

## Appendix E

### Lescarbot's Poem - English Translation

Marc Lescarbot. (1609). *Les Muses de la Nouvelle France: à Monseigneur le Chancelier*. Chez Jean Millot, Paris.

This document contains the scanned text of a translation of Marc Lescarbot's poem *Les Muses de la Nouvelle France*.

The translation was done by Thomas Goetz, who was a faculty colleague of Alvin Morrison's at SUNY Fredonia (State University College). It was originally an appendix to Morrison's article [Membertou's Raid on the Chouacoet "Almouchiquois" - the Micmac Sack of Saco in 1607] for the Sixth Algonquian Conference (c. 1974).

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T H Goetz's translation accompanying A H Morrison's paper "Mem's Raid", pp 141-179 in W Cowan (ed) *PAPERS OF THE SIXTH ALGN CONF (1974)*, in CAN ETH SVC Paper No 23 (1975), Nat Mus of Man Mercury Series, Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

THE DEFEAT OF THE ARMOUCHIQUOIS SAVAGES<sup>1</sup>  
 BY CHIEF MEMBERTOU AND HIS SAVAGE ALLIES, IN NEW FRANCE,  
 IN THE MONTH OF JULY, 1607

By Marc Lescarbot

In which one can recognize the ruses of war of said Savages,  
 their funeral rites, and the names of several among them.

I do not sing the pride of the giant Briareus

Nor of the furious passion of the proud Rodomonte

Who has almost covered the universe with blood

Nor how he forced the gates of the underworld.

I sing of Membertou and the happy victory<sup>2</sup>

Which acquired for him a short time ago an immortal glory.

When he littered with dead the fields of the Armouchiquois

To avenge the Souriquois people.

Because of an ancient discord between these peoples  
 Rarely could they agree to get on well with one another,  
 And if occasionally they treat for peace,  
 This peace can be called a fool's trap.

"Because the Renard [fox] never changed his nature,

And the double-faced man took no heed to keep his word."

In fact, this lesson was taught these savages only recently

At the expense of the one who gives me subject

To say what moved Membertou and his followers

To undertake such a bloody pursuit for his death.

He was Panoniac (for such was his name)

Once a savage of great renown among his people.

Believing he had made a good alliance  
With these wicked persons, he went unsuspectingly  
To talk among them; he even aided them  
Very frequently with the best of his possessions.  
But for all that this people given to doing evil  
Did not abandon their evil fashion of life.  
Because this Panoniac ten months ago  
Having gone to see them (for the last time)  
Carrying in his boats some merchandise  
To suit these perverse nations,  
Who have always been greedy for spoils,  
Without mercy they slaughter their neighbor,  
Pillage what he had and divide it.  
The companions of the dead man escape by swimming away and  
Hide themselves for a time in the shadow of a rock  
Not daring to approach on these warm mornings.  
Because to tell the truth, the murderous band  
Was much too large and too strong for them.  
But as the over-ridden horses of Phoebus Apollo  
Were drawn exhausted under the waters  
These mad dogs finally abandoned the spot  
Leaving there the cut up dead body  
Which under cover of the dark night  
Was suddenly carried away without noise by his friends,  
And not put, as we are, in an earthly grave  
Nor in a wooden coffin, nor in a stone hollow.

He was embalmed in the form of Kings  
Whom the pious Egyptians embalmed in times past.

The Etechemin people are the first  
To receive the bad news of this cruel murder,  
Whence followed a mourning so full of loud woes  
That the high Heaven heard its clamor  
(Because when these people lament the death  
Of one of their own the people of these parts make  
Strange clamors many days together.)  
But this was not the principal mourning,  
Because when this poor body was shown to his people  
At Port-Royal, God knows how many cries,  
Howlings, and funereal plaints there were.<sup>3</sup>  
The air was filled with wails, and the nearby hills  
Seemed by their echoes to endure all these ills:  
The thick forests, and even the river  
Gave evidence of being in extreme sadness.  
Only eight days were spent in this fashion  
Out of respect for the French who made light of this.

Service paid to the wandering spirit  
(Who has already passed the Styx)  
And to the body present there, Prince Souriquois  
Starts to cry out in a frightful voice:  
What then, Membertou (he said in his language)  
Will he leave unpunished such a vicious outrage?  
What then, Membertou will not have satisfaction  
For the excesses against his own and even his house?

