

From: Alexander Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, Between the years 1760 and 1776. In Two Parts* (New York: I. Riley, 1809).

[The Massacre at Fort Michilimackinac]

Chapter VIII

Rumours of hostile designs, on the part of the Indians, against Michilimackinac. The Commandant wholly discredits them, and they are generally disregarded. Indians assemble, in unusual numbers, but exhibit only the most friendly behaviour. The Author is urged, by an Indian, to retire from Michilimackinac. Singular Incident. Few apprehensions are entertained within the Fort.

When I reached Michilimackinac, I found several other traders, who had arrived before me, from different parts of the country, and who, in general, declared the dispositions of the Indians to be hostile to the English, and even apprehended some attack. M. Laurent Ducharme distinctly informed Major Etherington, that a plan was absolutely conceived, for destroying him, his garrison and all the English in the upper country; but, the commandant, believing this and other reports to be without foundation, proceeding only from idle or ill-disposed persons, and of a tendency to do mischief, expressed much displeasure against M. Ducharme, and threatened to send the next person, who should bring a story of the same kind, a prisoner, to Détroit.

The garrison, at this time, consisted of ninety privates, two subalterns and the commandant; and the English merchants, at the fort, were four in number. Thus strong, few entertained anxiety concerning the Indians, who had no weapons but small arms.

Meanwhile, the Indians, from every quarter, were daily assembling, in unusual numbers, but with every appearance of friendship, frequenting the fort, and disposing of their peltries, in such a manner as to dissipate almost every one's fears. For myself, on one occasion, I took the liberty of observing to Major Etherington, that in my judgement, no confidence ought to be placed in them, and that I was informed no less than four hundred lay around the fort.

In return, the major only rallied me, on my timidity; and it is to be confessed, that if this officer neglected admonition, on his part, so did I, on

mine. Shortly after my first arrival at Michilimackinac, in the preceding year, a Chipeway, named Wa'wa'tam', began to come often to my house, betraying, in his demeanour, strong marks of personal regard. After this had continued for some time, he came, on a certain day, bringing with him his whole family, and, at the same time, a large present, consisting of skins, sugar and dried meat. Having laid these in a heap, he commenced a speech, in which he informed me, that some years before, he had observed a fast, devoting himself, according to the custom of his nation, to solitude, and to the mortification of his body, in the hope to obtain, from the Great Spirit, protection through all his days; that on this occasion, he had dreamed of adopting an Englishman, as his son, brother and friend; that from the moment in which he first beheld me, he had recognised me as the person whom the Great Spirit had been pleased to point out to him for a brother; and that he hoped that I would not refuse his present; and that he should forever regard me as one of his family.

I could do no otherwise than accept the present, and declare my willingness to have so good a man, as this appeared to be, for my friend and brother. I offered a present in return for that which I had received, which Wawatam accepted, and then, thanking me for the favour which he said that I had rendered him, he left me, and soon after set out on his winter's hunt.

Twelve months had now elapsed, since the occurrence of this incident, and I had almost forgotten the person of my *brother*, when, on the second day of June, Wawatam came again to my house, in a temper of mind visibly melancholy and thoughtful. He told me, that he had just returned from his *wintering-ground*, and I asked after his health; but, without answering my question, he went on to say, that he was very sorry to find me returned from the Sault; that he had intended to go to that place himself, immediately after his arrival at Michilimackinac; and that he wished me to go there, along with him and his family, the next morning. To all this, he joined an inquiry; whether or not the commandant had heard bad news, adding, that, during the winter, he had himself been frequently disturbed with *the noise of evil birds*; and further suggesting, that there were numerous Indians near the fort, many of whom had never shown themselves within it.— Wawatam was about forty-five years of age, of an excellent character among his nation, and a chief.

Referring much of what I heard to the peculiarities of the Indian character, I did not pay all the attention, which they will be found to have

deserved, to the entreaties and remarks of my visitor. I answered that I could not think of going to the Sault, so soon as the next morning, but would follow him there, after the arrival of my clerks. Finding himself unable to prevail with me, he withdrew, for that day; but, early the next morning, he came again, bringing with him his wife, and a present of dried meat. At this interview, after stating that he had several packs of beaver, for which he intended to deal with me, he expressed, a second time, his apprehensions, from the numerous Indians who were round the fort, and earnestly pressed me to consent to an immediate departure for the Sault.—As a reason for this particular request, he assured me that all the Indians proposed to come in a body, that day, to the fort, to demand liquor of the commandant, and that he wished me to be gone, before they should grow intoxicated.

