FOUNDED IN 1960, HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CHARITY WHOSE FOCUS IS RESEARCHING, RECORDING AND COMMUNICATING MISSISSAUGA’S VIBRANT AND DIVERSE HERITAGE. HERITAGE MISSISSAUGA IS KNOWN FOR ITS RESEARCH PROGRAMS, PUBLICATIONS, OUTREACH PRESENTATIONS, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND UNIQUE EVENTS.

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I DON’T THINK IT WAS QUITE LIKE THAT.

YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

BESIDES, OUR PROJECT IS ON THE 1805 SIGNING OF TREATY 13-A WITH THE MISSISSAUGAS.

NOT THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH.

Alright. Well, we have the treaty text...

But we should focus on why they would sign the treaty.

Hopefully, Robarts Library has more information.

I really want to know what was going on with the Mississaugas before they signed the treaty.
YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT THE MISSISSALIGAS HUH?

I KNOW JUST THE PLACE.

HEY, WAIT. ISN'T THIS A GOLF CLUB?

YES, IT IS.

GO ON, THE GATHERING HAS BEGUN.

OH, BY THE WAY.

RUN.
J-JASMINE! LOOK!

WHAT IS THAT?!

AANII. WELCOME.

SORRY ABOUT THE DOGS.

I AM QUENEPEON. FOLLOW ME.

ARE WE STILL AT THE COUNTRY CLUB?

I THINK THE DOGS HAVE STOPPED CHASING US.

THIS GOLF CLUB IS GOING TO GET AN ANGRY LETTER FROM ME!

JUST KEEP RUNNING.
WE HAVE MUCH TO DO.

WE MUST PREPARE FOR THE FIRE CEREMONY.

SOOO... WE'RE NOT AT THE COUNTRY CLUB?

BRYAN! THIS IS A NATIVE VILLAGE! A REAL VILLAGE!!

OHHH!! WHOSE VILLAGE IS THIS?

PEOPLE HAVE CALLED US OJIBWA, CHIPEWA.

WE CALL OURLSES ANISHNAABE, BUT HERE WE ARE KNOWN AS MISSISSAUGAS.

I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS.

THERE WILL BE TIME FOR ANSWERS.
So, Queneponon, what’s this fire ceremony about?

Father the King?

He’s talking about the King of England.

When the King’s people arrived we were told that they would be of great use to us.

We granted land accordingly. However...

The English drive us away and shoot our dogs.

They offer no assistance as promised.

Now the King wants more land...

I fear we cannot say no, but we must decide on a course of action as a community.

So we must prepare the fire ceremony.
HERE IS WHERE THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD.

THIS IS OUR VILLAGE ELDER. HE IS THE KEEPER OF THE SACRED FIRE.

CRACK

AND NOW BEGINS THE SMUDGE.
A smudge cleanses us of any negative energy.

This is important when facing the difficult choices ahead of us.

Mind, Body, and Spirit must all be cleansed before the council.

We will return to the Sacred Fire later.

Let us go into the village. You must be hungry.

Yes!
Everything smells so good! I can’t believe it!

So is this everyone? Doesn’t look like much of a council.

It is our tradition to share what we have with others. Especially visitors from afar.

Will you join us in the feast.

Of course!!
This is Eagle Clan’s village. They have offered to host the Council.

We sent cut runners to track down members of other Clans.

So they are responsible for preparations.

That was a difficult task. We traditionally do not meet at this time and Clan villages can be very distant.

The Council has not started yet. Some have arrived early to visit friends and relatives.

Hey, what are they doing over there?

I’m sure I can pick it up. I’m a quick study.

You are among great teachers as well.

Ah yes, basket weaving is very important to us.

Can I try?

It’s very difficult, just a warning.
WHAT CAN I HELP OUT WITH?

THOSE YOUNG WARRIORS ARE FROM MY OWN CLAN....

THE OTTER CLAN.

I HAVE THE PERFECT TASK FOR YOU.

WHOA, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

YOU HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO CLEAN THEIR WEAPONS.

