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OLD LOUIS ANNANCE AND HIS DESCENDANTS.

By Fannie Hardy Eckstorm.

It is fairly certain that one of the grandsons of Samuel Gill, the white captive, whose story was told in the preceding paper, was Francis Joseph Annance, who went to Hanover as a student in 1774. It is wholly certain that Francis Joseph was the father of the boy Louis Annance, who, with one of the Gills of St. Francis -of-the-Lake, went there in 1803 at the age of <sup>nine</sup> seven years and remained six years. And there is no question but this boy grew up to be the Louis Annance who spent half of his long life at Moosehead Lake as woodsman, guide and hunter.

Under pressure of circumstances I spell his name "Louis", bowing to a custom which is imperious in its demands for conformity. But the name "Lewis Annance" is on his tombstone, and undoubtedly he so wrote it himself. It was the custom then in Maine to English the name, and though we yielded the sound under the form of "Lewey", the business books of my father and grandfather enter Indians of the name as Lewis, or Lewey, and the French form was never used, so far as I know, by residents of Maine, until after the Civil War. "Old" Lewey Annance he was always called to distinguish him from his son "young" Louis. And Old Louis had been to college; but he hunted and fished and went in the woods like any other Indian. And strangest of all Old Louis was a Protestant and a Free Mason. Even the children felt that he was a most unusual Indian, though Indians were too much an every day experience with us to be even interesting. But we did not know that Old Louis Annance was certainly one quarter white, and, if his father did not marry a full-blooded squaw, considerably more; nor that the known white blood back of him was English and Protestant, while in most of the Indians we knew it was French and Catholic.

In compounding a life of Louis Annance, rather than writing it, I aim only to bring together a number of traditional accounts of him which vary much in details, but are not so much incorrect as inexact; that is, though they fail in accuracy, they do not misrepresent the man. Time forbids trying to hew to the line of exact fact and matters not easily ascertained I have had to let pass. The printed references found are a page upon him ~~in~~<sup>in</sup> a paper contributed by Mr. Charles D. Shaw of Greenville to the Piscataquis County (Maine) Historical Collections, 1910, (I: 61, 62) (L61, 62); a somewhat longer article, "Louis Annance", by Hon. John Francis Sprague, in his "Piscataquis Fragments", 1899, (pp. 71-75); and a poem by Ellen Alwilda Warren, communicated by Mrs. Almena Holt to The Northern (published in Greenville) for October, 1932. Mr. Shaw knew Annance as a boy; Mr. Sprague heard him tell his life-story the year before he died; and the poem, evidently written years ago, relates the Indian legend of Mount Kineo as told by Louis Annance in 1848 to a sportsman. To these Mr. Walter M. Creegan, one of the editors of The Northern, has added all he could gather from townspeople now living as to Louis Annance and his descendants; and Mr. Lucius L. Hubbard, whose accuracy is so well known, has written me some of his own recollections of the educated Indian of Moosehead Lake. There would be no record of it but for a side-note in my father's old copy of Thoreau's "Maine Woods", but the St. Francis Indian whom Thoreau met July 25, 1857, who thought Thoreau could not make a good canoe (and no doubt he was right), was Old Louis Annance. My father passed over the same route a few weeks later and could identify practically every person Thoreau mentioned. *He also knew de Lowey Annance.*

The discrepancies of the various accounts are those of oral tradition. The poem mentioned is prefaced by a note which says Annance "was for two years in Dartmouth College. When the war of 1812 broke out his tribe was ordered out and he was obliged to leave. He was for many

many years a guide at Moosehead Lake.

"Brave Louie Annance was the guide, and  
A better one man never saw;  
Two years he had studied at Dartmouth  
Until interrupted by war."

Mr. Sprague says:

"Louis was born August 25, 1794, where is now the town of St. Francis, County of Yamaska, in the Province of Quebec. He received a Catholic tuition from the Jesuits in his neighborhood, who subsequently secured his admission to a school in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he was prepared for a college course; but as he was about to enter college the war of 1812 was declared, and he was summoned to his home in Canada to serve with his tribe under the British government. He was engaged in that war three years. His brother Noel had command of all the Indian forces during that war and both were noted for their bravery and daring in battle."

