

ANTHOLOGY of TRADITIONAL  
**TOBACCO STORIES**



C. H. H. H. H.

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ANTHOLOGY  
*of*  
TRADITIONAL  
**T O B A C C O**  
**S T O R I E S**





**Acknowledgment**

This collection of stories and facts about traditional Native American tobacco was compiled for the project, “Reducing Cancer Risks Among Native American Youth in the Northeast,” sponsored by Columbia University School of Social Work, New York, NY. The project was funded by the National Cancer Institute, 1992.



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## ORIGIN OF TOBACCO (NIPMUCK)

Long ago there was a wise and peace-loving elder who travelled from tribe to tribe encouraging cooperation and friendship between all nations. He was a spokesman for the cause of good will and his mission was to promote unity among all beings.

At a very great age the elder called a council meeting of elders and representatives from the many clans, tribes, and nations which he had visited and taught. He told them that his work was coming to an end and he must soon join the spirit world. However, he promised to return in a new form as a reminder of the peaceful brotherhood he had sought to establish among the nations.

A short time after his death a new plant sprouted from his grave. This was tobacco and has been used in ceremonies ever since as a symbol of unity, honesty and peace. The rising smoke from the pipe is a reminder that the thoughts and prayers of people go upward to the Creator.

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*by: Little Turtle, Nipmuck Tribe, Dudley Band  
from: Concord Museum, Concord, MA c 1988*



*AMONG THE **SENECAS**, THE TOBACCO PLANT IS ALLOWED TO GROW . . . until the leaves are twice as large as the space enclosed between the outstretched and joined thumbs and forefingers, and then, in order to insure its virtue, it is plucked only when a thunderstorm is approaching; otherwise the tobacco is thought to be of inferior quality and not nearly as acceptable to the Powers. Improperly gathered tobacco, when cast in the fire, burns immediately, and the smoke incense rises straight to the sky, whereas, when picked at the approach of a thunderstorm the tobacco writhes and wiggles when cast upon the coals, as though it is alive, and the smoke swirls upward with its message.*

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## CREATION OF TOBACCO (WISCONSIN LAC DU FLAMBEAU CHIPPEWA)

Wenebojo . . . walked along until he came to a lot of brush. He walked right into it. After he had passed through the bushes, Wenebojo turned around and looked back. There was a trail of red behind him going through the brush. Then Wenebojo thought of his uncles. He said, “When my uncles are out of tobacco and have nothing to smoke, they can always have these to smoke, and they will call them bakwecpakuzigunen.” Bakwec means “woods.” The word means “a stick that grows in the woods.” That’s the wild kinnickinnick.

Wenebojo walked on again until he came to a river. There he found some more brush and sticks. He walked through it and then looked back again at the brush he’d been through. His scabs and his sores were hanging on all the sticks and brush. He thought about his uncles again. He said, “They will smoke these, and they will be sweet.” He named them gekadugnugekwukin. That means “speckled stick.” It’s another kind of kinnickinnick, very hard to get around here now. It tastes very good and sweet.

Then Wenebojo walked along again until he came to another bunch of brush. Then he walked spread-legged through it; and when he looked back, it was all red. Those were red bushes three or four feet high. White people sometimes plant them in front of their houses. It’s another kind of kinnickinnick. Wenebojo thought about his uncles again. “They can smoke these when they have nothing else to smoke.” He named them memiskwakwakin miskwabimizin. That means “red hardwood stick.” The miskwa that’s repeated in there means “red.”

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*from: Victor Barnouw, Wisconsin Chippewa Myths and Tales and Their Relation to Chippewa Life. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.*



*AMONG THE NEW ENGLAND INDIANS, NO TRIBAL RELIGIOUS ceremony or intertribal conference begins without the pipe and the smoke of tobacco. A pipe is the first courtesy offered guest or stranger.*

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## FIRE-IN-THE-MOUTH (CHEROKEE)

In the beginning of the world, when people and animals were all the same, there was only one tobacco plant. Everyone came to this plant for their tobacco until the Dagulku geese stole it and carried it away to the south.

The people suffered without tobacco. One old woman grew so thin and weak that everyone said she would die unless she could get tobacco to keep her alive.

