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# The Kahnawake Iroquois and the Lower-Canadian Rebellions, 1837-1838.

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## ABSTRACT

Drawing on archival data and theoretical reflections on interest groups and collective identity, this thesis aims to understand why the Kahnawake Iroquois cooperated with the British Crown during the Lower-Canadian Rebellions of 1837-1838. It is suggested that the Iroquois' decision to intervene was prompted by their own interpretations of the events and of their complex relationships with the British, neighboring settlers, and the Patriotes. It is argued that the resulting collective action was intended to defend interests such as government annuities, land, and livelihood. An analysis of the cultural, social, economic and political contexts further reveals that by intervening in the crisis, the Iroquois intended to protect land and presents because they were powerful symbols around which they collectively defined themselves as "Indians", despite the presence of internal factions. To conclude, it is argued that Kahnawake Iroquois did not intervene in the Rebellions only to defend economic interests, but, more fundamentally, to express and protect their collective identity.



## RÉSUMÉ

S'inspirant de sources archivistiques ainsi que de concepts théoriques tels que le groupe d'intérêt et l'identité collective, ce mémoire de maîtrise à pour objectif de mieux comprendre les raisons qui ont amené les Iroquois de Kahnawake à collaborer avec les autorités britanniques au cours des Rébellions de 1837-1838. La prise de décision des Iroquois semble avoir été basée sur leur propres interprétations des événements et de leurs relations avec les autorités coloniales, les villages voisins et les Patriotes. Une analyse des contextes culturels, sociaux, économiques et politiques suggère que l'intervention des Iroquois avait pour but de défendre des intérêts collectifs tels que les cadeaux annuels et le territoire. De tels intérêts avaient une valeur symbolique importante comme représentant une identité "indienne" et "de Kahnawake", et ce, malgré la présence de factions internes dans la communauté. À Enfin, nous proposons que les Iroquois de Kahnawake ont décidé d'intervenir au cours des Rébellions non seulement afin de protéger des intérêts d'ordre économiques mais, aussi, afin d'exprimer et de défendre une identité collective.

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# - INTRODUCTION -

Armed insurrections and massive population uprisings have been fairly rare in Canadian history. Yet in 1837 and 1838, Great Britain's North American colonies came as close to revolution as they ever would when residents of both Lower and Upper Canada mounted relatively separate armed rebellions against authorities of the British Crown.

Despite the considerable attention the "Patriotes' Rebellions of 1837-1838" have received by historians, political scientists and sociologists,[1] scholarly discussions have not rigorously deciphered the specific role played by the Iroquois community of Kahnawake in 1837-38. Situated between the Montréal and Lachine British-Army headquarters and the Patriote-friendly Châteauguay River Valley, the Kahnawake Iroquois rapidly found a place in this context of civil war and revolutionary crisis.[2]

Existing works have discussed to some extent the involvement of the Iroquois on three different occasions during which they intervened by cooperating with the British:

- on 13 December 1837, about 150 Kahnawake men quickly responded to a government request to mobilize in Lachine for the purpose of repelling a feared attack by Patriotes;
- on 4 November 1838, the Iroquois apprehended seventy-five armed Patriotes who had come to Kahnawake in a failed attempt to borrow arms and obtain Native support;
- from 11 to 16 November 1838, 200 Kahnawake men joined volunteers and soldiers to wage battle on Patriotes thought to be hidden in Châteauguay. Finding the place deserted, British soldiers and Iroquois warriors proceeded to pillage and plunder.

These three events constitute the "barebones" of the sequence of events involving Kahnawake. It is interesting to note that most historical studies of the Rebellions have failed to push the issue of Iroquois involvement much further. Specifically, no one has considered Kahnawake's point of view during the Rebellions nor have all actions undertaken by the Iroquois been scrutinized rigorously. Until now, investigators have failed to take on an insider's perspective of the Rebellions as they were lived and assessed by the Iroquois. Further, when attempts have been made to explore the underlying causes of Kahnawake's involvement, interpretive research has been quite limited. There has been a generalized tendency to essentialize "the loyal Kahnawake Indians" as a group of loyal Indians simply acting in defense of the Crown.

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[1] For more information, please refer to historical studies by Bernard (1996), Ryerson (1968), Creighton (1937), Greer (1993; 1995), Ouellet (1972; 1980), Séguin (1973; 1983), and Senior (1985). For important analytical discussions and historiographical essays, please see Bernard (1983a), Bernier et Salée (1986), Dechêne (1982), Greer (1995), Ouellet (1985) and Roy (1983).

[2] As with scholars such as Bernard, Ouellet, Greer, and Séguin, I will use the term "Rebellion". Also, because a second uprising followed the one of 1837, the plural "Rebellions" is preferred.

Such limited views prompt the need for further investigation. In seeking to view events from Iroquois perspectives, the following questions are raised: why did the people of Kahnawake intervene? Did such action simply flow from an allegiance to the British? To what extent did collective interests shape Iroquois actions? Were some people trying to defend their own interests? To what extent did the Iroquois' own awareness of the Rebellions and their relations with the Patriotes model their decision to act? Contrary to previous studies, this thesis hopes to show that the actions of the Kahnawake people were not necessarily grounded in an outright allegiance to the British Crown. Indeed, it is possible that a wide and complex mixture of socio-economic, political, and cultural factors shaped the behavior of the community, in general, and of specific Kahnawake people. For instance, at the time, the Indian Department was seeking ways to reduce its expenses by curtailing annuities it had been providing to Native people. By collaborating with the Crown, the people of Kahnawake may have been hoping to maintain the flow of annual presents, and thus protect interests which they felt belonged to them as "Indians". Also, in 1837-38, perhaps the relations between Kahnawake and its French-Canadian neighbors as well as between the former and the Patriotes were marked by mutual mistrust and suspicion. To what extent did these relationships shape Kahnawake's intervention?

Given the relative importance of factionalism in Iroquois political culture, the village of Kahnawake may have experienced internal disputes at the time of the Rebellions. To what extent did the relationships that grew out of these tensions shape individual interests and ambitions? Conversely, various studies have suggested that despite the common presence of divisive tendencies within Native villages, a community's sense of collective identity can prevail in the face of an external threat to resources, land, and identity. In this respect, Becker (1995) has observed that although internal factions and divisions were manifested among the Iroquois people of Kanesatake during the Oka Crisis of 1990 over the role of the Warrior Society, "there was a remarkable degree of consensus spanning political differences over the issues of autonomy, claim to the land, and assertion of control over their own affairs and resources" (Becker 1995: 343). In the case of the Rebellions, did a perceived external threat to Native land, life, and identity effectively unite the entire Kahnawake community? The oral historical tradition of Kahnawake maintains that the Iroquois intervened in the Rebellions in order to protect their land and express their identity (Trudel 1991). Drawing on this tradition, Blanchard writes that it

> was not necessary to reward the Kanienkehaka for defending their own lands. By defending their land, the Kanienkehaka had not joined with the British against the French. They had simply been protecting the interests of the people of Kahnawake. Such a defense did not make the Kanienkehaka pro-British or anti-French. It simply showed that they were Kanienkehaka. (Blanchard 1980: 321)

Does the documentary record show that in 1837-38, the will to defend land and identity united the Kahnawake Iroquois and ultimately shaped their intervention? In other words, can it be shown from the archival evidence that the Kahnawake Iroquois as a whole acted together in defence of their collective identity?

Compromising thematic organization with chronological order, this thesis will help illuminate the questions considered above. Chapter One reviews previous literature on the topic and details key methodological considerations. It then defines a theoretical framework which conceptualizes Kahnawake's intervention in the Rebellions of 1837-38 as a collective action intended to defend common interests and protect a collective identity. The second chapter presents a general historical portrait of Kahnawake society in the 1830s. Drawing on a rich array of correspondence between priests and government officials as well as contemporary government reports and recent historical studies, Chapter Three provides a detailed chronological account of the Lower-Canadian Rebellions as they may have been lived and experienced by the people of Kahnawake. This chapter also introduces key Native and non-Native figures who had a profound effect on the community's broader history and dynamics in the 1830s as well as during the difficult years of the uprisings.

The second half of the thesis examines background historical information which is needed to interpret central political and economic issues in Kahnawake at the time. Such data will help document several internal and external relationships which, during the Rebellions, may have shaped the actions of specific Kahnawake people and of the community in general. In Chapter Four, I investigate to what extent the Iroquois decision to intervene in 1837-38 may have been prompted by a common desire to defend collective interests. I argue that the Kahnawake people as a whole may have concluded that by collaborating with the Crown, they might protect presents annually provided by the Crown as well as an alienated portion of their territory. In Chapter Five, I describe factional disputes which may have enhanced individual interests among Kahnawake residents during the 1830s. This discussion will help illustrate the point that this Native community was far from united when the Rebellions erupted in November 1837. Nonetheless, as this thesis hopes to show, the Iroquois people of Kahnawake seem to have exhibited a united and concerted effort throughout the different phases of its military involvement. Finally, I conclude by reviewing the interpretations suggested throughout the thesis and argue that the decision of the Kahnawake Iroquois to intervene in the Rebellions of 1837-38 may have been prompted by a powerful desire to protect common interests as well as a strong community will to defend and express a collective identity.

# - CHAPTER ONE -
# LOYALTY, INTERESTS AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

*Another way of thinking about the history of Indians in Canada is to see them as a people with a distinct past of their own; to see that the coming of the whites does not change the Indian's continuity with his own past, that his story must be told in terms of his own experience with the white man, placing him at the centre of the narrative, regardless of the fact that he has ceased to occupy the centre of the narrative ... The shift in control of the land and in numerical and cultural balance is then seen as part of the experience of the Indian. The territory is not the theme of the story, and the narrative does not centre on the people who constitute either the majority, or the most dynamic and dominant group in that territory. The Indian is the centre, no matter how many people displace him or how deeply he is driven into the remote areas of the land, or to what extent he is forced to conform to the invaders in order to survive. The story centres on him and his surviving identity. (Palmer Patterson 1972:3)*

## *The Kahnawake Iroquois and Rebellion literature*

Though the Rebellions of 1837-38 have been repeatedly studied, a number of experts have argued that much fruitful work remains to be done on issues that may have been outlined, but never interpreted fully. Historian Jean-Paul Bernard, for one, argues that in order to obtain a more complete understanding of the Lower-Canadian Rebellions,

> des travaux sont à mener pour identifier [...] les groupes nationaux et sociaux plus ou moins impliqués dans le mouvement et, aussi, contre lui. Cela va de soi, on tentera de distinguer leaders et simples participants, et on procédera à des calculs de taux de représentation. Mais on mettra aussi à contribution l'analyse des mots, l'analyse du discours, l'analyse de la langue. (Bernard 1983b: 341, my emphasis)

Historian Allan Greer has called for a closer examination of the context which brought about armed revolt and has exhorted historians to consider "the perspective of the urban population, of the English speakers, of the aboriginal people, and of others" (1993: xi).

Despite such key suggestions, detailed efforts to ascertain why the people of Kahnawake intervened in 1837-38 have never been undertaken. Studies detailing the history of this community have even ignored the entire period between 1820 and 1850 (Alfred 1995a; Fenton and Tooker 1978; Tooker 1978). This contrasts markedly with the numerous historical investigations previously conducted to explain Iroquois involvement in the Seven Years War[3], the American Revolutionary War[4], and the War of 1812[5].

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[3] During the Seven Years War, although residents of Kahnawake and Kanesatake did participate with the French in raids on English settlements, most Canadian Iroquois were hesitant to wage war on their Iroquois brothers living in British territory. In fact, while the Iroquois League of New York opted for a neutrality favorable to the British, Kahnawake and the other Iroquois villages of New France opted for a neutrality in favor of the French. Near the end of the war, however, Kahnawake and Akwesasne signed peace agreements with the British. The actions and goals of the Iroquois communities of Canada during the Seven Years War have been examined by Delâge (1991a; 1991b), Jennings (1988), Green (1991), and MacLeod (1996).

[4] At the start of the American Revolutionary War (1774-1783), the Lower-Canadian Iroquois maintained a neutral stance and it is only near the end that many chose to assist the British. However, their participation was limited and not unanimous. Influenced by persuasive oratory, a display of the old covenant belt, and a large "bribe" of rum and trade goods, the Iroquois also joined the British as a way of defending their lands

By contrast, Rhonda Telford has considered the situation and aims of the Central Ontario Chippewa and Mississagua during the Upper-Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38.[6] This study is the only serious detailed investigation of Native actions in the context of the 1837-38 Rebellions. According to Telford, historians have provided "scant treatment of Aboriginal People in the rebellion" by bluntly concluding that there was never any doubt that Natives would "defend a government which they felt had always looked after them" and that they would stand "by their traditional alliance with the Crown" (Telford 1998: 12). Telford convincingly argues that these assumptions are "groundless", because, in her view, Natives "came out in the rebellion, supporting the government as allies with their own agendas" (ibid.: 24). Telford concludes that the Upper-Canadian Rebellion provided opportunities for the Chippewa and Mississagua to replenish their cache of arms, obtain clothing, provisions and presents, and to impress on non-Native settlers that they would not relinquish control over disputed lands (Telford 1998).

In her work, Telford consistently shows that historical studies and

> secondary sources on the Upper-Canadian rebellion consistently fail to give much weight to the role of the Native Peoples in the defense of the province. Aboriginals appear to be parachuted into the rebellion as random elements acting in someone else's play rather than as primary actors in their own right with their own immediate and different history and their own agendas. (Telford 1998: 2, my emphasis)

Similarly, a wide review of the literature tends to suggests that Lower-Canadian Rebellion historians have regrettably failed to view Kahnawake people as independent actors. As such, they have not closely examined the intentions, fears as well as collective and individual aspirations which guided the people of Kahnawake to collaborate with the

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from American encroachment. The Iroquois participation in this war has been examined by Aichinger (1981), Allan (1975; 1993), Graymont (1972; 1991), Ostola (1989) and Surtees (1985).

[5] During the War of 1812, the people of Kahnawake initially wished to remain neutral and proclaimed that they would rather hunt for fur than participate in a war. At the same time, they warned the Euro-american powers involved not to invade Iroquois territory. Despite neutral intentions, Kahnawake and other Canadian Iroquois communities sided with the British for material or economic reasons, but, also, because they sought ways to preserve their lands from American encroachment, "and many embraced the British as a means to that end" (Calloway 1987: 255). It has indeed been shown that in 1812, the Iroquois in general "still possessed enough diplomatic and military strength [...] to influence their British and American allies with some hope of securing their objectives of preserving their territory, culture, and independence" (Benn 1998: 6). For more information, please refer to Allen (1992), Benn (1998), Calloway (1987), Francis (1984), Glenney (1973), Reaman (1967), Stanley (1963; 1984; 1991), and Surtees (1985).

[6] In 1837 and 1838, a rebellion occurred in Upper Canada as well. Frustration was mostly due to the Family Compact, a small group of officials connected by marriage, land interests and religious convictions. Encouraged by the departure of all troops to Lower Canada in November 1837, over 8000 anti-compact "reformers" led by William Lyon Mackenzie attempted an ill-fated march on Toronto in the hope of establishing a new democratic government. Beaten by the local militia, Mackenzie fled to the United States where he found support for his cause. Despite the generalized opposition to the Family Compact, most people of Upper Canada did not want a rebellion. In the early months of 1838, various raids were conducted near Brantford by American-dominated para-military groups, who were quickly dispersed. Mackenzie fled to the United States, twenty people were hanged, and many reform supporters were banished from Canada (Greer 1995; Fryer 1987; Read 1988; Read and Stagg 1985).

British. Each in their own different ways, older studies by French-Canadian historians (Carrier 1877; David [1884] 1981; Duclos Decelles 1916; Fauteux 1950; Filteau 1938; Leclerc [1950] 1983), broad investigations detailing the military aspects of the Rebellions (Mann 1986; Morton 1979; Senior 1985) as well as more recent works (Bernard 1996; Boissery 1995; Greenwood 1980; Greer 1993) have briefly outlined some events concerning the Kahnawake people but not in extensive detail or from Iroquois perspectives. In fact, secondary sources discussing the intervention of the people of Kahnawake have failed to provide a detailed understanding of the underlying socio-economic, political and cultural context which guided the actions of specific individuals and brought the entire community to intervene. Also, those authors who describe the Iroquois "arrest" of Patriotes on 4 November 1838 have often gone no further than to repeat word for word the accounts offered in contemporary newspapers as well as in the *Report of the State Trials*, a detailed record of Rebellion-related testimonies (Great Britain 1839). Even if lesser known archival sources have sometimes been used (Greer 1993; Parent 1980; Senior 1985) and an overview of some of Kahnawake's external relationships at the time of the events is well provided by Allan Greer (1993), the evidence seems to be cited without a profound and detailed knowledge of Kahnawake's history in the 1830s.

Further, most historians who have interpreted the behavior of the Kahnawake Iroquois have presented them as loyal and subjugated allies of the Crown. In so doing, these authors have repeated the views of some contemporaries who simply denied the fact that the Iroquois may have had their own reasons to cooperate with the British. For instance, on 6 November 1838, the loyalist *Montreal Gazette* published this story.

> On Sunday morning, [4 November 1838] while the inhabitants of the Indian village of Caughnawaga were at Church, information was brought to them, that some armed men were seen skulking in the adjoining woods. The Indians, with their characteristic bravery, and that loyalty for which they have ever been distinguished, instantly rushed out, and, giving the war whoop, fell upon the rebels, who were so panic struck, that the cowards were unable to defend themselves. Upwards of seventy of them were made prisoners, and conveyed to town, guarded by the brave fellows who had so thoroughly vanquished them, and to whom the country is deeply indebted for their noble behavior. (*Montreal Gazette*, 6/11/1838, my emphasis)

Also drawing from the "noble savage" myth, Robert Christie, a politician at the time of the events (Roy 1983; Spragge 1985), explained Kahnawake's actions by stating that the "gallantry of the Indians in this first achievement over the patriots in the second insurrection, had a material effect of damping their ardour, while it inspired the loyal with courage and confidence in themselves" (Christie 1866: 247). John Fraser, a British soldier in 1837-38, similarly wrote that government officials thanked the "Caughnawaga Indians", for having turned out "so well and so loyally" (Fraser 1890: 61).

Such limited views have remained unexamined in more recent secondary sources, which have scarcely evolved from D. Borthwick's simplistic assessment, written in 1898, that "les sauvages" were "parfaitement loyaux" (Borthwick 1898: 61). In her seminal work, Elinor Senior states that the Akwesasne Iroquois "proved their loyalty in 1838 by accompanying Crown forces in their march on the insurgent camp on the Châteauguay River" (Senior 1985: 72). In his popular account on the Patriotes' ill-fated march on Kahnawake, historian Denis Vaugeois makes no further attempt to elucidate the situation reigning at Kahnawake at the time or to contemplate the possibility that in a context of a civil war, the Iroquois might not have countenanced being left unarmed by visiting Patriotes who wanted to "borrow" arms and ammunitions (see Trudel 1993a; 1993b). In a dismissive tone, Vaugeois simply states that "les Indiens préférèrent jouer la carte des autorités britanniques. Ils encerclent la troupe venue les rencontrer pour la conduire chez leur père, le gouverneur Colborne" (Vaugeois 1993: A1). Finally, Delâge and Sawaya state that during the Rebellions, "les Amérindiens catholiques alliés sont demeurés loyaux à la Couronne" in accordance with past diplomatic agreements with the British (1996: 107).

Though such statements are not inherently false, they cloud Native interests and aspirations and preclude scope for any degree of Iroquois autonomy and agency. In opposition to these interpretations, I will attempt to probe beneath the surface of apparently loyal, monolithic Iroquois behavior and examine the collective aspirations, notably those relating to annuities and land, which may have shaped Kahnawake's reactions to the Rebellions. These collective "interests" seem to have been endowed with a symbolic importance around which the people of Kahnawake united as "Indians" and Iroquois, thus asserting their difference from neighboring Canadians and the British. Moreover, given the importance of factional disputes in Iroquois political culture[7], which has partly resulted from external pressures, and been a source of diplomatic leverage and neutrality (Richter 1992),[8] this thesis will also explore a wide range of discordant views and actions in

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[7] Factions have always been part of Kahnawake's history. In the 1660s, when opposed segments within Iroquois villages could no longer remain at peace, many departed with Jesuit priests for new homes in the St. Lawrence Valley. This migration was at the origin of Kahnawake (Delâge 1991a; Richter 1992). In 1755, exhaustion of land and internal disputes sparked the departure of thirty families from Kahnawake to form the new mission of Akwesasne (St. Regis) (Devine 1922: 255; Fenton and Tooker 1978: 473). For a complete and up-to-date picture of Kahnawake's modern-day factions, the issues at stake, as well as the contributions of factionalism in fostering fruitful political debate, please refer to Harrison (1994).

[8] The Iroquois in general considered themselves to be sovereign from their European neighbors and thus often adopted a stance of neutrality when conflict arose amongst whites. In many instances, the initiatives and objectives of the Iroquois were at the heart of "international" negotiations. Often dictated by factionalism based on a mix of political, military, social, and economic issues, neutrality gave the Iroquois leverage and allowed them to preserve their independence by playing European powers off against each other. This fact has been well documented by Aquila (1997), Brandao and Starna (1996), Delâge (1991a; 1991b), Fenton (1978, 1985), Fenton and Tooker (1978), Green (1991), Hann (1987; 1988), Havard (1992), Jennings (1984; 1985), Richter (1992), Surtees (1985), and White (1991).

Kahnawake before and during the Rebellions. To this end, the interests of particular individuals, along with the relationships in which they were embedded, will also be explored. Although the relative importance of some people may be an artifact of the sources, when one examines archival evidence shedding light on the internal state of Kahnawake in the 1830s, elaborate networks of relationships partly grounded in government-influenced segmentation seem to have shaped the behavior of some people in 1837-38. Conversely, the same sources seem to indicate that during the Rebellions, rival ambitions were possibly set aside as the Iroquois decided to cooperate with each other in order to protect common interests and express a collective identity.

*Interests, action, and collective identity*

In order to examine Kahnawake's intervention in the Rebellions as a move intended to defend interests and protect an identity, some reflections are in order. The two main types of theory which will be discussed in this section are those relating to interests and collective action, and those relating to the social construction of a collective identity. Because this latter idea raises the question of the importance of symbolic expressions of identity, this section will help view some of Kahnawake's interests in cooperating with the British as key symbols of this community's distinct cultural identity.

In fields such as political science, theoretical discussions have repeatedly sought to study military intervention or other collective efforts as "rational" behavior guided by reason and logic (James 1988). Maoz (1990), for one, defines rationality as the "ability to find the best or most efficient means under a given set of circumstances to accomplish a specified set of objectives" (p. 151); "rational" decision makers discern a broad set of potentially suitable solutions for coping with a problem and choose that course of action which offers the greatest prospect of accomplishing the highest "expected utility" (ibid.: 151-7). Among the many researchers who have examined behavior in terms of cost-benefit calculations based on economic rationalism, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita (1981) has argued that a decision to go to war is the result of an attempt to maximize gains and minimize losses. Through an evaluation whereby the arguments for an armed action are weighed in comparison to those against, a state decides to go to war after measuring the benefits and the possible costs of such an act. Bueno de Mesquita thus treats war as a "rational" choice if it is perceived by decision-makers to be the optimal means toward some end.

Anthropologist Bruce Trigger has demonstrated that a wide and elaborate range of influences in addition to "rational" calculations of costs and benefits ultimately shape people's process of decision making (Trigger 1975; 1976; 1985). In his seminal work on the history of Native-European relations in the seventeenth century, Trigger has shown that

while some indigenous communities succumbed to forces beyond their control, others "tenaciously exploited the limited opportunities available to them to find a place for themselves in a world where some knowledge, and to lesser extent acceptance, of European ways was a prerequisite for success" (Trigger 1986a: 77). In fact, for Trigger, Native identities "have persisted insofar as Native people have found them an acceptable vehicle to defend or enhance their interests" (ibid.). In such instances, Trigger argues that the people who acted to protect their interests and thus survive as Indians were guided by "a complex mixture of cultural-specific beliefs, universal rationality, personal self-interest, and idiosyncratic personalities that shape human behavior within a context of technological and ecological constraints" (ibid.: 72). The importance of interests and culture in helping shape the behavior of Native people and groups in the face of European colonizers is well demonstrated in *The Children of Aataentsic* (Trigger 1976). According to Trigger, enough information can be obtained concerning the acts of individual Natives in specific circumstances that "a fairly detailed picture could be built up of their differing responses to these situations" (Trigger 1976: 23). Indeed, sometimes "we can learn enough about the status and family affiliations of individuals that we may infer with some confidence why these Indians behaved as they did" (ibid.). This allows one to steer "a middle course" between biographies and gross structural analysis "by studying the history of a tribe or confederacy in terms of the behavior of groups of individuals united by certain common interests" (ibid.). These "interest groups" are not abstract categories, but fluid associations that emerge as a result of the sharing of common interests. To be a "valid" interest group, its members must implicitly share common goals and support one another in collective action (ibid.). Also, while members of a community may share many beliefs and values, interest groups can react to new situations in different ways according to how they perceive it will best serve their own interests (ibid. 1986: 76; 1985: 169).

With such reflections in mind, Native history must not be regarded merely as an extension of colonial history. Rather, Trigger argues that the investigator must evaluate the "impact" of indigenous ideas and values upon the conduct and shape of Native diplomacy (Trigger 1976: 25). Specifically, an analysis of Native actions conducted by an individual, an interest group or an entire community must consider the fact that Indians made their adjustments to European colonization in terms of existing aboriginal institutions and culture. In Trigger's view, the differing responses of the Huron and the Iroquois in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflect not only "their different geographical locations, but also long-standing cultural differences that had arisen as a result of cultural adaptation to these locations" (ibid.: 843). Although reason was used to evaluate situations and decide the best course of action, the activities by which Native groups achieved success were

influenced primarily by culture (ibid. 1986a: 73). Taking this argument a step further, historian Peter Cook (1998) has recently examined facets of French-Iroquois colonial diplomacy on New France's western frontier and has concluded that "diplomatic practices of the early eighteenth century entailed symbolic and material exchanges that were rationally motivated, and yet, for all that, rooted in specific cultural schemes" (Cook 1998: 92). Inspired by Bourdieu's concept of "habitus", which refers to the "ways of being that are inculcated in each actor as he or she grows within a community", and "classificatory schemes that are transmitted, internalized, and put into practice every day without attaining the level of discourse" (ibid.: 84), Cook concludes that Iroquois adjustments made in the face of political and economic constraints were "the result of complex interactions between external circumstances, practices motivated by the 'habitus', and the consequences, both intended and unintended, of individual and collective actions" (ibid.).

Trigger further maintains that in seeking to understand Native actions, one must "take into account the pattern of intertribal relations that existed prior to the coming of the whites and that continued to influence Indian politics for a long time afterwards" (Trigger 1976: 25). Yet one must not only study the inner dynamics of Native groups, but, as well, the relationships between different Native and non-Native groups. This can help uncover the interests at the heart of individual or collective actions and help ascertain how segmented Native groups often united for the benefit of common interests, thereby experiencing a rise of alliances which cut across family or segment lines (ibid.: 24-6).

Finally, Trigger argues that each Iroquoian community's responses to the fur trade "was determined by that group's interpretations of what was happening and by their experience in dealing with analogous situations" (Trigger 1976: 843). In other words,

> there was no single overriding 'logic of the fur trade' that existed independently of prevailing customs and intertribal relationships and which could supplant these relationships instantaneously. Instead, the fur trade developed largely in terms of responses by Indians who were guided by their former experience and who extrapolated from these experiences to adapt to novel and ever-changing situations. (Trigger 1976: 843, my emphasis)

Similarly, in my view, Kahnawake's intervention in 1837-38 can be explained from three vantage points: 1) the Iroquois' collective involvement may have developed in terms of past and ongoing relationships with surrounding French-Canadian communities, the Patriotes, or the British Crown; 2) this involvement may have been based on Iroquois interpretations of their relationships with surrounding "others"; 3) the Iroquois intervention may have been grounded in Iroquois cultural values, knowledge, and skills.

The conclusions reached by Trigger on behavior are central to this thesis because they stress the importance of cultural values, relationships, interactions between groups,

and a community's interpretations of its external relationships as central sources of individual or collective behavior. Although Trigger has written about Huron-French relations in the seventeenth century and this thesis examines Kahnawake's interactions with government officials and nearby settlers in the 1830s, the reflections presented above provide an effective starting point upon which the notions of "collective action" and "collective identity" can be discussed.

In identity studies, some scholars are now more interested in examining mechanisms by which collective distinctions are created, maintained and changed, thus placing more emphasis on issues of group agency and political action. Within such a perspective, a community is interpreted as "a social artifact: an entity molded, refabricated, and mobilized in accord with reigning cultural scripts and centers of power" (Cerulo 1997: 387). In the same vein, Benedict Anderson's (1983) research on the concept of "nation" has been very influential. He defines a nation as an "imagined community" that is spatially and temporally inclusive as well as shaped by broad social forces (p. 15-6). In this line of thinking, recent research has tackled the issue of how the "imagined" becomes embodied in practice and lived experience: it has been shown that a nation is rendered real through powerful hegemonic strategies that transform a terrain of regional autonomies into unified and nationalized domains. Such strategies, at once material and symbolic, produce the idea of a state "while concretizing the imagined community of the nation by articulating spatial, bodily and temporal matrixes through the everyday routines, rituals, and policies of the state system" (Alonso 1994: 382). Overall, the "constructionist" approach holds that boundaries between groups are constructed to insulate and differentiate, that this "construction" usually leads to the emergence of a shared consciousness among group members as limited within the boundaries, and that various measures are often taken to underline and establish a distinct group identity, and thus defend the constructed boundaries. Identity is then a fluid social construct which continually responds to power relations and interactions with "others" and which can be reshaped in response to varying contexts and social needs. In other words, depending on the issues at stake, a group deploys and articulates specific aspects of its collective identity (Cerulo 1997).

Anthropologist Anthony Cohen (1985; 1993) defines a community as a group of people who have things in common with each other and which distinguish them from the members of other groups (Cohen 1985: 12). Overall, he examines the "community" as a cultural field composed of a complex array of symbols whose meanings vary among its members. In so doing, Cohen delineates a concept applicable to local communities through which people see themselves as belonging to a distinct society. Because this expresses an opposition of one community to others, Cohen focuses his attention on the "boundary",

which encapsulates the community and, like personal identity, is called into being through social interaction. According to Fredrik Barth (1969), boundaries channel social life and entail a complex organization of behavior and social relations. The resulting discrimination of people as strangers through the construction of boundaries implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, "differences in criteria for judgments of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest" (p. 14). Thus boundaries are marked and identified because communities interact with others from which they are, or wish to be, distinguished.

Cohen deploys his evidence by examining the context in which people become aware of belonging to a "community", thus describing how the members of this community symbolize and use their boundaries to give meaning to their collective or individual actions. Indeed, the consciousness of community is kept alive through manipulations of its "symbols", which are material, conceptual and political elements that are found within its boundaries (Cohen 1985: 15-6). Symbols "do not stand for other things", but, rather, express ideas and interests in ways which allow their common form to be retained and shared among the members of a group without imposing constraints of homogeneous meaning (ibid.: 17-18). Symbols can thus hold different meanings for individuals and yet still be shared by all members of a community. In this respect, symbols are "malleable" mental constructs which provide people with the means to express the particular meanings the community has for them (ibid.: 19). Symbols are, in other words, a "media through which people can speak a common language, behave in apparently similar ways, participate in the same rituals" (ibid.: 21). As Cohen states,

> the symbolic repertoire of a community aggregates the individualities and other differences found within the community and provides the means for their expression, interpretation and containment [...]. It continuously transforms the reality of difference into the appearance of similarity with such efficacy that people can still invest the community with ideological integrity. It unites them in opposition, both to each other, and to those outside. It thereby constitutes, and gives reality to, the community's boundaries. (Cohen 1985: 21, my emphasis)

In this manner, symbols promote the unification of a people and the statement of their goals; symbols "crystallize" a collective identity, "they tell citizens who they are, by demarcating what is authentically theirs from what is alien" (A. Smith, in Cerulo 1995: 15). This may render individual interests secondary to the collective attributes the symbols represent. In short, symbols bring people into contact within a shared consciousness, thus linking them despite differences that include status, power or age (Cerulo 1995: 17).

Because the ties that bond community members to the symbol and to each other are "emotionally charged", people may be prone to fight to protect their common symbols as they would fight to protect themselves. Such actions "bring the sentiment of the symbol to

life. By merging action and symbol, a [...] collective creates and re-creates the ideals embodied by the symbol" (Cerulo 1995: 21). In other words, a community is a highly symbolized and malleable construct whose manifestations in locality and ethnicity give it credibility. As a result, it may respond assertively to the encroachment of its interests, boundaries and symbols. In such cases, people may think that if outsiders trespass in that space, their own sense of self will be debased and defaced (Cohen 1985: 108-9). Indeed, since boundaries are oppositional,

> almost any matter of perceived difference between the community and the outside world can be rendered symbolically as a resource of its boundary. The community can make virtually anything grist to the symbolic mill of cultural distance [...]. The symbolic nature of the opposition means that people can think themselves into difference. The boundaries consist essentially in the contrivance of distinctive meanings within the community's social discourse. They provide people with a referent for their personal identities. Having done so, they are then themselves expressed and reinforced through the presentation of those identities in social life. (Cohen 1985: 117)

If a group feels that control over its common identity as it has been constructed is threatened from outside forces, the defensive response will be an increased control over its own body. This implies that a group's boundaries and gateways must be kept free from literal or symbolic intrusion by those who may challenge this group's identity (Jacobson-Widding 1983: 29). The ruminations of historian Keith Baker (1987; 1990), sociologist Alberto Melucci (1995; 1996) and political scientist Erik Ringmar (1996) concerning boundaries and identity defense are insightful in this regard. In my view, the interpretations of these researchers are those which I found most practical to articulate my line of argumentation as well as the archival evidence which is examined throughout this thesis

In his important work on the French Revolution, historian Keith Baker argues that members of a community or society can occupy any number of relative positions vis-à-vis other people, and therefore as possessing any number of potentially differentiating interests. The nature of the interests, and, in consequence, the identities of the relevant social groups and the nature of their claim, "are continually being defined (and redefined)" (Baker 1990: 6). As the ever-present competing claims are being negotiated and renegotiated, they may overlap in complicated ways. However,

> they are not necessarily unitary or homogeneous. Indeed, it may only be in rare situations, situations that we think of as properly 'revolutionary', that the terms of many of the political games being played out in a society seem (often quite unexpectedly) to align themselves in a unitary and coherent lexical field, like so many iron filings suddenly subject to the force of a magnet. At such instances, heterogeneous claims and complex social practices seem to be radically simplified and aligned in ways that offer (and demand) clear choices in terms resonating throughout large segments of society. (Baker 1987: xiii, my emphasis)

In such instances, the set of discourses and symbolic practices by which individual or interest group claims are made presents itself as a coherent system of oppositions to those who are not seen as members of the community as represented in its collective identity.

As for Melucci (1996), whose seminal work aims to interpret modern-day social movements, he defines collective identity as a "process of constructing an action system" based on the "ends", "means", and "field" of action, three axes which are defined and incorporated in a given set of "rituals, practices, cultural artifacts" (Melucci 1996: 71). In its expression and articulation, collective identity enables actors to act as unified and delimited subjects and to retain control over their own action; conversely, they act collectively because they have completed, to some extent, the constructive process of collective identity. Collective action is not simply a reaction to social and environmental constraints; it produces symbolic orientations and meanings which actors are able to recognize. Social actors are, as such, able to attribute the effect of their actions to themselves (ibid.: 71-3). Therefore, the construction and unity of a collective actor rest on its ability to locate itself within a system of relations. As Melucci states, a collective actor

> cannot construct its identity independently of its recognition -which can also mean denial or opposition- by other social and political actors. In order to act, any collective actor makes the basic assumption that its distinction from other actors is constantly acknowledged by them, if only in the extreme form of denial. (Melucci 1996: 73)

As a result, collective identity contains "an unresolved and unresolvable tension" (ibid.: 74) between the definition a society gives of itself and the recognition granted to it by others. In Melucci's view, war is the extreme example of this discrepancy. Beyond the concrete or symbolic objects at stake in a conflict,

> what people fight for is always the possibility to recognize themselves and be recognized a subjects of their action. Every conflict which transgresses a system of shared rules, whether it concerns material or symbolic resources, is a conflict of identity. Social actors enter a conflict to affirm the identity that their opponent has denied them, to reappropriate something which belongs to them because they are able to recognize it as their own. (Melucci 1996: 74, my emphasis)

Melucci concludes that this happens because, during a war,

> the internal solidarity of the group reinforces identity and guarantees it. [...] The solidarity that ties individuals to each other enables them to affirm themselves as subjects of their action and to withstand the breakdown of social relations induced by conflict. Moreover, they learn to gather and focus their resources in order to reappropriate that which they recognize as theirs. (Melucci 1996: 75, my emphasis)

Taking this argument a little further, Erik Ringmar (1996) argues that the idea that countries go to war to maximize gains or minimize losses is "not entirely convincing" (ibid.: 1). Ringmar holds that the forces unleashed in war are "difficult to assess beforehand: alliances shift, morale falters, rapid technological changes cause rapid

transformations in the balance of power" (ibid.). Also, the risks involved in proceeding with military intervention are "invariably high: a regime may be overthrown if defeated, the country may be invaded and occupied" (ibid.). As a result, "gains and losses from a potential war participation are often next to impossible to calculate in advance" (ibid.). In this line of thinking, Ringmar suggests that Sweden's intervention in the Thirty Years War in 1630 was an attempt on behalf of Swedish leaders to gain recognition for themselves and their country. Ringmar argues that military collective actions can be conceptualized in terms of identities, not utilities because people do not generally engage in war "because of what they can win, but instead of who or what the [war] allows them to be" (ibid.: 4).

Ringmar holds that in order to exist, we make distinctions between those people who are close to us and those who are further away, between "us" and "them". Through the narratives that we tell about this "affective geography", we carve out a presence for ourselves in time and space and make a claim to legitimacy. In so doing, we ask "audiences" to recognize us as the persons that our stories identify (Ringmar 1996: 78-81). What happens when our story of ourselves is denied by "others"? We can accept, without any resistance, stories that others apply; we can rethink our own descriptions of ourselves; or, we can stand by our original story and try to convince our audiences that it does apply to us. Ringmar argues that in trying to reach this third objective, people usually act because "only through action can we provide the kind of final, decisive, evidence that proves the others wrong" (ibid.: 83). The resulting collective action will be an irrefutable manifestation of our character and will force our detractors to reconsider their views. For Ringmar, such an action does not seek to maximize utility or minimize loss, but to establish a standard - a self- by which interests, utilities and losses can be measured. As "our" interests can only be identified by "us" as our "own" only once we know who we are, we act in defense of the application of our self-descriptions so that our own interests can be pursued. The collective identity expressed through such an action ensures the permanence of a community, creates or reinforces a solidarity among collective actors, establishes the limits of the actor with respect to its social environment, and defines the criteria by which its members recognize themselves and are recognized by others (ibid.: 83-6).

What can be concluded from the theoretical reflections presented above? We construct who we are in discourse through a process which involves an identification with images, symbols and narratives that dominate our ways of seeing and representing ourselves, our community, and the world around us. Identity is a fluid social construct which is embedded with a wide variety of meanings and symbols. As with the context in which it is articulated, identity is continually contested, reconstructed, or deployed in new ways. Further, it is "built and re-built in the discursive negotiation of complex alliances and

relations within the heterogeneity of community" (Valaskakis 1993: 286). Members of a community share symbols and interests, and, in this respect, a threat to their boundaries (and interests) may push them to deploy, to differing degrees, some of the symbols in which their collective identity is grounded. A similar threat may also push internal interest groups to unite in order to repulse a feared invasion of boundaries and interest, thus deploying a "collective" identity which all members of the group share. In its construction and expression, collective identity adopts transforming, open-ended and fluctuating symbols which are articulated in the processes of experiencing the community within power relations of different groups and interests. As a result, a collective identity is often expressed in response to a group of clearly defined "others" which poses a feared, real or exaggerated threat to a community's existence and legitimacy by "violating" its territorial, cultural, and symbolic boundaries. In 1837-38, did the Iroquois people of Kahnawake feel that their territory as "Indian" land was threatened by Patriotes? Perhaps the Rebellions were not assessed by the Iroquois as a republican struggle for independence or a quest for national liberation, but as a threat to their land and survival. On the basis of their assessments of their relationship with the Crown and Patriotes, did the Iroquois come to think that collective intervention might be an effective way of protecting themselves from invasion or expropriation? Moreover, did the Iroquois view a cooperation with the Crown as a means of defending important collective interests such as land and annual presents? Although these interests may seem to be solely material, they were profoundly linked to the Iroquois' own sense of themselves as "Indians" and often served as a means of expressing feelings of collective belonging to the legal status of "Indian" and to the "Indian village" of Kahnawake. Can it be shown that collective action entailed the unification by means of some common representation of interests and symbols such as land and annual presents? As a "collective actor", did the community of Kahnawake create of itself a unitary definition in order to reinforce its capacity for action and confrontation? Can it be shown that although different Iroquois individuals may have identified with certain factions, all community members united to defend common interests? By intervening in the Rebellions, did the Iroquois hope to protect and deploy their collective identity?

*A brief look at sources and ethnohistorical methodology*

In seeking to reconstruct the history of Kahnawake in the 1830s as well as its involvement in the Rebellions of 1837-38, a wide range of documentary sources was consulted. Some of these include: Rebellion-time testimonies; newspapers of the day; petitions and letters by Kahnawake chiefs; trial and conference minutes held in Kahnawake and elsewhere; dispatches between British government officials; letters between priests,

bishops and other clergymen; demographic tables; military reports and commission inquiries; travel journals; family histories and genealogies; maps and photographs. In addition to considering the ideas and views of modern-day Kahnawake residents on the Patriotes, this thesis provides the first extensive look at diocesan archival sources relating to the internal state of Kahnawake. Essentially, these constitute letters and reports, written by Father Joseph Marcoux, Kahnawake's secular priest from 1819 to 1855. Marcoux's correspondence to other priests and to his superiors provided some of the richest accounts of Kahnawake's dynamics in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the chapters that follow, quoted passages filtered from the writings of priests, Indian Department officials, or literate Kahnawake Iroquois are presented with the original spelling, except in some cases where corrections were necessary to avoid ambiguities. As Trigger reminds us, the "main checks" on the quality of ethnohistorical research such as this one are methodological techniques used by historians to consult and analyze archival data. Overall, previous research based on these techniques have revealed the "spurious nature" of European sources, that Indians "are quite often poorly understood and vaguely recorded in primary sources" (Trigger 1986b: 259), that Natives are unlikely to have done things that are attributes to them in some documents, and that they acted as they did for reasons other than contemporary non-Native observers though (ibid.: 1982: 9; 1986b: 259). Because archival records are often too ambiguous to allow definitive conclusions about Native culture and society, independent accounts of similar circumstances must be combined and compared in the hope of illustrating contradictions or obtaining more detailed information. This permits an evaluation of sources and an understanding of some of their flaws. This also ensures that "interpretations are tested against a sufficiently comprehensive corpus of data and that evidence that does not support an interpretation is taken into account no less than which does" (ibid. 1986b: 259). Ethnohistorians further require "a sound knowledge of ethnology if they are able to evaluate sources and interpret them with reasonable understanding of the perceptions and motivations of the Native people involved" (ibid.). Finally, one must not only consult written records of non-Native hands, but, as well, Native written and oral accounts. This is imperative to the establishment of a wider picture of certain historical events and to an understanding of how these moments were lived and interpreted by past and contemporary Native people.

# - CHAPTER TWO -
# THE IROQUOIS COMMUNITY OF KAHNAWAKE, 1815-1840

*Historical context, local economy and political institutions*

Located along the St. Lawrence river opposite the city of Montréal on the shores of the St-Louis rapids, the Iroquois town of Kahnawake dates back to 1667 as a Jesuit settlement called *Mission Saint-François-Xavier du Sault-Saint-Louis*. The original mission was located in what is now La Prairie and was called *Kentake* by its first Oneida settlers. During the 1670s, the Catholic mission grew as many Mohawk families arrived and rapidly outnumbered the more than twenty other Native groups that were represented there (Green 1991: 32). Following four displacements, the mission was moved to its present-day location in 1716 and was called *Kahnawake*, or "at the rapids".[9] In British sources of the 1830s, it is referred to as Caughnawaga, Cocknawaga, Caghnawaga or Cagnawagee.[10] French-Canadians of the day referred to Kahnawake as Sault St. Louis, le Sault or le village du Sault, and to its Native inhabitants as Gens du Sault, Indiens du Sault or Sauvages du Sault. The term "Sault St. Louis" was also used by local priests and British officials.[11] In the Mohawk language, Kahnawake residents are *Kahnawakehro:non*.

In order to avoid artificial impositions, I will do the same as nineteenth century documents and refer to the *Kahnawakehro:non* as "Kahnawake Iroquois". Unlike today, the community's residents of the 1830s did not use the term "Mohawk" when identifying themselves but terms such as Indiens de Caughnawaga, Indiens du Sault, Indiens du Sault St. Louis, Iroquois du Sault St. Louis, Iroquois de Caughnawaga, Iroquois tribe of Sault St. Louis, Iroquois tribe of Caughnawaga and Iroquois of Caughnawaga. In fact, it seems as if it is only since the early 1900s that Kahnawake people widely identify themselves as Mohawks or *Kanienkehaka* (the People of the flint). This seems to be the case even though the term "Mohawk" is seen in the June 1839 report of Châteauguay schoolmaster Charles Forest (31 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40262), early versions of "Mohawk"

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[9] Established in 1667, Kentaké was moved in 1676 and became known as Kahnawake. In 1680, the village was displaced and named Kahnawakon, or "in the rapids". In 1696, the mission returned "at the rapids" (at a different spot), a settlement which was *post eventum* named Kanatakwente, or "the village as they left it". The community of Kahnawake moved to its present location in 1716 (Béchard 1946: 6; Forbes 1899: 134).

[10] The British translation from the Mohawk and Dutch "Kahnawake" to "Caughnawaga" was used to identify this community until the late 1970s, when Kahnawake's *Kanien'kehaka Raotitiokwa Cultural Center* started convincing local people to use the Mohawk term Kahnawake in daily life. In 1981, the Cultural Center sent a request to the Québec government to reinstate the traditional name. In 1984, the post office started using "Kahnawake". In 1985, maps and road signs were corrected (Beauvais 1985: 19).

[11] In letters by Joseph Marcoux, Kahnawake's secular priest from 1819 to 1855, the term "Sault St. Louis" is gradually replaced by "Caughnawaga" in the early 1850s (Marcoux to Turgeon, ADJSQL 3A-332 to 372; Marcoux to Viger, 20 November 1848, ASQ Fonds Verreau 61, no. 6; Marcoux to Viger, 19 January 1854, ASQ, Fonds Verreau 61, no. 8; Marcoux to Verreault, 15 April 1855, ASQ Fonds Verreau 25, no. 212).

such as "Aniaka-haka" and "Amuhak" may have been pronounced by Kahnawake residents in 1882 (Hodge 1913: 310-11), and the Mohawk language has been predominantly spoken in Kahnawake since the late 1670s (Green 1993: 57). The term "Iroquois" refers to the Five Iroquois Nations of New York, whose confederacy included the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca and Cayuga (Fenton 1978: 320). As "Mohawk" is only one of the five Iroquois nations, the absence of the former term in nineteenth century sources hints at the possibility that the community's sense of identity in the past was different from today's.

In 1835, Kahnawake was Lower Canada's largest Native village: it had an overall population of 951 people, including eighteen chiefs and council members, 246 "warriors", 274 "wives and widows", and 409 children aged one to fourteen.[12] Despite a drop from 1827 to 1834[13], the population rose from 1835 to 1841 and reached a total of 1100 in 1843 (Gosford to Glenelg, 13 July 1837, in Great Britain 1969d: 36; Canada 1845). At the time, about fifty families practiced farming (Canada 1845). Crops grown in 1835 amounted to sixty-four bushels[14] of wheat, 312 bushels of oats, 3391 bushels of "Indian corn", 818 bushels of peas and beans and 2776 bushels of potatoes ("Answers to Queries, etc", 27 October 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 660, in Jennings et al. 1984). The crops were mostly attended by women and older men while the young men ploughed and harrowed the fields. In this context, everyone was free to cultivate the lots they desired:

> ils [Iroquois] sont établis d'après l'ancien système Français, en village, ayant chacun leurs champs, prairies et sucreries autour d'eux sur la réserve, souvent plusieurs morceaux de terre isolés les uns des autres forment la propriété de chaque particulier. Le bois debout n'appartient à personne; ils peuvent faire de la terre neuve là où ils veulent, et se vendre entr'eux l'ouvrage qu'ils ont fait, mais non le terrain qui l'avoisine. (Marcoux's answers to the questions of D.C. Napier, in Canada 1847)

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[12] By contrast, in 1835, the total population of Kanesatake (Algonquins, Nipissingues and Iroquois) was 821 people; the Abenakis of St-Francis amounted to 362 people; the Iroquois of Akwesasne numbered 350; and the Hurons of Lorette amounted to 211 individuals. In 1835, there were 3028 Indians in Lower Canada and the people of Kahnawake represented 31.4% of this population (Gosford to Glenelg, 13 July 1837, in Great Britain 1969d: 36).

