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Tonawanda Longhouse Ceremonies:
Ninety Years After Lewis Henry Morgan

By WILLIAM N. FENTON

PHONETIC NOTE

The orthography employed in this paper is the same as that used in *An Outline of Seneca Ceremonies at Coldspring Longhouse* (Fenton, 1936). It reduces Seneca transcription to a minimum of characters required by the economy of the language. The vowels: *a* (of English *father*); *ä* (of English *hat*); *ε* (of English *met*); *e* (of French *ete*); *i* (of French *fini*); and *o* (of English *mote*) may later be reduced to four: *a*, *e*, *i*, and *o*. They occur frequently in diphthongs and less frequently in triphthongs. Nasalization is denoted by a hook beneath the vowel: Vowel length by a raised period after the vowel. A raised comma indicates the glottal stop. The character *š* is *c* (of English *shoe*); affricatives vary between *dz* and *dj* (of English *adze* and *judge*) depending on the speaker; *s* and *t* are ordinarily somewhat aspirated; heavily aspirated *s* and *t* are followed by *h* (e. g., *sh* and *th*); *h* everywhere indicates aspiration; and *T* indicates a terminal whispered *t* which is articulated after a glottal stop in a few words.

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TONAWANDA LONGHOUSE CEREMONIES: NINETY YEARS AFTER LEWIS HENRY MORGAN¹

BY WILLIAM N. FENTON

METHOD

During 30 months, February 1935 to September 1937, I was in almost daily contact with the Tonawanda Band of Senecas. Although occupied with official duties, I nevertheless witnessed the entire cycle of ceremonies that Handsome Lake's followers have perpetuated at Tonawanda longhouse. At odd moments older Indians explained the present form and content of the rituals; they indicated unique features of the Tonawanda cycle; and they suggested possible changes in the last 100 years.

I have followed the method which Dr. Frank G. Speck devised for recording the Cayuga yearly ceremonial calendar at Soursprings longhouse, which proved convenient for recording rituals at Cold-spring longhouse, classifying my field notes, and presenting a summary of results (Fenton, 1936).² This approach reveals that although the same dances are shared by neighboring longhouse groups, patterning of the ceremonies differs from group to group; and that each longhouse repeats its ritual pattern several times during the yearly cycle. The yearly cycle is outlined, indicating the time, duration, and purpose of each festival; and the composition of ceremonies is listed day by day. Analysis of prayers reveals an Iroquois Pantheon of three orders: Spirit-forces on the earth, a midpantheon of appointed spirits above the earth, and an upper pantheon of forces controlling the universe. Prayers and thanksgiving songs, addressed to the unseen spirit world, commence on the earth and run the whole fixed gamut

¹ This paper was delivered in part, as "The Pattern of Seneca Ceremonies at Tonawanda Longhouse," before section H of the American Association for the Advancement of Science on June 16, 1936, at the University of Rochester. The present draught was read December 27, 1936, at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association at Washington, D. C.

The data presented here were collected during field trips spread over several years. The study began in 1934 with grants-in-aid of research from the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University, and it continued from 1935 until mid-1937 while I acted as Community Worker for the United States Indian Field Service in the New York area. Thanks are due Prof. Edward Sapir of the former institution and John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for their sustained interest in my Iroquois researches. My greatest debt is to my Seneca friends: Jesse Cornplanter, Cephas Hill, Rev. Peter Doctor, Chief Henan Scrogg and the "Salt Creek Singers," a mutual-aid fraternity at Tonawanda, who in accepting me for membership anchored my labors to the rock of tradition.

² Dr. Speck's monograph is still unpublished.

of stations upward to the Creator. Specific rites fall into three groups according to their function of bringing man into rapport with particular spirit-forces. There is a group of worship rites addressed to the Creator, others to the spirits of cultivated plants; a group of medicine-society rites concern man's relation to specific earth-bound tutelaries, frequently animals; and some societies restrict participation in their ceremonies to members only. The remaining rites fall under the general rubric of social dances which lack any direct religious purpose.

Work at Tonawanda has been a projection of a program to obtain comparable data for all Iroquois ceremonial groups, trusting that the facts may ultimately lend themselves to historical interpretation. The approach recognizes an intense feeling of localism, which informants voice in their replies to data obtained at other longhouses. Therefore, with Lewis Henry Morgan (1901, vol. 1, 175 ff.) as my illustrious predecessor among the grandfathers of my oldest Tonawanda informants, I commenced work ill-prepared to discover vestiges of an even richer ceremonial life after 90 years of supposed deculturation.³

THE LONGHOUSE

The present Tonawanda longhouse, situated "down below" near the northwest end of the reservation, was built in 1876.⁴ It is near the site of an older, log longhouse which still can be distinguished by an elliptical indentation near the present road where the feet of many dancers, emerging at intermissions to cool off and gossip, wore a path about the sunken foundation. South toward Indian Falls, another log longhouse stood on Sand Hill where the road emerges on a plateau. About 1870, the Faithkeepers tore it down in anticipation of erecting a new building of matched lumber, but, at that time, most of their membership passed over to the Christian party. No one now living remembers a third ceremonial longhouse which formerly stood in the middle of the original Tonawanda settlement of bark houses on the south bank of Tonawanda Creek near the canal feeder. As might be expected, where the longhouses were, at most, an hour's walk apart, the yearly round of ceremonies is said to have been identical.

THE CALENDRIC CYCLE

The Tonawanda Senecas observe seven religious festivals of thanksgiving. The yearly cycle commences at midwinter on the fifth day of the new moon called *ni-sgo'wakne* when the Pleiades are on the meridian at dusk. This moon, when the game commences to rut, anciently marked the end of hunting and winter removal and witnessed the return to sedentary village life.

³ For ceremonies at Newtown longhouse, Cattaraugus Reservation, see Parker, 1913.

⁴ Charles Blackchief, well over 80 years old, remembered that the lumber for the present building cost about \$500, which the Faithkeepers raised by conscription of annuity moneys among the longhouse party; they have twice reshingled it.

Seven days are devoted to renewing rituals of shamanistic medicine societies as revealed in old dreams, celebrating new dreams, and returning thanks to the Creator for life and sustenance, and praying for an early spring. A lineal descendant of the shamanistic orgy, called the Feast of Fools by the Jesuits among the Hurons, the concepts of confession and renewal dominate the festival. Public confession of sin precedes the festival; and dreams are revealed and must be celebrated lest someone take sick and delay the coming of spring. Renewal implies "new fire," the repetition of every known ceremony and dance; it underlies the White Dog sacrifice, and especially the rites associated with the planting, germination, progressive growth, and harvest of cultivated plants.⁵ Thanks-to-the-maple, or the Sap Dance, follows when the sap is collected from groves preempted by individual families. The Planting Festival, or Seed Dance, occurs early in May to soak and bless the seed before returning it to the earth. The Berry Festival, or Strawberry Dance, returns thanks for the first fruits ripening on earth. The Green Bean Festival, or String-bean Dance, celebrates the ripening of the first cultivated crop in August. The Green Corn Festival repeats the latter days of the Midwinter Festival, returning thanks that the crops have matured; and the Harvest Festival, or Bread Dance, late in the fall after harvesting and storing the crops for winter, completes the cycle before going into the woods on the fall hunt.

The Tonawanda people formerly held a sun-shooting ceremony to dislodge from the sun a frog which they believed masked the orb and retarded the approach of spring. And then, in time of drought, the thunder ceremony, which Morgan describes, is still resorted to for rain. A priest burns tobacco imploring the Thunderers to water the crops and men dance the War Dance (*wasa'se*). During the recent dry summer (July 10, 1936), the ceremony failed to bring immediate rain, because, according to the faithful, "Too many people are wicked now!"

PERIODIC CURES AND RENEWALS

Aside from their frequent public appearance during the Midwinter Festival, the False-face Company occasionally appears in early spring and late fall to drive pestilences from the settlement. The Little Water Medicine Society meets on the fifth night of the Berry Moon

⁵ Wissler (1917) has indicated a northern provenience for the medicine-bundle type of shamanistic societies allegedly derived from earth-bound animals, and he has suggested that the idea of renewal dominates cyclical rituals which appear to have spread with agriculture as gifts of the spirits in heaven. Possibly the Iroquois Midwinter Festival, and it is a strange palimpsest of ceremony, represents the result of the impact of an agricultural people upon a northern hunting environment. The Iroquois have both charm-bundle societies and those in which membership is indicated by dreams or hysterical possession, northern concepts, besides a regular cycle of first-fruits ceremonies closely integrated with the cultivation of maize, a peculiarly southern idea. Ceremonial buffoonery is widespread. Confession to avoid supernatural disaster occurs among the Eskimo and northern Athabaskans (Lowie, 1915, pp. 233-234). The idea of sin with fear of supernatural disaster has a greater distribution (Michelson, 1930, pp. 55-56).

