

Minutes of 1800 – cont'd

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

Reprinted in this edition of the newsletter is Day 3 of the Council Meeting.

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

September 5th:

Present

The same as before

Captain John in continuation:

As soon as Miller made this report, I assembled all the Village and told them what Miller had said and asked them whether they knew anything of the matter or not. Capt. Isaac and Capt. Aaron answered there might be some lands undisposed[sic] of but they did not know there were any and added that a surveyor had been surveying all around these Lands many years before. They then told me to look into the business and if they only got 100 dollars they would be very happy, after which the Council broke up and Captain Isaac and the party went off. I then consulted with my own people and it was agreed that it was necessary to look into the business, saying if they could get 400 Dollars for it they would be well satisfied. Miller said he was not certain whether the Land remained as formerly or whether the Americans had claimed it as theirs, but he told me he would go, himself, and let me know whether they belonged to us or not. Miller never returned according to his promise, having said before he went away he would not return unless he found the Mohawks had a right to the Land. A little time after this I received a Message from Capt. Brant to inform me it was certain that some of these Lands remained undisposed[sic] of. I immediately assembled the Village and informed them what Capt. Brant had said. Capt. Isaac made answer that he would have nothing to do in the business, that he had thrown the land away and would have nothing more to say to it. After this declaration, I assembled my own people & told them it was a matter of consequence & I immediately appointed 4 persons to go to the States to learn what could be done in the business. Before the men went away I again assembled the Village to consult in what manner a letter could be sent to Govr. Jay on the business, but Capt. Isaac did not appear and Capt. Aaron was dead. After detaining the 4 men two days, Capt. Isaac came to my house; I was then sick and I told Captain Isaac I was unable to do any thing, but I requested of Capt. Isaac to get the letter wrote to Govr. Jay, to which he made no answer. I then sent a message to Capt. Isaac to his house, begging of him to get the letter wrote and he returned for answer that he would have nothing to do with it, as he had thrown the Land away. Finding Capt. Isaac would not have any thing to do in the business, I assembled my own people and got Capt. Bowen and Kennedy to assist me in writing a Letter to Govr. Jay. The 4 young men went off with this Letter and when they arrived at New York they they met two of Captain Brant's people, both of the name of Aaron Hill, who had been sent on the same business. When the young men returned they informed me that they were told by Govr. Jay the Land Board business was then over, but desired that I might go myself to New York in the January following and the same message was sent to Capt. Brant, that he also might go to New York. In July, having heard that Capt. Brant