[13] In the 1830s, Lower Canada was overcome by many epidemics. Indeed, cholera struck massively in 1832 and 1834; Asian cholera caused the deaths of over 2500 deaths in Montréal alone; and, in 1834, typhoid fever killed over 6000 people in Lower Canada (Dechêne 1982: 199; Greer 1993: 47-8; Ryerson 1968). The effects of such epidemics were well felt in Kahnawake, where many elderly people were already in need of supplies and medical attention (Napier to Couper, 27 November 1828, NAC RG8 vol. 267: 389; Marcoux et al. to Napier, 28 October 1828, NAC RG8 vol. 267: 413). In January 1834, Marcoux noted that typhoid fever hit Kahnawake right after cholera, which had been afflicting the community since the late months of 1832. At the height of the epidemics, Marcoux buried up to fifteen people a day. The last case of cholera in Kahnawake was diagnosed on 20 August 1834 (Marcoux to Bourget, 31 August 1834, AAM 420.066, no. 834-3; Marcoux to Gaulin, 29 July 1835, ADSJQL 3A-166; Marcoux to Signay, 5 January 1834, ADSJQL 3A-147). It is said that as a result of the epidemics, the village population was reduced by 15% between 1832 and 1834 (Devine 1922: 393, 409).

[14] A bushel is equivalent to about forty-nine litres (Greer 1985: 250).

Within the village, "most of the good land [had already been] cleared and become private or individual property [making it] impossible to lay out a farm of one hundred arpents without taking in several possessions" (Napier et al. to Kahnawake chiefs, 1 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40205). Many residents derived subsistence from fishing and raising cattle, poultry and hogs (Bouchette 1815: 124). Even if gardens, sugarbushes and corn fields were not fenced, animals were placed in a pasture protected by gates. In the summer, fifty to one hundred young men repaired fences as well as the public roads which passed through the village. On these occasions, they were fed by the chiefs, who purchased bread, meat, and rum in Lachine (Marcoux, 25 January 1830, NAC RG8 vol. 269: 132).

Despite their application of non-Native farming customs such as field rotation and the use of harrows and fertilizers (Canada 1845), Kahnawake residents easily found ways to make a living from traditional Native skills. One important time of the year was the Saint-Francis-Xavier feast because it signified the start of the winter hunting season. As described by Joseph Marcoux, Kahnawake's secular priest from 1819 to 1855 (fig. 2):

> le tems de cette fête, au commencement de décembre, a toujours été pour eux une époque pour une infinité de choses dans leur manière de vivre. Par exemple, c'est à la St. F.-X. que finit pour eux une certaine chasse et qu'ils reviennent au village pour se préparer à une autre; c'est à la St. F.-X. que commence, pour eux, l'hyver, qu'ils vont chercher leurs animaux de toutes espèces, épars cà et là dans les déserts et les bois de leur seigneurie pour les établir; c'est à la St. F.-X. qu'ils tiennent réparations des bâtiments, charroyage du bois et une infinité d'autres choses. (Marcoux to Plessis, 4 October 1825, ADSJQL 3A-84)

Also, during the summer, most of the men worked as boatmen, lumberjacks or pilots of rafts conveying timber to Montréal. Women and aged men produced beadwork, mocassins and snowshoes, selling them to other *Kahnawakehro:non* or to residents of surrounding non-Native communities (Devine 1922; Lambert 1980).

In the 1830s, Kahnawake was governed locally by a council of eighteen members, including seven grand chiefs as well as several "members of council" (sub-chiefs) and war chiefs ("warriors"). All seven of the higher chiefs were named for life by members of their respective clans. According to Father Joseph Marcoux, the chiefs "sont élus par leurs bandes respectives et un officier quelconque ne peut casser un chef de conseil que de priver de son siège un membre du parlement" ("Origine des troubles du Sault St. Louis", Marcoux, 1840, AAM, 901.104, 840-3). Once a chief was selected by its clan by means of consensus, his appointment was confirmed by colonial authorities (Reid 1998). Yet in the eyes of the chiefs' council, "we consider our appointment of a chief conclusive; the Governor's approval is a mere matter of form" (Minutes of proceedings, 10-15 April 1840, NAC RG10 vol 717, in Jennings et al. 1984). The higher chiefs were "empowered to represent the Indians of the said village in all transactions of a public nature" (Montreal

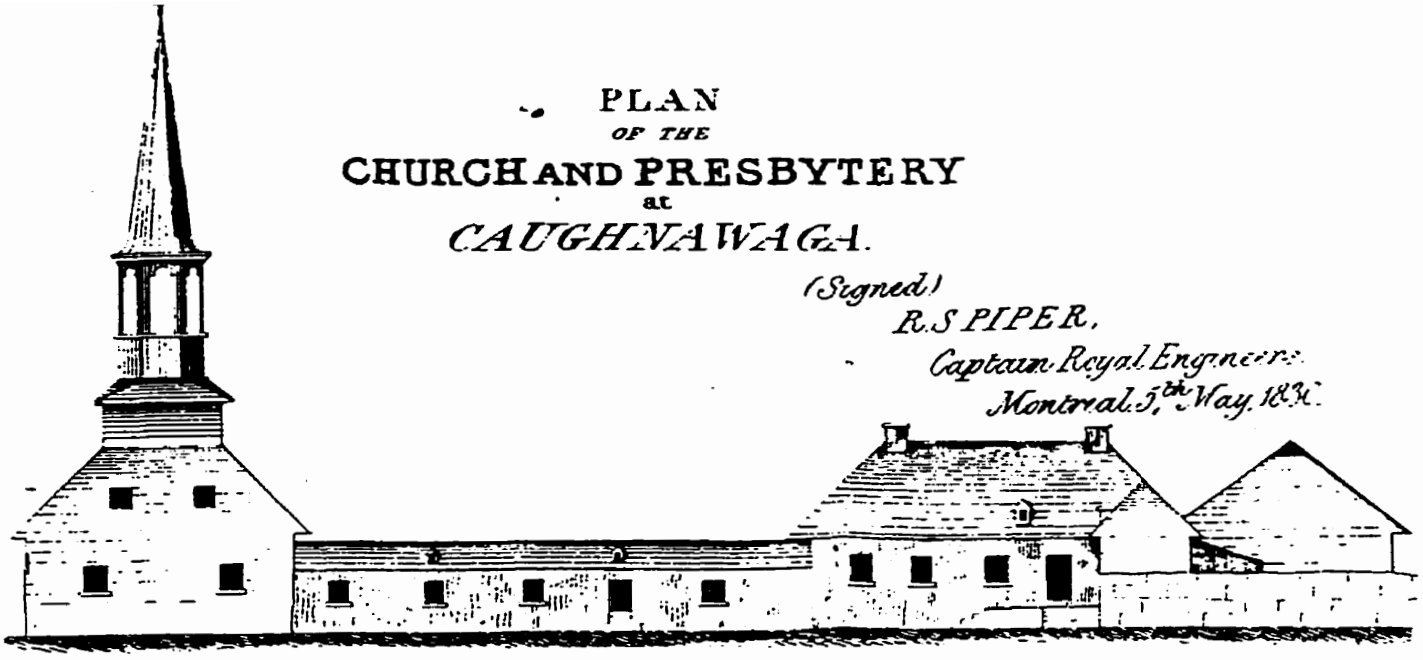


*Fig. 1: Saint-François-Xavier Mission, Kahnawake. This rear view shows what the church and rectory looked like at the time of the Rebellions. These buildings were originally built in 1721. (from an enclosure in a letter from R. S. Piper to Colonel Durnford, 5 may 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 92-94)*

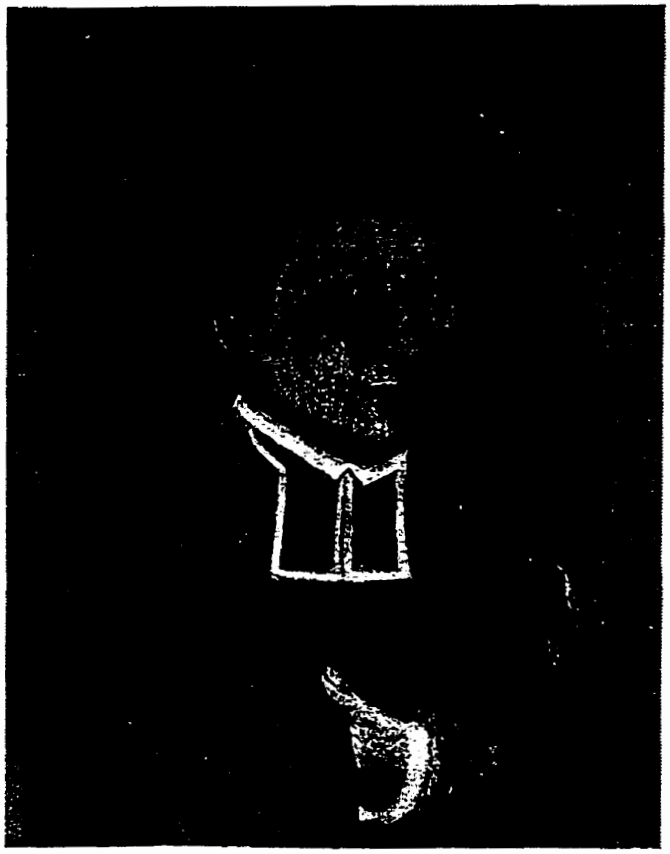

*Fig. 2: Joseph Marcoux (1791-1855) (from Devine 1922: 352). Fluent in Mohawk, Marcoux was also known as Tharoniakanere, "the one who looks up to the sky". Because of his consistent efforts to have the LaPrairie land claim settled in favor of Kahnawake, the Kahnawakero:non who are familiar with his work today agree that "he was one of the good ones", meaning that he was not like other priests, Jesuits especially, who did not work for the community's benefit. During his stay of 36 years in Kahnawake (1819-1855), Marcoux wrote Mohawk versions of Catholic prayer books, biographies of Kateri Tekakawitha, as well as Mohawk-French grammars, dictionaries and conjugation tables. (Béchard 1946: 19; 1985: 685)*

Indian Office, 20 December 1843, NAC RG10 vol. 598: 47046). Within this political structure, many "cheferesses du village" or "matrones" were said to hold certain powers (Marcoux to Lartigue, 29 December 1825, ADSJQL 3A-88). Indeed, some Kahnawake women of the 1830s may have played an important political role, either as council members or as clan leaders (Sawaya 1998: 48; Fenton 1978; Tooker 1978). Finally, from the early nineteenth century and until the establishment of the band council system in 1889, Kahnawake was divided into seven clans: Turtle, Wolf, Old Bear (Big Bear), Great Bear, Snipe, Rock (Stone), and Deer. The presence of the Turtle, Wolf, Big Bear and Great Bear clans point to the Mohawk roots of Kahnawake, whereas the Deer, Snipe and Stone clans point to the Onondaga and Oneida ancestry of the community. The Stone clan was said to be composed of "the people of the erected stone", individuals who traced their origin to the Oneida founders of the village (Reid 1998: 10; 1999).[15]

Kahnawake's diplomatic ties to the Native villages of Lower Canada were marked by an agreement that they formed the *Seven Nations of Canada* or *Seven Fires*. Since its origin in the seventeenth century, this "confederation" included the Hurons of Lorette, the Abenakis of St. Francis and Bécancourt, the Algonquins of Pointe-du-Lac, the Algonquins, Nipissings and Iroquois of Kanesatake[16], and the Iroquois of Akwesasne[17] and Kahnawake. Kahnawake was *Ktci'skwudek*, the "Great Fireplace" (Blanchard 1983: 11) or the "chef-lieu de tous les villages du Canada" (Beaulieu 1997: 44). In turn, Kahnawake's chiefs were not only at the head of their own village but also served as the chiefs of the Seven Fires' council and had the right to speak in the name of the other villages (Sawaya 1998: 53). As such, Kahnawake was the Native "capital" of Lower Canada and played a major role in shaping Native-British relations.[18] As a federated alliance, the Seven Fires promoted harmony, friendship and the autonomy of each

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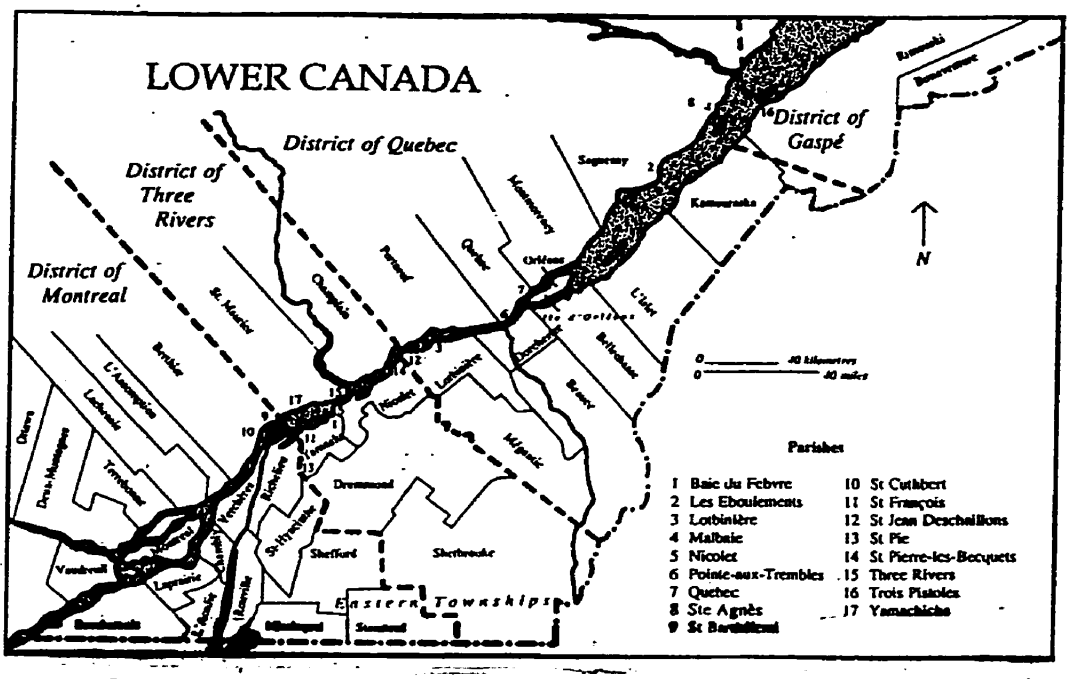
[15] In the 1830s, Kahnawake did not function politically with a "traditional" Mohawk council consisting of nine chiefs, with three chiefs from each of the three "traditional" clans (Turtle, Wolf and Bear) (Tooker 1978: 426). By comparison to the "traditional" form of government, the Kahnawake council of the early eighteenth century was composed of three chiefs, one from each of the dominant Native groups that composed the village at the time (Mohawk, Onondaga, Huron) (Green 1991: 42). In 1750, Kahnawake is said to have been divided into three clans: Turtle, Wolf, Bear. Each clan was further divided into "deux bandes commandées chacune par un chef" (Franquet, in Beaulieu 1997: 48). These six chiefs were in turn "subordonnés au grand chef du village", for a total of seven chiefs (Franquet, in Beaulieu 1997: 48; Green 1991: 284). The moment and reasons why Kahnawake was divided into seven clans remain unclear.

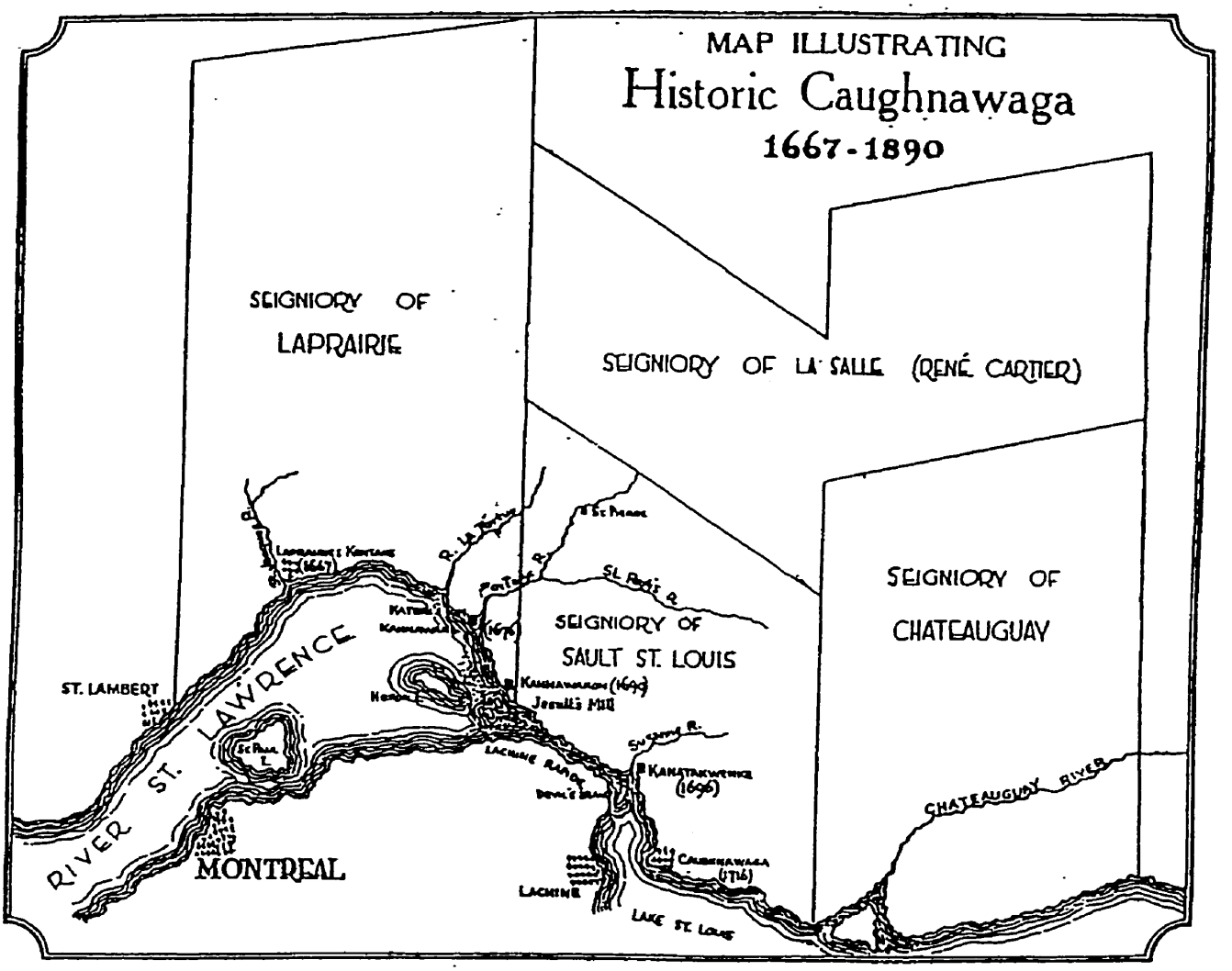
[16] In the nineteenth century, Kanesatake was referred to by French-speaking priests as the "Lac des Deux Montagnes", and by Crown officials as "Lake of Two Montains" or "Canasataga". In Mohawk, Kanesatake means "the place of the silvery sands" (Blanchard 1983: 10; Gabriel-Doxtater and Van des Hende 1995).

[17] At the time, this community was refered to by government officials and priests as "St. Regis". The modern-day reservation spans the border between Ontario, Québec and New York. In Mohawk, the term Akwesasne means "where the partridge drums are" (Fenton and Tooker 1978).

[18] The Seven Nations of Canada were united in the 1660s to serve as a buffer zone between the French and English colonies. This Native "confederation" was abolished in the 1860s. For more information, see Blanchard (1983), Beaulieu (1997), Delâge (1991a; 1991b) and Sawaya (1998).




*Map 1: Lower Canada in the 1830s. (in Greer 1993: 190)*




*Map 2: Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury and the five different locations of Kahnawake, 1667-1890. (in Devine 1922)*

village/nation. When one of the seven grand chiefs of Kahnawake died[19], "tous les chefs des autres villages, de St. Regis, du Lac, de Lorette, de St. Francois se rendent ici avec leurs femmes et leurs enfans, pour pleurer le mort et procéder à l'élection de son successeur" (Marcoux, 25 January 1830, NAC RG8 vol. 269: 133). Iroquois condolence ceremonies conducted for mourning deceased chiefs and installing new ones (Fenton 1978: 319; Tooker 1978: 437-440) thus seem to have been practiced in Lower Canada.

*Kahnawake and the seigneury of Sault-Saint-Louis*

Kahnawake was located in what was known as the *Seigneurie du Sault-Saint-Louis*, a 40 320 acre territory which was granted in 1680 by the French Crown to the Jesuits to "protect" and "nurture" newly converted Iroquois (Lambert 1980). In the 1830s, the Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury[20] was part of the District of Montréal, which extended from the U.S. and Upper Canada borders until Trois-Rivières (map 1). This district was supervised by a Superintendent and an interpreter, who were placed under the authority of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, one of the highest paid employees of the Indian Department (225£ per annum) (Napier, 29 May 1837, in Great Britain 1973: 24)

In the 1830s, Sault-Saint-Louis was bounded by the seigneuries of Châteauguay to the West, La Prairie de la Magdeleine to the East, and La Salle to the South (maps 2 and 3). Government surveyor J. Bouchette described the seigneury of Sault-Saint-Louis in 1815:

> from the river St. Regis towards the St. Lawrence the remaining part is covered with wood of all ordinary species, except a small portion reserved by the proprietors for their own uses. The village of Coghnawaga is placed on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and consists of a church, a house for the missionary, who resides with them, and about 140 others, principally built of stone, formed into two or three rows, something resembling streets. (Bouchette 1815: 124)

Bouchette also pointed out that "nearly all that half of the seigniory which lies towards La Salle [was] well settled and cultivated by Canadian families" (ibid.). At the time of the

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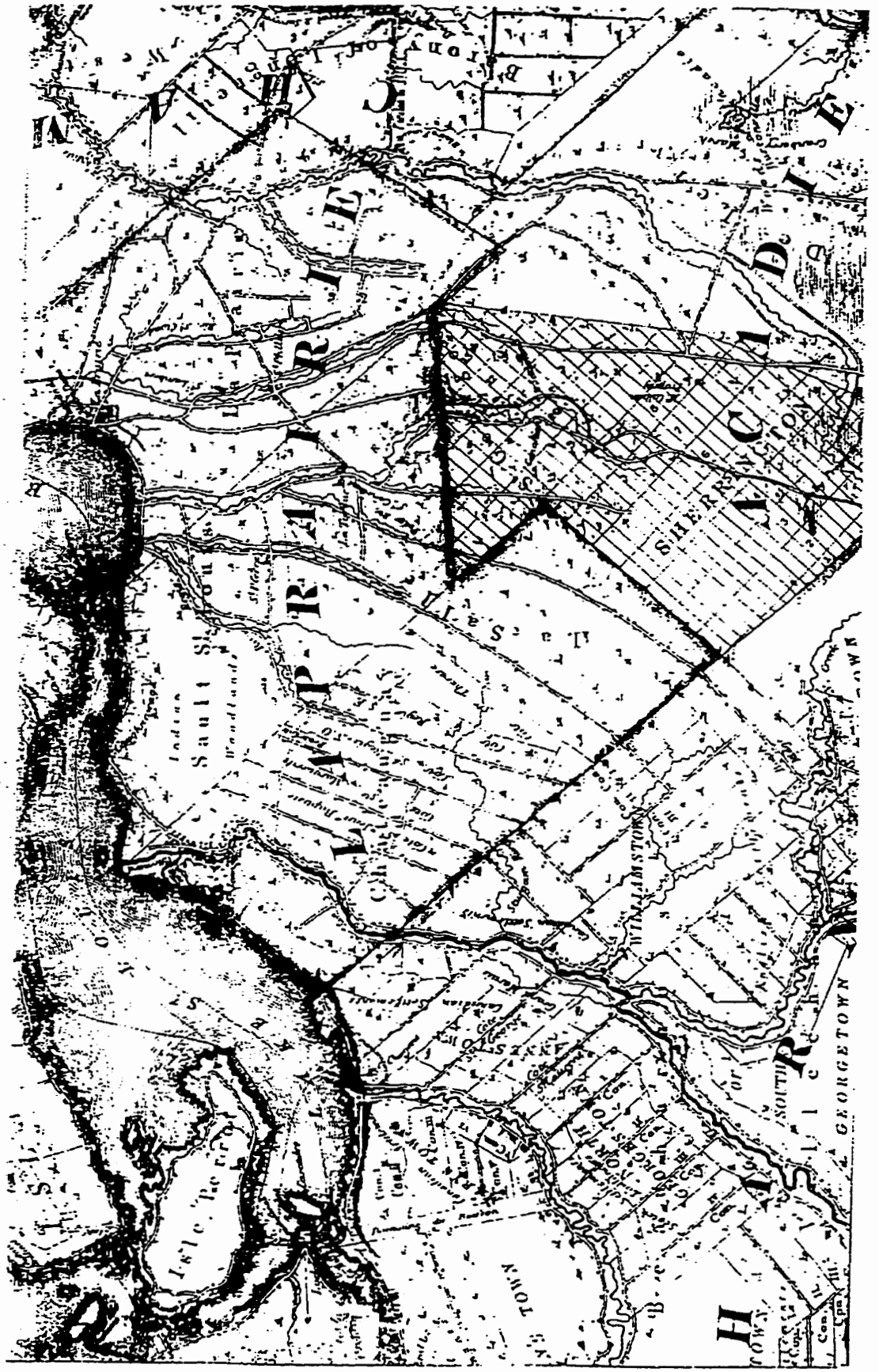
[19] If chiefs had recently died, the community was governed by only five or six individuals because replacements had not been chosen yet (Marcoux à Gaulin, 29 July 1835, ADSJQL 3A-166). In 1837, a petition was signed by six chiefs and twenty-two war chiefs (Martin Tekanasontie et al. to Lord Gosford, 3 February 1837, NAC RG10 vol 93: 38036-7). The six chiefs that signed this document are: Martin Tekanasontie, Michel Sarenhere, Thomas Teiohatekwen, Joseph Niwatenhenra, Charles Katsirakeron and Thomas Sakaoehetsta. In 1845, the seven higher chiefs were: Martin Tekansontie, Thomas Tiohatekwen, Charles Katsirakeron, Thomas Sakaohetsta, Jean Baptiste Saonwentiowane, Joseph Tenihatie, and Pierre Atawenrate (Béchard 1946; Reid 1999).

[20] A "seigneurie" consists of a territorial unit obtained and owned by a "seigneur" under the obligation to concede land to settlers, pay homage to authorities, and build and maintain a mill as well as a main road. As in France, the seigneuries of French Canada were divided into two components: 1) the personal domain of the seigneur; 2) and the remaining part divided into "côtes" or "rangs". These small parcels of land were conceded to peasants under the condition of regular payments to the seigneur. The settler also had to clear the ground for growing fields, put up fences, and build and maintain a house (Courville 1988: 9; see also Dechêne 1974; Greer 1985: 138-9; Harris 1966; Ouellet 1972: 91-113).




*Map 3: Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury, 1831. The woods surrounding Kahnawake are referred to as "Indian Woodlands". This map is a detailed close-up of a larger map of the District of Montreal drawn by government surveyor Joseph Bouchette in 1831. (in Parent 1984: 187)*

seigneury's concession, it was agreed that this territory was closed to whites. But, because the Jesuits falsely considered themselves to be the seigneurs of the Sault, they permitted the settlement of whites and collected their rents. The seigneury remained under the "superintendence" and "management" of the Jesuits until April 1762, when governor Thomas Gage[21] ordered that it was entirely and exclusively vested in the Iroquois, under the Supervision of the Indian Department (Lambert 1980: 18-26).

The judgement rendered by Gage in 1762 also ordered that from that moment on, non-Natives were not allowed to live in Sault-Saint-Louis and that all of those already living there could remain only if they promised not to enlarge their properties. The settlers were also obliged to offer regular payments of "cens et rentes"[22] to an newly appointed agent, hired to collect and administer seigneurial revenues for the Iroquois (Lambert 1980: 18-26). The agent was also responsible for keeping the receipts and payments

> carefully and distinctly noted in a Book to be kept by you for that purpose, and you are faithfully to deliver and distribute to the Chiefs of the said Indians, acting on the behalf of the Tribe, or otherwise, Pay to such persons as may be duly authorised to receive the same, the whole of the monies, or grain, that may come into your hands, on their account, reserving however to your own use as full and complete compensations for this duty, one tenth part of the whole Proceeds. (Lord Gosford to Joseph Baby, 18 June 1837, NAC RG10 vol 659: 181440; Gosford's emphasis)

In spite of such orders, a "mishandling" of revenues and land by agents such as Nicolas Doucet and Joseph Baby quickly led to an increase in land concessions to whites within the limits of Sault-Saint-Louis (Lambert 1980: 41) (map 4). Kahnawake's Indian agents often took more than their 10% royalty, absolved renters of their obligations without the consent of the chiefs' council, and used the revenues derived from the seigneury for their personal interests (Alfred 1995b: 37-8). In 1825, Kahnawake chiefs even claimed that agent Nicolas Doucet's work had been unsatisfactory and that

> from all the circumstances [...] alledged by us, we conclude that it better for us to transact our own business ourselves, than to intrust them into the hands of an agent who does not care to give us any satisfaction; for, it is notorious that for some time past our affairs have been conducted in a manner quite contrary to our wishes. (Kahnawake chiefs to John Johnson, 22 July 1825, NAC RG8 vol. 265: 28)

Despite repeated complaints, land and rent mismanagements continued, which increased non-Native encroachment around Kahnawake (Lambert 1980: 38). In 1830, about 280 Canadian settlers and their families resided in Sault-Saint-Louis. Their

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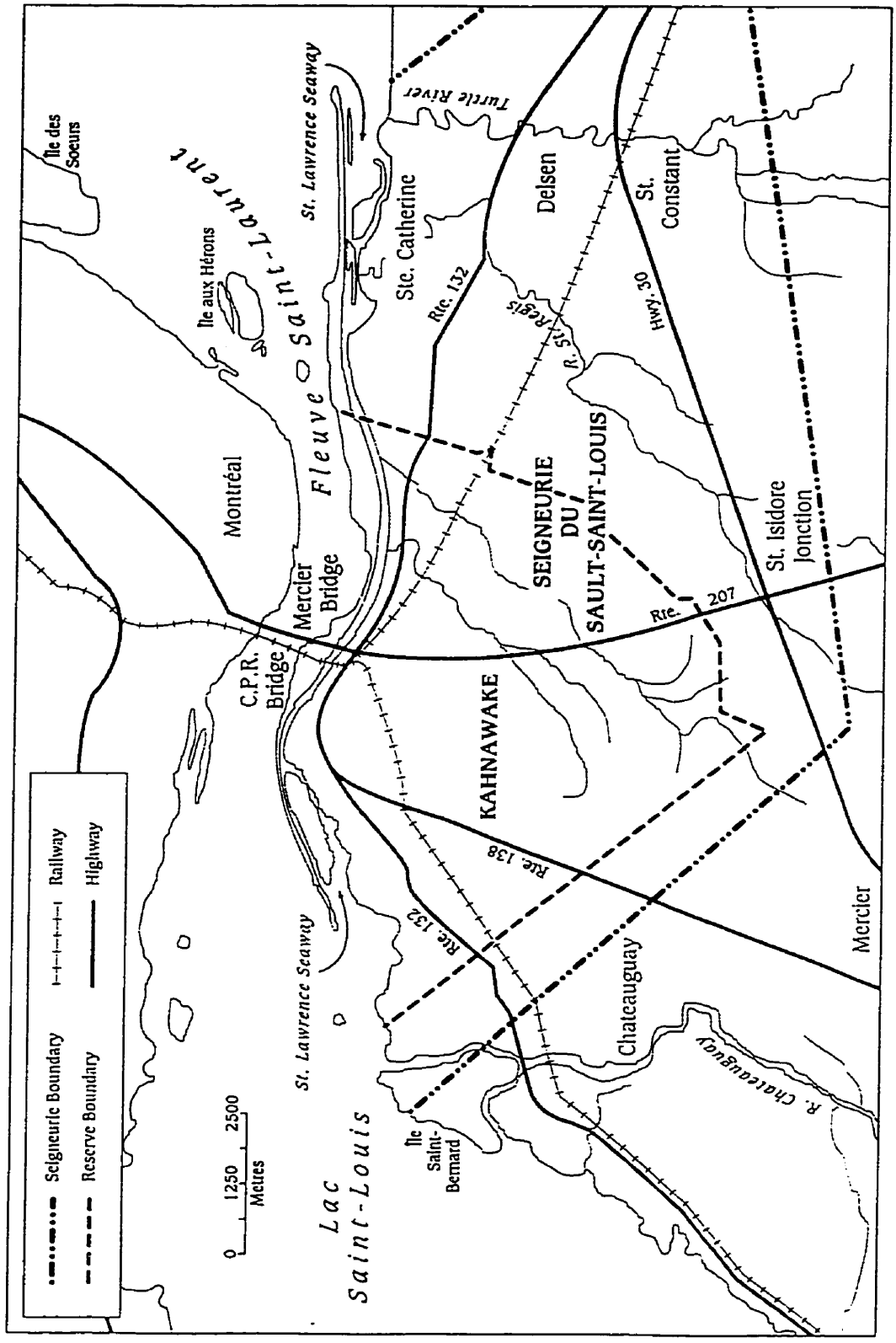
[21] Thomas Gage was the military governor of Montréal from 1760 to 1763.

[22] The most important mechanism of transfer from the censitaire (or settler) to the seigneur was the "cens et rentes", an annual payment in money, produce or labour. The "cens" was considered a token of the commoners' form of tenure, whereas "rente" was a lucrative charge added to and deliberately confused with the cens to subject the settler to penalties for late payment of the latter (Greer 1985: 122).




*Map 4: Kahnawake and its vicinity, present-day. The modern-day Kahnawake "reservation" originated from two French Crown seigneurial land grants to the Jesuits on 29 May and 31 October 1680. The seigneury's size was of over 40 000 acres (Canada 1891: 288-92). However, through the mismanagement of lands and rents by Jesuits and Indian agents, portions of Sault-Saint-Louis were sold off or integrated into surrounding non-native communities. Moreover, numerous land surrenders to railway, hydro-electric, and telephone companies took place from the late 1880s until the 1950s. As a result, the land which still remains in Kahnawake's hands today amounts to only 11 000 acres. (map in Alfred 1995a: 150)*

concessions amounted to "12 000 arpents"[23] and were divided into "six côtes, en un lopin irrégulier entre les Concessions de St-Pierre et la Tortue, et en continuations" ("Tableau approximatif de la superficie des terres concédées dans la Seigneurie du Sault St. Louis et des cens et rentes qu'elle produit", Doucet, 14 April 1830, NAC RG8 vol. 269: 346). Kahnawake's annual revenue[24] generated from this settlement averaged £200 in rents and £800 in agricultural produce (ibid.). It provided the funds to repair the church and presbytery, finance travel, pay for legal and burial services, maintain public roads and fences, pay the miller and guardians of the pasture, distribute food to visiting Native and non-Native delegations, and upkeep of the "Moulin de la Tortue" (Marcoux, 25 January 1835, NAC RG8 vol 269: 132-5; "Record Book of Sault St. Louis Landholders", RG10 vol. 665; "Sault St. Louis: Livre de Cens et Rentes", RG10 vol. 666).[25]

*Religious and cultural life*

The Kahnawake Iroquois consist of a group of people originally converted by Jesuit missionaries who emigrated from their homeland in 1667. As a result, Kahnawake experienced a rapid formation of a distinct Christian Iroquois identity (Green 1991). Traveller John Long even noted that "les Sauvages de cette nation [sont] appellés Indiens Prians, parce que leurs chefs portent des crucifix, et parcourent les rues de Montréal avec leurs chapelets, en demandant l'aumône" (Long 1792: 11). In 1783, the Jesuits in Kahnawake were replaced by secular priests and the community was placed under the religious jurisdiction of the Bishop of Québec. When the Diocese of Montréal was formed in 1836, Kahnawake was lodged under its jurisdiction but remained "supervised" by secular priests until 1855, when Oblates were given the status of missionary priests. The Jesuits returned to Kahnawake in 1903 (Devine 1922: 312; Forbes 1899: 135-6).

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[23] One arpent (area) is the same as 0.845 acres or 0.342 hectares (Greer 1983: 250).

[24] Since 1796, Kahnawake also obtained an annuity from New York state authorities for the sale of hunting lands. This sum of money amounted to 566$ and was paid on the first Tuesday of every August to the chiefs of Kahnawake and Kanesatake. Each council of chiefs was given an equal share of about 280$. After the War of 1812, New York stopped paying this annuity and resumed respecting the agreement in 1820 when Father J. Marcoux secured the payment. In 1848, the annuity became part of the funds needed to maintain the church (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 August 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-38; Devine 1922: 377).

[25] This revenue was also used to pay the "dîme" to the church, a payment which included an annual sum of money and 150 bushels of wheat (Marcoux, 25 January 1830, NAC RG8 vol 269: 132). However, Father Rinfret, who lived in Kahnawake between 1808 and 1814, often complained that he would get only half of the owed wheat and that "plusieurs sèment du bled, des pois, de l'avoine, mais point de dixme [...] se sont des monstres d'ingratitude" (Rinfret to Plessis, 21 August 1813, ADSJQL 3A-56). In 1840, many Kahnawake residents still owed the entire dîme from the years before (Marcoux to Lartigue, 12 February 1840, ADSJQL 3A-209). It is interesting to note that traveller John Long has stated that the "Indiens Cahnuagas [...] sont passionnées [...] pour la parure [...]. Les profits qu'ils retirent des terres louées par eux aux Canadiens leur permettent de satisfaire leur goût pour ce luxe" (Long 1792: 13).

In the 1830s, distant from Methodist and Protestant influences with which other Canadian Iroquois communities had to deal with, Kahnawake was primarily Catholic. Father Marcoux often noted proudly that many residents were avidly pious and that they regularly assembled in great numbers in the local church (figs. 1 and 3): "l'Église ne se vide pas du matin au soir; il y a toujours bande tout autour en dévotion; jusqu'aux petits enfans qui n'ont pas encore communié s'en mêlent" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 14 October 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-42). Also, Midnight Mass at Christmas and the New Year's Day feast of *Le Salut des Rois* held much importance in the eyes of many *Kahnawakehro:non*:

> le jour de l'an, dès cinq heures du matin, on illumine l'église et après la prière il y a sermon, [...] et ensuite bénédiction du ciboire. Le Salut des Rois est quelque chose de plus attrayant pour les sauvages. Le soir de ce jour on étale dans le choeur le crèche, qui est composée de personnages de grandeur humaine: on fait une espèce de théâtre, embelli surtout par l'illumination. Tout ce qu'il y a de beau à l'église est là, disposé avec ordre et symétrie. On s'assemble à 7h, et pendant que chacun va faire son offrande, on chante des Noëls pendant plus d'une heure. Toutes les femmes qui ont des enfans en bas âge, ne manquent pas de les apporter, dans des berceaux tout resplendissants d'argenterie, de rassades, de rubans. S'il fallait priver les sauvages de ce salut, il y aurait, comme on dit, du train, et on regarderait la religion comme abolie. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 23 Novembre 1835, AAQ, 26 CP, D-46)

Mass, prayers and sermons were conducted in the widely used Mohawk language. In fact, for Marcoux, familiarity with the language was an absolute necessity: "un des malheurs des villages sauvages vient de ce qu'ils sont sujets à avoir des missionnaires qui n'entendent par leur langue qu'au bout de deux ou trois ans. Pendant le tems le mal prend racine et accroissement" (Marcoux to Plessis, 21 April 1819, ADSJQL 3A-67). Evidence also suggests that Marcoux served the Iroquois only and that although Kahnawake's non-Native neighbors often journeyed to the Native village to conduct business with the Iroquois or visit the local priest, they worshipped in their own churches.[26]

Yet despite the fact they were seen as better parishioners than Canadians (Long 1792: 13; Talbot 1833: 306), some *Kahnawakehro:non* were not baptized and remained quite indifferent to Christian beliefs. In the 1750s, one Jesuit noted that the Kahnawake people were attached to Catholicism "only in as much as their interests dictate" (in Green

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[26] The views nineteenth century priests had of Indians were sometimes very negative. Father Joseph Marcoux remarked in 1835 that the people of Kahnawake "sont ingrats par caractère et ignorent la reconnaissance" (Marcoux to Gaulin, 29 July 1835, ADSJQL 3A-166). Bishop Turgeon of Québec noted to Marcoux that "vos chefs [...] sont toujours les mêmes, c'est à dire des hommes dont un présent de quelques guenilles peut tourner la tête" (Turgeon to Marcoux, 2 January 1837, AAM, vol. 901.032, no. 837-1). Marcoux often noted that "his" Indians were easily "corruptible": "les sauvages sont donc remuants par caractère, inconstants; prenant facilement de l'aversion pour ceux qui les conduisent, et pour la moindre cause [...]. Faites tout le bien possible à un sauvage; si ensuite vous lui causez la moindre peine, quoique ce soit votre devoir d'agir ainsi, vous attirez sa haine pour longtemps, et quelque fois pour toujours. Ils sont [...] toujours prêts à suivre un mauvais conseil, et, se défient de ceux qui ne peuvent vouloir que leur bien" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 May 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-18).

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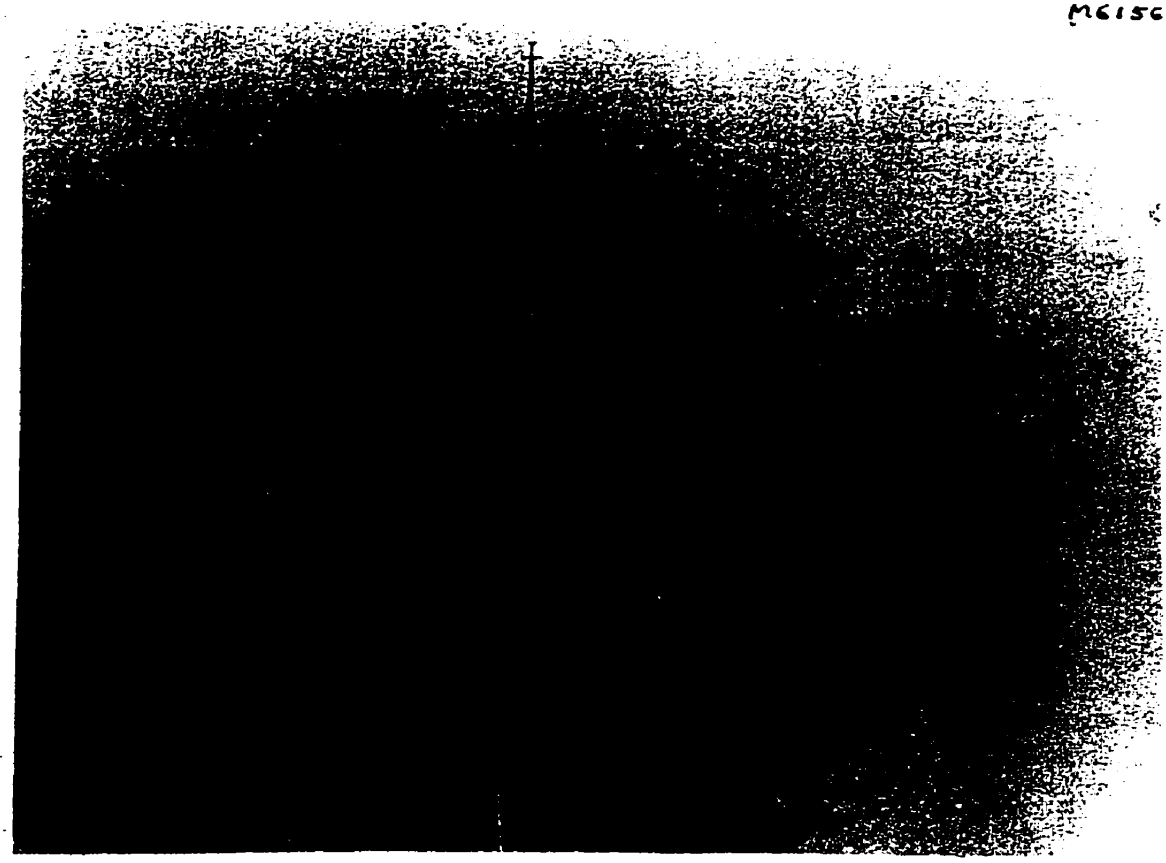

*Fig. 3: Saint-François-Xavier Mission, Kahnawake, built in 1845 (McCord Museum of Canadian History, M6156). Since as early as 1824, priests visiting Kahnawake noticed that the old church was in terrible shape and that it was not big enough for the growing community. In 1832, despite a special government agreement to have the church renovated because it was "much dilapidated, [as] one of the long walls appears to have given out from the upper part [...]" and that "it may hereafter -if not attended to- fall down", officials frowned at the estimate of the repair costs (£1023). Thus instead of going ahead with renovations, officials simply supplied the community with a meager £250 (R. S. Piper to Colonel Durnford, 5 May 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 92-94). Father Joseph Marcoux's requests for external funds continued during the 1830s; he even wrote a letter to "Amélie, Reine des Français". In response, the Government of France granted the community over 2500 Francs. Finally, by 1844, a sufficient sum of money had been accumulated and the community went ahead with the renovations. The angular stone for the new church was placed on 19 May 1845, with many people present, including the community's seven grand chiefs, Marcoux, and Bishop Bourget of Montréal. Construction crews built the new and present-day church (as depicted on the drawing above) over the old one by using the latter as a scaffold (Béchard 1946: 11-17).*

*The may-pole (or flag-pole) facing the church is where Kahnawake resident George de Lorimier assembled between 30 to 40 men when rumors spread that Patriotes were planning to "invade" the village on the morning of 4 November 1838. Some older Kahnawake residents refer to this pole as Tsikarontonte, or "the place of the standing wood". It is said that in order to see if a sufficient number of people wished to join a raiding party, a war chief would plant his tomahawk in the pole. If others followed with a similar move, the warriors went on the warpath. In the 1930s, the wooden pole was replaced by one made of steel. Today, a metal platform stands in its place.*

1991: 297). In 1813, Father Rinfret remarked that children following religion classes were not learning much: "s'ils ont la tête dure pour apprendre les prières et le catéchisme, ils ne l'ont pas pour apprendre à sacrer, et à dire en français toutes sortes de sottises" (Rinfret to Plessis, 21 August 1813, ADSJQL 3A-56). In 1819, Marcoux held that Christian morals were not always present and many enjoyed "traditional" dances:

> Ce qui perd les jeunes gens ici, ce sont les danses de nuit, ou les occasions sont faciles. Je ne pense pas réussir à les abolir entièrement, mais j'espère avec le temps empêcher au moins les filles d'y aller [...]. Des enfans de dix ou douze ans sont aussi instruits sur le mal que les jeunes gens de vingt. Tout cela s'apprend la nuit, lorsqu'il y a danse. (Marcoux to Plessis, 21 April 1819, ADSJQL 3A-67, my emphasis)

In many cases, the chiefs resisted helping the curé eliminate Native habits such as playing lacrosse without wearing any clothes. Marcoux complained that they often refused to

> prêter main forte au missionnaire lorsqu'il requiert leur secours pour abolir les danses entre garçons et filles, [...] empêcher leurs jeunes gens de se mettre nuds et seulement en brayer pour jouer à la crosse et tirer des courses, ce qui ne convient plus aux moeurs présentes, qui demandent qu'ils ayent au moins une chemise et peut-être des mitasses sinon des culottes. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 4 October 1825, ADSJQL 3A-84)

Also, the curé outlined in 1835 that the consumption of rum caused continual difficulties:

> nous sommes réduits à ne pouvoir plus rien faire avec les hommes; le rhum est leur Dieu. Ce n'est pas peu dire; et cependant, ce n'est pas trop dire. C'est tout les ans une demie douzaine, et quelques fois plus, qui périssent par le liquide diabolique et infernal (Marcoux to Cazeau, 29 September 1835, AAQ, 26 CP, D-153)

Thus despite the fact Catholicism holds much importance in the history of Kahnawake, archival evidence seems to suggest that the label of "Christian Indians", which has so often been imposed on the people of Kahnawake by past observers and modern-day scholars, is an oversimplified generalization. Sources seem to show that the religious history of this community is far more complex and diversified than what is usually conceived.

