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INDIAN GROUPS IN VERMONT

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I. *The Pre-Algonkians, ?? B.C.—2000 B.C. ??*

Unmistakable evidences of Pre-Algonkian (and Eskimo?) cultures have been found all over New England and New York, as well as in the parts of Quebec Province and the Maritime Provinces south of the St. Lawrence River.

Pre-Algonkian sinkers and fish-lures have been unearthed in Hubbardton; polished slate knives at Swanton; whale-tail ceremonial objects in the Otter Creek region. All these bear witness that Pre-Algonkian people lived and died in Vermont.

For detailed, profusely illustrated accounts of aboriginal cultures in Vermont see ANTIQUITIES OF THE NEW ENGLAND INDIANS by Charles C. Willoughby. (Harvard University Press, 1935.) Professor Willoughby drew heavily on the works of Vermont's late Dean George H. Perkins of UVM.

Long before the dawn of history these people were pushed out of New England by the "Old Algonkian" stock.

II. *The Old Algonkians, 2000 B.C.—1300 A.D. ?*

Old Algonkian pottery together with other implements have been discovered in every state east of the Mississippi River and north of the Tennessee-Carolina regions.

Some of the best artifacts of Old Algonkian origin were discovered at Swanton in the 1870's, and near Orwell 1933-1934.

It is probable that further archaeological research would reveal many other Old Algonkian and Pre-Algonkian sites in Vermont.

III. *Recent Algonkians, 1200 A.D.—1790 A.D.*

All these tribes or sub-groups spoke Algonkian dialects. They could understand each other fairly well, and as a rule hated the *Iroquois*. In fact, *Iroquois* is an Algonkian word meaning "real adder snakes," not exactly a term of endearment. The ancient hatred between these two great Indian groups arose part because the Iroquois split the Algonkians in terrible wars which left the Iroquois in possession of central New York and the St. Lawrence estuary.

1. *Abnakis (Abenakis, Ouabenaki, Waubanakee, etc.)*

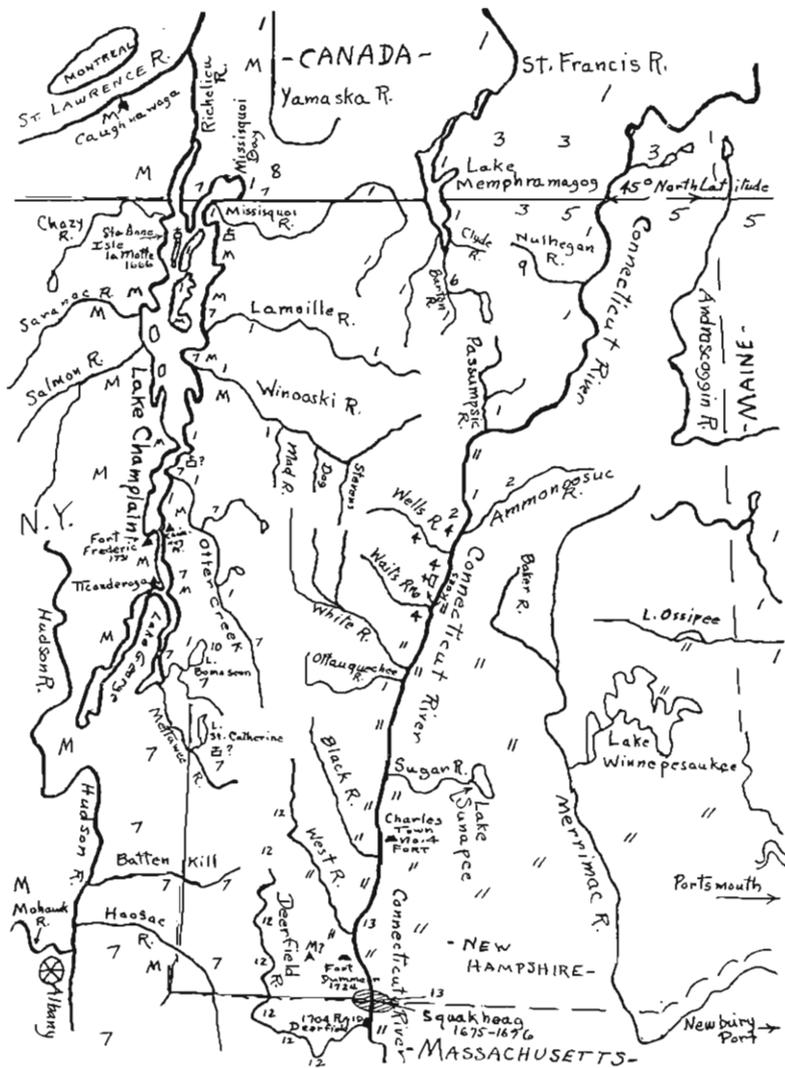
"Dawn People," "People of the East." Along Lake Champlain from Missisquoi Bay to Otter Creek and possibly to Chimney Point; around Lake Bomoseen; around Lake Memphremagog; along the Connecticut River and tributaries from Canada south to the Ottawaqueechee, at least.

2. *Anmomoosucks*

"Narrow fishing-place people." Wells River, Barnet, McIndoe Falls, etc. (Probably *Pemnacooks*?)

