

KATERI

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Kateri Tekawitha was the most renowned and heroic woman of the great **Iroquois Nation**. She was an **Algonquin** adopted by **Mohawks** from Khanewake. During her life she struggled to become a follower of “Rawannio,” the Christian God, against the will of her father and her tribe. Kateri died on April 17, 1680. She was declared “Venerable Servant of God” by Pope Pius XII in 1943; this constitutes the first step towards her canonization as a saint. She is buried in Côte-Ste-Catherine, three miles east of the present Khanewake. The site is a place of pilgrimage to this day.

Iroquois Nation Iroquois is a term which designates a confederacy of 5 tribes originally inhabiting the northern part of New York state, consisting of the **SENECA**, **CAYUGA**, **ONEIDA**, **ONDAGA**, and **MOHAWK**, also known as the league of the Five Nations or the League of the Iroquois.

The Lyrics

Words and music G. Scott MacLeod

Water broke beneath the bridge
Kanesatake where you live
Under the hand that rules
To take away your lifely tools

Hot summer broke
And the leaves will change to blood red
But the rules of the game and the
parceled land
Will stay the same

I was born into a country
Where I know not my history
Sent to white schools
Lost heritage and made a fool

Kateri the Mohawk saint
Flogged herself for her people
Converts took their religion
In exchange for their steeple

Mohawk, the most eastern member of the **IROQUOIS** Confederacy, resided in 3 principal villages (“castles”) on the banks of the Mohawk R. In 1609 and 1610 they were defeated by their northern neighbours, assisted by **CHAMPLAIN**. Mohawk hostilities were then channeled eastward, where they drove the Mahicans out of the Mohawk Valley and gained access to Dutch traders of Ft Orange (now Albany, NY)...Over 3000 Mohawk continue to speak their native language. Some of them returned to the **HANDSOME LAKE RELIGION** and established longhouse congregations at Caughnawaga in the 1920s and St Regis

Peter G. Ramsden, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, pp. 1094-1095.

Algonquin (Algonkin) are a group of communities of Algonquian-speaking people living in the western Quebec and adjacent Ontario, centering on the OTTAWA R and its tributaries. They call themselves *Anissinapek* (*Anishinabeg*) or by the name of their local community. The Algonquin have been known to Europeans since 1603, when they were allies of the French and of the MONTAGNAIS-NASKAPI and HURON against the IROQUOIS. This conflict, which had its origins in the competition over the European FUR TRADE, lasted throughout much of the historic period.

Meredith Jean Black, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p.62

(Akwasasne) in the 1930s.

Thomas S. Abler, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, p. 1369.

Kanesatake, Oka Crisis An incident that occurred on the Mohawk reserve in Quebec during the summer of 1990, where Kanesatake Mohawks set up barricades to protest and prevent the expansion of a nine hole golf course on their ancestral burial grounds. Tensions escalated and the Canadian Armed Forces were called in to crush the Mohawk revolt. This event gained international media attention and raised many questions about Native rights in Canada.

Books:

Weiser, F.X. *Kateri Tekakwitha*.
Cohen, Leonard. *Beautiful Losers*.
York, Geoffrey and Pindera, Loreen. *People of the Pines*.

Questions:

1. Why did some of the Iroquois convert to Catholicism?
2. Explain the function of the longhouse?
3. What caused the Oka Crisis and what was the outcome of this event?