

Family History Day

**February 19, 2014:
A Drop-In At Kanhiote Library
9:30am to 3:30pm**

**Come in and work on your family history!
Bring your info, ask questions, get help and
find out who your people are!**

Upcoming Sessions:

March 19, 2014: Crime & Punishment

April 23, 2014: Thunderwater & Thunderwater Council

May 28, 2014: Clans

We would like to provide information and material of interest to the community. Please let us know if there are topics of special interest to you!

**Local history information will
also appear in the newsletter,
on MBQ website and on
Kanhiote Library website.**

**Kanhiote Library 613-967-6264
MBQ Research 613-967-3616**



Women Pioneers & Trailblazers of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte

Catherine Loft: First Board Certified Female Teacher

Background

In the 1850s, children of the Territory attended one of two schools. One school was attended by both children of the community and children from the surrounding area. The teacher of that school was paid by the New England Company. The other school was attended only by Mohawk children of the community and the teacher was paid by the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (MBQ).

For a time in the 1850s, Joseph Claus, a community member, (great-grandfather of Leslie Claus, who many will remember as a teacher too) taught at the all Mohawk school. Later in that same decade a non-native man, Glenholm Garrett, had the position. The Mohawks had a budget of \$200 per year to pay a teacher.

Letters of the time indicate that the Mohawks were increasingly dissatisfied with Mr. Garrett but it was very hard to get a teacher for the very modest salary available. There was also pressure from the Visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs who was based in Toronto (William R. Bartlett) and the local Missionary (G. A. Anderson) that the hired teacher should be certified by the local Board of Public Instruction.

In 1859, while Visiting Superintendent Bartlett was on the Territory, the Mohawk Councillors told him that a young woman of the community, Catherine Loft, "was endeavouring to qualify herself for a school teacher, and that she intended going before the Board of Examiners, with the view of obtaining a certificate" [LAC RG10 Vol.544 p.443 Reel C-13358].

Visiting Superintendent Bartlett viewed this as "proper and desirable" and he was especially supportive of having properly qualified instructors teaching at an "Indian School" [LAC RG10 Vol.544 p.443 Reel C-13358].

Catherine Loft

Catherine Loft was the daughter of John Loft Junior & Catherine Crowe. Catherine was born in 1837 and was the eldest daughter in the family. We know very little about her mother. The 1860 census reports that her father, John Loft Junior, was illegitimate. Most likely he was a son of John Loft Senior and Catherine Hill (daughter of Captain Isaac Hill).

Catherine Loft, Certified Teacher

In January 1860, Visiting Superintendent Bartlett wrote to the Mohawk Councilors saying he had been informed that Catherine Loft had been granted a certificate from the County Board of Public Instruction. Bartlett wrote "This is highly creditable to her, and it ought to be gratifying to you to find one of your own band thus taking advantage of the means of education provided by the Mohawks & by perseverance and study to qualify herself for a school teacher..." [LAC RG10 Vol.544 p.443 Reel 13358].

Visiting Superintendent Bartlett proposed that she be hired for three months on trial and if she proved satisfactory that Council should set a salary [LAC RG10 Vol.544 p.443 Reel 13358]

At this time, MBQ had three school trustees, Seth W. Hill, Nelson Martin and G. A. Anderson, the Missionary. The Missionary was in full support of Catherine Loft. He thought that she would be able to "teach very well" [LAC RG10 Vol. 414 p. 310 Reel C-9618].

The Missionary was also very worried that if Catherine Loft, after all her work to "qualify herself as a teacher" and to become certified, was not given a chance to teach, "it will deter others from trying to improve their situation" [LAC RG10 Vol. 414 p. 310 Reel C-9618].

Reaction

The other trustees, Seth W. Hill and Nelson Martin, would not approve of this proposal. They gathered their supporters in the community and threatened that if she were hired they would make their children turn her out of the school [LAC RG10 Vol. 414 p. 317 Reel C-9618].

Those once so critical of Mr. Garrett (who in fact was not board certified) for "carelessness and neglect of duty" [LAC RG10 Vol. 414 p. 311 Reel C-9618] suddenly supported him. They would not give a chance to a woman, a Mohawk woman of their own community, who was board certified.

