themselves make of thin reeds and strings braided upon each other so that no arrow or axe can pass through to wound them severely; and after they had been playing thus a good while the parties closed and dragged each other by the hair, just as they would have done to their enemies after defeating them and before cutting off their scalps. They wanted us to fire our pistols, but we went off and left them alone. This day we were invited to buy bear meat, and we also got half a bushel of beans and a quantity of dried strawberries, and we bought some bread, that we wanted to take on our march. Some of the loaves were baked with nuts and cherries and dry blueberries and the grains of the sunflower.

December 24. It was Sunday. I saw in one of the houses a sick man. He had invited two of their doctors that could cure him—they call them simachkoes; and as soon as they came they began to sing and to light a big fire. They closed the house most carefully everywhere, so that the breeze could not come in, and after that each of them wrapped a snakeskin around his head. They washed their hands and faces, lifted the sick man from his place, and laid him alongside the big fire. Then they took a bucket of water, put some medicine in it, and washed in this water a stick about half a yard long, and kept sticking it in their throats so that no end of it was to be seen; and then they spat on the patient's head, and over all his body; and after that they made all sorts of farces, as shouting and raving, slapping of the hands; so are their manners; with many demonstrations upon one things and another till they perspired so freely that their perspiration ran down all sides.

December 25—being Christmas. We rose early in the morning and wanted to go to the Sinnekens; but, as it was snowing steadily, we could not go, because nobody wanted to go with us to carry our goods. I asked them how many chiefs there were in all, and they told me thirty.

December 26. In the morning I was offered two pieces of bear's bacon to take with us on the march; and we took our departure, escorted by many of them that walked before and after us. They kept up shouting: "Allesa rondade!" that is, to fire our pistols; but we did not want to do so, and at last they went back. This day we passed over many a stretch of flat land, and crossed a kill where the water was knee-deep; and I think we kept this day mostly the direction west and northwest. The woods that we traversed consisted in the beginning mostly of oaks, but after three or four hours' marching it was mostly birch trees. It snowed the whole day, so it was very heavy marching over the hills; and after seven leagues, by guess, we arrived at a little house made of bark in the forest, where we lighted a fire and stopped for the night to sleep. It went on snowing, with a sharp, northerly wind. It was very cold.

December 27. Early in the morning again on our difficult march, while the snow lay 2 1/2 feet in some places. We went over hills and through underwood. We saw traces of two bears, and elks, but no savages. There are beech trees; and after marching another seven or eight leagues, at sunset we found another little cabin in the forest, with hardly any bark, but covered with the branches of trees. We made a big fire and cooked our dinner. It was so very cold during this night that I did not sleep more than two hours in all.

December 28. We went as before, and after marching one or two leagues we arrived at a kill that, as the savages told me, ran into the land of the Minquaass, and after another mile we met another kill that runs into the South River, as the savages told me, and here a good many otter and beaver are caught. This day we went over many high hills. The wood was full of great trees, mostly birches; and after seven or eight leagues' marching we did the same as mentioned above. It was very cold.

December 29. We went again, proceeding on our voyage; and after marching a while we came on a very high hill, and as we nearly had mounted it I fell down so hard that I thought I had broken my ribs, but it was only the handle of my cutlass that was broken. We went through a good deal of flat land, with many oaks and handles for axes, and after another seven leagues we found another hut, where we rested ourselves. We made a fire and ate all the food we had, because the savages told us that we were still about four leagues distant from the castle. The sun was near setting as still another of the savages went on to the castle to tell them we were coming. We would have gone with him, but because we felt so very hungry the savages would not take us along with them. The course northwest.

December 30. Without anything to eat we went to the Sinnekens' castle, and after marching

awhile the savages showed me the branch of the river that passes by Fort Orange and past the land of the Maquas. A woman came to meet us, bringing us baked pumpkins to eat. This road was mostly full of birches and beautiful flat land for sowing. Before we reached the castle we saw three graves, just like our graves in length and height; usually their graves are round. These graves were surrounded with palisades that they had split from trees, and they were closed up so nicely that it was a wonder to see. They were painted with red and white and black paint; but the chief's grave had an entrance, and at the top of that was a big wooden bird, and all around were painted dogs, and deer, and snakes, and other beasts. After four or five leagues' marching the savages still prayed us to fire our guns, and so we did, but loaded them again directly and went on to the castle. And we saw to the northwest of us, a large river, and on the other side thereof tremendously high land that seemed to lie in the clouds. Upon inquiring closely into this, the savages told me that in this river the Frenchmen came to trade. And then we marched confidently to the castle, where the savages divided into two rows, and so let us pass through them by the gate, which was—the one we went through—3 1/2 feet wide, and at the top were standing three big wooden images, carved like men, and with them I saw three scalps fluttering in the wind, that they had taken from their foes as a token of the truth of their victory. This castle has two gates, one on the east and one on the west side. On the east side a scalp was also hanging; but this gate was 1 1/2 feet smaller than the other one. When at last we arrived in the chief's house, I saw there a good many people that I knew; and we were requested to sit down in the chief's place where he was accustomed to sit, because at the time he was not at home, and we felt cold and were wet and tired. They at once gave us to eat, and they made a good fire. This castle likewise is situated on a very high hill, and was surrounded with two rows of palisades. It was 767 paces in circumference. There are 66 houses, but much better, higher, and more finished than all the others we saw. A good many houses had wooden fronts that are painted with all sorts of beasts. There they sleep mostly on elevated boards, more than any other savages. In the afternoon one of the council came to me, asking the reason of our coming into his land, and what we brought for him as a present. It told him that we did not bring any present, but that we only paid him a visit. He told us that we were not worth anything, because we did not bring him a present. Then he told us how the Frenchmen had come thither to trade with six men, and had given them good gifts, because they had been trading in this river with six men in the month of August of this year. We saw very good axes to cut the underwood, and French shirts and coats and razors; and this member of the council said we were scoundrels, and were not worth anything because we paid not enough for their beaver skins. They told us that the Frenchmen gave six hands of seawan for one beaver, and all sorts of things more. The savages were pressing closely upon us, so that there was hardly room for us to sit. If they had desired to molest us, we could hardly have been able to defend ourselves; but there was no danger. In this river here spoken of, often six, seven, or eight hundred salmon are caught in a single day. I saw houses where 60, 70, and more dried salmon were hanging.

December 31. On Sunday the chief of this castle came back (his name is Arenias), and one more man. They told us that they returned from the French savages, and some of the savages shouted "Jawe Arenias!" which meant that they thanked him for having come back. And I told him that in the night we should fire three shots; and he said it was all right; and they seemed very well contented. We questioned them concerning the situation [of the places] in their castle and their names, and how far they were away from each other. They showed us with stones and maize grains, and Jeronimus then made a chart of it. And we counted all in leagues how far each place was away from the next. The savages told us that on the high land which we had seen by that lake there lived men with horns on their heads; and they told us that a good many beavers were caught there, too, but they dared not go so far because of the French savages; therefore they thought best to make peace. We fired three shots in the night in honor of the year of our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Praise the Lord above all! In the castle Onneyuttehage, or Sinnekens, January 1, 1635.

January 1, 1635. Another savage scolded at us. We were scoundrels, as told before; and he looked angry. Willem Tomassen got so excited that the tears were running along his cheeks, and the savages, seeing that we were not at all contented, asked us what was the matter, and why we looked so disgusted at him. There were in all 46 persons seated near us; if they had intended to do mischief, they could easily have caught us with their hands and killed us without much trouble; when I had listened long enough to the Indian's chatter I told him that he was a scoundrel himself and he began to laugh, said he was not angry and said: "You must not grow so furious, for we are very glad that you came here." And after that Jeronimus gave the chief two knives, two pairs of scissors, and a few awls and needles that we had with us. And in the evening the savages suspended a band of seawan, and some other stringed seawan that the chief had brought with him from the French savages as a sign of peace and that the French savages were to come in confidence to them, and he sang: "Ho schene jo ho ho schene I atsiehoewe atsiehoewe," after which all the savages shouted three times: "Netho, netho, netho!" and after that another band of seawan was suspended and he sang then: "Katon, katon, katon, katon!" and all the savages shouted as hard as they could: "Hy, hy, hy!" After long deliberation they made peace for four years, and soon after everyone returned to his home.

