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A Visit to Our Ancestors Place

Meddybemps - N'tolonapemk Village



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Donald Soctomah

Tribal Historic Preservation Office 2005

Meddybemps Cultural Study

N'tolonapemk - A Visit to Our Ancestors' Place

by

Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Office

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2005

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Printed in the Homeland of the Passamaquoddy Tribe

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Introduction

The unique story of the Passamaquoddy people can be traced back to the retreat of the giant glacier over 12,000 years ago, but oral history talks about a longer period of time residing in this area we call "Skitkomiq Kikuwosson; Our Mother the Earth". In this long span of history and changing environment, it was the adaptation to these changes that was the strength of the Passamaquoddy. Be it the changing of the forest types, the changes of neighboring animals, changes in the flow of the rivers and ocean currents, and the many other changes that have evolved through this time period, the Passamaquoddy people adapted with the help of "Kehciniwesqit" the Great Spirit, and "Glooscap."

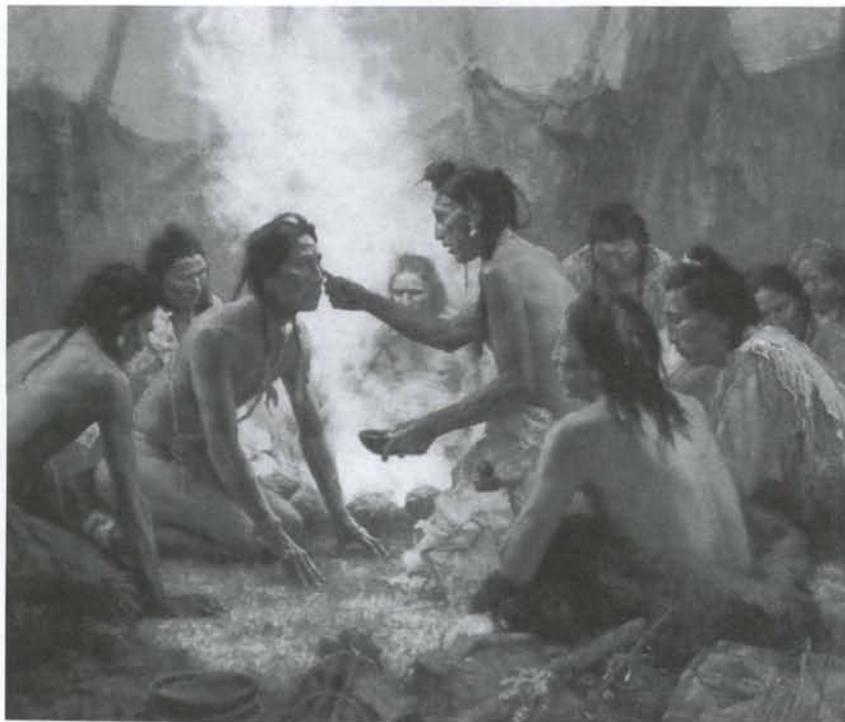
The Passamaquoddy people inhabited the area from the Magaguadavic watershed, the St. Croix watershed, the Machias watershed, and parts of the Union watershed, from Maine to New Brunswick, Canada. This area of occupancy varied during different time periods, different uses, and different alliances. Two thousand years ago part of a large group of Algonquin speakers followed the prophecy of a medouline visionary and left the coastal Dawnland before the appearance of a strange white cloud. Part of the group that stayed behind became known as the Wabanaki, the Dawnland people, the ancestors of the Passamaquoddy. During the next thousand years varying degrees of contact were made with the European fisherman but it wasn't until 1604 when there was an attempted occupancy by these strange people in the land of the Passamaquoddy. The first Europeans brought with them new diseases, including measles, smallpox, and the common cold, which killed thousands of native people along the coast of Maine and New Brunswick. Competition for land and resources by the warring English and French brought further death and displacement in the 1600 and the 1700s. Then in the mid 1700s to the 1800s the United States and Canadian border was formed, causing a further erosion of the land holdings of the Passamaquoddy Tribe. Even though the Passamaquoddy Tribe were confined to the fenceless reservations and, in 1852, the tribe separated into two communities, they shared an instinct for survival and a commonality of purpose, refusing to be dominated by the white man. In 1820, Maine became a State and the long relationship the Tribe had with Massachusetts changed with the new lawmakers. The treaty obligations that were reached in the 1700s were transferred to the new State of Maine and were listed in the State's first Constitution but were later removed from this declaration. Access to traditional

sites, such as Meddybemps (N'tolonapemk), for activities such as fishing, maple syrup gathering, camping, and a wide variety of other cultural purposes were denied by the setting of boundaries on private properties. Meanwhile, the Passamaquoddy Tribe became the most regulated Indian tribe in the nation under State law, even tribal monies were controlled by the State. Tribal population in the 1900s dropped to its lowest point, it wasn't until the 1960s that the population started to make a comeback with the improvement of living conditions. In 1975 the Passamaquoddy Tribe's treaty with the United States government was recognized, almost two hundred years after George Washington wrote his letter to the Passamaquoddy Tribe asking for help. The land claims of 1980 set the stage for the return of 150,000 acres of land to the tribe. Even though it is only a fraction of the aboriginal land holding of the tribe, a sense of partial justice was acknowledged.

Though land ownership is a foreign concept to the tribe, letters of concern and petitions were filed with the Legislature in Augusta, Maine about the destruction of land in the surrounding towns and pollution on the waters. Even today the protection of the environment and the connection to natural resources are strong in the tribal communities.

The Meddybemps project is an example of what can be done when people work together as it incorporates science with native concerns. Here was an ancient village of the Passamaquoddy Tribe engulfed with layers of hazardous waste; as a result the site received the attention of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a superfund designation. For many years the tribal voice was not heard, now the voices for a clean environment on the Dennys River and Meddybemps Lake have been heard and action has been taken to return this site to its natural setting. The EPA and its contractors are to be commended; Tetra Tech Nus, Inc. for the clean up of this site and the University of Maine at Farmington (2 years) and Archaeological Research Consultants, (1 year) who worked hand in hand with the Passamaquoddy government for the recovery and respectful treatment of artifacts. Native people also worked on the site during the excavation phase of the work. This was a powerful and symbolic gesture for today's society to honor the artifacts and the descendants of the people who created these tools and lived at the Meddybemps site for over eight thousand years.

This Cultural Report will look at the village site in Meddybemps- "N'tolonapemk" and the surrounding area in four time periods and during four seasons, as this is the best way that the Tribe tells its story. This story that is based on interviews, historic research, legends, and current uses. Join the Passamaquoddy Tribe as the story of "N'tolonapemk; A Visit to Our Ancestors' Place" is told.



Chapter 1 – Early Winter 4000 Years Ago

A fire was blazing in the center of the wigwam, the children looked at each other with anticipation; it was their favorite time during the long cold winter evenings. In walks Sopiél Selmore, he has long been the Keeper of the History, a position that comes with duties of retaining and telling the stories of the Passamaquoddy people. The children huddled close to the fire and leaned towards Sopiél. "Children, I am going to tell you a story that was told to me by a very old man when I was a young boy. It has to do with creation, it has to do with the land and the water, which is so important to us because that is what makes us who we are." Sopiél put an extra wood in the fire and started to tell the story of the giant ice age and how summer slowly pushed the grasps of winter further away from the land of the Passamaquoddy, exposing the landscape around Meddybemps Lake and the village of N'tolonapemk.



Great Glacier – Summer battles Winter

Pihce welikit ehpit liwiya Nipon mecimiw wikossqihiw kisuhsok:

"In the far old time there lived near the sun a beautiful woman, Nipon, her name meant summer. Green was her garment all of fresh leaves, and beautiful flowers covered her wigwam. She had a Grandmother, Komiwon, the rain, who dwelt far away. But when Komiwon came to visit her grandchild, one thing she always said whenever she left Nipon: "One thing I bid you with hardest warning, to one thing I bid you with a strong will, you should never seek in your wanderings the Lahtoqehsonuk, the land of the north, for there dwells Pun the winter, a deadly foe. You will surely find him should your feet fall in the Lahtoqehsonuk. Your Lahtoqehsonuk beauty will leave you, your green dress fade, your hair turn gray, your strength become weakness." Nipon gave little attention to Komiwon, the rain. One fair morning, she sat by her wigwam in the bright sunshine, looking at the Lahtoqehsonuk, the northlands. All that Nipon saw seemed strangely lovely as if enchanted. No human being was in the northland but over it all was beautiful sunshine. There she saw at a long distance a wonderful land, broad shining lakes, high blue mountains, bright rolling rivers, all strange and sweet. Something came over her, she didn't know if it was a dream or a voice. There was no help, she must rise and go to the land of Lahtoqehsonuk, in the northland. Up rose Nipon, on to the north she walked. Then she heard a voice, the voice of the rain. "Listen, my daughter! If you go to the northland, Pun, the winter, will surely kill you!" Nipon would not listen to the warning. She could not stay still, for a spell was on her. She kept walking to the north for many days, for many moons. Still the sun shone, still she saw a beautiful country of mountains and rivers, until one day Nipon noticed that she was followed. The land went onward; as she traveled, all around her was nothing but sunshine. Stopping a little to think of the wonders, she heard a whisper, the voice of the rain, "Stay, my daughter!" It made her willful, she still kept on. Still the Pun country went on before her, and something she had never known before came over her. She felt cold! An unseen power now drove her onward. Still the mountains went on before her; the green leaves of her garment grew yellow and faded and were blown away by the grim wind. Her long hair turned gray and white; the sun grew dim and then shone no more. She was very weak. The beautiful mountains were heaps of snow; the beautiful rivers and lakes were all of ice in the northland. Komiwon, the rain, was sad. She looked around; no smoke was rising in Nipon's wigwam. "She has not returned," said Komiwon, so in her fear she went to the wigwam.

All was silent, the boughs and flowers, which covered the wigwam were all yellow and faded. "My child, my child, you are caught by the cruel Pun, by the wicked winter, there in the north". Immediately she called for her bravest warriors, the ever-Invisible Spirits. These were their names: Sawonehson, the south wind; Cipenuk, the east wind; and Sonutsekoton, the warming southwest wind. "Quickly, " she cried, "travel away to the Lahtoqehsonuk, fight like heroes, and use all your power to rescue Nipon from Pun, the winter, fly to the north!" The wind warriors, unseen by man flew like lightning on their long journey. As they entered the Lahtoqehsonuk, Pun felt ill. He called all his chieftains, Great Lahtoqehsonuk, the terrible North wind, and the wild northwestern wind, the chill north-east wind, with all the frosts, sleet spirits, snow spirits, and every chill of the killing cold that dwell in the north. "Fly", he cried, "for our enemies are coming up from the south land, the homeland of Nipon, the summer!" Even as he spoke the sweat dropped from him, his face grew thin, his feet seemed smaller. "I feel them coming, fly to battle!" The mighty winged giants flew to the fight, great snowflakes and heavy hailstones met and melted with the great raindrops. Winds were loud and roaring thunder, storm against storm. The drops of sweat grew bigger on Pun's cheeks; on Nipon's head the hair grew whiter and whiter. Louder and louder the winds were blowing, snow was falling thicker and thicker, but the driving rain and the mild south winds were even warmer, and bigger. The drops on Pun's face grew, his strength had left him, down he fell and, in his falling, his leg was broken. "I must perish if this lasts longer," he cried. "Set Nipon free, she it is who caused this." As the words were spoken the winds were silenced. Snow and rain ceased. Turning her back to the Lahtoqehsonuk and Pun, the winter, weary Nipon set out on her long journey. As old as she was, she fled from the north, her white hair the color of the snows, worn out in her weakness in its chilling frosts. Many moons passed. Still she traveled, the sun grew warmer, days and shadows were ever longer, the air was softer and greener and greener grew the mountains. Freed from ice, rivers were rushing, lakes were shining in the sunlight, flowers were unfolding to the warm breezes. Weary Nipon was weary no longer. Her heart grew lighter, her hair grew darker, and her face was fairer, brighter and younger, becoming all she had been in her early beauty. The butterflies knew her again and fluttered around her, and all the flowers greeted her with perfume in sweet voices as she went past. She was near when the clouds grew thicker, rain drops falling, showers pelting, white water falling and thunder roaring. Still she went on, her path lit by wild lightning until in the midst where the clouds were darkest, she found the wigwam and entered the door. There, as if dying, lay Komiwon, the ancient rain-mother, weaker and older, worn and weary. "You, my daughter," she said to Nipon, "you well might have killed me by disobedience. You have brought suffering on me and all things. But for my battle with Pun, the winter, all life would have perished. Never again while life is in me, can I venture on such a struggle. Be this your warning, or else the Pun, the cruel winter, will conquer all things and ice and snow will cover the world forever and ever."

