

**Anishinaabe Treaty-Making in the 18th - and 19th-Century
Northern Great Lakes: From Shared Meanings to Epistemological Chasms**

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Abstract

This dissertation traces the evolution of Anishinaabe treaty-making process via the diplomatic language and implements used (wampum, calumet pipes, medals, clothing, texts, parchment and paper). Anishinaabe people (Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Potawatomi, Mississauga, Algonquin, and Saulteux), entered into numerous treaties with their neighbours, including the Haudenosaunee (aka Naadowe, Iroquois or Six Nations), Bwaan (Sioux), French and British. The Anishinaabe treaty process was principally an oral-based practice that utilized material objects as mnemonic devices. Once a treaty was established, it had to be renewed, often annually, around the council fire.

This dissertation deliberately draws upon council proceedings, and later petitions, to reveal the diplomatic discourse utilized by the Anishinaabeg. This diplomatic discourse is rife with metaphors that eventually get supplanted by legalese. Similarly, the signed treaty document eventually usurps the calumet pipe, wampum belt, and oral tradition as representative of the treaty in the colonial record. The thesis demonstrates the foundational importance and continuity of metaphors and mnemonic devices in the Anishinaabe treaty relationship by focusing on exemplars such as the Great Peace of Montreal (1701), the Covenant Chain and the Treaty of Niagara (1764). The analysis of the treaty relationship is informed by an interrogation of Anishinaabe language, clans, leadership and governance structure, as well as the importance of land base to chieftainship and clans during treaty negotiations. In this way, this dissertation investigates the epistemological chasm between Anishinaabe and Western understandings of history.

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Ch. 1: Introduction

This dissertation looks at the evolution of Anishinaabe treaty-making process via the diplomatic language and implements used (wampum, calumet pipes, medals, clothing, texts, and paper). Anishinaabe people, one of the most populous and widely dispersed people in North America, include Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Potawatomi, Mississauga, Algonquin, and Saulteux. Anishinaabeg (the plural form of Anishinaabe) continue to occupy and assert title to areas now known as Quebec, Ontario, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. The Anishinaabe treaty process was always an oral-based practice that combined material elements. Colonial treaty partners introduced text-based procedures, which the Anishinaabe adopted in part and combined with their existing oral and material methods of expressing and maintaining diplomatic relationships. In the beginning of their relationships, Anishinaabeg and Europeans developed shared meanings through their treaty-making, but over time, colonial treaty partners started to focus solely on their texts, while the Anishinaabe continued their oral and multi-media approaches, which led to chasms in meanings of treaties, and the deterioration of relations.

Throughout the dissertation, the manner in which the Anishinaabeg enacted their understanding of treaty relationships, both with other Indigenous peoples and European partners, will be explained and interrogated. Enacting and engaging in the treaty relationship from an Anishinaabe perspective meant annual meetings to renew and maintain mutual understandings of the treaty relationship. The annual meetings were also an opportunity to share news, announce policy, as well as settle any disputes. Since the implements were often gifted by colonial entities, a high degree of shared meaning could exist between the partners, and this certainly happened in the early days of treaties between the Anishinaabe and the British. By focusing on the words spoken at council and the materiality of the implements used, the continuity and evolution of Anishinaabe treaty understanding will be demonstrated for the time period (18th and 19th century). The dissertation traces the degree of shared meaning throughout the Great Lakes with other First Nations who had adopted the same implements and diplomatic metaphors. When Europeans introduced their own text-based methods of treaty-making, Anishinaabe chiefs and orators tenaciously maintained their oral and multi-media practices, which were

ensconced in an epistemological understanding and practice going back generations. Initially, when colonial newcomers relied heavily on the Anishinaabeg for protection, they adopted Anishinaabe treaty practices, but over time colonial entities slowly abandoned Anishinaabe ways of treating in favour of practices and epistemology based on western tenets. Colonial officials replaced the council fire and its long-established forms and implements with missives, statutes, and treaty documents.

Although gender roles, experiences, and meanings shaped and were shaped by the dynamic relations between Anishinaabeg and land, animals, and spirits, it is difficult to write this history. Unfortunately, the written historical record is dominated by male voices and observations of male actors, which have silenced the Anishinaabe-kwe of the past. Because this dissertation relies heavily on the male-dominated archival record, it does not explore women's leadership. This extremely important topic should be the subject of serious and sustained study, which is beyond the confines of this dissertation.

Historiography

Treaty History

The history of treaty-making between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the land that came to be known as Canada has been a booming area for publication. The best recent survey is J. R. Miller's *Compact, Contract, Covenant* (2009), which explores four centuries of treaty-making, unravelling complicated threads of agreements between Indigenous Nations and the French and British Crowns, fur trade companies, and colonial and national governments.¹ He outlines the Western side of the equation, rather than Indigenous understandings. Scholars have shown clearly how interpretations of treaty-making differed significantly, depending on cultural perspectives.² Indeed, the numerous

¹ J. R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2009).

² See for example, Treaty 7 Tribal Council, Walter Hildebrandt, Sarah Carter, and Dorothy First River, *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Harold Cardinal and Walter Hildebrandt, *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan: Our Dream is that Our Peoples Will One Day be Clearly Recognized as Nations* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2000); Jean-Pierre Morin, *Solemn Words and Foundational Documents: An Annotated Discussion of Indigenous-Crown Treaties in Canada, 1752-1923* (University of Toronto Press 2018).

legal cases surrounding treaties have led to substantial research being conducted on individual treaties.³ In *No Surrender: The Land Remains Indigenous* (2019), historian Sheldon Krasowski challenges the belief that cultural misunderstandings lay at the heart of treaty (mis)negotiations. Instead, he argues that in the Numbered Treaties, the Canadian government had a strategic plan to deceive Indigenous Nations by using the “surrender clause” and confusing it with the idea of land sharing. Krasowski convincingly asserts that the Canadian government deliberately used the treaty system to cheat Indigenous peoples out of their land, and this deception is at the heart of treaty legal cases today.⁴ Scholars have also turned their attention to the ways in which history becomes twisted and warped in court settings of treaty cases.⁵ The history of treaty-making requires more concentrated attention to Indigenous understandings of this process and its large diplomatic context. This dissertation finds its inspiration in the scholarship that forefronts Indigenous understandings of treaty relationships and which employs Indigenous methodologies in constructing Indigenous histories.⁶

Recording Anishinaabe History in Traditional Ways

³ John S. Long, *Treaty No. 9: Making the Agreement to Share the Land in Far Northern Ontario in 1905* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010); Aimée Craft, *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty: An Anishinabe Understanding of Treaty One* (UBC Press, 2013).

⁴ Sheldon Krasowski, *No Surrender: The Land Remains Indigenous* (University of Regina Press, 2019).

⁵ See William C. Wicken, *Mi’kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshall Junior* (University of Toronto Press, 2002); Arthur J. Ray, *Telling it to the Judge: Taking Native History to Court* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011).

⁶ On treaty history see Treaty 7 Tribal Council et. al., *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7*; Cardinal and Hildebrandt, *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan*; Craft, *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty*. On Indigenous-centred Indigenous history, see Robert Alexander Innes, *Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013); Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017); Allan Downey, *The Creator’s Game: Lacrosse, Identity, and Indigenous Nationhood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018).

The Anishinaabeg practiced history in a number of ways. They principally adhered to oral tradition.⁷ This oral tradition was complemented by a pictographic tradition.⁸ The Anishinaabeg also used mnemonic devices such as wampum belts, quillwork, pipe stems, drums, war clubs, medals, and beadwork on regalia.⁹

One of the practices used by the Anishinaabeg, one that is shared with other cultures, is passing on names. In 1671, at a Feast of the Dead, “on an island opposite Ekaentonon (Manitoulin Island)” the Jesuit Louis André recorded a large gathering of several thousand people. André noted that this gathering was particularly large because the “captain” (Ogimaa/ chief) who had died was a celebrated war chief who had many times defeated the dreaded Naadowe (Haudenosaunee). The Jesuit wrote that the Anishinaabeg took this opportunity, the Feast of the Dead, to celebrate the life of the chief but also to “resuscitate” him by conferring his name onto another person, a son or nephew. In this case, the son received the name “Mahiingan/ wolf.” André wrote that the Anishinaabeg do this to “perpetuate the memory and deeds of the deceased” so that future generations will know of his/ her accomplishments.¹⁰ The name Mahiingan of the Amikois/ Amikwas (Beaver clan people) was passed on to a worthy person. The deeds of Mahiingan were recited and perpetuated during subsequent feasts and celebrations. This is one way that history is recorded, remembered, and practiced.

Another way that Anishinaabe conceptualize history is to note the intercession of the Manidoog (spirits), and the attainment of a goal, which is then recorded in onaman (vermillion/ red ochre) on cliff faces. While travelling by water Anishinaabeg would pass these pictographs and would then remember and teach Anishinaabe history to the next generation. Stories of Mahiingan of the Amikois (Beaver clan) were painted on pictographs on cliff faces. At Agawa Canyon, west of Sault Ste. Marie, on the north

⁷ Basil H. Johnston, *Ojibway Heritage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

⁸ Selwyn Dewdney and Kenneth E. Kidd, *Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, second edition 1967).

⁹ “Ojibwe Material Culture,” Minnesota Historical Society, <https://collections.mnhs.org/ojibwe/>;

Cory Willmott, *Clothed Encounters: Great Lakes Anishinaabe Dress in Colonial Relations, 1760-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, forthcoming).

¹⁰ JR 55: 137-9.

shore in Lake Superior Provincial Park there is a sheer cliff face abutting Lake Superior.¹¹ One of the panels is called “Mahiingan’s panel.” The Elders of Garden River First Nation have been recorded telling the story of Mahiingan.¹² Of the numerous pictographs at Agawa, the specific panel of Mahiingan is of four canoes with various numbers of men in each canoe, and at the head of each canoe is a doodem (Clan) of the war chief, which includes a crane, a thunderbird, and a faded beaver leading the canoes. The United States American Indian Agent and amateur ethnographer Henry Rowe Schoolcraft took an interest in pictographs and interviewed Chief Shingwaukonse ‘Little Pine’ of Sault Ste. Marie (and later Garden River). Shingwaukonse told Schoolcraft that there once was a pictograph panel on the south shore of Lake Superior at the mouth of the Carp River.¹³ The rock panel apparently fell off and into the water. Shingwaukonse re-drew the pictograph from memory (Schoolcraft then had Eastman re-draw that). The panel on the south side was also another recording of a battle in which Mahiingan had prevailed. The panel pictured Mahiingan, his doodem, his spirit name, and also depicted the Manidoog (spirits) that he relied upon to achieve victory against the marauding Naadoweg (Haudenosaunee). Depicted was a loon (used to predict weather), a bear (for his ferocity and strength), a moose (for his abilities to escape and go undetected), a kingfisher (for his patience and skill in hunting), a white mishibizhiw (who works his power during the day), a black mishibizhiw (who works his power at night), as well as the horned snakes. All of these manidoog were essential to Mahiingan’s victory and success. Thus, on both sides of Lake Superior, the south and north, as it drains into Lake Huron and Michigan, the Anishinaabeg painted the manidoog essential to Mahiingan’s victories. Amikois Chief Mahiingan achieved victory multiple times against the

¹¹ For an overview, see “Agawa Rock Pictographs,” <https://www.algomacountry.com/agawa-rock-pictographs/> (accessed August 1, 2019). Also see Dewdney and Kidd, *Indian Rock Paintings*, 80-1.

¹² Thor Conway, *Spirits on Stone: Lake Superior Ojibwa History, Legends & the Agawa Pictographs* (Sault Ste. Marie: Heritage Discoveries Inc., 2010), 77 – 84.

¹³ Douglas Hunter, *The Place of Stone: Dighton Rock and the Erasure of America’s Indigenous Past* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 169, 181-2; Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, 6 volumes (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Company, 1851-57), 3: 85-88.

Naadoweg, as a result he became a chief of renown, and thus his name was perpetuated and his deeds recorded in onaman (vermillion) on two cliff faces.

Anishinaabeg also used birch bark to record history. In Walter Hoffman's ethnography of the Midewiwin, he recorded a migration scroll and the story that accompanied it.¹⁴ The 'simplest' recording of this migration was a diagram of a straight line, with a semi-circle at one end, and 29 dots along the line. Each dot represented a specific place in the migration. The Anishinaabeg recorded their migration from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Superior. Each place (dot on the line) had an Anishinaabe name and an event that it was remembered by. The diagram is a mnemonic to aid in the retelling of the migration. Other Anishinaabeg elaborated on this diagram and used birch bark and incised that bark with a map. This map started at the eastern seaboard and terminated at Fond du Lac in Minnesota. This pictographic map, however, depicted the Manidoog encountered along the migration. The map has images of bears, otters, Mishibizhiig (Underwater Lions), Mishiginebigooog (giant underwater snakes), as well as lakes, rivers, sand bars, and bays. The entire story of the migration was also encapsulated in song that served as a mnemonic (in addition to the scroll). The song was also a way to remember, record, and teach Anishinaabe history. The historical migration was depicted in pictographs on birchbark scrolls, but also recorded in place names, and also in song.

Anishinaabeg also recorded their understandings of encounters and interactions with Europeans in a variety of ways. Anishinaabe and mixed-heritage historian William Warren wrote that his uncle had a copper plate that he had secretly buried. This copper plate had indentations carved into it that depicted generations. At one of the indentations was a man wearing a hat. Warren's uncle stated that this was the first time the Anishinaabeg had met a European.¹⁵ This plate is similar to the Lakota winter counts as a way of recording history.¹⁶

¹⁴ Walter James Hoffman, "The Midewiwin, or 'Grand Medicine Society', of the Ojibwa" in *Smithsonian Institution, U. S. Bureau of Ethnology Report*, Vol. 7, 149-299 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1891).

¹⁵ William Whipple Warren, *History of the Ojibways, Based Upon Traditions and Oral Statements* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1885), 63-5.

¹⁶ Candace S. Greene and Russell Thornton, eds., *The Year the Stars Fell: Lakota Winter Counts at the Smithsonian* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2007).

As participants in treaties, Anishinaabeg were also outfitted with material items that they used as mnemonic devices to record, remember, and practice history. Two related items given by the British to Anishinaabeg were wampum belts and medals. Anishinaabeg referred to these two items as “the treaty.”¹⁷ The wampum belt was not quite as figurative as a birch bark scroll and the speech that accompanied it required more memorization than simply looking at the belt and ‘reading it.’ Certainly, motifs were shared, but wampum belts often had specific terms, say speech or talk, that went along with the belt. The image on the belt had deep meaning and required the wampum keeper to memorize a lot but the images and number of rows on the belt, number of columns, served as mnemonic devices as well. The medals that accompanied some wampum belts became expressly associated with the wampum belt and more importantly, with that specific treaty. A medal given at the 1764 Treaty of Niagara was inextricably tied to the wampum belt but also to that foundational treaty.¹⁸ The medal bore the date 1764, as did the wampum belt, and the medal had two men sitting under a tree, whereas the belt had two men holding hands. The two men represented an Anishinaabe and a Brit. The medal had more details that were recited in the speech that accompanied the belt, specifically the tree of peace, the mat on which they reclined, the council fire that was struck, the choice firewood that would always be supplied, the sun that shone, as well as the calumet of peace. Using the medal and wampum belt, reciting its ‘talk’ was a way the Anishinaabeg practiced their history, by remembering, recording, and thus teaching it.

Many Anishinaabe (Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Potawatomi, Mississauga, Nipissing, Saulteaux) Elders state that the land is our history book. Although it fell out of fashion, some used to also say that the land was the Anishinaabe bible. The late Sioux scholar Vine Deloria, Jr. asserted the primacy of land to Indigenous history, philosophy, religion,

¹⁷ Alan Corbiere, “‘Their own forms of which they take the most notice’: Diplomatic metaphors and symbolism on wampum belts.’ In *Anishinaabewin Niiwin: Four Winds Rising 2013*, ed. by Alan Ojiig Corbiere, Mary Ann Naokwegijig Corbiere, Deborah McGregor, and Crystal Migwans (M’Chigeeng: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2014), pp. 47-64.

¹⁸ At a council in Manitowaning in 1877, Chief Debassige and Chief Wakegijig produced a 1764 medal and explained its significance to the local Indian Agent. Chief Debassige, Mitchikiwadnong January 27, 1877. LAC RG 10 Vol. 1996, File 6990.

and worldview.¹⁹ He stated that place is paramount in Indigenous religion, thought, culture, and history, with chronological time playing a subsidiary role. Deloria suggested a way that Indigenous renderings of history could possibly align with Western constructions: each place name commemorates an historical event. Deloria posits that mapping the before and after of each event/ place, and arranging them sequentially, would form a chronological Indigenous history of that specific nation/ tribe.

Writing Down History on Paper

The practice of writing Anishinaabe history down on paper started in the 19th century with a cluster of literate Indigenous academics, including William Warren, George Copway, and Peter Jones.²⁰ These works meant that when non-Indigenous, professional, Western academics turned their attention to Anishinaabe history and anthropology, they had a wealth of sources on which to draw. These historians focussed on the period after contact with Europeans, and focussed on the fur trade, wars, treaties, and colonization.²¹ More recent works have looked at biographies of notable Anishinaabeg,²² spirituality,²³ and political histories.²⁴

¹⁹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *For this Land: Writings on Religion in America* (Routledge, 1999).

²⁰ Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), especially chapter 3 “Traditionary History in Ojibwe Writing.”

²¹ For early anthropologists see Frances Desmore, *Chippewa Customs* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1929); Ruth Landes, *Ojibwa Sociology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937); and A. Irving Hallowell, *The Role of Conjuring in Saulteaux Society* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1942) and “Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View” in S. Diamond, ed., *Cultural History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*, 19-51 (New York: Octagon Books, 1960). On early historians, see E. J. Danziger, Jr., *The Chippewa of Lake Superior* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978); Harold Hickerson, *The Chippewa and their Neighbors* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970); Charles Bishop, *The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974); and Peter Schmaltz, *The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario* (University of Toronto Press, 1991).

²² Donald Smith, *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) and the Mississauga Indians* (University of Toronto Press, 1987) and *Mississauga Portraits: Ojibwe Voices from Nineteenth-Century Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2013).

²³ Theresa S. Smith, *The Island of the Anishinaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-World* (University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

Anishinaabe Land and Animal Histories

Land is at the centre of Anishinaabe treaty history. Some have focussed specifically on Anishinaabe land and environmental history. Historian Richard White's *The Middle Ground* (1991) is an influential book that considers the Great Lakes as region.²⁵ White is primarily focused on Indigenous-Settler (Indian-White) relations, a political history of sorts. White does not really delve into Anishinaabe worldview per se. He mentions the customs, but he does not engage with the Anishinaabe's belief in manidoog (spirits) nor does he tackle the Anishinaabe's relationship with animals, birds, fish, and plants. An older book that received a lot of attention, but was largely discredited, is historian Calvin Martin's *Keepers of the Game* (1978).²⁶ Martin tries to explain an early environmental disaster commonly called the 'overkill' hypothesis, wherein Indigenous people of the northeast reportedly declared war on the animals and tried to exterminate them; he utilizes Indigenous worldview, religion, customs, and beliefs to explain environmental history. A more recent book, *Living with Animal* (2014) by philosopher Michael Pomedli tackles the spiritual relationship the Anishinaabeg have with animals and how animals have influenced their worldview, culture, and actions.²⁷ Pomedli recognizes that the Anishnaabeg's relationship with animals was often codified in symbols, painted on cliffs, carved in rock, incised on bark, and even drawn in ink on treaty documents. Pomedli states that the act of creating the image evoked a power and thus situates his work as an important foundation to reframe and reinterpret treaty signings. Another recent book, *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies* (2013), is an anthology written by Anishinaabe scholars with 23 chapters of varying length, deliberations on

²⁴ Chantal Norrgard, *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Heidi Bohaker, "Nindoodemag: The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600-1701" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63: 1 (Jan 2006), 23-52.

²⁵ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

²⁶ Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (University of California Press, 1978).

²⁷ Michael Pomedli, *Living with Animals: Ojibwe Spirit Powers* (University of Toronto Press, 2014).

place, story, climate change, wild rice harvesting, and law but none dealing explicitly with the environment, environmental thought, or environmental history.²⁸

Some books deserve close attention because they detail Anishinaabe treaty history in a land-based way. In *Masters of Empire*, historian Michael McDonnell attempts to place the Odaawaa Anishinaabeg as major actors in the development of North America as we now know it. He reminds the reader that the Anishinaabeg and others had agency, that they had agendas that guided their actions. McDonnell's conceptual framework includes three main precepts: (1) adopting an Anishinaabe perspective; (2) changing the arena of European-Indian interaction from the Atlantic to the Great Lakes, or 'facing east,' and (3) analyzing contact throughout the *longue durée*. This conceptual framework sounds promising, but he does not really adhere to it spatially and temporally. McDonnell has not given enough attention to "words exchanged over a newly kindled council fire,"²⁹ specifically, the use of diplomatic language. The purpose of applying the *longue durée* is to reveal the long-term historical structures. The rituals enacted around the council fires by the different nations living around the Great Lakes inherently convey those long-term historical structures. Similarly, the metaphors used in diplomatic language must have developed over a long period of time amongst the many nations around the Great Lakes because they all knew and used these metaphors. These metaphors are part of the context he seeks to provide in his telling of Anishinaabe history. McDonnell does not pay enough attention to the ritualistic diplomacy to reveal the inherent long-term historical structures therein, and thus has not truly abided by the principles of the *longue durée* despite his professions. The author incorporates some Anishinaabe place names throughout the area of Anishinaabewaki, but he should have incorporated additional place names with their accompanying stories and use them in the

²⁸ Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, eds., *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World through Stories* (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press; Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013).

²⁹ Michael A. McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015), 14.

telling of Anishinaabe history.³⁰ Adopting an Anishinaabe perspective should entail incorporating the cognitive world of the Anishinaabe, and that means using place names to a greater extent especially since many Native Americans, including the Anishinaabeg, associate their history with place.³¹ In this regard, McDonnell's book is essentially utilizing the same tried and true sources to tell the same history without really using the Anishinaabe's own notions, words, or concepts of history, let alone their relationship to the environment. This is principally a political history of the Odaawaa. The author does not incorporate or address Anishinaabe worldview in his analysis. Considering that the Anishinaabe recorded their migration from the east coast on birch bark scrolls, and they painted their battle victories on cliff faces, all of which recorded the assistance of spiritual entities at different locations on the land³² - professing to adopt an Anishinaabe perspective should incorporate and address the significance, influence and intercession of the manidoog (spirits) and mishoomisag (grandfathers) into Anishinaabe decision-making. These beings influenced the Anishinaabe words and actions, actions that McDonnell stressed "are usually a more reliable source of meaning."³³ Ignoring these spirits in retelling the history of the Anishinaabe is in fact rejecting an Anishinaabe perspective.

In *An Infinity of Nations* (2012), historian Michael Witgen covers the same time period and area as McDonnell's *Masters of Empire*, but they diverge. Where McDonnell attempts to incorporate Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) and Anishinaabe concepts in his analysis, Witgen utilizes them both more proficiently and profusely. Both authors discuss the importance of kinship to Anishinaabe society but Witgen actually uses the Anishinaabe words that describe the dichotomy essential to his analysis. Witgen states

³⁰ The exemplary work of Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places* could have informed McDonnell's work. Basso demonstrates how the Western Apache used place names to codify history as well as cultural precepts. The Anishinaabe follow the same practice. See Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

³¹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Putman, 1972), 101.

³² See Selwyn Dewdney, *Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway* (University of Toronto Press, 1975); Dewdney and Kidd, *Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes*; Warren *History of the Ojibways*.

³³ McDonnell, *Masters of Empire*, 14.

that in an Anishinaabe world people were either outsiders or insiders of a shared social identity, of “this imagined community,”³⁴ they were either “meyaagizid” (strangers) or “inawemaagen,” (relatives).³⁵ He further states that many of the ceremonies, gatherings, and even treaties were organized in such a way as to create kin and uses the intertribal/international Feast of the Dead as an example. He implicitly suggests that the Feast of Dead was the precursor to the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. Reportedly 200 hundred canoes left Michilimackinac for Montreal and the Great Peace too was attended by thousands. Witgen suggests that the Great Peace of Montreal was “designed to refashion the patterns of kinship and belonging that defined the social and physical boundaries of Anishinaabewaki (‘Indian land’) and the French Empire.”³⁶ Indigenous nations adopted the French King as their father, and by taking the role of his children, they became related. Furthermore, enemies of the Anishinaabe such as the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations/ Iroquois) accepted the terms of the peace and allowed that the French Father would serve as mediator of disputes amongst ‘his children.’ The main treaty metaphor promulgated was the ‘common pot’ or the ‘common dish,’ the dish being the land. Witgen notes that people who were related “fed one another, sharing whatever sustenance they had when they met.”³⁷ The French secured peace by making the nations of the Great Lakes basin a large extended family.

This extended family confounded European hierarchical polities. In Witgen’s analysis, the Anishinaabe people “evolved as multipolar social formation”³⁸ and activated political power “according to a seasonal cycle linked to their political economy and ritual calendar.”³⁹ Witgen states that this so called new world “was not actually a world of indigenous nations, but rather a world of bands, clans, villages, and peoples.”⁴⁰ He goes even further and states that in Anishinaabewaki, “land was not the exclusive dominion of

³⁴ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 97.

³⁵ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 33.

³⁶ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 267.

³⁷ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 274.

³⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 19.

³⁹ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 19.

⁴⁰ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 20.

a single individual or nation.”⁴¹ Witgen likens the territory as a web rather than a national bounded territory. Even though kinship ties, trading relationships, ceremonial complexes, crisscrossed the land, “Anishinaabewaki was not a national identity with exclusive claim to occupy a particular physical space. It was instead a constellation of lived relationships.”⁴² Witgen forcefully insists that “This was a vast indigenous space knit together by multiethnic Native alliances and exchange networks. It was not a Native empire.” He urges historians “to decenter European empire as the focal point of early American history.”⁴³ Witgen concedes that the Anishinaabeg had a shared identity but that they imagined themselves as an extended family made up of “autonomous social units. They were not a single nation, but a community of related peoples whose social identity was defined by their kinship with one another, but also by the relative autonomy of the doodemag – the core social units that determined place and belonging in villages and hunting territories, as well as in trade and warfare.”⁴⁴

The doodem or clan is the foundation of Anishinaabe identity.⁴⁵ The doodem was most often an animal, bird, or fish but could also be a tree or a manidoo (spirit, such as the thunderbird or the merman). McDonnell uses the doodem in his analysis, but in the sense of family. In contrast Witgen states that these “animals were understood as blood relatives who were the progenitors of extended families of human beings.”⁴⁶ Identifying with animals as progenitors is innovative. Doodems tied people to specific places, especially places that those doodem animals inhabited. In this way, the Anishinaabe people conceived of themselves as having been ‘made’ for that particular place. Witgen also notes that the seasonal cycle influenced identity. People who moved inland or upriver in the winter likely negotiated membership to new social units, in a sense a summer social identity and a winter identity. He states that the “interplay of village, doodem, and watershed shaped the social identity of the various ‘peoples of the north,’”⁴⁷

⁴¹ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 20.

⁴² Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 89.

⁴³ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 118.

⁴⁴ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 272.

⁴⁵ Bohaker, “Nindoodemag.”

⁴⁶ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 80.

⁴⁷ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 103.

which made it “virtually impossible to organize the Anishinaabeg into a Native nation – that is, a collective social body with a fixed territory and an exclusive social and political identity.”⁴⁸

Although Anishinaabe social structure challenged European settlers, it did not prevent them from trying to categorize the Anishinaabeg into ‘nations’ that they could understand. One way that Europeans essentialized the multitude of Anishinaabe bands, doodems, and villages, was to create maps. In creating maps, Witgen states, that the “Infinity of Nations” was contained by the colonizers who imagined fewer nations. He uses the map made by Jesuits wherein the “thirty-plus ‘nations’” were reduced “to one ‘Outaouac nation,’”⁴⁹ thus visually containing the multiple, autonomous doodems, villages, and bands into one nation. Later the Outouac nation was supplanted by Sauteur and eventually Ojibwe/ Chippewa/ Ojibway. Witgen’s *An Infinity of Nations* challenges historians to fundamentally re-think Indigenous nations living around the Great Lakes, especially their relationship to the land, water, flora, fauna, and spirits and how that informed their identity as well as guided their actions. Historical analysis and interpretation that incorporates one’s progenitorial relationship to a specific environment/ territory is more in line with an Anishinaabe perspective on history.

Seeking Environment in Treaty History

In *Disputed Waters*, historian Robert Doherty focuses on the Odaawaa and Ojibwe bands that have a treaty claim to fisheries along the southern shores of Lake Superior and Lake Huron as well as the northern shore of Lake Michigan. The area of focus is the nexus of lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron, principally confined to the American side.

At the time of this publication (1990) the scholarship in the field of Native Studies was just starting to proliferate and historians and academics were not quite orienting their scholarship to represent a “Native perspective.” Regardless, his limitation of relying on colonial sources (Indian Agents and travelers) out of necessity could have been overcome

⁴⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 106.

⁴⁹ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 84.

by highlighting the Native voices contained within those documents. He notes that prior to contact the Anishinaabeg in the area relied heavily on fish.⁵⁰ He states “Before the whites came, Indians had maintained the fishery for thousands of years,” while acknowledging that they “took their canoes far offshore, where they set nets on deep water reefs.”⁵¹ Doherty notes that, “Without Great Lakes fish, the existence of the Ottawa and Chippewa peoples would have been completely different. Certainly they could not have lived together in large groups without fish, for other food sources were too scarce to have supported many people in one place at one time.”⁵² The fishery was more than a food source, it also served as the base for an economy, “Whatever the manner of catching them, fish sustained the native economy in the upper Great Lakes both as a source of food and as item of trade.”⁵³ These two quotes encapsulate his analytical framework of the fishery – it was ultimately a marketable good and his analysis adheres more to economic or goods analysis of the fishery.

One of the author’s positions is that “the basic concept of an autonomous Indian fishery is a wise one, which would allow the Indians an opportunity to run their own affairs as they have not been able to do since the early nineteenth century.”⁵⁴ Throughout the book Doherty forwards a system of allocation as a solution to the dispute and he notes its possible benefits to ending an ‘Indian Problem’ - “A vertically integrated fish business such as this, in which Chippewas and Ottawas controlled everything from hatcheries to the urban retail stores, would greatly increase the benefits to Indians and, from their point of view, that would be a good thing, too long in coming.”⁵⁵

In January 1983, the U.S. Appeals court handed down a decision commonly called the *Voigt Decision*, which affirmed the Chippewa’s right to harvest fish based on the treaties of 1836, 1837, 1842, and 1854 with the United States government. Larry Nesper’s ethnographic book *The Walleye War: The Struggle for Ojibwe Spearfishing and*

⁵⁰ Robert Doherty, *Disputed Waters: Native Americans and the Great Lakes Fish* (University Press of Kentucky, 1990), 88.

⁵¹ Doherty, *Disputed Waters*, 23.

⁵² Doherty, *Disputed Waters*, 10.

⁵³ Doherty, *Disputed Waters*, 24.

⁵⁴ Doherty, *Disputed Waters*, 151.

⁵⁵ Doherty, *Disputed Waters*, 155.

Treaty Rights, (2002) covers the resulting dispute over Chippewa treaty rights, specifically spearfishing. Nesper situates himself as an outsider but an ally. Nesper openly recognizes that the Anishinaabeg have “participated in authoring their own history within the world system for a long time,”⁵⁶ stating that they have, in a sense, been “agents of their own history.”⁵⁷ This, in some ways, contrasts with the approach taken by McDonnell, who sees that the Anishinaabeg have been cast as passive agents of history and therefore he deliberately places the Anishinaabe as actors within empire. Nesper notes that during the period of salvage ethnography, when ‘Indians’ were dying out or ‘authentic Indians’ were assimilating, that “both Indians and their ethnographers agreed and coproduced a narrative that regarded the Indian past as glorious, the present as disorganization, and the future as assimilation. Increasingly since that time, the narrative is being rewritten: the past is revalued as exploitation, the present as resistance, and the future as ethnic resurgence.”⁵⁸ This stance, Anishinaabeg as authors of their history, is a marked change in style and interpretation than Doherty’s work on the same era with an adjacent group of Anishinaabeg.

Nesper situates his research within three pillars of Ojibwe life: the fur trade, the Midewiwin (Grand Medicine Society), and warfare⁵⁹ and states these persist to today, albeit in changed forms. Nesper tries to analyze Ojibwe history from their perspective and their worldview, relying specifically on the Anishinaabe belief about souls, which is enacted in hunting, war and Midewiwin healing rituals. He states, “In the Ojibwe world, the souls of both human and nonhuman persons are reborn, so it is mankind’s hunting, fishing, and gathering that is reproductive, nourishing persons in both worlds.”⁶⁰ Feasting is an integral part of establishing reciprocal relations amongst kin, strangers, humans, and ‘other-than-humans.’ He notes that it is in feasting that “the spirits of the animals are placed in humans’ debt by virtue of the sacrificial consumption of the bodies.”⁶¹ The

⁵⁶ Larry Nesper, *The Walleye War: the struggle for Ojibwe spearfishing and treaty rights* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 6.

⁵⁷ Nesper, *The Walleye War*, 7.

⁵⁸ Nesper, *The Walleye War*, 202.

⁵⁹ Nesper, *The Walleye War*, 6.

⁶⁰ Nesper, *The Walleye War*, 36.

⁶¹ Nesper, *The Walleye War*, 110.

Anishinaabe accord animals, fish, plants, and stones agency and often beseech them (rather their spirits) for blessings in this physical life, which is a central tenet of Anishinaabe worldview, religion, and culture and one of the main issues to reconcile and incorporate in modern co-management regimes.

Nesper has focused on cultural persistence and continuity and its expression in neo-traditionalism. This so-called neo-traditionalism guided the actions of the Lac du Flambeau Anishinaabe during this time of conflict over environmental resources. Nesper has documented a time when traditional ceremonies, songs, and practices were being re-invigorated. However, the point can be made that this same ceremonial complex had been initiated in previous times of environmental conflict but the research has not yet been conducted to determine that positively.

Historians focussed on Anishinaabe history have made important contributions, which set the stage for examining their treaty history. The work of Witgen reveals a profound relationship to the flora, fauna and spirit beings of the area that is manifested in the socially constructed Anishinaabe doodem identity. The work of McDonnell offers areas of further research regarding the kinship networks that span this vast area. McDonnell also demonstrates routes and nodes of knowledge and material transfer that also deserves further attention. Despite its limitations of occluding Anishinaabe identity and agency, the work of Doherty offers a case study to investigate fishery issues within a more contained space. Lastly, the ethnographic work of Nesper has tackled issues of prophecy and spiritual intervention which is foundational in any Anishinaabe history.

Sources

The principle primary sources used in this study come from various archival collections that contained councils, speeches, petitions, and treaties. Principle collections consulted are the published version of the Sir William Johnson Papers as well as the unpublished versions in Record Group 10 of Library and Archives Canada. Record Group 10 of Library and Archives Canada also forms the bulk of the collections consulted in this thesis, particularly petitions, speeches, and treaties. Other significant sources of speeches and petitions were drawn from the McCord Museum's McKay papers, the Ontario Archives (OA) Thomas Gummarisall Anderson Papers, A.E. Williams

Collection (OA), Irving Papers (OA). The Jesuit Archives in St. Jerome, Quebec (formerly known as the Archives of the Society of Jesus of Upper Canada – ASJUC) have also been a source of materials, particularly those written in Ojibwe from Holy Cross Mission – Wikwemikong, Manitoulin Island. A valuable collection of speeches housed at the Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library was also consulted, specifically the Thomas G. Anderson Papers, Samuel Peters Jarvis Papers, and the James Givins Papers. Also consulted and utilized are the Thomas Duggan Michilimackinac Journal housed at the Clements Library at the University of Michigan.

A second major source are the documented accounts of oral traditions and sacred stories that are both published and unpublished, contained in archival collections. These are often called ethnographic collections. Unpublished sources include George Gabaosa manuscript at the Canadian Museum of History, the Frederick Waugh Papers at Canadian Museum of History, and the Robert Bell papers at Library and Archives Canada. Out of print published secondary sources include Alexander F. Chamberlain's work, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's work, and one of the most important, Williams Jones' collection of Ojibwe stories published in two volumes, *Ojibwa Texts*.

A third major source are museum collections. Focusing primarily on wampum belts, pipes, and treaty medals, I consulted objects from the British Museum (London, UK); Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University (UK); National Museums of Scotland (Glasgow and Edinburgh, UK); Hunterian Museum (Glasgow, UK); Kelvingrove Museum (Glasgow, UK); National Museum of Ireland (Dublin, Ireland); Musée du Quai Branley (Paris); Musée d'Yverdon (Switzerland); National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution (DC); National Museum of the American Indian (DC); University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (PA); Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University (MA); Detroit Institute of Art (MI); Andrew J. Blackbird Museum (Harbour Springs, MI); Canadian Museum of History; Canadian War Museum; Royal Ontario Museum; and the McCord Museum of Canadian History.

Methods

Since 2001, I have been conducting research into the history of the Anishinaabeg around the Great Lakes. This active academic and archival study of Great Lakes Anishinaabe history has been also augmented by regular conversation with Elders, although I did not conduct any interviews specifically for this research. The archival research, museological research, and oral tradition research has been informed by my active participation in language revitalization and in my role as a ceremonial attendant to Elders. My overall goal in this dissertation is to present Anishinaabe history from an Anishinaabe perspective, blending sources found in museums, archives, and published books with questions, ideas, and priorities of Anishinaabe history.

In *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories* (2013), Anishinaabe editors Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark propose that the best methodology for studying Anishinaabeg is through stories, which they describe as “vessels of knowledge.” The volume draws together 24 Anishinaabe scholars and artists who reflect on and share aspects of their communities’ stories to provide a sense of the diversity and richness of Anishinaabeg life spread across Canada and the United States.⁶² Following their lead, my doctoral project will explore the methodology of doing Anishinaabe history through stories in the telling of Anishinaabe diplomatic history in the 19th century. In a story called “The Anishinaabe Road,” Elder Dan Pine of the Garden River First Nation worried that medicine (Anishinaabe knowledge and power) is sleeping: “There is so much we did not do, the old teachings we had back in history. Hopefully the medicine will work in this age, that which we are bringing back, so we can do better in looking back, we will look at mistakes made, and what was lost.”⁶³ I hope to help wake up the medicine in three ways: 1) by using Ojibwe language sources in producing Anishinaabe history; 2) by incorporating stories of Anishinaabeg Manidoog (spirits) back into our history; and 3) by

⁶² Doerfler, Sinclair, Stark, *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies*, xv-xviii.

⁶³ Dan Pine, “Anishinaabe Miikan (The Anishinaabe Road)” in *Gechi-Piitziig Dbaajmowag (The Stories of Our Elders)*, ed. by Alan Corbiere, 11-36 (M’Chigeeng, ON: The Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2011), 29.

focusing on the 19th century because by its end Anishinaabeg had lost so much, including land, language, and power.

Doing Anishinaabe-centred Anishinaabe history is not new. The 19th century saw a remarkable number of Anishinaabe historians publish books on Anishinaabe history that strived to incorporate an Anishinaabe-perspective and that paid attention to oral traditions and stories about Manidoog. For example, in the early 1850s Anishinaabe author William W. Warren completed his manuscript called “History of the Ojibways, based upon traditions and oral statements,” and although it was not published in his lifetime, it made an indelible impact on current Anishinaabe studies. Warren, perhaps ahead of his time, pointed out the importance of acknowledging language barriers to the transmission and production of knowledge: “Speaking their language perfectly, and connected with them through the strong ties of blood, ... he has deemed it a duty to save their traditions from oblivion, and to collect every fact concerning them, which the advantages he possesses have enabled him to procure.”⁶⁴ Warren believed that he had been able to obtain a true Anishinaabe history because he had talked to the old men of the tribe, but more importantly, because he received that information in Ojibwe (Anishinaabemowin), which he spoke and understood. In another example, George Copway, a Mississauga Anishinaabe, wrote in 1847 that, “The traditions handed down from father to son, were held very sacred; one half of these are not known by the white people, however far their researches may have extended. There is an unwillingness, on the part of the Indians to communicate their traditions.”⁶⁵

Copway highlighted the reticence of Anishinaabe people sharing information with outsiders. This sentiment has persisted to the present day. Elders I have consulted often state that published accounts of Ojibwe history are incomplete, especially those based on anthropological records. Incomplete and erroneous sources generated by outsiders make the writing of Anishinaabe history a contested terrain. The richest information on Anishinaabe history is contained in the language and in oral traditions passed down

⁶⁴ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 26.

⁶⁵ George Copway, *The Life, Letters and Speeches of Kah-ge-gah-bowh or G. Copway, Chief of the Ojibway Nation*, ed. by A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff and Donald B. Smith (University of Nebraska Press, 1997, 2006, orig. pub. 1850), 89.

through families. Today Anishinaabe people are seeking to revitalize their language and striving to learn from elders, but those who have been estranged from their families' communities often turn to published sources and to universities and colleges to learn about their history and language. Yet, no history books have been written in Anishinaabemowin. Many scholars of Indigenous history acknowledge the importance of language but rarely do any actual foray into the field of Anishinaabemowin. Anishinaabemowin is inherently interwoven with issues of authenticity, perspective, and traditional knowledge. In a chapter focused on Ojibwe writers, Maureen Konkle found that Warren, Copway, Peter Jones, and other 19-century Ojibwe writers insisted "on Native authority for traditional knowledge, and they denounce Euro-Americans' claims to know their own knowledge better than they themselves do."⁶⁶ Recognizing the importance of Indigenous traditional knowledge remains the main goal of today's Indigenous academics. All across the territory of Anishinaabeg, a cultural revitalization is occurring. People are learning the Ojibwe language, practicing ceremonies, pursuing self-determination, and remembering their histories. Anishinaabeg are engaged in cultural repatriation of material artefacts in museums and repatriation of territory, some of which is sacred or historically significant. Stereotypes are being shed and cultural identity is being re-configured and re-constituted. History plays a crucial role in this waking of the medicine as traditionalists, activists, scholars, and community leaders are learning from their ancestors.

Many involved in this cultural revitalization work lament their inability to speak Anishinaabemowin. Ceremonial leaders urge young people to learn their language with the admonition that the ceremonies cannot be conducted without Anishinaabemowin. Anishinaabemowin revitalization is perhaps the most pressing issue in communities now. Some have established immersion schools (such as Lakeview Elementary School in my home reserve of M'Chigeeng First Nation) to transmit Anishinaabemowin to the next generation. Demand is rising for Anishinaabemowin curricular materials written from an Anishinaabe perspective. Translating the Ontario Ministry of Education materials will not do.

⁶⁶ Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 166.

In response, a number of communities have recorded their Elders retelling their history in Anishinaabemowin (such as the vast collection held in the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation's archives). Yet, many recorded interviews (audio and video) are under-utilized because historians and curriculum writers do not understand the language. Lack of access to sources in Anishinaabemowin has led to a paucity of Anishinaabe-authored histories in English, and even less Anishinaabe-authored resources in Anishinabemowin. Anishinaabe history at the community level is still very much oral in nature (in both English and Anishinaabemowin). I have attained a good measure of Anishinaabemowin comprehension and I intend to contribute to this cultural revitalization by conveying what I have learned from the Elders and speakers in written form. I integrate the knowledge contained in the language into my narrations of our past. I also mimic the form of traditional oral history through using the structure of stories. Anishinaabe oral stories are divided into two categories (a) aansookaanan (sacred legends) and (b) dbaajmowin (historical accounts and reports). While these generally reflect the differences between sacred oral traditions and empirically-based oral histories, when elders tell our history in Anishinabemowin, their mediums are not so neatly divided. The characters in the aansookaan impinge and influence the chronological events of dbaajmowin. A case in point is the Anishinaabe account of the so-called Beaver Wars or Iroquois Wars carried out in northeastern North America from roughly 1650 to 1800. Crucial to the Anishinaabe re-telling of that history is the spiritual assistance of the underwater spirits (mishhi-gnebig and mishibizhiw) garnered by the Anishinaabe. Most published accounts by mainstream historians do not incorporate Manidoog. For the Anishinaabe, the missing actors are the most important part of the history because the Anishinaabe continue to rely on Manidoog for knowledge, guidance, and prosperity.

My project of using Ojibwe-language sources and focussing on Manidoog to craft an Anishinaabe-centred history of the 19th-century Great Lakes will help us understand how Anishinaabe sovereignty around their Great Lakes territory became eroded by colonization. I contribute to the Anishinaabe methodology of developing, preserving, and sharing knowledge through stories. I also hope to heed elder Dan Pine's warning about losing our knowledge from the past: "It will feel like, there will come a time to go back, to step backwards. Look after the new generation, so they will know, so they too can see

the richness of what we let go, what we threw away. We accepted the white man's way. We are going to have to go home someday."⁶⁷ Waking up the medicine, or Anishinaabe knowledge and power that is locked in language and stories, will help us find the Anishinaabe Road home.

Chapter Summaries

To emphasize that Anishinaabeg have a different epistemology that is based on oral tradition, chapter 2 starts with wampum origin stories. Four stories have been published and will be analyzed in the chapter to highlight mythic archetypes and motifs. In all four stories, a great bear has wampum and a group of Anishinaabe set out to procure the wampum for themselves and their people. In Anishinaabe culture the bear plays a major role. The bear is food, a clan, a spirit guide, and guardian of medicine. Animals and Anishinaabe relationships to them will factor into the analysis throughout the dissertation, especially clan (doodem) relationships.

In chapter 3, the importance of the clan to Anishinaabe identity, chieftainship, governance and land tenure is taken up and explored. This relationship to land is important especially regarding treaty history. The Anishinaabe understanding of land stewardship and proprietorship is inextricably tied to clan origin stories. The eventual sharing of territory with treaty partners had to be granted by the appropriate and rightful owners and stewards thus chieftainship, the making of chiefs, must be explored. However, Anishinaabe governance was more than the chief. Other officials existed that are rarely if ever mentioned in the literature. This chapter will reveal those offices and explain their roles. These offices of course operate within a system and for the purposes of this thesis, the forum where these officers operate will be explored - that forum is the council. In the council, or rather, around the council fire, is where these officials operate and utilize the implements of treaty. The importance of the pipe and wampum strings will be explained and tied to the various nations and their respective officials.

Chapter 4 explores the first treaties between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee, specifically the dish with one spoon and the eternal council fire belt. These treaties set

⁶⁷ Pine, "Anishinaabe Miikan," 33.

out the process and protocols that defined treaty relationships for years. Concepts such as the ‘council fire,’ ‘taking each other by the hand,’ ‘linking arms,’ and the ‘watchful eye of the sun’ were utilized in these treaties and these metaphors reappear in treaties with colonial entities. The imbued meaning of implements such as pipes, wampum belts, wampum strings, medals, and clothing are explained within the framework of diplomatic discourse. The major metaphors of diplomacy around the council fire are listed and explained. Initially these metaphors were the ‘legalese’ of their time, colonial officials had to learn how to speak this diplomatic language in order to operate in the *pays d’en haut* and around the council fire. This chapter provides the diplomatic vocabulary that will be used when tracking the chronological development and evolution of the treaty relationship between the Anishinaabe and British.

In chapter 5, the focus shifts from intertribal treaties and starts to introduce treaty relations with colonial entities. This was a time when the French and British vied for the alliance of the Anishinaabeg and both colonial entities knew that they had to adhere to the forms that the Anishinaabeg used – wampum and calumet protocol. This chapter outlines the formation of the treaty relationship between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch, who were then supplanted by the British. This history is important to the treaty relationship between the Anishinaabe and the British because it involves the formation and evolution of the treaty called the Covenant Chain. The Covenant Chain is the foundational treaty between the British and the Haudenosaunee and the British later extended this treaty relationship to other First Nations in the Great Lakes area, specifically the Anishinaabeg (Odaawaa, Ojibwe and Potawatomi).

Odaawaa Chief Pontiac and Seneca Chief Guyasotha are featured in chapter 6, especially as they organized a resistance against British hegemony, often called ‘Pontiac’s Uprising.’ This disaffection ushered in, but was not the sole reason for, the Royal Proclamation of 1763. In an effort to stop the violence, the British, specifically Superintendent General of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson, invited “24 nations” to participate in a peace conference at Niagara in 1764. This chapter delves into who participated in that congress on behalf of the Anishinaabeg, specifically those living around Michilimackinac and Sault Ste. Marie. The Royal Proclamation coupled with the

Treaty of Niagara/ Covenant Chain establishes the foundation of treaty relations between the British and the Anishinaabe.

In chapter 7, the nature of that treaty relationship is explored. Specific attention is paid to the era subsequent to 1760 detailing how that relationship was expressed especially through the annual delivery of the so called 'Indian Presents.' The delivery of 'warmth' (presents) at the council fire meant that the relationship was still in effect. Smoking, giving, receiving, and talking around the council fire meant that the alliance was renewed for another year. At the treaty of Niagara, Sir William Johnson had made specific promises and one was prosperity. This chapter will focus on how that promise was maintained. The British had also promised that the Anishinaabeg would maintain their freedom (autonomy) and their land. This chapter focuses on how the chiefs considered the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara as solid agreements to maintain both land and autonomy while demonstrating how that belief was ultimately ill founded. The last part of the dissertation then sets up a discussion about appropriate representation at cessions.

Ch. 2: The Origin of Wampum-Use for Anishinaabe

This chapter analyses four **aansookaanan** (sacred stories)⁶⁸ about the origin of wampum use among the Anishinaabe. The four main sources are: 1) “An Ottawa Obtains Medicine” told by John Pinesi to William Jones published in *Ojibwa Texts*, Part II;⁶⁹ 2) “Great Bear of the West” told by Charles Kawbawgam to Homer H. Kidder published in *Ojibwa Narratives: Stories told by Charles and Charlotte Kawbawgam and Jacques Le Pique*;⁷⁰ 3) Henry Rowe Schoolcraft’s “Mishemokwa or The War with the Gigantic Bear Wearing the Precious Prize of the Necklace of Wampum or The Origin of the Small Black Bear. An Ottawa Legend;”⁷¹ and 4) “Legend of the Origin of the Bears” collected by Johann Georg Kohl.⁷² A discourse analysis will be conducted comparing and contrasting these four sources. The version told by John Pinesi is especially instructive because it is written in Ojibwe (Anishinaabemowin). The motifs in each version will be compared (use of cardinal directions, use of spiritual assistance, tools used to conquer the bear, and the journey). This analysis will then be compared with archaeological information about the distribution of wampum throughout the Great Lakes to map out wampum usage in time and space. One of the purposes is to try to demonstrate the

⁶⁸ Aansookaanan is the word for ‘legend’ in Manitoulin dialect. See Richard Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993), 5. In the western Ojibwe and eastern Ojibwe the word is Aadizookaanan. See John Nichols and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 16.

⁶⁹ William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts, Part 2*, edited by Truman Michelson (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1919), II: 279 – 285.

⁷⁰ Charles Kawbawgam, Charlotte Kawbawgam, Jacques LePique, and Homer H. Kidder, *Ojibwa Narratives of Charles and Charlotte Kawbawgam and Jacques LePique, 1893-1895*, edited by Arthur Paul Bourgeois. Wayne State University Press, 1994), 97-100.

⁷¹ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *The Myth of Hiawatha and Other Oral Legends, Mythologic and Allegoric of the North American Indians* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott & Co., 1856), 142-60. Also called “Iamo or the Undying Head: An Ottawa Tale,” in Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Schoolcraft’s Indian Legends*, edited by Mentor L. Williams (Michigan State University Press, 1991), 46-67 (46-67)

⁷² Johan Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*, translated by Lascelles Wraxall (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985, originally published London: Chapman and Hall, 1860), 456-60.

spread of wampum and its accompanying diplomacy throughout the Great Lakes with special attention to the Anishinaabeg.

It is unknown when the Anishinaabe started to use wampum. Wampum is called **miigis**⁷³ in Anishinaabemowin, and the term is used for both the white (whelk) and purple (quahog) kind. The sacred cowry shell of the Midewiwin is also called **miigis**, but these are three different mollusks. In contrast, a clam shell is called **es** and a little shell is called **esiins**,⁷⁴ two different words to differentiate between the freshwater and saltwater organism. Wampum, both the quahog and the whelk shells, and the cowry shell also, are from the eastern seaboard so it is logical that these shells were an early trade item that predated contact. The shells themselves may have been decoratively used on apparel and on implements but we do not know if the shells were being woven into belts before contact.

How did the Anishinaabe come to know the wampum complex? Seemingly, the obvious answer is through trade with the Huron-Wendat or perhaps through contact with the Haudenosaunee. The Anishinaabe may have used wampum beads earlier and this idea is tied to the Ojibwe migration story. In the migration story, the Anishinaabe emerge from the salt water and then migrate west and depending on which scroll one refers to, the Ojibwe Anishinaabe end up at Fond du Lac, Madelaine Island, or Sandy Lake.⁷⁵ Throughout this migration the people are led by a sacred **miigis** that reveals itself

⁷³ Frederic Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992, originally published as *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language*, Montreal: Beauchemin & Valois, 1878, 1880), 234, Ojibwe to English; Reverend Edward F. Wilson, *The Ojebway Language* (Toronto: Roswell and Hutchison, for the Venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 187[4]), 265, Jean-André Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine* (Montreal: J. Chapleau & fils, 1886), 220.

⁷⁴ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 115 (Ojibwe to English); Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 306, 348; Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine*, 102.

⁷⁵ Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The voice of the Ojibway* (St. Paul: Red School House, 1988), 99; William W. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1885, re-printed 1984), 78; W. J. Hoffman, "The Midé'wiwin or 'Grand Medicine Society' of the Ojibwa" *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1885 – 86*, 143-300 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1891), 180; Selwyn Dewdney, *Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 68; James

from time to time during the migration. No one is certain about the duration of this migration or when it was initiated. The Anishinaabe mixed-blood historian William W. Warren had his doubts about the migration as a historic event and asked his Elder if the migration was of the people or the Midewiwin religion, and the answer provided was both.⁷⁶ This migration is viewed as a historical event by modern traditional Anishinaabeg but the migration has not yet been studied using archeological or historical evidence. On the migration scroll maintained by James Red Sky, cowry shells are depicted but it is unknown if a quahog or whelk shell would be depicted differently. In this scenario, the Anishinaabe brought the cowry and/ or the whelk and quahog with them as they migrated from the eastern seaboard. It is more likely, based on the symbolism of the Midewiwin, that only the cowry was brought along. Assuming that the cowry was an integral part of the Midewiwin from its inception, then the shell could have been initially brought along and then subsequently traded for to meet demand.

This leaves unanswered questions about the introduction of wampum belts and strings among the Anishinaabe. Some postulate that the Lenni-Lenape (Delaware) introduced the use of wampum as a mnemonic device. The Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Boodewaadmii (Potawatomi), Shawnee, Algonquin, Nipissing, and Mississauga all regard the Lenni-Lenape as an ‘older stock of people’ and thus addressed them as grandfather.⁷⁷ However, the argument against this wampum pathway is that it occurred too late – by the time the Lenni-Lenape were dispersed from their homelands, the Anishinaabe of the Great Lakes were already familiar with the use of wampum strings and belts. A seemingly more logical means of wampum’s path to the Anishinaabe was through the Huron-Wendat or direct contact with the Haudenosaunee. The inception of the League of Five Nations (Haudenosaunee) is generally accepted to date just prior to contact but the scholars debate whether wampum belts were used at the time to codify the

Redsky, *Great Leader of the Ojibway: Mis-Quona-Queb*, edited by James R. Stevens (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 100-6.

⁷⁶ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 79.

⁷⁷ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojibway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 116.

Great Law.⁷⁸ The Haudenosaunee are the nation predominantly associated with wampum protocol in treaty-making and they overshadow the eastern Algonquian nations (Lenni-Lenape, Mahican, Mohegan, Passamoquody, etc)⁷⁹ that actually harvested the mollusks. The Haudenosaunee had to trade for the whelk and quahog. Without a doubt the Haudenosaunee further developed and extended the symbolism on wampum belts and, historically speaking, the Anishinaabe and others were influenced by this wampum protocol complex. What is the Anishinaabe story of how they obtained wampum?

Anishinaabe Wampum in Story

I have located four stories about how the Anishinaabe received wampum. The first published account appeared in 1839. It was published by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, an Indian Agent cum ethnographer and folklorist who was stationed at Sault Ste. Marie Agency. His wife, Jane Schoolcraft (nee Johnston), was half Ojibwe. In the 1839 publication the story was called “Iamo, or the Undying Head” with no indication that it was an origin story of wampum.⁸⁰ In a subsequent publication with many of the same stories, Schoolcraft re-titled the story, “Mishemokwa or The War with the Gigantic Bear Wearing the Precious Prize of the Necklace of Wampum or The Origin of the Small Black Bear. An Ottawa Legend.”⁸¹ In this version, Iamo still plays a role, and the story is published virtually word for word with just a different title. Two points to note are that the story was attributed to the Odaawaa (he wrote ‘Ottowa’) and that Schoolcraft was stationed at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan for many years and thus likely collected from the Sault area.

⁷⁸ Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017), 32; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984), 39; J. R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2009), 37.

⁷⁹ Jennings states that “The Montauk natives of Long Island made wampum, which those who lived in the interior accepted for peltry and food products.” Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 51.

⁸⁰ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches, Comprising Inquiries Respecting the Mental Characteristics of the North American Indians. First Series, Indian Tales and Legends in Two Volumes* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1839), 1: 96-121.

⁸¹ Schoolcraft, *The Myth of Hiawatha*, 142-60.

The next wampum origin story was published in 1919 but collected by William Jones between 1903 – 1905.⁸² The storyteller was Fort William Chief John Pinesi. It was also obscured by its title, “An Ottawa obtains medicine.” The distinguishing feature about this story is that it is written verbatim in Ojibwe and then translated into English – a truly valuable resource. The storyteller, John Pinesi, was reportedly well known and well traveled. He was reputedly well known from Fort William to Sault Ste. Marie.⁸³ The storyteller was Ojibwe and from the western end of Lake Superior but known at the Sault, so again there is a tie to Sault Ste. Marie. Secondly, the Odaawaa, not the Ojibwe, are the protagonists in the story.

The third version was collected by Homer H. Kidder and told by Charles Kawbawgam in the 1920s. It was titled “The Great Bear of the West.” By the time the story was collected, Charles Kawbawgam was living around Marquette, Michigan but his father had been a chief around Sault Ste. Marie area and Kawbawgam’s brother Wab-me-me was a chief at Garden River, Ontario. This version is another Ojibwe source telling the story from the Sault Ste. Marie area.

The fourth version was written down by German travel writer Johann Georg Kohl who visited Lake Superior in 1855. Kohl visited Sault Ste. Marie and environs during his sojourn. He did not specify the storyteller of this tale but his notes indicate they were collected at “L’Anse, September 1855.”⁸⁴ This story also came from the Marquette area. He did not mention the Odaawaa.

The published record of the origin of wampum among the Anishinaabe can be traced to Sault Ste. Marie area and this is significant because Sault Ste. Marie is a major travelway for the Anishinaabeg and for the fur trade. Sault Ste. Marie also figures largely in the origin story of the crane clan, which has been used to state that the cranes are the pre-eminent chiefs of the Ojibwe.⁸⁵ In an oft published debate, one chief stated that as

⁸² William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, Volume VII, Part I, (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1917), I: ix.

⁸³ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, I: xvii.

⁸⁴ Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 431, footnote 1.

⁸⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 47; p. Theresa M. Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*”: *The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640 – 1855* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 75; Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis*

the crane descended to earth he heard a melodic voice singing. This voice was the loon and thus the crane designated the loon to answer him first in council, thereby designating the loon as orator.⁸⁶ This dissertation will later discuss the roles of clans in leadership, governance, and thus in wampum protocol.

The four stories are different but share many similarities. The main commonality is that a journey is undertaken by at least two men (Schoolcraft has 10 brothers, Kohl has one, but he seeks aid of three old men). The men intend to procure wampum from a giant bear who is the keeper of a wampum belt and wears it around his neck (not his waist). Every storyteller also emphasizes the danger of the task by stating that many had tried to accomplish this task before and perished in the attempt, with the proof being bones strewn profusely about. Every version has the protagonists approach a giant bear who is resting beside a great lake or sea. The protagonists sneak up while the bear sleeps, and all approach via the water in a canoe or raft. In two versions, powerful assistance is given by an entity from the north. However, all four storytellers do not unanimously state which direction the bear is in – Schoolcraft provides no direction but hints at the north; Kawbawgam states “Great Bear of the West;” Kohl’s version also gives the west as the direction the bear is in; and Pinesi states that the protagonists paddled their raft straight to the dawn. It would be convenient if all four stories had the bear in the east, where quahog and whelk were actually harvested. It would also be convenient because an argument could have been made that the bear represented the bear clan of the Huron-Wendat, but that is not the case. Regardless, all four have the protagonists embarking on a canoe or raft to make the last part of the journey, and thus an association to wampum’s habitat is conveyed.

All four stories also have an escape episode wherein the protagonists have stolen the wampum belt (and bag in some cases) and flee via canoe. In three versions the bear awakens, and realizes his wampum is missing, and starts after the thieves. Sometimes he

Book, 74; James Dumont, “Justice and Aboriginal People” in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Justice System: Report on the National Round Table on Aboriginal Justice Issues*, 42-85, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1993), 77.

⁸⁶ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 87-8.

runs after them until they get to a lake. Other times he immediately starts to suck the water, thereby drawing the canoe back towards himself. This also leads to another commonality in all versions: a member in the canoe/raft takes a war club and smites the bear, knocking him senseless and causing the bear to expel the water, leading to a rush of water propelling the canoe across the lake, and thus allowing the protagonists to escape with the wampum. It should also be noted that a war club was used to strike the bear, intimating a relationship between wampum and war.

In two versions the giant bear is killed and cut up. Each piece that is discarded then becomes the smaller black bear that now populates North America. Thus, three versions of the story are also the origin story of the black bear. The origin of a current species from a giant progenitor is a common theme in some aansookaanan/aadizookaanag. Kawbawgam told the story of the giant skunk and how many mustelids joined in the plot to kill the giant. Each mustelid that participated as a result now carries a bit of that scent.⁸⁷ Similarly, Nenabozhoo chased the giant beaver through the Great Lakes in an effort to kill him because he was menacing the Anishinaabeg.⁸⁸ Tying the origin of wampum to the killing of the giant bear and the promulgation of the black bear is interesting because the stories of giants are tied to a primordial time (and not historical time), therefore, wampum in Anishinaabe reckoning is ancient and not necessarily tied to historical actors (i.e., Haudenosaunee or Wendat or Lenni-Lenape).

From a modern cultural perspective, it is puzzling that the bear is associated with wampum. In one version, the wampum is a strap with a bag attached and in this bag are all kinds of medicine. In this particular version an association can be made between wampum and the bear because in the modern cultural perspective, the bear is recognized as a keeper of medicines.⁸⁹ Since the bear is the keeper of wampum in all of these stories,

⁸⁷ Kawbawgam et. al., *Ojibwa Narratives*, 96.

⁸⁸ Emerson Coatsworth, *The Adventures of Nanabush: Ojibway Indian Stories* (Toronto, Canada: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1991, original published 1979), 17-22; "Nanabozhoo hunts the Manitou-Amik." Indian Legends – Joseph Missabi, Library and Archives of Canada, Bell Papers, MG 29, B15, Vol. 54, File 19; Timothy Cochrane, *Minong: The Good Place, Ojibwe and Isle Royale* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2009), 47-9.

⁸⁹ Dumont, "Justice and Aboriginal People," 76.

one would think that historically wampum-keepers would be of the bear clan. It is known that the 1764 Covenant Chain Wampum belt, the 24 Nations Presents belt, the 1786 Covenant Chain Renewal belt were all kept together by the Odaawaa. In 1852 the Reverend George Hallen wrote down the names of the keepers of these belts. He noted the first name was Nishkawzhinee and to the left of the name was written “his father,” and to the right of the name, “the belt of 1764 was given to him.”⁹⁰ Nishkawzhinee’s clan was forked stick.⁹¹ The next name is Nawsomushkooda, which has also been spelled as Nawimashkode; he was awaazisii (brown bullhead) clan. The next name is Mookomaanish, also of the awaazisii clan.⁹² Another noted keeper of the belt was Assikinack who was of the Sparrow Hawk clan. It is evident from this list that for the Odaawaa, who were entrusted to keep these belts on behalf of the Western confederacy, the clan did not appear to be a factor for who became the keeper of the belts. Similarly, the belt given by the Haudenosaunee to the Anishinaabe to end the so-called Beaver Wars was entrusted to the caribou clan at the Narrows. None of these wampum-keepers are bear clan.

Another possibility, from a historic cultural perspective, is that the keeper of the belts should be a member of the loon clan. As previously mentioned, the loon clan are recognized as orators. They are also recognized as “internal chiefs.”⁹³ The loon clan also has an association with wampum. In Anishinaabe **aadizookaanag**, many animals have two names. The loon is called **maang** in Anishinaabemowin and William Warren writes that the original clans had “cognomens” and the loon was “Ah-ah-wauk.”⁹⁴ However, in

⁹⁰ A. F. Hunter, “Wampum records of the Ottawas” in *Annual Archaeological Report 1901: Being Part of an Appendix to the Report of the Minister of Education Ontario*, 52-55 (Toronto: K. L. Cameron, 1902), 52.

⁹¹ For Nishkawzhinee’s clan see October 19, 1797 entry in the Duggan Journal wherein a letter dated October 19, 1794 has been copied. See the Thomas Duggan Journal, Michilimackinack, 1795-1801, Clements Library, University of Michigan. The clans of the civil and war chiefs of L’Arbre Croche are copied, including Niscatchininy’s forked stick.

⁹² Alan Corbiere, “Mookomaanish: The Damned Knife” in *Anishinaabewin Niswi: Deep Roots, New Growth*, ed. by Alan Corbiere, Deborah McGregor, and Crystal Migwans, 55-84 (M’Chigeeng: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2012), 73

⁹³ Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book*, 74; Dumont, “Justice and Aboriginal People,” 77.

⁹⁴ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 44.

William Jones' collection of Ojibwe **aadizookaanag**, the loon is also referred to as **Wemiigisagoo**. In a story called "The Foolish Maidens and the Diver,"⁹⁵ two young maidens, sisters, have different interactions with various male species (spirits) and constantly get what they initially want only to change their minds and not want it once they find out the true nature of who they are with (for instance, one young maiden marries a young man and the other an old man, so they leave). In one episode they meet **Zhingibis** (Hell-diver).

⁹⁵ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 151-67.

<p>Now, once they came out upon a lake, upon which they beheld a Diver floating on the water. Accordingly they addressed him saying: “O Diver! Come hither, let us in (your canoe)!” But Diver did not speak. So again they tried in vain to speak to him, but not a word did he say. And then at last said Diver: “I am not Diver, I am Arrayed-in-Wampum.”</p> <p>“Then please come here! Let us look at you!”</p> <p>Whereupon hither came Diver.</p> <p>“Please spit!” They said to him.</p> <p>Whereupon he pulled off the beads which he used for ear-rings; and then, secretly putting them into his mouth, he thereupon spat; some beads he spat out.</p> <p>Thereupon the women picked them up.</p> <p>“Please (do it) again!” they said to him.</p> <p>And so (from the ear) on the other side he plucked from his ear-ring; some more beads he spat out. So again from each other the women grabbed (for them).</p> <p>“Some more, some more, do you spit out!” they said to him.</p> <p>“No, that is enough,” said Diver.</p> <p>Thereupon they were let into (the canoe) by Diver; the women paddled, while Diver himself sat in the middle of the canoe.⁹⁶</p>	<p>Ningoding idash gii-madaabiiwag zaaga’iganing, mii dash waabamaawaad zhingibisan agomonid. Mii dash ganoonaawaad: “Zhingibis! Ondaas, boozi’ishinaam!”</p> <p>Gaawiin dash giigidosii zhingibis. Miinawaa go oidaanoganoonaawaan, gaawaan ganage giigidosii. Gegapii dash ikido aw zhingibis: “Gaawiin niin nindaawisii zhingibis. Niin Wemiigisigoo.”⁹⁷</p> <p>“Shkomaa sa ondaas, giga-waabamigoo.” Mii dash gii-bi-izhaad a’aw zhingibis. “Shkomaa zikon!” odinaawaan.</p> <p>Mii dash ezhi-bakibinaad manidoominensa’ naabizhebizod; mii dash giimooch giizhakamod, mii dash zikod; manidoominensa’ ozikwaanaa. Mii dash igiw ikwewag gii-odaapinaawaad. “Shkomaa miinawaa!” odinaawaan. Mii dash miinawaa gwekaya’ii gii-bakibidood onaabizhebizon; miinawaa manidoominensa’ ogii-zikwaanaan. Mii miinawaa makandiwaad igiw ikwewag. “Miinawaa, miinawaa waa-zikon!” odinaawaan.</p> <p>“Gaawiin, mii dash minik,” ikido zhingibis. Mii dash gii-boozi’igoowaad zhingibisan; ikwewag jii mewag wiin dash zhingibis aabita’onag namadabi.⁹⁸</p>
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For these young ladies, the proverbial grass is always greener elsewhere. **Zhingibis** is an imposter assuming the name of the great chief **Wemiigisagoo**. He is able to fool them by

⁹⁶ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: English translation, 157.

⁹⁷ “Thus trying to pass himself off as the Loon, who went by that name,” in W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 156.

⁹⁸ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 156.

spitting out regular beads, **manidoominensa**’, not wampum beads.⁹⁹ Here **Zhingibis** plays them and ends up making them his wives. He also gets them to paddle him around in the canoe. As they paddle around, **Zhingibis** guides them to his village and says that they will meet their beautiful sisters-in-law who wear earrings made of wampum beads.

<p>Whereupon said Diver: “Now to-day we shall arrive where the people live in a town. That is where I come from. Really very beautiful are your sisters-in-law, your sisters-in-law wear ear-rings of wampum beads.”¹⁰⁰</p>	<p>Mii dash ekidod zhingibis: “Mii iw noongom ji-oditamang odetoowaad anishinaabeg. Mii imaa gaa-bi-onjiiyaan. Geget aapiji onizhishiwag gidaangwe’iwag, miigisan nanaabizhebizoonaawaan gidaangwe’iwag.”¹⁰¹</p>
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Here Zhingibis tells his new wives that they will see beauty and status, such high status, that his sisters wear earrings of wampum. Of course, this is a charade and when they meet his homely sisters they have earrings of dung. The Ojibwe words here are different – previously Zhingibis spit out beads **manidoominensag**; these are regular beads. In the present passage, the phrase is **miigisan nanaabizhebizoonaawaan** or ‘they wear earrings of wampum,’ indicating that wampum was prized in Anishinaabe society.

Even though the sisters-in-law were homely and not wearing wampum, the foolish maidens hold out hope because there is a dance that evening in honour of Wemiigisagoo. They of course want to attend but Zhingibis tells them women are prohibited from attending.

⁹⁹ It could be argued that the beads are bone or stone not European ones. However, the storyteller does not distinguish. If they are European glass beads, this of course is anachronistic.

¹⁰⁰ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 161.

¹⁰¹ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 160.

<p>Now, in truth, at that place was where lived the real Arrayed-in-Wampum. And so said Diver: “Women do not go to the dance. Therefore you go to bed,” to his wives said Diver. “Only I will go,” he said. Thereupon off he started, he went to the dance. Now, all kinds of fun was being made of Diver. He was being laughed at by the people... [maidens secretly go] And they likewise saw him who was really Arrayed-in-Wampum; many wampum beads he wore about his neck.¹⁰²</p>	<p>Geget idash iwidi geget endaad a’aw Wemiigisagoo. Mii dash ekidod Zhingibis: “Gaawiin ikwegag izhaasiwag niimi’iding. Mii dash nibaayok,” odinaan wiiwa’ zhingibis. “Niin eta ningadizhaa,” ikido. Mii dash gii-maajaad, izhaad niimi’iding. Anooj dash gii-doodawaa’ aw Zhingibis. Obaapi’igoon Anishinaaben... Gaye dash owaabamaawaan geget iniw Wemiigisagoon; niibiwa miigisan onaabikawaan.¹⁰³</p>
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The young maidens go to the dance and see how Zhingibis is treated by his fellow people and they also find the real Wemiigisagoo. They leave the dance with Wemiigisagoo and become his wives. It is revealed that Wemiigisagoo is the elder brother of Zhingibis. Of course, Zhingibis is jealous. Here again, a symbol of status is conveyed when describing the real Wemiigisagoo. He wears many beads of wampum around his neck.

Jones collected another version of the same story, “Helldiver, the Foolish Maiden and Winter-maker,”¹⁰⁴ but different details are emphasized and different terminology used to describe Wemiigisagoo. Here the maidens peep into the dance area and see the real Wemiigisagoo, Zhingibis’ elder brother, and they are enamored.

<p>In a while they peeped in (and) saw their husband [Helldiver] dancing by the doorway. Presently they saw Arrayed-in-Wampum with a wampum bead dangling from every single hair (on his head), from every single hair was hanging a wampum bead... It was true. Now he was the one</p>	<p>Zhigwa sa dapaapiwag owaabamaawaan Wemiigisagoon wenjida go endaswaanikwenid naaba’oosowan iniw miigisan, endaswaanikwed naaba’oozowan¹⁰⁶ iniw miigisan... Mii sa geget. Aaniish mii aw wegimaawid.¹⁰⁷</p>
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¹⁰² W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 163.

¹⁰³ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 162.

¹⁰⁴ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 455-69.

¹⁰⁵ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: English text, 677, 679.

that was chief. ¹⁰⁵	
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This passage is remarkable because **Wemiigisagoo** wears a wampum bead from every single hair, a sign of high stature, perhaps too much so. Regardless, by the splendour of his raiment they knew who the chief was.

Lest one thinks that the name **Wemiigisagoo** was confined to the western Ojibwe, we find the name and aadizookaan was also collected by Homer H. Kidder when speaking to Charles Kawbawgam. While visiting Kidder's father, Kawbawgam had brought along a little boy he was raising who he called "**Zhingibis**." This was a nickname given to the boy because "as a baby, the boy had a way of bobbing his head up and down like a diver, and the old man gave him the nickname for Shingebiss."¹⁰⁸ Zhingibis, the helldiver, is the pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), commonly known as dabchick. Kidder also stated that the boy's nickname was "Amiksagoo." Kidder then wrote down a story he called "The Diver" –

A very long time ago, before the world (i.e., before the flood) Nanabozho wanted to get some *migis* (orig emph), a precious thing (like shells or beads) but he could find no one who was able to get any of it for him. At last the helldiver, Shingebiss, said he would try. Finally, Shingebiss found some *migis* when he went south for the winter and he used to bring some of it back for Nanabozho every spring. It was thus that the diver came to be called by the nickname, Amiksago, because he brought the *migis*.¹⁰⁹

Here, according to Kidder's notes, Kawbawgam had stated that Helldiver earned the name Amiksagoo (**Wemiigisagoo**) because he procured **miigis** for Nenabozhoo each

¹⁰⁶ First listing has the 2nd "O" as short and the next has long vowel indicated. I am unsure of the vowel length, I do not know this word.

¹⁰⁷ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, II: 676, 678.

¹⁰⁸ Kawbawgam et. al., *Ojibwa Narratives*, 36, footnote 15.

¹⁰⁹ Kawbawgam et. al., *Ojibwa Narratives*, 36.

spring. He also states that Amiksagoo was **Zhingibis**, the Hell Diver, not **Maang**, the loon. Thus, we have contradictory evidence of who carries the name **Wemiigisagoo**.

Fortunately, the name and **aadizookaan** was also collected in Scugog, Ontario by Alexander Chamberlain in the late 19th century. His informant, Nāwigíshkōkē', had told the story he entitled, "The story of Wāmīgī'sakon, the Great Pearl Chief":

Long ago the Loon was a great chief, and was called Wāmīgī'sakon'. Our people thought the spots on his breast were pearl beads (mīgís). The Hell-diver (shíngibis) often tried to pass himself off for the Wāmīgī'sakon, the great pearl chief. The name of the loon is now māungk.¹¹⁰

Although Chamberlain did not write down the whole story, the plot and explanation conveys that it is the same story and the same set of characters. This also confirms that it is the loon, **maang**, who is arrayed in wampum **Wemiigisagoo**. In a footnote Kidder notes that "Diver" is the only story in his collection that was not translated and interpreted by Jacques LePique (Kawbawgam could not speak English). I believe this may be why Amiksagoo (Wemiigisagoo) is identified here with the Zhingibis (Helldiver) instead of the loon. Zhingibis does not have any markings of white on his back nor a white necklace and would not be called "Arrayed-in-wampum."

The importance of pulling these stories together is to find as many details as possible. Often different storytellers provide complementary information to other tellings. The purpose is not to come up with the definitive version. The purpose is to triangulate, to find as many consonant versions as possible, as well as to identify potential errors that may have been made by interpreters, translators, or writers. Assembling various tellings of the origin of wampum for the Anishinaabeg contrasts and delineates the epistemological and ontological orientations held by Anishinaabe and western people. In recent years, scholars and the court system have recognized the importance of the oral tradition to understanding Anishinaabe ways of knowing. However, courts and scholars have not yet been able to accord equal weight to both systems of knowledge. In many recent books on treaties, the author often states that the oral tradition and oral history is important to understanding the treaty but once the author finishes the introduction, the

¹¹⁰ Chamberlain, A.F., "Tales of the Mississaguas" *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 2 (1888: 141-154), 144, footnote 4.

written record is privileged.¹¹¹ This dissertation attempts to work within the chasm between the two epistemologies.

¹¹¹ Sheldon Krasowski, *No Surrender: The Land Remains Indigenous* (University of Regina Press, 2019); Arthur J. Ray, *Telling it to the Judge: Taking Native History to Court* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

Ch. 3: Ogimaawin ‘Chieftainship’: Anishinaabe Governance Structure and Offices

Historically, the chieftainship in Anishinaabe society descended through hereditary lines. The main leadership position is chief, in Anishinaabemowin – **Ogimaa** (or **Gimaa** in Central **Anishinaabemowin** dialect).¹¹² In Ojibwe¹¹³ this word means chief, boss or leader and even king. Noted Ojibwe historian and elder Basil Johnston points out that the word **Ogimaa** likely derived from the word ‘to count’.¹¹⁴ In Ojibwe the word to count or read is **gindaaso**, but that is the intransitive form of the verb (meaning that what is being counted or read is not specified). The transitive word to ‘count it’ or ‘read it’ (an inanimate object) is **gindaan**. Finally, the word to count animate objects, is **gimaa** (or **agimaa** in western dialects and historically). In the Ojibwe language (**Anishinaabemowin**) objects are referred to as animate (possessing life) or inanimate (not possessing life). Basically, Mr. Johnston postulated that the chief was the one who counted the people, and the more people he counted with him, the more prestige or status he attained. A great leader had more people that counted him as their leader, conversely, a great leader counted many as his band. The root of the word for chief Ogimaa, can be made into numerous verbs:

- Ogimaakaazo: He acts like or pretends to be a chief
- Ogimaakandaan: He is the boss of it, it is under his command/ control
- Ogimaakandawaad: He is chief or boss of them (animate objects)
- Ogimaakandawe: He reigns, He is the boss
- Ogimaawaadizi: His character or nature is chiefly
- Ogimaawi: He is a chief

¹¹² In the western part of Anishinaabe territory, around the Manitoba border, Indian Act chiefs are now called **Ogimaakaan** – ‘pretend chiefs’ because they are not the traditional hereditary chiefs, they are elected with rules imposed by **Gichi-Ogimaa** ‘the government’. The word **Ogimaakaan** is a modified form of the verb **Ogimaakaazo** – ‘he pretends to be chief’.

¹¹³ In this dissertation, Ojibwe and Anishinaabemowin will be used interchangeably. Ojibwe is the name for both the people and their language. Anishinaabe is the ethnonym the Ojibwe call themselves in their language. Anishinaabemowin is the word for the Anishinaabe language. The Anishinaabe include the Ojibwe, Odaawaa (Ottawa), Potawatomi (Boodewaadmii), Mississauga (Michisaagiig), Nipissing, and Algonquin (Odishkwaagamiig).

¹¹⁴ Basil Johnston, *Ojibway Language Course Outline for Beginners* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1978), 60.

Ogimaawi'aad: He makes him a chief

These words are to be contrasted with the words for leadership which incorporates the initial morpheme **niigaan-** which conveys the meaning of leading or in front. Some examples follow:

Niigaanii: He walks in front, takes the lead

Niigaanabi: He sits in the front

Niigaanigaabawi: He stands in the front

Niigaan'ose: He walks in front

Niigaanibattoo: He runs in front, runs in the lead

Niigaanzi: He is in charge, he is leading, he is in front, he is chief

Niigaanziikandawaad: He leads someone, he is in charge of someone

Niigaanziikandaan: He is in charge of it, he has authority over it

The distinction appears to be that an **Ogimaa** is a hereditary chief or a clan chief whereas **Niigaanzid** (or naagaanzid) is a general word for 'leaders,' which may include the chiefs, but also the war chiefs, speakers, and orators; it is a more inclusive term for leadership and conveys the idea of being in front or leading the way.¹¹⁵ In contrast, **Ogimaa** conveys no sense of relative position (in front, ahead, or behind).

Within the Anishinaabe leadership system there are other positions than the chief that have been underrepresented in the literature, and therefore not well understood. Many will have heard of the chief, warchief, deputy chief, councillor but many have not heard of **oshkaabewis** (ceremonial attendant), **mizhinawe** (pipe bearer), **mayaa'osewinini** (war chief, or 'he who walks precisely'), **niigaanosewinini** (war chief or 'he who walks ahead'), **minisinoo** (warrior or 'who is like an island'), **wedaase** (Brave), **maangwadaas** (The courageous brave), or **zhimaaganish** (soldier, or the 'lance/spear'). The majority of these various positions in historic Anishinaabe governance were eventually discontinued due to external forces and societal changes.

Ogimaawin: Chieftainship and Ties to Land

The majority of reports about a chief are Euro-centric and make comparisons of function based upon western ideals of authority and power structures, but, the Anishinaabeg are usually called an egalitarian society that was governed more by

¹¹⁵ Colloquially speaking many people will refer to the "community leaders" and will use the inclusive term naagaanzijig (which is the plural changed conjunct form of niigaanzi).

persuasion, consensus and mutual aid rather than incorporating coercion and punishment to attain goals and objectives. As Anishinaabe Methodist minister Peter Jones explains,

The Indian form of government is patriarchal, after the manner of the ancients. The chiefs are the heads or fathers of their respective tribes; but their authority extends no further than to their own body, while their influence depends much on their wisdom, bravery, and hospitality. When they lack any of these qualities they fall proportionably in the estimation of their people. It is, therefore, of importance that they should excel in everything pertaining to the dignity of a chieftain since they govern more by persuasion than by coercion. Whenever their acts give general dissatisfaction their power ceases. They have scarcely any executive power, and can do but little without the concurrence of the subordinate chiefs and principal men.¹¹⁶

Anishinaabe author Peter Jones stated that the chiefs had ‘no authority’ or ‘executive power,’ that they did not rule by coercion but depended solely upon their prowess on the battlefield, their hunting abilities and their eloquence in councils. The chiefs could not order people to do their will, they had to convince them to participate in initiatives. This principle was explained in 1695 by Chief Chingouabé of the “Sauteurs of Point Chequamegon” when he met with Count de Frontenac in Montreal. Frontenac requested that Chingouabé join his war against the Haudenosaunee. Chief Chingouabé replied “Father, it is not the same with us as with you. When you command all the French obey you and go to war. But I shall not be heeded and obeyed by my nation in like manner. Therefore I cannot answer except for myself and those immediately allied or related to me.”¹¹⁷ In other places, and other times, the power of the chief was reported as non-coercive and non-authoritative. One hundred and thirty seven years later, in the same general area, that is south of Lake Superior, the Ojibwe Chief Flat Mouth stated that he could not reply to Reverend William Boutwell’s request to establish a school on Leech Lake because some of the chiefs he had to consult were absent.¹¹⁸ A year later, 1833, the Reverend Sherman Hall, who was also stationed in Ojibwe country south of Lake

¹¹⁶ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 108.

¹¹⁷ O’Callaghan, E. B., Berthold Fernow, John Romeyn Brodhead, eds., *Documents relative to the colonial history of the State of New York; procured in Holland, England, and France*, 15 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons, Printers, 1853-1887), 9: 612.

¹¹⁸ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 97.

Superior, wrote to his superiors that “In any matter which shall affect the whole [village], the chief will never act or give his opinion till a council has been held with his men.”¹¹⁹

The Jesuits stationed in Upper Canada reported the same governance structure, leadership style, and social norms. The Reverend J. P. Choné, who was stationed at Manitoulin Island and Pigeon River (by Fort William, Ontario), wrote to a fellow priest in 1846,

They have Chiefs whom they obey [...] It is up to him to promote good order and true harmony in the tribe, to catch delinquents, to convoke the council or the entire tribe or simply the elders. It is also his responsibility to announce the decisions. The vote of approval that is given in these gatherings is a simple audible sound *hon*, which is lengthened or shortened to mark the greater or lesser support one wishes to give to the proposition that has been made.¹²⁰

Rev. Choné noted that the chiefs are obeyed, and that it is his responsibility to “promote good order and true harmony.” This little excerpt emphasizes the reliance the chiefs had upon the elders as well as the need to facilitate consensus in decision making process by listening to all who gathered for specific decisions about various issues. The Reverend Peter Jones “Kahkequonaby,” a Mississauga Anishinaabe from Credit River, elaborated on the roles and responsibilities of a chief, he stated the following:

The chiefs of each tribe settle all the disputes which arise among the people, watch over their territories, regulate the order of their marches, and appoint the time for their general rendezvous. This generally takes place after sugar-making, or about the first of May, when they have their grand pow-wow dances and various games.¹²¹

In the above quote Rev. Jones uses the word “pow-wow” for the ceremony but he also called the shaman or medicine men “pow-wows.” Rev. Jones added that the chiefs’ responsibilities were to “watch over their territories” and he elaborated by stating that the chieftainship through the hereditary line was intimately associated with territory,

¹¹⁹ Sherman Hall, “Ojibwas: Communication from Messrs. Hall and Boutwell, Dated at La Pointe, Feb 7th, 1833” *Missionary Herald* 29 (1833: 314-17), 316; also quoted in Cary Miller, *Ogimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 101.

¹²⁰ Fr. Choné 28 to the Provincial in Paris. From Holy Cross Mission, Great Manitoulin, March 28, 1846, in Lorenzo Cadieux, s.j., *Letters from the New Canada Missions: 1843 – 1852, Part 1: Letters # 1 to # 44*, translated by William Lonc, s.j., and George Topp, s.j. (Halifax: W. Lonc, 2001), 385-6.

