Dawnland Dog-Feast: Wabanaki Warfare, c. 1600–1760

ALVIN H. MORRISON

SUNY College/Fredonia

Introduction

The Wabanaki ('Dawnlanders') Algonquians of sub-St. Lawrence Canada and northern New England were notorious among the English as guerrilla warriors, scalpers, and captive-takers for the French during the Colonial Wars era, after 1675.[1] Prior to that time, Wabanaki war parties fought their own offensive and defensive campaigns among alliance factions of themselves and with other neighboring Algonquian peoples, as well as mostly defensive campaigns against raiding Iroquois, mostly Mohawk. The ritual Dog-Feast preceded the warriors' departure, and trophies (such as enemy heads or scalps) were brought home for the aftermath ceremony. War captives who were not torture-killed or adopted were enslaved. In this paper I attempt a synthesis of the limited ethnohistorical data on the earlier period, comparing it with the later (French) era. Wabanaki traditions of war wizards (called *ginaps*) and strife with the Kwedech (probably St. Lawrence Iroquoians, possibly Mohawks, maybe both) are discussed also.

"Wabanaki" is the generic name for the four ethnic categories called Micmac, Maliseet-Passamaquoddy, Eastern Abenaki, and Western Abenaki in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, volume 15 (Trigger 1978). Kroeber (1939:93) referred to their collective territory as the North Atlantic Slope culture area. The "Dawnland", or "Wabanakia", stretched from Cape Breton Island to Lake Champlain and from Gaspe Peninsula to northern Massachusetts. Languages and subsistence means each formed a

[1] Excerpts from an unpublished earlier version of this paper were read for the absent author at a symposium entitled "East Coast and West Coast Native Cultures: Variations on a Maritime Theme", at the Canadian Ethnology Society annual meeting in Vancouver, 8–11 May 1982. Considerable interim updating of relevant analytic scholarship about the Wabanaki informs the present version.

northeast/southwest continuum; otherwise the cultures were similar enough to allow us to make extrapolations and controlled comparisons.

Maize horticulture with its more sedentary settlement pattern prevailed toward the southern end of the subsistence continuum, with more nomadic intensive foraging becoming ever more important toward the northern end. Climate was not the only factor involved in this distribution range, however. In 1605, when Samuel de Champlain was exploring the coast of the Gulf of Maine, he did not see maize being cultivated until he got as far southwest as the Saco River mouth (in southwestern Maine). But, when further to the northeast, on the Kennebec River in Maine, Champlain (1922:1:321) states:

> The people live like those near our own settlement [at Port Royal, Nova Scotia]; they informed us that the Indians who cultivated corn lived far inland, and had ceased to grow it on the coasts on account of the war they used to wage with others who came and seized it. (Champlain 1922:1:321)

Details of several problems of interpreting primary source statements about the ethnic and political groups within Wabanakia appear elsewhere (Morrison 1974, 1975, 1976a, 1978, 1980a:13–14, 1980b; Goddard 1972, 1978; Snow 1976, 1978; Prins 1986; Bourque 1989). Here I present only brief summaries of my own interpretations of these groupings, together with the geographical and historical orientation needed to understand Wabanaki military alliances and campaigns. At best, Wabanakia is a complex scene, confusing at times because of unknown or unclear factors.

Military History and Political Geography

Furthest east in the Dawnland, the 17th-century French accounts of the Souriquois of Nova Scotia and Gaspesians of west-coast Gulf of St. Lawrence give us our earliest data on the widespread and still resident Micmac. Bernard G. Hoffman's (1955a, 1955b) careful analyses of this early period tell of several districts and of many local chiefs. Our concern here centers around one ambitious Souriquois leader — sagamore Membertou (d. 1611) of the Port Royal, Nova Scotia area, who worked his French connections to great political and military advantage.

French accounts of the early 1600s clearly state that the Etechemin (the probable forebears of the Maliseet-Passamaquoddy) dwelt on the coasts and estuaries of southern New Brunswick and Maine as far west as the Kennebec River. Within this Etechemin territory, on Penobscot River and Penobscot Bay, 17th-century English accounts refer to certain chiefs as being paramount sagamores, the most highly acclaimed of them being Bashaba (d.c. 1615). Western Etechemin Bashaba's apparently polyglot and intertribal Abenaki Confederacy (1A on chart) was at war with Souriquois