Various animals, first the large animals and then the smaller ones, volunteered to bring back the tobacco. But the Dagulku killed everyone before they could get to the plant. The little mole tried to reach the plant by burrowing underground, but the Dagulku saw his tunnel ridges and killed him as he emerged from the ground.

At last the hummingbird offered, even though the others said he was entirely too small and might as well stay home.

“Please let me try,” he begged. So they showed him a plant in a field and told him, “Let us see how you would go about it.”

In an instant the hummingbird was gone and they saw him perched on the plant, and then almost immediately he was back again. No one had seen him coming or going, because he was so swift.

“That is the way I’ll do it,” said the hummingbird.

They agreed to let him try.

The hummingbird flew away. When he came in sight of the tobacco, the Dagulku were guarding the plant carefully.

Quick as a flash the hummingbird darted down on the plant - tsa! - and snatched off the top with the leaves and seeds, and was off again before the Dagulku knew what had happened.

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Before he reached home with the tobacco, the sick old woman had lost consciousness; her family thought she was dead. When the hummingbird arrived with the tobacco, he blew the smoke into her nostrils. With a cry of “Tsalu!” (fire in the mouth), the old woman opened her eyes and was well again.

For southern Indians, tobacco use was not a personal habit; it was reserved for special occasions. They believed tobacco had mystical powers. They smoked it to ward off evil spirits and to bring forth friendly ones. They smoked to put themselves in touch with the spirit world. They smoked as a gesture of friendliness, using the peace pipe. And they smoked before waging war.

The Creeks valued the tobacco plant so highly they made it a warrior and gave it the war name hitci. The Cherokees called tobacco tsalu, “fire in the mouth.”

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*from: Virginia Pounds Brown and Laurella Owens, Southern Indian Myths and Legends. Birmingham, Alabama: Beechwood Books, 1985.*



*AMONG THE **DELAWARES**, TOBACCO IS CONSIDERED TO BE A magic plant. It is offered to Kee-shay-lum-moo-kawng, and to the lesser spiritual agents called Manitowuk, as the occasion warrants. Tobacco is burned like incense in an open fire, and medicine men use it during their prayers. . . . When an herbalist gathers roots or leaves in the woods, he customarily sprinkles tobacco at the foot of the tree, or around the plant, as an offering to the spirit world. Tobacco, in addition to its many religious purposes, is used to quiet angry waters; to allay destructive winds; to seek good luck in hunting; to return thanks to the Creator; to protect a traveler; and to console the bereaved.*

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## THE ORIGIN OF CORN AND TOBACCO (PENOBSCOT)

A famine came upon the people and the streams and lakes dried up. No one knew what to do to make things different. At length a maid of great beauty appeared and one of the young men married her. But she soon became sad and retiring and spent much time in a secret place. Her husband followed her one day and discovered that she went into the forest and met a snake, her lover. He was sad, but he did not accuse her; he loved her so much he did not wish to hurt her feelings. He followed her, however, and she wept when she was discovered. Clinging to her ankle was a long green blade of a plant resembling grass. She then declared that she had a mission to perform and that he must promise to follow her instructions; if he did so, he would obtain a blessing that would comfort his mind in sorrow and nourish his body in want, and bless the people in times to come. She told him to kill her with a stone axe, and to drag her body seven times among the stumps of clearing in the forest until the flesh was stripped from the bones and finally to bury the bones in the center of the clearing. He was told to return to his wigwam and wait seven days before going again to the spot. During this period she promised to visit him in a dream and instruct him what to do afterward. He obeyed her. In his dream she told him that she was the mother of corn and tobacco and gave him instructions how to prepare these plants to be eaten and smoked. After seven days he went to the clearing and found the corn plant rising above the ground and the leaves of the tobacco plant coming forth. When the corn had born fruit and the silk of the corn ear had turned yellow he recognized in it the resemblance to his dead wife. Thus originated the cultivation of both corn and tobacco. These plants have nourished the bodies of the Indians ever since and comforted their minds in trouble.

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*from: "Penobscot Tales and Religious Beliefs," Journal of American Folklore, volume 48 (January-March 1935).*



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## THE FIRST TOBACCO (HURON-WYANDOT)

Long ago, the Hawk clan of the Wyandot people lived in a village beside a lake. Clear streams flowed into the lake, coming down from the surrounding hills, where grew tall and beautiful trees. From the village, the hills looked blue.