¹²¹ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 109.

The Indian country is allotted into districts, and each section is owned by a separate tribe of Indians. These districts become so many independent states, governed by their own chiefs, one of whom is styled the “head Chief”... The title of head chief is either hereditary or obtained by the election of the tribe in council assembled.¹²²

Jones drew mainly from his experience with the Mississauga and southeastern Ojibwe, but fur trader, explorer, and interpreter Jonathan Carver noted the same governance structure north of Lake Superior, “Each family has a right to appoint one of its chiefs to be an assistant to the principal chief, who watches over the interest of his family and without whose consent nothing of a public nature can be carried into execution. These are generally chosen for their ability in speaking; and such only are permitted to make orations in their councils and general assemblies.”¹²³ Jones calls the clan unit “tribe” and Carver called that same unit “family” but both stated that this unit had a chief, but that in that specific territory, one of those chiefs would be, in Jones’ words, “head chief,” and in Carver’s words, “principal chief.” This “principal” or “head” chief would now just be called the chief of the band, which was comprised of various families and clans in a specific territory. Reverend Jones stated that each section, or territory, was “owned by a separate tribe of Indians,” but here tribe is not the same as nation, Jones used tribe to refer to clan. Rev. Jones likely picked up this terminology from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs who was stationed at York (Toronto), James Givins. The superintendent enumerated the Mississaugas at Credit River and divided each “tribe” as Eagle, Goose, Pike, Bear, Otter, Bark, Ox, Clay, and Bittern tribe,¹²⁴ which are clearly clans or in **Anishinaabemowin, odoodemiwaan** (their clans).

Jones’ point is that certain clans have pre-eminence in specific territories and the chieftainship gets passed down through that clan for that territory. This was also noted much earlier by Carver, who reported “it is generally supposed that from their territories being so extensive, the boundaries of them cannot be ascertained, yet I am well assured that the limits of each nation in the interior parts are laid down in their rude plans with

¹²² P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 107.

¹²³ Jonathan Carver, *Three Years Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America* (Philadelphia: Key and Simpson, 1796), 186.

¹²⁴ Return of the Mississauga Nation of Indians taken 26th of August 1818 at the River Humber. LAC Indian Affairs RG 10, Vol. 42, p. 22671.

great precision.... [so that] the most uncultivated among them are well acquainted with the rights of their community.”¹²⁵ This was also noted by the fur trader Peter Grant, who wrote in the Rainy Lake area in 1804, “It is customary with them in the beginning of winter, to separate in single families, a precaution which seems necessary to their very existence, and of which they are so sensible that when one of them has chosen a particular district for his hunting ground, no other person will encroach upon it without a special invitation.”¹²⁶ The people of a specific territory knew their band’s territory but also within that territory they knew each other’s hunting and trapping grounds. These principles and precepts of land ownership were acknowledged and reported by Commissioners Anderson and Vidal in 1849:

This conceded right of occupation which is general and common to all, being admitted, the tribal or individual interest in it becomes the subject of consideration: long established custom, which among these uncivilized tribes is as binding in its obligations as Law in a more civilized nation, has divided this territory among several bands each independent of the others; and having its own Chief or Chiefs and possessing an exclusive right to [an] control over its own hunting grounds; - the limits of these grounds especially their frontages on the Lake are generally well known and acknowledged by neighbouring bands.¹²⁷

Although the commissioners did not note the prominence of clans to territories, they did report that there existed a system of ‘exclusive rights and control’ over a specific territory. Further, the commissioners noted that each territory have “its own chief or chiefs” which intimates the existence of clan chiefs. Historian Cary Miller noted that anthropologists had collected the Anishinaabe name for the hunting groups that used a specific territory,

¹²⁵ Carver, *Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America*, 193-4.

¹²⁶ Peter Grant, “The Sauteux Indians” in L. R. Masson, ed., *Les Bourgeois de la Compagne du Nord-Ouest: Recits de Voyages, Lettres et Rapports Inedits Relatifs au Nord-Ouest Canadien*, vol. 2: 307-66 (New York Antiquarian Press, 1960), 326. Also cited in C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 94.

¹²⁷ Toronto, Archives of Ontario, F 1027-1-2 Robinson (Huron-Superior) Indian Treaties, Alexander Vidal and Captain Thomas G. Anderson’s Report to the Governor General in Council, December 5, 1849 (typescript), pp. 1- 2; James Morrison, *The Robinson Treaties of 1850: A Case Study*, prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Treaty and Land Research Section (Ottawa: Privy Council of Canada, RCAP, 1996), 72.

these hunting groups of twenty to forty individuals were generally made up of a single extended family led by the eldest male and so tended to be more uni-clan in composition. While these hunting groups usually contained a group of brothers and their sons, they could also include young men of other clans doing bride service. These hunting groups were referred by the Anishinaabeg term *indinaakonigewin*, translated (from a leader's point of view) as "that which I am in charge of." *Indinaakonigewin* is a flexible term that refers to anyone who falls within the sphere of influence of that individual and does not preclude the possibility that the individual may be a follower of someone else within the Ojibwe political structure at other times.¹²⁸

It must be noted that Miller also referred to the late anthropologist Edward Rogers, who worked in Northern Ontario in the 1960's and "his informants asserted that in the past the **nintibencikewin** unit was an important and active political, religious, and economic division of the community."¹²⁹ Comparing and contrasting the two terms, **indinaakonigewin** and **nintibencikewin**, illuminates Anishinaabe concepts of territory and its ties to leadership. The first word, **Indinaakonigewin**, is based upon the intransitive animate verb **inaakonige** "make a certain judgement, decide things a certain way, agree to something."¹³⁰ Converting this verb into a noun, Ojibwe speakers just add the suffix "**-win**," to make the inanimate noun **inaakonigewin** "law."¹³¹ This noun is then converted into the possessive form by adding the prefix "**ind-**" meaning "my law (or judgement or plan or rule depending on context)." The second word is written in an obsolete orthography that can be transliterated to the modern orthography as **nindibenjigewin** which is based upon the animate intransitive verb **dibenjige**, which Bishop Baraga rendered as "**Dibenjige**, (nin). I am master, lord."¹³² The verb is more commonly used in its transitive form, "**dibendan**, vti, control s.t., be the master of s.t., own s.t., earn s.t." and "**dibenim** vta, control s.o., own s.o., be the master of s.o."¹³³ The same process is followed, that is the intransitive form of the verb **dibenjige** is affixed

¹²⁸ C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 35.

¹²⁹ C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 244, footnote 58.

¹³⁰ John Nichols and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 66.

¹³¹ Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 66.

¹³² Frederic Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992, originally published as *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language*, Montreal: Beauchemin & Valois, 1878, 1880), 110.

¹³³ Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 45.

with “nin-” and “-win” to render the verb into the possessed inanimate noun **nindibenjigewin** “that which I own or am master of,” in reference to territory and its resources.

Specific groups, usually families, or uni-clan groups, occupied, used, managed and owned a specific territory while also belonging to a specific band. However, the loose application of terminology (band versus clan versus tribe) employed by Indian agents and Jones also affected subsequent ethnographers, such as the missionary Conrad Van Dusen, author of “Kezhickowenini,” a biography of Mississauga chief David Sawyer. Van Dusen reported that,

The chiefs are generally elected to their office. The son of a deceased chief is considered to have a claim to succeed his father, and at mature age generally takes his seat at the head of **the tribe** [emphasis added]. But though in some degree entitled to this distinction, he does not enter upon such duties without the appointment and approbation of **the tribe**, which is sometimes attended with considerable display and ceremony [...] **Tribes are sometimes divided into bands**; sometimes two or three bands compose **one tribe**. There is one chief at the head of each band, and frequently one or two subordinate chiefs associated with him.”¹³⁴

At first van Dusen appeared to use the word tribe in the same way that Jones did, when he stated that “the son ... takes his seat at the head of the tribe,” which could be read as clan. However, van Dusen attempted to clarify his terminology but obfuscated it by stating that “tribes are sometimes divided into bands, sometimes two or three bands compose one tribe,” which is counter to our current understanding of the term of band and tribe because many bands make up a tribe or what we now call a nation, such as the Ojibwe nation. Despite the conflation of terminology, the point can be extracted that there existed clan chiefs that were sometimes considered “sub-chiefs” who then elected a head chief for the band. The head chief would be of that particular band rather than the head chief of the “tribe” or nation, because this would mean, in the current use of the word, that there was one chief for all Ojibwe or all Mississauga, which we know was not the case; Jones spelled this out distinctly by stating that “The title of head chief is either hereditary or obtained by the election of the tribe in council assembled. Although the

¹³⁴ Conrad Van Dusen, *The Indian Chief: An Account of the Labours, Losses, Sufferings, and Oppression of Ke-zig-ko-e-ne-ne (David Sawyer), A Chief of the Ojibbeway Indians in Canada West* (London: William Nichols, 1867), 6-7.

Ojebway nation of Indians is scattered over a vast section of country there is no person among them recognized as king.”¹³⁵ Historian Theresa Schenck also reported that the Ojibwe did not have one chief representing all bands. She states that “Each local band was independent and sovereign, and no one chief could speak for or represent all others.”¹³⁶ To re-enforce her conclusion, Schenck utilized the statement of Ojibwe Chief Flat Mouth, who expressed the Ojibwe ideal of chieftainship at an 1837 treaty council, stating “I am called a Chief. I am not the Chief of the whole nation, but only of my people or tribe (meaning the Ojibwa of Leech Lake).”¹³⁷

Ogimaakewin: ‘Making’/ Electing a chief

The verb **Ogimaake** literal means ‘make a chief’ but of course it is translated as elect a chief. Even though the Anishinaabeg adhered to hereditary chieftainship, the selection of chief was not confined to immediate family members but to the person the band considered most qualified. The Reverend Jones explained, “The office of civil chieftainship is hereditary, but not always conferred on the eldest son. When a vacancy occurs, the surviving chiefs and principal men meet in council, and then select the most suitable person out of the family. The eldest son has the first consideration; but if he is deficient in any of the qualifications which they consider necessary, they elect the next best qualified.”¹³⁸ This is also echoed by the Reverend Choné in 1846,

The authority of these Chiefs is hereditary, without, however, being necessarily attached to the oldest of the male children. It is the Chief, when he is dying, who designates which of his children is to succeed him. He is careful to choose one who, through his good conduct, by his mind and his skill in public speaking, is the one most capable of leading the tribe with dignity [...] If he dies without any male children, or if he does not think that any of his sons are worthy to be invested with his authority, he states his opinion about the election of his successor. Then, the tribe gathers together and chooses a Chief.¹³⁹

Although the chieftainship followed hereditary lines, the people, fellow chiefs, elders or band, did have recourse to express their opinion on the succeeding chief.

Disputes did arise when a new chief took over, requiring superintendents of the

¹³⁵ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 108.

¹³⁶ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 79-80.

¹³⁷ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 80.

¹³⁸ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 108.

¹³⁹ Choné, 28 March 1846, in Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 1: 385-6.

Department of Indian Affairs to request information from former agents and priests in order to settle the dispute or to clarify the practices of selecting a new chief. In 1867, long serving superintendent Thomas Gummarsall Anderson, a veteran of the War of 1812, who could speak Anishinaabemowin, was asked whether a dying chief could name his successor, he replied:

In reply to your question of this morning whether the rule obtains and whether it is lawful amongst the Indians for the Chief of a Band to appoint his successor to Office irrespective of the hereditary claim, I beg to inform you that it is usual and lawful, the office however, is retained in the Chiefs family and may be conferred to a younger son, a nephew, and, I have in my official duty as S. I. A. been repeatedly called upon to confirm such appointment.¹⁴⁰

Superintendent Anderson, for his part, confirmed that the Anishinaabeg had the right to elect their chiefs according to their customs. In the above quote Anderson noted that he had the official duty to “confirm such appointment[s].” The British “confirmed” the selection of chief and this has been misunderstood as the British having power over the Anishinaabeg. Peter Jones had written that a chief’s influence was tied to his “hospitality,”¹⁴¹ or his ability to provide and share with others. The ability of the chief to share resources thus increased his status and influence. The alliance with the British, with the annual delivery of presents, aided in increasing a chief’s status as provider. A higher status chief would receive ‘marks of distinction’ from the British or American allies, such as silver gorgets, broaches, medals, flags, rifles (as opposed to guns), and also better quality blankets, which he would re-distribute. Once a chief had died so did his connections and influence. A dying chief usually conferred his medals and certificates to his successor so that they may then have influence and recognition when they visited the garrison. Imagine a chief had died and a new chief showed up at the garrison but was unknown and unrecognized. The chief had learned to take the new chief to the garrison and have their chief recognized by their allies, the British, so that they could continue to receive the same amount of influence that the preceding chief exerted. The British medals, flags, and certificates were symbols of the alliance and thus symbolized the office of a chief in alliance with the British. This process of transmitting symbols of

¹⁴⁰ LAC RG 10, Vol. 616, T.G. Anderson to O’Meara, 419.

¹⁴¹ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 108.

alliance (certificates, medals, flags) was also corroborated by the Reverend Frederick O'Meara,

In reply to yours of the 15th inst., asking for information and evidence as to the mode of transmission of Chieftainship among the Ojibwa and kindred tribes, I have the honor to state as the result of my intercourse with these Indians of now nearly thirty years standing that the Chief of any band in that tribe or these tribes has the power to leave **his decorations and with them his Chieftainship** [emphasis added] to any male member of his family that he may think most worthy of that position and I believe that any tendency to favour the first born as having "eteris paribus" prior claims to the other members of the family, that may latterly have manifested itself is solely derived from the grafting on of European ideas on the stock of the Native Indian practice which is as above stated. The Chief is not even [confined] to his own progeny in selecting a successor but may appoint one of his nephews if he thinks that from character or superior ability he would be better fitted for that office than any of his sons.¹⁴²

Long serving clergy and long serving superintendents of Indian Affairs confirmed that a chief may decide his successor, without being confined to the eldest son, by bestowing 'his decorations' upon his choice. Initially the practice of bestowing medals was an opportunity to publicly and ceremonially recognize the new chief. It was only later that hereditary chieftainship was manipulated via the system of bestowing medals. An early example of the ceremonial transference of chieftainship was recorded in Sir William Johnson's papers. In 1764, the Mississauga Chief Wabbicommicott attended the Treaty of Niagara and was given a wampum belt and medal by Sir William Johnson.¹⁴³ In 1768 Chief Wabbicommicott died and a delegation of his band went to visit Sir William to renew the alliance. Sir William conducted the condolence ceremony and then said,

Children – I have attended to all your words and am greatly concerned to hear of the death of Wabbicomat [Wabbicommicott] your chief who was a man I greatly esteemed. I am very glad to hear that his death has produced no ill consequences and yet the sky is still clear, and the road open between us. **I hope that a proper man, and of a good heart, may be appointed to succeed him** [emphasis added] and that you will still keep steady to your engagement. I give you assurances that

¹⁴² LAC RG 10, Vol. 616, 30 August 1867, Frederick O'Meara to William Sprague, 417.

¹⁴³ At a Conference with the Toughkinawinan Indians on Saturday July 28th at Niagara in Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, ed by James Sullivan, 14 vols. (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1921-1965), XI: 303-9.

our sky is clear, that our road shall always be open and our councils always conducted with a view to peace. *A Belt*¹⁴⁴

Sir William Johnson did not attempt to interfere with the selection of the chief to succeed his friend and ally Chief Wabbicommicott. Sir William was more concerned with maintaining the road of peace between Niagara and Toronto and the territory between which was owned by the Mississauga of the Eagle clan.¹⁴⁵ The principles of the Covenant Chain and the Treaty of Niagara precluded Johnson from interfering. However, subsequent officials of Indian Affairs would meddle and interfere with the leadership of various bands, but the initial principle was non-interference with internal matters due to the British recognition of Western Nations' autonomy.

There are, however, exceptions to this rule of hereditary lineage. Ambitious and gifted men were able to vie for chieftainship and attained it through their war deeds and eloquence. One such chief was Shingwaukonce from Garden River First Nation. Shingwaukonce was born to an Ojibwe woman of the crane clan but had a non-Native father.¹⁴⁶ Shingwaukonce was raised as an Ojibwe Anishinaabe, not as a Métis. Throughout his life he sought power through fasts,¹⁴⁷ vision quests and regular participation in the Midewiwin.¹⁴⁸ At the breakout of the War of 1812, Shingwaukonce was already an accomplished Midewiwin shaman and he readily and eagerly joined the British against the Americans. It was his stellar participation and war deeds that earned him a chieftainship. He dictated a letter to the Governor General in 1846,

Great Father - I was made a chief for services during the war, I fought in every action on the Niagara frontier and when at its close I returned to my home which had then become the property of the Long Knife, your officers told me,

¹⁴⁴ 1768 August 16th - Four Mississaugaes [Mississauga] from Pemiscotaigna to the north of Ontario arrived here – Paapinass Chief, LAC RG 10, Vol. 8, p. 99 – 103, C-1222.

¹⁴⁵ Heidi Bohaker, “Nindoodemag’: The significance of Algonquian kinship networks in the Eastern Great Lakes region, 1600 – 1701” *The William and Mary Quarterly* Third Series 63: 1 (January 2006: 23 – 52), 49.

¹⁴⁶ Janet E. Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwaukonce: A Century of Native Leadership* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 24-5.

¹⁴⁷ Johan Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*, translated by Lascelles Wraaxall (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985, originally published London: Chapman and Hall, 1860), 374.

¹⁴⁸ Janet E. Chute, “Shingwaukonce: A Nineteenth-Century Innovative Ojibwa Leader” *Ethnohistory* 45:1 (Winter 1998: 65 – 101), 71.

Chinquack you fought well for us, your lands are gone but you shall have those you helped us to defend, you shall possess the same on the British side, and you shall live in them [unmolested] forever.¹⁴⁹

Shingwaukonce appears to have been a ‘made’ chief by the British. In spite of all of the negative connotations the word “made” carries, the evidence shows that Shingwaukonce followed his and his people’s agenda, and together they chose their own course of action based upon their interests. Shingwaukonce pressed for a treaty when speculators threatened to take his land and he occupied an illegal mine that speculators were operating in his territory.¹⁵⁰ Although he was ‘made’ a chief by the British and was not strictly from the patrilineal hereditary line of chiefs,¹⁵¹ Shingwaukonce distinguished himself as leader and is revered to this day for his accomplishments.

Likewise, the inherent abilities of some men had them destined to become chief of their band or head chief of their nation. Andrew J. Blackbird reported that his father was not really an Odaawaa¹⁵² by blood. His ancestors had been captured by the Odaawaa on a war campaign and then adopted into the Odaawaa nation. Blackbird wrote,

I propose to rehearse in a summary manner my nationality and family history. Our tradition says that long ago, when the Ottawa tribes of Indians used to go on a warpath either towards the south or towards the west, even as far as to the Rocky Mountains, on one of these expeditions towards the Rocky Mountains my remote ancestors were captured and brought to this country as prisoners of war. But they were afterwards adopted as children of the Ottawas and intermarried with the nation in which they were captives. Subsequently these ‘captives’ posterity became so famous among the Ottawas on account of their exploits and bravery on the warpath and being great hunters that they became closely connected with the royal families, and were considered as the best counselors, best chieftains and best warriors among the Ottawas. Thus I am not regularly descended from the Ottawa nations of Indians, but I am descended, as tradition says, from the tribe in the far west known as the Underground race of people ... My own dear father was one of

¹⁴⁹ Shingwaukonce to Governor General, June 1846, LAC RG 10, Vol. 612, pp: 115-118.

¹⁵⁰ Chute, “Shingwaukonce,” 84; Nancy M. Wightman and Robert Wightman, “The Mica Bay Affair: Conflict on the Upper Lakes Mining Frontier, 1840 – 1850” *Ontario History* 83: 3 (September 1991: 193–208), 200.

¹⁵¹ Shingwaukonce’s maternal grandfather was reportedly the crane clan chief Tagwagane.

¹⁵² The Odaawaa, Ojibwe, and Boodewaadmii (Potawatomi) are known as the Three Fires and according to their reckoning, were descended from three brothers who separated long ago. *Indian Legends* by Rev. Fr. DuRanquet, September 1891, LAC, Bell Papers, MG 29, B15, Vol. 54, File 4.

the head chiefs at Arbor Croche, now called Middle Village or Good Heart... My father died in June 1861. His Indian name was Macka-de-pe-nessy, which means Black Hawk.¹⁵³

Chieftainship could be and often was earned. Another chief who earned the chieftainship of his band did so, not by outside colonial forces, but by outside spiritual forces. John Pinesi, aka Gaagige-Binesi, of Fort William¹⁵⁴ attributes his chieftainship to his fasting:

Miinawaa ningoding gii'igoshimoyaan ningii-waabandaan wajiw gechi-ishpadinaag. Mii dash iwidi gii-waabamag mitig badakizod ogidaaki, gikiwe'onaatig. Waasa akiing onzaabaminaagozi; gikiwe'on agoode imaa. Imaa dash ogidajiw mii imaa gii-waabandamaan niibiwa anokaajigan, gakina gaye miijim anooj ezhinaagwak, zhooniyaa gaye. "Mii iwe gidaya'iim," ningii-ig. I'we wajiw nitam igo bingwiikaag, baanimaa dash iwidi ishping aazhibikowan. Mii sa iw gaa-onji-inaabandamaan, manidoo ningii-inenimig anishinaabeg ji-inenimiwaad ji-ogimaawiyaan. Miziwe eniwek ningii-pabaamaadiz. Aapiji ningii-minwenimigoog bemaadzijig gaa-pabaa-waabamagwaa.¹⁵⁵

Another time, while in a fast, I saw a mountain that was very high. And then up there at the top I beheld a pole standing, a flag-pole. Far over the country was it visible; a flag hung thereon. And yonder on the mountain top was where I saw many goods, and all the various kinds of food there were, likewise silver. "That is yours," I was told. At the foot of the mountain was loose soil, but farther up at the top it was rocky. That I should thus have dreamed was on this account, by a Manitou was it willed in my behalf that the people should desire me to be chief. About everywhere I have travelled. Very much have I been esteemed by the living I have seen.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Andrew J. Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan: A grammar of their language, and personal and family history of the author* (Ypsilanti, MI: The Ypsilanti Job Printing House, 1887), 26-7.

¹⁵⁴ William Jones noted that John Pinesi was of the Awasizi 'Bullhead' doodem, which was one of the clans that traditionally held the chieftainship of the Fort William area. William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, Volume VII, Part I (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1917), xvi. In 1798, the chief and the majority of signatories to a treaty were of the Bullhead doodem, LAC RG10, Series A, Vol. 266, pp: 163151 – 163154.

¹⁵⁵ John Pinesi, "About Fasting: Four Accounts and Stories," transcribed by William Jones and edited by John D. Nichols, *Oshkaabewis Native Journal* 4: 1 (Spring 1997: 61-72), 65.

¹⁵⁶ John Pinesi aka Kagige-pinesi, Fort William, in William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, Volume VII, Part II (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1919), 302-3.

The superior abilities, or the spiritual abilities, of these men, suggests that it was almost destiny that they would become leaders, orators, and chiefs. The Anishinaabe people recognized inherent abilities and capabilities in these men and decided to accept them as **Ogimaa**, as chief, not just **Naagaanzid** ‘leader.’ The example of these three men, Shingwaukonce, Makadepinesi, and Gaagige-pinesi, demonstrate that some men are destined to lead. In fact, the sons of each of these men went on to become chief of their respective bands and thereby establish a new line of chieftainship. Some may not have lasted but the influence of these men continued after their death. These chiefs, and others, maintained their power and influence through their wisdom, spiritual power, and their oratorical skills in council.

Chieftainship, Clans and Land

Although various circumstances may have caused the hereditary line to lose influence, the people of the band usually remembered that the chieftainship resided with a specific clan. This principle of certain clans having pre-eminence in a territory is echoed by the Odaawaa Andrew J. Blackbird, he reported that “Every tribe of Indians has a different coat of arms, or symbolical sign by which they are known to one another. The emblem of the Ottawas is the moose; of the Chippewas, a sea gull; of the Backwoodsmen, a rabbit; that of the Underground tribe, to which I belong, is a species of hawk; and that of the Seneca tribe of Indians is a crotch of a tree.”¹⁵⁷ Here Blackbird associated tribe with what we now call nation. Each nation, according to Blackbird, had a pre-eminent clan. Blackbird reported that the clans had spread across the various nations (tribes) but each remembered the clans that were pre-eminent. Blackbird explained how this affected treaty protocol:

The first man who signed the treaty of 1836 [United States], one of the Chippewas of the Grand River Indians, whose name was “Mixinene,” was a descendant of the Backwoodsman, whose emblem was a rabbit. Therefore, all the rest of those Chippewas who went to Washington to form a treaty with the government felt displeased about this matter and tried to ignore the signature of Mixinene, because they thought that the first signature should have been made by a pure Ottawa or a pure Chippewa, because they had the **first right to the land of Michigan** [emphasis added]. But the “Backwoodsmen” they considered, had no

¹⁵⁷ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 81.

claim, nor title to this land which they ceded to the Government of the United States. But the Government did not know the difference, however – all she wanted was the land. So all the Chiefs of the Ottawas and Chippewas signed this said treaty, not with free will, but by compulsion.¹⁵⁸

Although Blackbird was an Odaawaa, the same principle held for the Ojibwe.

After Henry Rowe Schoolcraft sent delegates (his in-laws)¹⁵⁹ to Washington for a treaty conference, Gitchee Kawgaosh, Sault Ste. Marie crane clan chief, said to the American Indian agent in 1836, “Why and for what purpose has the man Whaiskee¹⁶⁰ gone to the home of our great father? Why did he leave without notifying me and other men of influence of my tribe of the nature of his mission? Why should he, whose totem-fathers live about Shaugawamekong be at his own will made the representative of the ancient band of red men whose totem is the lofty crane?”¹⁶¹ Gitchee Kawgaosh protested Whaiskee’s attendance to treat for territory that was not his. Gitchee Kawgaosh stated that the proper chiefs to attend this treaty council were the chiefs of the crane clan. Gitchee Kawgaosh was asserting his pre-eminence as the hereditary crane clan chief of Sault Ste. Marie and thus questioned the legitimacy of the endeavour to have a treaty without crane clan representation.

A hereditary line could lose influence, in fact historian, author and interpreter William W. Warren noted that among the Ojibwe of Lake Superior, one such line of crane clan chiefs lost their influence and thus were temporarily usurped in councils. In 1842 at a Treaty council held at La Pointe two leaders debated for hereditary

¹⁵⁸ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 81. For 1836 Treaty refer to Charles Joseph Kappler, ed., *Indian Treaties, 1778-1883, Volume 2 of Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (Interland Press, 1972), 450-6.

¹⁵⁹ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 81

¹⁶⁰ Schenck states that Way-ish-kee (Whaiskee) was the son of Waub-o-jeeg, both of the Reindeer clan, who lived at La Pointe (Wisconsin), and then moved to Sault Ste. Marie around 1823. Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 81. Historian Cary Miller reports that Waabojiig (Waub-o-jeeg) was Buffalo’s uncle. C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 179. William Warren stated that Ke-che-waish-keen (Great Buffalo) was the chief of the loon clan at La Pointe (Shaugawamekong), grandson of An-daig-we-os, who was chief at Sault Ste. Marie. The family moved to Shaugawamekong. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 48, 86.

¹⁶¹ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indians Tribes of the United States*, 6 volumes (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Company, 1851-57), 1: 533.

chieftainship, chief Tug-waug-aun-ay (Dagwaagane) was of the crane clan, the other chief was Ke-che-wash-keenah (Great Buffalo) of the loon clan. Tug-waug-uan-ay, chief of the crane clan resorted to story to remind the band of the hereditary line of chieftainship. He told the story of the crane soaring over Sault Ste. Marie and over La Pointe:

The Great Spirit once made a bird, and sent it from the skies to make its abode on earth. The bird came, and when it reached half way down, among the clouds, it sent forth a loud and far sounding cry, which was heard by all who resided on the earth, and even by the spirits who make their abode within its bosom. When the bird reached within sight of the earth, it circled slowly above the Great Fresh Water Lakes, and again it uttered its echoing cry. Nearer and nearer it circled, looking for a resting place, till it lit on a hill overlooking Boweting (Sault Ste. Marie); here it chose its first resting place, pleased with the numerous whitefish that glanced and swam in the clear waters and sparkling foam of the rapids. Satisfied with its chosen seat, again the bird sent forth its loud but solitary cry; and the No-kaig (Bear clan), A-waus-e-wug (Catfish), Ah-auh-wauh-ug (Loon), and Mous-o-neeg (Moose and Marten clan), gathered at his call. A large town was soon congregated, and the bird whom the Great Spirit sent presided over all. Once again it took its flight, and the bird flew slowly over the waters of Lake Superior. Pleased with the sand point of Shaug-ah-waum-ik-ong, it circled over it, and viewed the numerous fish as they swam about in the clear depths of the Great Lake. It lit on Shaug-ah-waum-ik-ong, and from thence again it uttered its solitary cry. A voice came from the calm bosom of the lake, in answer; the bird pleased with the musical sound of the voice, again sent forth its cry, and the answering bird made its appearance in the wampum-breasted Ah-auh-wauh (Loon). The bird spoke to it in a gentle tone, 'Is it thou that gives answer to my cry?' The Loon answered, 'It is I.' The bird then said to him, 'Thy voice is music – it is melody – it sounds sweet in my ear, from henceforth I appoint thee to answer my voice in Council. Thus, the Loon became the first in council, but he who made him chief was the Bus-in-aus-e (Echo Maker), or Crane. These are the words of my ancestors, who, from generation to generation, have repeated them into the ears of their children. I have done.'¹⁶²

Reportedly, all band members that had assembled agreed and stated "It is true; it is true."¹⁶³ The salient point again is that the chieftainship was intimately tied to the clan that had marked and recognized primacy in that territory.

Similarly, in another instance a member of the loon clan tried to assert claims to chieftainship at Fond du Lac in the years 1837 and 1838. Maangozid, son of the

¹⁶² Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 87-8.

¹⁶³ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 88.

influential loon clan chief Ka-dow-aub-e-da (Kawtawabeday ‘Broken Tooth’) of Sandy Lake, married the daughter of the Zhingob (Balsam), Marten Clan chief of Fond du Lac.¹⁶⁴ Zhingob was the undisputed chief at Fond du Lac but had only one daughter, the wife of Maangozid. In different councils, Maangozid reportedly served as Zhingob’s speaker. In this role, Maangozid received a medal from the United States government. Zhingob and Maangozid formed a leadership tandem for Fond du Lac. In time Zhingob took a second wife who bore a son. At the time of Zhingob’s death, his son Nindipens was a very young man. Maangozid assumed that his experience, age, and time served as speaker, coupled with his marriage to the chief’s daughter, meant that he would succeed his father-in-law’s office. He was wrong. The young man asserted himself and assumed the role of chief over his brother-in-law. Maangozid had the medal from the United States and this gave him leverage. However, Nindipens persisted and stated it was his grandfathers and father who had been the chiefs of Fond du Lac. Nindipens stated to the missionary Ely, “I will tell you well what Ma-osit [Maangozid] is. His father was chief of Sandy Lake. He (Maosit) does not live here... When you call the Indians together, they will tell you it is I who owns this land.”¹⁶⁵ Nindipens acknowledged that Maangozid had a medal from the United States but pointed out that the medal was for the serving as speaker for his father, stating further that the medal did not make Maangozid the chief of Fond du Lac. Nindipens then sought the assistance of his paternal uncle, who could also have become the chief but backed his nephew’s claim by relating the “genealogy of their five Grandfathers – chiefs.”¹⁶⁶ Nindipens inherited his father’s office by asserting his historic ties to the land while pointing out Maangozid’s ties lay elsewhere. The struggle between Nindipens and Maangozid did not expressly use the clan as an argument for territorial claims but it was implied when Nindipens said that “he does not live here,” because clearly Maangozid did live there and had lived at Fond du Lac for years.

Similarly, in 1860 a dispute over chieftainship arose on the shores of Georgian Bay. This time however, the clan was expressly used as a claim to pre-eminence in that

¹⁶⁴ C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 188. For Zhingob’s clan see Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 50.

¹⁶⁵ Nindipens quoted in C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 198, 199.

¹⁶⁶ C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 201.

specific territory. A chief by the name of Megis had died and was replaced in council by Bagahmegahbow. Another Anishinaabe, Asa Nahwequageezhig, living nearby dissented. Nahwequageezhig stated to the Indian agent that Bagahmegahbow was not the rightful chief,

[Asa Nahwequageezhig] asserts that he is the representative of the rightful Chiefs of the Muskoko... he states that the right of succession belongs to the Birch Bark branch of the Tribe, not to the Reindeers whose Chieftainship has been transferred to Rama and is now held by Chief William Yellowhead at that place. That Bagahmegahbow and his ancestors being of the Reindeer section of the Tribe must be looked upon as usurpers, and that it is time that the right of the Birch Bark Indians were restored to them by placing a chief of that family at the head of the Muskoko Band.¹⁶⁷

In this dispute, the matter was not so much about patrilineal descent (an heir to the deceased chief) but more about restoring the leadership to the pre-eminent clan of that traditional territory. The hereditary line of chieftainship was important, especially in matters of land ownership and treaty, because it perpetuated the clan ties to the land.

Anishinaabe Roles of Governance: Speakers, Orators, Attendants and Chiefs

Common councils were attended by band members, or in Jones' words members of the "tribe." In these common councils everyone had an opportunity to voice their opinion. The practice was to have a common council before a delegation was sent to a 'general council' whether that general council was for a treaty, the renewal of a treaty, an alliance or to go to war. At a 'general council' the process changed because the decisions that were made involved more than one band (or as Jones said 'tribe'). The general council format had chiefs who spoke for themselves but many times, the chiefs employed an orator or speaker. These representatives were usually identified as speakers but often times colonial entities started to treat the speakers as chiefs as well.¹⁶⁸ However, the chief was different than the speaker. These are two distinct positions in Anishinaabe society even though a chief often spoke for himself. The Ojibwe word for chief is **Ogimaa** and the word for speaker is **giigidowinini**, which is based upon the Ojibwe word **giigido**

¹⁶⁷ W.R. Bartlett to George Ironside, Toronto, August 7, 1860. LAC RG 10, Vol. 614, pp: 419 – 423.

¹⁶⁸ As in the case described at Fond du Lac when Maangozid, who served as speaker but possessed a medal from the United States, presumed to assume the chieftainship once his father-in-law Zhingob died. Refer to previous section.

meaning ‘he or she is speaking.’ This verb forms the basis for the title ‘speaker,’ ‘orator,’ and in modern times, ‘band councillor.’ The Ojibwe word **giigidowinini** literally means ‘speaking man’.¹⁶⁹ Consulting historical dictionaries, a list of variants of the Anishinaabe word for orator was compiled:

Orator: *p.n.a.* nátah-kéekedood (pl. –jig). He is an o.; netáh-kéekedo, *v. n.4*¹⁷⁰

Orator, nata-gigitod. I am an orator, nin nita-gigit.¹⁷¹

Speaker; n.a. kéekedo-wenéne, (pl. –wug).¹⁷²

Speaker, neta-gigitod, netawed, gigitowinini.¹⁷³

These words come from two sources, Bishop Baraga’s *Otchipwe Dictionary* and Reverend Wilson’s *The Ojebway Language*, both are rendered in obsolete orthographies. Although the word for speaker is written differently by both - Baraga **gigitowinini**; Wilson **kéekedo-wenéne**, the word is the same and is still used today and is rendered in the modern orthography as **giigidowinini**. The word for orator recorded by both Baraga and Wilson modifies the root verb **giigido** by adding the preverb **nitaa-** which means ‘be good at,’ or “frequently do [the verb that is attached],” so that **nitaa-giigido** means “he speaks well or talks frequently,” depending on the context. The verb is converted to the noun ‘orator’ by conjugating the verb to **netaa-giigidod**, which literally means, “the one who speaks well,” or the “good speaker.”

The orator was a naturally gifted speaker and was deliberately chosen for his demonstrated eloquence and debating skills. Sometimes the chief acted as his own orator, other times he employed an orator. Often the chief attended the same council and stood up to point out his speaker. For example, in 1760, when Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, George Croghan, met some Odaawaa on the south shore of Lake Erie the “principal” Odaawaa chief stood up and made an introduction by pointing to two of his young men and stated that they were deputized to conduct business for his nation.¹⁷⁴ The

¹⁶⁹ **Giigido** is the verb proper, and **inini** is the word for man. The ‘w’ connects the two adjacent vowels.

¹⁷⁰ Reverend Edward F. Wilson, *The Ojebway Language* (Toronto: Roswell and Hutchison, for the Venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 187[4]), 305.

¹⁷¹ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 186.

¹⁷² Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 361.

¹⁷³ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 239.

¹⁷⁴ Croghan quoted in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals relating to tours into the Western Country, November 16, 1750 –

Ho Chunk (Winnebago) Chief Kawranmawni also did this at a council on Drummond Island in 1816, he stood up and said, “Father – I address myself in behalf of the Waynebaygo Nation through the medium of this Brave man [Shongaypaw] (introducing another chief) who will speak for us.”¹⁷⁵ Both the unnamed “principal” Odaawaa chief and Kawranmawni stood up and introduced their speakers in full council. This practice was also recorded in 1846 at a general council of Indian Chiefs and principal men held at Orillia, Ontario. The minutes of the general council listed the attending chiefs and their residence, it also listed the orators. The published minutes listed “Chief Joseph Snake, Mr. John Snake (the Chief’s Orator)” from Snake Island.¹⁷⁶ At one point during the council, the secretary recorded that Chief Joseph Snake of Snake Island rose and stated, “‘My Chiefs – You will now hear what I have to say, through my orator.’ The Orator, Mr. John Snake, standing by the Chief, then spoke.”¹⁷⁷ At a general council, the chief’s orator was usually introduced by the chief. In these same minutes, the attendees from Beausoleil¹⁷⁸ were listed as “Chief John Aisaans (formerly of Coldwater), Unootahgawenene (Chief’s Orator).” The listed name for the Chief’s orator is actually another word for ‘messenger.’ The current spelling of this word is “**noodaagan**.”¹⁷⁹ L’Abbé Cuoq listed “**Anonagan = anotagan**, employé, depute, ambassadeur; Anotaganikwe, femme de service. (**Anonagan = anotagan**, employee, deputy,

November 1765” in *Early Western Travels 1748 – 1846*, Volume 1 (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 105.

¹⁷⁵ Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

¹⁷⁶ An island in Lake Simcoe, north of Toronto, ON.

¹⁷⁷ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, on Thursday, the 30th, and Friday, the 31st July, 1846, on the Proposed Removal of the Smaller Communities, and the Establishment of Manual Labour Schools (Montreal: Canada Gazette Office, 1846), 21. See also <http://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.59434/3?r=0&s=1>.

¹⁷⁸ An island in Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, north of Penetanguishene.

¹⁷⁹ Listed as “Messenger,” animate noun, in Richard Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993), 521. Manitoulin dialect omits the initial short “a” so anootagan becomes noodagan.

ambassador; Anotaganikwe, woman who serves).”¹⁸⁰ Bishop Baraga listed **Anotagan** in his dictionary but directed the user to **Anokitagan**,¹⁸¹ which he translated as hireling, male or female servant.¹⁸² **Anootagan** is the noun form of the word **anootaage**, which also forms the root of the word for interpret or translate, **aanikanootaage**.¹⁸³ The initial morpheme **aanik-** refers to succession or join side by side. The word for interpreter or translator is **aanikanootaagewinini** or **ayaanikanootaaged**.¹⁸⁴ Thus the word for the interpreter, the one who translated speeches from English to Ojibwe and also Ojibwe to English is not the same as the word for speaker or orator.

The chief spoke ‘through’ his orator and many times the chief was in attendance. There are numerous examples of this occurring at the King’s council fire. However, other times a chief spoke on behalf of other chiefs who attended the King’s council fire. This was the case in 1816 at Drummond Island when Ojibwe Chief Esquaukanebee said: “Father – [...] We hold you fast by the hand and will never let you go. This my father is the sentiments of all the chiefs now seated around you. I am their speaker and as a token of the truth of what I have said I give you this white wampum (* delivering a few strings of white wampum).”¹⁸⁵ Chief Esquaukanebee held wampum and spoke for the assembled chiefs. Just as Chief Esquaukanebee was charged to speak for the assembled chiefs, so too was Jean Baptiste Assiginack at St. Josephs Island in 1829. From 1815 to 1829 J.B. Assiginack had been the interpreter at the British garrison at Drummond Island, but in 1827 he had resigned to serve as catechist to his community.¹⁸⁶ At this council on St. Josephs Island the secretary wrote that “the late Interpreter Apekinac [Assiginack],

¹⁸⁰ Jean-André Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine* (Montreal: J. Chapleau & fils, 1886), 52. Translation by Mariana Lafrance.

¹⁸¹ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 42.

¹⁸² Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 41.

¹⁸³ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 35, Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 267.

¹⁸⁴ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 145; Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 267; Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 17.

Aanikanootaagewinini is a compound noun made up of the verb **aanikanootage** and the noun “**inini**” meaning man.

¹⁸⁵ Drummonds Island 18th July 1816, Minutes of a council held this day by Esquaukanebee a Chippewa Chief from the Grand River Col. Maul Com President, LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19149 - 19150, C-11010

¹⁸⁶ Cecil King, “J.B. Assiginack: Arbiter of two worlds” *Ontario History*, LXXXVI, No 1 (March 1994: 33 – 51), 38.

having been requested by his Tribe or the Chiefs to convey their sentiments, he left his seat and holding some strings of Wampum, addressed the assembly as follows: ‘My Father (to Colonel Mackay) and you, my brethren (to the Indians) do not look upon me as a Chief, I am merely employed to convey the words of my chiefs to our Great Father.’”¹⁸⁷ Here the Odaawaa war chief Assiginack, explicitly stated that he was not to be viewed as a chief in that instance but as the speaker or orator. Thus, a chief could serve as orator to other chiefs. Other times chiefs who served as speakers at a general council stated specifically that they represented the chiefs but also the ‘old men, women and children.’ This was the case at Michilimackinac when the commanding officer Major Arent Schuyler De Peyster, was departing for a new station, the Odaawaa Chief Jinquis Tawanong was charged with delivering the parting speech. He stated expressly who he was speaking for, “Father, I rise to bid you farewell in the name of the Ottawa nation. I am likewise, to speak for the many strangers assembled at this council fire - our old men, our wives and children, have hired me to speak for them likewise. It is with my tongue they bid you farewell, but it is with their own eyes they will weep your loss.”¹⁸⁸

Other times, one chief represented other chiefs from his village, such was the case when Ojibwe Chief Matchicowiss (Madjekwiss)¹⁸⁹ went to Sir William Johnson’s house in 1768. He smoked the pipe of peace with Sir William and delivered a beaver blanket as a peace offering and said, “Father – I now open your ears, that you may hear and, understand what I have to say. I have had an ardent desire to see you for a long time past

¹⁸⁷ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

¹⁸⁸ David A. Armour and Keith R. Widder, *At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution* (Mackinac Island State Park Commission, 1978), 113.

¹⁸⁹ This the same chief who played an integral role in the capture of Fort Michilimackinac in 1763, David A. Armour, “Madjeckewiss,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, accessed July 2, 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/madjeckewiss_5E.html.

and I now meet you to tell you what I am charged with from the Chiefs of all our people.”¹⁹⁰ Ojibwe Chief Matchicowiss presented a gift, a pipe and spoke on wampum to assure Sir William that he represented the Ojibwe chiefs from his region. Chiefs from other nations of the Western Confederacy also sent speakers to far off councils in their stead but these speakers were only authorized to deliver messages and bring back news. These speakers stated who they represented and presented a physical item, a pipe, strings of wampum, a beaver blanket, a garnished elk robe or even an otter pouch, to signify their commission. Another example occurred in 1796, when the Odaawaa Chief Niscatchininy “The Barbue” arrived at the new council fire at St. Josephs Island (by Sault Ste. Marie) with 10 others from L’Arbre Croche and “said he spoke for all the Ottawas and in their names particularly the Chiefs the pur[port] was that he was sent by all the other Chiefs to take their Father by the hand and to assure him of their friendship & c & c. [...], he afterwards spoke on four long strings of wampum he said they were presented to him by all the Chiefs of the villages of Arbre Croche deputizing him to come as their Interpreter and spoke for them to their Father at St. Joseph.”¹⁹¹ In this case Odaawaa Chief Niscatchininy, who was a chief, served as the speaker for the other chiefs from his village.

Sometimes the speakers represented war chiefs as well, such was the case on 21 October 1814 when the Potawatomi Waindawgay from St. Josephs Lake requested a council at Michilimackinac during the War of 1812. Waindawgay rose and said –

Father – I salute you and all those assembled here. I thank the Master of Life for having afforded me an opportunity of seeing you my English father, to enable me to represent the situation of your children the Potewahtomys who have deputized me and my friend Meshpawkissh to represent them...

Father – [Mesawganwa], Shaywaynisa and Mishinayway War Chiefs thank you in the name of all your children of our nation that remain true to you... *He delivered strings of Wampum.*¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ 1768 July 22nd At a Congress at Johnson Hall with the Chipeweighs, LAC RG 10, Vol. 8, p. 74 – 81, C-1222.

¹⁹¹ Thomas Duggan Journal, Michilimackinack, 1795-1801, Clements Library, University of Michigan, 2 October 1796.

¹⁹² Minutes of a Council held at Michilimackinac this 21st Oct 1814 by request of [Waindawgay] & [Meshpawkissh] Potawahtomy [Potawatomi] of St. Josephs Lake Michigan. LAC RG 10, Vol. 29, C-11008, p. 17301 – 17304.

The speaker delivered strings of wampum in the name of the Potawatomi but specifically for the war chiefs he named. To have a chief, speaker, or messenger, delegated to relay official messages was a common practice. In fact throughout the recorded history of Anishinaabe and British diplomatic relations, the names of chiefs and their speakers have been recorded in the council proceedings. Sometimes a chief spoke for his band, other times a sub chief¹⁹³ spoke and acted as orator, other times an orator spoke at a general council. Andrew J. Blackbird reported that his father had attained the status of chief and that of head speaker,

After my father's return to Arbor Croche [sic], he became quite an orator, and consequently he was appointed as the head speaker in the council of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. He continued to hold this office until his frame was beginning to totter with age, his memory became disconnected and inactive, and he therefore gave up his office to his own messenger, whose name was Joseph As-saw-gon, who died during the late rebellion.¹⁹⁴

Makadebinesi, Blackbird's father, was a chief but also head speaker for the "Ottawa and Chippewa Indians." This is another position or title in Anishinaabe politics called the **Ogimaa-giigido** "Chief Speaker." The role of the **Ogimaa-giigido** was to represent the views, opinions and perspectives of his chiefs in a general council. This title held prestige and status but no 'executive power' – to use Peter Jones' phrase.¹⁹⁵ Andrew J. Blackbird explained how the 'head counsellor and speaker' was authorized to represent his chief's wishes at a council but not authorized to exceed that mandate. In fact, Blackbird reported that the head chief of the Odaawaa did not go to Montreal after the Ojibwe took over Fort Michilimackinac in 1763 to return the survivors, the Odaawaa chief had sent his head counsellor/ speaker in his stead:

Ego-me-nay – Corn Hanger – was the head counselor [sic] and speaker of the Ottawa tribe of Indians at that time [1763], and according to our knowledge, Ego-me-nay was the leading one who went with those survivors of the massacre [at Michilimackinac], and he was the man who made the speech before the august assembly in the British council hall at Montreal at that time. Ne-saw-key – Down-the-hill – the head chief of the Ottawa Nation, did not go with the party,

¹⁹³ The Ojibwe word for sub-chief is **aanike-ogimaa** literally meaning "Next in line chief."

¹⁹⁴ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 31.

¹⁹⁵ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 108.

but sent his message, and instructed their counselor in what manner he should appear before the British Government.¹⁹⁶

The key phrase is that the chief had “sent his message, and instructed their counselor [sic] in what manner he should appear before the British Government.” The **Ogimaa-giigido** (head counsellor/ speaker) had a prescribed speech to deliver and likely delivered wampum or a calumet to the ‘august assembly’ but he was not the head chief (nor king for that matter), and he was not authorized to conduct any business beyond what he was told to do. Based upon circumstance an **Ogimaa-giigido** could be a temporary title. At the King’s council fire at Drummond Island on 29 June 1816, the Ho Chunk (Winnebago), Menominee, Odaawaa, Ojibwe, and the Sioux met with Lieutenant Colonel McDouall of the British army and Lieutenant Colonel McKay of the Indian Department to present their grievances regarding the status of their lands after the War of 1812. The Sioux Chief Wabasha spread a garnished elk skin before the commanding officers and stated,

Father - I salute you. I hold my Great Father the King, that is beyond the Great Salt Lake, fast by the hand, and I salute all the Red Coats now before me.

Father - Formerly I used to speak to you with joy and much satisfaction, but the present is on a disagreeable subject.

Father - (Holding a Wampum Paroll [sic] in his hand) your Red Children are miserably situated. The Big Knives threaten that they will take possession of our Lands. I address you on behalf of *all your Red Children to the Westward* [orig. emph.] being nominated so to do: These [str]ings of Wampum are to convey our sentiments to all the principal Chiefs and Warriors on the Communication from this to Quebec, and from thence to our Great Father the King, and to acquaint them all, that, an omission appears to have been made at the Treaty made between the Big Knives and English for since the Hatchet has been buried, the Big Knives threaten to erect Forts upon your Children’s Lands which they cannot suffer, the Land is their only Support.¹⁹⁷

This was a grand council and included more than a few bands of Ojibwe, the council included representatives of five nations. The chiefs of those nations gathered together before the council and selected Wabasha to speak on all of their behalf.

¹⁹⁶ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 9.

¹⁹⁷ Speech from Lieutenant Colonel William McKay, Superintendent of the Indian Department, to the Sioux, Winabagoes [Ho-Chunk], Minominies [Menominee], Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Chippawa [Ojibwe] Indians (about five or six hundred men) assembled in council at Drummond Island on the 29th June 1816. Lieut. Colonel McDonall [McDouall], President, Officers of the Garrison and Indian Department, and several naval officers present. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XVI, ed. by Joseph Greusel (1890), 479-87.

Wabasha was not likely called **Ogimaa-giigido** but that is the function he served at this particular council because he was selected by the chiefs, not the elders, warriors, or women, to present their position. The chiefs from those five nations would have held a council and smoked pipes amongst themselves, and then deliberated on what course of action they were to take regarding the American incursion on their lands. A year later at the King's council fire at Amherstburg four nations held a council, smoked the pipe, deliberated amongst themselves, formulated their course of action and then selected a speaker amongst themselves to present their position to their 'Great Father's' representative. On 17 March 1817 the Huron Chief was selected to speak on behalf of the Western Nations living around Detroit. He rose, holding strings of wampum in his hand, conducted the condolence ceremony¹⁹⁸ and said, "Father – You are to consider us as speaking in the names of Four Nations, the Ottawas [Odaawaa], Chippawas [Ojibwe], & Potawatomes [Potowatomi], as well as our own. We therefore hope, father, you will open your ears & listen to what your children have to say." After concluding the condolence ceremony, the speaker delivered some strings of wampum.¹⁹⁹ He then continued with his speech in which he complained about the diminution of presents and rations distributed to the Western Confederacy.

Later that same year, the Sauk Chief Black Hawk visited the King's council fire at Drummond Island with some fellow Sauk as well as Otaugamie (Fox) and Ho Chunk (Winnebago). Disillusioned, angry, and frustrated, Black Hawk delivered a long speech that the commanding officer eventually cut off. However, before Black Hawk was cut off he had laid a war belt of wampum on the floor and stated that "Father – This is the tomyhawk [sic] you gave me when you desired me to make war on the Big Knives. You

¹⁹⁸ The condolence ceremony is more often associated with the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) but it was adopted as part of wampum protocol and diplomacy throughout the Great Lakes amongst the nations. It was also integral to councils with the British. The condolence ceremony usually preceded any other business at a council. Its purpose was to set attendants in the right frame of mind by wiping their tears, cleansing ears, unblocking throats and setting hearts aright.

¹⁹⁹ Copy - Huron Speech To Major Martin, Amherstburg 10 March 1817. Copy transmitted to the Supt Genl 30 March 1817, Speech delivered by the Chiefs of the Huron Nation of the Indians resident on the River Canard near Amherstburg and addressed to Major Martin the Commandant in presence of a number of officers of the garrison & of the officers of the Indian Department LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, C-11010, p. 19707 – 19710.

told me to have it and never abandon it.”²⁰⁰ Black Hawk re-iterated the promises that the British made to the Western Nations. He then stated “that when he [American] made peace we should be considered as English men and your brethren^c (°allies). This was not only told us by you, my Father, but by the [Red head]^d (°Mr Dickson) the agent at Amherstburg^e (° Col. Caldwell) and by our Great Fathers Chief Warrior at Quebec, this **Meshaniway**^f (° pointing to a principal warrior)²⁰¹ and with his own ears, heard him repeat nearly the same words that you, yourself told me.”²⁰² Black Hawk then produced a copy of the speech that General Prevost had delivered to the deputation of the Western Confederacy that had visited him in Quebec in March 1814 after the death of Tecumseh. The “**Meshaniway**” was one of the Sauk deputies that served as an escort for Tecumseh’s son, sister and widow. Although he was a warrior, the fact that he brought back the copy of the speech meant that he acted as “**meshaniway**.”²⁰³

What or who is **Meshaniway**? The Reverend Jones again provides important information on Anishinaabe governance. He stated that “every chief has his attendant, called *mezhenuhway* who acts as aide-de-camp. It is his duty to deliver the messages of the chief, call a council, and attend to all necessary preparations.”²⁰⁴ Bishop Baraga also noted the following, “**mijinawe**. Steward, administrator of a property, manager; pl.-g.”²⁰⁵ The Reverend Wilson recorded a different word “Steward; n.a., **guhnuhwanjegáwenene** (pl. –wug)²⁰⁶ but had a note in the gloss to refer to the word ambassador. Under

²⁰⁰ Drummonds Island 7th Augst 1817, Winnebago, Sauk, Otaugamie. LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, C-11010, p. 20076.

²⁰¹ In correspondence from Lieutenant General Drummond to Noah Freer York, February 16th, 1814 the names of the deputation were provided and the Saak individual was identified as Mitass and the Fox representatives were Walisseka, Kenailounak. In E. A. Cruickshank, ed., *The Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812 – 14, Vol. IX December 1813 to May 1814* (Welland, ON: The Lundy’s Lane Historical Society, Tribune Office, 1908).

²⁰² Drummonds Island 7th Augst 1817, Winnebago, Sauk, Otaugamie. LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, C-11010, p. 20076.

²⁰³ In a personal communication with linguist Dr. Amy Dahlmstrom, the word meshaniway is not a Sauk word. The corresponding Meskwaki word for this title is mamîshîha. Professor Dahlmstrom confirmed my suspicion that the secretary likely knew Ojibwe and through the interpretation used the phrase he knew instead of the Sauk word.

²⁰⁴ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 108.

²⁰⁵ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 236.

²⁰⁶ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 366.

“Ambassador; n.a. **mezhénuhwa**, (pl. –g).”²⁰⁷ Although it sounds like the **mizhinawe** just delivers messages, he actually fulfills an official capacity for the chief and his importance comes to light in council. Jones recorded an intertribal council between the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee (Six Nations/ Iroquois). All were accounted for and “the council fire was then struck with flint and steel, and the pipe of peace having been filled, it was lighted with the new fire, and the Mezhinuway (Aide-de-camp) presented it to each of the chiefs of the Six Nations, then to the Ojebway chiefs, and afterwards to the warriors present.”²⁰⁸

Referring to the historical Ojibwe dictionaries written by Bishop Baraga, Reverend Wilson, and L’Abbé Cuoq, the following entries were compiled,

Ambassador; n.a. **mezhénuhwa**, (pl. –g).²⁰⁹

Messenger; n.a. **meshénuhwa** (pl. –g). enenáuzhuhwáhgun, (pl. –ug).²¹⁰

Messenger, ininajawâgan, ijinajawâgan, eninajaond.²¹¹

Steward, **mijinawe**. I am a steward, **nin mijinawew**.²¹²

Mijinawe, serviteur, maître d’hôtel, intendant, agent, (celui qui dans un festin, sert les autres); servant, headwaiter, intendant, agent, (the one who serves others at a feast); **mijinawewi**, être un **mijinawe**; **kitci okima o mijinaweman** l’intendant du roi. **mijinawewi**, to be a **mijinawe**; **kitci okima o mijinaweman** the intendant of the king.²¹³

The dictionary writers of the 19th century defined mijinawe/ meshénuhwa as a steward, servant, headwaiter, the one who serves others at a feast, but they also list messenger and ambassador, all of which does not convey the importance of the position. Perhaps the most fitting description or translation is the one provided by Peter Jones – aide de camp. On the significance of the position, Peter Grant in 1804, noted that next in rank to the chiefs are the “**Michinawois**... who act as secretaries or ambassadors on great public occasions.”²¹⁴ American Indian Agent and Ethnographer Henry R. Schoolcraft wrote that the **Mezhinauwa** “is an official personage, standing in the light of an aid, or

²⁰⁷ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 157.

²⁰⁸ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 118.

²⁰⁹ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 157.

²¹⁰ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 290.

²¹¹ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 169.

²¹² Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 245.

²¹³ Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine*, 219. Translation by Mariana Lafrance.

²¹⁴ Grant, “The Saulteaux Indians,” 350.

office help, to the chiefs. He carves at feasts, and lights the pipe at councils or ceremonial occasions. He is the verbal messenger of state messages, but not a messenger in the common acceptance of the term. He is an important functionary in all formal business or negotiations with the chiefs.”²¹⁵ Lest one is left with the impression that the **mizhinawe** was an eastern Ojibwe, Mississauga, Algonquin, Nipissing institution, the work of Sauk linguist William Jones provides the necessary proof that the word and therefore title of **mizhinawe** was used around Lake Superior. In a story called “Snapping Turtle Goes on the Warpath,” the word is used to refer to Snapping Turtle’s attendant:

Bezhig owiijiwan omizhinaweman.

“He went along with one of his attendants.”²¹⁶

Mii dash imaa geget ayaawaad mikinaak gaye aw mizhinawe.

And there, sure enough, there were Snapping-Turtle and the attendant.²¹⁷

The storyteller, John Pinesi of Fort William of the **Awaasizii** (Brown Bullhead) clan, referred to snapping turtle’s attendant as **mizhinawe** but then when the two met up with humans, snapping turtle was seized but his attendant fled. The storyteller then changed the word for attendant,

Mikinaak idash gii-dakonaa; aw idash ashkaabewis gii-maajiiba’iwe, gaawiin gii-debibinaasii.²¹⁸

Now, Snapping-Turtle was taken captive; but the attendant took to flight, he was not captured.

Pinesi used **mizhinawe** synonymously with **ashkaabewis** (**oshkaabewis**). Once again, referring to the historical dictionaries and modern dictionaries the following list was compiled.

Attendant (on an Indian chief); **ooshkahbawiss.**²¹⁹

Oshkabewiss. Waiter or attendant of an Indian Chief; *pl* –**ag.**²²⁰

Oshkaabewis *na* ceremonial attendant, ceremonial messenger; *pl*

oshkaabewisag; dim oshkaabewisens.²²¹

²¹⁵ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches: North American Indian folktales and legends* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications Inc., 1999), 208.

²¹⁶ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, 2: 113, 114.

²¹⁷ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, 2: 115, 116.

²¹⁸ W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, 2: 115, 116.

²¹⁹ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 163.

²²⁰ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 335. “Attendant, oshkabewiss.” Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 19.

²²¹ Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 110.

Both Baraga and Wilson listed **oshkaabewis** as attendant on/ of an Indian chief. The modern definition listed is “ceremonial attendant” specifically associated with the Midewiwin medicine society of the Anishinaabe. The storyteller deliberately used both words in the story and event occurs which may shed light on the change in terminology. This is a suggested interpretation for the switch in terms for the attendant in the story. According to the storyteller, Snapping Turtle was able to trick his captors into throwing him in the lake and he then escaped but was pursued by otter. Snapping Turtle ended up taking otter captive and stated that he would not let him go until a thunderstorm arrived. The thunders arrived and otter was released while Snapping Turtle headed home. The suggested interpretation for the switch from **mizhinawe** to **oshkaabewis** at that point in the story is that Snapping Turtle needed the logistical services of his **mizhinawe** on the first part of the trip and once captured needed more spiritual assistance and thus required the assistance of his **oshkaabewis**. This suggested interpretation illustrates the different roles the two may have performed in aiding a chief.²²²

The diplomacy and political positions and titles of the Western Nations are more complex than presented in standard historical accounts. The nuances are multiple and there is a conflation of English terminology - chief, sub-chief, speaker, orator, messenger, head counsellor/ speaker, aide de camp (steward), and attendant (ceremonial). The respective titles in Anishinaabemowin are **Ogimaa, Aanike-ogimaa, Giigidowinini, Netaa-giigidod, Noodaagan and Ogimaa-giigido, Mizhinawe, and Oshkaabewis**, each are distinctive titles with different roles and responsibilities in the internal and external decision-making process.

The decision-making/ governance process started with an issue to resolve. A clan or family member of the chief’s **nindibenjigewin** (hunting territory) or

²²² The two roles are not so easily disentangled. There are other sources that refer to the mizhinawe as an attendant at the Midewiwin. C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 83. I suspect one of the main reasons for the overlap is due to the fact that many chiefs were also high-ranking Midewiwin ceremonial leaders. The Jesuit Fr. Chazelle noted the strength of the Anishinaabe spiritual traditions in 1844, and stated that “these are charlatans, or professional sorcerers, and there are many [of] them. Every chief is a sorcerer and just as in earlier times and in other climes, power was connected with the priesthood. Authority comes from the Great Spirit.” Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 1: 249.

indinaakonigewin (band) brought forward an issue to resolve, perhaps a territory or resource issue. Perhaps the member of the **indaakonigewin** utilized a **giigidowinini** (speaker) to represent their issue to the chief and community. The **Ogimaa** (chief) summoned his **mizhinawe** (attendant) and the issue was discussed with relevant information procured by the **mizhinawe** (attendant). At this point the elders, **gichi-anishinaabeg** (elders), would have been party to the proceedings. A common council with the whole band, the elders, women and young men may then be held to settle the dispute or issue and at this ‘common’ council everyone would have a chance to voice their opinion. If the issue involved another band, the **mizhinawe** set up a meeting with the other band’s **Ogimaa** and **mizhinawe**. The **Ogimaag** (Chiefs) may have had to convene a general council with other **ogimaag**, **mizhinaweg**, **oshkaabewisag**, and **gichi-anishinaabeg**. At the general council the **netaa-giigidod** (orator) would outline the issue to all. The chiefs would then speak at some point as well and perhaps a **giigidowinini** would speak about the issue on behalf of the person who had the initial issue. The parties met, smoked, feasted, and deliberated, at this point the **oshkaabewis** (ceremonial attendant) may have been present to assist with the ceremonial feast. If the deliberations required spiritual assistance then the **mizhinawe** or **oshkaabewis** called the **jiiskiiwinini** (ceremonial shaking tent conductor) just like the Ojibwe chiefs at Sault Ste. Marie did in 1764 when they commissioned the **jiiskiiwinini** to ask the **mikinaak** (snapping turtle spirit) to gather information about the British.²²³ The **Ogimaa**, **mizhinawe**, **oshkaabewis** and **gichi-anishinaabeg** might require spiritual guidance to plan a course of action. At each stage of the process the people (**Ogimaa**, **mizhinawe**, **oshkaabewis**, **giigidowinini**, **netaa-giigidod**, **gichi-anishinaabeg**) would have burnt tobacco in the council fire. Tobacco would have also been smoked in pipes and food offered to the spirits during the feasts. The sheer number of councils and deliberations led Father Pierre Francois-Xavier Charlevoix, to remark that the Indians were “eternally negotiating ... some affairs or other ... such as the concluding or renewing of treaties, offers of service, mutual civilities,

²²³ Alexander Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada, and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776*, in two parts (New York: Riley, 1809), 171.

making alliances, invitations to become parties in a war, and lastly, compliments of condolence on the death of some chief or considerable person.”²²⁴

At the time of the Robinson Treaties (1850), the decision-making/ governance process was based upon the egalitarian nature of Anishinaabe society which required input from all sectors of Anishinaabe society (elders, warriors, women, young men and women). This input into the decision-making process was facilitated by various officials (Ogimaa, Aanike-ogimaag, Noodaaganag, Giigidowininiwag, Netaa-giigidojig, Gichi-anishinaabeg, Mizhinaweg, Oshkaabewisag) to achieve consensus in the decision making and governance process. The Anishinaabe decision-making process, which required numerous councils, frustrated colonial officials who wanted a prompt answer from one person, not many.

Zagaswe’idiwin: Councils

The forum for both the internal and external decision making process was the council. The principle elements used in a council were the fire, tobacco, pipes, wampum and food. There are a number of words in Anishinaabemowin for a council. According to L’Abbe Jean André Cuoq, **Kikito** was “to orate” or “to hold a council.” He also noted that **Kikitowin** is “an oration, or a council of chiefs.”²²⁵ As in other sections of this report, an explanation of the Ojibwe word is necessary. The word **kikitowin** (**giigidowin** in modern orthography) is based upon the verb **kikito** (**giigido**) prosaically meaning “he speaks,” or “he is speaking” but in Cuoq’s words, “he orates.” Adding the nominalizer “-win” renders the verb **giigido** into a noun meaning a speech, or an “oration.” The Reverend Wilson also listed in his dictionary that council was an inanimate noun “**kékedoowin**”²²⁶ and Baraga also listed council as “**gigitowin**.”²²⁷ This word **giigidowin** is now translated as “sentence, conversation,” and even “telephone, microphone” in some

²²⁴ Pierre de Charlevoix, “Letter XVII, Fort Ponchartrain in the Narrows, June 8, 1721” in his *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, 2 vols., (London: Printed for R. & J. Dodsley, 1761), 2: 1-37, quote from 27. Also cited in C. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 44.

²²⁵ Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine*, 164. Translation by Mariana Lafrance.

²²⁶ Wilson, *The Ojebway Language*, 199.

²²⁷ Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 60.

dialects.²²⁸ The verb **giigido** is also combined with the nominalizer “-gamig” (structure) to create the word “**giigidogamig**” meaning council hall or band office.²²⁹

The other word for council is **zagaswe’idiwin** and it is based upon the transitive animate verb **zagaswe’** “give a smoke to s.o., share a smoke with s.o. (especially a pipe in a ceremony).”²³⁰ Adding the reflexive morpheme “-idi-” indicates that the action is to each other, resulting in “**zagaswe’idiwag vai** they have a council meeting”²³¹ but it literally means “they are giving a [ceremonial] smoke to each other.” Baraga entered “**Sagasswéidiwin**. Smoking of several persons together, that is, an Indian assembly or council, where every Indian present lights his pipe and smokes.”²³² Wilson also included the word under “smoking; p.i., **suhguswahwin**. S. in council; **suhguswäédewin**.”²³³ L’Abbé Cuoq also wrote down this word as “**Sagasweitiwin**, l’action de fumer plusieurs ensemble (the act of several people smoking together); **Mi ondaje i sagasweitinaniwang**, c’est ici l’estaminet, ici quel’on s’assemble pour fumer (This here is where we gather together to smoke).”²³⁴

As the Reverend Peter Jones and Choné had stated, it was the chief’s duty to hold and host councils with the elders, fellow chiefs, and the band at large. He was to facilitate deliberations on matters that affected all, such as settling hunting territory disputes, as well as treaty negotiations. Jones stated that there were general councils and common councils. The common councils he said “are held in each tribe [clan] whenever occasion may require, and are composed of the chiefs and principal men belonging to the tribe [clan]. Each person is at liberty to give his opinion on all matters before the council. At these meetings their local affairs are settled, such as sale and division of their lands, settling disputes, adopting other Indians into their own body, and the transaction of

²²⁸ Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary*, 151. Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 58.

²²⁹ Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary*, 151. Wilson, *The Ojibway Language*, 199.

²³⁰ Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 121.

²³¹ Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 121.

²³² Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 360.

²³³ Wilson, *The Ojibway Language*, 357.

²³⁴ Cuoq, *Lexique de la langue algonquine*, 359. Translation by Mariana Lafrance.

business with the British Government.”²³⁵ Jones called these councils ‘common’ or ‘local’ councils. These common/ local councils were called by the chief to consult with his band. Elder Fred Pine, descendant of Chief Shingwaukonce, explained the process at the band or ‘local’ level,

The Indians had meetings between the heads of families before the leader went and passed the treaty. Everybody had to raise their hands up, then it passed. Everything will be legal that way. Won’t be like today where a couple of Indian guys can sell off the reserve. Gather the whole tribe and put the question to them. “This is coming up,” they told their people. “Who wants it?”, they asked. If the idea got a majority, it passed. The decision was made before the leader left home.²³⁶

This process of using the majority was also reported by Peter Jones in 1861. Jones wrote about councils and stated that “There is no voting among them but they give their decisions according to the opinions expressed by a majority of speakers. When a measure is found to be unpopular it is generally dropped; hence there are seldom any warm discussions.”²³⁷ Although Jones is talking about general councils, the same principle applied to common councils. The harmony of the group was paramount and the principle of respecting individual’s autonomy led to the practice of non-interference. This does not mean that difficult questions went unasked, quite the opposite, difficult questions were deliberated upon and settled, just in a manner that was non-combative or coercive.

Ojibwe Chief Mongowin, recalled the council before his father left for the treaty council at Sault Ste. Marie in 1850. Mongowin’s father, Shawenakezhick asked the difficult question of entering into treaty and establishing a reserve.

Shawenakichick was my father and the chief before me. I remember my father getting a message to go to the Sault to see about a reserve for the band... I remember my father calling a council in consequence of getting the message. The meeting was held where I now live at the Whitefish Lake. I was present at the meeting. My father told the people or asked the people: “shall I reserve so much,” and they answered “Yes.”²³⁸

²³⁵ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 107.

²³⁶ Fred Pine, Garden River, 1990, quoted in Morrison, *The Robinson Treaties of 1850*, 128.

²³⁷ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 106.

²³⁸ Attorney-General of Ontario v. John Harvey Francis and Others, Ontario High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, per Ferguson J., 19 January 1889 in Brian Slattery and

The chief summoned ‘common’ or ‘local’ councils, which would now be called ‘band’ councils in order to put questions to the whole band and elicit their opinions in the matter because, in Jones words, “Each person is at liberty to give his opinion on all matters before the council.”²³⁹ Common councils were also held with outsiders and they had a format that was followed. The Ojibwe band of Walpole Island charged the orator Oshawano to explain these rules to Jesuits in July of 1844, after the Jesuits had started to build a chapel on their territory without asking the chiefs and elders. Orator Oshawano, spoke first on behalf of Chief Pitwigijik:

My Brother, when you speak, your brothers seated here will listen to you. You are free to say whatever you are thinking. As long as your voice can be heard, not one of us will say a single word, and this is how you in turn will act, when you are being spoken to. As soon as the sound of your voice ceases to be heard, this young chief will speak to you. Then, perhaps I will have something more to say to you.²⁴⁰

Oshawano prefaced his remarks by stating that as host and orator, he would speak first. This could be referred to as etiquette, but it is more properly called protocol. This was the practice at common councils. Reverend Jones reported that the same general principle applied to general councils, where more than one band or chief was in attendance, “the head chief of the tribe in whose territory the council is convened, generally takes the lead.”²⁴¹ Reverend Jones stated “that the first thing done is to kindle the council fire. This is called the uncovering of the slumbering embers of former councils, and the closing of a council is called the covering of the council fire. From this fire they light their pipes. The council then proceed to the ceremony of smoking the pipe of peace, from which each Indian present takes a few whiffs. This is done in token of friendship and good-will to all parties.”²⁴² Igniting the council fire, or uncovering the “slumbering embers of former councils,” is an act acknowledging continuity of form as well as continuity of business. In an effort to establish continuity, Superintendent

Sheila Stelck, eds., *Canadian Native Law Cases*, 9 vols. (University of Saskatchewan Native Law Centre, 1980-91) vol. II.

²³⁹ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 107.

²⁴⁰ Fr. Chazelle to a priest of the same society. From Sandwich, January 24, 1845 Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 1: 294.

²⁴¹ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 105.

²⁴² P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 105.

General of Indian Affairs, Sir William Johnson, ignited the King's council fire at Detroit in 1761, using a brand from the fire he had lit at his house "in the Mohawk's country" by order of the king, thus establishing symbolic ties to that 'eternal' fire.

The required elements for a council were tobacco and pipes, regardless if they were common or general councils. In 1860, the Prince of Wales was scheduled to arrive at Sarnia, Ontario to meet with a deputation of chiefs from Lake Huron. Indian Affairs were requested to organize the council and Manitowaning Superintendent of Indian Affairs George Ironside was asked for his opinion about the council, he replied, "A liberal supply of tobacco for the Chiefs in council will be absolutely necessary."²⁴³ In fact, a staple in the inventory of the annual presents delivered by the British to the Anishinaabeg, was tobacco.²⁴⁴ Tobacco was and remains a sacred medicine to the Anishinaabeg. In fact, it is an offering to the spirits. The spirits love tobacco and when the Anishinaabe smoke in council the spirits smoke with them. The tobacco is smoked in a vessel or receptacle commonly called the pipe or **pwaagan** in Anishinaabemowin.²⁴⁵

The Role of Pipes

At the Treaty of Niagara in 1764 many pipes were brought by chiefs, warriors, and orators from numerous Western Nations. At the council convened on 15 July 1764, the Odaawaa chiefs of L'Arbre Croche, namely, Egorniney (Egominey), Nosawaquet (Nissawaquot) and Kiocuskcum (Kiwegoshkum) presented to Sir William Johnson "four Calumets of Peace of which he smoked, and returned them to the Indians, who passed

²⁴³ Ironside to Pennefather, Manitowaning 21st, July 1860, regarding visit of the Prince of Wales at Sarnia. LAC RG 10, Vol. 263, pp: 161338 - 161340.

²⁴⁴ To illustrate, five different requisitions from five dates are provided: Return of Indian Stores proposed as presents to Indians resorting the Post of Michilimackinac during the **Year 1789**. 22nd March 1788 "1000 lbs tobacco," OA, F662, Merritt Family Papers, Package 6, Doc 14, General Account of Indian Stores remaining in His Majesty's Store Houses at Drummond Island & St. Joseph [this] 9th day of **July 1816**. "Tobacco pounds four thousand five hundred & five & three fourths," see LAC RG 10, Vol. 33, pp: 19213 - 19216; Requisition for Indian Presents for the Year 1823 Drummond Island **8th July 1822** "Pounds Tobacco 1970," see LAC RG 10, Vol. 40, p. 21978; Numerical return of Indians and estimate of goods for distribution at the Island of Manatowauning **1st August 1841**. "3371 Pounds of Tobacco" LAC RG 10 Vol 626, p. 182701; Return of number of resident and visiting Indians resorting to Manitowaning and requisition for presents for the **year 1850**. "1332 pounds of tobacco" see LAC RG10 Vol 612, pp: 541 - 542.

²⁴⁵ Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary*, 333; Opwaagan in Nichols and Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*, 110; Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, 194; Wilson, *The Ojibway Language*, 313.

them round.” Only after the ceremonial smoking of the pipe was the orator allowed to speak. Later that same day the Menominee, an allied nation of the Odaawaa who resided at Green Bay Wisconsin, addressed Sir William Johnson, and said, “Brother - Hear what we have to Say; We are very poor. Our Fathers, (we don’t mean the French) desired us, when we spoke with our Brethren, and wanted any thing to smoke a Pipe with them first.”²⁴⁶ The Menominee speaker explained to Sir William Johnson that their ancestors had instilled in them a maxim – that the pipe and tobacco came first before deliberations. This maxim was not confined to the Odaawaa, Ojibwe and Menominee, it was observed and practiced throughout the Great Lakes. This maxim endured and was recorded again at a council held on 9 July 1802 at the British garrison of Amherstburg (now called Fort Malden, southeast of Detroit). The council was attended by the British officers but also chiefs and warriors of the Sauk, Meskwaki (Fox), Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Shawnee and Iowa (Ioway). The chief of the Iowa (Ioway) brought out a “Pipe of Peace ... who presented it to all around beginning with the Commandant & as soon as all had smoked this Pipe it was given to Capt McKee the Superindt.” After 38 years, the protocol remained the same, the pipe was smoked first, then deliberations could begin. Here the Iowa Chief had commenced his oration, “Father – The Great Spirit has taught us when we are sincere to smoke of the same Pipe, & that is the reason we have now done so, in order that you may be convinced of our attachment to & regard for our English Father.”²⁴⁷ The Menominee had stated that it was their “fathers (ancestors)” who had taught them to smoke the same pipe, but the Iowa elaborated and stated that the instruction originally came from the creator.

Ten years later, again at Amherstburg, the Shawnee war chief Tecumseh delivered a speech with chiefs of the Shawnee, Kikapoo (Kickapoo) and Winnebago (Ho Chunk) in attendance. This time Tecumseh explained the belief the Western Nations had in the medicinal properties of tobacco. He addressed the commanding officer, “Father –

²⁴⁶ The Ottawas of *L'Arbre Croache* [L'Arbre Croche] near Michilimackinac July 15th, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* Vol. 11: 273-6.

²⁴⁷ Proceedings of a Council held at Amherstburg this 9th day of July 1802 with several Chiefs & Warriors of the Sakie [Sauk], Musquaghie [Meskwakie] & [Iowa] Nations of Indians and some principal Chiefs of Ottawas [Odaawaa], Chippawas [Ojibwe] and Shawenoos [Shawnee]. LAC RG 8, Vol. 254, pp: 49 – 52.

The first whiff of this tobacco from your Pipe will bring to your recollection part of our discourse [] last interview. The second will still more bring into your recollection and the fourth will make every thing that then passed between us so clear that you must recollect the whole.”²⁴⁸ After the War of 1812, the Menominee Chief Big Nose stated similar sentiments when he presented a pipe to the commanding officer at the British garrison located on Drummond Island, “Father – When I smoke it gives me time to consider & I therefore present this pipe to you to smoke and hope it will produce the same effect with you as it does with me & that after smoking you will remember all your red children those present and the absent ones.”²⁴⁹ The chief stated his reliance upon the medicinal properties of tobacco and the calming effects of the act of smoking. One of the main purposes of smoking the pipe was to first offer a smoke to the spirits and then to have those assembled enter the right frame of mind of tranquility and peacefulness in order to deliberate on matters clearly.

The pipe and smoking of tobacco not only put people in the right frame of mind, it also created a sense of sacredness tied to purpose. The chiefs and orators often tied the sacredness of the pipe with the sanctity of their message or purpose. At the British garrison of Drummond Island in 1816, a council composed of Ho Chunk (Winnebago) chiefs addressed Captain Thomas Gummarsall Anderson of the Indian Department. The Ho Chunk Chief Karemanhi held a pipe and stem, and stated, “Father – This pipe and wampum is sacred amongst us, our ancient and wise people had no other way of expressing their sincerity but by pipes similar to this which I present for our Great Father.” After asking for assistance should the Ho Chunk engage the Americans in battle again, Chief Karemanhi concluded by stating, “Father – You may put the greatest confidence in what your children have said, the pipe is sacred among all your red children

²⁴⁸ Speech from Tukkumthai delivered here by a deputation of Shawanoes Kikapoos, & Woinebeegues – Amherstburg 13th March 1812. LAC RG 10, Vol. 28, p: 16512 – 16515.

²⁴⁹ Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

and at a future day you will be informed thro' some other channel of the truth of what I have said."²⁵⁰

It is evident by the speeches of the Ho Chunk and the Menominee that they esteemed the pipe as sacred and also viewed it as a "way of expressing their sincerity." Smoking the pipe together and making a pledge was a way of expressing sincerity but the giving of a pipe was also an expressive and communicative act. At St. Joseph's Island in 1829, Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce, tied these two ideas together when he stated to the British commanding officer, while holding strings of wampum in his hands, "Father – The Great Master of Life gave us pipes and Wampum for the purpose of conveying our ideas from man to man."²⁵¹ At that same council, a chief gave a pipe to serve as a pledge. Upon hearing the news that the King's council fire that had been ignited at St. Joseph's Island was to move to Penetanguishene, Ojibwe Chief Shau-wean-e-qui-nai-be from Lake Superior, said while holding a pipe, "Father – I speak to your heart, open your ears and listen to me. Your heart is like this (pointing to his pipe). I have come to ask charity, and to tell you that I will follow my pipe to Penetanguishene. I have always listened to your voice; you told me that whatever I asked you for, should not be refused me... Father – I send this pipe to your new fire, where I hope to see it again."²⁵² Chief Shau-wean-e-qui-nai-be then delivered the pipe to the commanding officer and took his seat.

²⁵⁰ Minutes of Council held this day the 11th June 1816 between the following Winnebago Chiefs viz. – Nayaakautay, [Sawsawnahe], Black Wolf, Karamanke & Oomsquoine and Captain Anderson of the Indian Department. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19126 - 19131, C-11010.

²⁵¹ D. Daly, "Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829," in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, "Great Britain" Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁵² D. Daly, "Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829," in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada,

The practice of depositing a pipe with the commanding officer at the fort was long-standing. Many chiefs used the pipes as badges of identification as well. In 1760, some Odaawaa had met Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, George Croghan, on the south shore of Lake Erie. The “principal” Odaawaa chief stood up and made an introduction by pointing to two of his young men and stated that they were deputized to conduct business for his nation. The chief then said, “Brother to Confirm what we have said to you I give you this Peace Pipe which is known to all the Nations living in this Country and when they see it they will know it to be the Pipe of Peace belonging to our Nation, then [he] delivered the Pipe.”²⁵³

Depositing a pipe as a pledge was also done by other nations. Furthermore, those other nations also stated that their pipe would be readily recognized by others when visiting the garrison. The Menominee of Green Bay had met with Sir William Johnson on 15 July 1764 at Niagara and stated to him, “Brother - The Indians of our Nation at La Bay hold you fast by the hand, and as this is the *Pipe* [original emphasis] our fathers esteemed so much, we will leave it with you to convince you of our Regard... Then Gave the Pipe to Sir Wm to smoke, and after handing it round to all present to smoke out of it, delivered it to Sir Wm. as a Token of their Regard, & Sincerity.”²⁵⁴ A few days later, on 19 July, the Odaawaa of Michilimackinac also presented a pipe to Sir William. The chiefs name was not recorded but his speech was, he said,

Brother – This is the Pipe of Peace which is in great esteem amongst us and which we always smoke out of.

Brother - This Pipe was sent by the ___ to smoke out of, with our Brother, and we are to assure you that this is an old Pipe, made when the Indians of those Nations came to their senses. They all joined in sending it to you and we hope you will comply with their desires by smoking out of it. We shall leave it with you here and we hope you will take care of it, that it may be smoked out of by the distant

submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁵³ Croghan quoted in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 105.

²⁵⁴ The Ottawas of *L'Arbre Croache* [L’Arbre Croche] near Michilimackinac July 15th, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* Vol. 10: 273-6.

Nations, whenever they come here.
*calumet with a belt.*²⁵⁵

Then gave the

The pipe/ calumet was decorated so that it was recognizable. These pipes that were deposited were often carried a great distance. The chiefs of the Toughkamiwans (Ojibwe from the Rainy River area) travelled a great distance to participate in the treaty at Niagara in 1764. Once they received an audience with Sir William, they too deposited a pipe. Johnson recounts:

Brother - This Pipe is sent by all our Chiefs; We were obliged, several times along the Road, to Hoist up this Pipe in our Canoe to prevent our being Scratched on our way. We now leave it here with you, that it may be used whenever any of our People come here, and then think of the Friendship subsisting between them, and the English. Then laid down Pipe.²⁵⁶

Certain pipes were given to a commanding officer as a pledge, but some were also deposited in the care of the officer with the expectation that the pipe would remain at the King's Council Fire for all nations to peruse. Not only was the pipe there for all to use, it was also there to show members of other nations that the contributing nation were allies to the British. The pipe was also for members of that nation to use whenever they visited that fort or garrison. In these instances, the pipe/ calumet acted as a badge identifying the allies of the British. The pipe/ calumet also served the practical purpose of being an instrument of renewal because the pipe stone and pipe stem are animate objects holding the potential of agency.²⁵⁷ The practice of depositing a pipe at a council fire was practiced amongst the Western Nations and was not predicated upon the participation of colonial entities. The Odaawaa chief Andrew Blackbird reported that the Odaawaa were keepers of council pipes. Blackbird stated the purpose of keeping a repository of pipes:

But the Ottawa nation of Indians are always considered as the oldest and most expert on the warpath and wise councillors [sic]; and consequently every tribe of Indians far and near, even as far as the Manitoba country, out north, deposited their pipe of peace with the head chief of the Ottawa nation as a pledge of continual peace and friendship. Every pipe of peace contained a short friendly address which must be committed to memory by every speaker in the council of

²⁵⁵ At a congress with the Ottawas & c at Niagara on July 19th 1764, LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 139 – 144, C-1222.

²⁵⁶ Friday July 27th [1764] the Sachims and Chiefs of Toughkamiwan waited on Sir Wm., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson XI*: 300.

²⁵⁷ Pipes continue to be referred to as grandfather by Anishinaabe people, just as stones are in the sweat lodge ceremony.

the Ottawas. If there was ever any outbreak among these tribes who deposited their pipe of peace with the head chief of the Ottawa nation, a general council would be called by the chiefs of the Ottawas, and the pipe of peace belonging to the tribe who caused the trouble would be lighted up, and the short address contained in the pipe would be repeated in the council by one of the speakers. When the cause of the outbreak or trouble was ascertained, then reconciliation must be had, and friendly relation must be restored, in which case they almost invariably succeeded in making some kind of reasonable settlement. This was the custom of all these people; and this is what formerly constituted the great Algonquin family of Indians.²⁵⁸

The pipe deposited at the council fire of the Odaawaa had a pledge or speech that accompanied the pipe. If ever there were a rupture in the “continual peace and friendship” then that pipe was brought out, smoked, and the speech recited, and a resolution to the conflict effected. This process was replicated by the Western Nations and their allies the British. The Western Nations deposited pipes/ calumets with the British that were specifically designed and decorated to denote the nation of origin. If ever members of those nations visited the fort, the pipe was brought out and smoked. For example, in 1770 a delegation of Mississauga from the Bay of Quinte, “Shanneyon” (Lake Simcoe), and the “River Pemidashoudayan” (near Rice Lake, Ontario) visited Sir William Johnson’s house and stated,

Father – We beg you will hear our two towns ~~Nations~~ Pemidashkondayan and Shanneyon. We cannot enough express our joy in seeing you the head chief of all Indians and to come and light our pipe at the great council fire which you keep always burning at your house, where all Indian Nations assemble & smoke the pipe of peace and address you as their father, and laying our petitions & grievances before you.²⁵⁹

The delegation lit their pipe with embers from the King’s Council Fire, an act of renewing the promises and ‘mutual engagements’ that had been entered into at Niagara in 1764. The delegation had come to renew their obligations but also to have grievances settled while partaking the “warmth of the great council fire” (that is, receiving presents). Two years later, two Mississaugas returned to Johnson Hall. Sir William met them on 16 July 1772 and said “I was glad to see that they took so good care of the flag & belt which

²⁵⁸ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 95.

