OTHER TYPES OF SASHES COLLECTED AMONG THE INDIANS

A number of sashes collected among the Indians, in the past 50 years, form a group distinctly apart from the trade sashes of the Hudson's Bay Company. Most of these share in the characteristics of the French-Canadian sashes and garters, and although they belong to the same fairly recent growth, they must be considered apart. They represent an earlier or independent stage of development, before standardization had eliminated the many variants of style, colour, and form that naturally grew out of the simpler garter forms of the beginning (Plates IX, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, and Figures 1 and 2).

The wool used in these sashes was an imported, ready-made trade article, and it was not spun over or twisted hard, as the Indians presumably had no imported spinning wheels. As a result, the strands, usually coloured with aniline dyes, remain woolly and hairy, and the weaving is loose. Most of these sashes, having been made in the past 100 years, were contemporaries of the trade sashes, yet they represent earlier prevailing types, some of which are still preserved in Quebec districts outside of L'Assomption.

The most widespread variety in this group includes sashes of various widths and sizes made by French Canadians and, presumably, also by Indians of some northern and central nations. The earliest known record of this type, in which the pattern consists of V, W, or with three and more points like saw-teeth across the width of the sash, was illustrated by W. Day, in 1825, in a water colour entitled, "A Gentleman travelling in a dog cariole at the Hudson's Bay . . ." (Plate II). Other sashes of the same type are French Canadian and were recently made in Charlevoix County, lower St. Lawrence, and at L'Ange-Gardien, near Quebec city (Plate X); and others are Indian—Lorette Huron, Iroquois, Shawnee, Sauk and Fox, Osage, etc.

A number of sashes with similar designs are illustrated in "Indian Tribes of North America" by Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, about 1827. For instance, in bands or belts worn by chiefs of the following nations: Cree (I, 262; II, 18), Seminole (II, 262; III, 82, 208, 224). Thus it appears that this type of dented or saw-tooth design had a much wider diffusion than the arrow and "flamme" designs, and is probably older.

This kind of finger-braided sash, like the Assomption sash, seems to have been an early trade sash, as our first record of it shows one of its best examples worn by a bourgeois of the fur trade in the vicinity of Hudson Bay. Indian chiefs from as far as the Seminole country on the lower Mississippi, in the same period, wore belts of the same type, along with beaver hats, trade silver and wampum, European textiles and decorations.