Shall I never see extinguished this race  
 Who of mine and myself pursue the ruin?  
 No, no, one must not put up with this insult.<sup>4</sup>  
 Children, it is proper for us to die for such a blow,  
 Or else by our arm to send ten thousand souls  
 Of this accursed people to the fires of hell.  
 We have close to us the support of the French  
 To whom these dogs have done a similar wrong.  
 It is resolved, it is necessary that the countryside  
 Soon be bathed in the blood of these murderers.  
Actaudin my dear son, and your youngest brother  
 Who have never once abandoned your father,  
 It is now necessary to arm yourselves with force and courage,  
 Now then, go quickly one following the shore,  
 From here to Cap Breton, the other through the woods  
 Towards the Canadians and the Gaspeiquois,  
 And the Etechemins to announce this insult,  
 And say to our friends that I beseech them all  
 To carry in their souls a spirited resentment,  
 With the result that they arm themselves promptly  
 And come to find me near this river,  
 Where they know I have planted my banner.  
Membertou had no sooner commanded his people<sup>5</sup>  
 Than each took the route he was instructed to follow,  
 And made in a short time such good dispatch,  
 That they seemed to outdistance a French postilion  
 So well that in Spring from all directions

Young and old soldiers come to Membertou.  
 All drawn to him not by unreal hopes  
 Under the assured guidons of the brave Captains  
Chkoudan, Oagimont, Mememboure, Kich'kou,  
Messamoet, Ouzagat, and Anadabijou,  
Medagoet, Oagimech and among them  
 The one who more than all others the Armouchiquois abhor.  
 He is Panoniaques, who has the chance  
 To bring misfortune to this nation  
 For the bitter memory of his brother's death.  
 When all had arrived, of this cruel death  
 It was necessary to start the mourning over again  
 And to put the body of the deceased in a coffin.  
 The bearded Membertou then started to speak:<sup>6</sup>  
 You know, he said, O benevolent people  
 The reason which has brought you here,  
 It is this body massacred without mercy which you have seen  
 Whose spilled blood asks for revenge,  
 Without my making long representations to you for it.  
 And as in centuries past when to the Roman people  
 Was shown the inhumanly massacred Caesar  
 (Membertou was able to have heard this from us.)<sup>7</sup>  
 All were moved immediately with an ardent anger.  
 They wished to redress this`cruel vituperation  
 Against the assassins (as I have learned it is  
 mentioned in ancient writings).  
 Thus you must all by this strange sight

Be moved with the desire to keep the praise  
 That our ancestors have put in our trust,  
 And as a result of which they are now in peace,  
 Not having esteemed themselves worthy of living  
 Without having pursued their enemies for their insults.

At these words each felt moved to combat;  
 Each felt the fire of revenge ignited in his heart,  
 And would have willingly against the scoundrels  
 (If possible) thus joined battle,  
 But it was first necessary to bury his body,  
 And to accomplish the required last rites.  
 This great band thus maddened with sadness  
 Lead the dead body to its mausoleum,  
 And making sacrifice to Vulcan of his goods,  
 Bows, arrows, quivers, knives, and dogs  
Matachias<sup>8</sup> also and his skins  
 All that he had saved when he lost his life.  
 But as for the mourners, each within his power  
 Paid him, devotedly, the accustomed duty.  
 Some cover him with beaver skins, some with knives, roses,  
 Weapons, trinkets, and many other things.  
 Then close the coffin, and allow to rest  
 The one whose quarrel they have just espoused.  
 The sky which very often warns us of misfortune,  
 Beforehand had by an ill omen,  
 Testified to the effects of this war here,  
 Because having frowned a long time,

It revealed many a time lighted torches,  
Spears, dragons, flaming armies.

Thus went the fleet with the intention  
Of vanquishing, or of dying on this occasion  
Leaving the guardianship of their children and wives  
To us, who took faithful care of them.  
When they saw the shores of the Armouchiquois,  
This wary people recognized them at once.  
Suddenly messengers travel fast throughout the country,  
And sound horns on each mountain  
To warn everyone to be on the watch and to stand by  
Before the enemy comes to awaken them.  
Peoples from every direction gather in large bands  
So numerous that they surpass the waves of the sea.  
But still Membertou does not take fright,  
Because he knows well how to take at the right moment  
The enemy, who so proud, seeing his small band,  
Promises themselves to do away with it as soon as the dark,  
Shall have spread its curtain over the earth.  
Membertou however draws his boat near  
To the port of Chouacoet, where the adversary band  
Was waiting for him with curiosity, to know what business  
Brought him to them: but he had left  
His people behind a rock, and had advanced  
To reconnoiter the port and the terrain  
That he wished to ruin by war.  
He, he, this was the cry with which he called