²⁵⁹ At a meeting of a party of Mississageys [Mississauga] from La Bay Quinte Shanneyon & the River Pemidashkoudayan in the West side of Lake Ontario. Johnson Hall 20th July 1770, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p. 95 – 99, C-1222.

I had given them 3 years ago... To let them know that it gave me pleasure to see them & smook [sic] a pipe with them out of one belonging to their council & that I shall keep it & smook [sic] out of it with all Nations who may come to this Council Fire & let them know we are friends.”²⁶⁰ Sir William makes it clear that the pipes that he has at his mansion are from numerous nations and the pipes serve to demonstrate to others the allies of the British.

This practice of depositing pipes with a British official at the designated council fire did not end when Sir William Johnson died in 1774. The practice continued. On 4 July 1817 Ojibwe Chief Pechiqui (Bizhiki ‘Buffalo’) and 17 others from Lake Superior had come to Drummond Island to receive ‘warmth’ and to renew their mutual obligations. The chosen speaker was Kanoshum. He held two strings of wampum in his hand along with a pipe and stated that his young men required guns, and one of the women a kettle. The speaker also stated that the distance was great for them to travel and perilous, he said, “Father – The distance we have to come & the privations we suffer in coming are very great I cannot certinely [sic] say you will see me again but if the master of life favors us I hope to shake you by the hand tomorrow morning (meaning next spring).” He then presented the pipe and said, “if I live I hope to see this pipe next spring.” The senior officer of the Indian Department at that council was Thomas G. Anderson and he replied, “Children – It will always give me pleasure to see you & if you come here tomorrow [original emphasis] you will find your pipe.”²⁶¹

The Western Nations utilized pipes for a variety of reasons. The foremost reason was an offering to the spirits. Another reason was to put members of the assembly in the proper frame of mind by smoking the medicine tobacco. Pipes and calumets were also deposited at the King’s Council Fire, which included Sir William Johnson’s house, as well as the forts at Michilimackinac, Niagara, Drummond Island and St. Joseph’s Island. The pipes/ calumets also served as badges of identity communicating to others who the allies of the British were by displaying a pipe at the fort. Lastly, pipes and calumets were

²⁶⁰ Thursday July 16th 1772, Two Messissagey [Mississauga] Indians arrived here yesterday LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p. 149 – 152, C-1222.

²⁶¹ Council No. 2, Drummond Island 4th July 1817 LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, p. 19989 – 19991. Also see LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19158 - 19160, C-11010.

left at the council fire for the practical reason of renewing the alliance by smoking the same pipe each year.

There remains another purpose to pipes. Pipes sometimes had an accompanying speech. Once the council was convened the pipe would be brought out and shown and the speaker would then state who the pipe came from and then recite the speech that accompanied the pipe. In Amherstburg on 8 June 1805, at a council attended by Meskwaki (Fox), Odaawaa, and Potowatomi, the principal Sauk chief held up a “war pipe” and expressly stated:

Father - We have received this Pipe from the Nadoussies, which has perplexed our Nation so much, that we determined to consult our Father before we return an answer to the speech which accompanied it, and which I will now repeat to you.²⁶²

The Sauk chief then recited a speech from the Nadouessie (Sioux) requesting that the Sauk quit fighting the Osages and direct their attention to the approaching Americans. The Sauk Chief continued with the words he had been charged to repeat. “Brothers - It is a long time since our common Dish & Spoon were made by our forefathers, and now we Nadouessies renew the friendship that subsisted between our ancestors.”²⁶³ This concluded the speech of the Sioux that the Sauk had been charged to repeat in full council at the British garrison. The Sauk chief then explained, “This Pipe Father, if no immediate answer is given, will remain with you, but as soon as you are pleased to give an answer, Let the Pipe accompany it.”²⁶⁴ The war pipe from the Sioux was to remain in the hands of the commanding officer until he had received an official answer, and then the answer was to be conveyed back to the Sioux along with the pipe.

Sometimes pipes were presented with a speech that was recited word for word and other times the pipe was presented and delivered for additional presents. At Drummond Island 28 June 1816, the Menominee Chief Wekient presented a pipe that he

²⁶² At a meeting with the Saakies [Sauk], Fox, Northern Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Poutawatamies [Potowatomi] held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XXIII (1895), 39-42.

²⁶³ At a meeting with the Saakies [Sauk], Fox, Northern Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Poutawatamies [Potowatomi] held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XXIII (1895), 39-42.

²⁶⁴ At a meeting with the Saakies [Sauk], Fox, Northern Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Poutawatamies [Potowatomi] held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XXIII (1895), 39-42.

was charged to deliver by the people of [Bute de Mort]. He also delivered three more pipes on “behalf of those who accompany me.” He then continued and stated, “Father – The presents you gave your children has been great which gave me courage to request six more chiefs coats & six sails to enable us to get to Green Bay sooner than we would do by paddling with our small paddles. These pipes are given in token of the request on demand & hope you will grant the last request of your children.”²⁶⁵ Similarly, two years later, on 24 July 1818, at Drummond Island the Lake Superior Ojibwe Chief Wais-key, laid a beaver robe at the commanding officer’s feet and holding a pipe in his hand said,

Father - The advice you gave me last year was so pleasant, and the news so good that I have come again this year in hopes to be treated in the same way (alluding to the manner in which they were clothed, and advised to remain at peace with the other Indians & c) [...]

Father- This is a Parole from my village, requesting you will be charitable, and supply them as you did last year – (Presented the Pipe)²⁶⁶

These last few speeches that had specific requests and specific speeches tied to them are testaments to Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce’s statement that “Father – The Great Master of Life gave us pipes and Wampum for the purpose of conveying our ideas from man to man.”²⁶⁷ In fact it was not only the chiefs and speakers who were to convey messages with pipes, the Superintendents of Indian Affairs were also charged with taking the pipes to their supervisors. The Winnebago Chief Kawranmawni (Karemanhi) had stated at Drummond Island to Lieutenant Colonel McKay, the commanding officer of Indian Affairs,

Father – I have represented the situation of our nation.

²⁶⁵ Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

²⁶⁶ Minutes of Speeches made by Chippewas assembled at Drummond Island, 24th July 1818. LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20473 – 20475.

²⁶⁷ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

Father – I present this chief, also the soldiers', pipe for you to smoke out of it and wish it may be sent to the principal leading men of the English nation for them to smoke that they may be informed of our situation & that means may be taken to afford us speedy relief.²⁶⁸

Lieutenant Colonel McKay of the Indian Department responded the following day,

My Children – I have paid attention to your speech delivered yesterday at this place & in the presence of your Great Father's representatives.

My Children – Your talk or speech accompanied by the wampum & pipes will be forwarded to your Great Father thro' the medium of Sir John Johnston as you have requested.²⁶⁹

McKay was to physically take the pipes and strings of wampum from Drummond Island to Montreal and deliver them to Sir John Johnson, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, also Sir William's son, who would then deliver them to England, or so the chiefs were told. These were the channels of communication that Sir William Johnson had proposed and that the chiefs agreed to at Niagara in 1764. Lieutenant Colonel McKay acted as the "white bird"²⁷⁰ placed at the King's council fire at Drummond Island and he was to convey the messages by physically taking the pipes and wampum to the other "white bird" at Montreal, the representative of the Crown.

The Role of Wampum Strings

In many of the above-mentioned scenarios the chief or speaker held a pipe in his hand while speaking, other times, he held a pipe and strings of wampum. Strings of wampum were used in councils in much the same way as the pipes, with some differences, but the main principle adhered to Shingwaukonce's statement that the Great Spirit had given pipes and wampum to the Anishinaabe to convey "ideas from man to man."

²⁶⁸ Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

²⁶⁹ Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

²⁷⁰ A white bird symbolized purity and honesty. The Anishinaabeg were consistently told by the British to not listen to 'bad birds.' Birds, in Anishinaabe culture, are messengers.

Even though wampum was introduced to the Western Nations,²⁷¹ they readily adopted it and identified with it and attributed strength to it. The Menominee Chief Big Nose remarked as such when he stated at Drummond Island in 1816, “Father – I present this wampum in token of what I have said it is the custom of Indians always to present wampum when they want to give strength to their paroles.”²⁷² In this instance, wampum acted much like the calumet by adding “sincerity” to a speech or “parole.” In contrast, during a council at York in 1817, the Mississauga Chief Paqua[iti]quat remarked that he was poor, unlike his ancestors. He stated to the commanding officer,

Father – You see how I am, I am like a child at present & incapable of addressing myself properly to you.

Father – You see that my hands are empty, I am unlike my ancestors, I am deserving of compassion...

Father – You see how I am, I deserve [...] [^am in a pitiable state], according to our [custom] we were in the habit of having wampum when we spoke, I now address you with my hand empty.²⁷³

The Mississauga chief noted that according to custom, he would have addressed the council holding wampum, but he was not able to because he had none. The use of wampum belts and strings had become an integral part of international diplomacy between the British and the Western Nations, indicative of the lasting influence of the treaty called the Covenant Chain. The diplomatic protocol of the Covenant Chain had its roots with the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) confederacy. The councils amongst the Haudenosaunee ritually commenced with the condolence ceremony that included the wiping of tears, cleansing the ears, and setting one’s heart aright.²⁷⁴ Sir William Johnson

²⁷¹ The ‘Western Nations’ and ‘Western Confederacy’ had a fluid membership but the four main nations were: Wendat, Odaawaa, Ojibwe, and Potowatomi. At times the Western Nations included Shawnee, Delaware, Ho-chunk (Winnebago), Menominee, Sioux, Sauk, Fox, Miami, Iowas and others, see Alan Corbiere, ‘Wampum, kin, alliance: Situating Tecumseh within the Western Confederacy’ in *Bonnie Devine: The Tecumseh Papers*. Exhibition Catalogue, curated by Srimoyee Mitra (Windsor, ON: Art Gallery of Windsor, 2014), 22.

²⁷² Minutes of a council held at Drummond Island the 28th of June 1816 between the Western Indians and Lieut. Col. McKay Superintendent of Indian Affairs at that post. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19106 – 19115.

²⁷³ Indian Speech York, 30th June 1817, Minutes of a Council held at the Garrison of York LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, C-11010, p. 19957 – 19959.

²⁷⁴ William N. Fenton, “Structure, Continuity, and Change in the Process of Iroquois Treaty Making” in Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R.

had utilized this ceremony with the Western Nations at Detroit in 1761. He convened the council and stated that he had come a long way to deliver a speech to them and “in order to prepare you to hear the same, I do agreeably to the customs of our ancestors wipe away those tears from your eyes, which were shed for the losses you sustained... that you may clearly discern your present interest & look with chearful [sic] & friendly countenances.”²⁷⁵ Sir William then delivered three strings of wampum. He then stated “Brethren – having cleared your sight I do on the ne[xt] place open the passage to your heart that you may at the meeting speak honestly and brother like.”²⁷⁶ Sir William then delivered another three strings of wampum. The strings of wampum symbolically dried the tears, cleared throats, ears and moved hearts. This ceremony was adopted and perpetuated by the Western Nations.²⁷⁷ At a council held at Amherstburg 4 July 1817, in the presence of chiefs and warriors from the Wendat, Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Potowatomi, Kickapoo and Muncey (Munsee), the Shawnee King held up six strings of wampum and declared to the assembly,

Father – With these strings of wampum, we open your eyes and ears, we stretch out your arm and place your heart in its proper position, that your sight may be good to see our poverty and wants, your ears always ready to listen with patience

Miller (eds), *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An interdisciplinary guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and their league*, 3-36 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1985a), 28.

²⁷⁵ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 1761, September 9th, LAC RG 10, Vol. 6, pp: 100 – 117.

²⁷⁶ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 1761, September 9th, LAC RG 10, Vol. 6, pp: 100 – 117.

²⁷⁷ The condolence ceremony was an integral part of diplomacy as enacted in wampum protocol and Covenant Chain renewals. The speaker would use either strings of wampum, a fine white cloth (doeskin), or a white feather to clear their allies’ eyes, ears, throat while setting their heart back in place. The Huron conducted this ceremony at Amherstburg 10 March 1817, the Ojibwe Chief Manitogaboit conducted the ceremony for the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Port Huron in 1839. See Speech of the Chief Manitogabouit, Port Sarnia, July 1, 1839. Samuel Peters Jarvis Papers, Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library, B57, pp: 367 – 372; the Ojibwe Chief Obwanuhwashkung “John Riley” conducted the ceremony for the Oneida when they arrived in his territory along the Thames River. See P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 105-6.

to the requests & demands of your children. Your heart and hands ready at all times to relieve your children here present, as well as all our brethren and at no time to suffer bad birds about you, for fear they should whisper bad things in your ears which might be prejudicial to your children.²⁷⁸

The Shawnee King, speaking on behalf of the Western Confederacy, had performed the condolence ceremony. The condolence ceremony was not confined to allaying grief, it was also a ritual to focus participants' attention to the issues deliberated upon. Strings of wampum were given to focus the council by allaying grief, relieving pain and removing irritation (dust in eyes, thorns and brambles in feet, etc). Strings of wampum were also used in council to symbolically bind people together, much like belts were. After the War of 1812, the Western Nations had delivered pipes and wampum to the British requesting assistance to continue the war especially since they did not think the boundary issue had been properly settled. The Odaawaa orator, Okedaa (spelled as Cato) however, wanted to assure the British that the Odaawaa were still allies, even though they felt that the British did not represent the Western Nations' interests properly at the peace. Okedaa stated to the council, "Father – This is to tie our hands and hearts (* holding a few strings of wampum in his hand) firmer than ever what you wish us to say we will say and what you wish us to do we will do. This, my father, is the sentiments of my chiefs, warriors and young men."²⁷⁹ Odaawaa Okedaa figuratively re-bound the ties of alliance with the British using strings of wampum.

Wampum, strings and belts, were symbolically used to bind people in friendship and alliance but they were also used to symbolically "clear the road" or path. In 1796, the British garrison at Michilimackinac were told they were to vacate the island because the British were going to abide by the provisions of Jay's Treaty. In 179[7] the Odaawaa orator Nibinissay addressed the commanding officer at Michilimackinac, "Father, hear your Children, the Chiefs appointed me to interpret for them, the wampum I hold in my hand was given to me by our Father at Michilimackinac Waubemisheway when [he] was here this summer telling us he made a road for us to come to see our Father and that this wampum was to keep it clean and free from all bad stumps and trees whenever you

²⁷⁸ LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, C-11010, p. 19970 – 19973.

²⁷⁹ Drummond Island 16th July 1816. Minutes of a council held this day between the Ottawa Chiefs from L'Arbre Croche and Lieut. Col. Maule President Lt. Col. McKay Superintendent and the other officers of the Indian Department. LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19147 - 19149, C-11010.

follow this road you will be well received by your father, this is what our Father Waubemisheway told us, he then put by the Wampum he received from Col. McKee”²⁸⁰ The secretary did not record if the wampum was a belt or strings. If it was a belt, the secretary did not report if it was a road belt. Regardless, the wampum was to be used to keep the road clean.

The British delivered road belts, that is wampum belts to figuratively keep the road to the council clear of impediments. The Western Nations also symbolically made roads with wampum. In 1829, Lieutenant Colonel McKay had informed the assembled chiefs and warriors from various nations that the British garrison was to move to Penetanguishene. The Menominee, Ojibwe and Odaawaa were in attendance and the Menominee chief Shin-gatch-o-ye-man addressed the assembly first, “with his attendant holding some branches of Wampum and a pipe of Friendship,” he said,

Father – I beg of our Father at York to receive this pipe as a mark of our esteem for the red coats (English) and to view this Wampum as a pledge of our being faithful children. With this Wampum we also make a road to his newly kindled fire (a place to which the Indians resort to for their presents) where we will in future go to change colour (clothing) trusting there may be no obstruction in our passage (not prevented by the Americans) and that our wives and children will not travel in vain, but that your fire will smoke as beautifully as it has ever done (alluding to their being supplied in the usual manner with Presents)...

Father – I now shake hands with you, with my Great Father at York and Quebec; and also stretch my heart and hand across the Great Salt Lake, to our Great Father, the King, from which springs our life (support). This Wampum I expect to see next year. *He then delivered the Wampum and pipe and retired.*²⁸¹

Shin-gatch-o-ye-man distinguished the purpose of the pipe and the strings of wampum. The pipe served to indicate the esteem of his people, but the wampum was

²⁸⁰ Duggan Journal, 17th no month, 179[7]. Waubemisheway meaning “White Elk” in Ojibwe, was the Anishinaabe name of Colonel McKee.

²⁸¹ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

figuratively used to make a “road” to the “newly kindled fire.” He then delivered the wampum and expected to see it the following year, this is the same type of process that was used with the pipes. Other chiefs and speakers at the same council also deposited wampum with Lieutenant Colonel McKay. Sault Ste. Marie Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce, holding a few strings of wampum in his hands said, “this Wampum reaches to Penetanguishene, I will go there in future with my women and children, in hopes that my life may be prolonged. *He then delivered the Wampum and retired.*”²⁸² Similarly, while holding a pipe and strings of wampum in his hand, Ojibwe Chief Me-zai from Lake Superior stated that it was not the first time that his people had to “make a road,”

Father – It is not a new thing for me to make a road with Wampum like this, my ancestors made a road to Montreal many years since. One end of this string is tied to my village at Sha-qua-me-cong (a place in Lake Superior) and the other end I wish you to tie at Penetanguishene, to your new fire; I will go to see it every day (year).

*Delivered the Wampum and took his seat.*²⁸³

At this same council, Odaawaa Chief Assiginack,²⁸⁴ holding strings of wampum, provided a history of the movement of the King’s council fire.

²⁸² D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁸³ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁸⁴ At that time (1829) Assiginack was interpreter for the Indian Department but served as speaker at the request of the Odaawaa chiefs.

Father – When you abandoned Mackinac, we made a road to this Island (St. Joseph's) and we continued to travel it until you returned to Mackinac, at the commencement of the war. After the war, you again gave up that Island to the Americans and desired that we should go to your new fire (Drummond Island) for our clothing. We did so. You have now removed your fire to a greater distance from us. We will follow it in full confidence of receiving our usual warmth (clothing) from it. As a proof of our determination, we make a road with this Wampum, the end of which we expect to see tomorrow (next year) at Penetanguishene, and trust it will continue clear for generations to come.²⁸⁵

The Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and Menominee all used wampum to figuratively make a road from their respective villages to the King's Council Fire at Penetanguishene.

Creating a road with wampum invoked the speech Sir William Johnson made when he delivered the great Covenant Chain Wampum belt to the Western Nations at Niagara in 1764, "I now therefore present you the great Belt by which I bind all your Western Nations together with the English and I desire you will take fast Hold of the same, and never let it slip, to which end I desire that after you have shewn this Belt to all Nations you will fix one end of it with the Chipaweighs at St. Mary's whilst the other end remains at my House."²⁸⁶ Wampum figuratively stretched across the country, connecting villages to the King's Fire.

Wampum was symbolically used to wipe tears, clear throats, move hearts and make roads. Wampum is most famously associated with being a mnemonic device for specific speeches that had to be recited word for word. In this usage it could be equated with delivering mail or letters from one person, or group, to another. The practice was long-standing and many nations used wampum for that purpose. In 1805 at the King's council fire at Amherstburg the Potawatomi Chief Wawiaikasa of Chicago arrived and

²⁸⁵ D. Daly, "Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829," in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, "Great Britain" Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁸⁶ July the 31st A.M.: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* XI: 309-12.

reported receiving four strings of wampum from the Sauk, who had received them from the Sioux. The strings were a call to unite and prepare for war. Chief Wawiaikasa said, “The War Chiefs gave me these strings of Wampum to be delivered to our English Father along with the speeches of the Sioux and Saakies. *Delivered four strings Black and White Wampum.*”²⁸⁷ The chief then recited the speech that accompanied the strings of wampum.

At a council on Drummond Island in July 1817, the Ojibwe Chief Pechiqui of Lake Superior along with his speaker Kanoshum presented two strings of wampum and held a pipe. Kanoshum then stated that the Sioux had tried to come to Drummond Island but were turned back by the Americans. The Sioux then entrusted the strings of wampum to Pechiqui with the words, “we hold our English father with a firm grasp & will never let him loose – this is the [road] from our village to our Great Father’s [nearest] fire – the path has many rough places in it & the encampments are numerous but we will try to overcome all these difficulties & reach our our [duplicate] Great Father’s new fire next spring, where we expect to find this our parole & hope to have an answer to our speeches of yesterday.” After saying these words, Kanoshum delivered the strings of wampum to the senior officer of the Indian Department, Thomas G. Anderson. Anderson replied on behalf of the British, “Children – Tell the Naudauessies, I am sorry they did not come to this warm Island of their Great Father that I am led to believe it is their own fault for I am sure the road is clear & that our friends the Big Knives would rather assist them than deter them from coming. Tell them likewise that I shall be happy to see them here tomorrow. [original emphasis].”²⁸⁸ In this case the strings of wampum did not ‘make’ a road but represented the road from their village to the King’s fire. The wampum also had a specific speech that the Ojibwe were charged to repeat to the British. In this case the wampum is comparable to delivering a letter from the Sioux to the British.

Other Western Nations passed strings of wampum to each other with specific speeches. On 21 June 1817 at Drummond Island the Odaawaa of L’Arbre Croche

²⁸⁷ At a meeting with the Saakies [Sauk], Fox, Northern Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Poutawatamies [Potowatomi] held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XXIII 1(895), 39-42.

²⁸⁸ Council No. 2, Drummond Island 4th July 1817 LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, p. 19989 – 19991. Also see LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, p. 19158 - 19160, C-11010.

(southeast of Michilimackinac) had brought a wampum parole of the Potawatomi to the council fire. Odaawaa Chief Makadebinesi (Makatepinainse) served as speaker, holding four branches of wampum in his hand, said, “Father – I hold in my hand a parole from the Potawautomie Indians and shall relay it to you precisely the words that were brought to us, with this parole by them.” Makadebinesi then recited the words of the speech that accompanied the strings of wampum, revealing a plot that the Shawnee wanted to go to war against the Ojibwe, Odaawaa and Potawatomi. He then concluded by saying, “These, my father, are the words we heard from the Potawatomes.”²⁸⁹ Again, the strings of wampum served to convey a specific speech that had been committed to memory and recited to others, thus conveying information akin to a letter. On 28 July 1828, the Odaawaa requested permission of Thomas G. Anderson to hold council with him and the Ojibwe chiefs and stated, “My friends - This wampum is from the Western Indians and comes thro’ the Potawatomes to my nation with the request that I would deliver it to you and relate their words.”²⁹⁰ As late as 1828 the Potawatomi, Ojibwe and Odaawaa around the Great Lakes were using wampum to convey specific messages to each other.

The chiefs also parlayed these wampum messages through different messengers, such as the commanding officers at various forts, who were requested to deliver the chiefs’ speeches to Superintendent of Indian Affairs and even the Commander in Chief of British North America. Upon hearing the terms of the Treaty of Ghent after the War of 1812, the Odaawaa of L’Arbre Croche were shocked to learn that Michilimackinac would become property of the Americans again even though they, the Odaawaa and other Western Nations, had successfully wrested it away from, and defended it against, the Americans. The Odaawaa speaker Chief Makataypenesee (Makadebinesi) said, “Father – We address ourselves to our Father at or near Detroit, thro’ you and request he will inform the principal officer commanding the Big Knives that we the principal chiefs and warriors of the Ottawa Nation living at L’Herbe au Croche”²⁹¹ desire to retain possession

²⁸⁹ The contents of the speech are not pertinent to the point and have therefore been omitted. To read the message consult LAC RG 10, Vol. 34, p. 19993 – 19994.

²⁹⁰ Memorandums taken at Drummond Island 1828 on the 3rd July the principal Ottawas Chief Kiskemick LAC RG 8, Vol. 267, C-2855, pp: 246 – 249a.

²⁹¹ Minutes of a council held at Michilimackinac the 3rd day of June 1815 between the following Ottawa Chiefs of L’Herbe [sic] au Croch, Ogick, Osawwa[n]gay, Makatay [e]nence, Sawkawkees son, St. Luke,

of the island of Michilimackinac. The Odaawaa offered to exchange an equal amount of land on the mainland of present-day Michigan to the Americans. Chief Makadebinesi presented a few strings of white wampum to represent the words he had said on behalf of his nation. Similarly, in 1827 the Potaganasee band (Drummond Island Ojibwe) delivered strings of wampum to the commanding officer at Drummond Island. The speaker, Ashagashee, requested a teacher and missionary for their people, he stated, “Father – We might send our children to Mackinac to get sense (be instructed) but we are not Big Knives (Americans) therefore, we wish you would deliver this, our parole to our Father at York with your own hands, and tell him our wants. You have been a long time with us and know our misery.”²⁹² Here the Chiefs and Speaker deliberately charged the commanding officer with conveying their speech, embodied in the strings of wampum, to their Great Father at York and at Quebec. The commanding officers did have to convey information to their superiors, but it was usually in the form of written reports. Conveying information, whether written documents, wampum strings, or pipes was standard for the Indian Affairs Superintendents, but they even acted as intermediaries between groups of people. For instance, in 1829, Thomas G. Anderson received strings of wampum and speeches from Ojibwe Chief John Aisence of Coldwater.²⁹³ Anderson delivered the speeches and wampum on behalf of Aisence to the Odaawaa and the Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Superior.²⁹⁴ After serving 14 years as clerk and

Makataypenesee & 22 warriors of said nation. AO, F450, (Capt) Thomas Gummarshall Anderson Papers, 1814 – 1822, MS 23.

²⁹² Drummond Island 19th July 1827, Potaganasee Indians address to the Commandant, Praying for a missionary establishment & c &c &c, LAC RG 10, Vol. 44, p. 23292 – 23294.

²⁹³ Coldwater, Ontario near Penetanguishene, was a model settlement established by the British to be a place where Indians were to be educated and civilized, by learning husbandry and adopting Christianity.

²⁹⁴ The subject of two Wampum Paroles sent to the western Tribes from Chief John Aisence of Penetanguishene by Mr. Anderson of the Indian Department; one being for the Chippawas [Ojibwe] and the other for the Ottawas [Odaawaa]. D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the

interpreter for Indian Affairs, by 1829 Thomas G. Anderson was well versed in wampum protocol and diplomacy utilized by the Western Nations.

The Western Nations had used wampum for multiple purposes, figurative, symbolic, and utilitarian (mnemonic). The chiefs and speakers used wampum to dry tears, clear throats, ears, and roads. The chiefs also used wampum as a mnemonic device to recall specific speeches. The Western Nations believed wampum to be sacred and adding it to their speeches added strength to their words. Wampum was a medium with multiple purposes. The chiefs adhered to the forms and protocols that they had inherited from their ancestors, they believed in the efficacy of wampum. In 1852, Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce succinctly stated the commonality and differences between the two systems of conveying “ideas from man to man”:

Father- We salute you, we beg of you to believe what we say for though we cannot put down our thoughts on paper as you our Wampums and the records of our old men are as undying as your writings and they do not deceive.²⁹⁵

This chapter has outlined the importance of the clan to Anishinaabe identity, chieftainship, governance, and land tenure, especially in the context of treaty history. Anishinaabe understandings of land stewardship and proprietorship, bound up with clan origin stories, was always more than a simple recognition of chieftainship. It extended to other officials, councils, council fires, and community. Pipes and wampum strings illuminate the collective nature of Anishinaabe governance, and how the ties included community, ancestors, and spirits. In the next chapter, we will turn to the first treaties between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee, specifically the dish with one spoon and the eternal council fire belt, examining how the metaphors from Anishinaabe governance structures came to play a larger role in regional diplomacy.

Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

²⁹⁵ Speeches of Chiefs in response to hearing the discontinuation of Indian Presents, Manitowaning 1852, LAC RG 10, Vol. 198, pt. 1, No. 6101 – 6200, p. 116405 – 116408.

Ch. 4: Ancestral Ties to Land and Early International Treaties

This chapter analyses treaties the Anishinaabeg entered into with the Haudenosaunee, tracing the continuity and evolution of intertribal forms to eventually show how colonial entities adopted these forms into their treaty relationships with the nations around the Great Lakes. The chapter explores the use of wampum and calumet, while drawing attention to the procedures within a council. The specific source used here to illuminate the process is Peter Jones's notes on the treaty relationship between the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabeg.

Ancestral Ties to Land

The Anishinaabeg²⁹⁶ believe that they were placed on North America by the Great Spirit.²⁹⁷ The Odaawaa have stated in council, and to Indian Agents, that the creator had placed them on Manitoulin Island.²⁹⁸ The Anishinaabeg believe that they were placed in specific areas by the creator and that they were given everything they needed to survive in that region. Indeed many nations have a creation story about being placed in their homeland by the creator, even the Anishinaabe clans have an origin story that is tied to a

²⁹⁶ In the Ojibwe language (Anishinaabemowin), Anishinaabeg is the plural form of Anishinaabe, which is the self-designation in Ojibwe for "human" but through time came to be translated as "Indian." Benton Banai provides the etymology as "Gitchee Manito them lowered man to the Earth. Thus, man was the last form of life to be placed on the Earth. From this Original Man came the A-nish-i-na'-be people. In the Ojibway language if you break down the word Anishinabe, this is what it means: Ani "from whence" Nishina "Lowered" Abe "The male of the species." Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The voice of the Ojibway* (St. Paul: Red School House, 1988), 3.

²⁹⁷ Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book*, 3.

²⁹⁸ The Odaawaa (Odaawaa/ Ottawa) Anishinaabe name for Manitoulin Island is Odaawaa Mnis 'Island of the Ottawa.' Odaawaa Chief Ocaitau (Okedaa) stated at this council "Father - When the Great Master of Life first made us, he set us down on the Ottawas Island (an island in Lake Huron)," in *The Ottawa [Odaawaa], Chippawas [Ojibwe], and Winabagoes [Winnebago], Indians assembled at Drummonds Island 7th July 1818*, LAC RG 10 Vol. 32, pp: 19172 – 19177. On June 5 1839, Odaawaa chief Assiginack told Henry Schoolcraft that the Odaawaa were created on Manitoulin, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: with brief notices of passing events, facts, and opinions, A.D. 1812 to A.D. 1842* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co. ..., 1851), passage dated 1839, June 26th, p. 658.

specific place.²⁹⁹ The Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie stated that the creator had sent a bird, Ajijaag, the crane, to Sault Ste. Marie to populate and rule the rapids.³⁰⁰ A persistent belief and sentiment held by the Anishinaabe is that the creator, Gichi-Manidoo, Gizhe-Manidoo,³⁰¹ bequeathed the land to their ancestors and they became the heirs and owners of the land that they inhabited. In fact, Mackinac Ojibwe Chief Minwewe (aka Minavavana)³⁰² stated this succinctly, “These lakes, these woods and mountains, were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance; and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread and pork and beef! But, you ought to know, that He, the Great Spirit and Master of Life, has provided food for us, in these spacious lakes, and on these woody mountains.”³⁰³ The Anishinaabeg of Michilimackinac, Manitoulin Island and Sault Ste. Marie definitely believed that the creator had placed them at various places in the Great Lakes area.

The Anishinaabeg also believed in a great uncle, that some call a trickster, but some also viewed as a creator or progenitor – Nenbozhoo (Nanabush, Waynaboohoo and written as Michabous in the Jesuit Relations).³⁰⁴ The stories of Nenbozhoo tie all of the Anishinaabeg together. The adventures, follies and escapades of the Anishinaabeg’s uncle created a bond between the people whether they were originally from the Ottawa

²⁹⁹ Darlene Johnston, “Connecting people to place: Great Lakes Aboriginal history in cultural context,” Report prepared for the Ipperwash Commission of Inquiry (July 2004), 6.

³⁰⁰ William Kabaoosa in William Jones, “Ojibwa tales from the North Shore of Lake Superior” *The Journal of American Folklore* 29: 113 (1916: 368 – 391), 388.

³⁰¹ Gichi-Manidoo is literally ‘great spirit/ mystery’ and Gizhe-Manidoo is literally ‘benevolent, loving spirit’.

³⁰² Also known as Minweweh, Menehwehna, “The one with the silver tongue,” and Grand Sauteux and Gichi-Ojibwe. David A. Armour, “MINWEWEH, Le Grand Sauteux,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed August 5, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/minweweh_3E.html.

³⁰³ Alexander Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada, and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776*, in two parts (New York: Riley, 1809), 42.

³⁰⁴ A comparative analysis of the legends collected by Frank G. Speck, *Myths and Folklore of the Timiskaming Algonquin and Timagami Ojibwa* (Ottawa Government Printing Bureau, 1915) with those published by Margaret Cote, “*Nēnapohs āhtahsōkēwinan Neanapohs Legends: Narrated by Saulteaux Elders* (University of Regina Press, 2011) reveal a great deal of consonance. Nenabosh stories were told from as far east as Barriere Lake (in northern Quebec) to the Plains amongst the Saulteaux.

River area or migrated to the Rainy River area. Nenbozhoo left his mark on the land. The Anishinaabeg as hunters and gatherers knew of these places because they had heard of them in the **aansookaanan/ aadizookaanag**³⁰⁵ ‘sacred winter stories.’ The Anishinaabeg told stories of the great flood. The Anishinaabeg also told stories of how Nenbozhoo tried to kill a giant beaver that was menacing the people.³⁰⁶ The giant beaver made a giant dam at present day Sault Ste. Marie.³⁰⁷ This dam resulted in the formation of Lake Superior, which the Anishinaabeg called **Ojibwe Gichi-gami** ‘Great Lake of the Ojibwe’. To kill this beaver, Nenbozhoo changed himself into a giant as well and made himself a spear and spear head. Nenbozhoo dropped this spear head and spear handle at Michigiwadinong “Bluff in the shape of the Spear head,” which is now called the Cup and Saucer on Manitoulin Island.³⁰⁸ Nenbozhoo knew that the beaver had two houses, one at Isle Royale close to Thunder Bay, Ontario, and the other at Michipicoten Island. Nenbozhoo then jumped upon one of the beaver’s houses at Michipicoten Island in an attempt to draw the beaver out. After Nenbozhoo jumped back onto the shore he slipped on some mud and left an imprint of his behind on the rocks on the shore. Nenbozhoo then said,

³⁰⁵ Aansookaan is the word for ‘legend’ in Manitoulin dialect. Richard Rhodes, *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993), 5. In the western Ojibwe and eastern Ojibwe the word is Aadizookaan. John Nichols and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 16.

³⁰⁶ Song and Tales by Louis Goodchild, 1959-60, Collected by Ghislaine Lecours, Canadian Museum of History (formerly Canadian Museum of Civilization) (III-G-4m, Box 42, f.3). Louis Goodchild was from Pic River.

³⁰⁷ Emerson Coatsworth, *The Adventures of Nanabush: Ojibway Indian Stories* (Toronto, Canada: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1991, originally published 1979), 17–22.

³⁰⁸ “Nanabozhoo's Beaver Hunt: When Nanabozhoo was pulling down the dam of the great beaver at Powting (Sault Ste. Marie); the lumps of earth he threw behind him formed the islands about Nibish Hog [lake] and Sugar Island. He is now sitting as a rock near [Gargantua]. His point spear lies as a long sharp rock on east side of West Bay = Mitchgwednong [Michigiwadinong]. The lower terrace is the point of the spear, the rest = the handle. [A drawing shows the bluffs from side profile, showing the spear handle is higher than the spear point, a.c.] N.B. The Indians everywhere around L. Huron know about the legend of this rock although they may not be clear as to the rest of the story.” Legends - James Nawigizhik, 1893, LAC Bell Papers, MG 29, B15, Vol. 54, File 24.

“No matter, let my grandchildren that shall live hereafter have it to laugh at.”³⁰⁹ Nenbosh then busted up the dam at Sault Ste. Marie which resulted in the creation of all of the little islands along the north shore of Lake Huron. Nenbosh chased the beaver eastward, the beaver swam up the French River, and in his attempt to elude Nenbosh, he scampered and scraped up all kinds of rocks and debris, thereby creating the Recollet Falls. Although Nenbosh was able to kill some of the beaver’s children he was unable to kill the parent, but he followed the beaver all the way out to the St. Lawrence River.³¹⁰

In his recent book, Timothy Cochrane points to this story as the Anishinaabeg grand narrative connecting people from the Ottawa River out to Kaministiquia River at the west end of Lake Superior.³¹¹ Indeed, the paraphrased, abbreviated version of the above story, drew from sources like Odaawaa historian Andrew J. Blackbird (1887), storyteller John Pinesi (1902) from Fort William, Ontario, James Nawigizhik (1893) from Manitoulin Island, Joseph Missabi (1891) from Henvey Inlet on Georgian Bay, John Debassige (1997) from M’Chigeeng First Nation, and Louis Goodchild from Pic River (1959 – 60).³¹² The story was widely told, details may have varied but the overarching narrative that Nenbozhoo changed the landscape and imbued it with meaning and teachings for his “grandchildren” or “nephews” is the salient point.

First Treaties: Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee

It is the stories, the land marks, the teachings, and the belief that the land was their inheritance given to them by their ancestors, and ultimately by the creator, that gave the Anishinaabe the understanding that they were the owners of the land. For millennia the Great Lakes have been home to the Anishinaabeg, however, this homeland had to be defended at times entailing conflicts with other nations. The Anishinaabe moved west of Lake Superior and pushed the Sioux into the prairies. From

³⁰⁹ William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, Volume VII, Part I (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1917), I: 431.

³¹⁰ “Nanabozhoo hunts the Manitou-Amik.” Indian Legends – Joseph Missabi, LAC Bell Papers, MG 29, B15, Vol. 54, File 19.

³¹¹ Timothy Cochrane, *Minong: The Good Place, Ojibwe and Isle Royale* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2009), 47-9.

³¹² Songs and Tales by Louis Goodchild, 1959, Canadian Museum of History (III-G-4m, Box 42, f.3).

the southeast, the Anishinaabeg faced the marauding Haudenosaunee (Six Nations). Eventually the Anishinaabe made peace with both the Sioux and the Haudenosaunee nations. The agreements of peace between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee are encoded on wampum belts. In fact, there is more than one wampum belt and more than one agreement between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee. The Reverend Peter Jones, who was a Mississauga Anishinaabe from the Credit River (now Toronto), recorded the following proceedings of a council between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee that was held Tuesday, 21 January 1840 to renew “the treaty of friendship with the Six Nations of Indians on the Grand River.” Jones noted that this meeting was requested by the Haudenosaunee chiefs. Fifteen Haudenosaunee chiefs were welcomed by Mississauga Chief Sawyer. Despite the fact that the Mississauga band of the Credit River were Methodists at this time, they still adhered to long established diplomatic protocols. Jones wrote that Chief Sawyer had opened the meeting by stating “that the council fire, kindled by our forefathers, might be rekindled by gathering the brand together, as the fire was almost extinguished. He [Sawyer] hoped, when it was lighted, the smoke would ever ascend in a straight line to the Great Spirit, so that when the eyes of all our people looked upon it they might remember the treaty of our forefathers.”³¹³ The Mohawk Chief John S. Johnson then introduced the keeper of the council fire, Onondaga Chief John Buck, who was charged with the task to recite the talk on the four belts they had brought. Jones recorded that:

The first contained the first treaty made between the Six Nations and the Ojebways. This treaty was made many years ago, when the great council was held at the east end of Lake Ontario. The belt was in the form of a dish or bowl in the centre, which the chief said represented that the Ojebways and the Six Nations were all to eat out of the same dish; that is, to have all their game in common. In the centre of the bowl were a few white wampums, which represented a beaver's tail, the favourite dish of the Ojebways. At this council the treaty of friendship was formed, and agreement was made for ever after to call each other Brothers. This treaty of friendship was made so strong that if a tree fell across their arms it could not separate them or cause them to unloose their hold.³¹⁴

³¹³ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 118.

³¹⁴ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 119.

This first treaty, the “dish” wampum belt, was negotiated at the “east end of Lake Ontario”



Figure 1: The Dish or the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt

This treaty may have taken place at Fort Cataraqui/ Frontenac (modern day Kingston) at an unspecified date. However, another scenario presents itself - in 1701, the French invited all of the nations to Montreal for a grand council to try to achieve peace throughout the Great Lakes.³¹⁵ This treaty contains one of the first written references to the dish with one spoon,³¹⁶ but that does not mean that the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee did not already have this treaty between themselves, they might have. This treaty meant that the nations should view all of the land as a dish and that all could eat from that dish (or bowl), meaning they could hunt for sustenance. In 1701 French Governor Callières gave wampum to delegates but there is no description of the imagery on the belt. The translated text of the treaty notes that “...so that they [his children, the delegates] will not be able to forget it, I attach my words to the collars I will give to each one of your nations so that the elders may have them carried out by their young people, I invite you all to smoke this calumet which I will be the first to smoke, and to eat meat and broth that I have had prepared for you so that I have like a good father the satisfaction of seeing all my children united.”³¹⁷ Callières suggestively stated that he gave

³¹⁵ Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native diplomacy in the Seventeenth century*, Translated by Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 100.

³¹⁶ Havard notes that it has been called a bowl, kettle, pot, dish and ‘sharing a meal.’ Harvard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 146-9.

³¹⁷ Harvard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 211.

out wampum (collars) and then he invited all to eat of meat and broth that he had prepared. Havard notes that this does not necessarily mean wampum belts with the imagery of the dish with one spoon were given to all delegates then. Havard does note by 1791 the “Dish with One Spoon” belt was associated with Kahnawake.³¹⁸ Although some may dismiss the above as a “Southern Ontario” recollection, the Anishnaabeg of Manitoulin Island knew of this treaty. In fact, the Chiefs of Wikwemikong in 1845 wrote a letter in Ojibwe to the Algonquian Chiefs at Oka and requested that if one of the Oka Algonquin chiefs were moving or coming to Manitoulin Island that they bring “our dish.” The chiefs wrote:

wii-bi-izhaad azhonda bezhig gid-oogimaam, maanda ge-ani-niibing; giishpin dash ba-izhaagwenh, aapiji nindaa-gichi-minwendam giishpin wii-bi-gaagizid iwi gechi-agaawaadaman wii-waabandamaan **Gid-oonaganinaa** gechi-apiitendaagwak, mii sa ezhi-bagoseniminaa.³¹⁹

If he comes, I would be greatly pleased if he would bring with him that which you greatly desire me to see, **our Dish** which is highly valued; that's what I ask of you.³²⁰

Historian Victor Lytwyn noted that this reference to ‘our dish’ was not some religious silverware, as Pentland postulated, but was the wampum treaty known as the Dish with One Spoon.³²¹ This treaty as well as the principle of having all game in common was known and practiced by the Odaawaa and Ojibwe of Manitoulin Island. The concept of the land as dish was also known by the Sioux, they referenced the concept in council at Amherstburgh in 1805.³²² The ‘Dish wampum’ was known by many nations throughout

³¹⁸ Harvard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 147.

³¹⁹ Transliterated to double vowel orthography by Alan Corbiere based on David Pentland’s transcription in his 1996 article: “An Ottawa Letter to the Algonquin Chiefs at Oka” in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, edited by Jennifer S. H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert, 261 – 279 (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996).

³²⁰ Pentland, “An Ottawa Letter to the Algonquin Chiefs at Oka,” 265.

³²¹ Victor P. Lytwyn, “A Dish with One Spoon: The shared Hunting Grounds Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley Region” In *Papers of the 28th Algonquian Conference*, edited by David H. Pentland, 210 – 227 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1997), 223.

³²² At a meeting with the Saakies [Sauk], Fox, Northern Ottawas [Odaawaa] and Poutawatamies [Potawatomi] held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections*, Vol. XXIII (1895), 39-42.

the Great Lakes region. It should be noted that in the mid-nineteenth century there were at least two known extant dish belts – one at Kahnawake and one at Six Nations.

To return to the 1840 council between the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabe, Peter Jones recorded that the second wampum belt the Six Nations chiefs brought for renewal was “given, as the chief stated, where Buffalo is now situated, at which place the original treaty was renewed.”³²³ Despite that there is no description of this belt, it is significant that it was given “where Buffalo” is now situated because it speaks to territoriality. Jones had recorded that prior to the war the “Ojebway country extended eastward only to the northern shores of Lake Huron, and the Nahdoways owned all the region east and south of it.”³²⁴ The Reverend Peter Jones noted that “the last battle that was fought was at the outlet of Burlington Bay, which was at the south end of the beach, where the Government House formerly stood. Near to this place a mound of human bones is to be seen to this day.”³²⁵ The result of this culminating battle was that the Anishinaabeg pushed the Haudenosaunee south of the Great Lakes and claimed the territory north of the lakes. The fact that this treaty (wampum) was given at Buffalo, along the Niagara River which is a natural boundary between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territories, is significant. The dish belt, according to the Haudenosaunee Chief, was originally given at the east end of Lake Ontario, and then renewed at the west end of the same lake. This act of renewing the treaty at both ends of Lake Ontario indicated that the treaty or the ‘dish,’ spanned that whole territory.

Jones notes that the third wampum “was given at a great council held at the Maumee River, at which the late Captain Joseph Brant was present,” but he offered no description. He also offered no description of the fourth and last belt brought by the Haudenosaunee chiefs other than to say it “was given by the Ojebways and Ottawas in confirmation of the treaties of our fathers. This council took place at Wellington Square about twenty-five years ago.”³²⁶

³²³ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 119.

³²⁴ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 112.

³²⁵ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 113.

³²⁶ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 119.

These, however, were not the only treaties renewed between the Anishinaabeg and the Haudenosaunee. Peter Jones recorded the proceedings of the following:

Wednesday, 22nd January.—The council being constituted, proceeded to business. Chief Yellowhead made a speech, exhibiting the great wampum belt of the Six Nations,³²⁷ and explaining the talk contained in it. John Sunday next addressed the chiefs of the Six Nations, and replied to the several particulars related yesterday by the Onondaga chief, and concluded by stating that they (the Ojebways) a few years ago were very poor and miserable, but the Great Spirit had been pleased to smile upon them... The Ojebway chiefs having closed their talk concerning the renewal of the treaties, the wampum belts were returned to the Onondaga chief, with the salutations of all the Ojebway chiefs, their warriors, women, and children.³²⁸

The Reverend Peter Jones recorded this interesting bit. It would seem that not much was said, or rather Jones did not record what was said in reply. However, the interchange shows the manner in which the two nations conducted business. The Haudenosaunee brought wampum belts and read them, then the next day, the Ojibwe took up the belts and also “explained the talk contained in it.” This shows how wampum protocol was conducted in an oral tradition that utilized mnemonic devices (wampum belts). The first group “read” or “recited” or “explained” the talk on the belt, and then the second group had a chance to “read” or “explain” the talk contained thereon or comment further. These days we say, “Now, everyone is on the same page” or perhaps they would have said, “We are on the same belt.” Another analogy would be that the attendees read the minutes from the last meeting and passed them. After the Ojibwe chiefs John Sunday (aka Shawundais) and Yellowhead (aka Muskwakie) read the belts brought by the Haudenosaunee, a mutual understanding was established and they could then proceed. Next it was the Haudenosaunees’ turn to read/explain the belt that Yellowhead had brought. Mohawk Chief John Johnson on behalf of the Six Nations delegation then:

explained the emblems contained in the wampum belt brought by Yellowhead, which, he said, they acknowledged to be the acts of their fathers. Firstly, the council fire at the Sault St. Marie has no emblem, because then the council was

³²⁷ Note this is a belt Yellowhead brought to the council for renewal. It was described as “about 3 feet long and 4 inches wide. It had a row of White Wampum in the centre, running from one end to the other, and the representations of wigwams every now and then, and a large round wampum tied nearly the middle of the belt, with a representation of the sun in the centre,” LAC, RG 10, Vol. 1011.

³²⁸ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 120-1.

held. Secondly, the council fire at Manitoulin [sic] has the emblem of a beautiful white fish; this signifies purity, or a clean white heart—that all our hearts ought to be white towards each other. Thirdly, the emblem of a beaver, placed at an island on Penetanguishew [sic] Bay, denotes wisdom—that all the acts of our fathers were done in wisdom. Fourthly, the emblem of a white deer placed at Lake Simcoe, signified superiority; the dish and ladles at the same place indicated abundance of game and food. Fifthly, the eagle perched on a tall pine tree at the Credit denotes watching, and swiftness in conveying messages. The eagle was to watch all the council fires between the Six Nations and the Ojebways; and being far-sighted, he might, in the event of anything happening, communicate the tidings to the distant tribes. Sixthly, the sun was hung up in the centre of the belt, to show that their acts were done in the face of the sun, by whom they swore that they would forever after observe the treaties made between the two parties.³²⁹

The Six Nations had given this belt to the Anishinaabeg and they acknowledged it came from “their fathers” and they recited the meaning of the belt in order to demonstrate that they still abided by the treaty. This belt was given at the conclusion of the war between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee and each emblem on the belt refers to specific place: Sault Ste. Marie, Manitoulin, Penetanguishene, Lake Simcoe and lastly the Credit River. Also mentioned are specific animals, fish or birds, namely the white fish, beaver, white deer and the eagle. Associated with each of these are virtues: purity, clean heartedness, wisdom, superiority, watching, and swiftness. Lastly, the sun was mentioned and serves as the reminder that the Great Spirit had witnessed the deeds and agreements of their grandfathers. So ended Peter Jones’ account of that treaty in his book. Fortunately, he recorded another version of the treaty as recited by Ojibwe Chief Yellowhead of the Narrows:

Yellowhead stated that this Belt was given by the Nahdooways to the Ojebways many years ago - about the time the French first came to this country. That the great Council took place at Lake Superior - That the Nahdooways made the road or path and pointed out the different council fires which were to be kept lighted. The first marks on the Wampum represented that a council fire should be kept burning at the Sault Ste Marie. The 2nd mark represented the Council fire at Manitoulin Island, where a beautiful White Fish was placed, who should watch the fire as long as the world stood. The 3rd Mark represents the Council fire placed on an island opposite Penetanguishene Bay, on which was placed a Beaver to watch the fire. The 4th Mark represents the Council fire lighted up at the Narrows of Lake Simcoe at which place was put a White Rein Deer. To him the Rein Deer was committed the keeping of this Wampum talk. At this place our

³²⁹ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 121-2.

fathers hung up the Sun, and said that the Sun should be a witness to all what had been done and that when any of their descendants saw the Sun they might remember the acts of their forefathers. At the Narrows our fathers placed a dish with ladles around it, and a ladle for the Six Nations, who said to the Ojebways that the dish or bowl should never be emptied, but he (Yellowhead) was sorry to say that it had already been emptied, not by the Six Nations on the Grand River, but by the Caucanawaugas residing near Montreal. The 5th Mark represents the Council fire which was placed at this River Credit where a beautiful White headed Eagle was placed upon a very tall pine tree, in order to watch the Council fires and see if any ill winds blew upon the smoke of the Council fires. A dish was also placed at the Credit. That the right of hunting on the north side of the Lake was secured to the Ojebways, and the Six Nations were not to hunt here only when they come to smoke the pipe of peace with their Ojebway brethren. The path on the Wampum went from the Credit over to the other side of the Lake the country of the Six Nations. Thus ended the talk of Yellowhead and his Wampum.³³⁰

The two versions are largely the same regarding the meaning of each of the marks on the belt and the locations. Chief Yellowhead does not note any virtues but does mention the dish and ladle. It is significant that Chief Yellowhead (aka Misquackey) was the keeper of this belt because it was entrusted to the “Rein Deer” Tribe or the Caribou clan, which was Yellowhead's clan (see Figure 2). The main difference is an added detail. This version has that the “white rein deer” was placed at the Narrows instead of just a white deer. According to Professor of Law, Darlene Johnston (Anishinaabe-kwe from Neyaashiingamiing Cape Croker), this belt is a representation of Anishinaabe land title and ownership tied explicitly to clans. Professor Johnston used documentary evidence such as later treaties and petitions to trace the line of chieftainship and noted that in most instances the clan of the chief for each locality mentioned was the same as the doodem (clan) animal mentioned in the reading of the belt. Thus, the chieftainship of those respective areas were maintained within specific clans from early contact to pre-confederation treaties.³³¹

³³⁰ LAC RG 10, Vol. 1011, Quoted from Darlene Johnston, “Connecting people to place: Great Lakes Aboriginal History in Cultural Context,” report prepared for the Ipperwash Inquiry, July 2004.

³³¹ Johnston, “Connecting people to place,” 11.

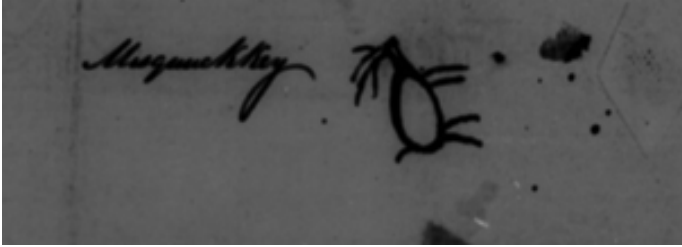


Figure 2: Misquackey's signature on Treaty 47, November 17, 1815

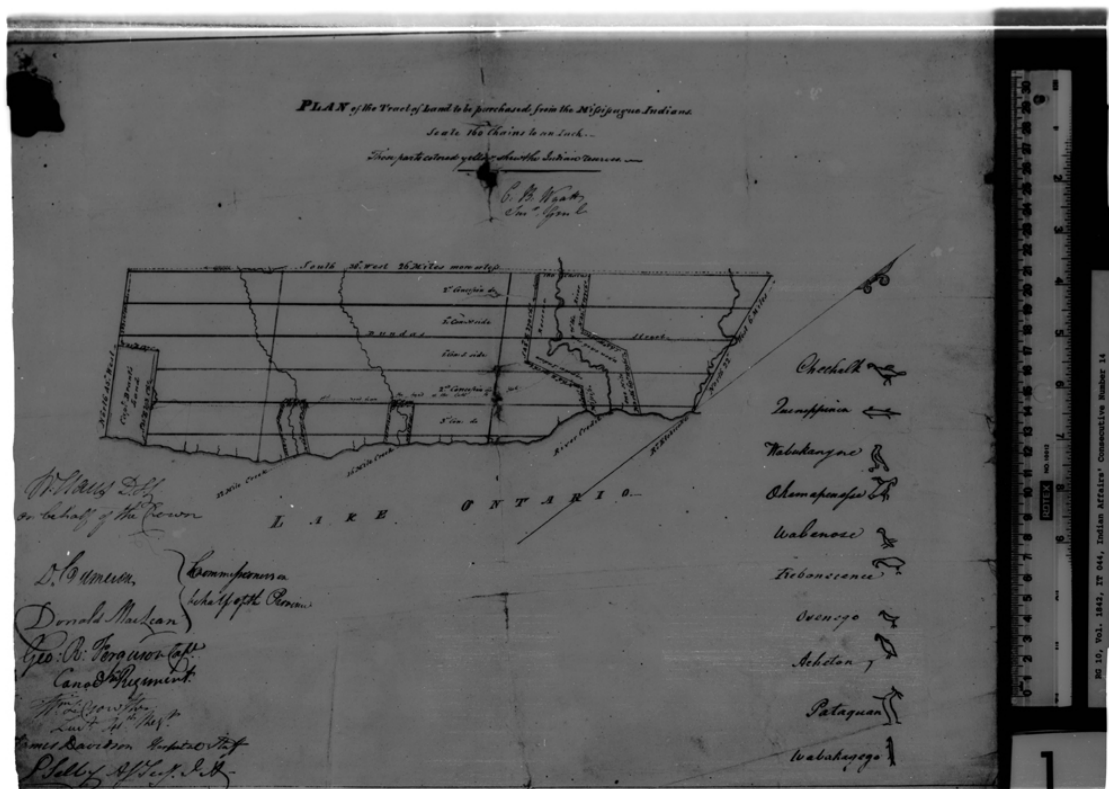


Figure 3: Toronto Purchase, n.d., probably September 1806, Treaty number IT044

The chiefs of the Credit River have been eagle clan for many years (see Figure 3), the chief for the Narrows area have been caribou for many years (see Figure 2), and the chiefs of the Georgian Bay area have been beaver for many years (see Figure 4, bottom and Figure 5, beaver is number 14). The “white fish” of Manitoulin however, requires more explanation. There is a whitefish (Adikmeg) clan but the fish clan of Manitoulin may in fact be a pike, sturgeon, channel catfish or bullhead. The Mohawk Chief Johnson said that the beautiful white fish “signifies purity, or a clean white heart” so the adjective

white is used to convey purity rather than fish species. This was also the case when Chief Johnson mentioned the “White Deer” at the Narrows which Yellowhead called “White Rein Deer.” So the “white fish” could be a “white pike,” a “white sturgeon,” or a “white bullhead (a type of catfish).” The Ojibwe Chief Shawanousoway signed the 1836 Manitowaning treaty with a fish (see Figure 4, seventh one from the top) and beside his signature is written “Pike.”³³²

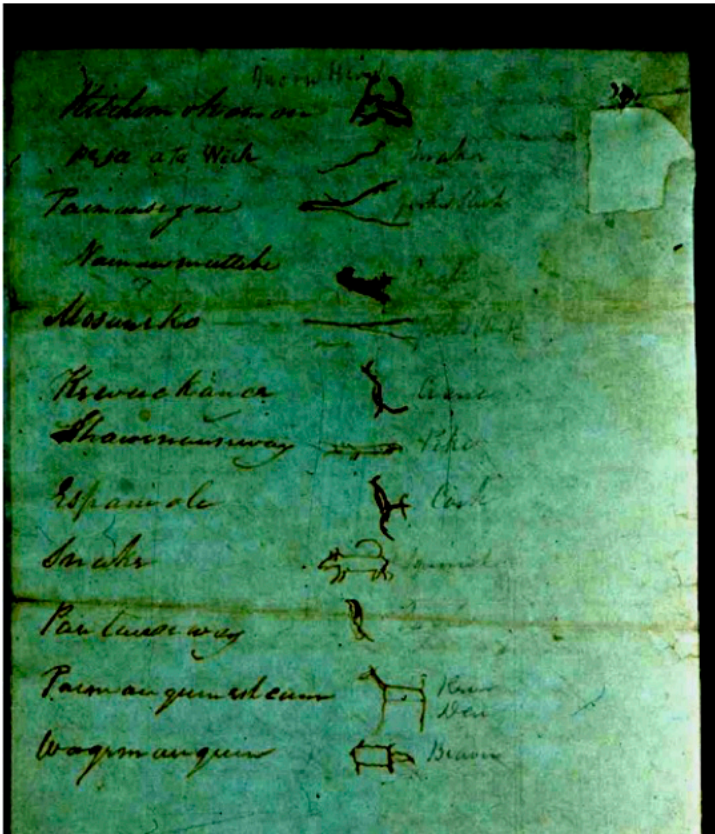


Figure 4: Doodems or Clans on 1836 Manitowaning Treaty

³³² This information is contested by modern descendants who assert that the clan is sturgeon.

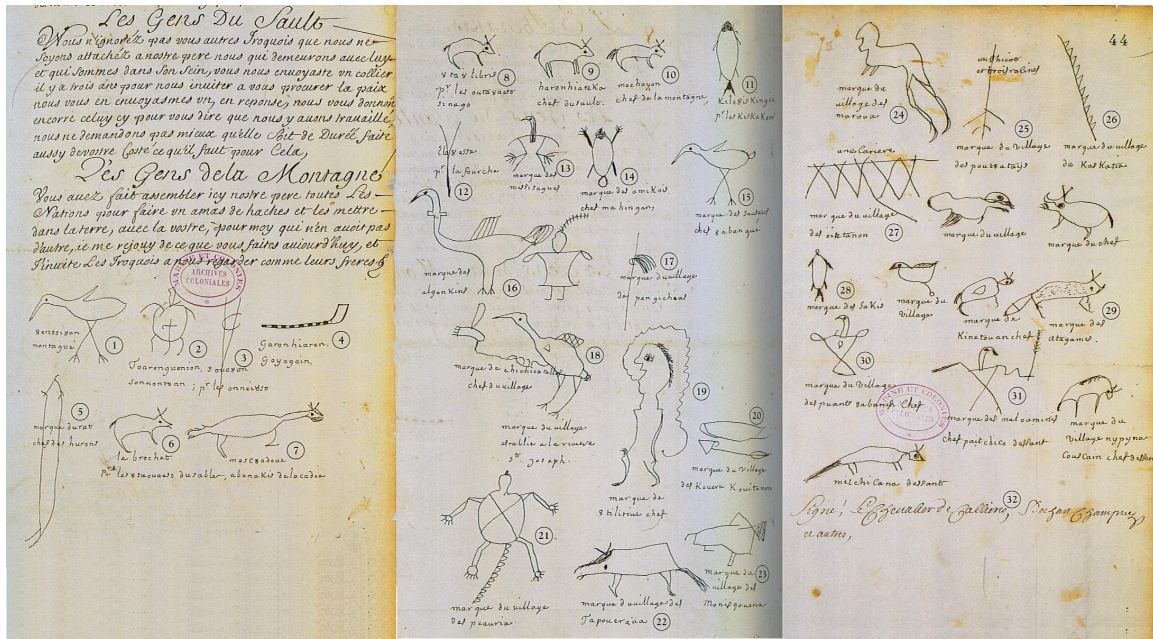


Figure 5: Doodems or clans, page form the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal

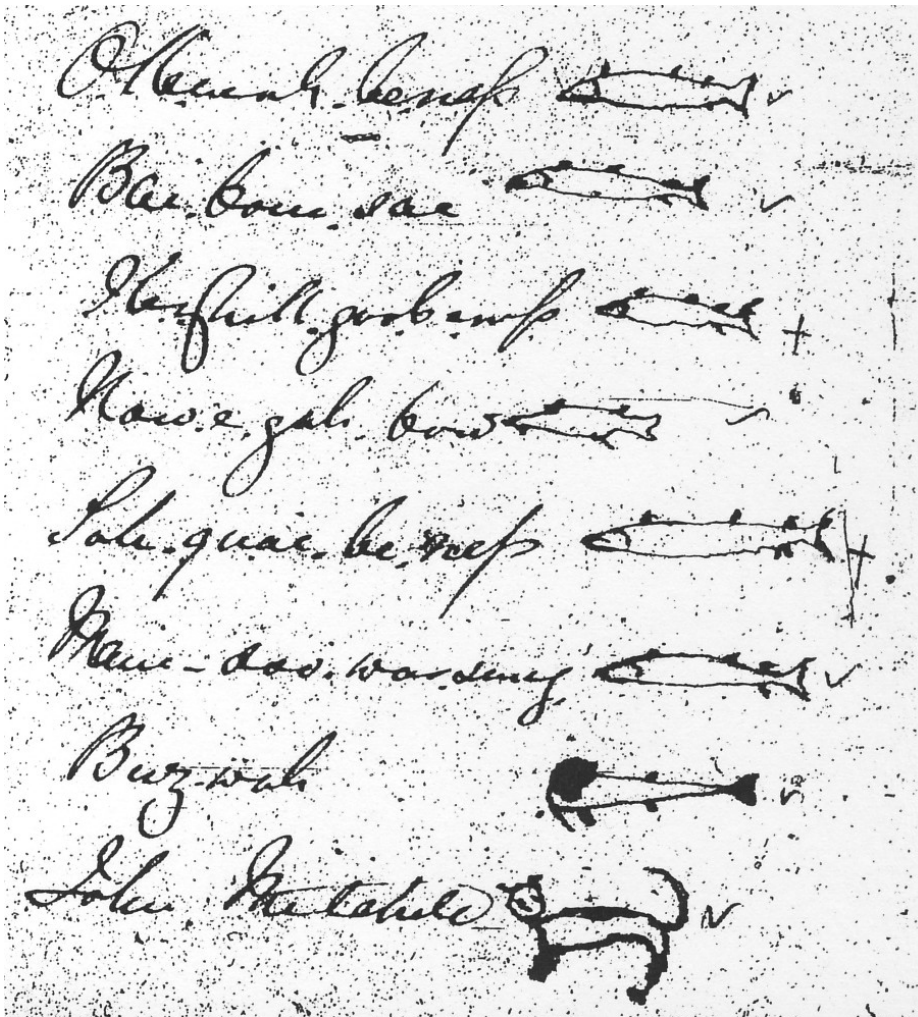


Figure 6: Surrender of Whitefish River Reserve, 1859

Looking at the marks made by Shauwanusoway's sons Paibomsai and Nowagahbow (See Figure 6) we see a fish with one dorsal fin near the tail. Checking the fin pattern with sturgeon, pike and muskie, we see the same pattern. Perhaps this was the main clan that was represented on the wampum belt. We also see that chief Mookomaanish who moved back to Manitoulin in the 1840's has the Awaasizii doodem "Brown Bullhead." Mookomaanish, his son, and his grandsons all served as head chief of the Wikwemikong band for many years, and they were all of the Awaasizii doodem. Looking at the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, which is the earliest known treaty that has totem marks of assent, has the clan mark of the Kiskakon Odaawaa Chief Kileouiskingié, which appears to be some kind of fish (see Figure 5, number 11). This could be the channel catfish, sturgeon, or sucker. The other Odaawaa signed 1701 treaty with a bear or a forked stick

(see Figure 5, numbers 8, 9, 10, 12). Some of the Odaawaa nation were reported to be living at Manitoulin in the 17th century, Lahontan states that these were primarily Sable Odaawaa but some Kiskakon may have also been present.³³³

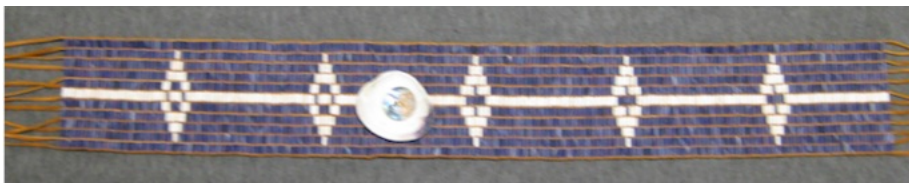


Figure 7: Reconstruction of Eternal Council Fire Belt, aka Yellowhead's Belt

This belt thus represents the Haudenosaunee's defeat and represents their acknowledgement of Anishinaabe ownership, based on clan, of those specific areas. It is significant that both Johnson and Yellowhead stated that this treaty was negotiated at Sault Ste Marie, but Yellowhead added that the council took place at "Lake Superior" which is the farthest the Naadoweg ventured into **Anishinaabe-akiing** (Anishinaabe land/ territory). According to various chiefs around Baawiting (Sault Ste Marie), after the defeat of the Haudenosaune at Point Iroquois (which is on the south shore of Lake Superior, opposite and west of Sault Ste Marie) the Naadowe never came back up that far into Anishinaabe-akiing again.

Yellowhead and Johnson both mention symbols or emblems associated with place. Since there is no sketch to accompany the belt, we have to guess what these "emblems" would look like. The Yellowhead speech refers to "representations of wigwams every now and then" whereas Johnson stated that "the council fire as [sic] Manitoulin has the emblem of a beautiful white fish," compared to Yellowhead's version, that "the 2nd mark represented the Council fire at Manitoulin Island, where a beautiful White Fish was placed." We could take the speech literally and surmise that the belt had a fish woven into the belt at the second place on the "path," and that a beaver was at the third, and a rein deer at the fourth, and an eagle at the fifth. However, the earlier belts rarely, if ever, use zoomorphic images, ergo the "emblems" and "marks" are not actual realistic representations of a fish, beaver, rein deer and eagle. It is also unlikely that the

³³³ Johanna E. Feest and Christian F. Feest, "Ottawa" in Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 15: Northeast*, 772-86 (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 773.

“representations of wigwams” are realistic domed shapes woven into the belt (see Figure 7). This belt was given, according to Yellowhead, “in the time of the French” meaning the 17th century. The early time attributed to this belt suggests that the “emblems” on the belt were geometric representations instead realistic animals or wigwams. Other early belts have squares (see Figure 8), some use triangles, some use diamonds, and some use hexagons to indicate council fires, territories and nations. The important point for purposes of treaty discussions is that the belt was an abstract representation of animals and places. It was also an abstract representation of an agreement that had been committed to memory, memory which needed to be renewed every once in a while, lest it be forgotten.

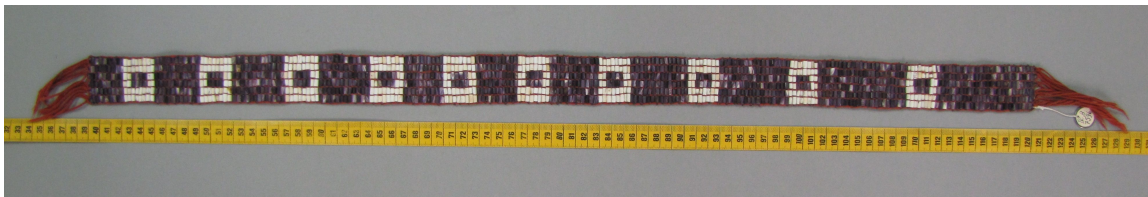


Figure 8: wampum belt with squares from Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, 18th century

It must be stated that the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabeg concluded and renewed this peace on their own, without any moderation or facilitation from any colonial entity. No specific date has been attributed to this treaty council at Sault Ste. Marie, but based upon the oral tradition this treaty likely happened between the mid to late 1690’s. It was concluded before the Great Peace of 1701.

This particular treaty renewal ceremony was described in detail by the Reverend Peter Jones and he noted the concluding remarks of Mohawk chief John S. Johnson who stated that they would like to hold another council in the future and that they “would let the eagle know that he may take the message to the white deer, who would decide when the council should be held.”³³⁴ Mohawk Chief Johnson is basically saying that they will tell the Chief Sawyer (Mississauga chief of the Credit River) to take the message to Chief William Yellowhead (the Rein Deer Chief of the Narrows) who will then decide when the next meeting will be. This is another interesting manner of speaking and it highlights how the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe placed high value on clan identity.

³³⁴ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 122.

Lastly, the two nations bid each other farewell. Chief William Yellowhead gave two strings of white wampum, “as a memorial or pledge of this council, and of what had been transacted between the two parties.” The chiefs then took “each other by the arm; which method was adopted by our forefathers when the treaty of friendship was first formed.”³³⁵ In this manner, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe re-enacted the metaphor of “linking arms” which was an oft used metaphor in councils between “brothers.”

Diplomatic Discourse and Metaphors

The Road

The road is a common metaphor in diplomatic relations and it occurs in the retelling of the Covenant Chain as well. In August 1759 at Fort Pitt, George Croghan met with representatives from the Western Nations, the Delaware Chief Beaver addressed all of those in attendance and stated to them that they, the Delaware, were charged with conveying the message of peace:

Uncles and Cousens – We have buried the Hatchet. With this Belt of Wampum we stop up the War Road, and clear out the Road of Peace from your Country here, which you will travel in safety to see your Brethren the English, and trade with them. We lay a great Log across the War Path over which your Warriors must not expect to pass for the future... Gave a Broad Belt.³³⁶

Figuratively speaking, Beaver blocked up the war road with wampum and then cleared out the road of peace with that same wampum belt. Wampum belts were used to figuratively wipe away tears, clear fire places, level and cover graves, as well as block and clear roads. Two years later, in 1761 Sir William Johnson delivered a wampum belt of 9 rows to the Western Nations and cleared the road to the council fire at Detroit, he stated, “I do by this belt of wampum offer my assistance to make the road of peace even, broad, and easy for traveling as far as the setting of the sun, assuring you that whenever it may happen to be any ways obstructed, or out of order I shall use all my endeavour

³³⁵ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 122.

³³⁶ Minutes of Conferences held at Pittsburgh, 7 August 1759. George Croghan in Donald H. Kent, Louis M. Waddell, Autumn L. Leonard, eds., *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, Vol. 3 (Harrisburg: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1976), 3: 507-11.

towards the repairing of the same and thereby keep open a friendly intercourse with our allies to the latest ages.”³³⁷

After the Ojibwe took over Fort Michilimackinac, the Western Nations around La Baye (Green Bay) along with the Odaawaa of L’Arbre Croche, proceeded to Michilimackinac and removed the prisoners from the hold of the Ojibwe. The nations then made a number of wampum belts and gave some to the Ojibwe but also made a special one that they wanted to give to General Gage when they turned the prisoners over to the British at Montreal in 1763. The Odaawaa speaker stated,

Brother – I am desired to speak to you in Behalf of the Nations about La Bay who also are very uneasy and concerned about what happened at Michilimackinac. The following Nations take a fast Hold of your Hand and declare themselves your firm Friends and Allies – vizt – The Folsavoine [Menominee], Puans [Winnebago], Saki [Sauk], Renards [Fox], Ayoways, Fox, Sioux, and la Prairie or Illinois. All which Nations you may regard as of one mind and one body, who are Resolved to remain always in your Interest and Die with you and they by this Belt of Wampum implore you to grant them a supply of their necessaries of life by establishing a Trade with them and not, on the account of One Nation, whom they look upon as Strangers, and Disturbers of the publick [sic] Peace and Tranquility, to make all the rest unhappy.

*A Belt denoting the Road of Peace Through all Those Nations*³³⁸

General Gage replied to the “Brethren of the Eight Western Nations” that the trade had been stopped because of the violence at Fort Michilimackinac and thus “the road of peace and door of trade are in a manner barred, and shut up to your country.”³³⁹ Gage then directed the nations to go and trade at Detroit, which was a greater distance from them but he stated that the situation was too dangerous for him to send his people up to the Michilimackinac country. General Gage did present a belt to the nations and

³³⁷ September 9th 1761, Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

³³⁸ At a meeting between his Excellency General Gage and 54 Chiefs and Head Warriors of the Ottawa Nation living within 10 Leagues of Michilimackinac and 30 Chiefs of the different Nations of Indians living within the Inhabited part of Canada, held at Montreal the 9th of August 1763. LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 487 – 493, C-1222. Note that the Fox (Renards) are counted twice but the Odaawaa are the Eighth nation represented on the belt.

³³⁹ LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 487 – 493, C-1222.

stated “but Brethren of the friendly Nations, you shall always find the road to me clear and open and shall be at all times welcome & be received with sincerity and affection.”³⁴⁰

The belt Gage gave in return had no description. The “Eight Friendly Nations” delivered a “Belt denoting the Road of Peace Through all Those Nations.” This belt would have had a white road of peace running the length of the middle of the belt. Eight symbols would have been placed at even intervals along the road of peace either diamonds or hexagons. The argument for diamonds is provided in numerous instances but Thomas Forsyth gave a didactic explanation of a belt that had been given by Sir William Johnson to the Western Confederacy and entrusted to the Shawnee.

The British in confederacy with the Shawanoes, Delawars, Mingoos, Wyandots, Miamies, Chipeways, Ottawas, and Pottawatimies (offensive and defensive) were the members of the council fire. The first nation of Indians who joined were the Shawanoes and Delawars [sic] and the other nations fell in or joined afterwards. The British as head of the confederacy had a large belt of white wampum of about six or eight inches wide at the head of which was wrought in with blue grains of a diamond shape, which meant the British nation: the next diamond in the belt was the first Indian Nation who joined in alliance with the British by drawing the belt through their hands at the council fire and so on. Each nation of the confederacy had their diamond in the belt. Those diamonds were all of the same size and were placed in the belt at equal distances from each other.³⁴¹

The Shawnee cared for a white belt with nine purple diamonds on it.³⁴² Note that Forsyth did not state that there was a road or a straight line connecting each. The belt the Odaawaa speaker delivered to Gage had eight diamonds on the belt and a straight line through the length of the belt. The fur trader, explorer, interpreter and author John Long

³⁴⁰ LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 487 – 493, C-1222.

³⁴¹ Thomas Forsyth, “An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Sauk and Fox Nations of Indians Traditions, 1827” in *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and region of the Great Lakes*, 2 vols., ed. by Emma H. Blair (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 2: 188-90.

³⁴² Ken Maracle, a Mohawk faithkeeper of the Longhouse told me that the diamond represented the nation. A hexagon a council fire. Personal communication with Ken Maracle, August 2011.

also provided a description of a belt that had been given to Sir William Johnson. It too had diamonds on it. The belt was:

... in several rows, black on each side, and white in the middle: the white being placed in the centre, was to express peace, and that the path between them [Shawnee and British] was fair and open. In the centre of the belt was the figure of a diamond, made of white wampum, which the Indians call the council fire. When Sir William Johnson held a treaty with the savages, he took the belt by one end, while the Indian chief held the other: if the chief had any thing to say, he moved his finger along the white streak; if Sir William had anything to communicate, he touched the diamond in the middle. These belts are also the records of former transactions.³⁴³

The authors of these latter two passages provided no dates associated with belts but both stated that the belts involved Sir William Johnson and it was likely after the 1764 Treaty of Niagara because the Shawnee were not listed as attendees to the conference. However, the road was mentioned at the Treaty of Niagara by the Toughkamiwans (Nations from Rainy Lake Area). They received the invitation to proceed to Niagara, travelled that great distance and stated to Sir William Johnson “Brother - We are therefore come down through a bad and Briary Road to see the English, and to desire Trade.”³⁴⁴ Then they gave a beaver blanket and a calumet to Sir William. The speaker Shuckey stated that the blanket was to serve as a bed for Sir William, and thus, served as an invitation to visit their country. Shuckey also stated that the blanket was white, just like his heart, indicating purity of intentions. Shuckey concluded by stating:

Brother - It is very hard to pass, this side of St. Mary's, the Road being very full of Brush, insomuch that we were Obliged to Open it with ou[r] hands to Save our Eyes; but we resolved nothing should hinder us from coming to your great Fire Place, the Light of which is now seen far, and near. You see our Poverty by the Smallness of our Belt this is the Road of Peace, which we will keep open & desire

³⁴³ John Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader* (London: Robson et. al., 1791), 47.

³⁴⁴ Friday 27th July [1764] the Sachims, and Chiefs of Toughkamawiman waited on Sir Wm., Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, ed. by James Sullivan, 14 vols. (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1921-1965), XI: 298.

you will lay your foot on one End, as we shall *ours* on the *other*, then Nothing shall hurt us.³⁴⁵

Nations from as far west as Rainy Lake, near the present-day Manitoba border, came to Niagara to treat with the English. Not only did they attend, they also brought wampum belts, calumets, and beaver blankets as diplomatic gifts for the representative of the Crown. They also had heard of the “great Fire Place,” and bore witness to its light. Shuckey on behalf of his people gave Sir William a belt of wampum that depicted the “Road of Peace.” The interesting piece of information is that they requested Sir William Johnson to put one foot on his end of the belt, and they would do the same on their end of the belt. The imagery and meaning were identical to that of Chief Canasetoga when he stated that the Haudenosaunee wrapped wampum around the mountain at Onondaga and then stood on that belt to detect any disruption to it, so that no harm could come to it. The symbolism of the diplomatic language ranged far and wide, in a sense, the rhetoric of the British had proven true because the road had been cleared from the ‘rising to the setting of the sun’.

Recall that Sir William Johnson had cleared the road at Detroit in 1761, Captain Balfour cleared a road to Michilimackinac in 1761, and Lieutenant Gorrell cleared a road to La Baye in 1762. The actions of Pontiac and the Ojibwe at Michilimackinac in 1763 ‘closed up these roads’ and thus they had to be re-opened. Some nations did not attend the Treaty at Niagara in 1764 and thus entered it afterward. The British were able to convince many chiefs to enter the peace and also convinced the chiefs to bring “Pontiac to his senses.” On 27 August 1765 George Croghan met with Pontiac and “all the Ottawa Tribes, Chipwaes [sic] & Puttewatamies [sic] wth [sic] the Hurons of this Place [Detroit] & the chiefs of those settled at Sanduskey & the Miamis River.” Croghan then addressed them all as children and said,

We have made a Road from the Sun rising to the Sun setting, I desire that you will preserve that Road good and pleasant to Travel upon, that we may all share the blessings of this happy Union.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ Friday 27th July [1764] the Sachims, and Chiefs of Toughkamawiman waited on Sir Wm., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 299.

³⁴⁶ August 27, [1765], Croghan in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals relating to tours into the Western Country, November 16,

Croghan had set out for the arduous task of extending the peace and binding all the nations to the Chain of Friendship. Although Pontiac was at the above conference it would be one more year before he finally took Sir William Johnson by the hand and joined the Covenant Chain at Oswego in 1766. However, Croghan continued to press on to bring some of the holdouts into the peace. Some of the holdouts included the Potawatomi. At Detroit in January 1765, the Potawatomi came to treat. They addressed Sir William Johnson as ‘father’ instead of ‘brother’ and stated,

Father – We have benifitted [sic] by your good advice, we amongst us gathered a little wampum and made a belt, at one end of which we placed your fire, in the middle ours, & at the other end that of the St. Joseph Vilage [sic] opening a road for them, telling them to have sense and come and speak to their father.³⁴⁷

These three Potawatomi chiefs of the Detroit area tried to broker a peace with Sir William Johnson on behalf of their western brothers at St. Josephs. In this case it was the Potawatomi chiefs who cleared the road with wampum.

Roads were cleared between nations, but also cleared between villages and forts. After the Treaty of Niagara, the two main forts in the west were Detroit and Michilimackinac. After the American War of Independence, the British had to evacuate Fort Mackinac and thus had to move their ‘fire’ to another location, which was St. Joseph’s Island. In 1829, Odaawaa Chief and Indian Affairs Interpreter Jean Baptiste Assiginack was chosen to speak on behalf of the Odaawaa. He recounted the movement of the council fire:

Father – When you abandoned Mackinac, we made a **road** to this Island (St. Joseph’s) and we continued to travel it until you returned to Mackinac, at the commencement of the war. After the war, you again gave up that Island to the Americans and desired that we should go to your new fire (Drummond Island) for our clothing. We did so. You have now removed your fire to a greater distance from us. We will follow it in full confidence of receiving our usual warmth (clothing) from it. As a proof of our determination, **we make a road with this**

1750 – November 1765” in *Early Western Travels 1748 – 1846*, Volume 1 (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 156.

³⁴⁷ A Conference held at Detroit January 26th 1765, Present Machioquise, Makisabe Chiefs of the Powtowattamies of this village and Nangisse, son of the Great Chief of the St. Joseph’s and Peshibaon Chief of the same village. LAC, MG 19, F35, Series 1, Lot 626, pp: 1 – 4.

Wampum, the end of which we expect to see tomorrow (next year) at Penetanguishene, and trust it will continue clear for generations to come.³⁴⁸

Over the years, the Odaawaa made multiple roads to the King's fire. They used wampum to make the road, and the road got longer and longer. The Chiefs of Manitoulin also wrote about the road in their petition to the Crown in 1862:³⁴⁹

Minawa ninidjanissidig mikan nindojiton	Moreover my children, I make a road
mi dach mandapi epegandamog mandapi sa	which will convey you here, on this height
ogidaki iwi gaojitamonagog.	that I have erected for you.

The Chiefs of Manitoulin mentioned that the road was the proverbial 'high road' and would conduct them directly to Johnson's house, or rather to the representative of the Crown in Indian Affairs. The chiefs understood that they had direct access to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who would later be called Superintendent General, and subsequently the Minister of Indian Affairs. The chiefs believed that they had a direct line to recourse and justice as stipulated and expressed by Sir William Johnson numerous times during his tenure as the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern District.

Lastly, as is the case with many metaphors, there are multiple interpretations and uses. Chief Okedaa used the image of the road to refer to the boundary between the English and the Western Nations. He had been holding the 1764 belt in hands, set it down, and then picked up eight strings of white wampum and said that Captain Roberts³⁵⁰ had convinced them to join the war against the Americans, against the Anishinaabeg's

³⁴⁸ D. Daly, "Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829," in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, "Great Britain" Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

³⁴⁹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

³⁵⁰ Captain Roberts was the Commanding officer at St. Joseph's Island prior to the outbreak of the War of 1812. He was ordered by General Brock to use his judgement in adopting an offensive or defensive position. He took the offensive and with the assistance of the Sioux, Winnebago, Menominee, Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and voyageurs, captured Fort Mackinac.

misgivings. “But my father, when one of your warriors (Captn Roberts Comdg) told us it was for our good, and that you would never make peace with them (the Americans) till you would drive them over the Mississippi and then you would make a large road (boundary line) that would divide them from us, that they should never be allowed to step over it.”³⁵¹ In this instance, the road refers to the boundary between countries and territories. A more careful reading of the speeches is required to understand the nuances of the diplomatic discourse and metaphors of the Covenant Chain.

The Mat

An enduring symbol of diplomatic relations is the mat. The mat, like many symbols, has two meanings, one that has the connotation of war and the other that connotes peace. In his recently published study on the now moribund Huron-Wendat language, linguist John Steckley looked at the morphemes³⁵² of words for mat. He found that “...mats made from rushes, used to form war bundles or sacks of sacred items (which can be likened to portable altars), had connotations of warfare. This differed from when rush mats were called –ndat- and referred to an individual’s mat used as a bed or resting place, and by extension one’s place or spot in the longhouse and, more significantly, from rush mats called –ien(d)-, which referred to a mat as an image of peace. I feel that this latter distinction between ‘mats of war’ and ‘mats of peace’ was part of the dualism of Huron thought.”³⁵³ Searching early Ojibwe dictionaries it is evident the analysis is not as detailed as Steckley’s for Huron, because there is just one word for mat *anaakan* (*anakan*)³⁵⁴ “mat, floor-mat.” However, the analysis that follows will reveal that nations

³⁵¹ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁵² Morphemes are parts of words that are not full words but carry meaning. Examples in English include sub- “meaning below, under, beneath etc” and tele- “spanning or over a distance, distant.”

³⁵³ John L. Steckley, *Words of the Huron* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007), 196.

³⁵⁴ Frederic Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992, originally published as *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language*, Montreal: Beauchemin & Valois, 1878, 1880), 27. Reverend Wilson also listed mat but employed a different orthography, he listed “mat; n.i. uhnâhkun, (pl. –un).” Wilson, *The Ojibway Language*, 288.

around the Great Lakes understood and used the double meaning of ‘mat’ for war or peace.