(June), the fifth night of the Harvest Moon (October), and sometimes at midwinter when the medicine bundle has been used after the fall meeting to renew the strength of the medicine. They sing four periods of songs recounting the origin of the society and the cure of the good hunter by animals whom he has befriended, but the Tonawanda lodge sings a fifth group at their fall meeting. Chanters for the dead usually convene one night in March at the longhouse to rest the souls of the departed. Other medicine societies hold private meetings throughout the winter, but rarely in summer.⁶

THE TONAWANDA PATTERN

A combination of four dances, recurring together five times during the annual cycle of festivals, distinguishes Tonawanda celebrations from versions employed among the Seneca at Coldspring and Newtown, and among the Onondaga near Syracuse. Five agricultural festivals repeat the same succession of dances—Women's Dance, Feather Dance, Trotting (or Standing Quiver) Dance, Hand-in-hand Dance, and Women's Dance—with the traditional songs to the plant spirits. This ceremonial pattern, except for particular speeches belonging to each festival, prescribes the procedure for the Planting, String-bean, last night of the Green Corn, Harvest, and the seventh night of the Midwinter Festival. The Maple and Strawberry Festivals include two somewhat different patterns. Otherwise, on a given day of a longhouse festival, the arrangement of the ceremonies follows the general ceremonial pattern observed at all Seneca longhouses, which I have described in another paper (Fenton, 1936, p. 14; Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 185).

The scope of this paper permits only a schematic summary of this 1 night in the cycle of ceremonies. After preliminary meetings, a collection of food and money precedes communal cooking and the festival at the longhouse. Dances to the triad of agricultural patronesses—the spirits of the corn, beans, and squash: three sisters—should commence at dusk, because “the corn grows at night” and the ceremonies are believed to assist its growth. An appointed speaker explains the significance of the meeting, returns thanks to all the spirit-forces from the earth to the Creator, particularly the growing plants and the Thunderers who water them, and announces the names of the singers and dancers. Four dances follow. The women dance first. The Feather Dance to the Creator follows. The Trotting, or Standing Quiver Dance harks back to centuries of war parties dancing about their stacked arms when breaking camp. Hand-in-hand Dance symbolizes the bean and squash vines reaching out tendrils to grasp the growing corn. The Tonawanda people call these the Four Rituals

⁶ Form and content of the series and the function of specific rites is presented in outline as an appendix.

because they are invariably performed at these five festivals. However, the other Seneca refer to the Feather Dance, Thanksgiving Dance, Personal Chant, and the Bowl Game when they mention the Four Ceremonies. Lastly, the women dance about the food kettles to the accompaniment of the traditional songs of the three sisters—corn, beans, and squash—dramatizing the sisterhood of women and cultivated plants. The speaker returns thanks to the participants, invokes a blessing on the people, and announces the next festival. An equitable distribution of the feast ends the meeting, and each family takes home its share of food provided for the communal cook house. Management of the festival rests with two women, one from each moiety, and they choose a chief as their speaker.

Peculiar to Tonawanda is the performance of the Feather Dance and Thanksgiving Dance on the third and fifth days of the Midwinter Festival and the first day of the Green Corn, and the coincidence of the Bowl Game, Women's Dance, and Personal Chant on the fourth and sixth days of the Midwinter Festival and the second day of the Green Corn Festival (Fenton, 1936, p. 21; Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 196, 213). Since daily arrangement of major rituals disagrees with Morgan's statement of 1850, we must consider the possibility of change.

MORGAN'S ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1846

Lewis Henry Morgan left us a somewhat complete account of the ceremonies current at Tonawanda in the middle of the last century, but attributed them to all of the Iroquois. While his description of the Midwinter Festival is full and rich, including difficult ritual prayers, which Ely Parker had ably translated, and there is an occasional brilliant description of a social dance, like the Trotting Dance (Morgan, 1901, pp. 271–273), which could only have been done from notes taken on the spot, his work is, nevertheless, unbalanced by failure to mention other significant details. He mentions turtle rattles accompanying the Thanksgiving Dance, instead of the water drum and horn rattle (Morgan, vol. 1, pp. 192, 273). He says nothing of the almost nightly winter meetings of medicine societies. He does not complete the programs of minor festivals after the Maple Dance to demonstrate their essential similarity (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 185). His failure to make any reference to a Green Bean Festival arouses one to wonder how much he really saw, to what extent he depended on Parker, how long he was in the field, and where he did his work. His extraordinary interpreter and collaborator, Ely S. Parker, lived beyond the ford in Tonawanda Creek from Sand Hill longhouse, the probable locus of the rituals he describes. Parker had access to Handsome Lake's successor, Jimmy Johnson (Soshe'owa', "Great-burden-strap"), whose working knowledge of the rituals extended back beyond the advent of the prophet's teaching in 1800. Nevertheless, in mulling over the

material which Parker furnished him for describing the religious system of the Iroquois, Morgan is frequently guilty of repeating Parker's failure "to describe Indian life in terms of itself," a method on which Morgan later insisted. Since Morgan was at his best when describing phenomena which he had observed and later investigated, and since some of his observations were so penetrating that no less an authority than Lowie (1933, p. 206; 1936, pp. 169-170) has dubbed him a superb observer, it is especially interesting to learn which rituals Morgan actually witnessed. Morgan's manuscript journals and field notes, in the Rush Rhees Library at the University of Rochester, disclose that all of his expeditions to the Seneca fell in the late fall and winter, by far the best season for field work among the Iroquois. Occupied with farming and hunting during the spring, summer, and fall, the Indians feel "free to talk while the earth sleeps." Nevertheless, he missed an opportunity to observe the periodic succession of first-fruits ceremonies, commencing with the Maple; he missed the migration of fish in Tonawanda Creek, planting, berrying, agriculture, the Green Bean Festival, if there were one, and summer harvest. He seems to have visited only Tonawanda and Buffalo Creek Reservations, apparently not going to Allegheny, and I find no entries of visits to Nicholson Parker, Ely's brother, at Cattaraugus. His first field trips were purposely made to gather information for embellishing the rituals of his "New Confederacy," an idea which the Indians at first greeted with mixed feelings; and it was only later, when he commenced making collections for the New York State Cabinet, that his interests became primarily scientific. His intense interest in rank, adoption, and place names gradually made room for the manufacture of moccasins and the finer detail of ceremonies (Gilchrist, 1936).⁷

⁷ Morgan commenced his study of the Iroquois in 1841 (vol. 1, No. 13). He discussed the Iroquois with E. S. Parker on September 27, 1845 (vol. 1, No. 19); and on October 1, 2, and 3, he and George Ripley of Rochester attended a Six Nations Council on Tonawanda Reservation (vol. 1, Nos. 12, 15). Jimmy Johnson, successor to Handsome Lake, recited the prophet's message on October 12 and 13, and Ely Parker sent Morgan an English Synopsis (vol. 1, No. 16), reprinted in A. C. Parker (1919, pp. 252-268). December 16, Morgan was at Onondaga (vol. 1, No. 6). The first of the year 1846 in Rochester, Morgan awaited reports from Ely Parker while the Tonawanda chiefs deliberated for 2 days the possible benefits Morgan's "New Confederacy" might achieve in their dispute with the Ogden Land Company (vol. 1, No. 3). Field notes for January 27, 1846 (vol. 1, No. 5), were made while a guest of William Parker, Ely's father, during the Midwinter Festival at Tonawanda (vol. 1, No. 5, pp. 69-73). After a short excursion to Buffalo Creek, he returned on February 6 and observed the White Dog hanging outside the Council house on Sand Hill (vol. 1, No. 5, p. 92; 1901, vol. 1, p. 202). An archeological reconnaissance in the Genesee valley intervened before his return to Tonawanda again on March 3, 1846 (vol. 1, No. 7, p. 138).

In April and May, in fulfillment of the purposes of the "New Confederacy," Morgan carried a memorial to Washington to procure relief against the treaties of 1838 and 1842 at Buffalo Creek, when the Senecas compromised the Tonawanda Reservation (vol. 1, No. 8; Rep. Special Comm., 1889, p. 29).

The following fall, Morgan and two fellow members of the "New Confederacy" left Rochester, October 27, to attend the Harvest Festival at Tonawanda the following day; and in appreciation of the services of the "new society," they were adopted into various clans on Oct. 31, 1846. They remained in the field a week and returned to Rochester, November 7 (vol. 2, No. 1; vol. 1, Nos. 9, 10). As late as 1901, Charles T. Porter vividly recalled their visit, but gives the year as probably 1847 (Morgan, 1901, vol. 2, pp. 157-161).

