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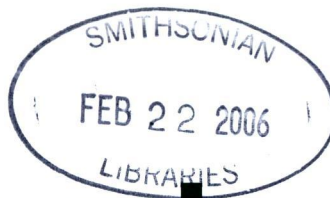
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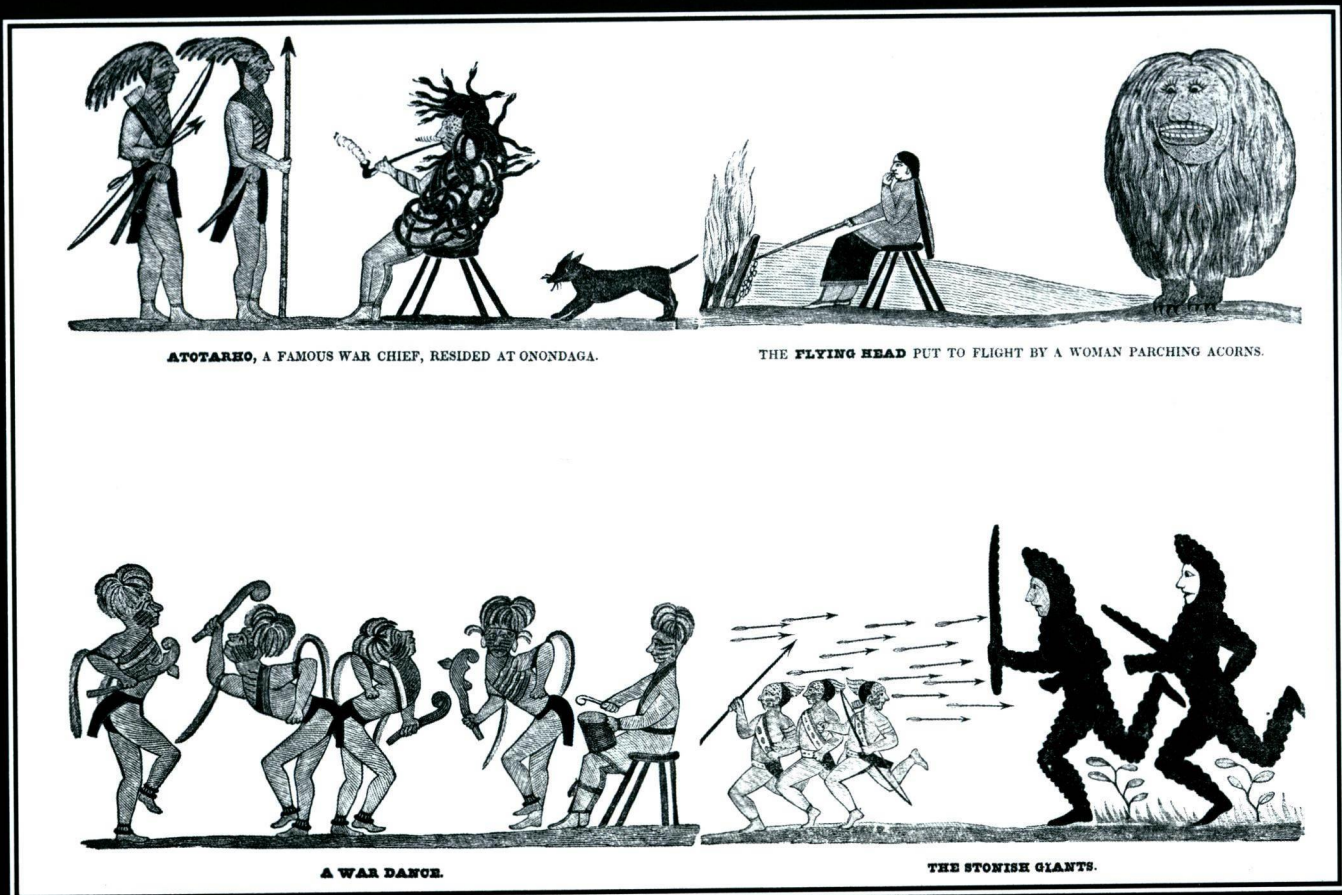
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Cover: *Buffalo Bull Society dancer displaying the regalia of a society leader, drawn by Bloody Knife, 1872-1876. All members of the society wore horned buffalo head-dresses, but only the leader wore a full buffalo head. Collected by General William B. Hazen. Courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Ms. 154064b, 085106.19. (See article pages 74-85, 99.)*



ATOTARHO, A FAMOUS WAR CHIEF, RESIDED AT ONONDAGA.

THE FLYING HEAD PUT TO FLIGHT BY A WOMAN PARCHING ACORNS.

A WAR DANCE.

THE STONISH GIANTS.

1. The sheet of woodcut prints issued with the 1828 second edition of David Cusick's *Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations*, in its original uncut format, approximately 9" x 13" (23 cm x 33 cm). Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London.

DAVID AND DENNIS CUSICK

EARLY IROQUOIS REALIST ARTISTS

William C. Sturtevant

The Tuscarora brothers David and Dennis Cusick were the founders of the Early Iroquois Realist style of watercolors, a style that was admired by their Iroquois contemporaries and immediate successors, some of whom continued and developed it in their own work.¹ The drawings were also admired by Euro-American and European visitors during the first half of the nineteenth century.

The extant drawings skillfully and pleasingly depict scenes from Iroquois life, especially distinctive clothing and incidents of Iroquois folklore, history and ritual. Like most artists of this period, the Cusicks had no academic training in painting or drawing, nor, as far as we know, did other artists working in the Early Iroquois Realist style. However, the techniques and style are based on those of Euro-American art, rather than on traditional Iroquois art. The style differs from other folk art styles of the period primarily in the Indian identities of the artists and in their emphasis on recognizable features of Iroquois culture.

The two brothers were among the many children of the famous Nicholas Cusick (b.1756, d.1840). Before 1800 their family lived in a Tuscarora village close to the Oneida and Onondaga settlements near the present town of Oneida, New York, some thirty miles east of Syracuse. Here in 1777 Nicholas Cusick had recruited Tuscarora and Oneida men who fought on the American side in the Revolutionary War; in 1779 he was commissioned as a lieutenant. He is said to have saved the Marquis de Lafayette's life when his men were assigned to guard him. Cusick was a Christian, evidently converted by Samuel Kirkland, Congregationalist missionary to the Senecas and then to the Oneidas.