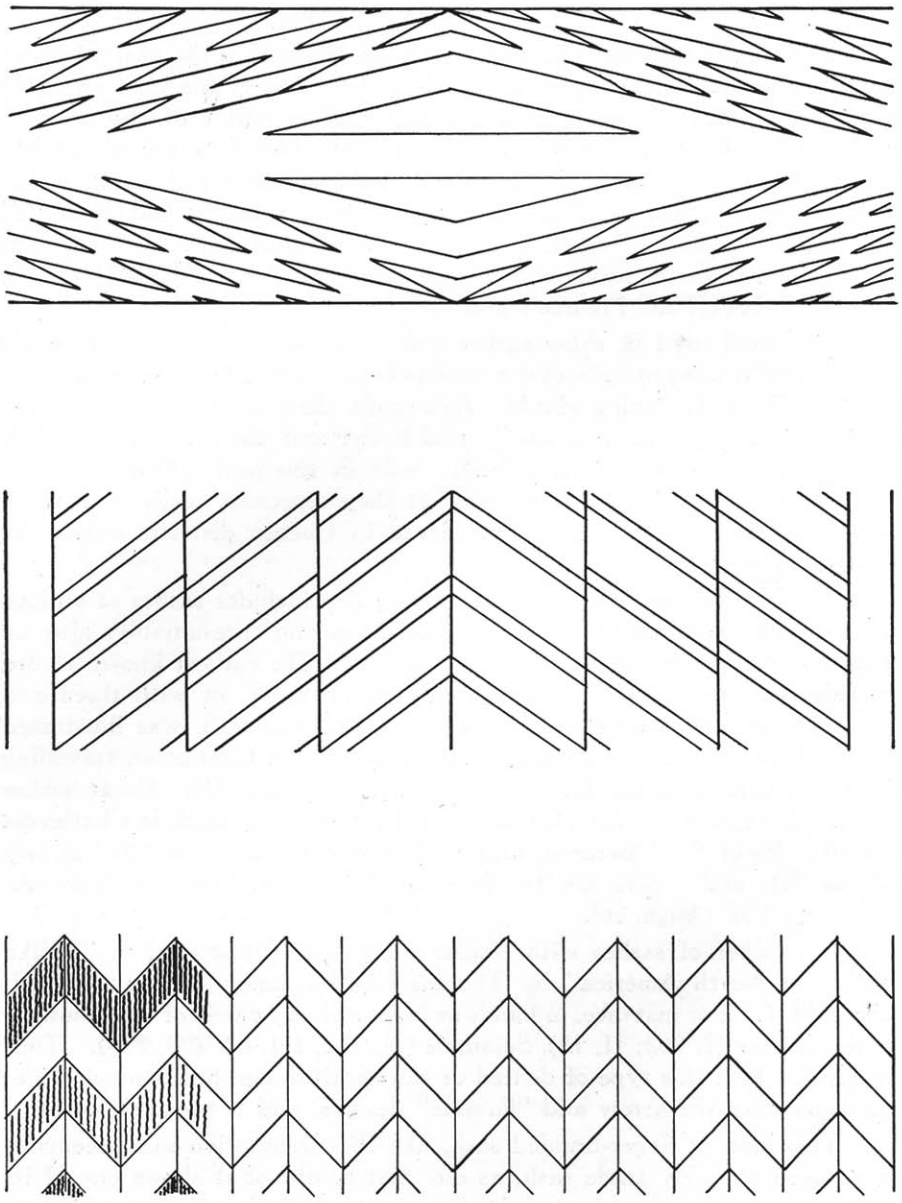

Figure 1. Indian sashes: (*Top*) drawing from arrow sash with exceptional puckering at centre, at the Museum of the American Indian, N.Y.; (*Centre*) Sauk and Fox, 14/1025 (Mus. Am. Ind.); (*Bottom*) Winnebago, 14/1026.

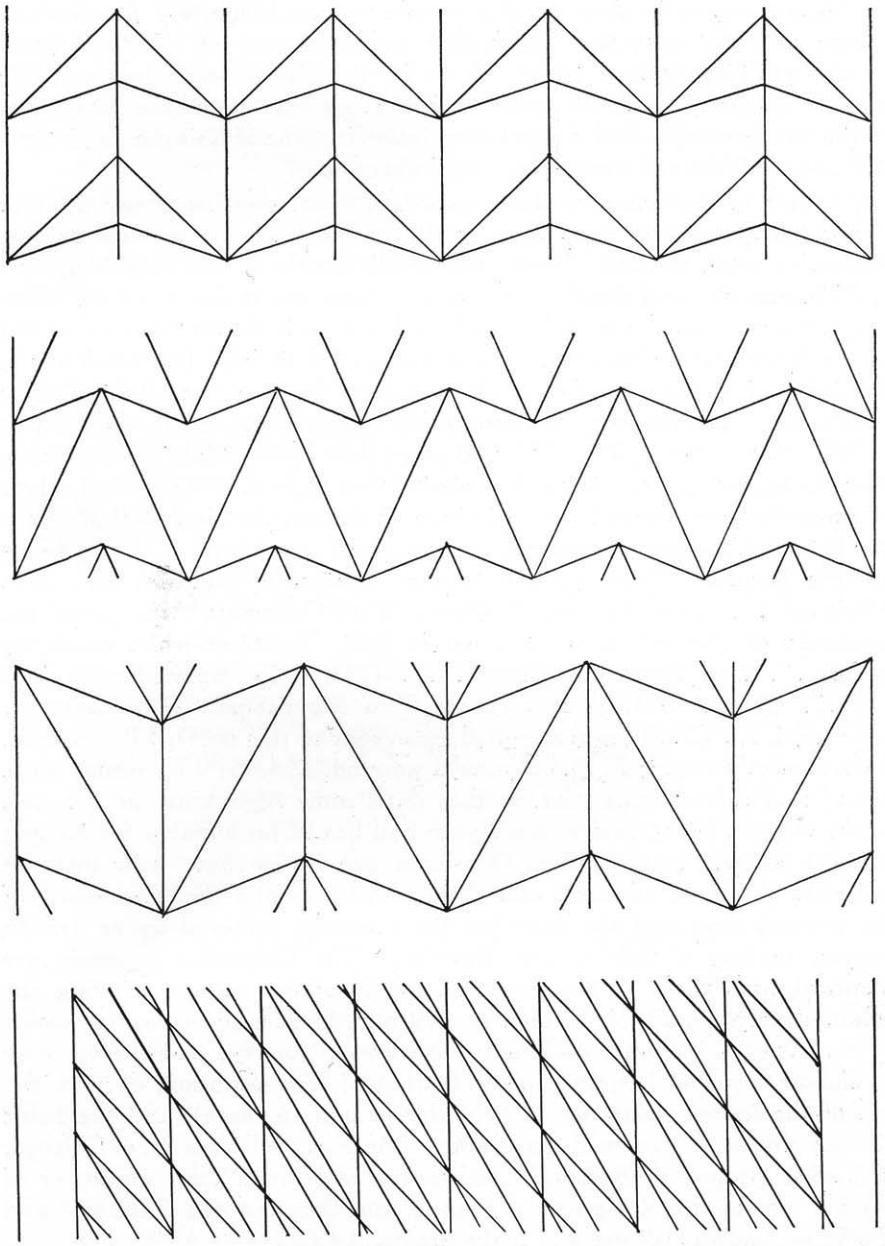

Figure 2. Drawings from sashes at the Museum of the American Indian, N.Y.: (*Top*) Winnebago, 14/1027; (*2nd*) Caddo, 2/2347; (*3rd*) Kickapoo, 2/4609; (*Bottom*) Winnebago, 14/1031.

