

Tobique First Nation, NB March 2013

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John River

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Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide the precise tools and the best information possible.

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SUSPECT SALE OF EQPAHAK RESERVE -OVERVIEW

This article is a supplement to an article about Eqpahak published in June 2012 issue of Wulustuk Times.

For more than a century several historians have described the sale of Eqpahak Island and the adjacent 500 acre shore property, originally reserved and granted to the Maliseets by the British, as being fraudulent, deceitful, conniving, a murky deal, and underhanded. Exact details as to why it was considered so devious have been scarce and vague. Some historians suggest that it was a lease turned to sale illegally; while others propose that the lease was fraudulently altered. No evidence is given by them. It remains no more than a legendary rumor.

Eqpahak Island with its burial ground, and the adjacent 500 acre lot on the south bank of the St. John River/Wolastoq containing another burial ground, and a 4 acre lot and burial ground at St. Anne's (now Fredericton) were all reserved in 1765 for the Maliseet Nation and later granted to them in 1779 in accordance with the conditions and limitations set forth in the British Proclamation of 1763. At this time it was registered under the Province of Nova Scotia because there was no political division of New Brunswick. After the American Revolution ended and the colony of New Brunswick was created, the Eqpahak lands by British law had to be re-granted. This is when the description of the property began to change, much the same as when new treaties were made to ratify previous ones and the original details were altered, some items omitted, in the later treaties.

In 1794 there seems to take place a collusion of sorts, or perhaps a form of bribery, between a new Catholic priest who was brought in to serve the Maliseets at Ekpahak and the Government Members of His Majesty's Council. This scheme had the objective of removing the Maliseets further up river to Tobique and freeing up the Eqpahak land for a certain prominent member of the Council. After all, most of Eqpahak Island had been cleared as well as 15 acres on the south shore of the river, whereas much of the remaining properties were wilderness. It would save a lot of hard labour and expense clearing forest lands.

The member of Council who wanted the property was very aware that there were rules to be followed in accordance with the Proclamation and he had to ensure that the records reflected a legitimate sale of the Indian lands. In fact, the official paper trail left behind in registered grants and in minutes of Council would indicate that everything went according to law. But it is all one-sided evidence being the records of the British officials and not one item of evidence from any of the Maliseets. They remain an unquoted party to the transactions that took place with no names given as to who approved the sale. None of them appeared before His Majesty's Council. Only the British government members appeared before Council and supposedly spoke truthfully on behalf of the Maliseet Nation who were not there. For over two centuries only one

side of the story was known and it was hard to refute. But two years ago Andrea Bear Nicholas, Chair of Native Studies at St. Thomas University discovered a journal of Father Ciquard in the Sulpician Archives in Paris that sheds new light on the Eqpahak land sale. Now there is another perspective of what took place with the sale of Eqpahak along with its sacred burial grounds in 1795. A more detailed account of the convoluted story behind the sale of Eqpahak can be found at this link:

[http://www.wiwoni.com/archives/eqpahak sale.pdf](http://www.wiwoni.com/archives/eqpahak_sale.pdf)
..... All my relations, Nugeekadoonkut

THE HONOURABLE BERNARD VALCOURT MINISTER OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt adawaska-Restigouche (New Brunswick)

Bernard Valcourt was first elected to the House of Commons in 1984 and re-elected in 1988. In 1984, he was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue and to the Minister of State (Science and Technology). From 1984 to 1993, Mr. Valcourt subsequently served as Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism), Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development), Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Minister of Employment and Immigration and Minister of Labour.

In 1995, Mr. Valcourt was elected to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick as the member for Edmundston, and he served until 1999. He was Leader of the Opposition party for the province from 1995 to 1997.

He was re-elected to the House of Commons in 2011 as the Member of Parliament for Madawaska-Restigouche. In May 2011, he was appointed Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie). He was appointed Associate Minister of National Defence in July 2012. In February 2013, Mr. Valcourt was appointed Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. Valcourt is a barrister and solicitor who practised law in Edmundston, New Brunswick, where he lives today.