In the village lived an old man of the Bear Clan and his young wife of the Hawk Clan. Two daughters were born to them, and they were very happy. But when the first daughter was twelve years of age, she died, and her parents suffered much grief. When the second daughter was twelve years of age, she too died. The mother soon died of grief, and the old man was left alone in his lodge. Sad and heavy was his heart, but he went about the village doing good. All the people of the Hawk Clan held him in high esteem.

One day when the old man and some of his neighbors were standing beside the lake, they saw a flock of very large birds come flying over the blue hills. They were giant hawks – half a tree tall they seemed to be.

Astonished, the people watched them circle over the lake and over its shores. Suddenly one of the birds fell to the ground and lay on the shore, its wings thrown above its back like a dove shot with an arrow. For a short time the other hawks soared overhead, dipped and soared again, calling and screaming to each other. Then they flew back over the blue hills from where they had come.

In terror, the people of the village had watched the scene. Up and down the shore of the lake they ran wildly, calling and shouting to each other in their fright. “The great bird is an omen of evil,” they said. “What disaster is coming to us?”

Only the old man was not afraid. He tried to quiet the others. “I will go to the bird that fell down,” he said.

“Oh no,” said his friends. “Do not go to the hawk.”

“I am not afraid,” he replied. “I am old, and I am full of sorrow. My life is almost

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done. The heavens are black, and I am alone. It can matter little if I die, and I am not afraid of death. I will see the stricken hawk.”

So the old man started alone toward the fallen bird. The way was longer than he thought, and darkness overtook him. But the hawk remained where it had fallen. As he came toward it, a great flame swept down from the sky and burned the bird to ashes. When the old man came to the spot, ashes lay all about. Within them was a living coal. When he stopped to look at it closely, he saw within the coal of fire the face of his first-born daughter. He picked her up, and she spoke to him.

By this time, people of the village, afraid of what might happen to the old man, had reached the place also. They too heard the voice of the old man’s first-born daughter.

“I have returned with a precious gift for my people, the Wayandots. I was sent with it to my own clan, the Hawk people. Here it is.”

Then she opened her hands, and the people saw that they were full of very small seeds. These the girl planted in the ashes of the fire from which she had risen. Soon a large field of tobacco grew around the place where the great hawk had lain.

For a time the girl lived with her people. She taught them how to cultivate and cure the tobacco. She taught them to make offerings of it and to smoke it in their pipes.

Thus the Wayandots were more fortunate than any other people. They alone had tobacco.

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*from: Ella Clark, Indian Legends of Canada. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960.*



*AMERICAN INDIANS VIEW TOBACCO AS A PLANT WITH A SACRED character and use it in many native ceremonies. . . . There is **no evidence** that the Indians become habituated to its use in any form. The various uses of tobacco are not recreational and many have deep religious significance.*

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## THE TOBACCO WARRIOR (CREEK)

A young man was courting a young woman. He told her he wanted to marry her and take her to his camp. She consented and they lay down together.

Later the man passed the spot where he and his wife had been and saw a pretty little plant growing there. He brushed the leaves from around it, and each time he passed that way he tended to the plant.

When the plant was about a foot high, the young man stripped off some of the leaves and smelled them. They smelled good to him. He threw some leaves in the fire, which made them smell even better.

He showed the leaves to the old men of his tribe, and told them how the plant had started.

The old men had noticed the plant, but they did not know what it was. Then one of them crumbled some of the leaves in his hand and put them in a hollowed-out corncob, lighted it, and smoked it. The smell was delightful.

“The leaves are good,” the old men said.

This is how tobacco was given to human beings. Since the man and woman were happy and peacefully inclined to each other, tobacco has ever since been used in making peace among the Indian tribes.

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*from: Virginia Pounds Brown and Laurella Owens. Southern Indian Myths and Legends.  
Birmingham, Alabama: Beechwood Books, 1985.*



*WITHIN THE ANISHNABEG [OJIBWA], THERE IS A STRONG inclination toward peace; there is a need to touch Kitché Manitou. Of all plants, none is more suitable than tobacco for inducing peace or transporting man's thoughts and prayers to Kitché Manitou.*

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## HOW GLUSKABE STOLE TOBACCO (ABENAKI)

Long ago, Gluskabe and his Grandmother, Woodchuck, lived alone in a small lodge near the water. One day his Grandmother said to him, "My Grandchild, it is sad that we have no tobacco."

