

Clothing Styles



This painting by Tuscarora artist Dennis Cusick illustrates the changing style of clothing among the students at this Seneca mission school in the 1830s.

Do Clothes Really Make the Man?



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The teacher is leading the children in prayer. In the back row are the older boys who wear long dark shirts, sashes wrapped around their waists and feathers tucked into turbans on their heads. In the front rows are young girls in wrap around skirts, colourful overdresses, with leggings and moccasins.



Since the arrival of trade goods in the 17th century, Hodino:ni clothing has been changing. Older leather clothes gave way to that made from woven textiles. Quill decoration gave way to glass beads and silver work. Both men's and women's clothing styles were influenced by the prevailing trends among our trading partners.

By the 1830s when these images were made, our clothing consisted of a combination of native made items, materials acquired through trade and styles were still changing. However, as we can see in these painting, the teacher is modeling the kind of clothing that was considered appropriate for "civilized" people.

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18th century depictions often focus on warrior's dress, as seen these images. Warriors often wore breech cloth, as seen on the left or leather leggings in the center. However many images were not from eye witness accounts, so features were exaggerated, like the headdress on the right.



Joseph Brant

During the late 1700s, English linen shirts, silver ornaments, cloth leggings and a robe made from a blanket were very popular as in this image of Brant.



Red Jacket wears a Blue Jacket

During the early 1800, long coat became popular, as in this painting of Red Jacket; He wears a woven sash as a belt, with smaller leg garters around his leggings.

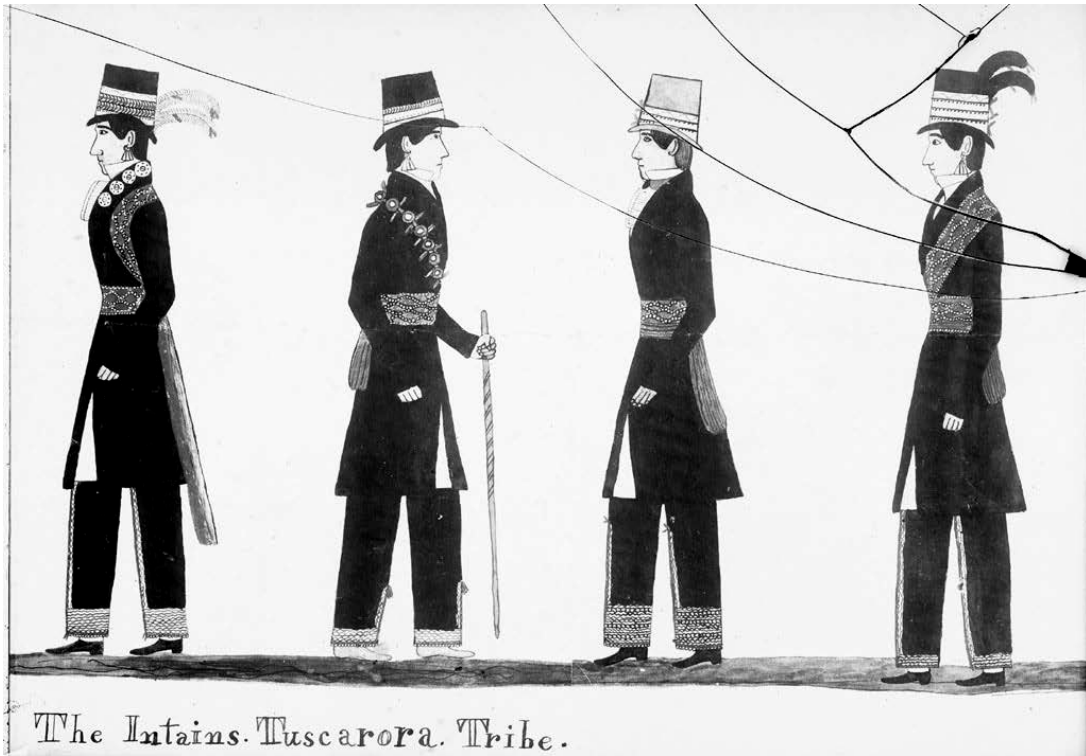
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The re-dressing of the Hodenohso:ni was a cultural exchange with a political intent. Since the late 17th century, our leaders were given gifts of clothing by French and British diplomats as a sign of respect and as a token of friendship. The fancy coat and three-corner hat were highly prized items of this form of diplomacy. Usually the leader or key speaker would receive such a gift, as well as their spouse, while bolts of fabric or trade goods were offered for the people. The basic idea was that if the leaders liked these gifts they would be more likely to maintain friendship relationships.



Top Hats



These four Tuscarora men, from about 1820, wear long coats that were popular then, along with beaded leggings, shoulder and waist sashes, and feather top hats with silver hat band.