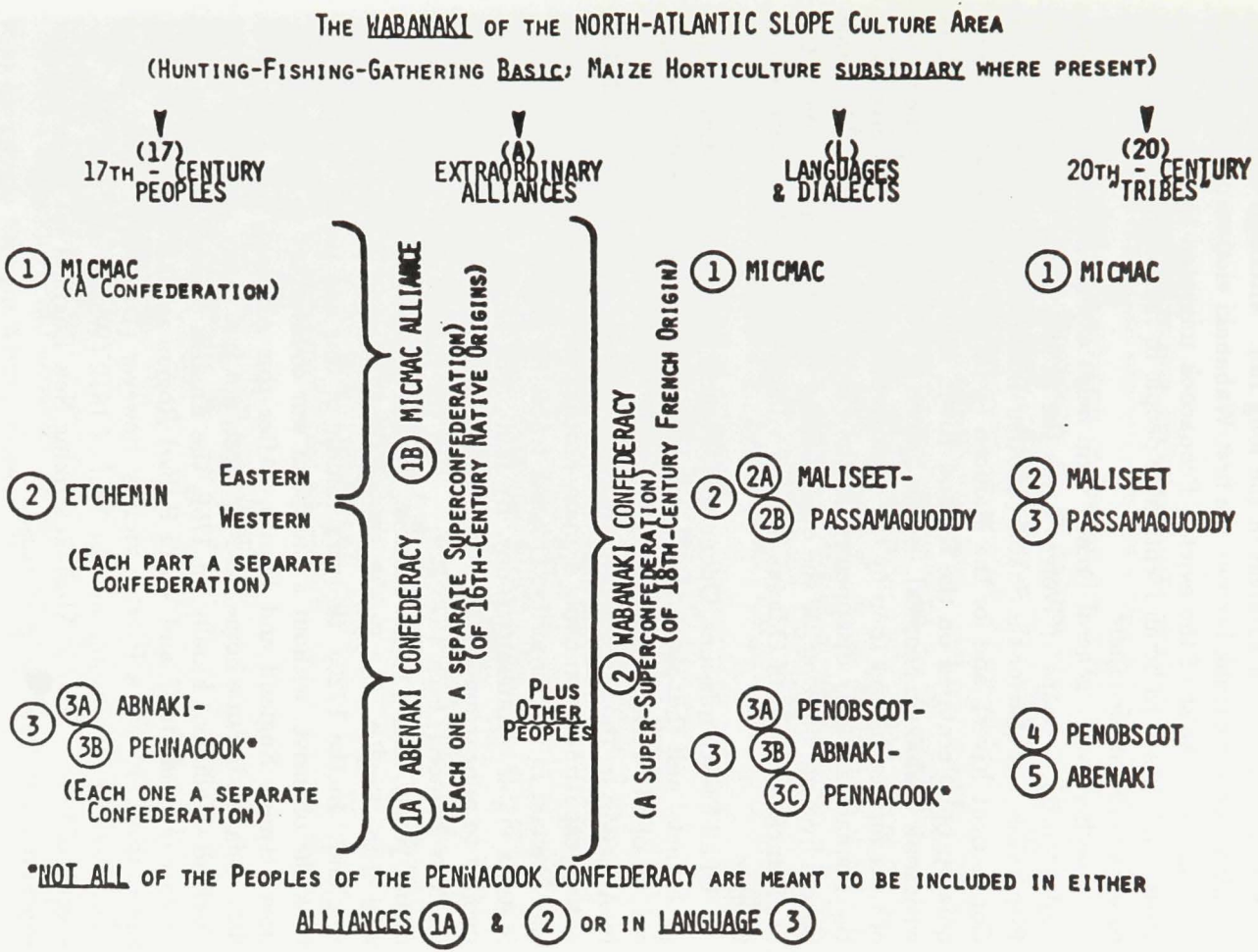
Membertou's Micmac Alliance (1B on chart) which included eastern Etechemin bands, too. There even may have been a third faction involved in the fighting which resulted from Membertou's 1607 raid on the Armouchiquois village of Chouacoet, at the Saco River mouth (Morrison 1975).

Membertou died of natural causes in 1611, but the Micmac, often called "Tarrantines" (Siebert 1973; Bourque and Whitehead 1985), continued their raids across the Gulf of Maine, and in about 1615 killed Bashaba and defeated his peoples. Some Tarrantines apparently settled on Penobscot Bay, where exploring Pilgrims from Plymouth, Massachusetts found them in the 1620s (Eckstorm 1945:75–77). At that time, Micmac and English were free to settle almost anywhere on the Gulf of Maine coast from Cape Cod to Penobscot Bay, because of the devastating plague of 1617 and 1618, which caused abandonment of most of the infected native villages and the regrouping of the weakened few survivors. The English interpreted this plague's depopulation as God's cue to them to take over the region as a divine gift, and large scale English settlements started on the eastern Massachusetts coast in the 1620s and the 1630s.

Regrouped Etechemin apparently continued to occupy the eastern half of the Maine coast (which had not been plague-infected), until about 1700. However, we can be sure neither of how long the term "Etechemin" remains valid, nor of the relationship it bears to Maliseet-Passamaquoddy linguistically, culturally, and biologically. We know only that by 1725, English colonial and military activities had been sufficient to change the actors as well as the stage positions in Wabanakia from those of approximately 1600. The Maliseet-Passamaquoddy inherited only the former eastern Etechemin region, while disrupted Abenaki groups, moving eastward, took over what had been western Etechemin territory (including Penobscot River and Penobscot Bay), to become the Eastern Abenaki.

Further to the west, the picture is even blurrier. As Day (1978:149) so aptly summarizes, "the Western Abenaki have moved through the pages of New England history under the names of their villages, regarded as tribal names, and through the pages of Canadian history under group names of vague denotation." Such a vague group name is "Almouchiquois", used only by the earliest French coastal visitors for all the Indians from west of the Kennebec River southward beyond Cape Cod. We can only guess whether and/or when Almouchiquois meant Abenaki and/or Southern New England Algonquians.