David Cusick, the older brother, was born about 1785. As a boy he lived with Samuel Kirkland and his family from about 1794 to 1800 while he attended the Hamilton Oneida Academy (founded by Kirkland in 1793 for the coeducation of Indian and white boys), some twelve or fifteen miles from the Cusick home. In 1800 he wrote his friend Samuel Kirkland Jr. that "I live here at Oneida with your Father and Mother...I dont know very much I ask Mr Kirkland if when I grow up a great man if my mind would not open like I know great deal. he tells yes, if I apply my self & make observations. I want be A Wise man I Don't think many Indians are Wise" (Cusick 1800).²

In July 1800 Nicholas Cusick agreed to accompany the missionary Elkanah Holmes to Buffalo, New York to act as his interpreter in negotiating with the Seneca chiefs for the establishment of a Seneca mission. Holmes found him indispensable and by 1802 Cusick and his family had moved to the Tuscarora Reservation near Niagara Falls, so Cusick could be an assistant missionary as well as interpreter for Holmes in the mission church on that reservation. Around the same time Cusick wrote a letter to the New York Missionary Society promising that he would "collect materials for making up an account of the present state of the Indians, as well as for a history of the ancient tribes inhabiting the state."

This plan may have influenced his son David Cusick, who became a doctor and demonstrated that he had become "a wise man" by 1827 when he published a small book of twenty-eight pages that became well known then and later. The title indicates that it concerns Iroquois traditional history and myths, as indeed it does. It distinguishes between the Six Nations and the Five Nations of the Iroquois, a recognition that the Tuscarora were adopted as the sixth nation of the confederacy in 1723 soon after they moved to New York from North Carolina. The title reads as follows:

David Cusick's Sketches of ancient history of the Six Nations: Comprising First — A tale of the foundation of the Great Island; (now North America,) The two infants born, and the Creation of the Universe. Second — A real account of the early settlers of North America, and their dissensions. Third — Origin of the Kingdom of the Five Nations, which was called A Long House; The wars, fierce animals, &c. Lewiston: Printed for the author. 1827.³

Cusick's brief preface, dated 1825, indicates his progress in research and writing (and in the English language) since his letter of 1800:

I have been long waiting in hopes that some of my people, who have received an English education, would have undertaken the work as to give a sketch of the Ancient History of the Six Nations; but found no one seemed to concur in the matter, after some hesitation I determined to commence the work; but found the history involved with fables; and besides, examining myself, finding so small educated that it was impossible for me to compose the work without much difficulty. After various reasons I abandoned the idea; I however, took up a resolution to continue the work, which I have taken much pains procuring the materials, and translating it into English language. I have endeavored to throw some light on the history of the original population of the country, which I believe never have been recorded. I hope this little work will be acceptable to the public.

His attitude toward the traditions he collected is illustrated by his footnote to a story of a party that migrated to the west, crossing the Mississippi River on a grapevine: "By some this may seem an incredible story. Why more so than that the Israelites should cross the Red Sea on dry land." That remark is his only reference to the bible or Christianity.

The booklet must have sold well — presumably mostly to early tourists visiting Niagara Falls after the



2. A giant hunter with a deer and a bear under his belt, holding a ball-headed club and a bow with two bird-bunt arrows. Unsigned, undated and untitled, probably by David Cusick. Ink, watercolor, slightly cropped at the left edge. 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (38.4 cm x 30.2 cm). Courtesy of the Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York. Acc. No. X.519.

Erie Canal to Albany opened in 1825. A second edition, of seven thousand copies, appeared in 1828 only a year after the first. The first edition was not illustrated, but the second edition contained four woodcuts, three of them illustrating Iroquois traditions described in the text (Fig. 1). Both editions were copyrighted by the author, and the second, at least, was printed by newspaper printers in nearby Lockport, as was the third edition of 1848, which appeared seventeen years after the author's death but contained the same woodcuts as the second edition, printed from the original blocks (in a slightly later state), with the titles reset.

Unfortunately we have no original watercolors or drawings that are certainly by David Cusick, although there are three that can be attributed to him (Figs. 2–4), which help to indicate the changes and distortions that were surely introduced by the engraver. Small engravings not very different in finish and details were published to illustrate advertisements in Lockport newspapers of the 1820s, although Cusick was a more skilled artist than those who designed the ads.

The first woodcut, on the upper left of the sheet, is an illustration of the tradition of the founding of the League of the Iroquois, perhaps about A.D. 1500, although Cusick says “perhaps 1000 years before Columbus discovered the America.” The name of the Onondaga chief (whose “head and body was ornamented with black snakes” according to Cusick’s text) is given in the caption in its Mohawk form, Atotarho, rather than the Oneida form Atotálho’ or the Onondaga, Seneca or Cayuga variants (all of which have an initial *t*). The name is not known to exist in Tuscarora; if it did, it would probably be quite different (Rudes 1997). The two standing figures presumably represent Deganawida and Hiawatha. They are the main characters, along with Atotárho, in standard stories of the founding of the League of the Iroquois, although they are not mentioned by Cusick in his text. The men are dressed in a style that seems rather antique for ordinary dress in the 1820s. They wear breechclouts, moccasins (somewhat



3. Atotárho, wrapped in snakes, which he requested be replaced by a wampum belt. Unsigned, undated and untitled, probably by David Cusick. The two standing figures may be Deganawida (left) and Hiawatha (right). Ink, watercolor on paper with linen backing. 15" x 16 3/4" (38.1 x 42.6 cm). Courtesy of the Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York. Acc. No. X.520.



4. Three men, two with weapons and one holding a pipe and with a large silver cross suspended on his back. Unsigned, undated, and untitled, probably by David Cusick. Ink, watercolor on paper with linen backing, slightly cropped at the left edge. 15 1/8" x 18 3/8" (38.4 cm x 46.7 cm). Courtesy of the Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York. Acc. No. X.521.

misunderstood by the engraver) and sashes across their chests, which are probably too modern for 1500. Their faces and chests have stripes in body paint. The elaborate feather headdresses shown here (and in somewhat simpler forms in other depictions by both of



5. The Seneca schoolhouse on the Buffalo Creek Reservation, signed "Dennis Cusick Fecit" and "July 3rd 1821." Ink, watercolor. 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (11.1 cm x 18.1 cm). Children are shown through the windows of the two classrooms on the second story, boys on the left and girls on the right. Note the careful attention devoted to clothing, trees and birds, as well as to the details of the building. Designed for a church collection box. A separate sheet of calligraphy signed by Dennis Cusick and dated August 17, 1821 dedicates the box to "Miss Rebeka Napier/Chatledon/South Carolina" and is decorated with an hourglass, leaves, a trumpet and a flute. Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York. Cat. No. A7840.