I had made, at the period to which I am now referring, so much progress in the language in which Wawatam addressed me, as to be able to hold an ordinary conversation in it; but, the Indian manner of speech is so extravagantly figurative, that it is only for a very perfect master to follow and comprehend it entirely. Had I been further advanced in this respect, I think that I should have gathered so much information, from this my friendly monitor, as would have put me into possession of the design of the enemy, and enabled me to save as well others as myself; as it was, it unfortunately happened, that I turned a deaf ear to every thing, leaving Wawatam and his wife, after long and patient, but ineffectual efforts, to depart alone, with dejected countenances, and not before they had each let fall some tears.

In the course of the same day, I observed that the Indians came in great numbers into the fort, purchasing tomahawks, (small axes, of one pound weight,) and frequently desiring to see silver arm-bands, and other valuable ornaments, of which I had a large quantity for sale. These ornaments, however, they in no instance purchased; but, after turning them over, left them, saying, that they would call again the next day. Their motive, as it afterward appeared, was no other than the very artful one of discovering, by requesting to see them, the particular places of their deposit, so that they might lay their hands on them in the moment of pillage with the greater certainty and dispatch.

At night, I turned in my mind the visits of Wawatam; but, though they were calculated to excite uneasiness, nothing induced me to believe that serious mischief was at hand. The next day, being the fourth of June, was the king's birth-day.

Chapter IX

The King's Birth-day being arrived, the Chipeways and Saakies play a match at Bag'gat'way. Account of this game. Fort Michilimackinac surprised and taken. General massacre of the English. Author solicits protection from M. Langlade—and is refused. Is concealed by a female slave. Indians drink the blood of the slain. Author in imminent peril.

The morning was sultry. A Chipeway came to tell me that his nation was going to play at *bag'gat'way*, with the Sacs or Saäkies, another Indian nation, for a high wager. He invited me to witness the sport, adding that the commandant was to be there, and would bet on the side of the Chipeways. In consequence of this information, I went to the commandant, and expostulated with him a little, representing that the Indians might possibly have some sinister end in view; but, the commandant only smiled at my suspicions.

Baggatiway, called, by the Canadians, *le jeu de la crosse*, is played with a bat and ball. The bat is about four feet in length, curved, and terminating in a sort of racket. Two posts are planted in the ground, at a considerable distance from each other, as a mile, or more. Each party has its post, and the game consists in throwing the ball up to the post of the adversary. The ball, at the beginning, is placed in the middle of the course, and each party endeavours as well to throw the ball out of the direction of its own post, as into that of the adversary's.

I did not go myself to see the match which was now to be played without the fort, because, there being a canoe prepared to depart, on the following day, for Montréal, I employed myself in writing letters to my friends; and even when a fellow-trader, Mr. Tracy, happened to call upon me, saying that another canoe had just arrived from Détroit, and proposing that I should go with him to the beach, to inquire the news, it so happened that I still remained, to finish my letters; promising to follow Mr. Tracy, in the course of a few minutes. Mr. Tracy had not gone more than twenty paces from my door, when I heard an Indian war-cry, and a noise of general confusion.

Going instantly to my window, I saw a crowd of Indians, within the fort, furiously cutting down and scalping every Englishman they found. In particular, I witnessed the fate of Lieutenant Jemette.

I had, in the room in which I was, a fowling-piece, loaded with swan-shot. This I immediately seized, and held it for a few minutes, waiting to hear the drum beat to arms. In this dreadful interval, I saw several of my countrymen fall, and more than one struggling between the knees of an Indian, who, holding him in this manner, scalped him, while yet living.

At length, disappointed in the hope of seeing resistance made to the enemy, and sensible, of course, that no effort, of my own unassisted arm, could avail against four hundred Indians, I thought only of seeking shelter. Amid the slaughter which was raging, I observed many of the Canadian inhabitants of the fort, calmly looking on, neither opposing the Indians, nor suffering injury; and, from this circumstance, I conceived a hope of finding security in their houses.