*Father Joseph Marcoux, the chiefs, and government schools*

Although Marcoux preached religious faith and stressed moral taboos, he was also used as a political mediator by the Iroquois when they wished to communicate demands or grievances to colonial authorities. Yet because he considered himself to be a pivotal chief-like figure and felt in some ways that the Iroquois "belonged" to him, there was a continual struggle between him and the established leaders. In fact, as soon as he arrived in Kahnawake in 1819, Marcoux found "beaucoup de préjugés contre moi" (Marcoux to Plessis, 21 April 1819, ADSJQL 3A-67) as his relations with the chiefs were quickly marked by mutual distrust and misunderstanding.[27] In 1821, Marcoux found out that

[27] Tensions between Kahnawake chiefs and local priests did not originate with Marcoux. In 1811, Father Rinfret wrote that those opposed to him had forced the chiefs to cease paying the dîme to the church. The

Kahnawake's new Indian agent was submerged in financial troubles and proposed to officials that Nicolas Doucet be hired instead. Officials agreed and informed the chiefs, who were outraged that their authority had been by-passed. Louis Garoniatsigowa, "premier chef et Capitaine Chrétien de la tribu Iroquoise établie au village du Sault St. Louis", and two other chiefs swiftly delivered a petition to Marcoux's superior Bishop Plessis of Québec complaining that the curé was trying to control Kahnawake's internal affairs (Marcoux to Lartigue, 29 December 1825, ADSJQL 3A-88). The chiefs complained

> de la conduite de leur missionnaire a cause qu'il se mêle des affaires des chefs concernant les rentes de leur seigneurie après avoir établi lui même un percepteur a l'insu des dits chefs, et de plus, il a adressé à sa mode une requête à son excellence sans avoir parlé à aucun des chefs qui conduisent le village du Sault St. Louis. La confiance que les Iroquois avoient pour leur missionnaire étoit perdue. (Louis Garoniatsigowa et al., to Bishop Plessis, 3 November 1825, ADSJQL 3A-85)

Moreover, in the 1830s, colonial administrators wished to educate Native people in English and Protestant ways. Indeed, British government officials strongly believed that

> nothing is more likely to [...] confirm the attachment of the Indians to the British Government, than the education of a portion of their children, with those of the inhabitants, at the common English schools of the country. The children thus educated would probably imbibe more favorable ideas of the Church of England than they now entertain, and might be hereafter most beneficially employed in disseminating instruction, and the English language, as schoolmasters to the Indian tribes. (Kempt to Murray, 15 December 1829, in Great Britain 1969a: 61, my emphasis)

Some even suggested that the government consider the "subject of Indian Female Education" as "the influence of Mothers over children to a certain age is generally acknowledged to be very powerful" (Christie to Napier, 25 February 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40270). However, government officials reminded each other that

> the cooperation, or the neutrality at least, of the Roman Catholic clergy is essential to the scheme for the settlement of the Indians; for, if opposed by them, I am persuaded that every efforts to attain that object, however zealously or judiciously made, will prove unavailing. (Kempt to Murray, 20 May 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 97)

It was also agreed that a "Protestant school at Caughnawaga, or among any other of the tribes under the missionaries of the Roman Catholic church, is [...] more likely to prove a waste of means" (Dalhousie to McCulloch, 9 Feb. 1827, in Great Britain 1969a.: 102).

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people who had sided with him were called "royalistes" and "n'ont aucun accès dans les conseils, ni aucune part aux revenus de la seigneurie. Non seulement le parti rebelle prévaut dans le village, mais il voudrait aussi prévaloir dans l'église. Voilà plusieurs fois qu'ils refusent le pain béni à ceux qu'ils appellent Royalistes" (Rinfret to Plessis, 20 February 1811, ADSJQL 3A-50). The central issue was one of power: "en un mot, les chefs prétendent absolument me conduire. Je ne me laisse pas conduire par eux, voilà mon crime, voilà pourquoi ils me refusent en partie ce qu'ils me doivent" (Rinfret to Plessis, 21 August 1813, ADSJQL 3A-56). In 1836, Father Marcoux noted that "les sauvages du Sault ont toujours été ce qu'ils sont aujourd'hui, ils ont toujours causé de la peine à leurs Missionnaires; ils ont toujours été forts pour faire des requêtes aux évêques contr'eux, lorsqu'ils n'abondaient pas dans leur sens" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 May 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-18).

Interestingly, as in surrounding non-Native communities (Chabot 1975), most government measures intended to force a Protestant education were unsuccessful in Kahnawake due to Marcoux's influence. Indeed, the curé did "not countenance or support [government schools] as he conceived [they were] calculated and intended to weaken the Catholic Principles of [his] Children (the Iroquois), and withdraw them from his Church" (Pyke et al., 18 January 1837, in Great Britain 1973: 58).[28] In 1826, a school was opened in Kahnawake by the *Society for Promoting Education and Industry in Canada* and was quickly attended by eighty Iroquois children. However, Marcoux claimed that those who would attended the school would be excluded from "a Participation in the Holy Sacraments of the Church" (ibid.). In turn, the entire project was abandoned. In an attempt to satisfy the curé's objections, Lord Aylmer[29] hired an English-speaking Catholic tutor to conduct a school in Kahnawake. Marcoux forced the closing of this school (Devine 1922: 367). In 1829, the chiefs and council members sent a petition to Sir James Kempt[30] and stated that

> les Iroquois du dit village de Caughnawaga sont absolument privés de moyens d'éducation et sont encore (à part des instructions religieuses qu'ils reçoivent de leur missionnaire) dans l'état d'ignorance où la nature les a placés, ce qui est la cause principale du peu de progrès qu'ils ont fait dans la civilisation et qui les retient encore dans des superstitions et des habitudes qui les font inférieurs de leurs co-sujets. (Kahnawake chiefs to Kempt, 23 August 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 580-2)

Guided by Marcoux, the petitioners argued that "pour remédier à ces inconvénients [...], vos suppliants se proposent d'établir dans leur village une école françoise-iroquoise pour l'éducation élémentaire des jeunes garçons de la tribu" (ibid., my emphasis). They also claimed that they wished to open "une école pour les jeunes filles" (ibid.). Finally, they stated that they had chosen Kahnawake resident George de Lorimier to become the tutor of the school. Yet, that same year, Kempt authorized the expenses needed to send six Kahnawake boys to an English Protestant (possibly residential) school in nearby Châteauguay. In 1834, the number of youths attending this school had risen to twelve but later dropped to five in 1837 (in Great Britain 1969d: 55-9). Despite Marcoux's objections, the school was still in operation in 1842 (Canada 1845).[31]

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[28] Similar circumstances were noted elsewhere in Lower-Canadian Native communities: in 1826, an English school project failed in the Huron community of Lorette through the opposition of the resident Catholic missionary; a school attended by eighty boys was opened at Kanesatake in 1835 but was quickly closed due to the influence of Father Dufresne; in Akwesasne, the efforts of Protestant preachers were diminished through the influence of Father François-Xavier Marcoux, the nephew of Kahnawake's Joseph Marcoux. The English language is also said to have been resisted in St. Francis where, in 1835, only two boys were attending a government school ("Answers to Queries, etc.", 27 October 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 660: 89-121, in Jennings et al. 1984).

[29] Matthew-Whitworth, Lord Aylmer, was the Governor of British North America from 1830 to 1835.

[30] James Kempt was an administrator of the government of British North America from 1828 to 1830.

[31] Marcoux's opposition to English education surprised many officials, who found it strange that a clergyman who obtained a salary from the Government should "thwart instead of promoting its benevolent

In sum, sources indicate that the people of Kahnawake have always resisted strong pressures from the French, the British and the Iroquois League, thus asserting a certain degree of autonomy. During the French regime, the Iroquois were excluded from colonial jurisdiction and repeatedly found ways to profit from the economic opportunities by getting involved in the fur "contraband" as active partners. As a result, despite their multicultural background and the maintenance of ties with Iroquois groups in New York and Canada and with non-Native neighbors, the *Kahnawakehro:non* came to view themselves as a distinct and separate people (Delâge 1991a; Grabowski 1996; Green 1991).

The end of British-American hostilities in 1815 and changes in the fur trade modified Kahnawake's ventures. The community's power in controlling its land persisted in slipping away as non-Native settlers occupying tracts of land located within Sault-Saint-Louis increased. Also, the process of Native subjugation accelerated, as Britain no longer felt the need to foster Native alliances. In 1830, guided by the will to refashion the Indian policy "from a utilitarian plan of using Indians as allies to a paternal programme of gradually incorporating the Indians into white society", the Crown transferred jurisdiction over Indian affairs from military to civil administrators (Miller 1991: 95). With non-Native population growth, European immigration and many other changes in Lower-Canadian society,[32] the Kahnawake Iroquois "braced themselves as a community for the long struggle to adapt in a changing political reality" (Alfred 1995: 50). As this thesis hopes to show, despite being nestled between French-Canadian "habitants" and British administrators, the *Kahnawakehro:non* continued to nurture a distinctive cultural milieu. This helped them pursue their own ambitions and thus negotiate a place of their own in nineteenth century Lower Canada.

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views" (Devine 1922: 371-2). Marcoux received an annual salary of £50, presents amounting to £10, 150 bushels of wheat and half a ton of hay. In response to such criticism, the curé stated: "Son Excellence (Lord Aylmer) [...] voudrait-elle me faire porter le poids de sa mauvaise humeur? Voudrait-elle faire de moi un courtisan parce que je reçois du gouvernement un £50 tous les ans?" (Marcoux to Signay, 5 January 1834, ADSJQL 3A-147). Marcoux's behavior was quite similar to that of all members of the Lower-Canadian Catholic Church, who, throughout the nineteenth century, struggled to secure their independence from government dictates over issues such as education. In 1826, claiming he did not want to become "un engin entre les mains de l'éxécutif" (Chaussée 1980: 152), Montréal's Bishop Lartigue ordered priests to oppose all Protestant schools, "tant anglaises que françaises, tant dans les villes que dans les campagnes: il n'y a pas d'autres moyens d'éviter la contagion" (in Majerus 1971: 58). In the 1830s, the debate raged on as Catholic priests threatened worshippers that they would be banished if they sent their children to Protestant institutions (Majerus 1971: 62). Also, because the education policies of the Indian Department had been formulated without the clergy's assistance, tensions persisted (Francis 1984: 20).

[32] For more information, see Bernier et Salée (1995), Courville (1980a; 1980b), Courville et al. (1990; 1998), Dechêne (1982), Greer and Radforth (1992), Ouellet (1972; 1980; 1983) and Young (1992).

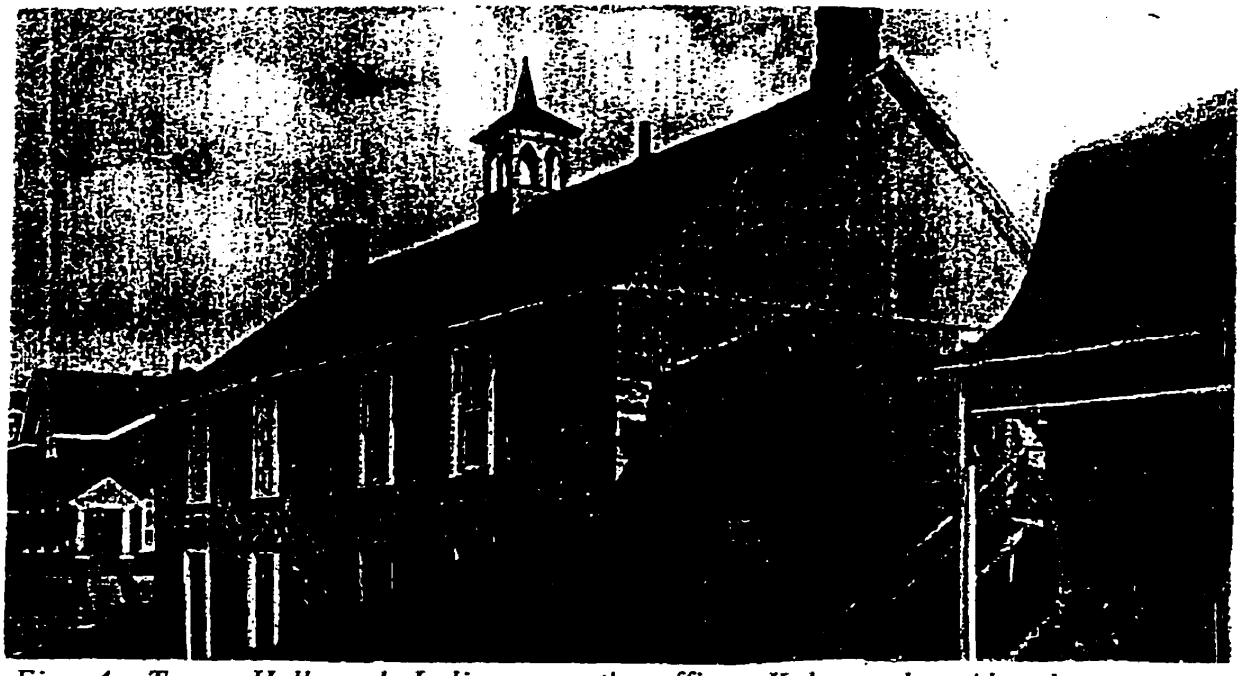

*Fig. 4: Town Hall and Indian agent's office, Kahnawake. Also known as* Otiokwasaka'aionne, *meaning "old fire" or "the meeting place", this stone building was part of the old French fort of the 1750s and was destroyed by fire in the early 1900s. This building housed the Indian agency office as well as space for a jail. The superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Montréal District, James Hughes, had one of his offices here. On the second floor, many council meetings between the chiefs as well as between chiefs and government officials took place. A parking lot facing Kateri Hall and the church rectory now stand at its place. (photographic archives of the Kanienkehaka Raotitiohkwa Cultural Center)*

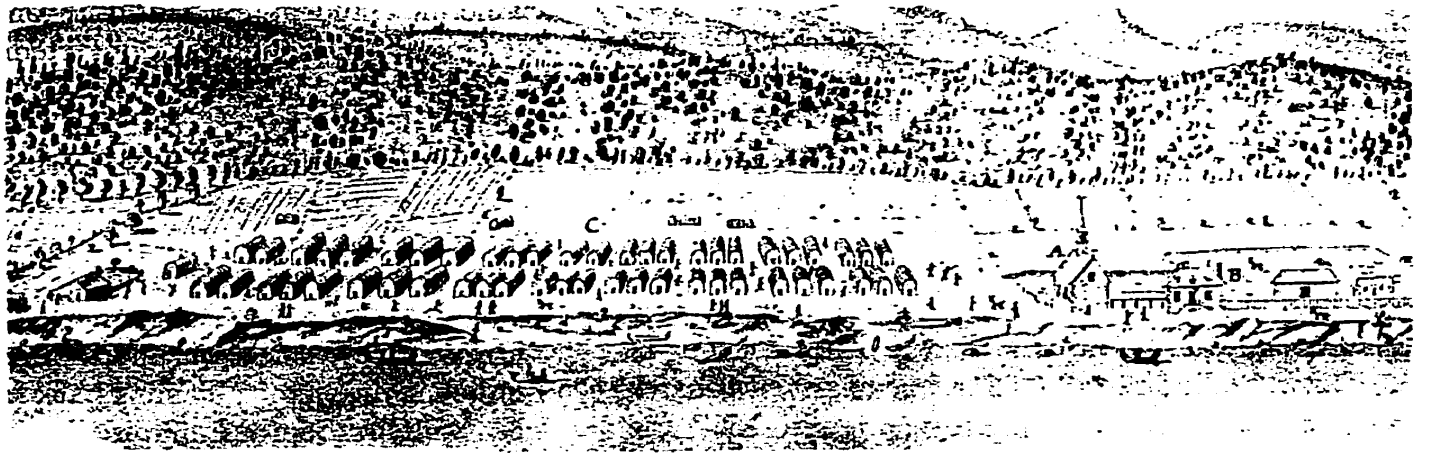

*Fig. 5: Kahnawake in the mid-eighteenth century (in Fenton and Tooker 1978: 470). At right is the church (A), the presbytery (B); at left are bark-covered longhouses. Fields, sugarbushes and the common grazing ground are in the background. The church and its adjacent buildings were originally surrounded by stone fortifications built by French authorities in 1752. Remains of this wall are still visible today next to stone buildings close to the church. In the enclosed wall were: the church; the presbytery; barracks for French soldiers and officers; a gun powder magazine; many gardens; and an inner court. By the 1760s, many residents started to change their dwelling styles, and abandoning the extended-family longhouse built of trees and bark, for single-family homes made of stone or timber. (Green 1991: 284)*

*Figs. 6 and 7: Kahnawake in the nineteenth century (in Beauvais 1985: 193).*

# - CHAPTER THREE -
# THE KAHNAWAKE IROQUOIS AND THE PATRIOTES

*It was during the troubled times of 1837-38 that the Indians of Caughnawaga achieved their bloodless victory, won by their resourcefulness, quickness of mind and cunning. Running through the whole affair is an element of humor that cannot be lost sight of, not withstanding the tragic ending for several [non-Native] participants (The Montreal Standard, 23/10/1926: 41).*

*The Lower-Canadian Rebellions of 1837-38: a general overview*

In 1837, long-standing discontent with British colonial authorities erupted into armed insurrection, as people throughout the District of Montréal forced a stoppage in the province's legislative business and took up arms against the Crown (Greer 1993). Political tensions simmering for the past three decades led to a severe crisis over the issues of provincial revenues, government subsidies and elective representation: on one side, office-holding oligarchies of recent British immigrants; on the other, "popular republicans" such as Louis-Joseph Papineau[33] and other members of the *Parti Patriote*[34] guiding

> a "popular" opposition to existing power structures marked by its origins as a French-Canadian ethnic or "nationalist" movement,[35] with a rhetoric dwelling on the rights of the people -read propertied men-, the dangers of corruption, and the need to defend the independence and prerogatives of the colonial elected Assembly. (Greer 1995: 10)

On 6 March 1837, Lord Russell gave the governor of Lower-Canada power to spend funds without the approval of the Assembly. He also rejected the so-called 92 Resolutions, which were sent to London in 1834 by the *Parti Patriote* to obtain democratic constitutional reform. This provoked rapid anger throughout reform circles. Local committees were established, popular opposition grew in the countryside, para-military groups intensified propaganda and numerous rallies were organized (Bernard 1996; Greer 1995; Leclerc 1983). Despite initial uncertainties, the Catholic Church joined the anti-rebellion campaign as claims for contraband and revolt increased. On 24 October 1837, Bishop Lartigue of

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[33] Louis-Joseph Papineau was a politician and a brilliant orator. An arrest warrant was issued for him in 1837 and, like many other Patriote leaders, he fled to the United States. Refusing to take part in the second insurrection, he remained there until 1839. In 1847, following an exile in France, he was elected as deputy for Canada-East and held this position until 1854, the year he retired from politics (Ouellet 1979).

[34] This political party was first called *Parti Canadien* and modified its name in 1826. The change to "Patriote" reveals that the Rebellion was a reform movement using a term which carried a positive connotation associated with the American and French Revolutions and with popular political movements by peasants in Europe and Latin America (Bernard 1996: 21; Greer 1993: 10-16).

[35] At the time, "French-Canadian" nationalism essentially defined a "Canadien" as one who would support the "habitants du pays, ceux en qui le nom de ce pays éveille le sentiment de la patrie" (Bernard 1996: 21). This sentiment of "national" pride played an important role in mounting a strong will among the French-Canadian bourgeoisie to free Lower Canada from what was seen as British "domination" or "oppression" and move the province towards independence. However, support for the "Canadiens" was also present in circles of Irish, Scottish, and British descent (Beaugrand-Champagne 1990). For more information on French-Canadian nationalism at the time, please refer to Bourque et Frenette (1972) and Ouellet (1972).

Montréal published the first of his two *mandements* claiming that insurrection equaled abjuration and atheism, and that the people had no legal and moral rights to rebel against established authorities (Brunet 1973: 83-90; Chabot 1975; Chaussée 1980; Lemieux 1989: 398-402; Majerus 1971).[36] In November, troops led by John Colborne[37] were mobilized to arrest leading agitators and armed confrontations occurred between soldiers and local "rebels". In turn, the Patriotes were swiftly dispersed, hundreds of men were jailed and eight leaders were deported to Bermuda (Greer 1993: 137-142; Leclerc 1983: 108-22).

Beaten in 1837, the Patriote movement was reborn the following year with new leaders, a more advanced social program and the promise of American assistance. Blamed for the failure of the first rebellion, L.-J. Papineau was pushed aside by a new leader, Robert Nelson. However, because the former was still popular among the habitants and Patriote agitators, the new leadership used his name as a way of gaining support, a measure which was not opposed by Papineau himself (Ouellet 1979: 630). The summer witnessed the birth of the *Société des Frères Chasseurs*, whose purpose was to "organize a system of secret lodges along military lines that could supply shock troops within the province in combination with an invading force from the United States to overthrow British power in the Canadas" (Senior 1985: 155). With the help of secret ceremonies similar to those of masonic societies, the *Chasseurs* recruited 10 000 members in thirty-five communities (Ouellet 1983: 211). However, when the uprising began in November, 4000 soldiers and volunteers quickly dispersed the Patriotes. By 16 November 1838, the second rebellion had been entirely repressed (map 5). Officials enforced martial law and many arrests were carried out. In the end, twelve people were executed and fifty-eight others were deported (Greer 1993: 344-51; Leclerc 1983: 124-130; Senior 1980: 175-92).

When it touches upon Kahnawake at the time, the existing literature essentially maintains that in 1837-38, the Kahnawake Iroquois expressed a monolithic and gratuitous loyalty to the Crown. By contrast, the archival sources cited below reveal that the intervention of the Iroquois was conducted in a context of conflicting interests, competing claims, and tense relationships which were specific to Kahnawake's internal and external

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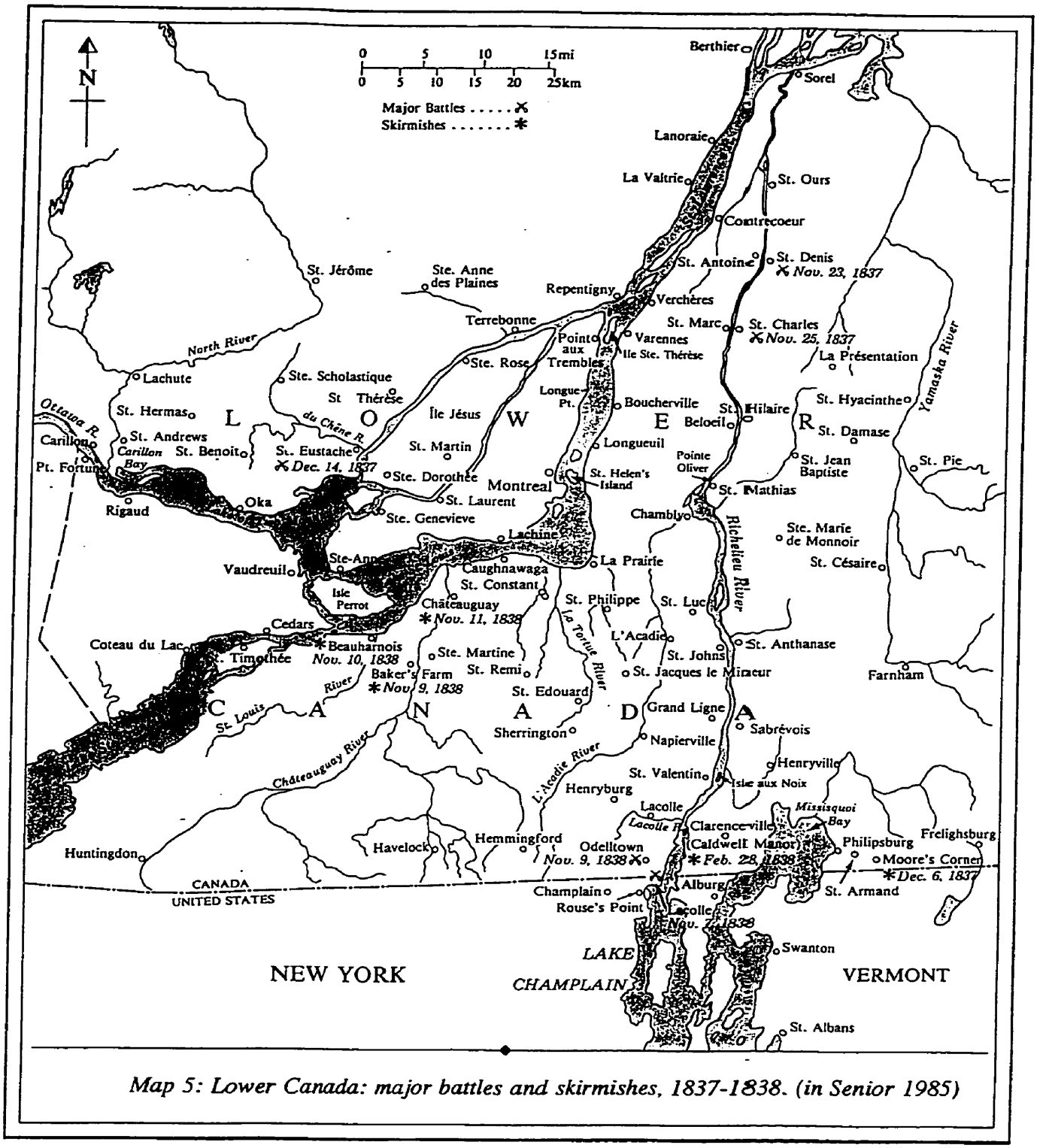
[36] Kahnawake's priest Joseph Marcoux believed that the Patriotes were guided by illegal and moral values. At the same time, he did not identify himself as a loyalist "bureaucrat". In 1835, he stated: "ah, restons donc au milieu et tenons les bureaucrates d'une main et les Patriotes de l'autre, pour les conduire au ciel" (Marcoux to Cazeau, 10 August 1835, AAQ, 26 CP, D-149).

[37] In 1836, Upper-Canadian lieutenant-governor Sir John Colborne became the commanding officer of British troops in North America and successfully completed his mandate to defeat the "rebels" in both Lower and Upper Canada. He was named Governor of Canada between February and May 1838. In December 1838, he received the title of Governor General and was made Lord Seaton in 1839 (Wilson 1977). Seen as a villain in Lower Canada, Colborne was given the surnames "Coq borgne" for his stubborn opposition to the Patriotes (Marcoux to Turgeon, 17 November 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-67) as well as "vieux-brulôt" because his troops burned many villages to the ground.




*Map 5: Lower Canada: major battles and skirmishes, 1837-1838. (in Senior 1985)*

dynamics in the 1830s. In fact, the following linear and detailed narrative of the Rebellions as experienced by the Iroquois reveals a central, fundamental issue: the apparent Patriote threat to Kahnawake's livelihood, territory, and autonomy is the main prism through which the *Kahnawakehro:non* became increasingly aware of the Lower-Canadian Rebellions.

*Kahnawake and the Patriotes in 1837*

In the fall of 1837, the people of Kahnawake seemed to be concerned hardly with the start of the "Troubles": sources seem to indicate that they were mostly interested in their harvests as well as their upcoming winter hunting trips. Father Marcoux insists that by mid-November, many men had already left for their winter hunting grounds: "plusieurs sont déjà partis pour aller hyverner dans les bois; un grand nombre s'apprête à les suivre aux premières neiges, de manière qu'il ne restera que peu d'hommes au village cet hyver" (Marcoux to Napier, 17 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38755). Many Iroquois had already departed on such hunting trips because "la récolte de blé d'Inde ayant encore manqué cette automne, il faut qu'ils marchent pour vivre; autrement ils seraient hors d'état de pouvoir semer ce printems" (ibid.). The corn crops had failed again and the Kahnawake people feared that if the men of the community did not go hunting, there would barely be any food at all. As in the case of other regions of Lower Canada which experienced failed harvests during the 1830s (Ouellet 1972), Kahnawake had been in need of grain and potatoes since spring. In May 1837, in response to many requests, officials supplied the community with 500 bushels of wheat, thirty bushels of "Indian corn" and fifteen bushels of beans and peas (Napier to Hughes, 30 May 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38424).

In October, when Bishop Lartigue issued his *mandement* reminding people that Catholic subjects must not revolt against established authorities, Marcoux initially refused to abide by the Bishop's orders and read it to the *Kahnawakehro:non*. As the curé states,

> j'ai hésité de commencer à le traduire pour nos missions [...] avant d'avoir consulté l'autorité. Les sauvages sont très tranquilles, et ignorent absolument les divisions qui nous affligent, de patriotisme et de bureaucratisme. Ce mandement ne pourra leur être expliqué sans les mettre au fait de l'état de la province, et il est à craindre qu'alors, pour faire comme les autres, il ne se forme parmi eux deux partis, comme dans les paroisses. Mon avis à moi, après en avoir pesé les conséquences, serait de les laisser dans leur heureuse ignorance jusqu'à nouvel ordre. (Marcoux to Lartigue, 29 October 1837, ADSJQL 3A-186, my emphasis)

Although the actual extent of Kahnawake's "happy ignorance" is hard to gauge, Marcoux overestimated the community's isolation. As Allan Greer (1993) comments, in the early days of the Rebellions, widespread anxiety spread to all regions. In this context, no village was isolated from its county, and no county from its district. Nor, for that matter, was Lower Canada as a whole isolated from Upper Canada. Greer suggests that at the time,

many choices were made and actions undertaken "in response to rapidly changing circumstances" (Greer 1995: 6). In Kahnawake's case, less than two weeks after refusing to read Bishop Lartigue's mandement, Marcoux decided to inform the Iroquois about it because, in his own words, "les circonstances ont beaucoup changé depuis l'époque de sa sortie" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 13 November 1837, ADSJQL 3A-187).

Essentially, Marcoux opted to read the mandement on 13 November because, on that day, the first of many wild rumors spread that Patriotes were invading Kahnawake:

> Nous sommes ici dans les transes. Ce matin [13 Novembre 1837], il s'est répandu un bruit que les Canadiens de St. Constant, de la Prairie, et de Chateauguay devaient se rassembler au nombre de mille hommes, et venir détruire le village et tuer tous les sauvages. Cette nuit même (il est dix heures du soir) votre Grandeur peut croire qu'il s'est plus fait d'ouvrage aujourd'hui avec la langue qu'avec les doigts, les aiguilles se sont reposées: plusieurs fois on est venu voir au presbytère si j'y étais, car on disait que j'étais parti, sauvé, et on était prêt à me suivre si c'eut été le cas. (Marcoux to Bourget, 13 Novembre 1837, ADSJQL 3A-187, my emphasis)

The rumor claimed that the "rebels" were out to kill the Iroquois and seize their seigneury. Interestingly, this next passage from Marcoux's letters seems to indicate that some Iroquois may have been aware of who "Papineau" was prior to the spread of the first rumors:

> On vint avertir que les Patriotes d'alentour devaient venir une certaine nuit le mettre à feu et à sang et chasser tous ceux des sauvages qu'ils ne pourraient pas tuer, pour s'emparer de la seigneurie, que Papineau leur avait, disait-on, donnée, s'ils étaient capables de s'en emparer. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 21 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-32)

In this context, Marcoux's reading of the *mandement* may have played a key role in guiding the people of Kahnawake to cooperate with the Crown and not join the insurgents. In fact, as contacts and communication between Iroquois and Patriotes increased, some of the former are said to have initially sympathised with the latter:

> Lorsque les troubles ont commencé cet automne ici, il y avait beaucoup de sauvages en faveur de Papineau, plus, je pense, par ignorance qu'autrement. J'ai donc été obligé et dans les conversations particulières et dans mes sermons, de leur faire comprendre notre doctrine là dessus: que la religion catholique ne permettait jamais la révolte, et qu'ils devaient, s'ils en étaient requis, défendre leur gouvernement jusqu'à la mort. Peu de curés ont parlé autant là dessus que moi; je pouvais le faire sans inconvénient; personne ici ne sortait de l'église. Je puis dire que l'ai réussi à les si bien persuader qu'il n'est pas resté un seul sauvage en faveur du parti patriotique. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 21 juin 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-32, my emphasis)

Marcoux proudly states that he was capable of eliminating Patriote sympathies by preaching the loyal obligation to defend the government: "j'ai prêché sans relâche la fidélité au gouvernement" (Marcoux to Coffin, 22 July 1840, AAQ, G. VIII-132). Although he may have exaggerated the extent of his role and influence, it is possible that he gradually led some Kahnawake residents into thinking that opposition to the Crown was unwise.

But, above all, the context of suspicion and fear from which the people of Kahnawake came to be more aware of the Rebellions led to the formation of "an atmosphere of the deepest distrust" (Greer 1993: 348) between *Kahnawakehro:non* and Patriotes. For instance, the first report of a "rebel" invasion is said to have rendered the *Kahnawakehro:non* quite nervous. Indeed, on the day of the feared invasion, many started preparing bags and supplies to flee Kahnawake: "chacun commençait à faire ses paquets pour se sauver" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 21 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-32). Also, Marcoux recounts that on that night, "tout le village a été sur pied pendant la nuit, les uns avec des fusils, les autres avec des lances, des couteaux, des bâtons" (Marcoux to Napier, 17 Novembre 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38754). The Patriotes thus seem to have been rapidly seen by the Iroquois as direct threats to their territory. James Hughes, the Superintendent of Indians Affairs for the District of Montréal,[38] even wrote that one full week following the spread of the first false report, the Iroquois clearly expressed to him the fear of losing their seigneury to the Patriotes, or "Papineau's People":

> About a week ago [...] three chiefs of the Iroquois Tribe of Caughnawaga [...] came to this office, and in the course of conversation, they informed me that there was a report in their village, which they could not trace to the bottom, that the whites in their environs, alias the Patriots or Papineau's people as they style them, had threatened to pay them no rents and that they would soon become possessors of their lands. (Hughes to Napier, 25 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38811, my emphasis)

In a much similar way, Marcoux emphazised to fellow clergymen and government officials that the Patriotes "disent aux sauvages que Papineau leur a donné la seigneurie, qu'ils peuvent les détruire ou les chasser" (Marcoux to Bourget, 13 November 1837, ADSJQL 3A-187) and that the Patriotes "jettent des yeux d'envie sur les terrains sauvages et ne cachent pas qu'ils les convoitent, leurs terres à eux étant toutes démunies de bois" (Marcoux to Napier, 17 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38754). In this context, Marcoux also rejected the idea that Natives might help fight the Patriotes and claimed that getting the Iroquois to exit Kahnawake to fight the insurgents would leave their community open to an attack. Insisting that the Iroquois had been repeatedly threatened by the Patriotes and that Kahnawake's male inhabitants were not "des soldats à gage", Marcoux stated:

> la meilleure politique serait de ne point employer les sauvages dans la guerre civile, si elle a lieu. [...] Il est certain, Monsieur, que si l'on obligeait les sauvages d'aller en parti soit à Montréal, soit ailleurs, les femmes et les enfants qui resteraient au village

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[38] James Hughes served as Captain of the *Canadian Voyageurs* during the War of 1812 and as Resident in the Indian Department from 1827 to 1830. He was appointed Superintendent of the Montréal District in August 1833 (Gosford to Glenelg, 15 February 1837, in Great Britain 1969d: 19). His annual salary amounted to £216; it was the second highest of the District after the salary of Superintendent General Duncan C. Napier. Hughes' tasks were to conduct the issue of the annual presents to each village of the District, assist the chiefs in "preserving Peace and good Order of their tribes" and provide regular qualitative and quantitative reports on each village (Napier, 29 May 1837, in Great Britain 1973: 24).

> seraient massacrés par les patriotes et les maisons incendiées. J'en ai entendu assez de mes propres oreilles dans les paroisses voisines pour affirmer ce que j'avance. [...] Je ne vois aucun avantage pour le gouvernement d'exiger le service des sauvages dans la présente circonstance, à moins qu'il ne veuille les anéantir pour toujours. Je ne tiendrais pas ce langage s'il s'agissait de combattre un ennemi éloigné, comme il est arrivé dans les dernières guerres avec les Américains, parce qu'alors, les villages étant dans l'intérieur de la Province, se trouvaient gardés tout naturellement par les localités qui les entourent. Mais aujourd'hui, exiger qu'une centaine d'hommes (c'est tout au plus ce qu'on pourra trouver dans le village jusqu'au printems) puissent faire face à des milliers d'ennemis qui sont à leur porte, quand même ils seraient bien armés et organisés, ne serait-ce pas les conduire de sang froid à la boucherie? (Marcoux to Napier, 17 Novembre 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38754-6, Marcoux's emphasis)

The curé argued that it would be in the interests of Kahnawake to adopt "une stricte neutralité, car les Patriotes leurs ont déjà plusieurs fois fait des menaces" (Marcoux to Napier, 3 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38849). He insisted that using Kahnawake men would be devastating because their territory "est tout entouré de Patriotes, qui n'attendent qu'un prétexte pour venir apporter la guerre et ses suites déplorables" (ibid.).

In response to the rumors of Patriote invasions, Marcoux as well as the council of chiefs adopted a certain course of action which eventually resulted in government intervention. The day following the first report, the curé is said to have sent a delegation of Iroquois chiefs to the village of La Prairie and other communities so that they may assert a claim of political neutrality, and, in so doing, warn the insurgents not to attack Kahnawake:

> J'ai envoyé ce matin quelques chefs du côté de La Prairie pour informer les Patriotes que les sauvages d'après l'ordre du gouvernement ne devaient pas prendre parti dans la présente lutte, car autrement toutes les nations d'en haut descendraient pour aider leurs frères, on ne pourra plus les arrêter. Je pense que cela fera effet et qu'on nous laissera tranquille. (Marcoux to Bourget, 13 November 1837, ADSJQL 3A-187)

Kahnawake chiefs were also sent to St. Constant and Châteauguay. The Patriotes responded that if the Iroquois did not intervene, they had nothing to fear (Marcoux to Napier, 17 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38845). Marcoux even told chiefs that they "had better go to the Captains of the [loyalist] Militia and tell them they wished to live in peace and quietness, that they would not meddle in the busyness" (Hughes to Napier, 25 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38812). However, according to Superintendent James Hughes, three chiefs did not follow Marcoux's suggestions. As Hughes states:

> I asked them if they had followed their Missionnary's advice. They answered no! I then told them not to do it on any account whatever, that I would in a very few days be with them, to give them a Parole from their Father at Québec, which I had done at the other Indian villages, and would also tell them my Opinions of the subject. I arrived at the village of Caughnawaga on the 22nd instant, assembled a Council. (ibid.: 38812)

In turn, inspired by the words of A. Acheson, Lord of Gosford, the Governor-General of British North America from 1835 to 1838, Hughes presented a "Parole" to "six of the grand chiefs and the majority of the council members and warriors". This "Parole" was

"purposely pronouced" in French, "as many of the Iroquois understand it perfectly". Interpreted "word for word in the Iroquois language" by interpreter Bernard St. Germain[39], this speach reads as follows:

Mes Frères et mes Enfants,

Me voilà encore une fois parmi vous; je serais venu plus vite, mais mes Enfants a mon retour de Lac ou j'ai été pour Equipper vos Freres j'ai trouvé un ordre pour me rendre a Quebec, votre Père le Gouverneur en chef [Lord Gosford], que j'ai eu l'honneur de voir m'a demandé des nouvelles de ses Enfants Sauvages. Je lui ai dis que ses Enfants se portaient touts bien, et qu'ils le saluaient de tout leurs coeurs. Il me dit, cela me fait plaisir et je leurs envoie beaucoup de remerciements. Mais, me dit-il, j'ai entendu dire, peut-être par quelques mauvaises langues, qu'une partie de mes Enfants, occasionnes par quelques mauvais conseils qu'ils recevoient de quelques Traitres, commencent à s'ecarter de leur chemin. Dites moi si c'est le cas ou non? J'ai repondu à Votre Père, que je ne doutais nullement qu'il y avait quelques mauvais oiseaux noirs qui vous criaient dans les oreilles, et tachoient par des promesses sucrées, de vous rendre aussi Traitres comme eux-mêmes. Mais que tous ses Enfants sauvages que j'avois vu depuis peu paroissent beaucoup peinés des dissensions qui existaient entre une partie des Blancs et le Gouvernement. Mais que pour eux, ils ne paraissoient Loyals et Bon sujets, et qu'ils Priaient leur Pere a Quebec d'entretenir aucunes mauvaises pensées de ses Enfants sauvages du Lac. Qu'ils regardoient leurs Père comme le Representant de leur Reine. Qu'ils avoient été toujours fidel au Gouvernement. Que ce n'etoit du Gouvernement qu'ils pouvaient esperer aucune Protection; qu'ils avoient déjà versés leur sang pour leurs Rois, Et qu'ils seroient toujours pret d'en faire autant pour leurs Jeune Mere, La Reine. [...] Après que j'avois mes Enfants, livrés les parolles de vos Freres du Lac a votre Pere a Quebec, il me repondit qu'ils ne pouvoit se fier aux rapports qui courroient, qu'il avoit trop bonne opinion de ses Enfants sauvages. Allez, dit-il, voilà l'hyver qui approche, portez une couverte et un morceau de drap à mes Enfans sauvages des autres villages. Dites l'eux les Parolles qui m'ont été Envoyé par leurs Freres et de leur courage, que Je ne doutais jamais de leurs loyauté et de leurs courage, qu'ils sont des Gens des Bois, qu'ils ont le coeur bien placé, et que je suis persuadé que mes Enfants des autres vilages, ont les memes sentiments que mes Enfants du Lac, Et qu'ils auront les oreilles bien bouchées aux cris de ses mauvais oiseaux, qui essayent peut-etre a les Desbaucher pour les rendre aussi Traitres et malheureux comme eux memes.

Dites a Mes Enfants qu'ils restent en paix chez eux, qu'ils ayent soin de leurs femmes et Enfants, que pour le present je n'ai point besoin de leurs services . Mais je pris mes Enfants de n'endurer aucunes insultes de ces Traitres et Rebels en question. Si mes Enfants sauvages sont le moindrement menaces ou maltraités par ces Traitres et Rebelles, qu'ils m'avertissent Et ils peuvent se fier sur la Protection de leurs Père.

Et dites l'eux aussi, si un jour a venir, j'ai besoin de leurs services, je suis persuadé qu'ils jetteront le cri de joie et qu'ils seront prets a se rendre au premier commandement.

Vous aimez votre Religion mes Enfants (c'est moi [Hughes] maintenant qui vous addresse), vous faites Bien. Votre Curé doit absolument vous avoir annoncé a la fin du

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[39] Bernard St. Germain was already known to Kahnawake chiefs in 1811 as many signed a petition in September of that year to request he be hired as the village's interpreter (Sawaya 1998: 32). In 1812-13, he was employed as Captain and Resident in the Indian Department. In 1816, he became Resident interpreter at Montréal (in Gosford to Glenelg, 15 February 1837, in Great Britain 1969d: 19). His annual salary amounted to £97. As an interpreter, his tasks included assisting Superintendent James Hughes in his duties, providing "interpretations" during trials, conferences and meetings as well as attending at the Court of King's Bench to interpret Indian testimonies (Napier, 29 May 1837, in Great Britain 1973: 24).

> mois passé, de sa Chaire, le Mandement de votre Reverend Pere sa seigneurie l'Eveque de Tellemesse [Lartigue]. Ecoutez les avis que vous donne votre Pere l'Eveque, suivez les, et soyez persuadé que vous serai dans le chemin droit.
>
> Mes Enfants, je n'ai a present plus a vous dire. Vous avez Ecoutez mes Parolles. Maintenant, donnez moi en des votres. Dites moi sans Cachette, s'il y a de vos freres ici, dans le vilage, assez simples de s'avoir laissé debaucher, s'il y en a nommez les. Et dites moi si vous connaissez celui, ou ceux qui ont essayés a les Rendre Traitres et Rebelles. Voux Etes hommes, ne craignez rien, et ne me cachez rien. S'il y en a des pareils Traitres, il faut les punir, tot ou tard.
>
> The chief Kanasontie got up and spoke for the whole, and they all sanctioned what he said. Father, we know of none among us that have strayed from the beaten path; we are now, what we have always been, we have no one but our Father to look up to for Protection, our sentiments are the same as those of our Brothers at the Lake [Kanesatake]. Our Father tells us to keep quiet, we obey him, and when called upon, it is our duty as his children, to listen to his words. We were told as we informed you at your house that we were threatened by the Traitors. But none of them have as yet Insulted us. If they do, you shall hear of it. (as cited in a letter by Hughes to Napier, 22 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38813-6, emphasis added)

As with previous speeches given by Hughes to the Iroquois people of Kanesatake, the words quoted above were intended to remind the Kahnawake Iroquois that they had "always" been "loyal" to the Crown and that the authorities expected that loyalty to their "generous" and "protective" British Father would continue. Through Hughes, Gosford informed the *Kahnawakehro:non* that the government knew that some Patriotes has threatened them and that some had even tried to rally Native people to the "rebel" side. In response, Gosford's words and blankets[40] were meant to secure Kahnawake's loyalty by reminding the Iroquois that "paternal protection" and material benefits can only come from the government, not the "malheureux Traitres et Rebelles". Hughes also wished to find out if, as in Akwesasne's case, people in Kahnawake had been tempted to join the "rebel" cause. Hughes also encouraged the Iroquois to listen to the church, an indispensable partner in the authorities' quest to halt any uprising. Grand Chief Martin Tekanasontie responded to Hughes by stating that the village would follow official orders and alert British authorities if they were attacked ("insulted") by Patriotes. He also indicated that if the need of Native assistance should arise, the *Kahnawakehro:non* would cooperate with the Crown.[41] Following a series of similar conferences, essentially aimed to establish

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[40] In the view of Crown administrators of the day, such an item was one of the most enjoyed by Indians. The Earl of Dalhousie argued in 1828 that "the blanket, the only article of value, is generally of the best quality, superior to any imported by the merchants, and is inestimable to the Indian, whom it serves for covering by night and by day. It is not unfrequently made into a coat, with a fancy-coloured edging, by those who have other bedding, and thus worn, makes a gay article of dress" (Dalhousie to Murray, 27 October 1828, in Great Britain 1969a: 26).

[41] A comment by Sir Francis Bond Head hints at the possibility that the government was assured of the "loyalty" of some Native communities one year prior to the start of the Rebellions. In 1836, Head wrote to Lord Glenelg: "with respect to the Indians inhabiting the vast regions around us, I can assure your Lordship, from personal communication with these brave men, that, in the event of a war, all those upon whose

military alliances with Indians on the eve of a feared civil war, Hughes concluded that the "Indians of all the villages I have visited appear to be loyal and good subjects, except a few insignificant fellows at St. Regis [...], and were most grateful for their presents"[42] (Hughes to Napier, 22 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38812).

Near the end of November, soldiers were trooped in and around Kahnawake. On the 28th, people from Châteauguay walking through Kahnawake were arrested by what seems to have been a "picquet of troops at the Indian village" (*Montreal Daily Star* 14/01/1888: 5). Moreover, some Kahnawake residents were now carefully monitoring the area for any signs of "disloyal" actions. On the 29th, Kahnawake war chief Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle testified against several people from the Châteauguay area "qui ont fait tout dans leurs pouvoirs pour inciter les habitants a prendre les Armes contre le Gouvernement" (I. Delisle, ANQM 1837-38, no. 870).

Following confrontations between Patriotes and British soldiers at St. Denis and St. Charles in November 1837 (Leclerc 1983: 109-110), 300 Patriotes from St. Eustache mobilized. Led by Amury Girod[43], they assembled on the morning of 30 November to march on the Iroquois village of Kanesatake to obtain arms and "désarmer les sauvages" (G. Spenard, ANQM 1837-38, no. 767). Upon their arrival, they pillaged a Hudson's Bay Company storehouse and took eight muskets, three barrels of musket balls and a cannon which was used by the Indians for firing salutes. They also plundered the storeshed belonging to the priest and secured a barrel of pork and ammunition (ibid.; Girod 1924).

In Kanesatake, Girod obtained permission to speak with an Iroquois chief. This conversation has been cited in Girod's journal (Girod 1924) and elsewhere (Gabriel-Doxtater and Van des Hende 1995; Leclerc 1983; Trudel 1991). The unnamed chief expressed his wish to remain neutral ("we wish to remain as we are") and refused to lend or sell his guns and cannons to the Patriotes. The anonymous chief concluded by stating:

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attachment we have a just claim would, at any time, sacrifice their lives for their great father, the King, and that, if it should be necessary to call upon them, they would come" (in Head 1839: 125).

[42]The reaction Native villages had to the gift of a blanket in 1837 is impossible to tell from the records. There is however one document describing the disgust of a Patriote-friendly Iroquois resident of Akwesasne upon learning that many of his chiefs had accepted such gifts. Joachim Satahawenoten is said to have claimed that "he was not like the Chiefs to give himself or sell himself for a Mokosin cloth -meaning a blanket- and he considered those that did so no better than [...] Hogs" (testimony of Michel Kientatirhon, 15 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38791-2). According to a witness of the scene, "this conversation occurred in a crowd of young men and [...] the object of the said Satahawenoten appeared to persuade some and drive others over to the cause of Papineau" (ibid.). Yet as in Akwesasne and St. Francis, the efforts of Native agitators to gain support for the Patriotes were small and dispersed quickly. When the fighting actually began, Patriote sympathizers may still have been in Akwesasne but their influence was very limited (Hughes to Napier, 22 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38778).

[43] In the late 1830s, Amury Girod actively participated in numerous Patriote assemblies. He deserted during the battle of St. Eustache on 14 December 1837. On 17 December, he was found by volunteers in Pointe-aux-Trembles. Instead of giving himself up, he committed suicide (Bernard et Gauthier 1988).

"Brother, I will not interfere in this dispute between you and Your Father, defend Your rights, and when I hear the thunder of your arms, I will consider in my breast whether I am not obliged to assist you" (in Girod 1924: 377-8). Yet, the next day, the Kanesateke chiefs gave their cannon to the St. Andrew's Loyalist Volunteers (Greer 1993: 321).