Moreover, it is clear from a number of contemporary illustrations (down to 1840) that the Assomption sash was not yet widely diffused among outlying Indian tribes. It is in the Brock sash (before 1812) and in Krieghoff's pictures, after 1845, that we first notice the prototypes of the standard sash, and this not invariably; in some of Krieghoff's pictures of Longueuil, the red woollen sash still appears.

Owing to the lack of positive records it is not possible to say whether the sashes of an early type worn by the Indians were home-made or purchased as trade articles. They were made mostly in the neighbourhood of L'Assomption and distributed yearly in large quantities to all the north and western posts as far as Great Slave Lake, as is shown by the invoices of the North West Company for the years 1799 to 1822 (Archives of the Seminary of Quebec), and by similar account books of the Hudson's Bay Company. For instance, 98 Assomption sashes are listed in the "Outfit 1799", 182 in 1804, 110 in 1820, and more than 200 in 1821, for the North West Company alone. Yet it is probable that at least some of the Indians at an early date learned the technique of Assomption sash-making from the French-Canadian voyageurs, and acquired spun dyed wool and beads for the purpose. Thus we find in the "Invoice of Sundries sent from Montreal . . . by the Lakes" (North West Company, Archives of the Seminary of Quebec) such items as: in 1800, "Smallest white beads for sashes . . . to Poste des Chats . . . 1803, 4 lb. worsted yarn, 4/2 . . .", and in 1821: "For Lake of Two Mountains, 16 lb. worsted, ass(orte)d, 7/: £3.10 (no ready-made sash sent to this post); 5 lb. crimson, 5 do. scarlet worsted; 75 lb. col(oure)d worsted, £18.15; 9 lb. round white beads"; all this showing that, at that date, some Algonkins and Iroquois of the Ottawa River used worsted yarn and beads, presumably for making braided sashes. Miss Frances Densmore also states that "belts made of yarn are the most common and characteristic among the Chippewa" of the present day; and she describes the processes followed by an Indian woman making a sash in her presence.[1] The Chippewa processes are identical with those of the French Canadians; the way of winding the coloured yarn, cutting it in sets, sorting out the sets according to colour, is the same as in garter making in Charlevoix County; and the weaving of elaborate sashes is quite similar to that of L'Assomption, even to the use of the *tempié* (split rod to hold the strands in place), and the habit of beginning at the centre of the strands. Mr. Roy H. Robinson, of Chicago, and Miss Ataloa, of Redlands, California, also write that a number of Indians among the Osages, the Poncas, the Omahas, the Pawnees, and the Winnebagoes still use and make braided belts.

The only authentic records we find as to makers of saw-tooth sashes and garters are of French-Canadian women in Montmorency and Charlevoix

[1] Bur. Am. Ethn., Bull. 86, p. 160.

Counties, on the lower St. Lawrence. Among the most significant representatives of this group is Mme. Odilon LeFrançois, an aged woman of L'Ange-Gardien, near Quebec, who learned in her childhood from her grandmother how to weave wide sashes. Her work is similar to that observed on old Quebec illustrations or collected among the Indians. The design in two of the sashes she made recently consists of one diamond and two diamonds in the centre and of W and saw-tooth designs across the sash from the centre to the ends. Similar sashes, though beaded, were worn by the Lorette Huron chiefs in the neighbourhood, about 100 years ago. One of them at least was purchased in 1805 by the Seminary of Quebec, as appears in the Seminary accounts for that year: "Sauvages, à Louis Vincent . . . cinture." It is doubtful whether the Lorette half-breeds ever made any of the sashes they proudly wore, as no evidence of it could be found there, from 1911 on, even in the recollections of the oldest members of the reservation. A few women in Charlevoix County, used to making garters, spontaneously wove sashes with V and W designs, and stated that similar sashes formerly were made in their localities (Plate XI).

Sashes with other designs—in particular the diamond and the zigzag—were also braided in the early days and had a distribution almost as wide as the V and saw-tooth.

An outstanding sash design is the detached arrow in rows from one end of the sash to the other, and usually with rows of reversed arrows in between. Although these are found on sashes worn by Huron chiefs near Quebec (Plates XII, XIV, XV), some of the best examples occur on Winnebago sashes at the Museum of the American Indian. It is possible that these may actually have been woven by members of the tribes, who specialized in this particular style, which originally was not their own but French Canadian.

RED BASKET-WEAVE SASHES AMONG THE IROQUOIS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS

A group of red sashes, most of them decorated with white beads, is now characteristic of the Iroquois and Huron Indians (Plate XVII), but it may at one time have had a wider diffusion, as one example, at the Museum of the American Indian, is tagged Menominee, and another Ojibway. There is one example in the old Dauphin de France collection, described as American Indian, in the Musée municipal de Versailles, and going back to the eighteenth century (Figure 5).

This style of loosely woven sash, the strands of which intercross diagonally, may have been evolved locally by the Iroquois of the Eastern Woodlands, or more probably it represents an early Quebec type, often referred to as red or black sashes, and indistinctly shown in illustrations; but