REPORT ON RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL DEATHS SHOULD SERVE AS 'WAKE-UP CALL' TO CANADA

CTVNews

A grim new report into Canada's residential school system should serve as a "wake-up call" to end the ignorance surrounding the dark period in the country's history, says the head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

The research released Monday shows at least 3,000 children are now known to have died while in the Indian residential schools system that started in the 1870s. The new numbers are the result of the first systematic search of government, school and other records.

Marie Wilson, commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said the numbers are shocking. Of the 3,000 confirmed to have died, she said, 500 are children whose identities remain entirely unknown.

"I hope it's a huge wake-up call to Canada about the enormity of the impacts of the residential school story," she told CTV's Canada AM on Tuesday.

"We've heard about it in the global way but now to know these are real little lives that were lived and lost in the context of going to school is something we all need to pay attention to and we need to ask ourselves questions about what it means for today."

Alex Maass, research manager with the Missing Children Project, compiled the numbers after extensive research. Each death was confirmed through documentation showing when the child died, where the death occurred and what the circumstances were.

Disease was the largest killer, particularly tuberculosis which flourished in the cramped dormitory-style accommodations. The Spanish flu was also devastating, and children are shown to have died from malnutrition or accidents such as fires, drowning or exposure. Others were the victims of physical and sexual abuse, some died while trying to run away and others committed suicide.

Alvin Dixon, a survivor of the residential school system in B.C. who now counsels other natives, said the report's description of overcrowding, physical abuse and disease is true to his experience.

"I was only there for about two hours when I got my first strapping for speaking (my) language," Dixon said. "I spoke very little English then, I was 10 years old, and the other impression I have is the overcrowding and the smell of little children, of too many people in one room."

About 150,000 First Nations children went through the church-run residential school system, which ran from the 1870s until the 1990s. The new records reveal the number of deaths only began to drop significantly after the 1950s, although some fatalities occurred as recently as the 1970s.

Maass said death was such an expected part of the residential school system that buildings were often designed with a cemetery as a key feature in the architectural plans. He warned the death toll is likely to go up as more documents are uncovered.

Wilson said she hopes the new insights will allow all Canadians to learn from the past and avoid making similar mistakes in the future.

"We have remedial learning to do which is very significant because most of us grew up knowing nothing about residential schools. So our school systems, our departments of education have work to do to make this mandatory so we're not investing in another generation of ignorance," she said.

THE RISE OF NOTABLE WOMEN OF TOBIQUE

p.paul

Looking over the past centuries native women of Tobique generally preferred home life, domestic affairs, family gatherings, homemaking and matters of social/cultural interest which are very sound, noble and rewarding responsibilities indeed.

As a matter of fact, in earlier times not

many of the finer gender preferred quieter family ties leaving the masculine gender to take lead roles in community affairs and securing livelihoods.

During the early times women kept a low profile around the home base until the mid-20th century when racial incidents erupted in other parts of the world while the media, mainly TV, opened up a new reality, a new wave and era for native women.

Some of these gender and racially related events erupted mainly in the United States when the black nations began their freedom and equality movements in many sectors of American life.

Their actions were concentrated in education, public transportation, employment sectors, or in semi-professional areas or occupations. They also explored public services like barber shops, hotels, and especially the public transportation industry that primarily focused on separate seating arrangements for whites and blacks in busses. The one most pivotal incident occurred in Montgomery, Alabama on Dec. 1, 1955 when a African American woman, Rosa Parks, a black passenger on a bus who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger and told to move to the rear 'colored' section of the bus. As a standard rule of the day, seats located in the forward section of busses were for white passengers only. Mrs. Parks refused to move from her whites-only seat and the police were called to arrest her.

From that one historic day the whole segregated seating scenario began in earnest that culminated on February 27, 2013 when President Barack Obama unveiled a statue of Rosa Parks that was placed next to statues of other famous Americans who had made a mark in US history over the years. Rosa Parks' statue depicted her sitting on a bus seat waiting for the police to intervene and arrest her for civil disobedience.