A second version of this event is provided by François Bertrand, who was brought over to serve as interpreter. In his view, this is "a peu près" the talk which took place:

> Girod: Veux-tu être un de nos amis?
> Sauvage: Je veux bien être ton ami mais ne pas remuer.
> Girod: Pourquoi ne veux-tu pas remuer?
> Sauvage: Vous autres êtes mes [frères] mais j'ai un père (voulant dire le Roi) je vous aime bien mais j'aime mieux mon père [...]
> Girod: Veux-tu nous prêter les canons que vous avez [...]?
> Sauvage: Nous n'en avons qu'un que notre père nous a donné pour s'en servir dans des fêtes, je ne veux point le prêter.
> Girod: Où est votre canon?
> Sauvage: Je n'en sais rien, j'arrive de la chasse.
> Girod: Tu est bon père, j'en convient (sic) mais il a de mauvais sujets qui te trichent sur les couvertes et les présents.
> Sauvage: Je suis content de ce que mon père me donne.
> Girod: Ne serais-tu pas plus content d'être avec nous, si tu nous joignais nous te donnerions du terrain? (my emphasis)
> Sauvage: Je suis bien comme je suis, je ne veux point de changement.
> (voluntary examination of François Bertrand, ANQM 1837-38, no. 736)

As in the version found in Girod's journal, the unnamed chief refused to help the Patriotes. However, in the latter text, the chief clearly reminded the insurgent leader that he was satisfied with his British "father" although the recent quantity of presents had been unsatisfactory. Also, it is very interesting to see that Girod used the issue of land as a means of obtaining Native support. Indeed, in seeking to gain Kanesatake's assistance, Girod did not mention the advantages of having an elective legislative council as well as other political aspirations animating the Patriotes. Instead, the Patriote leader tried to gather Kanesatake's support by making a relatively empty promise that he would give more "terrain" to the Indians if they actively joined the insurgents.

Recent work at the *National Archives of Canada* has led me to a third and much different account of the same incident. According to this source, on the day of Girod's march on Kanesatake, there was a rumor in Kahnawake that the Patriotes of St.Eustache

> had invaded the Indian village of the Lake of Two Mountains [Kanesatake], that a battle had taken place and that Indians and Rebels had fallen in the contest, that the Rebels had been victorious, had pillaged the village and taken away three pieces of cannon. (Hughes to Napier, 5 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38822)

To clear all doubts and fears, Superintendent Hughes sent Kahnawake war chief Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle to verify the state of Kanesatake and obtain an accurate account of what had occurred there. According to what Delisle was told by the people he spoke to,

> on the 30th [...] about 350 armed men, most of them on horse back, entered the village [...]. On their arrival, [...] they [...[ called for the chiefs and Indians, who were only sixteen in number (the whole of the rest, owing to the failure of their crops of Indian Corn, having resorted to their hunting grounds) and already assembled with their arms. The Indian women were also mostly armed with knives and axes under their blankets. One of the leaders of the Rebels demanded of the chiefs to deliver up all their ammunition, as well as their arms. The chief, Onarahison (a brave fellow) told him that the Indians had arms and ammunition given to them by their Great Father the King to support themselves and families and that they could not think of giving [them] up. The Rebels then demanded of the Chief to deliver up their cannon, that they had come for the special purpose of taking them and that they must give it up. Onarahison said yes we have got a cannon, a gift from our Father the Earl of Dalhousie to salute our officers when they visit us. We value our cannon and will never give it up but with our lives. You have come here, at this moment, because you know that we were but few and that all our brothers were gone to their hunting grounds to live? You wish and think that you can frighten us, but you are mistaken. Few as we are, we are not to be intimidated. Before you pillage us, you must kill us. Your numbers are great and you can easily do it. But think of the future and depend upon it. If you do us harm, you will repent it, we will be revenged. (account as told by Delisle and cited by Hughes to Napier, 5 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol 94: 38823-4, Hughes' emphasis)

The Patriotes replied: "keep your cannon and be quiet at home and take care that you do not give up your cannon to our Enemies" (ibid.). After pillaging shoresheds and attempting to disarm the local priest and British officers living in the village (ibid.: 38824), the Patriotes later returned to Onarahison, who had sent for them. He remarked that he had sent

> for you (Patriotes) to tell you not to come back again to frighten our women and children, we do not molest you and what is your business with us? We are Indians. If you Whites have quarrels, settle them amongst yourselves. Do not come and trouble us. (ibid.: 388244, my emphasis)

The Patriote leaders replied: "If you Indians keep quiet at home, [and not] [...] interfere in this busyness, we will leave you in Peace". Onarahison answered: "I can promise nothing. I am a Child, my hands are tied, I am under the laws of my Great Father and that of the Council of the Seven Fires -Caughnawaga-, whatever takes place must be decided there. (ibid.: 38825, my emphasis). Overall, according to James Hughes' interpretation of Ignace Delisle's account, in response to warnings not to get involved, the Kanesatake chief expressed a simultaneous attachment to the *Seven Fires of Canada* and the British Crown. Further, the chief indicated that a decision by Kahnawake chiefs or his "Father" could be final and may certainly shape decisions taken in Kanesatake ("I am a Child, my hands are tied"). Onarahison nonetheless expressed his Native identity ("we are Indians") and maintained that he did not wish to join either side involved in the conflict.

Following this event, which greatly contributed to enhancing Kahnawake's mistrust for the Patriotes, Duncan Campbell Napier, Lower Canada's Superintendent General of Indian Affairs (Leighton 1977), issued a letter of appraisal and conduct which stated:

> His Excellency highly approves of the Conduct of his Red Children on this occasion and desires that you will exhort them to continue [to be] faithful to their Great Father, who will not abandon them while they obey his injunctions and will punish those who molest and ill treat them. You will be pleased to caution the Indians generally that they are not to give up their arms and ammunition to any person unless directed to do so by their Father at Quebec. (letter to Walcott, 7 December 1837, ANQM 1837-38, no. 668)

The orders were thus very clear; fearing that Patriotes might gather Native support, Indians were ordered not to give up their arms to the "rebels" and to remain quiet in their villages unless their assistance would be needed by the government.

On 9 December 1837, British authorities decided to install a large garrison of troops in Kahnawake for the purpose of establishing surveillance posts overlooking the St. Lawrence. However, such a measure was unsuccessful due to Marcoux's opposition to having British soldiers in Kahnawake. Fearing he would lose control over "his" Indians, the curé recalled an incident during the War of 1812 when Americans attacked British troops stationed in Akwesasne. He argued that placing soldiers in Kahnawake would incite the Patriotes to attack the village: "une compagnie de soldats ici, quant même elle serait de cinquante hommes, pourrait en attirer plusieurs cents des Paroisses voisines et [causerait] un massacre" (Marcoux to Napier, 10 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38855). Instead, he suggested installing several guard posts in Lachine (ibid.). Hughes criticized Marcoux's opposition to government proposals and noted that the curé's ideas were "laughable" (Hughes to Napier, 10 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38856).

On 13 December, Kahnawake as well as the British Army headquarters in Montréal were once again shaken by rumors of Patriote invasion. No sooner had British troops marched out to St. Eustache to disperse the Patriotes assembling there than a report was received that insurgents were within three miles of Lachine (Senior 1985: 127). According to John Fraser, an observer who "shouldered his musket at the time" (Fraser 1890: 73), there was "a great scare" on that night. A horseman of the Lachine Troop of Cavalry received information that "the rebels have escaped from St. Eustache, and are reported advancing in force on Lachine, to capture the arms there for the frontier volunteers" (ibid.: 56). Fraser states that, as a result, "there was a wild hurrying on the streets of Montréal. To arms, was the cry, the rebels are at hand!" (ibid.). As rumors spread that Montréal itself would be invaded, Colonel Wilgress quickly had this note sent to Kahnawake:

> To the first Chief of the Indians of Caughnawaga. You are hereby directed immediately to bring over to Lachine all the effective men you can collect, with all the arms in your possession. (Wilgress to Kahnawake chiefs, 13 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38830)

In turn, "sur cet ordre, ils (Iroquois) ont amené une partie du village de l'autre côté, avec leurs fusils" (Marcoux to Hughes, 14 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38850-3).

Senior accounts that "two hundred Indian warriors immediately crossed the St. Lawrence" (Senior 1985: 127). According to Fraser, who was quite impressed with the scene,

> the river was literally covered with Indian canoes; every warrior in Caughnawaga was crossing to join the Lachine Brigade. The cheer of welcome from that little band of volunteers, which greeted the arrival of the Indian warriors, and their wild war-whoop in response, was a sound, a sight, and a scene, the like of which will never again be seen or heard in this Province. (Fraser 1890: 60)

However, the report was a false one and a few short hours later, the Iroquois men from Kahnawake quickly returned to their village (ibid.: 58-61).

Other sources tell a more nuanced story. Once the young men were ready to depart for Lachine, Kahnawake resident and ferry operator George de Lorimier swiftly ordered them out of his boats (Eustache Oraquatiron, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2406). Marcoux writes:

> On vint de Lachine demander les sauvages avec leurs armes. Ils partirent donc en grand nombre, emmenant tous les canots de Lorimier. Ils voulaient prendre aussi les bateaux, mais il (de Lorimier) les en empêcha, en disant que Mr. Brown de Beauharnois lui avait envoyé des ordres de tenir ses bateaux prêts pour le lendemain matin, afin de traverser plusieurs compagnies de miliciens qui devaient aller prendre des armes à Lachine. Il leur ajouta que peut-être, il n'était pas prudent pour eux de marcher sans avoir un ordre de leur surintendant. (Marcoux to J.-V. Quiblier, 5 February 1838, APSS).

Overall, George de Lorimier refused to lend his boats to the members of the expedition because he had already reserved them for "Mr. Brown" of Beauharnois, who intended to provide loyalist militiamen with guns and provisions in the next few days. Father Marcoux agreed with this action because he felt that by leaving for Lachine, the young men were placing their village in a vulnerable position:

> George de Lorimier leur (Indians) a dit qu'ils ne devaient pas partir ainsi sur la voix du premier venu, qu'ils n'avoient d'ordre de recevoir que de vous (Hughes). Il leur a dit ce que je leur [aurait] dit moi-même si j'eusse été averti, car si le premier venu prend les commandes [...], les commandements seront contradictores et ne causeront que du désordre, et de la confusion. Les jeunes gens, pour avoir un fusil [...] [ont] sacrifier leur village. [...] On a dit aux Sauvages de rester tranquille chez eux, pour protéger leurs femmes, leurs enfants, et leurs animaux [...] [Ils] sont menacés [...] s'ils quittent le village, pour aller se battre ailleurs. Ces menaces ont encore été répétées ici avant hier, par un Patriote qui s'en allait à Chateaugay. Il est bien vrai que le gouvernement peut les indemniser de leurs pertes, mais les femmes et les Enfants qui seroient victimes de l'imprudence de laisser le village sans défense, qui les leurs rendrait? (Marcoux to Hughes, 14 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38850-3, my emphasis)

Marcoux also stated that George de Lorimier was not well liked by many people, including James Hughes, and that had this not been the case, he could have helped reduce the state of confusion in the village by being the only person in Kahnawake to receive and transmit government orders (ibid.). Yet Hughes accounts that despite George de Lorimier's claims, "the chiefs, accompanied by [war chief] Ignace [Delisle], harangued the young men and brought over 120 men" (Hughes to Napier, 14 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94:

38851). Praising Delisle, Hughes holds that "over 40 were armed, the rest had no guns" (ibid.). In his opinion, "many more would have crossed if George de Lorimier [had not] ordered them (young men) out of the bateaux" (ibid.).

In the next days, the people of Kahnawake gradually returned to their daily lives and did not hear of "Papineau's People" until the following November. Yet relations between the Iroquois and most of their non-Native neighbors did not improve for the better. For instance, as a result of the 1837 insurrection, Kahnawake chiefs were not able to collect their rents from the Canadian settlers living on the seigneury of Sault-Saint-Louis. To the great displeasure of the village council, this frustrating state of affairs persisted until 1838 (J. Baby to Napier, 14 December 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38834).

*Kahnawake and the Patriotes in 1838*

Following the defeat of the Patriotes in December 1837, new insurgent leaders initiated work on a second uprising. On 3 November 1838, Patriote leader Robert Nelson arrived in Napierville and issued a declaration of independence. In an attempt to obtain Native support, Nelson claimed that the "Indians shall no longer be under any civil disqualification, but shall enjoy the same rights as all other citizens of Lower Canada" (in Great Britain 1969c: 250; see also Bernard 1988: 302). However, this article seems to have gone completely unnoticed by the Native communities of Lower Canada.

On the night of 3 November, Patriotes assembled in places such as Beauharnois, Baker's Camp, St-Constant, Lacolle, and Châteauguay. The "exceptionally thick" Châteauguay Patriotes (Greer 1993: 348) were led and assembled by Joseph-Narcisse Cardinal, Joseph Duquet and François-Maurice Lepailleur. The first was a notary and was well known by Father Marcoux, who once described him as follows: "ecuïer notaire, membre du Parlement pour le comté de LaPrairie, et, ce qui vous le doit recommander par dessus toutes choses, Patriotissime" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 12 Novembre 1833, ADSJQL 3A-143). Indeed, Cardinal had been an aggressive Patriote since the early 1830s and had been instrumental in the organization of the second uprising. Cardinal was also very familiar with Kahnawake resident Jarvis McComber (Great Britain 1839: 30) as well as with interpreter Bernard St-Germain: Cardinal had married St-Germain's daughter Eugénie in 1831 (Lorimier 1988a: 161). Joseph Duquet, a law student (Filteau 1988), was known by Kahnawake residents Jarvis McComber and Charles Giasson. Duquet also knew Ignace Delisle, from whom he purchased hay (Rochon 1988: 135). Lepailleur, a bailiff from Châteauguay, was known by George de Lorimier, Ignace Delisle and Jacques Teronhiahere (Great Britain 1839: 33; 46).

Overall, the Châteauguay Patriotes agreed among themselves that some men would disarm and capture local "loyalists and bureaucrats" while others would attempt to persuade the neighboring people of Kahnawake to provide weapons or remain neutral (Boissery 1995: 56). Following the Kahnawake expedition, the Patriotes would march on Beauharnois, and, with other insurgent companies, attack the LaPrairie military barracks (Leclerc 1983; Senior 1985). Moreover, it is said that the insurgents intended to march on the village of Kahnawake for these three additional reasons:

1) By disarming the Iroquois and taking their weapons, they could gain Native support or, at least, obtain guns which they badly needed. Also, fearing they would be attacked by Indians, they could neutralize them. Indeed, wild rumors and reports that "les sauvages viennent" circulated massively in the area on 3 November 1838 (Greer 1993: 348). As a result, many Patriotes believed that "the Indians were coming against us, so we wished to get their arms" (testimony of P. Reid, in Great Britain 1839: 42).

2) Some sources seem to indicate that the Patriotes' march on Kahnawake was central to the entire uprising. Nicolas Rousselle, a member of the expedition, testified that he heard from Cardinal and others that "le but de cette expédition était de prendre les armes des Sauvages et s'emparer de ce poste" (ANQM 1837-38, no. 2270). Narcisse Bruyère similarly testified that "en nous rendant au Sault St. Louis, je demandai à Cardinal ce qu'ils entendait faire. Ils m'a dit alors qu'il voulait s'emparer de quelque place et y déclarer l'Indépendance afin qu'ensuite les Américains passent plus librement" (ANQM 1837-38, no. 2246). In the same vein, historian Robert Sellar accounts that

> Cardinal told his followers that their American friends objected coming to their assistance until they had achieved some success which would give them the status of combatants. If, said Cardinal, the Americans come now and are captured, they would be hanged as murderers; if they come after we have obtained the standing of belligerents and are captured, they will be treated as prisoners of war, and so he saw in the disarming of the Indians and the capture of their village more than a merely prudential step. (Sellar 1888: 571, my emphasis)

Thus upon obtaining arms and ammunitions, the Patriotes may have intended to seize and secure Kahnawake as an "independent" region. In Cardinal's affidavit, essentially aimed at downplaying his role as the leader of the Kahnawake expedition, it is stated that "un rassemblement devait avoir lieu le soir dans ce village" (deposition of Joseph N. Cardinal, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2795). Was "ce village" supposed to be Kahnawake?

3) Sources hint at the possibility that the Patriotes had been assured of Kahnawake's assistance by government interpreter Bernard St-Germain (Parent 1984: 97). Two Lachine residents testified that St. Germain once said "that he would prefer the American System of Government to the British Government" and that "he would join the Americans with the

Patriots as he was sure they would gain the Country and that he thought they would be better off" (A. Duquette and C. St-Denis, ANQM 1837-38: 1059). Marcoux stated that

> c'est par son conseil [St.Germain] que les Patriotes de Chateauguay sont venus [...] prendre le village. Il était en conseil avec eux dans la nuit de samedi avec ce dimanche. [...] [Il] leur a donné cet avis, en ajoutant que la moitié des sauvages étaient patriotes et qu'ils se joindraient à eux. [...] Tout se trouve maintenant expliqué: les nombreux voyages que St. Germain a fait (sic) depuis l'été à Chateauguay, toujours la nuit, constatant sa sympathie avec les rebelles, qui assurent qu'il a prêté le même serment qu'eux. (Marcoux to Lartigue, 12 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-201)

Even his good friend and collegue James Hughes wrote about the interpreter in a negative light: "Entre nous, I have every reason to suppose that our friend was concerned in the plot, or at least knew about it. It is said that he wished and sold the Chiefs, as much as to deliver up their arms" (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39773). In the hours following the march on Kahnawake, St-Germain was arrested and brought over to the courts to face charges of high treason. However, he was quickly released. Indeed, the interpreter did not stay locked up very long as James Hughes got him acquitted (Marcoux to Lartigue, 16 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-202; Marcoux to Turgeon, 28 December 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-48).[44]

As the night advanced, about 200 Châteauguay men were assembled to march on Kahnawake. About sixty had guns (P. Reid, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2252) whereas many others were given swords, sticks or farming instruments. The ones holding guns were handed between three and ten cartridges of powder (A. Boursier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2242; N. Rousselle, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2270). At two o'clock in the morning, the Patriotes were ready to march. To encourage the men, some of whom may have been forced out of their homes by threats that they would be killed or that their houses and barns would be burned down (various affidavits and depositions, ANQM 1837-38, nos. 2242, 2243, 2244, 2246, 2247, 2257, 2263, 2265, 2266, 2305), Patriote leaders started chanting "au sault, au sault!" (N. Rousselle, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2269), and "allons, allons, au sault, au sault, allons désarmer les sauvages!" (A. Couillard, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2310). Yet according to Nicolas Rousselle, who was part of the Patriotes' expedition and whose testimony was meant to downplay his involvement,

> il n'y avoit que deux ou trois qui criaient ainsi. Bien des gens [ont] demandé alors ce que c'étoit que l'on voulait faire, en disant que le temps étoit bien mauvais et que l'on avoit pas manger. La réponse étoit qu'au Sault, on trouverait de quoi manger. Une bonne partie [...] des gens ne voulaient pas grouiller mais on leur dit qu'il fallait

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[44] Bernard St. Germain may have tried to save his Patriote son-in-law Cardinal prior to the second insurrection. In Marcoux's words: "le bruit se confirme de plus en plus qu'il (St. Germain) a averti lui même son gendre Cardinal de se sauver, qu'il lui a porté de l'argent et payé un sauvage pour le conduire au travers du bois hors des lignes" (Marcoux to J.-V. Quiblier, 5 February 1838, APSS).

> absolument qu'ils vinrent à marcher et que si on ne le fit pas, on se trouvoit en danger et on leur faisoit bien d'autres menaces; alors la plus grande partie sont partis pour se rendre au Sault et le déclarant étoit de ceux qui marchoit tout en voulant déserter s'il trouveroit le moyen. (ANQM 1837-38, no. 2269, my emphasis)

Despite threats that people who would leave the ranks would be shot, many hungry, cold and tired peasants like Louis Denaut escaped in the woods (L. Denaut, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2244). At the same time, as Patriotes departed for Kahnawake, Châteauguay resident Robert Findlay jumped out of a back window of his house and made it to Kahnawake, where he secured a boat to cross over to Montreal and alert the authorities (R. Findlay, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2398: Senior 1985: 171). According to Sellar, Findlay "told the Indians of the rising, got them to ferry him over to Lachine" (Sellar 1888: 570). Even if Findlay did warn some Iroquois, his report does not seem to have spread as the village remained sound asleep until sunrise.

Kahnawake oral history accounts that a local unnamed woman searching the bushes for her lost cow saw the Patriotes and alerted the community. As one written version holds:

> On the Sunday morning of November 4, 1838, a group of Mohawk people were meeting in a chapel on the Chateauguay road. This chapel still stands in Kahnawake today. It was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The Patriotes from Chateauguay intended to surround the chapel and capture all of the men meeting inside. The Patriotes were planning to hold these men hostage in exchange for the guns and ammunition in Kahnawake. The Patriotes would have been successful except for an old Mohawk woman. This woman was walking down the road to Chateauguay looking for a lost cow. She happened to see the Patriotes approaching, armed as if for an attack. There were sixty four Patriotes in all. She rushed back to the chapel and warned all of the men who had assembled there. The Patriotes were armed with sticks and pikes and clubs. The Kahnawake men had muskets. The warriors left the church and set up an ambush by the front of the church entrance. When the force of forty Kahnawake men surrounded the French, the Patriotes immediately surrendered. Eleven others were captured later on in the day ...The Kahnawake men took the Patriotes prisoners, bound them with cords and delivered them to a jail in Montreal. (Blanchard 1980: 320)[45]

A second version of this story is provided by Mohawk historian Johnny Beauvais.

> The most revealing patriot lack of judgment was their ill-fated sneak raid on Kahnawake [...]. There are several versions of this raid, but we will recount the account that we find most plausible. The Mohawks were in church; it is implied in the old chapel on the hill. We do not agree because that building is too small to contain the large contingent of churchgoers at that time. They had to be in the old church which was replaced by the present one in the 1840s. The Patriots were discovered approaching our town with their primitive arms by a woman searching for her cow in the outer edge of the village, and she scurried back to warn the congregation [...]. The Kahnawake men quickly disarmed the intruders. The Patriots claimed they came to parley but the Mohawks did not accept that a parley be initiated by lurking about and

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[45] This account is from *Seven Generations*, the textbook used in Kahnawake's schools. It was written by David Blanchard, a non-Native anthropologist who consulted many Kahnawake elders. Despite its numerous flaws, it has been used since 1980 to educate Kahnawake youth and has generally been accepted by the community. Many thus consider it to be representative of some Mohawk views (Harrison 1994: 9).

> arrive as an armed intrusion. Their annoyance prompted them to tie the prisoners and take the seventy-five prisoners to the Lachine garrison by canoe. (Beauvais 1994: 19)

Interestingly, I have found many non-Native accounts that provide a similar story involving an anonymous woman looking for her cow.

1) Stating that the Iroquois were assembling in the church and not in a small chapel, Father Joseph Marcoux provided this account in a letter he wrote on 7 November 1838.

> Dimanche matin (4 November 1838), jour des Patrons du Diocèse, à neuf heures du matin, le monde dans l'Église et le célébrant tout habillé pour commencer, on voit accourir une femme qui cherchait sa vache dans le bois depuis le matin. Elle rapporte qu'elle a vu en chemin se dirigeant vers le village, une masse compacte d'hommes armés, qui lui a paru être de plusieurs cents. En un clin d'oeil, l'Église est évacuée, et chacun de courir à son fusil et à sa hache et de prendre le chemin de la commune. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43)

2) The same story was reported by the newspaper *Le Canadien* on 9 November 1838.

> [...] une femme du village étant à la recherche d'une vache égarée, découvrit dans le bois un parti nombreux d'hommes armés, et en donna avis aux Sauvages qui étaient à la messe. Ils sortirent aussitôt, se saisirent de toutes les armes qu'ils purent se procurer, telles que fusils, cassetêtes et fourches, et poussant des cris de guerre, ils chargèrent leurs ennemis, qui prirent aussitôt la fuite, en jetant leurs armes. Soixante cinq furent faits prisonniers. (*Le Canadien* 9/11/1839: 1)

3) James Hughes, praising war chief Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle and identifying the Iroquois as "our Brown Boys", wrote the following account on 15 November 1838.

> Of all the transactions that have taken place here, the most noble [...] was performed by our Brown Boys of Caughnawaga, with Ignace Kaneratahere at their head. [...] On Sunday last the 4th instant about 8 o'clock as mass was beginning, many people having got into the church, it appears that a woman who has lost a cow the day previous was in search of her, scouring about the bushes for that purpose, she heard the bell that the cow had round her neck. The brush wood being thick she got on a stone fence, to see if she could discover her, but instead of seeing her cow, she saw about one hundred rebels, near the chapel sitting in the bushes; luckily she was not seen by them Brigands, she immediately returned to the village, [and] gave the alarm. (Hughes to Napier, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39772, my emphasis)

4) On 3 December 1838, Kahnawake resident Jacques Sohahio testified under oath

> that on Sunday the fourth day of November 1838 at about nine o'clock am, a report was spread in the said village of Caughnawaga, that a large force of armed Rebels had been seen near the Chapel situated about fifteen acres from the village, by a woman who was in search of a cow. (testimony of Jacques Sohahio, 3 December 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39801)

5) Similarly, in 1847, a British army officer by the name of John Richardson wrote in his travel journal *Eight Years in Canada* that while

> the Indians [...] were attending their morning service utterly ignorant of the rebellion that had commenced, a squaw who had gone into the woods in search of a stray cow, fancied as she approached a particular spot where she perceived the glimmering of arms. She looked more closely, and with that keenness of glance for which the Indian

> is remarkable, [...] she discovered that her impression was correct, for she now distinctly saw several men moving cautiously among the trees, while others were lying down apparently in ambush. With characteristic presence of mind, she affected not to have seen anything extraordinary, but continued her way, diverging gradually from the part, yet seemingly in search of some lost object. In this manner she continued to make such a circuit that brought her at once near the church, and out of the view of those whom she had so opportunely discovered. She now entered the building and apprised the Indians of the danger that threatened them. (Richardson 1847: 61)

In this case, a mid-nineteenth century writer generalized the "noble character of the Indian race" and drew upon stereotypes of the day to describe a specific event.

6) Without citing his sources, historian Louis N. Carrier provided this account in 1877:

> Le dimanche, 4 novembre, une sauvagesse de Caughnawaga qui était à la recherche de sa vache, dans un bois, près du village, aperçut un nombre considérable d'hommes armés cachés dans ce bois, et se disposant à surprendre les sauvages durant la messe. Immédiatement, sans éveiller l'attention des hommes embusqués, elle s'en retourna au village et annonça sa découverte aux sauvages rassemblés dans l'église pour le service divin. Aussitôt, ils sortirent de l'église, saisirent les armes qui leur tombèrent sous la main, des mousquets, des haches, des tomahawks, des barres de fer, etc., etc., et poussant leur cri de guerre, ils firent une charge si prompte et si furieuse sur la bande d'hommes armés qu'ils les mirent en fuite; la confusion fut telle qu'ils firent 64 prisonniers. (Carrier 1877: 112)

7) Sellar, who wrongfully identifies George de Lorimier as the "head-chief", wrote that a woman looking for her cow saved the village: "she, young and fleet of foot, fled with the intelligence that there were armed men entering the bush. A brave was sent out as a scout and he speedily returned, confirming the girl's statement" (Sellar 1888: 572).

8) As with Borthwick (1898: 61) and Kingsford, who provides a short section entitled "Attack on Caughnawaga" (1898: 167), historian and priest E. J. Devine has stated that

> forty [Patriotes], armed with sticks and pikes, set out for the Indian village, where they arrived at sunrise. They halted in [...] the vicinity and sent five of the chiefmen to sound the dispositions of the Indians. While those envoys were employed in urging the Indians to lend them their guns, a squaw caught sight of the rest of the patriots and ran frightened to the village to relate what she had seen. (Devine 1922: 360)

9) An historical article by writer Silas Salt published in the *Standard* of Montréal in October 1926 accounts that "a squaw" that was "looking for her cow" saw the Patriotes hiding in the trees and warned the community. The "braves" then seized their "muskets and tomahawks" and "coming with war-whoop, they threatened the rebels with destruction unless they came forward and surrendered" (*Standard*, 23/10/1926: 41). In some cases, this version of the event is ridiculed. For instance, author P. Rochon writes:

> chacun des participants, aussi bien chez les Indiens que chez les Patriotes, a sa version des événements qui se sont déroulés à Caughnawaga, le matin du 4 novembre 1838. Il y a même une légende qui veut que ce soit une vieille Indienne, cherchant sa vache, perdu dans les bois environnants, qui aurait aperçu les Patriotes, s'avançant armés vers le village, et aurait donné l'alerte aux siens. On ne nous dit pas si elle a retrouvé sa

> vache. La seule chose dont on soit certain, c'est qu'il ne s'est pas tiré un seul coup de feu, d'un côté comme de l'autre, ce matin-là. (Rochon 1988: 134)

In other cases, a different version is provided. For example, John Fraser accounts that

> in the early morning of Sunday, the 4th, the patriots of Chateauguay marched in force on Caughnawaga to disarm the Indians. The Indians were then attending early mass in a small chapel half a mile behind the village. The chapel was surrounded by the patriots. They said they came to parley. The Indians expressed surprise that friends should come armed, and asked them to pile their arms preparatory to a friendly talk. The innocent patriots piled their arms; they were immediately taken possession of by the Indians. (Fraser 1890: 75)

Although the Native and non-Native accounts cited above are interesting and insightful, they provide only part of the story, as there are numerous contradictions and obscurities concerning locations, actions, actors, and intentions. Moreover, despite the recent and slightly more detailed works of Boissery (1995), Greenwood (1980), Greer (1993), Parent (1984), and Senior (1985), most retellings of this specific event simply fall into the traditional account as originally provided by contemporary observers and the *Report of the State Trials* (Great Britain 1839). Even if this latter reference is essential in retracing events as well as the specific role played by some Kahnawake residents, secondary sources discussing this event essentially state that on 4 November 1838, sixty-four or seventy-five Patriotes marching on Kahnawake were lured into the village, caught and sent to Montréal. Over the years, this account has been repeated word for word by non-Native historians without any new data on the Iroquois' own interpretations as well as on the events which occurred immediately before and after that actual "Patriote raid".

Overall, the description of events as provided below tends to show that as a result of the tense context in which the Iroquois became well aware of the Rebellions, the Patriote march on Kahnawake was immediately conceived by the Iroquois as an "attack" on their lands and lives. It also seems to illustrate that by the time the second insurrection got underway, the tense Kahnawake-Patriote relations of the previous year severely deteriorated. Finally, the many archival sources I have documented tend to indicate that the previous accounts of events which occurred on that day as they have been told until now by the people of Kahnawake and non-Native historians is incomplete in detail and context.

Sources seem to indicate that, in a general way, the people of Kahnawake were not aware of the Patriotes' march on their village. While some residents were getting ready for church or were tending their animals and workshops, war chief Ignace K. Delisle was conducting a meeting with other chiefs. Interestingly, the people present at this meeting agreed that they did not have any "news" from Montréal (Great Britain 1839: 34). At around five o'clock in the morning, about two hours before the arrival of the Patriotes in the Kahnawake woods, Pierre Tehaquonte and eleven other Iroquois young men left their

village with the intention of taking down two rafts from Châteauguay. Ignorant of the ongoing events, they stopped at the house of "Sançon", a Châteauguay tavern keeper, where seven of them secured the loan of a canoe. The others walked to another tavern keeper's house, "Dalton", who informed them that "all is now stopt, [...] this is the day the troubles are to commence" (P. Tehaquonte, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2403). The Iroquois went back to Sançon's house, where the others were waiting. Subsequently, however, the twelve unarmed young men were swiftly overtaken by several Patriotes and

> persuaded to go into the House, where they were told they were prisoners. The Rebels were constantly assembling there with arms, after having kept the twelve Iroquois for the space of about an hour, they released ten and kept Pierre Tehaquonte and [another], [...], and they remained at Sançon's two days during which time they were well treated and well fed. (P. Tehaquonte, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2403)

After being moved to another building and, eventually, to the "Rebel guard House near the church of Chateaugay" (ibid.), Tehaquonte and his companion were set free on the seventh of November. They were kept as prisoners for three days (ibid.).

At seven o'clock in the morning, Patriotes arrived at the outskirts of Kahnawake and slowly positioned themselves in the woods next to an old stone chapel which was unoccupied at the time (Marcoux to Lartigue, 4 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-200). Pierre Reid, a member of the group, accounts that the Patriotes had left Châteauguay "au nombre de 150, on s'est rendu près du village du Sault; on fit halte à une petite distance du village le long d'un bois de manière à ne pas être vus du village" (ANQM 1837-38, no. 2252). However, as a result of many desertions, they now numbered between seventy-five and one hundred (depositions, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2246, 2247, 2251, 2266, 2305, 2310). Following quiet discussions, the Patriotes agreed that while the majority of the men would stay in the woods, Cardinal and Duquet, as well as Ignace Giasson, Joseph Meloche and Narcisse Bruyère, three other members of the expedition, would enter the village claiming to buy hay from war chief Ignace Delisle or to request owed money from Jarvis McComber (Joseph N. Cardinal, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2795). Their initial intention was to make separate but peaceful arrangements to obtain guns and ammunitions from specific people without alarming the entire community. They started walking down the present-day "old Châteauguay road" in Kahnawake and passed Jacques Teronhiahere's house, who was "surprised" to see people walking on that road "so early" (Great Britain 1839: 46).

A few minutes prior to eight o'clock, before the Patriote leaders had reached their specific destinations, one of the five men entered the stone house of Kahnawake resident George de Lorimier, who states: "I saw someone come into the parlor, and I recognized Ignace Giasson, who told me to say nothing, and immediately retired. Ignace Giasson was my wife's uncle, and came to warn me that I might defend myself (Great Britain 1839: 30,

my emphasis)". In a bilingual affidavit, de Lorimier testified that "Ignace Giasson, oncle de sa femme lui a dit que les patriotes viennent a prendre le village. [...] Narcisse Bruyère was with him. He was not armed" (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). George de Lorimier married Marie-Louise McComber in 1835. She was the daughter of Jarvis McComber and Angélique Giasson[46], a sister of Ignace Giasson. As such, Ignace Giasson, who lived in Châteauguay with his wife Marie Dollar, and who had been brought to Kahnawake by Cardinal to serve as an interpreter (Ignace Giasson et al., ANQM 1837-38, no. 2315), was Marie-Louise de Lorimier/McComber's maternal uncle because her father Jarvis was married to his sister Angélique (Faribault-Beauregard 1993; Massicotte 1915). In acting as he did, Giasson may have intended to protect close family members. Also, as discussed in Chapter 5, the de Lorimier and McComber families owned extensive property in Kahnawake. In response to a Patriote invasion, these families, as well as those related to them by marriage, may have been unwilling to give up their lands to Patriotes.

Shortly after, while Duquet met with Ignace Delisle, Cardinal and Bruyère entered George de Lorimier's house and told him they wanted to meet with the chiefs for the purpose of obtaining arms. In response, de Lorimier stated that there were only twenty or thirty guns in Kahnawake (Great Britain 1839: 30). Cardinal replied that such a small amount of guns was not worth the expedition and that if the Patriotes were caught, "we shall all be hanged" (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). Cardinal then started threatening de Lorimier by stating that "he had 150 men hidden in the woods" and that if the "Indians would give up their arms, they would not be injured by them, but would be permitted to retain their seigneury" (ibid., my emphasis). Cardinal asserted that if "the chiefs would join them, or even lend them their arms, they would not only be well paid, but would be allowed to keep their seigneury under the new government" (Sellar 1888: 572). As Girod had done a year before when talking to a Kanesatake chief, Cardinal used the issue of land in order to obtain Native support. The Patriote leader did not mention his own grievances but spoke in words and concerns that could be better understood by the people of Kahnawake. Yet de Lorimier did not give in to Cardinal's threats and soon after, both Cardinal and Bruyère left. A few minutes later, Duquet and Meloche rapidly walked by de Lorimier's house in search of Cardinal (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407).

In spite of the Patriotes' secretive plans, word that "hundreds" of armed men were hiding in the woods in the vicinity of the "old chapel on the hill" spread quickly throughout

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[46] Angélique Giasson was Jarvis McComber's second of his three wives. She had a sister by the name of Marie-Louise, who was married to Thomas Aubert de Gaspé, the brother of Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, the well-known author of *Les Anciens Canadiens* (Faribault-Beauregard 1993).

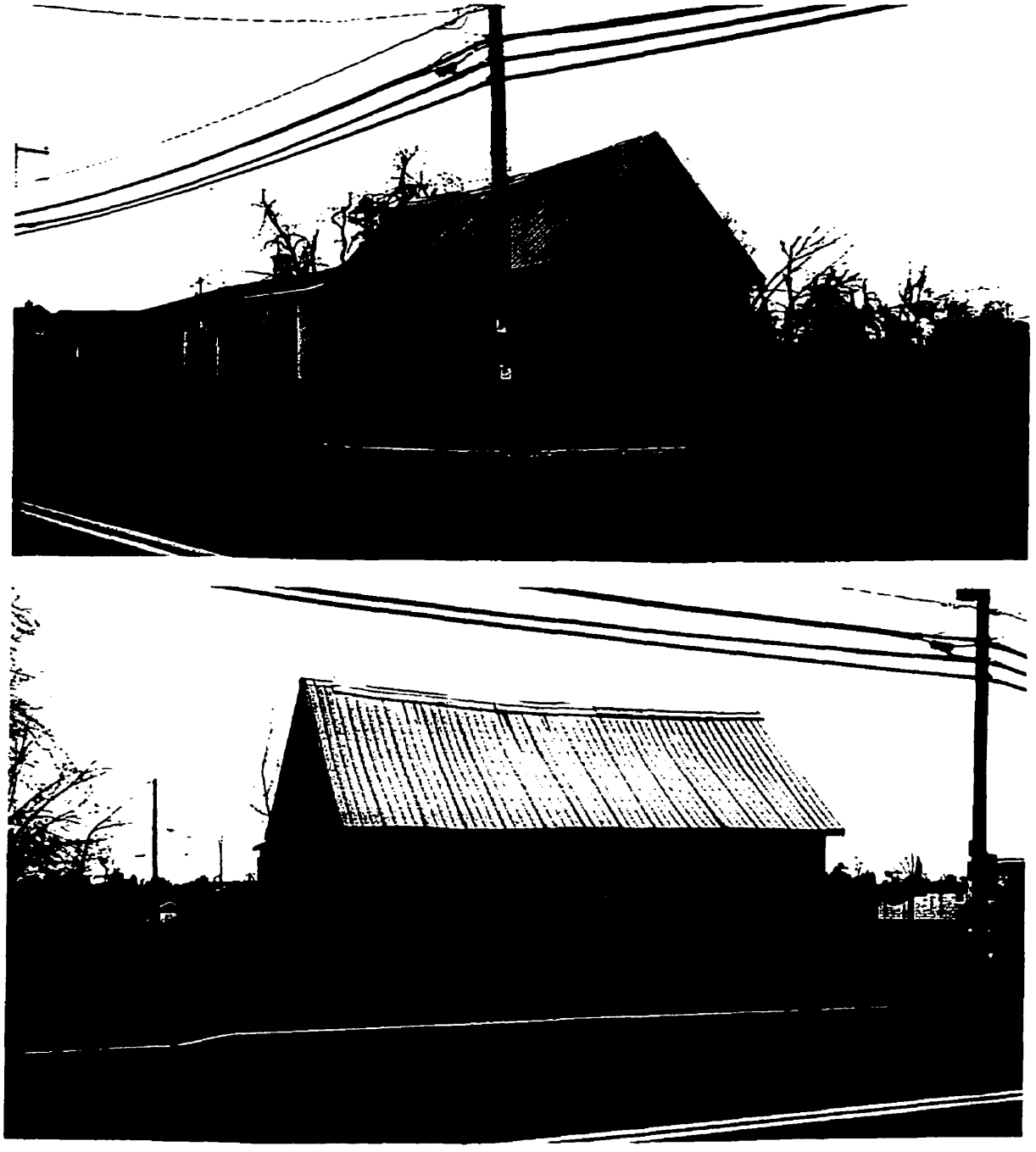

*Fig. 8: The "old chapel", Kahnawake. In Kahnawake, this stone building is commonly referred to as the "old chapel on the hill" or the "abandoned chapel on the old Chateauguay road". This stone house was once called "Chapelle St. Jean-Baptiste" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 4 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-200) and was dedicated to St. Jean Baptiste (Blanchard 1980: 320). It was built around 1705 to house clearing crews prior to the community's last westward relocation. Archival sources indicate that on the morning of 4 November 1838, this building was not occupied. In fact, at around seven in the morning, the Patriotes walked up next to it and waited nearby. About two hours later, Patriote leader François-Maurice Lepailleur was found sitting on its steps. The nine known Kahnawakero:non who walked up to Lepailleur for the purpose of ascertaining the Patriotes' intentions were: Joseph Tenihatie (war chief), Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle (war chief), Jean Baptiste Saonwentiowane (member of council), George de Lorimier, Laurent Tsioniatarenton, Jacques Teronhiahere, Paul Laronde, Kentarontie and Sose Raionwiio (ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). The photographs were taken by the author, with permission from the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake.*

Kahnawake. At around thirty minutes past eight, Cardinal, Duquet, Meloche and Bruyère were in the house of Ignace Giasson's brother Charles-Gédéon. According to Cardinal, Charles-Gédéon Giasson's wife, Agathe McComber, walked in and "nous averti que l'allarme était donnée et que les Sauvages volaient au devant des Canadiens qui venaient [...] pour piller le village" (Cardinal to St.Germain, 24 November 1838, JNC). War chief Ignace Delisle, who was not at Giasson's house, similarly testified that at that moment,

> the Chiefs, accompanied by some of the young men, came to see [him] at his own house [...]. One of the Chiefs went out at the second bell, and returned, saying that a woman had announced the arrival of the Rebels, and that they were within a mile of the village. The woman protested she had seen them herself. ([A student at law] 1839: 25)

Three minutes later, the chief returned to Delisle's house with another man who told him to prepare his arms, "and make much haste as possible, adding that the rebels were within a mile of the village, and the woman had seen them" (Great Britain 1839: 33). Kahnawake resident Jacques Teronhiahere testified that he heard of such a report and that "his brother-in-law [...] requested him to saddle his horse, for the purpose of ascertaining if the report of the woman was true or not. He went personally to see, and returned confirming what the woman had said" ([A student at Law] 1839: 40).

Was it Agathe McComber who saw the Patriotes while she was looking for her cow?[47] Perhaps, but a letter by James Hughes seems to provide the actual name of this person who has, until now, remained anomymous. On 7 June 1839, Hughes wrote that a "poor helpless and infirm sub-chief [Pierre] Tekenihatie and his wife Marie Kawananoron" were in great need of "attention and assistance" (Hughes to Napier, 7 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40210). He continued his letter by saying that the

> woman [Marie Kawananoron] is the identical person who discovered the rebels on the 4th November 1838 when approaching to attack the village. Through her immediate information, the Rebels met with the defeat they so richly deserved. They pray this his Excellency their Father may be pleased to sanction that these two individuals may be placed on the montly return of Provisions for wounded Indians, for a Full ration between them both (Hughes to Napier, 7 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40210).

As the alarm spread throughout the village, Cardinal and Duquet quietly ran off in the woods, Bruyère secretly hid in the rectory (he was found later that night [ANQM 1837-38, no. 2246]), and Meloche escaped on horse-back (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). At the same time, Iroquois women and children started escaping toward Lachine by canoe (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43). At forty-five minutes past eight, George de Lorimier secretly informed Father Marcoux of the

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[47] Charles-Giasson and Agathe McComber married in 1832. They lived in Kahnawake and had many children including Léon-Trefflé Akiohanes Giasson and Napoléon-Antoine Giasson. The first married Agnès Brault in 1886 and the second married Marguerite Meunier dit Lafleur in 1875. Agathe McComber died in 1889 at the age of eighty-one (Faribault-Beauregard 1993).

*Fig. 9: The "old chapel", Kahnawake. This drawing depicts what the chapel may have looked like in 1838 (in Kanien'kehaka Raotitiokwa Cultural Center 1980: 11)*

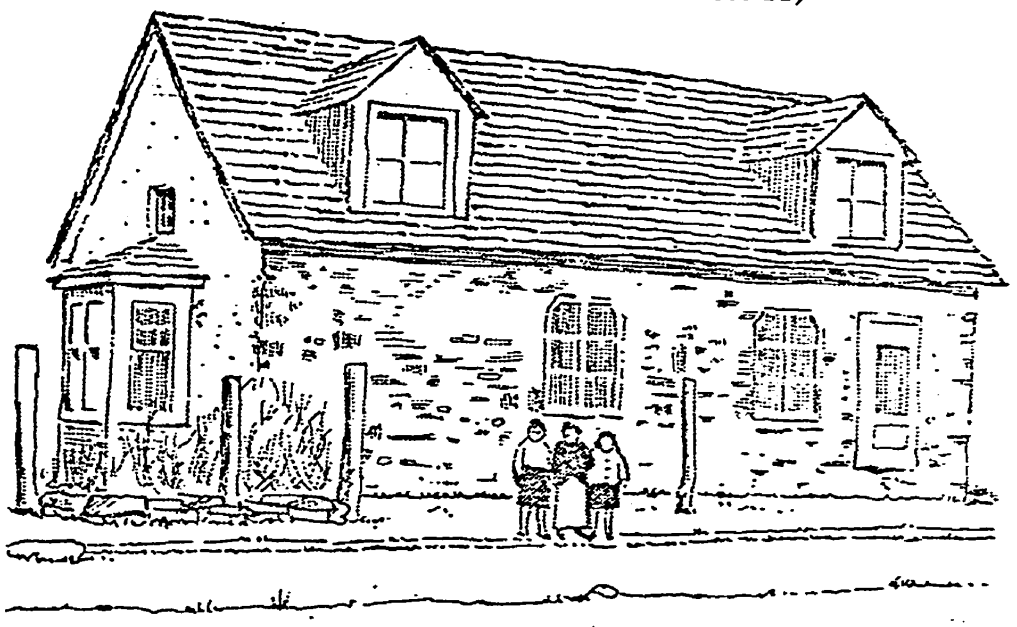

*Fig. 10: The "old chapel", Kahnawake. According to some Kahnawake people today, this chapel was the community's first church. Also, some people state that this building was used during the renovation of the church in 1845. Others think it served as a church for community residents that were not baptized. Nevertheless, the "old chapel" was eventually stripped of its religious role and subsequently used as a toll house and private residence. Its last occupants were members of the Beauvais family (Beauvais 1985: 107; ibid. 1994: 18; Béchard 1946: 6). This drawing depicts what the "old chapel" looked like at the time it was inhabited by members of the Beauvais family (in Kanien'kehaka Raotitiokwa Cultural Center 1979: 1).*

proceedings and entered the church, where members of the congregation "were partly assembled and got them out" (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407; Marcoux to Coffin, 22 July 1840, AAQ, G.VIII-132). The parishioners quickly left for their homes to hide or arm themselves. While others were being warned through other people, George de Lorimier "took a position in the middle of the village to warn those who had not been at church" (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). In about five minutes, forty armed Iroquois men had rapidly assembled around the flagpole facing the church (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43; G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). Realizing that their thirty guns would not be enough to protect the village from a group which was feared to be composed of "hundreds" of armed men, Marcoux attempted to convince them to give up their weapons to the Patriotes to save their own lives (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407; Thomas Sawonowanne, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2404; "Affidavits from 4 Indian Chiefs", 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39775-8; M. Taiowakora, 14 January 1839, NAC RG10, vol. 97: 39891-2). In the curé's own words:

> À la première nouvelle de l'arrivée des insurgés, je demandai combien il y avait de fusils dans le village; on me répondit vingt ou trente dans le plus, tandis qu'on portait les forces ennemies à deux et trois cents. Alors je me dis: tous mes sauvages vont être massacrés; la partie n'est point égale. Je commencai donc par faire cette réflexion aux chefs, leur disant que leurs vies devaient être plus précieuses qu'une poignée de fusils, et que s'il n'y avait pas moyen de se défendre contre un si grand nombre, il valait mieux rendre les armes; que le gouvernement leur en donnerait d'autres, avec lesquelles, lorsqu'ils seraient complètement armés, ils iraient prendre leur revanche à Chateaugay. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 5 December 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-47)

In response, many replied "never will we give up our arms!" (Thomas Sawonowanne, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2404). Seeing that they were not "disposés à céder" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 5 December 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-47), Marcoux replied: "ne tirez pas le premier coup, attendez qu'on vous attaque, vous n'en serez que plus forts" (ibid.). The Iroquois "accordèrent sans difficulté cette dernière demande" (ibid.). It is also very interesting to note that a young Iroquois boy of eleven years of age brought a spear and wished to march with the men to meet the Patriotes. Marcoux feared for his life and suggested that he was better off staying home: "J'ai eu pitié d'un enfant de onze ans qui voulait aller au devant des patriotes; je lui ai dit de donner sa lance à un homme et de rester chez lui parce qu'il était trop petit pour s'aller exposer" (Marcoux to Coffin, 22 July 1840, AAQ, G.VIII-132). Kahnawake resident Jacques Sohahio was then asked to go to Lachine with three others "to endeavor to get arms and the assistance of a party of Lachine Volunteers, to assist them to repulse the enemy, should they meditate an attack on the Indians of the village" (J. Sohahio, 3 December 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39801-2). Yet by the time they crossed

over to Lachine and found an officer, the Patriotes had been surrounded and captured by the Iroquois. How exactly did this happen?