Sopiel looked around the wigwam and the eyes of the young children stared at the fire. They were amazed at the extent of the battle to free the land of the ancestors from the giant ice glacier and the grasp of Pun. When the glacier was here on the land, it was higher than the highest mountain; it was Nipon that causes winter to retreat but Pun still comes to visit the land it once lived and formed the lake around the village and the hills off in the distance. When we think of the land and water, think about the battle it took so that we may live here. Sopiel told the children that tomorrow night he will tell them about another battle, this battle explains why the ocean leaves our land at Cobscook and returns back twice a day.

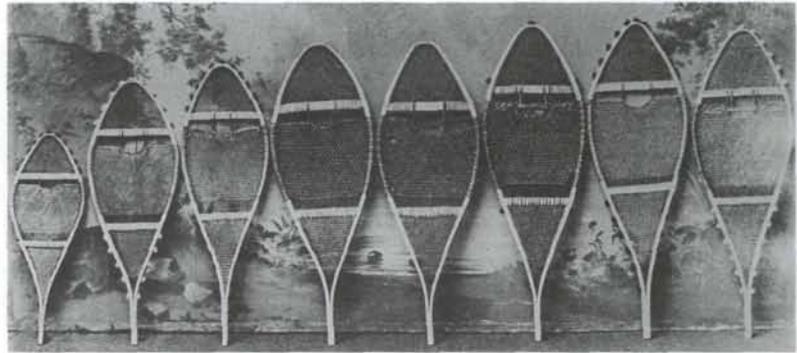
Frostfish – An Important Food

Then next morning there was excitement in the air, people were preparing for the arrival of the frostfish on its annual migration from the ocean to the streams not far from the village. The frostfish is an important source of protein for the people during the winter. The nets made of cedar bark were loaded in the birch bark packs and the men hiked along the frozen river "Kethonosk", now called Dennys River to the village known as "Cobscook". Here the canoes were stored for the voyages on the ocean to the many favorite small streams the frostfish called home. Sopiel and his grandson Mincel launched their birch bark canoe off the beach as the tide was making its daily retreat. They traveled east to "Kci-puna-muhkatik", the water was bubbling with action from the fish along the fringes of the salt water and the frozen fresh water. The nets were quickly unloaded and set in the water, within minutes the nets were bulging with fish. The baskets were full of fish after the long day and as the tide was making its return trip it was time to load the canoe and follow the current back to the Cobscook launching site. They were

met by many of the other fisherman readying for the hike to the village site up the Kethonosk to Meddybemps Lake. Arrival back at the village site was a happy scene, families were glad that all returned safe from the dangerous ocean canoe trip. The baskets of fish were taken near the fire for cleaning now the frozen fish were slowly coming back to life! The cook would ready the fish for a quick meal and package the remainder for leaner times. Everyone had a frostfish meal that night; much of the fish was shared with other relatives and friends. The preparation of the fish varied according to future usage by certain families. During the winter, fish were frozen without cleaning. It was said to be better not to clean them if they were to be kept. The skin of the fish would peel off when it was time to cook it. During the summer, other fish caught were dried, the skin and bones were removed and then the fish was spread on a clean sheet of birch bark and allowed to air dry. Sometimes they were put above the fire in the smoke, which preserve them for a long time. The fish could be mixed with maple sugar and wrapped up with birch bark.

Another method was to bury the fish below the ground near the fire.

Back at the wigwam, Sopiell readied the fire for the night visitors. Slowly the children made their way to their place around the fire. Sopiell told the children about the fishing trip that day and explained how important it was to understand the ocean tides and know how to use them to help on trips. He started to tell the children about Glooscap's adventure with the ocean tides.



Tides Story – The Rise and Fall

"Glooscap had built his lodge on a mountaintop. From his sky home, he could look over the countryside and knew all that was taking place in the world about. He could look over the waters of the bay and watch the wavelets break upon the shore. The four corners of the earth lay at his doorstep and his sharp eyes noted every happening that took place. In Passamaquoddy Bay lived a family of beavers. In the manner of their kind, they were the builders of dams. Long hours they worked, felling trees, cutting branches and constructing their rustic barriers. Glooscap watched them with interest, of all life in the woods these were the most diligent. The beavers built many dams. Then their industrious natures caused them to begin work on the largest dam of all, across the channel that connects with the waters of the bay. Soon the bay and the basin were completely divided and there was no longer an inlet of the sea, but a lake, lying apart and secluded. Glooscap was much displeased. The scene that he had loved to look upon had been completely changed. He could no longer watch the free wide sweep of the waves from his wigwam door. His angry cries did not disturb the beavers one bit and, if they heard, they did not listen. However, Glooscap was determined that the waters would be released. From a nearby cliff he broke an overhanging ledge of rock and threw it on the dam, crushing it beneath the heavy weight. With the forceful impact, the stone broke into two pieces and their jagged points still mark the spots where they fell. With the breaking up of the dam, the beavers fled in panic. All but one, the largest and oldest of them all. He had lived long and survived many dangers so that disaster to him was only another obstacle to be surmounted. Calmly he began to build the dam again. He knew no other work and building was his own peculiar pleasure. Annoyed at his failure to frighten this persistent one away, Glooscap flung some handfuls of earth. However, where the plunging stone had been a thunderbolt from the skies, this was but the patter of rain and the beaver did not even pause from his labors. The handfuls of earth took form and became islands and the dam was slowly being restored. Glooscap was now very angry. This time he broke off the mountaintop on which he had his home. He threw this at the dam, destroying it completely. The swirling waters rushed into the basin and even into the river channels. So agitated were the waters, so great the momentum caused by the falling mountain, that in all these years they have never subsided. Twice a day the great tides surge into the bays and inlets, and no beaver dam, no matter how skilled its builder, can stand against them. The old one left to join his fellows, his work in this place at an end for in this quarrel Glooscap was the victor".

All through the story Sopiell looked at the children's faces and laughed at the different expressions they made. He thought about the legacy of these stories and how they have been told for thousands of years, and how just one generation can lose it all if he didn't get his message across to the children.

The next day Sopiell left again to catch the frostfish. This was a weeklong event so he could not miss a single day. His grandson Mincel stayed behind this time so he could play with his friends on the frozen lake and help his mother prepare the big catch of fish. The lake ice was glistening from the sunlight, the right conditions for his homemade toboggan runner to be sliding across the lake. The other children enjoyed the toboggan race; time seemed to fly by for the children. The older boys and girls played the snow snake game. Throwing the snow snake stick required much skill, the stick varied in length. Personal marks often were put on the sticks. The family animal protector sign or good luck sign was drawn on the stick, which also made it easy to identify. The games were cut short because the skies darkened, and that meant heavy snow was on its way. All returned to the village and awaited the arrival of the fisherman from their trip. Firewood was gathered, food was readied, freshwater was brought to the wigwams, as this might be a big storm. Inside the wigwam the family huddled together, Mincel was hoping his Grandfather would return soon. His Grandmother had been through many storms like this and knew the children would be nervous and worried about their Grandfather. After a quick meal, Grandmother Mali started to tell a story of one of the worst storms they had known and how Glooscap came their rescue.

Glooscap Calms the Storm

Mali started the story; *"Glooscap was out on the ocean one day, and the wind blew so hard he could not manage his canoe. He had to go back to land and he asked his old Grandmother "Mali Moniwkwees" (the Woodchuck), what he could do. She told him to follow a certain road up a mountain. There he found an old man sitting on a rock flapping his wings violently. This was "Wuchowsen" the great Wind-blower. He begged Glooscap to take him up higher where he would have room to flap his wings still harder. Glooscap lifted him up and carried him a long way. When they were over the great lake he let Wuchowsen drop into the water. In falling Wuchowsen broke his wings and lay there helpless.*

Glooscap went back to sea and found the ocean as smooth as glass. He enjoyed himself greatly for many days, paddling about, but finally the water grew stagnant and thick and a great smell arose. The fish died and Glooscap could bear it no longer.

Again he consulted his Grandmother and she told him that he must set Wuchowsen free. So he once more helped Wuchowsen back to his mountain making him promise not to flap his wings so constantly but only now and then, so that the Indians can go out in their canoes. After Wuchowsen agreed to this, Glooscap mended his broken wings; but they were never quite so strong as they once were and now we do not now have such terrible winds as in the olden days".

Mincel was still worried about the men on the ocean, but Grandmother's story helped him to know that Glooscap would watch over them and protect them. He crawled to his little sleeping area and pulled up the thick caribou hide to keep him warm, his brothers and sisters were right behind him. Mali called Mincel and told him to keep the fire going so he moved closer to the fire. He listened as his Grandmother sang an old song about the sacred drum, which was the means of communicating with the Great Spirit.



"I sit down and beat the drum, and by the sound of the drum, I call the animals from the mountains. Even the great storms answer to the sound of my drum.

I sit down and beat the drum, and the storm and thunder answer to the sound of my drum. The great whirlwind ceases its raging to listen to the sound of my drum.

I sit down and beat the drum and the spirit-of-the-night comes and listens to the sound of my drum. Even the great wind-bird will cease moving his wings to answer to the sound of my drum.

I sit down and beat the drum, and the spirit-under-the-water comes to the surface and listens to the sound of my drum, and the wood-spirit will cease chopping and answer to the sound of my drum.

I sit down and beat the drum and the great Abbodumken sea serpent will come out of the deep and answer to the sound of my drum. The lightning, thunder, storms, gales, forest-spirit, whirlwind, water-spirit, and the spirit-of-the-night-air are gathered together and are listening to the sound of my drum."

The rhythm of the song and the beat of the drum gave Mincel a warm feeling inside and he knew all was safe. He added another log to the fire and looked deep into the flames, thinking about warmer times in the spring. The storm disappeared before the rising of the sun and Mincel saw his Grandmother take some of her medicinal plants and sprinkle them into the fire and say her prayers in the four directions. As she opened the entryway, some of the snow from last night's storm came into the wigwam. Mincel rushed to help his Grandmother. With a large piece of birch bark he moved the snow outside, then he started to make a trail in different directions for the work ahead. He thought the area looked like the caribou wintering area not far to the north. His Grandfather had told him the caribou was known as the shoveler because of the way it moved the snow around. No one from the other wigwams was up yet, so Mincel put on his snowshoes and backpack and then hiked deep in the forest to set traps for the rabbits. He found plenty of rabbit tracks under the small trees. Returning back to the village he saw how empty Meddybemps Lake looked with all the snow on top of it. He could hear his Grandfather's voice saying, "Is anyone home, I have a story to tell you." His pack was full of frostfish and so were the packs of the other men.

Mincel wanted to hear about Grandfather's trip during the storm, but all the children first had to gather firewood and prepare for the meal. Now that Mincel had traps set, he was responsible to look after the traps. Leaving an animal in the trap was a way to disrespect its gift of itself to the Passamaquoddy people. The spirits would look down upon a person who did that and bad luck would follow. So Mincel walked fast in his snowshoes to check the traps. But he came back to the village empty handed.

The Bear and the Fox

Grandfather Sopiell waited until Mincel arrived before he started to tell his story: "This is what happened while we were fishing before the storm hit. We made a hole in the ice where the fresh water would flow into the salt water. I caught a lot of frostfish there and went back to the Cobscook village to get more baskets to load the fish in. There was a bunch of fish just waiting on the ice to be picked up. When I came back, the fish were gone, but I did see the tracks of a Fox and a Bear. Fox met the Bear, and Bear said he didn't know what to do to catch the fish. Fox told Bear, I'll show you how to catch the fish. Over there is a hole. Sit down on that hole, and just sit there, soon you'll feel the frostfish bite your tail. When you think you have a good bunch on your tail pull it up. Bear stayed half a day; his tail was frozen in the ice. He tried to pull it out; but couldn't pull it out. This tells where and when Bear got his short tail. I would have caught more fish but that fox had a big snack and played a trick on brother bear. Everyone laughed at his story." Tomorrow I am traveling to the caribou area and will hunt. Mincel, after you check your traps in the morning be ready for the trip up north with me and the other men."

Before the rising sun, Mincel and his friend put on their snowshoes and traveled to the spots he had set the traps. He told his friend to check the traps in the mornings and after supper time. The snow was still a little too high from the wind drifts for the rabbits to move around. He came home again empty handed but he was ready for the big trip with the men. Grandfather had everything packed in the toboggan and everyone said their goodbyes and prayed for success and a safe hunt.