Missionary Anderson was in despair. He wrote "These Mohawks are really an unmanageable band and make me sick of my post" [LAC RG10 Vol. 414 p. 312 Reel C-9618].

In February 1860 all the Mohawk Councillors but one were in support of giving Catherine Loft a short try [LAC RG10 Vol. 544 p. 471 Reel C-13358]. But by June 1860 letters indicate there was a strong opposition to employing her.

The issue was taken before Council in the summer of 1860. The Councillors now argued that they objected not just to Catherine Loft but to any female teacher. They said "it was as much as a man could do to manage & control unruly boys..." [LAC RG10 Vol.545 p. 82 Reel C-13358]. And even though she was certified by the local Board of Public Instruction, they argued that "her English pronunciation was very imperfect" [LAC RG10 Vol.545 p. 82 Reel C-13,358].

The question of her employment was submitted to the Council and by a large majority "it was decided not to employ a female teacher" [LAC RG10 Vol.545 p. 82 Reel C-13,358].

The First Woman Teacher at MBQ

It must have been a difficult blow received by Catherine Loft who took the initiative to qualify herself as a teacher, apply to the local board, gain certification, and after that to be at first supported and then denied a chance by the Council of her own community. Even if she had been hired by Council, her father was afraid to send Catherine to the school as she had earlier been threatened by community members [LAC RG10 Volume 414 p. 317 Reel C-9618].

In ten years time, in the spring of 1870, the first female teacher on the Territory was hired. She was Lydia Hill, daughter of John W. & Catherine (Brant) Hill.

By 1882, there were three schools on the Territory: Eastern School; Central School; and Western School. The teachers for all three were women, Jemima Pearce, Margaret Johnston, and Jane Johnston.

In the end, Catherine Loft would not be the first woman school teacher to be employed by Council on the Territory. Yet she was a trailblazer. We honour her initiative, her hard work, and her courage.

Are you a descendant of Catherine Loft?

Catherine Loft married John Claus about 1865. John Claus was the son of Chief Powles Claus & Margaret Socco. Catherine and John had several children:

Andrew was born about 1866 and died in a gravel pit accident in 1887
[source : Joy Brant].

Levi was born about 1870. He married Susan Maracle the daughter of John & Lucy (Brant) Maracle. Between 1893 and 1915 they had several children including Meta Winnifred, Elmer, Roy, Joseph, Isabella, Thomas, Amelia, Dorsie/Darcy, Leo & Hazel.

Arthur was born about 1872. He married Margaret Ellen Maracle the daughter of John & Lucy (Brant) Maracle. Between 1896 and 1922 they had several children including Lulu, Clifford, Stafford, Gerald, William, Marie, Colman, Ruby May, Ray, Donald and Francis.

John was born about 1874. He married Harriet Maracle the daughter of Charles & Sarah (Sero) Maracle. Between 1895 and 1917 they had several children including Hattie, Pansey, John, Hanley, Helena, Leo, Charles, Evelyn, Wilfred and Ruth.

Ruth Amelia was born in 1877 and was known as "Minnie". Between 1896 and 1904 she had children with George Clute including Lewis, Mabel and Kathleen. Later she marries George Franklin Green but no further children.

Margaret was born and died in 1878.

Marshall was born about 1879. Records do not show a marriage. He died after 1940.

Catherine and John also raised "Alzina" but records do not show what happened to her.

John Claus died in 1898 and Catherine died the 26th of July 1922 due to "arterio sclerosis" and a "cerebral haemorrhage" *[Archives of Ontario Provincial Death Registrations]*. She was buried on the Territory.

Minutes of 1800

This is a continuation of the Minutes of 1800. In September 1800 there was a Council Meeting held in the community that spanned 8 days. This meeting was held to try to come to some resolution of the troubles that had been dividing the community at that time.

Reprinted in this edition of the newsletter is a proceeding of the meeting held on September 8th. No proceedings were held on September 7th as it was a Sunday. September 2nd to September 6th were previously printed in the newsletter in the months of May, August, September and October 2013. You can also find all of the Minutes of 1800 on our website.