Except for an excellent description of the War Dance (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 250 ff.), which Morgan says in a footnote occurred at a Mourning Council at Tonawanda in October 1846 (*ibid.*, pp. 251-252), although I am inclined to think he meant the previous year, and a reference to a speech by Abraham LaFort

Morgan was also a prolific letter writer. A letter from L. H. Morgan to Ely [S. Parker] (see Appendix A), which turned up on Tonawanda Reservation in February 1936, discloses that Morgan was writing an article on the religious system of the Iroquois during the winter of 1850. Finding his notes inadequate, he asks Ely to send him a description of "The Six Festivals of the Year," which he enumerates as Maple, Planting, Strawberry, Green Corn, Harvest, and New Year's, lamenting that he has only attended two of the six—the Harvest Festival and Midwinter, or New Year's, Festival.

The letter sheds light on several problems. The six festivals which Morgan enumerates in his letter are the same six which he describes in the *League* (1901) and which are still celebrated somewhat differently at Newtown and Coldspring longhouses. With a single exception, the Green Bean Festival, Morgan's enumeration and description is that of the present Tonawanda cycle. His journals and letter say nothing about a Bean Festival. There is the possibility which Simeon Skye first suggested to me in 1934, that "The Tonawanda band have borrowed the Bean Festival, since Morgan's day, from the New York Onondaga, who share it with their Canadian tribesmen."⁸ However, Tonawanda's oldest inhabitants—Charles Blackchief, well over eighty, and Peter Doctor, in his seventies—remember the performance of the Bean Festival as a well-integrated ritual from their earliest childhood. The process of culture change implies inevitably a progressive loss of older forms; this would mean a sloughing off of festivals, a process that Morgan had already noted in the abandonment of a Whortleberry Festival; and since the Bean Festival repeats the ceremonial pattern of Tonawanda longhouse, which recurs at the five festivals of the year associated with agriculture when returning thanks to the Creator for the germination, progressive growth and fruition of cultivated plants,

(Onondaga) as of 1847 (*ibid.*, p. 222), the next field data are Speeches delivered at a council of the Iroquois held at Tonawanda, October 4, 5, 6, and 7, 1848, for the purpose of raising life sachems (Gilchrist, vol. 1, No. 1; Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 222). These speeches together with a transcription of Johnson's recitation of the Handsome Lake Region, translated by Ely S. Parker, form the bulk of Book 2, Chapter 3, of the *League* (1901, vol. 1, p. 223 ff.). This seems to be the council for which Morgan, as we shall see presently, requested a report in his letter of January 29, 1850.

In May 1849, Morgan visited Onondaga (Gilchrist, 1936, vol. 2, No. 2) and Oneida Castle (vol. 2, No. 3), recording the Sachem names for the confederate councillors.

On November 30, 1849, he was once more a guest of William Parker's Tonawanda home while studying material culture and collecting for the State Museum (Gilchrist, 1936, vol. 2, No. 4); and December 7, 1849 (*ibid.*, vol. 2, No. 5), was Morgan's last field trip to Tonawanda prior to his letter of January 29, 1850, to Ely.

However, later in 1850, Morgan made two field trips: On October 28 to Grand River, Ontario (Gilchrist, 1936, vol. 2, No. 6), and another, December 26, to Tonawanda (*ibid.*, vol. 2, No. 7), collecting for the State Museum, and prior to his publication of the *League* in 1851.

Following the appearance of his famous work on the Iroquois, Morgan did not return to Tonawanda until 1858, and then for 6 days, November 6-11, to obtain degrees of relationship (Gilchrist, 1936, vol. 2, No. 11). The last entry of possible Tonawanda source material is a record in 1865 of a Conversation with E. S. Shawano, an Ojibwa, and N. Parker, Ely's brother from Cattaraugus (*ibid.*, vol. 6, No. 4).

⁸ Fenton, 1936, p. 6; Beauchamp, 1891, p. 42; 1922, p. 189 (where Beauchamp notes Morgan's omission); Goldenweiser, 1913, p. 471.

I am inclined to believe that the Bean Festival is an old Seneca observance at Tonawanda rather than an idea which someone brought back from Onondaga and promoted within the old Tonawanda pattern.

Confession, which used to precede all festivals, and the possibility that the wampum strings which were hung about the White Dog's neck when it was burned on the fifth day of the New Year might be the confession strings, worried Morgan. In writing the League, he decided that the White Dog was not the scapegoat for the sins of the community. He was not quite sure that the festivals constitute a fixed recurring cycle, antedating the teaching of Handsome Lake. The nature of the Thunderers and the concept of a good and an evil spirit bothered Morgan. He asks about witches and the doctrine of supernatural personages; and his queries concerning the number, titles, and manner of election of longhouse ritual managers, whom he calls Keepers of the Faith, indicate a firm grasp of Seneca social structure.

Since the answers to Morgan's letter are incorporated in the first two chapters of book 2 of the League, the enigma of the Bean Festival renders Ely's letter doubly interesting.⁹ First, Parker's letter reveals the degree to which Morgan depended on his Indian collaborator. Certain characteristic styles of expression in the League are not entirely Morgan's, and they appear to have crept into Morgan's writing from Ely's letters. Ely, also, at times, reflects the flowery style of his tutor: the informant bears the mark of the ethnologist. Secondly, Morgan's letter reached Ely at Ellicottville, 67 miles away from his Tonawanda people, where he was living among the whites as an Engineer for the Holland Land Co. Ely found the festivals difficult to recollect when considered apart from their natural setting. They are at best group phenomena closely integrated with village life and agriculture, celebrated by friends and relatives who share a common faith and a definite social organization which more or less prescribes the role of the individual. Lacking immediate nexus of kin and locality, Ely followed Morgan's questions. Whether or not in 1850 his people considered a Thanksgiving Festival for the green beans a definite station in the yearly cycle of ceremonies, as my oldest informants now insist, Ely omitted any reference to it and so has Morgan. Certainly, Morgan's regret of attending but two festivals, my failure to discover in his journals evidence that he ever visited Tonawanda in summer, Ely's silence, and the memory of two old men have vitiated historical reconstruction on the basis of the six festivals which Morgan enumerated, and which, from present distribution and the testimony of Old Silverheels at Cattaraugus

⁹ Morgan methodically bound his correspondence and field notes into 8 journal volumes, containing 80 separate memoranda, which passed at his death to the University of Rochester. I am deeply indebted to Donald B. Gilchrist, Librarian of the University, who kindly helped me identify Ely's reply in the first journal volume, and then cooperated in providing a photostatic copy (Gilchrist, 1936, pp. 385-390).

before 1890 (Caswell, 1892, p. 215), I had believed were old Seneca festivals, asserting that the Bean Festival had diffused to Tonawanda since 1850.

Morgan appends a list of 32 dances in his *League*, classifying them as mixed, women's, and men's dances. Of these, 3 are sacred rites addressed to the Creator; 2 war dances are now associated with the Sun and the Thunderers, respectively, in rain-making ceremonies; 4 social dances are associated with 5 festivals devoted to propitiating food spirits; 11 of the song series belong to medicine societies whose rites are restricted to members only; and the rest are social dances. A few dances are now becoming obsolete.

CONCLUSION

The yearly cycle of ceremonies at Tonawanda longhouse fall into the general framework or pattern of all Iroquois longhouse rituals which Dr. Frank G. Speck discovered among the Cayuga. Seven festivals survive. The celebration of five festivals with the same succession of dances, the inclusion of a Bean Festival, and the sequence of the Four Great Ceremonies at the New Year and Green Corn Festivals constitute the ceremonial pattern which is peculiarly Tonawanda. Lewis Henry Morgan has left us the best published account of the Tonawanda longhouse festivals; but his limited opportunity for observation prevented his grasping the importance of the medicine societies, and it caused him to omit one of the festivals; and he had to depend on his correspondent, Ely S. Parker, who was somewhat prone to compare Indian customs with those in the Bible. And lastly, Morgan realized and discussed the essential sameness of the festivals, describing how particular speeches are repeated from time to time, and perhaps he anticipated the pattern concept, but he attributed his treatment of the Tonawanda cycle to all of the Iroquois.