Mincel's First Caribou Hunt

Within the Passamaquoddy hunting territory is an area where the caribou are numerous, this area was not too far from Meddybemps Lake. This was known as the caribou barrens. The largest area was located between New River and at the head of Lake Utopia, but the closest was located a few days away. These barrens are 16 miles length and marked with well defined trails over which the animals were constantly passing and repassing, here and there spending a day where the lichens afforded good living, then moving away again on their never-ending wanderings. The Woodland caribou is very swift and cunning in devices to escape his pursuers. His run is a long trot, which he performs with his head erect. Sopieli and some of the other hunters were adept at calling the caribou. Sebatis was a great caribou hunter and excelled in the caribou call. The Tribal hunters say that caribou love to feed on seaweed and go to the coast in the spring and the fall of the year for that purpose.

On the first day Sopieli and Sebatis were leading the hunting group across the frozen Meddybemps Lake to the trail that led to the caribou wintering area. Arriving there on the second day and setting up camp, they traveled all day in pursuit of a herd of caribou. After losing much time laying in ambush behind a big boulder, the hunting party was suddenly overtaken by nightfall, which, in the short winter days happens without warning. "How far to camp?" Asked Mincel. Sopieli replied: "Well, I suppose in daylight, about five miles, but it's so dark now that it would take too long to get there. Had daylight given us the opportunity of selecting a camping site, we could not have found a spot better suited to our purpose than the grove of grand old firs and hemlocks that protects us in on every side and shelters us with broad, spreading branches. In front we have a forest lake, on the outskirts of our stronghold a plentiful supply of hardwood stood ready for the ax." Sebatis was just releasing his axe from its cover of leather. The darkness and silence of these old woods were appalling, and as they stood leaning on the old tree against which they had put their bows, gladly they welcomed the dry wood carried by Sebatis, which was mostly from the birches and maples. Sopieli left to search for dry bark to start the fire. "Now it is best to cook supper first," said Sebatis, "then make a fir bough bed or we'll be hungry. We'll have to boil the water in birch bark, make a kind of box, you see."

The frost of winter had sealed the forest lakes and the night was usually mild, so much indeed that Sebatis predicted a sudden change. During quiet moments in the talk, Mincel heard the notes of a bird but did not mention it; the sound might have been caused by steam escaping from one of the huge logs piled on the fire. "Just as I told you," remarked Sebatis, as he arose to get a light for his pipe, "big snowstorm coming. I heard the Wabepe singing just now and that is always a sign of a storm coming. Wabepe is a little bird that has all kinds of small little spots all over. It always sings best when there's moonlight and then it sings once every hour all night. If it sings in the dark of night then it's a sign of a storm coming. It doesn't belong here at all as it's only in summertime that we see it."

During the night several inches of light snow had fallen and the storm still continued. Heading back on big barren they didn't find any fresh tracks, so they went right back to camp before the snow became too deep. The storm was increasing every moment with the light snow drifting rapidly before the rising wind. Walking in file, they approached the confines of the big barren. The drift was so heavy on the barren that it was hard work to make headway against it. They had just turned to regain their wind when Sopieli said, "Megahlip! Chin-e-ga-bo! (Caribou - be careful). The words were hardly spoken when down wind came a herd of caribou trotting at a terrific pace, with their heads up and sending the snow in clouds on every side. Mincel tried to get a shot with the bow, but was not quick enough. He got a glimpse of a head or horns, then the full figure of a fast trotting caribou and last, a buck wildly plunging in the air, a victim to the arrows. "Come Sebatis, be quick help butcher the caribou. No time to lose getting to camp. Pretty hard chance to get there as the storm is so heavy, you see" said Sopieli as he skinned off the caribou's hide. In a few moments, the venison intended for the camp was cut, apportioned into loads and the rest of the animal securely protected. Then they hastened to get off the barren and into the shelter of the woods where they could draw a free breath unoppressed by the terrible drift. As the storm promised to be very heavy they lost no time in gaining the protection of the camp.

"Now then," said Sopieli as he dropped his load on arriving at camp, "all hands get firewood ready, big snowstorms, pretty lucky we got that caribou." Sebatis stood six feet and two inches in his moccasin, and was possessed of infinite patience and good humor. Grandfather Sopieli was very short in

stature. He was a comical man who kept everyone laughing. His friendship for Sebatis was of long standing and they got on very well together, except when a dispute arose about the shooting of a moose or caribou. Soon their united efforts as ax men, with Mincel's aid in carrying, accumulated such a goodly pile of hardwood, as enabled them to laugh at the howling storm. "No chance to hunt caribou tomorrow, always bad snowshoeing when the snow is so light," said Sebatis as he shook off the snow from his clothes and prepared to cook their dinner of fat caribou steaks. "Sebatis, where are our little friends the birds?" said Mincel. "Well, you see, they hide somewhere when storm so heavy. When the sunshine is around us then you'll see them again."

Early next morning Grandfather Sopiell was absent, he had left before daylight. At noon Sopiell marched into camp bringing with him the head and skin of the caribou slain the previous day. In the afternoon the sun shone out bright and warm and their little friends, the birds shyly renewed their acquaintances. It is quite common to see cross bills, pine finches, chickadees and red polls all picking up crumbs together at one's feet and often, after a few days' acquaintance, they become so familiar that they will accept food from the hand. In fact nothing seems to come amiss to the little beauties and they evidently enjoy the change from the dry cones and buds, which forms the staple of their winter diet. At night as the men sat over the campfire smoking their pipes, all heard a horrid screech in the forest. "Upwepesekin (lynx) chasing rabbits," said Sopiell between the whiffs of his pipe. "You see", said Sebatis, "when upwepesekin makes a noise like that it scares the rabbit so bad he jumps right out sight in deep snow. Then you'll see upwepesekin dig him out and have a pretty good supper."

Just as they were turning out next morning Sebatis walked into camp and said: "Caribou will be very hungry this morning. I found plenty of places where they're eaten off the old moss that hangs from the trees and bushes and is a favorite food of the caribou." "What kind of snowshoeing today, Sebatis?" "Just right," said Sebatis, the sun packed down the snow a good deal and it is a very good chance for snowshoeing now." Sopiell had breakfast ready, and in a few moments moccasins and snowshoes were the orders of the day. It will be best go to the little barren first, and then they don't find caribou there, they can try the big barren. Little barrens is the nearest, only about two miles, and very good ground for caribou. Just enough snow had fallen to make good snowshoeing, in fact, they could have got on without snowshoes but for the drifts and swampy parts of the barren, over which the broad snowshoes held them safely. Fortunately for their comfort, the high wind that had prevailed prevented the snow lodging in the spreading boughs of the coniferous trees and they escaped the smothering often experienced from avalanches of snow immediately after a snowstorm.

On their way to the barren they saw several fresh tracks of caribou but had not discovered their beds. After inspecting indications of that kind, Sebatis could form a correct opinion of the time elapsed since the beds were occupied and was guided in his decision as to whether it was wise to follow the tracks. Silently, they tramped along in single file. They had nearly reached the barren without finding any fresh tracks and were getting a little impatient and sorry that they had not gone to the big barren, as it was in that direction Sebatis had seen the places where the caribou had eaten the moss. "The little barren is handy now," said Sebatis. "Where is my Grandfather?" Mincel inquired. Sopiell had vanished like a spirit. Long and earnestly Sebatis scanned the barren with his searching gaze then ventured out a few paces, stopped suddenly, and beckoned Mincel to him. "Just don't make noise," he whispered. "Caribou are somewhere on this barren. You can see the tracks alongside big rock, then, a little ways ahead you can see tracks going everywhere. Must be nine, maybe ten, caribou going that way. Are they fresh tracks? We'll look soon and find out which way the wind is first. We're at the wrong end of the barrens. The wind blows straight down the barrens; suppose we tried to hunt the caribou, they would smell us. Its best to hide somewhere on the barren. There's a clump of firs nearly in the middle of the barren, I should think that's a good place. We'll go try it. You see, caribou are moving all the time and maybe soon, they'll be coming back on their tracks, then we'll have a very good chance." The barren was over three miles long and one mile wide, sprinkled with groups of fir trees, alders, boulders and old dead tree trunks. Just then we heard the crash of an animal. "That's old Sopiell, for certain, so cunning you see, just like a fox; he found out the wind was the wrong way so he went around in the woods and come out other the end of the barren." They now moved out of the shelter a little for a better view of the barren. Young Mincel was looking intently, and saw the form of a caribou disappearing behind a bunch of alders. Sebatis whispered, "You see the caribou just going behind bushes up there? Don't make any noise."

Looking out on the barren Mincel saw five caribou trotting at full speed and not over forty yards away. They raised such clouds of snow that he could only see their heads and, occasionally, their shoulders. There was only a chance for Mincel to shoot his bow arrow at the second caribou in the herd, only wounded him. He tried to keep up with the herd, but they soon distanced. "I killed one caribou," said Sopiél, "and five came this way. The rest ran away, maybe on the big barren. They collected the caribou killed by Sebatis, then tramped to the head of the barren for the one killed by Sopiél, a two year old buck, then to camp as it was too late in the day to try the big barren. "Now," said Sebatis after dinner and the invariable pipes, "Sopiél and Mincel will go hunt for wood and bark to make a toboggan and then we'll haul the caribou to camp." During the night there was a fall of snow, which made the snowshoeing heavy. However, they were determined to try the big barren; and a weary day they had of it, tramping over the soft snow, which accumulated on the front of the snowshoes and required quite an effort to throw it off. All traces of the old tracks were obliterated and they did not see a fresh track that day, although they searched the greater part of the barren, being careful to disturb the snow as little as possible, as a snowshoe trail is almost certain to frighten off a herd of caribou. Like graven images they sat puffing away at their pipes but for an opportune crash, as of breaking branches followed by a resounding fall that came from the forest, that had the effect of waking them up and loosening their tongues. "Sundown comes pretty quick now; best go to camp," said Sebatis. And to camp they went in double quick time, arriving just as darkness was closing in.

There were several changes of weather during the night; first a drizzling rain, then a sharp frost, followed by more snow. "Better luck today," said Sopiél. "I dreamed last night about seeing plenty of caribou." "Sopiél is very good at dreaming, I'd like to see him find caribou first and then I'll believe him," said Sebatis. The snow was almost over and they went to the big barren again. The snow was greatly in their favor as just enough had fallen to allow them to walk noiselessly on the crust. The hunter often experiences a very strange sensation as he walks unconcernedly on his way after the formation of a crust. At first he hears a peculiar creaking sound and fancies that the snow is moving under him. Then the creaking becomes louder and is accompanied by a muffled, rumbling noise, and suddenly the snow under and around him sinks and he fears that he is about to fall into a deep hole. The snow, in reality, seldom settles over one foot or eighteen inches and no matter how familiar one may be with it, every fresh experience causes the same apprehension. Sebatis attracted their attention and he beckoned them to where he and Sopiél were examining something. "Eight caribou slept here last night," he said, pointing to a number of depressions in the snow. They started only a little while ago, if you see tracks so fresh. It's always good time to hunt when they've first started because they bite the moss and are feeding, and then they don't go fast at all. Best take off the snowshoes and walk in the caribou tracks," said Sopiél. "Caribou stopped to feed here," said Sebatis, pointing to some newly cropped moss. "The caribou went two ways," said Sopiél, who was a little in advance. The herd had separated, three caribou going towards the big barren and five off in another direction. As it promised a better chance for game they imitated the tactics of the caribou and the party divided. Sebatis took Mincel on the track of the five and Sopiél went off after the others. Plodding along in the foot holes of the caribou was very leg tiring, but Sebatis kept on at a trot until he received some very fresh sign. "Caribou ate the moss here only about three minutes ago and must be handy somewhere. Best put on the snowshoes again, may be we'll have to run pretty quick." After putting on his snowshoes, Sebatis struck out in a direction nearly parallel to the caribou trail and they set off at a very much quicker pace. They were descending a slight decline when Sebatis waved his hand to Mincel, exclaiming at the same time; "Seh-ta-ga-bo," (keep back). At the word Mincel dropped in his tracks. Twice Sebatis raised his bow as if to shoot, then lowered it and called to Mincel. All five caribou were walking in the woods just little ways ahead. They had just entered a glade of fir trees, and between the trees trunks Mincel caught a glimpse of what he supposed to be a lake, but did not discover any caribou. All hurried to the spot and found a caribou, a large buck, lying dead in his tracks. A little further on, Sebatis found a bloody trail leading down to the lake and about 100 yards from the shore they saw the other caribou, a fine doe, vainly struggling to regain her feet on their approach. Sebatis said, "I'll go and get the toboggan and bring some dinner." True to his promise, Sebatis returned inside a couple of hours. The angry gusts of wind pushing through the lofty branches of the fir trees and driving the fast falling snow into clouds of shadowy powder warned them to hasten their packing. "Ready now, no time to spare. Now storm is so heavy it will be hard to find the camp," said Sebatis. He had fastened one end of the serviceable rope to the toboggan, passed part of it

over his shoulders and gave the other end to Mincel, and away they tramped. These sudden winter storms possess the magic power of investing the hunter with an indefinable terror. In a very short time all landmarks are obliterated and the air is filled with a blinding powder. The bewildering drifting powder is everywhere, and he is blinded and buffeted by it in such a manner as to call for the instant exertion of all his courage to carry him safely through. "So tired and never seen a storm so heavy," said Sebatis, as they rested before the campfire after their fearful four-mile tramp from the lake. The click of approaching snowshoes announced the return of Sopiél. Next day they traveled down the trail with the toboggans, then across Meddybemps Lake to the village. Mincel would have some stories to tell his friends. Sopiél knew that this was the manhood trip for Mincel and he was proud that the trip was a success in more ways than one.