If anyone has any questions please contact Amy Cowie in the Research Department.

Proceedings of a Council held at the Bay of Quinte beginning on the 2nd and ending on the 10th of September 1800, in the Mohawk Village

September 8th:

Present:

Present as on Saturday.

Capt. Isaac desired to speak again.

Brother - The Great Spirit has again permitted us to meet this day. We have been holding this Council several days and you have heard a variety of stories, some concerning war and some concerning troubles. I am not going to tell you of my war exploits, as you came on another business. It has been said I was driven away from the Grand River before I came here. I will relate how that matter really stands. The reason of my coming was that I was called down by Capt. John telling me this was a very good place and if I would come down, we would be happy together. Captain John's people told me that Sir John Johnson had said he would be glad if I would come and join Capt. John's party at this place, and these letters (delivering two written in the Mohawk tongue) will confirm what I say to be true. I would rather, by choice, have remained at the Grand River, but I came in consequence of these friendly invitations. I found the place very pleasant and the greatest friendship

among the Indians of the Village. About 3 or 4 months after I came here, various stories were going about which altered matters very much; but I paid no attention to them, imagining as I had so many friends nothing of consequence could happen. About a year after, I began to think there were a number of people telling stories of me; and whenever any of the people of the Village behaved improperly, Capt. John was always very rough with them and threatening them, and when he assembled the Village he said what he thought proper and told them to abide by what he said. One day while Captain John was holding a Council, Ab. Green got up and said something in opposition to the mode directed for placing the benches of the Church, on which Captain John desired him to be silent and struck him.

Brother - You know Captain John told you I never came to Council, nor paid any attention to it. Capt. John also told you that Thomas, the fiddler, and the Frenchman Paulus, were always making disturbances. When the money had been got at Albany and the people found they were to get none of it they were dissatisfied and it caused great confusion. About this time, Laurence's Widow came and told me that Capt. John's conduct was such as to have him put aside. Some of the people advised to drop the thoughts of this for the present and try if matters would not mend and things go on better hereafter. She still persisted in it and insisted that Capt. John should be set aside and another person appointed in his room. The Wolfe Tribe then appointed Thomas, the fiddler, Chief in the room of Capt. John, and 3 strings of wampum were produced as the speech of Laurence's wife, when he was made Chief by the Tribe. Old Laurence and his wife often threatened to kill Capt. John, but I always told them to be quiet. After this Laurence's family left me and went to Capt. John's party and threatened me as they had done Captain John before. On being asked the reason why the Laurences changed so often, Capt. Isaac answered, "it was because Laurence thought while they were at Lachine that he, Capt. Isaac, did not obtain from Sir John Johnson more things for him than he got". We then lost our friendship and we have been enemies ever since.

When the church was completed, all the people who lived near it were very happy and attended it regularly; those at a distance did not attend, among which number I am one. After service one Sunday, Capt. John said to the People, "You see how well we are provided with a Church; I have done the whole of this and none have assisted me; I was also the means of getting all the Indian Lands here". Last fall when the presents were brought up by Mr. Lines, a dispute arose about the mode of dividing the Presents. A parcel of kettles were on the outside of the tent, and Capt. John put them on one side saying these will be divided by and bye. I then went and took them and carried them among my own people, on which Capt. John struck me with a stick and afterwards drew his knife, that was the reason I was so angry and shook my

Tomahawk. I have nothing more to say on that subject.

Captain John mentioned the other day he did not like to see blood spilt, but when we were at Fort Hunter many years ago, Capt. John killed a nephew of mine while he was in liquor. The Village then came to a resolution to kill Capt. John, who was my Brother-in-law. I advised them to wait until would be taken into consideration, but they disregarded me until brought Mr. Stuart to my assistance and we settled the matter. We then sent for Capt. John and told him the business was settled and he might make himself easy. I strove hard to save him then, and he is now endeavouring to kill me if he can.

This is all I have to say, altho' I could say a great deal more, but it would be tedious and unsatisfactory.