January 2. The savages came to us and told us that we had better stop another four or five days. They would provide for all our needs and have us treated nicely; but I told them we could not wait so long as that. They replied that they had sent a message to the Onondagas—that is, the castle next to theirs—but I told them they nearly starved us. Then they said that in future they

would look better after us, and twice during this day we were invited to be their guests, and treated to salmon and bear's bacon.

January 3. Some old men came to us and told us they wanted to be our friends, and they said we need not be afraid. And I replied we were not afraid, and in the afternoon the council sat here—in all, 24 men—and after consulting for a long while an old man approached me and laid his hand upon my heart to feel it beat; and then he shouted we really were not afraid at all. After that six more members of the council came, and after that they presented me a coat made of beaver skin, and told me they gave it to me because I came here and ought to be very tired, and he pointed to his and my legs; and besides, it is because you have been marching through the snow. And when I took the coat they shouted three times: "Netho, netho, netho!" which means, "This is very well." And directly after that they laid five pieces of beaver skins on my feet, at the same time requesting me that in the future they should receive four hands of seawan and four handbreadths of cloth for every big beaver skin, because we have to go so far with our skins; and very often when we come to your places we do not find any cloth or seawan or axes or kettles, or not enough for all of us, and then we have had much trouble for nothing, and have to go back over a great distance, carrying out goods back again. After we sat for a considerable time, an old man came to us, and translated it to us in the other language, and told us that we did not answer yet whether they were to have four hands of seawan or not for their skins. I told him that we had not the power to promise that, but that we should report about it to the chief at the Manhatans, who was our commander, and that I would give him a definite answer in the spring, and come myself to their land. Then they said to me "Welsmachkoo," you must not lie, and surely come to us in the spring, and report to us about all. And if you will give us four hands of seawan we will not sell our skins to anyone but you; and after that they gave me the five beaver skins, and shouted as hard as they could: "Netho, netho, netho!" And then, that everything should be firmly binding, they called or sang: "Ha assironi atsimach koo kent oya kayuig wee Onneyatte Onaondaga Koyocke hoo hanoto wany agweganne hoo schene ha caton scahten frasoni yndicho." That means that I could go in all these places—they said the names of all the castles—freely and everywhere. I should be provided with a house and a fire and wood and everything I needed; and if I wanted to go to the Frenchmen they would guide me there and back; and after that they shouted again: "Netho, netho, netho!" and they made a present of another beaver skin to me, and we ate to-day bear meat that we were invited to. In this house, belonging to the chief, there were three or four meals a day, and they did not cook in it, as everything was brought in from the other houses in large kettles; for it was the council that took their meals here every day. And whoever then happens to be in the house receives a bowlful of food; for it is the rule here that everyone that comes here has his bowl filled; and if they are short of bowls they bring them and their spoons with them. They go thus and seat themselves side by side; the bowls are then fetched and brought back filled, for a guest that is invited does not rise before he has eaten. Sometimes they sing, and sometimes they do not, thanking the host before they return home.

January 4. Two savages came, inviting us to come and see how they used to drive away the devil. I told them that I had seen it before; but they did not move off, and I had to go; and because I did not choose to go alone I took Jeronimus along. I saw a dozen men together who were going to drive him off. After we arrived the floor of the house was thickly covered with the bark of trees for the hunters of the devil to walk upon. They were mostly old men, and they had their faces all painted with red paint—which they always do when they are going to do anything unusual. Three men among them had a wreath on their heads, on which stuck five white crosses. These wreaths are made of deer hair that they had braided with the roots of a sort of green herb. In the middle of the house they then put a man who was very sick, and who was treated without success during a considerable time. Close by sat an old woman with a turtle shell in her hands. In the turtle shell were a good many beads. She kept clinking all the while, and all of them sang to the measure; then they would proceed to catch the devil and trample him to death; they trampled the bark to atoms so that none of it remained whole, and wherever they saw but a little cloud of dust upon the maize, they beat at it in great amazement and then they blew that dust at one another and were so afraid that they ran as if they really saw the devil; and after long stamping and running one of them went to the sick man and took away an otter that he had in his hands; and he sucked the sick man for awhile in his neck and on the back, and after that he spat in the otter's mouth and threw it down; at the same time he ran off like made through fear. Other men then went to the otter, and then there took place such foolery that it was a wonder to see. Yes; they commenced to throw fire and eat fire, and kept scattering hot ashes and red-hot coals in such a way that I ran out of the house. To-day another beaver skin was presented to me.

January 5. I bought four dried salmon and two pieces of bear bacon that was about nine inches thick; and we saw thicker, even. They gave us beans cooked with bear bacon to eat to-day, and further nothing particular happened.

January 6. Nothing particular than that I was shown a parcel of flint stones wherewith they make fire when they are in the forest. Those stones would do very well for firelock guns.

January 7.—We received a letter from Marten Gerritsen, dated from the last of December; it was brought by a Sinneken that arrived from our fort. He told us that our people grew very uneasy about our not coming home, and that they thought we had been killed. We ate fresh salmon only two days caught, and we were robbed to-day of six and a half hands of seawan that we never saw again.

January 8. Aarenias came to me to say that he wanted to go with me to the fort and take all

his skins to trade. Jeronimus tried to sell his coat here, but he could not get rid of it.

January 9. During the evening the Onondagas came. There were six old men and four women. They were very tired from the march, and brought with them some bear skins. I came to meet them, and thanked them that they came to visit us; and they welcomed me, and because it was very late I went home.

January 10. Jeronimus burned the greater part of his pantaloons, that dropped in the fire during the night, and the chief's mother gave him cloth to repair it, and Willem Tomassen repaired it.

January 11. At ten o'clock in the morning the savages came to me and invited me to come to the house where the Onondagans sat in council. "They will give you presents"; and I went there with Jeronimus; took our pistols with us and sat alongside of them, near an old man of the name of Canastogeera, about 55 years of age; and he said: "Friends, I have come here to see you and to talk to you;" wherefore we thanked him, and after they had sat in council for a long time an interpreter came to me and gave me give pieces of beaver skin because we had come into their council. I took the beaver skins and thanked them, and they shouted three times "Netho!" And after that another five beaver skins that they laid upon my feet, and they gave them to me because I had come into their council-house. We should have been given a good many skins as presents if we had come into his land; and they earnestly requested me to visit their land in the summer, and after that gave me another four beaver skins and asked at the same time to be better paid for their skins. They would bring us a great quantity if we did; and if I came back in the summer to their land we should have three or four savages along with us to look all around that lake and show us where the Frenchmen came trading with their shallops. And when we gathered our fourteen beavers they again shouted as hard as they could, "Zinae netho!" and we fired away with our pistols and gave the chief two pairs of knives, some awls, and needles; and then we were informed we might take our departure. We had at the time five pieces of salmon and two pieces of bear bacon that we were to take on the march, and here they gave a good many loaves and even flour to take with us.

January 12. We took our departure; and when we thought everything was ready the savages did not want to carry our goods—twenty-eight beaver skins, five salmon, and some loaves of bread—because they all had already quite enough to carry; but after a good deal of grumbling and nice words they at last consented and carried our goods. Many savages walked along with us and they shouted, "Alle sarondade!" that is, to fire the pistols; and when we came near the chief's grave we fired three shots, and they went back. It was about nine o'clock when we left this place and walked only about five leagues through 2 1/2 feet of snow. It was a very difficult road, so that some of the savages had to stop in the forest and sleep in the snow. We went on, however, and reached a little cabin, where we slept.