The women and children ran out to meet the hunting group as they neared the village. Once at the village, the women took the meat and started to prepare a big feast for the celebration of a successful hunt and of Mincel's first hunting trip. Some meat was boiled with various roots for flavoring as another fire was roasting the caribou meat. The rest of the caribou meat was hung on a tree near the fire and later was put in a safe place and left to freeze. Finally the words were shouted out, "Get your plates come and eat." Everyone had food that night; there would be plenty of food for the winter if their luck continued. The drums were played and songs were sung. Sopiél did a dance that had everyone laughing, it was a dance that showed how the caribou ran.

The caribou was a main food source of the Passamaquoddy people; it also had many other uses, such as for clothing and items for warmth. The women spent many hours preparing the hides, scraping and stretching and then using a tanning process to soften the leather. Many times the caribou antlers were used as tool once they were shaped into a useful form.

Trapline Mikumwesuk

After a long rest of a few days, Mincel returned to his trapline but still he didn't have any luck, so he asked his Grandfather to show him what he was doing wrong. After they walked for a while Sopiél sat down and started to smoke from his pipe. He talked about Mikumwesuk, which was a type of little people known to the Passamaquoddy people. They were here to help the Indians. Some said they could not be seen unless they wanted to be seen and looked like little old men. They were red. "There were lots of Mikumwesuk here, when my mother was younger," said Sopiél. One day my Grandfather Athean decided to go up to his trapline. The day before, a neighbor boy who had a trap line in the same area, went up to check his traps." Sopiél said; "My Grandfather was pulling his toboggan along the trail to his trapline when he suddenly met a Mikumwesuk. The Mikumwesuk could speak good Passamaquoddy language and he told my Grandfather to look for the boy because he drowned. My Grandfather thought that he must be near the place where the boy had gone though the ice. He looked carefully along the river and soon spotted a hole in the ice where there was six or eight feet of water. Near the hole he found a mitten that belonged to the boy. My Grandfather hurried back to the village to tell the people what had happened to the boy and to get some men to search for the body."

"I knew a boy who saw one when we lived over where the Canoose River is. One day he looked out of the entrance of the wigwam and saw a little old man with a cane walk across the trail and into the woods. He was painted red. The boy asked my mother who he was and she told him that it was a Mikumwesuk. There are a lot of them at the old village on Big Lake, too."

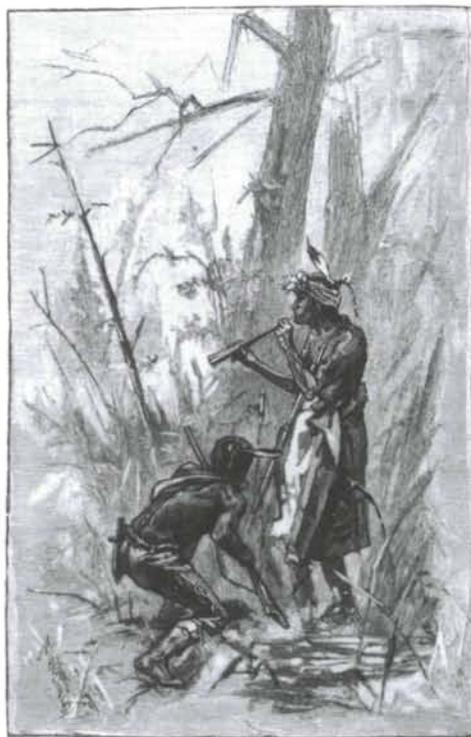
"There are also some little people called Wunagmeswook. These live around rock, usually granite ledges, and write on the rock. There use to be a lot of them living at the Narrows at Lewey Lake. Since the Tribe settled there, the Wunagmeswook have moved away. There are still a lot at Machias Bay where there are a lot of granite ledges. The people go down to Machias Bay to get sweet grass and they see their work there. One day there won't be anything on the rock and the next it will be marked."



Sopiel was ready to check the trapline now, and Mincel spent extra time looking around now, maybe a Mikumwesuk was watching. As he looked around he noticed the birds in the trees, the tracks in the snow, and many other things he did not notice before. The first trap was covered with snow, so Grandfather tied the leather noose on another small tree and raised the level of the trap. Trying to catch a rabbit in the snow was interesting, you can follow its tracks and see where it feeds, sleeps and plays.

Top of the Mountain

Off in the distance Mincel saw smoke coming from the top of a mountain, he asked Sopiel what it was, or who could live there. Sopiel told Mincel: "That is the home of Al-wus-ki-ni-gess, a tree-cutter, whose hatchet is made of stone. He throws it from him; it cuts the tree and returns to its owner's hand at each blow. One stroke of his hatchet will fell the largest tree. No one ever saw him except Glooscap, who often goes to the cave to visit him. He is a harmless creature and only fights when ordered to do so by Glooscap. He lives in that mountain, on deer, moose, or any meat he can kill. Sometimes he goes out to sea with Glooscap, to catch the Great Whale. Al-wus-ki-ni-gess and Kiawahq' once had a big fight, which lasted for two days. Kiawahq' put forth all his power to conquer but failed. He uprooted huge trees, expecting them to fall and crush his rival in strength; but Al-wus-ki-ni-gess would hurl his hatchet and split the tree predictably. Kiawahq' strove to drag him into the sea but the wood spirit is as strong in the water as on land, to say nothing of the fact that when he is in the water, K'chiquinocktsh the Turtle, comes to his aid. Once Kiawahq' got his foe between two great trees and felt sure he could slay him as they fell. Al-wus-ki-ni-gess seized his axe and struck the trees, which fell. The wind caused by their fall was so mighty that it left Kiawahq' faint and exhausted. He was forced to beg for peace and promised his enemy that, if he would spare his life, he would give him a stone wigwam and be his good friend forever. So the wood spirit had mercy and accepted his offer. That is how he got that cave where he still lives." This was the answer of Sopiel to his grandson Mincel's question. After that story they headed home following the ridgeline until they reached another ridge that headed east. This was an area Mincel had not been to before, and he was interested in seeing the whole country, so Sopiel took him to the top of the mountain. "Let us go up that shining mountain and sit together on that shining mountain; there we will watch the beautiful sun go down from the shining mountain. There we will sit till the beautiful night traveler arises above the shining mountain; we will watch him, as he climbs to the beautiful skies. We will also watch the little stars follow their chief. We will also watch the northern lights playing their game of ball in the cold, shiny country. There we will sit on the beautiful mountain and listen to the thunder beating his drum. We will see the lightning when she lights her pipe. We will see the great whirlwind running a race with the storm. There we will sit until every living creature feels like sleeping. There we will hear the great owl sing his usual song, teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique', and see all the animals obey his song. There we will sit on that beautiful mountain and watch the little stars in their sleepless flight. They do not mind the song, teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique- neither will we mind it, but sit more closely together and think of nothing but ourselves, on the beautiful mountain. Again, the teeg-lee-goo-wul-tique will be heard, and the night traveler will come closer to warm us as that all are dreaming, except us and the little stars. They and their chief are coursing along and our minds go with them. Then the owl sleeps; no more is heard teeg-lee-goo-tique; the lightning ceases smoking; the thunder ceases beating his drum and, though we feel inclined to sleep, yet will we sit on the beautiful, shining mountain."



Plants in the Wigwam

It was a dream of Mincel to learn the magical power that his Grandfather Sopiell had and to help the community with it so he too can be looked up to in the village. Sopiell was a famous medouline and traveled to visit other medoulines across the region. His powers were well known. Another thing that Sopiell was noted for was his knowledge in the use of plants. He had many different plants hanging in a corner of the wigwam. Besides smelling good, the plants were used to honor the spirits and cure the sick. Most of his plants came from the area around Meddybemps Lake and down the Dennys River; but special trips were taken far away to gather some of the rare plants. Mincel went on many trips with his Grandfather to collect plants around the lake and as they moved to new village sites. He decided to go to sleep and ask about the plants in the morning. His bedding consisted of fir boughs, carefully laid on the ground so as to form a thick, soft carpet, upon which were spread the skins of animals. The matting was made of rushes during the summer and some were stored for use in the winter, but the matting we used was made of cedar bark. The smell of tobacco was in the air; this was a mixture of bark and a wild tobacco plant. The smoking pipe looked like a graceful cup shaped bowl surmounting a kind of ridge, all carved



from one piece of stone and used with a short wooden stem. The men were playing a game with circular dice made of antler tossed in a shallow wooden dish. There was much laughter during the game.

The next day Mincel looked at the plants in the wigwam and tried to remember where his Grandfather collected them and how they were turned into medicine. Many of the plants were collected along the Dennys River and around Meddybemps Lake, but most of them were collected at the swamp on the west side of the lake. He asked his Grandmother Mali about the plants, since she was the one who prepared them for different uses. She said that only certain people are endowed by nature with the qualities that enable them to diagnose and treat disease with plants. There is a tradition that in early days it was necessary for the medicine person to undergo some trying ordeal to prove fitness in the use of plants and spirituality together. In her younger days she went on many trips with her mother to the land of the medouline where the sweat wigwam was set up and much fasting was done. She learned to prepare the medicinal plants by watching her mother. One way to prepare the plants for use was to boil them in dishes of birch bark placed on hot ashes or stones heated by fire beneath or heated stones were dropped into the liquid. In the case of mixing, the plants were steeped singly or in combination. Such quantity to a given volume of water as the judgment of the medicinal person deemed necessary. Grandmother Mali reached up on the line and pulled down a long brown stalk with a large bulb at the end. She said, "This is flag root medicine," pointing to the bulb root end of the plant then removed the stalk from the root. Mincel remembered getting that plant at the swamp in the fall season not too far from the village. Mali started to grind the root into a fine powder and put it in a pouch, and then she broke the remainder of the root into even-sized pieces. This is good for colds, sore throats, sore gums and many other things, but her favorite was to boil it as a tea. The whole village always had that type of tea in each wigwam but some people just chewed the root medicine all day.