and his party had passed, I set off with 5 of my party and on my arrival at Albany, I was informed by Governor Raenslow that he did not think the business could then be done and desired me to return in December following. I then returned home and made a report to the Village what had been told me. I also met Capt. Isaac on the road and told him I wished to speak to him to tell him what I had done, but he would not give me any answer. In the fall I again went to the States with two of my young men. Before I went I applied to Capt. Isaac for 6 dollars (which had been lent by me to Aaron who had paid the same to Isaac for my use) in order to assist me on my journey, but could not get it from him. On my arrival at Albany, I met Capt. Brant. The American Land Commissioners did not assemble until 15th of March following, 1797. Mr. Tenbrook, one of the Commissioners, laid his hand on my shoulder and said, "you talk about Lands, there is no Land belongs to you, the Lands were all gone 100 and odd years ago. We will, however, take it into consideration and see if anything can be done for you". Capt. Brant was in company at the same time. We remained there five months using all our endeavours to get the Lands sold and at last the Commissioners agreed to Pay us one thousand dollars and told us we were never after to make any more demands for Land. Governor Jay then provided a stage for Capt. Brant and myself and we were carried to Fort Schuyler where we received the money. Capt. Brant received 500 dollars and I received the other 500. Capt. Brant & myself and Party came together to Whites Town, where we separated [sic]. Before I parted with Capt. Brant I told him there was a sum of 250 Dollars due to my party for Lands he, Capt. Brant, had formerly sold and which I expected he would give me. Capt. Brant answered he could not pay me as the money belonged to the whole Village. On my return to this place, I intended to Assemble the Whole Village, but on enquiry, I found that Capt. Isaac and several men had gone down to Montreal, and I could not find out on what business. I however afterwards found that Capt. Isaac had applied to Sir John Johnson for a pension for his former services and that he had a very good right to it, and that Sir John had answered it was not in his power. When Capt. Isaac found that he could not get a pension, he made use of very improper expressions (Mr. Lorimier being interpreter) and added he would never serve the King again. When Captain Isaac returned from Montreal, some of his own party requested him to go down to my house to enquire what I had done in the States, but he refused saying, he would have nothing to do in the business, and as we have heard he has received the money and spent it, it is therefore useless to go to him. As soon as I heard that Capt. Isaac and his party had behaved so disrespectfully to me, I did not think proper to come forward to say any thing about it. Sometime after this I found a letter in my house directed to me but not signed by any body, expressing surprise that I had not given any account of what I had done in the States, after having been at home so long. I then wrote an answer to Capt. Isaac and his party telling them I was surprised they had not come down to me to enquire and be informed of what I had done, and told them also, it appeared by their conduct, as if I was a messenger sent by them, which I by no means look on myself to be. This letter of mine highly offended Capt. Isaac, who said to his people, "We will be a party by ourselves and will have no connection with Capt. John and his party". From this period the troubles took place in the Village - That Frenchman who sits there, named Paulus, has always been stirring up strife and discord among us and also his son-in-law Thomas, the Fidler [sic]. On the 9th of Octr. 1797, Capt. Isaac said to his people, "Now I think I can hold up my head, we will now begin and make regulations for ourselves and we will put down Captain John and he shall be no more - I will not follow his example, but will take a new method of my own". When I heard what Capt. Isaac had said, I was determined they should not put me down, as there was only one who could do it - that was the great Spirit. Soon after this I received a letter written by Thomas in the name of a Council where Isaac presided, desiring me to deliver up all the articles intrusted[sic] to me by Government, such as, I vow, Nails, Colours, Grindstones and two small cannons &c &c. The letter was delivered by the white man Mircle, and I returned an answer by him saying I would sooner lose my life, than give up the guns of the flag to them. After this there were constantly messengers passing from them to Sir John

Johnson, making false stories and misrepresentations of me. They also took upon themselves to open Public Houses for the sale of Spirituous Liquors in the Village and all the Clothing [?] which was given by Government was spent at these places and their families left naked. At one of these houses (Viz. John Hills) they had for a sign the picture of the Devil. Now, Brother, were you at the Head of a Village as I am, would you like such usage from them? You would certainly think it very hard and insufferable treatment. One of these new regulations was to beat and abuse all my friends and on New Year's Day last, one of Captain Isaac's party (Abraham Hill) came to the house of one Isaac, a trusty good man, and beat him very severely with a stick and afterwards went and bragged of it to his party. Ab. Hill and his Brother, soon after this, beat another of my people and nearly killed him, being beat as black as a kettle, without the least provocation. Nicholas Crawford, one of my people went up to Capt. Isaac and begged him to put a stop to the irregularities of his people, as it was uncertain whether the man they beat would live. Capt. Isaac answered them he could not do it as he had not that authority over them and was liable to be beat himself.

Captain John then delivered in the following papers:

Viz t.

Account of the Expencc which Captain John was at the from the 10th July 1789, Endeavouring for to sell Fort Hunter Lands, with the consent of the people of the Village.

	£	S	d
To Six persons, expences, who went with me to Niagara to meet Major Fundie	6.	10.	0
April 1792 To 3 persons who accompanied me to the Mohawk River on purpose to see Major Fundie, still concerning the Lands	4.	5.	0
February To my son William & 4 persons who went with him to New York concerning Land.	7.	0.	0
July 10 th , 1796 To 4 persons who went with me to Albany on purpose to meet the Commissioners.	19.	0.	0
November To 3 persons who went with me to Albany, the Commissioners desiring me to meet them there.	7.	0.	0
We being obliged to stay all winter in Albany, I was obliged to send unto Mr. John Forsyth, Montreal, for some money who sent me...	12.	10.	0
Halifax	45.	5.	0

Brother - You see my Expences with those who went with me, for which in Justice, I ought to be paid. Brother - now if we had lost this and had got nothing, Capt. Isaac would not have indemnified me for my trouble, for he himself would not be at any trouble about it, expecting the Commissioners would not give anything.