APPENDIX A

L. H. MORGAN TO E. S. PARKER

ROCHESTER, *January 29, 1850.*

DR. ELY: I wish to trouble you now for a favor which will require a little of your time and patience. I am now writing an article upon the Religious System of the Iroquois and find on many points my information is not sufficiently minute. I wish you would sit down as soon as you receive this and give me a description of the proceedings at the 6 festivals of the year. 1. *The Maple Dance*. When was it instituted? How many days does it last? What is done? give me a description. 2. *Planting Worship*. When was this instituted? How many days does it last. Is it before or after planting. What does the feast consist of.—Describe the mode of proceeding and what the leading motive is. 3. *Strawberry Feast*. [See pl. 15.] Does this come before or after Planting.—What does the feast consist of. If of Strawberries how are they prepared.—What is done at this festival and how long does it generally last. describe it. 4. *Green Corn Worship*. How long

does it last. Is the feast of Succotash.—Do you always have a religious discourse at these councils, or does it all consist of dances and short speeches which precede them. *Neither of these four celebrations have I ever attended.* and as I must describe each one minutely. I must look to you for a general and full explanation of them all. 5. *Harvest Corn Worship This I have attended.* Is that prayer you gave us giving thanks to the sun, & moon, & thunder & trees & birds used at this feast, or is it confined exclusively to the New Years. Give me the general idea of this festival. 6 & last the *New Years. This I understand pretty well from what I have seen & the explanations I have had from you and others.*¹⁰ Still there are some things about it I do not comprehend. Does Each person go near the Dog and make a confession of his sins in silence? How is it about the String of Wampum. It is always put about the neck of the dog. I understand Each one talks his individual sins into this "string," after which it is hung around the dogs neck & burned with him—Explain this whole proces minutely and you will oblige me greatly. The Spirit of the dog ascends to the Great Spirit and carries the prayers of the people. Is that the idea of sacrificing the dog? What time in the 5th day is the dog burned, at Sunrise or towards noon. Is he taken down from the pole over night or does he hang on the pole from the 1st to the 5th day. I wish you would describe the proceedings of this day methodically. I have the prayer but none of the other speeches. If you can remember them, or any part of them I wish you would write them down for me as full as you can in their order. I have been anxious for years to get this ceremony written down. I have tried this (?) repeatedly but without success. How are dreams worked off by confession—Are the same round of ceremonies, and the same speeches and dances used year after year in these 6 festivals.

Let me ask you also if these six festivals were not instituted long before Handsome Lake began to preach. These I suppose are a part of the old system. Under the old System also the Great Spirit is not regarded as the Creator of the world. This idea appears to have been introduced by Handsome Lake. The idea of future punishments also I take to be a part of the New System, and no part of the old. How do you understand it—Under the old System & new the Iroquois believed in the Great Spirit, the Evil Spirit (Send me the name of the Evil Spirit) & He is the spirit of thunder. What other Spirits or Gods did they believe in. Give me the Indian names and office of each. I find in my notes that He-no consisted of four persons. Tell me the Indian name and office of each of this also (?) I suppose one of them must be the Chief God of thunder and the others assistants.

The doctrine of Witches & supernatural personages. Will you explain it briefly—Do the Indians pretend that man ever saw the Great Spirit

One other thing I wish explained and that is the Committee or Prompters or Managers as you call them who are appointed on each reservation (?) to take charge of the dances the festivals, & religious discourses. How many are there at Tonawanda, or about how many. Do they hold their office for life? Are they appointed by the whole people or by the Tribe or by the Chiefs or by the Women. Explain the manner of their appointment, the term of their office their duties, & their numbers. I wish to understand this part of the system. What is the name in Seneca of the whole Committee as a Body & what the name of each one, includes a single committeman—

Now if you can write me about two sheets of Cap paper at least in answering all these questions as I wish them answered, and I shall esteem it a new favor if you will take your earliest leisure. [sic] and give me full answers to all these inquiries and such other explanations and discriptions [sic] as you may think

¹⁰ Italics added.—W. N. F.

suitable.—*When you have finished your answer I wish you would then read over this letter again & see if any questions are passed over in your answer.*

If it would not be asking too much of you at one time I would like exceedingly to have your Report of the Council which we have had so long in view.—I need it now to use.

I will send you in a few days my Report to the Legislature on the Indian fabrics which I collected at Tonawanda for the Indian Collection. It is not yet printed ¹¹—

Did you see the notice of the introduction by Mr. Burroughs of Orleans of my Bill for Support and Education of a limited number of Indian youths at the State Normal School (?) I wrote a memorial to the Regents of the University on the subject of opening this school to our Indian youth, and asked for an appropriation to organise (?) and support a small class (?) at the Normal School. The Governor read my memorial, and recommended it in his message. I went to Albany Jan'y 1. and before I left. I got a resolution passed by the Executive Committee of the Normal School approving the plan. We also got (?) up a bill appropriating \$1000 a year for two years, giving each student \$100. a year & 3 cents a miles for mileage—This you see will support ten scholars. The Governor approves of the bill & I think it will pass. But we cannot tell of course as yet. Nic. Newt- and Caroline ¹² will go down I think if the law passes. It will take effect May 1. You must find a few at Allegany and Cattaraugus to try the experiment.

Marsh the Resident Engineer said he thought he could give you a situation in his office in the Spring. if you wished to commence again as you did at Mt. Morris.¹³ You would have a fair chance to work your way up. If it would be any inducement to you let me know and I will keep watch for you, & I think you can obtain the situation if you wished it. [p. 17.]

L. H. MORGAN ¹⁴

APPENDIX B

E. S. PARKER TO L. H. MORGAN

ELLCOTTVILLE, *Feb. 12, 1850*

DEAR SIR: Upon much reflection, and having carefully read your letter, I am free to confess that I consider myself totally unable to answer your several inter-rogations satisfactorily [sic] either to you or to myself. I have at many different times written to you upon the subjects concerning which you now ask further information. I do not now recollect what I have said respecting them, and in my present answer I may say many contradictory things. And I will further, at the outset, tell you that I do not profess any great knowledge upon the several subjects and questions you have sent me to answer. [Pl. 17.]

MAPLE THANKSGIVING

I will answer your letter in the order you have put your questions, First then the Maple Dance. I cannot tell you when it was instituted, and I will say now in

¹¹ Morgan, 1852, pp. 67-117. An abbreviation of this article appeared in Stryker's American Register and Magazine, vol. 4, July 1850, Trenton, N. J. (Gilchrist, 1923).

¹² Nicholson Henry Parker, Newton Parker, and Caroline Parker, Mount Pleasant, brothers and sister of Ely S. Parker, were among the first Indians educated at the New York State Normal School.

¹³ Morgan here refers to Ely's early experience as a land engineer about Mount Morris in the Genesee valley. Later, after Ely learned he could not be admitted to the bar, this adventure led to his studying at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and to a post superintending the improvement of the western end of the Erie Canal (Parker, 1919, pp. 77, 79, 91).

¹⁴ This signature appears in the right-hand margin of the last paragraph of the letter. (See pl. 16.)

regard to all the dances that I cannot tell when any of them were instituted. They are all among the ancient customs of the Iroquois, and are all, besides many other feasts which are now discontinued, spoken off [sic] by all the early writers, both French and English—The Maple Dance continues only one day. This is a thanksgiving festival to the Honor of the Great Spirit, that he has caused the good tree to again produce its sweets for the comfort of man. There are a variety of ceremonies & dances at this time, but the principal one is the grand religious & or thanksgiving Dance. This dance you know is always in honor & praise of the Great Spirit.¹⁵

PLANTING FESTIVAL (SEED DANCE)

2nd The Planting worship continues only one day, I believe—It is held at the most convenient season, but must & is always at or about planting time. There is no peculiarity in the feast, it consists of course of what they can get.—The leading object of this festival is twofold; first to return to the Great Spirit thanks for the return of the planting season, and second, that his blessing might rest upon the seed they should (?) & had sown to give them a plentiful crop and an abundant harvest—

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

3rd The Strawberry Feast, comes off of course when the strawberries [sic] get ripe, which I believe is in June sometime, and would of course bring it after planting season or cornplanting time—They have all they can get to furnish this feast, but strawberries form the principal ingredient of the materials, and is prepared by being jammed and then sweetened with Maple Sugar,¹⁶ so that when it is prepared it looks like jelly, & of this each partake more or less as they have the opportunity. Sometimes water is put in, if the mixture is too thick, which is also taken either in a ladle or dipper. It is when taking this that many (?) make a thanksgiving prayer & talk to the Great Spirit—They return him thanks that he has again permitted them to taste of the first fruits of the Earth.—They pray him to spare their lives to another similar season. The whole proceedings is nothing more than a thanksgiving festival. The grand religious dance forms the principal drama in the feast.¹⁷

GREEN CORN FESTIVAL

4th *Green Corn Worship*.—This generally lasts 3 days. The time is spent in feasting and dancing. It is opened by a religious discourse from the Grand High Priest or one of his Deputys.—They have a number of dances during the time, but the principal ones are the Grand Religious & Thanksgiving dance.—I say that this opened by a religious discourse, of course, you are not to understand that I mean a discourse like Johnsons annual,¹⁸ but a statement of the invariable custom from time immemorial to celebrate this event with religious ceremonies, & says that it is a duty incumbent upon the people to recognize this custom & institution of the Great Spirit, who had ever required men to return thanks to him for every return & expression of his goodness—The speaker enjoins upon the people to examine themselves & see that they harbor no ill will to anyone, thus to come up to the festival with pure thoughts and right minds—.

¹⁵ The Thanksgiving Dance (gane'oto) is not included in the program of the present Maple Festival at Tonawanda.