6. James Young teaching reading and writing in the Seneca mission schoolhouse, by Dennis Cusick, dated November 12, 1821. Ink, watercolor. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (10.8 cm x 18.4 cm). About two-thirds of the students are boys, one-third girls. Glued onto a church collection box presented by James Young to the United Foreign Missionary Society, New York. Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York. Cat. No. A7841.

the Cusicks) do not closely match documented Iroquois men's headdresses of the 1820s or before. One detail of Cusick's depiction of the tradition was criticized by Lewis H. Morgan in his 1846 field notes, based on information from the Senecas at Tonawanda. He said that the spear is wrong, that "the Iroquois did not use this implement. They have no name for it. The picture...represents the spokesman through whom Daganewedah talks to [Atotárho] as holding a spear. This should be a staff which the Indians frequently use" (Morgan n.d.).⁴ Atotárho sits on a European stool or

chair, and his pipe bowl may be somewhat too late in form for 1500. The dog does not belong to this image, but rather to the one on the right. However, in most copies of the book it appears here, because of the manner in which the single sheet of illustrations issued with the book was cut apart. In 1883 Erminnie Smith published a derivative of this woodcut, without stating her source (Smith 1883:Pl. xiv).

An engraving similar to Cusick's woodcut, although less skillful (and lacking the dog) was published by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in 1846 in his report on his census of the New York Indians. He described the engraving as showing "a leader of great courage, wisdom and address, called Atotarho; and when they proposed to form a league...[he] was found, by the Mohawk embassy...sitting as he is represented in the annexed cut." Schoolcraft does not credit the artist, but rather says,

I found the original drawing of this personage, from which the above [annexed cut] is reproduced, in the summer of 1845, in the house of a Seneca on the Cattaraugus reservation. The owner of this curious pictorial relic, on being asked, proceeded to a chest and carefully took it from its envelope, and allowed me to make a copy (1846:132).

Schoolcraft says no more about his source. Could it have been the original drawing that lies behind Cusick's woodcut? Or was it an example of that woodcut, perhaps removed from David Cusick's book? Schoolcraft was told of the book on August 4, 1845, in a letter from David Cusick's younger brother James Cusick, which he reproduced in his 1846 volume followed by a couple of pages quoted from the booklet. In later works on the Iroquois, Schoolcraft

published copies of Cusick's four engravings done by Seth Eastman, sometimes crediting the originals to David Cusick. He often referred to Cusick's text, and in 1855 reproduced the whole text, but not the woodcuts.⁵

The next image on the sheet is *The Flying Head Put To Flight By A Woman Parching Acorns*. It illustrates a story about a time when the people were invaded by monsters — the legendary Flying Heads, whose Tuscarora name translates as "oh you with expansive scalp," while in Seneca their name means "hit us with a head." In the 1880s the Tuscarora author Elias Johnson

said that they "jumped on two legs like a grasshopper, 4 feet tall" (Rudes 1997).⁶ The legend illustrated here describes how a Flying Head saw an old woman with her dog, at Onondaga, sitting in front of a fire parching acorns (or chestnuts, in other versions) and eating them. Thinking she was eating coals from the fire, the Flying Head was frightened away. The woman wears clothing typical of the period, as is shown for example by the formal clothing made and worn by the Seneca woman Carolyn Parker about 1850 (see Tooker 1994).⁷ The Flying Head, who stands behind the much smaller unsuspecting woman with her hand to her mouth, is drawn as all hair except for eyes, a large, threatening mouth full of teeth and clawed legs. Smith also published a derivative of this woodcut in 1883 (Smith 1883:Pl. xv).

A third image, *The Stonish Giants*, illustrates another legend, of an invasion by ravenous monsters who overwhelmed the warriors sent to fight them. This seems to be a version of the story illustrated in a watercolor, not known to survive, that Thomas L. McKenney bought from David Cusick in 1826. McKenney described his watercolor as showing a large bear driven away by arrows aimed at his head, who was followed by a huge stone giant unaffected by the arrows. Another version, without a bear and in other ways also closer to Cusick's woodcut, was reproduced after a now-lost original (evidently a watercolor) in an engraving published by Smith in 1883 (McKenney and Hall 1938:355; Smith 1883:Pl. xiii). Although Cusick says that the giants rolled themselves in sand, producing a hard skin, his twin Stonish Giants are drawn in profile with serrated edges and pointed heads above their faces (and carrying long serrated clubs), perhaps indicating that they represent animated chipped stone projectile points.

In 1881 Elias Johnson published derivatives of two of Cusick's illustrations, with a text that paraphrased Cusick's descriptions: "Flying head and woman sitting by the fire," and "Stonish giant chasing Indians." These are not direct copies of Cusick's engravings, and they are not nearly as lively, well composed or interesting as their models, although the first of them does add a wooden spoon, a food-stirring paddle and a corn-sifting basket, all of proper Iroquois types (Johnson 1881:54, 55).

The fourth engraving, *A War Dance*, does not illustrate anything mentioned in Cusick's text. The postures are very well depicted, being readily recognizable as those of the modern "war dance" called *wasa:se'* in Seneca. In this dance each man dances independently of all the others, but the artist has arranged them here in a skillful composition in which the legs, armband tassels and clubs, for example, form balanced and nearly continuous lines. The dancers' headdresses are somewhat elaborate versions of the traditional Iroquois headdress. Two of the dancers carry ball-headed clubs, and two carry so-called gunstock clubs with inserted metal blades — all very well depicted. The man at right appro-

priately plays a water drum, while clothed in regular men's dress of the 1820s.

McKenney saw several other drawings by Cusick, of "hunting, travelling scenes, etc.," and another, on canvas, showing a treaty-making process. According to McKenney it showed an Indian chief "attired in his peculiar costume, [and] standing in a hesitating posture, with a hand half extended towards a scroll hanging partly unrolled from the hand of...an American officer in full dress, offering with one hand the unsigned treaty to the reluctant savage, while with the other he presents a musket and bayonet to his breast" (McKenney and Hall 1938:2).