Signed - John Deserontyon

1st April 1797 - Albany

In company with Capt. Brant we received 1,000 dollars which we divided at Fort Schuyler, and can any reasonable person suppose that myself and two more could travel from Albany to this place without expense, and at the arrival at this place I found we had expended 100 dollars, and the expenses at different times to Amount to two hundred and thirty seven dollars as per account, which I still keep in my possession, and the whole amount to be three hundred and thirty seven dollars.

Signed - John Deserontyon

Brother - Since I first came to this place I have strove hard to settle the people in the best manner I was able. I have by the Assistance of our Great Father erected a Church and a school house, and have endeavoured to follow the example of Christians, like the white people in our neighbourhood, and I have used my influence to keep peace and quietness in the Village as far as lay in my power. We poor miserable tribe of Mohawks are very sensible of the great Bounty of our Great Father and are very thankful for it. We have been more indulged than we could expect, but since Capt. Isaac's party has been formed, the Door of the Church has been locked, for how could we assemble there with such a burden on our Minds? Before Capt. Isaac left the Grand River, the Church there was also shut up on account of the disturbances he made.

Brother - After hearing what I have said you must be sensible I am very much hurt. These people who have occasioned all these disturbances were driven away from the Grand River for the same kind of behaviour and came here for shelter. When they arrived I did everything in my power to accommodate them.

Now Brother, I shall begin on another subject. You say it was by Gov. Hunter's orders you came here to get a just account of the sad affairs which lately happened here. Last year the disputes between the parties began to be more serious, & they continued growing worse and worse to the time of the unfortunate business. About a year ago, Laurence, the Deceased, sent for Capt. Isaac to endeavour to compromise their differences and make friends, and expected he would come, but Capt. Isaac refused coming. The son of Isaac had frequently abused his cousins, the sons to the Deceased, and was constantly irritating & treating them in an abusive manner, having been made a Chief by his father's party. On the 22nd October last, when the King's presents were delivered at this place, Capt. Isaac and Laurence were at great variances, and when Capt. Isaac found the division had not been made agreeable to his Wishes, he seized by force what had not been divided and carried them away to his own party & said he would divide them in the manner he pleased. Laurence seeing this behavior of Capt. Isaac's became more inveterate against him than before. Capt. John also states that a young man named William now present, had informed Laurence sometime before the murder, that mischief was intended against him and desired him to be on his guard and that Ab. Hill, one of Isaac's party, had told this young man that murder would be committed. Capt. John then says - I went up to Laurence's house on hearing this and advised him to keep himself quiet and not think of the threats he had heard, that perhaps it might not happen, and if it should happen, it cannot be helped, but I advise you not to be the first aggressor. On the 4th June, Laurence and his family came to my house saying it was the King's Birthday and they ought to pay attention to it, but having lost my son a little before I did not intend to have any mirth about my house. Laurence and his people were, however, pressing and saying it was a day they should celebrate, desired me to give them something to drink the King's health and make a little merry. I complied with the request and sent for a gallon of Rum, thinking that sufficient. They then fired a salute and drank the Rum. Laurence then said he would go home, but on the Invitation of my wife he staid[sic] all night. My Wife was induced to keep them all night for fear of accident, knowing that Isaac's party were drunk about the village. As Laurence went home in the morning and was passing a House where some of Isaac's part were, and being still in Liquor said, "You may hear what I say and you may go and carry the news to your Great Chief", which gave them offence. Some days before the 4th June, Laurence sent his youngest son to Capt. Isaac's house requesting him to come to his father's, that they might endeavour to compromise their differences, that things by long delay were getting worse, and the Capt. Isaac returned for answer that he would not go. On the 9th June, a Young man called Thomas and his younger Brother, sons of the deceased Laurence, went up to a salt lick above Capt. Isaac's where the Deer usually come out of the Woods, and after staying some time without success, the elder proposed to go home again, saying that tomorrow the other brother would come. On their way