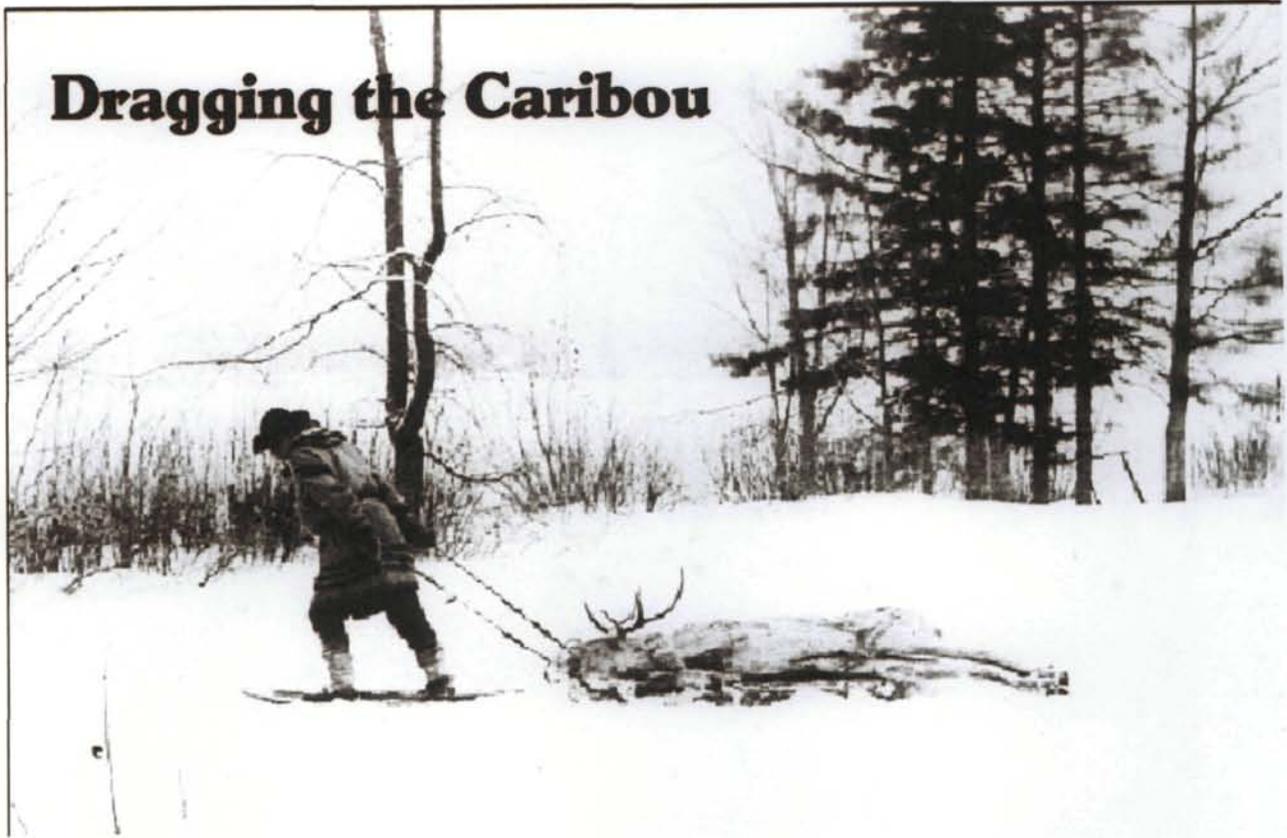
A VISIT TO OUR ANCESTORS PLACE

MEDDYBEMPS
N'TOLONAPEMK VILLAGE



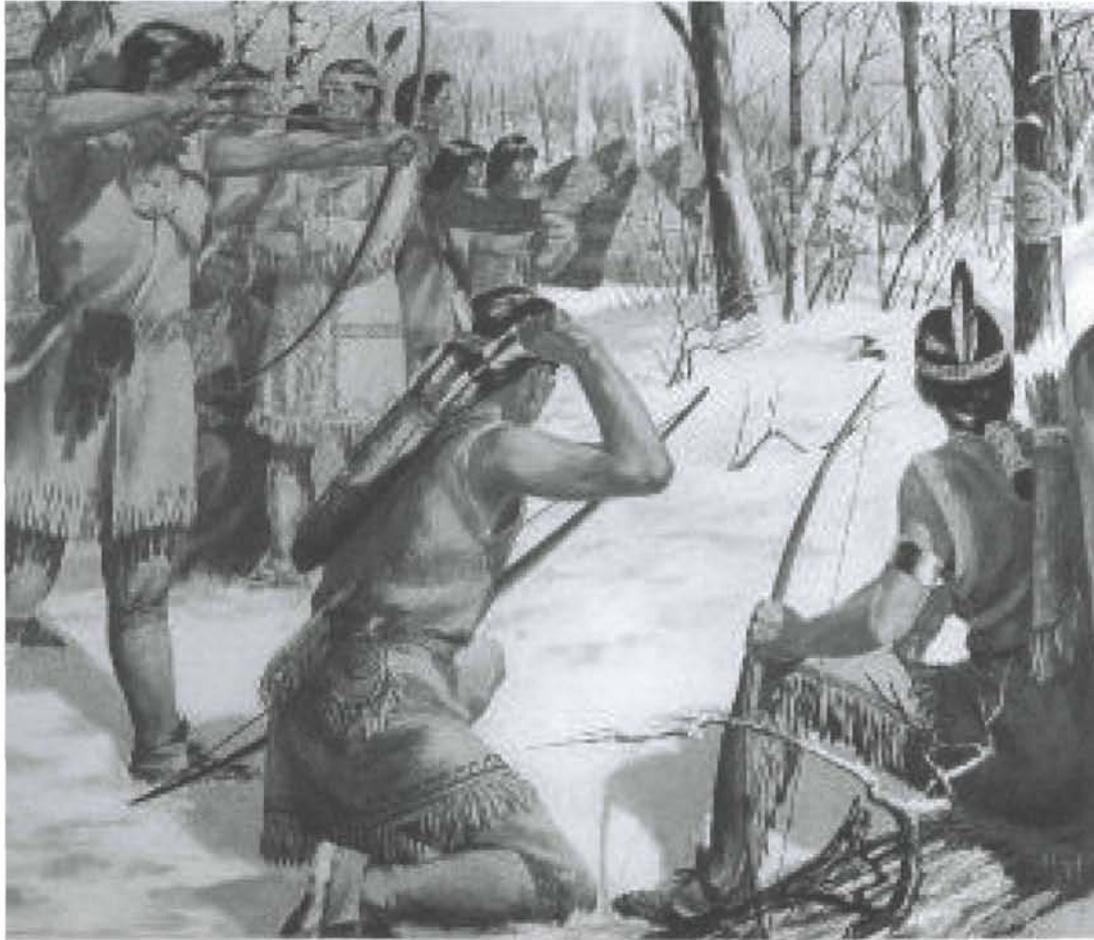
PASSAMAQUODDY TRIBAL
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE 2005

Dragging the Caribou



Successful Hunt



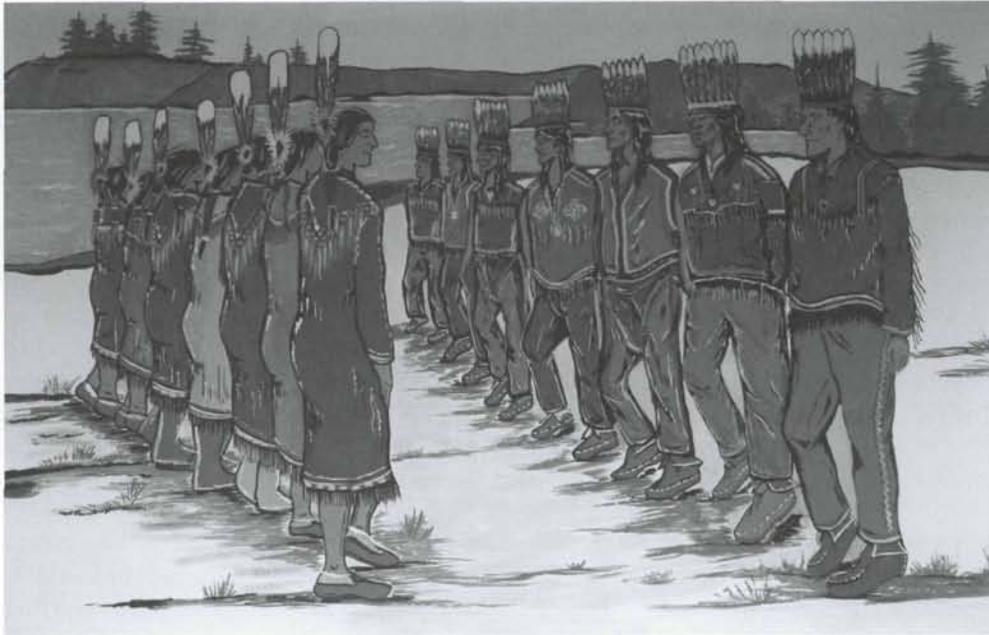


Other plants were in different leather pouches, one she called "wisawkeskil" was yellowish roots, which she picked at damp wet areas near the outer rim of the bog but also finds it along the Dennys River easily. Grandmother Mali told Mincel that this medicinal plant gets more powerful the longer you dry it, she once gave it to Grandfather Sopiell when his throat was sore and he has never had any problems with it again. She talked about the different uses of tree bark and its pitch but only keeps small amounts in the wigwam because it's so easy to get. We went outside and she pointed to the trees, "there is hemlock, cedar, poplar, fir, spruce, pine, ash, black cherry, alder and elm. I can use them all for the medicine I need. Most of the plants I pick come from the swamps and ponds, because they are the most potent and there are so many to choose from. Another place is at the outlet of Dennys River, in the estuary area near our Cobscook village." Mali made much medicine for the other families. Especially during the wintertime she could mix different plants together to strengthen the medicine. Even during the winter some of the smaller plant medicines was available in the forest if you know where to look; the cranberry in the swamp and the wintergreen in the spruce area both have red berries. She showed the plants that many of the older people like to use when the seasons change and their muscles start to hurt; it was dried seaweed she collected at Cobscook before the snow had fallen.

Winter was a hard time. The snow got higher, the temperature got colder and many people stayed in the wigwam during these times. The winter village might be at different locations; this was the first time that Grandmother had stayed at the Meddybemps village during winter. She would often tell Mincel to listen to the lake at night time, "when its ice cracking voice becomes louder we will know that Nipon is coming soon and her green garment of leaves will follow."

Chapter 2 - Springtime in the Village during 1800

In the springtime of 1800, along Meddybemps Lake lived Johnot Denny. He was the oldest member of his family and still the best hunter in the area. He canoed the river between Cobscook Bay and Meddybemps Lake so much that people called it Dennys River, but the real Passamaquoddy name is "Kethonosk," which means a place to gather animal scent for hunting and trapping. This was his family hunting and trapping area. Each family had its own territory so that outsiders wouldn't come and trap the animals out, as the white settlers started to move into the area. Johnot remembers his father also trapping this area and teaching him the ways of the land. He served in the Revolutionary War with Chief Francis Joseph Neptune and spent much time in Machias at the Headquarters of the Colonial forces. Meddybemps Lake was an important location; it served as an important water route.



Johnot Denny and his Travels.

Once Dennys River and its streams were released from the grip of winter's ice, it was the time to plan traveling. In the travels of Johnot, he was exceptionally fortunate because of the intersecting of the rivers made navigation by light canoe fast and easy. There is no other place in the world so completely watered by navigable streams in such a pitch of perfection. The principal streams of the area run in pairs and routes may be found in almost any desired location. A skilled canoe man, with a light pole of nine feet in length, can force such a craft up the swiftest river, surmounting rapids and even low falls guiding it with the greatest nicety among rocks and with exactness into the deepest places. If the water is too shallow in places for even it to float, its bottom is covered with a type of canoe shoe or splints of cedar and thus it may be dragged unharmed over wet stones. Finally, when the head of the river is reached, Johnot would turn the canoe upside down over his head, allowing the middle bar on which it exactly balances, to rest across his shoulders and then trot off over the portage path. The rate at which Johnot can travel upon the rivers depended upon the character of the river channel, its amount of descent, whether smooth or broken by falls, upon the height of the water and, especially, upon whether traveling with the current or against it.

Johnot told the men around the fire about the different canoe routes that he has taken. At the St. Croix River to Cobscook Bay route there was a portage to Meddybemps Lake from Wapskehegan

Stream, which comes off the St. Croix River near the second falls, then canoe down the Dennys River to Cobscook Bay. This was a good route especially during the time of war when the British had their warships in Passamaquoddy Bay, which served as a shortcut for quick access to the western part of the homeland. There was another portage from Meddybemps Lake to Round Pond then to the Pennamaquan River. This route provided access to other village sites and to the maple sap area. These were clearly shown on the map of 1798 made by the Chief of the Passamaquoddy Francis Joseph Neptune. Many of the old people talked about the day that the water ran north on Meddybemps Lake to the St. Croix River; people adjusted to the changes in these routes.

Another route that Johnot commonly used is the St. Croix River to Machias river route. There was a portage at the head of the Machias River, said Johnot. It ran from the West Branch of the St. Croix River to Pocomoonshine Lake, which is at the head of the Machias River. In his long travels from the upper part of the St. Croix watershed, he could travel to the Penobscot route. He traveled by the route from East Grand Lake to Baskhegan Stream. It left East Grand Lake at Davenport's Cove and ran southwest over a considerable hill, two and half miles to the landing on the Baskhegan, a mile below the village. The Baskhegan is easy navigation in summer for a canoe. In the long distance trip from Passamaquoddy to Quebec, this portage is part of the old Indian route from Quebec, passing up the Chaudiere and down the Penobscot and down this river to Passamaquoddy. Johnot said that in his fathers day he used this route to visit the French headquarters in Quebec and the tribal delegates used it to attend the Great Fire Council with 14 other tribes to recite the Wampum Laws.

On the trip in the northern part of the lands at Eel River to Chiputneticook Lake route, this was one of the most used and most important of all the ancient canoe routes in this part of the country, for it not only formed the chief route from the St. John River to the St. Croix River, but was also the greater part of the route to the Penobscot River. The portage between Eel River and North Lake is called "Mehtakomek." Johnot Denny used this portage site many times to visit his mother-in-law and father-in-law. His wife originally came from the Tobique River area, which flowed, into the St. John River; this was the land of the Maliseet People. Together with the Passamaquoddy and Maliseet, they formed a group known as "Skicin," People of the Earth. Traditions, language and legends were all one within this group. Johnot and his wife were treated as family wherever they traveled within this region, but during the 1770s to the early 1800s the area was dangerous because of the war between the Americans and the British.