The assembled Iroquois decided to send a party of ten unarmed men to meet the insurgents (Great Britain 1839: 31). Nine of the ten men who advanced were George de Lorimier, Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle, Laurent Tsioniatarenton, Jean Baptiste Saonwentiowane, Jacques Teronhiahere, Paul Laronde, Joseph Tenihatie, Kentarontie and Sose (Joseph) Raionwiio (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). Upon arriving at the outskirts of the village, the ten men noticed Patriote leader François-Maurice Lepailleur and another man sitting and waiting on the old chapel's steps. According to Joseph Corbeille, a member of the Patriote expedition, "de Lorimier est venu au devant de Maurice Lepailleur près de la chapelle qui se trouve en haut du village" (J. Corbeille, ANQM 1837-38: 2305) (figs. 8, 9, 10). As, the unidentified man ran away towards the woods, Lepailleur rose and attempted to convince the Iroquois that he was simply resting on his way to LaPrairie. War chief Ignace Delisle noticed that he was armed and tried to relieve the Patriote of his shot-bag. Lepailleur then drew out a loaded pistol against Teronhiahere, who quickly disarmed the leader. It is said that Teronhiahere was "assez prompt pour le saisir par le canon et lui arracher, eu lui cassant, dit-on, le doigt qu'il avait dans le chien" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 4 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-200) (fig. 11).

Shortly after, the individual who had run away came back with close to seventy armed men, who cocked their muskets and advanced on the ten unarmed Iroquois. Lepailleur told the Iroquois that he simply wanted their guns and that they could remain neutral in the upcoming insurrection. However, tensions were high; Teronhiahere testified that at that moment, he feared that "the French wanted to make us prisoners [...] When the Canadians first asked for our arms, they said, that if we did not give them up, they would take them by force" (Great Britain 1839: 47, my emphasis). Delisle similarly thought that "they came to make war on us" (ibid.: 34, my emphasis). As the armed Patriotes advanced, they yelled out to Lepailleur that they "were ready" and asked him to "give the word" (ibid.: 34): "commandez [...] et nous allons les coucher à terre" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 15 January 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-50). Lepailleur urged the men not to fire and asked once again if Kahnawake could support the Patriotes by lending them some weapons (*Montreal Daily Star*, 15/12/1888). In a skillful manner, George de Lorimier and Jacques Teronhiahere answered that such an arrangement could only be secured by speaking to the chiefs. Lepailleur and four others accepted the invitation and started to walk toward the center of the village. Interestingly, the other Iroquois who had marched for a parley started inviting the entire group of armed insurgents to follow Lepailleur. Some Indians are even quoted as having said: "viens, viens, on va s'arranger." (N. Rousselle, ANQM 1837-38,

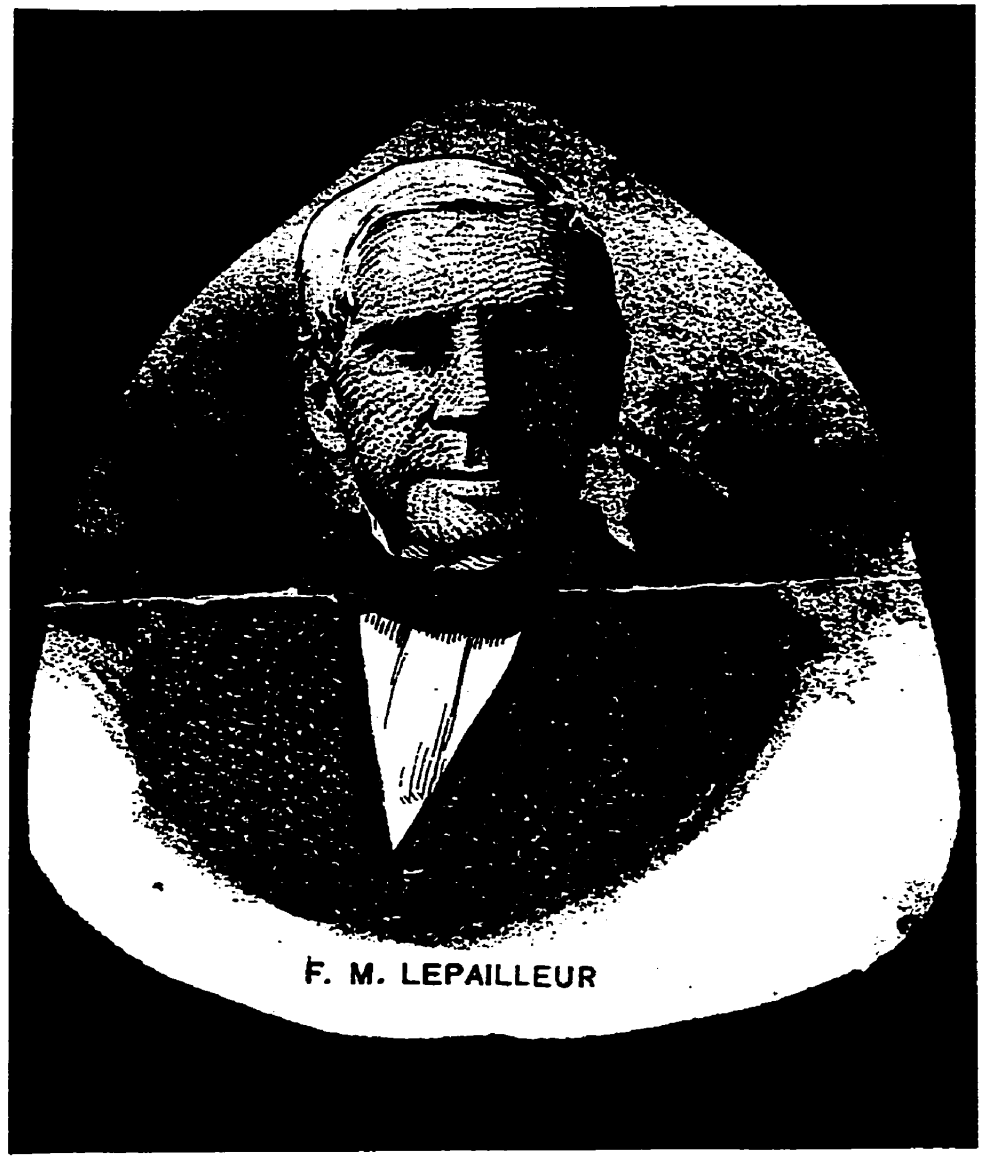


*Fig. 11: François-Maurice Lepailleur. (Archives Nationales du Québec à Québec: P1000, S4, PL106)*

no. 2269). Teronhiahere testified that in response to this invitation, the "crowd [of Patriotes] said, perhaps, if we go to the village, you will make us prisoners. I answered, don't be frightened, I will take care of that" (in Great Britain 1839: 47).

As testified by J. Teronhiahere, "my object in getting them into the village, was to make them prisoners, as we could not do so by ourselves, where we were" (Great Britain 1839: 47). The deputation had indeed been sent "ostensibly to inquire of the Canadians their intentions in coming thus armed, and in numbers; but in reality to draw them from the advantage of their covert into the more open space afforded by the village" (Levinge 1846: 180). As soon as the Patriotes arrived close enough to the ambushed Iroquois who were drawn up in line, George de Lorimier is said to have cried out "allez-y", upon which order about thirty Iroquois men surrounded the eighty insurgents (G. de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2407). The unarmed Natives were even told to move away from the crowd of Patriotes, as the armed Iroquois men would respond "if the Canadians fired first" (Great Britain 1839: 47). Despite the fact that three shots were actually fired by a Kahnawake resident and that many "rebels" protested that they had been forced to march on the Iroquois village (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43), the insurgents were easily disarmed. Describing the scene, Marcoux states that

> il ne s'est pas tiré un seul coup de fusil, ni d'un côté, ni de l'autre. Quelques sauvages [se placèrent] en joue, mais les autres les arrêtèrent [...]. Un seul indocile tira trois fois, et trois fois heureusement son fusil rata. Les pauvres Canadiens ne firent donc absolument aucune résistance. Ils se laissèrent prendre et conduire comme des moutons. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43)

In turn, the people of Kahnawake "took from the rebels 56 guns and ammunition" (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39773).

Sixty-four Patriotes were quickly brought in front of the church, where boats were secured. At that moment, many Iroquois are quoted as having said: "a cette heure, allez vous arranger en ville!" (N. Rousselle, ANQM 1837-38, no.2269). Claiming that war chief Ignace Delisle had advanced with only five other men, James Hughes states:

> the group invited [the Patriotes] to a council in the village. The fools were stupid enough to accept of the invitation, but they were no sooner in the village near the church, were surrounded by the Brown Boys, disarmed and driven to the Bateaux, when five Iroquois rowed sixty-four rebels across not one of whom hands were tied. (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39772-3, my emphasis)

The many Iroquois who remained in the village then "scoured the woods" in search of men who had ran away when sixty-four of their companions had been cornered. About one hour later, eleven others were caught and sent to Lachine, "which made 75, among the latter was Monsieur Cardinal, St. Germain's son in law; he ought to be hanged" (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39772-3). Cardinal accounts that he

was indeed found hiding in the woods next to the St-Lawrence river (Cardinal to St. Germain, 24 November 1838, JNC; Great Britain 1839: 31). Once in Lachine, the seventy-five Patriotes[48] who had been apprehended by the Iroquois were tied up by British soldiers (P. Picard, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2374). They reached the Montréal jail around two o'clock in the afternoon (*Montreal Daily Star* 15/12/1888).

Authorities were quick to notice the swift and rapid actions undertaken by the Kahnawake Iroquois. Sir John Colborne even wrote about it the next day.

> The general movements of the rebels commenced on the 3rd. They made an attack on the Indians of Cochanawaga, on Sunday the 4th instant, who sallied out of the church where they were assembled for divine service, repulsed the rebels from the village, and captured 70 prisoners (Colborne to Glenelg, 5 November 1838, in British North America 1839: 246).

He also stated that Patriotes "went to the Indians to persuade them to join their party; they pretended to do so, but having collected a sufficient number disarmed and embarked them in their boats" (Colborne to Goldie, [date?], NAC Colborne Papers, vol. 12: 3423-4).

The existing Native and non-Native accounts of what occurred in Kahnawake on 4 November have, until now, ended with the departure of the Patriotes to the Montréal jail. Letters by James Hughes and Father Joseph Marcoux reveal additional facts, which once again tend to show that the Kahnawake Iroquois' continual awareness of the Rebellions grew primarily out of wild rumors as well as threats to their land and lives.

Despite the fact that Kahnawake had been freed from intruders, a general sense of nervousness prevailed. Indeed, during the mass which followed the Patriote raid, many Iroquois remained armed and ready in church and in the nearby woods. As Marcoux states:

> Ca n'a donc été qu'après onze heures que j'ai pu dire une basse messe, à laquelle ont assisté les sauvages, tous armés, prêts à sortir au moindre appel, des sentinelles ayant été placées préalablement à toutes les issues du bois. (Marcoux to Lartigue, 4 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-200, my emphasis)

At around four o'clock in the afternoon, a wild report spread that Patriotes, armed with cannons, were coming back to Kahnawake. In Marcoux's words:

> Après-midi, au moment où je sonnais l'appel pour les vêpres, autre allarme, les Patriotes revenaient, dit-on, avec des canons. Tous les hommes sont partis armés, pour les rencontrer; et les femmes de s'embarquer dans les canots, bateaux etc., pour traverser à Lachine. Nous avons sonné le tocsin pendant un tems considérable pour avoir du secours de Lachine. [...] Heureusement, c'était une fausse allarme. Ils sont revenus le soir, sans avoir rien vu, et trop tard pour faire aucun office, de manière qu'il n'y a eu ni vêpres, ni salut. (letter to Lartigue, 4 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-200)

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[48] A complete list of the seventy-five men who were caught by the Kahnawake Iroquois on that day can be found in Borthwick (1898: 72-75) and Rochon (1988: 139).

As the evening advanced, the entire village was in a state of alert: "les Sauvages sont tous sur pied, personne ne dormira cette nuit [...] Je ne sais pas ce que nous avons à attendre pour demain, peut-être beaucoup, peut-être rien" (ibid.). At eleven o'clock at night, Marcoux wrote to the Lachine garrison "pour avoir du renfort et des fusils, la moitié des sauvages n'étant armés que de piques, de lances, de vieilles épées et de haches" (ibid.). At midnight, officials responded that guns and reinforcements might be supplied in the following days (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43).

The next morning, November 5th, a new alarm was heard. According to Marcoux, it frightened the Kahnawake people terribly because it was "pire que les autres":

> Mille hommes venaient et ne devaient faire grâce ni aux femmes, ni aux enfants ni même aux chiens, mais tout tuer et détruire. Voilà donc encore une fois tous les Sauvages qui partent, et le reste des femmes et enfans qui se jettent dans les bateaux et canots pour se sauver à Lachine me laissant seul pour garder le village. Je pris le sac aux saintes huiles et je me réfugia dans l'Église effrayé de la solitude horrible dans laquelle je me trouvais [...]. Le soir, les Sauvages revinrent sans avoir rien découvert. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43, my emphasis)

A few hours following this second false alarm, James Hughes was ordered to go to Kahnawake "for the purpose of arming the Indians and assembling all those who were gone to their hunting grounds" (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39772-3, my emphasis). He "issued 160 muskets, ammunition and accoutrements" and supplied all able-bodied men with "a capot (winter coat) and a pair of browns (shoes)" (ibid.). This "generosity" may have induced some Kahnawake Iroquois into cooperating with the Crown. Indeed, young Iroquois men may have desired to join the ranks of soldiers in order to obtain guns and provisions. In fact, Hughes recommended that the government give "them each a gun, they deserve it" (ibid.). He even pointed out that special rifles had been purchased by the government forces and that he "must get one for Ignace" (ibid.). Moreover, 531 pounds of gun powder were issued for Kahnawake in the months of November and December 1838, as well as in January and February 1839 (Indian Department, [1838-9], NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39600). Later on that day, warriors from Kahnawake arrived in Lachine. As J. Fraser accounts, "besides the [Lachine] Brigade, the village was filled with Indians from Caughnawaga" (Fraser 1890: 88).

In the next days, with Montreal barricaded, the *habeas corpus* suspended and martial law declared, British soldiers under the command of Captain Campbell were stationed in Kahnawake (Hippolyte Fortier, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2349). Swift arrests were then carried out in the vicinity of Kahnawake by Iroquois men who acted alone or who were accompanied by soldiers or loyalist volunteers.

1) Edouard Desautels was arrested while he was working on his father's field, "je fus fait prisonnier dans le moulin qui est bien près de chez nous. C'est les sauvages qui m'ont pris je ne sais pour quelle raison" (E. Desautels, ANQM 1837-38, no. 1141).

2) Likewise, Ignace Hubert from Châteauguay, who had hidden while the Patriotes were recruiting, was arrested by "les Sauvages et les Volontaires" a few days following the Patriote raid on Kahnawake (I. Hubert, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2352).

3) On 6 November, five Iroquois surrounded the house of Hippolyte Fortier and unsuccessfully tried to speak to him. The next day, the men came back and pretended to need Fortier's help, who accepted to accompany the Iroquois back to Kahnawake with two of his friends, "par plaisir, s'il n'y avoit aucun danger. Les Sauvages leurs (sic) ayant dit qu'il n'y auroit aucun danger, ils se rendirent avec les Sauvages, tous à cheval, au Sault, où ils furent arrêtés" (H. Fortin, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2349).

4) Jean-Baptiste Duquette was recruited by force on November third. After deserting, he spent the night in the woods and came back home to Châteauguay. He was arrested on 10 November. He specified that "les volontaires étaient accompagnés de Sauvages" (J.-B. Duquette, ANMQ 1837-38, no. 2343).

5) In the week following the Patriote raid, six unarmed Châteauguay men went to Kahnawake "pour faire la paix avec le village" (Marcoux to Drummond, 8 January 1839, GB u-8146). Marcoux writes that they had been invited by some Indians to make peace. However, Captain Campbell ordered that the men be arrested.

Similar arrests continued until 12 November, which resulted in the accumulation of "lots of prisoners" in Kahnawake (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39771). In fact, since the failed Patriote raid, "tous les jours et toutes les nuits, les sauvages font la garde; ils se rendent jusqu'à Chateauguay, où ils sèment la terreur" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-43, my emphasis).

As military confrontations started occurring in several places throughout the District of Montréal, men from some of Lower Canada's Native villages were integrated into companies of British soldiers. On 6 November 1838, about fifty Iroquois from Akwesasne joined Colborne's army and participated in the dispersion of the Patriotes along the Châteauguay River. On the 10th, "Glengarrie's pipes mingled with [Akwesasne] Mohawk war cries" as troops attacked Baker's Farm (Mann 1986: 126). As during the Upper-Canadian rebellion, Native warriors became employed only after and mainly because insurgents had attempted "to tamper with" their allegiance (Arthur to Glenelg, 28 September 1838, in Great Britain 1969c: 342). Overall, the British viewed Natives as unable to remain politically neutral (Allen 1992: 132; Calloway 1987: 198-206). Therefore,

their use would become essential only if "rebels" tried to obtain their support. In the words of George Arthur, lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada from 1838 to 1841,

> it forms no part of my policy to bring, unnecessarily, an Indian force into the field; but I consider it inevitable, that if civil troubles should unhappily recur in [Upper Canada], the scattered tribes of domesticated Indians will be ranged either on the side of the Government, or against it; and, under such circumstances, it is obviously more judicious to employ them in defense of the Crown, under the control of influential and experienced commanders, than to permit them to be arrayed in the enemy's ranks. (Arthur to Glenelg, 28 September 1838, in Great Britain 1969c: 343, my emphasis)

Moreover, officials argued that Indian tactics might be helpful in dispersing the insurgents:

> when under the command of Officers and chiefs, who possessed their respect and confidence, it has never been found impracticable to restrain them from acts of the ferocious character which have been the usual accompaniments of Indian warfare, while in the forest their native habits render them most valuable auxiliaries. [...] United together by the hope of plunder, in an attempt to rob and destroy British subjects, and to deprive the British Crown of this colony (Upper Canada), such brigands (Upper Canadian "rebels") cannot lay claim to any of the usages of civilized nations; and if the habits of Indian Warriors present greater terror to them than would be produced by the presence of regular Troops, the Council respectfully submit that it furnishes an additional argument for their employment. ("Report of the Executive Council of Upper Canada", 1838, NAC Colborne Papers vol. 18: 5314-8, my emphasis)

In turn, as 4000 regular troops, 500 volunteers, and 1500 Glengarry Highlanders were mobilized, authorities attached about 200 men from Kahnawake to the 7th Hussars for the purpose of marching on Châteauguay to defeat and disperse the Patriotes thought to be assembled there (Mann 1986: 121; Senior 1985: 190).[49]

On the night of 10 November, the Lachine Brigade and volunteers from Montréal crossed to Kahnawake. Early the next morning, the contingent left for Châteauguay (Fraser 1890: 88-90; *Le Canadien* 12/11/1838). Marcoux witnessed this departure and noted that the Kahnawake men had painted their faces and were dressed in full Native combat gear:

> le jour du seigneur ayant commencé à briller, les sauvages se sont organisés à leur façon et sont partis avec la cavalerie, armés de pied en cap, barbouillés de rouge et de noir, ou plutôt, véritablement masqués. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 16 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-44, my emphasis)

The last time the Iroquois painted their faces in the context of war was twenty-five years earlier, during the War of 1812 (fig. 12). This raises questions about the persistence of Native military skills and tactics through 1812 veterans. In 1838, the fact that the

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[49] A comment in a memoir written by a soldier during the Upper-Canadian Rebellion describes what it may have been like for Native warriors (probably Iroquois from Six Nations) and British soldiers to meet on the same side of a battlefield: "during the day (in 1838, near Brantford, Upper Canada) several hundred Indians drew up in line in an orchard and took us for rebels; we took them for the same. We were in line to receive them, and pails of whiskey were dealt along. [...] Officers met each other half way with flags of truce for a parley. It turned out we were all of the same side, so they brought their painted faces to within ten feet opposite: but we could not speak Indian and they could not speak English, so we were not very communicative" (Lizars 1897: 124-5).

*Kahnawakehro:non* painted themselves with red (associated with life) and black (associated with death) may indicate that Native martial knowledge was probably still seen by the Iroquois as a way to gain supernatural strength, frighten the enemy, and define themselves as a distinct cultural group against British soldiers and loyalist militiamen (Benn 1998: 77).

The British soldiers and Iroquois warriors initially intended to march on Châteauguay for the purpose of fighting the "rebels", or "se prendre avec les Patriotes" (*Le Canadien*, 16/11/1838). Although arrests were made on the way, the town was found to be deserted. Then, however, commenced the "work of destruction":

> fires broke out here, there, and everywhere around. It had the appearance at one time as if the whole village and the surrounding homesteads would fall a prey to the devouring element. [...] The men became unmanageable, whether through drink or the disappointment of not getting a fight. [...] Before order was restored, [...] a score of houses [...] barns and homesteads, fell before the devouring flames. (Fraser 1890: 91)

As "quelques fuyards" were killed in the woods most probably under the hands of British soldiers (Marcoux to Turgeon, 8 January 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-49), the Kahnawake Iroquois pillaged as well. According to Father Marcoux, who was informed of the events in the following days, the Iroquois warriors as well as the women who had followed them

> sont arrivés à Chateauguay sans aucun obstacle, les Patriotes étaient partis la veille, de manière qu'ils n'ont trouver personne à combattre [...]. Plusieurs au moins déchargèrent leur arme, ou pour faire peur aux fuyards, car tout le mode fuyait. À l'exemple des volontaires, les sauvages, n'ayant rien d'autre à faire, se sont mis à piller et à incendier. Les femmes qui les avaient suivis en grand nombre suivirent leur exemple. En peu de temps, un grand nombre de maisons furent en cendre, et celles qui ne furent pas brûlées, furent vidées entièrement. Depuis dimanche (11) jusqu'à aujourd'hui (16) vendredi, le pillage n'a pas discontinué et il est impossible d'évaluer le nombre de milliers de louis entrés dans le village en marchandises et provisions depuis ce temps. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 16 Nov. 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-44, my emphasis)

Between 11 and 16 November, the Kahnawake people alone are said to have pillaged

> chevaux, vaches, cochons, moutons, poêles, lits, tables, chaises, commodes, ustensiles de cuisine, linge de ménage, boissons de toutes sortes [...], de tout regorge dans le village [...]. Voilà ce qu'ont gagné les Patriotes à venir attaquer le Sault. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 16 November 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-44, my emphasis)

Despite the fact that Kahnawake's oral history denies that Iroquois people participated in the looting (Blanchard 1980: 320; Beauvais 1994: 19), archival sources seem to indicate that Kahnawake men alone pillaged or burned about fifteen houses in Châteaguay and about thirty homes in the entire county (Parent 1984: 170; Marcoux to Lartigue, 16 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-202). According to Captain Campbell, the pillaging of sheep and other provisions by Kahnawake men and women was done with his permission "in consequence of the rations intended for them not having arrived in time" (quoted in

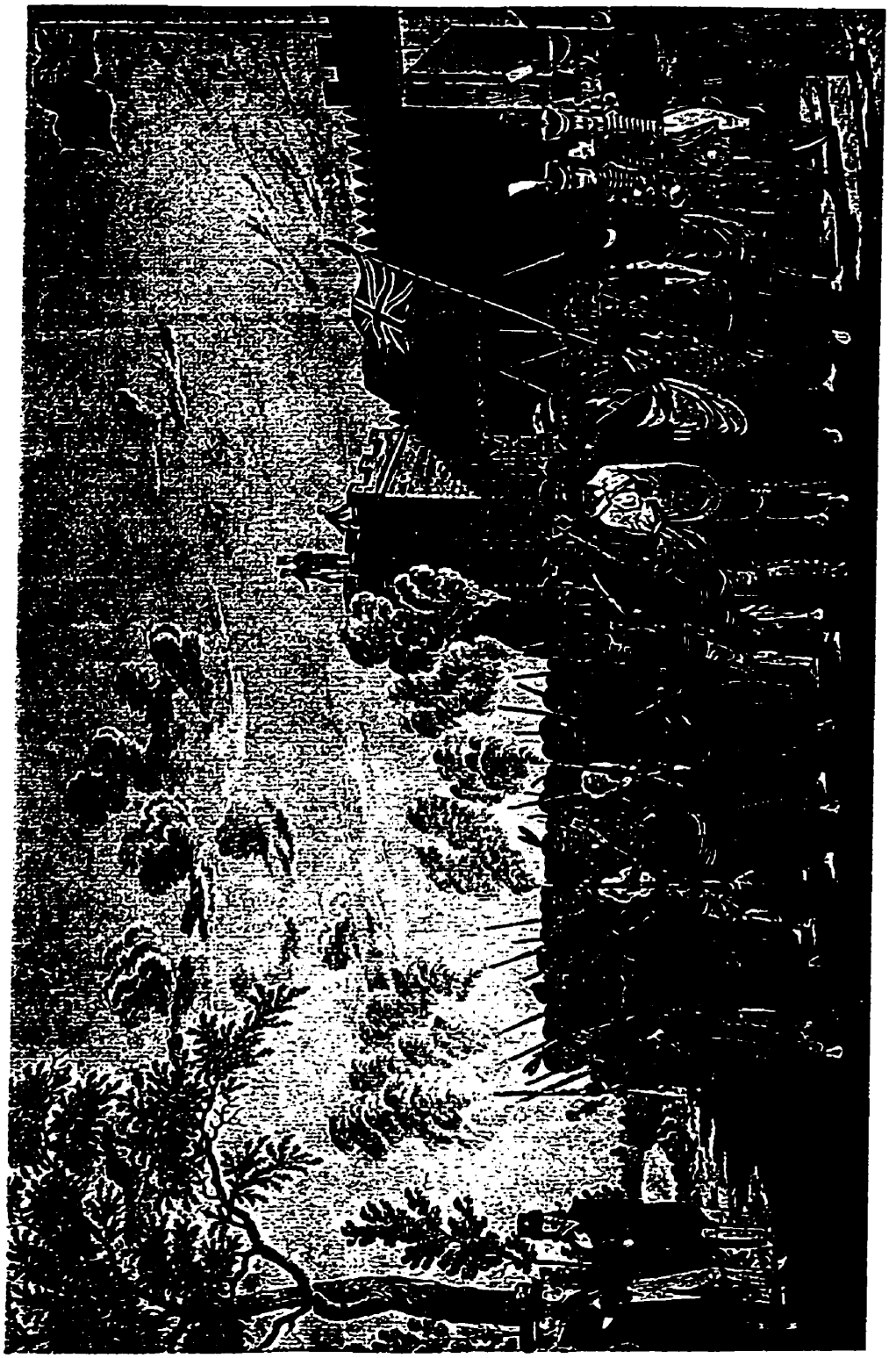

*Fig. 12: Indian salute and farewell at Fort McKay, Wisconsin, May 1815. This is possibly the most accurate depiction of what the Kahnawake men could have looked like on the eve of their march on Châteauguay with British soldiers in November 1838. (McCord Museum of Canadian History, M1378)*

Goldie to Rowan, 3 May 1839, NAC RG8 vol. 270: 208).[50] Although the government approved the looting, Marcoux violently condemned it and refused communion to the Kahnawake residents who had been involved. He also ordered the restitution of the stolen items: "il faut que tout soit restitué, ou rien" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 16 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-202). Even if many goods were returned by 25 November, some people did not cooperate with Marcoux: "plusieurs chefs et guerriers refusent absolument de remettre. Ils menacent du fusil" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 23 November 1838, ADSJQL 3A-205).

On 18 November, officials suggested that authorities "raise a company of at least 50 of those young Aborigines" from Kahnawake who could easily be placed "under strict subordination and discipline" ([?] to Goldie, NAC RG10 vol 96: 39779-82). Such a request seems to have been rejected because after 16 November, relative peace returned to the Kahnawake area. Following the gradual release of thousands of people, the Crown laid charges of high treason against a first set of Patriotes including Cardinal, Duquet, Lepailleur and nine others who had initiated the uprising in Châteauguay. Under the rules governing the Montréal general court martial, the accused would plead their own cases and there were no prosecutors. French and Iroquois interpreters (Jarvis McComber and Jean Baptiste Taiowentakowewe) were sworn in, and, over the next weeks, several witnesses, including four Kahnawake residents (George de Lorimier, Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle, Jacques Teronhiahere and Joseph Tenihasie), were brought in and successfully argued the "guilt" of the accused (Boissery 1995: 53-59; Great Britain 1839).

Upon learning that Duquet and Cardinal had been sentenced to death, Kahnawake chiefs addressed a petition to John Colborne (Blanchard 1980: 320; Boissery 1995: 68):

> We approach [...] our Father, to supplicate him to spare the life of these unfortunate men. They have done us no harm. They have not imbrued their hands in their bretheren's blood. Why spill theirs? If there must be victims, there will be enough besides them, of unfortunate men, who are a thousand times more guilty than they. [...] The services that we have rendered her majesty; those that the Queen do yet expect from us, and which we will not hesitate to render her in proper time, induce us to believe that our humble prayer will find the road to the heart of your excellency. (cited in McLeod 1841: 281-2, my emphasis)

This petition was delivered by a chief, together with letters from Duquet's mother and Cardinal's wife asking for the pardon of their loved ones. Yet authorities went ahead as planned. Cardinal and Duquet were hanged on 21 December 1838 and Lepailleur was

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[50] By contrast to the Indians of Lower Canada, those from Upper Canada who were embodied and called into action were placed on pay-lists and paid as militiamen (Jarvis to Clench, 3 October 1839, NAC RG8 vol. 270: 222). It was also decided that Indians there would be supplied with provisions as well as a responsible person to furnish meat, bread and clothing (Allen 1992: 184; Benn 1998: 190; Telford 1998). The Indian warriors of Upper Canada were officially disbanded in January of 1839 (Jarvis to Clench, 4 February 1839, NAC RG8 vol. 270: 220;"Report of the Executive Council, 1838", NAC Colborne Papers vol. 18: 5314-5; Read and Stagg 1985: 241-2; 287-8; Telford 1998).

"transported" to Australia for five years, during which time he wrote a journal and diary (Boissery 1995, Greenwood 1980; *Montreal Daily Star* 15/12/1888; Séguin 1972).

*The Kahnawake Iroquois and the Rebellions: discussion*

Scholarly debates have generally outlined that the Lower-Canadian Rebellions of 1837-38 grew out of a widespread social crisis, which embodied a desire to develop democratic political institutions, enhance the productivity of the colony's economy, and defend what increasingly came to be seen as a distinct and threatened French-Canadian identity (Bernard 1996). Inspired by republicanism and aimed at obtaining democratic constitutional reform, the Rebellions have been conceived as a movement of national liberation (Séguin 1973, 1983) or one resembling a revolutionary class struggle (Bernier et Salée 1995). Also, over the years, many different and opposed positions have emerged as to the relative importance to be attributed to underlying social and economic factors. Historian Fernand Ouellet has argued that deteriorating agricultural conditions served to "unite the French Canadian lower and middle class in a single nationalist movement" (Ouellet 1980: 135). In response to what he views as "crude" and "shematic" discussions, historian Allan Greer (1993; 1995) has sought to rethink the Rebellions by suggesting that historians provide a better appreciation of contextual elements as well as recognizing the contingency of events. In his view, the 1837-38 Rebellions were composed of events, actors and places which were interconnected and reciprocal (Greer 1995: 6). In contrast to Ouellet's views, Greer has shown that in regions of agricultural decline, mobilization was less important than in areas that were economically well-off. Morever, in concentrating attention on the ordinary people who formed the majority of people caught up in the Rebellions, he has demonstrated that local and deeply rooted peasantry customs provided effective models for collective action.

Interestingly, these interpretations seem to be absent when one examines the specific assessments made by the Kahnawake Iroquois in 1837-38. The rumors of invasions and subsequent reactions by officials and priests are interesting as they indicate in what ways the political commotion of the day was being filtered and interpreted at Kahnawake. With many Iroquois men gone on their annual winter hunting trips, the people of Kahnawake became exposed to threats and this rapidly damaged their trust for the Patriotes. Possibly fearing that Indians might be employed against them by the government, the threatening insurgents may have simply intended to frighten the Iroquois into staying out of the insurrections (Greer 1993: 346-7). The anti-seigneurial dimension of the Rebellions may have also been an issue as Patriotes who desired to abolish the seigneurial system viewed the people of Kahnawake as undesired "seigneurs". Although it

is hard to tell from the sources, the extrensive contacts between Iroquois and nearby non-Native villages hint at the great possibility that the former knew that "Rebellions" were coming even before the rumors started spreading. In fact, the use of terms such as "Papineau's People" of "Papineau" suggests that the inhabitants of Kahnawake may have had a clear idea as to who was a "Patriote" as compared to one who was not.

Overall, sources tend to show that the people of Kahnawake began to prepare themselves to face an invasion of their territory since as early as November 1837. This suggests that in the eyes of the *Kahnawakehro:non*, and as far as they were concerned, the Rebellions were not a political struggle for democracy but an invasion of their land. Patriote leaders even tried to use the issue of land to threaten the Iroquois or solicit their sympathy. Also, when a group of insurgents did "attack" Kahnawake in November 1838, the leader of the failed expedition clearly threatened the Iroquois that "Papineau" has given the Iroquois seigneury to the insurgents and that if the Natives refused to collaborate with the Patriotes, they would lose their land and village. In Kahnawake, because the Iroquois were unaware of or not at all interested in the political issues at stake, there was no talk of legislation and Nelson's claim that Indians would be treated as equal citizens fell flat. The issue at stake in Kahnawake seems to have been land and the threats Patriotes posed to it.

However, feelings of enmity and distrust between Iroquois and neighboring settlers, including those who would become "Patriotes", did not originate with the Rebellions. In the 1820s, Lower Canada experienced a strong demographic rise as its population grew from 334 468 in 1821 to 550 035 in 1840 (Ouellet 1983: 422). The number of parishes in the suburb of Montréal grew from seventeen in 1825, to forty-eight in 1831, and to ninety-nine in 1842 (Courville 1988). Robert Surtees has argued that this growth as well as the end of the Montréal fur trade occasioned by the amalgamation of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company (in 1821) forced the three Iroquois villages of Lower Canada back onto the resources of their village lands, "thus rendering those lands, and the titles to them significantly more important" (Surtees 1985: 71). In this context, Kahnawake developed tense relations with other Native groups as to the use of diminishing hunting grounds. In 1827, chiefs from Upper-Canadian Mississagua communities complained that Kahnawake residents were encroaching on their lands (Devine 1922: 335). Following repeated complaints to officials of the Indian Department, a grand council was held in Kahnawake in October 1827, following which the people of all Algonquin and Iroquois villages of Lower Canada were ordered

> to cease interfering with each other in your Hunting Grounds. [...] Your Father can only advise you one and all to discontinue it, and to confine yourselves strictly to those grounds which have long been assigned to [you] [...]. Do not now by any breach of the law cause your Father to turn his back upon you [...]. The Bounty of your Father

> in England which has been intended to you for many years will be [...] discontinued to the disobedient. (Proceedings of a Grand Council, 5 October 1827, NAC RG10 vol. 663, in Jennings et al. 1984)

In the late 1820s, land had become so scarce as a result of non-Native settlement that Indian communities sought ways to protect themselves from Native encroachment.

Contrary to views that Indians in general were "amicably disposed" towards the French and that both Indians and French-Canadians held a "reciprocal affection for each other" (Arfwedson 1834: 331; Weld 1807: 25; Palmer 1818: 219), a traveller by the name of Edward Talbot observed in 1833 that "les Français, pendant plus de deux siècles après les premiers établissemens, [...], n'ont cessé d'étendre leurs usurpation et de dépouiller violemment les malheureux Indiens de leurs terres" (Talbot 1833: 307). More specifically, surveyor Bouchette noted that by 1815, the Kahnawake Iroquois had been rendered incapable of "repelling the encroachments of the settlers" (Bouchette 1815: 129). By 1830, Canadian farmers occupied about $^3/_5$ of Sault-Saint-Louis (Napier to Couper, 12 January 1830, NAC RG8 vol. 269: 82-85). Also, as the white population expanded in La Prairie, fire wood rapidly diminished in quantity and quality. As Bouchette stated in 1815:

> the different ranges of concessions [in Laprairie] now enumerate about 300 lots [...], whereof the major part is settled upon, are in a very favourable degree of cultivation, almost entirely cleared of wood, or at any rate of timber, very little good dimensions being now left standing. (Bouchette 1815: 128)

As a result, frictions occurred between Native and non-Native neighbors in regards to the use of diminishing resources. On 19 March 1833, a "deputation of chiefs from Sault St. Louis" went to see Superintendent Napier to state that "great depredations had been committed on their woods and earnestly [sollicited] loyal advice and aid to enable them to bring the offenders to justice" (Napier to Baby, 20 March 1833, GB u-8989). In response, on 3 April 1833, officials accused four people of committing "great depredations" on the Iroquois seigneury: Thomas Dupuis from St. Constant was accused of stealing £250 worth of firewood; Toussaint Ste. Marie from Châteauguay was accused of destroying £500 of property while Louis and François Duranscau were both accused of causing £500 in damages (McComber to McCulloch, 3 April 1833, GB u-7855). Similar complaints continued in the mid-1830s, as Kahnawake chiefs claimed that whites were consistently trespassing on their "domain" and that they were cutting wood and destroying property (Minutes of Proceedings, 19 December 1835, GB N31). In March of 1836, all chiefs complained about "trespasses and depredations daily committed by the Whites and many of their own young men, who cut and [sold] wood to the whites in the village of Caughnawaga and its vicinity" (Hughes to Napier, 28 March 1836, GB u-5881; Hughes to Napier, 25 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38804). On 20 March 1836, the chiefs

asserted that if such actions continued, "the wood on their Domain will in a very few years, be entirely exhausted" (ibid.). In April of 1837, only a few months before the start of the Rebellions, Kahnawake's council of chiefs complained loudly that there were about 300 tenants in Sault-Saint-Louis and that agent McNab had not received the "rentes" from more than half of them for several years past (Hughes to Napier, 18 April 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38277-80). In fact, many settlers living on the Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury had often threatened the Iroquois that they would not pay their "cens et rentes" (Marcoux to Lartigue, 29 December 1825, ADSJQL 3A-88).

In sum, the real, feared or exaggerated Patriote menace to Kahnawake's territory is the main prism through which the *Kahnawakehro:non* became increasingly aware of the Rebellions. Indeed, central to Kahnawake's awareness of the crisis is the fact that Patriotes were rapidly perceived by the Iroquois as threats to their land and that this had the effect of poisoning French-Iroquois relations already troubled by conflicting interests in land and resources. Moreover, by continually encroaching upon Iroquois territory and refusing to pay their rents, many non-Native settlers denied Kahnawake's right as a collective seigneur to occupy and administer its own "Indian" territory. Therefore, in a similar way to their intervention in the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 (Graymont 1991; Stanley 1991), the people of Kahnawake may have joined the British in order to protect themselves from non-British encroachment and assert their distinctiveness in the face of the enemies of the British Crown. In this case, however, the "enemy" was not American, but, in Iroquois eyes, neighboring non-Native settlers and "Papineau's people".

In trying to protect themselves from invasion as well as a loss of land and life, the Kahnawake Iroquois drew inspiration from indigenous skills and practices. Indeed, in detailing their mobilization on 13 December 1837, Superintendent James Hughes indicated that the chiefs "harangued" the young men before leaving for Lachine. The harangue is a central ritual of Iroquois and Native warfare as it serves to communicate strategies and encouragements. As such, it identifies the leader of the war party, enhances courage and self-esteem, and strengthens group solidarity (Eid 1985; Richter 1992; Viau 1996).

Also, on 4 November 1838, knowing they could not overtake the Patriotes in a full scale combat, a "scouting" party composed of two war chiefs (Ignace Delisle and Joseph Tenihasie) advanced quietly toward the Patriotes and met them to confirm their demands and assess the situation. Traditionally, war chiefs were highly respected for their leadership qualities and exploits in warfare. As a result of this, they were often elevated to this rank in order to organize and guide military expeditions (Viau 1996; Richter 1992). After a brief conversation, the ten Iroquois then invited the insurgents into the village in order to place them in a vulnerable position. As Jacques Teronhiahere testified, "my object in getting

them into the village, was to make them prisoners, as we could not do so by ourselves. The French wanted to make us prisoners; they could not do that; so we Indians took them prisoners" (in Great Britain 1839: 47). Teronhiahere, who identified his group as "we, Indians" and the Patriotes as "the French" or "the Canadians", explained that the unarmed "Indians" could not overtake the Patriotes and that the only way to seize them was to place them into a well planned ambush. Patriote F. M. Lepailleur even admitted that he and his companions had "fallen into a trap which had evidently been prepared before hand" (*Montreal Daily Star* 15/12/1888: 2). Some historians have also argued that the Iroquois set up a "guet-apens", an "embuscade" (Leclerc 1983: 125; Parent 1984: 98), or a "ruse pour attirer les Patriotes dans le village" and that the insurgents were placed "dans l'impossibilité de se défendre" (David 1981: 202). Overall, the Iroquois adopted an ambush-like defensive posture which allowed them to confuse the enemy and cripple its capacity to respond effectively. This also allowed estimates to be made on the number of opponents, the nature of the terrain and the obstacles on the way (Benn 1998: 78-80; Richter 1992).[51]

Further, contrary to Benn's assumption that in helping "to put down the rebellions", the "Iroquois in Canada", were "accoutred much like their white militia neighbors" (Benn 1998: 192), Kahnawake people deployed symbols laden with Native understanding and identity. Father Marcoux's description of the Kahnawake men prior to their departure for Châteauguay specifies that they had colored their faces and bodies in red and black and that they were equipped in Native combat gear. Such ornamentation served to heighten self-esteem and was a deliberate way to make a stand of cultural and "ethnic" differentiation and identification (ibid.: 77). As well, war-whoops are said to have sounded when 120 Kahnawake Iroquois arrived in Lachine in 1837 and when forty of them arrested sixty-four Patriotes in 1838. The use of such war-whoops would not only have served to frighten the enemy but make a claim of identity and cultural belonging. In a general way,

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[51] As a result of such actions, the Kahnawake Iroquois have repeatedly been portrayed as cowardly and treacherous. For instance, Patriote leader F.-M. Lepailleur remained convinced all his life that the Patriotes had been betrayed by George de Lorimier (Greenwood 1980: xix). Indeed, when de Lorimier went to visit Lepailleur in prison, the latter is even said to have declared: "Voila Lorimier, celui qui nous a trahis, et nous a conduit ici, moi et bien d'autres" (ANQM 1837-38, no: 2408) (According to Antoine Sainte-Marie, a witness of the scene, "Lepailleur et Lorimier se sont rencontrés face à face. Et Lorimier mit sa main dans sa poche et offrit au dit Lepailleur deux piastres que ce dernier refusa d'accepter en lui disant 'je ne veux pas de ton argent. J'ai des amis qui m'en en ont apporté'. Les dites deux piastres, lorsque Lorimier les a offert, il dit 'bien voilà deux piastres pour prendre un coup à ma santé, et oublions le tout'. Et de plus [...] le dit Lorimier a dit [a] LePailleur, 'je ne pouvais faire autrement par rapport au sauvages" [ANQM 1837-38, no. 2408]). Some historians have also violently criticized the Iroquois for lying to the Patriotes. L.-O. David has written that the Patriotes were "trahis par ceux qui devaient les aider" (David 1981: 209); A. Fauteux has argued that the insurgents were "trahis par les Sauvages" by a "manoeuvre hypocrite" (Fauteux 1950: 238); Jules St. Elme has written that the Patriotes fell into a "traquenard abominable où l'on avait dès d'abord attiré les Patriotes, abusant de leur bonne foi" (in Séguin 1972: 191). Finally, P. Rochon has stated that "nos ancêtres ont peut-être abusé de la naïveté des Peaux rouges au tout début de la colonie, mais les Peaux rouges ont pris leur revanche, en 1838, au Sault-Saint-Louis" (Rochon 1988: 134).

"rituals" such as body painting helped reinforce the boundaries of the community by reconstituting its tradition and history. The community thus maintained distinctive meanings for behavior whose forms they might have shared with non-Natives. Such rituals expressed in a symbolic manner the continity of past and present and, as such, re-asserted the cultural integrity of the community in the face of apparent forces of subversion.

Finally, it has been documented that Iroquois women often accompanied warriors on battlefields in order to provide food and provisions (Sawaya 1998: 71). More importantly, a warrior who would refuse to fight would be seen

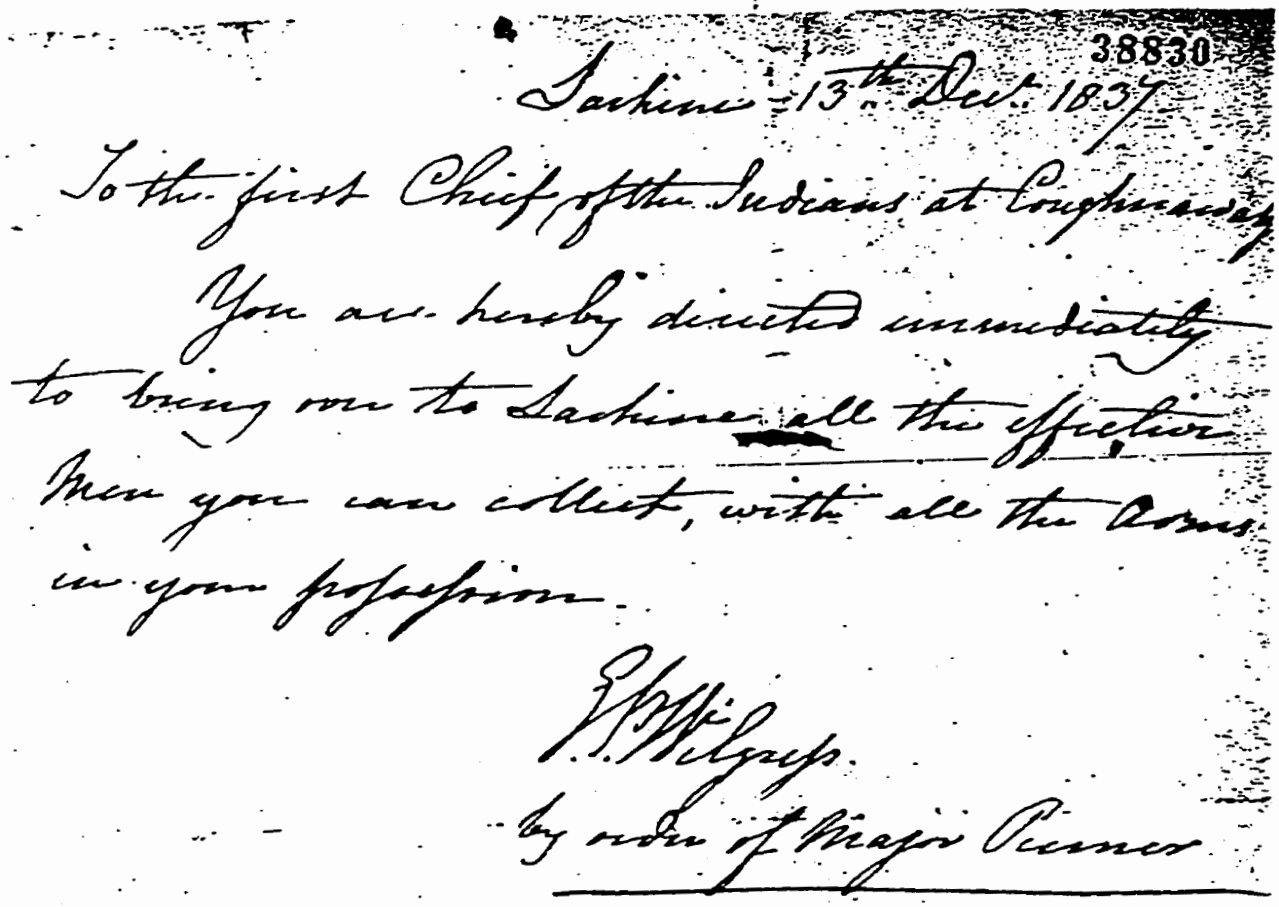
> as a failure in one of Iroquois society's fundamental tests of manhood, and his failure would be made all the more painful because it would occur under the accusing eyes of the women, many of whom accompanied the warriors on campaign (but not normally into battle) and thereby continued to make their views felt. With all these pressures, many men found it difficult to avoid joining a war party (Benn 1998: 61).

As Marcoux observed, women accompanied the Kahnawake men on their way to Châteauguay on 11 November 1838. They did not do so in the hopes of gaining plunder because the warriors and soldiers initially marched to wage war on Patriotes.

