

THE ABORIGINES

Almost nothing is known of the Indians who used to inhabit the Madoc district. No legends about them appear to have survived. The descendants of old Squire O'Hara, who was the first white child born in the township, give us what information we have. His older children can remember when they used to wake up in the mornings and find Indians sleeping on the floor around their kitchen fire. The family would not venture to bar their doors against these intruders, because of the superstitious fear the Indians had of locked doors. Their silent visitors would hang around the house for hours or until offered something to eat. They would sometimes prowl about, uninvited, and sample the food lying about on the table or the pantry shelves. Then they would depart with grunts of satisfaction.

It is known that a major battle was fought by the Indians west of the village, on Russell Lewis' place. One older resident recalls that his father found a skeleton and two tomahawks while digging a ditch in that area. On several occasions it would appear that skeletons and weapons of war have been ploughed up in nearby fields.

There is believed to be an Indian cemetery behind the woollen mills, but its exact location is unknown. There are also individual graves of more prominent Indians scattered north of the village.