"What is tobacco, Grandmother?" Gluskabe said

"Ah, Grandson, tobacco is a great gift from Tabaldak, Our Maker. If you are sick, you need only tobacco out into the woods, and you will find the medicine plants. Then, when you place some tobacco on the earth, you can pluck those plants from the root and use them. Tobacco is a great comfort to the old. They can smoke it in their pipes and see all the happy days of their lives in the smoke as it lifts up. When you pray and burn tobacco, that smoke carries your prayers straight up to Our Maker. Tobacco is a very good thing indeed, when it is used as Tabaldak intended."

"Then we should have tobacco," Gluskabe said. "Where can I find it, Grandmother?"

"Ah, Grandson," Grandmother Woodchuck said, "it is not easy to get tobacco. It is on a big island far out in the water. A person with great magic lives there. He raises tobacco and will not share it because of selfishness. He is very dangerous. Those who go to steal tobacco never return."

"Huunh!" Gluskabe said. "I will go and get tobacco, and I will share it with everyone."



*AMONG THE TOHONO O'ODHAM OF ARIZONA, BLOWING SMOKE upon someone is a mild form of purification. Tobacco smoke is used by the shaman to cure illness and also by those who purify a man who has been in contact with supernatural power. In the old rituals, blowing tobacco smoke was a form of prayer which placed a man in contact with the supernatural.*

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Then Gluskabe went to the edge of the water. There was a hollow log there, and Gluskabe shaped it into a canoe. He put it into the water.

“Now,” he said, “let me see if this canoe will go.”

He pushed it with his foot, and the hollow log canoe shot out across the water. It went one whole look, as far as a person can see.

“This canoe is not fast enough,” Gluskabe said.

Then Gluskabe took a big white birch tree. He stripped off the bark and fashioned it into a canoe and put it into the water.

“Now,” he said, “let me see if this canoe will go.”

He pushed it with his foot, and the birch bark canoe went very swiftly over the water. It went two looks, but Gluskabe was not satisfied.

“This canoe is not fast enough,” he said.

Then Gluskabe fashioned a boat with ribs of cedar and the skin of a moose. He put it into the water and pushed it out and it went three looks. But Gluskabe was not happy with the moose hide canoe.

“This canoe,” he said, “is not fast enough.”

Gluskabe looked around. There at the edge of the water was a great white boulder. Gluskabe turned it over, shaped it into a canoe and put it into the water.



*THE PEACE PIPE, OR CALUMET, IS SMOKED BY SOME OF THE Indian tribes of North America as a symbol of brotherhood and peace. A lighted pipe is passed around to those attending important gatherings, as well as peace conferences, each participant taking a puff. Since the tobacco plant is thought to be sanctioned by more than human power, it makes permanent and sacred the bonds of brotherhood, according to Indian belief.*

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“Now,” he said, “let me see if this canoe will go.”

He pushed it with his foot, and it shot out across the water with Gluskabe inside. It went four looks almost as quickly as one could think, leaving a great white wave behind it. Gluskabe was very pleased.

“Now I can go and get tobacco.”

He went back into the lodge. “Grandmother,” he said. “I am going now to steal tobacco. But first you must tell me the name of my enemy, the magician who will not share the tobacco.”

Grandmother Woodchuck shook her head. “Who will hunt for me and bring me wood for my fire and water for my cooking if Grasshopper kills you? No, Gluskabe, I cannot tell you his name.”

Gluskabe laughed. “Oleohneh, Grandmother,” he said. “When I return, you will be the first one to smoke tobacco in your pipe.”

Then Gluskabe climbed into his white stone canoe. He pushed off from the shore, and the canoe shot over the waves towards the island of the magician, Grasshopper. As the canoe sped along, Gluskabe sang:

Grasshopper, you are going to travel,  
Grasshopper, you are going to travel,  
You must leave your home now,  
Grasshopper, you are going to travel.