¹⁶ Now, about 5 pounds of granulated white or brown sugar is used to sweeten the "berry juice."

¹⁷ Here again, I think Ely's memory has failed; perhaps he means Feather Dance.

¹⁸ Ely refers here to Jimmy Johnson (Soshe'owa^o, "Great-burden-strap"), the first priest of the Handsome Lake Revelation, who was preaching at Tonawanda when Morgan visited it (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 223 ff).

HARVEST THANKSGIVING FESTIVAL (BREAD DANCE)

5th *The Harvest Corn Worship*.—This in its principal features is the same as the Green Corn Feast with the adoption of that speech I gave you.¹⁹ Thanks to the sun, moon, stars, the Thunderers etc., when they dance the Go-na-o-oh dance.²⁰ The Grand Religious, Thanksgiving & Thunder dances are performed at this time.—This is intended only & purely as a thanksgiving festival, for the abundant harvest reaped, and the constant return of the great blessings bestowed by the Great Spirit.

NEW YEAR OR MIDWINTER FESTIVAL

6 & last the New Years Festival—1st in regard to the confessions of the people—All the confessing of sins is done publicly before the Festival commences. This custom is adhered to now & has been for a long time, and is required & enjoined by our religion that all may come to the Festival free from sin—These confessions are made also before the commencement of the green corn & Harvest festivals. At the New Years festival, I am not aware that any person approaches the dog to confess his or her sins, though I admit that many confess in silence but not near the dog intentionally. I am not aware also, though I am conscious of the opinion you entertain respecting it, that this string of wampum into which the confessions are put, is the same that is put around the dogs neck. I hardly believe it is. And whether it is or not, it will make no difference as to the object and result. Now with us the white wampum is an emblem of peace & purity.—The dog is the only & most faithful companion (the) Indian has in the hunters state. The Indians therefore consider the trusty character of the dog. & they sacrifice him as a messenger and present to the Great Spirit, & they put the wampum about his neck to show to the Great Spirit his character and intentions. My phraseology in the last sentence may be wrong. By his character, I mean, that he is only a thanksgiving offering. It does not appear, nor is it pretended, that it is a type of anything, as to the ancient Offerings and Sacrifices we read of in the Old Testament—The wampum, always put about its neck, indicate to the Great Spirit the continued adherence [sic] of the Nation to the primitive faith.—The dog is strangled upon the morning of the first day, when the wampum is put about his neck, not by any particular person, but by someone, while others put upon him ribbons and paints, & for every favor and gift so bestowed, the giver expects a blessing. It is then, when so prepared, hung upon a pole, which is also decorated with paints and ribbons. It there hangs day & night until it is taken down to be burnt; and it is burnt early in the morning, just as the day dawn begins to appear in the east.—At this time, & during the time the dog is burning a speech is made by the High Priest or one of his Deputies. The altar is only a few sticks of wood. When the Dog is thrown in, the priest throws into the fire a quantity of tobacco, at the same time giving three whoops to call the attention of the Great Spirit. He then commences his speech. Great Spirit, Maker of us all. Listen now to what we shall say (3 whoops). Lend a kind ear to the thanks of thy people.—They thank thee that thy blessings have been so plentifully bestowed upon them during the past year. (3 whoops) Great Spirit, Our words

¹⁹ Morgan. 1901, vol. 1, p. 192.

²⁰ (gane'o'p). During this dance a speaker from each moiety or a single speaker interrupts the singers to intone prayers of thanksgiving to the Creator, hence Morgan called it Thanksgiving Dance. Prior to Handsome Lake, during the period of the Cherokee and the Catawba wars and earlier, it afforded an opportunity for warriors to brag of the number of scalps taken on various expeditions; but the prophet advocated substituting thanksgiving prayers for war records which after cessation of the wars only incited domestic feuds [Henan Scrogg].

continue to flow towards thee—Preserve us from all dangers. Preserve our aged men. Preserve our Mothers. Preserve our warriors. Preserve our children. Give us wisdom. (3 whoops) we burn here tobacco; may its smoke arise to thee. We have also offered another sacrifice. May its spirit arise to thee & be acceptable. (3 whoops) The wampum we send as our pledge of sincerity—(3 *whoops*) Great Spirit, Remember us. Great Spirit, Maker of us all, we have done—

This is about the substance of the speech made upon the occasion—tenor of it is the same among the Iroquois so far as I have heard. I am unable to give you a minute description of each days performance, *having never taken any notes*,²¹ and can only relate from memory. The original custom of this festival was to burn two dogs. You know the clans among the Indians are divided into two classes, each styling the other "Cousins," and it was the custom & still is among the Onondagas for each Class to provide and burn a dog. They meet in separate buildings & when they are burnt the two classes meet when the dogs are carried out together and burnt together.²²

As to dreams, I know not whether they are confessed. During the New Years festival there is a great deal of dreaming & guessing of dreams. The ceremony is simply this. A person apparently dejected advances into the room & says will some one guess my dream. Each person guesses, & when anyone guesses the person responds & feels much pleased. A present is then made to the Dreamer, & in this way presents accumulate, out of which a dance is got up from the presents. As to the many speeches that are made at this festival, I cannot send them to you. My memory is not powerful enough to recollect them, so many and diversified are they in their nature—This part of your answer will therefor remain unanswered.

I send you in this connection a thanksgiving speech published by Baron Le [sic] Hontan in his work.²³ I have frequently heard the same sentiments and I therefore have doubt but that it was used by the ancients. That portion however relating to enemies & huntsmen (?) are now omitted—"Great Spirit, Master of our lives, Great Spirit Master of all things visible and invisible. Great Spirit Master of the spirits whether good or evil—Command the good spirits to favor thy children. Command the Evil spirits to keep at a distance from them. O Great Spirit keep up the strength and courage of our warriors, that they may be able to stem the fury of our enemies. Preserve the old persons, whose bodies are not quite wasted that they may give counsel to the young. Preserve Our Children. Enlarge their number. Deliver them from Evil spirits to the end that they may prove our support and comfort. Preserve our parents and our beasts, if thou meanest that we should die of hunger. Take care of our villages, and guard our huntsmen in their hunting adventures. Deliver us from all fatal surprises when thou ceasest to vouchsafe us the light of the sun, which speaks thy grandeur and power. Acquaint us by the spirit of dreams, with that thy pleasure requires of us or prohibits us to do. When it pleases to put a period to our lives, send us to the great country of souls, where we may meet with those of our fathers, our mothers, our wives, our children, and our relatives, O, Great Spirit, Great Spirit, hear the voice of the nation. Give ear to all thy children and remember them at all times."

²¹ I have employed italics here, as in the preceding letter, for emphasis.—W. N. F.

²² The Seneca and Onondaga clans are grouped into two phratries or moieties that perform reciprocal and complimentary ceremonial functions.

²³ Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 192, says in a footnote, "For similar address in use among the Ottawas, see La Hontan's North Am., Lond. Ed. 1735, V. ii, p. 34."

THE OLD RELIGION

None of the 6 festivals were instituted by Handsome Lake, but he dedicated the Grand Religious and Thanksgiving dances particularly & peculiarly to the worship of the Great Spirit.²⁴

You say that under the old system the Great Spirit is not regarded as the maker of the world. This is very true and it is further true that the new system introduced by Handsome Lake does not make him the creator of the world. It only confirms the ancient system of theology respecting him.—That He is the Maker of man and all the animals, which man can make useful to him in any way, Also that He blessed & sanctified some of the fruits of trees to the palate of man—They hold further that the Evil Spirit made all poisonous animals and put poison into some herbs and fruits of trees—The entire system consists simply in this that the Great Spirit made all that is good and beautiful, and the Evil Spirit everything that is poisonous and deformed.—Further that the Great Spirit is now the ruler of all things. He wills everything to be done that is good for man.—I do not understand that the idea of future punishments & rewards was unknown to the old system. It is said to have been/was one of its principal features. What is called the new system is only a systematic collection of their ancient notions on these subjects, and was intended only to refresh the memories of all upon their respective duties to one another as members of one great family & of their obligations to their Creator.—This I gather from the sayings of Handsome Lake himself, from the sayings of old men, who were taught before Handsome Lake preached, and from all the early writers upon Iroquois customs religion &c, who are all agreed.

The Seneca name for Evil Spirit is 1st Hā-ne-go-ate,-geh, meaning Evil minded.—2. Hā,-nis-ha-o, noh—His satanic majesty. Hā, nis-na-o-noh, geh, Hell or the place of Evil Spirits—.