From the Parks incident new US laws on racial tolerance and policies were developed making it illegal for a person be segregated because of their race, color, gender or religious background.

As the freedom movement moved forward in the US, similar gender related activities began in Canada subtly at first but eventually escalated to a higher pitch as the freedom movement grew wider.

A few years after on August 18, 1963 Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his eloquent "I Have A Dream" speech in Washington, D.C. (Walk to Washington) to reiterate the gulf that had historically existed between whites and blacks in many sectors of US life, mostly focused on racial differences.

After the King's speech, a new day was born for the segregated, discriminated and the overshadowed segment of society that included Blacks, Hispanics, Native American Indians and women in general.

All of these victimized segments of society saddled particularly with horrific bad experiences took stock from Mr. King's speech and embarked on a new agenda in the US that specifically dealt with racial policies and equality.

The King speech quickly became the autonomous vehicle that galvanized all sectors and levels of governments and society in North America which quickly was transmitted via mass media and the spoken word from person to person across US and Canada including the Indian reserves and other aboriginal territories in Canada.

One significant result from the media circuit landed on a determined group of native women at the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, Canada. This information blitz later motivated the Tobique women to plan and stage a "Native Women's Walk to Ottawa" * where federal officials, politicians, media and the internationals could hear directly from victims about the harsh reality and abusive treatment native women suffered on reserves in Canada.

The "Women's Walk" attracting many native women from all parts of Canada took place in 1979. The purpose, intent and demand was to inform the public of the desperate plight and situation they faced in their own communities under the Indian Act. The Act legitimized and allowed social discriminatory policies to stand and be officially administered by local band officials on every reserve.

From that point on, the Women's Walk began and it arrived in Ottawa during the summer of 1979 with their prearranged agenda and intention of being heard and recognized as full native citizens, respected as equals in terms with their counterparts regardless of gender or other impediments or discriminatory provisions in the Indian Act

that specified Indian women automatically lose their Indian status when marrying a non-native man.

The inequality question was posed directly to the Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau in Ottawa and in response, the women were told that the matter would be presented to a parliamentary committee for review and in due course could possibly be corrected or stricken from the Act by both Houses when or if approved.

Roughly a dozen years passed after the Native Women's Walk, the unjust discriminatory clause was finally stricken from the Indian Act citing that Canada could no longer penalize Native women for marrying a white man which subsequently resulted in the loss of their native status and identity.

Prior to the Indian Act revision the United Nations had issued a statement to Canada stating that an Indian woman marrying a non-native man should no longer result in the loss of her Indian status.

With that clear statement from UN which in no uncertain terms, advised Canada to official remove the discriminatory clause from the Indian Act giving native women the right to marry a non-native man of any nationality or origin they would so chose without undergoing the discriminatory loss of their status and identity.

As a result of this cultural and matrimonial upheaval on Indian reserves in Canada, native women as a consequence were regarded as full equals on every account, and viable candidates for public office or for political positions and roles as chiefs and councillors in their communities.

As examples of attaining full rights and recognition, a couple stories can be attributed to the Tobique community. First, there was a particular woman who had lost her Indian status by marrying a non-native which resulted in a total separation from her kin and community. After the UN intervention this woman regained her rights and was subsequently identified as a trail blazer and achiever on national scale. Later this woman was appointed as the first aboriginal female senator in the Canadian Senate, whereby through her staunch effort and determination she gained a secure lifetime position.

Secondly, we can also say that after a 150-year history of Tobique First Nation, the first woman ever to be elected as chief on Tobique, happened on Sept. 21, 2012.

These two facts simply demonstrates how deeply the equality question has permeated into the Tobique First Nation mind-set and lifestyle.