Between the yard-door of my own house, and that of M. Langlade, my next neighbour, there was only a low fence, over which I easily climbed. At my entrance, I found the whole family at the windows, gazing at the scene of blood before them. I addressed myself immediately to M. Langlade, begging that he would put me into some place of safety, until the heat of the affair should be over; an act of charity by which he might perhaps preserve me from the general massacre; but, while I uttered my petition, M. Langlade, who had looked for a moment at me, turned again to the window, shrugging his shoulders, and intimating, that he could do nothing for me:—“*Que voudriez-vous que j'en ferais?*”

This was a moment for despair; but, the next, a Pani woman,* a slave of M. Langlade's, beckoned to me to follow her. She brought me to a door, which she opened, desiring me to enter, and telling me that it led to the garret, where I must go and conceal myself. I joyfully obeyed her directions; and she, having followed me up to the garret-door, locked it after me, and with great presence of mind took away the key.

This shelter obtained, if shelter I could hope to find it, I was naturally anxious to know what might still be passing without. Through an aperture, which afforded me a view of the area of the fort, I beheld, in shapes the foulest and most terrible, the ferocious triumphs of barbarian conquerors. The dead were scalped and mangled; the dying were writhing and shrieking, under the unsatiated knife and tomahawk; and, from the bodies of some, ripped open, their butchers were drinking the blood, scooped up in the hollow of joined hands, and quaffed amid shouts of rage and victory. I

* The Panies are an Indian nation of the south.

was shaken, not only with horror, but with fear. The sufferings which I witnessed, I seemed on the point of experiencing. No long time elapsed, before every one being destroyed, who could be found, there was a general cry, of "All is finished!" At the same instant, I heard some of the Indians enter the house in which I was.

The garret was separated from the room below, only by a layer of single boards, at once the flooring of the one and the ceiling of the other. I could therefore hear every thing that passed; and, the Indians no sooner came in, than they inquired, whether or not any Englishman were in the house? M. Langlade replied, that "He could not say—he did not know of any;"—answers in which he did not exceed the truth; for the Pani woman had not only hidden me by stealth, but kept my secret, and her own. M. Langlade was therefore, as I presume, as far from a wish to destroy me, as he was careless about saving me, when he added to these answers, that "They might examine for themselves, and would soon be satisfied, as to the object of their question." Saying this, he brought them to the garret-door.

The state of my mind will be imagined. Arrived at the door, some delay was occasioned by the absence of the key; and a few moments were thus allowed me, in which to look around for a hiding-place. In one corner of the garret was a heap of those vessels of birch-bark, used in maple-sugar making, as I have recently described.

The door was unlocked, and opening, and the Indians ascending the stairs, before I had completely crept into a small opening, which presented itself, at one end of the heap. An instant after, four Indians entered the room, all armed with tomahawks, and all besmeared with blood, upon every part of their bodies.

The die appeared to be cast. I could scarcely breathe; but I thought that the throbbing of my heart occasioned a noise loud enough to betray me. The Indians walked in every direction about the garret, and one of them approached me so closely that at a particular moment, had he put forth his hand, he must have touched me. Still, I remained undiscovered; a circumstance to which the dark colour of my clothes, and the want of light, in a room which had no window, and in the corner in which I was, must have contributed. In a word, after taking several turns in the room, during which they told M. Langlade how many they had killed, and how many scalps they had taken, they returned down stairs, and I, with sensations not to be expressed, heard the door, which was the barrier between me and my fate, locked for the second time.

There was a feather-bed on the floor; and, on this, exhausted as I was, by the agitation of my mind, I threw myself down and fell asleep. In this state I remained till the dusk of the evening, when I was awakened by a second opening of the door. The person, that now entered, was M. Langlade's wife, who was much surprised at finding me, but advised me not to be uneasy, observing, that the Indians had killed most of the English, but that she hoped I might myself escape.—A shower of rain having begun to fall, she had come to stop a hole in the roof. On her going away, I begged her to send me a little water, to drink; which she did.