THUNDERERS

I cannot give you the information you require respecting the 4 spirits of Thunder. I am not aware that they have separate names. Still they may have. The oldest spirit is chief, & they are not Gods, but deputies of the Great Spirit to rule & dispense rain, & destroy Evil Spirits. The youngest of them is said to have been the offspring of a girl who lived at Cayuga above Niagara Falls, & who at one time was lost for the term of one year, during which time she was inter-married with one of the thunderers. Their offspring was a boy, who being at one time ill treated refused to remain longer with his earthly relatives & so translated himself to the clouds & became a juvenile Thunderer—The relation the thunderers sustain to the Indian race & the designating title for them is Grand Parents.—

The Iroquois do not pretend to have any other God than the Great Spirit. But there are many spirits, who are considered only as messengers & assistants.

WITCHES

The Indian notion of witches is very vague—But they are all agreed that such a thing as a witch exists, and they believe that the witch is human, either male or female & may be either young or old. By some means or other, yet unknown to

²⁴ Here, Ely refers to Grand Religious, really Great Feather ('osto'we'go'wa'), and the so-called Thanksgiving Dance, literally skin drum head (gane'o'o'). Handsome Lake revised them, but they are old enough to be included in the cosmologic legends (Hewitt, 1928, p. 559 ff.)

For a treatment of the New Religion of Handsome Lake, see Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 217-248; Parker, 1913; Spier, 1936.

me & everybody else except witches, and hence their indefinite notions on witchcraft, a person becomes endowed with the power of doing evil, of destroying lives at their will and pleasure, by means of unseen poison—It is said that there is a regular and ancient organization of these demons, & that they have a regular initiation and fee. The fee is the life of the nearest & dearest relative or friend of the candidate, and the deed of poisoning to be executed by the candidate upon the eve of admittance. This may or may not be all true, but such is the belief. A witch, it is said, can transform themselves into kind of an animal and assume their shapes & as soon as thought regain again the human shape. They can dwindle down to a mere fox, or assume the huge dimensions of the black Bear, or they can take unto themselves wings and go to distant lands. Now whether this be so or not is altogether immaterial for our purposes, it is sufficient for us that these are their notions & beliefs.—They believe it is an organization of the Evil minded one for there is no good in them, & therefore it was a capital crime for anyone to be convicted of being a witch, and any person is justifiable in killing a witch whenever they are found on their nightly demoniac excursions.

I am not aware that the Senecas have any belief in any supernatural personages.—

Neither has it ever been pretended that anyone ever saw the Great Spirit.

FAITHKEEPERS

Your last inquiry respecting, Committees, Managers, & Prompters, I am wholly unable to answer. All I know is that they are elective & hold during the time they adhere to the faith.—Their number is not definite or limited. Women can and must hold these offices as well as men.—They are called Ho.nun-de-unt. Literally the Keepers of the word or faith, because to them are entrusted the times of appointing extraordinary festivals & religious exercises; & upon the regular festivals they have all the responsibility upon them.—

Now Lewis I have done. This will probably be unsatisfactory, but it is the best I can do for you.—I have made out to deceive myself and write more than I expected.—But I send you the whole as it is.—The report I cannot send. It is very long & full & I have no time to copy it, & notwithstanding my promise, I do not feel disposed to copy it for anyone at present.—²⁵

I am &c Yours

E. S. PARKER ²⁶

APPENDIX C

THE TONAWANDA CEREMONIAL CYCLE

A. TIME, DURATION, AND PURPOSE OF THE PERIODIC FESTIVALS

I. Midwinter, or New Year Festival: Dream Feast (Jesuits).

ganä''ya'sq', derangement.

hodinä''ya's, they are deranged (P. Dr.).²⁷

gaiwanqsgwa''go'wa'', difficult proposition, riddle (P. Dr.); the difficult ritual (HS).

²⁵ Morgan has asked Ely for a copy of his report of the council, and the particular council is not clear from either letter; but Morgan's journals contain complete speeches delivered at a council at Tonawanda in October 1848, which Morgan received from Ely S. Parker in 1850 (Gilchrist, 1936, vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-46). This appears in the League (vol. 1, p. 223 ff.).

²⁶ This sheet is signed "Ely S. Parker" in the right-hand margin. (See pl. 18.)

²⁷ Initials stand for various informants; P. Dr., Peter Doctor, Tonawanda; HS, Hanover Spring, Tonawanda; NYSM, New York State Museum ms. by Nicholson Parker, circa 1850; Ch. B., Charles Blackchief, Tonawanda; HRE, Henry Red-Eye, Coldspring; and JJ, John Jimmerson, Coldspring.

yosha'se', new year (P. Dr.).

gänä'yusta', (NYSM).

Time.—Five days after the new moon of nisgowakneh (late January–February).

Duration.—Seven days.

Purpose.—Renew ceremonial associations revealed in dreams, renew old dreams, reveal new dreams; return thanks to all spirit-forces.

Feature.—Medicine Societies' celebrations (Feast of Fools); White Dog Sacrifice.

II. Maple Festival, or Sap Dance; thanks to the Maple.

gahada otoddinonio', tree thanking (NYSM).

wainontchiiskot, sap boiling (NYSM).

ę'nęteisgo'', sap boiling (Ch. B.).

otadinęyę' ne' wa'hda', thanks to the Maple (Morgan, HRE, JJ).

Time.—At Maple harvest (March 30, 1935).

Duration.—One evening.

Purpose.—Thanks to the Maple, the harbinger of spring.

II a. Sun Shooting Ceremony: Thanks to the Sun.

deędi'nęnyo' gā'hgwa'', they thank the Sun (Ch. B.).

Time.—Occasionally in early spring (now obsolete).

Duration.—One day.

Purpose.—Dislodge frog that is retarding warm weather by engulfing the Sun; implore Sun to grow warm.

Feature.—Shooting at Sun; Feather Dance in honor of Sun.

III. Planting Festival, or Seed Dance: Soaking of the Seeds.

waino'noę gwa'so'', they-the-seeds-soak (Ch. B.).

waäno'nägwa sho't (NYSM).

ayent wā tā (Morgan, 1901, p. 186).

Time.—When the dogwood is in bloom, early in May (15, 1935).

Duration.—One evening.

Purpose.—Ask the Creator to bless seeds going into the earth (Morgan); appeal to Our-Life-Sustainers, the three sisters—corn, beans, squash; appeal to Thunderers to water the growing plants.

Feature.—Morgan says (1901, p. 187) that tobacco burning invocation used in later days, but anciently only at three principal festivals: Green Corn, Harvest, New Year.

III a. Corn Sprouting Rite (?). "Towiissas, an annual thanksgiving ceremony

led by the women, in honor of the corn, beans, and squashes" (NYSM, list of annual festivals (Seneca)). This ceremony, now part of the Green Corn Festival, was apparently performed periodically during the year by the women to stimulate their cultivated plants. It was probably associated with first and second hoeings, celebrated again at Green Corn, and finally at fall harvest. It is sometimes performed at midwinter.

IV. Berry Festival, or Strawberry Dance: Dipping the berries.

hanundä' yo (Morgan).

wainęda'yo· they-berries-dip (in water) (Ch. B.).

wanondagaet (NYSM).

Time.—When strawberries ripen in June; fifth day of berry moon (oya'ikneh).

Duration.—One morning.

Purpose.—First-fruits thanksgiving; first fruit to ripen on the earth (Morgan).

Feature.—Communion with berry juice.

IV a. Whortleberry Festival (Morgan, 1:190).

Time.—Ripening of huckleberries, not annual (now obsolete).

Duration.—One day (?).

Purpose.—Return thanks for first fruits of the shrubs.

IV b. Thunder Ceremony, or Rain Dance (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 188).

Time.—In case of drought (July 10, 1936).

Duration.—One evening.

Purpose.—To invoke the Creator to send the Thunderers to water the wilted crops.

Feature.—Tobacco invocation and War Dance (Sioux Type) to the Thunderers (Morgan); confession of sins which withheld rain, Thanksgiving Dance and Personal Chant.

V. Green Bean Festival, or String Bean Dance: Boiling string beans.²⁸

wainqdet { gowa'seo' (P. Dr.).
 { gowa'so' (Ch. B.).

waänodetgowuhseoh (NYSM, in notes by E. S. Parker and N. Parker).

Time.—When string beans ripen (July 30, 1934; August 6, 1935).

Purpose.—Return thanks to Life-sustainers and make crops grow.

Duration.—One evening.

VI. Green Corn Festival, or Ingathering of Food.

hononde { kwe's (P. Dr.) they-food-collect.
 { kwe-k (Ch. B.)

honodekweet (NYSM).

AH-DAKE'-WÄ-O, a feast (Morgan).

Time.—When the corn is in the milk (late August-September).

Duration.—Four days, anciently (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1, p. 196); three days (1847), (Morgan); two mornings and one evening (1935, 1936).

Purpose.—Thanks to Creator and Life-supporters that the crops have matured.

VII. Harvest Festival, or Bread Dance: Boiling bread.

wainqtä'hgo'', they-bread-boil (Ch. B. and P. Dr.).

Do-yo-nun-neo-quä-na Deoha'ko, thanks to Our Supporters (Morgan, 1901, vol. 1; p. 197).

wanontekweet (NYSM).