He sang his song four times. By the time he finished, he had reached the island, and, sure enough, just as he had wished in his song, Grasshopper was not there. The



*AMONG NEW ENGLAND INDIANS, TOBACCO IS A SACRED PLANT and religious ceremonies attend the preparation of the ground and the planting of the seed.*

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cooking pot was still on the fire, and a beautiful clay pipe decorated with bright stones was beside the fire, with smoke still rising from its bowl, but the magician was nowhere to be seen. Gluskabe picked up the pipe.

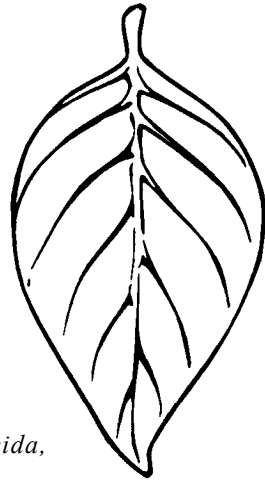
“Grasshopper,” he said, “you are not going to need this anymore.” Then he placed the pipe in his own pouch. Inside the lodge on many racks, tobacco bundles were drying. Gluskabe took them all and placed them in his canoe. He took all of the tobacco and did not leave a single seed. All around the fields were the bones of those who had come to steal tobacco and were killed by Grasshopper. Gluskabe gathered all of the bones together and then shouted.

“Get up!” Gluskabe yelled. “Your enemy is coming back.” Then all of the bones came back together, and all of the people came back to life. They were very happy, even though some of them had been in such a hurry to return to life that they had gotten the wrong bones. Some of them had legs or arms that were too short or too long. The old people say that is why there are crippled people today. Gluskabe shared the tobacco among them. He mended their boats, which had been broken by Grasshopper, and sent them back to their homes.



*AMONG THE \*SIX NATIONS (IROQUOIS Confederacy), the tobacco cultivation process itself reflects their great respect for this particular crop. Tobacco is not grown with other crops. It is usually cultivated by men which is interesting because crop cultivation among the Six Nations is considered woman's work. As the plants mature, the Six Nations gathers the leaves, carefully leaving the stems and the seeds to propagate new tobacco plants.*

*\* The Six Nations are: Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondago, Tuscarora and Seneca.*



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“Tobacco is for everyone,” he said. “You must always share it and give it freely or it will not do you good.”

Then Gluskabe climbed back into his white stone canoe. He pushed it with his foot, and it flew back across the waves to the place where his Grandmother Woodchuck waited.

“Grandmother,” he said, “I have brought tobacco. Never again will it be scarce.”

Grandmother Woodchuck was very happy. She filled her pipe with the tobacco and smoked it and gave thanks to Tabaldak. She began to sing a song in praise of her Grandson, Gluskabe. But as she sang, the magician, Grasshopper, came. He came across the sky in a magical canoe.

“YOU!” He shouted in a loud and terrible voice. “You have stolen my tobacco!”



*IN EASTERN NORTH AMERICA, TOBACCO IS SMOKED AS PART of a prayer and as part of the diplomacy of receiving guests and ambassadors.*

*In eastern North America, smoke from tobacco is used to fumigate ritually important objects such as the body of a dead chief, the body of a bear, and a sacred stone.*

*In eastern North America, tobacco is applied to the body in solid and liquid forms as a medicine.*

*In eastern North America, ascending tobacco smoke is thought of as an offering to the spirits, but the offering can be in solid form as well.*

*In eastern North America, tobacco is tied onto a prayer stick, included in medicine bundles, burned under the hearth for the Green Corn Ceremony, buried with the dead, deposited by waterfalls and other striking natural features, thrown into fire, thrown into water, and deposited as an offering to the spirits of the medicinal herbs, spirits of game animals, and to snakes.*



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But Gluskabe was not frightened. He reached up with one hand and grabbed Grasshopper from his flying canoe.

“That is not so,” Gluskabe said. “It was not right for you to keep it all to yourself. Now my children and my children’s children will have tobacco to enjoy.” Then he rubbed Grasshopper between his hands, and Grasshopper became very small.

“Please,” Grasshopper said in a small voice, “give me seeds so I can grow tobacco for myself.”

But Gluskabe shook his head. “No longer can you be trusted to grow tobacco. That will be the job of my children and of my children’s children. But since you were the first to grow tobacco, I will give you enough to enjoy in your lifetime. Open your mouth.”