One case is particularly hard to classify: the Pennacook Confederacy centered on the Merrimack River contained both Abenaki and Southern New England Algonquian villages. Located in today's states of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, the Pennacook were led first by paramount sagamore Passaconaway and later by his son Wonalancet. Both these lead-


THE WABANAKI OF THE NORTH-ATLANTIC SLOPE CULTURE AREA
(HUNTING-FISHING-GATHERING BASIC; MAIZE HORTICULTURE SUBSIDIARY WHERE PRESENT)
(17) 17TH - CENTURY PEOPLES
(A) EXTRAORDINARY ALLIANCES
(L) LANGUAGES & DIALECTS
(20) 20TH - CENTURY TRIBES
1 MICMAC (A CONFEDERATION)
2 ETCHEMIN
EASTERN
WESTERN
(EACH PART A SEPARATE CONFEDERATION)
3 3A ABNAKI-
3B PENNACOOK*
(EACH ONE A SEPARATE CONFEDERATION)
1B MICMAC ALLIANCE
1A ABENAKI CONFEDERACY
(EACH ONE A SEPARATE SUPERCONFEDERATION (OF 16TH-CENTURY NATIVE ORIGINS)
PLUS OTHER PEOPLES
2 WABANAKI CONFEDERACY (A SUPER-SUPERCONFEDERATION (OF 18TH-CENTURY FRENCH ORIGIN)
1 MICMAC
2 2A MALISEET-
2B PASSAMAQUODDY
3 3A PENOBSCOT-
3B ABNAKI-
3C PENNACOOK*
1 MICMAC
2 MALISEET
3 PASSAMAQUODDY
4 PENOBSCOT
5 ABENAKI
*NOT ALL OF THE PEOPLES OF THE PENNACOOK CONFEDERACY ARE MEANT TO BE INCLUDED IN EITHER ALLIANCES 1A & 2 OR IN LANGUAGE 3

ers abided by their treaties of peace with the English, believing honour to be the surer means of survival in the long run. Although bloodshed was avoided, the Pennacook became the first Wabanaki victims of English land dispossession. Most of the evicted Pennacook migrated to Canada in the 1670s, and ceased to be an identifiable people in the heterogeneous French mission communities there.

Another overly general French term helps explain this loss of Pennacook identity. "Loups" ('Wolves') was the French name not only for the Pennacook, but also for the Sokoki (another Wabanaki people, on the upper Connecticut River), and for the Mahican (a totally separate set of Algonquian peoples centered on the Hudson River, some of whom had contacts with some Wabanaki peoples). Better known in New England by the names of their former villages than by the confederation name we now give them, the Pennacook easily disappeared in the French "Wolf" pack. The name Sokoki lives on, however, as the other named constituent group among the St. Francis Abenaki of Odanak mission village, near Sorel in southeastern Quebec.

Of all French missions, Odanak/St. Francis was the most notorious single hornets' nest that stung the New England frontier, repeatedly, throughout all of the French and Indian Wars era (1688–1763; Wars 2–6 on list in Appendix). Its heterogeneous people were the French-allied, English-hating, expatriated remnants of many northeastern Algonquian tribes, with the Abenaki in the majority. Odanak traces its history from 1660, and it is still a viable community today. By 1700, New England's population had swollen to approximately 100,000 — compared with approximately 15,000 for New France (Leach 1973:129) — and the Indians were pushed further inland yearly, many to St. Francis. French priests channelled Indian hatred of the English, and French officers led Indian war parties against New England. In the 1720s, the very middle of this sad period, the English took the offensive, without a European war counterpart to trigger hostilities between England and France. After this Abenaki War (War 4 on list), Odanak became home base for most, not just many, of northern New England's Indians. Finally, in 1759, the English decided that they must destroy Odanak itself, and Major Robert Rogers and his Rangers attacked the mission. It was a Pyrrhic victory, however (Day 1972). Even during the American Revolution and the War of 1812 (Wars 7 and 8 on list), the specter of the St. Francis Abenaki striking New England yet again was still widespread, and not without cause.

Warfare Customs

Leadership

In an earlier paper (Morrison 1976a), I have proposed a three-part theoretical model of Wabanaki sociopolitical leadership which enhances modern interpretation of the ethnohistorical descriptions of Dawnland sagamores at work. In summary, its three parts are as follows. First, Morton H. Fried's (1960:718–719) structure model of leadership in the redistributive rank society fits the Wabanaki peoples perfectly. Second, Ronald Cohen's (1973:873) motive model of the "politically rational man – one who would rather win than lose" suits the sagamore's prestige-building needs admirably. Third, Bronislaw Malinowski's (1948:144ff) validation model of the "myth as charter" for perfidiously dealing with "enemies" clearly reflects the trickster's perogative of double-dealing, found in Wabanaki myths about the sagamore's role-model, Gluskap the culture-hero. The intent of my composite model is to allow interpreting specific (emic) Wabanaki data in a general (etic) cross-cultural frame of reference for better understanding; I believe it succeeds therein, thus increasing the value of the data.