Time.—Late fall after gathering and storing crops for winter.

Duration.—Four days (Morgan); one evening (1935).

Purpose.—Return thanks to the Creator, his appointed ones, and Life-sustainers for a bountiful harvest.

Feature.—Council of Faith-keepers decides to hold the Midwinter Festival following their return from fall hunt.

B. PERIODIC MEDICINE SOCIETY CURES AND RENEWALS

I. False-face Society Visits.

Time.—Early spring and late fall; also at midwinter.

Duration.—One day.

Purpose.—Drive sickness and disease from the settlements.

²⁸ Lacking at Coldspring and Newtown, but present at Onondaga and the Canadian longhouses; it is mentioned in notes by E. S. Parker and Nicholson Parker in the files of the New York State Museum at Albany.

II. Little Water Medicine Company Meetings.

Time.—(1) Spring meeting, when berry moon is 5 days old (June); (2) autumn meeting, when moon of ge'okneh is 5 days old (in the middle of October) (October 19, 1936); (3) midwinter meeting, when the Medicine has been used since the fall meeting.

Duration.—Throughout one night.

Purpose.—Renew strength of the Little Water Medicine; rearrange the sacred bundles.

Feature.—Fifth group of songs sung at fall meeting.

III. Chanters for the Dead, 'Ohgi'we.

Time.—Winter, about March (not regular—E. S. P. in NYSM).

Duration.—One night until midnight or all night.

Purpose.—Rest the souls of the departed, or the living who have dreamed of them.

Feature.—Carry-out-the-kettle; a clockwise dance.

C. COMPOSITION OF THE CEREMONIES

I. Midwinter Ceremony.

a. Preliminary Councils of Faithkeepers.

(1) Senior longhouse officers meet and appoint first meeting of Faithkeepers who meet at the same fireplace (Julia Peters', January 12, 1936) each year, to commence advancing the "head" (feast fund). Appoint collectors from each phratry.

(2) Hear report of collectors. Appoint day to commence Five Preliminary Longhouse Councils to meet 2 days apart until fifth day of the new moon, when the Festival begins. (January 14, 1936).

(3) Council of Faith-keepers and Commoners convenes at house nearer longhouse (Wm. Gordon's, January 16, 1936). Appoint day for Faithkeepers to sit in council opposite the Chiefs and present the "head" to the Chiefs.

(4) Chiefs meet Faith-keepers at house nearest longhouse (Sadie George's, January 19, 1936). Sit spatially divided opposite each other. Faithkeeper presents "Head" to Chiefs. Chief accepts. Chiefs instruct Faith-keepers, "Cut your firewood" (for the festival). Meet 2 days hence at noon at longhouse.

b. Chiefs call Preliminary Longhouse Councils to determine the "Uncles"—Heralds for the Festival.²⁹

(1) Longhouse council when sun on meridian (January 21, 1936). Sachems ask: "Who has an old dream? Who has a new dream? Who has a white dog?" If no one replies, appoint 2 days later.

(2) Question put before the Sachems (January 23, 1936).

(3) Two days later, question put to Subchiefs.

(4) Two days later, question put to Faith-keepers and the Common people (warriors). If no one volunteers, then they appoint two heralds. Other appointments for festival.

Preliminary night.—(January 28, 1936). Night watch of the Uncles. Gunshots at midnight, two shots at 3 a. m., three shots at dawn, then one, two, and three again.

First day.—The Uncles, "the Bigheads," circuit houses announcing the Festival at 9 a. m., noon, and at dusk (January 29, 1936).

²⁹ There were but four meetings in 1936; informants hinted that there were sometimes five.

Second day.—Stirring Ashes rite, Dawn Song (January 30, 1936). The Way is open for the False Faces. Medicine Society rites; dream renewals commence.

Third day.—Faith-keepers stir ashes; Dawn Song. Feather Dance. Thanksgiving Dance; "go around town" through the houses traversed by Uncles.

Fourth day.—Morning; Dawn Song (February 1, 1936). Bowl Game. Women's Dance for the Life-Supporters; make the circuit of houses. *Last day of dream derangement and fulfillment*; and on into the night.

Fifth day.—Big day at the longhouse (February 2, 1936). Morning: White Dog Sacrifice and Tobacco Offering; Personal Chant; Feather Dance; Thanksgiving Dance (gane'o'q) ends at noon.

Sixth day.—Peach Stone game at the longhouse (February 3, 1936). Pt. 2. Large rite of Personal Chant, terminates at noon.

Seventh day.—Nothing during the day. Dance for Life-supporters (djoh'e'ligq) at night at the longhouse: (1) Women's Dance; (2) Feather Dance; (3) Standing Quiver (Trotting) Dance; (4) Hand-in-hand Dance; (5) Traditional Women's Dance for the food-spirits, "Our-life-supporters."

Final dance for the False Faces and the Husk Faces on the Sunday night following the Festival at the longhouse (February 28, 1936). Thanksgiving (da'hq) and floor managers from each moiety: (1) Standing-quiver Dance; (2) Hand-in hand Dance; False Face rite for E. Hill, passage of Husk Faces; (3) Corn Dance; (4) Shaking-a-jug Dance; (5) Sharpening-a-stick Dance, feints at door by False Faces (incomplete).

II. Maple Thanksgiving. General Thanksgiving. Tobacco burning invocation to the Maple. Bowl game between the sexes. Social dances: (1) Pidgeon Dance; (2) Quiver Dance; (3) Hand-in-hand Dance; (4) Women's Dance; (5) Fish Dance; (6) Coon Dance; (7) Shaking-a-bush Dance, or Naked Dance; (8) Duck Dance. (Note that the Feather Dance is absent.)

III. Planting Festival. (Same as last night of Midwinter Festival.)

IV. Strawberry Festival.

Time.—One morning until noon.

Purpose.—Thanksgiving.

Feature.—Feather Dance in costume. (Intermission during which four women who have been appointed pass berry juice. Individual partaking and thanksgiving.) Feather Dance in costume (second part); distribution of Feast.

V. Green Bean Festival. (Same as seventh night of Midwinter and Planting.)

VI. Green Corn Festival. Ostensibly similar to last 3 days of the Midwinter Festival, omitting the sacrifice of the White Dog.

Duration.—Two to three days depending on whether the bowl game is finished.

VII. Thanksgiving or Harvest Festival. (Same as seventh night of Midwinter.)

D. SPECIFIC RITES AND DANCES ARRANGED IN GROUPS
ACCORDING TO FUNCTION

Group I. Longhouse Celebrations.

A. Rituals addressed to the Creator.

1. Four Longhouse Rituals.

*Morgan's list.*³⁰

(1) Great Feather Dance.

1. * m. & f.

(2) Thanksgiving Dance (gane'o'q).

2. *

(3) Bowl game.

(4) Personal Chant (adq'wε').

2. Confession.

3. Ashes Stirring Rite.

4. Tobacco invocation over burning White Dog.

B. Rituals addressed to the mid-Pantheon and indirectly to the Creator.

1. gano'iowi'

2. Thunder Rite (adq'wε') and War-dance (wasa'se).

3. Sun Rite (occasionally War Dance, wasa'se'eni'dje').

C. Rituals addressed to earth-bound spirits.

1. At Tonawanda, the following "Four Ceremonies" are addressed to "the-sisters-our-life-sustainers"—the spirits of the corn, beans, and squashes, the tutelaries of agriculture:

(1) Feather Dance.

1. m. & f.

(2) ga'da'sot, Standing-Quiver, or Trotting Dance.

4. m. & f.

(3) Hand-in-hand Dance, symbolic of bean vines climbing corn.

3. m. & f.

(4) Traditional Women's Dance, the dance of the three sisters

16. f.

The appeal of these rites extends through B to A.

Group II. Medicine Society Rites, restricted to members, and addressed to spirit-forces on earth or above it.

1. Bear Dance.

24.

m. (& f. now)

2. Buffalo Dance.

23.

m. (& f. now)

3. Eagle Dance.

27.

m.

4. False-face.

30.

m. (& some rites f.)

5. Husk Faces.

31.

m.

6. The Little Water Medicine Company and yei'do's.

7. Otter.

8. Changing Ribs and Quavering.

17 & 19.

f.

9. Dark Dance and Charm Holders.

21.

f.

10. Chanters for the Dead.

15.

f.

11. Carry out the Kettle.

7.

m. & f.

12. Four-nights ceremony (from Cayuga-Tute-lo) is celebrated by several families.

³⁰ The numbers at the right of the page indicate the place in Morgan's list of dances; * stands for costumed rites; "m. & f." for men and women participants.

Group III. Social Dances.