3. *Arisagunticooks (Alsnotigak, etc.)*

"People who live near the river abounding in shells." Along the St. Francis River in Quebec from Lake Memphremagog and vicinity northward. Sometimes called also *Coaticooks*, "People at the Pines." Probably sub-groups of the *Abnaki*; possibly mixed with *Kenebekis*.



Numbers refer to Algonkian Indian groups; Capital M shows Mohawk sites; trail routes are indicated by waterways. See pages - for key-statements.

4. *Coosucks*
 "Pine-tree place. People."
 Newbury, Ryegate, Barner, Bradford, Fairlee, Thetford.
 Probably *Pennacooks*.
5. *Kenebekis*
 "People at the Long Lake." Averill, Canaan, Bloomfield.
 Probably *Abnakis* from the headwaters of the Kennebec; possibly some *Pennacooks*.
6. *Kikomkwaks*
 "Those who live near sucker-fishing places."
 Bradford, Newbury, Orleans, etc. Probably *Pennacooks*.
7. *Mahicans (Mohicans)* "River-Folk"; "People of the Ebbing Tide";
 and "Wolf-People."
 (In the 1600's, Mohicans occupied the Hudson Valley east shore. They were broken up by English, Dutch and Mohawks, and driven north before 1750.) Hoosic Valley, Pownal; West Arlington; Back Bay, near Fair Haven; Lake Bomoseen, Lake Hortonia, etc.; mouth of Winooski river; Missisquoi Bay. Probably also at *Squak heag* (Vernon, Guilford, Brattleboro and Putney.) During King Phillip's War, 1675-1676.
8. *Missisquatucks (Missisquois; Mississiak, etc.)*
 "People at the marshy, grassy place (which abounds in waterfowl?)"
 Missisquoi Bay, Swanton, Highgate, etc.
 The *Missisquatucks* were *Abnakis* plus Algonkian refugees from New York and New England, together with a few Hurons from Ancien-Lorette, Quebec.
 Missisquoi Bay and its environs was an outpost of the St. Francis (Odanak) *Abnakis*.
9. *Nulheganocks*
 "Trapping-place people" or, "People who use wooden deadfall traps."
 These were probably *Abnakis* or *Pennacooks* who trapped along the Nulhegan River, (Brighton, Ferdinand, Brunswick, Maidstone.)
10. *Obom Sarwin* (Bomaseens, Bomzeens, etc.)
 Probably a band of *Abnakis*, but possibly *Mohicans*, (or perhaps both) who lived around Lake Hortonia and Lake Bomoseen, "Indian Fields" in Castleton.
11. *Pennacooks*
 "People of the Foot Hills";
 "People at the Bottom of High Land."
 Southern and western New Hampshire, as far west as Connecticut River from Bernardston, Massachusetts, northward to Newbury or Barner. *Pennacook* pictographs have been found in Bellows Falls; other traces of these peaceful people indicate that they also lived in considerable numbers at Vernon, Brattleboro, Springfield, Weathersfield, and Westminster. The *Pennacooks* linguistically were close relatives of the *Abnakis*, so their place-names are very much alike. Furthermore, most of the surviving *Pennacooks* had migrated to Canada before 1700, making it very difficult to identify their place-names wherever they had been in contact with the *Abnaki*.
12. *Pocumtucks (Pocumtooks, etc.)*
 "People of the very narrow swift river." (?)
 Until the destruction of their "fort" (near Deerfield, Massachusetts) by the Mohawks in 1666 the *Pocumtucks* were located in western Massachusetts and southwestern Vermont, especially the Deerfield valley. Their village *Squakheag* was near Northfield, Massachusetts.

13. *Squakheags*

"People Who Catch Fish With Pointed Spears."

"People of the Broad River Fishing-Place."

In 1674-1676 these Algonkians included remnants of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and New York tribes gathered under *Metacombet* "King Philip." See also *Pennacooks* and *Pocumtucks*.

IV. *The Iroquoians, 1500 A.D. ?-1790 A.D., etc.*

The Iroquois, "The Long House," "People of the Extended Lodge" were in central New York and the St. Lawrence estuary as early as 1550. The Iroquois spoke similar, but not identical languages. From west to east the Long House Five Nations included *Senecas*, "Stone People"; *Cayugas*, "Swamp Dwellers"; *Onandagas*, "We of the Hills"; *Oneidas*, "Beacon Rock Folk" and *Mohawks*, "Wolves."

After 1712 the Tuscaroras migrated from the Carolinas to New York, joining their Iroquoian relatives and becoming the Sixth Nation.

The *Mohawks* in 1550 controlled Eastern New York north of the Mohawk river, plus all of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu river which on old maps are called respectively "The Sea of the Iroquois" and "Iroquois River." It is not surprising, therefore, that Mohawk pottery, arrowheads and other evidences are found in western Vermont, often mixed with Algonkian goods.

The Iroquois jar discovered at Colchester, Vermont, in 1825 is one of the best of its kind. It is on display in the Robert Hull Fleming Museum at the University of Vermont, Burlington.

The Mohawks (probably) had outposts at Alburg, Swanton, Milton, Colchester, Monkton, Addison, Shoreham, Orwell and near Brattleboro.

In Massachusetts and Connecticut towns west of the Connecticut river, every two years a deputation of Mohawks would collect tribute from the Algonkian tribes; the Mohawks were feared as far east as Castine, Maine, so it is fair to assume that they exacted their levies north of the Massachusetts line.

