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Mohawks on the Nile: Natives Among the Canadian Voyageurs in Egypt, 1884-1885

Carl Benn

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Mohawks on the Nile explores the absorbing history of sixty Aboriginal men who left their occupations in the Ottawa River timber industry to participate in a military expedition on the Nile River in 1884-1885. Chosen becuase of their outstanding skills as boatmen and river pilots, they formed part of the Canadian Voyageur Contingent, which transported British troops on a fleet of whaleboats through the Nile's treacherous cataracts in the hard campaigning of the Sudan War. Their objective was to reach Khartoum, capital of the Egyptian province of Sudan. Their mission was to save its governor general, Major-General Charles Gordon, besieged by Muslim forces inspired by the call to liberate Sudan from foreign control by Muhammad Ahmad, better known to his followers as the "the Mahdi."

In addition to Carl Benn's historical exploration of this remarkable subject, this book includes the memoirs of two Mohawk veterans of the campaign, Louis Jackson and James Deer, who recorded the details of their adventures upon returning to Canada in 1885. It also presents readers with additional period documents, maps, historical images, and other materials to enhance appreciation of this unusual story, including an annotated roll of the Mohawks who won praise for the exceptional quality of their work in this legendary campaign in the chronicle of Britain's expansion into Africa.

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