About 1820 a Scottish visitor to Cusick's home was shown his drawings pasted on the walls and bought one to show his admiration of his work. He described one of Cusick's pictures as showing the battle of Waterloo which, he said, "exhibited a great deal of bloodshed and slaughter" (Hamell 1998; Howison 1822:98). This is the only mention of a Cusick drawing that clearly does not depict an Iroquois subject. In 1821 Philip Stansbury met Cusick, described him as "celebrated for his ingenuity in the art of painting," adding that he "had in his possession, a variety of relics of their former implements and arms, such as stone axes, flint arrows, war-clubs, belts of wampum, and some curious ornaments; and his drawings, though the materials were coarse, exhibited in a striking and clear manner, the council meetings, the rites of worship, and the modes of dancing practised by their forefathers" (Stansbury 1822:98).

In 1827, while traveling from Niagara Falls to the head of the Erie Canal on his way back to England from Mexico, William Bullock bought a copy of Cusick's book and went to visit him, finding him confined to bed with rheumatism. Bullock reported that Cusick's "room was decorated with colored drawings of his own execution, representing several subjects of the Indian history of his tribe; among the rest, was a drawing of a mammoth, which he informed me was so represented by his fathers, in whose traditions, it was stated more to resemble a hog, than any other beast. He presented me with it, and several others." In Cusick's book the mammoth is discussed under the name *Quisquis*, i.e., *kwiskwis*, the Tuscarora word for hog or pig (Rudes 1997). In the same year as Bullock's visit, Cusick sold the tourist John Bachman one of his books, and showed him his drawings (Bullock 1827).⁸

David Cusick died in 1831, aged forty-five, perhaps of tuberculosis (Graymont 1997b). Although no original drawings certainly done by him are now known, the number of published mentions of them shows that many visitors must have acquired examples. Others may survive as heirlooms in Tuscarora and Seneca (and perhaps Oneida) families.

There are, however, three original drawings, unsigned and untitled, that may perhaps be the work of David Cusick (Figs. 2–4).⁹ They are very carefully done watercolors, with figures outlined with a fine pen in black

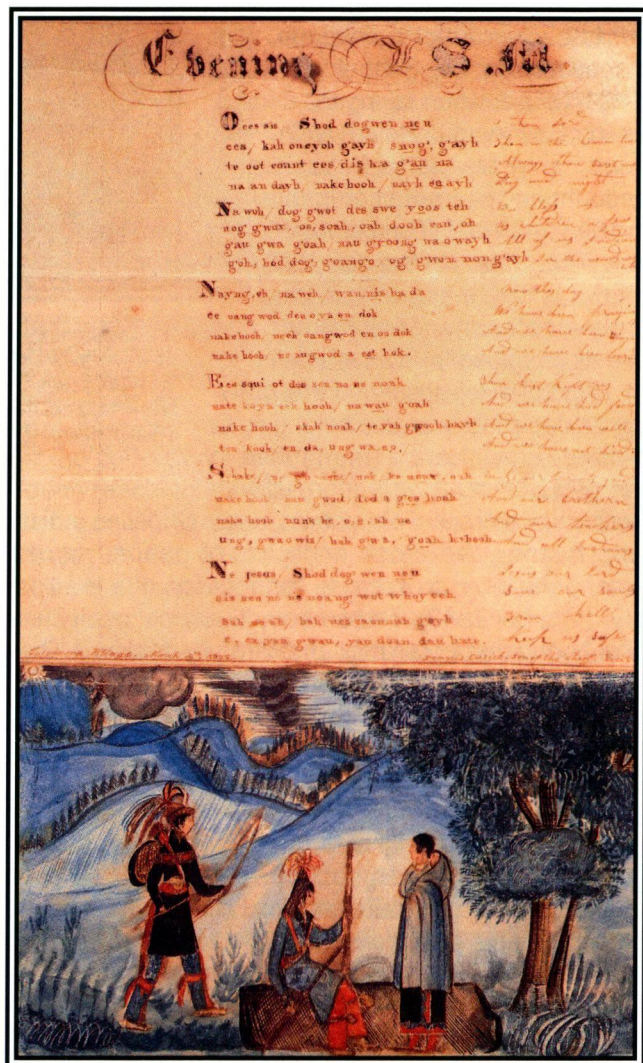


7. Mrs. James Young teaching carding, spinning and knitting to girls and a young woman in the Seneca mission school-house, signed "By Dennis Cusick" and "Seneca Mission school House," undated. Ink, watercolor. 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (11.1 cm x 20 cm). Part of a set (with Fig. 6) designed for a church collection box. Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York. Cat. No. A7842.

ink. These pictures were collected in 1845 from an Oneida, Jacob Beechtree of Oneida Castle, in the region where the Cusicks lived before moving to the Tuscarora Reservation near Niagara Falls. Beechtree said that they were painted by an (unnamed) Oneida about 1835. One of Nicholas Cusick's wives was Oneida, although David Cusick's mother was probably Tuscarora, as he was himself.

One of these "Oneida" drawings (Fig. 2) shows the legendary giant described in Cusick's text as Soh-nou-rewah (also spelled Sau-rau-ra-wah, etc.), "i.e. Big Neck... who was a great hunter...he was so strong that when returned from hunting he would have five or six deers and bears strung round on his belt," and "he used a plump [i.e., blunt?] arrow, which was so violent that it would break the body in two parts." The giant built a fort on the south bank of the Susquehanna River, where he was eventually killed. Cusick adds an interesting footnote: "In 1800 I went over the ground myself and viewed the mound." The drawing shows a giant with a deer and a bear under his belt, holding two bird-bunt arrows and a bow as well as a ball-headed club. His headdress and face paint are similar to those in David Cusick's *War Dance* engraving. The donor of this drawing (and perhaps Beechtree also), did not recognize that it depicted this legendary figure, describing it as an illustration of "the savage in his primitive and rudest state. He is scant of clothing, holds in his hands the most simple weapons of warfare, and carries the spoils of the chase suspended from the belt that encircles his body" (Thurber 1849).