Mr. Shaw says:

"He was educated and graduated at Harvard College, according to a treaty once made between the English Government and the St. Francis tribe" And a little later he speaks of Gov. John Hubbard in 1852 meeting "his old classmate Louis Annance for the first time since they left college" and the Governor stopping for a whole day to talk with the Indian.

It is left to anyone who wishes the task to reconcile the differences in these accounts with the statement in the Wheelock Memoir that Annance left Hanover in 1809, when he would have been fifteen years old. Governor Hubbard was of the class of 1816, Dartmouth, and could hardly have been in the town at any time when Annance was there. If Annance left school three years before the war of 1812, it is hard to see how that broke up his schooling. And in the light of what Judge Gill and Maurault have to say about the chiefs of the St. Francis

Indians, it is impossible to make out the claims entered for Louis Annance as the chief or the son of a chief. Mr. Sprague says of the St. Francis Indians : "For a long series of years Francis Joseph Annance was their chief, and while he was a daring and victorious chieftain in war, he was humane and benevolent in times of peace. He had two sons: Noel, and Louis who was the subject of this sketch."

We are sure that the white man, Joseph Louis Gill, followed his father-in-law, as head sachem, and that he was chief when Mrs. Johnson was at St. Francis in 1754. He lived till 1798. Judge Gill wrote that his brothers Joseph Piche and Robert were also chiefs. "Joseph-Louis, comme ses freres Joseph-Piche et Robert, etait des chefs de la tribu abenakise." It was usual to have two chiefs at a time, the head sachem and a younger man as second chief--"governor" and "lieutenant governor" they were often called even in early times. Some prominent warriors were given the titles of "captain", or even "esquire"; but these were not chiefs. Maurault says expressly (p.353) that Joseph Louis Gill's son Augustin <sup>(b.1770,d.1851)</sup> was head chief and was agent of the tribe from 1813 to 1833, when his son Louis followed him as agent . Augustin may have been head chief ~~some~~ years before he became agent ; or there may have been a space between father and son in which the two uncles managed the tribal affairs; But there seems no time between 1750 and 1850 when Francis Joseph Annance could have served "for a long series of years" , "victorious in war;" "benevolent in peace", unless he belonged to some other village than St. Francis or St. Thomas of Pierreville. The characterization of him is very close to that of Joseph -Louis Gill who was so inclined to peace that long before 1750 the tribe in derision dubbed him Magouaoudombabit, meaning "the friend of the Iroquois" , their own bitterest enemies; yet they elected him chief because of his bravery in war. This man was Judge Gill's great-grandfather and it would seem

as if a Judge of the Superior Court, writing the genealogy of his own family, could not have confused his great grandfather with some other man-- though strangers of another race might easily do so. The vexed question of whether Louis Annance ever was a chief or not must be left to those who know about it to settle.

There is also not entire concord upon Old Louis's religious preferences. Mr. Sprague, to quote ~~the~~ emended form preferred to that in print, says: "At this time his people were all Catholics; but Louis, about the year 1817 publicly renounced Catholicism, severed his connection with that body, became a Protestant and joined the Congregationalists. At about this time he became by the laws or the rules of his tribe successor to his father as chief and ruler, but having become an ~~avowed~~ ~~Pro-~~ Protestant and his religious convictions subjecting him to some persecution and annoyance, he, during the year 1818, removed to Hanover, New Hampshire. Here he connected himself with the Methodists and was a member of one of their churches at the time of his death."

Mr. Shaw, who lived in the same town with Louis Annance, from the time of his own boyhood, says Annance was a Congregationalist. I have heard the same. But the matter is not important enough to waste much time in investigating it. That he was a Free Mason there is no disputing; for ~~his gravestone~~ <sup>a simple but dignified monument</sup> in memory of him was erected by the Masons of Piscataquis County the year after his death and his picture, enlarged from a photograph, hangs in the Masonic Hall in Greenville.

"I remember "old" Louis Annance as a summer resident of Kineo", writes Mr. Lucius L. Hubbard, whose frequent visits to the Maine woods resulted in the best <sup>area</sup> map made of them and one of the most authoritative books about them, his "Lakes and Woods of Maine" (1884).