Among the Iroquois, warfare was a central aspect to the identity of entire villages and "nations" (Eid 1985). Indeed, military action was "non seulement un acte personnel, mais également un phénomène social de solidarité, d'intégration et d'identification communautaire" (Viau 1997: 90). Despite the major differences between Iroquois men of the 1600s and those of the 1830s, as well as the gradual decrease of the use of Native ways in the nineteenth century, "their distinctive heritage lived on in the old people who inspired their juniors with their stories of ancient glory" (Benn 1998: 193). As a result, there is no doubt the 1812 veterans in Kahnawake played a significant role in providing the essence of Iroquois ways of life to the next generation. Through the practice of winter hunting, symbols, stories, and past military exploits were handed down to men such as Joseph Tenihasie, Jacques Teronhiahere and Ignace Delisle, who used Native traditions to fight off Patriotes in 1837-38. In this sense, by "going to war" in 1837-38, the Iroquois may not only have sought "warrior" status and prestige, but the sense of collective solidarity and integration such military actions gave them. Although they appear to have sided with the British, they distinguished themselves from non-Native soldiers and affirmed their separate group identity. Indeed, guided by traditional Iroquois knowledge which had evidently not been forgotten, the *Kahnawakehro:non* collaborated with the British on their own terms, using their own strategies to fend off people who were not necessarily seen as republican-like enemies of the Crown, but, more importantly, as direct threats to Kahnawake's land, territory and inhabitants. As such, the Rebellions gave the Iroquois a chance to relive

traditional Iroquois skills and provide the stories and exploits necessary to educate future generations, thus allowing their Native identity and heritage to be protected and preserved.

Despite its key importance, such an explanation covers only part of the story. Among many other issues, the narrative account presented in this chapter reveals that in response to increasing contacts between Patriotes and Iroquois, both clergy members and government officials promoted the idea that siding with the insurgents was illegal, immoral and unworthy of "loyal" Indians. Within this complex relationship, the Iroquois may have felt that by remaining "loyal" to their generous "Father", they would obtain additional provisions. Also, the *Kahnawakehro:non* as a whole may have viewed their cooperation with the Crown as a way of maintaining a continual distribution of annual presents. In this line of thinking, the next chapter will argue that the community's actions were not necessarily modeled on gratuitous loyalty to the Crown or previous diplomatic agreements with the British colonial government. Rather, it seems as if common interests in land and annuities, as well as their symbolic importance in Iroquois eyes, played a key role in shaping the collective efforts of the people of Kahnawake in 1837-38.



38830

Sachine 13th Dec. 1837

To the first Chief of the Indians at Coughnawaga

You are hereby directed immediately to bring over to Sachine all the effective men you can collect, with all the arms in your possession.

T. B. Wilgress.

by order of Major Scanes

*Fig. 13: Note sent by Colonel Wilgress on 13 December 1837 to request the help of Kahnawake men. (NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38830)*

# - CHAPTER FOUR -
# THE KAHNAWAKE IROQUOIS: LOYAL OR "STRATEGIC" ALLIES?

*Kahnawake and the Treaty of 1760*

On 16 September 1760, eight days following Montréal's surrender by the French to Great Britain, a treaty was settled in Kahnawake between the British Crown, the Iroquois League and the Seven Fires of Canada. An orator from Kahnawake thanked the British

> for renewing and strengthening the old Covenant Chain[52] which before this War subsisted between us, and we in the Name of every Nation here present assure you that we will hold fast the Same, for ever hereafter. [...] We are greatly obliged to you for opening the Road from this to your Country we on our parts assure you to keep it clear of any Obstacles and use it is a friendly manner. [...] As we have now made a firm Peace with the English [...] we shall endeavor all in our Power to keep it inviolably. (in Corey 1962: 163-166, my emphasis)

It has been suggested that as a result of this treaty, the Kahnawake Iroquois as well as all the other Native groups comprising the Seven Nations of Canada remained "loyal" to the Crown during the Rebellions of 1837-38. In Sawaya's words, this treaty,

> qui comportait en outre des engagements de nature militaire, a conduit les autochtones des Sept Feux, a titre d'alliés mais également de dépendants, à combattre pour les Britanniques lors de la Révolution américaine, de la guerre de 1812 et de la révolte des Patriotes de 1837. (Sawaya 1998: 165, my emphasis)

The Kahnawake Treaty of 1760 is generally interpreted as having "polished" or reinforced the old Covenant Chain in a diplomatic ceremony whereby the English King replaced the French Crown as the "Father" of the Indians. In order to respect their continual allegiance to European powers, the Native population of Lower Canada recognized their new Father's role of their protector and purveyor and continued to remain in a relative state of subjugation (Delâge and Sawaya 1996:113).

Despite the historical legitimacy of this argument, it tends to ignore the specifics of Kahnawake's history and dynamics in the 1830s and leaves little room for Iroquois interests and ambitions. Nor does the treaty's existence guarantee that subsequent Native military collaborations with the British flowed directly from it. Although the actual behavior of the Iroquois seems consistent with the treaty, and in the absence of evidence of

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[52] Initially, the Covenant Chain was a trading alliance between the Iroquois and the Dutch at Albany. This chain of "iron" dominated Iroquois relations with the Dutch until the arrival of the British in New York between 1677 and 1690, when the chain was made over into one of "silver". As Haan maintains, "the change in metaphorical material not only reflected the English sense of a new arrangement of longer duration, but also an alliance that systematized Iroquois-English relations into a multicultural entity in which the two sides agreed to share power over the Northeast" (1987: 43). Overall, the Covenant Chain was an elaborate means to pacify English-Indian relations, pose a significant threat to French colonies and establish the preeminence of New York in Anglo-America. The Iroquois profited from this alliance as it helped them become equals by virtue of their ability to serve as brokers between English governments and Native nations (Aquila 1997; Brandao and Starna 1996; Haan 1987; 1988; Jennings 1984; 1985).

explicit references to the treaty in the 1830s, other explanations can be suggested in order to explain why the people of Kahnawake intervened in the Lower-Canadian Rebellions.

*Annual presents and strategic loyalty*

Prior to 1820, Native people in eastern Canada played significant roles in the competitive struggles of European powers to maintain their colonies in North America. In order to cultivate Native friendships, Europeans dealt with Indians as allies and respected Native diplomatic rituals such as the offering of presents in order to obtain economic and military alliances. The wide range of items distributed annually to Indians included blankets, buckles, armbands, earrings, belts, fishhooks, awls, mirrors, knives, razors, scissors, combs, rifles, powder, shot, flints, beads, needles, pipes, tobacco, hats, flags, medals, coats, kettles, cloth, handkerchiefs, shoes, axes, frying-pans, tomahawks with pipe handles, and rope. However, the gifts were not bribes. According to Native diplomacy, as the Indians' Father, the British King was obligated to conduct himself in a generous manner to show that he "loved" his "children" (White 1991: 310). Generally speaking, the Indians considered these presents as rewards for past services while the British, for instance, viewed them as down payments for future services (Allen 1992: 146; Calloway 1987: 61-2; Francis 1984: 11-12; Leslie 1985: 188; Sawaya 1998: 129-132).

Within the context of nineteenth-century British Imperial policy, presents for fostering Native alliances were no longer viewed as necessary. After the War of 1812, as American threats to British territory diminished and the lumber industry supplanted the fur trade, the utility of Native hunters and warriors was questioned. Inspired by philanthropic liberalism and humanitarian sentiments, British colonial authorities proposed policies of "religious improvement, education and instruction in husbandry" aimed at rendering the Natives civilized and sedentary as well as to relieve the government from the Indian Department (Kempt to Murray, 16 May 1829, Great Britain 1969a: 39; see also Miller 1991, Tobias 1991 and White 1991). Interestingly, officials knew that the Indians did not think "they ought to be called on to give up [...] a portion of the small Allowance which has been so long enjoyed by them in return for past services rendered by themselves or their Ancestors" (Gosford to Glenelg, 18 November 1836, in Great Britain 1969d: 11). Officials knew that "any plan which has for its Object the Abolition of the [...] issuing Presents will fail to meet with the Concurrence of the Indians" (ibid.). In spite of this, measures to abolish or modify the nature of the "annual bounty" were suggested.

In response, viewing the proposed changes as a breach of faith, alliance, and friendship on the part of their "providing" and "protecting" British "Father", the chiefs of Kahnawake signed numerous petitions together and asserted their rights, privileges, and

benefits as leaders and members of a Native community. Although the petitions cited below hint at a certain dependence on government annuities, they also reveal that the chiefs and the people of Kahnawake as whole could bind together when the time came to protect common interests they thought were rightfully theirs as "Indians".

In November 1833, Kahnawake's chiefs addressed a petition to Lord Aylmer to remind him that annual presents had been given to them as a way of rewarding past and future services. Identifying themselves as "Enfans Rouges du Sault St. Louis", they stated:

> Nous voudrions Mon Père savoir si nous nous sommes comportés de manière à mériter une telle Réduction. Mon père depuis le Gouvernement du Général Carleton jusqu'à celui de Sir James Kempt, tous les Gouverneurs de ce Pays nous ont toujours assurés que nos Equippements Annuels nous seraient conservés tant que nous Existerions, et comme une reconnaissance de nos services passés et en même tems comme une garantie pour nos services à venir, lorsqu'ils seront réclamés par notre Père le Roi. (27 November 1833, NAC RG10 vol. 87: 34843, my emphasis)

Claiming that their hunting grounds were diminishing due to the increasing settlement of "Emigrants", that "nous ne savons plus ou donner la Tête" (ibid.), and that without the presents, they would continue to be but poor, miserable, hungry and cold, the petitioners ended their plea with a loud "Vive le Roi!"(ibid.).[53]

In 1836, as a result of such requests, changes in the nature of the presents were delayed as officials agreed that

> the Time is not yet arrived at which it would be possible [...] to discontinue the annual Presents to the Indians. It appears, that [...] that on every Occasion when this Country has been engaged in War on the North American Continent the co-operation of the Indian Tribes has been anxiously sought and has been obtained. This was particularly the case in the Years 1777 and 1812. [This] Custom has now existed during a long Series of Years; [...] all [...] agree in stating that its sudden Abrogation would lead to great Discontent among the Indians, and perhaps to Consequences of a very serious Nature. (Glenelg to Gosford, 14 January 1836, in Great Britain 1969d: 1)

Yet that same year, Glenelg recommended that Indians be given European clothing and agricultural implements. He also suggested that money be given instead of presents, that the Indian children who were "civilized" be given prizes, and that English books be distributed (Glenelg to Durham, 22 August 1836, in Great Britain 1969d: 6-8).

Following many months of debates between officials, a conference was held in Kahnawake on 6 August 1836 "to obtain the real Sentiments of the Iroquois Tribe of that village relative to a proposed Change on the Manner of making His Majesty's annual Bounty to them for the future" (Martin Tekanasontie et al. to Hughes, 6 August 1836, in

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[53] Mary Black Rogers (1985) and Bruce White (1985) have shown that such claims of hunger, poverty and misery were metaphorical in nature and were related to complex meanings of Native diplomacy. Purposely manipulative, these terms were used by Native leaders to model and influence the "benevolence" and "generosity" of European governments and trading agents. In other words, the use of these terms was meant to instigate the non-Native trading partner into behaving in a generous manner.

Great Britain 1969d: 46). In response to D.C. Napier's proposed policies, Kahnawake's Grand Chief Martin Tekanasontie replied to Superintendent Hughes:

> Tell our Father, Brother, that we one and all, especially our Wives and Children, beg and pray of him to have the goodness not even to think of altering or changing the present Mode of distributing our Great Father's annual Bounty to us in the Articles of Clothing. Tell him that if the present system was changed, and that we received Money instead of the Articles we now receive, that by far the greater Part of his Red Children would shortly be reduced to the greatest Distress; for the greatest part of the Money we might receive would be expended in Spirituous Liquors. (ibid., my emphasis)

Tekanasontie also noted that the Iroquois would rather receive blankets and clothing instead of books. The grand chief concluded by stating:

> Brother [Hughes], tell our Father the King that whenever our Services were wanted in former Days, we were ready at the first Call, and did our duty; and should it hereafter happen that our Father should be in want of us, we shall be ready at the first Signal to rally round him. We therefore beseech our Great Father, who has the Means, to have Pity on his poor Indian Children. (ibid., my emphasis)

As in similar past instances, the chief reminded officials that his people were worthy of receiving presents because they will always remain "loyal" to the Crown.

In February 1837, despite Native requests, the Government of Lower Canada cancelled the presents of every Native child born after May of that year. In spirited response, a petition was sent to Lord Gosford, the governor of Lower-Canada. This document was written in Kahnawake and was signed by six principal chiefs and twenty-two war chiefs of Kahnawake, four principal Iroquois chiefs and eight Iroquois war chiefs of Kanesatake, thirteen Nippissing and Algonquin chiefs of Kanesatake, and four principal chiefs and eight war chiefs from Akwesasne. It read:

> Mon père. Depuis qu'il a plu au Tout-puissant de nous placer sous le Gouvernement paternel de la Grande Bretagne, nous avons eu qu'à nous louer des bons traitemens qu'il nous a prodigués; aussi de notre part avons nous toujours marqué notre reconnaissance par un attachement et par une fidélité à toute épreuve, et même dans le temps du danger, nous n'avons craint d'exposer notre vie pour repousser l'ennemi de notre souverain.
>
> [...] mon père, nous avons appris avec le plus grand chagrin que tu avais enjoint aux officiers de département sauvage de nous informer que ta volonté était que les enfans qui naîtraient de nos femmes après le premier de Mai seraient jugés indignes de partager les équippemens que nous recevons annuellement de la munificence royale.
>
> Nous ne pouvons cacher que cette nouvelle nous a navrés le coeur, et fait verser des larmes. [...] Nos villages prennent l'alarme; nous et nos enfans pleurons, et nos femmes nous reprochent la naissance de leurs nouveau-nés, parce que tu les sépares de leurs frères aînés en les déclarant indignes de la bonté royale.
>
> Mon père, ces présents [...] ne sont pas dans le fait des présents, c'est de la part du Gouvernement une dette sacrée promise à nos pères par les Rois de France pour les indemniser des terres qu'il leur ont abandonnées, et confirmée par les Rois d'Angleterre depuis la cession du pays, et jusqu'à présent ponctuellement payée et acquittée.[...] C'est donc à cette fin que nous, les principaux chefs des Sept Nations sauvages du Bas Canada, nous sommes assemblés aujourd'hui au village du Sault St.

> Louis, dans une maison sur laquelle nous avons arboré le pavillon Britannique en signe de dévouement, et que nous avons à l'unanimité résolu de te faire une humble prière, afin que [...] tu présentes à notre père le Roi nos justes réclamations.
>
> Le caractère magnanime dont tu as fait preuve depuis que tu as traversé les mers pour administrer le gouvernement de cette province, nous portes à espérer que tu ne dédaigneras pas la prière des vrais habitans du sol, jadis propriétaires de tout un continent, et maintenant dénudés de tout, et que tu emploieras ton influence auprès de notre Souverain pour qu'il [...] continue [...] si non comme dette, du moins comme faveur, la distribution annuelle d'équippemens que [nous avons] coutume de recevoir.
>
> Nous sommes fâchés, mon père, que notre prière soit si longue. Cependant nous ne pouvons nous empêcher de te prier d'assurer notre Souverain que nous offrons tous les jours au Très-haut de ferventes prières, afin qu'il lui accorde une longue vie et un règne paisible et heureux. (Indian chiefs of the Seven Fires of Lower Canada to Lord Gosford, 3 February 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38031-9, emphasis added)

The petitioners, who identified themselves as "les vrais habitans du sol", viewed the presents as a "dette sacrée" which were distributed to them as a means of compensating the loss of land endured by Indians at the hand of whites. In so doing, they reminded officials that they had always been "loyal" to the Crown and would remain that way. At the same time, the chiefs, who seem to use less agressive language near the end of the petition, agree that if presents are not distributed as part of a "sacred debt", they can be simply handed by the government as a "favor" to Indians.

Rebellion historian Allan Greer has argued that in the nineteenth century, an increasingly "parsimonious" Department of Indian Affairs was cutting back on the quantity and quality of presents and medical aid distributed to Indians. In turn, according to Greer, the Patriotes "had a golden opportunity to [...] enlist their active support, by taking up Native grievances and welcoming Indians into the anti-government movement (Greer 1993: 347-8). Yet this thesis, as well as previous works (Greer 1993; Senior 1985), clearly show that the Kahnawake Iroquois collaborated with the British in December 1837 and in November 1838. In light of the government policies of the day, one may wonder why the Iroquois supported the Crown at all. On the other hand, the people of Kahnawake may have been hoping that they could use their "loyalty" during the Rebellions as a bargaining tool to continue receiving special attention from their protective and generous "Father". Indeed, many young men may have viewed active collaboration with the Crown as a way of obtaining new blankets, muskets, shoes, or winter coats. Moreover, perhaps the community as a whole concluded that by cooperating with the government, it may secure a continual flow of annuities. Similar strategies were used by Native communities during the Upper-Canadian Rebellion in 1837-38. As Telford has argued, "the fact of their loyalty would serve to increase, not reduce, their ability to argue that the government was obligated to aid them and to treat them generously" (Telford 1998: 12). This has also been documented during the North-West Rebellion of 1885, when many poor and hungry

Plains Cree refused to join the Métis and instead affirmed their loyalty to the Crown so that they may be rewarded with increased supplies and rations (Stonechild and Waiser 1998: 86). Throughout the 1830s, by requesting that annuities not be cancelled and illustrating past, present and future acts of loyalty, Kahnawake Iroquois petitioners forced officials not to ignore the possibility of a continuing military and economic alliance with the British Crown, and reminded administrators that it was in its interests to rally "loyal" Indians on its side. In other words, Kahnawake's loyalty as expressed by grand chief Martin Tekanasontie may have been "strategic", thus intended to provide the "loyal" community with an unaltered flow of presents, supplementary attention and support, and ultimately, recognition of their political and military "importance" as Indians.[54]

It is interesting to note that in February 1839, Kahnawake chiefs went to see Superintendent General D.C. Napier to complain that for the last three years, the government "ne mettait plus sur la liste des equippemens les enfans nouveau-nés, et lui ont fait voir qu'en peu d'années, il n'y auraient plus que les vieillards qui recevraient des présents, et qu'à la fin, le village entier s'en trouverait privé" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 25 February 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-51). It is said that the Iroquois had become well aware that "l'affaire du 4 nov. [1838] leur a donné une grande importance auprès du gouvernement" (ibid.) and that this is why they visited Napier. In response, Crown officials agreed that the Iroquois' annual presents should not be eliminated, "in consideration for their praiseworthy conduct during the last Rebellion" (Napier to Colborne, 18 July 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 98: 40367-8). In January 1839, Lord Glenelg even suggested that special presents be given to the people of Kahnawake:

> It has occurred to me, that it might be satisfactory to the Indians of Cochanawaga, who so gallantly defeated the Rebels who collected at their Village on the 4th November last [...], to know that their Conduct on that Occasion has been specially brought under the Notice of the Queen, and has met with Her Majesty's Commendation. I convey to them Her Majesty's special Approbation of their Conduct [...]; and I would wish you to consider [...] whether it might not be expedient, in the next annual Distribution of Presents to these Indians, to substitute Medals, or other honorary Rewards, to such as distinguished themselves in this Transaction, for the Clothes &c. usually given to them; or whether in any other Method their good Conduct might be honoured in some public Manner. (Glenelg to Colborne, 26 January 1839, in Great Britain 1969d: 10)

Also, council member Jean-Baptiste Saonwentiowane, one of the Iroquois who had marched forward to meet the Patriotes on 4 November 1838, was approved to become the

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[54] In October 1838, Lower Canada's Catholic Church reminded officials that they should not displease potential Native allies in a time of crisis, a first uprising having ended about a year before and a second one being only a few days ahead: "dans les malheureuses circonstances où se trouvent les Canadas, sous le rapport politique, il est essentiellement important que les sauvages qui y sont réunis en villages, n'aient aucune raison de soupçonner que le Gouvernement veuille diminuer à leur égard ses libéralités (J.-J. Lartigue et al. to Lord Durham, 20 October 1838, in Great Britain 1969d: 70-1).

village's seventh grand chief as a "reward" for his "brave and loyal conduct during the last Rebellion" (Napier to Edouard N. de Lorimier, 7 January 1841, NAC RG10 vol. 590)[55].

In other instances, Kahnawake chiefs attempted to use their "loyalty" to obtain favors. On 27 July 1839, twenty-three Kahnawake and Kanesatake chiefs wrote to officials that a "médecin salarié" was "necessaire" as

> un grand nombre d'entre nous ont péris victimes du Choléra Asiatique en 1832 et 1834 et succombent tous les jours à diverses maladies contre lesquelles ils ne peuvent avoir aucun secours médical, faute de moyens pécuniaires (M. Tekanasontie et al. to J. Colborne, 14 November 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 98: 40380)

The chiefs asserted that they deserved to obtain such medical help because they "ont en toute occasion montré leur dévouement au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, nommément dans les deux Guerres avec les États-Unis, et encore récemment pendant les dernières Rebellions" (ibid.). Also, in January 1840, Crown authorities requested the return of weapons and clothes provided to Native men during the 1838 uprising. In response, Kahnawake chiefs argued that they still feared there may be more "troubles" and asked if "they could retain [their] arms and accoutrements a little while longer" (M. Tekanasontie et al to Napier, 31 January 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 40984).[56]

*Strategic loyalty and the contentious La Prairie land dispute*

In the 1830s, the *Kahnawakehro:non* lived within the limits of the Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury, a 40 000 acre territory bounded by three other seigneuries, including the Jesuit-owned seigneury of La Prairie. The territory within which the Iroquois community was established originated from two French Crown grants to the Jesuits in 1680. However, its eastern boundary with La Prairie remained ill-defined. As a result, La Prairie gradually expanded into Sault-Saint-Louis. Indeed, because the Jesuits considered themselves to be the seigneurs of the Sault, they profited from non-Native settlement in both Sault-Saint-Louis and La Prairie, especially in the area of the ill-defined boundary between the two concessions. In the 1750s, French officials noted that the Jesuits desired

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[55] On 23 March 1839, food rations and sixty-five pairs of shoes were issued to Akwesasne men. Indeed, as "it has not been considered desirable to place them on pay, the Governor General [approved] of them receiving the shoes as a remuneration for their trouble, and as the men have been brought away from their hunting grounds. His Excellency [was] further pleased to approve that the women and children of these men actually employed should receive the proportion of rations, namely half a ration for the women and a third of a ration for the children" (Goldie to Rowan, 23 March 1839, NAC RG8 vol. 270: 202-3).

[56] However, imperial strategists had little interest in reflecting too long on old Indian alliances (Allen 1992: 184). Although the total value of presents given to the Indians of Lower Canada rose from £3030 to £3615 between 1838 and 1839 (possibly because of the Rebellions), the same value for 1840 dropped to £2834. From 1837 to 1838, the total value of presents and provisions distributed to Lower-Canadian Natives fell from £3601 to £3030. This drop continued between 1839 and 1843, during which time the total value of presents dropped from £3615 to £2917. The entire expenses of the Indian Department dropped from £5173 to £4288 between 1837 and 1843 (Canada 1845).

to "profit from the lands" of the Sault and encouraged the Iroquois to make "improvements" on various lots, only to turn a profit on parcelling them out to Canadians (Green 1991: 182). In 1762, when Sault-Saint-Louis was passed into the administrative hands of the British Crown, La Prairie remained in possession of the Jesuits. However, the ill-defined line between the two seigneuries was not rectified. This led to a key dissagreement: a tract measuring thirty-seven acres wide by four leagues in depth came to be claimed by both the Jesuits and the Iroquois (Lambert 1980: 34; Surtees 1985: 72).

Throughout the nineteenth century, all the chiefs of Kahnawake signed hundreds of letters and petitions requesting that the piece of land in question be returned to the community. As Marcoux states, this claim was legitimate, as a portion of the seigneury of Sault-Saint-Louis had indeed been taken away from the Iroquois:

> les sauvages se plaignent depuis longtemps d'avoir été frustrés d'un morceau considérable de leur seigneurie. Après bien des perquisitions, je découvrais en effet que cette lacune, qui se trouve sur toutes les cartes, entre la seigneurie de la Prairie de la Magdeleine et celle du Sault St. Louis, avait été, soit par erreur, soit autrement, détachée du Sault et confondue avec les biens des Jésuites, dont certainement elle n'a jamais fait partie. (Marcoux, 28 septembre 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170, my emphasis)

Overall, the people of Kahnawake based themselves on a combination of oral and written sources and demanded that the ill-defined boundary of La Prairie be redressed in their favor Interestingly, such requests hint at a strong feeling of unity as well as an acute awareness of their legal, cultural, and historical rights as "Indians" (see maps 6 and 7).

Kahnawake's claim began in 1762. That year, general Thomas Gage relieved the Jesuits from the administration of Sault-Saint-Louis and confirmed the Iroquois' title as collective seigneur of the entire territory. However, a court decision in favor of the Iroquois was quickly reversed. Surveyor Jean Péladeau was subsequently hired by the British Government to define the ill-defined limit between Sault-Saint-Louis and LaPrairie in the presence of Iroquois chiefs, who were satisfied with the measurements. Subsequently, however, according to various testimonies acquired by Father Marcoux,

> dans l'automne de la même année [1762], le même arpenteur Jean Péladeau, alla à l'inscu des Sauvages enlever les bornes qu'il avait lui-même plantées près de la rivière de la Tortue, et les mettre plus d'une demie lieue plus haut, immédiatement au dessus du moulin du Sault. Les Sauvages ont toujours regardé cette translation de leurs bornes seigneuriales (sans formes légales, puisqu'ils n'en furent point informés) comme une voie de fait, contre laquelle ils ont, depuis constamment crié, mais sans effet, vu leur faiblesse et leur peu d'existence légale, quoique hommes comme les autres et également sujets de sa Majesté, ayant par conséquent droit de n'être pas dépouillés de leurs biens à inscu et dans l'obscurité. (Marcoux: "Copie d'un procès verbal", 17 November 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 943-4, my emphasis).

Despite a Crown ruling in 1763 recognizing Kahnawake's ownership of the disputed tract of land, the boundary was shifted again in 1768 (Alfred 1995b: 40; Lambert 1980: 30-34).

Sometime between 1796 and 1799, the chiefs representing the Seven Fires assembled in Kahnawake and wrote a petition to Indian Affairs Superintendent A. McKee to argue that the territory between Kingston and Longueuil rightfully belonged to them as "Indian land" and that it had been stolen by "whites":

> Mon perre, nous les Chefs des Sept vilages, nous vous suplions au nom des guerriers, des femmes, et Enfans, present, Et pour leur avenir, de nous permettre de reclamer nos terres depuis le Seigneurie Longuïel, nord et Sud jusqu'a Kingston, Suivant le partage qui en a ete fait par nos Encètres;
>
> Quand le Roy de France ci devant notre perre est venu setablir sur nos terres, yil ait venu amiablement et nos encètres le reçurent avec joie yil lui firent part des terres que le maitre de la vie nous avoient destinée, vous prient d'observer que nous n'avons jamais Été conquis par les françois, qu'au contraire nous avonts toujours été protecteur des peaux Blanche contre les nations Sauvages [...].
>
> Mon perre, vous nous Demandée les preuves comme-quoi ces terres nous apartienne, les meilleurs que nous ayons a vous donner sonts que Dieu nous a Crée sur ces terres. (Chiefs of the Seven Villages of Canada to Alexandre McKee, undated [1796-1799?], NAC RG8 vol. 248: 231-232; my emphasis)

However, the Crown ignored Native requests and Kahnawake's claims continued. In 1798, following another unfavorable ruling, Kahnawake chiefs attempted a lawsuit against the Jesuits and a court decision favorable to the Natives was overturned the following year (Alfred 1995a: 153). In 1807, a delegation of three Kahnawake Iroquois travelled to London to meet with officials who later rejected the Native claim (Lambert 1980: 33). In 1817, following more denials, all Kahnawake chiefs addressed this letter to authorities:

> What has become of the lands which we have reclaimed? We have made a good of many voyages in consequence of these lands [...]. We understand that these lands are in the Possession of Government; they are ours and Government knows that well. [...] We beg the government to take into consideration and to give us back these lands. This is the [claim] of the whole Nation and it is a great complaint which if now redressed, we will complain no more. If our demands are not satisfied, we will never rest quiet, but always complain. We are conscious that government is too just to keep those lands from us, which have been taken by usurpation. We request that the Court will interest themselves for us and intercede on our behalf. The only complaint against our officers, is, that they do not interest themselves for us. We do not ask anything that is not our own. (Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, 25 September 1817, NAC RG10 vol. 13: 11112, my emphasis)

In 1828, Kahnawake chiefs sent a petition to governor Dalhousie demanding the restitution of the alienated lands. After requesting permission to travel to London, they stated:

> tu sais pourquoi nous voulons aller voir notre Père. C'est à l'occasion de nos terres qui nous ont été frustrées par les Jésuites. Car nous avons des titres de ces terres qui nous ont été frustrées. C'est pourquoi nous sommes décidé de remettre cette affaire entre les mains de notre Père le Roi. C'est parce que nous avons besoin de nos terres qui nous ont été otées, étant le premier village Sauvage, et que c'est dans ce village ici, où se font tous les grands Conseils de sorte que nos rentes ne sont pas suffisentes pour faire de telles dépenses. Car tous les étés nous avons plusieurs grands Conseils dans ce village, et tous le tems que nos frères sont assemblés, nous sommes obligés de les

> nourrir, en sorte que tous les gens de ce Village n'ont rien, car les rentes sont insuffisantes pour tout de dépenses. (Kahnawake chiefs to Lord Dalhousie, 21 February 1828, NAC RG10 vol. 659: 181420, my emphasis)

The chiefs reminded Dalhousie that they had a "titre" to the lands as assured to them by general Gage in 1762. They also claimed that the rents from these lands could, in their view, help them cover the expenses needed to approvision chiefs of the other Native villages during grand councils held in Kahnawake.

In 1829, Marcoux was asked to write a petition of behalf of the council of chiefs. Yet Iroquois requests were once again dismissed (Alfred 1995a: 154). In 1830, a delegation of *Kahnawakehro:non*, with George de Lorimier as their interpreter[57] (Massicotte 1915: 39), travelled again to England to meet with colonial secretary George Murray, who rejected the claim but promised to pay for renovations to the church and rectory. He also agreed to pay for a new church bell and to offer the community a gift of money, which were not easily obtained (Devine 1922: 349-50).

In what ways does this contentious issue relate to the Rebellions? Iroquois hopes in regaining the tract of land may have been quite present in 1837-38 because of two promises previously made to them by British officials. In the early 1760s, Guy Carleton[58] is said to have promised the restitution of the alienated piece of land after the death of the last Jesuit in Kahnawake. In 1829, six Kahnawake chiefs provided this oral testimony (in Mohawk):

> Nous [...] certifions avoir entendu le vieux chef Louis Karonhiatsikosa nous dire à nous et notre missionnaire assemblés: "J'ai entendu de mes oreilles de la bouche même du Général Carleton ces paroles dans la Maison du Gouvernement à Montréal: *Mes enfants, soyez tranquilles sur votre morceau de terre; aussitôt que le dernier Jésuite mourra, je vous le rendrai; je vous dirai alors, Tenez, mes enfans, reprenez ce qui vous appartient.* Je puis faire serment de cela. Nous étions beaucoup à ce conseil qui avons également entendu; mais tous les autres sont morts; je suis demeuré seul pour rendre témoignage à la vérité." (Louis Teisherote et al., 21 December 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 945, Marcoux's translation from Mohawk; see also Great Britain 1969a: 79)

Moreover, Kahnawake's oral history of the 1830s accounts that Sir George Prevost[59] made a key promise to the Iroquois at the start of the War of 1812. Speaking in Mohawk, eight Kahnawake chiefs offered this testimony in December 1829:

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[57] Speaking about the Iroquois trip to England, George de Lorimier's great grandson Charles de Lorimier of Virginia had this to say: "one of the interesting stories I recall from my father (George de Lorimier's grandson Arthur John) [...] is George's trek to England with the Indians to present their greviances to the King. I was told that they had either corn or potatoes with a meal with the King and in the course of the evening the Indians threw either the potato peels or the corn cobs over their shoulders. The gracious King and his courtiers did likewise" (Charles de Lorimier, Williamsburgh VA, personal communication, 1999).

[58] Guy Carleton served as the Governor-General of British North America on two different occasions, from 1768 to 1778, and, as Baron Dorchester, from 1786 to 1796.

[59] George Prévost was the Governor-General of British North America from 1811 to 1815.

> Nous chefs soussignés certifions qu'en trois circonstances et endroits différents, d'abord à Montréal, dans la Maison du Gouvernement, ensuite à Chateaugay aux Fourches, en enfin à Kingston, nous avons entendus ces paroles à nous adressées de la bouche de Sir George Prevost: "Mes enfants, c'est à vous de commencer; si vous faites votre devoir dans la présente guerre, je ferai le mien aussi; si nous en sortons heureusement, je vous rendrai ce qui vous appartient; mais c'est à vous à commencer à le défendre contre ennemis." (Louis Karonhiatsi Kosa et al., 21 December 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 946, Marcoux's translation from Mohawk, my emphasis)

Judging by the importance of the claim, Prévost's promise was probably not forgotten in 1837-38. Indeed, the people of Kahnawake may have hoped that collaboration with the Crown might result in a favorable restitution of the disputed territory.

Despite their cooperation with the British, the Iroquois' land claim was not recognized. Many of Kahnawake's white neighbors even claimed to government officials that the land claimed by the Iroquois had never belonged to the latter (Kempt to Murray, 4 January 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 68). In 1839, following the completion of contradictory reports from two surveyors, it was decided that the "bornage of Laprairie should be continued without regard to the pretensions of the Indians" (Napier to Baby, 29 May 1839, GB u8984), and, in 1844, the La Prairie dispute was declared to be closed (Surtees 1985: 72). According to Gerald Alfred, the rejection of this claim is the result of a confusion on the actual boundaries of the Seigneury mainly due to the "lack of skill and integrity" on the part of local government officials charged with formalizing the boundaries (Alfred 1995b: 40). In Alfred's view, the British actions were rooted in

> a eurocentric perspective which recognized only the French account and denied the legitimacy of [Kahnawake] oral tradition documenting the history of the land in the Seigneury, a tradition which confirms the history of fraud, abuse and steady erosion of the Seigneury's boundary in the face of increasing White settlement on [Iroquois] land. This resulted in the creation of an 'institutionalized reality' (British law) in which previous French misdeeds with respect to the land became legitimized simply because they were recorded using the proper (European) legal procedures (Alfred 1995b: 32).

Father J. Marcoux similarly remarked that " les traditions sauvages, quoi qu'elles n'ayent jamais été écrites, ont leur degré de respectabilité comme celles des autres peuples, et il ne suffit pas de les nier gratuitement" ("Notes explicatives", Marcoux, 25 January 1830, NAC RG8 vol. 269: 134). Interestingly, in 1830, Crown officials had agreed not to concede to the demands of the *Kahnawakehro:non* in order to prevent establishing a precedent:

> the concession of the ground claimed by the Iroquois, considered abstractedly, may be deemed a point of little importance; but the expediency of granting it to them, under existing circumstances, is extremely questionable. It is clearly established that their pretensions to this land rest on no just foundation, and if it be now conceded to them, it will naturally tend to confirm their belief, that by determined perseverance, and an ultimate appeal to the King, their pretensions, however unfounded, or however frequently rejected by the law courts of the country [...], will be eventually recognized. It would moreover encourage the prevailing disposition amongst the Indians generally,

> to send deputations to England, from which many evils were found on a former occasion to proceed (Kempt to Murray, 4 January 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 69).

Today, only about 11 000 acres of the original 40 000 acres remain in Kahnawake's hands and claims to retrieve the lost land are still being pursued. The modern-day claim touches the municipalities of St-Constant, Ste-Catherine, St-Mathieu, Delson, Candiac and St-Philippe. Led by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake and Kahnawake's Inter-governmental Relations Team, the community has recently turned over the legal documents to the government of Canada and is seeking monetary compensation (Rosenburg 1999).

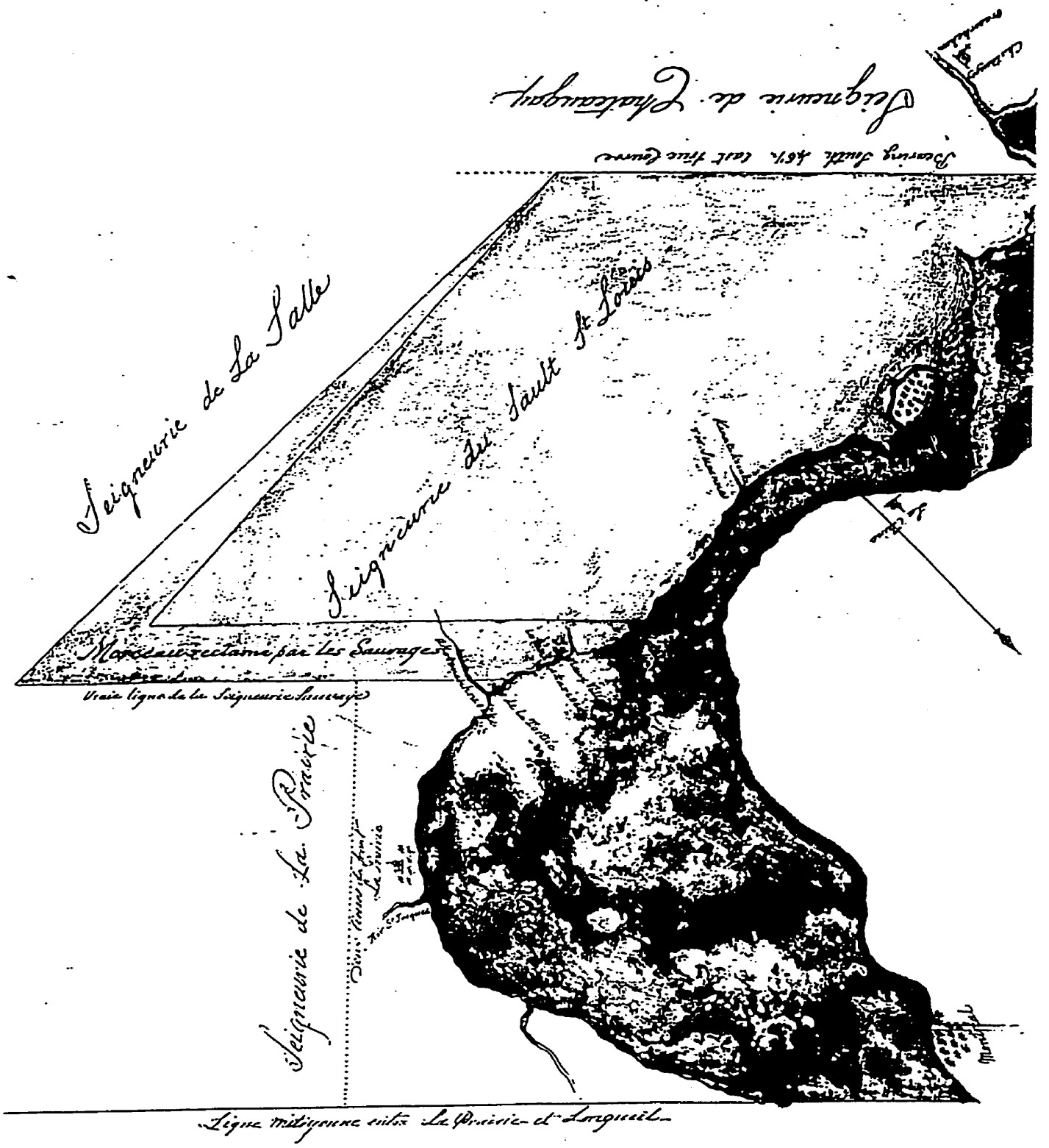
Since the fall of New France, Kahnawake had been involved in a highly complex, relatively subordinate, but beneficial relationship with the British government. From Iroquois perspectives, if well maintained by regular "strategic" expressions of loyalty such as claims of allegiance or military assistance, this relationship might serve as a way of securing for them important economic and political interests. In this perspective, it can be suggested that Kahnawake's involvement in the 1837-38 Rebellions may have been "strategically" intended to secure annual presents and a tract of land. Indeed, given the opportunities and choices of the economic and political worlds in which they lived, the Iroquois as a whole may have elected to be drawn into a specific military relationship with the British Crown, one which they viewed as potentially profitable and beneficial. In the same vein, by using the old rhetorical term such as "Father" to identify Gosford, Napier or the King, and by claiming they were "Red Children" that would remain "poor", hungry" and "loyal", Kahnawake chiefs like Martin Tekanasontie were not accepting a relationship of inferiority and subjugation. Instead, although economic conditions were much different in the 1830s, the Kahnawake Iroquois did the same as the Ojibwa in the eighteenth century and attempted to play on the generosity of the Crown, "to appear powerless in order to wield power" (Black-Rogers 1985: 647).

Interests such as land and annuities provided the chiefs and the community as a whole with monetary revenues, clothing, food and other items and provisions. As such, they may have been sought by the Iroquois for their immediate material or economic benefits. However, as Kahnawake's grand chief Martin Tekanasontie stated, the "presents" were much more than mere presents. In his view, they constituted a "sacred debt" as promised to "Indians" by European governments as a way of securing military alliances and in compensation for a loss of "Indian" lands at the hand of "whites". As such, over the years of European colonization, annuities had not only come to provide the Kahnawake Iroquois with essential provisions, but, more fundamentally, key symbolic criteria from which a distinct vision of "self" had been gradually constructed and expressed against non-

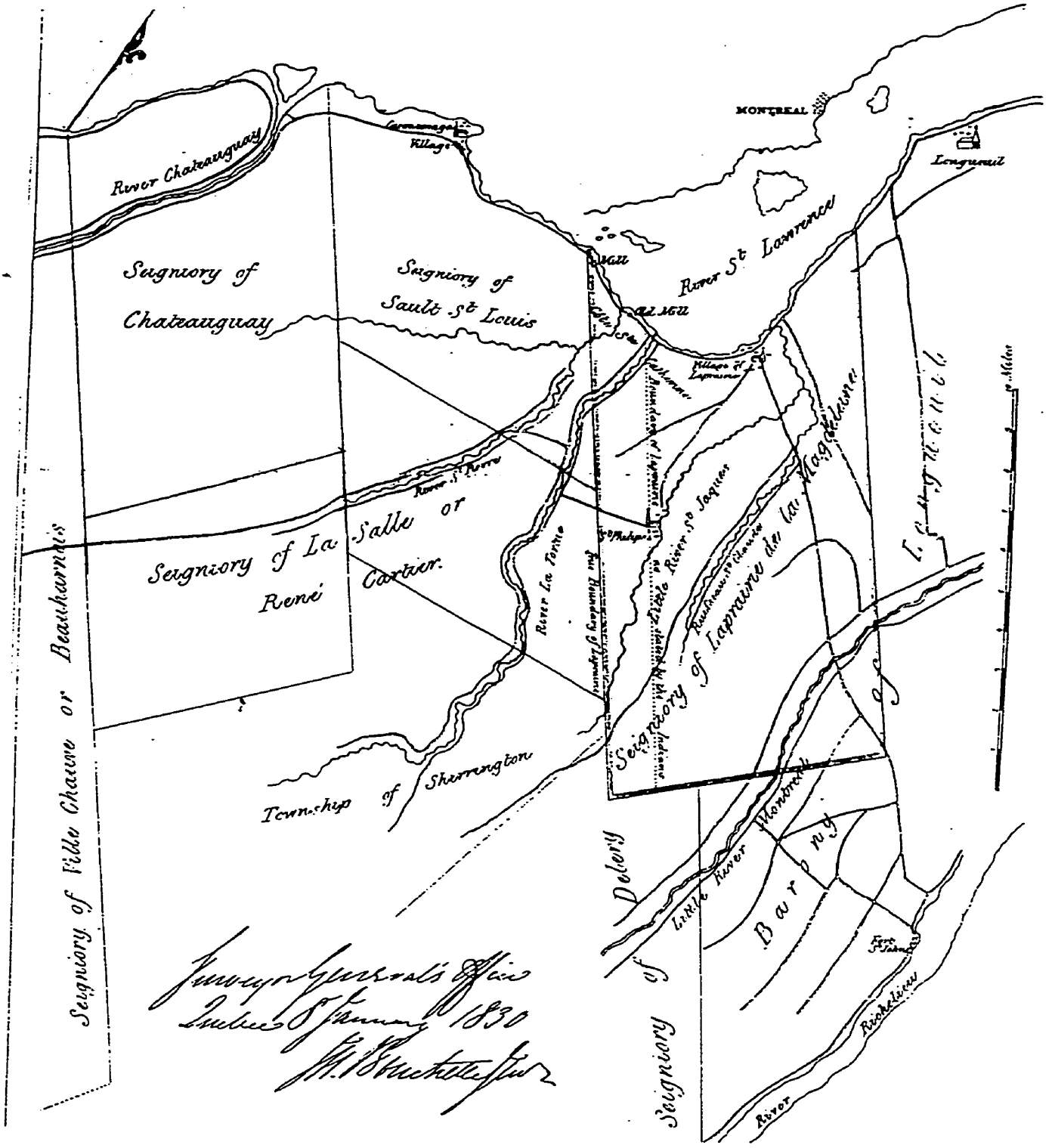
Native powers and settlers. Indeed, by promoting a distinction between Indians and non-Indians, presents had contributed to the legal definition of the "Indian". In turn, presents provided a language which contributed to giving the Kahnawake Iroquois or any other Native community a way of deploying a Native collective identity.

In a similar way, the portion of land that was continually claimed by the Iroquois during the nineteenth century was not only desired for the rents and crops it might produce. In virtue of treaties with the French and British Crowns, the people of Kahnawake viewed the claimed territory as "Indian" land which rightfully belonged to them and was exclusively reserved for them, as "Indians". For the Iroquois, displacement from this land or the illegal expropriation of it would be wounding in many ways because not only would they be deprived of their means of subsistence and self-sufficiency, but, as well, of the land's symbolic role in providing one of most powerful criteria in which their collective Native identity was grounded. As such, the relationship of *Kahnawakehro:non* with the land itself was not only phrased in terms of economic resources; the land served as a means of expressing and maintaining an identity through a process which involved an identification with images, interests, stories and rituals. For the Iroquois, the seigneury of Sault-Saint-Louis in its entire 40 000 acres was a geographical space in which cultural difference, Native cultural identity, historical memory, and societal organization had been inscribed, limited by boundaries, and distinguished from nearby non-Native settlers.

Cohen (1985) has argued that culture is represented as identity through symbols. Simple in form but complex in substance because of their malleability, imprecision, and multivocality, symbols are powefully eloquent, "so much so that their loss of proscription may be experienced as an utter silencing of the cultural voice" (Cohen 1993: 201). When interests generate collective cohesiveness and a generalized agreement within a community, they become powerful symbols of a collective identity, and therefore, claims of this identity. In the Kahnawake community of the 1830s, annuities and presents were embedded with such rich symbolism because they were important criteria which helped the Iroquois identify themselves as members of an Indian and Iroquois community in the face of non-Native governments and communities. As symbols of Kahnawake's cultural identity, land and presents provided a lowest common denominator on which all village residents could agree. In this perspective, it can be suggested that the Iroquois may have not only intervened in the Rebellions to maintain a bargaining power vis-à-vis the British over material goods, but, at a more fundamental level, to defend material conditions of social life which provided the means for the construction and repeated expression of a collective "Kahnawake Iroquois" identity.




*Map 6: Sault-Saint-Louis, 1829. It is interesting to note that the surveyor (McCarty) identifies the portion of land that is claimed by the people of Kahnawake ("Morceau réclamé par les Sauvages"). Also, with the words "Vraie ligne de la seigneurie Sauvage", the surveyor highlights that the original boundary of the Iroquois seigneury is situated in LaPrairie. (NAC, National Map Collection: NMC1718)*




*Map 7: Sault-Saint-Louis and the south shore of Montréal, 1830. Contrary to McCarty's map (Map 1), government surveyor Joseph Bouchette writes that the "True Boundary of Laprairie" is located within the limits of the territory the people of Kahnawake view as their own. (in Great Britain 1969a: 60-62)*

# - CHAPTER FIVE -
# CO-OPTATION, FACTIONAL DISPUTES AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

*Since... divisive tendencies were so prevalent in the Indian Weltpolitik, why did the individual Indian soldier regularly obey the decisions of village, tribal and confederate councils? Over and over in the accounts of informed commentators is found the idea that Indians knew and loved their "nation" and their "country". Today's historians and social scientists may talk of societies, tribes, bands and sibs; but when early writers talked of "savages", they also spoke of nation and country. [Hector St. John] De Crèvecoeur captured the sympathetic European/Colonial idea of Indian communal war when supposedly quoting Agueghon, an aged Ojibwa living on the Niagara frontier: "What, then, is this life, I asked one day of Kouetategen, ancient war chief of the Massakoohasset tribe? What does it matter what life is, since yours does not belong to you? You own it to your tribe, to your nation who, for you, is the sun-dew on plants everytime its honor or independence demands it." (Leroy V. Eid 1985: 137)*

*Whites and Indians in Kahnawake*

Between 1833 and 1840, Kahnawake was wracked by internal disputes which have never been discussed entirely in previous studies on the history of this community. Over the years, silent animosity emerged in Kahnawake toward specific families of partial white ancestry who had acquired large pieces of land in the village.[60] For instance, resentment toward the de Lorimier family originated in the early 1800s and simmered quietly until 1833. That year, Superintendent James Hughes and interpreter Bernard St. Germain purposely intervened in favor of people who were at odds with wealthy Kahnawake resident George de Lorimier. Factional disputes grew out of the already present enmity and caused severe tensions which wracked the community until 1840 and, to some extent, through the latter half of the nineteenth century. The goal of this chapter is to show that at the time of the Rebellions, Kahnawake's internal harmony was in a state of turmoil. Yet a collective sense of identity seems to have prevailed in the face of Patriote "aggressors".