It is useful to start with the Huron-Wendat because of their long association with the Odaawaa and Ojibwe (Amikwa/ Amikouais), living alongside each other by Georgian Bay and on the southeastern portion of the Bruce Peninsula. The Huron-Wendat likely introduced or re-enforced much of the international diplomatic wampum discourse. After the so called “Iroquois Wars” the Huron-Wendat, specifically the Petun, fled with the Odaawaa and others west and settled for a time at Michilimackinac, Chaguamigon (Chaquamigon) and also at La Baye (Green Bay).³⁵⁵ In 1701 the Wendat settled by the Detroit river along with the Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and Potawatomi.³⁵⁶ In diplomatic discourse the mat referred to many ideas. The Jesuit Pierre Potier who lived among the Huron and knew their language compiled a list of the meanings of ‘mat’ in Huron expressions:

to arrive on the mat of someone... is to arrive at someone’s place
 to prepare the mat for someone... is to be ready to receive someone at one’s place
 to smoke on the mat... that is to enjoy a profound peace
 a mat tainted with blood, that is (to say) to have had people killed in war
 to wash a mat tainted with blood, that is to say or soothe or appease the pain of one who had people killed in war
 to keep the bag of (wampum) necklaces on the mat... that is to wait for a favourable moment for deliberating on matters.³⁵⁷

First, there is a dual meaning of the mat, it can be a mat associated with war or peace but within those two there are multiple meanings of the mat. The French were aware of the use of this term and recorded its usage at the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. On 23 July, Huron-Wendat Chief Kondiaronk of Michilimackinac addressed Governor Calliere in front of those assembled and stated, “Our Father, you see us near your mat; it is not without many dangers that we have endured on such a long voyage.

³⁵⁵ Helen Hornbeck Tanner, ed., *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 29-35.

³⁵⁶ Kathryn Magee Labelle covers the migration of the Wendat and the alliance with the Anishinaabe in chapter 4 and 5 of *Dispersed but not destroyed: A history of the seventeenth-century Wendat people* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013). Helen Hornbeck Tanner also covers the migration in *Atlas of Great Lakes History*.

³⁵⁷ Steckley, *Words of the Huron*, 201.

The falls, the rapids, and a thousand other obstacles did not seem so difficult for us to surmount because of the desire we had to see you and to gather together here.”³⁵⁸ In this case, Kondiaronk the Huron-Wendat Chief of Michilimackinac, employed the term ‘mat’ to mean “arrive at someone’s place.” By this time Kondiaronk had been living with Odaawaa and Ojibwe located around Michilimackinac for a number of years and had likely built up a discourse of shared meaning even though the Huron-Wendat language is unrelated to Ojibwe and Odaawaa.

Prior to the Great Peace of 1701, the mat as a metaphor was recorded by the Jesuits at a “Treaty of Peace Between the French, the Iroquois, and other Nations,” at Three Rivers in 1645. The deputation of Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) had a French prisoner among them who they employed to speak for them because they were releasing him as part of the terms of the treaty. The Haudenosaunee delivered 18 “presents,” when delivering the “third present,” the speaker said “Here is a mat or bed on which you can lie softly when you come to our country; for as we are brothers, we would be ashamed if we did not treat you according to your deserts.” The speaker continued with the fourth present and said “It is not enough to have good bed; the nights are cold; here is something with which to light a good fire, and to keep yourselves warm.” The Jesuit Vimont made an additional note and stated “Observe, in passing, that the Savages usually sleep close to the fire.”³⁵⁹ In turn the Huron replied to the Iroquois at this same council with 14 ‘presents’ (wampum belts) and the final one, “the fourteenth asked that a mat – that is to say, a bed or lodging – be prepared for the Hurons who would soon go to the Hiroquois country.”³⁶⁰

The treaty was entered into to secure peace. The Haudenosaunee extended their hand to the Huron to take them as brothers and allies. Summarizing the passages of the proceedings, scholar of Iroquoian studies William Fenton remarked that “a mat suggests

³⁵⁸ Kondiaronk quoted in Harvard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 130.

³⁵⁹ Quoted in Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R. Miller, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An interdisciplinary guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and their league* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 146-7.

³⁶⁰ Quoted in Jennings et. al., eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*, 151-2.

both hospitality and brotherhood, since siblings may share a mat. Metaphors of unity extend to sharing: to hunt together, roast meat on the same spit, eat across the fire... It is clear that the Hurons understood the same set of symbols.”³⁶¹ There was a mutual intelligibility of symbols in discourse amongst the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat. This mutual intelligibility or shared meaning extended to the Odaawaa as demonstrated at a different council in the presence of Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac. The Odaawaa addressed the Wendat in council and requested their aid in avenging a fallen warrior: “My brothers, [...] Our men have been killed. For a long time the bones of so-and-so, our brother, have rested in such-and-such a place. It is time that we should go and see them. Now you know that he was a brave man and worthy to be avenged. *We have rested in peace on our mat* [emphasis added]. Today, I arise, for the spirit who rules me has promised me broth and fresh meat.” In this instance historian Vernon Kinietz noted that the terms “‘broth’ or ‘fresh meat’ meant killing men and capturing prisoners,” and to “‘rest on the mat’ is to repose and live in peace.”³⁶²

The Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Odaawaa used the mat in reference to “someone’s place,” but also in reference to peace. The Odaawaa explicitly stated that they had “rested in peace on our mat.” In order to see how the mat fits into the Covenant Chain and Treaty of Niagara discourse, the speech of Chief Canasetoga at the Treaty of Lancaster must be revisited. Recall that the Haudenosaunee made an alliance with the Dutch, who were replaced by the British. They had tied a vessel to slim bushes on a river bank, but liking the contents of the boat and finding them useful, the Haudenosaunee secured the boat to a tree. Still fearing the security of the vessel, they got a longer rope and tied it to a big rock in the Oneida country. The whole Haudenosaunee confederacy finally accepted the relationship and thus the boat was secured to the mountain in the Onondaga country, the council fire of the Five Nations. Canasetoga said,

for its further Security, we removed the Rope to the big Mountain (here the Interpreter says they mean the Onandago country) and there we tied it very fast,

³⁶¹ William N. Fenton, “Rituals of peace making” in Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke and David R. Miller, eds, *The History and culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An interdisciplinary guide to the treaties of the Six Nations and their league*, 127-31 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1985b), 129

³⁶² Kinietz quoted in Steckley, *Words of the Huron*, 200.

and rolled Wampum about it; to make it still more secure, we stood upon the Wampum, and sat down upon it, to defend it, and to prevent any Hurt coming to it, and did our best Endeavours that it might remain uninjured for ever.³⁶³

The image of wrapping wampum around something, a tree or rock, and sitting on it to protect it is a recurring image and eventually became associated with the Covenant Chain. In 1796, after the Jay Treaty, the British were ordered to evacuate Fort Mackinac. The Odaawaa chiefs, the entrusted keepers of the 1764 Great Covenant Chain wampum belt that had been given to the Western Confederacy by Sir William Johnson at Niagara, brought that belt out in 1797, L'Arbre Croche Chief Keeminichaugan was chosen as speaker. He said:

Father, I shew [sic] you this to let you know that we shall never part with it Sir John Johnson's Father gave it to us at Niagara, saying, Children This is my Belt, take it, let us always sit down on it and be of one mind, by doing so no bad Birds can hurt us.³⁶⁴

The Odaawaa, keepers of the Great Covenant Chain stated that Sir William had said to them in council that “This is my Belt, take it, let us always sit down on it and be of one mind,” an expression of protection. Furthermore, when considering that Fenton had stated that “siblings share a mat” this also becomes an expression of unity, especially since the phrase, “be of one mind” is used.

Later that same year a council was held again at Fort Mackinac, this time the Odaawaa War chief Mitaminance spoke on May 11, 1797 on three strings of wampum. The second string Mitaminance stated:

I always keep in remembrance the good advice my father Governor Simcoe gave me at Detroit when he told me to sit down quiet with my Children at my Village and not listen to bad birds that when I wished to see him he was not far off and that I could see him at Niagara, that if the Americans should come to take possession of Detroit & Michilimackinac I should pass on the other side of them.³⁶⁵

The Odaawaa were still meeting with the British and were told to ‘sit down quiet’ which meant to remain at peace and not engage the enemy. Further, the admonition to

³⁶³ Canasetoga quoted in Bruce Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect: The Covenant Chain and Aboriginal-Crown Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 25.

³⁶⁴ Thomas Duggan Journal, Michilimackinack, 1795-1801, Clements Library, University of Michigan, 29 [no month listed] 1797.

³⁶⁵ Duggan Journal, 11 May 1797.

not listen to bad birds was used to emphasize that they knew the proper channels of communication. Mitaminance then picked up a wampum belt and said,

Father - I thank you again for your care of your Children, I present you this mat to sit on, tis a Mat of peace and as long as you Sit on it you will never be disturbed. If you should change your fire place take it along with you sit on it and you will be as quiet there as you are now, wherever you go take it with you and be sure of being quiet and not disturbed by bad Birds,³⁶⁶

This time Mitaminance admonished the commanding officer against listening to bad birds. Mitaminance expressly called the wampum belt a “mat of peace” and requested that the Commandant should sit on it. If the British were to “change their fire place” meaning the council fire and the fort, the commanding officer was to take the belt along because it would be recognized by all. Mitaminance then explained the imagery on the belt,

here is a mark of what I now tell you – pointing with his (^hand) fingers to the figures represented on the Belt – where I hold you by the hand and I’ll never let it go, I shall be always near you ready to assist you if you should want me – here is the mark of my tribe (^presenting the Belt) ~~as well as that of all my nation~~ all my nation on seeing it will know it and assist you in time of trouble.³⁶⁷

This speech closely matches the speech of Canasetoga when he said the Haudenosaunee “rolled Wampum about it [the Mountain with the vessel’s rope around it]; to make it still more secure, we stood upon the Wampum, and sat down upon it, to defend it, and to prevent any Hurt coming to it.” In these two cases, sitting on the mat or on a belt of wampum does not necessarily mean peace, it means vigilantly protecting the agreement and alliance.

The commanding officer then replied to the chiefs the following day and stated that “their father... was very glad to see them at his fire,” and he in turn delivered a wampum to the chiefs. The chiefs were told that the wampum was given for the “purpose of keeping their fire place clean and free from all bad Branches that might stand in their way, that as long as they sat on it they would enjoy fine clear weather, that if they heard any bad Birds amongst them, they had only to look this way and they would see their Father sitting on their mat.”³⁶⁸ In this particular passage there are two images of

³⁶⁶ Duggan Journal, 11 May 1797.

³⁶⁷ Duggan Journal, 11 May 1797.

³⁶⁸ Duggan Journal, 13 May 1797.

peace, sitting on a ‘mat of peace’ or wampum, and sitting at a fire across from each other - the council fire that was burning cleanly.

The Odaawaa of L’Arbre Croche, keepers of the Covenant Chain wampum belts, would bring the belts out frequently to remind the British of the promises they had made to the Western confederacy. Odaawaa Chief Keeminichaugan, who had presented the belts in 1797 at Fort Mackinac, was a war chief and orator who trained others about the meaning of the belts, specifically his nephew Jean Baptiste Assiginack.³⁶⁹

Keeminichaugan participated in the War of 1812 and drowned on his way back from Detroit after the war.³⁷⁰ Chief Okedaa (Ocaitau) then became the principal spokesman (giigdowninini)³⁷¹ for the L’Arbre Croche chiefs, the keepers of the belts. Chief Okedaa also recited the history of their interactions as well as the promises the British made when they had given the Covenant Chain wampum belt. Chief Okedaa picked up the belt on 18 July 1818 at Drummond Island, the new “council fire” of the British after the War of 1812, and in front of hundreds of chiefs and warriors of the Western Nations stated,

Father - This my ancestors, received from our father (Sir William Johnson), [superintendent of Indian Affairs] - You sent word to all your red children to assemble at the crooked place (Niagara). They all heard your voice (obeyed the message) and the next summer met you at that place - you then laid this Belt on a Mat and said –“Children, you must all touch this belt of Peace - I touch it myself that we may be all brethren (united) and hope our friendship will never cease.”³⁷²

In this instance, Chief Okedaa stated that Sir William Johnson had “laid this Belt on a Mat” and stated that those in attendance were to all “touch” it as a symbolic gesture of their acceptance. The great Shawnee Chief Tecumseh had also ordered people at a council in 1811 to touch a belt to indicate their acceptance.³⁷³ This action would be akin to smoking the pipe, indicating agreement to a proposition.

³⁶⁹ Reverend Leonard Bacon, *Sketch of the Reverend David Bacon* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1876), 50.

³⁷⁰ Minutes of a council held between Colonel Mauld President, Lt. Col. McKay Superintendant [sic] and the other officers of the Indian Department present and the Ottawa Chief from L’Arbre Croche. Drummond Island 16th July 1816. LAC RG 10, Vol. 33, p. 19227.

³⁷¹ Giigigowinini literally speaking man from giigido “he speaks” and nini “man,” this word is still used but is now for a band councillor.

³⁷² Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁷³ “He ordered the Belt [one given by the British to the Western Confederacy but entrusted to the Shawnee] to be passed round and handled and run by every person present saying they never would quit

Odaawaa Chief Okedaa died in 1829 and was succeeded as speaker in British councils by Jean Baptiste Assiginack for that year.³⁷⁴ Assiginack served as speaker for the chiefs from time to time but he also was hired as the interpreter for the British Indian Department. In 1850, J.B. Assiginack attended the Robinson treaties council and provided secondary assistance to the Indian Department delegation. Some time after that treaty the Western Nations were told that the quantity of presents would be diminished. Jean Baptiste Assiginack wrote down his understanding of the Covenant Chain wampum belt and the Treaty of Niagara as he understood it. He too mentioned the wampum belt and called it a mat. Furthermore, he stated that the British would occupy the eastern corner of that mat:

My Children, I clothe your land, you see that Wampum before you me, the body of my words, in this the spirit of my words shall remain, it shall never be removed, this will be your Mat the eastern corner of which I myself will occupy.³⁷⁵

The wampum itself carried the spirit of Johnson's words. Wampum is sacred to the Anishinaabe people and each generation learned the words that accompanied the belt. The wampum belts delivered at Niagara (the 24 Nations belt and the 1764 Covenant Chain belt) were entrusted to the Odaawaa of Michilimackinac, who after the War of 1812 moved to Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island, bringing the belts with them when the King's Council Fire was ignited at neighbouring Manitowaning in 1836. In 1862 the assembled Chiefs of Manitoulin, which included the descendants of the Odaawaa who were entrusted with the belts, wrote their understanding of the Covenant Chain and

their Father or let go his hand." Speech of Tehkumthai brother to the Shawanoe Prophet, Amherstburg 15 Nov. 1810. LAC RG 10, Vol. 27, pp: 16176 -16178.

³⁷⁴ D. Daly, "Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829," in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, "Great Britain" Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

³⁷⁵ Petition from J. B. Assikinawk, October 10, 1851. LAC, RG 10, vol. 613: 440-443, Indian Affairs Superintendency Records Northern (Manitowaning) Superintendence Correspondence, Manitoulin Island), 1851-1855, Microfilm reel C-13, 386.

mentioned that a tree was planted, and the area around the tree was swept clean and a mat placed underneath the tree:

<p>Minawa kigiikit mitig ninbatakichima manda anawaaiwang kiminicheimiwa minawa nintchigada'an kiwitaiai awi mitig abadakisod minawa dach anakan nindajwegisidon missa kaikidoian.³⁷⁶</p>	<p>You said again, "Here I plant a tree in the center of your little Island and I sweep the place about this tree and I lay down a mat."</p>
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The Ojibwe text does not state that the mat was spread under the "tree of peace" but the evolution in diplomatic discourse can be traced back to Canasetoga's oration of 1744 at the Treaty of Lancaster when he stated that the rope that secured the British ship was tied to a tree, and then to the mountain, and finally wampum (and thus a mat) was rolled around it to secure it. Both the Haudenosaunee and British stood on that wampum and then sat on it to protect it. Through the various stages in the economic and political alliance, the discourse evolved and morphed into the planting of a tree and a mat being laid underneath it for shade so that the allies could smoke and repose in 'profound peace.'

The Tree of Peace (Flag pole)

The above Ojibwe quote mentions the "tree in the center" of the Anishinaabe's island. It is not expressly called the Tree of Peace but it is evident that it is the same metaphorical tree of peace mentioned at the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal. The Tree of Peace was also referred to by the Wendat Chief at Detroit in 1760, who stated to Croghan that "whenever we should meet in the Woods" we should "smoke under the Tree of Peace."³⁷⁷ After the Treaty of Niagara, Croghan met with Pontiac and others at Detroit in 1765 and stated to the assembled chiefs,

Children: with this Belt I take the Hatchet out of your Hands & I pluck up a large tree & bury it deep, so that it may never be found any more, & I plant the tree of Peace, where all our children may sit under & smoak [sic] in Peace with their Fathers. A Belt.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

³⁷⁷ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., "A selection of George Croghan's letters and Journals," 119.

³⁷⁸ August 27, [1765], Croghan in Thwaites, ed., "A selection of George Croghan's letters and Journals," 156.

Erecting a tree also meant erecting a flagpole. In July 1818 when Odaawaa Chief Okedaa brought out the belts and explained them to the Commanding Officer, he drew attention to the time when the Ojibwe took Fort Michilimackinac in 1763 but the Odaawaa had saved the prisoners. The British then had to again “build a fire” that is build a fort, but also they “planted a tree:”

Our Father at Montreal [...] said he would again build a fire (a Fort) and plant a tree [orig. emph.] on our lands that would never die tho’ the bark would be taken off (a Flag staff) and that round the tree you would raise a strong hill (a fortification). All this my Father, has come to pass your words have been true, your words were smoothe [sic] and pleasant.³⁷⁹

Chief Okedaa expressly mentioned that the tree that was erected was the flag pole. This does not, however, preclude it being a symbol of peace though. The Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse also made reference to the planting of a tree in his speech when he requested that the British maintain a ‘fire’ at St. Joseph’s Island so that the bands living further away could partake of the fire’s influence:

Father - You once made your great fire at the Island of St. Joseph where you planted a tree such as you have planted here [Manitoulin] and from which you have just now taken down your flag.

Father - The tree was very tall and it could be seen from a great distance.

Father – You have taken away the flag staff and the flag under which your children were accustomed to recline and take shelter.³⁸⁰

Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse, then of Sault Ste. Marie, referred to the planted tree as very tall but that it had a flag on it. This flag staff was seen from a great distance and the ‘King’s children’ reclined under that tree with the flag and took shelter. So the tree of peace was equated with the flag pole at the fort. In the Ojibwe petition of the Chiefs of Manitoulin, they wrote of the British erecting a tree in the middle of their island. They specifically wrote “mitig ninbadakishimaa” which was translated as “here I plant a tree.” The literal Ojibwe word for planting is gitigaanaa, so an alternative passage could be “mitig nin-gitigaanaa.” So at this point the mitig (Ojibwe for tree or stick) sounds like a flag pole because the Ojibwe word is literally ‘erected’ rather than

³⁷⁹ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁸⁰ First Speech of Chinquakous – Young Pine. S20 James Givins, Indian Papers – Transcriptions, Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library, Baldwin Room.

‘planted.’ Later in the petition, however, the chiefs write about the tree again and specifically mention that it had leaves:

<p>awi dach mitig kawawinad kawi geiabi nindakadjigakwechinsi kawi nin ninbinakwiassi awi mitig kassa nindaijigakibadisissi nin kebinakwiagiba awisa mitig. Mandapi sa agiwi kenawendamonadjig manda sa niiaw missa ajonda wendendama wendjibinakwid maba sa mitig.</p>	<p>and that tree which you have spoken of does not shade us any more. It is not we who deprived it of its leaves [this tree], our mind would not be so stupid as to do such a thing, it is those to whom you have given charge over our persons, those are the persons whom we blame for having deprived the tree of its leaves.³⁸¹</p>
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The chiefs specifically stated that the tree that was erected had leaves to recline under. This suggests that the tree was both the ‘tree of peace’ and the flagpole.

High Hill

Inextricably tied to the tree of peace is the high hill or strong hill which is a reference to a fortification. Sir William Johnson stated in council at Detroit in 1761 and again in council at Niagara in 1764, that the British just wanted the outposts to conduct a mutually beneficial trade. The chiefs of the Western Nations agreed to that and stated that the French had only occupied the posts because of their good will. The chiefs strongly stated that the French had not purchased that land from them. This clause of the Covenant Chain was encoded into the oral tradition as erecting a tree and raising a strong or high hill. Odaawaa Chief Okedaa, in the presence of 350 men from the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Ojibwe, and Odaawaa nations, reminded the British commanding officer at Drummond Island in 1818 of the circumstances leading up to the promises made by the British in 1764 regarding the Covenant Chain. Okedaa stated that the Odaawaa had gone to the ‘strong place,’ that is Montreal, and met with General Gage, their Great Father, who had expressed his appreciation of their conduct during the taking of Fort Michilimackinac and stated to the Odaawaa delegation that “he would again build a fire (a Fort) and plant a tree [orig. emph.] on our lands that would never die tho’ the bark would be taken off (a Flag staff) and that round the tree you would raise a strong hill (a

³⁸¹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

fortification).³⁸² About twenty years later, Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse also referred to the tree and a high hill. Shingwaukonse was protesting the removal of the council fire from the Sault Ste. Marie area. The council fire was moved to Manitoulin and he stated that it was too great a distance for the Lake Superior people to visit their Father's fire to receive warmth:

Father - Many of your children live at a great distance from this island and there is a high hill between which prevents their seeing the fire which burns or the flag which floats from the staff erected at this place.³⁸³

The 'high hill' that Shingwaukonse referred to was Fort Brady on the south shore of St. Mary's river in American territory. The Americans had actively dissuaded and even prevented the Western Nations living within the borders of the United States from visiting the British to receive their presents.³⁸⁴ In the same speech though, Shingwaukonse referred to the high hill in his country whereby he could see all his brethren clear out to Red River:

Father - The country where I live [there] is a high hill from which I can see all the Indians belonging to our tribe. I can see as far as the Red River, or even to this place.³⁸⁵

Twice in the same speech, Shingwaukonse referred to a high hill, one was Fort Brady and the other was the abandoned fort at St. Joseph's. He stated that from the high hill in his country an ample view was afforded, furthermore, that high hill and its flag could be seen for miles by his western brethren.

The high hill with a flag became a symbol of a place supplied with ample goods and thus a place where a chief could partake in the distribution of presents and raise his influence within his band. In 190[2] Chief John Pinesi of Fort William told Fox Linguist William Jones about his puberty fast in which it was prophesied that he would become chief:

Another time, while in a fast, I saw a mountain that was very high. And then up there at the top I beheld a pole standing, flag-pole. Far over the country was visible; a flag hung thereon. And yonder on the mountain-top was where I saw

³⁸² Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁸³ First Speech of Chinquakous – Young Pine” in James Givins, Indian Papers, TMRL.

³⁸⁴ Sims 1992, p. 80 - 85.

³⁸⁵ First Speech of Chinquakous – Young Pine” in James Givins, Indian Papers, TMRL.

many goods, and all the various kinds of food there were, likewise silver. “That is yours,” I was told. At the foot of the mountain was loose soil, but farther up at the top it was rocky. That I should thus have dreamed was on this account, by a Manitou was it willed in my behalf that the people should desire me to be chief.³⁸⁶

The fort, a place to negotiate with the British colonial representatives, a place to receive presents from the commanding officer, including marks of distinction, such as silver arm bands, silver hat bands, and of course the silver chiefs’ medal, was a symbol of the alliance with the British. The reference to abundance and silver is apt considering that the foundational treaty was called the Silver Covenant Chain.

The ‘high place’ was also a node in a vast communication network. Fur traders from Montreal brought the news to the forts in the pays d’en haut. British army officials stationed at various posts also received news from head quarters and more importantly, they received orders from head quarters regarding the management of Indian Affairs. Many times messengers were sent with speeches to be read and translated to the Western Nations who congregated at the fort for that express purpose, that is, to ‘polish or brighten the chain.’ Sir William Johnson had told the assembled Western Nations at Niagara in July 1764 that suitable people would be placed at the posts to mediate grievances and do them justice and if they were unable to accomplish that, the Western Nations should cast their “Eyes to the Eastward, where you will find me ready to clear up mistakes, and do you Justice.”³⁸⁷ Sir William re-iterated these promises at the Treaty of Oswego with Pontiac and other representatives of the Western Confederacy, when he said, “you likewise now see that proper officers, men of honour and probity are appointed to reside at the Posts, to prevent abuses in Trade, to hear your complaints, and such of them as they can not redress they are to lay before me.”³⁸⁸ This clause of the Treaty of

³⁸⁶ John Pinesi (aka Gaagige-pinesi) in W. Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, 2: 301, 303.

³⁸⁷ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyns, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. 11: 278–81.

³⁸⁸ Proceedings of Sir William Johnson with Pontiac and other Indians, July 23 - 31, 1766. E. B. O’Callaghan, Berthold Fernow, John Romeyn Brodhead, eds., *Documents*

Niagara and the Covenant Chain relationship was codified by the keepers of wampum belt in the following passage, as written by the Chiefs of Manitoulin in 1862:

Binawa ninidjanissidig bakwadina
 nindojiton ketchi achpadinag mi dach ajiwi
 ajasag awi pinechi ketchibichigendagosid
 waiabichkisisid kakina dach kiwidaiai
 anichinabedig, mi maba gegawanabameg
 kego wiijiieg, mi maba kebiganoneg win
 dach ningawindamag. Minawa
 ninidjanissidig mikan nindojiton mi dach
 mandapi epegandamog mandapi sa ogidaki
 iwi gaojitamonagog gaie nin dach pejig
 ningaganawenima awi sa bineshin
 ketchibichigendagosid, mi dach maba gego
 wiininagog mi maba kewi nondagosid
 awadi sa widjibinechiian ajaianid kakina
 dach kiwitaiai tabi ondji sagakossewag.
 Anodj kebi inwedjig kego wi agiwi
 bisindawiiiegego. Missa kainadwaba
 nindogimamibanig. Mi dach maba Ottawa
 missa maba ogidaki kenawabamangid
 nongo.

Here my children I make a mountain, I
 make it high. I place there this bird, he is
 beautiful and white. All you Indians
 which are around, you will fix your looks
 upon him when ever you want to tell me
 something, it is to him that you will
 confide your words and he will make
 them known to me.

Moreover my children, I make a road
 which will convey you here, on this
 height that I have erected for you. I also
 shall keep a very pretty bird and when I
 shall have any thing to tell you it is to him
 that I will speak in order that he may
 make known the means of supporting life
 to the other bird, and all the other birds
 about shall come to him. Those who will
 contradict this do not listen to them. This
 is what you have said to our chiefs which
 are gone. And this Ottawa, behold he was
 yesterday on the mountain to which our
 attention is now directed,

Sir William had stated to the Western Nations that proper people, honourable people, would be stationed at the posts and they were delegated to report the news from head quarters. The high hill that the Chiefs said Sir William had made was the fort in their country, where the British had ignited the inextinguishable fire, and where the British distributed warmth. Also at this high hill was placed a beautiful white bird to whom they were to convey their messages and grievances. Throughout the Treaty of Niagara, and subsequent to its conclusion, the chiefs were admonished against listening to ‘bad birds.’ Likewise, the chiefs admonished the British against listening to ‘bad birds.’ By keeping a beautiful white bird at the high hill in the Anishinaabe’s country, and one at Sir William’s house, the proper channels of communication were established.

relative to the colonial history of the State of New York; procured in Holland, England, and France, 15 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons, Printers, 1853-1887), 1856 Vol. 7: 854-67.

The white birds represented the proper officials to deal with. One of the white birds was the commanding officer at the post, the other was the Odaawaa Chief entrusted with keeping the wampum belt and its “talk” or “spirit of its words.” The chiefs reported in Ojibwe, in their own language, that Sir William had then created a high road connecting these two high hills so that the two had a high and honorable means of communicating to each other.

The Fire and Council Fire

The Anishinaabe believe that fire is an essential part of life, fire is life. In the creation story the creator makes man from earth, water, wind and fire.³⁸⁹ The fire within is a reference to the spirit that the Anishinaabe believe ties us to the act of creation. Fire also relates us to all of creation because it is an element that was used in creating all of life. Even to this modern day the Anishinaabe continue to use fire as a metaphor for life:

Each of us carries a fire within. Whether it’s through the knowledge we have, or through our experiences and associations, we are responsible for maintaining that fire. And so as a child, when my mother and father would say, at the end of the day – “My daughter, how is your fire burning?” It would make me think of what I’ve gone through that day -- If I’d been offensive to anyone, or if they have offended me. I would reflect on that because it has a lot to do with nurturing the fire within. And so we were taught at a very early age to let go of any distractions of the day by making peace within ourselves, so that we can nurture and maintain our fire.³⁹⁰

Fire is used for an individual metaphor, but fire has also been used metaphorically, and synonymously, for lifeway. In 1845 the Jesuits started to build a church at Walpole Island, much to the consternation of the chiefs. The chiefs halted the priests and brothers from cutting down more trees and summoned them to a council. The priests knew enough to bring tobacco for the meeting. The priests noted that the elders were seated together and the chief Pitwegijig with his speaker Ojaouanon (Oshawanoo) were also present, Oshawanoo started the debate:

Tell me, my brother, if I myself went to your island, to talk against the church and to try to force you to adopt my practices, would you listen to me? Leave me

³⁸⁹ Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book*, 3; Basil Johnston, *Ojibway Language Course Outline for Beginners* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1978), 12.

³⁹⁰ Elder Lillian Pitawanakwat quoted on website <http://www.fourdirectionsteachings.com/transcripts/ojibwe.html>.

therefore with the blessings of my elder; I love them and do not want to give them up. It is true that among our blood-brothers, there are some who have abandoned the ancient way, but that is no reason why we should do so. On the contrary, we must preserve more carefully what our ancestors have left us as our heritage. Therefore, my brother, do not flatter yourself that we are going to change. No, for my part, never - as a native person - will I forget the Great Spirit through whom all things came to be. I know what He has given me and I shall preserve it carefully. I continue to **kindle my fire, it shall never go out** [emphasis added]. This determination is nothing new; ... we do not want to adopt your religion.³⁹¹ Chief Pitwegijig (Petrokijic), the chief at Walpole Island, in his turn used the image of the fire as the spiritual traditions that his people had been given by the Great Spirit. He too made reference to the fire as lifeway:

My brother, I love my Ancestor's blessings. I certainly cherish them deeply and I want to preserve them carefully. This is how **my fire is lit** [emphasis added] and will continue to make its smoke rise up into the air... Now, my brother, look at what you have come to ask of me, what you have kept for me. After traveling long distances in every direction, you come to me, on this little island where I am living. Are you not willing to let me enjoy in peace the blessings of my Ancestor? Very soon I shall therefore have forgotten about them completely. No, that cannot happen. I remain loyal to my Ancestor. Here at least, **the fire he left me will live on for me and my children** [emphasis added]. So, my brother, do not worry about me, stop being anxious about my fate, just let me live in peace on my little island, in my poor little home.³⁹²

For the Anishinaabeg, fire was used by the Great Spirit to create the first man, and the first man was bestowed with a way of life that was given by the Great Spirit, and fire became a symbol of that unique way of life. Kindling and maintaining a fire in this context meant that the Anishinaabeg of Walpole Island were maintaining their way of life.

The fire was also used as a symbol of communal unity, strength and well being. At the King's council fire of Manitowaning in 1839, Ojibwe Chief Bamakoneshkam (Bemigwaneshkang) stated to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Samuel Peters Jarvis,

³⁹¹ Fr. Chazelle to a priest of the same Society. Sandwich, Ontario, January 24, 1845. Reporting a council held on July 23, 1844 at Walpole Island, Lorenzo Cadieux, s.j., *Letters from the New Canada Missions: 1843 – 1852, Part 1: Letters # 1 to # 44*, translated by William Lonc, s.j., and George Topp, s.j. (Halifax: W. Lonc, 2001), 297.

³⁹² Fr. Chazelle to a priest of the same Society. Sandwich, Ontario, January 24, 1845. Reporting a council held on July 23, 1844 at Walpole Island. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 307.

that he wanted to settle his band on an island in Georgian Bay in order to re-unify them.

He stated,

Father - I follow in the footsteps of the Chiefs who have preceded me. I also thank you for your goodness + mean to ~~follow~~ adopt your advice, but father, I must settle on the land of my fathers + farm there with my children.

Father - I ask you for the Island of Wasa-coussing [Parry Island] to assemble upon it my scattered tribe our fires are far apart, + burn darksome and low. When we are all together it will throw out a brilliant light.³⁹³

Here Chief Bamakoneshkam stated that he followed in the footsteps of the Chiefs who preceded him, much like Oshawanoo and Chief Pitwegijig, he was going to keep his fire going, yet start cultivating the soil as per the advice of the government. As his band, or 'tribe,' were living apart, he thought to bring the people together and thus their fires would "throw out a brilliant light." In this specific statement, the use of fire can have a double meaning because igniting a fire in a specific place was also to claim it. This was a metaphoric reference that was also used by the Haudenosaunee:

In the metaphorical speech of the Iroquois, to establish a 'fire' is to claim that place for oneself or one's tribe. To 'extinguish' or 'put out' a fire is to leave that place or remove from it those who had lived there.³⁹⁴

By starting a fire at Wasa-coussing (Wasaukosing), Chief Bamakoneshkam could have just been stating that he and his band claimed that island. Similarly, when Odaawaa Chief Okedaa (Ocaitau) addressed the Visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Drummond Island in 1818, he held the 1764 Covenant Chain Wampum belt in his hands and reminded the British of the history of the Western Confederacy. He started with the time the French came amongst them and entered into relations, he stated,

Father - Our ancestors one day in looking towards the rising sun saw people of a different colour to themselves and not long after they (the French) stretched out their hands to us (supplied them with goods). We were delighted at the appearance of those strangers, they treated us well & offered to become our relations (to live in their country). We consented and soon after **they kindled a**

³⁹³ Speech of the Chippewa Chief Bamakoneshkam [Bemigwaneshkang] at a council held before Colonel Jarvis at Manitowaning, August [10]th, 1839. Samuel Peters Jarvis Papers, Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library, Box 57, p.303 – 308. Ojibwe Chief Bamakoneshkam (Bemigwaneshkang, Paimoquonaishkung, Paimoquonaishkam) of the caribou clan signed the 1836 Manitoulin Treaty (Treaty 45), the Robinson Huron Treaty (Treaty 61), and the 1862 Manitowaning Treaty (aka MacDougall, no. 92).

³⁹⁴ Jose Antonio Brandao, *Your Fyre Shall Burn No More: Iroquois policy toward New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 341, footnote 27.

fire at old Michilimackinac (built a fort) [emphasis added] and called us their children they told us we would never be in want or miserable with them.³⁹⁵

The secretary who wrote down this oration took pains to keep the chief's turns of phrase intact and then added in parentheses the meaning of those phrases. In this instance, kindling a fire was associated with building a fort. Odaawaa Chief Okedaa (Ocaitau) continued delivering the history lesson to the commanding officer and referred to the time when the British defeated the French and took over Fort Michilimackinac. Okedaa reminded the officer that the Ojibwe had taken over the fort in 1763 and that it was the Odaawaa who transported the surviving officers to safety in Montreal. Okedaa said that "our Father at Montreal was delighted at our conduct, returned us many thanks, and said he would again build a fire (a Fort)."³⁹⁶ Once again the scribe had written down the literal words of the chief when he had said that the British would build a fire but the chief used it as a metaphor to mean they re-established the fort. This was an actual clause at the Treaty of Niagara. Sir William Johnson had addressed the Chiefs of the Western Confederacy, including the Odaawaa, and said "that if they expected a Trade upon good Terms, they must admit of a Fort at Michillimackinac [sic]." Sir William Johnson had then delivered a wampum belt (no description).³⁹⁷

Similarly, in 183[8] Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce (Little Pine) of Sault Ste. Marie³⁹⁸ delivered a speech to the colonial officials about the location of the council fire,³⁹⁹ which was specifically associated with the disbursement of the annual presents:

³⁹⁵ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁹⁶ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

³⁹⁷ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyes, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 11: 278-81.

³⁹⁸ Shingwaukonce, Chigwauk, Chingwaukonce has often been listed as the Chief at Sault Ste. Marie but eventually founded a reserve at Garden River, Ontario.

³⁹⁹ Initially the presents were distributed at Michilimackinac until 1798, then they were distributed at St. Joseph's Island from 1798 to 1812, and from 1812 to 1815 at Michilimackinac again, 1815 to 1828 at Drummond Island, 1829 at St. Joseph's Island, then Penetanguishene from 1830 to 1836, then from 1836 to 1856 at Manitowaning on

Father - You once made your great fire at the Island of St. Joseph where you planted a tree such as you have planted here and from which you have just now taken down your flag...

Father – When you laid your log, you said it would never burn out but that the smoke from it would always be seen at a great distance. You told my ancestors to bring their children and warm their hearts at the fire of this log but when I came past it to this place I could not discern the spot where the tree stood. I cleared the place and made it clean around the log and all our young children have agreed to [turn] the log and see whether they can find a dry place where a fire may be kindled.⁴⁰⁰

Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce made specific reference to the inextinguishable fire that Sir William Johnson had ignited in 1761 at Detroit; Sir William then charged Captain Balfour to ignite the inextinguishable “fire of peace, friendship & concord” at Michilimackinac.⁴⁰¹ The western nations continued to refer to an inextinguishable fire made of choice pieces of wood that the British provided.

Fire had multiple meanings and depending on context could be used in reference to peace or war. The Kentuckian captured and raised by the Odaawaa, John Tanner, wrote down some Anishinaabe songs and their accompanying pictographs with an explanation of the song’s meaning. The following song is about the Anishinaabe’s great uncle, Nenbozhoo.



*Figure 9: Na-hah-be-ah-na na-nah-boo-shoo o-tish-ko-tahn ma-jhe-ke-sha
He sat down Na-na-bush; his fire burns forever*

Manitoulin Island. Catherine Sims, “Algonkian-British Relations in the Upper Great Lakes Region: Gathering to Give and to Receive Presents, 1815 – 1843,” Unpublished Thesis, University of Western Ontario, London, ON, 1992.

⁴⁰⁰ First Speech of Chinquakous – Young Pine. S20 James Givins, Indian Papers – Transcriptions, TMRL.

⁴⁰¹ Keith R. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow: Michilimackinac and the Anglo-Indian War of 1763* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press and Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 2013), 82.

Tanner provided the following explanation to the song and the pictograph,

This figure appears to be descriptive of the first assumption by Na-na-bush of his office, as friend and patron of men. He is represented as taking a seat on the ground. Fire, with the northern Indians, is the emblem of peace, happiness, and abundance. When one band goes against another, they go, according to their language, to put out the fire of their enemies; therefore, it is probable that in speaking of the perpetual fire of Na-na-bush, it is only intended to allude to his great power, and the permanence of his independence and happiness.⁴⁰²

So the phrase “to put out the fire of their enemies” was used by the Anishinaabeg as well as the Haudenosaunee. The converse of these violent overtures is that the fire “is the emblem of peace, happiness, and abundance.” The metaphor had been in use by the time the French arrived in the great Lakes area⁴⁰³ and the British learned of it and it was incorporated into the Covenant Chain discourse. Bear in mind that when Sir William Johnson entered into the treaty with the Western Nations, he stated to General Gage that it was to be a defensive and offensive alliance, therefore one of peace and war. In the vast majority of councils, Sir William Johnson and his deputy George Croghan, as well as Commanding officers Gorrell and Balfour, made reference to the peaceful connotations of the fire. In 1761 Sir William stated that he was directed to light an “unextinguishable [sic]” fire at his house and that “This fire yields such a friendly warmth that many Nations have since assembled thereto, and daily partake of its influence.” He then continued and stated that he came to light a fire using a brand from his place to “kindle up a large Council fire made of such Wood as shall burn bright and be unextinguishable, whose kindly warmth shall be felt in, and shall extend to the most remote Nations and shall induce all Indians even from the setting of the sun to come hither and partake thereof.”⁴⁰⁴ Adjectives such as “friendly” and “kindly” convey the peaceful intentions. When Captain Balfour arrived at Michilimackinac he too, like Johnson earlier in the month at Detroit, “lighted a ‘fire of peace, friendship, & Concord,’ to serve as a symbol

⁴⁰² John Tanner, *A narrative of the captivity and adventures of John Tanner during thirty years residence among the Indians in the interior of North America.*, ed. by Edwin James (London: Baldwin & Cradock, 1830), 351-2.

⁴⁰³ Brandao, *Your Fyre Shall Burn No More*.

⁴⁰⁴ Proceedings of a council at Detroit 9 September 1761, LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 101.

that the road to ‘peace & good friendship’ was open to all ‘Nations of Indians’ coming under ‘it’s influence.’”⁴⁰⁵

During the 1764 Treaty of Niagara, Sir William Johnson made reference to the council fire when he welcomed the Toughkamiwan delegation, stating, “Brethren - I have with Pleasure heard your friendly Speech, and heartily bid you welcome to this *Council fire*, which is lighted for all friendly Indians, and expect, after this that they will constantly attend the same, and assist in preserving it clear, as it is intended for the Good of all well disposed Indians.”⁴⁰⁶ The council fire was ignited by the British but the British expected the Western Nations to assist in keeping it clean and burning pure.

In 1765, a delegation of Mississauga Chiefs who had not attended the Treaty at Niagara called upon Sir William Johnson with the stated intention of joining the peace. They addressed Sir William as father, and stated that they had been away at their hunting grounds when the messenger arrived at their village but now came to the inextinguishable council fire:

Father – We beg you will hear our two towns Nations Pemidashkondayan⁴⁰⁷ and Shanneayon.⁴⁰⁸ We cannot enough express our joy in seeing you the head chief of all Indians and to come and light our pipe at the great council fire which you keep always burning at your house, where all Indian Nations assemble & smoke the pipe of peace and address you as their father, and laying our petitions & grievances before you.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 82.

⁴⁰⁶ On Friday the 27th July [1764] the Sachims, and Chiefs of Toughkamawiman, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 300.

⁴⁰⁷ Pemidashkondayan spelt as Pa’mitaskwo’tayong by Chamberlain 1891, “The name given by the Indians to Rice Lake, which body of water received this last name from the whites by reason of the wild rice in which it abounds. Mrs. Bolin explained the term as signifying ‘across the prairies, or burnt lands,’ saying that on looking across the lake from the Indian camping ground one could see the prairies. This explanation is somewhat doubtful. In the region of Peterborough the old name is believed to have meant ‘lake of the burning plains.’ The word may be derived from pa’mit, ‘across’ and ‘maskota’, prairie with the locative –ong.” A. F. Chamberlain, *The language of the Mississauga Indians of Skisugog: A contribution to the linguistics of the Algonkian tribes of Canada* (Philadelphia?: s.n., 1892) 62.

⁴⁰⁸ Azhoonyaang ‘Place of Shining waters’ based upon silver zhoonyaa.

⁴⁰⁹ At a meeting of a party of Mississageys [Mississauga] from La Bay Quinte Shanneyon & the River Pemidashkoudayan in the West side of Lake Ontario. Johnson Hall 20th July 1770, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p. 95 – 99, C-1222.

The Mississaugas took an ember from the great council fire and lit their pipes and smoked with Sir William Johnson, and expressed their willingness to join the Covenant Chain, thereby demonstrating that nations could and did join after the treaty of Niagara by going to the council fire at Sir William Johnson's house.

Council fires, like the one at Johnson's house and at Michilimackinac, were places that were officially recognized by both parties, the British and Western Nations, as "official places where treaties were negotiated and conflicts handled."⁴¹⁰ Further, the inextinguishable fire became associated with peace, abundance, and 'warmth,' which was the metaphor for the annual delivery of presents at the King's council fire. Referring back to Okedaa's speech of 1818 at Drummond Island in which he specifically referred to receiving the Covenant Chain wampum belt at Niagara from Sir William Johnson, Okedaa recalled that the British had said, "I will call you my children, will send warmth (presents) to your Country, and your families shall never be in want. Look towards the rising sun, my Nation is as brilliant as it and its word cannot be violated."⁴¹¹ After the War of 1812, the council fire was moved from Drummond Island to St. Joseph's Island for 1829, and then to Penetanguishene, and eventually the fire was moved to Manitoulin Island where it remained until 1856. Sault Ste. Marie chief Shingwaukonse,⁴¹² advocated on behalf of the Western Nations, stated that the council fire had been moved too far away from them:

Father – Many of your children live at a great distance and are too poor to come here and warm themselves at your fire.

Father - It seems to me that many of your children living on the other side of the lines will very soon become very poor [...]

Father - The children of the next generation living at this place will be able to come to the fire at St. Joseph's which we wish to light and warm themselves.⁴¹³

⁴¹⁰ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 27.

⁴¹¹ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

⁴¹² Shingwaukonse was listed as Sault Ste. Marie Chief for many years but eventually settled at Garden River.

⁴¹³ First Speech of Chinquakous – Young Pine. S20 James Givins, Indian Papers – Transcriptions, TMRL.

Here Shingwaukonse made a special reference to the distance required for the western people to come to “warm themselves at” the King’s council fire. The reference to warming oneself at the fire is literal but also figurative because it is a reference to gathering at the council fire to receive the presents or ‘warmth’ as part of the “engagements” entered into at the Treaty of Niagara. This literal and figurative meaning of gathering around the council fire to receive ‘warmth’ was also in the speech of Jean Baptiste Assiginack in 1829 at St. Joseph’s Island. Assiginack stated,

Father – When you abandoned Mackinac, we made a road to this Island (St. Joseph’s) and we continued to travel it until you returned to Mackinac, at the commencement of the war [War of 1812]. After the war, you again gave up that Island to the Americans and desired that we should go to your **new fire (Drummond Island) for our clothing** [emphasis added]. We did so. You have now removed your fire to a greater distance from us. We will follow it in full confidence of **receiving our usual warmth (clothing) from it** [emphasis added].⁴¹⁴

In Assiginack’s speech, a more direct link is made between the King’s Fire and receiving ‘warmth’ in the form of presents. Odaawaa Chief Jean Baptiste Assiginack returned to oblique references when he dictated his understanding of the wampum belts in 1851. He mentioned the council fire,

In the central part of your land I plant a big fire, it is kindled with the choicest pieces of firewood, and it shall continue to burn as long as the world shall last, and the Indians dwelling round will frequent it in order to enjoy the benefit of its warmth.⁴¹⁵

Enjoying the benefit of the big fire’s warmth was also a reference to receiving the “King’s Bounty,” that is, receiving presents. The British promise to deliver presents forever was expressly encoded in the 24 Nations wampum belt that had the image of a

⁴¹⁴ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

⁴¹⁵ Petition from J. B. Assikinawk, October 10, 1851. LAC, RG 10, vol. 613: 440-443.

boat that was filled with all of the necessities the nations could require (see image 6). However, receiving presents was also obliquely referred to as receiving warmth from the council fire. In 1862 the Chiefs of Manitoulin wrote down in Ojibwe their understanding of the wampum belts and they too mentioned the fire:

Minawa dach kigiinag ningitisimag
nindjanisidig minawa ashkode nindaton
keawasonodameg. Kawika taatessinoo
keniawasonodang kidabinojiim. Minawa
dach nindagwitoiagoshimaa maba godawan
keniawasonodawad kagocha wika
taatessino. Kitchi manido ninondag
nindikid gocha nindjanisidig. Minawa dach
tchitchikijeigan nindaton mandapi nindaton
nindjanissidig tchitchikijeamog manda
kidachkodemiwa wiate inendameg. Wiateni
nangwana ninidjanissag odachkodemiwa
ningainendam. Missa manda kainadwaba
ningitisimag Kin Chaganach Egoian.

These are the words you have said to my forefathers. “My children, I place there a fire to warm you. This fire will never go out so that your children may always keep themselves warm. Moreover I pile wood for your use as fuel. [I again say your fire] will never go out. The Great Being hears me I say so my children. Moreover again, I place a poker, here is where I leave it, my children, poke your fire if you see that it wants to go out. “Ought the fire of my children ever go out?” Such will my thought ever be. This is what you said to my forefathers you whom we call the English.⁴¹⁶

There is no mention of a poker in the proceedings of the Treaty at Niagara but Sir William Johnson did mention a brand at the 1761 Treat of Detroit. This passage demonstrates the manner in which the oral tradition aggregated information. The Anishinaabe’s forefathers are mentioned, as well as their children, and of course they themselves are referenced in the present tense, thus, the speech as recited and handed down created a perpetual or living treaty in the minds of the Anishinaabeg.

In exploring the first treaties between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee, this chapter has outlined the process and protocols that defined treaty relationships for years to come. Concepts such as the ‘council fire,’ ‘taking each other by the hand,’ ‘linking arms,’ and the ‘watchful eye of the sun’ became central components to a shared diplomatic language that set the terms of Anishinaabe relationships with colonial entities. The imbued meaning of implements, such as pipes, wampum belts, wampum strings, medals, and clothing supported the metaphors of diplomacy and assisted in cross-

⁴¹⁶ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

language communication. These metaphors were the ‘legalese’ of their time and dominated the diplomatic vocabulary that colonial officials had to master to achieve alliances. The next chapter traces the evolution of the Anishinaabeg’s main colonial treaty partner, the British.

Ch. 5: Early Treaties with the British

In this chapter I briefly trace the period prior to 1760, a period in which the French and English vied for Anishinaabeg alliance. In this period, attention will be paid to the formation of the Covenant Chain - from the Dutch and Mohawk origins to its extension to the Western confederacy.

Around the turn of the 18th century, the Haudenosaunees' military power waned and they did not want to continue the war with the Anishinaabeg.⁴¹⁷ The French also wanted war to cease because it had a detrimental effect on the fur trade. The French, under Governor Callière, called for a grand council to be held at Montreal. This is now known as the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. This treaty gathering was attended by 1300 Native people with representatives from 39 nations, including the Odaawaa and Huron from Michilimackinac area, the Saulteuers (Ojibwe) from Sault Ste. Marie, and the Cree and Ojibwe from the “shores of Lake Superior.”⁴¹⁸ Another group attended called the “Gens des terres” or “Inlanders,” Havard stated these people may be related to the Cree.⁴¹⁹ The “Gens de Terre” were likely the people called “Noopiming dazhi-ininiwag” ‘People of the hinterland or inland’.⁴²⁰ In the *Historical Atlas of Canada*, the

⁴¹⁷ Bruce Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect: The Covenant Chain and Aboriginal-Crown Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 17; Leroy V. Eid, “The Ojibwa-Iroquois War: The War the Five Nations did not win” *Ethnohistory* 26: 4 (Autumn 1979), 297–324; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native diplomacy in the Seventeenth century*, translated by Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001).

⁴¹⁸ Gilles Havard, *Montreal 1701: Planting the tree of peace* (Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History, 2001), 31.

⁴¹⁹ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 120.

⁴²⁰ Gregor McGregor told linguist Leonard Bloomfield a story about the Haudenosaunee coming to raid up in Lake Huron country. They were lured to Whitefish River (north shore of Lake Huron) where they were defeated by the “Noopiming dazhi-niniwag.” John D. Nichols, *An Ojibwe Text Anthology* (London: Centre for Research and Teaching of Canadian Native Languages, University of Western Ontario, 1988), 114-15. The 1671 map of Louis Nicholas has the name “Noupiming=dach=irinioek” and he located them northwest of Sault Ste. Marie and east of Lake Nipigon, see François-Marc Gagnon with Nancy Senior and Réal Ouellet, *The Codex Canadensis and the Writings of Louis Nicolas* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2011), 94-5), in the proximity of Begetikong. Nicolas also did a portrait of a man of that nation which appears on 115.

“Noupiming daci irinouek” are located in the Pic River area on the north shore of Lake Superior.⁴²¹

This treaty was attended by many Native people from far and wide, with some definitely coming from Sault Ste. Marie and north of Sault Ste. Marie as well as the west end of Lake Superior. Although the main impetus for the gathering was to secure a peace amongst the nations so that the fur trade could thrive again, the western representatives took the opportunity to trade. In fact a trade fair was hosted by the merchants of Montreal.⁴²² Note that this treaty was not held to cede territory to the French, nor to the Haudenosaunee.⁴²³ The Anishinaabeg left this treaty as owners of their territory and as an independent people, not indentured to the French. Another point that must be stressed is that each nation in attendance received a wampum belt (called collar [coliers] by the French). Governor Callière, at the conclusion of the treaty negotiations addressed all in attendance, “I attach my words to the collars I will give to each one of your nations so that the elders may have them carried out by their young people.” In this manner the Governor was conforming to the manner that the Native nations conducted peace negotiations as well as outfitting them with the appropriate medium (wampum) that conformed with how they kept records. The Governor continued, “I invite you all to smoke this calumet which I will be the first to smoke, and to eat meat and broth that I

Andrew J. Blackbird called these people “Backwoodsmen” and said that they had the rabbit for their clan, which he called emblem. Andrew J. Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan: A grammar of their language, and personal and family history of the author* (Ypsilanti, MI: The Ypsilanti Job Printing House, 1887), 81. The term is a relational one and was used to contradistinguish the people living along the shores of Lake Superior, who were called Gichi-gamiiwininiwag, meaning “sea people” in reference to living along the shore of Lake Superior. William Jones, “Ethnographic and Field Notes on the Ojibwa Indians.” American Philosophical Society, Collection Call no. 497.3J71. In an agreement between the North West Company and the Ojibwe of Grand Portage in 1798, the name “Kitchicamingue Indians” was used. LAC RG10, Series A, Vol. 266, pp: 163151-163155.

⁴²¹ R. Cole Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada: From the beginning to 1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), Plate 35. Greater detail about the term “Gens de Terres” is covered in Adolph M. Greenburg and James Morrison, “Group Identities in the Boreal Forest: The origin of the Northern Ojibwa” *Ethnohistory* 29:2 (1982), 75–102.

⁴²² Havard, *Montreal 1701*, 35.

⁴²³ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 186.

have prepared for you so that I have like a good father the satisfaction of seeing all my children united.”⁴²⁴ By concluding the negotiations with a smoke of the calumet, he was solidifying the agreement. By feasting his guests, he was also honouring them, by brokering the peace, he was acting the role of father (as mediator), and this provides an excellent example of what British officials would come to call “the French manner of treating with the Natives.”

While the French hosted all of these nations, the British also hosted a grand council at Albany in which they solidified their ties to the Five Nations.⁴²⁵ The competition for furs intensified and colonial powers vied for partnerships and alliances. In fact, prior to the 1701 conferences at Albany and Montreal, several British records indicate that British sent emissaries into the *Pays d'en Haut*⁴²⁶ to establish relations with the Waganhaas, Ottawa, Mississauga, Miami, Illinois, Dionondades (Huron), and others. These same records also reveal that the group called the “Waganhaas,” (Ottawa and their allies) entered the Covenant Chain⁴²⁷ alliance with the British on 5 August 1684. The British again made a treaty with seven nations (castles) of the Dowanganhaas on 14 July

⁴²⁴ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 136.

⁴²⁵ The Five Nations later accepted the Tuscarora into their league and then became known as the Six Nations.

⁴²⁶ Havard defines the *Pays d'en Haut* as “The Great Lakes Region.” Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 4. Widder states that the *pays d'en haut* means the “upper country.” Keith R. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow: Michilimackinac and the Anglo-Indian War of 1763* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press and Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 2013), xix. Podruchny adds more specificity, “Literally translated as ‘the country up there,’ or ‘upper country,’ the term *pays d'en haut* referred to areas ‘upriver’ [...] by the late seventeenth century, the term came to be widely used for the fur-trading territory mainly around the Great Lakes. After the mid-eighteenth century, the boundaries of the *pays d'en haut* moved farther west and north.” Carolyn Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World: Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), xii.

⁴²⁷ The Covenant Chain had its antecedents in negotiations conducted between the Dutch and the Mohawks on the Hudson River. Some scholars posit that the treaty of “tying hands in friendship” was first formed in 1618. Another scholar counters that the relationship evolved from a rope to an iron chain in 1659. The eminent Iroquoian scholar Francis Jennings offers the founding of the Covenant Chain as 1643 or 1645. Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 28.

1701.⁴²⁸ Similarly, Morito (2012) noted that a group called the “Wississachos,” who he identified as possibly being the Mississauga, entered the Covenant Chain on 31 January 1707. Lastly, the Odaawaa treated with the British and their allies the Five Nations at the Onondaga council fire on 4 – 5 June 1710. Two messengers reported to the British at Albany that:

When we came into the Castle we were sent for into the Genr Assembly, Where we found 3 Wagenhaes or Uttawawas singing the Song of Joy. They had long Stone Pipes in their hands & under the Pipes hung feathers as big as Eagles Wings. When they left off singing well we filled the Pipes & let them smoak, when they had done, they filled the Pipes & let us smoak – this is the token of friendship ... One of the 5 Nations then stood up & spoke, “Brethren we being now to speak of Peace I desire that we may lay aside all heart burnings against each other & behave with that Meekness wch becomes Brethren.”⁴²⁹

A Seneca replied, “Go with us to your brother Corlaer,⁴³⁰ The Doors stand open for you, The Beds are made for you from the Senecas Country to the Habitation of Corlaer, the Path is secure & there is no Ill in our Country.” An Odaawaa then addressed all those assembled, “Brethren here I am, you have told me the Doors stood open, the Beds made, yr Pots boiled & the Path was secure from the Sennecas Country to the Habitation of Corlaer. Let it be so. And gave a Belt of Wampum.”⁴³¹

This passage does not reveal where these Odaawaa came from (Michilimackinac or Detroit or St. Joseph) but the passage provides a sample of the protocol with which the nations employed when dealing with each other such as offering tobacco to visitors, allowing them to smoke first, then taking a turn to smoke their calumet. The passage also reveals the metaphors that the Nations employed when speaking in diplomatic settings. These metaphors would remain for years and likely pre-date significant colonial presence. The metaphor of the kettle (also called the common dish or pot), the secure

⁴²⁸ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 38.

⁴²⁹ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 38.

⁴³⁰ Corlaer is the name given to the Governor of New York which became a title in testimony to the services rendered by Arent van Curler (Corlaer) who negotiated the first treaty between the Mohawk and the Dutch. The title was bestowed to Governor Edmund Andros, circa 1675, and it was used by his successors Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R. Miller, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An interdisciplinary guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and their league* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 235.

⁴³¹ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 38-9.

path (also clear road or smooth waters), pots boiled indicating peaceful intentions to feed guests, and beds made (usually mats) to indicate hospitality and territoriality. The British would learn the meaning of these metaphors, master them and incorporate them into their diplomatic dealings with the Western Nations.

The British achieved some success in luring the Anishinaabeg of Sault Ste. Marie and environs to trade with them at Albany. In fact, they were having so much success that the French felt it necessary to establish a post at Sault Ste. Marie in 1750. Louis Legardeur, Sieur de Repentigny, built a fort there, “in order to stop the savages of the northern posts who go and come to and from the English, to break off the trade they carry on with them.”⁴³²

The northern Anishinaabeg were getting better trade value with the British and sometimes they just claimed that they were getting better trade value so that the French traders would have to lower their prices.⁴³³ The British may have provided leverage in bargaining but the French had married into Anishinaabe society and became not only fictive kin but real kin.⁴³⁴ This became a powerful connection when war finally broke out between the colonial powers.

French officers arrived at Michilimackinac on 10 August 1754 for the purpose of gaining warriors from the surrounding nations to join their fight against the English. The officer who led the ‘recruitment’ remained at Michilimackinac for 12 days and “he met with twelve hundred men from sixteen nations on three occasions.” The tribes represented were “Huron, Ottawas, Sauteux, Algonquins, Potowatomies, Outagamis or

⁴³² Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 27.

⁴³³ For further information about Anishinaabe trade protocol and “playing off” the French and British traders, refer to Bruce M. White’s “A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol” *Minnesota History* 50 (Summer 1987): 229-40.

⁴³⁴ “Fictive kin” is a term used to refer to the social process in which the Anishinaabeg (and other groups) created a familial relationship with newcomers through adoption. The most famous example is the adoption of the French and British King as the Great Father. The purpose of establishing fictive kin was to expand social relationships and obligations, a father would provide for his child and not deny their requests to fulfill their needs. See Cary Miller, *Ogimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760 – 1845* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 32-3.

Foxes, Miamis, Mississaugas, Mascoutens or the Fire Tribe, Puants, Sioux, Kickapoos, Malomines or Fallavoines, Assinaboines, Pawnees, and Weas [Ouiatenon].”⁴³⁵

The French recruitment mission had been a success. The Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Menominee, Potowatomi and others from the Michilimackinac borderland had fought alongside the French and soundly defeated the British under General Braddock at Fort Duquesne in 1755.⁴³⁶ These warriors continued to fight against the British for five more years. Captain Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, aide-de-camp to General Marquis de Montcalm, noted that there were 1,799 Western Indians at Fort William Henry in July 1757 including Odaawaa from L’Arbre Croche, Saginaw, and Detroit plus four more settlements; Ojibwe from five settlements, including Chagouamigon (Chequamigon); Potowatomi from St. Joseph and Detroit.⁴³⁷ In 1759, grandson of the Odaawaa chief Nissawakwat (La Fourche), mixed blood Charles-Michel Mouet de Langlade, led a “force of twelve hundred Ojibwe, Menominee, Fox, Sac, Sioux, and Cree from Michilimackinac down the Ottawa River to New York, where they hoped to help the French in what turned out to be their unsuccessful defense of Fort Niagara.”⁴³⁸ It should be noted that it was Sir William Johnson who played a lead role in taking Fort Niagara and the Western Nations associated him with that battle.⁴³⁹

Despite the combined efforts of the French and the Western Nations, the tide of war started to turn. Supply lines were obstructed, the Western warriors and chiefs had families to care for and feed and many perhaps started to perceive that the tables had turned in favour of the British. Some nations started to meet with the British and checked

⁴³⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 10.

⁴³⁶ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 20; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lakes region 1650 – 1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 243.

⁴³⁷ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 21.

⁴³⁸ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 21.

⁴³⁹ On 31 July 1761, Sir William Johnson requested the assistance of the Mississauga Chief Wabibicomicot to accompany him to Detroit to treat with the Western Nations there. Sir William stated “he was pleased to find what he had said [sic] to their Nation on the reduction of Niagara had produced the desired effect,” meaning that the Mississauga and others were attached to the British, LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 77- 79, C-1222.

out the terms of peace. This was not a surrender, the Anishinaabeg never conceded defeat.

On the 8 August 1759 Deputy Agent of Indian Affairs, George Croghan met with the “Chiefs and Warriors of the Delawares, Shawnesse, Wayondotts, Twigtwees, Ottawas, Chepawas, Cuscuskees and Putawatimes,” at the council house in Pittsburgh. Croghan opened the council and stated “I was glad to see so great a number of my Brethren from so many different Nations met together to brighten and strengthen the Chain of Friendship between them and us,” and he then delivered a String of Wampum.⁴⁴⁰ Unfortunately, as with many other British colonial officials, Croghan did not list the chiefs’ names nor where they came from. Interestingly though he stated that they came to “brighten and strengthen the Chain of Friendship.” This reference to the ‘Chain of Friendship’ pre-dated the 1764 Treaty of Niagara but it acknowledged the pre-existing entries into the chain mentioned above. Whether Croghan knew of these earlier entries (1701, 1710, etc) is unknown but he would have known that the Delaware and the Shawnee, who had both been displaced from their eastern territories, had already been part of the ‘Chain’.

The council proceeded with the Delaware speaker ‘Beaver’ speaking on behalf of the Western Nations, assuming their position of ‘grandfathers’ of the confederacy.⁴⁴¹ He performed the condolence ceremony, figuratively using a feather dipped in oil to clean the ears of the participants so that all may hear the message he had to parlay. The Beaver then talked about the peace that he had been charged to work towards. He had fourteen belts of wampum from the English, the Six Nations, the Delaware and others. He stated that these nations “were willing to take fast hold of the Chain of Friendship subsisting between the English and all Nations of Indians living to the Sunrising.” He continued, “Uncles & Cousens this Belt which you see me hold in my hand I will join with these

⁴⁴⁰ George Croghan in Donald H. Kent, Louis M. Waddell, Autumn L. Leonard, eds., *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, Vol. 3 (Harrisburg: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1976), 3: 507.

⁴⁴¹ The Delaware were acknowledged as an ‘older stock of people’ by the Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Potowatomi and Shawnee and thus were called grandfathers by all of these nations. Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 116.

fourteen Belts to assure all Nations to the Sun rising that your Nations have agreed to the Peace confirmed here the 9th of the last Month between the Deputys of your Nations (who came with me here for that purpose) & our Brethren the English” he placed the belt beside the other fourteen belts and promised to send them to their respective countries. The Beaver then picked up another belt and said, “I assure you by this Belt, that the Peace was settled here between your Deputys and our Brothers the English in the manner I have informed you, and they have taken to your Country the Belts of Confirmation given to them.”⁴⁴²

International, some say intertribal, protocol dictated that the host welcome guests with the condolence ceremony. This ceremony was meant to prepare people to engage in the council by wiping away the tears shed for loved ones who had passed away since the last meeting, clearing the throat so that one could speak clearly, and cleaning the ears in order to hear the message.⁴⁴³ The guests then also performed the condolence ceremony. In this instance the British extended the ‘Chain of Friendship’ to deputies of the western nations, including Ojibwe and Odaawaa people. Not only did the British extend the chain but the relationship was also confirmed by a chosen speaker for the Western Nations. At this point we cannot determine the identity of the participants of this conference, but we do know that the wampum belts were sent out.

Next the “Principal Warrior of the Delawares” rose and spoke. He stated that they, the Delaware and the Shawnee, had started the war, “We and our Grand Children the Shawnesse began the War in this Country, The Wise Men of all of our Nations have made Peace with our Brethren the English, and as the Peace is very agreeable to us, we by this Belt of Wampum take the Hatchet we sent you out of your Hands, and we pull up a large Pine Tree & bury it deep in the Ground, treading down the Earth firm about all the spreading Roots of the Tree that the Hatchet may never be found more.” Here the Delaware took the blame for sending war belts to the Western Nations and now the

⁴⁴² Croghan quoted in Kent et. al., eds., *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, Vol. 3: 507.

⁴⁴³ William N. Fenton, “Structure, Continuity, and Change in the Process of Iroquois Treaty Making” in Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R. Miller, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An interdisciplinary guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and their league*, 3-36 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1985a), 18–19.

Delaware wanted to broker the peace. The Delaware had long interaction with the Five Nations and during that time, some of the metaphors used, such as the ‘tree of peace’ (usually stated as a pine) had been adopted.⁴⁴⁴ The tree of peace is famously associated with the founding of the League of Iroquois but the Tree of Peace was also mentioned at the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701, a treaty that had participants from as far west as the Mississippi.⁴⁴⁵ Recall as well that the Haudenosaunee gave a wampum belt to the Anishinaabeg at Sault Ste. Marie and that one of the symbols on the belt represented an eagle on a tall pine tree at the mouth of the River Credit,⁴⁴⁶ thus the Western Nations were familiar with the metaphor.

The following year, on November 5, 1760, Deputy Superintendent George Croghan met a group of 30 Odaawaa on the south shore of Lake Erie. The Odaawaa had hoisted the British colours so Croghan met with them, smoked the calumet, and gave them a ‘dram,’ he then recorded the following:

I called a meeting of all the Indians and acquainted them of the Reduction of Montreal, and agreeable to the Capitulation we were going to take possession of Fort D’Troit, Misselemakinack, Fort St. Joseph’s & c. and carry the French Garrisons away Prisoners of War & Garrison the Forts with English Troops, that the French Inhabitants were to remain in possession of their property on their taking the Oath of Fidelity to His Majesty King George, and assured them by a Belt of Wampum that all Nations of Indians should enjoy a *free Trade with their Brethren* [emphasis added] the English and be *protected in peaceable possession of their hunting Country* [emphasis added] as long as they adhered to his Majestys Interest. The Indians in several Speeches made me, expressed their satisfaction at exchanging THEIR Fathers the French for their Brethren the English who they were assured were much better able to supply them with all necessaries, and then begged that we might forget every thing that happened since the commencement of the War, as they were obliged to serve the French from whom they got all their necessitys [sic] supplied [sic], that it was necessity and not choice that made them take part with the French which they confirmed by several Belts and Strings of Wampum.⁴⁴⁷

First of all, Croghan informed the Odaawaa of the capitulation and he also informed them that the British were to take over the forts but named three specific ones

⁴⁴⁴ Jennings et. al., eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*, 122.

⁴⁴⁵ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 144.

⁴⁴⁶ P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 121.

⁴⁴⁷ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 104 – 105.

that the Anishinaabe had a known affiliation to, namely Detroit, Michilimackinac and St. Josephs.⁴⁴⁸ Croghan had dealt with chiefs and warriors for years and had obtained intelligence from his informants so he knew that the Western Nations wanted to have a fair trade, maintain their land and more importantly, they wanted to maintain their freedom.⁴⁴⁹ Croghan specifically addressed these concerns by stating that the nations would be “protected in the peaceable possession of their hunting country.” The principal Odaawaa chief then arose, pointed out two of his young men and stated that they were deputized to conduct business for his nation, he then said, “Brother to Confirm what we have said to you I give you this Peace Pipe which is known to all the Nations living in this Country and when they see it they will know it to be the Pipe of Peace belonging to our Nation, then [he] delivered the Pipe.”⁴⁵⁰

The diplomatic interactions thus far demonstrate the primacy of wampum and the calumet. Both the calumet and wampum were given as pledges of a chief’s or a nation’s word. Both were also offered as invitations, for a peace council, or to join a war party. There are numerous references in the colonial records wherein chiefs and speakers of various nations delivered a pipe to a commanding officer and stated that their pipe was “known by all the Nations.”⁴⁵¹ A serious diplomatic gaffe was made by the British in the summer of 1760 when a delegation of Ottawas and Ojibwas visited Niagara only to

⁴⁴⁸ St. Josephs here refers to the fort established along the river of the same name on the south east shore of Lake Michigan, not St. Joseph’s Island that the British would later occupy.

⁴⁴⁹ Croghan wrote to William Johnson that “We may say that we have beat the French; but we have nothing to boast from the War with the Natives.” George Croghan in Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations & the British Empire* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 55.

⁴⁵⁰ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 105.

⁴⁵¹ On 11 September 1761 at a Detroit council, Mississauga Chief Wabbicommicott presented a calumet to the Mohawks and declared “this pipe which is known by all the Nations here, I give to you Brethren of the Mohocks, to smoak [sic] out of it in your councils with your brother Warraghiyagey.” Proceedings at a Treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson, LAC RG 10, Vol. 6, pp: 100 – 117.

discover that the wampum and calumets that they had presented the previous year had been sent to Amherst as war trophies and curiosities for his cabinet.⁴⁵²

By treating wampum and pipes as collectibles Amherst showed the chiefs and warriors that he did not value their ways. Amherst's disdain for the Western Nations and Indians in general, affected his policy and often times nullified the work that his Indian Agents did on the ground. Despite the gaffe, Croghan again met with the Wendat, Potawatomi, and Odaawaa in the council house at Detroit on 4 December 1760. He summoned them to the council so that they could witness the fort changing hands from French to British. He also took the opportunity to point out that the Western Nation's French 'Fathers' were now British subjects. Croghan ordered the Anishinaabeg to "look on them as such & not to think them a separate People."⁴⁵³ Croghan also promised by the delivery of a wampum belt that the Western Nations would have "free open Trade with your Brethren the English & be protected by his Majesty King George now your Father and my Master." At this point Croghan attempted to have the British King recognized as the new 'Father' but that was premature. Once again, the representative of the Crown promised protection to the Western Nations if they abided by the peace and did not harm any of the King's subjects. Croghan concluded his speech by referring again to the Covenant Chain:

Brethren: On Condition of your performance of what has been said to you I by this Belt renew and brighten the ancient Chain of Friendship between his Majestys Subjects, the Six United Nations and our Brethren of the several Western Nations to the Sun setting and wish it may continue as long as the Sun and Moon give light. A Belt [...]⁴⁵⁴
 A Wendat⁴⁵⁵ (Wyandot) Chief replied on behalf of the Western Confederacies:
 Brethren: [...] we assure you our Hearts are good towards our Brethren the English, [...] ***All the Indians in this Country are Allies to each other and as one People***, what you have said to us is very agreeable & we hope ***you will continue***

⁴⁵² Dowd, *War Under Heaven*, 58.

⁴⁵³ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., "A selection of George Croghan's letters and Journals," 114.

⁴⁵⁴ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., "A selection of George Croghan's letters and Journals," 115.

⁴⁵⁵ The Wyandot/ Wendat/ Huron were the "uncles" of the Western Confederacy and often served as speakers in council, but were also the keepers of the council fire, and thus, keepers of the wampum belts that concerned the Western Confederacy.

to strengthen the Ancient Chain of Friendship [emphasis added] A
Belt.⁴⁵⁶

On behalf of the Western Confederacy, the unidentified Wendat Chief accepted that the “Ancient Chain of Friendship” had been renewed and strengthened while reminding Croghan that the Western Nations were united. Noteworthy is that fact that he did not address the English as ‘Father’ but as ‘Brethren,’ he continued:

Brethren: Yesterday you desired us to be strong and preserve the Chain of Friendship free from rust, Brethren look on this Friendship Belt where we have the Six Nations and you by the hand; this Belt was delivered us by our Brethren the English & the Six Nations when first you came over the great Water, that we might go & pass to Trade where we pleased & you likewise with us, this Belt we preserve that our Children unborn may know.⁴⁵⁷

The Wendat speaker reminded Croghan that there already was a pre-existing relationship and showed him the belt to prove it. The belt was specifically tied to trade with each other though. Philosopher Bruce Morito (2012) noted that the origin story of the Covenant Chain made use of an evolution from a rope to an iron chain and finally to a silver chain of friendship; Morito equated the chain’s material with the level of ‘friendship,’

Origin narratives almost always include a description of growth and transformation (e.g. from a rope to an iron chain to a silver chain). These descriptions represent the Covenant Chain’s evolutionary character. Members viewed the Chain as having evolved from purely economic trading arrangement into a military alliance and political arrangement. Utility had been the principal motive for initiating the relationship (symbolized by a rope and articulated in the phrase “finding one another useful”). At the same time, origin stories also mention that the relationship transformed into something considerably more robust... despite its utilitarian basis, the partnership had evolved into a conflict resolution forum characterized by justice, familial loyalty, fairness, and lawfulness, and parties drew attention to this evolution when they emphasized that the relationship was no longer bound by a rope or even an iron chain but by a silver chain.⁴⁵⁸

This belt the Wendat chief referred to likely had three men holding hands on it representing each nation which could be read as representing alliance but the chief

⁴⁵⁶ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 118.

⁴⁵⁷ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

⁴⁵⁸ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 27.

specifically stated that the belt represented a trading relationship between the British, Six Nations and Western Confederacy with free passage between countries. The Wendat chief, on behalf of the Western Confederacy, wanted to take a step back and ensure that the fair trade was re-established in their country. The Chief also stated “we hope *you* [emphasis added] will continue to strengthen the Ancient Chain of Friendship.”⁴⁵⁹ The chief placed the onus on the British to strengthen the chain and told them how they could do so, which was re-establishing fair trade. In case the chief was being too subtle, he decided to be forthright and stated, “Brethren: We heard what you said yesterday it was all good but we expected [...] that you would have settled the prices of goods that we might have them cheaper from you than we had from the French as you have often told us.”⁴⁶⁰ And if his words were not enough, the chief even delivered a wampum belt from the warriors “to request of you to be strong” on behalf of the women and children for the purpose of having goods cheap. Next the Wendat chief pointed out that they recognized a new era was dawning and that the diplomatic forms that had been utilized thus far had to be re-instated with the young men. This was an oft used statement in council to urge colonial officers to have patience.⁴⁶¹ “Brethren you have renewed the Old Friendship yesterday, the Ancient Chain is now become bright, it is new to our young Men, and Brethren we now take a faster hold of it than ever we had & hope it may be preserved free from rust to our posterity.”⁴⁶² The Wendat then delivered a wampum belt of 9 rows.

Shortly after this conference, the commanding officer at Detroit, Captain Donald Campbell remarked that he would “have a great trouble in that [Indian] Department,” noting that the French dealt with and treated the Anishinaabeg in a different manner. He noted that the four nations, Odaawaa, Potowatomi, Ojibwe and Wendat, living around

⁴⁵⁹ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

⁴⁶⁰ Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

⁴⁶¹ Earlier in the council the speaker actually said “We are like a lost People, as we have lost many of our principal Men, & we hope you will excuse us if we should make any Mistakes,” Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

⁴⁶² Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

Detroit visited the commanding officer often and asked for provisions, presents and rum, he ruefully noted “I have nothing to give them.”⁴⁶³

The conference at Detroit was also attended by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rogers, who was ordered to proceed to Michilimackinac, take command of that fort, and remove the French garrison. During the month of December, with many Anishinaabeg in attendance, a delegation of Ojibwe from Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Superior showed up to meet with the commanding officer. Captain Campbell noted, “The Indians here are in great distress for want of Ammunition. I have had two of the Tribes that depend on Michilimackinac that come at a great distance – they were absolutely starving, their whole subsistence depends on it [provision of ammunition].”⁴⁶⁴ Under these dire circumstances, Robert Rogers met with and executed a treaty with these Ojibwe chiefs for land along the south shore of Lake Superior, between the Ontonagon and Copper Rivers on 23 December 1760. These Ojibwe from Lake Superior had come to Detroit accompanied by Jean-Baptiste Cadot, an influential French fur trader who married an Ojibwe woman.⁴⁶⁵ Other chiefs who signed the deed were Kecke bahkonce, Ogemawwas, Nawkusich, Moyettueyea.⁴⁶⁶ These chiefs gave Rogers a wampum belt confirming the transaction.⁴⁶⁷ On the same day Rogers entered into another agreement but with chiefs from Sault Ste. Marie area. The deed was for a track of land on both sides of the St. Mary’s river. The document is difficult to read but the signatory chiefs appear to be Kacbeach “Chief of the falls of St. Mary”, a second signature is illegible but written beside his mark is “Chief of the warriors”; this name is followed by MusquawKesick and

⁴⁶³ Captain Donald Campbell to Colonel Henry Bouquet, 11 December 1760. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. *Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, ed. by M. Agnes Berton (1911), 48.

⁴⁶⁴ Captain Donald Campbell to Colonel Henry Bouquet, 23 December 1760. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. *Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, ed. by M. Agnes Berton (1911), 50.

⁴⁶⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 65-6.

⁴⁶⁶ Written as Kecke bahkonce but the ‘kecke’ is ‘keche’ - “gichi-” meaning large or great but the “bahkonce” is incomprehensible as written. Gichi-bashkoon (still meaningless but Gichi-bizhikiins would be great calf); Ogemawwas is likely Ogimaans ‘Little Chief’, Nawkusich is likely NawKeesick - Naawgiizhig ‘Middle of the sky’, Moyettueyea is incomprehensible as written. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 255.

⁴⁶⁷ Wampum belt is kept at Detroit Historical Society, Detroit, Michigan.

kenoshe.⁴⁶⁸ The arrival of these Lake Superior and Sault Ste. Marie chiefs at Detroit to gather information demonstrates the distances that the chiefs traveled but also reveals that the Anishinaabeg may not have been as isolated as popularly portrayed and thus it is conceivable that a representative from the north may have been at various Detroit councils.

After taking over the Fort Detroit in 1760, the Commanding officer, Captain Campbell, was not outfitted with enough supplies to deliver presents to the various chiefs, and in fact, his commanding officer General Amherst actively dissuaded him from doing so. Campbell realized however, that if he was to live peaceably with the surrounding Indians, he would have to deliver presents because it was part of their protocol. Captain Campbell, and other officers stationed at various forts in the *pays d'en haut*, were put in a difficult situation because they had not been given orders by General Amherst to deliver presents, especially larger ones, to the chiefs and warriors. The delivery of presents adhered to Anishinaabe protocol, built trust and solidified good faith between the British and the Anishinaabeg. Not adhering to the long-standing custom, the British raised suspicions and actually diminished trust.⁴⁶⁹ This trust was further diminished when the Anishinaabeg witnessed the show of British force that came to garrison the outposts. Captain Campbell at Detroit wrote to Colonel Bouquet, thanking him for providing some necessaries, "I can never too much acknowledge your attention to the support of this Post, you have sent me what was most wanted." Campbell informed Bouquet that he was compelled to give a large quantity of powder to the Western Indians visiting the post. He noted that it was the custom to wait on the commandant for a present of ammunition and provisions, and that "it would not be prudent in me to deviate from it in my present situation... I assure you I am much put to it how to behave in Indian affairs, as I have no orders on that Head... I wish the Indian Trade was put on good footing, they complain of our prices and that we do not take all their Pelletries [sic] from

⁴⁶⁸ Musquawkesick is likely Miskwaa-giizhig 'Red Sky', kenoshe is like ginoozhe 'Pike' and Kacbeach, Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 258.

⁴⁶⁹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 67.

them.”⁴⁷⁰ Captain Campbell experienced increased trepidation and in late June [1761], summoned the leaders from the Detroit villages and the Seneca deputies for a council in an effort to allay his suspicions but also to serve a warning to the chiefs and warriors. He told those assembled that he suspected that they held ill intentions. Campbell believed that the unrest was localized to Detroit and that he could contain it by keeping the Detroit area chiefs and warriors loyal but worried that the Mississauga Anishinaabe would “secure all the Northern Nations who are entirely influenced by the Nations here.”⁴⁷¹

Stability and peace required that trust be established between the Western Nations and the British. Denying provisions and ammunition did not build a relationship of trust. Orders from Amherst to discontinue the delivery of presents made life precarious for those in the field. Amherst wanted to incorporate, what he understood to be Britain’s new territory, into the empire by imposing terms of peace for the establishment of a fair fur trade wherein the Anishinaabeg and other Aboriginal people could earn their living by trade, not by presents. However, officers stationed at the posts in the *pays d’en haut* lived a different reality and some purchased presents from area traders and delivered them to the chiefs and warriors, much to Amherst’s consternation and disapproval. The work of establishing peaceful relations by the British officers at the posts was undermined by Amherst’s policies and views.⁴⁷² Regarding the policy and practice of giving presents, Amherst wrote to Johnson on 9 August 1761,

You are sensible how averse I am, to purchasing the good behaviour of Indians, by presents, the more they get the more they ask, and yet are never satisfied; wherefore, a Trade is now opened for them, and that you will put it under such Regulations, as to prevent their being imposed upon, I think it much better to avoid all presents in future, since that will oblige them to supply themselves by barter, and of Course keep them more constantly employed, by means of which they will have less time to concert, or carry into execution any Schemes prejudicial to his Majesty’s Interest; and to abolish entirely every kind of Apprehension on that account, the keeping them scarce of ammunition is not less

⁴⁷⁰ Captain Donald Campbell to Colonel Henry Bouquet, 21 May 1761. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. *Historical Collections*, Vol. XIX, ed. by M. Agnes Berton (1911), 67-8.

⁴⁷¹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 69.

⁴⁷² Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 60.

to be recommended; Since nothing can be so impolitick as to furnish them with the means of accomplishing the evil which is so dreaded.⁴⁷³

Amherst was incapable of building the necessary mutual trust because he did not trust the “Indians” nor the French. Furthermore, Amherst had a low opinion of Aboriginal people. He thought they were lazy, untrustworthy and insatiable. Amherst summed up his views by stating that “without Our Assistance they must all Starve.”⁴⁷⁴ Historian Keith Widder succinctly stated that,

Amherst’s attitude seems to have been that Native people should be thankful for being conquered and then spared by the British, who then were willing to trade with them. The Indians, however, understood the stoppage of gifts as a sign that Britain considered them to be a conquered people – a notion they rejected. The lack of presents threatened the Indians’ place in the social and political order of the *pays d’en haut*.⁴⁷⁵

Amherst’s views were based upon his erroneous belief that the Western Nations had been conquered along with their French allies. Ironically, Sir William Johnson and George Croghan held that the Indians had not been conquered and they recommended a policy informed by the ‘French manner’ of dealing with ‘Indians’, that is to say delivering presents.⁴⁷⁶ George Croghan explained in an undated letter to Sir William Johnson that the French had delivered ample presents to the Nations and:

never sent them away empty, which will make it difficult & troublesome to the Gentlemen that are to command in their Country for some time, to please them & preserve Peace, as they are a rash inconsiderate People and don’t look on themselves under any obligations to us, but rather think **we are obliged to them for letting us reside in their Country** (emphasis added). As far as I can judge of their Sentiments by the several Conversations I have had with them, they will expect some satisfaction made them by Us, for any Posts that should be established in their Country for Trade.⁴⁷⁷

Although Amherst viewed the presents as “emblematic of the problems with existing relationships with the Indians,”⁴⁷⁸ he was blinded to the fact that Croghan had understood,

⁴⁷³ Amherst quoted in Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 104.

⁴⁷⁴ Dowd, *War Under Heaven*, 73.

⁴⁷⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 104.

⁴⁷⁶ R. White, *The Middle Ground*, 258.

⁴⁷⁷ Croghan to Johnson undated in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 172.

⁴⁷⁸ R. White, *The Middle Ground*, 257.

namely, that the presents were a form of rent. Refusing to pay the rent was going to have consequences.

Sir William Johnson wrote to the Board of Trade and stated that the French had won over the Indians through “an infinity of presents” and that the Western Nations were accustomed to receiving presents as tribute for sharing their land. Johnson informed the board that if the presents were cut off or severely diminished in quantity, “doubts and suspicions” would plague the minds of the Western and Six Nations.⁴⁷⁹ Johnson then stated that there were “necessary expenses” to maintain but it would be better to gradually wean the Indians from presents over time. Johnson confidently stated to the Board that if the post commanders adhered to his regulations, the trade would prosper, and as such would show that the British were living up to their word by caring for the Natives’ interest. Johnson stressed the importance of assuring the Indians “that His Majesty intended to do them justice regarding their lands.”⁴⁸⁰ Johnson feared that if the presents were cut off too soon, the land settled too quickly, the Natives would think that the British were trying to diminish their standing in their own land, which would unnecessarily provoke the Nations to violence.

Captain Campbell, commander at Detroit, had already detected simmering hostile intentions at Detroit. He also was wary that the feeling could spread north because he thought the ‘Northern Nations were entirely influenced’ by the nations living around Detroit. The chiefs and warriors around Detroit did have an influential role on the chiefs and warriors of the north and frequently parlayed information and strategy to them but the northern people were their own masters. This network of shared goals and shared channels of information between the Anishinaabeg of Detroit and the Anishinaabeg of Lake Superior had its parallel with the fur trade as well as the British army. Flow of commands and directives were passed from colonial officials at Niagara to colonial officials at Detroit, then to the outposts. The key difference between these parallel channels of information (Anishinaabe and colonial) was that the Northern Anishinaabeg

⁴⁷⁹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 106.