As night was now advancing, I continued to lie on the bed, ruminating on my condition, but unable to discover a resource, from which I could hope for life. A flight, to Détroit, had no probable chance of success. The distance, from Michilimackinac, was four hundred miles; I was without provisions; and the whole length of the road lay through Indian countries, countries of an enemy in arms, where the first man whom I should meet would kill me. To stay where I was, threatened nearly the same issue. As before, fatigue of mind, and not tranquility, suspended my cares, and procured me further sleep.

Chapter X

Means by which the capture of the Fort was accomplished. Author is betrayed—surrenders himself to Wenniway, a Chipeway Chief—and is spared—escapes from an Indian, who treacherously attempts his destruction. Sordid inhumanity of M. Langlade. Author is embarked, with other captives, for the Isles du Castor, in Lake Michigan.

The game of baggatiway, as from the description above will have been perceived, is necessarily attended with much violence and noise. In the ardour of contest, the ball, as has been suggested, if it cannot be thrown to the goal desired, is struck in any direction by which it can be diverted from that designed by the adversary. At such a moment, therefore, nothing could be less liable to excite premature alarm, than that the ball should be tossed over the pickets of the fort, nor that having fallen there, it should be followed, on the instant, by all engaged in the game, as well the one party as the other, all eager, all struggling, all shouting, all in the unrestrained pursuit of a rude athletic exercise. Nothing could be less fitted to excite premature alarm—nothing, therefore, could be more happily devised, under

the circumstances, than a stratagem like this; and this was, in fact, the stratagem which the Indians had employed, by which they had obtained possession of the fort, and by which they had been enabled to slaughter and subdue its garrison, and such of its other inhabitants as they pleased. To be still more certain of success, they had prevailed upon as many as they could, by a pretext the least liable to suspicion, to come voluntarily without the pickets; and particularly the commandant and garrison themselves.

The respite which sleep afforded me, during the night, was put an end to by the return of morning. I was again on the rack of apprehension. At sunrise, I heard the family stirring; and, presently after, Indian voices, informing M. Langlade that they had not found my hapless self among the dead, and that they supposed me to be somewhere concealed. M. Langlade appeared, from what followed, to be, by this time, acquainted with the place of my retreat, of which, no doubt, he had been informed by his wife. The poor woman, as soon as the Indians mentioned me declared to her husband, in the French tongue, that he should no longer keep me in his house, but deliver me up to my pursuers; giving as a reason for this measure, that should the Indians discover his instrumentality in my concealment, they might revenge it on her children, and that it was better that I should die, than they. M. Langlade resisted, at first, this sentence of his wife's; but soon suffered her to prevail, informing the Indians that he had been told I was in his house, that I had come there without his knowledge, and that he would put me into their hands. This was no sooner expressed than he began to ascend the stairs, the Indians following upon his heels.

I now resigned myself to the fate with which I was menaced; and regarding every attempt at concealment as vain, I arose from the bed, and presented myself full in view, to the Indians who were entering the room. They were all in a state of intoxication, and entirely naked, except about the middle. One of them, named Wenniway, whom I had previously known, and who was upward of six feet in height, had his entire face and body covered with charcoal and grease, only that a white spot, of two inches in diameter, encircled either eye. This man, walking up to me, seized me, with one hand, by the collar of the coat, while in the other he held a large carving-knife, as if to plunge it into my breast; his eyes, meanwhile, were fixed steadfastly on mine. At length, after some seconds, of the most anxious suspense, he dropped his arm, saying, "I won't kill you!"—To this he added, that he had been frequently engaged in wars against the English, and had brought away many scalps; that, on a certain

occasion, he had lost a brother, whose name was Musinigon, and that I should be called after him.

A reprieve, upon any terms, placed me among the living, and gave me back the sustaining voice of hope; but Wenniway ordered me down stairs, and there informing me that I was to be taken to his cabin, where, and indeed every where else, the Indians were all mad with liquor, death again was threatened, and not as possible only, but as certain. I mentioned my fears on this subject to M. Langlade, begging him to represent the danger to my master. M. Langlade, in this instance, did not withhold his compassion, and Wenniway immediately consented that I should remain where I was, until he found another opportunity to take me away.