There is a long and complex history of white settlement in Kahnawake. Through the adoption of captives, the stationing of troops, the establishment of shopkeepers and the many marriages between whites and Indians, many Kahnawake people became related to people of French, Scottish or Irish descent. People visiting Kahnawake have even described the "great mixture of blood" there. They have also written that many "pure" white children were being brought up and that the "pure Indians" were very rare (Long 1792; Weld 1807: 24). Names like Beauvais, D'Ailleboust, de La Ronde Thibaudière, Delisle, de Lorimier, Giasson, Johnson, Mailloux, McComber, McGregor, Montour,

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[60] After the War of 1812, the village of Akwesasne experienced similar tensions. In Father Joseph Marcoux's words: "les émigrés ou les fils d'émigrés [...] parvinrent à se faire nommer chefs et obtinrent des médailles de différents officiers du département; et quoi qu'ils n'eussent pas été accepté par la nation comme Chefs du village, s'immiscèrent à la gestion des terres sauvages [...] de Concert avec les quatre ou cinq vrais Chefs [...] qui les avaient administrés jusque là depuis très longtemps" (Marcoux 1961: 23).

Phillips, Rice, Stacey, Tarbell, and Williams are still present in Kahnawake today and hint at an old non-Native establishment through intermarriage and adoption.[61]

Sources also seem to indicate that relations between whites and Natives have not always been peaceful in Kahnawake.[62] In 1722, community residents objected to the establishment of French soldiers there because they feared it would cause "horrible discord" (in Green 1991: 185). Some Iroquois even stated that the presence of troops proved that the French government did not trust the *Kahnawakehro:non* (ibid.: 183). In the mid-1720s, the community forced the eviction of the Desaulnier sisters who had established a trading house and who were quickly garnering profits formerly earned by Kahnawake families (Alfred 1995a: 46). In 1771, twenty-two Iroquois pressed British officials to help them prevent two local families from bringing French families to settle "on lands reserved for their common use" (in Flick 1931: 188-9). In 1812, tensions were high as many Iroquois were opposed to specific "mixed" marriages. Father Rinfret explains:

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[61] The origins of some of Kahnawake's well known family names seem to be as follows (from Forbes' *Dictionnaire Généalogique des familles Iroquoises de Caughnawaga*, in Faribault-Beauregard 1993: 7). Beauvais: the first Beauvais was André Karhaton, who married Marie-Anne Kahenratas before 1743. He was a young man from the Beauvais family of La Prairie who had been adopted and raised in Kahnawake; D'Ailleboust: this name originates from Ignace Soteriioskon dit D'Ailleboust, born in about 1733 from the marriage of Catherine Kawennakaion and La Prairie resident Antoine D'Ailleboust, sieur de Coulogne et de Mantet. The name is now spelled Diabo; de La Ronde: this name is from Paul Niioherasha, son of voyageur Charles-François Denys de la Ronde Thibaudière and Magdeleine Pemadjisoanokwe from Kanesatake. The name is now spelled Delaronde or Laronde; Delisle: this name is from Jacques Tewennitashen, born in about 1746 and deceased in 1826. According to tradition, he was the son of an English prisoner brought over to Kahnawake. In 1766, he married Catherine Skawenniooha, from Kahnawake; Mailloux: Amable Mailloux married French-Canadian Félicité Rollin in Châteauguay in 1793. Their three sons, François-Xavier Tiorateken, Louis Onokohte and Pierre Ohahakehte were brought up by Kahnawake Iroquois and married local Native women. The name is now spelled Mayo or Myiow; McGregor: Pierre Anatorenha McGregor is from Deerfield, Mass., and was adopted with his sister Marie by an Iroquois family of Kahnawake following the Iroquois raid on Deerfield in 1704; Rice: Edmund Rice, from Barkhamstead, England, established himself in Massachussetts in 1638. His grand-son, Edmund, had two children (Silas and Timothy) who were kidnapped by Kahnawake men in 1703 and raised by local Iroquois families. They went on to marry local Native women; Stacey: this name comes from John Aionwatha Stacey, Englishman of the Protestant faith. In about 1755, at the age of nine, he was kidnapped near Albany and brought over to Kahnawake with Jacob Hill. With his three marriages, he had fourteen children; Tarbell: John, Zacharie and Sarah Tarbell, children of Thomas Tarbell and Elizabeth Woods, from Groton Mass., were kidnapped on 20 June 1707. Many of their descendants have adopted the name Lazare or Leclaire; Williams: Eunice Williams, the daughter of minister John Williams, was captured during the Iroquois-Abenaki- French raid on Deerfield, Mass., on the night of 28 February 1704. Eunice was seven years old at the time. She was adopted and married within the Kahnawake community. Despite repeated requests by friends and family members, she refused to go back to Deerfield and remained in Kahnawake her entire life. The "unredeemed captive" passed away on 26 November 1785 at the age of 89. For a history of her life and of other members of the Williams family captured at Deerfield in 1704, see Demos (1993). The name as it is found today in Kahnawake and Kanesatake descends from her and her children.

[62] In 1836, there are also three "negroes" who lived in Kahnawake: "Glasco and wife" as well as a man named Joseph Thompson worked as labourers. It is stated that they had been forced out of the village many times but had always returned (Hughes to Napier, 28 March 1836, GB u5881-2).

> les chefs mirent opposition au mariage d'un françois avec une sauvagesse, et repoussèrent même violemment le jeune homme qui voulait entrer à l'Église. Mais il aima mieux se retirer du village que de les poursuivre. Dernièrement, il s'est présenté un semblable mariage auquel ils ont non seulement mis opposition [...], mais le jour même que devait se faire le mariage, ils ont gardé la porte de l'église et l'avenue de ma maison, craignant que j'introduisisse les futurs époux par la sacristie; ils avaient mis des gardiens pendant la nuit. Le jeune homme a mis l'affaire entre les mains d'un avocat qui va les poursuivre. (Rinfret to Plessis, 21 August 1813, ADSJQL 3A-56)

In 1822, Indian agent Nicolas Doucet reported that "les difficultés augmentent par rapport aux Étrangers qui ont contracté mariage avec des Sauvagesses et qui ont acquis de [leurs] Biens" (Doucet, 21 January 1822, NAC RG10 vol. 659: 181401-5). Marriages by which white husbands acquired legal rights over the lives and properties of their Iroquois wives were causing growing frustrations. Doucet suggested that authorities prohibit the settlement of whites in Native villages by virtue of the Royal Proclamation and the Ordinances of 1771 and 1791, which, in his view, did not permit the establishment of whites among Indians. In 1828, based on the "Provincial Ordinance of the 17 Geo III. C.7.", which included the means for "compelling the removal of persons who had settled in the Indian village of Caughnawaga" ([?] to Darling, 23 June 1827, RG8 vol. 267: 74), whites who were "poisoning" the Iroquois "with rum and spirituous liquors" were expelled from Kahnawake (Lord Dalhousie to George Murray, 24 July 1828, in Great Britain 1969a: 25). In spite of this, other whites requested permission to stay. In some cases, as with widowed wives of retired or deceased officers, government permissions to live in Kahnawake were granted (Louise de Gaspé-Giasson to J. Kempt, 3 June 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 416).

*Kahnawake and the de Lorimier family*

The history of the de Lorimier family reveals that the first member of this French military family to come in direct contact with the Kahnawake Iroquois is Claude-Nicolas-Guillaume de Lorimier, also known as Teiohatekon, Chevalier de Lorimier or Major de Lorimier. Born of non-Native aristocrats in Lachine in 1744, Claude was hired by the Indian Department after the Seven Years War. In 1783, following his service during the American Revolution as one of the leading officers of "British Indian" warriors, he married an Iroquois woman by the name of Marie-Louise Schuyler and the couple moved to Kahnawake, where he became resident agent. In 1801, after the deaths of his first two wives, the second of which was white, Claude married Iroquois Anne Skaouennetsi (McGregor or Gregory) with whom he had four children, including George de Lorimier. After the War of 1812, during which he and two of his sons (Guillaume and Jean-Baptiste) were at the head of Lower-Canadian Iroquois warriors, Claude was named Major and

gradually retired from military life. He remained in Kahnawake until his death in 1825 (Aichinger 1983; *La Presse* 1927; Leighton 1986; *Le Petit Journal* 1944; Massicotte 1915).

As in the cases of other non-Native officers stationed in Native villages, Claude de Lorimier's relationship with the Iroquois gained him the trust of some and the resentment of others. Today, *Kahnawakehro:non* who are familiar with this part of their history account that "Major Delormier" was a soldier and an Indian agent who used his status to his advantage in order to acquire large pieces of land. Such actions came to be unacceptable to the community. As a result, he and his heirs had to live and suffer under his actions for several generations. What do the archives say about Major Claude de Lorimier?

In 1787, Kahnawake chiefs granted Claude de Lorimier land concessions, "aux conditions de trois sols de cens et deux sols de rentes à perpétuité" (Kahnawake chiefs to C. de Lorimier, 7 March 1787, NAC RG8 vol. 265: 81). This was done in recognition of his services as the community's land agent ("percepteur"). It was agreed that all lands were to be enjoyed by him and his descendants forever (ibid.). In 1790, Claude de Lorimier was

> formally naturalized as one of the said tribe, and declared and acknowledged as one of the principal chiefs thereof [...] with all the rights and privileges which were enjoyed by the said Chiefs themselves, and namely the right of acquiring and holding lands in the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis. (George de Lorimier et al. to Barton, 1825, NAC RG8 vol. 265: 63, my emphasis)

However, he was not allowed to sell, exchange or cede the land or his mill to any other party except the Iroquois. In all, de Lorimier obtained fifty-three lots amounting to 107 acres. The other "whites" living in Kahnawake in 1836 are said to have owned not more than twenty acres among themselves (Kahnawake chiefs to C. de Lorimier, 21 December 1801, NAC RG8 vol. 265: 71-75; Hughes to Napier, 10 May 1836, GB u-5882).

In a few short years, relations between Claude de Lorimier and the Kahnawake people deteriorated. Many seemingly did not approve of a white man becoming a chief and owning extensive property. Already in 1811,"Mr Lorimier" was "rejeté par la majeure partie de la nation" (Rinfret to Plessis, 20 February 1811, ADSJQL 3A-50). In 1817, the chiefs stated that they had no complaints about de Lorimier for the last three years but rather complained "on his conduct [...] twenty or thirty years ago" (Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, 25 September 1817, NAC RG10 vol. 13: 11110). The chiefs also protested that de Lorimier had no right to own as much land as he did, that he had committed several "illegal deeds" and that his cattle were encroaching upon the properties of others (in Hughes to Napier, 4 May 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38311). Following increasing complaints, a council was held on 24 November 1821, following which de Lorimier was dismissed as agent of Kahnawake "for irregular conduct" (Hughes to Napier, 10 May 1836, GB u-5882). It was decided that "his behavior made him unworthy to hold any

situation in the Indian Department" (ibid.). Yet by virtue of his old age, he was allowed to remain in Kahnawake and enjoy his properties until he died. In 1823, it was further decided that all grants made to him were "disavowed and annulled" (in G. de Lorimier et al. to Barton, 1825, NAC RG8 vol. 265: 64). It was also ordered that after his death, his lands would immediately revert to the community (Hughes to Napier, 10 May 1836, GB u-5882). However, this did not take place "as his heirs took possession of the lands, sold what they could and afterwards, and repurchased part of it" (Hughes to Napier, 10 May 1836, GB u-5882). Believing these lands were rightfully theirs, de Lorimier's "métis" children obtained many of his lots, stone houses, fields, and meadows. By 1835, most of these had been repurchased from Kahnawake residents by his son George. A few other lots were obtained by three of Claude's six daughters (Agathe, Catherine, Magdeleine) in the name of their sons or non-Native husbands, who were retired or active military officers (McNabb, 26 May 1835, GB N-27; Hughes to Napier, 10 May 1836, GB u-5882).

As with Claude de Lorimier, another person that was resented by some Kahnawake residents because of his extensive land property was a man of Scottish origin named Jarvis McComber. In 1796, at the age of sixteen, Jarvis (Gervais, Gervase) McComber left Massachusetts, and, on his own, moved to Kahnawake. He was adopted by Thomas Arakwente. Following several expeditions to the Great Lakes, he married Arakwente's daughter and refused to go back to his family (Faribault-Beauregard 1993: 7). In 1807, after serving as land agent for the chiefs' council, Jarvis McComber obtained various lots amounting to seventy-nine acres. In 1817, he was ordered to return these lands by order of a sentence of the Court of King's Bench. However, that same year, the entire property was repurchased by him for those whom he identified as his "enfants sauvages" (Robert McNabb, 26 May 1835, GB N-27). Jarvis served as lieutenant and interpreter in the War of 1812, as resident interpreter in Kahnawake in the 1820s, and as interpreter during the Rebellion trials. In all, he married three times with local Iroquois women and had a total of twenty-eight children. He died in 1866 at the age of ninety-five (Beauvais 1985: 10).

*Government interference and factional disputes in the 1830s*

As discussed above, due to past circumstances, Jarvis McComber and the children of Claude de Lorimier (especially his son George) were resented by Kahnawake residents. In 1833, a personal affair involving George and interpreter Bernard St. Germain occurred. This event caused a chain reaction of events which quickly damaged the internal state of the community. As Marcoux wrote in 1835: "l'occasion de la division qui existe maintenant dans le village, a été une affaire d'honneur [...] qui eut lieu, sans armes meurtrières cependant, en 1833, entre George de Lorimier et l'interprète St. Germain" (Marcoux, 28

September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170). The interpreter seemingly lost this "affaire d'honneur" and, to avenge himself, attempted to get de Lorimier's lucrative ferry license revoked and handed over to war chief Ignace Kaneratahere Delisle, "son favori" (ibid.), a member of the chiefs' council who had become closely tied with government officials (ibid.). In turn, St. Germain gathered support for Delisle among the chiefs. In spite of such damaging efforts, three of the chiefs signed de Lorimier's request for a continuation of his license and refused to support Delisle. Believing that the latter was not qualified to own and operate a ferry, Marcoux signed de Lorimier's "requête" also because "j'ai considéré que puisque tous les chefs étaient libres de signer pour l'un ou pour l'autre, je ne devais pas avoir moins de liberté qu'eux" (Marcoux to Gaulin, 29 July 1835, ADSJQL 3A-166).[63]

No additional tensions would have occurred if Superintendent James Hughes had not intervened. By that time, Father J. Marcoux has already made himself many enemies in government circles.[64] Indeed, not only was he despised for being "an active persevering character" who resisted Protestant schools (Kempt to Murray, 4 January 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 69), but he was also seen as the "principal instigator" of the La Prairie land claim (ibid.). In answer to continual denials of the claim, Marcoux had even criticized government officials by stating that "les sauvages ont été joués par les Sirs", that they were guided by an "esprit de despotisme", that they had been "peu chiches de promesses envers les sauvages", and that authorities should not be "fières de leurs paroles" (Marcoux, 28 september 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170).[65] In 1833, the same year that St. Germain befriended Ignace Delisle and vowed to get de Lorimier's ferry licence cancelled, James Hughes was hired as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Montréal District and Lord Aylmer ordered that Marcoux cease communicating with the entire council of chiefs as well as with government officials (Aylmer to Turgeon, 4 November 1833, ADSJQL 3A-140).

Realizing the administration could profit from enhancing the simmering antagonism and thus develop enough divisions to get Marcoux expelled[66], James Hughes intervened in

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[63] During the War of 1812, Claude de Lorimier, his sons Jean Baptiste and Guillaume, Jarvis McComber, Bernard St. Germain and James Hughes were all part of the staff of the Embodied Indian Warriors, a "regiment" in which Native warriors from a wide range of communities were grouped under the command of Claude de Lorimier and other non-Native officers (Irving 1908).

[64] There have always been rivalries between priests stationed in Kahnawake and colonial government officials. For instance, in the 1720s, the Jesuits did not want a fort to be built in the village because they resented having to share authority with the French officers. As one Jesuit argued: "whenever the Governor wishes to obtain anything from the Indians, and the officer does not succeed, as is nearly always the case, he casts the blame upon the Missionary" (in Green 1991: 184).

[65] In 1839, Marcoux was ordered never to pursue this claim again (Turgeon to Marcoux, 12 November 1839, AAM, 901.032, 839-9; Turgeon to Marcoux, 24 November 1839, AAM, 901.032, 839-10).

[66] A similar incident occurred during the War of 1812. At the time, Marcoux lived in Akwesasne. Initially, the United States forced neutrality among the people but some young men joined sides with Britain. Marcoux was accused of forcing the non-participants to stay neutral. Subsequently accused of disloyalty, he was expelled and sent to Kahnawake (Marcoux, 28 September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170; Béchard 1985).

the on-going community tensions by supporting Ignace Delisle as well as all the council members who had joined with the war chief. In so doing, Hughes joined sides against George de Lorimier as well as Marcoux, who had unwillingly become de Lorimier's supporter. As a result, the chiefs favoring de Lorimier were replaced by others:

> par une innovation inouïe, tous les chefs grands et petits, qui n'avaient pas voulu prendre parti contre Lorimier, furent tous destitués, sans aucune forme de procès et de plus sans l'aveu de leurs constituants, et remplacés par d'autres plus souples et plus complaisants. Jusqu'à là, le Gouvernement n'était jamais intervenu dans la nomination des chefs, qui sont électifs dans tous les villages par la tribu du dernier décédé. Cette forme de gouvernement, seule convenable au caractère des sauvages, se trouva donc anéantie par le fait [...] Nous avons donc à présent dans notre village des Capitaines sans compagnies et des compagnies sans capitaines, anomalie propre à produire l'anarchie, car les tribus [clans] n'obéissent pas à des chefs qu'elles n'ont pas élus. (Marcoux, 28 September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170, my emphasis)

However, in spite of such damaging efforts of the part of Hughes and his supporters, the Montreal court accepted George de Lorimier's requests to operate his ferry and denied Ignace Delisle's right to own and operate a ferry (ibid.).

Subsequently, as George de Lorimier's son Albert-Emmanuel recounted in 1911,

> in the year 1834, Bernard St. Germain [...] took an action before the Montreal Courts, against Antoine-George de Lorimier to have him expelled from the said Reserve, alleging that he had no rights therein, not being a member of the tribe. (A.-E. de Lorimier to L. Letourneau, 15 March 1911, NAC RG10 vol. 3165, file 379792)

At the time, colonial authorities wished to reduce the Indian Department's expenses. In order to do so, James Hughes, greatly influenced by the patriarchal views of women in nineteenth-century British property law, suggested that all

> Indian women who marry white men ought certainly to be excluded from the list of presents and moreover they ought not to be allowed to remain in the Indian villages for their children take from their Father, and according to law are whites [and that] [...] all men and women that are connected with the white people by marriage, are to be excluded from the list of presents, as well as all Indians not in need of any assistance of cloathing, and all half-breeds whether or not they have received presents heretofore. (Hughes to Napier, 11 May 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38346-7)

By contrast, "such of the pure Indians who have married white women should not be deprived of their presents, nor their children for they become Indians" (ibid.). These ideas had already been proposed previously and had resulted in the expulsion of some "whites" from Kahnawake. Yet in Hughes' mind, an important "white" remained: George de Lorimier. Thus following the failed attempts at getting his ferry licence revoked, Hughes, St. Germain and Delisle accused de Lorimier of being a "white" person who was not allowed to live among the people of Kahnawake. At the time, Lower-Canadian legislation and Kahnawake customary law concerning whites living with Indians stood as follows: "All children begotten by Indian parents or an Indian father and a white mother are looked

upon as Indians; all children by white men and Indian women are looked upon as whites" (Hughes to Napier, 10 September 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37436). In addition, "all whites who sojourn amongst Indians for a certain time, have Indian names and are adopted as some relation or other to one or more of the tribe" and are thus considered Indians (ibid.).[67] Thus "whites" were not allowed to live among Indians unless having obtained special permission from the government.

According to such laws, George de Lorimier could be a white man because his father was the same. James Hughes even asserted that "self-interest has caused [George] to proclaim himself an Indian [...] so as to become the possessor and returner of the Property on the [...] Indian Reserve of the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis which was owned by his late Father" (Hughes to Napier, 10 September 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37436). In spirited opposition, George and others insisted that he was indeed an "Indian" and that "une grande partie des sauvages, même des chefs étaient dans le même cas que Lorimier, et avaient, comme lui, des pères blancs et des mères sauvagesses" (Marcoux, 28 September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170; Marcoux, McComber et al. to Gosford, 21 July 1836 NAC vol. 92: 37444). In December 1834, after a few weeks of investigation, the courts reached a verdict: because his mother was Iroquois; he had been born in Kahnawake and raised as a "sauvage"; he had been speaking French for only 10 years; he had always been considered as an Indian and had been given the name *Oronhiatekha* (brilliant sky or burning sky), George de Lorimier was recognized as an Indian (G. de Lorimier to Hughes, 14 December 1835, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37447). As his son Albert-Emmanuel states, a judgement

> was rendered in this case in the month of December 1834, dismissing the action and declaring the said Antoine-George de Lorimier member of the Reserve and Having the rights of said members. Before this judgement and ever since Antoine-George de Lorimier and family were and have been recognized members of the said Reserve. (A.-E. de Lorimier to L. Letourneau, 15 March 1911, NAC RG10 vol. 3165, file 379792)

In spite of this, the Indian Department cancelled George de Lorimier's annual presents even though he had always received them (G. de Lorimier to Hughes, 14 December 1835, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37447; G. de Lorimier to Lord Gosford, 29 January 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37439; J. Hughes to G. de Lorimier, 20 December 1835, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37448; J. Marcoux to Lord Gosford, 21 July 1836, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37444).

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[67] As Kahnawake chiefs asserted in 1850, "il n'est pas permit a un blanc qui se marie à une sauvagesse de jouir des droits des Sauvages, qu'en se mariant a un blanc elle perd ainsi que ses enfans, tous droits comme membres de Tribu a la quelle elle appartenoit [...]; un Sauvage qui se marie à une blanche peut emmener sa femme dans sa cabane et elle et ses enfans jouissent de tous les droits des membres de la Tribu a laquelle appartient, le Sauvage avec qui elle se marie [...]; il n'est pas permis a un blanc de s'établir parmi nous et de jouir de nos droits. [Ces] droits nous ont été transmis par nos pères, ils ont toujours été respecté" (Martin Tekanasontie et al. to Lord Elgin, 18 September 1850, NAC RG10 vol. 607: 51857).

De Lorimier's expulsion having failed, Hughes, St-Germain and Delisle pursued what Marcoux refers to as their task of "entretenir le feu de la division, en proclamant sans cesse que tous ceux qui sont du parti de Lorimier et du missionnaire -car on fait un parti là où il n'y en eut jamais- n'auront point d'équippemens" (Marcoux, 28 September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170). Following the court's decision over the "identity" of George de Lorimier, Hughes obtained a ferry license for Delisle, and, with the help of promises that many people would gain political power, he gained the trust of the majority of the chiefs. In so doing, he also secured their opposition to Marcoux and de Lorimier. As a result, the long-standing enmity for the de Lorimier family and their friends resurfaced as the majority of the community came to think that their lands were being taken away by such "whites". Council members, war chiefs, and even the grand chief now accused a number of people suddenly seen as "whites" of causing internal strife. They also accused Marcoux of supporting the so-called "whites". Because the curé had repeatedly testified in de Lorimier's favor, Hughes and St. Germain claimed to all that he "soutenais les blancs. On voulait confondre les blancs avec les métis" ("Origines des troubles du Sault St. Louis", Marcoux, 1840, AAQ, 901.104, no. 840-3). In Marcoux's own words,

> [en] m'opposant aux innovations que l'on voulait introduire (schools, new chiefs), pour la seule jouissance de se vanger de haines particulières, je n'avais eu en vue que de maintenir les anciennes institutions des sauvages. On cria donc bien haut que j'étais l'auteur des troubles et qu'il fallait m'expulser. (Marcoux, 28 September 1835, ADSJQL 3A-170, my emphasis)

In reality, Hughes and St. Germain had skillfully exploited already present rivalries and tensions in order to target a full blown attack aimed at getting Marcoux and de Lorimier expelled from Kahnawake. Moreover, as Superintendent in the Indian Department, Hughes was working to reducing government expenses in annual presents by limiting the number of Kahnawake residents considered legally as "Indians".

Such a chain of events quickly led to "les plus mauvais fruits dans le village, en causant des batailles[68], des haines, des querelles, des procès même" ("Origines des troubles du Sault St. Louis", Marcoux, 1840, AAM, 901.104, no. 840-3). This also resulted in the following petitions and inquiries:

1) On 11 April 1835, Kahnawake chiefs sent a memorial to Lord Aylmer "praying for the exclusion of Whites and Strangers" from the village. This document states:

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[68] In April 1835, George de Lorimier and James Hughes were involved in a fist fight. According to the former: "dans le conseil du 5 avril dernier, que c'est vous qui m'avez outragé; tandis que je vous parlais bien poliment et que vous étiez obligé d'écouter nos représentations, vous m'avez pris à la gorge et m'avez traité de voleur [...]. Je réclame mes présents pour l'année dernière et cette année. Si l'on me traite comme un homme, je serai le sujet le plus dévoué et le plus obéissant; mais si l'on me traite comme un chien, ainsi qu'on l'a fait jusqu'à présent, je me défendrai" (G. de Lorimier to J. Hughes, 20 December 1835, NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37449; see also Kahnawake chiefs to [?], NAC RG10 vol. 92: 37446).

for many years past, numbers of White People and Strangers have resorted to the Domain and Indian Reserve of the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis and have taken up their [...] residence, are now occupying Farms, Lots, Houses, in some instances without tending to claim any manner of title. [...]. That the late Major Delorimier, a white, occupied and held a large parcel of land on the said Domain [...], and was during his life time, permitted to do so by General Darling, in consequence of his great age; that since the death of the said Major Delorimier, the said parcel of land has been divided amongst his White Descendants, without, we your Red Children humbly consider, any legal right or title; which the said Major Delorimier never possessed.

Therefore, we, your Red Children do most humbly and respectfully pray your Excellency our Father and Protector to order and direct that the agent of the said seigneury [...] be instructed and appointed to inquire into [...] the quantity of land, the number of Farms, Buildings, Lots, Houses, Barns, sheds or other buildings in or about the said village, or on the Domain or Indian Reserve of the seigneury of Sault St. Louis, in the occupation or possession of White People or Strangers; and if it does appear that any White Person or Persons, Stanger or Strangers have obtained possession of property in the said village, Domain or Indian Reserve illegally, [...] we do, in such case, humbly Pray that the said [...] persons be commanded to forthwith peacefully and quietly, leave, yield, and surrender to the said Domain or Indian Reserve [...] every or any part or parcel thereof, the Sault having been graciously given, granted and allowed [...] for the use [...] of Us, your Red Children and our Descendants, and for no other person or persons whatsoever. (Kahnawake chiefs and residents to Lord Aylmer, 11 April 1835, GB N-26, my emphasis)

In response to these requests, agent Robert McNab was appointed to conduct an "investigation" into the lands owned by the so-called "Whites and Strangers", and the "White descendants of Major Delorimier" (McNab, 26 May 1835, GB N-27; McNab to Solicitor General, 12 September 1835, GB N-33). He bluntly concluded that members of the Mailloux, McComber and de Lorimier families had "no title" to live on their numerous "cornfields", "meadows", and "pieces of land" (ibid.).

In answer, Father Marcoux questioned the validity of the desired expulsions:

en trompant le gouverneur [...] on sollicite des ordres pour déposséder plusieurs sauvages du parti opposé de biens qu'ils ont achetés et payés, et cela sous le spécieux prétexte qu'ils n'auraient point de titres. Des titres chez les sauvages? Et pas un du parti en faveur n'en a de titres, plus que les autres; [c'est une] persécution que je me sens capable de supporter, étant accoutumé depuis longtemps à ces démêlés avec les officiers du Département, qui viennent souvent mettre leur nez où ils n'ont affaire. (Marcoux to Signay, 28 June 1835, ADSJQL 3A-160, my emphasis)

2) Also on 11 April, twenty people including grand chief Martin Tekanasontie and Ignace Delisle sent a "memorial" to Bishop Signay of Québec stating that Marcoux and de Lorimier had become friends for the sole purpose "to be revenged upon us" (Martin Tekanasontie et al. to Bishop Signay, ADSJQL 3A-151). Influenced by Hughes, they identified de Lorimier as a white man, who, according to customary law, was not allowed to live in Kahnawake. They also urged the Bishop to expel Marcoux because he was "the cause of so much evil" and encouraged George de Lorimier (ibid.). They

even asserted that before the tensions erupted in the community, Marcoux promoted "peace and harmony" in the village (ibid.). However, since then

> our missionary, [...] visibly altered in his demeanor towards us his Red Children, whom he not only ceased to regard as formerly; but treated us rather with contempt, taking under his immediate favor and protection, George de Lorimier, our bitterest enemy, the homicide of one of our own tribe, a crime for which he was compelled to fly to the United States, and there take refuge, for a period of two years, at the end of which time he sought our pardon and forgiveness, which we did not withhold, and permitted him to return among us. (ibid., my emphasis)

Sources do not reveal much about the murder de Lorimier is said to have committed. However, it is said that after his return, he asked the forgiveness of Thomas Owenneniont, the brother of the man he had killed (ibid.). Did Kahnawake people hate George de Lorimier for this criminal act as well?

3) On 21 June 1835, the faction opposed to the expulsions of Marcoux and de Lorimier replied with a petition to J.-J. Lartigue, the Bishop of Montréal. This petition was signed by twenty-nine men (including four chiefs) and sixty-six "Femmes de la Sainte-Famille".[69] Exasperated by the events, the petitioners held that the faction opposed to de Lorimier numbered only about fifteen "jeunes gens" and that expelling Marcoux would be a great loss for the village (Thomas Tiohatekon et al. to Bishop Lartigue, 21 June 1835, ADSJQL 3A-157).

4) On 29 July 1835, a government inquiry was held in Kahnawake to investigate the charges laid against Marcoux by Hughes, Delisle, and their supporters. During the inquest, many people, including Thomas Tiohatakon, "chef de la tribu (clan) de la Tortue depuis environ 15 ans", testified that Marcoux was not the source of the difficulties and that "les troubles qui règnent actuellement dans le village proviennent d'une querelle particulière entre le sieurs St. Germain interprète [...] et George Oronhiatekha, sauvage iroquois du dit village, et d'affaire de traverse" ("Déposition des Chefs devant M. Hughes et M. Napier", 29 July 1835, ADSJQL 3A-165). This statement, which identifies G. de Lorimier as an Indian, was approved by ten other council members. Marcoux was later acquitted of all charges ("Origines des troubles du Sault St. Louis", Marcoux, 1840, AAM, 901.104, no. 840-3). According to him, "la grande majorité du village est en ma faveur, et [je n'ai] affaire qu'à une cabale" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 18 september 1835, 26 CP, D-8). Marcoux also believed that many people who signed petitions against him had been bribed or forced to do so.

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[69] The early years of Kahanwake were known for the extreme religious devotion of many community residents. In the early eighteenth century, women formed the Confrérie de la Sainte-Famille du Sault St. Louis for the purpose of providing religious guidance as well as charity work (Green 1991: 33).

5) In September 1835, Kahnawake people identifying themselves as "les Enfants Rouges de la Tribu des Iroquois du village du Sault St. Louis" sent a memorial to Lord Gosford to describe "la grande misère et peine que nous éprouvont tous les jours dans notre village, causée par les grandes dissentions et les troubles qui y règnent, depuis près de deux années" (Kahnawake chiefs and residents to Lord Gosford, 21 September 1835, GB N-30). The petitioners held that as a result of growing tensions, existed

dans le village de Caughnawaga, deux parties opposées. Les [...] Blancs persistent à y rester, ils augmentent au lieu de diminuer. Et en plus, ils sont du parti des mauvais vivants, et aident beaucoup à encourager le désordre qui existe parmi nous. Ils ruinent notre Bois, se rendent maîtres de nos propriétés et montrent mauvais exemples à le jeunesse. [..] Beaucoup de nos lots de terres, nos propriétés et notre Bois, nous ont été frustrés et pillés par les [...] Blancs [...], mais principalement [...] par des Officiers du Département Sauvage. Le feu Major de Lorimier et Gervais McComber, Interprète. Oui notre Père ces Officiers qui ont été mis parmi nous autres pour veiller à notre Bonheur, et nos intérêts. Ce sont eux, qu'au lieu de nous secourir, par bons avis, et de veiller à nos intérêts, nous ont privés de nos Biens et nos Propriétés. Les dits biens, terres et propriétés, qui nous sont été prises par le feu Major de Lorimier sont maintenant entre les mains des Blancs et Étrangers et de ses enfants; qu'on voudrait, contre et en dépit de toutes les anciennes et présentes coutumes, des Sauvages des quatre villages et les lois du Pays même, faire passer pour des Sauvages.

Ainsi nous les Enfants Rouges te prions notre Père, comme le seul moyen de mettre la paix et l'accord dans le village, c'est d'établir et mettre en force nos anciennes lois et coutumes, de faire éloigner tous les Blancs et Étrangers d'avec nous autres, et d'en empêcher d'autres d'y venir. Et nous te supplions aussi, [...] de donner les ordres [...] de nous faire rendre toutes les propriétés qui nous ont été si injustement ôtées par notre ignorance et imbécillité par des personnes qui sçavoient que les enfants Rouges n'avoient aucune autorité, ou droit de s'en défaire. (ibid., my emphasis)

6) In March 1836 the "majority of the Chiefs and Members of council" sent a petition, praying administrator James Kempt to

adopt such measures as he may deem most proper to clear their village of all intruders as well as to oblige all such white people [that] have become possessed of their property [...], houses, buildings, lots, and lands of every description on their Reserve in a most illegal unashamed manner to restore the same to the Iroquois Tribe of Caughnawaga. (in Hughes to Napier, 28 March 1836, GB u-5881)

The petitioners also requested that "a Notification be published [and that] such a Document would be the only means of obliging the whites to abandon their village and restoring peace, as well as putting a stop to the daily depredations committed on the Domain of the Seigneury" (ibid.). Finally, the petitioners urged the Governor

to order and prohibit all Indians whatever, Chiefs as well as Warriors [and] women from selling, leasing, granting or otherwise making away with any houses, buildings, lots, sugar bushes or land of any description whatever, in the village of Caughnawaga or on the Domain of the Seigneury of Sault St. Louis, to any white persons, or strangers, under some severe Penalty, both to the seller and purchaser. (ibid.)

In the next weeks, a trial was held following which Marcoux and George de Lorimier were acquitted of all charges (Marcoux to Turgeon, 8 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-27).

7) On 28 March 1836, James Hughes compiled a list of the sixty-one "whites" living in Kahnawake at the time. Some had names such as Duquet, Hubert and Mailloux. Not surprisingly, Jarvis McComber and George de Lorimier were on this list and the latter was referred to as "the principal cause of all the disturbances" experienced in the village (Hughes, 28 March 1836, GB u/5881-2). The names of his sisters were not on this list, as the majority of them did not live in Kahnawake. However, Magdeleine de Lorimier did receive full permission to remain in the Iroquois village (Napier to Darling 31 October 1827, NAC RG10 vol. 586; Magdeleine de Lorimier to Kempt, 18 July 1829, NAC RG8 vol. 268: 673). In response to what he believed was the false notion that whites were taking over the village, Marcoux stated:

> A part Mr. Macomber, notre interprête, qui par le passé à acheté, avec l'agrément des chefs, quelques morceaux de terres et maisons pour ses enfants sauvages, il n'existe assurément aucun blanc qui ait jamais été tenté d'acheter des sauvages, je ne dis pas des terres, mais même une maisonnette, une cabane. Je défie qu'on en nomme un seul. [...] Le défunt Major de Lorimier avait aussi fait quelques acquisitions, mais ce qui en est resté, est passé entre les mains de sa veuve, qui est sauvagesse, et de ses enfans. Voilà donc comment on trompe le gouvernement. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 15 April 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-17, Marcoux's emphasis)

Marcoux argued that "whites" in Kahnawake numbered only about "une demie-douzaine" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 25 March 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-15) and that expelling the well assimilated "métis" children of white men and Native women such as George de Lorimier would empty and destroy Kahnawake:

> Si, comme le veut St. Germain, dans la vue seulement de faire partir son grand ennemi Lorimier, on expulsait des villages sauvages tous les Métis et Blancs adoptés dans le bas âge, ayant à présent femmes et enfans ne parlant que le langue sauvage et n'ayant que les habitudes sauvages, les villages sauvages seraient réduits à rien [...] [Qu'on] laisse tranquilles ceux que l'on a vu élever et marier jusqu'à aujourd'hui, et auxquels on a toujours donné les présens, sans opposition de personne: dans toute la forme du terme, ils sont sauvagifiés; et on ne retrouve en eux aucune nuance différente de caractère d'avec les vrais sauvages. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 12 April 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-16, my emphasis)

8) In late March and early April 1836, following the reconciliations of some chiefs and council members, "les brouillons ont repris le pouvoir en mains, et aussitôt le village est retourné dans la peine et la désolation. Un voyage de St. Germain ici a suffi pour causer tout ce mal" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 25 March 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-15). Encouraged by Hughes and the interpreter, some chiefs asked the Bishop of Québec to expel Marcoux. Quite upset, the warriors assembled and asked the chiefs to cease all disagreements and to stop listening to St. Germain. In the curé's words:

> les guerriers du village se sont assemblés il y a une dizaine de jours et sont allés en corps faire sans trop de cérémonie des remontrances aux chefs [...]. Ils leurs ont signifié qu'ils n'approuvaient point du tout leurs démarches insensées [...] et qu'on avait jamais vu auparavant, les tisons épars çà et là, et qu'il était à craindre que le grand feu s'éteignit, sans qu'on put le rallumer. Qu'ils eussent par conséquent à se réunir comme auparavant, et à agir de concert. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 12 April 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-16; Marcoux's emphasis)

By August 1836, the segment favoring Hughes had diminished in number and power. Once again, Marcoux's observations are worth quoting in length:

> le parti du Capt. Hughes est bien diminué; la zizanie s'est mêlée parmi ses partisans et un bon nombre d'entr'eux sont revenus de mon côté, de manière qu'aujourd'hui sur cinq grands chefs et demi, j'en ai quatre et demi pour moi, avec la grande majorité des chefs subalternes. Mais le Malheur est que le moment que l'on revient à moi, on perd son pouvoir et son influence dans le conseil, et que les quatre chefs (dont un grand chef et demi seulement) qui tiennent à Hughes et à St. Germain ont plus de pouvoir que les vingt et quelques autres, parmi lesquels se trouvent ceux qui ont déserté son parti. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 20 August 1836, AAQ, 26 CP, D-21, my emphasis)

Marcoux notes that the chiefs who had left Hughes' "side" seemingly lost power and prestige in the council, especially if they opted to join the curé. Marcoux identifies Hughes as the source of all the troubles: "c'est presque toujours le dimanche que [Hughes] vient faire ses conseils ici, que toujours, il fait manquer l'office divin à un grand nombre de sauvages" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 28 Septembre 1835, AAQ, 26 CP, D-10); "au fond, c'est lui qui est la principale, l'unique cause de tout le mal" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 23 September 1835, AAQ, 26 CP, D-9). The curé also noted that as a result of Hughes, the internal harmony of the village had deteriorated: "depuis quelques années, nos sauvages rentrent dans la barbarie, et pas moins de deux meurtres ont été commis ici depuis le commencement de l'année" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 30 May 1838, ADSJQL 3A-191).

Further, while Hughes claimed that Ignace Delisle was "the most intelligent" and "the best of all Indians" and that he was under Marcoux's "persecution" (Marcoux to Napier, 15 May 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 93: 38355-8), the curé viewed Delisle as a corrupt young man "qui n'a vécu depuis plusieurs années que des présens du gouvernement" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 25 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-33) as well as a "jeune chef noir": "ce jeune homme était bon autrefois, mais depuis qu'il est intimement lié avec St. Germain, [...] il n'est plus reconnaissable" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 21 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-32). Marcoux held that Delisle had been "endoctriné" by officials and was a person who was always ready to "sacrifier l'intérêt général, lorsqu'ils ont quelque chose à gagner pour eux-mêmes, en particulier" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 8 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-27).

On 12 January 1838, another petition "from the chiefs of Sault St. Louis praying for the expulsion of the White intruders at Caughnawaga" was sent to Napier in order to evict members of the Giasson, Mailloux, McComber and de Lorimier families (Baby to

Napier, 25 January 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 95: 39062-3). In answer, the so-called "whites" who had been accused of living on Iroquois territory sent petitions to various officials as well as to the chiefs of Kahnawake to express their wish to remain in the community (Hughes to Napier, 5 May 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 95: 39288-90). Although de Lorimier's claims that he had been unjustly deprived of his annual presents and that the "issue of the order for the expulsion of whites originated in [a] hostility on the part of the Officers of the Indian Department against [him] personally" were dismissed (Walcott to G. de Lorimier, 16 November 1837, NAC RG10 vol. 94: 38744-6), the authorities did promise that if further abuses of authority were reported and "subtantiated", these abuses would "immediately be visited in such a manner as to prevent [their] recurrence" (ibid.).

The 1837 insurrection temporarily diminished internal tensions in Kahnawake. However, as soon as it had been repressed by colonial authorities, George de Lorimier was arrested and accused of high treason.[70] This arrest was based on the following suspicions:

1) He was the second cousin of François-Marie-Thomas Chevalier de Lorimier, a renowned Patriote leader[71]. It is unknown if they actually knew each other but in a time of crisis, it is possible authorities may have feared so. Chevalier de Lorimier was sentenced to death in February 1839 (Lorimier 1988b; Massicotte 1915).

2) In late December 1837, the fifty young men employed by George de Lorimier to operate his ferry and work in his various shops organized a feast. Rum was brought over from Lachine and, during the evening, the men pretended playfully to elect a chief. George testified that on that occasion, he stated: "je suis Patriote, mais pas Patriote rebelle; je n'ai jamais dit qu'ils devaient obéir à mes ordres" (examination of George de Lorimier, ANQM 1837-38: 2409). Although it was later argued that the young men who were present at that feast sang, danced and proclaimed that they were "les patriotes, mais les patriotes de la Reine" (Marcoux to J.-V. Quiblier, 5 February 1838, APSS), de Lorimier's claim of being a Patriote was seemingly used by his bureaucratic enemies to lay charges of disloyalty against him.

3) According to Marcoux, George became increasingly frustrated by the hatred against him and felt that "qu'on l'avait assez maltraité depuis plusieurs années pour le forcer de se jeter dans le parti des rebelles" (Marcoux to Bourget, 29 May 1840, ADSJQL 3A-

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[70] According to Mills, the American threat and the fear of republicanism made Canadian politicians of the nineteenth century reinforce the belief that any opposition to the administration was disloyalty. This conservative mentality, which became even more inflexible after the War of 1812, "equated political dissent with disloyalty" (Mills 1988: 12), to the point that the smallest murmur against government would be considered as a breach of allegiance. Since dissent was disloyal, the concept itself was often used as a tool or a weapon to criminalize and condemn any person opposed to the administration (ibid.: 33). For more on the concept and its meaning in nineteenth century Upper-Canadian politics, please refer to Mills (1988).

[71] George's father Claude had had many brothers, including François-Thomas (born 1740), the grandfather of Patriote leader François-Marie-Thomas Chevalier de Lorimier (Massicotte 1915)

217). However, the curé apparently changed George's mind and encouraged him "a faire son devoir, à exposer sa vie, s'il le fallait, pour sa reine et son pays" (ibid.).

4) In December 1837, when word came from Lachine that Iroquois assistance was needed by British troops, George de Lorimier ordered the young men out of his boats. According to his rivals, this was an act of outright disloyalty and treason.

The newspaper *Le Populaire*, which published daily accounts of similar arrests of people accused of disloyalty, provided this interesting report on 29 Januuary 1838:

> Arrestation: George de Lorimier, aubergiste, traversier du Sault St. Louis a été amené aujourd'hui en cette ville, sous accusation de haute trahison; il est probable que Mr. Delorimier obtiendra bientôt sa mise en liberté; son arrestation ne peut être que la suite de quelques vengeance particulière et il a toujours été connu comme loyal. (*Le Populaire*, 29/01/1838: 4, my emphasis)

In fact, the day George was arrested, Hughes and St. Germain announced "en triomphant cette bonne nouvelle aux chefs menaçant de leur colère et de ses suites, ceux qui diraient ou feraient quelque chose en faveur de Lorimier" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 30 May 1838, ADSJQL 3A-191). St. Germain is said to have used these words to warn the chiefs not to help de Lorimier: "Tokat enhonwaiatakennha oronhiatekha, eniontkaronni" (in the future, if they [chiefs] help Oronhiatekha [George de Lorimier], they will lose something valuable) (Marcoux to J. V. Quiblier, 5 February 1838, APSS). In any case, three weeks later, de Lorimier was released with the help of Marcoux who obtained thirty affidavits in his favor (Marcoux to Turgeon, 19 June 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-31).

Following the end of the second insurrection in 1838, Marcoux's "loyalty" during the Rebellions was also questioned. According to him, this was intended to "agglomérer des soupçons sur ma loyauté, de manière à me faire regarder d'un mauvais oeil par les autorités, et à rendre nulles par là les recommandations que je pourrais donner" (Marcoux to Quiblier, 5 February 1838, APSS). On 17 November 1838, grand chief Martin Tekanasontie and six others testified that on several occasions, Marcoux had been disloyal to the Crown. For instance, they asserted that by refusing to read Bishop Lartigue's *mandement*, the curé was guilty of high treason. They also claimed that on 4 November 1838, Marcoux told the Indians to give up their arms to the Patriotes and that such words were proof of his disloyalty (testimony of J. Sohahio, 3 December 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39802; "Affidavits from 4 Indian Chiefs", 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39775-8; M. Taiowakora, 14 January 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 39891-2). In a "private and confidential" letter to his superior D. C. Napier, J. Hughes even argued that in having asked the Iroquois to think twice before attacking the Patriotes, Marcoux was a "double faced hypocrite" that wished "to make himself pass for a loyal subject" (Hughes to Napier, 12 July 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39408-10). Hughes also described Marcoux as George

de Lorimier's "friend" and as one who "would fill the Indian village with whites of all descriptions" (Hughes to Napier, 26 June 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 97: 40258-9).

In the same vein, the testimonies delivered to the Court Martial by Ignace Delisle and Jacques Teronhiahere in December 1838 were partly intended to get George de Lorimier once again accused of high treason. In his testimony, Delisle discussed how he invited the Patriotes into the village and how "the chiefs" ordered them to be disarmed (Great Britain 1839: 33-4). Also, Teronhiahere described how he alone disarmed Patriote leader F.-M. Lepailleur. By contrast, Nicolas Rousselle, a member of the "rebel" expedition to Kahnawake in November 1838, recounted that it was George de Lorimier who disarmed Lepailleur, not Teronhiahere (N. Rouselle, ANQM 1837-38, no. 2269-70). Moreover, although Lepailleur identified George de Lorimier as the leader of the ten Iroquois who met the Patriotes at the old chapel and as the one who set up the trap by lying to the Patriotes (*Montreal Daily Star* 15/12/1888), Teronhiahere and Delisle barely mention de Lorimier (Great Britain 1839: 49). In addition, whereas de Lorimier testified that he and nine others invited the Patriotes into a trap, Delisle (as with James Hughes) argued that the group of men that advanced to meet the Patriotes did not include de Lorimier and numbered only five or six people. In fact, the only time Delisle talked about his rival is when he stated: "de Lorimier told us not to take their guns away, but we obeyed the chiefs" (ibid.: 34). Teronhiahere similarly testified that the group of Indians who walked to the chapel did not include de Lorimier and that the latter only "came afterwards" (ibid.: 49).

As a result of such testimonies, the significant role played by George de Lorimier on 4 November 1838[72] was denied and quickly forgotten. As Marcoux states:

> par mes conseils, il a tenu à la bonne cause; [...] et avec des officiers équitables, il aurait mérité une grande récompense. C'est lui qui a averti les Sauvages dans l'église et dans le village, pour les faire courir aux armes; c'est lui qui a été le premier en avant et qui par son adresse a amené les rebelles à se faire prendre par les sauvages, qui sans lui n'auraient certainement pas fait ce prodige. Le Capt. Campbell n'a eu qu'à se louer de lui; mais on a su anéantir ses services, et on a donné à d'autres les récompenses qu'il avait méritées. (Marcoux to Coffin, 22 July 1840, AAQ, G. VIII-132, my emphasis)

As George de Lorimier himself put it in a petition to Colborne on 8 April 1839,

> le pétitionnaire, dans la dernière insurrection a fait son devoir comme sujet fidèle et loyal, aussi bien qu'aucun autre, ayant toujours été en avant dans les expéditions, comme le peut certifier le Capt. Campbell; qu'il est même le premier qui a averti les Sauvages de courir aux armes, lorsqu'il apprit l'arrivée des patriotes, et que malgré cela, il est toujours traité de rebelle par Capt. Hughes et St. Germain, qui lui ont refusé les présens extra que le gouvernement a accordé à cette occasion. (G. de Lorimier to Colborne, 8 April 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-55, my emphasis)

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[72] It is interesting to note that following the Patriote march on Kahnawake, "St-Germain was ill treated and struck by [George] de Lorimier" (Hughes to Napier, 17 November 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39773).