January 13. Early in the morning we were on our journey again, and after going seven or eight leagues we arrived at another hut, where we rested awhile, cooked our dinner, and slept. Arenias pointed out to me a place on a high mountain, and said that after ten days' marching we could reach a big river there where plenty of people are living, and where plenty of cows and horses are; but we had to cross the river for a whole day and then to proceed for six days more in order to reach it. This was the place which we passed on the 29th of December. He did us a great deal of good.

January 14. On Sunday we made ready to proceed, but the chief wished to go bear hunting and wanted to stop here but, because it was fine weather, I went alone with two or three savages. Here two Maquas Indians joined us, as they wanted to go and trade elk skins and satteeu.

January 15. In the morning, two hours before daylight, after taking breakfast with the savages, I proceeded on the voyage, and when it was nearly dark again the savages made a fire in the wood, as they did not want to go farther, and I came about three hours after dark to a hut where I had slept on the 26th of December. It was very cold. I could not make a fire, and was obliged to walk the whole night to keep warm.

January 16. In the morning, three hours before dawn, as the moon rose, I searched for the path, which I found at last; and because I marched so quickly I arrived about nine o'clock on very extensive flat land. After having passed over a high hill I came to a very even footpath that had been made through the snow by the savages who had passed this way with much venison, because they had come home to their castle after hunting; and about ten o'clock I saw the castle and arrived there about two o'clock. Upward of one hundred people came out to welcome me, and showed me a house where I could go. They gave me a white hare to eat that they caught two days ago. They cooked it with walnuts, and they gave me a piece of wheaten bread a savage that had arrived here from Ford Orange on the fifteenth of this month had brought with him. In the evening more than forty fathoms of seawan were divided among them as the last will of the savages that had died of the smallpox. It was divided in the presence of the chief and the nearest friends. It is their custom to divide among the chief and nearest friends. And in the evening the savages gave me two bear skins to cover me, and they brought rushes to lay under my head, and they told us that our kinsmen wanted us very much to come back.

January 17. Jeronimus and Tomassen, with some savages, joined us in this castle, Tenotogehage, and they still were all right; and in the evening I saw another hundred fathoms of

seawan divided among the chief and the friends of the nearest blood.

January 18. We went again to this castle, I should say from this castle on our route, in order to hasten home. In some of the houses we saw more than forty or fifty deer cut in quarters and dried; but they gave us very little of it to eat. After marching half a league we passed through the village of Kawaoge, and after another half league we came to the village of Osquage. The chief, Ohquahoo, received us well, and we waited here for the chief, Arenias, whom we had left in the castle Te Notooge.

January 19. We went as fast as we could in the morning, proceeding on the march; and after going half a league we arrived at the third castle, named Schanadisse, and I looked around in some of the houses to see whether there were any skins. I met nine Onondagas there with skins, that I told to go with me to the second castle, where the chief, Taturot, I should say Tonewerot, was at home, who welcomed us at once, and gave us a very fat piece of venison, which we cooked; and when we were sitting at dinner we received a letter from Marten Gerritsen, brought us by a savage that came in search of us, and was dated January 18. We resolved to proceed at once to the first castle, and to depart on the morrow for Fort Orange, and a good three hours before sunset we arrived at the first castle. We had bread baked for us again, and packed the three beavers we had received from the chief when we had first come here. We slept here this night and ate here.

January 20. In the morning, before daylight, Jeronimus sold his coat for four beaver skins to an old man. We set forth at one hour before daylight, and after marching by guess two leagues the savages pointed to a high mountain where their castle stood nine years before. They had been driven out by the Mahicans, and after that time they did not want to live there. After marching seven or eight leagues we found that the hunters' cabins had been burned, so we were obliged to sleep under the blue sky.

January 21. We proceeded early in the morning, and after a long march we took a wrong path that was the most walked upon; but as the savages knew the paths better than we did they returned with us, and after eleven leagues' marching we arrived, the Lord be praised and thanked, at Fort Orange, January 21, anno 1635.

[Vocabulary of the Maquas.]

Assire or aggaha.....	Cloth.
Atoga.....	Axes.
Atsochta.....	Adze.
Assere.....	Knives.
Assaghe.....	Rapier.
Attochwat.....	Spoons.
Ondach.....	Kettles.
Endat hatste.....	Looking-glass.
Sasaskarisat.....	Scissors.
Kamewari (Garonare?).....	Awls.
Onekoera.....	Seawan, their money.
Tiggeretait.....	Combs.
Catse (Garistats?).....	Bell.
Dedaia witha.....	Shirts or coats.
Nonnewarory.....	Fur caps.
Eytroghe.....	Beads.
Canagosat.....	Scraper.
Caris.....	Stockings.
Achta.....	Shoes.

Names of animals that occur there:

Aque (Gario?).....	Deer.
Aquesados.....	Horse.
Adiron.....	Cat.
Aquidagon.....	Ox.
Senoto wanne.....	Elk.
Ochquari.....	Bear.
Sinite.....	Beaver.
Tawyne.....	Otter.
Eyo.....	Mink.
Senadondo.....	Fox.
Ochquoha.....	Wolf.
Seranda.....	Male cat.
Ichar or sateeni.....	Dog.
Tali.....	Crane.
Kragequa.....	Swans.
Kahanckt.....	Geese.
Schawariwane.....	Turkeys.
Schascari wanasi.....	Eagles.
Tantanege.....	Hares.
Onckwe.....	Men.
Etsi (Eightjen?).....	A man.
Coenhechti (Gahetien?).....	A woman.
Ocstaha.....	An old man.

Odasqueta.....	An old woman.
Sine gechtera.....	A wooper.
Exhechta.....	A lass.
Ragina.....	Father.
Distan.....	Mother.
Cian.....	Child.
Rocksongwa (Ronwaye?).....	Boy.
Canna warori.....	Prostitute.
Omentar.....	Woman in labor.
Ragenonou.....	Uncle.
Rackesie.....	Cousin.
Anochquis.....	Hair.
Anonsi.....	Head.
Ohochta.....	Ears.
Ohonikwa.....	Throat.
Oneyatsa.....	Nose.
Owanisse.....	Tongue.
Onawy.....	Teeth.
Onenta.....	Arm.
Osnotsa.....	Hands.
Onatassa.....	Fingers.
Otich kera.....	Thumb.
Otsira.....	Nails.
Onvare.....	Shoulder blade.
Orochquine.....	Spine.
Ossidan.....	Feet.
Onera.....	Pudenda.
Oeuda.....	Excrements.
Onsaha.....	Vesicle.
Canderes.....	Phallus.
Awahta.....	Testicles.
Casoya.....	Ship, canoe.
Conossade.....	House or hut.
Onega.....	Water.
Oetseira.....	Fire.
Oyente.....	Wood (firewood).
Oscante.....	Bark.
Canadera.....	Bread.
Ceheda (Osaheta?).....	Beans.
Onesta.....	Maize.
Cinsie.....	Fish.
Ghekeront.....	Salmon.
Oware.....	Meat.
Athesera.....	Flour.
Satsori.....	To eat.
Onighira.....	To drink.
Kastten kerreyager.....	Very hungry.
Augustuske.....	Very cold.
Oyendere.....	Very good.
Rockste.....	Friends.
Iachte yendere.....	'Tis no good.
Quane (Kewanea?).....	Great.
Canyewa.....	Small.
Wotstaha.....	Broad.
Cates.....	Thick.
Satewa.....	Alone.
Sagat.....	Doubly.
Awaheya.....	Death.
Aghihi.....	Sick.
Sasnoron.....	Hurry up.
Archoo.....	At once.
Owaetsei.....	At present.
The derri.....	Yesterday.
Jorhani.....	To-morrow.
Careyago.....	The sky.
Karackwero.....	The sun.
Asistock.....	The stars.
Sintho.....	To sow.
Deserentekar.....	Meadow.
Sorsar.....	To raise.
Cana.....	The seed.
Onea.....	Stone.
Canadack or cany.....	Sack or basket.
Canadaghi.....	A castle.
Oyoghi.....	A kill [small river].
Canaderage.....	A river.
Johati.....	A path or road.
Onstara.....	To weep.
Aquayesse.....	To laugh.
Ohonte.....	Grass, vegetables.
Oneggeri.....	Weeds or reeds or straw.
Christitty.....	Iron, copper, or lead.
Onegonsera.....	Red paint.