Thus far secure, I re-ascended my garret-stairs, in order to place myself, the furthest possible, out of the reach of insult from drunken Indians; but, I had not remained there more than an hour, when I was called to the room below, in which was an Indian, who said that I must go with him out of the fort, Wenniway having sent him to fetch me. This man, as well as Wenniway himself, I had seen before. In the preceding year, I had allowed him to take goods on credit, for which he was still in my debt; and some short time previous to the surprise of the fort he had said, upon my upbraiding him with want of honesty, that "He would pay me before long!"—This speech now came fresh into my memory, and led me to suspect that the fellow had formed a design against my life. I communicated the suspicion to M. Langlade; but he gave for answer, that "I was not now my own master, and must do as I was ordered."

The Indian, on his part, directed, that before I left the house, I should undress myself, declaring that my coat and shirt would become him better than they did me. His pleasure, in this respect, being complied with, no other alternative was left me than either to go out naked, or to put on the clothes of the Indian, which he freely gave me in exchange. His motive, for thus stripping me of my own apparel, was no other, as I afterward learned, than this, that it might not be stained with blood when he should kill me.

I was now told to proceed; and my driver followed me close, until I had passed the gate of the fort, when I turned toward the spot where I knew the Indians to be encamped. This, however, did not suit the purpose of my enemy, who seized me by the arm, and drew me violently, in the opposite direction, to the distance of fifty yards, above the fort. Here, finding that I was approaching the bushes and sand-hills, I determined to proceed no further, but told the Indian that I believed he meant to murder me, and that if

so, he might as well strike where I was, as at any greater distance. He replied, with coolness, that my suspicions were just, and that he meant to pay me, in this manner, for my goods. At the same time, he produced a knife, and held me in a position to receive the intended blow. Both this, and that which followed, were necessarily the affair of a moment. By some effort, too sudden and too little dependent on thought, to be explained or remembered, I was enabled to arrest his arm, and give him a sudden push, by which I turned him from me, and released myself from his grasp. This was no sooner done, than I ran toward the fort, with all the swiftness in my power, the Indian following me, and I expecting every moment to feel his knife.—I succeeded in my flight; and, on entering the fort, I saw Wenniway, standing in the midst of the area, and to him I hastened for protection. Wenniway desired the Indian to desist; but the latter pursued me round him, making several strokes at me with his knife, and foaming at the mouth, with rage at the repeated failure of his purpose. At length, Wenniway drew near to M. Langlade's house; and, the door being open, I ran into it. The Indian followed me; but, on my entering the house, he voluntarily abandoned the pursuit.

Preserved so often, and so unexpectedly, as it had now been my lot to be, I returned to my garret with a strong inclination to believe, that through the will of an overruling power, no Indian enemy could do me hurt; but, new trials, as I believed, were at hand, when, at ten o'clock in the evening, I was roused from sleep, and once more desired to descend the stairs. Not less, however, to my satisfaction than surprise, I was summoned only to meet Major Etherington, Mr. Bostwick and Lieutenant Lesslie, who were in the room below.

These gentlemen had been taken prisoners, while looking at the game, without the fort, and immediately stripped of all their clothes. They were now sent into the fort, under the charge of Canadians, because, the Indians having resolved on getting drunk, the chiefs were apprehensive that they would be murdered, if they continued in the camp.—Lieutenant Jemette and seventy soldiers had been killed; and but twenty Englishmen, including soldiers, were still alive. These were all within the fort, together with nearly three hundred Canadians.*

These being our numbers, myself and others proposed to Major Etherington, to make an effort for regaining possession of the fort, and maintain-

* Belonging to the canoes, &c.

ing it against the Indians. The Jesuit missionary was consulted on the project; but he discouraged us, by his representations, not only of the merciless treatment which we must expect from the Indians, should they regain their superiority, but of the little dependence which was to be placed upon our Canadian auxiliaries. Thus, the fort and prisoners remained in the hands of the Indians, though, through the whole night, the prisoners and whites were in actual possession, and they were without the gates.

That whole night, or the greater part of it, was passed in mutual condolence; and my fellow-prisoners shared my garret. In the morning, being again called down, I found my master, Wenniway, and was desired to follow him. He led me to a small house, within the fort, where, in a narrow room, and almost dark, I found Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, an Englishman from Détroit, and a soldier, all prisoners. With these, I remained in painful suspense, as to the scene that was next to present itself, till ten o'clock, in the forenoon, when an Indian arrived, and presently marched us to the lakeside, where a canoe appeared ready for departure, and in which we found that we were to embark.