I SEE... COOL!
Check out the basket! Not bad huh?

Yeah, for a three year old!

Hey! It's my first time.

The little one says your work is similar to hers when she started.

She knows she will be able to use your basket to hold berries...

As long as the berries are not too heavy.

And what have you been up to?

Check it out. I cleaned the muskets and sharpened this knife.

You're supposed to use a stone to sharpen a knife.

Not your fingers!
What is happening?

That is Chechalk, a chief of the Eagle clan. The council will begin now.

I will help you to understand the ways of the council...

...and translate for you.
Council participants reside in the inner circle.

The rest of the village sit, watch, and listen.

This is a very diverse group.

Are all the village members involved in the council meeting?

Whenever there is a council, we will send the people who are best suited to solve the problem in question.

If it is a war council, we send the best warriors. Hunting, we send hunters...

Even kids and teenagers?

Their generation and those that come after will have to live on with our decisions. It is only right that they speak for themselves.
The council begins with a blessing and the passing of the peace pipe.

Next we hear stories from the village elder...

Tales of the Great Spirit, Mishomis and Nokomis, and Turtle Island.

We then hear from Chief Chechalk.
An Englishman came to the Eagle Clan village and offered to buy the land. He offered gifts in return.

- Money, trade goods, even English homes and farms.

I simply explained to him that the land was not mine to give.

Can a man possess a gust of wind? A measure of flowing water?

It is not people who own the land but rather the land that owns the people.

More and more Anishinaabe have been pushed from their homes with nothing left.

And now they come to us requesting more land.

We must decide, are their words true or empty promises?

This is why we are here today.
WHO WILL TAKE THE EAGLE FEATHER?

I WILL SPEAK FIRST, FATHER.

WHEN WE HAVE GIVEN LAND ELSEWHERE, THE ENGLISH BUILT FENCES TO KEEP US OUT.

WHERE ARE THE MEN SUPPOSED TO HUNT?

THE ENGLISH COME AFTER US WITH GUNS AND DOGS WHEN WE TRAVEL INTO "THEIR" LAND.

I WONDER IF THIS IS SOMETHING WE MUST DO.

WHEN THE ENGLISH WRITE SOMETHING ON PAPER, THAT IS LAW.

I AM WORRIED THAT IF WE DO NOT SIGN, THEN THE ENGLISH WILL DRIVE US OFF AND SHOOT US LIKE THE "LONG KNIVES" HAVE DONE.

IF WE SIGN THE PAPERS, WHERE WILL MY HOME BE? WILL I KNOW THE PLACE WE ARE SENT TO?

I AM AFRAID I WILL HAVE TO WANDER FARThER AND FARThER TO FIND SOMETHING FAMILiar...

I AM AFRAID WE WILL ALL BE LOST.
LOOK AT HOW MUCH BETTER OUR LIVES ARE NOW. I CAN BRING DOWN A BULL MOOSE FASTER WITH A MUSKET THAN A BOW.

THE ENGLISH WAYS HAVE IMPROVED OUR LIVES TENFOLD.

CAN YOU NOT SEE THE ENGLISH ARE KILLING US? OUR WAYS ARE BEING TAKEN FROM US.

WE HUNT LIKE THEM, WE LOOK LIKE THEM.

WE EVEN SOUND LIKE THEM.

WE MUST STAND FAST. WE CANNOT GIVE UP OUR LAND, AND WE WILL NOT DIE.

WE HEAR YOUR WORDS BROTHER OKAMAPENCES, BUT WE HEAR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS AS WELL.

THE ENGLISH ARE THE ONES WHO TAKE ONE PERSON’S WORDS OVER OTHERS. WE CANNOT DO THAT.

WE MUST MAKE THIS DECISION OUR WAY.

WE MUST LISTEN TO EVERYONE AND GAIN WISDOM FROM THAT.
I believe our young man is correct, that when the English write words on paper it is law.

The written word is truth to the English.

If we sign this treaty, whatever territory we retain will become ours.

No one else may use that land. The English can squawk like angry geese...

But once it is written, we will be under our father the king’s protection.