A second drawing in this set is related to Cusick's description and depiction of Atotárho (Fig. 3). It shows him seated on the ground, wrapped in snakes, while a man holding a wampum belt approaches from the left. According to Cusick, Atotárho's snakes were replaced, at his request, by "a large belt of wampam [sic]; he became a law giver, and renewed the chain of alliance of



8. *Evening Psalm with a prayer in Seneca* above, by Dennis Cusick, dated 4 Mar. 1822. Ink, watercolor. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (31.8 cm x 19.7 cm). Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York. Cat. No. A7839.

the Five Nations and framed their internal government." The wampum is shown in this drawing, but not in Cusick's 1828 woodcut. The two figures with Atotárho are probably Hiawatha and Deganawida (not mentioned by Cusick). The one with the wampum belt holds a bow and two arrows and has a ball-headed club under his belt, like Deganawida in the version in the engraving. The other man has a spear, similar to the one that Morgan objected to in Cusick's woodcut. The men wear nineteenth-century kilts, rather than the breechclouts of the woodcut, but their face and body paint and headdresses resemble those in the woodcut. According to the collector, Lansigh Thurber, "a drawing somewhat similar, but less truthful in costume, was discovered by Mr. Schoolcraft in an Indian house, when taking the census on the Cattaraugus Reservation," evidently a reference to Schoolcraft's account and reproduction published in 1846 and 1847 (Thurber 1849).

The third "Oneida" drawing shows three men, one in mid- or early-nineteenth-century dress and two as imagined for earlier times (Fig. 4). The collector described this drawing as depicting "warriors belonging to a more recent period [than those in the Atotarho drawing], adorned with feathers and fanciful ornaments; and a Christian Indian, who bearing the cross and pipe of peace, returns among the tribes to exercise the vocation of a missionary" (Thurber 1849). The ornaments are not really "fanciful," but rather accurately and carefully depicted. They include multiple silver ornaments (gorgets, ear and nose ornaments, armbands), finger-woven sashes and an otter skin(?) pouch tucked under the belt, and the man at the right has artificially extended earlobes typical of some Iroquois men in the eighteenth century. The figure at the left is especially elaborately dressed, with a silver cross much larger than those frequently worn as neck ornaments and here shown at his back, perhaps to hide it from his potential converts. He also wears a formal, carefully frilled cravat. If this drawing is indeed by David Cusick, then the Christian Indian might refer to his father Nicholas Cusick, who was a missionary.

The leafy plants and grass which rise from a green band that supports the figures are particularly notable in these last two drawings. The plants, in particular the plant with alternate leaves, are strikingly similar to those below the two Stonish Giants in the Cusick woodcut.



9. *Christening of Asa Thompson*, by Dennis Cusick. The catalog record gives the title, and adds "Painted in August 1821, by Dennis Cusick." The only writing on the original is a faint penciled "1821" at upper left. Ink, watercolor. 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (18.1 cm x 17.1 cm). Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Cat. No. 8/8209.

Some of the men's headdresses are rather like those of the men pursued by the Stonish Giants, and may indicate the appearance of the latter in the original drawing, somewhat misunderstood by the engraver. The designs of the face and body paint in the Atotarho drawing (Fig. 3) resemble the face paint in the War Dance and Atotarho woodcuts and the face and body paint in the Stonish Giants woodcut. All these similarities in stylistic details support the attribution of these three watercolors to David Cusick.

Several original watercolors by David Cusick's younger brother Dennis Cusick do still exist, although information about the artist is scarcer than about his brother David. Dennis Cusick died about 1822, aged twenty-four (Graymont 1998), and so was born around 1798, thirteen years after David, and while David was living with Samuel Kirkland. Ten watercolors of his are presently known to have survived, and others were mentioned by visitors in 1820. The known examples are dated between September 16, 1820 and April 16, 1822. All derive from Dennis Cusick's association with the Congregational mission school on the Seneca



10. Three standing women, signed by Thomas Jacobs, March 27, 1852. Ink, watercolor. 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (35.8 cm x 29.9 cm). Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York.

Reservation at Buffalo Creek, near the Tuscarora village. According to James Young, the teacher at the school, Dennis Cusick, "in acquiring the arts...has had no instruction except what he has received from copying."¹⁰ What was available for him to copy can be guessed: perhaps spelling books and other schoolbooks, sewing and embroidery pattern books, an illustrated bible, missionary tracts and newspaper ads. He may also have been influenced by published engravings, since many of his works are signed with the word *fecit* — Latin for "he made [it]" — after his name.

All of Dennis Cusick's works are in ink and watercolor on paper. Two nearly identical sets of watercolors were made to be attached to church collection boxes that were to be used for soliciting funds to support missionary activities. One of these sets has been glued to a box, evidently used, which is now in the collections of the Andover Newton Theological Seminary, Newton Centre, Massachusetts. The other set is not attached to a box but was clearly intended to be. Each set has a view of the mission school building (Fig. 5), which was also used for church services on Sundays. It was built of square-hewn logs, eighteen by forty-two feet, with an extension authorized in 1821. (This extension is shown

in another watercolor of the building, not illustrated here). The school building had a shingled roof, glazed windows and a 150-pound school bell. The top story was a single large classroom, while the bottom story was living quarters for the schoolteachers and missionaries (Alden 1827:19; Buffalo Historical Society 1903:125). Children are shown in the windows, while boys and men appear outside. Their clothing is consistent with other evidence for a somewhat later period. It is also similar to that worn by the men in an 1818 colored lithograph by the British artist Dennis Dighton, depicting men from this same Seneca community in a troupe that performed in England in 1818 and 1819.¹¹ The men and boys wear coats with sashes, leggings with garters, moccasins and feather head ornaments. The boys are shooting birds with bows and arrows, while the men also have bows and arrows, somewhat anachronistically, and one seems to wear a typical silver gorget.

Another pair of paintings for the collection boxes shows schoolteacher James Young teaching his reading and writing class (Fig. 6). On the blackboards and slates are materials used in the Lancaster plan of education, then a very progressive method of teaching that is reported as having been used in the school (Duncan 1819:30, 1823:65).

