

Their distance from Bent and his party was far too great to see any small object easily, yet the habitual caution of these men was such that it would have been next to impossible to detect their presence from any position on the lake.

After watching the canoes for some minutes and seeing that their course was steadily south, Bent gave a signal which was evidently well understood, for in a short time all the six sons of Okwaho were seated behind the tree.

Not one of them spoke a word or manifested the least impatience, as the chief and Bent continued to gaze after the canoes.

At length the chief seemed to have completed some train of thought, for turning suddenly round he rapidly informed his sons, more by gesture than words, what he considered the object of the incursion to be, and who the men were, for pointing over his shoulder, he mentioned French and Abenakis, indicating four of the first and eight of the second named. He next inquired of Bent what he considered it best to do.

"I think," said Bent, "the lads ought to go over to friend White's place and see if he is home, and apprise them of what they may expect. If he is not in, they must try and see him before he is surprised and perhaps murdered. The rest of us must follow the vermin and see if we cannot pick them off."

"Yoe hauh," said the chief, "Yoe hauh," said the sons.

Then addressing the two youngest, he said, "You hear what Oghkwari tells you; to you is entrusted the difficult business of seeing White before the French and Abenakis can get there—if he is at home stay and help him until we come, if not find out from his wife where he is and follow quick. Our signal will be three caws."

We have merely attempted the meaning of the chief's speech, for figure and gesture gave its meaning and force.

In a few moments the whole party had disappeared in the mazes of the forest and all was silent; even the occasional tap of the woodpecker had ceased with their departure.

The marauders in the boats passed down to the extreme southern point of the lake, to its outlet, and from there, after carefully concealing their canoes beneath overhanging bushes, they started through the woods to a tributary of the Mohawk. On this creek was a lonely farm house, the residence of White, and from the cautious manner of their approach, it was apparent that this place was one object of their incursion, and that their intention was to take the owners by surprise. From the manner in which they approached, it was evident they did not anticipate any interruption to their attack or any counterplot for their injury. Although they had moved with considerable celerity, they had been anticipated in their stealthy visit by the two young Mohawks, who, finding that White was not at home, had continued their hurried journey to find him.

Karhakoha and Oteanyea (Hawk and Eagle) were barely out of sight when the marauders arrived on the scene. Of course they found the outer gate securely fastened. A fence of eight feet is, however, a poor protection against an active man unless carefully defended inside. In a very short time one of the Frenchmen was over and had removed the fastening from the gate and the whole number entered,