Cahonsye.....	Black.
Crage.....	White.
Ossivenda.....	Blue.
Endatcondere.....	To paint.
Joddireyo.....	To fight.
Aquinachoo.....	Angry.
Jaghac teroeni.....	Frightened.
Dadeneye.....	To gamble.
Asserie.....	Very strong.
Carente.....	Artful, crooked.
Odossera.....	The bacon.
Keye.....	The fat.
Wistotcera.....	The grease.
Ostie.....	The bone.
Aghidawe.....	To sleep.
Sinekaty.....	Carnal copulation.
Jankurangué.....	Very tired.
Atsochwat.....	Tobacco.
Canonou.....	Pine.
Esteronde.....	The rain.
Waghideria.....	To sweat.
Kayontochke.....	Flat arable land.
Ononda.....	Mountains.
Cayanoghe.....	Islands.
Schasohadee.....	The overside.
Caroo.....	Close by.
Cadadiene.....	To trade.
Daweyate.....	To sit in council.
Agetsiaga.....	A string of beads.
Aquayanderen.....	A chief.
Seronquatse.....	A scoundrel.
Sari wacksi.....	A chatterer.
Onewachten.....	A liar.
Tenon commenyon.....	What do you want?
Sinachkoo.....	To drive the devil away.
Adenocquat.....	To give medicine.
Coenhasaren.....	To cure.
Sategat.....	To light the fire, make fire.
Judicha.....	The fire.
Catteges issewe.....	When will you come again?
Tosenochte.....	I don't know.
Tegenhondi.....	In the spring.
Otteyage.....	In the summer.
Augustuske.....	In the winter.
Katkaste.....	To cook dinner.
Jori.....	It is ready.
Dequoguoha.....	To go hunting.
Osqucha.....	I'll fetch it.
Seyendere u.....	I know him well.
Kristoni asseroni.....	Netherlanders, Germans.
Aderondackx.....	Frenchmen or Englishmen.
Anesagghena.....	Mahicans, or Mohigans.
Torsas.....	To the north.
Kanon newage.....	Manhattan.
Onscat.....	One.
Tiggeni.....	Two.
Asse.....	Three.
Cayere.....	Four.
Wisch.....	Five.
Jayack.....	Six.
Tsadack.....	Seven.
Sategon.....	Eight.
Tyochte.....	Nine.
Oyere.....	Ten.
Tawasse.....	Forty.
Onscat teneyawe.....	Hundred.

END OF "MEGAPOLENSIS ON THE MOHAWKS (Part 1)."

MEGAPOLENSIS ON THE MOHAWKS (Part 2)

A Short Account of the Mohawk Indians, by Reverend Johannes Megapolensis, Jr., 1644. In J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664* (Original Narratives of Early American History). NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

A Short Account of the Mohawk Indians, their Country, Language, Stature, Dress, Religion and Government, thus described and recently, August 26, 1644, sent out of New Netherland, by Johannes Megapolensis the younger, Preacher there.

The Country here is in general like that in Germany. The land is good, and fruitful in everything which supplies human needs, except clothes, linen, woollen, stockings, shoes, etc., which are all dear here. The country is very mountainous, partly soil, partly rocks, and with elevations so exceeding high that they appear to almost touch the clouds. Thereon grow the finest fir trees the eye ever saw. There are also in this country oaks, alders, beeches, elms, willows, etc. In the forests, and here and there along the water side, and on the islands, there grows an abundance of chestnuts, plums, hazel nuts, large walnuts of several sorts, and of as good a taste as in the Netherlands, but they have a somewhat harder shell. The ground on the hills is covered with bushes of bilberries or blueberries; the ground in the flat land near the rivers is covered with strawberries, which grow here so plentifully in the fields, that one can lie down and eat them. Grapevines also grow here naturally in great abundance along the roads, paths, and creeks, and wherever you may turn you find them. I have seen whole pieces of land where vine stood by vine and grew very luxuriantly, climbing to the top of the largest and loftiest trees, and although they are not cultivated, some of the grapes are found to be as good and sweet as in Holland. Here is also a sort of grapes which grow very large, each grape as big as the end of one's finger, or an ordinary plum, and because they are somewhat fleshy and have a thick skin we call them Speck Druyven. If people would cultivate the vines they might have as good wine here as they have in Germany or France. I had myself last harvest a boat-load of grapes and pressed them. As long as the wine was new it tasted better than any French or Rhenish Must, and the color of the grape juice here is so high and red that with one wine-glass full you can color a whole pot of white wine. In the forests is great plenty of deer, which in autumn and early winter are as fat as any Holland cow can be. I have had them with fat more than two fingers thick on the ribs, so that they were nothing else than almost clear fat, and could hardly be eaten. There are also many turkies, as large as in Holland, but in some years less than in others. The year before I came here, there were so many turkies and deer that they came to feed by the houses and hog pens, and were taken by the Indians in such numbers that a deer was sold to the Dutch for a loaf of bread, or a knife, or even for a tobacco pipe; but now one commonly has to give for a good deer six or seven guilders. In the forests here there are also many partridges, heath-hens and pigeons that fly together in thousands, and sometimes ten, twenty, thirty and even forty and fifty are killed at one shot. We have here, too, a great number of all kinds of fowl, swans, geese, ducks, widgeons, teal, brant, which sport upon the river in thousands in the spring of the year, and again in the autumn fly away in flocks, so that in the morning and evening any one may stand ready with his gun before his house and shoot them as they fly past. I have also eaten here several times of elks, which were very fat and tasted much like venison; and besides these profitable beasts we have also in this country lions, bears, wolves, foxes, and particularly very many snakes, which are large and as long as eight, ten, and twelve feet. Among others, there is a sort of snake, which we call rattlesnake, from a certain object which it has back upon its tail, two or three fingers' breadth long, and has ten or twelve joints, and with this it makes a noise like the crickets. Its color is variegated much like our large brindled bulls. These snakes have very sharp teeth in their mouth, and dare to bite at dogs; they make way for neither man nor beast, but fall on and bite them, and their bite is very poisonous, and commonly even deadly too.