back they passed Capt. Isaac's House, when he told them to tell their father not to make a practice of beating people as he had done, and if he did not leave it of, he, himself, would put a stop to it. The young man, Thos., said he did not know any thing his father had done amiss. Capt. Isaac then told him to hold his tongue, or he would take a stick and flog him and looked about for one, saying you cannot dispute with me; for I am a great Warrior. Neither can your father dispute with me; Tell him to come here, taking his Tomahawk and saying I am a great man. Thomas then said "why did you not go when my father sent for you, he sent for you with a good design". Capt. Isaac answered he would not go to see such a fellow. Thos. though it extraordinary to hear such language. Capt. Isaac then said, "I tell you again to tell your father to come over and do not forget it". The young man looked pale when he got home, which being observed by his mother, he told her it was in consequence of what Capt. Isaac had been saying to him. The young man then related to his father what Capt. Isaac had said. In the evening of the same day, Laurence, the Deceased, seeing Captain Isaac's negro boy pass, desired him to tell his master that as they could not meet at each other's houses, to point out a place where they could meet and talk over their differences; the Widow of the Deceased being now present, and hearing the message sent. Laurence's eldest son (who was killed at the same time with his Father) desired his father, as he was going to bed, to awake him early in the morning as he and his Brother, Thomas, were going to hunt. At sun rise in the morning, some time after Laurence's sons had gone hunting, Capt. Isaac's negro boy came to the door and told Laurence that his master was at the place appointed, which was half way between their houses, and was waiting for him and begged him to make hast and come immediately. The night before Capt. Isaac told young Mircle and John Loff to go with him in the morning and he would shew them how to go to war, that he only wanted them to look on and he would show them what the warriors did. Laurence followed the boy out of the door and asked him if his master was there. The boy answered, "he thought he was there by that time". Laurence hearing that imagined he was alone. Peggy, an Indian woman who was in the house, said as Laurence was lame, it was a pity he should go alone, and sent a younger son of Laurence's after the two Brothers who had gone hunting. They were met by him coming home. When they got into the house they put away their Guns and followed their Father who had gone, before they came home, with no weapon but his walking stick; and the young men having only their Tomahawks, which they usually carry. Laurence's wife, wishing to bring her husband back, went after him with two other women, but when she ascended a hill, she perceived he was a considerable distance and she heard Isaac's party whooping and hollering. When Laurence arrived at the place appointed, Capt. Isaac came up to him with a sword under his arm and wished him a good morning, saying I wanted very much to see you before, and hope you will quit that way of beating and abusing people where you meet them. Laurence answered, "I never struck any of your Children or any person belonging to you, but you always make a practice of beating my Children". Capt. Isaac then took the sword from under this arm and said, "Don't you say a word, but hold your tongue", on which Laurence took his stick and stuck him on the shoulder. Capt. Isaac's son immediately called out - How! -How! - an Indian expression signifying - Come on! - Come On! - Let us begin! - upon which all of Isaac's party, who had their Knives & Tomahawks, came forward, at which time Laurence had Isaac by the Breast on the ground. At this time two women with Clubs (one of which is produced and is about 4 feet long) came up and struck Laurence very violently, they afterwards with the same Clubs came up to Laurence's Wife and knocked her down so that she was for sometime senseless. While Laurence had a hold of Isaac on the ground, John Green, an Indian, came up and struck Laurence a violent blow with the axe part of his Tomahawk so that it was sometime before he could get it out again. The Widow of Laurence had also been attacked with a club by Captain Isaac's daughter and was left for dead on the ground, on which the widow, Laurence's daughter-in-law, attacked Isaac's daughter and overpowered her, on which Isaac's daughter called out to her father's negro to come to her assistance, which he did and knocked her down with a stick.....Adjourned until tomorrow at 10 o'clock.