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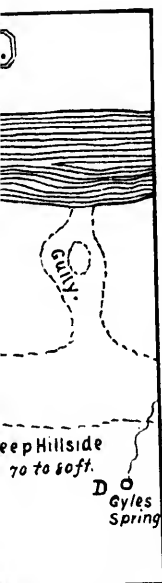
early times a very strong fort to repel the French. It is, however, almost certain that the fort was in existence before the arrival of the French on the upper St. John, and was intended primarily for the protection of the Indians against the attacks of hostile savages. In construction the fort was probably very similar to those of the Hurons and other Indians of Canada, which are described at length by Parkman in his book, "The Jesuits in North America." It must have been a very laborious task to construct the palisade in the first instance, and nothing but stern necessity is likely to have driven so naturally indolent and improvident a people to undertake it. The stout stakes were cut, pointed, and firmly planted with no better implements than the clumsy stone axe and like tools of pre-historic times. Between the stakes saplings were interwoven, so as to form a well-nigh impenetrable wall, which was braced as firmly as possible.

According to tradition several sanguinary battles were fought in the vicinity of Fort Medoctee, and the bodies of many of the slain were buried in the old grave yard, others at a place on the opposite side of the river, where many skeletons have been brought to light. In these legendary Indian fights it is the Mohawks who, for the most part, figure as the antagonists of the Maliseets. Until very recently the very name of Mohawk sufficed to startle a St. John river Indian. The late Mr. Edward Jack once asked an Indian child "What is a Mohawk?" and received for reply, "A Mohawk is a bad Indian who kills people and eats them."

In the narrative of his captivity John Gyles tells an amusing story of an incident at Fort Medoctee, which serves to illustrate the superstitious dread the Maliseets entertained with regard to the Mohawks. We give the story from the original narrative in his own words:

"One very hot season a great number gathered together at the village; and, being a very droughty people, they kept James\* and myself night and day fetching water from a cold spring, that ran out of a rocky hill about three quarters of a mile from the fort. In going thither we crossed a large interval cornfield, and then a descent to a lower interval before we ascended the hill to the spring. James, being almost dead, as well as I, with this continual fatigue, contrived to fright the Indians. He told me of it, but conjured me to secrecy, yet said he knew that I could keep counsel. The next dark night James, going for water, set his kettle on the descent to the lowest interval, and ran back to the fort pulling and blowing as in the utmost surprise, and told his master that he saw something

\* The reference is to James Alexander, a Jersey man, who was captured at the taking of Falmouth, Maine, by a band of about 300 Indians, many of them belonging to the river St. John, on the 29th May, 1690. More than 100 prisoners were taken, and the number of killed was very large.



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