Our voyage, full of doubt as it was, would have commenced immediately, but that one of the Indians, who was to be of the party, was absent. His arrival was to be waited for; and this occasioned a very long delay, during which we were exposed to a keen north-east wind. An old shirt was all that covered me; I suffered much from the cold; and, in this extremity, M. Langlade coming down to the beach, I asked him for a blanket, promising, if I lived, to pay him for it, at any price he pleased: but, the answer I received was this, that he could let me have no blanket, unless there were some one to be security for the payment. For myself, he observed, I had no longer any property in that country.—I had no more to say to M. Langlade; but, presently seeing another Canadian, named John Cuchoise, I addressed to him a similar request, and was not refused. Naked as I was, and rigorous as was the weather, but for the blanket, I must have perished.—At noon, our party was all collected, the prisoners all embarked, and we steered for the Isles du Castor, in Lake Michigan.

Chapter XI

Author and fellow-prisoners rescued, by the Ottawas of L'Arbre Croche—relanded at Michilimackinac—restored to the Chipeways—lodged with other prisoners. Author sees and is recognised by Wawatam.

The soldier, who was our companion in misfortune, was made fast to a bar of the canoe, by a rope tied round his neck, as is the manner of the Indians, in transporting their prisoners. The rest were left unconfined; but a paddle was put into each of our hands, and we were made to use it. The Indians in the canoe were seven in number; the prisoners four. I had left, as it will be recollected, Major Etherington, Lieutenant Lesslie and Mr. Bostwick, at M. Langlade's, and was now joined in misery with Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, the soldier, and the Englishman who had newly arrived from Détroit. This was on the sixth day of June. The fort was taken on the fourth; I surrendered myself to Wenniway on the fifth; and this was the third day of our distress.

We were bound, as I have said, for the Isles du Castor, which lie in the mouth of Lake Michigan; and we should have crossed the lake, but that a thick fog came on, on account of which the Indians deemed it safer to keep the shore close under their lee. We therefore approached the lands of the Otawas, and their village of L'Arbre Croche, already mentioned as lying about twenty miles to the westward of Michilimackinac, on the opposite side of the tongue of land on which the fort is built.

Every half hour, the Indians gave their war-whoops, one for every prisoner in their canoe. This is a general custom, by the aid of which all other Indians, within hearing, are apprized of the number of prisoners they are carrying.

In this manner, we reached Wagoshense,* a long point, stretching westward into the lake, and which the Otawas make a carrying-place, to avoid going round it. It is distant eighteen miles from Michilimackinac. After the Indians had made their war-whoop, as before, an Ottawa appeared upon the beach, who made signs that we should land. In consequence, we approached. The Ottawa asked the news, and kept the Chipeways in further conversation, till we were within a few yards of the land, and in shallow water. At this moment, a hundred men rushed upon us, from among the bushes, and dragged all the prisoners out of the canoes, amid a terrifying shout.

We now believed that our last sufferings were approaching; but, no sooner were we fairly on shore, and on our legs, than the chiefs of the party advanced, and gave each of us their hands, telling us that they were our

* i.e. Fox-point.

friends, and Ottawas, whom the Chipeways had insulted, by destroying the English without consulting with them on the affair. They added, that what they had done was for the purpose of saving our lives, the Chipeways having been carrying us to the Isles du Castor only to kill and devour us.

The reader's imagination is here distracted by the variety of our fortunes, and he may well paint to himself the state of mind of those who sustained them; who were the sport, or the victims, of a series of events, more like dreams than realities, more like fiction than truth! It was not long before we were embarked again, in the canoes of the Ottawas, who, the same evening, relanded us at Michilimackinac, where they marched us into the fort, in view of the Chipeways, confounded at beholding the Ottawas espouse a side opposite to their own.

The Ottawas, who had accompanied us in sufficient numbers, took possession of the fort. We, who had changed masters, but were still prisoners, were lodged in the house of the commandant, and strictly guarded.