One of his favorite routes was along the Seacoast, as long as the seas were calm. By this natural and easy route Johnot and many other Passamaquoddy people traveled in the summer in their birch bark canoes. Though the coast is bold, harbors are very frequent and the danger from storms slight. At Point Lepreau the eddies are dangerous and, to avoid them, there was used a path from Indian Cove just to the west of the point. There is still a camping ground across to the beach half way between Duck Cove and the Point. There are also paths on the head of the Lepreau Basin over to the head of Dipper Harbor, a distance of less than two miles.

The life of the Passamaquoddy people, dependent upon fish and game, imposed upon them a traveling existence with villages at favorite spots. They took what game the season afforded and went where it was found. The Tribe moved to the places of abundance of fish and shellfish in spring and summer and to the areas of the big game animals in their season in autumn and winter. This constant movement allowed permanent villages, though it necessitated numerous camping grounds to serve for variable short periods of time. When the temporary camping places are looked at they still exist and are in all different degrees of importance, from those that are occupied for long periods by many families, down to the tiny sites used for a night by the hunter. Of the several influences determining the situation of camping sites, the first in importance would be nearness to a river, for the birch canoe was the Tribe's sole vehicle of movement. The next would be the abundance of game, particularly of game occupying a fixed position, as shellfish do. So the most abundant camp sites were along Passamaquoddy Bay, near the great clam beds where they are marked by great shell heaps, such as Oak Bay, Minister's Island, Bocabec, Frye Island and others of lesser extent, too many to mention. Another consideration for the location of villages and camping areas was defense; a good look out place in the vicinity commanding a view of the waterway was an advantage. When many of the favorable conditions for a camp site came together; a good country, good eel grounds, the end of a portage, an interval flat capable of easy cultivation, a good spring for water, this would result in a large village. Of the camping areas that Johnot used

during his long journeys across the land of the Passamaquoddy he spoke about the area below Forest City and between Grand and Chiputneticook Lakes, below Tupper's Cove, is a point known as the ancient Passamaquoddy camping grounds. This passage between the lakes was a great fishing place, and a secure area where Johnot caught a lot of fish. When he was in that area he often stopped at Indian Island at the lower end of Chiputneticook Lake. He visited this island with his family to gather the cranberries, which grew in great numbers; this was also a camping area. A little further down the lake was the St. Croix village, known as "Kilmaquac," an old Tribal village site, which is an ideal one for a camping place and the catching of eels, and there are falls just above. It is also marked as Indian Town on Titcomb's Plan of the Schoodic, 1792. On the west side of the exit from the lake on the land map plan, LaCoote, an Indian settled, and on the opposite side, east, was a clearing made by Indian Newell. The 1785 map of the Schoodic shows Indian wigwams about halfway between Indian Township and the main river on the north side, and the Titcomb's plan of 1792 shows them on the south side. Not far from Meddybemps Lake was Canoose village, located at the mouth of the Canoose River and the St. Croix River, a good fishing and camping area. This was set-aside for the Passamaquoddy Tribe by the Canadian local government and later set aside by the Canadian Province by Order of Council. Along the ocean waters at Oak Bay, on the east side, was a favorite summer camping ground for Johnot. When Johnot traveled down the Dennys River to the Cobscook Bay he had easy access to all the ocean sites. The largest village during the summer that Johnot visited was at St. Andrews, from its location, one of the most admirable of all camping sites. This is an important burying place. Johnot camped one summer at Ministers Island that faces St. Andrews, and spent time hunting and fishing there while his children picked clams. On Cobscook Bay sits an ancient Tribal village site, now the main village of Pleasant Point and there were many others spots that Johnot said he could talk about.

The Great Spring Village

But one of Johnot's favorite spots was at the Meddybemps village site of N'tolonapemk; here was an ancient camping place. He liked to tell the story of this village because his Grandfather often told him about its history. It was here, he would say, that Colonel Church in 1704 attacked the Passamaquoddy at the mouth of the Dennys River and later attacked the village on the St. Croix River. The Passamaquoddy came here when there was a run of fish and camped on the west side of the river. There was high ground there and that's where the huts were placed. The river was literally full of fish, crowding side by side to get over the narrow areas of the river and onto the spawning grounds in the lakes above. First came the alewives on the river, which was clear in color but would turn black from the thousands of alewives swimming up river. Many people said that it was so thick with alewives that you could almost walk across the river without getting wet. The run of alewives was so numerous the lake was always referred to as Meddybemps, which means lake of plenty of alewives. Then came the salmon a few weeks later. The tribal fisherman used no hooks or lines due to the fact that the salmon would not take anything in their quest to go up stream. But here was a lively scene. Men and women and children lined the banks of the Dennys River, and if there was a chance to reach in and grab a fish it was quickly thrown on the bank. At the outlet of the river in Cobscook Bay, when the tide went down, the older ones would wade into the pools with their spears and clubs, and then the real fishing began. It was a pleasant time for the tribe. There would be plenty to eat for some time. Some of the spears were made only of sticks sharpened at the end; if stone tips were used they would break too easily. Some people fished from the birch bark canoes. If a large fish was speared it was admired by all there. Around the fires were merry times as the women cooked the salmon by roasting the fish. The Passamaquoddy were not fussy feeders. Very little of the fish was thrown away, very little. The Indians around here had to be hunters and had to roam over a large area to get their food and, when they got any, they made the most of it. Here on the banks of the Dennys River it was a merry time. Food was plentiful for a while, and that was enough for the tribe. They had to go from place to place wherever they thought there was something to eat and where tribal memories told them where to go. The salmon were, perhaps, 10 to 12 pounds on the average.

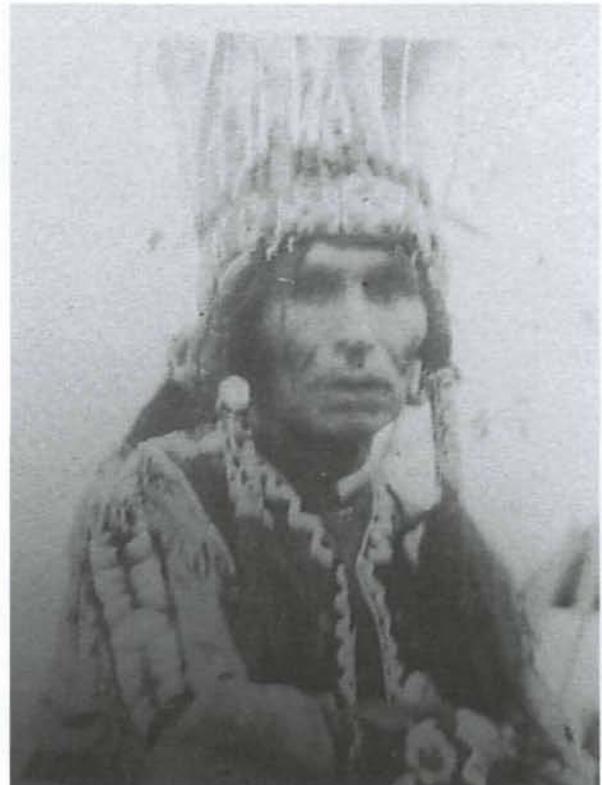


Land in the Fog

Johnot likes to tell the stories of his travels but most of all he likes to tell the story of the Land in the fog. "There was once a man and his wife who lived by the sea, far away from other people. They had many children and they were very poor. One day this couple was in their canoe, far from land. There came up a dense fog; they were quite lost. They heard a noise as of paddles and voices. It drew nearer. They saw dimly a monstrous canoe filled with giants, who greeted them like friends. "My little brother," said the leader, "where are you going?" "I am lost in the fog," said the poor native man. "Ah, come with us to our camp," said the giant, who seemed to be a good fellow, if there ever was one. "Truly, you will be well treated, my small friends, for my father is the Chief; so be happy!" And they, being much amazed at this gentleness, sat still in awe while two of the giants, each putting a tip of his paddle under their bark canoe, lifted it up and put it into their own, as if it had been a chip. And as they drew near the beach, they saw three wigwams, high as mountains, in size according to that of the giants. Coming to meet them was the chief, who was taller than the rest. "Ha!" he said, "Son, what have you there? Where did you pick up that little brother?" "My father, I found him lost in the fog." "Well, bring him home to the lodge, my son!" So the giant took the small canoe in the palm of his hand, with the man and his wife still sitting in it, and carried them home. Then they were taken into the wigwam, and the canoe was laid carefully in the eaves, but within easy reach, about hundred and fifty yards from the ground. Then an abundant meal was set before them, but the kind host, mindful of their small size, did not give them more to eat than they would have needed for about ten years to come, and informed them in a quiet whisper, which could hardly have been heard a hundred miles off, that his name was Oscoon. Now it came to pass, a few days after, that a company of these well-grown people went hunting, and when they returned the guests must pity them that they had no game in their land which answered to their size; for they came in with strings of such small affairs as two or three dozen caribou hanging in their belts. Yet, what with these and many deer, bears, and beavers, they made up in the weight of their game what it lacked in size, and of what they had they were generous. Now the giants became very fond of the small people, and would not for the world that they should in any way come to harm. And it came to pass that one morning the chief told them that they were to have a grand battle, since they expected in three days to be attacked by a Chenoo. But this time the Chief was forewarned, and bade his little guests stop their ears and bind up their heads and roll themselves in many folds of dressed skins, or they should hear the deadly war-scream of the Chenoo. And with all their care they hardly survived it; but the second scream hurt them less and after the third, the chief came to them with a cheerful approval and told them arise and unpack themselves, for the monster was slain, and though his four sons, with two other giants, had been sorely tried, yet they had conquered. But the sorrows of the good are never at an end, and so it was with these honest giants who were always being pestered with others who would not leave them in peace".

Gathering Maple Syrup

Johnot's favorite food was the sugar sap from the maple tree. Each year he would travel to the maple groves on the Pemnaquan River. It was hard work to process the maple sap to maple sugar but he told everyone it was worth it. The ancient sugar-gathering village of the Passamaquoddy was on the Pemnaquan River. Here the people would assemble, here livid and ghostly their council fires glowed. The river which pursues its winding way through the eastern village and the beautiful expanse of crystalline water in which it has its source, was known to the Indian possessors of the soil, whose birch canoes first ruffled the glassy surface of the lake or ran the foaming rapids, by the sweet appellation of "Maple sap" lake and river. It was on the rocky hillsides that bordered the lake and stream that the primeval maple forest grew from whose saccharine juices that the Passamaquoddy secured at springtime obtained their store of sweets. Here, when the deep snow of winter began to melt under the ardent rays of the sun and the icy fetters that bound the lakes and rivers were weakened, came the Tribal clans to gather the harvest of so plentifully provided by nature's lavish hand for her children. After the long winter's cold and the enforced diet of dried meats, corn and fish, it was a most welcome addition. The joyful old and young welcomed the time of breaking the winter's camp at the river's mouth and the short journey to the maple groves above where a season of enjoyment and plenty of the forest's sweets was entered upon. The Tribe named everything, the rivers, the falls on the river, the shallows and others places. "Penmaquan" is a corruption of "Penomahqanihkuk," which means the place where we go to get maple sap. This name was given to the river that flows through Pembroke to the old village site, which extended at the lower part of the river. The lake above Penomahqanihkuk is now called Round Pond; this was called "Petqakomek kuspem." There is also a brook in the western meadow this is known as "Sipuhshis penomahqan." This follows a course through the fields and meadows until it reaches the head of tide and meets the salt water. The name of the cove and river about where the village of west Pembroke lies is called "Elomipisipiqek" meaning where the salt water goes into the land. The first water falls on the Pennamaquan River is called Little Falls, in Passamaquoddy it is called "Kapskicuwok" meaning where the river falls again. Near Putnam Island the water divides into a calm area. This is called "Ankuwiw niktucuwon," meaning Good River. The Island is called "Monihkuhsis," which forms a natural dam across this part of the rivers course, allowing the water to pass by two narrow passages. The island was formerly a bare rock of less than an acre but driftwood and other debris found a spot here resulting in a floating island, which in time became solid ground upon where the present forest now stands. The main or eastern branch of this river below the island, goes tumbling and foaming down a rocky incline of several hundred yards and was a famous salmon spearing place of Johnot that has the name "Etolisaptuhut polamuwok," which means, where we catch salmon with a spear. The rivers western outlet is narrow and unbroken in its flow by rocks or other obstructions until the smoothly running water falls over a perpendicular ledge of some feet, down a rocky incline to its junction with the main stream. Johnot gathered much of the maple sap and used a variety of different methods to preserve it for the long season ahead. His easiest method was to place it on birch bark and allow the sun to dry it.