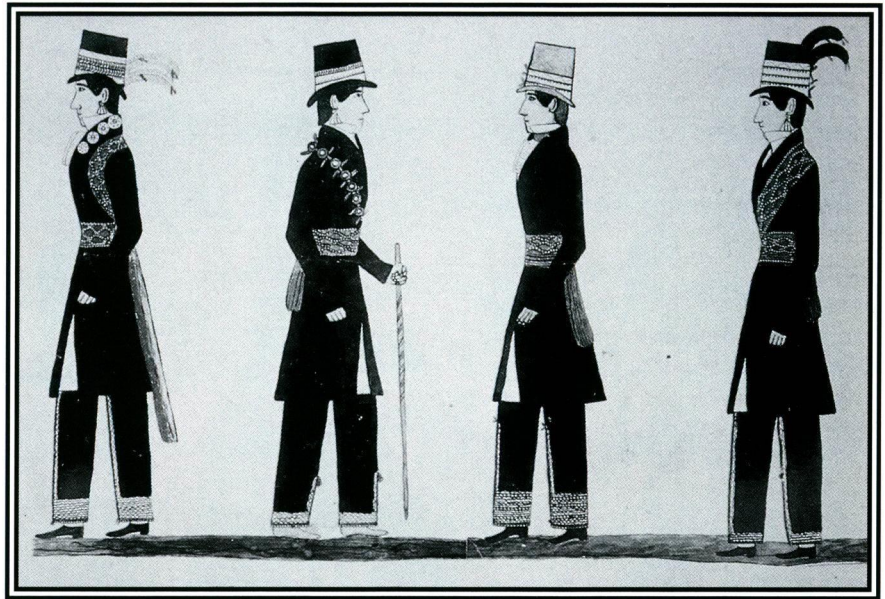
James Young's wife taught girls and women knitting, sewing, spinning and weaving, as shown in another watercolor (Fig. 7). The girls wear skirts, blouses and leggings, sometimes with elaborate ear ornaments. The young women wear shawls over their blouses, and the woman at the right has a decorative band on her skirt. These are the clothes described by contemporary visitors to the Niagara Falls region and documented in Morgan's museum collections (Stansbury 1822:99, 118; Duncan 1819, 1823:65–67; Low 1903:277).

Both collection box sets include sheets with carefully written biblical quotations and other short texts, in English, related to the activities of the New York Missionary Society and the American Board of Foreign Missions, the initial and subsequent sponsors of the school and the associated mission. These sheets are done in very careful and quite elaborate expert calligraphy. A visitor to the school in 1820 reported that Dennis

Cusick "had left numerous pieces of writing, of different hands, showing a skill in penmanship seldom surpassed by anyone. He has a natural taste for drawing, and some of the specimens of his ingenuity in this art, which we had opportunity to examine, indicate a genius worthy of encouragement" (Alden 1827:119).

Besides the paintings done for collection boxes there are two more paintings by Dennis Cusick. One titled *Evening Psalm* (Fig. 8) is signed by Cusick and has above the painting the text of a prayer in Seneca, with a somewhat scribbled English translation at the right — this last not in Cusick's hand, and perhaps written by James Young. The picture is unusual in its use of color and in having a dramatic landscape background. Dark brown thunderclouds appear in the sky. Waves of hills, each surmounted by a row of trees in dark blue, black or light brown, are shown in blue along with some of the foreground. A tree in the foreground is impressionistically drawn in darker shades of blue, evidently because it is an evening scene. Curved lines are scraped through the colors in the lower corners and on the lower leaves of the big tree. The figures have touches of red on their clothing. The woman wears a classically draped dark blue robe with a baby carried on her back inside the robe. A short description on the back, not in either Cusick's or Young's hand, says the standing man has a pack on his back while the seated man is wearing a cap made from a blanket.

The other painting is not signed, but resembles *Evening Psalm* stylistically (Fig. 9). It is accompanied by documentation (from an unknown source) that ascribes it to Dennis Cusick in 1821 and says it represents the christening of Asa Thompson, a Tuscarora who was born in October 1820 and died in 1878.¹² The baby's father, beautifully dressed, wears a finger-woven sash, leggings and moccasins (in contrast to the minister at the right) and carries a red umbrella. The minister is shown with brown hair, while the Indian figures have black hair. The woman has a blue dotted blouse covered by a dark blue robe, and a skirt with a blue-and-red design on the bottom, red leggings with a



11. Black-and-white photograph of a watercolor titled *The Intains [sic]. Tuscarora Tribe*, perhaps by Thomas Jacobs, date unknown (received by museum in 1931). Size of original watercolor unknown. The eyes and profiles of these figures are like those of the figures in Fig. 10. Courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Cat. No. 22,716.



12. Three standing men, perhaps by Thomas Jacobs, perhaps 1830–1840. Ink, watercolor. 10½" x 14¼" (26.7 cm x 36.2 cm). Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York.

blue band at the bottom with front seams indicated by ink dots, and pink moccasins. The baby is in a cradleboard with a blue-and-red wrapping, with a different blue-and-red blanket suspended from the top. The tree-lined hills in the background (in blue) and the double tree in the margin are very similar to those in *Evening Psalm*. The



13. Four standing women, perhaps by Thomas Jacobs, perhaps 1830–1840. Ink, watercolor. 10½" x 14¼" (26.7 cm x 36.2 cm). Courtesy of the Rock Foundation, New York.

work is not quite finished, for the hills and sky are only partly filled in with blue.

That completes the known works by David and Dennis Cusick. There are, however, several other surviving examples of the Early Iroquois Realist style (Sturtevant n.d.). There is a drawing signed "Thomas Jacobs 1852." He has not so far been identified, although Jacobs is both a Seneca and a Tuscarora name. This drawing illustrates three standing women, one in a frontal view and the other two in profile (Fig. 10). Their waists are drawn as though they were corseted (perhaps the artist was influenced by fashion plates), and they wear varied and very carefully drawn dresses and silver ornaments typical of early- to mid-nineteenth-century Iroquois. Two hold umbrellas and the other has a scarf in her left hand. The dress of the women (including their small waists) resembles that in an 1883 engraving titled *Returning Thanks to the Great Spirit*, based on a now-lost watercolor (Smith 1883:Pl. xii). The dance shown in that engraving seems to be a mixture of the Great Feather Dance and Thanksgiving Dance, as performed in modern Iroquois longhouses. But one of the dancers wears a False Face mask, inappropriate for both the Great Feather Dance and the Thanksgiving Dance. If this error was unintentional, the artist may have been a Christian unfamiliar with the details of longhouse rituals.

There is another now-lost watercolor, of which a 1931 photograph survives. The title beneath reads *The Intains [sic]. Tuscarora. Tribe* (Fig. 11). It shows four standing men, in profile, again with detailed, careful drawings of clothing and ornaments. The facial features closely resemble those drawn by Thomas Jacobs. The very formal dress is an interesting combination of Euro-American and Iroquois styles of cloth-

ing of the mid- or early nineteenth century.