Queneponen, why are people leaving?

The chiefs have decided. The council has ended.

There are some who still do not agree we should sign the treaty and refuse to give up land.

They have made their decision and we have made ours. We respect their decision with no animosity.

Looks like Okamapanesse has decided to stay.

A change of heart perhaps. His decision is his own.
LATER...

WHERE ARE WE GOING NOW?

WE ARE TO MEET THE KING'S MEN DOWNRIVER, AT THE GOVERNMENT INN.

DID YOU THINK WE'D BE DOING THIS WHEN YOU WOKE UP TODAY?

NOT IN A MILLION YEARS!
Ahh, gentlemen! So glad to see you.

My sincerest greetings...

I will speak on behalf of the chiefs.
In the past we gave land without hesitation, but great Father did not take care of us, and farmers have not helped us as promised.

Now more land is requested and we cannot say no. It is hard without promises we can trust.

We make no bargain for the land, but leave it to our Father the King to care for us.

Yes... well... shall we?

You now have your own land...

...for as long as the sun shines, the rivers flow, and the grasses grow.

It is done.

May our decision prove to be a wise choice for the future.
I hope you understand it was not an easy decision... one that affects us all.

Tell of our flight, our history, and our people.

You are the keepers of our story.

Yeah! The stakes were so high, they could have lost everything.

Amazing! No one back home knows anything about this!

Where are we? Are we still at the government inn?
I know this place.

We're in Port Credit.

This plaque commemorates the signing of Treaty 13-A, the one we just witnessed ourselves!

DID YOU FIND WHAT YOU NEEDED?

Yeah, we have a story to tell now.
THE SIGNING OF Treaty 13-A
BY JASMINE AND BRYAN
1805

By the 1790s, the British Crown recognized that the Mississaugas controlled a large amount of land at the western end of Lake Ontario, and entered into a series of negotiations to acquire the "Mississauga Tract" for settlement. At the end of July 1805 Crown representatives met with the principal chiefs of the Mississaugas near the mouth of Credit River. Prior to these negotiations, the Mississaugas called for a Council Fire gathering to choose a course of action.

The Crown was represented by Colonel William Claus, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, with other officials and officers from the 49th Regiment. The Mississaugas were represented by their principal chiefs and a gathering of warriors; Chief Quenepenon - "Golden Eagle" - spoke on their behalf.

The conference - held downstream of the Mississauga village on the Credit River, outside the Government Inn - lasted several days. The Mississauga Chiefs understood that the Crown wished to purchase land from them, and while wary of giving up too much of their territory, they also looked to protect their interests from incoming settlers.

Reluctantly the Mississaugas ceded to the Crown's request for land. On August 2nd, 1805, Treaty 13-A was signed, giving 70,704 acres of land to the Crown, including all lands from the Etobicoke Creek to Burlington Bay to an approximate depth of 6 miles from the shoreline. The southern part of the City of Mississauga, from Lake Ontario to Eglinton Avenue, is located within this area. The Mississaugas were compensated 1000 pounds of Province currency, given in trade goods over several years. Promises made by the Crown during these negotiations were later lamented by the Mississaugas as having not been kept.

Treaty 13-A was signed by William Claus, Esq., Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs on behalf of the Crown, together with Mississauga Chiefs Chechak, Quenepenon, Wabakaryne and Okannapeneze. The signing was witnessed by J.W. Williams, Captain 49th Regiment, John Brackenbury, Ensign 49th Regiment, Peter Selby, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and Scribe, and translator J.B. Rousseaux.

In the treaty the Mississaugas reserved rights to the fisheries in the Twelve Mile Creek, Sixteen Mile Creek and the Etobicoke Creek, and sole right to the Fishery in the River Credit along with one mile each side of the river. This area became known as the Credit Indian Reserve. But that is another story.

1. Group Gathering, by Seth Eastman, c1867, LAC
2. Artists' rendition of the signing of Treaty 3-A, HM
3. Treaty 13-A, LAC
4. Chief's Tracks, from Treaty 13-A
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