Chapter 3 - SUMMER OF 1900

Much of the land was fenced, rivers were filled with logs, access for the Passamaquoddy people was not as easy as in the days of old. Dams stopped the flow of water and the migratory fish were blocked from their breeding grounds. Every tree that is felled in the forest reduces the area of the hunting grounds, which the Tribal people inherited from their fathers. Every day he sees the girdle of fields and meadows narrowing the circle of his hopes. Driven back, mile by mile, they became strangers and aliens in their own land - outcasts, robbed of their birthrights by another race. He and his Tribe are but a few, and their efforts avail nothing against the ceaseless advance of the white race, who come welded together into a resistless forge by the iron hand of civilization. It was only on the ocean that the tribe could find the freedom that was in their blood; no one bothered the ocean hunter.



Tomah's Seal Hunt

Tomah looked at the month of June as his favorite time to hunt seals, and to travel around the Bay of Fundy. Many men of the tribe are expert hunters of seals and other ocean creatures. Every season they start off in their frail birch bark canoes of 18-foot length far into the treacherous waters of the Bay of Fundy. On last season's trip, Tomah harvested 38 seals. It was below the average as seals were becoming scarce and more difficult to hunt in recent years. Sometimes the hunters secured 50 to 60 seals. The expert hunters of the Tribe started off recently with canoes loaded with bedding, tents, cooking utensils, a small supply of food, guns, harpoons and limited supplies for several weeks. While using their light paddles often on the trips, each canoe is fitted with a tiny sail and, when winds are favorable, it saves time and their strength as the canoes were loaded nearly to the limit. The craft ride deep in the salt water and could not be handled safely excepting by Indians who are noted paddlers and sailors. It is not necessary to take along much food as plenty of seabirds are available when the hunting grounds are reached. Millions of herring of many sizes swim in the Bay of Fundy. Cod, pollock and haddock are easily caught on hooks. Lobsters are always to be secured. Other kinds of shellfish can be found by Tomah when on

his trips so food problems do not bother him. Many seal hunters like Tomah would camp on small islands and pitch their tents to remain for a few weeks. During the seal-hunting season there are many seals to be found on rocks and ledges in the sun. The mother seals watch carefully over their young and, on the approach of strangers, gather up the little ones under their flippers and quickly reach the water for safety. They will fight for the protection of the baby seals. Hunters do not consider the older pelts of much value as the hairs are long, coarse and often fall out when tanned. The younger seal hairs are short and silky and, when the pelts are tanned with salt, they are soft and pliable and of value for rugs, mittens, moccasins and gloves. Often they are attractively beaded by the women of the reservation and are always in demand at the trading post. Seals are destructive to many kinds of fish. Seals break apart many lobster traps for the bait in the small pouch or the lobster in the trap. The seal hunting is carried out long before the season arrives for lobster fishing at a time when not many traps are out in the Bay. Tomah does not care for seal hunting in the winter months.

Tomah said that in late summer of each year, we all knew that they needed to dry fish if they were going to survive the winter. Every household would be drying fish. That was their survival for the winter. They dried flounder by just taking the heads off, gutting the fish out and nailing it to the side of a building to dry in the sun. Pollock and cod were split whole and dried on clotheslines. Herring were salted down for winter in a barrel.

The sealskin left from the season's trading was cut into pieces for moccasins and mittens. Sometimes they find older seals near the waters of the reservation and kill them. The pelt is like a cow, yet the hide is tough and satisfactory for out of doors occasions for men, especially for snowshoes and sliding. Tomah said that who have eaten smoked seal meat declare it satisfactory. The Tomah will not give up his canoe though there are a few motorboats owned by the Tribal hunters. They are too noisy for seal hunting and cannot be paddled close to rocks and ledges like the tiny canoes. It is a dangerous and strenuous occupation, and rarely followed by white men. Next season, Tomah expects a few of the hunters will start off from their village in motorboats but they will take along a canoe for close hunting when the noisy motor craft cannot be used.

Wayne's Fishing Trip

Wayne told Tomah, "I started to fish when I was twelve years old. My mother would send me and my younger brother out to fish for dinner. We didn't have a boat but we would use one that belonged to someone else. That was understood to be ok as long as you took care of the boat and put it back where it belonged. I learned how to catch flounder just by being down along the shore and watching. I remember too just taking a pan down to the beach when the whales would come into the Bay and chase the fish towards the shore. We would gather them from the beach, or someone would stand in the shallows and toss fish onto the beach. Flounder was a staple food for us. Haddock and pollock were the prize fish. Cod was the last choice, but it would be used for a stew, often cooked with heads and all. During nighttime fishing on the lake, one of the large fishing canoes could contain one hundred of the largest salmon and two men besides. They take the salmon by torchlight when they use the spear. These olden times of salmon fishing, so glowingly described by Wayne, makes one long to witness such fine sport, when a full canoe load could be taken with the spear in one night, as Wayne assures he used to do. The spear they then used was from five to seven feet long and had an iron spike in the center, with two spreading jaws of wood fastened with a string, that closed and held the fish to the spike. By which contrivance, it was easily and safely taken into their canoe. The jaws of the salmon spear are made of rock maple.

Tomah told Wayne that when he would go to the islands in the Bay during his seal hunting trips he would pick bird eggs for a nice meal. The birds varied but most often it was the seagull's eggs that were taken. The forests also abound with partridges and rabbits; these last are clothed with white fur in winter and gray in the summer. They have also some foxes. The red, gray, and even the black fox was found there. This last one, however, was very scarce.



Glooscap's Travels in the Area

Traditions and legends of the Tribe, as told by, Tomah, are rich in description of the vast area and he tells of Glooscap's travels.

"Glooscap is regarded by his people with high admiration. There is also the turtle, who is the uncle to Glooscap. The former, it seems, lived alone and was unmarried, though it appears the most notable of the young women did appear to welcome him. He therefore diverts himself at a wedding party in a singular manner, as follows: the caribou has two fine daughters, that were very desirous to marry the lonesome Glooscap and take him from his single life, but Glooscap had other ideas. He therefore desires the turtle to marry one of these fine girls and even lends him his clothes that he may impersonate him and be sure of success. The turtle then goes to visit the ladies and passes himself off as Glooscap. After being duly ushered to the family, the mother tells one of her daughters to make ready the bridal bed for the expected husband. The events that follow furnished much of the talk for many years.

The next adventure is when they go moose hunting; but here the turtle cannot run or keep up with them and is therefore carried on a sled. On the way he fell off and was left behind. He remembers that his nephew is behind and lights his long handled Indian pipe, and when he sees him coming, hands it to him to smoke. But Glooscap says that his uncle must be having trouble with his pipe so he takes his hatchet and cuts the long pipe. The turtle is now in distress but discovers a way to gain upon his hunting companions. He goes to the river and glides along the bottom, is the first to reach the hunting ground, kills the first moose and prepares it in his wigwam before his companions arrive. He also refreshed himself before they arrived. He awakens then and says to the young nephew, "you run very fast!" When the hunting party is satisfied and all ready, the moose meat is put into the sled. With this they return home to have a great feast. The Indian fashion was to make a hunt after a wedding and, as the turtle could not do this himself, it was brought about by the invisible power of Glooscap.

The next feat of Glooscap was when he advised his uncle, the turtle, to go fishing at a place where there was a net and where he used to visit to fish at times. Without delay, the turtle starts with the stone canoe of Glooscap, and here he captures a large fish, which proves to be a whale, which he brings to the shore with the stone canoe. Amazed with the success of his fishing, he goes to Glooscap and enquires how he is to carry so huge an affair. He is told to carry it on his shoulder to the wigwam of his father-in-law, which he attempts, but on the way before he reaches the place is overwhelmed by the huge load intended as a present to his wife's father. When the prize is discovered, Caribou, the father-in-law, invites all his friends to come and help him to secure and cut up the whale, supposing that the turtle had now perished in his perilous undertaking. After much feasting and cutting up of the whale, at length beneath it they found the turtle dead and partly devoured by maggots. Glooscap then goes to him, gave him a kick, and tells him he should not sleep so long. The reply of the turtle is, "sure enough; I have slept late here!"

Now the scene changes a little and the story is about the married part of life. The wife of turtle now bears him a son and the baby is instantly crying. This new kind of sound causes much trouble to the turtle so he goes for advice and consolation to Glooscap. I don't know what's the matter with the baby that it cries so much. "What noise does he

make?" Enquires Glooscap. "Why," says the turtle, he cried "Wah, wah, wah, wah." "Don't you know what the child says? What he wants? It is egg, egg, and egg." "Well now, how am I now to get eggs?" To this enquiry, Glooscap says, "Do you not remember where we use to collect eggs?" He then directs turtle to go behind certain rocks with an empty sled and there, miraculously, turtle himself lays a load of eggs and brings them home. This caused another feast of eggs. When the party is assembled to enjoy the feast, Glooscap makes his appearance among the guests. Then he takes an egg and begins to strike it with his finger. This the turtle feels most keenly and instantly shrinks and exclaims, "why do you do so? Why don't you eat up your egg and be done with it!" This was done twice to annoy the turtle and make him feel his power. These surprising feats of Glooscap caused the greatest astonishment among the people, then envy crept in and they would gladly kill Glooscap, to get rid of an individual who can work such miracles. Afterwards the Indians set their wits to work to destroy Glooscap and turtle has the likelihood to make the attempt, which he sets about in the following manner. He proposes to Glooscap to make a voyage in his stone canoe to a well known distant ledge of rocks surrounded by the sea. They go there, and while Glooscap is leisurely walking about the desolate rocks, the turtle takes away the stone canoe and leaves him to supposedly perish. On discovering this treachery, Glooscap mounts on a whale, which brings him ashore. When he arrives on shore he hears music and dancing. This was to celebrate the destruction of Glooscap. When he finds this state of feeling raised against him he resolves to be revenged, which he does in this manner. He puts on the disguise of an old woman and enters a wigwam where he finds two toads placed as sentries on each side of the door. He asks for the cause of this rejoicing. The first toad feels indignant at the supposed old woman's question and is puffed up with pride and haughtiness instead of giving a civil reply. Then Glooscap instantly seizes the first toad and twists off his nose. Then he turns to the other, which he serves in the same unceremonious manner. Since that time the Indians say the toad has never had a nose on his face. The next thing to do was to find the turtle and punish him for his baseness, ingratitude and treachery. Still disguised as an old woman, he entered the wigwam and looking for turtle and finds him bending forward in the dance. He steps behind him and, with his knife, cuts out his entrails by a dexterous circular cut, and immediately hands the protruded bowels to a dog, which he drags away. Immediately the rest of the dogs fall to and have a fight for this morsel. Then turtle finding himself so dangerously wounded, cries out, "it is I that am hurt." For at first, benumbed in the dance, in the eagerness of his joy, he had not discovered the source of the mischief and that himself was the victim. Turtle was at last punished for his treachery in conspiring the death of the wonder working Glooscap". These stories answer a lot of the questions that many people asked.



Creation of the Islands

When Tomah traveled on his hunting trips he was asked where the islands came from, so he told how the Islands in the Bay were created.

"Long ago before earth was yet decided in her form, there lived two brothers, Glooscap and his brother Malsom. The mighty Great Spirit gave to them many powers over the other animals of the earth. He told them to put each living creature to the good of all creatures. Glooscap and Malsom became known as mighty hunters and, because of this, each was presented many brides, who in turn gave them many children. Soon Glooscap and Malsom, who

once hunted together, became rivals for the game and the game, in turn, fled their hunting grounds. One day they met while returning from the hunt, neither having food for their children. As Glooscap approached the shoreline path returning to his village an old man who walked out of the sea met him. "Marry my daughter Glooscap for I have become old and am worn from warring with brother Wind." Glooscap shook his head and refused the daughter until the Old Man spoke of her wedding gifts. "Each day her mother and I will fill her basket with fish and food from the sea, your children will never again go hungry." Glooscap immediately agreed. Upon his return home the other wives were angry. They wanted meat and did not believe another wife, with whom they would yet have to share their already little food, was a good idea. Glooscap went to the waters edge just before daylight hoping to call the old man and turn down his offered daughter. As he waited at the shore, a ribbon of gold preceded Mother Sun and the Ocean water was jeweled in sparkling gems. "This is my daughter." spoke Mother Sun. And then Glooscap realized this beautiful daughter was the daughter of the Sun and the Sea. This was their daughter, Dawn. The tide lowered as she met him and the basket woven from birch and brush with its bottom, the floor of the sea, lay full of fish, lobster and eel. Plenty to feed the village. Glooscap returned with his newest bride and her offerings from the sea. His family ate fully each day. His newest bride gathered around her the creatures that once had fled and soon to her they became as children. But the other wives grew weary of fish and maybe a little jealous and they wanted to hunt the very creatures the Dawn Bride nurtured as her children. Glooscap defended her and told the other wives he would find red meat by hunting inland once again. Malsom by now was starving and he and his braves watched until Glooscap left the village shore. Glooscap had not gotten far when Malsom made the attack. They charged the village, murdering and gorging upon Glooscap's wives and children. Hearing their cries Glooscap, hurried back only in time to see Malsom chasing Dawn and her children out into the sea where she went seeking the safety of her father. Summoned by the Sun and the Sea, the Great Spirit raised his mighty walking stick to stop Malsom, but his anger was such that the power from his stick not only turned Malsom into islands but also Dawn and her animal children. The Dawn became the Island known as Grand Manan. When Glooscap finally reached his bride his tears mixed with her earth and two children were born, these became known as the Passamaquoddy- Children of the Dawn".