Two more watercolors have recently surfaced. One shows three men, and the other four women, standing and in profile (Figs. 12, 13). They are entirely undocumented but surely by the same artist. They do rather resemble those works by and attributed to Thomas Jacobs, and the clothing receives equally detailed attention, although the style of the Iroquois dress seems slightly earlier, perhaps of the 1830–1840 period.

There are three drawings collected by the anthropologist Jeremiah Curtin in 1883 on the Cattaraugus Seneca Reservation — the location to which the inhabitants of the Buffalo Creek Reservation moved after that reservation was sold in 1838. Curtin said they were drawn about 1845 by George Wilson, evidently the man so

named who lived on the Cattaraugus Reservation and was seventeen years old in 1845 (Hauptman 1993:31). Two of these drawings, nearly identical, show a man lying in bed, while according to the caption he is being bewitched by two well-known witches, a woman standing at the foot of the bed (with what seems to be a speech balloon, filled by short lines rather than words) and a man perched in a tree at the right, both quite oddly costumed (Fig. 14). Another drawing collected at the same time by Curtin shows a patient seated by a fire who is being approached by two men wearing False Face masks and one wearing a Husk Face mask, appropriately for the curing ceremony mentioned in the caption.

These examples of Iroquois art on paper are a unique development, with no discernible relation to earlier, traditional Iroquois art, not even to the occasional representational works in pipes, bone combs, pottery decoration, and pictographic war records and signatures. They seem to follow Euro-American folk models. All surviving examples have clearly Iroquois iconographic allusions, but others that evidently lacked such iconographic features were mentioned in contemporary accounts and may yet survive to be identified, once the distinctive features of the style are recognized.

The paintings depict human and supernatural figures, usually without backgrounds but in two instances with skillfully stylized hills and trees in the distance. Sometimes the scene is framed by one or two well-depicted large trees in the foreground. Dennis Cusick was especially skilled at depicting trees; he was also interested in showing birds. The figures are sharply outlined, usually in ink, sometimes in pencil. They are usually in profile, standing or seated, but in one instance running and in another dancing. Both the Cusicks were

more likely than their successors to show frontal views of their figures' faces, and were more interested in varied postures. Sometimes the individuals stand in a line, to illustrate clothing styles, while in other examples they are engaged in typical activities. The drawings are two dimensional, without perspective. Yet many details are carefully done and very naturalistic. There are no portraits, no busts or partial figures. The figures nearly always stand on a narrow base running across the paper, colored and sometimes with small plants on it. The colors throughout are usually flat, evenly applied watercolors or perhaps gouache. The overall compositions are thoughtful and pleasing.¹³

The time when the paintings were produced was a difficult period for the Iroquois. After the War of 1812 they had lost political influence with the American and British governments, their land was being expropriated, many more Euro-American settlers were arriving, and missionaries and schoolteachers were urging important cultural changes. These works of art assert Iroquois identity, political authority and a long historical tradition in their own country, at these troubled times. David Cusick's book treats these topics very seriously, as does much of Schoolcraft's text (based in part on Cusick's book and on interviews with his contemporaries). These factors also help account for the collecting of the works of art by contemporary Euro-American visitors and by the artists' Seneca and Oneida countrymen.

Footnotes

¹ For a more complete treatment of this topic, see Sturtevant (n.d.). For the history and culture of the Tuscarora and other Six Nations, see Trigger (1978).

² Details of Nicholas Cusick's biography are from Lewis (c.1957a/b); Graymont, citing Tuscarora Congregational Church records (1972:197, 1997a); New York Missionary Society (1800:305, 1802:203–204, 1803); Buffalo Historical Society (1903:125); and McKenney (1972:353–355). Information about David Cusick living with Kirkland is from manuscripts in the Hamilton College Library, Clinton, New York: Kirkland (1798, 1803) and Cusick (1800). I thank Karim M. Tiro for telling me about the Hamilton College documents, and Frank K. Lorenz for providing copies of them. There is also information on David Cusick in Beauchamp (1892:41–47); this volume also contains extensive, useful commentary on David Cusick's text, much of it collected from his brother James Cusick's grandson, Albert Cusick — although J. N. B. Hewitt often marked "error" in the margins of this section in the copy once in the Bureau of American Ethnology Library (now in the Rare Book Library, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.).

³ The first edition, with the title as just given, indicates on the verso of the title page that the title was deposited by Cusick for copyright on January 3, 1826. Cusick's preface, p. [3], is dated "Tuscarora Village, June 10, 1825," which led some nineteenth-century sources to date the publication, wrongly, as 1825. This edition — 28 pages, page size 8½" x 5½" — had no illustrations. The second edition, of 36 pages, bore



14. Man being bewitched within a house by Susan Blinky and outside by John Dowdy (also a witch), who is perched in a tree. Attributed to George Wilson, c.1845. Collected by Jeremiah Curtin, December 7, 1883. Ink, watercolor. 14" x 16½" (35.6 cm x 41.9 cm). Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Cat. No. 11/2912.

the same title with minor differences in punctuation and ending "Second edition of 7,000 copies. — Embellished with 4 engravings. [small ornament] Tuscarora Village: (Lewiston, Niagara co.) 1828." The maximum page size is 7" x 5"; the verso of the title page has the same copyright notice as in the first edition, and adds "Cooly & Lathrop, Printers, Lockport." The text and title page have been reset. This edition has four woodcut illustrations. Only three copies of the work are now known in the United States, with the four woodcuts on a single sheet, measuring 9¼" x 13¼" (in another copy 8½" x 13"). These are in the Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts; the Rosenbach Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. Other copies have the woodcuts cut apart and bound in, sometimes all following the title page. The edition is rare, and many references for its location given in the National Union Catalog (Pre-1956 Imprints) (www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/about.html) and even in important library catalogs, are wrong. I have located nine copies in North America, some imperfect. The third edition bears the same title, concluding "Lockport, N.Y.: Turner & McCollum, Printers, Democrat Office. 1848." It is a pamphlet of 35 pages, sewn in a yellow paper cover. The four engravings are on pages [5]–[11], printed from the same blocks as were used in the second edition, but cleaned, sharpened and quite heavily re-engraved, with titles in reset type. The engraving of *The Flying Head Put To Flight By A Woman Parching Acorns* is also printed on the verso of the back cover.