Note:

* For more information on Tobique women, read: "Enough is Enough" By Janet Sillman, Printed by 'Women's Press' First printing 1987

THE COMING OF SPRING

By: Nick Smith

It was March. We were at Peter Paul's table enjoying a delicious cake baked in the oven of the cook stove that was also the principal heat for the house. I still marvel with wonder at the tasty baked goods that Minnie Paul produced. She was truly an artist at the wood burning stove that lacked a temperature gage. Between bites our conversation centered about the cold, snowy winter with the snow as high as a moos's belly, the snow banks on the sides of the highways almost twenty feet high, trees had begun pumping up sap on warm days and on cold nights exploded splitting the bark and sounding like gun shots. Signs that days were getting longer. We tried to imagine the earlier Maliseet living in isolated wilderness birch bark camps in the frosty months.

Now conditions were excellent for moose hunting. The snow softened a bit but froze again at night creating a crust that supported man, but not moose. While the Maliseet hunter on snowshoes could skim over the shimmering frozen surface, the heavy moose would sink through the snow making progress slow and difficult. The moose had a defensive characteristic. With hind legs set solidly in the three meter blanket of snow, it reared up ready to swiftly pounce on the hunter who approached within his range. His weight drove his forelegs down with their sharp dew claw hoofs breaking the back and causing severe wounds to the unlucky hunter who miscalculated his quarry. It was also the reaction to circling wolves. The ancient hunters carried a long sharp tipped spear for moose hunting that was thrust into the throat of the hovering target felling it and coloring the bright white snow red.

We moved so the women and children could eat. With the changing location the conversation changed from thoughts of snow and ice to visions of the beginning of spring that would soon be noticeable. Streams would begin to trickle happily over rocks and downed branches pruned by the vicious winter winds, and the icy banks flowing to the Wulustukw that then sent their water to the salty Atlantic Ocean. The early missionaries proclaimed that these icy waters would cure the sick if gathered on Easter Day and the sick bathed in it. All too often it brought a quick end to the life to an infant whose heavy slow breathing was a sign of pneumonia. The shock of the cold icy water was too much for the labored breathing of the infant.

The Wulustuk's icy crust would begin breaking up sending large and small ice cakes rushing down stream, some hitting the river banks causing erosion, some becoming caught in other debris such as trees or logs blocking the river preventing ice to continue their journey to the sea. Huge ice dam resulted. The mighty power of the river would find a weak spot forcing a hole in the ice dam and the ice cakes continued their journey.

The River was always changing. Peter Paul brought to our attention the island at the west end of the reserve. It was once attached to the mainland, not an island. One year the powerful spring freshet pushed huge blocks of ice crashing through and severing

the narrow neck of land extending to the middle of the river, the umbilical cord that retained the island as mainland. As mainland it was a part of the Maliseet Reserve. The Maliseet continued to claim the island. A neighboring farmer also claimed it and changed it into a productive cornfield. In the early spring the small island always produced an abundance of masozial, (fiddleheads), that pushed through the sand as the water retreated. Later in the summer the Maliseet harvested sand plums from the small productive bit of land in the middle of the River. The building of the Mactaquac Dam drowned the island killing its productive resources for both the Maliseet and their neighbor farmer.

The conversation drifted to other events connected to the River. Peter Paul interjected that in the early 1800s the Maliseet mail carrier one spring at high water made the canoe run following the ancient canoe trails from Quebec to St, John, NB, in record time, a record that still stood in 1950 and may still be the recognized record.

Dr. George Frederick Clarke added that one early spring day after the high water of the freshet had retreated to normal levels, he went down to the Meductic flat as he often did at that time of year. He could see that ice cakes had scraped away part of the area behind the church cemetery. He digressed turning toward the river walking to the recently disturbed sandy River bank and was astounded to see many broken leg bones sticking out of the sand. He concluded that the area between the fenced in cemetery and the river must have been an ancient Maliseet cemetery before the arrival of the missionaries. Each spring was a time of discovery along the Maliseet's River. Although they did not name themselves for their river as the Penobscot did, it was their river providing the resources that attracted a great variety of fish, fowl, animals, and plant life supplying a comfortable life for them.

DAN'S CORNER: HOW DID OUR HOMELAND BECOME SOMEONE ELSE'S COUNTRY??? WITH APOLOGIES TO THE ANCESTORS

The saint john river valley that our people have always known as the Wulustuk River Valley is our homeland and has been so for thousands and thousands of generations. At the time of contact our Ancestors referred to it as Ski-gin-ee-weekog or "our Indian Homeland".