All the alert people who were firmly waiting there,  
Yo, yo was the answer. Then, after he asks  
 If he and his small band could safely  
 Treat with them and amicably  
 Settle the difference which for so long  
 Held each of them in endless war,  
 And ruined each others land.  
 They wildly believe to catch by surprise<sup>9</sup>  
 The one who shrewder than those he came to entrap,  
 Tell him he may freely approach the shore,  
 And his people that he had left near the rock,  
 That they have no greater desire than to see a peace  
 Solidly established between them forever,  
 So that they who know the French so well  
 May share the goods which they have in abundance,  
 And thus be able to succor one another  
 Without henceforth pursuing each other.  
Membertou receives the offer and as a hostage  
 Sends one of his own in exchange to the shore.  
 Then he draws back and goes to see his people,  
 Whom he finds greatly desirous of knowing  
 What the will of these peoples was  
 And if they seemed inclined to some sort of peace.  
 Prince Souriquois approaching his followers  
 With a joyous face comes to them saying,  
 They are ours: the farce will take place,  
 Tomorrow we must see this band defeated:

And he gives them a full account of what happened,  
 And how they had greeted one another.  
 After all (he says) let us think of surprising them  
 And in this respect let us not make a mistake.  
 When we left the plan was  
 To make them a present of the goods we brought,  
 And to exchange our goods with them.  
 So that the deceitful man may be caught in his deceit,  
 Only half of us will go by sea:  
 The rest in two groups will go secretly  
 Spreading throughout the woods on sentry duty  
 Until the moment when my horn calls them:  
 Then they shall attack and come to our support,  
 And as long as the day shall last they will strike,  
 Without pity, without kindness, and without mercy,  
 So that here we shall be spoken of for a long time to come.  
 In addition to our quarrel there are some spoils,  
 They have wheat, nuts, vines, linseed,  
 All these goods will be ours if we are courageous,  
 And if we wish to sack their women  
 They will also be ours. It was still night  
 And the clear sky was brilliant with golden studs,  
 When Membertou (whose mind never rested)  
 Goes to his quarters and gives his people their assignments,  
 Those whom he knows to be quick runners  
 He tests with terrestrial dangers.  
 Thus Memembourre suited for pursuit

Is made the general of an elite band,  
Medagoet on the other hand brave in great feats of arms  
Chose the strongest and the most skillful from the entire camp.  
But the great Chief before raising his banner  
Waited until Dawn had scattered its light  
On all the horizon: and when the Sun  
Had been escorted to the place of its waking  
He sets sail, heading straight to the place  
Where a great gathering of people was already waiting for him,  
When having arrived, some of his people  
Are anxious to follow him.  
He greets the chiefs of this party,  
Among them Olmechin, Marchin, and their households.  
Then he offers the presents which I mentioned,  
Which he offers as a mark of his esteem.<sup>10</sup>  
There were dresses, hats, shoes, and shirts,  
But when it was time to see the other goods,  
Among the spears, daggers, and cutlasses,  
There were some horns, of which they did not know  
The use, nor the evil end they concealed.  
The others, however, were in the woods  
Carefully waiting for the planned signal,  
When Membertou wishing to show his prestige  
Calls his people by blowing a horn,  
And in trumpeting, triumphantly deceives the deceivers.  
Because in an instant he who had no arms  
Hearing his people come he pretends to be alarmed

Finding himself provided with axes, knives,  
 Bows, arrows, swords, picks, and darts,  
 He attacks these people, and each of them begin  
 At once to defend themselves without great success.  
 They massacre many of them, meanwhile from the woods  
 The reinforcements arrive screaming:  
He, he oukcheqouia,<sup>11</sup> and in the conflict  
 Soon find themselves mingled.  
 The Armouchiquois seeing that it was all over for them  
 If they did not promptly put their trouble right  
 Think of the need to defend themselves  
 Rather than of placing themselves at their mercy here.  
 They were for the most part armed with knives  
 Which they were accustomed to wear around their necks,  
 But these weapons were of little use at this time.  
 Because Membertou equipped with good armor  
 With a shield of hardwood and a good cutlass  
 Just as the swing of a scythe lays low  
 Honor in fine epics: his sword likewise  
 Reaped the enemy with extreme rapacity.  
 The others carried away with a like ardor  
 Following the chief's pace, do not lack courage  
 But with cries<sup>12</sup> and frightful voices  
 Kill these poor wretches like ants.  
 So that it was all over for them  
 If they did not find some way to reverse the situation.  
 These people who always loved pillage