As to the soil of this country, that on the mountains is a reddish sand or rock, but in the low flat lands, and along the rivers, and even in the jutting sides of the mountains for an hundred or two hundred paces up, there is often clay. I have been on hills here, as high as a church, to examine the soil, and have found it to be clay. In this ground there appears to be a singular strength and capacity for bearing crops, for a farmer here told me that he had raised fine wheat on one and the same piece of land eleven years successively without ever breaking it up or letting it lie fallow. The butter here is clean and yellow as in Holland. Through this land runs an excellent river, about 500 or 600 paces wide. This river comes out of the Mahakas Country, about four leagues north of us. There is flows between two high rocky banks, and falls from a height equal to that of a church, with such a noise that we can sometimes hear it here with us. In the beginning of June twelve of us took ride to see it. When we came there we saw not only the river falling with such a noise that we could hardly hear one another, but the water boiling and dashing with such force in still weather, that it seemed all the time as if it were raining; and the trees on the hills near by (which are as high as Schoorler Duyn) had their leaves all the time wet exactly as if it rained. The water is as clear as crystal, and as fresh as milk. I and another with me saw there, in clear sunshine, when there was not a cloud in the sky, especially when we stood above upon the rocks, directly opposite where the river falls, in the great abyss, the half of a rainbow, or a quarter of a circle, of the same color with the rainbow in the sky. And when we had gone about ten or twelve rods farther downwards from the fall, along the river, we saw a complete rainbow, like a half circle, appearing clearly in the water just as if it had been in the clouds, and this is always so according to the report of all who have ever been there. In this river is a great plenty of all kinds of fish—pike, eels, perch, lampreys, suckers, cat fish, sun fish, shad, bass, etc. In the spring, in May, the perch are so plenty, that one man with a hook and line will

catch in one hour as many as ten or twelve can eat. My boys have caught in an hour fifty, each a foot long. They have three hooks on the instrument with which they fish, and draw up frequently two or three perch at once. There is also in the river a great plenty of sturgeon, which we Christians do not like, but the Indians eat them greedily. In this river, too, are very beautiful islands, containing ten, twenty, thirty, fifty and seventy morgens of land. The soil is very good, but the worst of it is, that by the melting of the snow, or heavy rains, the river readily overflows and covers that low land. This river ebbs and flows at ordinary low water as far as this place, although it is thirty-six leagues inland from the sea.

As for the temperature in this country, and the seasons of the year, the summers are pretty hot, so that for the most of the time we are obliged to go in just our shirts, and the winters are very cold. The summer continues long, even until All Saints' Day; but when the winter does begin, just as it commonly does in December, it freezes so hard in one night that the ice will bear a man. Even the rivers, in still weather when there is no strong current running, are frozen over in one night, so that on the second day people walk over it. And this freezing continues commonly three months; for although we are situated here in 42 degrees of latitude, it always freezes so. And although there come warm and pleasant days, the thaw does not continue, but it freezes again until March. Then, commonly, the rivers first begin to open, and seldom in February. We have the greatest cold from the northwest, as in Holland from the northeast. The wind here is very seldom east, but almost always south, southwest, northwest, and north; so also the rain.

Our shortest winter days have nine hours sun; in the summer, our longest days are about fifteen hours. We lie so far west of Holland that I judge you are about four hours in advance of us, so that when it is six o'clock in the morning with us it is ten in the forenoon with you, and when it is noon with us, it is four o'clock in the afternoon with you.

The inhabitants of this country are of two kinds: first, Christians—at least so called; second, Indians. Of the Christians I shall say nothing; my design is to speak of the Indians only. These among us are again of two kinds: first, the Mahakinbas, or, as they call themselves, Kajingahaga; second, the Mahakans, otherwise called Agotzagena. These two nations have different languages, which have no affinity with each other, like Dutch and Latin. These people formerly carried on a great war against each other, but since the Mahakanders were subdued by the Mahakobaas, peace has subsisted between them, and the conquered are obliged to bring a yearly contribution to the others. We live among both these kinds of Indians; and when they come to us from their country, or we go to them, they do us every act of friendship. The principal nation of all the savages and Indians hereabouts with which we have the most intercourse, is the Mahakuaas, who have laid all the other Indians near us under contribution. This nation has a very difficult language, and it costs me great pains to learn it, so as to be able to speak and preach in it fluently. There is no Christian here who understands the language thoroughly; those who have lived here long can use a kind of jargon just sufficient to carry on trade with it, but they do not understand the fundamentals of the language. I am making a vocabulary of the Mahakuaas' language, and when I am among them I ask them how things are called; but as they are very stupid, I sometimes cannot make them understand what I want. Moreover when they tell me, one tells me the word in the infinitive mood, another in the indicative; one in the first, another in the second person; one in the present, another in the preterit. So I stand oftentimes and look, but do not know how to put it down. And as they have declensions and conjugations also, and have their augments like the Greeks, I am like one distracted, and frequently cannot tell what to do, and there is no one to set me right. I shall have to speculate in this alone, in order to become in time an Indian grammarian. When I first observed that they pronounced their words so differently, I asked the commissary of the company what it meant. He answered me that he did not know, but imagined they changed their language every two or three years; I argued against this that it could never be that a whole nation should change its language with one consent;—and, although he has been connected with them here these twenty years, he can afford me no assistance.

The people and Indians here in this country are like us Dutchmen in body and stature; some of them have well formed features, bodies and limbs; they all have black hair and eyes, but their skin is yellow. In summer they go naked, having only their private parts covered with a patch. The children and young folks to ten, twelve and fourteen years of age go stark naked. In winter, they hang about them simply an undressed deer or bear or panther skin; or they take some beaver and otter skins, wild cat, raccoon, martin, otter, mink, squirrel or such like skins, which are plenty in this country, and sew some of them to others, until it is a square piece, and that is then a garments for them; or they buy of us Dutchmen two and a half ells of duffel, and that they hang simply about them, just as it was torn off, without sewing it, and walk away with it. They look at themselves constantly, and think they are very fine. They make themselves stockings and also shoes of deer skin, or they take leaves of their corn, and plait them together and use them for shoes. The women, as well as the men, go with their heads bare. The women let their hair grow very long, and tie it together a little, and let it hang down their backs. The men have a long lock of hair hanging down, some on one side of the head, and some on both sides. On the top of their heads they have a streak of hair from the forehead to the neck, about the breadth of three fingers, and this they shorten until it is about two or three fingers long, and it stands right on end like a rock's comb or hog's bristles; on both sides of this cock's comb they cut all the hair short, except the aforesaid locks, and they also leave on the bare places here and there small locks, such as are in sweeping-brushes, and then they are in fine array.

They likewise paint their faces red, blue, etc., and then they look like the Devil himself. They

smear their heads with bear's-grease, which they all carry with them for this purpose in a small basket; they say they do it to make their hair grow better and to prevent their having lice. When they travel, they take with them some of their maize, a wooden bowl, and a spoon; these they pack up and hang on their backs. Whenever they are hungry, they forthwith make a fire and cook; they can get fire by rubbing pieces of wood against one another, and that very quickly.

They generally live without marriage; and if any of them have wives, the marriage continues no longer than seems good to one of the parties, and then they separate, and each takes another partner. I have seen those who had parted, and afterwards lived a long time with others, leave these again, seek their former partners, and again be one pair. And, though they have wives, yet they will not leave off whoring; and if they can sleep with another man's wife, they think it is a brave thing. The women are exceedingly addicted to whoring; they will lie with a man for the value of one, two, or three schillings, and our Dutchmen run after them very much.

The women, when they have been delivered, go about immediately afterwards, and be it ever so cold, they wash themselves and the young child in the river or the snow. They will not lie down (for they say that if they did they would soon die), but keep going about. They are obliged to cut wood, to travel three or four leagues with the child; in short, they walk, they stand, they work, as if they had not lain in, and we cannot see that they suffer any injury by it; and we sometimes try to persuade our wives to lie-in so, and that the way of lying-in in Holland is a mere fiddle-faddle. The men have great authority over their concubines, so that if they do anything which does not please and raises their passion, they take an axe and knock them in the head, and there is an end of it. The women are obliged to prepare the land, to mow, to plant, and do everything; the men do nothing, but hunt, fish, and make war upon their enemies. They are very cruel towards their enemies in time of war; for they first bite off the nails of the fingers of their captives, and cut off some joints, and sometimes even whole fingers; after that, the captives are forced to sing and dance before them stark naked; and finally, they roast their prisoners dead before a slow fire for some days, and then eat them up. The common people eat the arms, buttocks and trunk, but the chiefs eat the head and the heart.