⁴ I thank Elisabeth Tooker for the quotation from Morgan's notes (n.d.).
⁵ Schoolcraft (1846:55–56) with the engraving on page 132 and the James Cusick letter on pages 237–238. The engraving was reprinted, from the same block, with the relevant text in Schoolcraft (1847:91–92). The Eastman versions of the four engravings are in Schoolcraft (1851:Pls. 70–73), as colored lithographs, with Cusick's book cited on pages 125–126. Schoolcraft cites Cusick's book (1854:117, 137); in Schoolcraft (1855:Vol. 5) Cusick is cited on page 56 and his text (but without illustrations) is reprinted on pages 631–646. Schoolcraft (1857:Pls. 70, 73) reproduces Eastman's versions of the Stonish Giants and Atotarho illustrations, here uncolored, "Drawn by S. Eastman, U.S.A." but credited in the list of plates, p. xxvii, to "David Cusick [sic], a Tuscarora." A search of the

Schoolcraft papers in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, on May 11, 2000, located in Box 48 the original James Cusick letter (heavily edited by Schoolcraft), but did not turn up any version of any of the engravings or the originals for them.

⁶For Tuscarora see Rudes (1997), citing A. S. Gatschet's field notes in the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. For Seneca see Chafe (1963:59).

⁷Carolyn Parker wears the clothing she made for Morgan in Tooker (1994:68–69). My comments here and below are also based on my examination of the surviving Morgan collections in museums in Albany and Rochester, early Iroquois materials in many other museums in North America and Europe, and seventeenth- through nineteenth-century illustrations of Iroquois individuals drawn and painted by European and Euro-American artists.

⁸Bullock (1827); Bachman (1888); and page 19 of the 1848 third edition of *David Cusick's Sketches*.

⁹I found these drawings in the New-York Historical Society, New York in 1966, and identified them as Iroquois. They were then in a folder of miscellaneous clippings and prints, unaccessioned and uncataloged. In 1983 Elisabeth Tooker located the donor's description of them in the *Proceedings of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1849* (pp. 252–253). The attribution to David Cusick was very tentatively suggested by Tooker on the basis of the description alone, and more definitely by Sally McLendon (2000) from comparison of photographs of them and of the Cusick woodcuts.

¹⁰Inscription on verso of Cusick's watercolor of the Seneca schoolhouse, signed and dated "Seneca Mission School House, Au. 26, 1821. James Young."

¹¹A copy of the lithograph in the Ulster Museum, Belfast, Northern Ireland is reproduced in black-and-white as the frontispiece in Glover (1978). There is also a colored original in the Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London. Another version, probably based on the lithograph, is an oil painting attributed to John Lee Douglas Mathies, which is on loan to the Memorial Art Gallery of Rochester, New York (Hamell 2000).

¹²According to the catalog card for this painting in the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Asa Thompson was born in October 1820, the son of Samuel Thompson and Rebecca Mount Pleasant, was christened on the Tuscarora Reservation, and died August 2, 1878. The catalog says the work was "painted in August 1821, by Dennis Cusick." The source of this information is presently unknown.

¹³These paintings and drawings contrast markedly in several ways with another type of Iroquois folk art that has a long history and survives into the present — namely, carved wooden False Face masks made for ritual use and also, during much of the twentieth century, made for sale to outsiders, and usually in styles indistinguishable from those made for use. See Fenton (1987).

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shows "the Kaagwaantaan Clan leader wearing the Chilkat tunic with bear crest." The museum agreed that the garment was "the property of the Kaagwaantaan Clan, [and] could not have been conveyed by any individual tribal member, and should be returned as an object of cultural patrimony...to the Sealaska Corporation, acting on behalf of the Kaagwaantaan Clan of the Klukwan." At the time this column was written, it was possible to access some interesting information on the internet that relates to this repatriation; an October 7, 2005 article from the *Anchorage Daily News*, which identified the original purchaser as a fur trader named Louis Levey, and mentioned a 1923 photograph of clan leader Kudeinahaa wearing the tunic (www.adn.com/news/alaska/story/7057446p-6961441c.html); a photograph posted by the Sealaska Heritage Institute showing Kudeinahaa clad in the tunic (www.sealaskaheritage.org/news/news_article_tunic_comes_home_2005_cvn.htm); and an October 6, 2005 article from the *Seattle Times* detailing and illustrating some of the steps taken to guarantee that the piece is not impregnated with lead, arsenic or mercury residue from pesticide treatment (http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/PrintStory.pl?document_id=2002542706&zsection_id=2002111777&slug=chilkat06m&date=20051006).

5. *Notice of Intent to Repatriate Cultural Items: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Gila National Forest, Silver City, NM; Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; and Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit College, Beloit, WI (June 1, 2005)*. Between 1935 and 1949 the material discovered with or near human burials and removed from A.D. 500 to 1300 Upland Mogollon sites at Mogollon Village, Geronimo Canyon Ruin, Starkweather Ruin, and Jewett Gap in New Mexico's Gila National Forest included: "1 pottery bowl, 1 stone bowl, 4 projectile points, 2 stone tools, 1 tubular bead, 3 shell bracelet fragments, and 2 mineral pieces [from Mogollon Village]...12 pottery bowls, 3 pottery jars, 3 pottery pitchers, and 1 pottery olla [from Geronimo Canyon Ruin]...5 pottery bowls, 3 strands of clay and shell beads, 1 shell necklace, 1 strand of clay beads, 1 bunch of shell beads from a necklace, 1 shell bracelet, and 1 bunch of turquoise beads and pendants from a necklace [from Starkweather Ruin]...190 pottery vessels, 608 shell beads, 8 shell bracelets, 5 shell pendants, 3 pebbles, 1 piece of shell, 1 piece of bone, 7 projectile points, 2 projectile point fragments, 2 stone awls, 1 stone axe, 73 pieces of chipped stone, 7 pieces of malachite, and 1 crystal [from Jewett Gap]." The institutions mentioned in the notice agreed to repatriate these unassociated funerary objects to the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico; the Hopi Tribe of Arizona; and the Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation, New Mexico.

This column offers neither legal nor financial advice, and anyone in need of such advice should seek the services of a licensed professional in the relevant field. The author welcomes readers' comments and suggestions. These may be sent to him by email addressed to mccoyn@emporia.edu or regular mail to his place of business: Professor Ron McCoy, Department of Social Sciences, Box 4032, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS 66801. The use of these addresses is purely for the sake of convenience, and in no way implies that institution's endorsement of any of the views or information contained within this column.

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