

Another Tuscarora Mosquito Legend

Many winters ago two giant mosquitoes appeared on either side of a river. These giant creatures were as tall as a good sized pine tree. As the Indian people paddled down the river in their canoes, these giant creatures would bend their heads and attack them with their beaks. The mosquitoes killed many people.

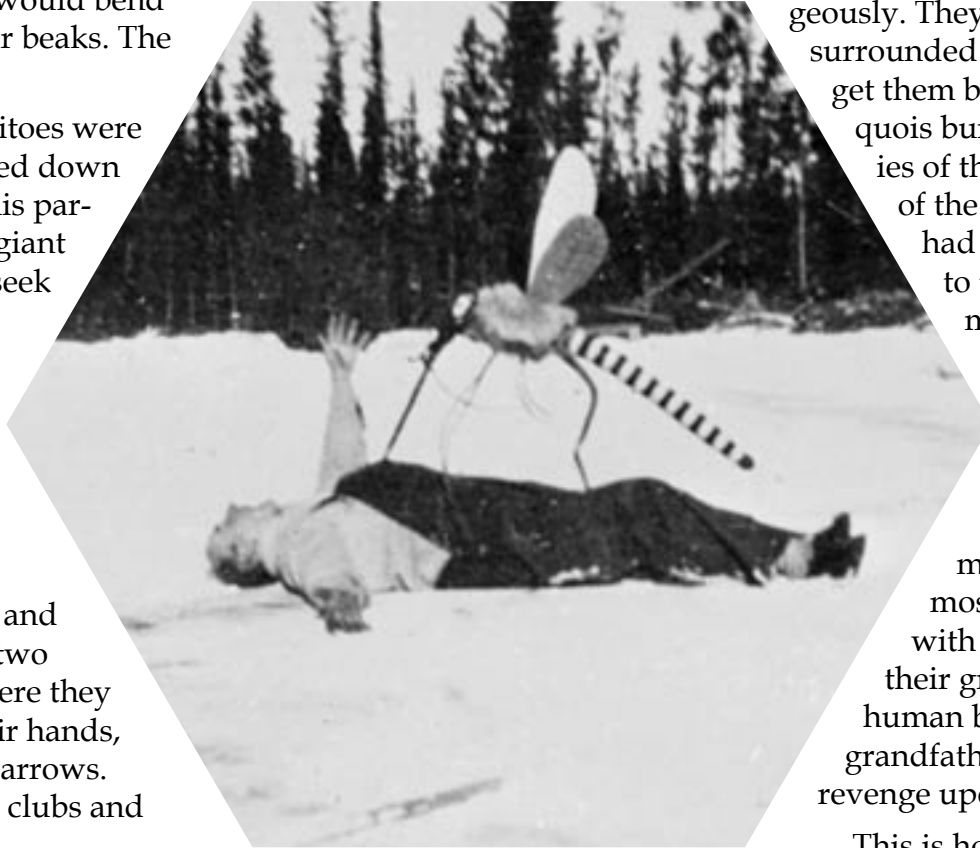
Knowing that these giant mosquitoes were waiting to attack any canoe that floated down the river, the people began to shun this particular stream. It was then that these giant creatures moved to other streams to seek their prey.

For a while, it was a reign of terror for the Iroquois who were great canoe travelers. They never knew just when these giant mosquitoes would pounce out and devour them.

Finally, one day a war party was organized to seek out these creatures and to destroy them. Twenty warriors in two great canoes floated down a river where they expected the mosquitoes to be. In their hands, ever ready, they held their bows and arrows. Fastened to their belts were their war clubs and hunting knives.

Suddenly, two shadows loomed over them and a giant beak pierced one of the canoes. Giving their war cry, the warriors filled the air with many arrows. The battle was terrific! The giant mos-

quitoes seemed to be everywhere at the same time. In a little while, half the warriors had been killed.



The remaining braves determined to die courageously. They hid behind trees and bushes. They surrounded the mosquitoes who were unable to get them because of the thick branches. The Iroquois buried many of their arrows in the bodies of the two mosquitoes. Finally, after most of the arrows had been shot and the supply had become low, the two mosquitoes fell to the earth. They were covered with many wounds. Immediately, the warriors fell upon them with their war clubs and, with powerful blows, they tore the bodies of the mosquitoes apart.

From the blood of the two giant mosquitoes there sprang many little mosquitoes and the air was soon filled with them. These little mosquitoes, like their grandfathers, are fond of the taste of human blood. They hate man for killing their grandfathers and are continually trying to get revenge upon man for this reason.

This is how mosquitoes came to be. The battle took place on the Seneca River in New York State.