

Indian Tribes of Wisconsin

By John Gilmary Shea

All that relates to the Indian tribes of Wisconsin, their antiquities, their ethnology, their history, is deeply interesting, from the fact that it is the area of the first meeting of the Algie and Dakota tribes. Here clans of both these widespread families, met and mingled at a very early period; here they first met in battle, and mutually checked each other's advance. The Algonquin race covered all the territory now embraced in Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as the Eastern, Middle and Western States of our own confederacy, encircling the tribes of the Huron-Iroquois, who lay in the line from Lake Huron to Albermarle Sound. Every tribe in this vast limit, spoke dialects either of the Algonquin or of the Huron.

The French, on the settlement of Canada, turned their attention to the Indian tribes, and discovered the fact of the existence of these two great families; their missionaries and traders soon learned enough of these two, to pass from tribe to tribe, or acquire from one, accounts, more or less accurate, of the nations whose distance prevented a personal visit.

In five years after the founding of Quebec, the French gazed upon the waters of Lake Huron; and, as early as 1618, Champlain and Sagard were able to record the fact, that on the shores of a Lake connecting with Lake Huron, lay a people from the distant sea-coast, the representatives of a third great family of tribes, distinct from the Huron and Algonquin. Thus early was this great ethnological point established by