"I think he occupied a tent or cabin on the shore of "Cove" east of the hotel. This was about 1870. I think he made himself useful to Mr. Dennen, and although then rather advanced in years, acted as a

guide on camping parties. I knew from hearsay that he had been a student at Dartmouth, but never had any conversation with him. "Young" Louis at that time must have been perhaps twenty-two or twenty-three years old, and "guided" once or twice for parties of which I was a member. He had at least one younger brother, whose name I do not now recall-- unless it was 'Pete'."

Mr. Shaw recalls him as a man "tall, straight, broad-shouldered, copper-colored, athletic in his general make-up. He spoke pure English. He was a great reader and an easy speaker. Although he lived in the solitude of the wilderness, nearly all of the time he kept himself well up on current events of the time. He could sit down with an educated person and converse with him on almost any subject."

Mr. Sprague testifies that "He was a man of marked natural ability and superior intelligence and was noted for his kind and generous disposition, his genial and pleasant manners, unimpeachable integrity and strict morality. While possessing all these traits of a noble and refined manhood, he, at the same time, always retained the natural instincts and peculiarities of his race; for he loved the lone hunting-grounds of his fathers and devoted many autumns and winters to the adventurous hunt and exciting chase."

From the older residents of Greenville, Mr. Creegan has gathered a few more personal details. He writes: "He is remembered by the oldest inhabitants. Mr. Charles Shaw recalls that, in addition to guiding, Lewis Annance did much of the butchering about town. He smoked a mixture of tobacco and the bark of the squawbush, half in half, and in his late years when Mr. Annance was unable to get out, Mr. Shaw and other youngsters would gather this bark and take it to his cabin as a treat for the old gentleman." (It may be said, in passing, that all our Indians in Maine used this mixture of half tobacco and half of the finely scraped and dried bark of the low cornel, here called "squaw-bush" and

"red willow" from the color of the stems. It is the Cornus stolonifera of the botanics.) "His cabin was a log affair. They all agree that Lewis Annance was a most interesting old gentleman to listen to. The townspeople are of the opinion that he was a graduate of Dartmouth. The introduction to the poem you have recently read mentioned that he went two years, when his tribe was called out. Mr. Shaw says that it was the Indian in him that prevented him finishing his course, the longing to be out in the woods. His headstone neatly skirts the question by reading, "He was educated in N.H." ~~Thxexisx~~ He became a Mason and was very highly thought of. There is an enlarged portrait of him in the Masonic Hall here. He lies buried in Greenville Cemetery, along the most northern driveway, in the sixth section you come to. The Masons conducted the services and erected a simple but dignified slab of marble. On the face it bears the following:

(Carving of a sheaf of wheat  
bound with ivy leaves.  
Below that the name:)

LEWIS ANNANCE

(Below that the Masonic insignia.  
Below that the age:)

Aet. 81

The reverse side of the slab bears the following inscription:

LEWIS ANNANCE, a member and for some time Chief of the St. Francis Tribe of North American Indians, born at St. Francis, Canada, August 25th, 1794. Became a member of the North Star Lodge No. 8 of F. and A. Masons at Lancaster, N.H. in 1836, was educated in N.H. and removed to Greenville November, 1853, where he died December 25th, 1875.

In memory of his virtuous and honorable life and as a tribute of respect and affection, this stone is raised by his brethren of the Masonic Fraternity, 1876.

"His wife's name was Adelaide, apparently. The townsfolk say he had two sons, Louis Annance and Peter Annance, and two daughters,

~~daughters~~, Christie and Elizabeth. We must however have buried an infant daughter whom they had forgotten, for I found a small stone at the same corner of the lot which read:

ELLEN  
 Daughter of LEWIS and Adelaide Annance  
 Died January 13th, 1873  
 Aged 4 yrs., 15 d."

[This would seem to indicate that Adelaide was a second wife, much younger than himself.]

"The son Louis was known as the second Louis. Note the spelling. His wife's name was Lottie.

"Christie died young and Elizabeth soon after. No one recalls what became of Peter.