Our Mahakas carry on great wars against the Indians of Canada, on the River Saint Lawrence, and take many captives, and sometimes there are French Christians among them. Last year, our Indians got a great booty from the French on the River Saint Lawrence, and took three Frenchmen, one of whom was a Jesuit. They killed one, but the Jesuit (whose left thumb was cut off, and all the nails and parts of his fingers were bitten,) we released, and sent him to France by a yacht which was going to our country. They spare all the children from ten to twelve years old, and all the women whom they take in war, unless the women are very old, and then they kill them too. Though they are so very cruel to their enemies, they are very friendly to us, and we have no dread of them. We go with them into the woods, we meet with each other, sometimes at an hour or two's walk from any houses, and think no more about it than as if we met with a Christian. They sleep by us, too, in our chambers before our beds. I have had eight at once lying and sleeping upon the floor near my bed, for it is their custom to sleep simply on the bare ground, and to have only a stone or a bit of wood under their heads. In the evening, they go to bed very soon after they have supped; but early in the morning, before day begins to break, they are up again. They are very slovenly and dirty; they wash neither their face nor hands, but let all remain upon their yellow skin, and look like hogs. Their bread is Indian corn beaten to pieces between two stones, of which they make a cake, and bake it in the ashes: their other victuals are venison, turkies, hares, bears, wild cats, their own dogs, etc. The fish they cook just as they get them out of the water without cleansing; also the entrails of deer with all their contents, which they cook a little; and if the intestines are then too tough, they take one end in their mouth, and the other in their hand, and between hand and mouth they separate and eat them. So they do commonly with the flesh, for they carve a little piece and lay it on the fire, as long as one would need to walk from his house to church, and then it is done; and then they bite into it so that the blood runs along their mouths. They can also take a piece of bear's-fat as large as two fists, and eat it clear without bread or anything else. It is natural to them to have no bears; not one in an hundred has any hair about his mouth.

They have also naturally a very high opinion of themselves; they say, Ihy Othkon, ("I am the Devil") by which they mean that they are superior folks. In order to praise themselves and their people, whenever we tell them they are very expert at catching deer, or doing this and that, they say, Tkoschs ko, aguweechon Kajingahaga kouaane Jountuckcha Othkon; that is, "Really all the Mohawks are very cunning devils." They make their houses of the bark of trees, very close and warm, and kindle their fire in the middle of them. They also make of the peeling and bark of trees, canoes or small boats, which will carry four, five and six persons. In like manner they hollow out trees, and use them for boats, some of which are very large. I have several times sat and sailed with ten, twelve and fourteen persons in one of these hollowed logs. We have in our colony a wooden canoe obtained from the Indians, which will easily carry two hundred schepels of wheat. Their weapons in war were formerly a bow and arrow, with a stone axe and mallet; but now they get from our people guns, swords, iron axes and mallets. Their money consists of certain little bones, made of shells or cockles, which are found on the sea-beach; a hole is drilled through the middle of the little bones, and these they string upon thread, or they make of them belts as broad as a hand, or broader, and hang them on their necks, or around their bodies. They have also several holes in their ears, and there they likewise hang some. They value these little bones as highly as many Christians do gold, silver and pearls; but they do not like our money, and esteem it no better than iron. I once showed one of their chiefs a rix-dollar; he asked how much it

was worth among the Christians; and when I told him, he laughed exceedingly at us, saying we were fools to value a piece of iron so highly; and if he had such money, he would throw it into the river. They place their dead upright in holes, and do not lay them down, and then they throw some trees and wood on the grave, or enclose it with palisades. They have their set times for going to catch fish, bears, panthers, beavers and eels. In the spring, they catch vast quantities of shad and lampreys, which are exceedingly large here; they lay them on the bark of trees in the sun, and dry them thoroughly hard, and then put them in notastens, or bags, which they plait from hemp which grows wild here, and keep the fish till winter. When their corn is ripe, they take it from the ears, open deep pits, and preserve it in these the whole winter. They can also make nets and seines in their fashion; and when they want to fish with seines, ten or twelve men will go together and help each other, all of whom own the seine in common.

They are entire strangers to all religion, but they have a Tharonhijouaagon, (whom they also otherwise call Athzooockkuatoriaho,) that is, a Genius, whom they esteem in the place of God; but they do not serve him or make offerings to him. They worship and present offerings to the Devil, whom they call Otskon, or Aireskuoni. If they have any bad luck in war, they catch a bear, which they cut in pieces, and roast, and that they offer up to their Aireskuoni, saying in substance, they following words: "Oh! great and mighty Aireskuoni, we confess that we have offended against thee, inasmuch as we have not killed and eaten our captive enemies;—forgive us this. We promise that we will kill and eat all the captives we shall hereafter take as certainly as we have killed, and now eat this bear." Also when the weather is very hot, and there comes a cooling breeze, they cry out directly, Asorunusi, asorunusi, Otskon aworouhsi reinnuha; that is, "I thank thee, I thank thee, devil, I thank thee, little uncle!" If they are sick, or have a pain or soreness anywhere in their limbs, and I ask them what ails them they say that the Devil sits in their body, or in the sore places, and bites them there; so that they attribute to the Devil at once the accidents which befall them; they have otherwise no religion. When we pray they laugh at us. Some of them despise it entirely; and some, when we tell them what we do when we pray, stand astonished. When we deliver a sermon, sometimes ten or twelve of them, more or less, will attend, each having a long tobacco pipe, made by himself, in his mouth, and will stand awhile and look, and afterwards ask me what I am doing and what I want, that I stand there alone and make so many words, while none of the rest may speak. I tell them that I am admonishing the Christians, that they must not steal, nor commit lewdness, nor get drunk, nor commit murder, and that they too ought not to do these things; and that I intend in process of time to preach the same to them and come to them in their own country and castles (about three days' journey from here, further inland), when I am acquainted with their language. Then they say I do well to teach the Christians; but immediately add, Diatennon jawij Assirioni, hagiouisk, that is, "Why do so many Christians do these things?" They call us Assirioni, that is, cloth-makers, or Charistooni, that is, iron-workers, because our people first brought cloth and iron among them.

They will not come into a house where there is a menstruous woman, nor eat with her. No woman may touch their snares with which they catch deer, for they say the deer can scent it.

The other day an old woman came to our house, and told my people that her forefathers had told her "that Tharonhij-Jagon, that is, God, once went out walking with his brother, and a dispute arose between them, and God killed his brother." I suppose this fable took its rise from Cain and Abel. They have a droll theory of the Creation, for they think that a pregnant woman fell down from heaven, and that a tortoise, (tortoises are plenty and large here, in this country, two, three and four feet long, some with two heads, very mischievous and addicted to biting) took this pregnant woman on its back, because every place was covered with water; and that the woman sat upon the tortoise, groped with her hands in the water, and scraped together some of the earth, whence it finally happened that the earth was raised above the water. They think that there are more worlds than one, and that we came from another world.

The Mohawk Indians are divided into three tribes, which are called Ochkari, Aanaware, Oknaho, that is, the Bear, the Tortoise and the Wolf. Of these, the Tortoise is the greatest and most prominent; and they boast that they are the oldest descendants of the woman before mentioned. These have made a fort of palisades, and they call their castle Asserue. Those of the Bear are the next to these, and their castle is called by them Banagiro. The last are a progeny of these, and their castle is called Thenondiogo. These Indian tribes each carry the beast after which they are named (as the arms in their banner) when they go to war against their enemies, as for a sign of their own bravery. Lately one of their chiefs came to me and presented me with a beaver, an otter, and some cloth he had stolen from the French, which I must accept as a token of good fellowship. When he opened his budget he had in it a dried head of a bear, with grinning teeth. I asked him what that meant? He answered me that he fastened it upon his left shoulder by the side of his head, and that then he was the devil, who cared for nothing, and did not fear any thing.

