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WOODSTOCK.

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

PART PLAYED BY THE ST. JOHN RIVER INDIANS.
(28.)

Soon after the beginning of the Revolutionary war, the congress of Massachusetts made special efforts to obtain the assistance of the St. John river Indians. The latter were disposed to remain neutral, but this did not suit the purpose of the Americans. It cannot be said, in view of all the circumstances of the case, that the conduct of the government of Massachusetts and its agents redounds to their honor. The New England colonies knew all too well by experience the horrors of savage warfare, and the attempt to incite the Maliseets to destroy the loyal settlements of Nova Scotia seems worthy of severe censure. In order to secure the Indians their cupidities were excited by promises of large presents while at the same time the conduct and designs of the English were grossly misrepresented.

The style of argument used to induce the simple natives from their allegiance to the King of England is seen in the letter addressed to them by the congress of Massachusetts on May 15th, 1775, from which the following extracts are taken:—"The ministry of Great Britain have laid deep plots to take away our liberty and your liberty; they want to get all our money and make us pay it to them when they never earn it; to make you and us their servants and let us have nothing to eat, drink or wear but what they say we shall, and prevent us from having guns and powder to use and kill our deer and wolves and other game, or to send to you to kill your game with, and to get skins and fur to trade with us for what you want. But we hope soon to supply you with both guns and powder of our own making. . . . We want to know what you our good brothers want from us of clothing or warlike stores, and we will supply you as fast as we can. We will do all for you we can and fight to save you at any time. . . . The Indians at Stockbridge all join with us and some of their men have listed as soldiers and we have given them that listed each one a blanket and a ribbon and they will be paid when they are from home in the service, and if any of you are willing to list we shall do the same for you. . . . Brothers, if you will let Mr. John Preble know what things you want he will take care to inform us and we will do the best for you we can."

General Washington, in February, 1796, wrote letters to the chiefs of the Micmacs and Maliseets, accompanied by belts of wampum after the most approved Indian fashion, representing the British government as enemies of the Indians and picturing the advantages the latter would gain by siding with the Americans in the war.

The most active agent the Americans had at this time was one John Allan who formerly resided in the eastern part of what is now Westmorland county on the road from Fort Cumberland to Baie Verte. Although an exceedingly disloyal subject of old King George, he had been a representative of the county of Cumberland in the Nova Scotia house of assembly. He carried on an extensive trade with the Indians in connection with which he had occasion to visit nearly all their villages as far west as the Penobscot river.

In consequence of the inducements held out by Allan and other American agents, Pierre Tomah and Ambrose St. Aubin, chiefs of the St. John river, went to the trading post at Penobscot in September, 1775, and after some negotiation made an agreement with the Americans on behalf of their tribe, in which they affirmed, "We heartily join with our brethren the Penobscot Indians in everything that they have or shall agree with our brethren of the colony of Massachusetts, and are resolved to stand together and oppose the people of Old England that are endeavoring to take your's and our lands and liberties from us. . . . We have no where to look to for assistance but to you and we desire that you will help us to a priest that he may pray with us to God Almighty. We have no place to go to but Penobscot for support, and we desire you would provide ammunition, provisions and goods for us there, and we will come in there and give you our furs and skins and take our support from you in return and will be thankful to you for your kindness."

The shrewdness of the Indians is displayed in the last sentence. They could have still carried on trade with Simonds and White and other settlers on the river St. John, but the fact was that most of the Indians were "over head and ears" in debt to these traders and they saw in the proposal to trade at Penobscot an opportunity to get rid of the old score and start afresh.

About this time the Governor of Nova Scotia sent Col Arthur Gould to the river St. John to engage the Indians either to remain neutral or to assist in the defence of Nova Scotia. His visit was not without effect and the savages were inclined to withdraw their promised support from the Americans. However when Major Francis Shaw arrived the next spring from Boston he succeeded in persuading them to confirm the agreement made by their chiefs at Penobscot and they entered into a formal treaty with him. Shortly after, Pierre Tomah, accompanied by a delegation of warriors proceeded to Washington's headquarters on the Delaware. They were cordially welcomed and entertained with that generous hospitality so dear to the savage heart. Desirous of confirming the Indians in their support Washington wrote the following letter:—"Brothers of the St. John's tribe:—It gave me great pleasure to hear by Major Shaw, that you kept the Chain of Friendship which I sent you in February last from Cambridge, bright and unbroken. I am glad to hear you have made a Treaty of Peace with your brothers and neighbors of the Massachusetts Bay, who have agreeable to your desire established a Truck House at St. John's out of which they will supply you with everything you want and take your furs in return.

My good friend and Brother Gov. Pierre Tommah and the warriors that came with him shall be taken good care of, and when they want to return home, they and our Brothers

of Penobscot shall be furnished with everything necessary for their journey.