Top Hat with American Trade
Silver Gorget by Peter Getz

Lancaster, Pa., 1764-1808, oval
engraved gorget with tree of
life atop turtle's back, marked
PG. Beaver skin marked John
B. Stetson & Co. Philadelphia,
hat is also decorated with
rattlesnake skin band and
ostrich feather. Ex John
Armiger Collection

(<http://www.cowanuctions.com/auctions/item.aspx?ItemId=21071>)



Silver Hat Bands



Basic Elements to Modern Male Clothing



Shirt
Breech Cloth
Leggings
Arm bands
Leg Garter

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Solomon O'Bail, Seneca, 1870s

In this set of clothing we see what became popular toward the end of the 19th century:

Gustoweh – feathered headdress

Long White Shirt

Suit Coat or Vest

Beaded Shoulder bag

Woven Belt Sash

Silver Arm bands

Decorated legging, with fringe on the side

Deer hoof leg garters

Center Seam Moccasins

Note: O'Bail also wears a silver nose insert and silver earrings, which men wore back then.

Men's Leggings



Men's leggings were either straight like a stove pipe, or form fitting to be tight at the ankles. The center seam of the legging was meant to be in the front, with a slight opening at the bottom.



Apron or Breech Cloth



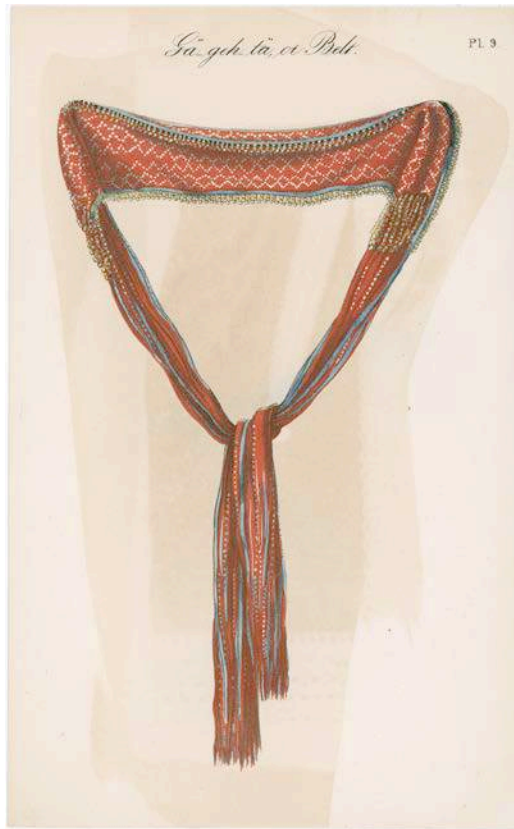
This long piece of decorated cloth is worn between the legs, with the ends pull over the top of a belt. It is decorated with ribbon work, bead work and silver brooches.



Shoulder Sash



*G. M. Johnson
Chief*

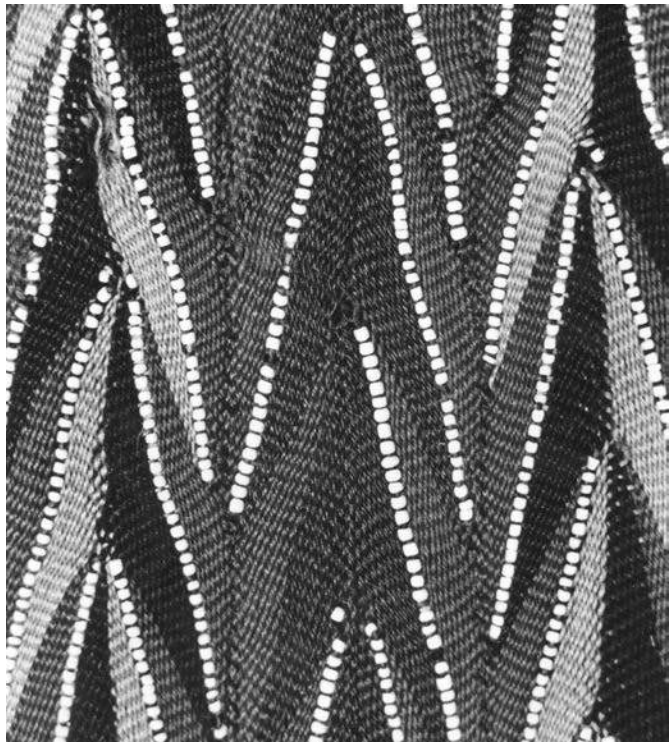


George Martin Johnson wears his “traditional” clothing in this early image. He is wearing tight-fitting stockings, a leather kilt, wampum decorated cuffs, silver brooches and a woven shoulder sash.

The sash was most likely inspired by the military sashes worn by the French and British officers that our ancestors came in contact with. It was a symbol of status and rank.

These finger woven sashes and belts were intricately designed with large white beads woven into to reinforce the design.

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Glass beads are sewn on top of cloth sashes, or woven into the finger-woven sash on the right.