A Wabanaki sagamore usually inherited his position through his elite lineage. He then needed to earn public recognition for manifesting superior personal ability: in leading men by his example; in inspiring confidence in his wisdom and physical prowess; in proving his concern for and generosity toward others; in attaining success in hunting, diplomacy, warfare, and especially supernatural affairs (which could influence most other things). The greatest Wabanaki sagamores were themselves also shamans and *ginaps* (supernaturally endowed war leaders). Less eminent sagamores merely controlled the services of these specialists. Any sagamore needed all of the supportive props that he could accumulate to enhance his image and influence, because he had no sovereign political or economic authority in the usual sense of the term.

A relatively fluid and voluntary association of men delegated to a sagamore whom they respected the responsibility, but not the authority, for their welfare. Only in warfare was authority an expected feature of leadership. Every sagamore seems to have had a council of elders to advise him. Even though he acted as economic redistribution agent for his constituency (usually a kinship-structured village band, sometimes a plurality thereof) a sagamore could amass no greater accumulation of tangible riches than his people thought fitting. General respect and well-earned deference to his opinions were his true worldly treasures. However, if public deference extended beyond appropriate foci, and/or if the elders' advisory inputs decreased, a particularly strong sagamore easily could become haughty and authoritative. Theory and practice could diverge, and sometimes did.

Paramount sagamores must have been extraordinarily capable or charismatic leaders (or both).

The sagamore himself usually was also a *ginap*, but other men in the village, band, and tribe were *ginaps* too, and perhaps were shamans also. William H. Mechling's encyclopedic study of Maliseet and Micmac traditions includes the following summary statements:

> A *ginap* was a man who had, through previous bravery and skill in war, made a reputation forhimself, and who, therefore, was able to obtain a following in war time. One finds constant references to these war-leaders in the literature and mythology of this area . . . Even though a *ginap* may not be a *medeulin* [shaman], he is supposed nevertheless to have supernatural power, but only along particular lines. For example, . . . to run very fast and for a long distance, to swim under water . . . and to perform feats of strength which would be impossible to ordinary individuals. How much supernatural power he is supposed to have is well shown by the fact that a war party, no matter how numerous, is entirely helpless before a much less numerous enemy if it loses its *ginap* or *ginaps*. This point is illustrated again and again in my "Malecite Tales." The belief in the power of *ginap* [sic] is intimately connected with . . . shamanism . . . A *ginap* was neither elected nor did he inherit the office from his father, but obtained it entirely through his own abilities in warfare. (Mechling 1958:141–142)

Whether or not a *ginap* really had great supernatural power is irrelevant; if enough followers and opponents believed that he did, then his shadow could far exceed his substance, and his growing reputation produced a self-fulfilling prophecy. French lawyer-adventurer Marc Lescarbot seemingly was a strong believer in this: In Lescarbot's *History of New France* (1907) he repeatedly states that Micmac Membertou was over 100 years old, but in his epic poem "The Defeat of the Armouchiquois Savages" (1975), Membertou is accredited with titanic actions in the 1607 attack on Chouacoet that can only be explained as *ginap*-power (Morrison 1975).

Ceremonies

Warfare was not entered into lightly, although after it was initiated, raiding parties could be launched impetuously. The role of the council of elders in deciding upon whether or not to initiate a war seems to have been more important than that of the sagamore. But after receiving approval from his council, the sagamore spread the word to neighboring allied villages, bands, and tribes, and met with them in debate and ceremony. Lescarbot describes such a gathering, probably based on his witnessing a planning session for Membertou's 1607 campaign:

> When therefore they wish to make war, the Sagamos most in credit among them sends the news of the cause and the rendezvous, and the time of the

> muster. On their arrival he makes them long orations on the subject which has come up, and to encourage them. At each proposal he asks their advice, and if they consent they all make an exclamation, saying *Hau*, in a long-drawn-out voice; if not, some Sagamos will begin to speak, and give his opinion, and both are heard with attention. (Lescarbot 1907(3):264)

The Dog-Feast war ceremony was based upon the belief that dog's flesh makes warriors more courageous. The Wabanaki specialized in small water-retrievers called "canoe dogs", but there were other and larger dogs in the area, as archaeological and traditional data attest (Butler and Hadlock 1949). Ethnohistorical accounts give the impression that Indian dogs were numerous, and omnipresent at meals where greasy hands were wiped on them in lieu of napkins. John Giles, an English boy from Pemaquid, Maine, held captive mostly at Meductic on the St. John River (northwest of present Fredericton, NB) from 1689 to 1698, wrote the following eyewitness account of the Dog-Feast:

> When the Indians determine on war, or are entering on a particular expedition, they kill a number of their dogs, burn off the hair, and cut them to pieces, leaving only one dog's head whole. The rest of the flesh they boil, and make a fine feast of it. Then the dog's head that was left whole is scorched till the nose and lips have shrunk from the teeth, leaving them bare and grinning. This done, they fasten it on a stick, and the Indian who is proposed to be chief in the expedition, takes the head into his hand and sings a warlike song, in which he mentions the town they design to attack, and the principal man in it, threatening that in a few days he will carry that man's head and scalp in his hand in the same manner. When the chief has finished singing, he so places the dog's head as to grin at him who he supposes will go his second, who, if he accepts, takes the head in his hand and sings; but if he refuses to go he turns the teeth to another; and thus from one to another till they have enlisted their company. (Giles 1869:43–44)

In his 1758 book about Micmac and Maliseet customs, long-time French missionary in Acadia Pierre Maillard has created some valuable word pictures:

> Whilst the fire is still burning, the women come like so many furies, with more than bacchanalian madness, making the most hideous howlings, and dancing without any order, round the fire. Then all their apparent rage turns of a sudden against the men. They threaten them, that if they do not supply them with scalps, they will hold them very cheap, and look on them as greatly inferior to themselves; that they will deny themselves to their most lawful pleasures; that their daughters shall be given to none but such as have signalized themselves by some military feat; that, in short, they will themselves find means to be revenged of them, which cannot but be easy to do on cowards. (Maillard 1758:29)

This vignette makes it clear that females were not passive assenters but active stimuli in the machismo game of war. To earn honors and to be revenged were the apparent main motives for Wabanaki warfare, but we can add to impress women also. All three themes converged when captives and scalps were brought back and given to the women, who ritually tortured the captives and paid deference in the Scalp Dance to the specific warriors who had done the capturing or scalping. Honouring warriors slain in combat by taking vengeance on the captives was equally important. Overall, female opinion thus seems to have been a major factor in Wabanaki life (Morrison 1983).

Strategy, tactics, weapons, and trophies

Declaration of war was made by sending messengers to the largest village of the enemy. Maillard (1758:30) states that these messengers spoke to no one, but symbolically struck the ground with war clubs and shot two arrows, then returned quickly. Lescarbot describes the general nature of the combat which followed:

> Their wars are carried on solely by surprises, in the dead of night, or if by moonlight, by ambushes, or subtility . . . And after this manner they travel over great countries through the woods in order to surprise their enemy, and to assail him on the sudden. This keeps them in continual fear. For at the least noise in the world, as of a moose passing among branches and leaves, they take alarm. Those who have towns . . . are somewhat more assured; for having strongly barred the gate, they may . . . prepare themselves for the combat. (Lescarbot 1907(3):264, 267)

The subtility referred to above included such stratagems as pretending no interest in taking the offensive, while actually setting occasional ambushes for a few enemy victims at a time. Often such intruding ambushers were counter-ambushed while returning home. Infrequently there were formal battles, with subtle overtones. Hoffman gives some details of legendary formal battles, based upon his analysis of Micmac traditions of their wars with the Kwedech (St. Lawrence Iroquoians):

> [A] . . . formalized pattern of action based upon the host-guest relationship guided the behavior of both parties preliminary to an all-out battle. The relations between the two parties were limited to the chiefs, who used a formalized and pseudo-friendly form of speech. On some occasions the chief of the attacked village invited the attackers to a feast; this invitation was, of course, accepted. Following such a feast, the chief of each party rose to dance his war-dance and sing his war-song. The chiefs then engaged in a hand-to-hand duel between the lined-up warriors of both parties; as soon as one chief won, the battle became general. (Hoffman 1955a:659)

Wabanakia is birch-bark country, and the Dawnlanders' canoes were technological marvels, making hit and run warfare quite efficient. The riverine systems allowed remarkably fast travel, with relatively easy portages. St. Francis/Odanak was so located that no place in New England or eastern New York could feel safe from the raids originating there. And the Wabanaki were equally adept on salt water: Micmac raids went as far as Massachusetts. Indeed, Horace P. Beck (1959), in his synthesis of various relevant historical, literary, and ethnographic accounts, has called the Wabanaki "sea-fighters" in the Abenaki War (War 4 on list). English fishing vessels in the Gulf of Maine were their chief targets, but isolated New England coastal settlements were menaced, too.

In the pre-1675 aboriginal wars era, a warrior's usual weapons consisted of bow and arrows, war-club, spear, scalping-knife, and (according to Lescarbot 1907(3):268) "a shield which covered his whole body." When Micmac Membertou led his allies against the Chouacoet (Saco) Armouchiquois in 1607, he borrowed some French firearms — the first such use recorded (Lescarbot 1975; Morrison 1975). By the time King Philip's War (War 1 on list) started in 1675, the Wabanaki used firearms regularly for both hunting and warfare. Indeed, a major cause of the northern front of King Philip's War was the English attempt to take away from the Dawnlanders the firearms upon which they had become dependent (Morrison 1977). War paint seems to have been used to accomplish the two-way psychological effect — on enemy and on self — of indicating commitment to the dreadful role of combatant, requiring as altered a state of conscious endeavor as of symbolic appearance.