Grasshopper opened his mouth and Gluskabe filled it with tobacco. Grasshopper was pleased, but he spoke again. “Give me back my canoe so that I can fly across the sky.”



*IN THE FIRST PLACE, TOBACCO IS A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT. IT WAS THE father of Nanabush who gave the tobacco and shared the custom of smoking with his son after their epic battle as a symbol of peace. Nanabush in turn passed on the custom to the **Anishnabeg** as a ceremony. Thereafter, the Anishnabeg smoke the Pipe of Peace before great councils, after war, and before other ceremonies. . . .*

*In the second place tobacco is in the nature of an incense sweet to the taste and fragrant to smell. No other plant is endowed with such qualities.*

*In the third place, tobacco is a natural child of Mother Earth and Father Sky, the natural victim to be offered in sacrifice in the smoking of the Pipe of Peace. It is central to the ceremony. The leaf comes to an end and, commingled with the breath of life, is borne skyward to Kitche Manitou. What is given by the giver is returned in symbol of gratitude by the recipient.*

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But Gluskabe shook his head. “It is not right for you to have such a magical canoe. I will split the back of your coat and give you wings. Now you will be able to fly on your own, but you will no longer be able to frighten the people.”

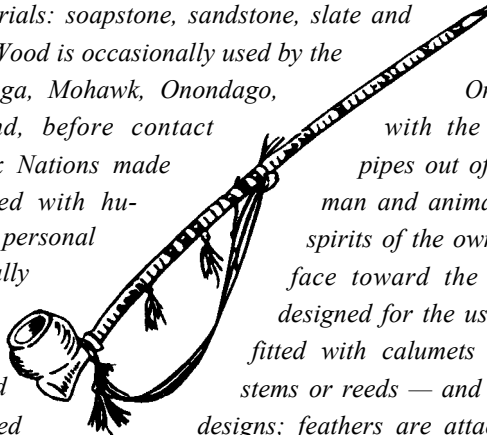
So it is that to this day tobacco is used by the children of Gluskabe and their children’s children, and when they use it as Tabaldak intended, always giving it freely to others, it does them no harm. As for Grasshopper, he flies about with the wings Gluskabe gave him and chews his mouthful of tobacco which will last all his life. And he remembers the lesson taught to him by Gluskabe. If you ever pick up any grasshopper it will immediately spit out its tobacco as if to say, “See, I am willing to share.”

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*from: I Become Part Of It: Sacred Dimensions in Native American Life. Edited by D. M. Dooling and Paul Jordan-Smith. Parabola Books, New York. 1989.*