Early the next morning, a general council was held, in which the Chipeways complained much of the conduct of the Ottawas, in robbing them of their prisoners; alleging that all the Indians, the Ottawas alone excepted, were at war with the English; that Pontiac had taken Détroit; that the king of France had awoke, and repossessed himself of Quebec and Montréal; and that the English were meeting destruction, not only at Michilimackinac, but in every other part of the world. From all this they inferred, that it became the Ottawas to restore the prisoners, and to join in the war; and the speech was followed by large presents, being part of the plunder of the fort, and which was previously heaped in the centre of the room.—The Indians rarely make their answers till the day after they have heard the arguments offered. They did not depart from their custom on this occasion; and the council therefore adjourned.

We, the prisoners, whose fate was thus in controversy, were unacquainted, at the time, with this transaction; and therefore enjoyed a night of tolerable tranquillity, not in the least suspecting the reverse which was preparing for us. Which of the arguments of the Chipeways, or whether or not all were deemed valid by the Ottawas, I cannot say; but, the council was resumed at an early hour in the morning, and, after several speeches had been made in it, the prisoners were sent for, and returned to the Chipeways.

The Ottawas, who now gave us into the hands of the Chipeways, had themselves declared, that the latter designed no other than to kill us, and *make broth of us*. The Chipeways, as soon as we were restored to them,

marched us to a village of their own, situate[d] on the point which is below the fort, and put us into a lodge, already the prison of fourteen soldiers, tied two and two, with each a rope about his neck, and made fast to a pole which might be called the supporter of the building.

I was left untied; but I passed a night sleepless and full of wretchedness. My bed was the bare ground, and I was again reduced to an old shirt, as my entire apparel; the blanket which I had received, through the generosity of M. Cuchoise, having been taken from me among the Ottawas, when they seized upon myself and the others, at Wagoshense. I was, besides, in want of food, having for two days ate nothing.

I confess that in the canoe, with the Chipeways, I was offered bread—but, bread, with what accompaniment!—They had a loaf, which they cut with the same knives that they had employed in the massacre—knives still covered with blood. The blood, they moistened with spittle, and rubbing it on the bread, offered this for food to their prisoners, telling them to eat the blood of their countrymen.

Such was my situation, on the morning of the seventh of June, in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three; but, a few hours produced an event which gave still a new colour to my lot.

Toward noon, when the great war-chief, in company with Wenniway, was seated at the opposite end of the lodge, my friend and brother, Wawatam, suddenly came in. During the four days preceding, I had often wondered what had become of him. In passing by, he gave me his hand, but went immediately toward the great chief, by the side of whom and Wenniway, he sat himself down. The most uninterrupted silence prevailed; each smoked his pipe; and this done, Wawatam arose, and left the lodge, saying, to me, as he passed, “Take courage!”

Chapter XII

Indian Council. Speech of Wawatam. Speech of Menehwehna. Wawatam obtains the Author's freedom, and carries him to his own lodge. Seven prisoners killed. A war-feast on human flesh. Messages of invitation. English canoe arrives from Montréal—plundered, and passengers made prisoners. Fate of the Garrison and English Traders, who fell into the hands of the Indians, at Michilimackinac.

An hour elapsed, during which several chiefs entered, and preparations appeared to be making for a council. At length, Wawatam re-entered the lodge, followed by his wife, and both loaded with merchandize, which they carried up to the chiefs, and laid in a heap before them. Some moments of silence followed, at the end of which Wawatam pronounced a speech, every word of which, to me, was of extraordinary interest:

“Friends and relations,” he began, “what is it that I shall say? You know what I feel. You all have friends and brothers and children, whom as yourselves you love; and you—what would you experience, did you, like me, behold your dearest friend—your brother—in the condition of a slave; a slave, exposed every moment to insult, and to menaces of death? This case, as you all know, is mine. See there (*pointing to myself*) my friend and brother among slaves—himself a slave!

“You all well know, that long before the war began, I adopted him as my brother. From that moment, he became one of my family, so that no change of circumstances could break the cord which fastened us together.

“He is my brother; and, because I am your relation, he is therefore your relation too:—and how, being your relation, can he be your slave?

“On the day, on which the war began, you were fearful, lest, on this very account, I should reveal your secret. You requested, therefore, that I would leave the fort, and even cross the lake. I did so; but I did it with reluctance. I did it with reluctance, notwithstanding that you, Menehwehna, who had the command in this enterprise, gave me your promise that you would protect my friend, delivering him from all danger, and giving him safely to me.