⁴⁸⁰ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 106.

were not answerable to the Detroit Anishinaabeg but the Michilimackinac commander reported to the commander at Detroit.⁴⁸¹

Sir William Johnson decided that it would be good policy to re-enforce the peace treaty entered into by his deputy Croghan at Detroit in 1760; he therefore set out to meet the nations of Detroit. Johnson had also started to hear rumours that the Western Nations were colluding to strike the English and thought a show of force might quell such intentions, if that were ineffective, at least he would be able to collect information firsthand. The council was convened on 9 September 1761 with Deputy Superintendent George Croghan and Captain Balfour of Gage's regiment present as well as representatives of the "Wiandots [Wyandot, Wendat], Saguenays [Saginaws], Ottawas [Odaawaa], Chipeweighs [Ojibwe], Powtowatamis [Potawatomi], Kickaposs, Twightwees, Delawares, Shawanise [Shawnee], Mohicons, Mohocks [Mohawks], Oneidas & Senecas."⁴⁸² Sir William started by conducting the condolence ceremony, wiping away the tears and clearing the throats of the assembled chiefs. He informed the chiefs that he was appointed by the King himself to be the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the northern district. Sir William then stated that he was instructed to:

to light up a large Council Fire at my house in the Mohocks [sic] country for all Nations of Indians in amity with his subjects, or who were inclined to put themselves under his royal protection to come thereto and receive the benefit thereof. This fire yields such a friendly warmth that many Nations have since assembled thereto, and daily partake of its influence. I have therefore now brought a brand thereof with me to this place with which I here kindle up a large Council fire made of such Wood as shall burn bright and be unextinguishable, whose kindly warmth shall be felt in, and shall extend to the most remote Nations and shall induce all Indians even from the setting of the sun to come hither and partake thereof.

*Gave a belt of nine rows*⁴⁸³

Lighting the council fire was a solemn act and lighting the fire on behalf of the King with a brand from an existing fire was an important gesture for diplomatic relations because the council fire then represented continuity and conformity with an existing

⁴⁸¹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, xxvii.

⁴⁸² Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁴⁸³ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

official diplomatic centre. Philosopher Morito noted of the initial council fires that “origin stories were recorded as far back as 1691 (probably earlier) at Albany, one of two council fires. The other was at Onondaga. Council fires were official places where treaties were negotiated and conflicts handled.”⁴⁸⁴ By igniting a fire at Detroit (then a council fire of the French King and the Western Nations), Sir William was signifying the official transformation of Fort Detroit from a centre of commerce to a place where they could “polish the chain,” that is air grievances, settle disputes, and enter into treaty negotiations. The council fire served as a beacon, a light to dispel darkness, and a flame to warm up. The inextinguishable council fire was also a reference to the place where the presents were distributed, so literally, the ‘warmth’ around the council fire was also a reference to the cloth, blankets and rum that warmed the people who came to partake.⁴⁸⁵

Next Sir William Johnson informed the Western Nations gathered at Detroit that “His Excellency General Amherst is well pleased to hear of your friendly behaviour toward His Majesty’s troops at their taking possession of th[is] place last year” which was not a total lie but also not the whole truth.⁴⁸⁶ However, Sir William then reminded those assembled that they had made promises “of becoming our friends and allies and of **renewing the old Covenant Chain** [emphasis added] at the meeting then held here in presence of Mr. Croghan my Deputy.”⁴⁸⁷ Sir William then offered to brighten and strengthen the chain by delivering another one:

Brethren - With this belt, in the name of his Britannick Majesty, I strengthen & renew the antient [sic] Covenant Chain formerly [ex]isting between us that it may remain bright and lasting to the latest ages, earnestly recommending it to you to do the same and to hold fast thereby as the only means by which you may expect

⁴⁸⁴ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 27.

⁴⁸⁵ In 1818 at a council on Drummond Island, Odaawaa Ocaitau (Okedaa), held the 1764 wampum belt in his hands and recalled the words of Sir William Johnson, “I will call you my children, will send warmth (presents) to your Country, and your families shall never be in want,” the secretary wrote down turns of phrases and then provided the meaning in brackets. In this case ‘warmth’ was a reference to presents. Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818. LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C- 11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

⁴⁸⁶ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁴⁸⁷ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

to become happy & flourishing people. *Gave the Belt of the
Covenant Chain containing 20 rows*⁴⁸⁸

There is no description of what this belt looks like, whether it took the form of the belt in image 1 (Mohawk British Chain) or image 2 (Delaware-Penn Belt) nor is there any information of its fate. Next Sir William stated that on behalf of General Amherst he was there to offer clemency to those who had joined the French in fighting against the British. He also informed the chiefs and warriors that the King and his representatives would promote an “extensive plentiful commerce on the most equitable terms” if they entered “into an offensive and defensive alliance with the British Crown.”⁴⁸⁹ Johnson also claimed that he was charged but also inclined to serve the Western Nations and that he would work to promote their interest and welfare. One of the metaphors of promoting interest and welfare was “smoothing the road.” Johnson told the assembled chiefs that “I do by this belt of wampum [9 rows] offer my assistance to make the road of peace even, broad, and easy for travelling as far as the setting of the sun.” Lastly and perhaps most importantly Johnson had stated,

Brethren - I can with confidence assure you that it is not at present, neither hath it been his Majesty's intentions to deprive any Nations of Indians of their just property by taking possession of any lands to which they have a lawfull [sic] claim, farther than for the better promoting of an extensive commerce for the security and protection of which, (and for the occupying of such [post] as have been surrendered to us by the Capitulation of Canada) troops are now on their way. I therefore expect that you will consider and treat them as Brethren and continue to live on terms of the strictest friendship with them and as I now declare these, his Majesty's favourable intention to do you justice. I expect in return that nothing shall on your part be wanting to testify the just sense which you all conceive of his Majesty's favour and of your earnest desire to live with the British subjects on the terms of friendship and alliance. *Gave a belt of 7 rows*⁴⁹⁰

Just like Croghan the year before, Johnson assured the Western Nations that the British were not there to deprive them of their land. Recall that the previous year at Detroit, Croghan had stated that he assured the nations that they would be “protected in

⁴⁸⁸ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁴⁸⁹ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁴⁹⁰ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

the peaceable possession of their hunting country.”⁴⁹¹ The following day the chiefs responded to Sir William Johnson. The Wendat Chief Anáíása expressed the Western Nations thankfulness for “the council fire which you have kindled at this place,” and he promised that “it shall be our constant study to renew and keep it continually up so that we may always partake thereof.” He continued, “Brother – We thank you for renewing the old Covenant Chain subsisting between our ancestors and yours, and we on our part heartily concur with you therein and with this belt we now renew and strengthen it and shall hold fast by it forever.”⁴⁹² Chief Anáíása also pointed out that the union secured with the “strong chain” would be manifested in “plenty of goods and that at a cheaper rate.” Again, the Western Chiefs pointed out that they required better terms for the trade. On behalf of the Western Nations, Chief Anáíása addressed the issue of ownership of land:

Brother – It gives us great satisfaction to hear that the King has no intention to deprive us of our Lands (of which we were once very apprehensive) and as to the troops who are now going to distant posts, we are well pleased therewith and hope they will look upon and treat us as Brethren in which light they shall always be esteemed by us, as we are determined to live on the best terms with them. *A belt*⁴⁹³

In 1760 George Croghan had told a delegation of Western Chiefs that their lands were safe, and he sealed that statement with wampum. Once again, a representative of the Crown, a higher ranking official than Croghan, assured the Western Chiefs of the possession of their land. Sir William had also sealed these words with wampum. The chiefs of the Western Nations then told the representatives of the Crown that they were glad to hear that the King was not going to “deprive” them of their lands.

After this 1761 Detroit Treaty, Captain Balfour was sent to Fort Michilimackinac to hold a council with the assembled chiefs and warriors. His dual purpose appears to have been to take over the fort and establish the fur trade with British traders instead of the French traders. He decided, much like General Amherst, that the best way to

⁴⁹¹ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 105.

⁴⁹² Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁴⁹³ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

accomplish this was through a show of force. He was also ordered by Johnson to promote the Covenant Chain as the framework for diplomacy and peace. The council was on 29 September 1761 and in attendance were the Ojibwe and Odaawaa from the surrounding environs, specifically including those of Sault Ste. Marie and L'Arbre Croche. Two chiefs were listed - "Quieouigoushkam" (Kewaykishgum, Kewigushum), a chief from L'Arbre Croche, and "Kipimisaming, a Delaware who lived with and acted as spokesman for the Ojibwe at Sault Ste. Marie, and men from their villages."⁴⁹⁴ Balfour welcomed the chiefs and then started his speech by scolding them for joining the French in taking up arms against the British. Balfour then conducted the condolence ceremony using strings of wampum to bury the bones of those killed during the war. He, too, like Johnson earlier in the month at Detroit, "lighted a 'fire of peace, friendship, & Concord,' to serve as a symbol that the road to 'peace & good friendship' was open to all 'Nations of Indians' coming under 'it's influence.'" Similarly, Balfour then held up a wampum belt and presented it to the Ojibwe and Odaawaa "to renew ancient 'Treatys of peace and alliance,' or the Covenant Chain." He explained that Johnson had recently renewed the agreements and understandings of the Covenant Chain with "your Chiefs, or their Deputys at Detroit and at Niagara." Balfour concluded by assertively stating that "British arms had conquered the French and become 'Masters of the Dominions of the King of France in Canada.'"⁴⁹⁵ This statement contradicts those made by Croghan and Johnson at Detroit, both of whom had stated that the Western Nations were to retain their country, with Johnson elaborating and stating that the British King only wanted the posts.

The Odaawaa speaker Quieouigoushkam deferred a positive or negative response and stated that the majority of his chiefs had left for the hunt and that he did not have the authority to enter into negotiations and therefore left the 'Belt of Alliance' with the Ojibwe.⁴⁹⁶ This demonstrates that the chiefs were deputized to listen to the "news" from colonial officials at the council fire, the chiefs were also deputized to deliver pre-approved messages on behalf of their people but they were not authorized to make a decision without first consulting the rest of their band and fellow chiefs. This type of

⁴⁹⁴ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 82.

⁴⁹⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 82.

⁴⁹⁶ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 83.

consensus decision making was utilized by the Anishinaabeg and it frustrated colonial officials who wanted to deal with one man and get a prompt answer.

At this same council, the Delaware Chief Kipimisaming then rose to reply on behalf of the Ojibwe. First, he thanked Balfour for covering the graves of their dead and igniting the council fire. Kipimisaming lamented that the Ojibwe had lost so many of their wise people and their chiefs but he took the opportunity to warn Balfour that some of the young people were foolish and were “likely to ‘commit some follys, and strike you.’”⁴⁹⁷ Captain Balfour then re-issued his stern warning to the assembled chiefs, urging them not to attempt to strike the British for it would lead to their destruction.

The British Indian Department maintained intelligence and continuously heard rumours of a potential outbreak of violence. As the garrisons changed from French to British, and the British army stationed more soldiers at the outposts, the Western Nations grew suspicious again. Sir William Johnson wrote to the Board of Trade in August 1762 and laid out the long-term strategy of his Indian policy. He remarked that the Six Nations and the Western Nations, had an increased suspicion and jealousy of the British due to their growing power and population. Johnson “advised that the British take ‘quiet possession of our distant posts,’ and increase ‘settlements on the back parts of the Country.’ In a few years ‘a well Setled [sic] Frontier’ would be strong enough to resist Indian hostilities.”⁴⁹⁸ In the meantime, Sir William sent another emissary to collect more information from the northern outposts.

That summer, Lieutenant Thomas Hutchins, was sent to explore the outposts in the *pays d'en haut* and gather as much information as possible. A council was convened on 4 June 1762 at Michilimackinac which was attended by “eighty Odawa and sixty Ojibwe,” the emissary explained that Johnson had sent him to visit the posts, merely to show that he was living up to his promise to ensure their welfare and happiness. The Odaawaa and Ojibwe met with the emissary and after he delivered his speech he gave a wampum belt to the chiefs but did not give them any presents or rum. The next day the Odaawaa expressed their gratitude that Sir William had sent Hutchins and further they

⁴⁹⁷ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 83.

⁴⁹⁸ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 96.

stated that Johnson's words at Detroit last September had proved to be truthful.⁴⁹⁹ The Odaawaa speaker assured Hutchins he should disregard "any bad reports Concerning us... we have no evil in our Hearts against the English but are entirely reconciled to them and will do all in our Power to advise our Young People to behave well."⁵⁰⁰ Hutchins did not provide a present at the conclusion of the council and the gathered chiefs and warriors expressed their disappointment to the interpreter. The British were saying the right things, but their words were not backed up with actions, specifically delivering presents to the owners of the land.

West of Michilimackinac, at La Baye,⁵⁰¹ British officer Lieutenant Gorrell likewise faced the dilemma of having no presents, provisions or ammunition to give to the chiefs and warriors of the area Western Nations. Lieutenant Gorrell met with the chiefs on May 23, 1762 and delivered a speech that utilized much of the same precepts and phrases that Sir William utilized. He too, like Balfour, scolded the chiefs for joining French against the British. Gorrell had procured enough wampum from the traders and made belts in order to perform the condolence ceremony. He used the wampum belts to "wipe away all the Blood that was spilled and bury all the bones of your Brethren that remain unburied in the face of the earth," and used the belts "to open a Passage" to their hearts to "speak honestly."⁵⁰² Gorrell, like Balfour, stated that:

I also light a Fire of pure Friendship, and Concord in order to afford a sweet and agreeable Heat to all those who approach the same, and for all Indian nations that are willing to partake of its influence, and come within its Reach; and that nothing may prevent their coming to it, I clear a great Road from the Rising to the Setting of the Sun, and remove all Obstructions so as all Nations with Freedom and Safety may travel to it.⁵⁰³

The British, through its commanding officials and their Indian agents, had lit council fires at Detroit, Michilimackinac, La Baye and St. Josephs, in addition to the

⁴⁹⁹ This response by the Odaawaa proves that the Odaawaa of Michilimackinac at least heard about the proceedings of the council at Detroit, if not proving their attendance.

⁵⁰⁰ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 112.

⁵⁰¹ Present-day Green Bay, Wisconsin.

⁵⁰² James Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus" 1761 October 12 to 1763 August 13, Thomas Gage Papers, AS 138:4, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

⁵⁰³ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

council fires already in existence (Fort Niagara, Fort Pitt and Johnson's house). The British had also figuratively cleared a road from the 'rising of the sun to its setting.' Gorrell also stated to the chiefs and warriors that if they were aggrieved and had "just complaints against" traders, they were to come to this fire to seek protection and justice.⁵⁰⁴ By taking hold of the 'ancient chain of friendship' and, "by their good Behaviour" the chiefs and warriors made "themselves worthy of his Royal Bounty and favour."⁵⁰⁵ These are the same elements that Sir William Johnson and George Croghan had been using to conduct business. In this manner the British had spread the Covenant Chain right across the great lakes to as many Native nations as they could. Lieutenant Gorrell then "presented more belts to renew ancient treaties made between the English and the Indians' ancestors and recently reconfirmed by their 'neighbouring Chiefs at Niagara and Detroit.'"⁵⁰⁶

Lieutenant Gorrell also utilized the same phrase that Balfour had used, when he stated that Great Britain had defeated France, and thus all Canada had been "ceded to the English King my Master and your Father."⁵⁰⁷ Despite the fact that the Western Nations had not yet adopted the British King as father, nor did they acknowledge that the French could cede the land to the British, the Menominee chief responded and said they "would partake with pleasure of the Influence of the pure Fire of Friendship I had lighted for them, as there was so good a Road to it."⁵⁰⁸

While the British army and Indian Affairs officials toured around the Great Lakes visiting outposts and igniting council fires, the Odaawaa Chief Pontiac had started fires of his own. In the summer of 1762 there was a secret council that was held in the Odaawaa village south of Detroit. Widder stated that "the significance of this conference was not in the substance of the secret deliberations, but in the number of nations touched by it... the conference connected Indians from Michilimackinac, Detroit, the Wabash country, and the Ohio country in a common purpose – how to break the yoke of British power that

⁵⁰⁴ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵⁰⁵ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵⁰⁶ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵⁰⁷ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵⁰⁸ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

was causing them so much grief.”⁵⁰⁹ Chiefs and war chiefs from the four principal villages at Detroit (Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi and Wendat) hosted the nations living beyond Michilimackinac around Lake Superior and La Baye. Those attending this secret meeting were then charged with disseminating the message to the Shawnee, Six Nations, Miami, Wea and Kickapoo.

One of the results of this initial meeting was that subsequent meetings had more representation, which was also a drawback due to the attention it drew. On April 27, 1763, the Odaawaa chief Pontiac told his version of the vision of the Delaware Prophet, Neolin, to 460 warriors and chiefs of various nations.⁵¹⁰ After this meeting war belts were sent out to various directions. On May 5, 1763, Pontiac sent a belt to the Saginaw Ojibwe, informing them of his intentions to take Fort Detroit and inviting them to join him. Another belt was sent to the Odaawaa at Michilimackinac, but they never received it, however, the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac knew of Pontiac’s intentions.⁵¹¹ Pontiac then laid siege upon Detroit while other allied groups took the offensive in their respective territories.

The story of the attack on Fort Michilimackinac is well known and often cited.⁵¹² On June 2, 1763, the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac, led by chief Minwewe, staged a game of lacrosse against the Sauk (Sac), who reportedly were not a part of the plot to gain entry into the fort. As the game intensified, more soldiers left the fort to watch the game, when all of a sudden the ball was thrown into the fort. Pretending that it was part of the game, the players ran in to retrieve the ball but on their way in they were outfitted with weapons by women who were stationed at the entrance. The battle was quick, 21 British soldiers were killed, and 17 more were held captive, including Captain Etherington.⁵¹³ The Odaawaa surrounding Michilimackinac were kept in the dark about this plan. William Warren later reported from his sources that the Ojibwe thought that the Odaawaa were

⁵⁰⁹ Reportedly “two Frenchmen dressed as Indians accompanied the Lake Superior Indians.” Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 101.

⁵¹⁰ David Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again: Pontiac’s Uprising and the Fate of the British Empire in North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 106.

⁵¹¹ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 139.

⁵¹² Dowd, *War Under Heaven*, 93.

⁵¹³ Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again*, 122.

too closely attached to the English and suspected that they might tell the British of the impending attack.⁵¹⁴ Their suspicions were well founded, grandson of the L'Arbre Croche Odaawaa Chief Nisawakwat, Charles Langlade told Captain Etherington, commanding officer at Michilimackinac that the Anishinaabeg were planning an attack. Etherington, however, had just finished a council with area chiefs and was confident that their pledge of peace was going to stand.⁵¹⁵ Ojibwe Chief Minwewe, who played a large part in the taking of the fort, also reported later that he had told very few of his own people for fear that the word would get out. Secrecy was of paramount importance to the endeavor, but it had a drawback – other people were not informed and thus not on board.

Once the Odaawaa of L'Arbre Croche had heard the news of the capture of the fort they sent scouts to determine what had happened. The scouts returned, reported that the Ojibwe had captured the fort and the commanding officer. A party of Odaawaa warriors set out to the fort the next day and took the prisoners from the Ojibwe, including Captain Etherington, for themselves to ransom at Montreal.⁵¹⁶ Etherington convinced the Odaawaa to send a message to Captain Gorrell at La Baye. Once Gorrell heard the news, he immediately summoned a council with the Menominee. He informed the Menominee that their enemies, the Ojibwe, had taken over Fort Michilimackinac and that he required their assistance in re-taking the fort. He delivered wampum to the chiefs and they readily agreed since two of their men had recently been killed by Ojibwe from that area.⁵¹⁷ Lieutenant Gorrell's diplomacy and gift giving, or rather his disobedience to Amherst's instructions, had placed him and his fellow British officers in a stronger position because he could call upon the assistance of the Nations around Green Bay (La Baye), which he did. He summoned another council with the Sac, Fox, Ho-Chunk and Menominee on June 19 securing their alliance and participation to travel to Michilimackinac.⁵¹⁸ Gorrell left La Baye on 21 June 1763 with sixteen rank and file, joined by 90 men from Sac, Fox, Ho-Chunk and Menominee.

⁵¹⁴ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 137.

⁵¹⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 137.

⁵¹⁶ Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again*, 122; Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 141.

⁵¹⁷ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 153.

⁵¹⁸ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

On 29 June 1763 Gorrell and his party were met by an Odaawaa courier bearing four peace pipes and a letter from Etherington. After smoking the pipes, the party set out the following morning to L'Arbre Croche where they were greeted by a *feu de joie* and were then presented with nine peace pipes.⁵¹⁹ The chiefs and warriors from La Baye then met with the Odaawaa of L'Arbre Croche and the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac. The following week was spent in deliberations and finally all came to an agreement but Gorrell and Etherington were not privy to the council, they had to watch from the sidelines in a passive role supplying provisions, gifts and wampum.⁵²⁰ This episode again demonstrated that the Western Nations could and did settle matters amongst themselves. They did not always need a 'father' to mediate disputes. At this council the nations of La Baye had renewed their alliance with the Odaawaa of L'Arbre Croche by delivering wampum, in turn the Odaawaa reciprocated by giving wampum and a gift of powder and other goods.⁵²¹

At the completion of the negotiations amongst the Menominee, Ho-Chunk, Sac, Fox, Odaawaa and Michilimackinac Ojibwe, the Ojibwe were sent to Captain Etherington's tent on July 13 and presented their case. The Ojibwe stated to Etherington that it was not because of the Odaawaa that he and the remainder of his troops survived, rather they said, "but it was on Accot [sic] of the Indians that came from La Bay [...] with their pipes full Tobacco for them to smook [sic] and that they were well under Arms Ready to fire upon us they were Oblidged to Lay down their Arms on accot of an Old Alliance Between them they Likewise said although It was not them that struke [sic] it was their own Nation that first begun the War at De Troit and Encouraged them to do the same."⁵²² Once again, the primacy of the pipe, tobacco and wampum was on display. The British already knew the power of these instruments yet General Amherst continued to collect these items as curiosities.⁵²³

⁵¹⁹ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵²⁰ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 159.

⁵²¹ Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵²² Gorrell, "Journal of Events at Fort Edward Augustus."

⁵²³ Ruth B. Phillips, "Reading and Writing between the Lines: Soldiers, Curiosities, and Indigenous Art Histories" *Winterthur Portfolio* 45: 2/3 (Summer/ Autumn 2011: 107-24), 111.

The Odaawaa then took the prisoners to General Gage in Montreal. Some of these chiefs, namely Negominey (Egominey) would proceed to the Treaty of Niagara in 1764 and be regaled and rewarded with presents and a medal.⁵²⁴ Captain Etherington made special mention that it was the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac who had acted on their own. He went out of his way to explain to General Gage that the Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie had not participated in the hostilities.⁵²⁵ The fact that the Captain and a few of his men were returned to the British went a long way to re-establishing trust between the British, the traders and the Western Nations, but much still remained to be done before trust was fully restored.⁵²⁶ The good will gesture of returning Captain Etherington and the surviving soldiers now had to be reciprocated by the British.

The situation in the *pays d'en haut* had boiled over into war and crown officials realized that a different approach was required to achieve peace. However, when General Amherst heard of the capture of Michilimackinac and other forts, he wrote to Gage on July 2, 1763 and stated “money must not be spared on such occasions, the just and villainous Behaviour of the Savages shall be punished as they deserve & I will make no peace with them till I have brought them to such a State, that they shall be afraid ever to think of making such another attempt.”⁵²⁷ At this point, while Amherst remained, there would be two trains of thought on how to settle matters, Amherst wanted war and Johnson favoured conciliation by presents. Historian Gregory Dowd noted that “The British colonial administration ... was not known for frequent and close consideration of American Indian affairs... but the final peace with France and the outbreak of Pontiac’s War in 1763 had made it clear that more regulation was needed, and both events encouraged the British Board of Trade to shift from casual review to fast action.”⁵²⁸ Similarly, Anishinaabe legal scholar John Borrows noted that “Often, both First Nations and settlers used crass power and force to confront these difficulties. The discontent caused by this conflict [Pontiac’s War] necessitated the formulation of principles to

⁵²⁴ Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 9.

⁵²⁵ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 162.

⁵²⁶ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 167.

⁵²⁷ Quoted in Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 175.

⁵²⁸ Dowd, *War Under Heaven*, 177.

mediate First Nation/ settler contention.”⁵²⁹ Both Borrows and Dowd point to the formulation and publication of the Royal Proclamation as the means by which the British Government wanted to curb the violence and restore, peace order and law. The Royal Proclamation was hastily drafted and sent to America to be implemented. The Proclamation arrived in North America in December 1763.⁵³⁰

In the meantime, Amherst was recalled and General Thomas Gage took over as Commander in Chief of the British forces. General Gage wanted to end the war and sought the advice of Sir William Johnson. Sir William recommended that they enter into a “Treaty of Offensive and Defensive Alliance” and listed specific principles that this treaty should embody, Johnson stressed that the Crown should “... assure them of a Free Fair & open trade, at the principal Posts, & a free intercourse, & passage into our Country, That we will make no Settlements or Encroachments contrary to Treaty, or without their permission. That we will bring to justice any persons who commit Robberys [sic] or Murders on them & that we will protect & aid them against their & our Enemys [sic] & duly observe our Engagements with them.”⁵³¹ After he advised General Gage what the treaty should contain, Johnson informed him how this treaty was to be delivered and effected:

At this Treaty wheresoever held we should tye [sic] them down (~~in the peace~~) according to their own forms of which they take the most notice, for Example by Exchanging a very large belt with some remarkable & intelligible figures thereon, Expressive of the occasion which should be always shewn at public Meetings, to remind them of their promises... The use of frequent Meetings with Indns [sic] is here pointed out, They want the use of letters, consequently they must frequently be reminded of their promises, & this custom they keep up strictly, amongst themselves, since the neglect of the one, will prove a breach of the other.⁵³²

Sir William Johnson had known, and had been telling the Western and Six Nations that the King did not want their land, just the posts. He had also heard the Western and Six Nations complain about the price of goods and that they wanted a fair

⁵²⁹ John Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara: The Royal Proclamation, Canadian Legal History, and Self-Government” in *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equity, and Respect for Difference*, ed. by Michael Asch, 155-72 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 159.

⁵³⁰ Dowd, *War Under Heaven*, 179.

⁵³¹ Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 328.

⁵³² Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 330.

and open trade. Lastly, based upon his interactions with chiefs of the Western Nations, Johnson realized that the Anishinaabeg were a proud independent people who did not view themselves as conquered or subjects of any King, and as such he had to adjust his negotiating strategy accordingly to account for this. Sir William Johnson, an expert cultural mediator, knew that the Western and Six Nations were not going to accept a piece of paper written in a language that they did not understand, he knew that a wampum belt was required. As a mediator, he knew that he had to meet the Nations halfway or on the “middle ground” if there were going to be a lasting peace based on trust and good faith.⁵³³

In the period after the capture of Fort Michilimackinac the whole area around Michilimackinac and Lake Superior remained in a state of distrust. Alexander Henry had escaped from the so-called “Massacre at Michilimackinac” with assistance from Charles Langlade, and his adopted brother Wawatam. However, remaining around Michilimackinac was dangerous. Eventually he scurried away from danger as a stowaway when Madame Cadotte and her entourage allowed him to board their canoe as they headed back to Sault Ste. Marie. While at Sault Ste. Marie, the Ojibwe chief Matchikewis came looking for Henry, intending to take him to Detroit as prisoner or kill him. Again, Henry was spared by the intercession of the Cadottes. Fortunately messengers arrived from Niagara with a wampum belt and a copy of the Royal Proclamation.⁵³⁴ A council was convened and the messenger addressed the chiefs and warriors,

My friends and brothers, I am come, with this belt, from our great father, Sir William Johnson. He desired me to come to you, as his ambassador, and tell you, that he is making a great feast at Fort Niagara; that his kettles are all ready, and his fires lit. He invites you to partake of the feast, in common with your friends the Six Nations, which have all made peace with the English. He advises you to seize this opportunity of doing the same, as you cannot otherwise fail of being destroyed; for the English are on their march, with a great army, which will be joined by different nations of Indians. In a word, before the fall of the leaf, they will be at Michilimackinac, and the Six Nations with them.⁵³⁵

⁵³³ R. White, *The Middle Ground*.

⁵³⁴ Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara,” 162.

⁵³⁵ Alexander Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada, and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776*, in two parts (New York: Riley, 1809), 165.

Henry wrote that this speech alarmed the chiefs and men of the Sault, but they decided to send 20 deputies to Niagara to meet with Sir William Johnson. Henry asked the chief (who he did not identify but was possibly Michael Cadotte who Henry said the Ojibwe regarded as a chief) if he could accompany the deputation, which was granted. After all that had happened and the ill feelings that persisted, the chiefs were still reticent to go down to Niagara. The chiefs decided to put the question to the spirit and they summoned a **jiisakiwi-nini** (shaking tent shaman).

After the **jiisakaan** (Shake tent) was set up and the requisite tobacco offered, the chief then asked the head spirit, **Mishiikenh** (Snapping Turtle) if the British were preparing for war against the Anishinaabeg and whether or not there were a large contingent of troops at Fort Niagara. **Mishiikenh** departed to seek the answer to the queries, he crossed Lake Huron, proceeded to Fort Niagara and seeing no great number of soldiers there, proceeded to Montreal, where he saw a great many boats filled with soldiers, “in number like the leaves of the trees.”⁵³⁶ These soldiers in the boats were coming to make war. The chief asked one more question, “If the Indians visit Sir William Johnson, will they be received as friends?” To which Mishiikenh replied, “Sir William Johnson will fill their canoes with presents; with blankets, kettles, guns, gun-powder and shot, and large barrels of rum, such as the stoutest of the Indians will not be able to lift; and every man will return in safety to his family.”⁵³⁷ The crowd around the **jiisakaan** (Shake Tent) clapped their hands and declared their intention to go to Niagara. Henry and a deputation of 16 Anishinaabeg left for Niagara on June 10, 1764.⁵³⁸

The following day Henry and his fellow travellers landed at the mouth of the Mississauga River on the north shore of Lake Huron where they were well received and enjoyed a feast. After the feast a council was held, and Henry was requested to “recommend the village the Sir William Johnson.”⁵³⁹ On June 14th the travellers arrived at the village on La Cloche island only to see that the majority of people had left for

⁵³⁶ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures*, 171.

⁵³⁷ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures*, 171.

⁵³⁸ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures*, 173.

⁵³⁹ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures*, 175.

Niagara. After a few more days, they reached Matchedash Bay⁵⁴⁰ and portaged en route to Lake Simcoe. Between Matchedash and Lake Couchiching they met with “several lodges of Indians containing only women and children, the men being gone to the council at Niagara.” After weeks of travel, the entourage finally came within sight of Fort Niagara but hesitated and decided not to go over until the next day, apparently still apprehensive. The next day they decided to cross the river to enter the fort but first “painted themselves with the most lively colours, in token of their own peaceable views, and after singing the song which is in use among them on going into danger, they embarked, and made for Point Missisaki, which is on the north side of the mouth of the river or strait of Niagara.”⁵⁴¹ Henry then proceeded to Fort Niagara and was greeted by Sir William Johnson.

Henry’s Ojibwe companions must have stayed on the West side of the Niagara River because on July the 31st, 1764 Sir William Johnson crossed the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their Camp and delivered the “great Covenant Chain, 23 Rows broad, & the Year 1764 worked upon it, worth above. £30.”⁵⁴²

Odaawaa Chief Pontiac had been compelled by the actions of the British, and inspired by the message of the Delaware Prophet Neolin, to gather chiefs and warriors in order to drive off “those dogs clothed in red.” Chief Pontiac assembled a sizable force of warriors from Detroit, Saginaw, the Thames and Grand River; a force composed of Odaawaa, Potowatomi, Ojibwe, Wendat, and Mississauga. Some have viewed his efforts as a tragic failure because he was unable to take Fort Detroit. However, through his and the efforts of many others, the British had to take notice and come to the negotiating table.

This chapter shifts from intertribal treaties to treaty relations with colonial entities. The French and British vied for the alliance of the Anishinaabeg and both colonial entities knew that they had to adhere to Anishinaabeg forms of diplomacy: wampum and calumet protocol. The Covenant Chain, initially formed between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch, became the foundational treaty between the British and

⁵⁴⁰ Also spelt as Matchedushk in historic documents.

⁵⁴¹ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures*, 181.

⁵⁴² Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 309-13.

the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations). The British later extended this treaty relationship to other First Nations in the Great Lakes area, specifically the Anishinaabeg (Odaawaa, Ojibwe and Potowatomi). In the next chapter, we will examine the roles played by specific chiefs in relation to the British.

Ch. 6: The Foundation of the Covenant Chain

Long term peace was established (which was not a foregone conclusion at the time) utilizing a long-standing treaty framework called the Covenant Chain, which is based upon mutual respect, reciprocity and good faith. The treaty was attended by representatives of the British Crown, specifically the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the northern district, and chiefs and warriors from [24] Nations with a reported total of up to 2000 Aboriginal people.⁵⁴³ To answer this multifaceted question, the origins of the Covenant Chain have to be further explicated.

The modern Haudenosaunee confederacy maintained an oral tradition of the Covenant Chain as it related to the Six Nations. They recall that the Mohawks had met the Dutch on the Hudson River and then made a pact with them to trade together and bind themselves together with strong cords of friendship. They found that their relationship was going well, and they decided that rope was not strong enough to reflect the nature of their relationship, so an iron chain of friendship was cast and used to bind the two together. At some point, the Dutch were replaced by the British nation, who assumed the responsibilities of the chain. The British and Haudenosaunee found that iron rusted easily, and if the chain rusted, it might just as easily break, plus it was not very valuable. They decided that a silver covenant chain should be cast and polished annually. The British then worked to extend this silver covenant chain of friendship to the Western Nations. In doing so, a multiplicity of terms arose that essentially meant the same but had differing contexts. Scholar Bruce Morito explains,

The terms *Covenant Chain*, *Silver Covenant Chain*, and *Chain of Friendship* refer roughly to the same type of treaty relationship, although distinctions can be drawn between the Silver Covenant Chain, which allied New York with the Six Nations, and the Covenant Chain or Chain of Friendship, which allied the colony of Pennsylvania with the Six Nations, the Delaware, and the Shawnee... Francis Jennings views the Pennsylvania Chain, for example, as completely separate from the Iroquois Covenant Chain. He refers to Governor Patrick Gordon's description of the Delaware-Crown relationship as a "Strong Chain of Friendship," whose

⁵⁴³ Louise P. Kellogg, *The British Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1935), 34.

beginning can be traced to 1682, when William Penn, founder of the colony, made a separate treaty with the Delaware.⁵⁴⁴

The above explanation reveals that the British or sects of British in America, extended the idea of the cord and/ or chain of friendship to different nations that they lived amongst. In fact, there are different examples of wampum belts that depict the chain of friendship. The first image is a belt currently housed at the Canadian Museum of History (refer to image 1). It was collected from the Mohawks.⁵⁴⁵ The two men holding the rope or chain are separated by a distance which is indicated by having both men stand at either end of the belt, this is a Haudenosaunee Covenant Chain belt. The next belt is one that is currently housed at the Philadelphia Museum of History at Atwater Kent and it depicts the Delaware-Crown relationship (refer to image 2).⁵⁴⁶ This image, of two men holding hands, would be used numerous times throughout the British “Indian” relationship. Of the two figures, one represented a “white man” and the other a “red man.” At a council in 1731 the Delaware were told that William Penn had declared that “his people and ye Indians should be the same” and so “he made a strong chain of Friendship with them which has been kept bright to this day.”⁵⁴⁷ Taking each other by the hand, linking arms, or holding a chain became synonymous with the Covenant Chain and the British used the motif on wampum belts multiple times up to the War of 1812.

⁵⁴⁴ Bruce Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect: The Covenant Chain and Aboriginal-Crown Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 18.

⁵⁴⁵ Great Lakes Research Alliance for the Study of Aboriginal Art and Culture (GRASAC) Database for Canadian Museum of History (formerly Canadian Museum of Civilization) III-I-35 lists that this belt was presented by Mr. Peter Hill collected by John Gibson, circa 1886, originated from Grand River, Ontario.
https://grasac.org/gks/gks_heritage_item.php?id=366.

⁵⁴⁶ This belt is currently housed at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collection at the Atwater Kent Museum of Philadelphia. The belt was donated by John Granville Penn in 1859 to the society. Upon donating the belt to the society, Penn stated, that the central figures “of an Indian grasping with the hand of friendship the hand of a man evidently intended to be represented in the European costume, wearing a hat... can only be interpreted as having reference to the treaty of peace and friendship.” Andrew Newman, *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists and the Media of History and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 124. Anthropologist F.G. Speck showed pictures of this belt to 2 Six Nations Chiefs and they noted that the ‘hat’ was actually a feather and represented the Native. Newman, *On Records*, 129.

⁵⁴⁷ Newman, *On Records*, 118.

Another image that became intimately and inextricably tied to the Covenant Chain was the image of a moored ship. The ship was filled with presents for Britain's allies. A succinct explanation of the relationship was orated by Chief Canasatego at the Treaty of Lancaster, in 1744:

We saw what sort of People they were, we were so pleased with them, that we tied their Ship to the Bushes on the Shore; and afterwards, liking them still better the longer they stayed with us, and thinking the Bushes to [sic] slender, we removed the rope, and tied it to the Trees; and as the Trees were liable to be blown down by high winds, or to decay of themselves, we from the Affection we bore them, again removed the Rope, and tied it to a strong and big Rock (*here the Interpreter said, They mean the Oneida country*) and not content with this, for its further Security, we removed the Rope to the big Mountain (*here the Interpreter says they mean the Onandago country*) and there we tied it very fast, and rolled Wampum about it; to make it still more secure, we stood upon the Wampum, and sat down upon it, to defend it, and to prevent any Hurt coming to it, and did our best Endeavors that it might remain uninjured for ever. During all this Time the New-comers, the *Dutch*, acknowledged our Right to the Lands, and solicited us, from Time to Time, to grant them parts of our Country, and to enter into League and Covenant with us, and to become one People with us.⁵⁴⁸

Similar to the previous mentioned evolution, in which the cord of friendship starts as a rope, then to iron, and finally to silver, likewise this cord goes through an evolution but not in material used but in distance and in places to which it is anchored. The more time lapsed and the more trust that was established between the Haudenosaunee and the newcomers, the closer they allowed the ship to be secured to. At first the ship is somewhat insecurely tied to bushes, then to a tree which was susceptible to rot and decay, the Haudenosaunee thought it best to secure the vessel to a “big rock” which is a metaphor for the Oneida country and the Oneida people. Thus, the Covenant Chain was extended from the Mohawk on the Hudson River to the Oneida. In the longhouse tradition, the Mohawks are the keepers of the eastern door of the confederacy. Second to them are the Oneida.⁵⁴⁹ Finally the rope was moved a “big mountain” meaning the

⁵⁴⁸ Canasetoga quoted in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 25–6.

⁵⁴⁹ The territory of the Haudenosaunee confederacy is conceived as a one long house stretching across the south shore of Lake Ontario. The territory was claimed territorially by the nations, from east to west: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca in the west. Refer to map in Daniel K. Richter and James Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and their Neighbours in Indian North America, 1600 – 1800* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 2.

Onondaga country. In the Haudenosaunee confederacy (League of Five Nations) the central council fire is located in the Onondaga country. Tying the cord to the Onondaga country is akin to attaching the whole Haudenosaunee confederacy to the newcomers. This is particularly reinforced when it is said that wampum was used to secure the rope to the mountain and that the Haudenosaunee first stood and then sat upon the wampum in order to keep it safe and defend it. The rendition told by Canasetoga reveals the channels through which the chain proceeded, finally being adopted by the whole Iroquois confederacy, then called the Five Nations. Significantly, Canasetoga deliberately pointed out that the Dutch had “acknowledged our Right to the Lands, and solicited us, from Time to Time, to grant them parts of our Country.” Here the cord is explicitly tied to Haudenosaunee ownership of land as well as to the process of granting parcels of it to the Dutch and British for their use.

Enter William Johnson, an enterprising Irish man who was appointed a ‘Colonel of the Six Nations,’ and rose to cultural mediator par excellence by taking up residence in the country of the Haudenosaunee, learning their language, trading with them, fighting with them and fathering children among them. William Johnson was an ambitious man and took to learning all about his allies by living amongst them but also studying records that pertained to them. He demonstrated his knowledge to the Haudenosaunee when he met them at their central council fire at Onondaga on 25 April 1748. He told the assembled chiefs, warriors and clan mothers:

It may seem strange to you that a Foreigner should know this, But I tell you how I found out some of the old Writings of our Forefathers which was thought to have been lost and in this old valuable Record I find, that our first Friendship Commenced at the Arrival of the first great Canoe or Vessel at Albany, at which you were much surprized [sic] but finding what it contained pleased you so much, being Things for your Purpose, as our People convinced you of shewing you the use of them, that you all Resolved to take the greatest care of that Vessel that nothing should hurt her Whereupon it was agreed to tye her fast with a great Rope to one of the largest Nut Trees on the Bank of the River But on further Consideration in a fuller meeting it was thought safest Fearing the Wind should blow down that Tree to make a long Rope and tye her fast at Onondaga which was accordingly done and the Rope put under your feet That if anything hurt or touched said Vessel by the shaking of the Rope you might know it, and then agreed to rise all as one and see what the Matter was and whoever hurt the Vessel was to suffer. After this was agreed on and done you made an offer to the Governour [sic] to enter into a Band of Friendship with him and his People which

he was so pleased at that he told you he would find a strong Silver Chain which would never break slip or Rust to bind you and him forever in Brotherhood together and your Warriours [sic] and Ours should be one Heart, one Head, one Blood & ca and that what happened to the one happened to the other. After this firm agreement was made our Forefathers finding it was good and foreseeing the many Advantages both sides would reap of it, Ordered that if ever that Silver Chain should turn the least Rusty, offer to slip or break, that it should be immediately brightened up again, and not let it slip or break on any account for then you and we were both dead.⁵⁵⁰

Johnson, an admitted ‘foreigner,’ established the procurement of his knowledge from “writings of our Forefathers” but his speech contained many of the same elements that Chief Canasetoga had conveyed. The Dutch were not mentioned nor were the Mohawk and Oneida specifically. Johnson did mention the boat and noted “that you all Resolved to take the greatest care of that Vessel that nothing should hurt her,” which also served as a metaphor to protect the trade and traders because “what it contained pleased you so much, being Things for your Purpose.”⁵⁵¹ Johnson stated that the boat was initially secured to a tree on the bank of a river by a rope but fearing its safety, a “long rope” was then used to secure it at Onondaga. The people at Onondaga then stood upon the rope to further secure it. By standing on the rope, the people would be able to detect any disturbance “by the shaking of the Rope.” If the rope was shaken, the Haudenosaunee were to “rise all as one” to investigate the disturbance and if necessary take military action.⁵⁵² Johnson stated that the Haudenosaunee would enter into a “Band of Friendship” with the Governor and his people. The Governor in turn found a strong silver chain to bind them together so that together they would be “one Heart, one Head, one Blood & ca and that what happened to the one happened to the other.” Both were obliged to keep the chain free from rust and to never let it slip or break.

Sir William Johnson then met again with the Haudenosaunee on 23 June 1755 and delivered the following speech:

⁵⁵⁰ Johnson quoted in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 26–7.

⁵⁵¹ Johnson quoted in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 26–7.

⁵⁵² Shaking the belt or the rope or the cord became an enduring symbol in diplomacy between the Haudenosaunee and the British. After 1761, this also became an enduring symbol in diplomacy between the British and the Western Confederacy, which will be explained later in this report.

Behold Brethren these great books, 4 folio volumes of the records of Indian Affairs which lay upon the table before the Colonel. They are records of the many Solemn Treaties and the various Transactions which have passed between your Forefathers and your Brethren the English, also between you here present & us your Brethren now living. You well know and these books now testify that it is almost 100 years since your forefathers & ours became known to each other.⁵⁵³ In the above Sir William Johnson expressly made two connections: the first between the written record and the oral tradition and secondly between the past “100 years” and the present, thus establishing a continuity of forms, usages and principles with himself and the forefathers. Sir William continued,

That upon your first acquaintance we shook hands & finding we should be useful to one another entered into a Covenant of Brotherly Love & mutual Friendship. And tho’ we were at first only ties [sic] together by a Rope, yet lest this rope grow rotten & break we ties ourselves together by an Iron Chain. Lest time or accident might rust & destroy this Chain of Iron, we afterwards made one of Silver, the strength and brightness of which would subject it to no decay.⁵⁵⁴

Sir William Johnson outlined the evolution of the cord of friendship from rope to iron to silver covenant chain, which accorded to history, the records of Indian Affairs, and to the oral tradition of the Haudenosaunee. Next, he stated that the covenant chain was adopted by the whole confederacy when it was tied to the “immoveable mountains:”

The ends of this Silver Chain we fix’t to the Immovable Mountains, and this in so firm a manner that no Mortal enemy might be able to remove it. All this my Brethren you know to be Truth. You know also that this Covenant Chain of Love and Friendship was the Dread & Envy of all your Enemies & ours, that by keeping it bright & unbroken we have never spilt in anger one drop of each other’s blood to this day.⁵⁵⁵

Next Johnson reminded those in attendance that the chain was built upon love and friendship but that this also made it the “dread and envy” of their mutual enemies. Johnson also made the claim that they never spilt each other’s blood. Johnson then stated to the chiefs and warriors that the strength, which can be read as success, of the relationship was due to the annual councils to brighten and polish the chain. ‘Brightening’ and ‘Polishing’ the chain were synonymous and both were used to refer to the act of holding council to settle any disputes:

⁵⁵³ Johnson in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 24.

⁵⁵⁴ Johnson in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 24.

⁵⁵⁵ Johnson in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 24.

You well know also that from the beginning to this time we have almost every year, strengthened & brightened this Covenant Chain in the most public & solemn manner. You know that we became as one body, one blood & one people. The same King our common Father that your enemies were ours that whom you took into your alliance & allowed to put their hands into this Covenant Chain as Brethren, we have always considered and treated as such. If you will now stand by & uphold the Covenant Chain of your Forefathers; if you will continue to be dutiful & faithful Children of the Great King of England your Father; if you will be true Brothers to the English, and neither enter into any under handed agreements with the French, or any Treaties with them against your Brethren the English, if you will do this with sincerity & keep it truly & honestly.

I am now ready with this Belt in the Great King your Father's name, to renew, to make more strong & bright than ever, the Covenant Chain of Love and Friendship between all the English upon this Continent & you're the Confederate Nations here present, all your Allies and dependents and that it now be agreed between us, that those who are Friends or Enemies to the English shall be considered such by the Confederate Nations their Allies & Dependents & that your Friends and Enemies shall be ours. Here the Union Belt was given.⁵⁵⁶

At this council, or rather this particular 'chain polishing,' Johnson felt the need to remind the Haudenosaunee of their forefathers', and their previous commitments, in order to prevent any potential alliances between the Haudenosaunee and the French. The Haudenosaunee also portended to have the Delaware, Shawnee, Mohican (Mohegan) and others as "dependents," a claim the British were all too eager to perpetuate and promote.⁵⁵⁷ The above quote also demonstrates that the Haudenosaunee, even though they were willingly part of the Covenant Chain, were not subjects of the British Crown, and thus maintained their independence and autonomy, and had to be annually courted, especially if warriors were to be called into action. That is why Johnson had to again stretch his hand forward and offer another belt of the covenant chain, the "Union Belt." The covenant chain was a process not an event, a process that required annual meetings to maintain open communication, mutual agreement and thus, harmonious relations.

In 1748 and 1755 Sir William Johnson re-iterated the history of the development of the covenant chain based upon his reading of the records but also upon reflection of his time in the longhouse. As previously mentioned, philosopher Bruce Morito called these

⁵⁵⁶ Johnson in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 24–5.

⁵⁵⁷ R. White, *The Middle Ground*, 352.

re-iterations “origin stories”⁵⁵⁸ and explained the role they played in the development of a highly contextualized diplomatic language and discourse. The origin stories told and re-told to each treaty partner codified historical events and actual locations in the speeches exchanged around the council fire. Mutual understanding was developed through a shared set of metaphors. The main point is that the origin story of the covenant chain appears simplistic, however, it is rooted in historic events and actual places (Onondaga and Albany), the historic facts were converted into highly contextualized language that was more symbolic and metaphoric in character. In fact, when Sir William lit the council fire at Detroit and Balfour lit the council fire at Michilimackinac, new places were added to the story and it moved beyond Onondaga and Albany to include places of reference that were important to the Western Nations. Sir William understood the process of encoding information and tying it to wampum protocol so that the Western Nations would understand it and maintain it for their purposes. Understanding these metaphors provide a more nuanced and complete interpretation of the events surrounding the 1764 Treaty of Niagara.

Sir William Johnson had learned about the Covenant Chain from the Haudenosaunee as well as from his study of the records of Indian Affairs. Although the Covenant Chain or the Chain of Friendship had been earlier agreed upon as a treaty by Algonquian speaking people, such as the Delaware and the Uttawas (Odaawaa), Sir William Johnson made it British policy to extend that relationship even further and disseminated the Covenant Chain of Friendship to nations as far west as the Mississippi. By 1762 the British had lit council fires at Detroit, Michilimackinac, La Baye and St. Josephs. Prior to 1760 the majority of the Western Nations were allied with the French and thus, if they had agreed to a chain of friendship, they were not strongly bound by it and it may have been set as a trading relationship instead of a military or political one. Sir William Johnson and his deputy George Croghan had worked hard to extend the Covenant treaty relationship to the Western Nations. Therefore, it is important to show examples of their understanding of the Covenant Chain relationship and this is done by looking at the speeches they made to the Western Nations in 1759, 1760, 1761, and then

⁵⁵⁸ Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 30.

adding in Balfour's speech at Michilimackinac in 1762, and Gorrell's speech at La Baye in 1762 and 1763. A core set of symbols emerges. The paramount symbol is obviously the chain which is often equated with taking each other by the hand, the second symbol is the inextinguishable fire or council fire, also often mentioned is the road (often associated with peace), a tree and a mat, a moored ship and directions to ignore 'bad birds,' that is, to listen only to delegated Indian Affairs officials. All of these symbols were utilized prior to the Treaty of Niagara in 1764 and all of these symbols were used afterward to typify the treaty and the relationship afterward.

Armed with this knowledge that was founded on years of practice, Sir William stated to General Gage in February 1764 that the proposed peace treaty should "assure them of a Free Fair & open trade, at the principal Posts, & a free intercourse, & passage into our Country, That we will make no Settlements or Encroachments contrary to Treaty, or without their permission. That we will bring to justice any persons who commit Robberys [sic] or Murders on them & that we will protect & aid them against their & our Enemys [sic] & duly observe our Engagements with them."⁵⁵⁹ The above are basically the terms of the treaty and they coincide with the precepts of the Royal Proclamation. Johnson told General Gage what should be included in the treaty, next he told him how it was to be put into practice:

In my opinion a Treaty of Offensive & Defensive Alliance would be the best, as we should then have a right to claim their assistance on occasion, & they would hardly ever desire ours for anything more than Arms & Ammunition which it would be our interest to give them in a War with one another... At this Treaty wheresoever held we should tye [sic] them down (~~in the peace~~) according to their own forms of which they take the most notice, for Example by Exchanging a very large belt with some remarkable & intelligible figures thereon, Expressive of the occasion which should be always shewn at public Meetings, to remind them of their promises and that we should Exchange Articles with the Signatures of the Chiefs of every Tribe; (~~Some of the five Nations have but Three, the Western Indians several~~). The use of frequent Meetings with Indns [sic] is here pointed out, They want the use of letters, consequently they must frequently be reminded

⁵⁵⁹ Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, ed. by James Sullivan, 14 vols. (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1921-1965), IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

of their promises, & this custom they keep up strictly, amongst themselves, since the neglect of the one, will prove a breach of the other.”⁵⁶⁰

While Johnson stated that the purpose of the frequent meetings was to remind the Western Nations of their promises, it actually worked the other way too, the Anishinaabeg took the opportunity to remind the British of their promises. Johnson’s recommendation to Gage here also reflects the fact that Johnson recognized the difference between Anishinaabe customs based on orality, symbols and mnemonics instead of relying on the literacy based Euro-Western tradition. Not only did Johnson have to have these precepts translated in numerous languages but he also was tasked with encoding these concepts into the diplomatic discourse that he knew the Western Nations understood.

Seemingly, Gage understood and based on Johnson’s recommendation to utilize the Anishinaabeg’s “own forms,” that is mnemonic devices, Gage ordered that medals be crafted. Gage reported “The Reverse [of the medal] is not the King’s Arms, but represents an Englishman and an Indian in Friendly Conversation. I suppose these would do for you as well as the old pattern... They are larger than yours...”⁵⁶¹ Johnson wanted to deliver these medals at the grand council held in Niagara in July 1764 where the western confederacy formally entered into the Covenant Chain alliance. This medal would serve as a mnemonic device associated with the promises the British made to the Western Nations (Anishinaabeg) at Niagara when the Great Covenant Chain Wampum belt was given. The medal indeed served the Anishinaabeg, “whose want of letters,” used the picture on the medal as a reference. The two figures, one Anishinaabe and an Englishman, sit on a mat under a tree smoking (see Figure 10).

⁵⁶⁰ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

⁵⁶¹ Gage to Johnson, New York, June 10th 1764. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 446-7.



Figure 10: Happy While United Medal given by Sir William Johnson to various Chiefs at Niagara in 1764.

Preparations were made, the medal was struck and delivered in time to be presented at Niagara to the various chiefs, the provisions ordered, and presents ready for distribution and the new wampum belt crafted. It is not apparent who actually made the 1764 wampum belt but Sir William Johnson had to have a hand in its design. The belt had the date 1764 woven into it, as well as two men holding hands in the centre of the belt, their hearts shown, and on either side of the men were two hexagons with an image inside it representing the links of the chain (see Figure 11).

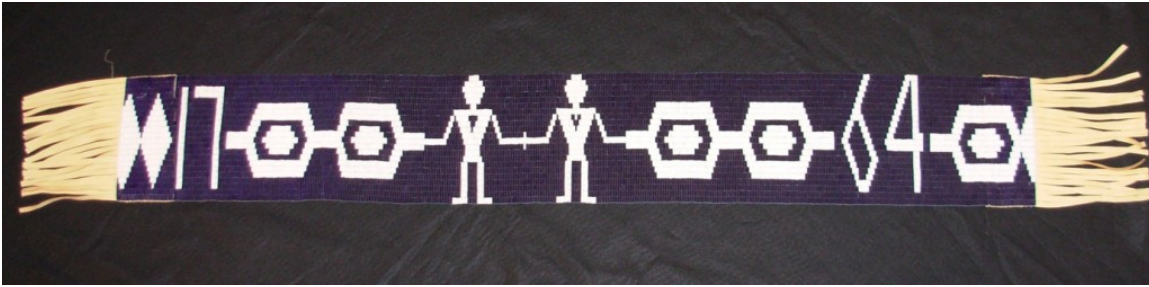


Figure 11: Great Covenant Chain Wampum Belt re-made by Emrick Migwans, M'Chigeeng First Nation, based upon information from Paul Kane's sketchbook and Reverend Hallen's notes on wampum belts held by the Odaawaa.

Hexagons on wampum belt usually represent a council fire.⁵⁶² At the left end of the belt is an incomplete diamond which is then joined by a second complete diamond, followed by the number 17, then the chain links. To the right of the two men in the centre are two more chain links then the number 64 followed by another chain link and an incomplete chain link or diamond. Many wampum belts, particularly road belts, have the main motif go right the end of the belt indicating that the treaty or agreement the belt represents perpetuity or eternity. This version of the Covenant Chain suggests the existence of prior treaties because the left end of the belt starts with a half-formed image. The right end of the belt, with an unfinished diamond or chain link, suggests the belt will continue on into the future. Another interpretation was shared by elders. The elders suggested putting the two ends together, forming two complete diamonds on the belt (see Figure 12).

⁵⁶² A. F. Hunter reported that the hexagons represented council fires when he published the notes of Rev. George Hallen who had sketched the belts in 1852. Hallen borrowed the belts from Odaawaa Chief J. B. Assiginack, and took the time to make notes as well. A. F. Hunter, "Wampum records of the Ottawas" in *Annual Archaeological Report 1901: Being Part of an Appendix to the Report of the Minister of Education Ontario*, 52-55 (Toronto: K. L. Cameron, 1902), 52-4.



Figure 12: 1764 Covenant Chain Belt joined end to end

Another wampum belt was prepared for the upcoming congress was the one commonly called the “24 Nations Wampum Belt” but is the document representing the British’s promise to deliver presents to the Eastern and Western Confederacy forever. The ship at the right end is the boat loaded with goods for the 24 nations that are bound together, holding the cord of friendship that is secured to the boat. The mountain or rock at the left end of the belt represents all of North America, or the rock at Quebec (see Figures 13 & 14).

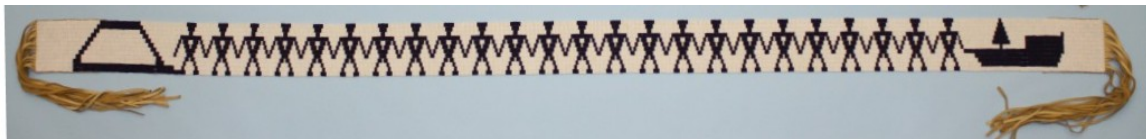


Figure 13: Presents or 24 Nations Belt delivered by Sir William Johnson to the Western Nations. The ship to the right is to be full of presents and delivered every year to the council fires or posts.

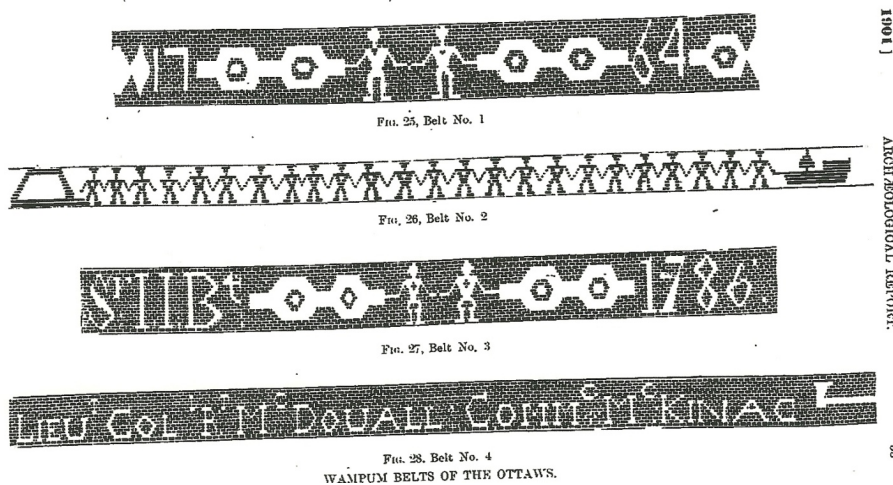


Figure 14: Wampum Belts in the possession of Jean Baptiste Assiginack and documented by Reverend Hallen.

Sir William Johnson then prepared his speeches and “lit his fires and hung his kettles” in anticipation of greeting thousands of Native people from numerous nations.

Anishinaabe Participation in the Treaty of Niagara

Entering the Covenant Chain alliance with the British, which was done at the Treaty of Niagara, was not a singular event, but a process. Many times, various members of the Western and Eastern Confederacy entered and exited the Covenant Chain. In fact, members of the Western Confederacy entered the Covenant Chain at Detroit in 1761 when Sir William Johnson went there for the express purpose of inviting them to partake. Likewise, the Treaty of Niagara did not include the Odaawaa Chief Pontiac, he entered the peace in 1766 at Oswego. Ergo, the 1764 Treaty of Niagara was not the only time for members of the Western Confederacy to enter into peaceful alliance with the British, the alliance known as the Covenant Chain.

Sir William Johnson had summoned many Nations to Niagara to enter into a general peace and according to Louise Phelps Kellogg, “Johnson reported that over 2 000 western Indians were present.”⁵⁶³ There is no roll call of all the chiefs present but the following list of Nations in attendance was published in Sir William Johnson’s papers.

NATIONS AT INDIAN CONGRESS AT NIAGARA: Indians at the Congress at Niagara, July 1764.

Mohawks	45	
Caenawagues	7	
	124	
Canyesadaguss	1	
Schahanies	14	7
Canajoxeris	57	
Oneydas & Tusceroras	120	
Onendagas	115	
Aquagaws	117	Sachims and Warriors
Senecas	178	
Tenessess	273	
Cayugas	146	
Menomenies	99	

⁵⁶³ Kellogg, *The British Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, 34.

Jibbeways	71	
Ottawas	173	┘
Huron & Wyandots	16	
Foxes & Sacs	27	
women & children	<u>150</u>	
Total	1725 ⁵⁶⁴	

This above list is not comprehensive or complete because it excluded the Algonquins, Cree (Christinox, Christinaux, Cristineans, etc), Nipissings, Potowatomi (Pottowatomies, etc) and Puans (Puoans, Winbigooos, Winnebago, etc). As proof that Johnson had met with these Nations, in his own papers it is recorded that on 11th July 1764 Sir William Johnson met with “The Ottawas, Chipweighs, Cristineans & Nipissins”⁵⁶⁵ Similarly, on 8th July 1764 Sir William Johnson met with the Six Nations as well as the following members of the Western Confederacy, who were labelled as Western Nations: “Chippaways, Menomoneys, [Saikis], Pottowatomies, Puans, Hurons, Christineaux and Toughkaminimons.”⁵⁶⁶ Note that the Potowatomis did not make it on the above list.

In his thesis, “The Covenant Chain,” legal historian Paul Williams published a roll call of nations that attended the Treaty of Niagara. Williams’ list has the nations categorized into “Western” and “Eastern” confederacy. The list identifies the 24 Nations represented on the 24 Nations Wampum Belt. Williams stated that the following 11 nations represented the Western Confederacy: Chippewas, Crees, Ottawas, Hurons, Menominees, Algonquins, Sacs, Nipissings, Foxes, Toughkamiwons, and Winnebagoes. Williams noted that the Algonquins and Nipissings were counted twice, once for the Western Confederacy and a second time for the Eastern Confederacy (along with Six Nations and some Mohawk villages that Johnson counted as separate Nations).⁵⁶⁷

Even more information is provided in Sir William Johnson’s papers, particularly the council proceedings. Many times, he, or his secretary, listed the names of chiefs he met with on that particular day. It was a month-long meeting with people coming and

⁵⁶⁴ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 276.

⁵⁶⁵ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 264.

⁵⁶⁶ LAC, MG 19, F35, Series 1, Lot 619, pp: 1 – 2.

⁵⁶⁷ Paul Williams, “The Covenant Chain.” LL. M. Thesis (unpublished), York University, Toronto, ON, 1982, p. OJ4.

going all the time and no comprehensive attendance list or roll call exists. The following is a list of chiefs of the Western Nations that met with Sir William at Niagara in 1764. It was compiled from the published papers of Sir William Johnson.

Algonquin & Nipissing: Wabikackeck or White Hawk “a Chipeweigh Warrior Alg. & Nip.”⁵⁶⁸

Chipeweigh (Ojibwe): Shownannicaboa, Kagaisse, Sowwongibbey⁵⁶⁹

Christinox (Cree): Ogewetassin⁵⁷⁰

Mississauga: Wabbicommicott (Wabbicomicot),⁵⁷¹ Weynakibio,⁵⁷² Estawabey,⁵⁷³

Menominees (Manominis, Menominee, Falsavoines, Folles Avoines): Grand Pee, Chicconaway, Succamoy or “Musketo”, Wabashogo or “White Crab”, Wenosachey or “Bever [sic]”.⁵⁷⁴

Ottawas: Bindanouan (Bildennawan, Bildanouan, Bindanowan, Bindanouan)⁵⁷⁵, Cashkokey, Teckamus, Otchinggwas, Pemmassad, Shawwamusse, Otchibauscasigon⁵⁷⁶, Kiocuskcum (Kiwegoshkum), Egorniney (Egominey, Negominey), Nosawaquet (Nissawaquot, etc)⁵⁷⁷, Mackakeeman (Mechukimon), Piggagun (Piggagoonin)⁵⁷⁸

Puans (Puoans, Winnebago, Ho-Chunk): Winosigo⁵⁷⁹

Reynards (Fox, Outagamies): Nonoh⁵⁸⁰

Sauk (Sakis, Sakeys): Weshion⁵⁸¹ (perhaps also spelt as Washiboo)⁵⁸², Akousy (Aukussey),⁵⁸³

Toughkamawiman (Toughkamiwan): Shuckey “The Crane”⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁶⁸ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 264. Interesting that Waabi-gegek (Wabikackeck) is listed under 3 Nations: Ojibwe, Algonquin and Nipissing.

⁵⁶⁹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 264.

⁵⁷⁰ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 264.

⁵⁷¹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 306.

⁵⁷² Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 307.

⁵⁷³ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 307.

⁵⁷⁴ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 274.

⁵⁷⁵ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 270.

⁵⁷⁶ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 264.

⁵⁷⁷ Kiocuskom, Egorniney, Nosawaquet and Mackakeeman are listed in Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 273.

⁵⁷⁸ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 285.

⁵⁷⁹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 305.

⁵⁸⁰ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 305.

⁵⁸¹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 300.

⁵⁸² Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 305.

⁵⁸³ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 302.

⁵⁸⁴ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 298. The Toughkamiwan are people from Rainy Lake or Lac de la Pluie. “According to Abbé Dugas, this native name Takimamiwen is a corruption of the Cree Taki Kimiwen, “It always rains.” See François Maynard s.j., *Jesuit Missions in Northern Ontario*, translated and ed. by William Lonc,

Another source that provides more names of various chiefs are the chiefs' certificates and medals that Sir William Johnson presented while at Niagara.⁵⁸⁵ Not all of the presentations made it into Sir William's published papers. The British had crafted a special medal with the date 1764 on it and along the top of the medal was the phrase "Happy While United." The medal has an Indian and an Englishman sitting under a tree smoking a pipe with a fire smouldering in the background, on the opposite side was the King in his armour (see Figures 10 & 15).

s.j. (Montreal: William Lonc, s.j., and Les Archives des Jésuites, 2012), 6. According to a French voyageur named Joseph Derouen (Drouin), the people living at Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods in 1760 were "Saulteaux" and "Gens des Terres or Maskigons." See Joseph Derouen, "Voyage de Montreal .. a La Mer de l'ouest, 25 December 1760," quoted in Antoine Champagne, *Nouvelle Etudes sur les Verendrye et le Poste de l'Ouest* (Quebec: Les Presses de l'Universite Laval, 1971), 64, 141-2.

⁵⁸⁵ The following list appears in Martha Wilson Hamilton, *Silver in the Fur Trade 1680 – 1820* (Chelmsford, MA: Martha Hamilton Publishing, 1995), 151: "Aukussey, chief of Onisquathona Puonas, Washiboo, chief warrior of the Sakis, Nonoh chief of the Renards, Winosigo chief of the Puoans, Wabbicomicot chief of the Toronto Chippawa, Estawaby elder brother of Wabbicomocot, Weynakibio brother-in-law of Wabbicomicot."



Figure 15: Obverse to "Happy While United" Medal, LAC #200519

These were large medals given specifically to the chiefs who were deemed to represent their respective nation. Sir William Johnson had ordered that 60 of these medals be made for the express purpose of delivering them at Niagara to chiefs in exchange for their French medals.⁵⁸⁶ One of these medals is currently housed at the Library and Archives of Canada's National Medal Collection⁵⁸⁷ but there is no accompanying certificate with it nor any information as to who owned it. Smaller medals were also delivered to chiefs deemed to be minor or councillors.

In contrast to the above example of a medal with no provenance, there is a chief's certificate at the Wisconsin Historical Society's library that was made out to Menominee Chief Ogemawnee [Ogemawinini] "Old king." The certificate has Johnson's signature

⁵⁸⁶ Wilson Hamilton, *Silver in the Fur Trade*, 150.

⁵⁸⁷ LAC, National Medal Collection, catalogue No. H1612.

and states “Given under my hand and seal at arms at Niagara the first day of August 1764.” It should be noted that there is no mention made of the medal that would have accompanied this certificate.⁵⁸⁸ Likewise, there is another chief’s certificate with the same date at the William Clements Library but made out to “Akowawbomye – A Chief of the Ottawaw Nation.”⁵⁸⁹ Similarly there is no mention as to the whereabouts of the medal that would have accompanied the certificate. Note that neither of these two chiefs’ names appeared on the list above that was compiled by perusing the published and unpublished William Johnson papers.

In 2009 a medal and certificate were sold at auction.⁵⁹⁰ The certificate was in the name of Ottawa (Odaawaa) Chief Negominey and dated 1 August 1764, at Niagara, but the difference was that the family had kept both the small medal and the certificate. On the back of the certificate were the names of the chiefs and heirs who had possessed and safeguarded the medal and certificate since 1764.⁵⁹¹ It should be noted that Negominey is Egominey. It is interesting to note that this chief was remembered and written about by the Odaawaa chief cum author Andrew J. Blackbird in his book “History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan.” Blackbird reported in 1887 that:

Ego-me-nay – Corn Hanger – was the head counselor and speaker of the Ottawa tribe of Indians at that time, and according to our knowledge, Ego-me-nay was the leading one who went with those survivors of the massacre [Michilimackinac], and he was the man who made the speech before the august assembly in the British council hall at Montreal at that time. Ne-saw-key – Down-the-hill – the head chief of the Ottawa Nation, did not go with the party, but sent his message, and instructed their counselor in what manner he should appear before the British Government. My father was a little boy at that time, and my grandfather and my great grandfather were both living then, and both held the royal rank among the Ottawas. My grandfather was then a sub-chief and my great-grandfather was a war chief, whose name was Pun-go-wish.⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁸ Kellogg, *The British Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, 34.

⁵⁸⁹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 277.

⁵⁹⁰ <http://www.midnorthmonitor.com/2009/12/09/king-george-iii-medal-auctioned-off>

⁵⁹¹ AO, Williams Papers, F 4337-3-0-24 Subscriptions/ Lists - Spanish River], Massey Stn, Algoma Dist., Spanish River Reserve, Band No. 2, 10th May 1904.

⁵⁹² Andrew J. Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan: A grammar of their language, and personal and family history of the author* (Ypsilanti, MI: The Ypsilanti Job Printing House, 1887), 9.

The existence of the medal and the certificate directly associated with Egominay/Negominey is an exception to the sources utilized because his name is also written in the proceedings of conferences held at Niagara. Furthermore, Egominay/Negominey's name is also reported in the oral tradition of his band, as re-told and published by Andrew J. Blackbird.

Johnson stated that upwards to 2000 "Western Indians" were at Niagara but only 33 individuals from the Western Nations have been identified, therefore other sources must be consulted. Since the medals and certificates have been extricated from the heirs of those chiefs who attended, some archive and museum records were consulted, but again, there is such a paucity of information in the museum card catalogue that it is imperative that the oral tradition also be consulted because it is just as important as the written documents, which are incomplete.

In some cases, the oral tradition was written down by Anishinaabe authors (such as Andrew J. Blackbird and Peter Jones) other times that oral tradition has been recorded by ethnologists and anthropologists. William Jones, a Fox Indian who studied under Franz Boas, was one such ethnologist. Jones recorded William Kabaossa of Garden River re-telling a story that Jones entitled "Origin of the Ojibwas:"

A home was made on the south shore of the rapids, and it was called Bowā'ting ('rapids'). This was the first town that was founded by the Crane, and it became the centre of the Ojibwa nation and power. The head chief of all the Ojibwas lived at this place. His clan was the Crane (adcidcā'k). Wābangi⁵⁹³ was the chief when white men came to the Ojibwas... Shingwā'kōns (Little Pine Tree) is William Kabaossa. Tagwāgānē is George Kabaossa. Pabāmāsinōkwe is Sofia Kabaossa. These are brothers and sisters, and stand in the eighteenth generation. Tagwāgānē, the chief after whom George is named, was chief when America and England were at war. He went to Niagara at the time, and made an agreement with England. England promised to grant presents to his people every year till the

⁵⁹³ It should be noted that at the Great Peace of Montreal of 1701, the Saulteurs (Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie) were represented by Chief 8abangué (Waabange), which is close to the time "when the white man came to the Ojibwas." Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native diplomacy in the Seventeenth century*, translated by Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 117, 121.

end of time. A round medal was given him, the circular object denoting that the friendship would never end.⁵⁹⁴

The Anishinaabeg had also adopted the practice of naming a descendant after a grandfather in order to perpetuate the memory of the deeds and accomplishments of their ancestors. In this case, the Kabaossa (Gabaossa) family maintained an oral tradition based upon naming practices as well as the care of medals and other heritage items and according to their oral tradition, Tagwāgānē was the chief when the Ojibwe entered into a treaty with the British that guaranteed presents forever.⁵⁹⁵ Gabaossa stated that this occurred when American and England were at war which may actually refer to when Sir John Johnston (Sir William's son and successor in the Indian Department) re-pledged the Covenant Chain belt in 1786 after the American Revolution.

However, it may also be that the Saulteurs (Ojibwe) were represented by Chief Tagwāgānē at the Treaty of Niagara, but the records maintained by Sir William Johnson do not provide a name for the Ojibwe Chief from Lake Superior. For example, at the “conference with the Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Nipissins & c” held on 13 July 1764, the speeches of Odaawaa Chief Bindanouan were noted but whenever the “Chipeweigh Chief” addressed Sir William, a name was never provided,⁵⁹⁶ in fact it was left blank in the manuscript too. It was recorded that Sir William Johnson had again met with members of the western confederacy on July 17 – August 4, 1764, but this time the “Chipeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior,” were specifically noted and differentiated as separate groups but their chiefs were not identified.⁵⁹⁷ Then once again the Ojibwe chief was unnamed on 31 July 1764. This is more puzzling because it is when Sir William Johnson presented the “Great Covenant Chain” wampum belt to the Western Confederacy but stated that “I desire that after you have shewn this Belt to all

⁵⁹⁴ William Jones, “Ojibwa tales from the North Shore of Lake Superior” *The Journal of American Folklore* 29: 113 (1916: 368–91), 388-9.

⁵⁹⁵ In 1798 Tacoacanais (Tagwāgānē) signed a document that ceded the north side of St. Mary's river to the Northwest Company. See “Surrender of land at Sault Ste. Marie to the Northwest Company 10 August 1798,” Russell Papers, AO, MS 75. Tagwāgānē was reportedly the maternal grandfather of Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse, signatory to the Robinson Huron Treaty.

⁵⁹⁶ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 270.

⁵⁹⁷ Although it is known that Chipeweigh Chief Wabibicomot was the chief of Toronto, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 306.

the Nations you will fix one end of it with the Chipaweighs at St. Mary's, whilst the other end remains at my house."⁵⁹⁸ It was recorded that "a Chipeweigh chief arose & said – Brother – I am of the opinion that it is best to keep the Belt of the Covenant Chain at Michilimackinac."⁵⁹⁹ Even at the most seemingly important moment of the conference, the secretary and Sir William failed to provide the name of the Ojibwe chief from Sault Ste. Marie, the chief could very well have been Gabaoosa's ancestor Ojibwe Chief Tagwāgānē. Historian Theresa Schenck noted that when Sieur de Repentigny established a fort at Sault Ste. Marie in 1750 he listed the Tacoḡagané as the first chief.⁶⁰⁰ Searching through contemporary sources, in particular, Alexander Henry's account of his time at Sault Ste. Marie did not yield the name of Tagwāgānē. Henry only noted chief Mutchikiwish because he thought Mutchikiwish was going to do him harm. Afterward, Henry did note that "sixteen Saulteurs, or Chipeways of the Sault de Sainte-Marie," had accompanied him to Fort Niagara, but he did not provide any of their names.⁶⁰¹

Later, George Gaboosa would take to writing as well. Some of his papers are in the archives of the Smithsonian Institute and there is a manuscript of his writing in the Canadian Museum of History. In that manuscript he expressly stated that he wanted to correct the false history that was being disseminated at the time. He divided his manuscript into broad categories, one of which was entitled "The Historic Period." In that chapter he dealt with treaties and he wrote down what was told to him about the promises that the British made during the Treaty of Niagara. He associated the treaty not only with the wampum belt but with the medal that was given to his ancestor:

My agreement will be as good when you arise in the bright spring morning as you see the sun arising over the hills like a big fire to warm yourselves. Thus my promise will be as good as the sun & it will last as long as it will arise & set. And I will be as your Father & I will take care of you as a father takes care of his loved children. And remember that I have promised you an everlasting friendship. The

⁵⁹⁸ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 309.

⁵⁹⁹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 311.

⁶⁰⁰ Theresa M. Schenck, *"The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar": The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640 – 1855* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 76.

⁶⁰¹ Alexander Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada, and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776*, in two parts (New York: Riley, 1809), 183.

envoy then took a medal & said, ‘You all see this medal is round, it has no end,’ then taking the chief by the hand said, ‘I take you for ever to be my child.’⁶⁰²

The available evidence strongly indicates that the Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie were in attendance at the Treaty of Niagara. It was specifically recorded in Sir William Johnson’s papers that on July 13, 1764, he met with members of the Western Nations and was address by an unidentified ‘‘Chief of the Chipeweighs,’’ who stated,

Brother - Hearken to what I have now to say: I have been away at St. Marys where I have resisted all the Sollicitations [sic] of your Enemys who sent me three belts of Wampum which I disregarded. I have been this Summer at La Baye where I told your Enemys that I was coming to you but they disregarded me, had I Known what was intended ag[ains]t you, you sho[ul]d not have Suffered the loss you did: for my part I always endeavoured to preserve peace & have become a great Sufferer & very poor by the War. I Know nothing of the War nor can I fix it with certainty on any Nation - As it is now too late & we want to consult together we must defer saying anything till tomorrow.⁶⁰³

This unidentified chief did not state his residence but gave both St. Mary’s and La Baye as places where he had been. The next day the same group of people met with Sir William and made a reply to his direct questions about prisoners and perpetrators. Again the unidentified ‘‘Chipeweigh chief’’ stated that they knew nothing of the matter, and stated outright, we ‘‘Know nothing of w[hat] you asked us Yesterday:’’

Brother - We resolved to wait your arrival here & to attend to w[hat] you said. We are not of the same people as those resid[in]g ab[out] Michilimackinac we only heard at a distance that the Enemy were Killing y[our] people, on which we covered our heads, a I resolved not [to] suffer my people to engage in the War I gathered them together & made them sit still... We have lived by ourselves two days Journey from Toronto.⁶⁰⁴

Not only did they plead that they had no knowledge of the plans to take the fort, but they also distanced themselves from the area. In his recent book, historian Keith R.

⁶⁰² George Gaboosa 1927 Manuscript CMH III-G-17M, Box 28 F. 1, p. 5.

⁶⁰³ At a Conference with the Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Nipissins & c in the presence of the Six Nations. July 12th 1764 P.M., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 267–73.

⁶⁰⁴ At a Conference with the Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Nipissins & c in the presence of the Six Nations. July 12th 1764 P.M., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 267–73.

Widder noted that “In 1760, perhaps 250 Ojibwe lived at Sault Ste. Marie.”⁶⁰⁵ He also elaborated and stated that people could identify with an area but that a number of bands could be from that same area, “For the Ojibwe, ‘village’ meant their band and their family group, not a particular location or a cluster of dwellings. For example, members of at least three bands lived in the Ojibwe settlement at Sault Ste. Marie in 1760, but they did not remain together all year. Across Lake Superior country the Ojibwe lived together in their larger settlements in the summer, but in autumn single families or small bands dispersed to their winter hunting grounds located along rivers and streams probably no more than fifty miles away from their summer sites.”⁶⁰⁶

There could be at least three chiefs identifying with the Sault Ste. Marie location. On 23 December 1760 Robert Rogers met with and executed a treaty with Ojibwe chiefs for land along the south shore of Lake Superior, between the Ontonagon and Copper Rivers. These Ojibwe from Lake Superior had come to Detroit and ended up signing a deed. The legible names of the chiefs include Kecke bahkonce, Ogemawwas, Nawkusich, Moyettueyea.⁶⁰⁷ These chiefs gave Rogers a wampum belt to confirming the deed.⁶⁰⁸ On the same day Rogers entered into another agreement but with chiefs specifically from Sault Ste. Marie area. The deed was for a track of land on both sides of the river. The document is difficult to read but the signatory chiefs appear to be Kacbeach “Chief of the falls of St. Mary”, a second signature is illegible but written beside his mark is “Chief of the warriors”; this name is followed by MusquawKesick and kenoshe.⁶⁰⁹ The doodems of these chiefs were not drawn onto the parchment.

⁶⁰⁵ Keith R. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow: Michilimackinac and the Anglo-Indian War of 1763* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press and Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 2013), 36.

⁶⁰⁶ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 37.

⁶⁰⁷ Written as Kecke bahkonce but the ‘kecke’ is ‘keche’- “gichi-” meaning large or great but the “bahkonce” does not mean anything. Gichi-bashkoon (still meaningless but Gichi-bizhikiins would be great calf); Ogemawwas is likely Ogimaans ‘Little Chief’, Nawkusich is likely NawKeesick - Naawgiizhig ‘Middle of the sky’, Moyettueyea undecipherable. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 255.

⁶⁰⁸ Wampum belt is kept at Detroit Historical Society, Detroit, Michigan.

⁶⁰⁹ Musquawkesick is likely Miskwaa-giizhig ‘Red Sky’, kenoshe is like ginoozhe ‘Pike’ and Kacbeach. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac's Shadow*, 258.

The year after the Treaty of Niagara, Monsieur Marsac, an emissary of Sir William Johnson, went to the northern Western Nations to conduct the adoption ceremony, making the British King the Great White Father. He had 17 wampum belts made. He had delivered 4 belts to the Ojibwe at Saginaw Bay, forwarded another four belts to the Commandant at Michilimackinac, who was to then forward them to La Baye for the commanding officer there to deliver with the speech. Monsieur Marsac arrived at Michilimackinac 27 April 1765 with the remaining 9 wampum belts. He delivered four belts to the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac, two to the Odaawaa of L'Arbre Croche, and two to the Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie. He wrote to Captain Campbell at Detroit and reported that he had delivered the belts to the various chiefs and provided the names of the chiefs for each locale. He listed Tacoagamet, Cakéhyache and AndéeKouiasse as the Sault Ste. Marie Chiefs.⁶¹⁰ In 1765 the British poorly spelt the chiefs names because there was no standardized orthography that adhered to British conventions. However, it is very likely that Tacoagamet is Gabaoosa's ancestor "Ojibwe Chief Tagwāgānē." The spelling of that name in the modern orthography would be Dagwaagane.⁶¹¹ Mixed blood historian William W. Warren wrote about a crane clan chief named Tug-waug-aun-ay who was hereditary chief at La Pointe, Shagawaumikong (Chequamiqon). Tug-waug-aun-ay was "about 60 years of age" in 1852.⁶¹² However, Tug-waug-aun-ay's ancestors had migrated to La Pointe from Sault Ste. Marie, home of the crane clan.⁶¹³ The Ojibwe had adopted the practice of remembering ancestors by bestowing their names unto descendants,

⁶¹⁰ An Address in French & Translated delivered to Ojibwe & Ottawa of Michilimak [sic], L'Arbre Croche, Sault Ste. Marie & Saguinan. Mon'r Marsac to John Campbell, Detroit 29th July 1765. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 803–8.

⁶¹¹ A different individual, Mijen Tangaugan, from L'Arbre Croche had a similar name. His name was name was translated as "Cabane d'Automne (autumn cabin)." Adding "e" at the end changes this word into a verb, meaning "he dwells in an autumn cabin" but as a name becomes 'Autumn cabin dweller'. The word Dagwaagane is the changed conjunct form of this name literally meaning 'He who dwells in the wigwam of Autumn.' *Annales de L'Association de la Propagation de la Foi* 4: XXIII (janvier 1831), 544.

⁶¹² Warren stated that Tug-waug-aun-ay had died "two years prior," assuming he meant 1853, the date of publication. William W. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1885, re-printed 1984), 90.

⁶¹³ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 88.

thereby perpetuating their deeds and accomplishments.⁶¹⁴ It is likely therefore, that the Tug-waug-aun-ay William Warren wrote about, the one who lived from circa 1790 – 1850 was named after his grandfather.

William Warren in his *History of the Ojibway People* also noted Chief Au-daig-we-os (Aandeg-wiyyaas) ‘Crow Flesh,’ who was a chief of the Loon clan. This is likely just a different spelling of AndéeKouiasse. His grandson, Gichi-weshkii (Keche-waishkee “Great Buffalo) was a contemporary of Tugwaug-aun-ay’s.⁶¹⁵ The third name listed was Cakéhyache which is also likely the chief who signed the treaty with Rogers at Detroit in 1760. The name was written on that document as Kacbeach “Chief of the falls of St. Mary.” The spelling of Kacbeach is likely a mistranscription of Kackeach which more closely resembles Cakéhyache, which would be spelt in the modern orthography as Gaagigeyaash. The name was passed down and by the mid-nineteenth century there was a chief named Gitchee-Kawgaosh,⁶¹⁶ who was also a contemporary of both Tug-waug-aun-ay and Keche-waishkee, all living along the south shore of Lake Superior between Sault Ste. Marie and La Pointe. Gitchee-Kawgaosh ‘Forever soaring,’ was also of the crane clan.

Anishinaabeg from the north shore of Lake Superior were not expressly enumerated in a detailed manner but they did attend the congress and Sir William Johnson mentioned them in a letter to General Gage dated 22 August 1764. Sir William reported that “concerning the Western Inds [sic] who turned back from Carillon & who attended the Congress at Niagara, they were some Ottawaes [sic] from St. Marys with a few Nipissins. The Folles Avoins attended the Congress, as did the Sakis, Reynards, Puans & c., ... The Sioux did not attend, they are on verry [sic] bad terms with some of the upper Chippaweighs but there were some of the Christineaux from the

⁶¹⁴ “The Captain of the Beaver Nation having died three years before, his eldest son had invited various tribes to attend the games and spectacles which he wished to hold in his father’s honor. He intended, too, to take this opportunity to resuscitate him, as they say, by taking his name; for it is customary to recall the illustrious dead to life at this Festival, by conferring the name of the deceased upon one of the most important men, who is considered his successor and takes his place.” Thwaites 1899, *JR*, Vol. LV, Relation of 1670-1672, 137.

⁶¹⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 87.

⁶¹⁶ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes From Afar*,” 26.

Neighbourhood of Hudsons Bay, and also others from the North West Side of Lake Superior, who had no hand in the War, these are rather remote to give us much trouble, but as I looked upon it to be necessary to all Nations of Inds [sic] (particularly those who trade at our Factories or Posts) a favourable impression of ye English, I dismissed them with a Present, as well as the rest.”⁶¹⁷ Ojibwe from the north and south shore of Lake Superior were represented at the Treaty of Niagara.

The purpose of gathering at Niagara was to establish peace between the Western Nations and the British. Tied to the establishment of peace was re-establishing the trade, establishing a process to settle disputes, re-establishing the delivery of presents to the Western Nations, and lastly, but perhaps of paramount importance was the acknowledgement and recognition of Aboriginal ownership of land. This was expressed in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 in the following manner,

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to Our Interest and the Security of Our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians, with whom We are connected, and who live under Our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds;⁶¹⁸

The Crown also strengthened this clause further by stipulating that it was their “Royal Will and Pleasure [...] to reserve under our Sovereignty, Protection, and Dominion, for the use of the said Indians, all the Lands and Territories not included within the Limits of Our said Three new Governments [excluding Hudsons Bay territories as well].” Further, the Crown stipulated in the Proclamation that no private purchases were to be transacted between Indians and individuals and that any individual who was settled in the area described were to remove themselves and settlement was forbidden in that specified area. The sole entity mandated to purchase land from the Indians was the Crown. The government could then appoint officials to host a “publick Meeting or Assembly” to purchase lands in the name of the Crown.⁶¹⁹ Lastly, the trade “shall be free and open to all our Subjects” provided that the traders purchased licences

⁶¹⁷ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 336–7.