Chapter 4 - FALL OF 2003

Many changes have taken place in the history of the Passamaquoddy People over the last hundred years, even the environment has changed. At the Meddybemps village of N'tolonapemk, life in the last fifty years has completely turned around. The old Passamaquoddy village site was often visited even though only the trees were there, but it still had a nice run of alewives, which were shared between both the native people and the local residents of Meddybemps. Different species of fish were introduced to the Meddybemps water, altering the natural ways of the ecosystem. People traveled and fished here much less than in the past.

Vanessa's Journey

Vanessa is a Passamaquoddy woman who often traveled to Meddybemps Lake to swim with her family. Little did she realize that within her life time that events in this area would forever alter her views of the history of her people, and also, of the environment. As a child she often looked at the dam on the Dennys River and saw how the farmer was using it to get water for his crop of corn and to generate power. Vanessa went to the cornfield sometimes and gathered a few cobs of corn and felt strange when she was standing at the outlet of Meddybemps Lake near Dennys River. It was a beautiful spot to look out at the lake and the southeast exposure made it a warm place to be and a good place to explore and find arrowheads.

During her teenage years the cornfield had disappeared, and trucks, trailers and tires replaced the serene cornfield. The sight was one not of happiness but of an alien world, disrupting her view of her favorite spot. Years later she returned to the site hoping that the cornfield would return, but the few signs of nature there were replaced by a mountain of metal. Hundreds of barrels were placed in the area where she once looked out at the lake and the stream and the water didn't look as clear as in the early days she remembered. Some of the fisherman talked about catching deformed fish and many found dead birds in the area. Older people would tell her about missing the old cornfield. This reminded her of the arrowheads that she would often find there when the area had been plowed.

Vanessa remembered the stories she heard of the dense runs of salmon and alewives on the Dennys River into Meddybemps Lake, now the salmon were almost gone and the alewives were just a fraction of their former population. The outlet of Dennys River flows into Cobscook Bay and this area was once a popular site for the clam diggers. Now they had to travel to other ocean coves where the clam populations were higher. Many people talked about the whole Cobscook Bay area being different, all the ocean fish seemed to avoid the area.

An article appeared in the newspaper about the problems at Meddybemps Lake and the US Environmental Agency designed the salvage yard as a superfund site. Maybe the fish would return and the site regain its natural beauty, Vanessa hoped that she could be part of this interesting project. Her hopes became reality when, along with three other Passamaquoddy people, she was hired to work with an archeological team. This became more of an adventure for them than a job. Each day, as they prepared to start the excavation work, they learned more about the site that once was the home of their ancestors. It wasn't long before the first artifact was found and, as more artifacts were uncovered, the presence of the ancestors who made these tools grew stronger. Vanessa and her companion's excitement about the N'tolonapemk site spread to the communities of the Passamaquoddy Tribe in Pleasant Point and Indian Township. For the next three years the tribal communities would look forward to hearing about the new artifacts and anticipated that the site would return to its natural condition. Many people traveled to the site to view the work and to offer medicinal plants to the spirits of the village. The stone materials, which the tools were made from, came from a wide variety of locations across the northeast region of the United States and Canada. The travels and visits of the Passamaquoddy people were documented by the finding of these stones, some originating from as far as the Great Lakes in one direction and Nova Scotia in another direction. This was not just Vanessa's journey, but it was also a journey for many Passamaquoddy people.

Tribal Villages in Today's Setting

A community viewing session of the N'tolonapemk artifacts was held at both Passamaquoddy villages during the summer of 2003. The present tribal villages are both located within 20 miles from the ancient village site of N'tolonapemk along Meddybemps Lake; the Passamaquoddy people have kept a close vigilance on the Meddybemps Lake/ Dennys River area. Indian Township is the home of 800 Passamaquoddy citizens, it is located in northeastern Washington County straddling the west branch of the St. Croix River on the southern boundary of the Township and a few miles from the main branch of the St. Croix River and Canada to the east. The land mass encompasses 21,000 acres and 7,000 acres of water. This has been the traditional forestland center of the tribe for over 12,000 years, and many ancient village sites are within this area. Indian Township area was settled permanently in 1848 by Captain Lewey, a Passamaquoddy man from St. Andrews and Pleasant Point area. By the 1860s a church and several framed homes and wigwams were built. Now over 220 homes are on Indian Township, a grammar school, a military clothing factory, Health Clinic, Public Works Department, Forestry Department, Housing Office, Church, Fire- Dispatch-Police and Ambulance Headquarters and the Tribal Administrative Building. Pleasant Point is located between the Cobscook Bay and the much larger Passamaquoddy Bay. It is located on the western side of the Passamaquoddy Bay at the outlet of the St. Croix River, traditional ocean activities such as fishing, canoeing, and gathering still take place there. This is an ancient village, which was used during the warm periods of the year, and became a trading post in the 1700s then was set-aside for the Passamaquoddy Tribe in 1794. Also known as Sipayik, the original acreage of the village was 10, but later expanded to 100 acres in the 1800s and increased to 212 acres in the late 1980s. Deacon Sockabasin built the first timber-framed house in the 1840s, during this same time a school and church were built in the community. The population at Pleasant Point has grown from two hundred people in the 1900s to eight hundred fifty people in the year 2004. There is approximately 230 homes, a museum, a convenience store, a youth center, elderly housing unit, Grammar school, Health Clinic, Public Works Department, Housing Office, Church, Fire- Dispatch-Police and Ambulance Headquarters, and the Tribal Administrative Building located on Pleasant Point.

The total population of the tribe is 3300; this includes approximately 1650 Passamaquoddy citizens living in various parts of the United States and Canada. There are many thousands of people who have ancestry in Passamaquoddy Tribe but are not listed on the tribal census. The Tribal Councils from both communities jointly meet once a month to discuss issues dealing with common interests, such as management of the forestlands, business investments, cultural issues, legislation and many other items. The forestlands of the tribe total 150,000 acres, extending from the St. Croix River on the Maine-New Brunswick Canadian Border to the Maine-Quebec Canadian Border. The Tribe also owns and operates the largest native owned blueberry farm in the United States, which employs many people in the area. Passamaquoddy people living in Canada are still seeking recognition as the Passamaquoddy First Nation Schoodic Band.

Future Visions of the N'tolonapemk Village

The future of the N'tolonapemk site is very important to the Passamaquoddy people, it is a strong link to the past which future generations will be able to see and learn about. Tribal people need to be involved in archeology, so we can have a voice and control in ground work while we look for links to our past, it can be looking for something that's been laying in the dirt for five to six thousand years, it was probably created by our ancestor and in being the first person to touch that artifact for five thousand years that your ancestor left behind is pretty powerful. The Tribal people who were involved with this project say this it's very important to stay involved, especially, to continue this time of cultural healing with our artifacts and our traditions. This really plays a strong impact in bringing things together and it bonds us closer with these artifacts instead of just seeing these artifacts in museums, we're actually in the process of regaining and finding our history. The artifacts collected during the excavation are housed at the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, Maine until such time when the tribal museum is licensed. Artifacts

and displays of the site will be at the tribal museum, so people will be able to touch the tools that were made many thousands of years ago by the ancestors, this is a true connection. The N'tolonapemk site should remain open and nature should be allowed to take over the site, this has been one of the visions for the future management of the site. As the contaminated ground water is continually being removed and cleaned, the health of the surrounding environment will improve, the salmon numbers will return and the outlet of the Dennys River be again rich in aquatic life.

Closing

We are the Passamaquoddy, Children of the Dawn Country, People of the East. Long have the white men been among us, yet we still remember many of the old songs and stories, we have never lost our language. Yet some of us still remember hearing about the time when our ancestors' lives were spent in hunting and fishing and our villages were of wigwams instead of houses. In the olden time our ancestors' garments were of moose skins and fur, our pouches were of the skins of animals, our dishes were of wood and bark. Before the coming of the white men, our knives and tomahawks and all our tools were of stone. With the stone knife we cut open the moose and with a tool of stone we skinned him. We fished with a bait of stone greased with moose tallow, on a line of moose sinew. Our lives were simple and glad and our marriages were happy. Man and woman made their vow to the Great Spirit. In our old religion we believe that the Great Spirit who made all things is in everything, and that with every breath of air we drew in the life of the Great Spirit.

Today we can view life in the Meddybemps village of N'tolonapemk as a vision of harmony with people and nature. The Passamaquoddy people can view this story as a success and know that a sense of respect and honor was brought back to the ancestors of the N'tolonapemk village.

Appendix 1

Passamaquoddy Place Names Around Meddybemps

English Name	Passamaquoddy Name	Meaning
Earth	Skitkomiq Kikuwosson	Mother Earth
Village at Meddybemps	N'tolonapemk	place of our ancestors
Meddybemps Lake	Motopehsok	Alewives place
Dennys River	Kethonosk	place to gather animal scent
Sipp Bay, Pembroke	Kci-punamuhkatik	big frostfish spawning place
Pennamaquan Lake	Penomahqanihkuk	place where we get maple syrup
Cobscook Bay	Kapskuk	boiling rock under water
Pleasant Point	Sipayik	along the edge
Passamaquoddy Bay	Pestomkati	place to spear pollack
St. Andrews	Qonasqamkuk	Sandy point bar
St. Croix River	Skutik	burnt land along river
Magurrewock Stream	Mekaluwakakom	place of the caribou
River/Portage Woodland	Wapskonikonok	white rock carry
East Machias	Kepamkewis	little sand bar-closing off

Appendix 2

Cultural Resource Management

Public Laws – United States Codes

Antiquities Act of 1906, PL 59-209; Stat. 225; 16 USC 431-433
Historic Sites Act of 1935, PL 74-292; 49 Stat. 666; 16 USC 461-467
Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, PL 86-523; 74 Stat. 220-221; 16 USC 469
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, PL 89-665; 80 Stat. 915; 16 USC 470
National Environmental Policy Act 1969, PL 91-190; 83 Stat. 852; 42USC 4321
Archeological & Historic Preservation Act 1974, PL 93-291; 88Stat174; 16USC 469
American Indian Religious Freedom Act 1978, PL95-341; 92Stat. 469; 42USC1996
Archeological Resource Protection Act 1979, PL 96-95; 93Stat. 721; 16USC 470aa
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act 1990 PL 101-601; 104Stat. 3048; 25USC3001

Code of Federal Regulations

25CFR262: BIA Protection of Archaeological Resources
36CFR60: National Register of Historic Places
36CFR61: State, Tribal and Local Government Historic Preservation Programs
36CFR63: Determin of Eligibility for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places
36CFR800: Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties
43CFR3: Preservation of American Antiquities
43CFR7: DOI Protection of Archaeological Resources
43CFR10: Final Rule for Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

Executive Orders

Executive Order 11593: Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
Executive Order 13007: Indian Sacred Sites
Executive Order 13175: Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments
Executive Order 13287: Preserve America

Appendix 3

Public Meetings at Indian Township and Pleasant Point

A community viewing session was held at the Tribal Offices of the Tribal Government during the summer of 2004. On hand were the artifacts from the Meddybemps site, carefully placed on the tables in the room. The meeting opened with a purification ceremony, known as the smudging ritual of burning the medicinal and sacred plants in a shell bowl. The smoke from this burning process cleanses the minds and souls of the people in the meeting and purifies the artifacts of the ancestors. Donald Soctomah explained the history of events concerning the archeological work and the displayed the artifacts. The carved stone, which resembles a fish, received much comment, as to its use and similarity to various native fish in the area. One lady commented on the size and shape of this stone, which was similar to a tool used in net making process, another lady commented on the significances of the stone in honoring the fish and its contributions in the survival of the tribal people. An elderly fisherman commented on the similarity of the stone to a lure used in fishing.

For the conclusion of the meeting a film was shown of an archeological dig, which occurred on Indian Township ten years ago (1994), and the experience of the tribal workers at the site.