“The performance of this promise, I now claim. I come not with empty hands to ask it. You, Menehwehna, best know, whether or not, as it respects yourself, you have kept your word, but I bring these goods, to buy off every claim which any man among you all may have on my brother, as his prisoner.”

Wawatam having ceased, the pipes were again filled; and, after they were finished, a further period of silence followed. At the end of this, Menehwehna arose, and gave his reply:

“My relation and brother,” said he, “what you have spoken is the truth. We were acquainted with the friendship which subsisted between yourself and the Englishman, in whose behalf you have now addressed us. We knew the danger of having our secret discovered, and the consequences which must follow; and you say truly, that we requested you to leave the

fort. This we did, out of regard for you and your family; for, if a discovery of our design had been made, you would have been blamed, whether guilty or not; and you would thus have been involved in difficulties from which you could not have extricated yourself.

"It is also true, that I promised you to take care of your friend; and this promise I performed, by desiring my son, at the moment of assault, to seek him out, and bring him to my lodge. He went accordingly, but could not find him. The day after, I sent him to Langlade's, when he was informed that your friend was safe; and had it not been that the Indians were then drinking the rum which had been found in the fort, he would have brought him home with him, according to my orders.

"I am very glad to find that your friend has escaped. We accept your present; and you may take him home with you."

Wawatam thanked the assembled chiefs, and taking me by the hand, led me to his lodge, which was at the distance of a few yards only from the prison-lodge. My entrance appeared to give joy to the whole family; food was immediately prepared for me; and I now ate the first hearty meal which I had made since my capture. I found myself one of the family; and but that I had still my fears, as to the other Indians, I felt as happy as the situation could allow.

In the course of the next morning, I was alarmed by a noise in the prison-lodge; and looking through the openings of the lodge in which I was, I saw seven dead bodies of white men dragged forth. Upon my inquiry into the occasion, I was informed, that a certain chief, called, by the Canadians, Le Grand Sable, had not long before arrived from his winter's hunt; and that he, having been absent when the war began, and being now desirous of manifesting to the Indians at large, his hearty concurrence in what they had done, had gone into the prison-lodge, and there, with his knife, put the seven men, whose bodies I had seen, to death.

Shortly after, two of the Indians took one of the dead bodies, which they chose as being the fattest, cut off the head, and divided the whole into five parts, one of which was put into each of five kettles, hung over as many fires, kindled for this purpose, at the door of the prison-lodge. Soon after things were so far prepared, a message came to our lodge, with an invitation to Wawatam, to assist at the feast.

An invitation to a feast is given by him who is the master of it. Small cuttings of cedar-wood, of about four inches in length, supply the place of cards; and the bearer, by word of mouth, states the particulars.

Wawatam obeyed the summons, taking with him, as is usual, to the place of entertainment, his dish and spoon.

After an absence of about half an hour, he returned, bringing in his dish a human hand, and a large piece of flesh. He did not appear to relish the repast, but told me, that it was then, and always had been the custom, among all the Indian nations, when returning from war, or on overcoming their enemies, to make a war-feast, from among the slain. This, he said, inspired the warrior with courage in attack, and bred him to meet death with fearlessness.

In the evening of the same day, a large canoe, such as those which came from Montréal, was seen advancing to the fort. It was full of men, and I distinguished several passengers. The Indian cry was made in the village; a general muster ordered; and, to the number of two hundred, they marched up to the fort, where the canoe was expected to land. The canoe, suspecting nothing, came boldly to the fort, where the passengers, as being English traders, were seized, dragged through the water, beat, reviled, marched to the prison-lodge, and there stripped of their clothes, and confined.

Of the English traders that fell into the hands of the Indians, at the capture of the fort, Mr. Tracy was the only one who lost his life. Mr. Ezekiel Solomons and Mr. Henry Bostwick were taken by the Otawas, and, after the peace, carried down to Montréal, and there ransomed. Of ninety troops, about seventy were killed; the rest, together with those of the posts in the Bay des Puants, and at the river Saint-Joseph, were also kept in safety by the Otawas, till the peace, and then either freely restored, or ransomed at Montréal. The Otawas never overcame their disgust, at the neglect with which they had been treated, in the beginning of the war, by those who afterward desired their assistance as allies.