⁶¹⁸ 1763, October 7, by the King. A Proclamation. Brigham 1911, 215.

⁶¹⁹ 1763, October 7, by the King. A Proclamation. Brigham 1911, 217.

and follow the regulations and abide by the commissaries. All of which had to be explained to the Western and Eastern confederacies, as well as accepted by them.

Sir William Johnson had invited many nations from around the Great Lakes to come and partake in the treaty negotiations and to enjoy the warmth of the King's Council Fire. Sir William's mandate was to end the war and secure peace. It is seemingly at cross purposes then that the British Government had sent the army to also subdue the holdouts. Colonel Bradstreet and Colonel Bouquet had marching orders and in fact Sir William Johnson also wanted to enlist his new brethren to join the forces against the King's enemies as demonstration of their sincerity. At Niagara on 8 July 1764, Sir William addressed both the Six Nations and the Western Confederacy and stated,

but as for those nations who have obstinately maintained the War & thereby justly merited our highest resentment, they must expect nothing but punishment & to which end an army is now assembled at this place & will proceed agt them supported by a large number of those Indians most zealous in defending the subjects of Great Britain & in punishing the guilty. Those troops will proceed immediately whilst my business is to settle matters with you here⁶²⁰

Sir William then met with the Western Nations again in the presence of the Six Nations on July 13, 1764 and stated again that the British were going to send armed forces against those that remained "obstinate:"

Brethren - The unjust War Commenced by many of the Western & other Nations leaves me little reason to Expect that we can rely much upon their Sincerity, and the great King finding all other methods ineffectual has been obliged to send an Army with a large body of good Inds, under an Experienced Officer now at this place, in order to bring all obstinate Nations to a Sense of their folly, [...] I Expect that you will first declare who were the Promoters of the War & the causes they assigned, for so high a breach of their Agreement. *A Belt*⁶²¹

On Saturday July 14 an unidentified Ojibwe Chief claimed that he and his people had no knowledge of the war and that they were not the same Ojibwe people as those around Michilimackinac who had taken the fort. After the chief had continued his speech, 18 of his young men went and sat across from Sir William and the chief

⁶²⁰ Niagara 8th July 1764, At a convention of the Chiefs and Warriors of the Six Nations & Western Nations, LAC, MG 19, F35, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Series 1, Lot 619, pp: 1 – 2.

⁶²¹ At a Conference with the Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Nipissins & c in the presence of the Six Nations. July 12th 1764 P.M., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 268.

continued, “Brother: Hearken to what I say. We have attended to your desire of Yesterday & in consequence of it, here are 18 of my people who shall joyn [sic] the Army, the rest not being here.”⁶²² Alexander Henry also wrote that he had a force of Ojibwe warriors consisting of “sixteen Saulteurs, or Chipeways of the Sault de Sainte-Marie,” plus the “eighty Matchedash Indians.” This formed an “Indian battalion” of which Henry was the leader. Henry set out with only 10 of the battalion and the rest promising to join the next day. Henry waited the next day only to find that they left for home.⁶²³ By this time the congress had not been completed but demonstrations of sincerity were required.

At the beginning of this conference with the Western Nations, July 13, the speaker had delivered a calumet to Sir William on behalf of the Menominee. The Menominee arrived and joined the council on July 17th and Sir William felt it necessary to repeat his statement about the Army:

Brethren - The Menomeneyes [Menominee] & Ottawas of La Bay. Before your Arrival at this Place, I had a General Meeting with your Brothers the Ottawas, Chippeweighs, & c wherein I explained to them the Occasion of my coming here, and the cause that the Army was going against our Enemies, that the Officers commanding the Troops was directed to go against those Nations, who continued obstinate,⁶²⁴

One of the unstated purposes of the gathering at Niagara was for the British to show their strength. However, this show of force was also used to show the King’s mercy and capacity to forgive. In this regard, the information obtained from the Spirit Mishiikenh (Snapping Turtle) at the shaking tent ceremony in Sault Ste. Marie proved to be true. Mishiikenh had travelled south to determine whether the British had assembled an army and he was also asked how many soldiers there were. Mishiikenh reported to the chiefs and warriors at the Sault that the British were assembling an army and that there

⁶²² At a Conference with the Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Nipissins & c in the presence of the Six Nations. July 12th 1764 P.M., Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 272.

⁶²³ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada*, 175-6.

⁶²⁴ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyes, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 278–81.

were more red coats at Montreal than there were leaves on the trees.⁶²⁵ He advised the chiefs that they would never be able to defeat them all. Recall also that Mishiiken was asked if Sir William would accept the Anishinaabeg as friend or foe, and Mishiiken said that Sir William had his kettles lit and was ready to accept the people as friend. Despite this assurance by the Mishiiken, the chiefs and warriors who had accompanied Alexander Henry were reluctant to cross the river once they arrived at Niagara for fear of retribution.

However, the chiefs and warriors were compelled to come to Niagara to trade because of the lack of goods in their territories as a result of the stoppage of traffic due to the war. Many of the chiefs, warriors and deputies came and requested trade. The Odaawaa of Michilimackinac made these intentions very clear on July 19, after making mention of their deeds conveying the surviving members of the garrison at Michilimackinac to Montreal, their speaker stated,

Brother – [...] We hope you will pity us and that we may meet with the same treatment here we did last year at Montreal, when we escorted the garrison there. We are in great **want of Trade** [emphasis added]. Our families in much distress. We beg you will permit us to trade as we have some furs and that the Trade may be reasonable. We hope the Traders will take a Buckskin as a Beaver and two doeskins as of the same value. Also, four raccoons for a beaver and one bearskin, two small beavers to be as one and that you will take our deerskins. *A Belt of 8 rows.*⁶²⁶

The Odaawaa stated that they were in want of trade and this appears to have been the principal reason that they did not join the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac when the Ojibwe took Fort Michilimackinac. The Odaawaa even suggested a range of prices. To this request for trade, Sir William responded that he had wanted a more thorough answer to his question. He wanted the Odaawaa to provide names of the instigators and to turn them in as well as return prisoners, panis (slaves), and deserters. He also wanted the Odaawaa and others to make restitution to the traders, but did not really state what form that restitution would take. Sir William then allowed a trade for two days, partly as a reward for the Odaawaa's past actions. He strictly limited the trade to two days and

⁶²⁵ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada*, 171.

⁶²⁶ At a congress with the Ottawas & c at Niagara on July 19th 1764, LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 139–44, C-1222.

“after which all Trade must be stopped until our Enemies are reduced. It is therefore your Interest to support us in bringing them to submission. They are your enemies as well as ours. They are the occasion of your being so poor and without Trade and until they are humbled, you cannot expect it as formerly.”⁶²⁷ Sir William tried to use the trade as means to build allegiance but also to create division amongst the Western Nations.

Later that month, the Toughkamawiman⁶²⁸ arrived from Rainy Lake (near present day Fort Frances) and made a similar request to Sir William, “Brother - We are therefore come down through a bad and Briary Road to see the English, and to desire Trade.” Shuckey, the speaker then laid down a large beaver blanket and a calumet.⁶²⁹ The trade was very important and it was one of the negotiating chips that the British could and did use effectively against the Western Nations. Many of the Western Nations had actually brought furs down with them in anticipation of trading. This is reminiscent of the Great Peace of 1701 at Montreal when Governor Calliere set aside a few days for an open trade.⁶³⁰

Trade was so important that two years later (1766), Odaawaa Chief Pontiac thanked Sir William for re-establishing the trade at Detroit. He said, “Father – We thank you for the goodness you have for us in sending plenty of merchandize to Detroit, this will be a great means of promoting a good understanding between us, as it will enable us to cloath our children well.”⁶³¹ The key point is that trade was “a great means of promoting a good understanding between” them.

The outcome of the treaty gathering at Niagara was that many of the Western Nations entered into the Covenant Chain with the British. From the Native point of

⁶²⁷ At a congress with the Ottawas & c at Niagara on July 19th 1764, LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 139–44, C-1222.

⁶²⁸ Recall that Derouen (Drouin) referred to these people as “Saulteaux.”

⁶²⁹ July 27th [1764] Sachims and Chiefs of Toughkamawiman waited on Sir Wm. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 298.

⁶³⁰ Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 127.

⁶³¹ Proceedings at a Congress with Pontiac and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Pautawattamies, Hurons and Chippawaes begun Tuesday July 23, 1766. E. B. O’Callaghan, Berthold Fernow, John Romeyn Brodhead, eds., *Documents relative to the colonial history of the State of New York; procured in Holland, England, and France*, 15 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons, Printers, 1853-1887), 7: 859.

view, the outcomes meant that they maintained their freedom, their land, re-established the trade and re-established the annual delivery of presents. The British established, in their eyes, a means to orderly and legally purchase lands west of the Appalachians, and south of the Hudson's Bay Company claim.

The most succinct terms of the proposed treaty were provided by Sir William Johnson to General Gage in February 1764. Sir William wrote that the proposed peace treaty should "assure them of a Free Fair & open trade, at the principal Posts, & a free intercourse, & passage into our Country, That we will make no Settlements or Encroachments contrary to Treaty, or without their permission. That we will bring to justice any persons who commit Robberys [sic] or Murders on them & that we will protect & aid them against their & our Enemys [sic] & duly observe our Engagements with them."⁶³² Sir William called this a "Treaty of Offensive and Defensive Alliance."

The Treaty of Niagara does not have a document, per se, that detailed the terms and was signed and countersigned by the British and the chiefs of the Western Confederacy. However, early at the congress, Sir William met with the Six Nations and some members of the Western Confederacy (specifically the Wendat) and referred to an earlier meeting,

I now meet you in conformity to your transactions at my house last April and to give you the highest proof of his Majesty's Clemency. I am impowered [sic] to treat with you concerning peace agreeable to the Preliminary Articles then signed by your Deputys [sic] all which I expect will be fully complied with for without it you must expect to meet with the punishment which you undoubtedly deserve... whilst my business is to settle matters with you here on so good a footing as to prevent all quarrels hereafter and secure to themselves that happiness & security which without us they can never enjoy, there only remains on your parts a strict compliance with your engagements & that you will strictly conform to & subscribe to the sevl [sic] Articles of peace agreeable to the Preliminary signed by your Deputys [sic] before me.⁶³³

⁶³² Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

⁶³³ Niagara 8th July 1764, At a convention of the Chiefs and Warriors of the Six Nations & Western Nations, LAC, MG 19, F35, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Series 1, Lot 619, pp: 1 – 2.

It is unclear if Sir William was talking only to the Six Nations or if he included members of the Western Confederacy, but the Wendat had signed articles peace.⁶³⁴ However, as more representatives from the west arrived, Sir William met Chiefs of the Odaawaa, Ojibwe of Toronto, Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissing, Algonquin, Menominee, Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada on July 17, 1764 and stated his purposes for inviting them to Niagara:

I was to receive the Concessions of, and Settle a Peace with those Nations who were disposed to Yield, after which you should all have Trade; but 'till that was effected, his Majesty would not permit it, and that some of the young Men Should Join our Troops, and Indians, as a proof of their Sincerity and Attachment, and that if they expected a Trade upon good Terms, they must admit of a Fort at Michillimackinac [sic], with the particulars of which, and their Compliances, you are all acquainted. I shall therefore, now speak to you in general on the Subject of this Meeting. *A Belt*⁶³⁵

The first and main purpose of the meeting was to secure peace. After peace was accomplished, the trade could be re-established and in order to do that, the Western Nations had to allow the Fort at Michilimackinac to be safely garrisoned again. Sir William continued to detail further details of the terms of the peace.

Brethren - All that is wanting on your Parts to attain this is that you never more listen to Stories told you by People who have nothing to do with the Management of Indian Affairs, that you shut your Ears against all bad Birds, and be no longer deluded by their Whistling, that, when any evil Reports prevail, you cast your Eyes to the Eastward, where you will find me ready to clear up mistakes, and do you Justice, that you love the English and Consider them as Brethren, that you take care of our Post at Michillimackinac [sic] and the Soldiers, and Traders there, and that you keep the Sky clear, and the Waters of the Lakes, and Rivers smooth, and even so that they may come to that Country without any Danger, & lastly that you do all in your power to procure Restitution for the Trader's Losses, and to restore to them their Panis, and other Prisoners, now amongst your People. If you will do all this and engage to pay due Regard for the future to what I have now Recommended, I shall once more receive you into an Alliance with the English,

⁶³⁴ O'Callaghan, et. al., eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York*, Vol. 7: 650–1.

⁶³⁵ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneys, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 11: 278 – 281. It should be noted that Pontiac and his most ardent supporters did not “yield” and did not attend the Treaty of Niagara.

and take care that every thing on their parts shall be strictly adhered to, to which end his Majesty purposes a Regulation of Indian Trade to correct all Abuses.

*A Belt*⁶³⁶

In this specific speech, Sir William paraphrased most parts of the contents of his letter to Gage that he had written in February of 1764. Firstly, Sir William “assure[d] them of a Free Fair & open trade, at the principal Posts,” when he stated that His Majesty would regulate the Indian Trade and correct all abuses. Secondly, he assured them of “a free intercourse, & passage into our Country,” which was stated somewhat backwards in that Sir William actually stated that the Western Nations were to “keep the Sky clear, and the Waters of the Lakes, and Rivers smooth, and even so that they [soldiers] may come to that Country without any Danger,” but the converse had been stated earlier when Sir William had cleared the road to his place and to Niagara. Thirdly, Sir William covered the provision “that we will bring to justice any persons who commit Robberys [sic] or Murders on them & that we will protect & aid them against their & our Enemys,” by stating to the chiefs that “you cast your Eyes to the Eastward, where you will find me ready to clear up mistakes, and do you Justice.” Two days later, Sir William had stated again that if the chiefs agreed to these terms (restitution to traders etc), divulged the names of perpetrators, and gave up panis (captured slaves), then he said, “I shall give you the great Covenant Chain Belt, and I expect a large one from you which shall be carefully preserved. I shall also as a Proof of his Majesty’s Bounty and Esteem give you a Present and some Rum, that your People on your return may see the kind treatment you have met with here and I hope you will continue to deserve it.”⁶³⁷ A little extra incentive, the rum, was added to bring the deal to a closure. Recall again, that the spirit Mishiikenh had told the chiefs at Sault Ste. Marie that Sir William would accept them as friends and “fill their

⁶³⁶ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyes, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 11: 281.

⁶³⁷ At a congress with the Ottawas & c at Niagara on July 19th 1764, LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, p. 139 – 144, C-1222.

canoes with presents; [...] and large barrels of rum, such as the stoutest of the Indians will not be able to lift.”⁶³⁸ The information solicited from the spirit was coming to light.

On July 31, 1764 Sir William crossed the Niagara river and went to see the Western Nations at their camp on what is now called the “Canadian side” of the river with the 1764 wampum belt specially crafted for the occasion and stated,

Brothers of the Western Nations, Sachims, Chiefs & Warriors - You have now been here for several days, during which time we have frequently met to Renew, and strengthen our Engagements, & you have made so many Promises of your Friendship, and Attachment to the English that there now only remains for us to exchange the great Belt of the Covenant Chain that we may not forget our mutual Engagements.

I now therefore present you the great Belt by which I bind all your Western Nations together with the English, and I desire you will take fast Hold of the same, and never let it slip, to which end I desire that after you have shewn this Belt to all Nations you will fix one end of it with the Chipaweighs at St. Mary's, whilst the other end remains at my House.—and moreover I desire that you will never listen to any News which comes to any other Quarter, if you do, it may shake the Belt.—but keep your Eyes upon me, & I shall be always ready to hear your Complaints, procure you Justice, or rectify any mistaken Prejudices, if you will strictly Observe this, you will enjoy the favour of the English, a plentiful Trade, and you will become a happy People.—On the contrary, if you listen to any People whatsoever, who do not like the English you will lose all these Blessings, and be reduced to Beggary & Want—

I hope you are a People too wise to prefer War, and Ruin to Peace & Prosperity.—you have already felt some Wants, which must make you sensible of the necessity you are under to respect, and Esteem the English.—

I Exhort you then to preserve my Words in your Hearts, to look upon this Belt as the Chain which binds you to the English, and never to let it slip out of your Hands.

Gave the great Covenant Chain, 23 Rows broad, & the Year
1764 worked upon it, worth above. £30.⁶³⁹

Sir William requested that one of the belt be fixed with “Chipaweighs at St. Mary's, whilst the other end remains at my House” but an unidentified Ojibwe Chief stood up and addressed Sir William and stated in front of the whole assembly that “Brother - I am of Opinion that it is best to keep the Belt of the Covenant Chain at

⁶³⁸ Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada*, 171.

⁶³⁹ July the 31st A.M.: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 309–12.

Michilimackinac, as it is the Centre, where all our People may see it.”⁶⁴⁰ The belt was therefore entrusted to the Odaawaa at Michilimackinac. Sir William then gave medals to the chiefs and “treated them all wth [sic] liquor & c.”⁶⁴¹

The next day Sir William met with the chiefs of the Western Confederacy again and one of the chiefs, who was unidentified but was noted to be from Michilimackinac, assured Sir William that the Western Confederacy would hold fast to the Covenant Chain, ignore ‘bad birds’ and that if anything was disturbing they would “cast” their eyes to him. The chief gave a wampum belt of 13 rows (no image or motif or colour recorded) and then gave a second wampum belt of 14 rows with white triangles.⁶⁴² Sir William assured the chiefs that their wampum belts would be kept at his house “which was the only Place for Transacting Indian Affairs, and where everything relative thereto, remained upon Record.”⁶⁴³ Sir William once again gave testimonials (chiefs certificates), medals and gorgets to numerous (but unlisted) “head warriors and Sachims.”⁶⁴⁴

In 1761 at Detroit, the western confederacy had spoken on numerous belts and delivered them to Sir William Johnson. The Wendat Chief Anaiasa answered Sir William with 14 belts, no description of imagery or colour was provided with the belts. The Odaawaa speaker Macatepilesis (Makadebinesi)⁶⁴⁵ replied on behalf of the Odaawaa and he delivered three wampum belts of no description. Makade-binesi stated to Sir

⁶⁴⁰ July the 31st A.M.: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 311.

⁶⁴¹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 311.

⁶⁴² July the 31st A.M.: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 311.

⁶⁴³ At a Conference with the Western Indians, Niagara August the 2d 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 312–13.

⁶⁴⁴ At a Conference with the Western Indians, Niagara August the 2d 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 313.

⁶⁴⁵ Macatepilesis would be rendered today as Makade-binesi because there currently is no “l” in the Ojibwe or Odaawaa language. Historically, the Jesuits recorded an “l” dialect of Odaawaa. Thwaites 1899, *JR*, Vol. LV, 99 contains numerous examples, especially toponyms such as Missilimackinac/ Michilimackinac which was reportedly later pronounced as Mi-shi-ne-macki-naw-g o. Blackbird, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, 20. And names of nations Kilisteno = kinestino). Makade-binesi has been translated as Black Hawk and as Black Thunderbird. Binesi in Ojibwe refers to a raptor as opposed to the generic word for birds ‘bineshiinh’ meaning little bird.

William that they were “determined as one man to hold fast by the Covenant Chain forever,” but then later in the council addressed the Mohawks in attendance and interestingly stated, “Brethren – You now see that we have linked ourselves with a Chain of Iron to our Brethren the English and to you, and we hope that no person shall be able to break that Chain or dissolve our Union.”⁶⁴⁶ Recall that Bruce Morito had stated that the beginning of the relationship was usually a trade agreement symbolized by rope, once the treaty became one of military alliance the ties that bound were described as iron, then when the relationship became a political one it was represented by a silver covenant chain. Clearly, in 1761, the Odaawaa did not view the relationship as one of silver yet.

This changed when the Odaawaa and others arrived at Niagara in 1764. On July 13, 1764 Sir William Johnson met with the Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Nipissing and others in the presence of the Six Nations at Niagara. Sir William gave the Western Nations 3 strings of wampum and four belts of wampum. An unidentified Ojibwe chief “Gave a bunch of wampum”. The next day an Ojibwe chief “Gave skins” and a “Beaver Blanket” to Sir William.⁶⁴⁷ In a general congress dated July 17 – August 4, 1764, Sir William addressed the Odaawaa, Ojibwe of Toronto, Lake Huron and Lake Superior, the Nipissing, Algonquins, Menominee, the Odaawaa of La Baye, the Six Nations and the “Indians of Canada.” He delivered four wampum belts that had no description. Sir William met with various members of the Western Confederacy and he finally mentioned the Covenant Chain on July 19, “Soon as matters are entirely settled and that you have answered what I last said to you, I shall give you the great Covenant Chain Belt and I expect a large one from you which shall be carefully preserved.”⁶⁴⁸ Sir William was given a belt of seven rows, three belts of eight rows, a belt of 11 rows and a belt of 10 rows, none of which had a description of colour or imagery.⁶⁴⁹ In reply Sir William gave them a belt, but not the covenant chain, just one of no description.

⁶⁴⁶ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁶⁴⁷ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 267–73.

⁶⁴⁸ At a Congress with the Ottawas & c at Niagara on July 19th 1764. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 286.

⁶⁴⁹ LAC RG 10, Vol. 7, pp: 139-44.

On July 21, 1764, Sir William met with the Menominee and gave five wampum belts. Then on July 27 Sir William met with the Toughkamawiman (Rainy Lake Ojibwe) and was given a large beaver blanket and a calumet. Later that same day Sir William met with the Sac, Fox, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) and was given “a black belt green painted.”⁶⁵⁰

Another belt was given on July 29, 1764 by Sir William Johnson to the Mississaugas of Credit, or as Johnson recorded, to “Chippaweighs living near Toronto.” The chief, Wabbicomiccott presented his certificate and then gave Johnson a calumet and declared his determination to “hold the English fast by the Hand.” Sir William acknowledged Wabbicomiccott’s service at Detroit in 1761 and then he presented “a large Belt with a Figure representing Niagara's large House, and Fort, with two Men holding it fast on each side, and a Road through it, and desired that he, Wabbicomicot, and his People would come, and settle at their old Place of Abode near Toronto, and have a carefull eye always over said Fort, and Carrying Place, and see that nothing should hurt either, as they must feel the Loss as well as the English.”⁶⁵¹ This is the only other belt presented at Niagara in 1764 that has any significant description. Many belts were exchanged and presented but with minimal description. On July the 31st Sir William “went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their Camp” and “gave the great Covenant Chain, 23 Rows broad, & the Year 1764 worked upon it, worth above £ 30.”⁶⁵²

The Polishing and Strengthening of the Covenant Chain: 1764 – 1852

The period immediately following the Treaty of Niagara was still a period of uncertainty for the British because Pontiac and his allies had not entered into the peace. In fact, historian Jon Parmenter called the Treaty of Niagara a failure for Sir William Johnson because none of the Chiefs and Warriors who actually fought against the British attended.⁶⁵³ Only after the recalcitrant chiefs and nations had witnessed the changed

⁶⁵⁰ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 301.

⁶⁵¹ At Conference with the Toughkinawinan Indians on Saturday July 28th, at Niagara, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 303-9.

⁶⁵² Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 309.

⁶⁵³ Jon Parmenter, “Pontiac’s War: Forging New Links in the Anglo-Iroquois Covenant Chain, 1758-1766” *Ethnohistory* 44 (1997: 617-54), 632.

behaviour of the British did they join the Covenant Chain at the Treaty of Oswego in 1766.⁶⁵⁴

Up in the *pays d'en haut* the Ojibwe who had attacked Fort Michilimackinac once again expressed their disaffection with the British and rumours of a renewed “Indian War” were circulating in 1768. Major Robert Rogers was charged with treason and arrested, which angered Ojibwe chiefs Minweweh, Mongamick and Bonnair, all of whom had “thrown away their English colours in the Lake and [they] invited the Ottawa nation to feast with them.”⁶⁵⁵ Major Rogers was sent to Montreal. The chiefs’ grievances were settled and they eventually rejoined the Covenant Chain as well. From 1764 to 1781 the designated council fire of the King was at Michilimackinac, and that was where the presents were distributed. For strategic purposes, the council fire was moved in 1781 from Michilimackinac to Mackinac Island by order of Commanding officer Patrick Sinclair.⁶⁵⁶ As a testament to the manner in which peace under the Covenant Chain was conducted and clemency extended, the 1781 Michilimackinac treaty was signed by a former enemy, Ojibwe Chief Kitchie-Negou.⁶⁵⁷ This is the same Ojibwe Chief who was known by the English as “the Grand Sable” (Gichi-negaw “Great Sand”). Seventeen years earlier Kitchie-Negou arrived at Michilimackinac after the fort had already been taken and despite his lateness, or perhaps because of it, Kitchie-negou took 5 (or 7) British captives and killed them.⁶⁵⁸ The fact that this chief was not brought to “English justice” demonstrates the power relation in the *pays d'en haut*. It also demonstrates that the British adhered to the principles laid out in the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara, which precluded such action.

⁶⁵⁴ Parmenter, “Pontiac’s War.” For the treaty council proceedings consult O’Callaghan, et. al., eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York*, 7: 854–67.

⁶⁵⁵ Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations & the British Empire* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 238.

⁶⁵⁶ David A. Armour and Keith R. Widder, *At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution* (Mackinac Island State Park Commission, 1978), 127.

⁶⁵⁷ The 1781 Treaty of Michilimackinac is Treaty Number 1 in Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, Volume 1, Treaties 1–138* (Ottawa: Brown Chamberlain, 1891), 1. Also consult Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 166.

⁶⁵⁸ Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow*, 152. Widder noted that Alexander Henry stated that Grand Sable killed 7 and Captain Etherington said Grand Sable killed 5 people.

Similarly, Ojibwe Chief Matchekewis (Majiikwis, Machiquawish, Matchekewis, Madjeckewiss, etc) also participated, and in fact, assisted in orchestrating the attack on Fort Michilimackinac.⁶⁵⁹ He too was initially a sworn enemy of the British, however, in 1774 Arent De Peyster took over command of Fort Michilimackinac, was introduced to Matchekewis and apparently won him over. Matchekewis frequented Michilimackinac but resided at Saginaw and Thunder Bay, which is on the south shore of Lake Huron.⁶⁶⁰ On July 16, 1774, Ojibwe Chief Matchekewis stated his fidelity to the King and expressed his regret for having played a lead role in the taking of Fort Michilimackinac 11 years earlier.⁶⁶¹ At this council the Odaawaa brought forth a belt that came from the Mohawks of New York. A runner had also brought a message from the Potawatomi from St. Joseph (lower Lake Michigan) that they too had received large wampum belts from the Delaware and Shawnee who were seeking allies against the “Virginians.”⁶⁶² The American Revolution had reached the *pays d'en haut* and the British were to test the provisions of the “Treaty of Offensive and Defensive Alliance” entered into by Sir William Johnson. Ojibwe Chief Matchekewis played a significant role in recruiting warriors to make the long trek to go fight the Americans.⁶⁶³

The rebellion of the “Virginians” prompted the British to call upon their allies and to activate one of the ‘mutual engagements’ (provisions) of the Treaty of Niagara, which was military service. On June 17, 1776, the Michilimackinac Commandant ordered that a war “party of local Ottawa and Chippewa” be assembled and then proceed to Montreal to assist in driving out the ‘Virginians’ and ‘Bostonians.’⁶⁶⁴ The war party’s route to Montreal was the route used by fur traders, along the north shore of Lake Huron, to French River, then along the Ottawa River to Montreal. The war party under the able

⁶⁵⁹ David A. Armour, “Madjeckewiss,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003, accessed July 2, 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/madjeckewiss_5E.html.

⁶⁶⁰ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 15.

⁶⁶¹ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 15.

⁶⁶² Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 20.

⁶⁶³ Armour, “Madjeckewiss,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.

⁶⁶⁴ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 54.

leadership of Charles Langlade, was to join the British forces against the Americans.⁶⁶⁵ Before seeing the war party off, Michilimackinac Commander de Peyster stated to them that the King was looking after their best interests. He stated that the ‘Bostonians’ just wanted their land. He further stated that the fur trade would be stopped, and goods the Anishinaabeg relied upon would be in short supply if the Americans were not stopped. Again, De Peyster invoked the Chain of Friendship entered into at Niagara and implied that the British, not the Americans, would treat the Western Nations as autonomous, as per the Covenant Chain.

Once again, the Anishinaabeg from the *pays d’en haut* were required to assist in the effort to fight the rebels. On May 29, 1778 De Peyster sent 110 warriors to Montreal, he was also expecting another force from the Green Bay area, which was to be led by Charles Langlade and Charles Gautier. Langlade and Gautier arrived at Michilimackinac with several hundred warriors, 210 of which were Sioux, Sac, Fox and Menominee. By the end of June 1778, an estimated 550 chiefs and warriors from the Michilimackinac borderland had departed for Montreal to fight as allies of their Great Father the King of England. Again, this was done in fulfillment of one of the ‘mutual engagements’ entered into at the Treaty of Niagara, the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance. The warriors and chiefs were not conscripted. Unfortunately, the British army did not know how to utilize this force, and after thanking them for showing up, most were sent back home.⁶⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the commandant at Michilimackinac had to provision the wives of these warriors, as well as pay the chiefs and warriors, which had become a large expense due to the duration of absence from home and distance covered. One war party returned to Michilimackinac from Montreal, their clothes were rags, their guns and canoes needed repair and they demanded payment for service, which was provided.

As the war progressed, the rebels achieved some key victories at which point the Americans started to court the Anishinaabeg as allies. Some Potawatomi accepted belts

⁶⁶⁵ Michael A. McDonnell, “Charles-Michel Mouet de Langlade: Warrior, soldier, and intercultural “window” on the sixty years’ war for the Great Lakes” in *The Sixty Years War for the Great Lakes, 1754 – 1814*, edited by David Curtis Skaggs and Larry L. Nelson, 79 – 104 (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 95.

⁶⁶⁶ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 81.

from the rebels and this shook the confidence the northern Anishinaabeg had in their British Father. Coupled with the fact that the chiefs and warriors felt that the presents offered did not commensurate with the roles they played, the Anishinaabeg started to 'loosen their grip' on the chain of friendship. Some long-standing allies started to express hesitancy to travel so far for so little in return.⁶⁶⁷ This reminded the British that the Anishinaabeg, despite being allies, were not British subjects and maintained their independence. The Anishinaabeg's autonomy remained intact, which was also one of the principles of the Treaty of Niagara. The British continued to tell the Anishinaabeg that the Americans would make slaves of them. The converse of this message is that the British would not "make slaves" of the Anishinaabeg, that is, the British recognized the autonomy and independence of the Western Nations.

The Anishnaabeg continued to complain about the quality and quantity of presents but in 1782, Indians from the nexus of the Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior answered the call again and they joined the British on a raid into Ohio and Kentucky.⁶⁶⁸ The distance the warriors traveled was great and it is a testament to the diplomacy of commanding officers at Michilimackinac as well as the strength of the Covenant Chain and the annual delivery of presents that assisted in securing the services of the Anishinaabe allies.

In 1783 peace was established, trade could proceed, and the British could start to save funds by distributing fewer presents.⁶⁶⁹ However, the British were correct to fear that once the Western Nations heard the terms of peace and that they would turn on them and plunder the traders and possibly even take over the garrisons again. To prevent this General Haldimand wrote a speech that was directed to the nations around Michilimackinac explaining "that the King still considered them as his children," and that "He would continue to protect them" and would continue to send traders into their country.⁶⁷⁰ Ojibwe Chief Matchekewis continued to fight the 'Big Knives' in the Ohio

⁶⁶⁷ McDonnell, "Charles-Michel Mouet de Langlade," 96.

⁶⁶⁸ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 178.

⁶⁶⁹ R. White, *The Middle Ground*, 405.

⁶⁷⁰ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 188.

but finally made peace with the Americans at the Treaty of Greenville.⁶⁷¹ In fact many of the Odaawaa and Ojibwe from the nexus of the northern Great Lakes continued to fight the Americans.⁶⁷²

The Americans continued to push and expand westward. The Western Confederacy attempted to check that expansion and sought aid, particularly in arms, ammunition, and provisions, and even British soldiers in the field. However, the British did not want to breach the Treaty of Paris with the Americans, yet they wanted to show their Western allies that they still adhered to the Covenant Chain. The British walked a delicate line, supplying their allies as per the provisions of the Treaty of Niagara, yet, not overtly arming the enemies of the Americans.

The first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, was then the representative of the Crown in Upper Canada and he took pains to learn the diplomatic protocol the British engaged in with the Six Nations and Western Nations. Lieutenant Governor Simcoe admittedly wanted to reclaim territory “lost” to the Americans. Simcoe faced American charges that he was supplying provisions and arms to the Western Nations for purposes of war. Simcoe was warned by his superiors to use more discretion, in response he asserted on January 27th, 1793, that he had explained to the American diplomat that delivering presents to the Western Nations was a long-standing practice. Simcoe reported “I have endeavoured to impress upon him by Extracts from Sir William Johnson’s Opinions, that our giving Provisions & Necessaries to Indians, as Possessors of the Posts, **is the result of ancient & undeviating System** [emphasis added], not directed by temporary Motives, & that the Military Orders of these Posts, are to give them on whatsoever Account they Assemble, such Supplies as may be required.”⁶⁷³ In Simcoe’s opinion, informed by reading Sir William Johnson’s papers,

⁶⁷¹ United States of America, *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, Vol. 1, 4th Congress, First Session, “Treaty of Greenville,” 579. Armour, “Madjeckewiss,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.

⁶⁷² Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 196.

⁶⁷³ John G. Simcoe to Alured Clarke, Navy Hall, January 27, 1793. E. A. Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents Relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada. Vol. I* (Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, ON, 1923), I: 281.

delivering the “presents” at the posts was not a move instituted by the British in order to arm the Western and Six Nations when convenient, rather it was part of a long standing system, that long standing system was actually the Treaty of the Covenant Chain, which was extended to the Western Nations at Niagara in 1764. The phrase “as Possessors of the Post” also harkens back to the speeches of the various chiefs who had stated to Sir William Johnson and George Croghan that they would allow the British to occupy the forts with the proviso that they were to be provided with “proper returns” and that a “proper satisfaction” were given to them.⁶⁷⁴

The British were covertly inciting the Western Nations to resist American expansion. The British, however, did not want to get into another war. They armed the Western Nations as well as select members of the Six Nations and met frequently with chiefs and warriors to strategize on keeping the Ohio country out of American hands. The Western Confederacy, under the leadership of the Shawnee War Chief Blue Jacket and the Miami Chief Little Turtle, delivered two successive and decisive blows against the American army, one against General Harmar⁶⁷⁵ and the second against General St. Clair.⁶⁷⁶ Taking lessons from these two battles, the Americans concentrated on training a more competent army and that task was assigned to Anthony Wayne.⁶⁷⁷ After months of training, General Anthony Wayne met the confederacy of Western Nations at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 20 August 1794 and soundly defeated the assembled forces. Members of the Western Confederacy retreated to the British Fort Miami on the Maumee River only to find that the gates had been locked.⁶⁷⁸ The British abandoned the confederacy at a critical moment: this seriously “shook the belt.” The British had to take measures to re-assure their allies that the Covenant Chain was still in effect.

⁶⁷⁴ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 160.

⁶⁷⁵ John Sugden, *Blue Jacket: Warrior of the Shawnees* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 105.

⁶⁷⁶ Sugden, *Blue Jacket*, 115–17.

⁶⁷⁷ Robert S. Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies: British Indian Policy in the Defence of Canada, 1774 – 1815* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 82.

⁶⁷⁸ Timothy D. Willig, *Restoring the Chain of Friendship: British Policy and the Indians of the Great Lakes 1783 – 1815* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 56.

Lieutenant Governor Simcoe met the Western Nations at the Confederacy's council fire at the Wendat town on 13th October 1794. The representative of the crown delivered a long speech to justify the perfidy of the British and vilify the Americans. First, Simcoe stressed that the Western Nations entered into an alliance with the British as an Independent people, that is, as autonomous people, at the time the British took over North America from the French.⁶⁷⁹ Simcoe claimed that this was enshrined in the Treaty of Paris, "In the Treaty between the English, the Conquerors, and the French, it was stipulated that your rights should be preserved, those rights which you enjoy as an **independent People** [emphasis added]."⁶⁸⁰ Not only did Simcoe state that this was enshrined in the 1763 Treaty of Paris but he also claimed that at the conclusion of the American Revolution, the King continued to view the Western Nations as autonomous and independent, "at the Peace your Father considered the Indian Nation as free and independent... he in no manner interfered in your rights admitted by European compacts as the Laws of Nations and undoubtedly those of nature."⁶⁸¹ The principle of independence and freedom, or autonomy, is a tenet of the Covenant Chain and the 1764 Treaty of Niagara, and Simcoe affirmed that the British continued to adhere to these principles. Governor Simcoe then directly tied his speech to the Covenant Chain by bringing up Sir William Johnson's name and attributing the long-standing friendship to the King's wisdom in selecting Sir William to broker that peace:

Children: Say! Why has their Friendships so long continued? It is, because the Wisdom of your Father appointed your late Superintendent, Sir William Johnson,

⁶⁷⁹ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794. Simcoe Papers, in E. A. Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents Relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada. Vol. III* (Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, ON, 1925 Vol. III, 1794 – 1795), III: 122.

⁶⁸⁰ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 122.

⁶⁸¹ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 123.

to hold a **Treaty** [emphasis added] with all your Nations to consult what was best for your general and particular interests.⁶⁸²

Governor Simcoe specifically called the agreement a Treaty, this is significant because by the time of the Robinson Treaties, agents of the Crown would diminish the agreement and call it a custom, and not a treaty.⁶⁸³ Lieutenant Governor Simcoe read the files of Sir William Johnson and immersed himself into a world of political diplomacy with Britain's allies. Simcoe also assured the assembled representatives of the Western Nations that the British had abided by the line stipulated since the Royal Proclamation, including the one established by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix:

Children: A Line between you and the British Colonies was then drawn agreeably to your pointing out and Inclination.

Children: The King's subjects were never suffered to pass this boundary and it would have continued at this day, had the King's people and those of the United States remained at one – they are now separate.⁶⁸⁴

Simcoe publicly claimed to affirm the Royal Proclamation as well as the “engagements” set out in the Covenant Chain, which included a recognition of land rights and ownership. The British through Simcoe this time, again accepted no blame or culpability, but freely assigned it elsewhere when Simcoe stated to those assembled that “the United States by a solemn Act formed the whole territory ceded or to be ceded by

⁶⁸² His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 122.

⁶⁸³ In 1836 Sir Francis Bond Head in reporting to his superiors refer to the delivery of presents as an “existing custom,” see Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, Vol. 34, Bond Head to Lord Glenelg Jan 14, 1836. Likewise, Thomas G. Anderson referred to the wampum belts as “two memoranda” that represented “all they know of the original engagements between the Government and themselves, as far as I am acquainted, is by tradition.” Thomas G. Anderson, Superintendent at Manitoulin; Answers to the queries proposed by the Commission on the Indian Department in the year 1840. D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay's, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

⁶⁸⁴ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 122.

your Nations in to various States... Land-jobbers immediately came in among you.”⁶⁸⁵ Simcoe firmly denied that the King had not looked after their territorial interests during the peace negotiations. In fact, he stated “Children: to incline the minds of your Chieftains to abandon & sell your Country falsehoods were propagated... Children: It is said that the King, your Father had ceded your Lands, ceded what neither He or his Predecessors had ever claimed.”⁶⁸⁶ In Simcoe’s rhetorical speech to the Western Nations, he stated that the British had not claimed their land. In other words, the British continued to acknowledge their title in all other areas, excluding those now claimed by the United States, but inclusive of Canada, and inclusively along the north shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior.

Simcoe said all of the right things. He performed the tasks that the chiefs and orators did at councils, that is outline and detail the history of British interaction with the Western nations, only he took the British perspective. Much of it, as the above excerpts demonstrate, was in line with the Chiefs’ understanding. Specifically, that the Western Nations maintained their autonomy and freedom as well as their title and ownership to the land. The Lieutenant Governor then asserted that the king, their great father, always had their best interests at heart and that his actions accordingly demonstrated this benevolence and protection:

Children: You must be convinced that your Father means everything for your welfare – I can only assure you that he will uniformly fulfill all his engagements with you, his Arms will at all times be ready to receive you and his territory open to protect and defend you from all his Enemies.

Children: The King, your Father, has always advised you to be strong & unanimous & at present it is requisite for me to repeat his constant advice to you, which is to unite as one man – With this Belt – therefore I now collect and bind you together, and recommend to you that friendship and unanimity which is

⁶⁸⁵ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe’s reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 122.

⁶⁸⁶ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe’s reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 123. The chiefs in subsequent councils however, communicated a different understanding of those same events.

absolutely necessary as well for your own interests as the general Welfare of the Country.⁶⁸⁷

The wampum belt Simcoe delivered re-pledged the Covenant Chain.⁶⁸⁸ The belt is white to indicate peace and purity of intentions. There are two men in the centre holding hands, just like many other Covenant Chain images, with white hearts (see Figure 16).

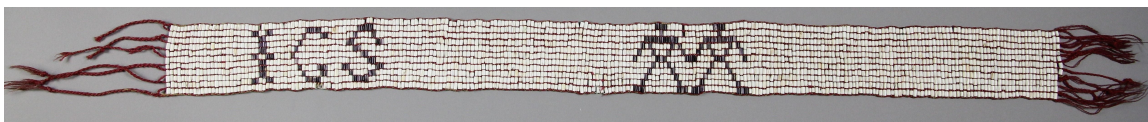


Figure 16: Wampum Belt presented to Western Nations by Governor Simcoe E201156, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Washington DC.

The initials IGS are on the left side of the belt.⁶⁸⁹ Thus, on behalf of the British, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe carried on a tradition of presenting wampum belts with the image of two men (nations) holding hands in friendship with his initials, just as Sir John Johnson had done before him.⁶⁹⁰ Governor Simcoe had polished and brightened the chain and the Western Nations outwardly at least, accepted Simcoe's belt and the strengthening of the alliance it represented.

The following year, the Western confederacy entered into treaty with the United States of America and signed the Treaty of Greenville with General Anthony Wayne on 3 August 1795. A wampum belt was given by the United States to the Western

⁶⁸⁷ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe's reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 122.

⁶⁸⁸ In a letter addressed to E.A. Cruickshank, the assistant curator of Ethnology at National Museum of Natural History stated that the wampum belt in its collections had been purchased from Mr. Willis N. Tobias of Moraviantown, Ontario in 1899. The people of Moraviantown are predominately Munsee and Delaware, both members of the Western Confederacy. W. deC. Ravenel to Cruickshank 9 December 1921 in the Simcoe Papers, years 1794 – 1795 in Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence*, III: 126.

⁶⁸⁹ The initials IGS were used in conformity with Latin practices which used the "I" for "J".

⁶⁹⁰ In 1780 Sir Guy Carleton had a belt made with his initials on it and delivered it to the Six Nations, "A Great Black belt of 16 rows, with an axe at one end & the letters G.I. at the other." LAC Superintendent of Indian Affairs, MG19, F35, Series 1, Lot 694, p.5.

Confederacy and entrusted to the Wendat, who were the “uncles” of the confederacy.⁶⁹¹ This peace did temporarily stem the flow of settlers, but many continued to transgress the stipulated boundary thus raising the ire of the Western Confederacy. Tensions started to escalate between the Americans and the Western Confederacy, a Prophet rose amongst the Shawnee and started to galvanize the Western Nations resolve to resist American expansion by halting any further land cessions. In 1805 warriors of the northern Odaawaa, Potowatomi and the Sauk came to the council fire at Amherstburg with a war pipe and requested the assistance of their Great Father to attack the Americans.⁶⁹² The following year, a delegation was again sent to Amherstburg and the speaker stated to the commanding officer, that “[we] still strictly attended to the advice you then gave us, notwithstanding the threats of the United States and the daily encroachments they make upon our country. Now in consequence of our uneasiness our chiefs have sent us again to you in expectation we should receive your answer to our speech of last year.”⁶⁹³ The superintendants of Indian Affairs were expressly admonished against committing to the Western Nations aspirations of going to war.⁶⁹⁴ The following year Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs William Claus met with the Western Nations at Amherstburg and delivered a wampum belt bearing his initials and the date 1807 (see Figure 17).

⁶⁹¹ United States of America. *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, Vol. 1: 579.

⁶⁹² At a meeting with the Saakies, Fox, Northern Ottawas and Poutawatamies held at Amherstburg on the 8th June 1805. LAC RG 10, Vol. 10, p. 9600 - 9610.

⁶⁹³ Speech of the Saakies and Potewatomies to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Amherstburg 28th June 1806. LAC, Claus Papers Vol. 9, p. 139.

⁶⁹⁴ Allen, *His Majesty's Indian Allies*, 112.

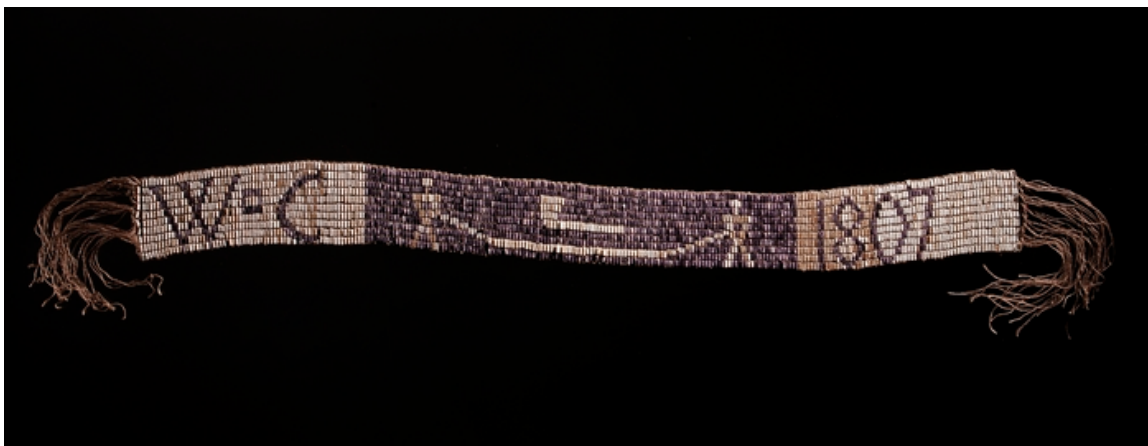


Figure 17: William Claus Belt, National Museum of American Indian, 1/4004

Once again, a representative of the crown had delivered a belt with their initials and the date of the transaction. Claus had “brightened and polished” the chain and encouraged the Western Nations a bit too much. His superior, Lieutenant Governor Francis Gore grew concerned and decided to meet with the nations at Amherstburg in 1808 in order to quell the fervour of the Western Nations. Runners were sent to the chiefs of various nations to meet the Lieutenant Governor and on 11 July 1808 at Amherstburg, Gore addressed the assembled chiefs who were waiting to hear a positive response to their request for assistance:

Children – It has been my wish and desire for a considerable time past to meet you in a General Council of all the Nations that I might personally assure you of the King your Father’s constant regard for his Indian Children; and to tell you that the Treaty made at Fort Stanwix in year 1768 is still held sacred by your Great Father, as well as the Treaty made by General Simcoe. Also to renew at this Fire place the antient [sic] Friendship, which has subsisted for so long a space of time, between your Great Father, your ancestors and yourselves and [even]tually and freely to communicate to each other in conformity to the engagements entered into by your Forefathers and the English Nation... With this Belt I therefore **renew all our ancient friendship & those ancient customs** [emphasis added], which have been so wisely framed and agreed to by the general consent of all the Nations in the Country... Children – I came not to invite you to take up the Hatchet but I wish to put you on your Guard against any attempt that may be made by any Enemy whatever to disturb the Peace of your Country... Children – Make my words known and send this Belt of Amity and friendship to all the Western Nations and others who are confederates with you. *Delivered Belt, 11550 Grains Wampum*⁶⁹⁵

⁶⁹⁵ Lieut Governor Gore’s Speech to the Western Confederacy, Amherstburg 11 July 1808. LAC RG 10, Vol. 11, pp: 9884 – 9889.

Lieutenant Governor, representative of the crown, publicly renewed the Covenant Chain or that “antient friendship,” as well as the treaty made by General Simcoe. Lieutenant Governor Gore gave the wampum to recommend that the young men and warriors obey their “Sachems and Chiefs” meaning that peace should prevail. The belt that he delivered fit the pattern set by his predecessors. Although the original belt has not been located, a sketch of the belt was made in the Claus papers which depicted two men at either end of the belt bound by a chain running through the middle of the belt with a heart in the middle (see Figures 18 and 19).

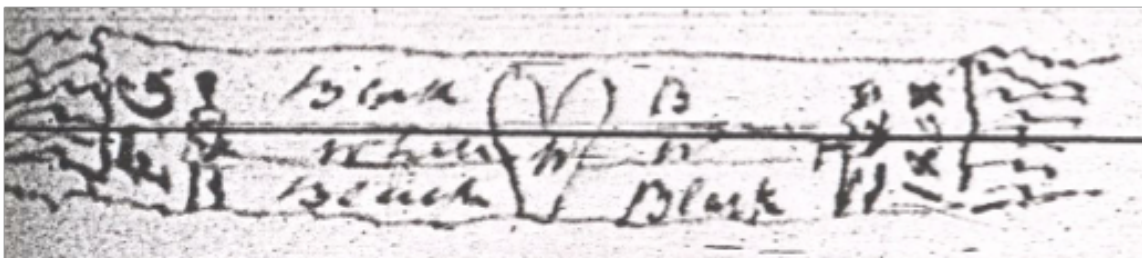


Figure 18: Sketch of 1808 Gore Wampum belt, Claus Papers.



Figure 19: Francis Gore Replica based upon description and bead count. Made by Brian Charles.

The initials FG and the year 1808 were woven into the belt at opposite ends to each other. Once again, the representative of the crown addressed the chiefs of the Western Nations and in open council publicly avowed and affirmed that the Covenant Chain and its tenets were upheld by the British.

War inevitably revisited North America. The Americans continued to push, and the Western Nations continued to push back. Great Britain finally had to also enter the fray. The Shawnee brothers Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa had adopted an idea that had been around since the time of General Simcoe, the idea of an “Indian country” that acted as a buffer state between the Americans and the British of Upper and Lower Canada. In a letter dated 9th December 1812, the Earl of Bathurst had advised the Colonial Administration of the Canadas that:

The extreme importance of securing during the continuance of hostilities with America the cordial cooperation of the Indian Tribes has been proved on so many occasions... I so entirely concur in the expediency of the suggestions contained in your dispatch as to the necessity of securing their Territories from encroachment

that I have submitted it to His Maj's Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs in order that whenever negotiations for Peace may be entered into the security of the Indian Possessions may not be either compromised or forgotten.⁶⁹⁶

In this letter the colonial administration was granted permission to live up to the tenets of the Covenant Chain and the Treaty of Niagara, specifically the tenet of providing "protection" to the Western Nations as well as recognizing land rights and ownership. The colonial administration took swift measures and appointed fur trader Robert Dickson to act as an "agent for the Western Nations" with the Odaawaa chief Amable Chevalier appointed to "accompany Mr. Dickson as a Lieut & Interpreter."⁶⁹⁷ The two were outfitted with a speech composed at headquarters and approved by signature of Major General de Rottenburg and Superintendent General John Johnson. The speech was crafted to woo the Western Nations to fight with the British not against them nor remain neutral. The British needed the Western Nations badly because they simply did not have the forces to counter an American invasion.⁶⁹⁸ The speech made mention of Sir John Johnson's father, Sir William Johnson:

Brothers, I have been to Quebec to see the Great Chief Sir George Prevost, who holds there the place of your Father and ours, the Great King George, that I might know from him everything which relates to War, which yours and our Enemies the Big Knives are carrying on against you & us, and I am returning with his Talk to all Indians[.] Hear then what he says, and let these Strings of Wampum open your Ears to his voice The Ottawas or Others.⁶⁹⁹

This opening statement established the validity of the speech and hearkened back to Sir William Johnson's admonition to only listen to people who had been delegated to speak to them about Indian Affairs. The second fact, seemingly innocuous, is the mention of "his voice the Ottawas." This is a direct reference to the Treaty of Niagara

⁶⁹⁶ Extract from Earl Bathurst's letter No. 15, in William Wood, ed., *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*, Volume III, Part II (Toronto, ON: Champlain Society, 1928), 718–19.

⁶⁹⁷ Quebec Jan'y 14, 1813 To Genl Sheaffe from M.S. Office, War of 1812, Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, Downloaded 2 February 2005. <https://clarke.cmich.edu/nativeamericans/mphc/documentsofwarof1812/robert217.jpg>.

⁶⁹⁸ Allen, *His Majesty's Indian Allies*, 111.

⁶⁹⁹ Speech of His Excellency Sir George Prevost, Baronet, Governor in Chief and Commander of the Forces in British North America, to the Deputation of Chiefs and Warriors of the Western Nations, Quebec on Thursday the 17th March 1814. LAC RG10, Vol. 12, pp: 10313 – 10316, C-11001.

when Sir William Johnson initially tried to give the belt to the Ojibwe at Sault Ste. Marie but the Ojibwe chief stood up and declared that the belt should be kept at Michilimackinac and was thus entrusted to the Odaawaa.⁷⁰⁰ The Odaawaa, as keepers of the belt, were designated as the “white bird” to whom all the Western Nations should direct their attention to whenever they had anything to say to their Great Father.⁷⁰¹ This was a tenet of the Treaty of Niagara and the Covenant Chain, the establishment of the proper channels of communication. So it was fitting that Fur Trader cum Agent for the Western Nations should have Amable Chevalier as his Interpreter because he was an Odaawaa. The two read the speeches at various places to various chiefs and warriors rounding up the forces. The next line in the official speech expressly mentioned Sir William Johnson:

My Children – It is now a longtime since you were adopted by me as my Children – Remember Sir William Johnson, he told you I never would forsake or abandon you, but on the Contrary, having pity on your wives and Children, I would send Traders amongst you with Cloathing [sic], and with Arms and Ammunition, that they might be covered, and provisions provided by your Young Men for their sustenance. How is it now? These Traders have been ruined and chased away from amongst you, and you are reduced to the hard necessity of making use of your Bows and Arrows for want of Powder to kill the Deer.⁷⁰²

In this speech the British invoked Sir William Johnson’s name, by this time, years after his death, he had become revered by the Western Nations. At the Treaty of Niagara Sir William had also stipulated that traders would be re-established in the country as the Western Nations required it. Trade goods and the provision of ammunition were often equated with less toil, in contrast to hunting with bows and arrows. The speakers, on behalf of the British, also made explicit reference to the Great Covenant Chain wampum belt:

⁷⁰⁰ July 31 [1764] Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their Camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 311.

⁷⁰¹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Michigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

⁷⁰² “Speech of Robert Dickson Esquire to Indian Tribes,” Major General Francis De Rottenburg, counter signed by Superintendent General of Indian Affairs John Johnson; To each of the tribes of Indians whom Mr. Dickson may have occasion to address, McCord Museum of Canadian History, M640, Montreal 18 January 1813. Reproduced in Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies*, Appendix C, 223-24.

But my Children, I have not nor will I lose hold of the Belt which has been so long among you from Sir William Johnson – on the contrary, I will now make it stronger by the belt which I now present to you, and never will I leave you but as, Your Father, see that Justice is done to you by the Big Knives and that your hunting Grounds shall be preserved for your use, and that of your Children agreeably to the Treaty made at Grenville with their General Wayne some years ago.⁷⁰³

The emissaries, Robert Dickson and Amable Chevalier, referenced the Covenant Chain Belt that the Odaawaa kept on behalf of the Western Confederacy and offered another belt to strengthen the original belt. Furthermore, the British had heeded the concerns expressed by the chiefs and knew that they wanted to retain and regain their lands. The British promised, by a belt of wampum, that the Western Nations “hunting grounds” were to be preserved for them and their children. The Odaawaa of Michilimackinac area had attended the Treaty of Greenville.⁷⁰⁴ The Odaawaa and the Western Nations had maintained records, met frequently to renew “engagements” and treaties, and likewise, superintendents of the British Indian Department maintained their records. The British then invoked, by wampum, a provision of the Treaty of Niagara, the treaty of “offensive and defensive” alliance,

My Children, with this Belt I call upon you to rouse up your young Warriors and to join my Troops with the red Coats, and your ancient Brethren the Canadians, who are also my Children, in order to defend your and our country, Your and our Wives and Children from becoming Carriers of Water to these faithless people – they must be told in a Voice of Thunder that the object of the war is to secure to the Indian nations the boundaries of their Territories, and that all those who may be found withing [sic] their boundaries, shall perish if they do not immediately remove.⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰³ “Speech of Robert Dickson Esquire to Indian Tribes,” McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal 18 January 1813. Reproduced in Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies*, Appendix C, 223-24.

⁷⁰⁴ At a council held at Michilimackinac on 15 October 1834, the Odaawaa Chief Chusco (Zhashkoonh Muskrat) said, “It is 40 winters since we first saw the Americans, when we first shook hands with you and smoked the pipe of peace with you, at Greenville Gen. Wayne the chief who led your soldiers drew lines across our lands, and they were agreed to.” National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) [of the United States], M1, 69: 75–6.

⁷⁰⁵ “Speech of Robert Dickson Esquire to Indian Tribes,” McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal 18 January 1813. Reproduced in Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies*, Appendix C, 223-24.

The British summoned the warriors to defend their independence by stating that they would otherwise become “carriers of water” for the Americans. The British also called upon the warriors to “secure to the Indian nations the boundaries of their Territories.” Again, the British stated that the land belonged to the “Indian nations,” a principle stated in the Royal Proclamation and agreed upon by the British when they extended the Covenant Chain:

And now my Children, I invite you to the War Feast of your Father, be then couragous [sic] and Stout hearted, and depend upon it that I shall hold firmly one end of the Belt whilst you hold the other which shall bind us to assist one another against our common Enemy.⁷⁰⁶

The long standing and oft used diplomatic metaphor associated with the Covenant Chain was then stated, that is holding one end of the belt firmly while the allies held the other end just as firmly. Also provided were mnemonic devices to memorialize the principles of the Covenant Chain representing that it had been renewed in 1813:

My Children, that you may bear in mind the Alliance now renewed between you and my White Children, I give you a Flag and a Medal to be preserved in your Nation forever: By looking at this Flag you will remember it came from your English Father, and when any of my Chiefs shall see it, they will be happy to take you by the hand and do you all the good they can.⁷⁰⁷

This scene is reminiscent of the conclusion of the Treaty of Niagara in 1764 where Sir William Johnson had awarded various chiefs “colours” (flags) and medals of various sizes to be preserved amongst their people.⁷⁰⁸ Tradition and continuity of forms were the hallmark of the oral tradition and wampum protocol.

The British continued to adhere to wampum protocol during the War of 1812. After the death of Tecumseh, Sir George Prevost, the governor-in-chief of British North America and Commander of the Forces, met with a deputation of Western Indians that included Odaawaa, Ojibwe, Sauk, Fox, and Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) among others and stated at Quebec on March 17, 1814,

⁷⁰⁶ “Speech of Robert Dickson Esquire to Indian Tribes,” McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal 18 January 1813. Reproduced in Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies*, Appendix C, 223-24.

⁷⁰⁷ “Speech of Robert Dickson Esquire to Indian Tribes,” McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal 18 January 1813. Reproduced in Allen, *His Majesty’s Indian Allies*, Appendix C, 223-24.

⁷⁰⁸ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 305, 307, 311.

My Children – Listen to my words, they are the words of truth, ... Our interests are the same. We must still continue to fight together for the king our great father considers you as his children and will not forget you or your interests at a Peace. But to preserve what we hold and recover from the enemy what belongs to us. We must make great exertions and I rely on your undaunted courage with the assistance of my chiefs and warriors to drive the Big Knives from off all our lands the ensuing summer.⁷⁰⁹

This time wampum protocol was conducted not by emissaries but by the Governor-in-Chief. Prevost, the representative of the Crown, again stated that the British would not forget their allies at the peace, and that they were to exert themselves to regain “our lands.” Reading this speech in isolation creates an erroneous impression that the Western Nations were fighting to regain British possessions as opposed to their own lands. However, coupling this speech with the previous speeches, especially that of de Rottenburg and delivered by Dickson, it becomes clear that the Western Nations were fighting for the “Indian Country” also referred to as the Indian Buffer State. Further, Prevost sealed his words with wampum,

My Children – You will not forget what I have said to you, this is my parole to the Nations (Here the Black Wampum was presented). Let them know what I have said. Tell them they shall not be forgotten by their Great Father, nor by me. (Here the Bloody Belt was presented).⁷¹⁰

The presentation of a belt of black wampum indicated an invitation to war and a belt painted red indicated active war. Prevost told the deputation to tell the other nations what he had said and that he, nor the King, would forget them at the Peace, which the nations had already understood to mean that they were to be treated as allies, maintain their autonomy and regain their territory.

This did not happen. By the time the news came that peace had been concluded, the Western Nations had thought that they had gained ground, especially since they had

⁷⁰⁹ Speech of His Excellency Sir George Prevost, Baronet, Governor in Chief and Commander of the Forces in British North America, to the Deputation of Chiefs and Warriors of the Western Nations, Quebec on Thursday the 17th March 1814. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 12, pp: 10313 – 10316.

⁷¹⁰ Speech of His Excellency Sir George Prevost, Baronet, Governor in Chief and Commander of the Forces in British North America, to the Deputation of Chiefs and Warriors of the Western Nations, Quebec on Thursday the 17th March 1814. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 12, pp: 10313 – 10316.

successfully repulsed the American effort to re-take Mackinac and Prairie du Chien.⁷¹¹ At the end of the war Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, William Claus, Sir William Johnson's grandson, convoked the council to bury the hatchet. By command of General Drummond, Claus was to assemble the chiefs and warriors and read the terms of the Treaty of Ghent. While delivering his message, Claus had to put a positive spin and stated at Burlington on 24 April 1815 that "I am further instructed to inform you that in making Peace with the Government of the United States of America your interests were not neglected, nor would peace have been made with them had they not consented to include you in the Treaty which they at first refused to listen to."



Figure: 20: Pledge of the Crown wampum belt, 1815

Despite the public speeches of the British the Western Nations had to contend with the reality of American hegemony and soon complained in council that the British had not represented their interests as they had promised to. Odaawaa chief Okedaa, with the 1764 Covenant Chain Wampum Belt in front of him, stated this in 1818 at Drummond Island,

Father - We of course supposed the enemy had been crying over your head (imploring) to be charitable to them, to make Peace, and save their lives - We were glad to hear the news, not doubting but that all you told us was now coming to pass.

Father - My heart now fails me. I can hardly speak - We are slaves and treated worse than dogs - Those bad spirits (the Americans) take possession of our lands without consulting us, [...]

Father - Our chiefs did not consent to have our lands given up to the Americans, but you did it, my Father, without even consulting us and in doing that you delivered us up to their mercy- They are enraged at us for having joined you in the play (war) and they treat us worse than dogs

Father - We implore you to open your ears, to listen to our Grievances, fulfill your promises, that we may be released from slavery, and enjoy the happiness we did previous to the War.⁷¹²

The Western confederacy had been led to believe that all they had been told "was now coming to pass." Chief Okedaa expressly stated that the British gave up the Western

⁷¹¹ Allen, *His Majesty's Indian Allies*, 164–5.

⁷¹² Council No. 1 Drummond Island, 7th July 1818. LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, file No. 20460.

Nations' land to the Americans, just as they had done after the American Revolution. They implored their Great Father to "fulfill your promises."

Likewise, the Sauk Chief Blackhawk also expressed surprise and dismay when he had heard that peace had been concluded, he stated that, "I believed that a happy day was at hand," but found that "these promised happy days have not yet made their appearance."⁷¹³ Representatives from two different nations both thought that the promises the British made, of retaining or regaining lands, and maintaining autonomy was at hand at the conclusion of the war. After all, they had won battles at Prairie du Chien and at Mackinac Island.⁷¹⁴

The British continued to use the annual delivery of presents to relay messages, promote their policies, and settle grievances in accordance with the Treaty of Niagara. The American threat had subsided to the point that the British did not deem it necessary to maintain the Western Confederacy as an auxiliary force and thus started to seek ways to make further cuts to the expenditures accompanying Indian Affairs. One targeted area included for cuts was the Indian Presents, both in the quantity and the quality. One of the reasons the Crown hired Sir Francis Bond Head to oversee the administration of reducing expenditures was because he had success in cutting expenditures in England.⁷¹⁵ Sir Bond Head received his instructions and detailed his plan of action. The first of which was to meet with the Western Nations at the annual delivery of presents at Manitoulin Island. He wrote to his superiors,

It is my intention ...to attend this most important meeting and I trust I shall by that time be competent to give your Lordship an opinion on the first question upon which I am to report, namely, how far it may be practicable with good faith and sound policy gradually to diminish the amount of presents with a view to the ultimate abrogation of the existing custom, and whether in the mean while they might not be commuted for money payments.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹³ Drummond Island 7th August 1817, Council No. 3, LAC RG 10, Vol. 32, pp: 19161 – 19168, C-11010.

⁷¹⁴ Allen, *His Majesty's Indian Allies*, 162.

⁷¹⁵ S. F. Wise, "HEAD, Sir FRANCIS BOND," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed August 12, 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/head_francis_bond_10E.html.

⁷¹⁶ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, Vol. 34, [Head no date], Bond Head to Lord Glenelg Jan 14, 1836.

Sir Francis Bond Head then departed for Manitoulin on his fact-finding mission but others arrived before he did. The annual delivery of presents had become a forum for various religious sects to come and proselytize and evangelize. The Methodist minister, Reverend James Evans reported that he himself had arrived at Manitoulin on Wednesday 3, August 1836. Evans described the scene of the “New Establishment” and noted that on Thursday 4 August 1836, “about ten of our brethren from Lake Superior,” had also arrived. The following day, Evans wrote that those Anishinaabeg who lived close to non-Natives were opposed to Christianity, in contrast he noted, “While those from Lake Superior, and the far west, are unprejudiced, and open to conviction, and many of them expressed their satisfaction in being informed that we propose visiting them in a tour around Lake Superior.”⁷¹⁷ The attendance of Lake Superior Ojibwe was also noted by the Reverend Adam Elliott who also attended the annual delivery of presents that year at Manitoulin, he wrote, “Many of the Chippewas were from Lake Superior as well as from parts adjacent to the Manitoulin Island.”⁷¹⁸

Reverend Evans reported that the sight of the Lieutenant Governor’s canoe caused a stir, and since it was Sunday, the Native and non-Native people were congregated and celebrating mass, some remained at the service, but others left to fire off a salute. Coming ashore, Sir Francis Bond Head later recalled that, “For a considerable time we indolently gazed at each other in dead silence... ‘the pipe of peace’ was introduced, slowly lighted, slowly smoked by one chief after another, and then sedately handed to me to smoke it too. The whole assemblage having, in this simple manner, been solemnly **linked together in a chain of friendship** [emphasis added].”⁷¹⁹ In this instance, Bond

⁷¹⁷ James Evans, “1836 Mission Tour of Lake Huron,” copied for the Manitoulin Historical Society by Frank A. Myers, and reprinted in *Gore Bay Recorder* issues of December 29, 1955 and January 5, 12, 19, 26, 1956 and *Little Current Expositor* issues January 5, 12, 19, 26 and February 2, 1956.

⁷¹⁸ Adam Elliott to Bishop Strachan, Tuscarora [Portage/ Passage] 12th June 1838, Ontario Archives, Strachan Papers, MS 35 Reel 3. In this same letter, Elliott noted that “members of Mr. MacMurray’s congregation did not attend the council,” meaning the Garden River and Batchewana bands. Therefore the Lake Superior bands refer to more northerly bands.

⁷¹⁹ Sir Francis Bond Head, *Communications and Despatches Relating to Recent Negotiations [sic] with the Indians and Arrangements for the Future Settlement of the*

Head equated the smoking of the pipe with the chain of friendship and demonstrated that he had incorporated the terminology used by the Western Nations to describe their relationship with the Crown. In his report dated 20 August 1836, Bond Head stated that he had decided to meet face to face with chiefs, warriors, and employees of Indian Affairs:

I accordingly explained my views in private interviews which I had with the Chiefs, and I then appointed a Grand Council, on which they should all assemble to discuss the subject, and deliberately to declare their opinions. When the day arrived, I addressed them at some length, and explained to them, as clearly as I was able, their real interests, to which I found them very sensibly alive.⁷²⁰

Initially, Bond Head went to Manitoulin to determine how he could save the government money by gradually discontinuing the presents.⁷²¹ Once he arrived and talked to various people, he had formulated more of his policy. Although Bond Head admitted to private interviews with the chiefs, a grand council was held in the open as well. Bond Head later wrote in his memoir, “The Emigrant” that,

My own speech at the Council, which was an attempt to explain to the tribes assembled the reasons which had induced their late “Great Father” to recommend some of them to sell their lands to the Provincial Government, and to remove to the innumerable islands in the waters before us. **I assured them that their titles to their present hunting-grounds remained, and ever would remain, respected and undisputed** [emphasis added];⁷²²

Sir Francis Bond Head had demonstrated his understanding of the Covenant Chain, even if it was nascent knowledge. Regarding the Treaty of Niagara and the Covenant Chain, Bond Head did assure the assembled chiefs and warriors, including those from Lake Superior, that their title to land “remained and ever would remain, respected and undisputed.” This statement adhered to the clauses of the Royal Proclamation. The Reverend Evans noted that, “the speech of His Excellency was well suited to the idiom of the Indian Language and admirably adapted to gain their attention

Tribes in this Province [London?], Office of the British Colonist, [1838?], downloaded 15 August 2019, <http://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.91609/2?r=0&s=1>, p. 145.

⁷²⁰ Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th August 1836, Despatch No. 70 in Head, *Communications and Despatches*.

⁷²¹ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, Vol. 34, Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 14th January 1836.

⁷²² Sir Francis Bond Head, *The Emigrant* (London, England: John Murray, 1846), 148.

and confidence and will doubtless be remembered and frequently repeated in the depth of the wilderness.”⁷²³

Bond Head then noted that the Anishinaabeg had deliberated amongst themselves and then appointed “one of their greatest orators to reply to me. The individual selected was Sigonah (the Blackbird),⁷²⁴ celebrated among them for having, it is said, on many public occasions, spoken without once stopping from sunrise to sunset.”⁷²⁵ It was at this point that Asiginaak brought out the wampum belts and recited them to all assembled. Many of the chiefs and warriors would have been familiar with the belts, even Indian Agent Thomas G. Anderson was familiar with the wampum belts. Sir Francis was impressed by the reading, so much so that he later reported to Lord Glenelg on the 20th November 1836 that,

It will be asked in what way were these, our promises made – it is difficult to reply to this question, as it involves the character of the Indian race. An Indian’s word, when it is formally pledged, is one of the strongest moral securities on earth - like the rainbow it beams unbroken, when all beneath is threatened with annihilation. The most solemn form in which an Indian pledges his word, is by the delivery of a wampum belt of shells – and when the purport of this symbol is once declared, it is remembered and handed down from father to son, with an accuracy and retention of meaning which is quite extraordinary. Whenever the belt is produced, every minute circumstance which attended its delivery, seems instantly to be brought to life... the wampums thus given have been preserved, and are now entrusted to the keeping of the great orator Sigonah [J. B.

Assiginack], who was present at the council I attended on the Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron,⁷²⁶

Sir Francis Bond Head was impressed and as a published travel writer, he cast the Anishinaabeg as the ‘disappearing, noble savage.’⁷²⁷ This was one of his first significant interactions with Anishinaabe people, and he quickly deduced about wampum that “in

⁷²³ J. Evans, “1836 Mission Tour of Lake Huron,” and Adam Elliott to Bishop Strachan, Tuscarora [Portage/ Passage] 12th June 1838, OA, Strachan Papers, MS 35 Reel 3.

⁷²⁴ Sigonah is Jean Baptiste Assiginack (Asiginaak), Bond Head did not spell his name correctly, or the typesetter mistook the “k” for an “h.”

⁷²⁵ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th August 1836, Despatch No. 70. Head, *Communications and Despatches*.

⁷²⁶ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 5.

⁷²⁷ Kevin Hutchings, *Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures in the British Atlantic World, 1770 – 1850* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 154.

every sense these hieroglyphics [sic] are moral affidavits of the bye-gone transactions to which they relate.”⁷²⁸ However in his next sentence, he also revealed both his naiveté and his ignorance by stating that “on our part, **little or nothing documentary exists** [emphasis added] – the promises which were made, whatever they might have been, were almost invariably verbal; those who expressed them are now mouldering in their graves.”⁷²⁹ Bond Head had started his position in January of 1836 and thus likely did not read all of Sir William Johnson’s papers about the Treaty at Niagara and therefore claimed that the promises were merely verbal with no written record.⁷³⁰ Casting the treaty relationship in this manner, as merely an oral one with no documentary record, served to diminish its legitimacy in the eyes of subsequent colonial officials who privileged the written record. Bond Head astutely deduced that, “However, the regular delivery of the presents proves and corroborates the testimony of the wampums.”⁷³¹

Analyzing Bond Head’s texts reveals that he actually deferred to the Anishinaabe chiefs, specifically J. B. Assiginack, about treaty relations. This deference is evident when Bond Head stated that the promises that were made were “almost invariably verbal,” but it is also evident with the metaphoric language Bond Head inserted in his reports and his published writing, especially when he referred to smoking a pipe as establishing a “chain of friendship.” The metaphoric language employed by J. B. Assiginack made an impression with Bond Head, so much so that in an official report to Lord Glenelg, he quoted Assiginack (but referred to him as a warrior), comparing the King (and the British) with the sun; “‘When we see the sun rise in the East,’ said a warrior to me at the Great Council at the Manitoulin Island, ‘it is our custom to say to our

⁷²⁸ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 6.

⁷²⁹ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 5.

⁷³⁰ Bond Head had Superintendent James Givins request a copy of the Royal Proclamation for his perusal after the 1836 Manitowaning Treaty had already been signed. James Givins to D.C. Napier, 20 August 1836, LAC RG10 Vol. 62 pp. 61659-60. Napier replied to the request on 6 September 1836. D.C. Napier to James Givins, 6 September 1836, LAC RG10 Vol. 62 pp. 61709-10.

⁷³¹ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 5-6.

young men, there is our Great Father, he warms [us], he clothes us, he gives us all we desire.”⁷³² Further proof of Bond Head’s deference is the fact that the first line of the Manitowaning Treaty of 1836 read, “My Children – Seventy snow seasons have now passed away since we met in Council at the crooked place (Niagara), at which time and place your Great Father, the King, and the Indians of North America tied their hands together by the wampum of friendship.”⁷³³ Undoubtedly, J.B. Assiginack affected the policy and perspective of Sir Francis Bond Head. Bond Head continued to view the Indigenous peoples of North America as a doomed, noble race, but instead of merely informing the assembled chiefs and warriors that the presents would be discontinued, Bond Head decided to enter into a treaty, reserving islands for them upon which to slowly disappear from the face of the earth.⁷³⁴ Technically, the assembly did not adhere to the steps outlined in the Royal Proclamation and Lord Dorchester’s additional instructions, which stated that an assembly intended for a treaty must be publicly and openly, stated in advance. This assembly was summoned as part of the annual delivery of presents, not for the resultant treaty. However, the chiefs in attendance accepted it as a treaty and as an open and public brightening of the Covenant Chain. The Reverend Adam Elliott reported as much, “it appeared to me that the business of the Treaty was transacted in the [simplest] [openest] and most candid manner. The meeting was held in a capacious wigwam made of bark and erected for the [] for the accommodation of the Indian

⁷³² Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 5.

⁷³³ Treaty 45 ½ aka 1836 Manitowaning Treaty. Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, Volume 1: Treaties 1 – 138*, 112. LAC RG 10, 1844, IT 121.

⁷³⁴ Bond Head reported to Glenelg on 20th August 1836 that “it was evident to me that we should reap a very great benefit if we could persuade these Indians, who are now impeding the progress of civilization in U. Canada, to resort to a place possessing the double advantage of being admirably adapted to them (inasmuch as it affords fishing, hunting, bird-shooting and fruit) and yet in no way adapted to the white population.” See Head, *Communications and Despatches*. Bond Head later wrote in 1846 (p. 146) that one of the chiefs had stated in council “how continuously the race of red men had melted, and were still melting, like snow before the sun.” Bond Head as a published writer perpetuated the stereotype of the doomed vanishing race. See Hutchings, *Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures*.

assemblies.”⁷³⁵ Bond Head reported the treaty and acknowledged that it was not “in legal form” but noted its “equity:”

I enclose to your Lordship a copy of this most important document, which, with a wampum attached to it, was executed in duplicate; one copy remaining with me, the other being deposited with a chief selected by the various tribes for that purpose. Your Lordship will at once perceive that the document is not in legal form; but our dealings with the Indians have been only in equity, and I was therefore anxious to shew that the transaction had been equitably explained to them.⁷³⁶

Sir Francis Bond Head had attached a string of wampum to the treaty, had it signed in duplicate, and left one copy with the delegated chief. Sir Francis explained that his intent was to demonstrate that the transaction was completed utilizing wampum protocol. Sir Francis Bond Head meant to conform to treaty practices of the Western Nations, as he was given to understand them, and therefore affixed wampum, and incorporated into the treaty text the metaphors that the Western Nations were familiar with, as opposed to the legalese that would come to dominant subsequent treaty texts. In this manner Bond Head’s actions conformed to Sir William Johnson’s recommendation “to use the forms they most readily recognize.”⁷³⁷ In fact, this is an example of a treaty concluded that made explicit reference in the text to the foundational 1764 Treaty of Niagara.

The chiefs who signed this treaty were Ojibwe and Odaawaa. The first signatures were those of the Odaawaa, namely J.B. Assiginack and his son Itawashkash, both of who could write their own names. The next name was Mookomaunich (Mokomanish aka Pebamitapi) who put his X by his name, followed by Odaawaa Chief Kimewon who drew his Bear Doodem. The remaining Odaawaa that signed this treaty were living principally around L’Arbre Croche as well, which was an area consisting of at least three villages. The other Odaawaa were from upper state Michigan. The Ojibwe chiefs who had signed the treaty had claims to the islands along the north shore of Lake Huron. The western

⁷³⁵ Adam Elliott to Bishop Strachan, Tuscarora [Portage/ Passage] 12th June 1838, OA, Strachan Papers, MS 35 Reel 3.

⁷³⁶ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th August 1836, Despatch No. 70. Head, *Communications and Despatches*.

⁷³⁷ Johnson to Gage, 19 February 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 330–1.

most Ojibwe chief that signed this treaty was Kewuckance (Crane doodem) of present day Thessalon; no Lake Superior chiefs signed this treaty but they were in attendance as both Reverend Evans and Reverend Elliott reported.⁷³⁸

The Odaawaa and Ojibwe of Lake Huron had entered into treaty with the Crown, setting aside Manitoulin and the surrounding islands as a place of refuge for any other Anishinaabeg who had wanted to settle on Manitoulin to partake of the benefits of the Government's education and 'civilization' program. The signed treaty did not expressly mention the Lake Superior chiefs, nor did their names appear on it, however, the overall proceedings was a brightening of the Covenant Chain, of which they and others were included. The Lake Superior chiefs were in attendance when the pipe of peace was smoked linking the British (represented by Lieutenant Governor Sir Francis Bond Head) and the Western Confederacy "**together in a chain of friendship** [emphasis added]."⁷³⁹ This treaty was signed in the presence of other chiefs from territories abutting Lake Huron (Lake Superior and Lake Nipissing), and all the chiefs, warriors, orators, women, and elders departed having polished and brightened the Great Covenant Chain.

The Lieutenant Governor also renewed all of the tenets and principles, of the Covenant Chain and the Treaty of Niagara, including Land Ownership, Autonomy, and Protection. Bond Head renewed the provisions of Aboriginal ownership specifically assuring the assembled chiefs and warriors, including those from Lake Superior, that their title to land "remained and ever would remain, respected and undisputed."⁷⁴⁰ This statement adhered to the clauses of the Royal Proclamation and in the eyes of the chiefs, affirmed their ownership of the land. The chiefs of Manitoulin, keepers of the wampum belt and the foundational treaty between the Western Confederacy and the British recalled this promise 26 years later when they wrote to the Governor General in July 1862:

⁷³⁸ J. Evans, "1836 Mission Tour of Lake Huron," and Adam Elliott to Bishop Strachan, Tuscarora [Portage/ Passage] 12th June 1838, OA, Strachan Papers, MS 35 Reel 3.

⁷³⁹ Head, *The Emigrant*, 145.

⁷⁴⁰ Head, *The Emigrant*, 148.

Minawa dach eko nijitana
 ashiningotwasswi Eko dassobibonagak
 minawa ningibiodissigona Kitchi Ogima
 Ningibi songitamagona manda
 Niminissimina tchi apitchitibendamang
 ninawi Enichinabewiiang. Wika
 waiabishgiwed tchi wibwa
 bimagoshkadjiiamind.

Twenty six years have elapsed since the governor came here to assure us the possession of our Island that we Indians should be the absolute masters of it and that no whites should disturb us.⁷⁴¹

The specific Ojibwe sentence **ngii-bi-zoongitamaagonaa** is translated as “[he] came here to assure us” but the word **ngii-bi-zoongitamaagonaa** in Ojibwe conveys much more force. The initial morpheme **zoong-** refers to strength and power. Some examples include **zoongizi** “he/ she is sturdy, firm, powerful, strong,” **zoongigaabawi** “He stands strongly, (feet firmly planted),” **zoongdehe** “be courageous, (be stout-hearted).” The translation “assure” is inadequate and just does not convey the full sense of the word **n-zoongtamaagonaa**. All of the chiefs in attendance were given to understand by the words and actions of the Lieutenant Governor that their ownership of the land was secured beyond doubt.

The second principle or tenet that was affirmed at the 1836 Manitowaning Treaty by Lieutenant Governor was autonomy. Bond Head understood and reported that the Western Confederacy had not been defeated in battle nor conquered and he stated this understanding, “be it always kept in mind, that while the white inhabitants of our North American Colonies are the Queen's *subjects*, the red Indian is by solemn treaty Her Majesty's *ally*.”⁷⁴²

The third principle or tenet affirmed in 1836 by the Lieutenant Governor was the King’s provision of protection. The Lieutenant Governor expressed this in council but also in the written text of the treaty, stating that affairs and conditions had changed since 1764,

Since that period various circumstances have occurred to separate from your Great Father many of his red children, and as an unavoidable increase of white population, as well as the progress of cultivation, have had the natural effect of

⁷⁴¹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, *Mitchigiwadinong*, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

⁷⁴² Head, *The Emigrant*, 149.

impoverishing your hunting grounds it has become necessary that new arrangements should be entered into for the **purpose of protecting you from the encroachments of the whites** [emphasis added].⁷⁴³

Bond Head attempted to further explain in the text of the treaty that land was property, just like “dogs are considered among yourselves to belong to those who have reared them;” he continued that “uncultivated land is like wild animals, and your Great Father, who has **hitherto protected you** [emphasis added], has now great difficulty in securing it for you from the whites, who are hunting to cultivate it.”⁷⁴⁴ Bond Head also reported his understanding of the protective role the King assumed in his correspondence to Lord Glenelg by stating “The Lieutenant Governor of the Province may protect them from open violence,” but that he could not protect them from vices introduced by the “white man.”⁷⁴⁵ This principle was also mentioned by the chiefs of Manitoulin in the 1862 petition when they stated the governor had promised “that no whites should disturb us.”⁷⁴⁶

Sir Francis Bond Head had come to Manitoulin with the expressed purpose of diminishing expenditures as well as abrogating “the existing custom” of delivering presents, he left having entered into a treaty that renewed and strengthened the foundational treaty – the Covenant Chain.

Mnemonics and Orality: Medals as Mnemonic for Promises

Sir William Johnson read extensively about the Covenant Chain and also read past treaties but his direct experience with the Haudenosaunee and other nations led him to believe that a long-lasting peace could only be established utilizing existing treaty practices and customs that included gift giving, adhering to wampum protocol, calumet smoking, and condolence ceremonies. All of these were part and parcel of the Covenant

⁷⁴³ Treaty 45 ½ aka 1836 Manitowaning Treaty. Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, Volume 1: Treaties 1 – 138*, 112. LAC RG 10, 1844, IT 121.

⁷⁴⁴ Treaty 45 ½ aka 1836 Manitowaning Treaty. Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, Volume 1: Treaties 1 – 138*, 112. LAC RG 10, 1844, IT 121.

⁷⁴⁵ Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th November 1836, Despatch No. 95, Head, *Communications and Despatches*, 4.

⁷⁴⁶ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

Chain which had a metaphoric discourse as well as enduring symbols, such as two men holding hands on a belt, or a straight road between two countries or villages. Another symbol that became associated with the treaty was the medal, often called Indian Chief Peace Medals. These medals were more than Peace Medals, they were mnemonic device that reminded the chiefs of the treaty discourse.

The Covenant Chain had antecedents and so did the medals as mnemonic devices. The French had delivered medals to chiefs and the British adopted the practice as well. On December 4, 1760 Deputy Superintendent George Croghan met with the Wendat, Potawatomi, Odaawaa and “several of the principal Men of the Ohio Indians” at Detroit. Croghan had renewed and brightened the Chain of Friendship between the British and the Western Nations. The Western Nations accepted that this had been accomplished but the Wendat speaker stated that the chain “is new to our young men,” and thus required explanation, then he proceeded to show all assembled two medals that they had in their possession. The Wendat speaker exhibited the medal and explained the image thereon, stating “Brethren: [Shewing two Medals] those we had from you as a token that we might remember our Friendship **whenever we should meet in the Woods and smoke under the Tree of Peace**, we preserved your token and hope you remember your promise, **it was then said that this Country was given by God to the Indians & that you would preserve it for our joint use where we first met under a shade** [emphasis added] as there were no Houses in those times.”⁷⁴⁷

The medal is likely the one designed, struck and delivered by a Quaker group called the Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with Indians by Pacific Means, who were located in Philadelphia. The medal was struck in 1757. One side had the image of King George II, the other side had the image of an Indian and Englishman seated on either side of a fire, with the Englishman (Quaker) handing a calumet to the seated Indian (refer to image 11). The sun is in the sky and a tree curves over the two providing some shade.⁷⁴⁸ In her exhaustive publication on silver in the fur trade, Martha Wilson Hamilton identified the tree on the medal as the “Tree of Peace”

⁷⁴⁷ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 119.