The government among them consists of the oldest, the most intelligent, the most eloquent and most warlike men. These commonly resolve, and then the young and warlike men execute. But if the common people do not approve of the resolution, it is left entirely to the judgment of the mob. The chiefs are generally the poorest among them, for instead of their receiving from the common people as among Christians, they are obliged to give to the mob; especially when any one is deceased; and if they take any prisoners they present them to that family of which one has been killed, and the prisoner is then adopted by the family into the place of the deceased person. There is no punishment here for murder and other villainies, but every one is his own avenger.

The friends of the deceased revenge themselves upon the murderer until peace is made by presents to the next of kin. But although they are so cruel, and live without laws or any punishments for evil doers, yet there are not half so many villainies or murders committed amongst them as amongst Christians; so that I oftentimes think with astonishment upon all the murders committed in the Fatherland, notwithstanding their severe laws and heavy penalties. These Indians, though they live without laws, or fear of punishment, do not (at least, they very seldom) kill people, unless it may be in a great passion, or a hand-to-hand fight. Wherefore we go wholly unconcerned along with the Indians and meet each other an hour's walk off in the woods, without doing any harm to one another.

JOHANNES MEGAPOLENSIS.

END OF "MEGAPOLENSIS ON THE MOHAWKS (Part 2)."

LETTER AND NARRATIVE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES

Letter and Narrative of Father Isaac Jogues, 1643, 1645. In J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (Original Narratives of Early American History)*. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

Letter of Father Isaac Jogues to His Superior in Canada, 1643.

I STARTED the very day of the Feast of Our Blessed Father Saint Ignatius from the village where I was captive, in order to follow and accompany some Iroquois who were going away, first for trade, then for fishing. Having accomplished their little traffic, they stopped at a place seven or eight leagues below a settlement of the Dutch, which is located on a river where we carried on our fishing. While we were setting snares for the fish, there came a rumor that a squad of Iroquois, returned from pursuit of the Hurons, had killed five or six on the spot, and taken four prisoners, two of whom had been already burned in our village, with cruelties extraordinary. At this news, my heart was pierced through with a most bitter and sharp pain, because I had not seen, or consoled, or baptized those poor victims. Consequently, fearing lest some other like thing should happen in my absence, I said to a good old woman—who, by reason of her age, and the care that she had for me, and the compassion that she felt toward me, called me her nephew, and I called her my aunt—I then said to her: "My aunt, I would much like to return to our cabin; I grow very weary here." It was not that I expected more ease and less pain in our village, where I suffered a continual martyrdom, being constrained to see with my eyes the horrible cruelties which are practised there; but my heart could not endure the death of any man without my procuring him holy baptism. That good woman said to me: "Go then, my nephew, since thou art weary here; take something to eat on the way." I embarked in the first canoe that was going up to the village, always conducted and always accompanied by the Iroquois. Having arrived, as we did, in the settlement of the Dutch, through which it was necessary for us to pass, I learn that our whole village is excited against the French, and that only my return is awaited, for them to burn us. Now for the cause of such news. Among several bands of Iroquois, who had gone to war against the French, the Algonquins and the Hurons, there was one which took the resolution to go round about Richelieu, in order to spy on the French and the savages, their allies. Certain Huron of this band, taken by the Iroquois, and settled among them, came to ask me for letters, in order to carry them to the French, hoping, perhaps, to surprise some one of them by this bait; but, as I doubted not that our French would be on their guard, and as I saw, moreover, that it was important that I should give them some warning of the designs, the arms and the treachery of our enemies, I found means to secure a bit of paper in order to write to them, the Dutch according me this charity. I knew very well the dangers to which I was exposing myself; I was not ignorant that, if any misfortune happened to those warriors, they would make me responsible therefor, and would blame my letters for it. I anticipated my death; but it seemed to me pleasant and agreeable, employed for the public good, and for the consolation of our French and of the poor savages who listen to the word of Our Lord. My heart was seized with no dread at the sight of all that might happen therefrom, since it was a matter of the glory of God; I accordingly gave my letter to that young warrior, who did not return. The story which his comrades have brought back says that he carried it to the fort of Richelieu, and that, as soon as the French had seen it, they fired the cannon upon them. This frightened them so that the greater part fled, all naked, abandoning one of their canoes, in which there were three arquebuses, powder and lead, and some other baggage. These tidings being brought into the village, they clamor aloud that my letters have caused them to be treated like that; the rumor of it spreads everywhere; it comes

even to my ears. They reproach me that I have done this evil deed; they speak only of burning me; and, if I had chanced to be in the village at the return of those warriors, fire, rage and cruelty would have taken my life. For climax of misfortune, another troop—coming back from Montreal, where they had set ambushes for the French—said that one of their men had been killed, and two others wounded. Each one held me guilty of these adverse encounters; they were fairly mad with rage, awaiting me with impatience. I listened to all these rumors, offering myself without reserve to our Lord, and committing myself in all and through all to His most holy will. The captain of the Dutch settlement where we were, not being ignorant of the evil design of those barbarians, and knowing, moreover, that Monsieur the Chevalier de Montmagny had prevented the savages of New France from coming to kill some Dutch, disclosed to me means for escape. "Yonder," said he to me, "is a vessel at anchor, which will sail in a few days; enter into it secretly. It is going first to Virginia, and thence it will carry you to Bordeaux or to La Rochelle, where it is to land." Having thanked him, with much regard for his courtesy, I tell him that the Iroquois, probably suspecting that some one had favored my retreat, might cause some damages to his people. "No, no," he answers, "fear nothing; this opportunity is favorable; embark; you will never find a more certain way to escape." My heart remained perplexed at these words, wondering if it were not expedient for the greater glory of our Lord that I expose myself to the danger of the fire and to the fury of those barbarians, in order to aid in the salvation of some soul. I said to him then: "Monsieur, the affair seems to me of such importance that I cannot answer you at once; give me, if you please, the night to think of it. I will commend it to our Lord; I will examine the arguments on both sides; and to-morrow morning I will tell you my final resolution." He granted me my request with astonishment; I spent the night in prayers, greatly beseeching our Lord that he should not allow me to reach a conclusion by myself; that he should give me light, in order to know His most holy will; that in all and through all I wished to follow it, even to the extent of being burned at a slow fire. The reasons which might keep me in the country were consideration for the French and for the Savages; I felt love for them, and a great desire to assist them, insomuch that I had resolved to spend the remainder of my days in that captivity, for their salvation; but I saw the face of affairs quite changed.

In the first place, as regarded our three Frenchmen, led captive into the country as well as I: one of them, named Rene Goupil, had already been murdered at my feet; this young man had the purity of an angel. Henry, whom they had taken at Mont-Real, had fled into the woods. While he was looking at the cruelties which were practised upon two poor Hurons, roasted at a slow fire, some Iroquois told him that he would receive the same treatment, and I, too, when I should return; these threats made him resolve rather to plunge into the danger of dying from hunger in the woods, or of being devoured by some wild beast, than to endure the torments which these half-demons inflicted. It was already seven days since he had disappeared. As for Guillaume Cousture, I saw scarcely any further way of aiding him, for they had placed him in a village far from the one where I was; and the savages so occupied it on the hither side of that place, that I could no longer meet him. Add that he himself had addressed me in these words: "My Father, try to escape; as soon as I shall see you no more, I shall find the means to get away. You well know that I stay in this captivity only for the love of you; make, then, your efforts to escape, for I cannot think of my liberty and of my life unless I see you in safety." Furthermore, this good youth had been given to an old man, who assured me that he would allow him to go in peace, if I could obtain my deliverance; consequently I saw no further reason which obliged me to remain on account of the French.