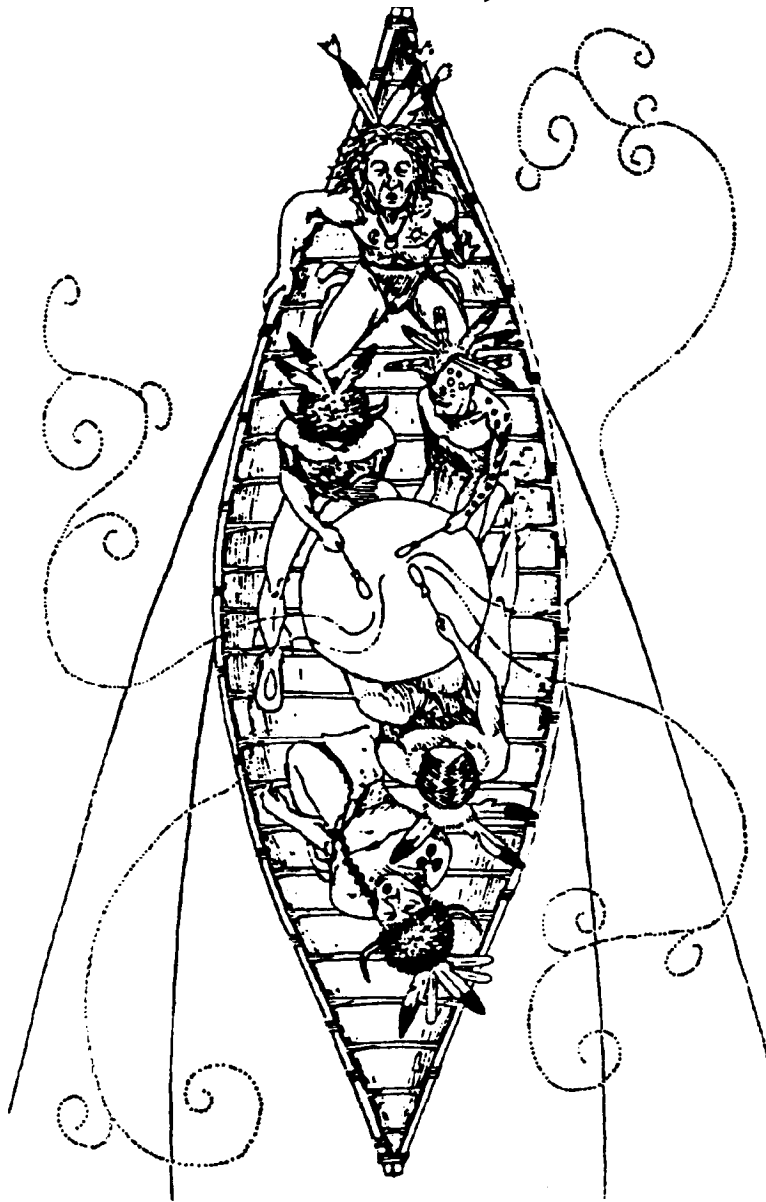


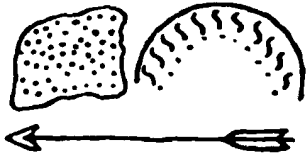
THE BOWLS OF THE SMOKING PIPES ARE MADE FROM A WIDE variety of materials: soapstone, sandstone, slate and catlinite, a red claystone. Wood is occasionally used by the **Ojibwa and Six Nations** (Cayuga, Mohawk, Onondago, Tuscarora) and, before contact with the Europeans, the **Huron and Six Nations** made pipes out of clay. The pipes are often carved with human and animal figures which might represent personal spirits of the owner or clan symbols. They usually face toward the user, since the decoration is designed for the user’s benefit. The pipe bowls are fitted with calumets — long, elaborately decorated stems or reeds — and embellished with painted or carved designs; feathers are attached to indicate the special significance of the pipe.



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# The Great Gift, Tobacco





Many Winters ago  
(arrow going back)



a band of Iroquois, People  
of the Longhouse,



were camped in  
a village on the Ohio River.



One day



as the people of the village were  
going about their regular work,



a strange sound was heard coming  
from the river.

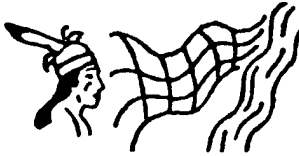
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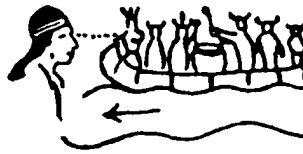
The people forgot their activities and rushed to the river bank to see where the strange sound was coming from.



They stood looking at each other and listened to the weird sound. The noise sometimes sounded like howl of a strange animal, and then again, it resembled the chant of singing people.



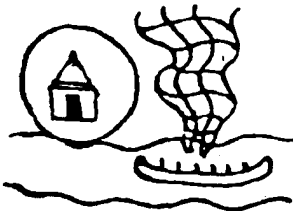
As the people stood listening to the peculiar music, a loud voice was heard coming from up the river.



As they looked toward the sound of the voice, they saw floating toward them, a large canoe filled with strange beings. These peculiar people were beating a large kettle drum which was in the center of the canoe. They were chanting a strange song.



By their peculiar dress, the singers appeared to be medicine men.



As the canoe floated toward the village

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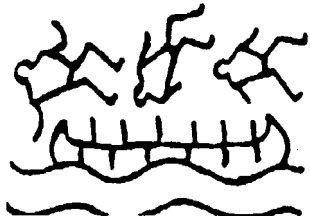
. . . the loud voice was again heard coming from the canoe.



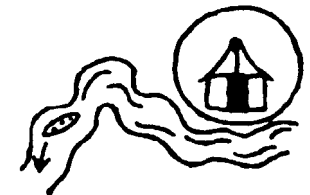
It told the inhabitants of the village to go back to their homes, and to remain indoors. It said that if they disobeyed, bad luck would come to them.