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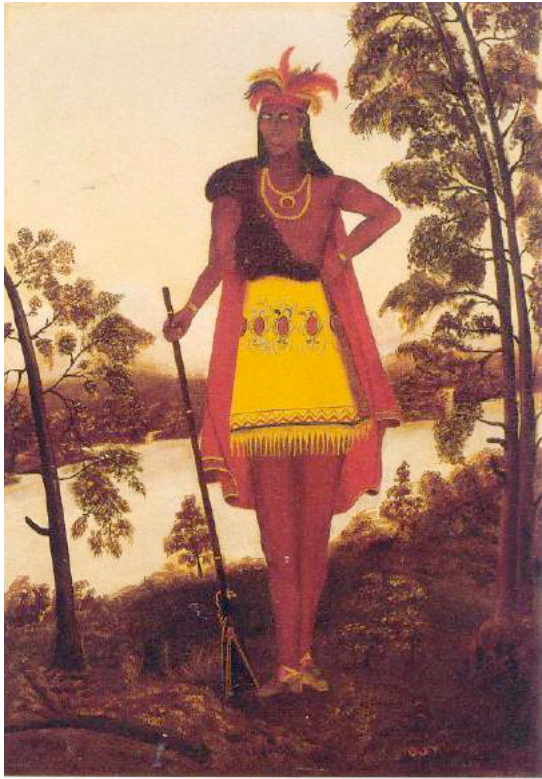
Portrait of Tommy Jemmy, Seneca, about 1830.

Red and Green were popular colors for sashes, trimmed with white beads.



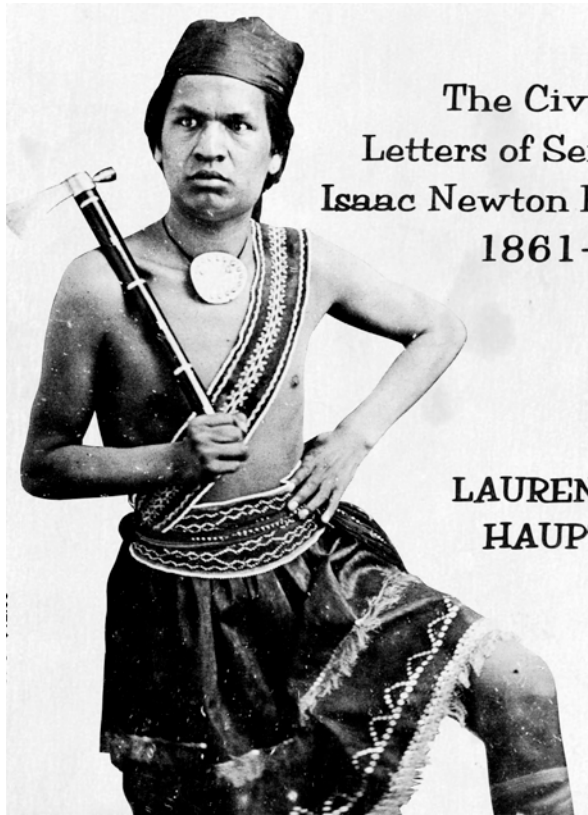
Ga-ah-ka - Man's Kilt

The Hodinohso:ni developed an affinity with the Scottish Highlanders during the American Revolutionary War. The Scots had clans and clan chiefs who wore eagle feathers on their hat. They also wore plaid kilts as a symbol of their clan affiliation.



Hodinohso:ni men began to wear similar kilts, often decorated with glass beads. This painting of Oneida leader named Shikellamy shows an 18th century kilt. On the right is a close up of the draw string that puckers' the kilt at the waist.

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Top: Leather kilt with glass beads designs

Bottom: Cloth kilt with thread fringe and metal sequins.



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When Hodinoḥso:ni men participated in Wild West Shows and public dance performances, as well as lacrosse demonstration in the late 19th century, the kilt became more colorful.



GĀ-KĀ-AH OR DEER SKIN KILT

Beaded Collars



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Tuscarora men's collar



Tonawanda women's collars



Mohawk Collar and Cuffs

The Big Shirt



Man's Vest



Grand River Clothing



Compare the Mohawk clothing on left with that of Rev. Peter Jones, Mississauga, photo taken in England c. 1840



Since the 1880s our clothing has been influenced by the Wild West Shows.

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Henry Fishcarrier, Cayuga, c. 1901

Dr. Oronhyatekha Outfit



Women's Clothing



Women's clothing had also undergone several major transformations. Once, all clothing was made from animal hides, fur robes or woven fibers. Once the fur trade introduced cloth, beads, metal needles and spun thread, more elaborate kinds of clothing was created. Seneca women's clothing was influenced by that of whites, as seen below, with dress on the right dating to 1850s.



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MRS. JEMISON IN INDIAN DRESS



MRS. JEMISON IN FULL INDIAN COSTUME



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