Question: from the Acting Depy. Superintendent General to Capt. Isaac: "Was Sir John Johnson informed of the purpose for your Council with the 7 Nations of Canada"?

Answer: "Yes - Sir John Johnson was present - it was on account of the dispute about Lands with the Caughnawagas".

Question: "Who is Mircle who lives among you"?

Answer: "A Swede by birth - he has been 3 or 4 times taken prisoner by the Indians in different wars and was at length taken from the Caughnawagas by his relations when they went with him to the States to sell furs. After that he ran away from his friends and has voluntarily lived with our people ever since".

Question: "Did you not lately receive some wampum from Moses Johnson sent you by Cut Nose Brant"?

Answer: "Yes". "Then say what the message was".

Answer by Peter: "Moses Johnson gave me the wampum by desire of Cut Nose Brant who sent his respects to the Bear Tribe and hoped they would take good care of themselves. He hoped there would be no disturbances in the Village, and that there would be peace and quietness. He said he heard there was much trouble in our Village and that we were seemingly unhappy, which he was sorry for. We know Capt. Isaac has been the occasion of a great Crime being lately committed among you, and that matter will probably be taken into consideration bye and bye".

The Acting Deputy Superintendent General informed them he would speak to the two parties separately, as it was his wish and the instructions of the Governor to make peace among them and to see them renew their former friendship.

Captain John desired to speak a few words more:

Brother - With regard to my having said I would hurt any person for placing the saw mill - it is not true. The principal part of what Isaac has said has come from the women and when old Laurence came to speak about the saw mill, I said I had no objection to it. There was one place only which was wanted for the good of the Village, and they might take all the rest. Capt. Isaac and his people got tired of reading the same prayers over and over again in the Church, and in Council said they would make new prayers of their own, Which surprised me much, knowing when the Minister heard it, he would throw us all away. I told them so in Church and desired them to let it alone until they saw whether it met Mr. Stuart's approbation. I then told Capt. Isaac and his party, they held too many Councils on no good principle and that the Women caused these Councils to be held. I also told them to look up to their Great Father and every thing would go well. But if you mean to make Books and Prayers for yourselves, I will never approve of it or have anything to do with it. On the 27th July 1798, Mr. Stuart was here and we went to Church after Church we assembled in this House, by desire of Mr. Stuart who said he would endeavour to make peace and quietness among us - this was about the money so much has been said about. On hearing what Mr. Stuart said, Capt. Isaac got very angry and I expected he would fall upon me in the House. At this time Laurence did not pay attention to Capt. Isaac with regard to the money which enraged him very much, and he said that I put a stop to everything which could be useful to the poor. I then told Capt. Isaac I was as good a man as he was, and was ready to settle the business with him directly. You seem to endeavour to do all the mischief you can if you are a man, let us decide the business at once and then there will be peace & quietness, on which Capt. Isaac retired and stood back. This was all in the presence of Mr. Stuart.

Brother - I have always strove to be of the greatest use to the Village, little expecting such treatment. It was on that principle I did no wish to have any liquor sold in the Village as long as I had any influence. After Mr. Stuart had spoke to them some time, Capt. Isaac got up and acknowledged he was a bad man and never would repent and that he never would stop the selling of Liquor as long as the Town of Kingston shall last, as by that means the place will get rich. Now we see that by selling liquor, a family has been destroyed.

Brother - You have now heard all I have to say, and you have also heard all parties. I hope you will fulfill General Hunter's wishes.