The people became very frightened, and most of them rushed to their houses. There were some who refused to be frightened by the strange beings. They stood on the bank of the river and watched the approaching canoe.



As the canoe floated by them, those men who remained on the river bank fell down dead.

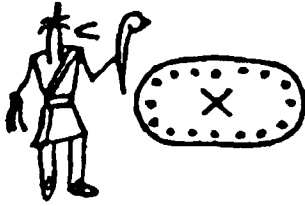


The canoe with the strange singing men continued floating on downstream, and disappeared around the bend in the river.

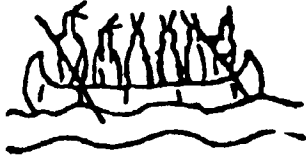


The next day. . .

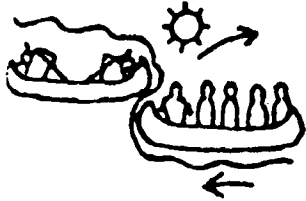
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... one of the relatives of the dead men organized a war party.



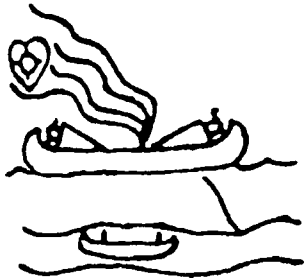
In their canoe, they paddled down the river in search of the strange canoe. They were seeking revenge for the death of their relatives.



After traveling for a day, they came upon the canoe floating in a sheltered bay. In each end of the canoe, fast asleep, was one of the strange beings.

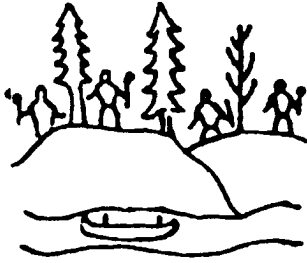


As the warriors looked at the peculiar beings,

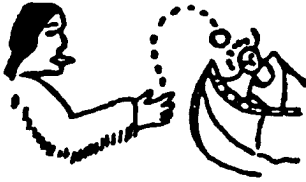


the voice was again heard coming from the canoe. The loud voice said that if these strange beings were destroyed, a great blessing would come to the People of the Longhouse.

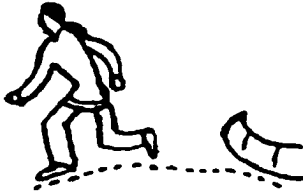
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After the strange voice had ceased speaking, the warriors hid in the forests bordering the stream.



A single warrior approached the river. Taking a stone, he threw it at one of the beings who awoke with a shout. The single warrior stuck out his tongue at the strange creatures.



He pretended to be frightened and ran away from them.



Seeing this, the two beings beached their canoe and ran after the fleeing man.

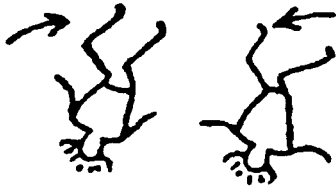


The warrior led them to a nearby bark house, and after he had decoyed them into it, he gave his war cry. With his war club, he faced his pursuers.





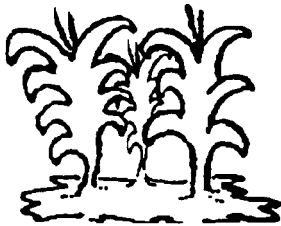
At the sound of their comrade's war cry, the other warriors immediately came to his aid. They surrounded the two strange beings.



In a short time, the two beings were killed.

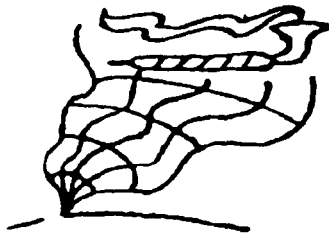


Gathering a great pile of brush and placing the two dead creatures upon it, the warriors set fire to the brush. Soon the two bodies were ashes.



From the ashes of the dead bodies rose a strange plant.

It was the tobacco plant.



The strange voice was heard coming from the Earth. It instructed the warriors how to prepare the plant and how to use it. It was the great gift to the People of the Longhouse.

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*"Great Gift, Tobacco" from Tales of the Iroquois by Tehanetorens. Published by Akwesasne Notes, 1976.*

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