Believed their advantage over Membertou so great  
 That there was no need of arms for this meeting,  
 Nevertheless had taken care just in case  
 To store an armory at the bottom of a valley,  
 Where the fleeing band finally went.  
 There each one armed himself with bows, arrows, and quivers,  
 With picks, shields, and wooden maces.  
 There they turn around and with angry faces  
 Charge Membertou and his people inebriated  
 With the blood of the Armouchiquois. In this counterattack  
Panoniagues was in danger of dying  
 Wounded in the chest by a javelin.  
Chkoudun the courageous, received on the spine  
 A blow which almost crushed him and saw himself in danger  
 Of never moving (the enemy was gaining ground).  
 But the strong Chkoudumech' his brother, with his body  
 Forcing his way through the crowd, soon made room  
 To take him out of there: but he was beaten  
 By a blow struck by the cruel Olmechin  
 Which taxed all his valor. Mnesinou (whose glory  
 Throughout these parts is well known)  
 As the boldest, strives with his spear  
 To pierce Membertou through:  
 But the blow dodged with subtle adroitness  
 By Prince Souriquois, to his son it directs itself,  
 His son Actaudinech' whom he loves more  
 Than all the beauty of the earth and sky.

This blow having pierced his sleeve  
 As quickly as a flash of lightning struck him in the hip:  
 Completely startled by this Prince Membertou  
 Recalled the eyes of the monstrous Gougou<sup>13</sup>  
 And the ancient duel that in his tender youth  
 His father once dared to undertake,  
 And redoubling his force he stretched out his arm,  
 And cleaved him in two with his proud cutlass.  
 And like a tall oak blown down by a storm  
 Drags down with it all the best in its neighborhood  
 So the dead Mnesinou fell, surrounded by many of his followers,  
 Went to see the sombre region of Pluto.  
 But the Armouchiquois do not allow themselves to be chased,  
 Preferring to die there than to live shamefully  
 If it ever happened that Membertou, victor,  
 Eternally dishonored them in this combat.  
 Thus reassembling themselves they make some attacks  
 And give their enemies many a set-back.  
 Because until then they had still not organized  
 For this reason they had badly revenged themselves.  
Bessabes and Marchin, who have the first blows,  
 Come to attack with their proud bands  
 The Souriquois chief, a hail of arrows  
 Falls on both sides from every direction.  
 The sun's brightness remains obscured,  
 The number of arrows continually increasing.  
 In this attack some of the Souriquois

Are wounded: but there are more  
 Laid low on the other side: because their arrows  
 With heads of bone, do not make as mortal a wound  
 As those used by the neighbors of the French  
 Which have steel tips at the end of their wooden shafts.  
 Yet once more here is a new force  
 Which tries the arms, not the hearts, of the Membertouquois.  
Go, go, go, is their cry, Abejou, Olmachin,  
 The strong Argostenbroet, and the proud Bertachin  
 Are the leaders of it, who in their first encounter  
 Met the forces of the valiant Messamoet.  
Messamoet (who once breathed the air of France  
 Had learned the knowledge of warfare  
 Among the domestics of the Lord de Grandmont)  
 After many a skirmish had gained the hill  
 From which he thought he had an easy advantage  
 To injure his adversary without danger to himself.  
 But this crafty foe stayed far from there,  
 And lead the main squadron of Souriquois  
 Who followed briskly to just above the shore  
 Where twice a day the tide rises.  
 There Neguioadetch' mother of the deceased,  
 After having watched the combat for a long time,  
 Seeing Membertou's followers in disarray  
 Comes to land and leaves her long-boat,  
 To give heart to the astonished warriors  
 Who had abandoned their first stable position.

And like those Persian mothers and wives  
Of old seeing their infamous sons and husbands  
Fleeing from the Medes who were following them,  
Courageously went to the front suddenly,  
Without shame to show them the part of the body  
From which man receives his entry to life,  
Some crying "What then, do you want  
To save yourself in here to avoid the blows  
Of those who chase you? Others in another way  
Crying to their children: Return to the door  
Of the dwelling place in which you were born,  
Or return quickly against the enemy.  
Finding themselves full of shame before such a spectacle,  
The blood of shame now mounts to their faces  
So well that in turning around  
They put an end to the Empire of the Medes.  
Thus did this mother in seeing the danger into which  
Membertou and his followers were going to plunge themselves,  
Neguiroet her husband now paralytic,  
But who understood the practice of how to fight well  
Had himself carried there: and well recognizing  
The impending disaster which was going to beset them  
If some new force did not arrive,  
Had himself lowered to the ground, and himself tries  
To march to combat, in order to die there  
If he could not at least aid his friends.  
Being in the middle of them, he gives them courage