⁷⁴⁸ N. Jaye Fredrickson and Sandra Gibb, *The Covenant Chain: Indian Ceremonial and Trade Silver* (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1980), 25, 77.

and the fire as a “Council Fire”. The medal was embossed with the date 1757 and the phrase “Let Us Look to the Most High Who Blessed Our Fathers With Peace.” The medal was presented at the Treaty of Easton, Pennsylvania in October 1758. Members of the Six Nations and Delaware were in attendance as was George Croghan. Wilson Hamilton stated that “This is thought to be the first Indian Peace Medal executed in America.”⁷⁴⁹ The imagery was utilized by Sir William Johnson on the certificates he gave out to chiefs (refer to image 12).⁷⁵⁰

In preparation for the Niagara peace treaty ending Pontiac’s war, Sir William had requested that General Gage order some medals for the occasion. Gage reported “The Reverse [of the medal] is not the King’s Arms, but represents an Englishman and an Indian in Friendly Conversation. I suppose these would do for you as well as the old pattern... They are larger than yours.”⁷⁵¹ This particular medal that Gage had struck has the date 1764 embossed on it (Refer to image 9 + 10).⁷⁵² The medal served as a mnemonic device associated with the promises the British made to the Western Nations at Niagara when the Great Covenant Chain Wampum belt was given. The scene on the medal served the Anishinaabeg because “they want the use of letters.”⁷⁵³ The Western Nations used the picture on the medal as a mnemonic reference. The two figures, an Anishinaabe and an Englishman, sitting on a mat under a tree smoking, with a fire and woodpile in the background. Johnson concluded the peace negotiations with the Western confederacy in July 1764 and on August 1, 1764 bestowed medals and certificates to a number of chiefs. It was recorded in the official council proceedings that

⁷⁴⁹ Wilson Hamilton, *Silver in the Fur Trade*, 146.

⁷⁵⁰ However, the three known certificates dated 1764 at Niagara (Ogemawnee, Egominey and Akowawbomye) were not of this type.

⁷⁵¹ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 446-7, Gage to Johnson, New York, June 10th 1764.

⁷⁵² Wilson Hamilton reported that only 60 of these large medals were cast and delivered in 1764. The medal was re-struck but with the date 1766 and delivered at the Treaty of Oswego when Pontiac joined the Covenant Chain. Wilson Hamilton, *Silver in the Fur Trade*.

⁷⁵³ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

“Sir William then gave Medals to the Chiefs, and exhorted them to look at them often in order to remind them of their engagements.”⁷⁵⁴

Then an unidentified chief rose and stated “Brother - We have thought of what you have said, and greatly approve of the same.—We are determined to follow your Advice, for the Good of our People.—and we shall never Swerve from our Engagements, but look at the Medals you have given us every morning.”⁷⁵⁵

Some chiefs that attended the 1764 Treaty of Niagara left with medals. Other chiefs who had not attended the Treaty of Niagara, came to meet with Sir William Johnson afterward to enter the Covenant Chain and requested both clemency and medals. The Ojibwe Chief Kinishikapoo, who was related to the Mississauga Chief Wabbiamicott, and a known ally of Pontiac, visited Sir William in 1765. In the council room he stated that he had gone to Detroit to investigate matters and to promote peace but “found many Indians who were drunk in that quarter & Pontiac is not yet quite sober & I acknowledge I have been a little drunk myself & which I attribute to this French Medal (taking it off).”⁷⁵⁶ Of course the medal did not make him drunk, but he alleged that the messages delivered by Pontiac and the French ‘instigators’ had been ‘intoxicating’ and had clouded his judgement. It may also be that the attention the French had reposed in him as a chief had gone to his head. Chief Kinishikapoo stated that “I had always a great esteem for it [the French medal]” but he decided to give it up “since it has made me drunk.” Kinishikapoo did not want to surrender the French medal, he wanted it to be replaced by an English one. He then continued and stated that he left Detroit, seeing that many “Indians [sic] heads were turned” towards Niagara, “where all are at peace & quietness.” He then stated to Sir William Johnson, “I came here with my brother Wabbiamicott [orig. emph.] to assure you of my fixed resolution to observe & follow your advice & the engagements I entered into - *Then delivered up a large French*

⁷⁵⁴ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, IV: 446-7, Gage to Johnson, New York, June 10th 1764.

⁷⁵⁵ July the 31st. A:M: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their Camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 309-13.

⁷⁵⁶ Wabbiamicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p.56 –65, C-1222.

*Medal.*⁷⁵⁷ The secretary took careful notes that reveal a good deal. First Kinishikapoo talked about the French medal as having an intoxicating effect, the secretary then noted that Kinishikapoo then removed it from his neck and talked about the peace and quiet of Niagara, visually showing that by removing the medal from his neck he could now perceive that peace. Lastly, he stated that he resolved to follow Sir William's advice and honour the engagements he entered into and then he delivered up the French medal to signify that resolution.

Sir William Johnson responded to Ojibwe Chief Kinishikapoo's speech the following day:

Brother – [...] You have done wisely in casting away that Medal which was the cause of your drunkenness. I now present you with a Medal of the Great King of England, which I desire you to wear near your heart to look upon it & thereby remember your engagements whilst you follow this advice you need not fear being anymore drunk but should you cast your eyes off of it to regard any thing else, your head may become giddy past care – take care then to respect this Medal, to consider it as a Badge of the King's esteem & your gratitude & shut your ears against all news but what comes from his Majesty or the persons in authority under him. *Gave an English Medal*⁷⁵⁸

Sir William again admonished another chief to “look upon” the medal as a reminder of the “engagements.” Sir William also requested that the medal be worn close to the heart. This admonishment would later become part of the discourse of alliance and chiefs would come to request a “heart” from the British, other times, particularly after the War of American Independence, the chiefs would state that they did not have “two hearts.”⁷⁵⁹ The medal became a symbol of alliance and its closeness to the heart re-enforced that image. Mississauga Chief Wabbicommicott stated at the same council as Kinishikapoo that “Brother Johnson – For my part I have received a medal, colours & c

⁷⁵⁷ Wabbicommicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p.56 –65, C-1222.

⁷⁵⁸ Wabbicommicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p.56 –65, C-1222.

⁷⁵⁹ Medal as a heart see “2nd Speaker - Quaisinte,” A Band of Chipawas and Minomini Indians after having received their presents, Drummond Island June 20, 1820, Archives of Ontario, F450, (Capt) Thomas Gummarsall Anderson Papers, 1814 – 1822, MS 23. Reference to two hearts, Drummond Island 30 June 1822, Indian Speech of Waiskey, LAC RG 10, Vol. 40, pp: 22048 – 22053.

from you last year at Niagara [1764], which binds me to you [yet] nothing can alter my resolution.”⁷⁶⁰

The medal itself, cast of silver and in the shape of a circle served to remind the chiefs and warriors of the Covenant Chain as well as the eternal promises made, represented by the circle that has “no beginning and no end.”⁷⁶¹ Subsequent medals were made without that same pattern of the seated Englishman and Indian but these medals had the visage of George III and the obverse were the King’s coat of arms. The silver and round shape of the medal in concert with the King’s visage all represented the original treaty and the promises made. In 1796 Odaawaa Chief Mitaminance addressed the Commanding Officer at Fort Mackinac with strings of wampum, on the third branch of the strings of wampum, he said:

My father further said, My son if anything extraordinary should happen with respect to the Indians, you shall hear my voice that you may come directly to see me. I present you this medal with your Great Father King George’s picture on it who sits on the other side of the Great Lake. If you should have any bad affairs Look on it and take care of it and it will banish all bad thoughts from your hearts, this is what my Father told me which I shall always remember.⁷⁶²

The chiefs of the Western Nations kept these medals as mementos of the Treaty and the alliance formed with the British. The medals were handed down to successive chiefs. Since there were only two belts given to the Western Confederacy (1764 Covenant Chain and 24 Nations belt), the medals became another means to remember the ‘talk’ contained in the belts. The medals served as a mnemonic device to remember the ‘talk’ or the ‘spirit’ of William Johnson’s words. This was especially so for the 1764 and 1766 “Happy While United” medal with the image of the Anishinaabe and the Englishman sitting under a tree smoking a pipe while a fire smoulders in the background. This image on the medal encapsulated the tenets of the Covenant Chain, specifically the inextinguishable fire, choice pieces of wood piled to keep the fire going, the tree of peace, the mat, and the sun. The chiefs could use this image to remember other parts of

⁷⁶⁰ Wabbiocommicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p.56 –65, C-1222.

⁷⁶¹ CMH George Gaboosa 1927 Manuscript CMH III-G-17M, Box 28 F. 1, p. 5.

⁷⁶² Thomas Duggan Journal, Michilimackinack, 1795-1801, Clements Library, University of Michigan, 11 May 1797.

the ‘talk’ contained in the wampum. The meaning of this symbolism endured long after the British quit delivering the presents at the council fires.

The chiefs of the Western Confederacy, specifically those around the north shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior were active in trying to have the presents restored after the British quit delivering the presents in 1856. On July 3 -5, 1879 at Garden River, Ontario, a grand council was held and the assembled chiefs decided to send a petition to Lord Lorne complaining about various matters including the discontinuation of the presents. They wrote,

They were told by their Great Father, then the King of England, through his officers that the said King would not always live to look after them, and [their rights], that after his decease efforts might be made by evil disposed persons to deprive [them] of [their] presents and if they [were] ever so unfortunate as to lose them, all they would have to do would be to present the **Treaty and the medal** [emphasis added] which I give them, to my successor in the throne of England, and both the covenant and the promise would be speedily and faithfully carried out, and the presents restored to them.⁷⁶³

The chiefs believed the medals were important, that they were more than heirlooms, that they actually symbolized the alliance between the British and the Western Nations. The chiefs stated that they wanted an audience with His Excellency, and if denied, they would attempt to go to England to explain the treaties to Her Royal Highness. Unfortunately, neither meetings were granted and the chiefs were unsuccessful in their bid to have the Treaty of Niagara and the Covenant Chain restored. By discontinuing the annual delivery of presents, the manifestation of polishing and brightening the Covenant Chain, the British and the successor governments “let go of their end of the belt” and thus failed to their uphold their responsibilities and “mutual engagements.”

This chapter has traced the resistances organized by Odaawaa Chief Pontiac and Seneca Chief Guyasotha, which led, in part, to the Royal Proclamation of 1763. In an effort to stop the violence, the British, specifically Superintendent General of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson, invited “24” nations to participate in a peace conference at

⁷⁶³ To Lord [Lorne], the Governor General of the Dominion of Canada: The memorial of the Chippewa Nation of the Dominion of Canada and other Indian Tribes; viz: the Ottawas, Pottawatamis and the Shawnees, who met together on a general council held at the Garden River Reservation on the 3rd, 4th, & 5th day of July A.D. 1879. LAC RG 10, Vol. 2092, File 15434, Sep 16, 1879.

Niagara in 1764. The Anishinaabeg living around Michilimackinac and Sault Ste. Marie participated in that congress. The Royal Proclamation coupled with the Treaty of Niagara/ Covenant Chain established the foundation of treaty relations between the British and the Anishinaabe. In the next chapter, we will examine how these foundations were incorporated (or not) into Anishinaabe diplomatic practices.

Ch. 7: Nation to Nation Relationship: Brothers, Fathers, Children & Protection

The 1764 Treaty of Niagara was one of a number of instances in which the British sought to bring the Western Nations in the relationship that is called the Chain of Friendship or the Silver Covenant Chain. This treaty relationship was first entered into by some of the Western Nations in [1701] but more concerted efforts were made by the British after the fall of Quebec in 1760. The British then tried to assume power over the Western Nations and were immediately told by various chiefs that the French had been conquered but not the Western Nations. The Western Nations insisted on their independence and freedom. The Covenant Chain was promoted as a framework for a lasting peace by the Sir William Johnson and his Deputy George Croghan. Both representatives assured the Western Nations of their autonomy, independence and freedom by delivering speeches and wampum belts at Detroit, Fort Pitt, Niagara and Oswego. However, these Crown representatives did not use the words “sovereignty” or the more modern term, “nation-to-nation relationship.” They couched the terminology in the highly contextualized diplomatic discourse of the Covenant Chain.

The relationship that was forged at Niagara (as well as Detroit, Michilimackinac, Oswego, and La Baye) was one that is now typified as nation-to-nation relationship. This is evident in the images of the various versions of the Covenant Chain wampum belt (refer to Figures 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19), an image of two men holding hands in close alliance. Prior to the British adopting, modifying and influencing the design of wampum belts, which they did by incorporating letters, numerals and anthropomorphic figures, the Western Nations and Six Nations used the diamond to represent a nation. The 1764 Covenant Chain wampum belt incorporated both sets of symbols, the two men holding hands, and two diamonds closely connected. By taking the ends of the belts and putting them together, the image of two diamonds are formed (see Figure 12). This belt is a melding of two traditions, the Western literary one (incorporating numbers and reading left to right) and the Indigenous one that used geometric shapes woven on belts to symbolize precepts.

The chiefs stated their autonomy numerous times, but this was most forcefully stated in the *pays d'en haut* by Ojibwe Chief Minwewe when he told Alexander Henry

that the British had conquered the French but not the Anishinaabe. Chief Minwewe took military action to prove his point by playing a pivotal role in the taking of Fort Michilimackinac in 1763. Pontiac had also made similar statements and he also organized armed forces to make the point. This autonomy, which the Anishinaabe usually referred to as freedom, or its converse, by stating that “we are not your slaves,” was recognized and acknowledged by Sir William Johnson. In fact, Sir William Johnson vigorously argued to his superiors and colleagues that the Western Nations valued their freedom and autonomy. Sir William was alarmed when he had found out that Colonel Bradstreet had entered into a treaty with the Western Nations around Detroit in 1764 wherein it was stated that they agreed to become subjects of the King. Sir William Johnson wrote to Henry Bouquet on 6 December 1764 and expressed his alarm at the wording used in the treaty that the Western Nations signed at Detroit with Bradstreet. Johnson wrote, “I fear for the Consequences of the Words, *Subjection And Dominion* [orig. emphasis] said to be Acknowledged by the Ottawas and Chipeweighs, they have no words to Express any thing like either; so that Whenever they discover it, then Jealousy and Resentment must be Renewed.”⁷⁶⁴ Earlier, in November, Sir William had written a brief on Colonel Bradstreet’s conduct and noted that had the chiefs known about and understood those words in the Treaty, “it would have been verry [sic] bad Policy, being well known to all who understand anything of the transactions of these four Years past with the Inds, that a Jealousy [...] of our Grasping at their Country, was one principal reason of the present Disturbance.”⁷⁶⁵ Sir William feared that his efforts at Niagara would become undone by Bradstreet’s actions, actions Sir William implied were uninformed and potentially dangerous.

Sir William told various chiefs at different times that the British acknowledged the Western Nations’ independence but always took pains to remind the chiefs that the

⁷⁶⁴ Johnson to Bouquet, Johnson Hall December 6th, 1764, in Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, ed. by James Sullivan, 14 vols. (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1921-1965), Vol. IV: 610–11.

⁷⁶⁵ Johnson’s remarks on the conduct of Colonel Bradstreet, Novbr 24th 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV, p. 601.

British were a mighty people, as he told Mississauga Chiefs Wabbicommicott and Kinishikapoo a year after the Treaty at Niagara,

The English are very powerfull, if further provoked, you may dearly experience it. They have **no designs either on your Liberty** or possessions [emphasis added], all they require is to live at peace with you & carry on a Trade with the several nations, the garrisons are necessary for the security of goods & stores & will not affect you, nor will his Majesty suffer any of his **Subjects to oppress you whilst you live in friendship** [emphasis added] with him and fulfill your engagements. Remember these my words, repeat them to your people at home & recommend it to them to observe them with the utmost strictness. *A belt*⁷⁶⁶

The Anishinaabeg had codified this understanding of autonomy differently and referred to it as being allies or friends. Sir William Johnson knew this and employed these phrases in his discourse to the assembled nations at Detroit in September 1761,

Brethren of the several Nations here assembled – Tho' the management of your affairs is the province allotted to me by His Majesty, I am not less bound by inclination than by duty to serve you and so long as you shall pay strict adherence to every part of the present treaty, I shall esteem all your Nations as **our true and natural allies, treat with you independent of any other Nation or Nations of Indians whatsoever** [emphasis added].⁷⁶⁷

This was not Sir William granting autonomy or independence, this was Sir William acknowledging that the Western Nations were independent and inherently autonomous.

Years later, Odaawaa Chief Okedaa, speaking on behalf of the Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), used similar phrasing after the War of 1812 at Drummond Island. He reminded the Commanding officer that prior to that War the British had told them that when they made peace with the Americans, that “all your red Children that would join you [in the war] should be consulted, and included as your sincerest friends (allies).”⁷⁶⁸ In the discourse of the Covenant Chain, being friends or allies signified independence, autonomy and freedom.

One complex aspect of the Covenant Chain treaty relationship is the fictive kin relationship. Fictive kinship has caused confusion because of the different roles fathers

⁷⁶⁶ Wabbicommicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p. 56 –65, C-1222.

⁷⁶⁷ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁷⁶⁸ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

played in both societies. The European father was the authoritative disciplinarian. The Native father was neither authoritative nor disciplinarian, he was expected to provide for his children to the best of his ability and give them what they wanted and needed. The illustrative example is to refer back to the creation story of the Anishinaabe in which the earth is mother, the moon is grandmother, and the sun is father.⁷⁶⁹ These planets and celestial bodies are often referred to as the first family.⁷⁷⁰ The sun shines indiscriminately on all of his children and all of creation. He gives his warmth unconditionally and without favour. This is who Anishinaabe fathers were to emulate. It is apt that then, that the French adopted the sun as a symbol, especially the Sun King Louis the XIV. The Western Nations allied themselves with the French in the 17th and early 18th century but called the French King their “father” or “Great Father.” After the British defeated the French in North America, they presumed to inherit the title of “father” but the Western Nations did not call the British father. At the council held at Detroit on 4 December 1760 George Croghan told the gathered Western Nations that King of England was now their Father.⁷⁷¹ The Western Nations continued to address George Croghan as “brother.” He did not push the issue further and did not bring it up in that council again. Croghan continued to call the Western Nations “Brethren” and “Brother” and did not presume to call them “children.” Likewise, when Sir William Johnson went to Detroit in 1761 to treat with the Western Nations, he too referred to the King as their father but did not call the Western Nations children.⁷⁷² Even at the Treaty of Niagara in 1764, the Western Nations continued to call the British “Brethren” and likewise, the British officers

⁷⁶⁹ Basil Johnston, *Ojibway Heritage: The ceremonies, Rituals, Songs, Dances, Prayers and Legends of the Ojibway* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1994), 22–6.

⁷⁷⁰ Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The voice of the Ojibway* (St. Paul: Red School House, 1988), 2.

⁷⁷¹ Croghan quoted in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals relating to tours into the Western Country, November 16, 1750 – November 1765” in *Early Western Travels 1748 – 1846*, Volume 1 (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 115.

⁷⁷² Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

continued to also call the Western Nations “Brethren.”⁷⁷³

It is important to stress that at this point in time, the alliance between the British and the Western confederacy was marked by calling each other “brother” not father and children; the adoption ceremony had not yet taken place. In his seminal study, “Give us a little milk,” Bruce White (1982) determined that certain kin had certain social obligations and that for fur traders and colonial diplomats to establish good relations with the Anishinaabeg, they had to become kin.⁷⁷⁴ White demonstrated that the social obligations between brothers was not very onerous but usually entailed an equal exchange of clothing or items. He mentioned a story in which an Ojibwe and a Sioux adopted each other by exchanging clothing, since that time they referred to each other as brother instead of enemies. This idea of brother, instead of enemy, was also recorded by Peter Jones:

A treaty of peace and friendship was then made with the Nahdoways [Haudenosaunee] residing on the south side of Lake Ontario, and both nations solemnly covenanted, by going through the usual forms of burying the tomahawk, smoking the pipe of peace, and locking their hands and arms together, agreeing in future to call each other BROTHERS. Thus ended their wars with the Nahdoways.⁷⁷⁵

The Nahdoways (Haudenosaunee aka Iroquois) became brothers to the ‘Three Fires’ (Anishinaabeg) but the Wyandot, also Iroquoian, were also called brothers. In international diplomacy, distinction is made between elder brothers and younger brothers, an example from Miami Chief Little Turtle illustrates:

Elder brothers: I am surprised at you, my uncles, the Wyandots, and you, my grandfathers, the Delawares, and you, Shawanese, should say you were not ready. Your younger brother [Miami] expects that you will call them all together, and

⁷⁷³ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomenays, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 278-81.

⁷⁷⁴ Bruce M. White, “Give us a little milk: The social and cultural meanings of gift giving in the Lake Superior fur trade” *Minnesota History* 48 (Summer 1982): 2 – 12.

⁷⁷⁵ Peter Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians: with especial reference to their conversion to Christianity* (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), 113.

make them acquainted with your sentiments first, as elder brothers ought to do, and afterwards to listen to the opinion of your younger brothers.⁷⁷⁶ We may look at these titles, not as authoritative, but in the following manner of influence, an elder brother would have sense, an uncle has knowledge, and a grandfather has wisdom. In fact, intimately tied to age was a notion of power. Being older also meant having more responsibility but being a father meant to principally be a provider and mediator and thus had more requirements to fulfill and it was the more onerous role. The father had to give liberally to his children, conversely, the children did not have as much obligations to their father. The chiefs were regarded in a fatherly role to their band and it was often remarked by travellers and diplomats that one could tell the wigwam of the chief because it was the poorest, he had to give liberally to his band in order to maintain his influence.⁷⁷⁷ In councils the chiefs referred to themselves as father to their bands.

The Odaawaa Chief Mitaminance stated on May 11, 1797 on three strings of wampum:

I always keep in remembrance the good advice my father Governor Simcoe gave me at Detroit when he told me to sit down quiet with my Children at my Village and not listen to bad birds.⁷⁷⁸

Some may take this to mean his own biological children but Ojibwe Chief Bamakoneshkam also used the same analogy in 1839 at the King's council fire at Manitowaning when he stated, "Father - I follow in the footsteps of the Chiefs who have preceded me. I also thank you for your goodness + mean to follow adopt your advice, but father, I must settle on the land of my fathers + farm there with my children."⁷⁷⁹

Chief Bamakoneshkam could also be interpreted as speaking for just his biological children, but chiefs spoke for their band. The explicit case was presented by Ojibwe Chief Debassige when he wrote to the Governor General in 1877 stating that all of his

⁷⁷⁶ Treaty of Greenville in Walter Lowrie and Matthew St. Claire Clarke, eds., *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 2 vols., (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832-34): 1: 490, 575.

⁷⁷⁷ In 1828 Giacomo Beltrami visited Minnesota in 1828 and noted that remarked that, "in the distribution of presents, the chief was always last, and if nothing remained for him, he did not complain. The chiefs and their families were, in fact, the poorest among the people." See Theresa M. Schenck, *"The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar": The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640 – 1855* (New York: [Garland Publishing Inc.](#), 1997), 82.

⁷⁷⁸ Thomas Duggan Journal, Michilimackinack, 1795-1801, Clements Library, University of Michigan, 11 May 1797.

⁷⁷⁹ Speech of the Chippewa Chief Bamakoneshkam [Bemigwaneshkang] at a council held before Colonel Jarvis at Manitowaning, August [10]th, 1839. Samuel Peters Jarvis Papers, Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library, Box 57, p. 303-8.

band members deserved to receive the annuity from the Robinson Huron Treaty. He stated, “Sometimes my eyes fill with tears when I stop and think of my children. I speak for my fellow Indians... A large number of my fellow Indians have not been paid, even though they should have been paid for their property. May they all receive a little money as I receive some! All of those, I mean, who have not been paid. We the Chiefs are basically ashamed. Our children (that is to say, the men whose chiefs we are) regard us with envy when they see us receive a little money.”⁷⁸⁰

The chief was regarded as a father to the band. The father was to be gentle to his children and provide for them all indiscriminately. The “chief of all the Indians” or the Superintendent of Indian Affairs was also to serve as father to all “Indians.” The King of England had adopted the sun as an emblem and this fit into the Western Nations conceptualization of the father because the sun constantly provides heat and light for his children, or all of creation, and does so indiscriminately without favouritism.

At Fort Pitt on May 9 – 11, 1765, a congress was hosted by George Croghan and attended by the Shawnee, Delaware, Senecas and the Sanduskey Indians. Croghan informed them that the British had taken over possession of the posts from the French in the Illinois and Ohio country. He stated further that the King of England offered to “take under his Protection all the Nations of Indians in this Country to the Sun Setting,” furthermore, the King had “now become their father.”⁷⁸¹ These Shawnee and Delaware had not attended the Treaty at Niagara and were part of the holdouts with Pontiac. It was at this council however, that they entered the Covenant Chain and requested that the British take them and adopt them as their children. They stated,

Fathers - (For so we will call you henceforth.) - Listen to what we are going to say to you, it gave us great satisfaction Yesterday to be called the Children of the great King of England: it convinces us that your intentions towards us are upright, as we know a Father will be tender to his Children, and they more ready to obey him than a Brother, therefore we hope our father will now take better Care of his

⁷⁸⁰ Chief Debassige, Mitchikiwadnong January 27, 1877. LAC RG 10 Vol. 1996, File 6990.

⁷⁸¹ At a Meeting of the Shawanese, Delawares, Senecas and Sanduskey Indians at Fort Pitt the 9th of May 1765. Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, ed. by James Sullivan, 14 vols. (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1921-1965), Vol. XI: 726.

Children, than heretofore, has been done.⁷⁸²

The Shawnee, on behalf of themselves and Delaware formally accepted the British as their father at this council. They pointed out that a “Father will be tender to his Children” and hoped that their newly adopted father would “take better Care of his Children, than heretofore,” which is a reference to the manner in which the British had attempted to discontinue presents and over take the land, which were contributing factors to their participation in the war against the British. The other Western nations would soon adopt the British as their father.

A special emissary was sent to the *pays d'en haut* to adopt the nations. The emissary reported to Commander Campbell at Michilimackinac that he had read the following speech to the Ojibwe and Odaawaa of Michilimackinac, the Odaawaa of L'Arbre Croche, Ojibwe of Sault Ste. Marie and Saginaw, to which all had agreed. The speech and wampum belt were used in the adoption of those nations as the children of the King, and he, their father:

Comrades – You have heard of the commission that I am charged with by your Brother who now wishes to adopt your [sic] for his *children* [orig. emph.] instead of Brothers as you have hitherto been. Wherefore, *children* [orig. emph.] I present you with this Belt, recommending to you not to listen to those evil birds which hover over your heads & whisper bad things in your ears. Now, Children, you see this belt which I give you, which is of the same colour with the sky, & promises everything that is pleasant & fine, and which is to serve you as a mat to sit upon, till your Father shall [] you of this Belt [] declares to you that, if among the [] there shall be any found who may [].⁷⁸³

There was no other description of the belt other than the colour and that it too, was to serve as a mat which the children were to sit upon in peace. The emissary took pains to state that if any remaining malcontents attempt anything against the British, that they would be dealt with. However, those accepting of the new arrangement would find

⁷⁸² At a Meeting of the Shawanese, Delawares, Senecas and Sanduskey Indians at Fort Pitt the 9th of May 1765 Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 727.

⁷⁸³ An Address in French & Translated delivered to Ojibwe & Ottawa of Michimak [sic], L'Arbre Croche, Sault St. Marie & Saguinan. Mon'r Marsac to John Campbell, Detroit July 29th 1765, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV: 803-8. Note the square brackets indicate that the document was damaged and illegible in those portions.

that their father had sent them a present of “his milk... his breasts large & full of it;”⁷⁸⁴ milk was rum. The assembled chiefs replied,

Comrade – We thank you for the good news you bring us; & we [] the belt of our Father, whom we receive for our true Father [] thank our new Father for the kindness he expresses towards us, [d]on’t you forget to tell our Father at Detroit that we are obliged [to] him, on account of the pity he shews [sic] towards us, our wives, and children. We have already thanked our father at Michilimackinac.⁷⁸⁵ The chiefs acknowledged their new father but they also took the effort to make sure that their father at Detroit was acknowledged as well. The Western Nations around Michilimackinac had significant ties to Detroit, the commanding officer and their relatives living around there.

Although the document was damaged and the full speech is not known, it does look like the belt given to the Western Nations about Michilimackinac re-enforced one of the initial terms of the Treaty of Niagara as detailed by Sir William Johnson, that is the relationship was one of an offensive and defensive alliance. The incomplete phrase in the speech, that the wampum belt was to “serve you as a mat to sit upon, till your Father shall [blank],” which could be filled in with the phrase ‘require your services.’ This interpretation is bolstered when considering subsequent councils wherein the British request a demonstration of fidelity by engaging an enemy.

Such was the case when the Potawatomi Chief Machioquise of Detroit stated to Colonel Guy Johnson that he had known that the British were offended and had a “bitter heart and wanted to know who was your real children, which you could be no otherwise convinced of than by their exerting themselves to revenge the insult you had received or by bringing the offenders to a proper submission.”⁷⁸⁶ The British wanted those who had entered the Covenant Chain to prove their fidelity by bringing in the warriors who had fought against them. The British continued to have difficulties bringing all the so called ‘malcontents’ to justice. Many feigned ignorance. Sir William later wrote to General

⁷⁸⁴ Mon’r Marsac to John Campbell, Detroit July 29th 1765, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV: 803-8.

⁷⁸⁵ An Address in French & Translated delivered to Ojibwe & Ottawa of Michimak [sic], L’Arbre Croche, Sault St. Marie & Saguanan. Mon’r Marsac to John Campbell, Detroit July 29th 1765, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV: 803-8.

⁷⁸⁶ A Conference held at Detroit January 26th 1765, Present Machioquise, Makisabe Chiefs of the Powtowattamies of this village [Detroit] and Nangisse, son of the Great Chief of the St. Joseph’s and Peshibaon Chief of the same village. LAC, MG 19, F35, Series 1, Lot 626, pp: 1 – 4.

Gage enclosing copies of the Treaty of Peace he had signed with the Huron of Detroit and the Chenussios, who claimed to have had no part in the war. Sir William had his doubts about this claim but stated to Gage in 1764 that “I know many of them could not avoid being in some degree concerned against us, Yet from the impossibility of making [sic] a more strict enquiry, or of punishing some without bringing on fresh troubles, which we were not able to put an end to, it was Judged adviseable to treat those Indians as People who had not Joyned in the War.”⁷⁸⁷ Thus clemency was granted to prevent another possible war. The threat of war dictated that the British had to negotiate with the nations as autonomous entities.

Three years later the Ojibwe Chief Michicowiss (Matchekwis) of Michilimackinac travelled to Johnson Hall to meet with Sir William Johnson. Sir William was away and Michicowiss parleyed with Guy Johnson,

Brother – I am very glad to see you this day and to see the sun shine so bright at this our meeting. I remember to have seen you during the war at Niagara, I hope I shall soon see my father Sir William, being his adopted child, and fast friend, and I can tell you that my people are well disposed and ready to shew [sic] their regard for the English but towards the Mississippi the people are very bad and now meditating mischief.⁷⁸⁸

Here, Michicowiss called Guy Johnson ‘Brother’ and reserved the title ‘Father’ for Sir William. Michicowiss also stated that he was Sir William’s “adopted child and fast friend” which he sought to prove by reporting some “bad birds” to the west.⁷⁸⁹ Michicowiss, one of the principal actors in the taking of Fort Michilimackinac⁷⁹⁰ stated that he was a ‘fast friend’ of Sir William, and thus bound to him by the chain of friendship, yet he also stated that he was his adopted child, and therefore entitled to mercy, clemency, and benevolence. Michicowiss finally got to meet Sir William days later and said to him,

⁷⁸⁷ Sir William Johnson to General Gage, Johnson Hall, August 22d, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 337.

⁷⁸⁸ 1768 July 10th - At a Congress held at Guy Park July the 10th with Michicowiss a Chief of the Chipeweighs and some of his people. LAC RG 10, Vol. 8, p. 69 – 81, C-1222.

⁷⁸⁹ Michicowiss (Matchekiwis) was likely complaining about the Sioux, historic enemy of the Ojibwe, and thus made a complaint that served Ojibwe interests if the British were to furnish the Ojibwe with arms and ammunition.

⁷⁹⁰ Madjeckewiss, David A. Armour, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/madjeckewiss_5E.html

Father – When I last saw you, you united my heart with yours. Mine still remains entirely devoted to you & in consequence thereof I now offer you our service as your son; and to assure you that we are ready to do whatever you desire... Michicowiss expressed his willingness to act as a son and do service for his adopted father as per the terms of the Treaty of Niagara as well as the terms of the adoption. He took the opportunity to express his and his people's satisfaction with the state of the country in that obstacles and 'clouds' had been removed:

Father – We the Western People are glad to see your way so open and the sun so clear in this part of the country. We are your adopted sons and will take good notice of what you say and when I return home I shall communicate it to all my people who will follow your advice. They desired me to make haste as they are sitting still about Michilimackinac until my return. I hope that you will look upon me and use me as your son.⁷⁹¹

Ojibwe Chief Michicowiss stated again that they were Sir William's adopted sons and were ready to fulfill the services to their father. Chief Michicowiss did not use the adjective 'obedient.' However, that adjective soon entered the diplomatic discourse and is problematic because of its paternalistic overtones. It is also problematic because in Ojibwe the word used for obedient is **bizindam**, which also means "he listens."⁷⁹² In 1770, a deputation of Mississauga chiefs from the north shore of Lake Ontario paid a visit to Sir William to state to him that they continued to abide by the Covenant Chain and were 'obedient' children:

Father – It is a long time we have not seen you, you recommended to us at Niagara where we saw you last to behave as good and obedient children ought to do, [...] we took a firm hold of your hand which you, like a father, stretched out to us, and we assure you we will not let it go as long as we live [symbol]. We address ourselves on behalf of our Nation, thro' you, to the Great King of England, ~~the hand we stretch out to the giver of life the other to you our temporal father~~ whom you represent among the Indians and beg you will assure him from us & our Nation that we are determined to behave as faithful and obedient children ought to do, and shall always keep the good advice fresh in our memories which you in his name gave us, and call the giver of life to our assistance, to keep us sted fast in executing these our intentions.

⁷⁹¹ 1768 July 10th - At a Congress held at Guy Park July the 10th with Michicowiss a Chief of the Chipeweighs and some of his people. LAC RG 10, Vol. 8, p. 69 – 81, C-1222.

⁷⁹² **Bizindam** is an intransitive verb for the act of listening. The transitive animate form of the verb is **bizindawaan** "He listens to him," and the transitive inanimate form is **bizindaan** "He listens to it." Obedient children could be translated as **bezindamojig binoojiinyig** but this would also be understood as the 'children that listen.'

The Mississauga chiefs employed the metaphors of taking firm hold of their father's hand, as well as the image of their father extending that helping hand. The Mississauga gave Sir William a white belt of wampum with two figure holding hands. In between the two was a cross representing providence.⁷⁹³ A dichotomy is also mentioned, but scratched out by the secretary, between the temporal father and the spiritual father, that is the giver of life. In later petitions chiefs of Manitoulin Island, which included Ojibwe, Odaawaa and Potawatomi chiefs, wrote that the King was to care for their temporal affairs and that he represented the giver of life here on earth.⁷⁹⁴ Apparently, chiefs of the Western Nations were also practiced at rhetoric, however, this flattery can be traced back to the symbolism of the sun, father sun, that the British adopted which the Western Nations, particularly the Anishinaabe, associated with the role of father.

The British referred to the sun in councils with the Western Nations. Sir William Johnson met with Pontiac and other representatives from the Wendat, Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and Potawatomi in 1766. By this time the British had adopted the Western Nations as children. He directed the assembled chiefs to look east, and they would find him:

Children – I now with this Belt turn your eyes to the sun rising where you will always find me to be your sincere friend, and from me you may depend upon hearing what is true & good, and I charge you never more to listen to those bad birds who come with false stories to lead you astray and to make you break the solemn engagements you have in the presence of the Great Spirit (who detests lyars [sic]) entered into with the Great King your Father and his people, and I exhort you all to be strong and lay fast hold of this chain of Friendship with the English, that your children seeing the advantage of it, may follow your example and may be a happy people which I should rejoice to see.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹³ At a meeting of a party of Mississageys [Mississauga] from La Bay Quinte Shanneyon & the River Pemedashkoudayan in the West side of Lake Ontario. Johnson Hall 20th July 1770, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p. 95 – 99, C-1222.

⁷⁹⁴ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

⁷⁹⁵ Proceedings at a Congress with Pontiac and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Pautawattamies, Hurons and Chippawaes begun Tuesday July 23, 1766. E. B. O'Callaghan, Berthold Fernow, and John Romeyn, eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York; Procured in Holland, England, and France by John Romeyn Brodhead, esq.*, vol. VII (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), Vol. VII: 857.

Sir William Johnson made deliberate attempts to associate the British nation, himself, justice and righteousness with the east. The Ojibwe, Odaawaa, and Potawatomi already had symbolic associations with the east, particularly new beginnings, enlightenment and truth. Pontiac responded on behalf of the Western Nations assembled and stated,

Father yesterday you told us to turn our eyes towards the sun rising, I do and when I get home, I shall desire all the Nations to do the same, and there they will always see their Father and by stretching out their hands they can always take hold of his. *A Belt of 10 Rows*.⁷⁹⁶

Pontiac also pledged to have his allies look for their father in the east.

Associating the British with the colour of rising red sun was a strong one and it lasted for years. Indeed, 85 years later, Odaawaa Chief Jean Baptiste Assiginack recounted the promises the British made to the Western Confederacy as represented by the wampum belts. Assiginack noted that the British had told the Anishinaabeg that the Great Spirit himself had adopted the British nation:⁷⁹⁷

Now children, hear and understand, there are only four distinguished parts of the sky, that portion where the sun rises, the south, that where he goes down, and the north: these are the only four remarkable points in it: Children you must never fix your eye upon any of the other three points, for in vain you will look to any of them for means to sustain life; let your eyes be always directed towards that quarter where the sun rises. Sometimes the sun will appear like blood, then you will say to yourselves, I see the coat of my Great Father the **protection of my life** [emphasis added]: My children you heard me say that in this the Great Spirit pointed out to me to imitate him, and this is the reason why the coat of the British Nation is red; and as the Sun will continue to appear to you so my Coat shall never be out of your sight.⁷⁹⁸

The sun, the colour red and the direction of the east all became associated with the British engagements entered into vis-a-vis the Covenant Chain and thus these symbols

⁷⁹⁶ Proceedings at a Congress with Pontiac and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Pautawattamies, Hurons and Chippawaes begun Tuesday July 23, 1766. O'Callaghan et. al., eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, Vol. VII: 859.

⁷⁹⁷ According to Assiginack, the Great Spirit told the British that they would rule the world. "These are the words spoken to my Great Grandfather by the one who addressed him from above." Chief Jean Baptiste Assikinawk, 21st October 1851, LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 440.

⁷⁹⁸ According to Assiginack, the Great Spirit told the British that they would rule the world. "These are the words spoken to my Great Grandfather by the one who addressed him from above." Odawa Chief Jean Baptiste Assikinawk, 21st October 1851, LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 441.

represented the nature of the relationship agreed upon at Niagara in 1764. The Chiefs of Manitoulin, keepers of the wampum belts, also wrote in Ojibwe about the red sun rising:

<p>Mi manda kejiwebisiian ininabiian kawita-kijig nandawabandan kidabinodjiim obimadisiwin awadi wendji mogiset kisis inabiian kigawabama kisis tchibimiskwabikagodjing missa ajinawag amiskokwanaieian nage achpimeing dach kibiagodjing awi kisis apitchi tawasikoso missa kejinagwadinig kidabinodjiim obimadisiwin</p>	<p>Here is the place that will be yours, when you look around you under the vaulted heaven looking for the support of your children, when your gaze turns towards the rising sun you shall see that sun rising red similar to the color of the coat that I wear [emphasis added], when it rises higher that same sun shall be very bright with light, there is the image of the life of your children.⁷⁹⁹</p>
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The chiefs and Sir William Johnson codified the words of their foundational treaty in order to remember and recite them. The rising sun reminded the Western Nations of the colour of the coat the British wore and thus reminded them of their Great Father and the promises he made. The chiefs, whenever they met in council recited the meanings of the belt, thus summoning the spirit of Sir William Johnson's words. The level of consonance is striking between the documented speeches of Johnson and the speeches of the chiefs as well as their petition written 85 years later. The integrity of the oral tradition relied upon an interlocking system of mnemonic devices and memorized speeches.

However, the eastern direction did not just represent the sun and the eternal nature of the promises, the east also represented the 'seat' of the British on Anishinaabe land. Assiginack stated that the British had given the Covenant Chain wampum belt as a mat for the Western Nations and that the British would occupy the eastern corner of it.⁸⁰⁰ It was from this eastern seat that the British would watch over and protect their children. Sir William Johnson and his deputy George Croghan repeatedly told the chiefs that the British King offered them protection and that all they had to do was come east to have any disputes or grievances settled. In 1760 at Detroit Croghan told the Wendat,

⁷⁹⁹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

⁸⁰⁰ "My Children, ...you see that Wampum before you me, ... this will be your Mat the eastern corner of which I myself will occupy." Odawa Chief Jean Baptiste Assikinawk, 21st October 1851, LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 440 - 443.

Potawatomi, and Odaawaa chiefs that “as long as you adhere to all his Majestys Interest and behave yourself[ves] well to all his subjects as faithfull allies, you may depend on having a free open Trade with your Brethren the English & **be protected by his Majesty King George** [emphasis added] now your Father and my Master.”⁸⁰¹ The sentiment of clemency and protection was also re-iterated and sealed with wampum by Sir William Johnson at Detroit in 1761, when he stated in council that he was charged by his superiors:

to give assurances of his clemency and favour to all such Nations of Indians as are desirous to come under his royal protection, as well as to acquaint you that his Majesty will promote to the utmost an extensive plentiful commerce on the most equitable terms between his subjects and all Indians who are willing to entitle themselves thereto, and to partake of his royal clemency by entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with the British Crown.⁸⁰²

As previously mentioned, but necessary to state again, Amherst’s policies and actions undermined the diplomatic work of George Croghan and William Johnson. So these principles had to be re-implemented and re-stated at the peace treaty solidified at Niagara in 1764:

Brethren - All that is wanting on your Parts to attain this is that you never more listen to Stories told you by People who have nothing to do with the Management of Indian Affairs, that you shut your Ears against all bad Birds, and be no longer deluded by their Whistling, that, when any evil Reports prevail, you cast your Eyes to the Eastward, where you will find me ready to clear up mistakes, and **do you Justice** [emphasis added], that you love the English and Consider them as Brethren, that you take care of our Post at Michillimackinac [sic] and the Soldiers, and Traders there, and that you keep the Sky clear, and the Waters of the Lakes, and Rivers smooth, and even so that they may come to that Country without any Danger,⁸⁰³

⁸⁰¹ Croghan in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals relating to tours into the Western Country, November 16, 1750 – November 1765” in *Early Western Travels 1748 – 1846*, Volume 1 (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 115.

⁸⁰² Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁸⁰³ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyns, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 278–81.

Two weeks later, after more intensive negotiations, and more people had arrived, Sir William Johnson then stipulated terms of this peace treaty, and again, the principle of providing justice, settling disputes between traders and the Western Nations, was explicitly stated in council with the caveat against listening to others who had nothing to do with Indian Affairs,

and moreover I desire that you will never listen to any News which comes to any other Quarter, if you do, it may shake the Belt.—but keep your Eyes upon me, & I shall be always ready to hear your Complaints, **procure you Justice** [emphasis added], or rectify any mistaken Prejudices, if you will strictly Observe this, you will enjoy the favour of the English, a plentiful Trade, and you will become a happy People.⁸⁰⁴

Establishing clear lines of communication was so important, as was identifying who was delegated to receive complaints and rectify mistakes, it was re-enforced with each group of chiefs that came in to tie their hands in friendship, that is, join the Covenant Chain. Sir William Johnson told a group of Mississaugas in 1765 that the Department of Indian Affairs would be established with appointed people:

Whenever you hear any idle reports, turn your face to me, or those under me, & there you will hear truth & all mistakes will be rectified, and so soon as the good work in which the King is now employed is finished, persons will then be appointed to hear & redress small complaints & a more regular system will be pursued, than heretofore, by which our correspondence will become more General, and the peace will be firm & lasting unless disturbed thro' the restless disposition & ill grounded jealousys [sic] of some of the Indian Nations.⁸⁰⁵

Sir William Johnson continued to work to establish peace across the *pays d'en haut* and one of the last to enter the peace was Pontiac himself. Pontiac did not attend the Treaty at Niagara in 1764. The precepts of that treaty had to be re-iterated to Pontiac. The same symbolic discourse was used because it essentially was the same treaty, that is, it was the Covenant Chain. Sir William addressed Pontiac and other chiefs from the Detroit area in 1766 at Oswego and told them,

⁸⁰⁴ July the 31st. A:M [1764]: Sir William went over the River and had a General Meeting with all the Western Indians in their Camp. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 309-13.

⁸⁰⁵ Wabbicommicott with the rest came into the Council room & requested a conference. June 4th 1765, LAC RG 10, Vol. 9, p.56 –65, C-1222.

you likewise now see that proper officers, men of honour and probity are appointed to reside at the Posts, to prevent abuses in Trade, to hear your complaints, and such of them as they can not redress they are to lay before me.⁸⁰⁶ Sir William outlined the channels of communication, which were based upon a nation to nation relationship, a relationship that respected the autonomy of the Western Nations. Also outlined was the process to settle grievances. It must be pointed out that the protection offered by the King, through Sir William's agency, was to keep traders in check, as well as redress any other crimes committed against the Western Nations by any of the King's subjects:

Children – I assure you of the King my Masters esteem for all faithful good Indians, who duly regard their engagements and that he will by no means suffer them to be **ill used** [emphasis added], so that whenever you have any reason to complain you are to lay the matter candidly before one of the commissaries or other officers in your country, who if they can not do you justice, will report it faithfully to me, who having the entire management of your affairs, and the most ready inclination to serve you, will always study your interest, and exert myself to procure you the satisfaction you may deserve.⁸⁰⁷

By taking hold of the King's proffered hand, and tying it with wampum, the Western Confederacy held onto their land, maintained their freedom, solidified trade relations, secured protection from unscrupulous traders, secured a process for restitution of fraudulent land purchases by adopting the British as father. Furthermore, their father had to provide for them, that is, annually provide them with ample presents, tobacco, provisions, and milk (rum). Adopting the British as "father" could be viewed as paternalistic, however, if viewed from an informed perspective that explicates the metaphoric language and the associated mnemonic symbols, the Treaty of Niagara (which includes the Covenant Chain), demonstrates that the treaty partners had a high degree of shared understanding. The treaty and its forms demonstrate that the British met and treated with the Western Confederacy on terms the Confederacy adhered to, demonstrating that the British implicitly acknowledged the autonomy and independence

⁸⁰⁶ Proceedings of Sir William Johnson with Pondiac and other Indians, July 23 - 31, 1766. O'Callaghan et. al., eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 7: 855.

⁸⁰⁷ Proceedings of Sir William Johnson with Pondiac and other Indians, July 23 - 31, 1766. O'Callaghan et. al., eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 7: 855.

of the Western Confederacy while recognizing that a mechanism was required to facilitate trade and settle disputes that did not diminish either's autonomy.

The treaty, coupled with the protective provisions in the Royal Proclamation should have been enough to secure the Western Confederacy, and their constituent individual bands, of their lands and territory. The chiefs certainly thought that this had been secured. Chief Okedaa stated his belief in the strength of the treaty in 1818 at Drummond Island, "Father - Your words were true, all you promised came to pass. On giving us this belt of peace, [orig. emph.] you said, 'If you should require my assistance, shew [sic] this belt and my hand will be immediately stretched forth to help you.'"⁸⁰⁸ Likewise, the Chiefs of the North Shore of Lake Huron and Manitoulin Island gathered on 25 July 1870, smoked the pipe, and brought out the wampum belt and recited its meaning and decided to appeal to the Governor General of Canada, Sir John Young Baronet, in a petition to address multiple grievances:

Great Chief – We the undersigned Chiefs of the North Shore of Lake Huron and the Great Manitoulin Island do hereby respectfully acquaint your Excellency that we met in grand council at Little Current on the 25th July 1870 for the consideration [of] that sacred Friendship which have existed between our forefathers in the year 1786⁸⁰⁹ at which time a wampum belt have been given by the British Government as an emblem of that sacred Friendship (which is now before us in our assembly) and after a long deliberations we came to the conclusion to renew that sacred Friendship by having smoked the Pipe of Peace as a token of a perpetual Friendship between the different tribes and bands assembled [...]

Great Chief – We would therefore humbly ask and entreat your Excellency to have the said sacred Friendship renewed (as we do in our part) by respecting our rights to the lands. Hunting and fishing which are virtually ours which the Great Spirit has given us many hundred years before the white man set his foot upon this good and delightful country of ours on which we were once very numerous and mighty nation but now we are small in number, your Excellency ought therefore endeavour to get the right thing done for us like a good father does with his surviving children who lost most of his children.

⁸⁰⁸ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

⁸⁰⁹ The 1786 Covenant Chain Wampum belt was pledged by Sir William Johnson's son and successor Sir John Johnson. The Covenant Chain needed to be re-pledged due to the losses after the American Revolution.

Great Chief – We sometimes think that the said sacred Friendship is not held so sacred as when first made.⁸¹⁰

The chiefs then listed various grievances about the Fish and Game act, the selling of material procured and processed on their reserves, the Gradual Enfranchisement Act, the fact that commissioners were continually sent to harass them into ceding more land, and they also mentioned that the islands in Lake Huron had not been properly surrendered. The Chiefs did not appeal to the Royal Proclamation to have these issues of autonomy and title settled, the chiefs pointed to the wampum belts and the pipes because that was the treaty that they understood.

The Covenant Chain Treaty Relationship: The Importance of Delivering ‘Warmth’

The most telling example of British conduct revealing their adherence to the Covenant Chain and the 1764 Treaty of Niagara is the annual delivery of presents. From 1764 to 1856 the British delivered presents to the Western Confederacy at Michilimackinac, Detroit, Amherstburg, Mackinac, St. Joseph Island, Drummond Island, Penetanguishene, and Manitowaning. The provision of the annual delivery of presents was represented by a wampum belt called the “24 Nations” wampum belt. A description and life-sized drawing of this belt and three other belts, (see Figure 13) was made in 1852 by the Reverend George Hallen who had borrowed the belts from Chief J.B. Assignack. Hallen counted the number of rows of wampum on the belt as well as the number of beads per row. Hallen recorded that the belt had “12 strings, each containing 590 beads, or a total of 7,080 beads.”⁸¹¹ In the margins of his drawings Hallen had written “24 Nations” in reference to the 24 men on the belt. A. F. Hunter, who had published Hallen’s drawings, reported that he had been told by “the old Chief of the Oka Indians” that they too had a belt of the same pattern, that is men standing side by side with a boat at one end and a mountain or rock at the opposite end of the belt. Hunter’s informant

⁸¹⁰ The Memorial of the Ojibwa Indians to His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Young, Baronet, K.C.B.G.C.M.G. Governor General of the Dominion of Canada & c & c, Garden River June 12th 1869 and Little Current on the 25th July 1870. LAC RG 10, Vol. 380, p. 253–64. This is actually two petitions, the first forwarded to the next grand council at Little Current.

⁸¹¹ A. F. Hunter, “Wampum records of the Ottawas” in *Annual Archaeological Report 1901: Being Part of an Appendix to the Report of the Minister of Education Ontario*, 52-55 (Toronto: K. L. Cameron, 1902), 52.

stated that the meaning of the belt was that “the British were bound to supply the Indians with annual presents from the ship. If they should fail, the Indians would be at liberty to act unitedly to secure their just rights. The annual presents were to be given in return for the lands the white men took from the Indians. Such was the meaning of the Oka belt, and such is probably the meaning, or nearly so, of the belt of the Ottawas shown here.”⁸¹² Hunter admitted that he did not have a full understanding of the meaning or the promises of the belt. Fortunately, on 21 October of 1851, someone wrote down J. B. Assiginack’s words regarding the 24 Nations wampum belt. J.B. Assiginack had long been the official interpreter for the Indian Department stationed at Drummond Island and Manitowaning.⁸¹³ He held that position since the end of the War of 1812. As such, J. B. Assiginack was well versed in the meaning of the wampum belts, was entrusted as keeper of the belts for a time and had presided over the distribution of presents for many years.⁸¹⁴ Assiginack recounted the “talk” on the 24 Nations wampum belt:

The British officer put forth another Wampum having on it the figure of a ship and the Representatives of twenty four different Tribes and he spoke as follows: “My children, see, this is my canoe floating on the other side of the Great Waters, it shall never be exhausted but always full of the necessaries of life for you my children as long as the world shall last. Should it happen any time after this that you find the strength of your life reduced, your Indian Tribes must take hold of the vessel and pull. It shall be out [“in” written above] of your power to pull towards you this my canoe, and when you have brought it over to this land on which you stand, I will open my hand as it were, and you will find yourselves supplied with plenty.” This is the commencement of clothing.⁸¹⁵

Chief J. B. Assiginack lived on Manitoulin Island at the time this statement was taken down. It is therefore understandable that the chiefs of Manitoulin would have a similar understanding. Referring again to the Ojibwe petition written by the Chiefs of Manitoulin, there is a consonance but also minor differences. The chiefs wrote:

⁸¹² Hunter, “Wampum records of the Ottawas” 54.

⁸¹³ Cecil King, “J.B. Assiginack: Arbiter of two worlds” *Ontario History*, LXXXVI, No 1 (March 1994: 33–51), 37.

⁸¹⁴ For a description of Assiginack in his role overseeing the distribution of presents consult Anna Brownell Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, 3 vols. (London: Saunders and Oatley, 1838, Re-published by the New Canadian Library in 1990 in 1 volume), 496–502. Also refer to Paul Kane, *Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America* (Dover Publications, 1996, First published in 1859), 7, 10–11.

⁸¹⁵ J.B. Assikinawk, Manitowawning 21st Oct. 1851. LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 443.

Minawa dach kego kigiwawindan manda
 nabikwan kiminin. Kawika
 tanawachkinessino ninidjanissidig
 nisagabikadan manda kitchimaniwa.
 Ninidjanissidig midasswewan
 achinijwewan kidandatchim minik nongo
 keganoninagog. Missa iwi
 kedassogabawiieg tchiwikobidoieg manda
 kidjimaniwa. Kichpin dach ninidjanissidig
 tchitchibabigibidog gego
 kwinawabandameg. Kego nangwana
 ogwinawabandanawa ninidjaanissag
 ningainendam ningabos dach ajiwi
 tchimaning ninganandawabandan dach iwi
 kegigwinawabandameg ningabositon dach
 kibositoian dach wikobidog manda
 kitchimaniwa missa manda kaijiiian kin
 Chaganach egoian.

You afterwards promised some thing
[mother]. “This vessel I give you, it
 shall never be empty my children. I tie a
 rope to this vessel which has become
 yours. My children you are twelve bands
 in number who hear my words, you will
 come in the same number to draw up your
 vessel. If any day my children you see
 something wanting I shall say my
 children are in want of something. I’ll go
 aboard the vessel, I’ll try to get what is
 wanted and I’ll ship it and when I shall
 have brought it you will then draw up
 your vessel. This is what you have said,
 you whom we call English.”⁸¹⁶

Both Assiginack and the chiefs stated that the boat would always be full. Both state that if anything is lacking (Assiginack says “strength of your life reduced”) that they were to assemble, take hold of the rope that was tied to the boat, and draw it towards them.

Assiginack initially referred to 24 “Tribes” and stated that “your Indian Tribes must take hold of the vessel and pull” but the Chiefs of Manitoulin specifically stated that 12 “bands” should get together and pull. This is an error; the English word should be “tribe” or “nation,” but the translator used “band.” The number 12 though, is not an error. The Manitoulin bands refer to 12 Nations/ Tribes because they are referring only to the portion for the Western Confederacy, which was 12 Nations, the other 12 being from the Eastern confederacy, including the Six Nations.

The Odaawaa were entrusted keepers of the belts and the talk contained therein since 1764.⁸¹⁷ However that does not mean that others were ignorant of the meanings of the belts. In fact, in 1852, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs informed the assembled chiefs at Manitowaning that by 1854 the presents would be reduced by half, and he asked

⁸¹⁶ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

⁸¹⁷ Refer to Question 2 wherein the 12 Nations representing the Western Confederacy are listed.

them which of the items included as presents they could readily “despense with.” The chiefs vociferously protested. The Odaawaa chief Mookomaanish, one time keeper of the belts, stated at this 1852 council, “Father - The words of your Chiefs were, ‘you shall have presents forever,’ Father - let it be as they said.” Next the Potawatomi Chief Wacowsai (Waakaa’ose) stated, “Father - We pray of you to tell him that in former days your first men said to us the presents should never be taken away.”⁸¹⁸ Lastly, the Ojibwe Chief from Garden River, Shinguakonse stated at length:

Father - You came and he [French] disappeared but you said to the Red Man. “Be you now [in] my care. Be you now my children all that the French have done for you + much more will I do. Let the Red Warriors [cleave] to me and they shall never know want.”

Father - We heard your words + we believed when you said, “You see that sun above us who daily shines to light and warm us, you see those green leaves which open out beneath his rays. You see that grass which clothes the earth, those waters which flow from the high lands towards the sea. Well! Whilst these things live your presents shall live.” Can it be that this is forgotten?

Father - Shall the Indian no longer be able to draw to [the] home which it has so often gladdened that [amply freighted] vessel which was bound by the strong cord of friendship, [much] to agitate which you told him should make it appear.⁸¹⁹

Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse, Odaawaa Chief Mookomaanish, Potawatomi Chief Wacowsai (Waakaa’ose) and Odaawaa Chief J. B. Assiginack were contemporaries, they knew each other and met with each other annually at least, if not more frequently.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁸ The Speeches of Mo.ko.ma.nish, Wa.ka.ow.se, Chinguakonse, 7th August 1852, Manitowaning. LAC RG 10, Vol. 621a, p. 107.

⁸¹⁹ The Speeches of Mo.ko.ma.nish, Wa.ka.ow.se, Chinguakonse, 7th August 1852, Manitowaning. LAC RG 10, Vol. 621a, p. 107.

⁸²⁰ These chiefs, Assiginack, Mookomaanish, Shinguaconse and Paimoquonaishkung (Bemigwaneshkang), were recorded attending the same councils in 1829, 1838, 1839 and 1852. In **1829** Assiginack spoke on behalf of Mookomaanish and Shinguaconse spoke at the same council. See D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48. In **1839** Chief Shinguaconse, Mookomaanish, and Bemigwaneshkang delivered speeches that were recorded (Colonel Jarvis at Manitowaning, August 1839. Samuel Peters Jarvis Papers, Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library, Box 57). In **1852** (The Speeches of Mo.ko.ma.nish, Wa.ka.ow.se, Chinguakonse, 7th August 1852, Manitowaning. LAC RG

Evidenced by their recorded speeches, these chiefs knew the wampum belts, they knew the promises made at Niagara in 1764 because they had heard their elders and chiefs recite the treaty at the councils held in conjunction with the annual distribution of presents. Assiginack had heard the year before that the presents were to be discontinued but the rest heard the news in council at Manitowaning. All responded that the presents were to be forever. Chief Shingwaukonse made specific mention of the sun, the trees, grass and the flowing water, that as long as these persisted, the presents would continue to be delivered. Likewise, 10 months earlier, J. B. Assiginack stated, “you spoke at the time of your granting the Presents, your fingers were constantly directed to the sun whilst speaking and frequently mentioned the Great Spirit: it is believed the Great Spirit yet exists, and the Sun continues to shine with splendour; but what means the report the Indians now hear that Great Fire on which you laid so much stress, would be extinguished: it is thought such a thing cannot take place.”⁸²¹ Assiginack referred to the Great Fire and its extinguishment and equated it with the discontinuation of the presents. The presents were the embodiment and manifestation of the provisions of the Treaty. By 1850, the word “Treaty” had taken on a different connotation, especially “Indian Treaties” which were equated more with cessions than treaties (in contrast with Treaty of Ghent, Jay’s Treaty) at that time.

The language that Shingwaukonse and Assiginack used, specifically the phrase “draw” that “vessel which was bound by the strong cord of friendship” echoed the antecedents of the Covenant Chain. During the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744, Chief Canasatego used very similar phrasing,

We saw what sort of People they were, we were so pleased with them, that we tied their Ship to the Bushes on the Shore; and afterwards, liking them still better the longer they stayed with us, and thinking the Bushes to [sic] slender, we removed the rope, and tied it to the Trees; and as the Trees were liable to be blown down by high winds, or to decay of themselves, we from the Affection we bore them, again removed the Rope, and tied it to a strong and big Rock (*here the Interpreter said, They mean the Oneida country*) and not content with this, for its

10, Vol. 621a, p. 107). Anna Brownell Jameson also noted the attendance of three of these chiefs at Manitowaning, Shinguakonse, Mookomaanish and Assiginack in 1837. See Jameson, *Winter Studies*, 499-500.

⁸²¹ J.B. Assikinawk, Manitowawning 21st Oct. 1851. LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 443.

further Security, we removed the Rope to the big Mountain (*here the Interpreter says they mean the Onondago country*) and there we tied it very fast, and rolled Wampum about it.⁸²²

Instead of “friendship” Canasatego said “Affection.” However, the image of the boat tied to a rock was used again for the belt that was given to the Odaawaa on behalf of the 24 Nations at Niagara. Recall that Hunter reported that the chief at Oka held a similar belt but he did not state if the belt had 24 men or six. If the belt had six men holding hands with a ship at one end and a mountain at the other, that belt would presumably be an older one.⁸²³ Note the persistence of symbols, enduring from 1744 to 1852 and beyond. The visual symbol conveyed the meaning easily enough, however, more metaphors were included with the rope that was tied to the boat. Chief Shingwaukonse was recorded saying, that the Anishinaabe merely had to “agitate” that “strong cord of friendship,” and that action “should make it [vessel] appear.”⁸²⁴ Likewise, 10 years later, the chiefs of Manitoulin also referred to shaking the rope when they wrote, “Giishpin dash ni-niijaanisidig jiichiibaabiigibidoog gegoo gwiinawaabandameg,” which unfortunately was translated into English as “If any day my children you see something wanting I shall say my children are in want of something.” The key word missing in the translation is **jiichiibaabiigibidoog** “tug on the rope,” in order to give a signal that something is amiss. Shingwaukonse said that they were told to “agitate” the rope, the Chiefs of Manitoulin said “**jiichiibaabiigibidog** - tug the rope” and all will be restored. Sir William Johnson was familiar with this phrase. He had recited this phrase to the Haudenosaunee in 1748. He stated that he had read various volumes of past transactions and re-iterated them:

I find, that our first Friendship Commenced at the Arrival of the first great Canoe or Vessel at Albany, at which you were much surprized [sic] but finding what it contained pleased you so much, being Things for your Purpose, as our People

⁸²² Canasetoga quoted in Bruce Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect: The Covenant Chain and Aboriginal-Crown Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 25–6.

⁸²³ No belt has been identified but if there were one with six men holding hands with a ship on one end and the mountain at Onondaga at the other end, it would be the older belt upon which the pattern for the 24 Nations belt was based and could have been associated with the time of Canasatego.

⁸²⁴ The Speeches of Mo.ko.ma.nish, Wa.ka.ow.se, Chinguakonse, 7th August 1852, Manitowaning. LAC RG 10, Vol. 621a, p. 107.

convinced you of shewing you the use of them, that you all Resolved to take the greatest care of that Vessel that nothing should hurt her Whereupon it was agreed to tie her fast with a great Rope to one of the largest Nut Trees on the Bank of the River But on further Consideration in a fuller meeting it was thought safest Fearing the Wind should blow down that Tree to make a long Rope and tie her fast at Onondaga which was accordingly done and the Rope put under your feet That if anything hurt or touched said Vessel **by the shaking of the Rope you might know it** [emphasis added], and then agreed to rise all as one and see what the Matter was and whoever hurt the Vessel was to suffer.⁸²⁵

In a sense this belt is the complement to the 1764 Covenant Chain which shows two men bound together, one being the Englishman and the other the “Indian.” Taken together, this 24 Nations belt is the one that unites all of the nations together as one to then be bound to the English. The chiefs, governors, commanding officers and orators often mention in council that they have bound themselves together as one man. In the above quote, Sir William stated in 1748 to the Haudenosaunee that they should “rise all as one and see what the Matter was.” Later, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe stated that “Children: The King, your Father, has always advised you to be strong & unanimous & at present it is requisite for me to repeat his constant advice to you, which is to unite as one man – With this Belt – therefore I now collect and bind you together.”⁸²⁶ Likewise, the Oka Chief told Hunter that if there were any disturbance, interruption, or delay in the delivery of presents “the Indians would be at liberty to act unitedly to secure their just rights.”⁸²⁷ Similarly, in 1862 the Chiefs of Manitoulin wrote that they were told, by the British (Sir William), “My children you are twelve bands in number who hear my words, you will come in the same number to draw up your vessel.”⁸²⁸ In fact, at different times, various chiefs requested that the belt be brought to their community to renew alliances. For example, on 27 June 1832, Ojibwe Chiefs Aisence and Yellowhead of Coldwater and

⁸²⁵ Johnson quoted in Morito, *An Ethic of mutual Respect*, 26–7.

⁸²⁶ His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Simcoe’s reply to the Indian Nations assembled at the Wyandot Village on the 13th Day of October, 1794, E. A. Cruickshank, ed., *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents Relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada. Vol. III* (Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, ON, 1925), 1794-5, Vol. III: 122.

⁸²⁷ Hunter, “Wampum records of the Ottawas” 54.

⁸²⁸ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

the Narrows (near present day Orillia, Ontario) requested that the Odaawaa would “bring with them the Great Wampum Belt delivered into their care at Niagara by Sir William Johnson,” to maintain “their long established friendship.”⁸²⁹

Long after the British had discontinued delivering presents, the chiefs continued to refer to the belts as a symbol of unification. In 1869, chiefs of the North Shore of Lake Huron gathered at Garden River and wrote a petition to detail various grievances. This petition was then forwarded the following year to the chiefs of Manitoulin Island, where an addendum was added and reference to the belts were made:

Great Chief – We the undersigned Chiefs of the North Shore of Lake Huron and the Great Manitoulin Island do hereby respectfully acquaint your Excellency that we met in grand council at Little Current on the 25th July 1870 for the consideration [of] that sacred Friendship which have existed between our forefathers in the year 1786 at which time a wampum belt have been given by the British Government as an emblem of that sacred Friendship (which is now before us in our assembly) and after a long deliberations we came to the conclusion to renew that sacred Friendship by having smoked the Pipe of Peace as a token of a perpetual Friendship between the different tribes and bands assembled.⁸³⁰

The chiefs had the 1786 Covenant Chain renewal belt in front of them. This belt was pledged to the Western Confederacy after the American Revolution by Sir John Johnson, Sir William’s son. The Chiefs made specific reference to renewing the sacred friendship on their part by smoking the pipe amongst themselves. This petition did not yield the desired results and the grievances of the chiefs went unresolved. They met in council again at Garden River and resolved to send a deputation with the belts to explain the treaties of old. The petition preceded their proposed visit:

In one of the belts America and twenty four Indians are worked with Wampum beads [sic], at the other end an English ship is worked, laden with goods. The twenty four Indians are standing side by side holding each others hands and reach from America to the said English ship. They were told that if they did not get the presents, to get together and draw or pull the rope; how their wants would be

⁸²⁹ Superintendent Anderson reports the proceedings of a meeting of the Ottawas [from] Penetanguishene with the Coldwater Indians, 27th June 1832. LAC RG 10, Vol. 51, p. 56411.

⁸³⁰ The Memorial of the Ojibwa Indians To His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Young, Baronet, K.C.B.G.C.M.G. Governor General of the Dominion of Canada & c & c & c, 20 July 1870. LAC RG 10, Vol. 380, p. 253 – 264.

known and respected. The ship would be sent, as pictured, laden with valuable presents.⁸³¹

Once again, the chiefs stated that they were promised presents forever and that all they would have to do would be to “get together and draw or pull the rope” and “their wants would be known and respected.” The rest of the petition detailed grievances that went beyond the call to re-institute the annual delivery of the presents. Thus, the chiefs viewed the Covenant Chain, the wampum belt that was given in 1764 at Niagara, as being treaty that encapsulated more than receiving presents of clothing, ammunition, and blankets. The Covenant Chain included the nation to nation relationship, autonomy, protection, and ownership of the land. The chiefs tried to get the representatives of the Crown to recognize and acknowledge their perspectives. Despite the chiefs’ continued calls to meet to explain the “treaties” of old, they were told that they would have to receive prior permission to travel to Ottawa if they wanted to get their travel expenses covered, which was a way of limiting the chiefs from meeting with the representative of the crown, or as they called him, “the beautiful white bird.”⁸³²

Although the written record privileges prominent chiefs such as Shingwaukonce, Mookomaanish, Okedaa (Ocaitau) and Assiginack, the northern Lake Superior bands definitely visited the King’s Council Fire in order to receive warmth. The Lake Superior bands that were located around the Pic Hudson’s Bay Company trading post definitely attended the council fire at Drummond Island. In the 1828 Hudson’s Bay Company

⁸³¹ To His Excellency Lord [Lorne], the Governor General of the Dominion of Canada & c & c & c, the memorial of the Chippewa Nation of the Dominion of Canada and other Indian Tribes; viz; the Ottawas, Pottawatamis and the Shawnees, who met together on a general council held at the Garden River Reservation on the 3rd, 4th, & 5th day of July A.D. 1879. LAC RG 10, Vol. 2092, File 15434.

⁸³² On 28 August 1879 Manitowaning Indian Agent Phipps reported that a council was held at Garden River and a deputation (including Augustin Shingwauk, William Wawanosh, William Kinoshameg and others) appointed to visit Ottawa to address ‘certain matters’. Phipps stated that the chiefs had been informed that “unless the object of their visit was explained to the Department and authority therefore obtained, no assistance towards paying their expenses could be obtained. I am given to understand that they possess the necessary means and do not require the aid of the Department.” See LAC RG 10, Vol. 10446, p. 657. It is unknown at this time if they received an audience in Ottawa. On 11 May 1894 a circular was sent out to all the chiefs stating “that hereafter any expenses incurred by Indians going to Ottawa to lay matters before the Department will not be paid unless going there has been authorized by the Department.” See LAC RG10, Vol. 10487, p. 156.

report on the Pic District, the factor reported that “the presents which all Indians who resort to Drummond Island receive indiscriminately from the British Government annually is a very strong inducement for the latter to go and visit a place where they are sure of having their wants partially relieved gratis – These are visits which are very prejudicial to affairs and difficult to remedy.”⁸³³ The Hudson’s Bay Company, a private enterprise, saw the presents as detrimental to their enterprise. In 1833, the factor at Pic reported that the proximity of the HBC post to Sault Ste. Marie was a challenge to operations because goods were offered at lower rates at the Sault. He gladly reported though, that there was a marked drop in the number of Indians resorting to the Sault Ste. Marie since the British Garrison of Drummond Island had been removed to Penentanguishene. He reported that the Indians “find the distance too great to go for their annual presents – which the Natives were in the habit of receiving annually from the King’s stores.”⁸³⁴ However, once the King’s Council Fire was moved to Manitowaning on Manitoulin Island in 1836, the Lake Superior Ojibwe started to attend again. Reporting on the 1836 Treaty, the Reverend Adam Elliott wrote to Bishop Strachan that “Many of the Chippewas were from Lake Superior.”⁸³⁵ The Ojibwe from Lake Superior could refer to a number of bands. The Jesuits later reported from the Pigeon River Mission (south west of Fort William, Ontario) on August 25, 1849 that one of the “natives who made a trip to Manitoulin Island,” arrived and he reported that “The Presents will be made too late, so everyone returns.”⁸³⁶ Five days later the Jesuits reported that “our native people return from the Sault. They did not go to Manitoulin

⁸³³ Donald McIntosh, Pic, 15th June 1828. Report on District Pic, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (HBCA) B162/e/1.

⁸³⁴ Thos. McMurray, C. F. Honble Hudsons Bay Company, Pic Establishment, Lake Superior, June 4th 1833. HBCA B162/e/3.

⁸³⁵ Adam Elliott to Bishop Strachan, Tuscarora [Portage/ Passage] 12th June 1838, Ontario Archives, Strachan Papers, MS 35 Reel 3. In this same letter, Elliott noted that “members of Mr. MacMurray’s congregation did not attend the council,” meaning the Garden River and Batchewana bands. Therefore, the Lake Superior bands refer to more northerly bands.

⁸³⁶ William Lonc, s.j. and Shelley Pearen (Transcribers and Translators), *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission: 1846 - 1862* (Ottawa, ON: William Lonc s.j. [self published], 2010), 32.

Island; the Presents will not be distributed until October.”⁸³⁷ From as far as Pigeon River and Fort William the Anishinaabeg went to Manitowaning on Manitoulin Island to warm themselves at the King’s Council Fire (receive presents). Then on July 31, 1851, a council was convened at Fort William so that the Hudson’s Bay factor could distribute the annuity from the treaty. The factor explained that the treaty made no mention of clothing. “The natives were profoundly astonished. They place the blame on both Joseph [Peau de Chat] and Mr. Robinson who had clearly promised them clothing in perpetuity, without which, they said, they would have never sold their land for a mere one dollar per head.”⁸³⁸ This news alarmed the chiefs and head men of Fort William so they decided to write a petition to Lord Elgin, which was dated 3 January 1852:

Father, you said to us: my children you shall have clothing for yourself and your children, forever; it shall be delivered to where you live. You shall not be obliged to leave your little field, to abandon or to drag your children along with you to cross the great dangerous water to come for it. And we were satisfied; we touched the pen with which you wrote our names; we would have never touched it if we had heard these words. And so we have waited in vain for your ship loaded with our supplies. Someone has even told us that we will never see it.⁸³⁹

The chiefs specifically referred to the British promise that clothing would be supplied forever and they also stated that they waited for the “ship loaded with our supplies.” They continued,

Father, do not say: my children, I have not promised you clothing, or if it has been promised to you, it is not in my name. Father, I have not written down your words as you have written down mine on your paper. I have neither a pen nor liquid to write, nor paper, but I have the memory that the Great Being has given me. I heard it; you said: “My children, this is the person whom I have chosen to speak to you, he has all my authority, all my power; what he shall say to you, it is I who say it to you; what he promises you, it is I who promises you,” and he is the one there who said to us: “My children, you shall have clothing; I myself shall come to give it to you and distribute your money.”⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁷ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 33.

⁸³⁸ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 93-4.

⁸³⁹ Nicholas Point, s.j., *Memoirs of the Jesuit Mission at Wikwemikong, Manitoulin Island: Mid 1800s*, translated by Shelley Pearen and William Lonc, s.j. (Ottawa, ON: William Lonc, 2009), xvi.

⁸⁴⁰ Point, *Memoirs of the Jesuit Mission at Wikwemikong*, xvi-xvii.

It is clear that the Ojibwe Chiefs of Fort William, as well as others, thought that receiving the annual presents was important to maintain. The annual delivery of presents was not to be supplanted by an annuity from a treaty. The presents themselves represented something more than clothing, the giving and receiving of presents was the embodying act of the continued the alliance between nations.

The Covenant Chain: Promise of Prosperity

The word treaty has different connotations in modern society, especially “Indian Treaty,” because it is largely associated with land cessions, annuities and guarantee of certain rights, however the language utilized in the Covenant Chain and the Treaty of Niagara was definitely not the same as the legalese of cession treaties. The Treaty of Niagara and the Covenant Chain did not contain an explicit clause referring to annuities, but the British did promise that the Western Nations and their posterity would ‘never sink into poverty.’ In fact, Sir William Johnson stated in 1761 at Detroit to the Western Nations that if they took hold of the Covenant Chain they would “become a happy and flourishing people.” This statement was delivered before he gave a Covenant Chain wampum belt to the Western Confederacy, he stated:

Brethren - With this belt, in the name of his Britannick Majesty, I strengthen & renew the antient [sic] Covenant Chain formerly [ex]isting between us that it may remain bright and lasting to the latest ages, earnestly recommending it to you to do the same and to hold fast thereby as the only means by which you may expect to become happy & flourishing people. *Gave the Belt of the Covenant Chain containing 20 rows*⁸⁴¹

The fate of this Covenant Chain wampum belt is unknown. It was accepted by the Huron on behalf of the Western Confederacy, but it has not been positively identified in any museum collection.⁸⁴² The year 1761 held some promise that was quashed by General Amherst’s policies, which lead to the Odaawaa Chief Pontiac, Seneca Chief Guyasuta and others to engage the British in 1763. Becoming a ‘happy and flourishing’

⁸⁴¹ September 9th 1761, Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁸⁴² The National Museum of the American Indian has a white wampum belt collected from Silas Armstrong, the Principal Chief of the Wendat of Kansas (NMAI Catalogue # 1/2132). It has two men (purple beads) in the middle of the belt holding each other by the hand and holding canes or wampum belts in the other hand. However the belt is not 20 rows and therefore is not this particular Covenant Chain belt.

people does not necessarily translate into a promise of prosperity but after the battles and sieges of 1763, Sir William adopted stronger and more explicit language when he stated to the Western Confederacy at Niagara in 1764 that,

The English will deal fairly with you, they will treat you kindly, and trade with you honestly. You will grow Rich, and happy, and your Brothers Contented, so that our Union cannot be shaken. *A Belt*⁸⁴³

Sir William stated that the Western Nations, if they accepted the Covenant Chain, and entered into the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, they would “grow rich.” The chiefs of the Western Nations remembered this and brought it up in subsequent councils, especially at times when they felt that the British had started to diminish the quality and quantity of presents. The Western Chiefs had experienced the largesse proffered prior and during the War of 1812. Once the war ended the chiefs brought out the belts in 1818 and recited the history of the alliance as well as the promises the British made at Niagara. Chief Okedaa was the spokesperson for the Western Nations at Drummond Island and he stated,

Father - On making peace, you promised to treat us with the same attention that the French had done, that we should receive a bounty annually of fine things that would make us comfortable and happy...⁸⁴⁴

The chiefs often started their discourse by mentioning that they had initially been allies of the French. The chiefs would further state that the French treated them very well and then the chiefs would state that Sir William promised to treat the Western Nations even better than the French had. Chief Okedaa stated this as well,

Father – [^This my ancestors received from our father (Sir William Johnson)] you sent word to all your red children to assemble at the crooked place (Niagara) they all heard your voice (obeyed the message) and the next summer met you at that place, you then laid this belt on a mat and said, “Children you must all touch this Belt of Peace I touch it myself that we may be all brethren (united) and hope our friendship will never cease, I will call you my children, will send warmth (presents) to your Country, and your families **shall never be in want** [emphasis

⁸⁴³ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyes, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Niagara July 17 - August 4, 1764, Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, XI: 278 – 281.

⁸⁴⁴ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

added]. Look towards the rising sun, my Nation is as brilliant as it and its word cannot be violated... Father - When you abandoned M^ckinac, you promised we would at this fire place (Drummond Island) receive every thing we could wish for to make us comfortable, until this year, your words have been true, but we have now come a great distance and all return nearly empty handed.⁸⁴⁵

The chiefs noticed that the presents had diminished a mere two years after the war. The chiefs cajoled the commanding officer to be more liberal and generous, which did not have the desired effect. The belts changed hands but the ‘talk on the belt’ remained the same.

At the council fire of St. Joseph’s Island in 1829, Odaawaa Chief Assiginack, who was also an Indian Department Interpreter, served as spokesperson for the Odaawaa chiefs. He started his discourse by telling the commanding officer not to look upon him as a chief but merely the spokesperson for the chiefs.⁸⁴⁶ He then stated to the commanding British officer, “Father – When you first came to Michilimackinac, you spoke to our ancestors. You told all your red children that they should never look for you in vain. You said, “Children when you rise in the morning (Spring) look towards me, and your wants will be supplied.”⁸⁴⁷ Years later, in 1851, Interpreter Assiginack was recorded detailing the history of the alliance, the talk in the wampum belts, and the beginning of the distribution of presents. His words were written down as follows,

My children, listen to me very carefully. I will tell you the early history of the British Nation to which I belong. When my great Grandfather came to the use of reason, the beginning of his existence, the Earth was covered with darkness, no light was to be seen anywhere, the whole sky also was filled, with immense

⁸⁴⁵ Minutes of a Council held at Drummond Island 7th July 1818, LAC RG 10, Vol. 35, C-11011, p. 20381 – 20388.

⁸⁴⁶ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

⁸⁴⁷ D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48.

darkness: whilst he was looking all round, someone spoke to him from above saying, ‘Look there,’ and turning towards that direction, he saw some object in the act of emerging of the colour of blood, and the unknown person said to him, ‘That is the life of you British Nation, fix your eye upon it, you will observe that when it ascends high the Earth and Sky will be no longer in darkness, the Earth will grow warm, and the most magnificent flowers will begin to burst forth in every part of the Globe: **just so will the prosperity** of the British Nation’ be cries the voice; ‘Moreover when the thing is suspended in the middle of the sky, no spot of the Earth shall be left uncovered, so shall your life be, all the deep vallies will present a cheerful prospect;” These are the words spoken to my Great Grandfather by the one who addressed him from above.⁸⁴⁸

Assiginack was told the narrative of British hegemony and prosperity. This was associated with the sun, especially the rising red sun. The radiating sun, reaching the deep valleys, bringing forth ‘magnificent flowers.’ The sun, warmth, were associated with comfort, and the flowers indicative of prosperity. The chiefs of Manitoulin also recorded their version of the promises in Ojibwe in 1862. They too recounted the rising red sun but also noted that the flowers would appear all over the earth.

Mimanda keijiwebisiian inininabiian kawita-
kijig nandawabandan kidabinodjiim
obimadisiwin awadi wendji mogiset kisis
inabiian kigawabama kisis
tchibimiskwabikagodjing missa ajinawag
amiskokwanaieian nage achpimeing dach
kibiagodjing awi kisis apitchi tawasikoso
missa keijinagwadinig kidabinodjiim
obimadisiwin minawa dach nawadj
achpiming kibiagodjing bebakiwong
taijinagwadon wawasakwanen. Missa
keijinagwadinig kidabinodjiim obimadisiwin.
Missa iwi kaijiiian kin Chaganach Egoian.

Here is the place that will be yours.
When you look around you under the
vaulted heaven looking for the support
of your children, when your gaze turns
towards the rising sun you shall see that
sun rising red similar to the color of the
coat that I wear, when it rises higher
that same sun shall be very bright with
light, there is the image of the life of
your children. After that sun has been
up a little longer you’ll see in different
places the flowers bloom. There is the
image of the life of your children. That
is what you said, you whom we call
English.⁸⁴⁹

Chief Assiginack lived on Manitoulin and was an influential leader and his rendition of the alliance would have been incorporated into the 1862 petition. The

⁸⁴⁸ Odawa Chief Jean Baptiste Assikinawk, 21st October 1851, LAC RG 10, Vol. 613, p. 440.

⁸⁴⁹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

Odaawaa as keepers of the belts, had detailed knowledge of the talk because they were entrusted to keep the talk and the belts. However, chiefs from the Ojibwe knew the speeches, and Ojibwe Chief Shinguakonse also re-iterated that the French had treated the Anishinaabeg well and that the British promised to do even better:

Father - You came and he disappeared but you said to the Red Man. “Be you now [in] my-care. Be you now my children all that the French have done for you + much more will I do. Let the Red Warriors [cleave] to me and they shall never know want.”⁸⁵⁰

The British had promised the Anishinaabeg prosperity if they took hold of the belt and agreed to uphold the mutual engagements made at Niagara. The chiefs reported that in the past, “your words had been true” but the diminution of the presents was a hardship to them and their people.

The Royal Proclamation, The Treaty of Niagara, and Surrenders: A view based on Anishinaabe Understandings of Covenant Chain

In the diplomatic exchanges between the British and the Anishinaabeg of the Michilimackinac and Sault Ste. Marie area, the declaration by Ojibwe Chief Minwewe (aka Minavavana aka the Grand Saulteur or Gichi-Ojibwe)⁸⁵¹ to Alexander Henry is often used as an exemplar of Anishinaabe understanding of title and ownership. British fur trader Alexander Henry came to Michilimackinac to trade shortly after the fall of Montreal. Henry wrote about an encounter he had with Ojibwe Chief Minwewe, who forcefully stated to Henry in 1761:

Englishman - Although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us! We are not your slaves. These lakes, these woods and mountains, were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance; and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread and pork and beef! But, you ought to know, that He, the Great

⁸⁵⁰ 7th August, 1852. Speeches delivered at Manitowaning by Mo-ko-maun-ish, Wa-ka-ow-se, Chingwaukonse. LAC RG 10, Vol. 621a, p. 107.

⁸⁵¹ Armour, David A. “MINWEWEH, Le Grand Sauteux,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, accessed September 3, 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/minweweh_3E.html.

Spirit and Master of Life, has provided food for us, in these spacious lakes, and on these woody mountains.⁸⁵² Chief Minwewe continued to state that the British were not “father” to the Anishinaabe, nor had the British provided presents to his people, and lastly, Minwewe forcefully stated that since Henry’s King had not entered into any treaty with the Anishinaabe, they were still at war. In his discourse, Chief Minwewe outlined a way to achieve peaceful relations, a way to live together on Anishinaabe land.

Eighty-seven years later, at a council held in Sault Ste. Marie, the Crown summoned the chiefs and warriors from the north shore of Lake Huron and Superior to discuss the possibility of entering into treaty. The crown stated that they wanted to determine who the owners of the land were in order to obtain their consent for a surrender of lands. However, they challenged the chiefs by asking them to prove that they were the owners of the land and that a treaty was indeed required. These chiefs responded the same way that Chief Minwewe had 87 years earlier by stating that the Anishinaabeg had been placed on North America by the Great Spirit and thus were, and remained, the owners of the land. During the council held at Sault Ste. Marie in 1848, Fort William (Kamanitigweia) Chief Joseph Peau de Chat (Esiban-wayaan)⁸⁵³ expressly stated to treaty commissioners,

Father – You ask how we possess this land, now it is well known that 4000 years ago, when we first were created all spoke one language, since that a change has taken place, and we speak different languages - you white people well know, and we red skins know, how we came in possession of this land, it was the Great Spirit who gave it to us from the time my ancestors came upon this earth it has been considered ours.⁸⁵⁴

Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse (Little Pine) of Garden River also expressed similar sentiments in a petition written in 1846 and signed by Shingwaukonse’s headmen, they

⁸⁵² Alexander Henry (the Elder), *Travels and Adventures in Canada, and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776*, in two parts (New York: Riley, 1809, www.canadiana.org/view/35677/24), 41–5.