In February 1839, a significant event occurred: all chiefs expelled Ignace Delisle from the village council. This was triggered by a feeling of jealousy and mistrust that came to be felt for him among the chiefs. Indeed, because of his strong ties with Hughes, Delisle had obtained the major part of the "glory" for the community's "arrest" of the Patriotes and this seems to have frustrated the other leaders. In fact, Marcoux noted that

> depuis longtemps, les chefs s'aperçoivent qu'ils sont joués par nos officiers et leur favori Ignace Delisle. Ce dernier, par ses mensonges, ayant réussi à accaparer pour lui seul toute la gloire de la victoire remportée cette automne sur les patriotes quoique dans la réalité, il eut moins fait que beaucoup d'autres, a obtenu par conséquent un extra de récompenses, ce qui a choqué les autres chefs, qui se sont regardés comme méprisés. De ce moment, il n'a plus été demandé aux conseils, dans lesquels chacun, par esprit de vengeance et par jalousie, s'est mis à dévoiler toutes les turpitudes de sa conduite depuis plusieurs années. (Marcoux to Turgeon, 25 Feb. 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-51)

Also, Delisle had possibly agreed with St. Germain not to name Patriote leader Joseph N. Cardinal at the Rebellion trials as one of the men who was present in Kahnawake on 4 November 1838. In a letter to his father-in-law St. Germain, the Patriote leader stated:

> il me reste peu de temps pour réfléchir aux moyens de me défendre et me sauver. Cependant, il me faut m'en épargner, et j'ose espérer que vous me seconderez dans ce but. Je crois que le témoignage d'Ignace Delisle me serait favorable et qu'il prouverait que je n'étais pas parmi les gens armés qu'il a pris au Sault. Il pourrait aussi vous donner le nom des Sauvages qui m'ont pris dans le bois qui prouveraient que je n'avais pas d'armes [...]. Et je crois que vous êtes le seul qui puissiez me procurer les témoins que je mentionne. Il est de mon devoir d'employer tous les moyens au pouvoir de l'humanité pour me conserver à une famille chérie et de laisser le reste entre les mains de la Providence [...]. Veuillez cher Monsieur, me rendre ces services. (J.-N. Cardinal to Bernard St. Germain, 24 November 1838, JNC, my emphasis)

During the trials, Delisle did not mention Cardinal's name nor did he explicitly identify him as having been among the men who were part of the expedition (Great Britain 1839). If he did in fact agree not to name a Patriote that had organized an "attack" on Kahnawake, he may have gained the mistrust and hatred of many people in the community.

Yet, by April 1839, Hughes' power in the community started failing. For one thing, the entire council of chiefs reconciled its differences with Marcoux and de Lorimier. Furthermore, the chiefs requested them to write up complaints against Hughes and St. Germain. As described in the following petitions, letters and proceedings, changes in local interests and relationships would eventually result in a massive reduction of tensions.

1) On 8 April 1839, the chiefs sent a list (written by Marcoux) of fifteen grievances concerning Hughes, St. Germain and Delisle. Overall, they unanimously claimed that Ignace Delisle had taken control over the minds of government officials and that he alone guided the distribution of annual presents. They also pointed out that "Ignace travaille à rassembler les jeunes gens pour les soulever contre les chefs et que par là il faut voir qu'ils ne cherchent pas le bien et la tranquillité du village" (Kahnawake chiefs

to Colborne, 8 April 1839, AAQ, 26 CP, D-54). George de Lorimier's request to have Delisle's ferry licence discontinued was, however, rejected on the grounds that "a competition is desirable and would be attended with advantage from the public" (Napier to de Lorimier, 7 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 591: letter # 35).

2) On 31 May and 1 June 1839 an inquiry was held in Kahnawake during which nineteen witnesses, including grand chief Martin Tekanasontie, testified that

> Ignace Delisle has too much influence with the Superintendent in the distribution of the surplus presents [...], [that Hughes] paid no attention to the Chiefs, and attended more to Indians who have no authority [...], that the personal use of the Government Garden by Ignace Delisle is unfit and that this should be appropriated to the joint subsistence of the Tribe on the occasion of Public meetings, [...] [and that Hughes] thinks the Chiefs are not as wise as the young men and therefore attaches more importance to the statements of the latter. (Minutes of proceedings, 31 May - 1 June 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 663, in Jennings et al. 1984)

It was also noted that Delisle "obtains a large blanket for a small one in preference to the Chiefs", that "at the distribution of the presents [many chiefs were] turned out of the room by the Superintendent and Interpreter while several young men, not chiefs, were permitted to stay", and that although Delisle had been expelled from the Council, Hughes continued "to treat him as a chief" (ibid.). It is interesting to note that the Abenaki chiefs of St. Francis also started writting petitions to complain about Hughes' behavior (Hughes to Napier, 15 July 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 98: 40321-4).[73]

3) Following another petition by the chiefs and council members arguing that the Superintendent was interfering with the seigneurial revenues and unjustly favoring Ignace Delisle (Martin Tekanasontie et al. to Napier, 11 January 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 40929-31), Hughes and St. Germain violently replied with complaints and explanations of their own (B. St. Germain to Napier, 15 February 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 41025-6). The interpreter even filed an unsuccessful law-suit of £2000 against Marcoux (Hughes to Napier, 12 July 1838, NAC RG10 vol. 96: 39408-10). Overall, Hughes claimed that the accusations brought against him by the people of Kahnawake were "false", "malicious" and "unfounded" ("Answers to complaints preferred against the Superintendent and Interpreter St. Germain", 10 July 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 98: 40308-12). In spirited response, Hughes "explained" the origins of the factions in Kahnawake as being caused by his rival Marcoux:

> the whole of the troubles, dissentions, quarrels and even battles that have taken place since winter 1833-34 at the village of Caughnawaga were occasioned and brought on by the unheard conduct and proceedings of the Reverend Missionary and his assistant

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[73] James Hughes and Bernard St. Germain are also said to have caused great divisions and difficulties among the Abenaki of St. Francis, as well as in Kanesatake and Akwesasne (Marcoux to Turgeon, 8 July 1838, AAQ, 26 CP, D-36; Marcoux to Turgeon, 18 October 1840, AAQ, 26 CP, D-98; Beaulieu 1997).

George de Lorimier, and a few of their adherents. [...] In the course of the month of November 1833 [...] it pleased [...]. Lord Aylmer to order the officers of the Indian Department [and the chiefs' council] to discontinue all official communication with the Reverend Missionary Mr. Marcoux. [...] This appears to have wounded the feelings of the Reverend Gentleman for some days after [...] he met one of the chiefs [...] with one or two other warriors [and told them] you will repent it, mind what I say. The Reverend gentlemen in this intance kept his word, from that day, or shortly after, the village was in flame. The Reverend Missionary, being aware that the chiefs and great majority of the Tribe detested de Lorimier and wished to get him removed from their village, Mr. Marcoux took the said De Lorimier under his protection [...]. The chiefs readily believed that their Missionary acted in this manner out of pure malice and revenge [...]. ("Report and Observations of the Superintendent at Montreal on a Memorial from certain Chiefs", 26 August 1839, NAC RG10 vol. 98: 40380-5)

Hughes bluntly stated that Marcoux,

by fair promises of his part, such as getting for them the piece of land and mill so long in dispute and attached to the seigneury of La Prairie, and allowing George de Lorimier to get as much liquor as they pleased, [...] succeed in bringing over the majority of the chiefs, who are the greatest drunkards of the village, to his side, and has since, with the assistance of George de Lorimier, occasioned great dissentions among the Tribe (Hughes to Napier, 17 February 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 41032-6).

Hughes also explained, in his own way, the tensions surrounding the ferry:

the [petitions] [against me] represents that George de Lorimier has held the Ferry from Sault St. Louis to Lachine for upwards of ten years. This assertion is most incorrect. Mr. de Lorimier got his first licence for the said ferry in the month of May 1833 in a most clandestine and underhand manner [...]. Before [this] [...], there had never existed but one ferry at that village, and that one was held from time immemorial, long before and since the Conquest, by the Indians only. Many white men, did on former occasions apply for it, but without success, until recently in May 1833. When it pleased the sitting Magistrate of the Court of Quarter sessions [...] to grant a licence to the said George de Lorimier [...] Ignace Kaneratahere and Michel de L'Isle held the ferry three years before. (ibid.)

4) On 27 February 1840, despite more complaints against Hughes and St. Germain as well as the reconciliation of Marcoux with the council, forty-four individuals sent a petition to the authorities stating that they had nothing against Hughes, except for his partiality for Ignace Delisle. They also claimed that de Lorimier and Marcoux had "endeavored to make [the Iroquois] traitors in the Troubles of 1837 and 1838 and that [they were] the whole cause of the present disturbances" (in Minutes of Proceedings, 10-15 April, NAC RG10 vol. 717, in Jennings et al. 1984). In response, Marcoux claimed that this petition was written by "trois ou quatre boutefeux, qui ont voulu y exciter un soulèvement, pour s'emparer des affaires et surtout des argents" (Marcoux to Charles P. Thompson, 29 May 1840, ADSJQL 3A-218). Marcoux insisted that "personne ici en 1837 et 8, ni en aucune autre temps, n'a essayé de rendre les sauvages traîtres à leur Reine. Ceci est une calomnie qui pourrait conduite ses auteurs à payer des grands dommages" (ibid.) .

5) On 19 March 1840, a petition by the majority of the chiefs accused Hughes of

supporting Ignace Kaneratahere (Delisle) and treating him as a Chief, although we have turned him out of our Council [...]. We do not mean to say that Mr Hughes makes Chief; but that he treats his favorites as such [...] by his giving the extra allowance of cloth to three young men, which ought to have been given the chiefs. (in Minutes of proceedings, 10-15 April 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 717, in Jennings et al. 1984)

Hughes was accused of favoring five young men, of interfering with the "monies from the seigneury" Hughes to Napier, 1 February 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 40994-6), and of unjustly excluding George de Lorimier from the distribution of presents. In response, Hughes tried to explain why he joined Delisle by stating that

Marcoux and Mr. G. de Lorimier his bosom friend have themselves to blame [...]. [Ignace Delisle] has been most shamefully persecuted for these several years past by Mr. Marcoux and G. de Lorimier. His character is such that I was bound as Superintendent to protect him and see that justice was done him. Ignace is the son of one of the bravest and most loyal Indians of the village of Caughnawaga, who lost his life at Beaver dams, during the last American War [...]. He was much estimed [...] by Sir George Prevost. His last words were to that officer, if I am killed, take care of my son. ("Detailed answers to complaints preferred against the Superintendent of the Indian Department by J. Marcoux", August 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 100: 41622-37)

6) In April 1840, an inquiry was held to investigate the complaints expressed in the petitions of 27 February and 19 March 1840. After four days of testimonies, the magistrate "fully and honorably acquitted" James Hughes of all the charges against him

because [...] we consider the charges to be frivolous and vexatious, and got up through the secret influence and vindictive feelings of the Missionary and [...] George de Lorimier, the originators of all the difficulties and disagreements which now exist and have for a long time reigned in that village. For these reasons, we are constrained to recommend that removal of these two persons, as the only means whereby harmony, peace and good order may be reestablished and maintained in Caughnawaga. [...] [An] unpardonable waste of their public revenue has been made in the present management of [Kahnawake], and as the Indians themselves desire a change, we would respectfully recommend that all commissions granted to the chiefs of that village be cancelled, and that the number of chiefs be reduced to seven; one for each band, as they are at present constituted, that each Band shall select their chief, subject to the approval of the Governor General. (Minutes of proceedings, 10-15 April, NAC RG10 vol. 717, in Jennings et al. 1984, my emphasis)

However, the proposed expulsions were not undertaken and Marcoux's efforts to document Hughes' and St-Germian's damaging actions continued.

7) On 29 May 1840, a petition was sent to the Governor-General of British North America. This document was signed by forty-six Kahnawake residents, many of whom later testified that they had not read its contents. It was also signed by one grand chief and a few council members. The petitioners stated that the village was composed of several "mauvais Vivants Blancs" that "essayèrent durant les troubles de 1837 et 1838, de nous rendre traîtres à Notre Reine et à notre Pays" (Wishe Sarenkes et al., to

Charles P. Thompson, 29 May 1840, ADSJQL 3A-210). Rejecting the validity of Delisle's expulsion, they stated that "nos Chefs, qui sans doute sont conseillés par ces Mauvais Vivants susmentionnés ont eu l'injustice d'expulser du Conseil, plusieurs de ses meilleurs Membres, et d'en susbstituer d'autres à leur place" (ibid.). Claiming that "il y a trop de chefs et membres de Conseil pour une poignée de monde que nous sommes" (ibid.), the petitioners suggested reducing the number of chiefs to three, appointing the chiefs for one year and holding elections following each term. They also asked that one warrior of each "bande", "qui sont au nombre de dix-huit" (ibid.), be hired to assist the chiefs. Finally, they requested the expulsion "de tous les Blancs hors du village comme c'étoit autrefois" (ibid.). Judging that Marcoux was at the heart of all the disturbances, the Govervor-General ordered his expulsion (Béchard 1985: 687)

8) In turn, Father Marcoux and the council of chiefs gathered enough affidavits to force a final inquiry on 16 July 1840. Bishop Turgeon of Québec as well as various British officers testified that the curé and George de Lorimier had been loyal during the Rebellions. A great majority of warriors and chiefs expressed their friendship toward George de Lorimier as well as their opposition to the reforms proposed by Hughes, Delisle and their few supporters. They argued that if these measures were adopted, they would overturn the hereditary laws and customs in Kahnawake. Marcoux was later acquitted of all charges (Devine 1922: 378; "Notes explicatives sur une enquête tenue au village de Caughnawaga", 16 July 1840, GB N-34). In addition, the proposed changes and expulsions were not undertaken and Kahnawake remained governed locally by a council of seven higher chiefs until the establishment of the band council system in 1889 (Reid 1998). Interestingly, in 1875, an unsuccessful petition by Ignace Delisle and 189 other *Kahnawakehro:non* requested that the chiefs of the community be, from that moment on, elected for three years and that their number be reduced from seven to three (Ennias Kaneratahere et al. to J.R. Pinsonault, 16 February 1875, NAC RG10 vol. 1953, file 4452).[74]

By December 1840, Ignace Delisle's[75] adherents, now labeled as "les Travers", "parti rebelle" or "le petit parti de M. Hughes", numbered about fifteen people. On 4

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[74] Gerald Reid (1998; 1999) has shown that the establishment of the band council system in Kahnawake in 1889 resulted in large measure from a sustained and concerted effort by a significant portion of the Kahnawake community for change in the chiefs' council. Reid argues that in the 1880s, whereas some people sought the maintenance of the council under the "old rules", others wished to obtain changes in the system and supported government proposals (Reid 1998: 30). Did tensions over these issues develop out of the government-enhanced antagonism which disrupted community harmony in the 1830s?

[75] In the records of the Saint-Francis-Xavier Mission in Kahnawake, Ignace Delisle (Ennias Aneratаere, Ennias Kaneratahere) is referred to as "ancien voyageur". He wed Elizabeth Kaherori in 1826 and died in 1877. Only one of their six children reached adulthood and married: Joseph Iohahiio (1827-1916) wed Anne

December 1840, both factions signed a "Peace Treaty" which included seven articles. Five grand chiefs and their two main rivals, Ignace Delisle and Thomas Sawenowanne, were present ("Grand Thomas"). Encouraged by D. C. Napier, they all agreed

> that all past subjects of dispute should be buried in oblivion and from henceforth forgotten and that his Children at the Sault will in future live in friendship and brotherly love as members of one family. ("Minutes of a conference held at the Indian Office in Montreal", 1 December 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 100: 41826-7)

They also concluded that Indians who will "obstruct the good order in the village shall be excluded from any participation in the annual bounty as a mark of their Father's disapprobation of their perverse conduct" (ibid.). Interestingly, it was agreed that "as the children of all Indian women, without reference to their Paternity, are classed as Indians, and as nearly 3/4 of the Tribe are descended from whites, it is impossible to exclude such persons from the advantages of adopted or *bona fide* Indians" (ibid.).

Feeling an increasing enmity toward him from the great majority of Kahnawake's residents, Hughes did not attend the annual distribution of presents in December 1840 (Hughes to Napier, 11 December 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 100: 41861). Gradually, officials recognized that Ignace Delisle had been Hughes' "favorite" for a long time and initiated changes in the administration of the Indian Department's District of Montréal. In December 1840, Hughes and St. Germain were "removed from any official connexion" with Kahnawake (Napier to Civil Secretary, 19 March 1842, NAC RG10 vol. 593, letter #5). However, in 1842, Hughes and St. Germain continued "to identify themselves with the party opposed to the Grand Chiefs of the Indians of Caughnawaga" (ibid.). Following these "recent attempts on the part of Mr. Hughes and others to create new troubles at that village" (ibid.),[76] it was agreed that he had been "greatly influenced by the Interpreter, that St. Germain is the principal agitator [...] and that his further employment as an interpreter cannot be attended with advantage to the service of the Indian Department" (ibid.). The interpreter was placed "upon a retired allowance at the rate of 75£ per annum" (Napier to Civil Secretary, 18 June 1844, NAC RG10 vol. 593, letter # 59). It was also ordered that

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Mailloux-Katsitsiaroroks in 1846. Five of Joseph's children married and had children (Elizabeth, Michel, Charlotte, Louis, André) (Faribault-Beauregard 1993).

[76] A document from the year 1842 indeed states that several "young men" were opposed to the chiefs and constituted a "Parti Rebelle" (Beaulieu 1997: 49). In Marcoux's words, "les Travers se plaignent que l'on tient conseil ici sans les mander; mais les chefs ne se sont point obligés à cela" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 7 December 1840, AAQ, 26 CP, D-102). Indeed, there was a "conjoncture politique extraordinaire prévalent au village" by which a group of young men claiming to be the chiefs had required the presence of Kanesatake chiefs in Kahnawake, "et cela entièrement à l'insu des Chefs du Sault qui seuls ont le droit de mander les nations chez eux" (Marcoux to Simpson, 12 February 1842, NAC RG10 vol. 597: 46238).

Hughes be "attached exclusively to the Indian Tribe at the Lake of Two Mountains" (Napier to Civil Secretary, 19 March 1842, NAC RG10 vol. 593, letter #5).[77]

In other circles, despite the fact that the judgement rendered in 1834 "proving" that George de Lorimier was an Indian" was recognized as being in "accordance with the law" (Attorney General to C. Montizambert, 7 January 1840, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 40884-9), his annual presents were never distributed to him.[78] Intense resentment toward him persisted as well, as one person was apparently paid to kill him or his farm animals in the summer of 1840 (Marcoux to Coffin, 22 July 1840, AAQ, G.VIII-132). In November 1840, a petition by nine people as interpreted by Bernard St. Germain stated:

> par l'expérience que nous avons eue nous pensons et sommes persuadés que tant qu'il restera des Blancs, ou Enfants de Blancs qui ont été légitimement mariés aux Sauvagesses, la Paix ne sera jamais établie dans notre Village. Ces Blancs, Père, au défit de la Loi, du Gouvernement, des Anciennes Coutumes de tous les Villages Sauvages, et des Papiers récemment signés de ta main, et affichés à plusieurs portes d'Églises continuent de résider parmi nous. Ils nous privent d'une grande Portion de notre Terrain, soit par achat ou autrement, ce que tu sais, Père, [est] contre la Loi, aucun Blanc n'ayant permission d'acheter du Terrain des Sauvages, ni les Sauvages permission d'en vendre. Il y a encore un de ces Blancs (George de Lorimier), Père, qui s'enrichit sur notre Domaine et d'une manière frauduleuse. Il occupe plus de Terrain que Dix Sauvages; et si notre Père n'y met point arrêt, les Blancs dans peu de temps se rendront Maîtres de nos propriétés. C'est pourquoi nous te prions, Père [...], d'ordonner que ni les Chefs ni les Guerriers ne vendent ni ne cèdent en aucune manière du terrain ou des Propriétés aux Blancs ou Étrangers d'aucune description quelconque. (Thomas Sawonowanne et al. to Lord Sydenham, NAC RG10 vol. 99: 41334)

In 1841, Ignace Delisle, Thomas Sawenowanne and fifteen others who still contested the authority of the chiefs finally agreed that "comme on a déjà plusieurs fois fait notre possible pour faire partir George de Lorimier du village, et que l'on n'a pu réussir [...], nous proposons que George de Lorimier reste dans le village". In exchange, they requested that "après sa mort, sa famille s'en retire" (Ignace Kaneratahere et al. to Napier, 23 November 1841, NAC RG10 vol. 102: 42689, my emphasis).

A few years following George de Lorimier's death in 1863 (at the age of fifty-eight), his widow petitioned authorities to obtain her own enfranchisement and that of her children. She also requested that in accordance to her late husband's will, she be

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[77] In 1840, B. St-Germain was replaced by Edouard-Narcisse de Lorimier (Marcoux to Turgeon, 5 July 1840, AAQ, 26 CP, D-82), one of George de Lorimier's many brothers. Edouard and George had the same father but a different mother (Massicotte 1915). About one month before his death in 1844, St. Germain seemingly reconciled his differences with Marcoux and destroyed documents he had produced to incriminate the curé. James Hughes retired in 1846-7. Before his retirement, he and Marcoux often passed each other in Montréal or on steamboats. On these occasions, the Superintendent is said to have always ignored the curé, preferring to address him "que par des signes" (Marcoux to Turgeon, 30 Juin 1844, AAQ, 26 CP, IX-1).

[78] The cancelation of presents given to children of white men and Native women was officially approved in November 1837. As a result, out of a population of 982 people in Kahnawake in 1837, 917 residents received presents. By contrast, in 1828, Kahnawake's entire population (967) had obtained annual presents. In 1843, out of 1100 Kahnawake Iroquois, 950 were obtaining their annuities (Canada 1847).

considered the owner of his "valuable property" (Louise McComber-de Lorimier to Lord Dufferin, 6 March 1873, NAC RG10 vol. 1887, file 1401). Although his "Indian origin" had been recognized in 1834, the "pretensions" of his widow and five of her seventeen children were denied. Indeed, claiming that George de Lorimier was not an Indian and that he and his wife had never been recognized as members of the band, the chiefs' council and government authorities rejected the de Lorimier claim (in "Caughnawaga Agency: Correspondence regarding whites on the Caughnawaga Reserve, 1884-1894", NAC RG10 vol. 2693, file 139964 pt. 1). As a result, feeling intense pressure from the community, George de Lorimier's sons who had inherited land from their father and grand-father gradually sold their respective properties to various community residents and left Kahnawake for various destinations such as Montréal, North Dakota, Michigan, Montana and California (Massicotte 1915).[79] Also, throughout the nineteenth century, a number of families whose members were seen as the descendants of whites or who were related to the George de Lorimier family remained the targets of numerous eviction requests as well as many threats to their lands, homes and lives.[80]

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[79] In January 1883, George de Lorimier's widow Marie-Louise McComber donated the entire property to her sons Alexandre, Jean-Baptiste (John) and Joseph. When Alexandre died, he donated his lots to Joseph, who, by a deed of donation signed in February 1899, gave the property to his brother Albert-Emmanuel. In 1906, all properties were leased by Albert E. to Kahnawake resident Joseph Laronde and, after his death, to his widow Louise Konwasethe. In April 1910, the properties were leased to Jacques McComber and his wife. In November 1920, Kahnawake resident Joseph Herbert Jacobs purchased the entire property from Albert E. de Lorimier. As for Jean-Baptiste de Lorimier, he sold his property to Jacques Laronde sometime between 1901 and 1905 ("Agreement of Alexander de Lorimier and P. Bayard regarding land on the Primeau Road, 1894", NAC RG10 vol. 2775, file 155577; "Correspondence, reports and minutes of council meeting regarding a dispute caused by the closing of a road by Joseph Laronde on land he had purchased from John Delorimier on the Caughnawaga Reserve, 1901-1905", NAC RG10 vol. 3030, file 233350; "Correspondence regarding the de Lorimier estate, 1911-1945", NAC RG10 vol. 3165, file 379792). It must be specified that George de Lorimier does not seem to have direct descendents in Kahnawake today. In fact, the few modern-day Delormier and Dell families simply adopted the name in the early twentieth century to abide by Canadian legislation forcing every "Indian" to have a "Canadian" family name.

[80] In the 1860s, young men were said to have threatened the lives and properties of families of "Canadians" whose members were not seen as legitimate Indians with the right to live in Kahnawake. Indeed, the "Delorimier, Giasson, Deblois, Meloche and a few others" were accused of being whites as well as "masters of our Reserve". Similar threats continued in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1878, a document signed by eight people was placed on the church's door and was addressed to the "half-breeds" living in the village. It read: "Si vous ne partez pas du village, gare à vos têtes, à vos bâtisses, à vos animaux et soyez bien avertis de ce que nous vous disons". In another letter, some Kahnawake residents warned that they "will bring down vengeance on those who have given trouble, on those who are making themselves masters here [...]. The same thing will happen to the Indians who are in favor of the Canadians". In some cases, houses and barns were destroyed by arson while cows and horses were killed. Delorimier family members were harassed and some of their properties were destroyed by arson at least twice. Arson also damaged Giasson properties at least four times, while many of their farm animals were killed. Osias Meloche, the husband of Charlotte-Louise Giasson, a daughter of Charles G. Giasson, was even killed in the arson fire that destroyed his home and barn in May 1878. Interestingly, the attorney hired by the Giasson family to prevent their eviction was Albert-Emmanuel de Lorimier, a son of George de Lorimier. Whereas many fewer wealthy "whites" were evicted in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Meloche, Daillebout and McComber families gained their "Indian" status and Albert-E. de Lorimier eventually won for the Giasson's their right to remain in Kahnawake (in "Caughnawaga Agency: Agent Georges Cherrier reports threats

*Internal community rivalries and collective identity: discussion*

This chapter has revealed important archival data regarding the internal state of Kahnawake in the 1830s. It also tends to indicate that larger forces other than mere internal strife played a role in fostering widespread rivalries. The divisive process of "co-optation" works on already present cleavages and involves the displacement of established leaders away from the group and towards government officials. This is often intended to create an internal political grip within a community. According to anthropologist Noel Dyck, "not all aspects of federal Indian administration have been invariably resisted by all aboriginal communities" (Dyck 1997: 337-8). This raises the question of whether "instances of non-resistance, or even of active cooperation on the part of some aboriginal people with certain government policies, initiatives or procedures" (ibid.) may have occurred. Traditionally, Native societies possessed as leaders middle-aged or elderly men who consistently tried to defend their status from ambitious young men. With the decline of Native autonomy in the nineteenth century, it became difficult for aboriginal communities to agree upon courses of action. In turn, divisions between opposed parties deepened as government agents bribed established leaders[81] or bypassed these chiefs in favor of "younger men" more disposed to cooperate with government programs. Because their efforts had consistently been restrained by established leaders, some Native young men sided with government officials as a way of gaining power over the chiefs. This often "had the effect of replacing, often with administrative encouragement, the older, kinship-based [...] leadership, [thus] promoting new models of leadership selection and authority derived from Whites" (Cornell 1988: 37). With the resulting tensions, people tried to exclude their opponents by declaring that they had no right to participate in meetings and councils (Benn 1998: 58).

In the late 1820s and early 1830s, the British Crown sought to cut back on various expenses by reducing the amount of presents annually distributed to Natives in Lower and Upper Canada. Some of the first people to be affected by such policies were the children of white men and Native women, who, in the eyes of officials, were no longer seen as Indians who had the right to obtain presents and live in Indian villages. Within the context of such policies, the government sought ways to enhance its control over the jurisdiction of

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made against the lives of Half-Breeds living on the Reserve, 1878-1880", NAC RG10 vol. 2057, file 9702; "Correspondence regarding whites on the Caughnawaga Reserve, 1884-1894", NAC RG10 vol. 2693, file 139964 pt. 1).

81 When discussing the resistance offered by missionaries and local leaders to "civilizing" policies, British officials argued that to "overcome these and other difficulties [...], experience and discretion will suggest various means; and amongst others, the allotting to the chiefs, and to the other leading individuals, more extensive grants than to other persons may perhaps have some effect" (Murray to Kempt, 25 January 1835, in Great Britain 1969a: 89). It was also suggested that "increasing the lots of the present chiefs to 150 or 200 acres each, will materially tend to confirm their co-operation in promoting the settlement of their tribes" (Kempt to Murray, 20 May 1830, in Great Britain 1969a: 96).

Kahnawake. Not surprisingly, Father Joseph Marcoux attempted to protect his own political and religious interests by resisting certain measures. By 1833, enmity between Marcoux and officials, simmering antagonism over the issue of land appropriation by the de Lorimier family, and tensions surrounding the ownership of a ferry exploded as Superintendent James Hughes and interpreter Bernard St. Germain, hoping to diminish (or eliminate) Marcoux's influence (or presence) in the community, found ways to convince some chiefs to oppose the curé and George de Lorimier. Many residents even came to believe that their lands were being taken by de Lorimier and that Marcoux supported him. Ignace Delisle, a young war chief in his early thirties, joined sides with Hughes and St. Germain, and the local priest was isolated from the chiefs. In the wake of these events, council members were replaced and, over the next years, political changes were suggested by Hughes and his Native supporters, who had been given greater prestige and influence.

The resulting networks of relationships may have played an important role in shaping the behavior of specific Kahnawake residents during the Rebellions. Indeed, by helping the British, Ignace Delisle perhaps sought to enhance his own prestige with government officials, who, in turn, remained generous with him by providing him with continual admiration and benefits. Encouraged by such developments, many other young men such as Thomas Sawennowanen seemingly followed Delisle's ways. In seeking to obtain material benefits, Delisle or Sawennowanen may have intended to prevent their key political position as privileged links between the government and Kahnawake from being offered to other individuals. As such, many leaders sought to protect their authority as well as the political legitimacy of Kahnawake as an autonomous community, which they governed locally within Lower Canada. In this context, George de Lorimier may have felt that by cooperating with the Crown and defending Kahnawake would help him obtain government sympathy and community acceptance. As well, in de Lorimier's view, a renewed distribution of his presents may have reified his "Indian" status.

Above all, this chapter has shown that on the eve of the Rebellions, a wide range of internal rivalries had marked Kahnawake's local dynamics at least since 1833 and continued to do so until 1840. In spite of this, the Iroquois did not wage war on each other nor did they decide to create separate villages. On the contrary, throughout the 1830s, when the time came to protect collective interests such as land or annual presents, all chiefs and council members repeatedly signed petitions together and asserted their belonging to the Iroquois Indian "tribe" or village of Kahnawake. Similarly, when Kahnawake was "attacked" in 1838, Ignace Delisle and his friend Laurent Tsioniatarenton joined other "Indians" as well as their bitter rival George de Lorimier in order to defend their community from Patriotes, whom they identified as "the French" or "the Canadians". Also,

despite the fact that they had often petitioned to have de Lorimier expelled from Kahnawake, community residents Jacques Sohahio and Thomas Sawennowanen joined him and eight others to lead seventy-five armed Patriotes into an ambush. Although Delisle and Teronhiahere later used their testimonies to the Court Martial to get de Lorimier accused of disloyalty, the fact that bitter rivals did join together shows that, for brief moments, competing claims were set aside by members of opposed interest groups. Moreover, the Rebellions seem to have had a positive effect on the internal state of the village: following the events of 1837-38, Ignace Delisle was fired from the chiefs' council and chief Martin Tekanasontie moved against Hughes and his supporters. In turn, the two government officials (Hughes and St. Germain) whose actions had caused the most damage were gradually relieved from any political role in Kahnawake. Interestingly, it seems as if the Rebellions brought Kahnawake people together and enhanced their awareness that they were being destroyed from within through government interference.

In 1837-38, in a context of "co-optation" and factional disputes, a sense of common belonging became crystallized among the people of Kahnawake when they were threatened by Patriote invasion and expropriation. This, in turn, prompted a series of cohesive efforts intended to take up arms and defend their "community". However, it must be specified that by intervening in the Rebellions, the Iroquois did not create a collective identity nor did they become more aware of their identity. Rather, for brief moments in December 1837 and November 1838, as a result of direct threats to key collective identity symbols such as land and the right to existence as a distinct "Indian" community, personal interests were realigned and directed in common efforts aimed at protecting collective goals and interests. Acting as "we, Indians" in the face of "French" or "Canadian" invaders of their land, the Iroquois' collective actions were based primarily on their own interpretations of the events as well as of their relationships with neighboring "Patriotes" and government officials. Concluding that they may stand to lose "their" land and lives, the people of Kahnawake did not apprehend seventy-five insurgents or join sides with British soldiers to promote the British cause, but to defend their common interests and protect their land from intrusion and feared expropriation. By intervening in 1837-38, the Kahnawake Iroquois made a political claim about themselves and sought to protect the land, interests, and collective identity which they felt belonged to them as members of a Native and Iroquois community.

*Fig. 14: George de Lorimier (1805-1863). He was also known as Antoine-George de Lorimier and George Oronhiatekha de Lorimier. He was a merchant, a wealthy land owner and a ferry operator. Sources indicate that he played a key but forgotten role in defending the village of Kahnawake from the Patriotes on 4 November 1838. Indeed, he was the first person to hear from the Patriotes that if the people of Kahnawake did not collaborate with the insurgents, they would lose their territory; he was the one who warned the congregation assembling in church; he was part of the group that met the Patriotes before leading them into an ambush. In 1835, George married Marie-Louise McComber. Stephen-Ambroise, Albert Emmanuel (Albert Oronhiatekha), Georges-Gervais, Joseph (Sose Ountiakase) and Jean-Baptiste (Sawakis Tahohenta) were five of their seventeen children. The first two still have many descendants in Montreal and the latter has descendants in places such as California, Delaware and Virginia. George de Lorimier lies buried under the Saint-Francis-Xavier Mission in Kahnawake (Massicotte 1915). Photo credit: F. de Lorimier (Montreal), D. Mouisset and J. W. de Lorimier (California) and C. T. de Lorimier (Virginia).*

*Fig. 15: Claude-Nicolas-Guillaume de Lorimier (1744-1825). Also known as Major de Lorimier or Teiohatekon, he is the father of George de Lorimier and a key source of the antagonism that was felt toward his son and other Kahnawake residents in the nineteenth century. He and his twelve children descended from a French military family. In fact, from the arrival of Guillaume de Lorimier in Canada in 1685 until the latter part of the eighteenth century, most of the de Lorimier men were trained to become military officers. Claude's father and many of his brothers were part of a new French-Canadian aristocracy who opted to stay in Canada and integrate themselves in the rising Anglo-saxon bourgeoisie following the conquest of New France by the British in 1763 (Faribault-Beauregard 1993; La Presse 1927; Le Petit Journal 1944; Massicotte 1915). Photo credit: D. Mouisset and J. W. de Lorimier (California), and C. T. de Lorimier (Virginia).*

# - CONCLUSION -

*There are only two things that unite men: fear and interests. (Napoleon Bonaparte)*

*It strikes us as the very height of absurdity to deprecate the employment of Indians against brigands, pirates and assassins... What principle of justice, what motive of humanity, what usage of nations should prevent the Indians from rushing to meet the invaders, or the government from organizing them into an available force?... [The Indians] have lives and properties of their own to guard, they are as much the subjects of her Majesty as the whites themselves, and it is a strange thing that they alone are to be debarred from the exercise of man's inherent and instinctive privilege: the right of self-defense. (London Standard, 5 January 1839: 3)*

*The Mohawks, loyal to the British? I don't think so! The Indian villages were always close to the borders because the governments knew that Indians would protect their lands. They were not loyal to the governments but to Mother Earth (Kahnawake resident, personal communication, 1998)*

When it touches upon the Rebellions of 1837-38, Kahnawake's local history maintains that the residents of this community "were not interested in this latest conflict between the French and the English" and that they "would only become involved if the Patriotes proposed to attack Kahnawake or Kanesatake, or to invade the territory near these settlements" (Blanchard 1980: 317). It is further said that Kahnawake's "first involvement was when a call for help came from Lachine [on 13 December 1837] which was expecting a rebel attack. Our people saw the fall of Lachine as a stepping-stone for the rebels to cross the river and attack Kahnawake in order to join other Châteauguay-Valley Patriots" (Beauvais 1994: 19). This oral history further holds that on 4 November 1838, the Patriotes intended to "sneak up" behind the Iroquois and "attack" them while they were assembling peacefully at church. To some *Kahnawakehro:non* I have spoken to on the topic, the story of what took place on 4 November 1838 is known as the *Patriote Saonkenatakari*, a term which is said to mean "when the Patriotes came in here and tried to raid our town" or "when they came to attack, unprovoked, without cause". The story describes primarily an "attack", an "invasion", a "trap" and an "armed assault" by armed people who were out to "kill", "massacre" or "slaughter" the Indians and "take over the community". In this respect, the Patriote raid is seen as a "betrayal" of Kahnawake and its people and the event has become "a history lesson that is remembered and told by many of the old people of Kahnawake" (Blanchard 1980: 318). These oral and written interpretations of the past serve to illustrate the types of hazards the community has been exposed to over the years. When the incident of 4 November 1838 is recalled by Kahnawake people today, the Rebellions and their causes are ultimately forgotten because they are deemed irrelevant. It is simply stated that the Patriotes intended to invade the town (see Katzer 1972: 77). Furthermore, because the Iroquois apprehended people who wanted to "attack" Kahnawake, the *Patriote Saonkenatakari* provides a perfect example of how the

entire Iroquois community was able to defend its land and its residents in a cohesive manner. In other words, by serving as a "proof" of "white betrayal" and of the "fact" that Kahnawake people can only trust themselves, the story of the Patriote raid promotes an emotional bond between the *Kahnawakehro:non* as well as a powerful attachment to their consistently threatened land and identity.

Overall, Kahnawake's oral tradition tells of a widespread and immediate Iroquois view of the Patriotes as potential invaders or land grabbers. Fear that Patriotes might attack Kahnawake is often the only reason that is given to explain why the Iroquois intervened in the crisis. Although the situation was far more complex than what is accounted for in the oral history, the evidence examined in this thesis tends to show that as a result of consistent rumors, a history of difficult relations with nearby non-Native settlers, as well as direct threats of invasion, the people of Kahnawake seem to have rapidly seen "Papineau's People" as great menaces to their territory and livelihood. Sources seem to indicate that the Rebellions were immediately assessed by the Iroquois as a potential threat to their right as collective seigneurs to administer and profit from the Sault-Saint-Louis seigneury and, more fundamentally, to their right as people and Indians to occupy their own land.

Inspired by Trigger's statement that "any new knowledge of how Natives perceived the world around them and reacted to it "ought to improve an understanding of how and why they behaved as they did in specific circumstances" (Trigger 1976: xxiv), I have attempted to address Kahnawake's interactions and relationships with non-Native settlers and the British Crown prior to and during the Rebellions in order to understand why the Iroquois decided to get involved in the crisis. Overall, I have intended to describe how the people of Kahnawake and specific Iroquois people evaluated their relationships with British officials, non-Native neighbors, and the Patriotes, and in what ways these interpretations made the Iroquois believe that intervention in opposition to the latter might be a productive way of satisfying their own interests and defending a collective identity. In this respect, I argued that in 1837-38, in response to increasing British government policies intended to eliminate annuities given to Indians, the Kahnawake Iroquois may have used "strategic loyalty" to be looked upon as deserving of such presents. Such a move may have also been intended to obtain from the Crown the return of an alienated portion of land. However, it must be remembered that interests such as land and annuities were not only sought for their material importance, but, more fundamentally, for their symbolic role in providing the people of Kahnawake with criteria around which they defined themselves an "Indians" and "Iroquois" against non-Native governments and settlers. Indeed, within the complex process of decision to intervene, land and the "sacred debt" of annual presents were identity symbols around which the Iroquois rallied and united. In turn, as theoretical

discussions on the role of symbols in the construction and expression of a collective identity have pointed out (Cohen 1985; Cerulo 1995), land and annual presents provided the means needed for the *Kahnawakehro:non* to transform their collective identity into effective cohesive action. Conversely, the very attempt by the British government to eliminate annual presents to Indians or to deny the legitimacy of Native land claims may have reinforced the role of presents and land in Native self-identification.

As a fluid and long-standing social construct, Kahnawake's sense of belonging at the time of the Rebellions had been shaped through the adoption and use of fluctuating and transforming symbols consistently articulated within power relations with other Native groups, non-Native settlers, and European monarchies. In 1837-38, annuities and land were put forward by the "Iroquois tribe of Sault St. Louis" as symbols of a collective identity. Because such interests, as well as the group's symbolic and territorial boundaries had, over the years, helped the *Kahnawakehro:non* develop a sense of collective belonging, the community as a whole responded assertively to their non-recognition and encroachment. Also, the Kahnawake Iroquois had shaped their identity through their occupancy of a social and cultural space limited by specific symbols and boundaries. As a result, in December 1837 and in November 1838, they seem to have thought that if Patriotes trespassed in that space, their sense of self and community would be destroyed. It is in these terms that it can be suggested that in 1837-38, the *Kahnawakehro:non* may have embraced a military alliance with the Crown in order to defend their own interests.

Finally, though I have tried to tease out the key interests at stake, the archival sources used in this thesis were no doubt incomplete. As a result, it was not possible to obtain a complete picture of Kahnawake's internal political state in the 1830s. However, it was shown that despite severe internal rivalries, the community came together to defend collective interests. In keeping with the reflections provided by Baker (1987) and Trigger (1976), this indicates that despite the ongoing presence of internal turmoil within communities, certain crisis situations may require a transcending of factions. Indeed, instead of dividing itself up along the lines of the Patriotes and having one segment encourage "Papineau's People", the entire community came together to pursue common goals and aspirations. Indeed, despite the fact that factional struggles were at work in the community prior to and at the time of the Rebellions, rival interest groups temporarily came together and asserted their identity as "we, Indians" against "the French", who had "come to make war on us" (see Great Britain 1839: 30-48). The speed and unity which seem to be characteristic of the Iroquois interventions are certainly consistent with a collective sense of identity as felt and expressed by the *Kahnawakehro:non* in December 1837 and November 1838. This tends to suggest that the will to defend and express a collective identity played a

fundamental role in fostering the Kahnawake Iroquois' collective intervention. This may also indicate that factions and collective identity need not be antithetical, as they can come to play in different circumstances. In Kahnawake's case, factions were not destroyed through a concerted action. Rather, they were set aside while the community intervened to defend already existing boundaries in the face of clearly defined "outsiders".

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In the 1830s, the Iroquois people of Kahnawake experienced epidemics, tense relations with non-Native neighbors as well as important changes to their local economy. Kahnawake's relationships with "others" were experienced within a context of power, where mutual interactions and representations of the self and the other took place. As political discourses were increasingly marked by racialist terms such as "Brown Boys" or "White Father", Kahnawake chiefs used words such as "Red Children" to claim a positive identity and make statements about cultural and political difference (see Shoemaker 1997). As with previous armed conflicts involving non-Natives, the 1837-38 Rebellions were assessed by the Kahnawake Iroquois mainly as yet another threat to their territory and survival. In the midst of internal and external pressures, they intervened to protect themselves and to let the British government and their non-Native neighbors know they would not relinquish control over common ambitions such as annuities and disputed portions of their territory. In this context, Native warfare and symbolic rituals such as body painting or war-whoops provided a sense of identification, cohesiveness and cultural differentiation. Thus although the Iroquois collaborated with the British, they did so on their own terms, without identifying themselves with non-Native soldiers.

In 1837-38, the people of Kahnawake acted collectively to stand by their "story", to be recognized as Kahnawake Iroquois and, ultimately, to raise a symbolic barrier around themselves and their territory. In so doing, they put aside competing interests, cohesively drew on traditional skills, and expressed a sense of collective belonging in the face of real, feared, or imagined Patriote threats to their land. Although the main Native and non-Native actors would have told this "story" in very different words, the evidence tends to reveal that the importance of gratuitous Iroquois loyalty to the Crown has been over-emphasized. Rather, a group of Native people divided along certain lines perceived threats to common boundaries and interests, and, through concerted efforts, conceived themselves as a distinct and united Kahnawake people. In 1837-38, the Kahnawake Iroquois seem to have been much more loyal to themselves than to the British Crown.

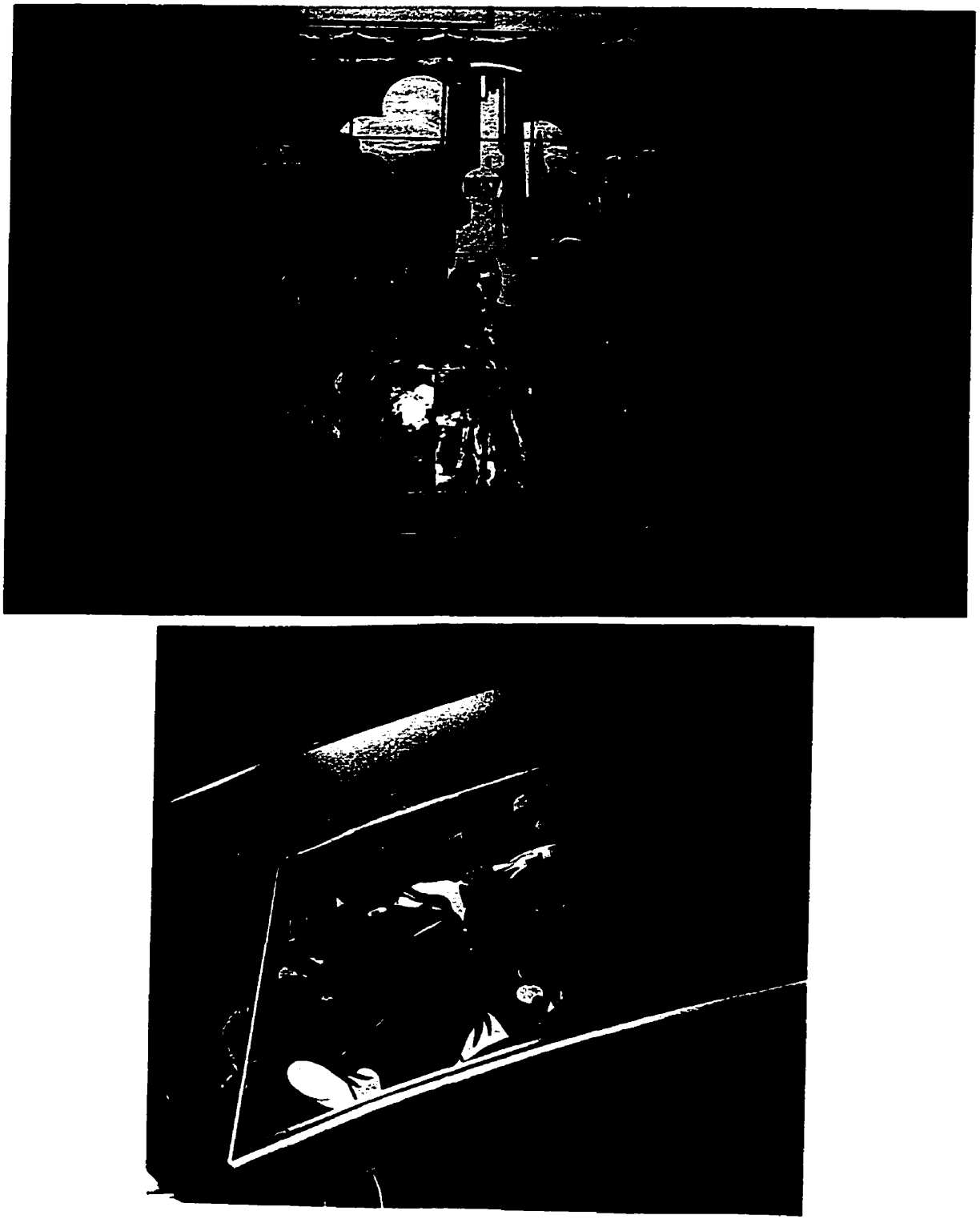

*Fig. 16: Indians and Patriotes in popular culture...*
*Mural depicting the history of the Rebellions of 1837-38, with Louis-Joseph Papineau at its center. Located at the tunnel level of the "Papineau" subway station in Montréal, this mural is divided into three sections, two of which are positioned over the tracks. A small portion of this mural depicts Patriotes (who are unarmed) wanting to borrow the many weapons of an Indian, who is reluctant to collaborate with the insurgents. Note the "tepees" in the background and the highly contrasting red skin of the native individual (photo by author, with permission from the Société de Transport de la Communauté Urbaine de Montréal).*

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**AAQ** - Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Québec, Québec.
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**ADJSQL** - Archives du Diocèse de Saint-Jean-de-Québec-à-Longueuil.
-file 3A: "Saint-François-Xavier-de-Caughnawaga".

**ANQM** - Archives Nationales du Québec à Montréal.
-**1837-38**: dossier "Événements 1837-1838".
-**JNC**: Fonds Joseph-Narcisse Cardinal (P-1000/61-1240).

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