Regarding combat trophies, William Wood, an early English visitor to northern Massachusetts, states that:

> . . . their Captaines have long speares, on which if they returne conquerours they carrie the heads of their chiefe enemies that they slay in the wars: it being the custome to cut off their heads, hands, and feete to beare home to their wives and children, as true tokens of their renowned victorie.(Wood 1639:72)

Lescarbot, based at Port Royal, Nova Scotia, states otherwise, however:

> [They] . . . leave the carcass, contenting themselves with the scalp, which they dry, or tan, and make trophies with it in their cabins, taking therein their highest contentment. And when some solemn feast is held among them . . . they take them, and dance with them, hanging about their necks or their arms, or at their girdles, and for very rage they sometimes bite at them; which is a great proof of this disordered appetite for vengeance, whereof we have sometimes spoken. (Lescarbot 1907(3):271)

After both French and English governments started paying scalp bounties, white men joined the scalping business, too. For example, in the Abenaki War (War 4 on list) of the 1720s, Captain John Lovewell's bounty-hunting band was specifically offered by the Massachusetts General Court "one hundred pounds for each male scalp" (Kidder 1909:13–14). However, Lovewell and almost half his approximately three dozen men were killed in stalemate combat at present Fryeburg Maine, a battle famous in song and story (Morrison 1981).[2]

Captives and Slaves

"The victory won . . ., the conquerors keep the women and children, and cut off their hair, as was done of old in sign of contempt . . ."(Lescarbot 1907(3):270–271). Men were kept, too, at least temporarily for torture, a complex common throughout northeastern North America and best-known among Iroquoian peoples. Writing in the 1750s, missionary Maillard states:

> It was rarely the case that they did not devour some limbs, at least, of the prisoners they made upon one another, after torturing them to death in the most cruel and shocking manner: but they never failed of drinking their blood like water; it is now, some time, that our Micmakis especially are no longer in the taste of exercising such acts of barbarity. (Maillard 1758:32)

Torture was not just for adult males, however. For example, Jesuit missionary André Richard reports a 1662 incident in which a Montagnais(?) boy, about seven years old, suffering from four bullet wounds sustained while being captured by a Micmac war party, was first half-drowned and then "pulled and torn", before being given to a Micmac captain's wife for torture:

> She, wishing to show that she had courage as well as her husband, and that she could witness human bloodshed without shrinking and without weakness,

[2]Besides the songs and literature described in Morrison (1981), which largely are associated with the centennial observances of Lovewell's 1725 Fight and the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, older ballad materials (one even associated with the name of Ben Franklin) have been analyzed by Maine ethnohistorian and folklorist Fannie Hardy Eckstorm. Indeed, at least eight items by her, discussing some asect of Lovewell's Fryeburg (Pigwacket) Fight, are listed in Whitten's (1975) bibliography of Eckstorm's works.

However, it should be noted that Lovewell's Fight was a mere sideshow in the Abenaki War (War 4 on the list). The main events were the 1724 English raid on Norridgewock, Maine, in which Jesuit missionary Sebastian Rasles was killed, and the repeated raiding of English frontier settlements by Grey Lock's Western Abenaki warriors, from his castle near Mississquoi, Vermont, southward (Calloway 1987, 1989:55–57).

> drew a large knife from her bosom and plunged it with inhuman cruelty into the arm of that child, — half-dead as he already was, both from the wounds received in the encounter, and from the cruelty with which he had been treated in the water. Yet he was forced to sing as he beheld his own blood, which drew from him neither tear nor cry. The training which parents give their children to display courage in such circumstances, and the noise and din made by those Barbarians, cause such a stupefaction of their prisoners' senses that even the youngest are not wanting in the manifestation of fortitude. (JR 47:231–233)

Many tortured captives were only wounded, not killed, and became servants or slaves, the distinction being in practice not in theory, judicable only by actual treatment. Wabanaki society had three general social strata: 1) the elite (sagamores, shamans, highest elders, and their closest kinfolk); 2) the commoners (the entire remainder of the tribe); and 3) the captives (prisoners of war from hostile tribes, sometimes including other Wabanaki tribes, who were servants/slaves).

Occasionally, even before the French era with its English captives-for-ransom, an Indian captive was ransomed by his people. More often captives changed owners by being given away — by sagamores as gifts, by others for profit or in return for favors. Some captives were treated like members of the families they worked for, while others were constantly harassed by their owners. These extremes applied to English captives, too, as John Giles (1869) attested, having had a variety of owners on the St. John River before being ransomed. Once during a heat wave, Giles and a fellow English captive were being over-worked as water-carriers, until they falsely reported seeing Mohawks up the river, whereupon the entire village dispersed in terror, and their toil ceased.

French families often bought English captives from their Wabanaki captors, to use as servants until ransomed for money by New England relatives. Some English captives, however — and in earlier times some Indian captives, too — married into their captors' villages and became honoured citizens, even leaders. At St. Francis/Odanak, such a person was Joseph-Louis Gill, called "the White Chief of the Abenaki." Gill was born there in 1719, the son of two English captive parents. He married the daughter of a principal chief, and later became a principal chief himself. Frontier life during the colonial period was about as difficult with European material culture as with that of Indians, and some English captives were quite content to stay on, even if given the chance to return to New England. Many French persons married allied Indians and lived as Indians, the most colorful Wabanaki case being the Baron de Saint-Castin on Penobscot Bay, who became an honorary chief if not an actual sagamore, through his marriage with paramount sagamore Madokawando's daughter.

