

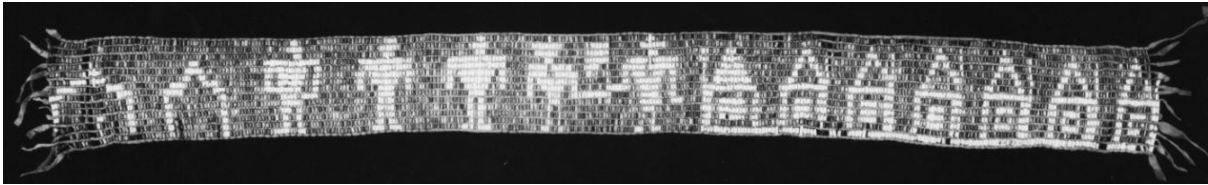
Six Nations Legacy Consortium

War of 1812

Traveling War Belts

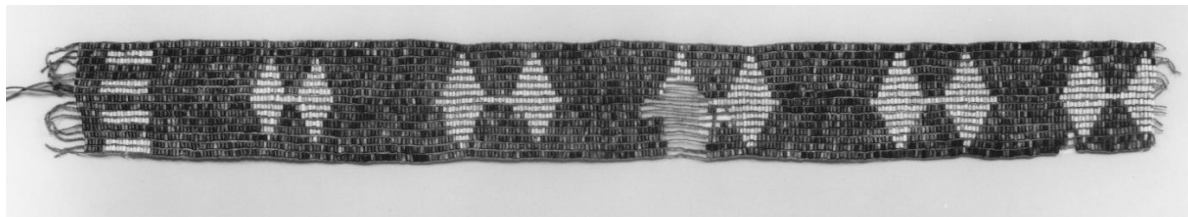
A large Wampum Belt with proper designations & an appropriate speech, encouraging a general and spirited combination, among the different Indian tribes, to be immediately forwarded.

Robert Dickson of the Indian Department to General George Prevost, 1812



Great Belt of Unity, once associated with Tecumseh, who was reported to be one of the figures depicted above.
National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC

Whenever strife came into the life of the Hodinohson:ni it is described as *darkening clouds* (death and grief) that block out the brightness of the sun (life and hope). Such dark times are seen in the use of purple beads in wampum belts, representing the dark face of death; and the blackened faces of prisoners who are to be executed. White beads, on the other hand, represent peace and hope. In this belt, the lodges of the Native Nations are being united as the Western Confederacy.



Five Nations War Belt
Haudenosaunee Confederacy Council of Chiefs, Grand River

Wampum belts remained an important part of British-Native diplomacy during the War of 1812. Dickson was asked to enlist support from “His Majesty’s Indian Allies.” He recommended that if war was to be launched proper protocol must be followed, the proper designation would have been a purple wampum belt with a tomahawk symbolizing war, or, the Five Nations War Belt as seen above.