After Captain John and his party had withdrawn, the Acting Deputy Superintendent General spoke as follows:

Brother - We have patiently attended to all that has been said and there appears reason to believe that both parties have been greatly to blame. You began with accusing Capt. John with receiving 500 dollars which he did not account for, but you took a most improper method to bring him to account. You should have gone to the King's officers, who have the care of you & justice would have been done you. The method you took was the most improper and calculated to defeat the end. You threatened to Burn his Houses and destroy his Cattle. You also appointed Thomas, the Fiddler, a Chief of the Wolfe Tribe. Among yourselves, that may be, But I was present when the King placed Capt. John here as the Head of the Village and no one but the same authority can displace him. If he had complied with your demands in delivering up the things committed to his charge, he would have deserved to be displaced, but he properly refused it. If an application had been sooner made to the Officers of the Department, all the Mischief which has happened might have been prevented, but both parties have been greatly to blame. And until the person who was placed here by the King forfeits the confidence reposed in him, he cannot be displaced by any one. He was put here as the principal person of the Village and must remain so. Altho' the Governor has been pleased to place me at the Head of the Department in this province, yet it is not in my power to displace him; if he acts wrong, all I can do it to report it. I came here, as I told you before, to endeavour to accommodate your differences. The Great Spirit is looking down on us and sees all your actions and he observes you are only destroying yourselves by your disagreements and quarrels. I, therefore, ask you whether you are willing to come to an accommodation and live in the manner you formerly did. We have sat patiently and heard everything both parties had to say; if, therefore, you now agree to bury everything that has been said, your minds will be easy and all will be well. I, therefore, recommend to you again most strongly to agree to an accommodation - You must do so - it is impossible for you to live otherwise - and you must be informed that by a Contrary conduct, and you do not agree to this, the Governor will put you aside and have nothing more to say to them who refuse this advice. I shall tell Capt. John the same, And I persuade myself that you will consider the propriety of it and when I know that, I will speak further to you.

With regard to the 500 dollars, Capt. John has accounted fairly for the whole but 163 Dollars, and with regard to these same lands, it appears you, Isaac, and Capt. Aaron had received your share before. The 163 dollars remaining, I

will see and endeavour what can be done in it, but if recovered it must be divided among the whole Village.

I now only want to know your Sentiments. I am sure it is unnecessary to press it, and when you have both agreed, we will endeavour to bind you so together that nothing of this kind shall happen again. I shall exactly repeat the same words to the other party.

After Capt. Claus and the other Gentlemen had retired for some time a messenger was sent to say that they had agreed on what to say.

Captain Isaac then said:

Brother - You told us that it was not proper to take Captain John's cattle on account of the money - true it was not right, and I went down & laid the matter before Sir John Johnson, who answered it was not just and he would endeavour to get us righted. Having received no satisfaction, we wrote down to Sir John the following winter. Captain John went down about the same time and we soon afterwards received an answer from Sir John desiring us to remain quiet for that he had not had time to look into the business, but he imagined the Chief part of the money had been spent on the road and in drink. I answered Sir John's Letter and told him I would follow his advice and endeavour to keep peace in the Village. I believe, as you have said, that both parties have been to blame. You also said when you took the whole matter into Consideration that you would not speak from Your Life, but from your Heart.

It will take us a little time to form a determination on what to do in so good a cause; Sensible the Great Spirit is looking at us. We the Turtle, Wolfe and Bear Tribes have consulted among ourselves and have come to a resolution never again to breed any disturbances in the Village, and on now from our hearts, determined that nothing hereafter shall be done without the Consent of the whole Village. Should any kind of news arrive among us, the Whole shall be assembled and the whole Village made acquainted with it. Should any of us in future hear any bad news, it shall go into one ear and out at the other, for we will pay no attention to it. Whatever may happen, I shall never in future open my mouth to insult any one, if I am sober. We will take the good advice you have been pleased to give us and I hope the like confusion will never happen again among us. You are all here representing the King, and your advice is so good we must follow it. If you had not come we should have remained longer in a bad situation. We have determined on the business and I think the matter well settled and have nothing further to say.

The Acting Dy. Superintendent General replied:

Brother - We have been listening to you attentively for 8 days and it gives me great satisfaction to hear the determination you have come to. You have been in opposite parties all this time, but as I shall hope to meet you tomorrow at noon, I shall rejoice to see you meet in a different manner, when this determination shall be repeated, leaving out that part respecting the money, as enough has been said on that subject already, and nothing shall be said to irritate.

Adjourned until tomorrow noon.

*Source: Library and Archives Canada RG10 Volume 26 pp. 15307-15354
Microfilm Reel C-11,007*