Conclusion

Before Europeans called all the shots, the Wabanaki peoples fought opposing alliances of each other, as well as other native peoples: Southern New England Algonquians (part of the Almouchiquois), St. Lawrence Algonquians (e.g., Montagnais), St. Lawrence Iroquoians (or Kwedech), and Five Nations Iroquois (especially Mohawk). Hoffman (1955a:609) states: "No cases of warfare are recorded . . . between the different divisions of the Micmac nation." However, "at various times," the Micmac fought "all of their immediate neighbors" — Kwedech, Etechemin, and Almouchiquois especially (Hoffman 1955b). Wabanaki aboriginal allies and enemies changed from time to time, but during the colonial wars era, after 1675, the only changes were in degrees of active or passive participation in overall Wabanaki support for the French cause. Yet even during periods of formal warfare, some Wabanaki preferred to trade their furs for English goods, and did so despite French protests (Morrison 1974, 1976b).

The one constant theme running through both the aboriginal and colonial wars was the Wabanaki fear of the Mohawk. From Western Abenaki through Micmac, there are oral traditions and historical references to the long-standing animosity between this easternmost of the Five Nations Iroquois League and all of the Dawnlanders. Although the Wabanaki supposedly raided the Mohawk, too, the Dawnlanders' almost psychotic fear of them indicates an uneven match. The fanatic commitment to military campaigning displayed by the Mohawk would have been hard indeed for any other northeastern Amerindian people to equal. For example, a Jesuit missionary report for March and April 1662 (JR 47:279) includes this statement, that the Mohawk "had set out for war, to the number of 200; and that they were resolved to return only at the end of two years, after having roamed over the entire land. Their design was to go to the country of the Etechemins." (See Erickson 1983 and Smith 1983).

So great was the Mohawk menace to the Wabanaki in otherwise-peaceful 1650 that Gabriel Druillettes, the first Jesuit missionary to the upper Kennebec River Abenaki, travelled to Puritan Boston to try to establish a joint defense force of French, English, and Wabanaki to curb the Iroquois threat (Morrison 1984). Druillettes did not succeed in his cause, even in that brief time of good feeling among all three peoples. Perhaps his visit even gave the English the idea that they put to good use from 1675 to 1760: hiring Five Nations Mohawk as mercenaries to fight New England's enemies, especially Wabanaki (throughout Wars 1 to 6 on the list). Eventually the French lured away a dissident splinter group of Mohawk to join the French military cause and religion. These became the Caughnawaga Mohawk of the Montreal area, and they allied themselves with the Wabanaki and other French Indians, but only in an overlord's position (Speck 1915; Frisch 1971).

Interesting as the Iroquois-Wabanaki conflict may be, it has always been eclipsed by public fascination with the Indian aspects of the more familiar European contest for supremacy in North America. Captivity narratives were the best-sellers of much of the 18th and 19th centuries. And in our own century, besides the rediscovery and reprinting of captivities per se, there has been a major interest in historical novels for young adults and children, based upon them. Often these try to make good stories better by compositing various separate accounts. Because of their strategic position in the contested overlap area of New France and New England, the Wabanaki loom large on this popular stage (Morrison 1979).[3] In this paper I have attempted to give a quick tour backstage, to allow some needed perspectives on the usual hackneyed Dawnland drama.

Appendix

Wars with Actual (1–6) or Potential (7–8) Conflict Between New-Englanders and Wabanaki*

* From east to west, the *Wabanaki* (= Dawnlanders) at one time or another included the MICMAC, MALISEET, PASSAMAQUODDY, PENOBSCOT, ABENAKI, and PENNACOOK, and the various divisions thereof.