And beseeches them all to avenge his outrage.  
 My friends (he said) you do not fight  
 Only for the fact, alas! which wounds me too much.  
 It is a question of honor; it is a question of life:  
 These two things lost, the loss is followed  
 By the regret and sorrow of the women and children  
 Of whom our enemies are going to be triumphant  
 As well as of us. Thus have courage,  
 I see them wavering there: it is a good sign.  
 At these words Membertou had the muskets fired  
 That at their departure the French had lent him.  
Chkoudun does the same because he also had  
 Two muskets (for which he likes the French very much)  
 Which were prepared in case of necessity  
 As a last remedy for a debilitated body.  
 With their blows ten of them fell dead  
 And the noise of this thunder frightened the rest.  
Abejou, Chitagat, Olmechin, and Marchin,  
 Four of the worst of this mutinous people,  
 Fell at this burst. Chkoudun who remembers  
 The blow he received does not wish the glory for it  
 To remain with the giver, but in a death dealing movement  
 Valourous he attacks the strong Argostembroet,  
 And sets on his followers with so great a severity  
 That at the sound of his name alone the enemy disbands.  
Membertouchis as the oldest son of Membertou  
 Under the wing of his father assisted by Kichkou,

Gives three blows for everyone he receives.  
 And now here and there, everywhere the tide is turning.  
 Five hundred feet further away are Ouzagat,  
 And Anadabijou in the thick of combat.  
 They were aided by the brave band  
 Of Panoniagues, who was soon followed  
 By Oaginech' and his followers; so well that in a short time  
 The enemy was cut down like a field of grass:  
 Because all those who remained, although strong in numbers,  
 Hardly carried any further the ill-starred encounter  
 Which had followed on its heels: more especially as Oagimont  
 With Mememboure staying at the foot of the hill  
 Where a short time ago I said, the panic-stricken waited,  
 And valorously pursuing fought them.  
 But Oagimont having assumed a distant position  
 Too promptly, was gravely wounded by an arrow.  
Mememboure (in hot pursuit) almost in the same way  
 Was wounded in the leg pursuing the enemy  
 As were several others attempting to escape from their hands  
 But who could not however fool their enemy.  
 Because Etmeminaoet the man who of six women  
 Can as a gallant lover appease the amorous flames,  
 And Metembroebit, Medagoet, Chich'cobech'  
Bituani, Penin, Actembroe, Semcoudech',  
 All valiant champions, warriors, and captains  
 Completed the ruin of this inhuman race.  
 But what is here worthy of astonishment,

Is that not a single Souriquois died.

The Armouchiquois extinguished, their army defeated,  
Membertou glorious has sounded retreat,  
 They find still more wounded: Pech'kmeg,  
Oupakour, Ababich, Pitagan, Chich'kmeg,  
Vmanuet, and Kobech', whose wounds they dress,  
 While they think of the spoils of the other side.<sup>14</sup>  
 The cure is improvised. Among them is a soothsayer  
 (Ignorant nevertheless) whose name is Aoutmoin.  
 A prognosticator of the state of sickness  
 He feigns towards some demon to be his ambassador  
 And according to his answer, in this as in everything else,  
 He judges that he will soon be dead or cured.  
 Thereupon from the wound he sucks blood,  
 He spits it out, and while spitting it out shakes his sides:  
 This done, he applies over the wound  
 The kidney of a beaver (the perfect bandage)  
 And thus tries to cure his patient.

The spoils gathered, before leaving  
 They sever the heads of the Armouchiquois chiefs  
 So as to make of their return a time of joyous feasting.  
 Now they are sailing and approach the port  
 Where they must give comfort to their wives,  
 Who as soon as they have news  
 Of their arrival, shout from

SHORT AND BEEN THE TASK  
 EACH ONE. E-10.

And marching in order, some with spiked staffs  
Others with sharp knives (all having  
Their faces mottled) they were all waiting  
Their turn to have their own Armouchiquois,  
To butcher him cruelly.

But without that agreed to feast  
And after the banquet followed the dance,  
Which lasted all the day and the night,  
And which goes on with unending cries  
Singing the valor and prowess of Membertou  
As long as their stomachs support their voices,  
Or until some illness makes them rest.

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