As for the savages, I was without power and beyond hope of being able to instruct them; for the whole country was so irritated against me that I found no more any opening to speak to them, or to win them; and the Algonquins and the Hurons were constrained to withdraw from me, as from a victim destined to the fire, for fear of sharing in the hatred and rage which the Iroquois felt against me. I realized, moreover, that I had some acquaintance with their language; that I knew their country and their strength; that I could perhaps better procure their salvation by other ways than by remaining among them. It came to my mind that all this knowledge would die with me, if I did not escape. These wretches had so little inclination to deliver us, that they committed a treachery against the law and the custom of all these nations. Savage from the country of the Sokokiois, allies of the Iroquois, having been seized by the upper Algonquins and taken a prisoner to the Three Rivers, or to Kebec, was delivered and set at liberty by the mediation of Monsieur the Governor of New France, at the solicitation of the Fathers. This good savage, seeing that the French had saved his life, sent in the month of April, some fine presents, to the end that they should deliver at least one of the French. The Iroquois retained the presents, without setting one of them at liberty, which treachery is perhaps unexampled among these peoples, for they inviolably observe this law, that whoever touches or accepts the present which is made to him, is bound to fulfil what is asked of him through that present. This is why, when they they are unwilling to grant what is desired, they send back the presents or make others in place of them. But to return to my subject: having weighed before God, with all the impartiality in my power, the reasons which inclined me to remain among those barbarians or to leave them, I believed that our Lord would be better pleased if I should take the opportunity to escape. Daylight having come, I went to greet Monsieur the Dutch Governor, and declared to him the opinions that I had adopted before God. He summons the chief men of the ship, signifies to them his intentions, and exhorts them to receive me, and to keep me concealed—in a word, to convey me back to Europe. They answer that, if I can once set foot in their vessel, I am in safety; that I shall not leave it until I reach Bordeaux or La Rochelle. "Well, then," the Governor said to me, "return with the savages, and toward the evening, or in the night, steal away softly and move toward the river; you will find there a little boat which I will have kept all ready to carry you

secretly to the ship."

After very humbly returning thanks to all those gentlemen, I withdrew from the Dutch, in order better to conceal my design. Toward evening, I retired with ten or twelve Iroquois into a barn, where we passed the night. Before lying down, I went out of that place, to see in what quarter I might most easily escape. The dogs of the Dutch, being then untied, run up to me; one of them, large and powerful, flings himself upon my leg, which is bare, and seriously injures it. I return immediately to the barn; the Iroquois close it securely and, the better to guard me, come to lie down beside me, especially a certain man who had been charged to watch me. Seeing myself beset with those evil creatures, and the barn well closed, and surrounded with dogs, which would betray me if I essayed to go out, I almost believed that I could not escape. I complained quietly to my God, because, having given me the idea of escaping, *Concluserat vias meas lapidibus quadris, et in loco spatioso pedes meos.* He was stopping up the ways and paths of it. I spent also that second night without sleeping; the day approaching, I heard the cocks crow. Soon afterward, a servant of the Dutch farmer who had lodged us in his barn, having entered it by some door or other, I accosted him softly, and made signs to him (for I did not understand his Flemish), that he should prevent the dogs from yelping. He goes out at once, and I after him, having previously taken all my belongings, which consisted of a little Office of the Virgin, of a little Gerson, and a wooden Cross that I had made for myself, in order to preserve the memory of the sufferings of my Savior. Being outside of the barn, without having made any noise or awakened my guards, I cross over a fence which confined the enclosure about the house; I run straight to the river where the ship was—this is all the service that my leg, much wounded, could render me; for there was surely a good quarter of a league of road to make. I found the boat as they had told me, but, the water having subsided, it was aground. I push it, in order to set it afloat; not being able to effect this, on account of its weight, I call to the ship, that they bring the skiff to ferry me, but no news. I know not whether they heard me; at all events no one appeared. The daylight meanwhile was beginning to discover to the Iroquois the theft that I was making of myself; I feared that they might surprise me in this innocent misdemeanor. Weary of shouting, I return to the boat; I pray God to increase my strength; I do so well, turning it end for end, and push it so hard that I get it to the water. Having made it float, I jump into it, and go all alone to the ship, where I go on board without being discovered by any Iroquois. They lodge me forthwith down in the hold; and in order to conceal me they put a great chest over the hatchway. I was two days and two nights in the belly of that vessel, with such discomfort that I thought I would suffocate and die with the stench. I remembered then poor Jonas, and I prayed our Lord, *Ne fugerem a facie Domini,* that I might not hide myself before his face, and that I might not withdraw far from his wishes; but on the contrary, *infatuaret omnia consilia quae non essent ad suam gloriam,* I prayed him to overthrow all the counsels which should not tend to this glory, and to detain me in the country of those infidels, if he did not approve my retreat and my flight. The second night of my voluntary prison, the minister of the Dutch came to tell me that the Iroquois had indeed made some disturbance, and that the Dutch inhabitants of the country were afraid that they would set fire to their houses or kill their cattle; they have reason to fear them, since they have armed them with good arquebuses. To that I answer: *Si propter me orta est tempestas, projicite me in mare:* "If the storm has risen on my account, I am ready to appease it by losing my life;" I had never the wish to escape to the prejudice of the least man of their settlement. Finally, it was necessary to leave my cavern; all the mariners were offended at this, saying that the promise of security had been given me in case I could set foot in the ship, and that I was withdrawn at the moment when it would be requisite to bring me thither if I were not there; that I had put myself in peril of life by escaping upon their words; that it must needs be kept, whatever the cost. I begged that I be allowed to go forth, since the captain who had disclosed to me the way of my flight was asking for me. I went to find him in his house, where he kept me concealed; these goings and these comings having occurred by night, I was not yet discovered. I might indeed have alleged some reasons in all these encounters; but it was not for me to speak in my own cause, but rather to follow the orders of others, to which I submitted with good heart. Finally, the captain told me that it was necessary to yield quietly to the storm, and wait until the minds of the savages should be pacified; and that every one was of this opinion. So there I was, a voluntary prisoner in his house, from which I am writing back to you the present letter. And if you ask my thoughts in all these adventures, I will tell you.

First, that that ship which had wished to save my life, sailed without me.

Secondly, if our Lord do not protect me in a manner well-nigh miraculous, the savages, who go and come here at every moment, will discover me; and if ever they convince themselves that I have not gone away, it will be necessary to return into their hands. Now if they had such a rage against me before my flight, what treatment will they inflict on me, seeing me fallen back into their power? I shall not die a common death; the fire, their rage, and the cruelties which they invent, will tear away my life. God be blessed forever. We are incessantly in the bosom of His divine and always adorable providence. *Vestri capilli capitis numerati sunt; nolite timere; nultis passeribus meliores estis vos quorum unus non cadet super terram sine patre vestro;* he who has care for the little birds of the air does not cast us into oblivion. It is already twelve days that I have been concealed; it is quite improbable that misfortune will reach me.

In the third place, you see the great need that we have of your prayers and of the holy Sacrifices of all our Fathers; procure us this alms everywhere, *ut reddat me Dominus idoneum ad se amandum, fortem ad patiendum, constantem ad perseverandum in suo amore, et servitio,* to the end that God may render me fit and well disposed to love him; that he may render me strong

and courageous to suffer and to endure; and that he may give me a noble constancy to persevere in his love and in his service—this is what I would desire above all, together with a little New Testament from Europe. Pray for these poor nations which burn and devour one another, that at last they may come to the knowledge of their Creator, in order to render to Him the tribute of their love. Memor sum vestri in vinculis meis; I do not forget you; my captivity cannot fetter my memory. I am, heartily and with affection, etc.

From Renselaerivich, this 30th of August, 1643.

END OF "LETTER AND NARRATIVE OF FATHER ISAAC JOGUES."

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK NARRATIVES OF NEW NETHERLAND, 1609-1664 ***

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