Our people were placed here by Great Creator along with sacred instructions to love, honour, respect and protect our homeland along with our Sacred Earth Mother. We lived by those sacred instructions right up to the arrival of those European invaders.

We are taught that we corrupt and degrade, and dishonour and disrespect our sacred teachings and all of the efforts of the Ancestors to live, preserve and pass-on our sacred teachings when the present generation allows the destruction of our homeland and our Sacred Earth mother.

Our present generation has not, and is not, doing a very good job in living our original instruction of respecting and protecting our Sacred Earth Mother. Hence the need to apologise to the Ancestors.

In the many, many millennia that we have lived in our homeland we left NO ecological footprint. Our homeland was a paradise on Earth, as clean, pure, pristine and perfect as when Great Creator placed our Ancestors here.

But it took the European invaders only a very short period of time to desecrate, destroy and to lay waste to our once pristine homeland.

Our beautiful homeland was stolen from us by those Europeans who we greeted as brothers. Who we helped and fed and sheltered so that they would survive their first years here.

In time we were repaid with lies, treachery, deceit and the theft of our homeland through extreme white violence including rape, hangings, fire, torture, mass killings and genocide. This attempt at the genocide of our people continues into the present as white-mans way of eliminating all of those Indian witnesses to their genocide of some one hundred million human beings in order to steal their lands and in order to hold on to their ill-gotten gains - that being our homeland.

But we are still here living in our terrorized, traumatized and colonized state locked away on those Eurocanadian-made Indian reservations where we await the white-mans Final Solution to Canada's Indian Problem.

What do we as Indians do in our present state of terror and trauma?

In the words of one of humankind's great Elders... "when all the familiar goals in life are snatched away, what alone remains is the last of human freedoms - the ability to chose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances."

There is only one thing worse than remembering that we were once free and that is forgetting that we were once free.

We as Indian people should know that we always have our Original Instructions, our traditional Teachings, our Ancestors, and our Sacred Ceremonies, our choice as Indian people should be our return to the sacred ways of The Ancestors.

If we are to survive as a people and begin to be part of the solution in defending and protecting our homeland and our Sacred Earth Mother we must begin thinking, acting and speaking as The Ancestors thought, acted and spoke. What that means in the present context is that we think and act and speak as Indians and not as colonized victims.

And we must continuously remind our white oppressor that we are still here, and that we know and remember what they did to our people in their religious zeal to steal our homeland and to continue to hold on to our homeland.

From this day forth our chant, our mantra, our war cry must be... How did our homeland become someone else's country?

For as long as need be or until we receive a satisfactory answer from the thieves.

These are the words of a child of the Canadian holocaust.

All My Relations, Dan Ennis, O.I.M.

DEAN'S DEN: Frozen Land

I look out across this frozen land
For some small sign of Creator's hand
A lone wolf wanders from the pack
Like rabbit's rambling - told by track,
I see a black-capped chickadee
Who follows flitting tree to tree
It softens me, how close it comes
I break my bread, and share some crumbs,
A squirrel scampers, scoots and scurries
No time to waste, it hastens - hurries
Wind whipped seeds fall off a branch
The tastes of life, another chance,
And yet, those fearful freezing gusts
Where sunlight hits are causing crusts
To a snow-bound partridge its the worst
It must break free, to freedom burst,
A red fox cowers weak and frail
Curled up in cover, nose to tail
Back on a ridge a coyote howls
At a world blunted to its bowels,
A great white owl comes from the north
This long cold spell has brought it forth
Camouflaged - it'll sit and wait
A fat field mouse then meets its fate,
A season wild - with ice and snow
Congealed - clotted - at forty below
No quarter given - no quarter asked
Please - and pity - are but a mask,
Rigid, frigid, fixed in frost
Shelter - food - at any cost
I continue cross this frozen land
And everywhere ... Creator's hand!

D.C. Butterfield

Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you can be successful or be happy.