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---------|
| 1. Standing Quiver, or Trotting Dance. | 4. | m. & f. |
| 2. Hand-in-hand Dance. | 3. | m. & f. |
| 3. Women's Dance, with ancient or modern songs. | 16. | f. |
| 4. Fish Dance. | 8. ³¹ | m. & f. |
| 5. Coon Dance. | | m. & f. |
| 6. Dove, or Pigeon Dance. | 12. | m. & f. |
| 7. Corn Dance. | | |
| 8. Duck Dance. | 11. ³⁰ | m. & f. |
| 9. Chicken Dance. | | m. & f. |
| 10. Naked, or Shaking-a-bush Dance. | 9. | m. & f. |
| 11. Skin-beating Dance (Delaware). | | m. & f. |
| 12. Sharpening-a-stick Dance. | | m. & f. |
| 13. Robin Dance. | | m. & f. |
| 14. Shaking-a-jug Dance (from Cattaraugus). | | m. & f. |
| 15. Garter Dance (from Cattaraugus but known). | | m. & f. |
| 16. Ancient, or Devil Dance (dji'haya') (obsolete). | 6. | m. & f. |
| 17. Grinding-an-arrow Dance (obsolete). | | |
| 18. Grinding-dishes Dance (employ wood rasp on a bench for resonator). (Morgan marked this obsolete.) | 13. | m. & f. |
| 19. North Dance, or Cold Dance (obsolete). | 5. | m. & f. |
| 20. Knee-rattle Dance (still known). | 14. | m. & f. |
| 21. Arm-shaking Dance (Morgan marked this obsolete. It is still performed by women). ³² | 29. | m. |

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³¹ Morgan lists this as foreign in provenience, but it has long been an integral part of the dance programs.

³² The rest of the items on Morgan's list were not identified by my informants. Evidently some dances have appeared since his time, and some others have become obsolete. There is also a possibility that his terms are but synonyms in faulty phonetics for dances now known by other names so that my informants do not recognize them.

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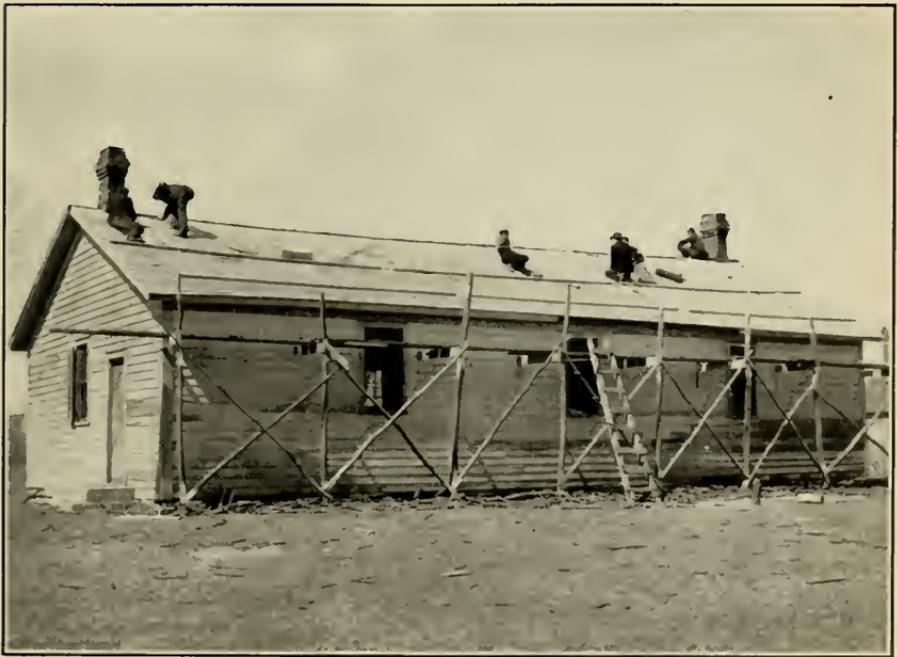
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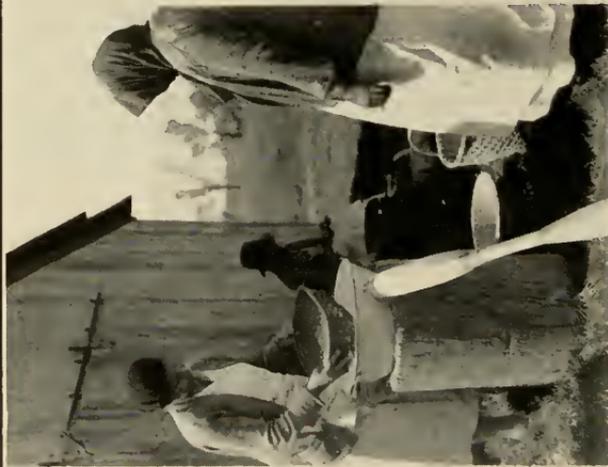


1. The longhouse and cookhouse.



2. Indian youths reshingle the longhouse under National Youth Administration.

TONAWANDA LONGHOUSE.



FAITHKEEPERS PREPARE THE COMMUNITY FEAST IN HONOR OF THE "THREE SISTERS" AT THE PLANTING, OR SEED FESTIVAL



THE MEN ASSIST THE WOMEN BY POUNDING CORN.



OUR UNCLCS, THE BIGHEADS, GO THROUGH THE HOUSES, ANNOUNCING THE MIDWINTER FESTIVAL



1. THE FALSE-FACE BEGGAR DANCERS VISIT A HOUSE ON SECOND NIGHT OF MID-WINTER FESTIVAL.
2, 3. CHARLIE CHAPLIN AND THE DEVIL CAPTURE THE IMAGINATION OF THE CHILDREN.



GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS STAGE IMPROMPTU DANCE CONTESTS.

Rochester January 29, 1850

DEAR

I wish to trouble you now for a favor which will require a little of your time and patience. I am now writing an article upon the Religious System of the Indians. I wish that an easy portrait of your system is not sufficiently minute. I wish you would set down as soon as you receive this and give me a description of the proceedings at the 6 festivals of the year! The Woble Dance. When was it instituted? How many days does it last? What is done? give me a description. 2. Planting Woble. When was this instituted. How many days are it last. Is it before or after planting. What are the first consist of - describe the mode of proceeding and what the leading motive is. 3. Stawling Feast. Does this come before or after planting. - What are the first consist of. 4. of Stawling how are they performed. - What is done at this festival and

spent, the school to our Indian youth and asked for a appropriation to organize,
 we support a small class at the Normal School. The Bureau read of memorandum, and
 recommended it a fair measure. I went to Albany July 1, and before I left I got
 a resolution passed of the Executive Committee of the State to send a School offering the plan.
 We also got up a bill appropriating \$1000 a year for two years pay to each student \$100
 a year, & 3 cents a week for mileage. The proposition was referred to selectmen. The Governor
 approved of the bill, & I think it will pass. But we cannot take of course a just. Mr. West-
 wood's "Lives" will go down & that of the Law Professor. It will take about \$100,000. You
 must find a few or Albany and Saratoga - 6 to 7 the expenses

Although the President Engineer should be thought he could give you a
 situation in his office in the Spring if you wish to commence again as you did
 at Mt. Vernon. You would have a fair chance to work your way up. If
 it would be any inducement to you let me know and I will keep
 watch for you, & I think you can obtain the situation if you wish it.

Ellicottville, Feb 13, 1850

Dear Sir, Upon much reflection, and having carefully read your letter, I am free to confess that I consider myself totally unable to answer your several interrogatories satisfactorily either to you or myself. I have at many different times written to you upon the subject concerning which you now ask further information. I do not now recollect what I have said respecting them, and in my present opinion I may say many contradictory things. I will farther, at the outset, state to you, that I do not profess any great knowledge upon the several subjects upon which you have sent me to answer. I will answer you here in the order ~~which~~ you have put your questions, but then the utmost I can do is to answer you when it is in my interests, and I will say no more in regard to all the dances that I cannot see than any of the men interested. They are all among the ancient customs of the Choctaws, and are all, besides many others.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant, L. H. Morgan

I wish he it has been pretended that any one saw what I said when
 you last inquired regarding, Comstock, Manypus & Pompton, I am sorry to say
 to answer, & all I know is that they are electric & last during the time they were
 & the fact their number is not definite or limited. Among them I must be
 those often as well as men. They are called No. 10000. No. 10000. Actually
 the number of the cord & faith, because to them are entrusted the things of
 appointing extraordinary feelings & religious elevations, & upon the (U.S.) law
 provisions they have all the responsibility upon them.
 I know & I know I know. This will probably be unnecessary, but it is the fact
 I know & I know I know made out to them. They are the separated -
 But I know you the whole as it is. I know I know & I know. It is very long & full
 & I have no time to copy it. There may be 30 pages of manuscript of it. This
 I have not time to copy, & withstanding my promise, I do not feel disposed
 to copy it for you but I will print it. The 10,000. E. S. P. 10.