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# THE FAITHFUL MOHAWKS

JOHN WOLFE LYDEKKE



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## **The Faithful Mohawks**

The Mohawks were the largest group in the Iroquois confederacy of Native American tribes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Living in what is now upstate New York and along the Canadian border, they held political control over north-eastern America before the colonial period, and were one of the first native American groups to have contact with European explorers. First published in 1938, this work contains a history of the Mohawks and the Iroquois confederacy from the period 1704 to 1807 taken from the archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, founded in 1704 and at first active mainly in North America. J.W. Lydekker provides a detailed history of the Mohawks' co-operation and alliance with the British colonists during the wars of the mid-eighteenth century and during the Revolutionary War, seen from the perspective of the missionaries from the Society.

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# The Faithful Mohawks

JOHN WOLFE LYDEKKER



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# **THE FAITHFUL MOHAWKS**

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# THE FAITHFUL MOHAWKS

by

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Archivist to the Society for the Propagation  
of the Gospel*

With a Foreword by

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD TWEEDSMUIR.

G.C.M.G., C.H.



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1938

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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## CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
FOREWORD	ix
BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD TWEEDSMUIR, G.C.M.G., C.H.	
PREFACE	xi
INTRODUCTION	xv
Chapter I. PRELUDE (1664-1704)	i
II. THE FIRST DECADE (1704-1713)	16
III. THE NEXT THIRTY-THREE YEARS (1714- 1746)	42
IV. THE CONFLICT FOR CANADA (i) (1747- 1755)	61
V. THE CONFLICT FOR CANADA (ii) (1756- 1760)	82
VI. THE YEARS BETWEEN (1761-1774)	107
VII. THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1775-1782)	139
VIII. "THE FAITHFUL MOHAWKS" (1783-1807)	169
Appendix A. Deed from the Five Nations to King William III of their Beaver Hunting Grounds (1701) (showing <i>totem</i> signa- tures)	190
B. Pedigree of "King" Hendrick and Joseph Brant <i>Between 194 and 195</i>	195
BIBLIOGRAPHY	195
INDEX	197



## ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	<i>Facing page</i>
II. "King" Hendrick (Thoyanoguen)	26
III. Facsimile of the <i>Sachems'</i> letter to the S.P.G. (1710)	30
IV. Communion Plate presented by Queen Anne to the Mohawks' Chapel, Fort Hunter	31
V. Plans of Fort Hunter (drawn by Colonel John Redknap, October 1711)	32
VI. The Old Church of St Peter, Albany (1715- 1820)	52
VII. The Rev. Henry Barclay, D.D.	54
VIII. The Rev. John Ogilvie, D.D.	64
IX. "King" Hendrick and Sir William Johnson (Statue in the State Park, Lake George)	77
X. "The Death of Wolfe"	97
XI. Colonel Guy Johnson's Map of the Indian Boundaries after the Treaty at Fort Stanwix (1768)	116
XII. Sir William Johnson, Bart.	134
XIII. The Rev. John Stuart, D.D.	148
XIV. Statue of Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea) at Brantford	171
XV. Frontispiece and Title-page of the Mohawk Prayer Book (1787 edition)	181

### MAP

Part of Canada and the British Colonies of North America showing Indian Territories	<i>At end</i>
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## FOREWORD

I WELCOME MR LYDEKKER'S WORK as the first-fruits of what I hope will be a continuing harvest, researches among the archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The Society was founded by Royal Charter in 1701, and three years later sent out its first missionary to America to work among the Indians. Its archives are therefore important material for the history of the American colonies from that date to the Revolution. They give us, too, a special point of view. The Society's evangelists, like Doty and Stuart, were educated men of high character whose evidence cannot be disregarded.