⁸⁵³ Peau de Chat ‘Skin of the Cat.’ The Jesuits provided the Ojibwe name Essibanwaian, meaning Raccoon hide. See Dominique DuRanquet, *Mission Journal: 1853 – 1856, Fort William, Ontario*, translated by William Lonc, s.j., transcribed and edited by Alain Nabarra (Midland, ON: William Lonc, s.j., 2011), 340.

⁸⁵⁴ Province of Canada, “Put By” Submission to the Executive Council: 1841 – 1867, LAC RG1, E 5, Vol. 9, 1848, Series 1, No: 1067 – 1157.

wrote “I call God to witness in the beginning and do so now again and say that it was false that the land is not ours, it is ours.”⁸⁵⁵ Upon finally receiving an audience with Lord Elgin, Shingwaukonse was able to explain his reasoning, he stated,

Why ask by what right we claim these lands? These lands where our fathers and their fathers’ fathers lie buried, you must know it as every Red Skin does know it, that long before your White Children crossed the waters of the rising sun to visit us, the Great Spirit, the Red Man’s God, had formed this land and placed us here, giving it to his Red Children as their inheritance.⁸⁵⁶

The Ojibwe Anishinaabeg believed the Creator had placed them where they lived and they understood that their title and ownership had not been extinguished or relinquished. At a council held at Sault Ste. Marie 18 August 1848, Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse succinctly stated the Anishinaabe position and understanding to Thomas G. Anderson who had been sent to investigate Anishinaabe claims,

we joined and were brothers (allies) with the English - at that time the English promised our Fathers, that they would never take away land from them without purchasing it - we believed their words and have not as yet been deceived, whenever the English has required any of our lands, they have held Councils, and purchased such lands as they required from us - for these reasons we consider the land to be ours, and were not a little astonished to find that the money (mineral) on our lands has been taken possession of by the white children of our Great Mother the Queen, without consulting us - we rested on the belief that it was only a preparatory step taken by the Governor to Fix a value on it and then purchase from us...

Father – When you wanted to make a strong place on our Island (St. Josephs) you called a Council of all the Indians concerned and bought the Island from us - when you smoked the pipe of peace with the big knives (Americans) you allowed them to take part of our land, they purchased them from the Indians who were living on that side of the water, and pay them every year for them but we British Indians do not share in that payment for these reasons, we think it hard that the Whites take our Lands without payment and we would like our Great Father to purchase them from us.⁸⁵⁷

The Anishinaabeg in 1848, just like their ancestors in 1760, knew that they were the sole owners of the land. This sentiment was expressed by various chiefs, from the Odaawaa

⁸⁵⁵ Petition of William Shinguaconce, Henry Shingwauconce, Thomas Shinguaconce, Joseph Nabaegoshing, Nahwaquagaboo, Francis Kewahcunce, Charles Pahyahbetahsung, John Kabaoosa, James Ahbetahkeik, and George Mahgahsahsuhqua, 1846, LAC RG 10, Vol. 416, 5942.

⁸⁵⁶ *Montreal Gazette* 7 July 1849.

⁸⁵⁷ Province of Canada, “Put By” Submission to the Executive Council: 1841 – 1867, LAC RG1, E 5, Vol. 9, 1848, Series 1, No: 1067 – 1157.

Chief Pontiac to Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonse (Zhingwaakoons). The chiefs knew their rights to the land and asserted it but it was the British who had seemed to forgotten their “engagements” as entered at the 1764 Treaty of Niagara.

Since the time that the British defeated the French they had tried to convince the Anishinaabeg that they, the British, owned the land. The Anishinaabeg fought back and asserted their rights to the land and their ownership of the land. Some British officials, particularly Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs George Croghan and his superior Sir William Johnson, realized that the best way to move forward was to acknowledge that the Anishinaabeg were the owners of the land. Under the superintendence of Johnson, policies were promoted that sought the re-institution of the annual delivery of presents as well as instituting a process that assured the Anishinaabeg ownership of the land, and if ceded to the Crown, that benefits derived from the cession would go to the Anishinaabeg. The process of alienating land was to be conducted in an open manner and no private sales were permitted between the Anishinaabeg and subjects of the Crown. This was specifically stated in the Royal Proclamation “and We do hereby strictly forbid, on Pain of Our Displeasure, all our loving Subjects from making any Purchases or Settlements whatever, or taking Possession of any of the Lands above reserved, without Our especial Leave and Licence for that Purpose first obtained... We do, with the Advice of our Privy Council, strictly enjoin and require, that no private Person do presume to make any Purchase from the said Indians of any Lands reserved to the said Indians.”⁸⁵⁸ The Royal Proclamation had also stipulated that any proposed cession be conducted in a public manner, “if, at any Time, any of the said Indians should be inclined to dispose of the said Lands, the same shall be purchased only for Us, in our Name, at some publick Meeting or Assembly of the said Indians to be held for that Purpose by the Governor or Commander in Chief of Our Colonies respectively, within which they shall lie.”⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁸ Royal Proclamation of 1763, made October 7, 1763 by King George III of England, in Clarence S. Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations Relating to America*, Volume 12, Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Massachusetts: American Antiquarian Society, 1911), 212-18, which reproduces the original text of the Proclamation printed by the King's Printer, Mark Baskett, in London in 1763. See especially 216.

⁸⁵⁹ Royal Proclamation of 1763, Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations*, 12: 216-17.

Both Sir William Johnson and George Croghan had known of the Royal Proclamation and both of these representatives of the Crown publicly behaved in a manner that was congruent with the principles outlined in the Covenant Chain relationship. Further, Crown representatives smoked the calumet with chiefs and warriors, delivered wampum strings and belts to confirm their words and actions, and repeated in council the words that assured the Anishinaabeg that the British understood who the owners of the land were. During a council held on 5 November 1760 at Ashtabula Creek, George Croghan assured the Odaawaa by a “Belt of Wampum that all Nations of Indians should enjoy a free Trade with their Brethren the English and be *protected in peaceable possession of their hunting Country* [emphasis added] as long as they adhered to his Majestys [sic] Interest.”⁸⁶⁰ During his intercourse with various nations around Fort Pitt, Croghan had heard many times, the concerns that the Nations had about the manner in which the British were acting. He reported to his superiors that the chiefs were suspicious of the British. Croghan’s public statements in council were assuring to the Western Nations but Croghan understood that these assurances had to come from his superiors as well. In 1761, Sir William Johnson travelled to Detroit in order to extend the British Covenant Chain to the Western Nations. Further he wanted to assure the chiefs of the Western Nations that their “English brethren” meant to treat with them honourably. In Sir William’s speech he attempted to vilify the French while exalting the British:

Brethren - I can with confidence assure you that it is not at present, neither hath it been his Majesty’s intentions to deprive any Nations of Indians of their just property by taking possession of any lands to which they have a lawfull [sic] claim, farther than for the better promoting of an extensive commerce for the security and protection of which, (and for the occupying of such [post] as have been surrendered to us by the Capitulation of Canada) troops are now on their way. I therefore expect that you will consider and treat them as Brethren and continue to live on terms of the strictest friendship with them.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁶⁰ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 104–5.

⁸⁶¹ 1761, September 9th Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled. The Sachems and Warriors of the following several Nations: Wiandots, Saguenays,

Sir William expressly stated that the British did not intend to “deprive any Nations of Indians of their just property by taking possession of any lands to which they have a lawfull claim.” Anishinaabe legal scholar John Borrows stated that the principles of the Covenant Chain were included in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, principles of sovereignty, aboriginal title, and reciprocity were inherently and explicitly included in the text.⁸⁶² Sir William Johnson once again re-iterated these principles, using diplomatic metaphors, in council with chiefs, speakers, and warriors of the Western Confederacy at Niagara. On July 17, 1764, in council “with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyns, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada” Sir William addressed his avowed brethren:

Brethren - You have known the English for a number of Years, though your Connections with the French prevented your having much Intercourse with them until we reduced all Canada and of **consequence became possessed of all the Out Posts** [emphasis added] which the French Governor granted us by the Capitulation.⁸⁶³

Here Sir William Johnson acknowledged that the British were only granted possession of the “out posts” such as Fort Michilimackinac, Fort Detroit, Fort Augustus, etc., but not the land or what Croghan had called the Indians’ “hunting Country.” As he did in 1761, Sir William Johnson once again vilified the French and exalted the English:

You assisted the French during the late and preceding War and they Rewarded you for it, notwithstanding [sic] which, although we were numerous, and able, we did not attempt anything against you but considered you as a People who had been misled, and Imposed upon by them. They often sent Armies against you,

Ottawas, Chipeweighs, Powtawatamis, Kickaposs, Twightwees, Delawares, Shawanise, Mohicons, Mohocks, Oneidas & Senecas. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁸⁶² John Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara: The Royal Proclamation, Canadian Legal History, and Self-Government” in *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equity, and Respect for Difference*, ed. by Michael Asch, 155-72 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 170.

⁸⁶³ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomeneyns, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 278–81.

killed many of your People, and meditated a Design of possessing themselves of your Country: we never attempted the one nor intended the other...⁸⁶⁴
 Sir William avowed in open council at Niagara in 1764 that the British never attempted to kill many of the Western Nations and he also avowed that the British never attempted to possess themselves of the Western Nations' country. The British intentions were all too clear to Neolin, Pontiac, Guyasotha⁸⁶⁵ and many others. French designs and intrigues were largely directed against the British, not the Western Nations. The fact that Sir William Johnson knew that General Gage had ordered Colonel Bradstreet and Colonel Bouquet to Detroit and Ohio to subdue Pondiac and his allies belied Sir William's stated professions. In fact Sir William Johnson made mention that if prisoners were not brought in and released, and the names of perpetrators not provided, then the British would proceed to withdraw trade and thus reduce them all. Amongst all of this rhetoric, Sir William did realize that the paramount point was that the Western Nations owned the land. Just as he had done at Detroit in 1761, Sir William Johnson again stated to the Western Nations that "All we wanted was to keep the Posts, which we took from the French, in Peace, and Quietness, and to carry on a fair Trade at them with you for our mutual Advantage"⁸⁶⁶ and thus he acknowledged that the Western Nations still owned the land except the posts. Many of the Western Nations agreed to this proposition.

The following year, Croghan had sent messengers to the Illinois Country to deliver messages from himself as well as the Western Confederacy and the Six

⁸⁶⁴ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomenays, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 278–81.

⁸⁶⁵ A Seneca war chief who was instrumental in the war named after Pondiac.

⁸⁶⁶ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomenays, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 278–81.

Nations.⁸⁶⁷ In council with Croghan on August 30, 1765 representatives from the Wabash (Ouabache) River had replied to his messages, stating:

that nothing gave them greater pleasure, than to see that all the Western Nations & Tribes had agreed to a general Peace & that they should be glad [to know] how soon their Fathers the English, would take possession of the Posts in their Country, formerly possessed by their late Fathers the French, to open a Trade for them, [...] They then spoke on a Belt & said Fathers, every thing is now settled, & **we have agreed to your taking possession of the posts in our Country** [emphasis added]. We have been informed, that the English where ever they settle, make the Country their own, & you tell us that when you conquered the French they gave you this Country. That no difference may happen hereafter, **we tell you now the French never conquered us neither did they purchase a foot of our Country, nor have they a right to give it to you,** [emphasis added] we gave them liberty to settle for which they always rewarded us, & treated us with great Civility while they had it in their power, but as they are become now your people, if you expect to keep these Posts, **we will expect to have proper returns from you** [emphasis added].⁸⁶⁸

In this council at Detroit in 1765, chiefs of the Western Confederacy stated that the French were allowed to settle in the country around the posts, but the French had not purchased any land from them and therefore had no right to dispose of it. The chiefs plainly laid out the new arrangement, the British likewise did not own any land and they too, like the French before them, would have to deliver “proper returns” for use of the land.

A few days later, on September 2, 1765, the Wendat of Detroit took the opportunity to remind Croghan that they too had stated the same to Sir William Johnson at Niagara the previous year. They gave Croghan a wampum belt and asked him to remind Sir William about their lands. They told Croghan that they had never sold the land to the French and “expected their new Fathers the English would do them justice.”⁸⁶⁹ Two days later, Odaawaa Chief Pontiac and several chiefs of the Odaawaa, Ojibwe, and Potowatomi similarly stated that the French had not purchased their land. They stated that they “hoped their Fathers the English would take it into Consideration, & see that a

⁸⁶⁷ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 159.

⁸⁶⁸ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 159-60.

⁸⁶⁹ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 159.

proper satisfaction was made to them. That their Country was very large, & they were willing to give up such part of it, as was necessary for their Fathers the English, **to carry on Trade at, provided they were paid for it, & a sufficient part of the Country left them to hunt on** [emphasis added].⁸⁷⁰ The Wendat Chief of Detroit, Pontiac of Detroit, the Chiefs of the Wabash area, all stated that the French did not own any of their land nor had the French purchased any of it.

In public councils, representatives of the British Crown acknowledged that the Western Nations owned the land. The Crown also acknowledged in their Proclamation that in order for the land to be ceded it had to be done so in a public manner. In some of the early transactions, the British even delivered wampum belts to commemorate land transactions. Historian Theresa Schenck stressed the importance of wampum belts in transactions. She stated that giving wampum at a ceremony was “a kind of treaty, an agreement, a promise to keep one’s word.” She noted that when Sieur de Repentigny ‘took possession’ of the land for his fort at Sault Ste. Marie, four strings of wampum were given to him. Some have mistakenly believed that the delivery and acceptance of the “wampum signified transfer of full title to the land,” however, Schenck stated that the wampum only represented the promise to share the land, not dispose of it.⁸⁷¹ She stated that this was evident based upon subsequent actions by the area Anishinaabeg. Once the Fort de Repentigny was destroyed and Sieur de Repentigny departed, the area Anishinaabeg subsequently granted use of the same land to at least three other individuals including Jean Baptiste Cadotte, Robert Rogers and Alexander Henry. In this transaction Robert Rogers was given a wampum belt to seal the deal.⁸⁷² After these men left, the area chiefs also entered into negotiations with other individuals to use the land as well. Significantly, Schenck concluded that “In the meantime the native inhabitants never left

⁸⁷⁰ Croghan in Thwaites, ed., “A selection of George Croghan’s letters and Journals,” 160.

⁸⁷¹ Theresa Schenck, “Who owns Sault Ste. Marie?” *Michigan Historical Review*, 28: 1 (Spring 2002: 108 – 120), 118.

⁸⁷² Wampum belt is kept at Detroit Historical Society, Detroit, Michigan. Keith R. Widder, *Beyond Pontiac’s Shadow: Michilimackinac and the Anglo-Indian War of 1763* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press and Mackinac Island: Mackinac State Historic Parks, 2013), 255.

the lands in question because it was always their intention to share them.”⁸⁷³ In the above land transactions wampum belts were used.

Similarly, the Ojibwe of Michilimackinac entered into treaty negotiations with Lieutenant Governor Patrick Sinclair in 1779 when he decided to move Fort Michilimackinac and to Mackinac Island. Before the Ojibwe left for their winter hunt, a string of wampum was presented and the “chief agreed to permit Sinclair ‘to cut down some brush’ that winter. Before winter set in, soldiers of the King’s Eighth set to work cutting trees and transporting buildings to the island.”⁸⁷⁴ The important point was that Lieutenant Governor Sinclair knew to initiate discussions with a string of wampum prior to entering into negotiations. The subsequent spring, 1780, Sinclair explained to “chiefs from eight nations” that the move to the island was for defensive purposes. He also explained that whites were to be given lots on the island but “they would not hold title to it. The King maintained control over these properties.”⁸⁷⁵ The following year, on 12 May 1781, five Ojibwe chiefs: Kitchi-negou or Grand Sable, Pounas, Koupe, Magousseihigan and Okaw signed the Treaty with their doodems transferring Mackinac Island over to King George III for “more than a dozen canoe loads of presents worth £ 5,000 New York Currency.” Fulfilling protocol, Lieutenant Governor Sinclair gave a seven-foot wampum belt to the Ojibwe chiefs as a “lasting memorial.”⁸⁷⁶

For a short period of time, the British continued to engage the Western Nations with wampum, particularly when requesting aid to fight their enemies. However, wampum belts were also used briefly for land transactions. This represented a continued adherence to the Western and Eastern Confederacy’s manner of conducting economic, military and political business. The last notable land transaction in which a representative of the Crown utilized wampum was the 1836 Manitowaning Treaty. The

⁸⁷³ Schenck, “Who owns Sault Ste. Marie?” 118.

⁸⁷⁴ David A. Armour and Keith R. Widder, *At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution* (Mackinac Island State Park Commission, 1978), 127.

⁸⁷⁵ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 143.

⁸⁷⁶ Armour and Widder, *At the Crossroads*, 166. Treaty No. 1, Island of Michilimackinac in Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, Volume 1, Treaties 1–138* (Ottawa: Brown Chamberlain, 1891), 1.

treaty reportedly had strings of wampum attached to the parchment, which are now missing.⁸⁷⁷

The 1836 Manitowaning Treaty is significant because it clearly referenced the Treaty of Niagara. The first line of the Treaty text is “My Children- Seventy snow seasons have now passed away since we met in council at the Crooked Place (Niagara), at which time and place your Great Father, the King, and the Indians of North America tied their hands together by the wampum of friendship.”⁸⁷⁸ The ‘wampum of friendship’ is of course the Covenant Chain. The other reason that this treaty is significant is because after 1836, Manitowaning became the King’s Council Fire where all his ‘red children’, came to receive ‘warmth,’ that is presents. The 1836 Manitowaning Treaty was entered into by Sir Francis Bond Head after he heard Odaawaa Chief Jean Baptiste Assiginack recite the 1764 Covenant Chain Wampum belt and the 24 Nations belt. A direct connection was thus made between land, treaty, wampum protocol, the Covenant Chain, and the principles of the Royal Proclamation, which Sir William Johnson had converted into the diplomatic language of the Covenant Chain. The chiefs of the north shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior had seen the belts many times and had heard the ‘spirit of Sir William Johnson’s words’ recited often when they attended the distribution of presents. The keepers of the wampum belts, the Odaawaa of Michilimackinac area, specifically the Odaawaa of L’Arbre Croche, moved to Manitoulin Island in the years after 1836 and brought the belts with them.⁸⁷⁹

In July 1862 at Michigiwadinong⁸⁸⁰ the Chiefs and warriors of Manitoulin gathered for a council to oppose any proposed treaty to cede Manitoulin. The chiefs decided to write down their understanding of the wampum belts in order to prevent the island from being ceded. The chiefs, as keepers of the foundational treaty between the British and the Western Nations, tried to bring the British back to the basics, to remind

⁸⁷⁷ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons, Vol. 34, Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, 20th August 1836, Despatch No. 70, pp. 350-1.

⁸⁷⁸ Treaty 45 ½ aka 1836 Manitowaning Treaty in Canada, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders*, Volume 1: 112; LAC RG 10, 1844, IT 121.

⁸⁷⁹ Petition of the Ottawa, 19 August 1840 by Augustin Hamelin and Johnston. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) [of the United States], R424: 265.

⁸⁸⁰ Currently called M’Chigeeng First Nation.

them of the original agreements because it was apparent to the chiefs that the British no longer abided by the initial rules set out when the Treaty of Niagara was agreed upon.

Numerous times, chiefs of the Western Nations were recorded calling this treaty sacred. This was communicated in Ojibwe by the Chiefs:

<p>Ambe ninidjanissidig. Kitchi manito ninondag ejiganoninagog. Banima pachagichkibikak mitchi boni ijiwebak manda ejiganoninagog... Kitchi manido ninondag nindikid gocha ninidjanissidig.⁸⁸¹</p>	<p>Come on my children the Great Being is witness of what I say to you. When the world shall return to darkness it is then only that these things [that I say to you] will end... The Great Being hears me I say so my children.</p>
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The Chiefs of the Western Nations had handed down their understanding of the 1764 Treaty of Niagara and considered the treaty that these wampum belts represented as sacred. The Anishinaabeg understood that these belts represented their autonomy (freedom/ independence). The Anishinaabeg also understood that these belts represented the Crown's acknowledgement that the Anishinaabeg owned the land. The first lines of the petition clearly reference this:

<p>Keiabi ningikendan kaijigaganonadwaba ningitisimag apitch wakwadjiwinadwa awimigasoian. Niwi akonajawa maba kigitchigamimiwang wabimadabid. Oganidibendan kidabinodjim odakim awadi waianag agigaganonadwaba ningitisimag. Mi manda keijiwebisiiian... Mi sa iwi kaijiiian kin Chaganach egoian.</p>	<p>I know how you have spoken to my forefathers when you bid them go to war. “I wish to chase anyone [away] who comes near your lake.” Your children shall possess their lands yonder - did you say this to my forefathers at the place where the water runs into the sea [Niagara]? Here is the place that will be yours. That is what you [to us], you whom we call the English.</p>
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In this passage the chiefs referred to the boundaries that would come to be known as the “Royal Proclamation Line.” The significant fact here is that the Anishinaabeg pointed to the wampum belt and its ‘talk’ as the British promise to them that they retained ownership to the land outside of the 13 colonies (which eventually became the United States of America). The area beyond the 13 colonies was a vast area and included in that

⁸⁸¹ Manitoulin Island Chiefs, Mitchigiwadinong, June 27th 1862. Ojibwe Text has been transliterated from: LAC, RG 10, Vol. 292, Reel C-12 669, File # 195683 - 195687. Original English translation LAC RG 10, Vol. 292, pp: 195678 – 195682.

area, according to the British, was the territory of the Ojibwe of Lake Superior and Lake Huron.

The chiefs of the north shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior knew the tenets of the Covenant Chain and the promises represented on the 24 Nations wampum belt. The chiefs knew the importance of wampum. The chiefs abided by wampum protocol and handed down their understanding of the Treaty of Niagara by reciting the wampum belts in council. By 1847 the chiefs knew that prospectors, miners, timber companies and others coveted their land. The chiefs of the north shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior knew that they still owned the land and they knew that they had not surrendered the land, nor had their ancestors. Chief Peau de Chat succinctly conveyed their understanding in 1848,

after a time the whites living on the other side of the Great Salt Lake, found this part of the world inhabited by the red skins, the whites asked us Indians, when there were many animals here, would you not sell the skins of these various animals for the goods I bring – our old ancestors said yes! I will bring you goods – they the Whites did not say anything more, nor did the Indians say anything. I did not know that he said come I will buy your land, everything that is on it, under it & c & c he the white said nothing about that to me and this is the reason why I believe that we possess the land up to this day ... He the English did not say, I will after a time get your land, or give me your land, ... When the war was over, the English did not say I will have your land, nor did we say you may have it and this father you know, this is how we are in possession of this land.⁸⁸²

The chiefs insisted that their ancestors had never given up their land. The chiefs insisted that they had not given up their land to the Crown either, therefore the Anishinaabeg understood that they continued to own the land, because it was given by the Great Spirit. After 1764, and prior to 1850, the British recognized the Western Nations' right to the land, that is, the British had abided by the Treaty of Niagara and the Royal Proclamation. Only when there was a significant change in personnel at the Department of Indian Affairs, and a discontinuation of corporate memory and practice, only then did the British start to disregard wampum protocol and diminish its importance and relegate the belt to an heirloom instead of a treaty.

⁸⁸² Minutes of a council held by T. G. Anderson V.S.I.A. at Sault Ste. Marie on Friday the 18th day of August 1848, August 19, 1848, Continuation of the council. LAC RG 1, E5 series 1, vol. 9, no. 1067-1157.

Proper Representation at Treaties

The Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara (an extension of the Covenant Chain) forged a relationship between the Western Confederacy and the British that was principally based upon reciprocity and respect. The Anishinaabeg fought the British in 1763 to make the point that they had not been conquered when their allies the French were defeated. The Anishinaabeg fought the British to force an acknowledgement that the Anishinaabeg owned the land. In the interest of peace, the authors of the Royal Proclamation dealt with the issue of ownership in the following manner:

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to Our Interest and the Security of Our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians, with whom We are connected, and who live under Our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds⁸⁸³

Leaving aside the legal arguments of the above passage and subsequent unilateral Acts and laws, the historical question is what was the Western Nations understanding of their land ownership as a result of accepting the Great Belt of the Covenant Chain at Niagara in 1764? Sir William explained to General Gage in February 1764 that the proposed peace treaty should “assure them of a Free Fair & open trade, at the principal Posts, & a free intercourse, & passage into our Country, That we will make no Settlements or Encroachments contrary to Treaty, or without their permission.”⁸⁸⁴ In this letter Sir William stated that the Western Nations land could not be encroached upon without their permission. At the Treaty of Niagara, Sir William Johnson stated to the Western Nations that “They [the French] often sent Armies against you, killed many of your People, and meditated a Design of possessing themselves of your Country: we never attempted the one nor intended the other... All we wanted was to keep the Posts, which we took from the French, in Peace, and Quietness, and to carry on a fair Trade at them with you for our mutual Advantage.”⁸⁸⁵ Sir William led the chiefs of the Western Nations

⁸⁸³ Royal Proclamation of 1763, Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations*, 12: 215.

⁸⁸⁴ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

⁸⁸⁵ At a General Congress at Niagara on the [17th] July 1764 with the Sachims, and Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippeweighs of Toronto, of Lake Huron, and Lake Superior, the

to believe that the British did not have “designs of possessing” the land, Sir William stated that the British only “wanted to keep the posts.” As demonstrated in the section of this report called “How were the terms of the Treaty Recorded: Diplomatic Discourse and Metaphors” the chiefs understood that they and their people had retained ownership to their lands. Further, the chiefs, through their metaphoric speeches also indicated that they acknowledged that they allowed the British to establish and occupy forts in their territory. The chiefs understood that they still owned the land – the British did not own the land. At a council in Sault Ste. Marie in August 1848, Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce stated that after becoming allies with the British, “the English promised our Fathers that they would never take any land from them without purchasing it – we believed their words.”⁸⁸⁶ This statement appears to be in reference to the Royal Proclamation, which stated that lands not purchased or ceded to the British by the ‘Nations or Tribes,’ remained reserved to the ‘said Indians.’ Recall that at the 1761 Detroit Council Sir William Johnson had assured chiefs of the Western Nations that “I shall esteem all your Nations as our true and natural allies, treat with you independent of any other Nation or Nations of Indians whatsoever.”⁸⁸⁷ Therefore, in light of the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara (Covenant Chain), it should not have been possible for the Pic River (Begetikong) band and the Teme-augama Anishnabai⁸⁸⁸ to lose their land without their consent because they were not treated with independently, that is they were not asked for their consent independent of any other ‘Nation or Nations of Indians.’

Read in conjunction with the historical context of the Treaty of Niagara, the following paragraph of the Royal Proclamation which stipulates that Governors or Commanders in Chief were prohibited from issuing “grants of survey or pass Patents” in

Nipissins, Algonkins, Meynomenays, or Falsavoins, & Ottawas of La Bay, the Six Nations, & Indians of Canada. Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. XI: 278–81.

⁸⁸⁶ Minutes of a Council held by T. G. Anderson V.S.I.A. at Sault Ste. Marie on Friday the 18th day of August 1848. LAC RG1 E5, Vol. 9, Series 1, No: 1067 – 1157.

⁸⁸⁷ Proceedings at a treaty held at Detroit by Sir William Johnson Baronet with the Sachems and warriors of the several Nations of Indians there assembled, 9th September 1761. LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6, p. 100 – 117, C-1222.

⁸⁸⁸ Ontario (Attorney General) v. Bear Island Foundation, 1991, case no. 21435.

unceded territory, it is evident that the Crown transgressed the Royal Proclamation by issuing mining permits in the unceded Lake Superior and Lake Huron watershed:

We do therefore, with the Advice of Our Privy Council, declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure, that no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of Our Colonies of Quebec, East Florida, or West Florida, do presume, upon any Pretence whatever, to grant Warrants of Survey, or pass any Patents for Lands beyond the Bounds of their respective Governments, as described in their Commissions; as also, that no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of Our other Colonies or Plantations in America, do presume, for the present, and until Our further Pleasure be known, to grant Warrants of Survey, or pass Patents for any Lands beyond the Heads or Sources of any of the Rivers which fall into the Atlantick Ocean from the West and North-West, or upon any Lands whatever, which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by Us as aforesaid, are reserved to the said Indians, or any of them.⁸⁸⁹

Issuing mining permits in the unceded territory was an “encroachment” made “without permission” – to use Sir William Johnson’s words and thus, the fact that mining permits were issued by the government did not accord with the “mutual engagements” agreed upon at the Treaty of Niagara.

One of the “mutual engagements” of the Treaty of Niagara was the British promise to take care of their allies or rather, to place the allies in their protection. Sir William Johnson had told the chiefs, speakers and warriors of the Western Nations on numerous occasions that they were not to ‘listen to bad birds’ but to direct their attention to him in the east, and he would provide them with justice. Explaining this clause of the treaty relationship to General Gage, Sir William Johnson stated “That we will bring to justice any persons who commit Robberys [sic] or Murders on them & that we will protect & aid them against their & our Enemys [sic] & duly observe our Engagements with them.”⁸⁹⁰ The notion of protection was also mentioned in the Royal Proclamation in the following passage - “the several Nations or Tribes of Indians, with whom We are connected, and who live under Our Protection.”⁸⁹¹ However, Sir William Johnson took protection further by promising prosperity to the Western Nations if they allied themselves with the British by accepting the Great Belt of the Covenant Chain. The

⁸⁸⁹ Royal Proclamation of 1763, Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations*, 12: 216.

⁸⁹⁰ Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Vol. IV: 330, Johnson to Gage, Feb. 19, 1764.

⁸⁹¹ Royal Proclamation of 1763, Brigham, ed., *British Royal Proclamations*, 12: 215.

British adopted the Western Nations as children and promised to act as a father to them, by providing for them, settling disputes and looking after their best interests. This adoption happened after the Treaty of Niagara but was an integral part of the Covenant Chain treaty relationship. The British, in the role of father, did not protect the interests of the Anishinaabeg by dispossessing them of their land. The British, in the role of father and protector, did not promote the promise of prosperity Johnson made at the Treaty of Niagara for the Anishinaabeg when they purported to take a surrender of their land by treaty.

It must be stated that the Covenant Chain was not a one-time event, it was renewed annually, whenever the British provided tobacco, smoked the pipe, exchanged wampum and speeches and delivered the presents. The council fire was the place where the Covenant Chain and the treaty relationship was annually strengthened and renewed. Therefore, council proceedings will be analysed to demonstrate the treaty process.

The council proceedings for the 1850 Robinson Superior and Huron Treaties have not been located. In the absence of those council proceedings, others from 1846, 1849, and 1861 and 1862 will be analyzed. The council procession will be outlined as will the role of the **Ogimaa-giigido**, culminating in an analysis of the participation of the chiefs individually in the council. This analysis will show that even if an **Ogimaa-giigido** (chief speaker) or **Netaa-giigidod** (orator) were utilized, the chiefs individually addressed the council and eventually provided a positive or negative answer to the pertinent proposal on behalf of their respective band at the treaty council. The **Ogimaa-giigido** or **Netaa-giigidod** did not sign on behalf of a chief and a band that was not in attendance especially if the speaker/ orator did not have a pipe or strings of wampum that showed they were deputized by the absent party.

In 1846, a general council was convened at the Narrows, present day Orillia, Ontario, which was attended by Ojibwe chiefs from Alderville, Rice Lake, Mud Lake (present day Curve Lake band), Skugog Lake, River Credit, Snake Island, Rama, Beausoleil Island, Owen's Sound, River Severn and some Mohawks from the Bay of

Quinte.⁸⁹² The majority of the chiefs and principal men were from the Lake Ontario watershed except for the Beausoleil band (Georgian Bay, Lake Huron). The chiefs and principal men were listed as “Chippeways (otherwise called Missesaugas [sic]).” They were asked to remove from their reserves to Saugeen Peninsula to form a larger, more populous and concentrated reserve. Secondly, they were also asked to support the establishment of a manual labour school. They were further asked to contribute a quarter of their annuities to the costs of said school. The minutes of this general council provide details that much of the Indian Affairs records do not because they were written by Henry Baldwin, who was the legal counsel and secretary to the chiefs in council.

Baldwin did not record the smoking of the pipe, but he did note that “Captain Anderson and Mr. Vardon shook the Chiefs severally by the hand.” Shaking or taking one by the hand was a courtesy that the chiefs took seriously. Taking a friend by the hand was a sign of friendship and was often mentioned at the beginning of speeches, and the chiefs would later include the sentiment in written petitions.⁸⁹³ Visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Thomas G. Anderson then did a roll call of chiefs and their communities and then delivered the opening speech. Interpreters were in attendance and “all speeches and addresses made in full council were interpreted.”⁸⁹⁴ Furthermore, Anderson addressed the council at the end of the first day and stated, “I have now told you all that I have to tell you. I leave these papers with you until to-morrow; and to-

⁸⁹² LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 3-4.

⁸⁹³ A typical example of the opening lines of a speech provided by Ojibwe Chief Mezai from Lake Superior, “Father – I salute my Great Father beyond the Great Salt Lake; I shake hands with you and all my friends on this side of the Great Lake.” See D. Daly, “Minutes of the Speeches made by the different Tribes of Indians, in reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Mackay’s, of the 11th of July, 1829,” in Province of Canada, Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada, submitted to the Honorable the, Legislative Assembly, for their information, Appendix (T), in Appendix to sixth volume of the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, Session 1847, Montréal, “Great Britain” Stean Press—Rollo Campbell, Printer, 1847, Appendix no. 48. On June 10, 1846 Ojibwe Chief Shingwaukonce had sent a letter to his “Great Father” and signed off “Great Father – I salute you... I shake hands with him in my heart on behalf of myself, my every [sic] men and the women and children of my tribe.” See LAC RG 10, Vol. 156, p. 118.

⁸⁹⁴ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 10.

morrow you will make known your answers. I hope that by your deliberations you will come to be of one mind.”⁸⁹⁵ Anderson then emphasized that besides himself, there were missionaries there, who could help the chiefs understand the document by explaining it to them during the evening. That evening the Reverend Peter Jones, an English and Ojibwe speaking Mississauga from the River Credit, interpreted the document to the chiefs in the absence of the government officials. Leaving the documents with the chiefs and their interpreters was a way of abiding by the principles of the Royal Proclamation in that the meeting was “publick” and that no impropriety or secret dealings occurred or were intimated.

The next day the questions posed in the document were answered one by one, with each chief taking a turn to provide his answer to each question. The Mississauga Chief George Paudash of Rice Lake rose and answered, “My chiefs - I will tell you what we think of the question which our great father asks us, what he wishes to know from us... Now I will tell him my sentiments, and the sentiments of my subordinate Chiefs.” Paudash then explained that he required more information about the status of his land tenure before he could positively answer, he however stated, “But I intend to go down to make enquiries about the matter. And I defer giving the answer on the part of my people until such time.”⁸⁹⁶ Chief Paudash addressed the council on behalf of himself and his “subordinate chiefs” but he could not provide a positive or negative answer to the question because he lacked certain information.

Next to reply was Chief Peter Noogie of Mud Lake (Curve Lake, near present day Peterborough, Ontario), and he too replied similarly, “My Chiefs – I shall not say much on this subject. I have come to this Council by invitation, to listen. And I have now heard the wishes of our Great Father, for our good, the good of Indians. And I am glad to hear what I have heard. With regard to leaving my present location, I say but little... when I shall understand the matter well, then I can easily answer, and know what to

⁸⁹⁵ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 11.

⁸⁹⁶ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 19.

do.”⁸⁹⁷ These first two chiefs both required more information before they answered the question regarding removal from their reserves.

Next Chief Jacob Crane of Skugog Lake (Scugog near Port Perry, Ontario) responded, “My Chiefs – I will say a little to you, my chiefs.... The land that I occupy, I purchased. It is very good. We have commenced farming, have built houses, and my young men have said: ‘this is the place where we will become farmers.’ There are only three of us here, and we cannot decide with regard to removing from our present location.”⁸⁹⁸ This chief and his people acquired their land under different circumstances and understandably wanted to keep it. However, the chief explicitly stated that only three of them were in attendance from their band and they could not make that decision to remove. They could not answer that question because that type of question required the consent of the whole band. Chief Jacob Crane would have to go back and have a common council with his people and put the question to his elders, women and young people. The question exceeded his mandate and authority.

The chiefs were then asked to dedicate a portion of their annuities to the establishment of the manual labour school. Mississauga Chief Joseph Sawyer rose and replied: “My Chiefs – I am master only of my own money. I said before, that I take the words of our Great Father with my two hands. The other people will speak for themselves; but I give the money that is proposed to be given.”⁸⁹⁹ This chief could dedicate a portion of the annuities he received but he had to ask the rest of his band to support the cause and dedicate a quarter of their funds to the establishment of the school.

Each chief had responded in turn and then **Aanike-Ogimaa** (sub-chief) Chief Naaningishkung from Rama addressed the council and stated that he approved of the plans put forward by T.G. Anderson. He further stated that he would remove with his women and children if the neighbouring Snake band did so. The head chief of Rama, Chief Yellowhead had already stated that he did not approve of removing from his

⁸⁹⁷ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 19.

⁸⁹⁸ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 20.

⁸⁹⁹ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 24

reserve and he did not fully support establishing a school elsewhere. After **Aanike-Ogimaa** Naaningishkung spoke, Chief Shahwandais from Alderville spoke up and stated to the council “that this speech of Naaningishkung’s is not a final answer;” Shahwandais further stated “that he [Naaningishkung] is not authorized.”⁹⁰⁰ Interestingly Head Chief Yellowhead did not rebuke his **aanike-ogimaa** (Naaningishkung), a senior chief from a neighbouring community did so.

Chief Naaningishkung had another opportunity to address the council and stated, “My chiefs – I will say a little. I have told you before that I have no power; if I had the power I would readily comply with what the other Chiefs have agreed to, for this is the sense of my people. That is all I have to say.” The secretary then added an explanatory note to the minutes and reported that “This is because he is not head Chief, Yellowhead being the head Chief, who has opposed the Government plan, as his speech shews. Naaningishkung had liberty to speak, in order to shew the sentiments of the majority of his people.”⁹⁰¹ The next day, **Aanike-ogimaa** Naaningishkung and **Aanike-Ogimaa** Big Shilling signed a petition with their caribou doodem signifying their “approval of the Governor’s proposal.”⁹⁰² The two Rama **aanike-ogimaag** (sub-chiefs) also garnered the “marks” of 19 other individuals and four additional individuals names appear on the document. Clearly a disagreement occurred in Rama that required further deliberation.⁹⁰³

This council format began with Thomas G. Anderson and George Vardon introducing themselves and going around and shaking each chief, warrior and orator’s hand. A roll call of those present was then announced and then Thomas G. Anderson read the opening address which was interpreted into Ojibwe by the government’s interpreter (speech was also translated into Mohawk). Next George Vardon delivered his speech on behalf of the Governor General, which was also interpreted by the same

⁹⁰⁰ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 23.

⁹⁰¹ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 27.

⁹⁰² LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 33.

⁹⁰³ The majority of the above-mentioned reserves and bands continue to this day so they did not move to the Saugeen Peninsula.

interpreter into Ojibwe (and Mohawk). The council was also addressed by various missionaries and then the addresses were handed over to the chiefs so that they could deliberate upon them in the evening and have their own interpreters explain anything they may not have fully understood. The next day each chief had an opportunity, or their orator spoke on their behalf, answering each question posed. The attending community representative from each band, whether it was the chief or orator, took a turn addressing the council and each made known their stand on the issue. Lastly, two chiefs, John Aisaans and Yellowhead both stated that although they opposed dedicating a portion of the annuities to establishing the school, they were not averse to a school. Both had also stated that if the Governor General himself had attended the council himself, they might have been more favourable.⁹⁰⁴ In other later councils the chiefs also questioned the standing of the commissioners that had been sent to deal with them. The chiefs would state that they expected to deal with people of authority.

In 1849 Thomas G. Anderson and Alexander Vidal were commissioned to determine the chiefs and the territories claimed along the shores of Lake Huron and Lake Superior in order to lay the ground work to properly execute the proposed treaty for that area. Anderson and Vidal arrived at Spar Island on Saturday September 22, 1849 and later proceeded to Fort William. The Jesuit Fr. Frémiot noted that the people were very excited, “As soon as the people were informed that these were Government representatives, you should have seen them running to the Fort. No group of students ever rushed out more joyfully to begin their holidays after a long period of study as did these people running to the fort. No fire brigade ever responded more quickly to an alarm to put out a fire as they did.”⁹⁰⁵

Anderson told the chiefs to arrange for a meeting the following day at 10 o'clock. The chief replied that the young people were hungry and he was then given food and tobacco “and there was a smoking session or Council which lasted till far into the

⁹⁰⁴ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, 26.

⁹⁰⁵ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Lorenzo Cadieux, s.j., *Letters from the New Canada Missions: 1843 – 1852, Part 2*, translated by William Lonc, s.j., and George Topp, s.j. (Halifax: W. Lonc, 2001), 2: 128.

night.”⁹⁰⁶ The Vidal and Anderson council sessions were held for two days and both started at 10 o’clock and ended at 7 o’clock. Frémiot noted the structure of the council. Three chairs had been set up, Vidal in the centre taking notes, to his left was Mr. Sommerville, and Thomas G. Anderson seated to Vidal’s right. Captain Anderson, being fluent in Ojibwe, asked the questions posed by the government and he translated for Vidal and Sommerville. Opposite these three were the two chiefs, Joseph Peau de Chat and the Illinois, also referred to as Miskouakkonayé (the man dressed in red). It is evident that Frémiot favoured Joseph Peau de Chat, describing him as “about 40, tall, and well built with a vibrant and pleasant voice. His eloquent spirit, and his vehement impetuosity had led to his being chosen by the Natives as Chief.”⁹⁰⁷ In contrast, Frémiot described the Illinois as “an old man in his seventies... He was simply one of the fur-trading chiefs appointed by the Hudson’s Bay Company. Every year he received two suits, one of which was red, laced and adorned with metal buttons. That is what gave him the nickname of Miskouakkonayé (the man dressed in red)... This old man,⁹⁰⁸ whom the people like to look upon as their Chief, but who does not exercise the principal authority, on this occasion – as you well imagine – was wearing his official suit.”⁹⁰⁹ Frémiot continued to describe the old chief in an unflattering manner noting that the Illinois’ calumet would not light. He reported that the Illinois began his discourse by saying, “My Father, I do not know what I want to say. I have no more wit. I am like you, I am very old.”⁹¹⁰ This is actually a formulaic saying employed by chiefs in councils, often the chiefs would state that they had no more ‘old men’ and therefore lacked wisdom. The Illinois was old so he could not say they had no more old men but he had to be humble.

⁹⁰⁶ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 129.

⁹⁰⁷ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 129-30.

⁹⁰⁸ It should be noted that Joseph Peau de Chat was marginally Catholic, which Frémiot liked and the Illinois was marginally Anglican.

⁹⁰⁹ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 130.

⁹¹⁰ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 133.

This phrase was misinterpreted by Frémiot but would have been understood by Anderson.

During the commencement of the council Anderson asked the people “Are those your chiefs? Which one has the highest rank?” According to Frémiot the assembled replied “Joseph, la peau de chat.”⁹¹¹ Another question that was posed, “Do you want to sell your lands? What do you think they are worth?” The answer was “Apart from a Reserve on both sides of the river where we live, we are asking for thirty dollars a head, including women and children, every year until the end of the world, and this in currency, not in merchandise. In addition we are asking – at the Government’s expense – for a school teacher, a doctor, blacksmith, a carpenter, a farmer, and a Superintendent to administer justice.”⁹¹² Anderson did not like this reply and at the close of the first day Anderson stated that Peau de Chat was not known or approved of as a chief in eyes of the government. Secondly, Anderson told them that they were asking for too much and told them that they would never get that amount for that term. Joseph Peau de Chat was discouraged and confided in the priest that he wanted to resign. The priest told Peau de Chat that it was a bad time to quit and reminded him “It is the people who chose you as their Chief, you will be Chief as long as they support you.”⁹¹³

The next day Peau de Chat showed up. The Illinois then spoke. Again, Frémiot derisively described the Illinois, stating that his speech was long and boring, “our Native Nestor went back, I think, to the Deluge or perhaps earlier still. Then coming back closer and closer to present times, he came to the appearance of the whites on this land and to the marvellous things that the people saw for the first time.”⁹¹⁴ It is unfortunate that Frémiot did not bother to write down any of the Illinois’ speech because the Illinois was answering the question posed by Anderson, “What is your origin?” The Illinois answered

⁹¹¹ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 130.

⁹¹² Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 131.

⁹¹³ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 132.

⁹¹⁴ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 133.

by reciting his genealogy, listing his ancestors and their long-standing tenure at Kamanitigweia (Fort William). Instead Frémiot noted that “It was late and the people, who had started to become hungry, were bored to death by these Homeric speeches. One of the orator’s sons-in-law even went up to him and said, ‘That is enough, Father-in-law.’”⁹¹⁵ This was a common council because it just involved a government representative, two band chiefs and the band members.

To show the enduring council format, post 1850, the general council for a proposed treaty held on Manitoulin Island in 1861 will be analyzed. The Treaty Commission of 1861 consisted of journalist Charles Lindsay and the superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Central Superintendency William Bartlett, both based in Toronto.⁹¹⁶ On October 5, 1861 the two commissioners opened the council by stating their commission and that they had been authorized by the Commissioner of Crown Lands who was also the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. They then read the address that had been prepared. The government interpreter then interpreted the address into Ojibwe. The address was then given to the chiefs’ interpreter.⁹¹⁷ This again, was in accordance with the Royal Proclamation that stated that general assembly should be “publick.” Handing over the written instructions (on hand) was to allay any suspicions the chiefs may have harboured. Similarly, Thomas G. Anderson had also delivered the written opening address to the chiefs’ interpreter at the Orillia council for their perusal.

Odaawaa Chief Edowishcosh (Itawashkash) had been selected to act as **Ogimaa-giigido** (chief speaker) for this council. His opening statement was, “I have heard what you have said, and the words you have been sent to say to us. I wish now to tell you what my brother Chiefs and Warriors, women, & Children say. The Great Spirit gave our

⁹¹⁵ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 133.

⁹¹⁶ Shelley J. Pearen, *Four Voices: The Great Manitoulin Island Treaty of 1862* (Self-published, 2012), 8. Lindsay was the editor of the newspaper *The Leader*.

⁹¹⁷ The Council with Commissioners Bartlett and Lindsay at Manitowaning took place on October 5, 1861. Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers of Parliament* (Quebec: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1863), Appendix 63.

forefathers land to live upon and our forefathers wished us to keep it.”⁹¹⁸ The commissioners then reported that “a pause here ensued, and no other Indian coming forward to speak, Mr. Bartlett said the Deputation would be glad to hear any other Chief who might be disposed to speak.” The old war chief and interpreter J.B. Assiginack stepped forward and delivered a speech that recounted the history of contact and alliance and ended with his endorsement of the proposed cession. The commissioners then left for two hours to allow the chiefs and warriors to deliberate. The general council at Orillia also had taken breaks to allow the chiefs to talk and consider the proposition before them.

The commissioners were summoned and Edowishcosh (Itawashkash) replied again on behalf of the chiefs, “We have not changed... I am stating what my young men have decided.”⁹¹⁹ Two chiefs and a “halfbreed” from Wikwemikong then spoke after Edowishcosh but did not contradict the position. The commissioners then addressed the council and stated that they “could not take back bad words against the government” and decided to break the council for the day and re-convene on Monday. The council re-assembled on Monday and Edowishcosh again stated,

I am employed by the other Chiefs and Warriors to tell you their decision since we last met... they have smoked the pipe together, as their forefathers had done, thinking over old matters. They are the proprietors of the Island, and intend to keep the land for themselves and their friends all over the country who may come here. We won't allow our land to be surveyed. If more persons come here we have more forces than appears now. I am speaking now to those who are asking me for my land. That is all I have to say.⁹²⁰

As the council heated up over the issue of surveying the island, a commissioner stated “We trust we shall receive an assurance from some Chief authorized to speak for the Indians, that no obstruction will be offered to the Government Surveyor. Perhaps this Chief who has been authorized to speak for the rest will consult them on this point.” Insinuating that Edowishcosh did not have authorization to speak for the chiefs was an affront to the chiefs, an attempt to discredit their selected **Ogimaa-giigido**. Regardless, Chief Edowishcosh consulted again with the chiefs, returned and said, “You saw when I

⁹¹⁸ The Council with Commissioners Bartlett and Lindsay at Manitowaning took place on October 5, 1861. Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers of Parliament*, 1863, Appendix 63.

⁹¹⁹ Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers of Parliament*, 1863, Appendix 63.

⁹²⁰ Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers of Parliament*, 1863, Appendix 63.

went to consult all the Chiefs here. We don't like it that the surveyors are here." The commissioner again insisted on the surveyor and also claimed that the Ojibwe and Odaawaa had already relinquished their "perfect" title to Manitoulin Island. **Ogimaagiigido** Edowishcosh replied, "I am empowered by my Chiefs to get up the same as I did before. Those Chiefs that employ me to speak up now have the idea that they are going to be wronged, and that the authority is not from the right source." Here again, just like Chief Aisaans and Chief Yellowhead at Orillia in 1846, the chiefs questioned the authority of commissioners sent to deal with them. The Manitoulin Chiefs did not know these two commissioners and required further proof that this proposal came from the proper crown authority. The commissioners decided to end the council and closed their official report by stating that "All the Chiefs and Indians present then came forward and shook hands with the Commissioners and the other gentlemen in the most friendly manner."⁹²¹

This was not the end of the government's attempt to wrest Manitoulin Island away from the Anishinaabeg. The following year, on 3 October 1862, the Honourable William MacDougall, who held dual title of Commissioner of Crown Lands and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, arrived at Manitowaning to enter into treaty with the Anishinaabeg of Manitoulin Island. The council began inauspiciously on Saturday. MacDougall took his seat and waited for the chiefs to approach him to shake his hands. The Wikwemikong chiefs, who did not accept the treaty, noted in their record of the council proceedings, "When the Honourable chief, MacDougall, was seated in the meeting room, he expected that the natives were going to come up and shake hands with him. But they did not do so. They said to him: It is up to you who come to speak to us, to give us your hand first. He rose, gave his hand to our chiefs, then he spoke."⁹²² This is

⁹²¹ Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers of Parliament*, 1863, Appendix 63.

⁹²² Rev. P. Choné, s.j., to Scholastics, 12 November 1862 including a translation of an Ojibwe document written by the Chiefs of Wikwemikong regarding the proceedings of October 1862 Manitoulin Treaty. In Cadieux, Lorenzo, s.j. and Robert Toupin, eds. *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870, Volume 6 of the Letters from the New Canada Missions* (William Lonc, 2007), 208.

contrasted with the opening that the experienced Thomas G. Anderson undertook when he and Vardon started the council by shaking the hands of the chiefs at Orillia.⁹²³

MacDougall then made his opening statement and had offered different terms than Lindsay and Bartlett had the year before. Sheshegwaning Odaawaa Chief Itawashkash (Edowishcosh) was again chosen as **Ogimaa-Giigido**. However, according to the Wikwemikong chiefs, Itawashkash was taken aback with the new terms, he stated, “One moment... I am going to consider what you have said.” MacDougall promptly replied: “Do not hurry, but reflect on it.” At this point Pekoneiassang, a man from Wikwemikong urged Itawashkash, “Hurry! What have you to still to consider? Make known your thoughts... Our minds have been made up for a long time. There is nothing more to deliberate.”⁹²⁴ Once the **Ogimaa-giigido** hesitated other warriors and speakers spoke up and stated that they continued to oppose a treaty.

MacDougall then briefly left so that the chiefs could consider the new terms on their own, without the influence of the government agents, this was also done by Anderson at Orillia in 1845. The chiefs and warriors discussed the new terms of the proposition and according to the Wikwemikong chiefs, “We have again talked together, all of us who hold onto our land, and we have not thought to surrender it, for it is the only thing we have.”⁹²⁵ MacDougall was then summoned, he returned, and Itawashkash was again employed to deliver the thoughts of the chiefs, “My brother, I will make known to you our thoughts, after having reflected on the words that you addressed to us. It is not the first time that we have considered these things; Well! Here are my thoughts: I hold onto my land, I do not surrender it... These are the thoughts of all my chiefs present here.”⁹²⁶ Odaawaa Chief Itawashkash specifically stated that he represented the “thoughts” of all the chiefs present – he was acting **Ogimaa-giigido** for the council. The

⁹²³ LAC RG 10, Vol 32, Minutes of the General Indian Council of Indian Chiefs and Principal Men held at the Orillia, Lake Simcoe Narrows, p. 5.

⁹²⁴ Rev. P. Choné, s.j., to Scholastics, 12 November 1862 including a translation of an Ojibwe document written by the Chiefs of Wikwemikong regarding the proceedings of October 1862 Manitoulin Treaty. In Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 209.

⁹²⁵ Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 209.

⁹²⁶ Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 210.

similarities in the councils (1845, 1861, and 1862) was that the chiefs broke off periodically to talk amongst themselves to discuss new information without the presence of the government representatives. The chiefs established a consensus at these “break out” sessions. The 1862 council reconvened and Itawashkash then presented the united position. That Saturday night the discussion ended, with the Manitoulin Chiefs seemingly united against a treaty. However, come Monday morning the Chiefs of Wikwemikong returned to Manitowaning and were astonished to find that some chiefs and headmen from elsewhere on the island (Sheguiandah, Manitowaning, M’Chigeeng) had agreed to sign the proposed treaty. In their subsequent petition, the chiefs of Wikwemikong noted that the **Ogimaa-giigido** was no longer employed to represent the united chiefs, the time had come in the council for each chief to represent himself and his band:

Then the non-believing chiefs rose successively; first Mijakwange, then Kijikobinesi, Bebaniesse, Itawikisie and Bemigewanessikang. They spoke thus to the Great Chief’s envoy: ‘I accept your proposals and I surrender what I possess.’ Then they marked the part of the island that they were selling.⁹²⁷

Once the **Ogimaa-giigido**, Odaawaa Chief Itawashkash, no longer represented a united position against the then proposed treaty, he was relieved of his duties. The Wikwemikong people that chose to reject the treaty united under Chief Wakegijig and chose another **giigidowinini**, a man called Jako. Each of the chiefs that eventually signed the treaty then spoke for themselves and their bands, instead of employing a speaker.⁹²⁸ They then individually went up to the parchment and signed the document with their **doodem** (clan). So even though the chiefs who eventually signed the treaty were represented at the council on Saturday by **Ogimaa-giigido** Itawashkash they had to verbally assent to the terms of the treaty in full council and then consent by signing. The related point is that the Wikwemikong chiefs, warriors and people, even though initially represented by **Ogimaa-giigido** Itawashkash, did not assent nor consent. Furthermore, Itawashkash as **Ogimaa-giigido** did not, nor could he have, consented and signed on their

⁹²⁷ Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 214.

⁹²⁸ Protest (Copy) Wikwemikong 15 November 1862. The Indians of Wikwemikong, peninsula of Manitoulin Island, against what occurred at Manitowaning on 4, 5, 6 and 7th of last October. 26 Victoria. Province of Canada. *Documents de la Session* (No. 63)A. 1863. French version of Canada’s *Sessional Papers*. Translation by Shelley Pearen.

behalf. This is similar to the situation of Joseph Peau de Chat and the Pic River band. Even if Peau de Chat initially served as spokesperson for the Lake Superior bands in the council, it did not give him the authority to sign on their behalf in their absence. It should not have been legally possible for the Crown to enter into the Robinson Superior Treaty with the Begetikong Anishinaabe (Pic Band) because they were not there to assent.

In their petition to the Governor General, the Wikwemikong chiefs stated the reasons that they perceived the 1862 Manitoulin Treaty as deception and not a true treaty. They wrote, “No righteous man, once he knew the facts, could say: Here is a true contract! On the contrary, it is a simple deception! If the promoters had intended to make a valid deed, they should not have accepted the words of those who said: I surrender (the land), for no one, by himself, be he even a chief, can cede a thing that we all possess in common. If we had all consented, then a true treaty would have been concluded, but it was not so. Those who gave their assent, consented as private individuals; they had not sought the advice of their tribes.”⁹²⁹ Similarly, Ojibwe Chief Peau de Chat from Fort William could not enter into treaty ceding Begetikong (Pic River Band) territory, especially since he did not consult with them on the terms that had been changed at the treaty council in September. Even if Chief Peau de Chat had been requested to speak on the Pic Band’s behalf he would not have had the authority to relinquish Pic River Band territory. All he would have been delegated to do was to deliver a message to the treaty commissioners on behalf of the Pic River band. He also would have then been charged to deliver a message from the treaty commissioners back to the Pic River chiefs and their band, including the elders, women and young people.

Another point that the Wikwemikong chiefs raised about the 1862 Treaty was that many who signed away the island actually owned reserves on the mainland. Their argument was that since those that signed the treaty had reserves on the mainland, they did not own the island and therefore could not sign it away. They decried the situation,

⁹²⁹ Rev. P. Choné, s.j., to Scholastics, 12 November 1862 including a translation of an Ojibwe document written by the Chiefs of Wikwemikong regarding the proceedings of October 1862 Manitoulin Treaty. In Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 208.

if the promoters wanted to act with justice, they should not have accepted the consent of several other people: people who possess nothing on the island that they can sell. Their reserve is on the mainland; their tribe is there not here. Yes, we assert that it is a big mistake, a bad proceeding, to ask from someone a thing that does not belong to him, but to accept his word nevertheless.⁹³⁰

This argument raised the issue of property and engaging the proper people to enter into treaty with. In the previous section, the argument put forward was that clans had long standing ties to specific territories and were the proper owners, therefore the chiefs of those clans were the proper people to treat with. In the earlier section, ‘Chieftainship, Clans and Land,’ various chiefs at different treaty councils had stated that the wrong person was at the treaty or the wrong person had been asked to surrender a certain tract of land. The chiefs had stated that the proposed signatory should be of the hereditary chieftainship line with ties to the pre-eminent doodem of a specific territory. For the Robinson Superior Treaty, Joseph Peau de Chat was not the chief of the Pic River area. He did not possess the necessary knowledge nor ties to that territory to cede it.

William Benjamin Robinson wrote in his diary that Joseph Peau de Chat “Was appointed by the tribes of Lake Superior to settle the business & had done what he thought for the best.”⁹³¹ Joseph Peau de Chat had been listed as the chief of Fort William at the August 19, 1848 council held at Sault Ste. Marie. At that council Peau de Chat had stated that his band still owned the land because they had never ceded it but he expressed his willingness to enter into a treaty with the government; he stated,

I now begin to think that the white man wishes to take away and steal my land, I will let it go, and perhaps I will accomplish it. I wish to let the Governor have both land and mineral, I expect him to ask me for it, and this is what would be for our good [...] send some one to ask for my lands, my minerals & c I wont [sic] be unwilling to let it go. The Government shall have it if they give us good pay. I do not regret a word I have said.⁹³²

⁹³⁰ Cadieux and Toupin, eds., *Letters from Manitoulin Island, 1853-1870*, 208.

⁹³¹ Robinson on Peau de Chat, in James Morrison, *The Robinson Treaties of 1850: A Case Study*, prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Treaty and Land Research Section (Ottawa: Privy Council of Canada, RCAP, 1996), 118.

⁹³² Minutes of a Council held by T. G. Anderson V.S.I.A. at Sault Ste. Marie on Friday the 18th day of August 1848. LAC RG1 E5, Vol. 9, Series 1, No: 1067 – 1157.

Joseph Peau de Chat was in favour of a treaty in 1848. Throughout his speech he consistently used the first person singular, “I” (in contrast to Shingwaukonce’s speech who predominantly used “we”), but at the end of his speech, Peau de Chat stated,

This is nearly all I have to say, tell the Governor at Montreal to send a letter and let us know what he will do, and what our land is worth, in the meantime I will converse with my tribe on the subject. When I am going to sell my land, I will speak again and settle matters.⁹³³

Peau de Chat did state that he would converse with his “tribe” (meaning band) in the meantime. Peau de Chat knew that he did not have the authority to enter into the treaty without their knowledge and approval. His band was the Fort William band, not the Pic band. On November 2, 1848, the Jesuits noted that “Joseph La Peau de Chat, a chief of the Ft. William natives,”⁹³⁴ had said that if he could receive his payments at La Pointe (for the treaty signed on the American side), then he would bring his band to the “English side of the Rivière aux Tourtes” (Mimi-siping “Pigeon River”). Peau de Chat is “a chief” from Fort William not “the” only chief. In 1848 – 1849, Peau de Chat and his band were living at Fort William but were entertaining the idea of moving southwest to the Pigeon River to join the Jesuit mission there as well as join the band living there. Soon Peau de Chat decided against this move and then issued a letter forbidding any of the Anishinaabeg living on the United States side from fishing and hunting on the “British territory.” The Fort William band had apparently issued this letter in an effort to get the Pigeon River band to “include them in the list of payment recipients or share their Payment with those at Ft. William.”⁹³⁵ By 1849 the Jesuits decided to establish the mission closer to Fort William. On September 9, 1849 they reported in the diary, “After dinner, a Smoke was held at our residence to propose a design for their future village; the natives will build on one side of the future church, along the river; the Métis and the Whites along the other side. This was approved unanimously, and confirmed by our chief, Joseph La Peau de Chat and the old Baptist chief called Illinois.”⁹³⁶ The Jesuits clearly favoured Peau de Chat because of his affiliation with Roman Catholicism as well

⁹³³ Minutes of a Council held by T. G. Anderson V.S.I.A. at Sault Ste. Marie on Friday the 18th day of August 1848. LAC RG1 E5, Vol. 9, Series 1, No: 1067 – 1157.

⁹³⁴ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 10.

⁹³⁵ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 18.

⁹³⁶ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 36.

as his intention to amalgamate two bands so that the priests could have a larger ‘flock.’ Peau de Chat had won the priests’ confidence as well as his band’s confidence.

As mentioned earlier, Peau de Chat’s chieftainship was questioned by T. G. Anderson at the council convoked by the 1849 Vidal and Anderson Commission. In his diary, Vidal noted that,

Peau de Chat – acknowledged as head chief by all his people at Fort William, is not a chief by right of descent – He is a shrewd and somewhat intelligent man – evidently very [conceited] and forward – his cunning has enabled him to take his present position he makes great professions of his desire to have all his countrymen obliged and converted to Christianity – but from many expressions he dropped I think selfishness is the main spring of his efforts to bring the Indians all to one place, as he would then exercise authority over a large number and so be of greater importance.⁹³⁷

Vidal described Peau de Chat as “shrewd and somewhat intelligent,” yet “conceited and forward,” also “cunning” and ultimately selfish. Contrast the glowing terms the Jesuits used to describe Joseph La Peau de Chat, “well built with a vibrant and pleasant voice,” and an “eloquent spirit” and possessing a “vehement impetuosity.”⁹³⁸ After Vidal and Anderson had completed and handed in their report, a letter arrived from James Anderson, the Hudson’s Bay Company representative at Lake Nipigon. He had replied to T.G. Anderson’s queries about the Lake Superior chiefs. James Anderson’s letter was dated January 7, 1850 and he warned T.G. Anderson,

as to their empowering the Peau de Chat of Fort William to act for them in treating with the Government for their lands: I have put the question to several of the most respectable Indians – including the Indian the Company acknowledges as Chief – and who were all at Fort William last summer. They all positively deny having empowered him in any way to treat with the Government or act for them. Not one half of the Nipigon Indians have ever even seen the Peau de Chat. I may add that two years ago he sent word to these Indians that the Government had made him Chief over the whole of L. Superior included between Michipicoten – Pigeon River and the height of land. He was too well known to the Indians to be believed... I would strongly advise you not to let the Peau de Chat have anything to do with the Nipigon Indians. He wishes to assume an

⁹³⁷ Alexander Vidal, Notebook, p. 21. University of Western Ontario Archives, Vidal papers, Box 4438.

⁹³⁸ Fr. Fremiot to his Superior in New York. From the Immaculate Conception Mission, October 18, 1849. Cadieux, *Letters from the New Canada Missions*, 2: 129-30.

authority over them and be the Great Man – the fellow is a cunning rogue with a dreadful tongue.⁹³⁹

The Hudson's Bay Company Factor at Nipigon also described Peau de Chat as "cunning" but added "rogue." The factor, much like Vidal a couple of months earlier, also thought that Peau de Chat an ambitious man who desired to be a greater chief than he was. The factor had also stated that Peau de Chat was "completely under" the influence of the Jesuit priest. The factor shared T.G. Anderson's sentiments in that, "if you treat with him [Peau de Chat], you treat with the Jesuit Missionary."⁹⁴⁰

The Jesuits do appear to have had an influence on Peau de Chat and the rest of the band. On June 5, 1850 Fr. Choné "held a Smoke" in order to solidify plans for the settlement and "there was no opposition."⁹⁴¹ At the end of the month, Fr. Choné:

...convened the men to present a unified front at the meeting in Sault Ste. Marie, to avoid being shy about asking for a paid religious minister; as for the school teachers, to give the natives the money who will then appoint the teachers. Finally, to ask to be paid at least half in money to buy a stove and other household and farm items. If our Protestant natives, who will soon be consulted, agree to the points above, the Catholic natives need only go in a small number to Sault Ste. Marie. Otherwise, as many as possible will go to constitute a significant majority. This meeting was held and no one raised any objection.⁹⁴²

Initially the priests reported in the mission diary that Peau de Chat was directing affairs, banning the Pigeon River band from hunting and fishing on the "British side" of the river. However, after the priests moved the mission closer to Fort William, the priests reported that they had convened councils (fumerie or "smoke"). By December 1850, after the treaty had been signed, the priests started to report in their diary that they "continue to receive reports over the past 2 or 3 days about the bad behaviour of the chief."⁹⁴³ Peau de Chat had engaged in a relationship with a widow. Peau de Chat denied the charges at first and stated that he was the target of a witch hunt. Letters were exchanged, and then a council convened by Fr. Choné and attended by the band and Peau

⁹³⁹ James Anderson to T. G. Anderson January 7, 1850, LAC RG 10, Vol. 266, pp: 163156 - 163159.

⁹⁴⁰ James Anderson to T. G. Anderson January 7, 1850, LAC RG 10, Vol. 266, pp: 163156 - 163159.

⁹⁴¹ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 62-3.

⁹⁴² Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 64.

⁹⁴³ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 71.

de Chat. Peau de Chat stated to all in attendance that he put “himself into the hands of all the native people in matters of religion.”⁹⁴⁴ The situation at Fort William was strained and continued so and got worse when Peau de Chat revealed to the priests that the factor at Fort William had been opposed to having the Pigeon River band move closer to the fort for fear that the area game and fish would be depleted. Matters grew worse when Fr. Choné publicly confronted both the factor and Peau de Chat. Fr. Choné threatened to quit construction on the church and the houses being then built by the mission. The priest wanted the band from Pigeon River to join the mission and Peau de Chat kept stalling and would not answer until he had consulted with a government agent. The conflict between Peau de Chat and the priests continued, with the priests continuing to push for the admission of the Pigeon River band to the mission. On March 3, 1851, Peau de Chat and Fr. Choné went to the fort with some band members. The council was convoked because “The chief declared that he was going to divulge something that he had hidden until now, namely that the Hudson Bay Company had influenced him during the making of the Treaty; that nevertheless he is in full support of it... It was evident from this meeting that it was really Mr. McKenzie himself who caused all our troubles, fearing and leading La Peau de Chat to fear that too many natives would deplete the land and especially the Fort.”⁹⁴⁵

On May 27, 1851 the priests reported that they convened another council in an effort to depose Peau de Chat. Fr. Choné hosted the “smoke (fumerie)” and at 3:00 pm the assembled band members had not decided what to do about Peau de Chat. The priest delivered a speech and an ultimatum and was then able to have a new chief elected. Peau de Chat was reportedly ill having lost his vision. However, on July 8, 1851 the priests reported that Peau de Chat was given \$ 150 from the factor Mr. Mackenzie and “even though he had no authority, he alone distributes it – without consulting anybody – not only to Habit Rouge his eldest brother, but also his companions from Lac du Bois Fendu, and who, it seems, have no right to it.”⁹⁴⁶ Peau de Chat, deposed, reportedly brought this new band to partake in the funds so that he could remain a chief, just of a different band.

⁹⁴⁴ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 73.

⁹⁴⁵ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 78.

⁹⁴⁶ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 87.

Peau de Chat had his allies summon a council in which the question of Peau de Chat's deposition was deliberated upon. Peau de Chat stated that he would never enter the church again and at the following mass the Jesuits name him "Joseph the Apostate."⁹⁴⁷ Peau de Chat's health deteriorated but still he refused to go to church. However, the factor interceded on Peau de Chat's behalf and the priest visited and asked for his confession. On August 1, 1851 Peau de Chat died.⁹⁴⁸

Clearly Joseph Peau de Chat was a complex man. By all accounts he was intelligent and more than one labelled him "cunning." The factors, agents, and eventually even the priests, considered Peau de Chat an ambitious man, one who aspired to be the "Great Man." The historical record suggests that Joseph Peau de Chat was manipulated by the priests and the Hudson's Bay Factor. Peau de Chat in turn also tried to manipulate them in order to maintain his stature as chief. Reportedly many of the Nipigon band did not know Peau de Chat and those that did, did not trust him. If the Nipigon band did not know Peau de Chat, would the Pic band have known him? Unlikely. Furthermore, if the Nipigon band did not trust Peau de Chat, would the Pic band have trusted him to represent them at the treaty? Just as unlikely. Peau de Chat eventually revealed to his band and to the priests that "the Hudson Bay Company had influenced him during the making of the Treaty; that nevertheless he is in full support of it."⁹⁴⁹

The available evidence does not reveal that Joseph Peau de Chat, acting as **Giigidowinini** or **Ogimaa-giigido** or **Netaa-giigidod**, delivered any strings of wampum or a pipe or a letter to William Benjamin Robinson on behalf of the Begetikong Anishinaabe (Pic River Band). Even if he had delivered a pipe, he would have been delegated to deliver a specific message with that pipe. Ceding the Begetikong Band's territory and entering them into the treaty would have exceeded that mandate. Joseph Peau de Chat did not have the necessary ties to the Pic River area to cede it. In keeping with the proper protocols outlined in the Royal Proclamation and the Niagara Treaty, it should not have been legally possible for the Crown to enter into the Robinson Superior Treaty with Peau de Chat on behalf of the Begetikong Anishinaabeg (Pic Band).

⁹⁴⁷ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 90–1.

⁹⁴⁸ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 94.

⁹⁴⁹ Lonc and Pearen, *Letters from the Fort William Jesuit Mission*, 78.

Furthermore, based upon the tenets of both the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara, it should not have been possible for the Begetikong Anishinaabe to lose their lands through delay or because they did not make any formal complaints. The Crown agreed to act as a father and protect his children and their interests. As such the Crown should have sought the band's consent, similar to what W. B. Robinson had done to obtain the consent of Lake Huron chiefs, Chief Megis and Muckata Mishaquet.

After 1815, treaty relationships became reduced to an annual delivery of 'Indian Presents' and 'warmth' at the council fire, consisting to smoking, giving, receiving, and talking. The promises that Sir William Johnson made to Anishinaabeg at the treaty of Niagara, which included prosperity, autonomy, and ownership of land, had begun to erode, despite the best efforts of the chiefs to maintain the Covenant Chain.

Ch. 8: Conclusion

Indigenous people of North America have always asserted ownership to the land, consistently asserting that it was given to them by the Creator. They organized themselves as autonomous nations with their own governance structures based on their culture, economy, governance, and laws. These governance systems were enacted in a variety of ways, such as council meetings used by Anishinaabeg. Many Indigenous nations established ties of alliance for peace and trade. For many of these nations, especially in northern North America, the forum for negotiating agreements was the council fire. The media for recording the events and agreements were wampum belts. The procedure for enacting these agreements was the calumet pipe. Well before Europeans arrived on the scene, an international Indigenous treaty framework or process was established on mutually understood wampum and calumet protocols that incorporated a highly contextualized metaphoric language.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Niagara Treaty of 1764 requires an understanding of the treaty structure of the Covenant Chain, explaining its antecedents and showing how the British adopted this treaty framework that had its origins in the formation of the League of Five Nations (now called Six Nations). The Mohawk Nation, a part of this League, had established ties with the Dutch on the Hudson River and they used the phrase “chain of friendship” to describe their treaty relationship. This chain was eventually lengthened to include the neighbours of the Mohawk, the Oneida, the Onondaga, and eventually the whole League of Five Nations. The Dutch were usurped by the British, who then assumed this treaty relationship with the Six Nations. After the defeat of the French, the British incorrectly assumed that they had defeated the Western Nations, including the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe, Odaawaa, Potowatomi, and Mississauga) but the Western Nations told the British outright (and demonstrated in military terms) that they had not been conquered and remained sovereign. Seeking a way to establish peace, the British proposed extending the Covenant Chain to the Western Nations.

The 1764 Niagara Treaty was momentous because it established the diplomatic foundation of the Covenant Chain relationship between the British and the Western Nations. The Covenant Chain signified mutual respect, reciprocity, and good faith. The

agreement was figuratively referred to as a chain because it bound multiple parties together in an alliance. The 1764 Treaty of Niagara was attended by representatives of the British Crown, specifically the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and chiefs and warriors from 24 different nations with an estimated total 2000 Indigenous people attending.

The purpose of the gathering was to establish and secure long-term peace between Britain and Indigenous Nations (Western Confederacy). The outcome was that many Indigenous representatives entered into the Covenant Chain, which re-established trade, created a process for conflict resolution, and renewed the annual delivery of presents, which meant the treaty was still in effect. Finally, and most importantly for the Western Nations, was the acknowledgement and recognition of Indigenous ownership of the land. From the Anishinaabe perspective the Niagara Treaty assured them that they maintained their freedom, their land, re-established trade with the British, and renewed the annual delivery of the presents. From the British perspective, they developed a way to legally purchase lands west of the Appalachians and south of the Hudson's Bay Company's territorial claim.

The terms of the 1764 Treaty of Niagara were recorded by giving calumets, exchanging wampum belts, and presenting medals, all of which served as mnemonic representations of the treaty process. Subsequent speeches delivered in councils between the British and the Western Nations show a high degree of mutual understanding because the speeches were metaphorical. The principal metaphors of the treaty relationship included the "road of peace," "the mat" (which meant land/ territory), "igniting the council fire," "warmth" (delivery of presents), "the high hill/ mountain" (establishing a fort or post), and "the tree of peace" (flag pole), all of which were understood by the chiefs of the Western and Eastern Nations and the agents of Indian Affairs. The use of these metaphors demonstrates how the formulaic speeches were a codification of both the Royal Proclamation and the Covenant Chain as agreed upon at the Treaty of Niagara. The symbols on the wampum belt delivered at Niagara in 1764 represent a melding of two literary traditions, one based on geometric shapes woven onto wampum belts and the other alphabetic and numeric. The Great Covenant Chain of 1764 has hexagons and diamonds of the pre-existing wampum tradition but also includes numbers and letters of

the western tradition. The shared understanding entered into at Niagara was perpetuated and disseminated at various council fires around the Great Lakes, including Michilimackinac, St. Joseph's Island, and Manitoulin Island.

The British sought to bring the Western Nations into the Chain of Friendship or the Silver Covenant Chain. The Covenant Chain was promoted as a framework for lasting peace. Although the British had conquered the French, the Western and Eastern Nations declared that they continued to hold onto their independence and freedom and had not been conquered. Part of solidifying the treaty relationship meant establishing ties or bonds of fictive kinship. Subsequent to the Treaty of Niagara, the Western Nations were adopted by the King of Great Britain as his children, and they adopted him as father. The key to understanding the relationship forged at the Treaty of Niagara rests on understanding the set of fictive kinship terms: father, elder brother, younger brother, and children, which reveal that the Western Nations and the British had different world views that influenced their interpretations of those kinship terms. The Western Nations understood that the British had committed to a more onerous role because a father has to dote on his children and provide for them indiscriminately, whereas a child does not have too many obligations to the father. The Western Nations did not conceive a father to be authoritative. The adoption did not mean the Western Nations were subjects of the Crown, as some British officers believed.

According to the Niagara Treaty, the Western Nations understood that they held title to their lands, maintained their autonomy, re-established fair trade relationships with the British, secured protection from unscrupulous traders, secured a process for restitution of fraudulent land purchases, and established annual gift giving wherein the British gave tribute to the Western Nations for using the land. By annually delivering the presents to the Western Nations at the various outposts, the British were abiding by the terms of the Treaty of Niagara and the Royal Proclamation. By delivering ample presents, the British enacted their role as the generous father. By settling disputes with traders, the British played the protective father to his children. By going to war against Great Britain's enemies, the Western Nations were fulfilling their role as children in the treaty. By maintaining peaceful relations with the fur traders and allowing them to trade in their country without pillaging them, the Western Nations were being obedient children.

Through the Treaty of Niagara, the Anishinaabeg and the British decided to quit fighting and agreed to enter into a treaty of defensive and offensive alliance. The Anishinaabeg understood that by extending the Great Covenant Chain Wampum belt, the British had assured their autonomy, independence, and land rights. The relationship was further solidified, in the eyes of the Western Nations, when they adopted the British as their father. The Western Nations did not view a father as an authoritative figure but one who was to provide for his children's wants and needs.

The British promised to deliver warmth (a metaphor for the annual 'Indian presents') to the country of their allies, the Western Nations. The alliance was tested during the American Revolution, the Battle for the Ohio Valley, and the War of 1812. During each of these times of tribulation, the Crown, through delegated representatives, such as the Lieutenant Governor, Commander-in-Chief, and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, presented additional wampum belts that depicted the Covenant Chain to strengthen the alliance. Sir John Johnston, Sir Guy Carleton, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe, Lieutenant Governor Gore, Commander in Chief General Prevost, and Lieutenant Governor Bond Head all presented wampum strings and belts to representatives of the Western Confederacy to polish the Covenant Chain. Many of these colonial figures delivered a wampum belt in their own name but each referred to the Covenant Chain of Friendship in their speeches. Thus, the British continued to adhere to the Covenant Chain and the Royal Proclamation because they continued to deliver presents. Upon receiving the new wampum belts that bound the ties even stronger, the Western Nations understood that the tenets of the Covenant Chain as agreed to at Niagara in 1764 were still adhered to. Since the Treaty of Niagara incorporated terms within the Royal Proclamation, the tenets of the proclamation were re-enforced and strengthened by the delivery of wampum by colonial officials.

After military threats subsided, however, the British began to neglect the maintenance of the relationship with Western Nations by diminishing their warmth (the so-called Indian presents). It fell upon the Western Nations to bring out the wampum belts to remind the British of the mutual engagements entered into at the Treaty of Niagara. The chiefs and orators of the Western Confederacy maintained the belts and the

words and ideas contained therein. By bringing the belts out and reciting the speech that accompanied the belts, the chiefs were maintaining the treaty relationship.

In 1848, the Crown summoned the Anishinaabeg of the North Shore of Lake Huron and Lake Superior to discuss the possibility of entering into a treaty. The Crown specified the need to identify the owners of the land to obtain consent for the surrender of title. They questioned the Anishinaabeg claim to the land and requested proof of ownership as a requirement of a treaty.

When asked to provide confirmation of their autonomy and title, the Anishinaabeg chiefs and orators demonstrated the understanding that their title and ownership had never been extinguished or relinquished. There was an awareness that a treaty process existed to cede territory and they asserted their right to the land. There was also an awareness of the stipulations of the Royal Proclamation regarding the purchase of land.

Principles of autonomy, title, and reciprocity were inherently included in the text of the Royal Proclamation. These principles were affirmed by William Johnson at the Treaty of Niagara in 1764. Aided by wampum protocol and the accompanying ‘talk on the belt’ (speeches), the chiefs and warriors of Lake Huron and Lake Superior understood that they still owned the land and recalled that they had not been asked to surrender the land, nor had their ancestors.

The Anishinaabeg have been described as an egalitarian society whose decision-making process involved attaining consensus on decisions that affected the whole community. There were two types of councils utilized to make decisions: the common council or local council, which was used for issues that affected only the local community or band, and the general council, which was composed of many bands and chiefs deliberating on issues that affected more than one band. The Ogimaa (chief) solicited the opinion of his band make decisions. The Anishinaabe governance system was composed of more positions than the chief, including the aanike-ogimaa (sub-chief/ deputy chief), netaa-giigidod (orator), giigidowinini (speaker/ counsellor), noodaagan (messenger), oshkaabewis (ceremonial attendant), mizhinawe (chief’s attendant/ steward), gichi-anishinabeg (elders), and kwewag (Women). Each played a role in the decision-making process, adhering to common (local or clan) council protocol and

inherently acknowledging the importance of doodem (clans) to specific territories and chieftainship.

In contrast, the general council was composed of many bands and chiefs deliberating upon an issue, such as a treaty, going to war, or settling a boundary. If the general council was convened by a colonial entity such as Great British, France, or the United States of America, the chiefs employed an Ogimaa-giigido (Chief speaker) to address the colonial representative. The Ogimaa-giigido was a temporary position struck for that particular general council. Sometimes the Ogimaa-giigido served at other general councils, not because it was a fixed or hereditary position, but because they were a gifted and noted orator who had the confidence of the other chiefs. Decisions made at councils required a council fire, tobacco, smoking pipes, and talking on strings of wampum to be accepted and ratified.

The period of transition after the British conquest of the French was marked by unrest and warfare. Odaawaa Chief Pontiac and others led a movement to maintain their lands. After a series of battles (often called Pontiac's War), the British realized that they would have to deal with the Western Nations in a different manner if they were going to achieve peace and stability in the area around the Great Lakes. The Crown's response was to issue the Royal Proclamation, which laid out the framework for protecting Anishinaabe lands that was based on reciprocity and respect. The wording of the Proclamation stipulated that the land belonged to the "Indians," that it was reserved for them, and that it could only be ceded to the Crown in open and public meetings. The Royal Proclamation was a document written for English colonial administrators and had to be converted into a more readily understandable medium for the chiefs of the Western Nations. The framework utilized to achieve a long-term peace was the Covenant Chain, which was also based on reciprocity and respect. The Covenant Chain was extended to the Western Nations at Detroit in 1761, again at the Treaty of Niagara in 1764, and subsequently Pontiac entered it in 1766 at Oswego. Every year thereafter the British delivered presents to the Western Nations, which was the act manifesting the renewal of the principles contained in the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara. The tenets in both the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara preclude the alienation of a band's land without their express consent. This dissertation analyzes and compares

several general councils to show how the chiefs expressed the limitations of their authority and the necessity of obtaining consent from their band, the elders, women, and young men. The comparisons reveal that the Ogimaa-giigido was not authorized to alienate another's land even if s/he was authorized to speak for them. Speaking for a band meant delivering a specific message and then reporting back to the chief and band the answer to that message. Authorization could not be given to an Ogimaa-giigido to cede another's territory without that band's express consent.

This dissertation has focused on treaty relationships of the Anishinaabeg with the Haudenosaunee, the French, and the British. Treaty relationships took specific forms to transmit the mutual engagements contained within the treaties. Anishinaabe treaties contained specific metaphors that were known and utilized throughout the Great Lakes region. In the 18th and 19th centuries and before, Anishinaabe treaties were exemplified by the exchange of calumets, medals, wampum strings and belts, and the making of fictive kin. Major treaties such as the Dish with One Spoon, the Eternal Council Fires Belt (aka Yellowhead's belt), the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the Covenant Chain, and the 1764 Treaty of Niagara and its subsequent renewal belts epitomized the oral nature of treaty relations by relying on mnemonic devices. From 1701 to 1880, Anishinaabe chiefs persistently relied on these old forms, or the 'records of their old men,' to seek redress for treaty relations that had gone awry. This persistence reflects the *longue durée* or long continuity of practices inherent in oral tradition. Orienting to the *longue durée* has meant abandoning an event-based perspective on history that privileges the signed treaty document over the treaty accoutrements on which the chiefs relied. This orientation to treaty analysis and interpretation is best captured by Indigenous literacies specialist Birgit Brander Rasmussen, who stated, "the wampum did not stand alone as a static, binding contract; rather, it was the communicative nexus for 'an ongoing relationship based on reciprocity and a shared world. Thus, wampum did not seal an agreement **so much as mark its beginning**'" [emphasis added].⁹⁵⁰ I concur and extend this argument. It wasn't just the wampum but also the medal, calumet, and flags that were

⁹⁵⁰ Rasmussen quoted in Andrew Newman, *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists and the Media of History and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 164.

central to treaty relationships. Although treaty history is becoming an expansive field of study, the signed treaty document is still *prima facie* in courts.⁹⁵¹

The research undertaken in this dissertation has privileged Anishinaabe voices in the documentary record, amplifying not simply the Ogimaag (chiefs), but also the Ogimaa-giigdoog (Chief speakers), Giigdowniniwag (speakers), Netawejig (orators), Mazhinaweg (Aid de Camps), and Wedaaseg (warriors). This was a deliberate decision to combat the perpetuation of nameless ‘Indian’ actors of history. Pontiac and Tecumseh were not the only leaders. In fact, as noted earlier, the Anishinaabeg passed on names of their ancestors as a way “to preserve their memories and deeds,” which make Anishinaabe names vessels of history. The colonial record can be ‘read against the grain’ to tease out forms of transmitting Anishinaabe history. This dissertation makes a concerted effort to identify the chiefs, orators and warriors. The weakness of this approach, however, is that the archival record is gender- and age-biased. The voices of female leaders and the elders could not be included as they were silenced by colonial authorities who created and preserved the written record.

Privileging the voices of the chiefs and speakers in councils conveys an idea of how they communicated their ideas about the treaty relationship and we know that this vernacular was not legalese. As a student of Anishinaabemowin, I was able to analyse historic documents written in Anishinaabemowin by the chiefs’ secretaries to further aid in interpreting the Anishinaabe perspective on treaty. It is safe to say that many differences in treaty interpretation are the result of mistranslations and lack of understanding among different language speakers. Privileging the Anishinaabemowin record is a corrective to this imbalance.

Anishinaabe culture is based on an oral tradition that relies on mnemonic devices. This dissertation has revealed many recorded instances when the chiefs pointed to

⁹⁵¹ Arthur J. Ray, *Telling it to the Judge: Taking Native History to Court* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 31. I served as an expert witness in the Robinson Huron Annuity Trial, and the Crown’s expert witness adopted a position that there was no Treaty of Niagara because there was no signed document. See Alain Beaulieu, *The Congress at Niagara in 1764: Historical Context and Meaning of British-Aboriginal Negotiations* (Report prepared for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada), 14.

material culture such as wampum strings, calumets, medals, flags, and most importantly wampum belts. Most treaty histories rely on only the written record. This dissertation extends this source base to illuminate the devices the chiefs had used to remember and recall the mutual engagements entered into at various treaties. The overall effect has been to move closer to past understandings by using material culture and Anishinaabemowin to re-contextualize the foundational understandings of treaty before the Anishinaabe understanding had been actively denigrated and discarded by their colonial treaty partners.

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