Brothers, I have one thing more to say to you; our enemy the king of Great Britain, endeavored to stir up all the Indians from Canada to South Carolina against us. But our Brethren of the Six Nations and their allies the Shawnese and Delawares would not listen to the advice but kept fast hold of our ancient covenant chain. The Cherokees and Southern tribes were foolish enough to hearken to them and to take up the hatchet against us, upon which our warriors went into their country, burnt their houses, destroyed their corn and obliged them to sue for peace and to give hostages for their future good behaviour. Never let the king's wicked counsellors turn your hearts against me and your brethren of this country, but bear in mind what I told you last February and what I tell you now.

In token of my friendship for you I send you this from my army on the banks of the Great River Delaware this 24th day of December 1776. G. WASHINGTON."

The majority of the old inhabitants on the St. John river, at Sheffield Mauderville and vicinity, at this time sympathized with their Massachusetts kinsmen. This is clearly shown by the resolutions passed at a meeting they held May 14th 1776, one of which states it was their desire to submit themselves to the government of Massachusetts and that that they were ready with their lives and fortunes to share with the Americans in the present struggle however providence might order it. The Mauderville settlers in transmitting their resolves to the Massachusetts Congress stated that General Washington's letter had set the Indians on fire; they were plundering all the people they suspected of being Tories and it was feared after that was done others might share the same fate, they deemed it necessary therefore that some person of consequence should be sent among them.

In July 1776 a number of Maliseet chiefs held a conference with representatives of the Massachusetts congress on which occasion Ambrose St. Aubin displayed as his credentials Washington's letter to his tribe and the letter received from the congress before referred to; he then delivered up to the Americans the parchment copy of the treaty made at Halifax in 1760 in which the Indians had pledged their allegiance to the King of England in as ample manner as they had formerly done to the King of France.

The following November sixteen Indians from the St John river joined an expedition against Fort Cumberland (at the head of the Bay of Fundy) the leader of which was one Jonathan Eddy. The expedition resulted disastrously to the Americans and the party after some fighting was compelled to beat a precipitous retreat to the river St. John. In an account of the affair, written at Mauderville Jan. 5th 1777, Jonathan Eddy commends the Indians and says they were exceedingly hearty in the cause, sixteen of them together with Governor Ambrose had accompanied the expedition and behaved most gallantly. He adds that they were now a little uneasy because no goods had arrived from Boston agreeable to the late treaty with them which was ratified by Col. Shaw in behalf of the States.

Of the sixteen Indians who went against Fort Cumberland at least five were living near Woodstock in 1788. Their names as written by Eddy were Att Juennis, Tomo Squatapan, Pierre Tomer, Joseph Tomer and Bazil. The two Tomers and Tomo Squatapan (or Thomas Quodpan, as Rev. Frederick Dibblee writes his name) were living in 1790 at the mouth of the Becagumec. Bazil died at Woodstock in 1789.

W. O. RAYMOND.

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Suez Canal.

According to Washington dispatches not one mercantile ship flying the United States flag entered the Suez canal last year, although many cargoes destined for America passed through in British ships. During the year 1894 the number of vessels passing through the canal was 3,350, being ten in excess of the preceding year, and the receipts from tolls amounted to almost \$15,000,000. The number of ships using the canal in 1874, 20 years ago, was only 1,264. These figures, compared with those of the present day, show how completely the canal has revolutionized the traffic between the far east and Europe.—*Railway Review, Chicago.*

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PHOTOGRAPH

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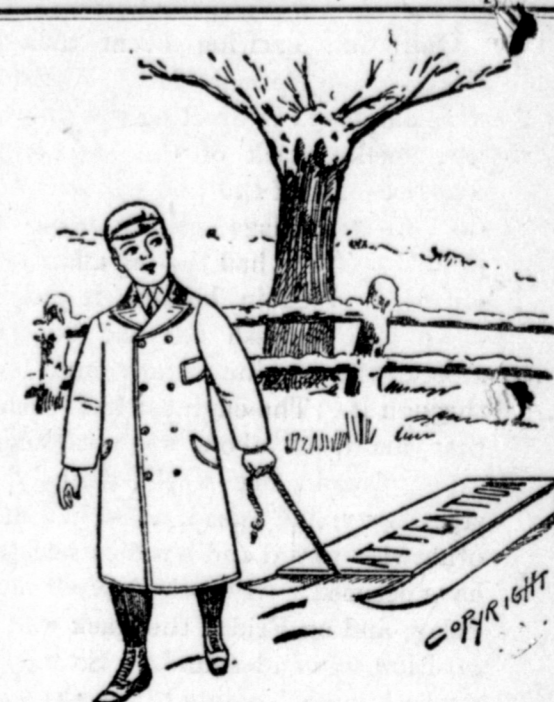
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