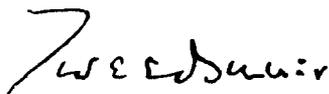
In history and literature the Iroquois of the Long House are by far the most famous of Indian peoples. Though they never numbered more than three thousand fighting men, they controlled for long the precarious balance of the frontier, and their alliance with the English settlers as against the French was a decisive factor in America's history. Of the five Iroquois nations the Mohawks were the most vigorous stock. They produced not only warriors but statesmen. Their chief figures, like Hendrick and Joseph Brant, fortunately visited England and have their place in the chronicle of English life. You will find Hendrick in the pages of Steele and Addison, and on the canvas of Verelst, while Brant was visited by Boswell, painted by Romney, and given the rank of captain in the British Army. The consequence was that "Mohawk" became as familiar a name in English letters as "Huron" in French.

The Iroquois have not found unprejudiced chroniclers, for the latter stages of their history were shadowed by the American Revolution. But it would appear that the mist is lifting. A recent American scholar has done much to clear the character of Walter Butler, and Sir William Johnson is no longer the monster of the old revolutionary histories. The

*FOREWORD*

Society's records shed considerable light upon Johnson, who appears to have taken a real interest in its work, and to have been one of the earliest advocates of colonial bishoprics.

The Mohawks were always true to their salt and loyal to Britain, down to Joseph Brant's son John, who led his tribe in the war of 1812. What is left of the nation is now settled on Canadian soil. The old church at Brantford to-day bears, by the authority of the late King Edward VII, the same name as that given to the first church by Queen Anne—"His Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks".

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frederick".

OTTAWA

3 February 1938

## PREFACE

**T**HE survey of our relations with the Mohawk Indians during the eighteenth century is the principal theme of this volume, which has been largely compiled from the *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York* collected by J. R. Brodhead, and original MS. letters and documents in the Archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

In writing this book it has been my endeavour to illustrate the importance of the political (apart from the evangelistic) aspect of the Society's labours in establishing and cementing the English alliance with the Mohawks, which became an essential factor in our colonial expansion in North America. For this reason the earlier chapters are divided into convenient periods corresponding to the progress of the Society's work among the tribe.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to F. C. Nicholson, Esq., M.A., Librarian of the University of Edinburgh, and to that University for the very courteous loan of the first eight volumes of the *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*; to the Rev. Canon Gould, M.D., D.C.L., D.D., General Secretary of the Church of England Missionary Society in Canada, for a photograph of the Communion Plate presented by Queen Anne to the Mohawks' Chapel, Fort Hunter, New York; to the Rev. H. W. Snell, B.A., Principal of the Mohawk Institute, Brantford, Ontario, for a photograph of the statue of Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea); to George P. Hoff, Esq., of Albany, New York, for a photograph of a painting of the Old Church of St Peter, Albany; to the Rischgitz International Art Supply Agency, London, for their courtesy in lending me their photograph

of the picture "The Death of Wolfe"; to the D. Appleton-Century Co. Inc. of New York and London, for permission to reproduce the illustration of "King" Hendrick and Sir William Johnson (taken from the bronze statue in the State Park, Lake George) which appears in the biography *Sir William Johnson* by A. C. Buell; and to Miss Blanche Thompson, B.A., Assistant Archivist to the S.P.G., for her valuable assistance in indexing.

J. W. L.

WESTMINSTER

*February 1938*

## ABBREVIATIONS

### USED IN FOOTNOTES AND INDEX

Conn. = Connecticut.

L.I. = Long Island.

Mass. = Massachusetts.

N.E. = New England.

N.H. = New Hampshire.

N.J. = New Jersey.

N.S. = Nova Scotia.

N.Y. = New York.

Pa. = Pennsylvania.

S.C. = South Carolina.

Sm. = Schoolmaster.

Va. = Virginia.

*Dict. Nat. Biog.* = *Dictionary of National Biography.*

*New York Docs.* = *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York.*

P.R.O. = Public Record Office.

S.P.G. = Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

'A', 'B' and 'C' MSS. = the corresponding classification of documents in the S.P.G. Archives.