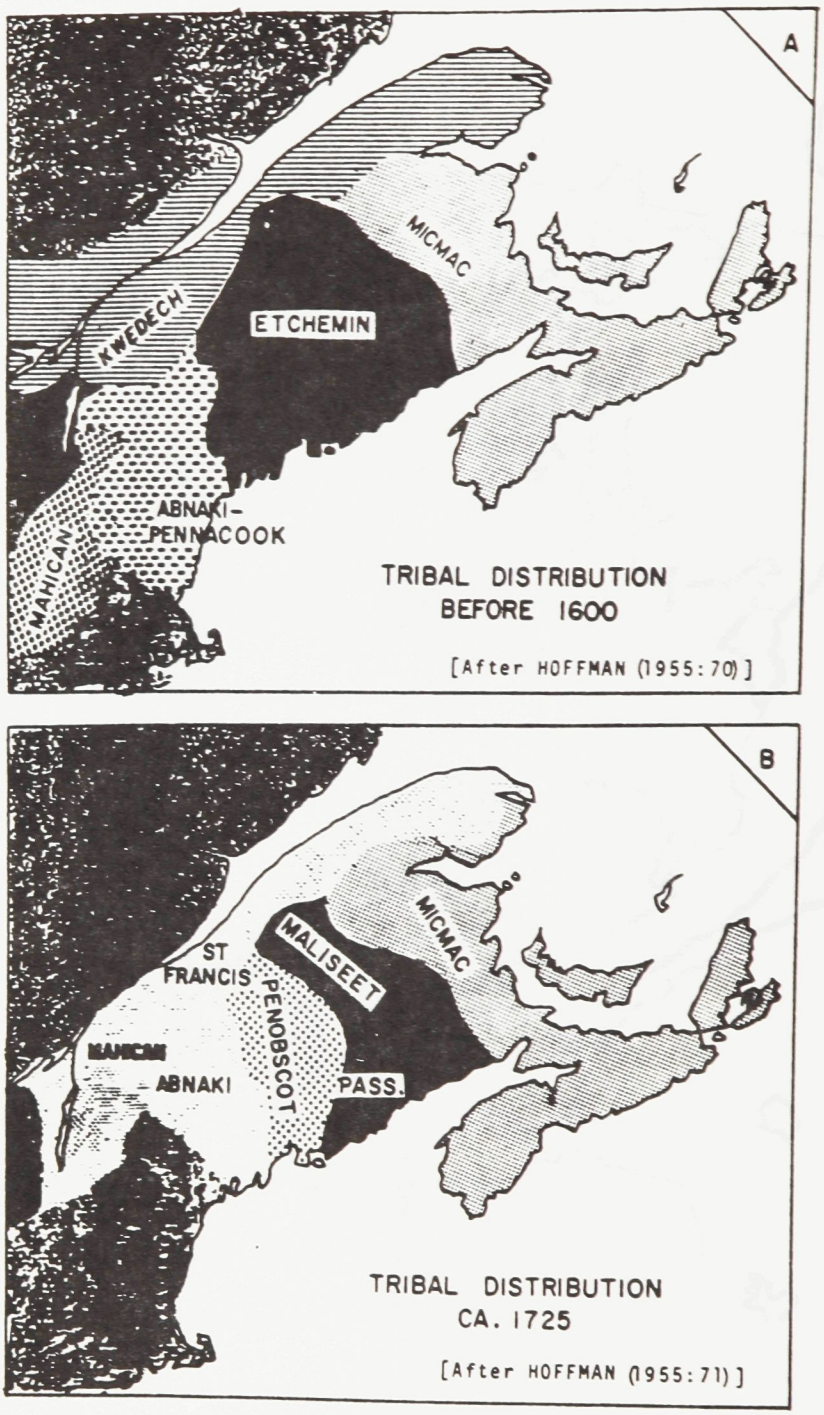
1.	King Philip's War	1675–1678
	Northern Front	
	(no European counterpart)	
2.	King William's War	1688–1699
	(1st French and Indian War)	
	(St. Castin's War)	
	(War of the League of Augsburg)	
	(War of the Grand Alliance)	

[3] Popular stage literally, in the case of ex-New York City/now Maine-based playwright Hank Beebe's (1983) musical, *Hold On, Molly!* Based on the popularized story of captive Molly Finney, who was taken at the 1756 Means Massacre at Flying Point in Freeport, Maine. Beebe's production tries, he says, to give an even-handed presentation to frontier grievances all around. His Indians are English-evicted Abenaki, his French are English-evicted Acadians, and Molly is an English victim of the joint evicteds' vengeance. Molly finally is rescued by her persistent lover, an enterprising English ship- captain, but only after several good points have been scored on behalf of the eventual losers of the continental conflict.

3.	Queen Anne's War (2nd French and Indian War) (War of the Spanish Succession)	1702–1714
4.	Abenaki War (Gov. Drummer's War) (Lovewell's War) (no European counterpart)	1721–1726
5.	King George's War (3rd French and Indian War) (Gov. Shirley's War) (War of the Austrian Succession)	1744–1748
6.	*The* French and Indian War (4th French and Indian War) (Seven Years War)	1754–1763
7.	War for American Independence (American Revolution) (French fought British, too)	1775–1783
8.	War of 1812 (2nd War for American Independence) (French not involved)	1812–1815


WABANAKIA
Scale: 0 100 Miles
LEGEND
1 St. Croix River
2 Passamaquoddy Bay
3 Merrimac River
4 Quacke / Yorke / Portland on Casco Bay
5 Androscoggin River
6 Sagadahoc Estuary
7 Kennebec River
8 Saco River
9 Penobscot Bay
10 Penobscot River
11 Mt. Desert Island
12 St. John River
13 Port Royal
45° LAT.
60° LONG.
CAPE BRETON ISLAND
MI'CMAC
GASPE PENINSULA
ETCHEMIN
ABNAKI
PENNACOOK
CAPE ANN
LAKE CHAMPLAIN

Map 1


A
MICMAC
ETCHEMIN
KNEDECH
ABNAKI-
PENNACOOK
MAHICAN
TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION
BEFORE 1600
[After HOFFMAN (1955:70)]
B
MICMAC
MALISEET
ST
FRANCIS
PENOBSCOT
MAHICAN
ABNAKI
PASS.
TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION
CA. 1725
[After HOFFMAN (1955:71)]

Maps 2 and 3

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JR = Jesuit Relations

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