"This second Louis lived to the age of eighty-six. Mr. Shaw has an excellent picture of him in his window at his office. He was born October 13th, 1823, and died, in the Bangor Insane Asylum, October 1, 1907, and is buried beside his father. The inscription on his headstone reads:

"The Cross is my Anchor."

He had the following children: Louis Napoleon, Edward, Peter, Charles, Abbie, and Matilda.

"This Louis was known as the third Louis and only lived to the age of 38 years and 10 months, dying long before his father on Sept. 6th 1894. His headstone, which is beside that of his father and grandfather reads, "Louis N. Annance, Jr" So perhaps the second Louis was entitled <sup>middle</sup> to the name of Napoleon but did not use it. The verse of the third Louis's stone reads:

'No pain, no grief, no anxious fear  
 Can reach our loved one sleeping here.'

"The third Louis was unmarried. Edward is dead. He had married the widow of John Brown of Greenville. Peter went to the Klondike and is purported to have become wealthy. He married in the west and has been here on visits. It is not known whether he is living now.

Abbie married Dave Brown, the Game Warden who met his death two winters ago up near the boundary. They had a son Peter Brown, still living here, a lad in his early twenties. Both Abbie and Matilda are dead. Charles is now living in Greenville."

Again we note the discrepancies of detail. The gravestone says decidedly that Old Louis Annace came to Greenville November, 1853, while Mr. Sprague puts the time in the later thirties. The poem mentioned says that he was here in 1848, and implies a previous residence. Had he come after my father was old enough to remember, it seems as if he would have mentioned Old Louis as coming from somewhere else; but he seemed to regard him as a part of Moosehead Lake. Probably he was here in 1840 and perhaps earlier.

Though I wrote the North Star Lodge of Masons in Lancaster, N.H., asking for information from their records about the date of Louis Annance being there, no answer was received, and I cannot tell which of the two dates, 1834 and 1836, both given as marking his entry into that Lodge, is correct. Mr. Sprague says he was made a Master Mason in Lancaster, which would mean that he must have resided there for some time after taking his first degrees. Very likely the town records and the church records of Lancaster would yield information if searched. We see by the date of his oldest son's birth, (1822), that he must have been married long before and some of his children may have been born in Lancaster.

There is a suggestion which can be made, though possibly <sup>it is</sup> fanciful, <sup>which may</sup> to explain his choosing Lancaster as a residence, apart from opportunity for work in mills or on the river. I may be remembered that in the last paper I spoke of Rogers' Rangers dividing when they got down to Israel's River and I mentioned their having with them the church treasure, among it the silver statue of the Virgin and Child.

This was a statuette of pure silver weighing about ten pounds. It was hollow, so that it must have had some size. The Virgin, seated in a chair, with a veil over her head and the Christ Child upon her knee, was a replica of the famous wooden statue in the Cathedral at Chartres. In return for gifts of collars of wampum sent the cathedral, this was sent by the canons of the cathedral to the little church at St. Francis, and the rape of the statue by Rogers' men was one of the greatest losses the tribe sustained in the raid. When the Rangers divided, the <sup>nine men</sup> ~~section~~ who went up Israel's River, which enters the Connecticut from the east at Lancaster, took the statue of the Virgin with them, and are supposed to have buried it. That it became the subject of much talk is clear from the space devoted to it in books on the White Mountains. John H. Spaulding's "Historical Relics of the 1855, White Mountains", spends very nearly one sixth of his entire book in discussing the treasure of the church of St. Francis, giving wild and fanciful tales current when he wrote. It is likely that an Indian from St. Francis, who had always heard about the silver image, might have made his own attempts to find what many were hunting after, and to further such search might have chosen Lancaster as the most desirable place to live. There is however no evidence that this was so.

It would be interesting to settle the question of Louis Annance's paternity. Of no other Indian family is there as good a genealogy as of the Gills and the fact that neither Judge Gill nor Maurault gives any hint of a Francis Joseph Annance, while they do give much information about his contemporary Chief Joseph Louis Gill, <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ Maurault states that the Annances were descended from Chief Joseph Louis's sister leads to the almost unavoidable conclusion that though Old Louis Annance was allied to the chiefs of St. Francis, he probably never had the honors that have been conferred upon him traditionally.

End -