

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FIELD SERVICE

ADDRESS ONLY
THE SUPERINTENDENT

New York Indian Agency
807 Stock Exchange Bldg.
Buffalo, New York
June 20, 1940

Miss Helen M. Post
112 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Madam:

As suggested in your letter of June 17, I wired you collect at your New York address June 18 as follows:

Relet seventeenth strawberry festival nine a.m. tomorrow
Cattaraugus Reservation Newtown Longhouse south of Lawtons.
Am advised ceremony closes early in afternoon. While you
are here you can learn about other festivals among the Senecas
concerning which you wrote me.

Since I have had no reply to this wire, and you were not present at the Strawberry Ceremony on the Cattaraugus Reservation yesterday, I have inferred that you probably did not receive my telegram.

You state in your letter that you desire to take some photographs for the Indian Bureau in Washington, and that you would like information from me with regard to the different types of ceremonies carried on by the Senecas with the places and dates of some of these ceremonies, especially the Strawberry and Green Corn ceremonies. You advise that you plan to visit the Allegany Reservation, but say nothing about visiting the other two Seneca reservations, Cattaraugus and Tonawanda.

It is true, as you have been advised by the Washington Office, that the Senecas do carry on annually certain ceremonies, among them are the Strawberry and Green Corn celebrations. These people also hold annual harvest celebrations and New Year's festivals.

It is my understanding that the four principal celebrations among the Senecas of New York State are the Strawberry, Green Corn, Harvest, and New Year's celebrations. These celebrations are annual affairs, and are promoted by all three of the Seneca reservations.

The dates for the different ceremonies vary with the seasons, except the New Year's ceremony. By way of illustration of this point, the Strawberry celebration is planned at the beginning of the harvest of strawberries, and

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of course, if the season is early, the ceremony is correspondingly early, and if the season is late, the same would be true of the ceremony, and this same principle, the dates for the Green Corn and Harvest ceremonies are determined.

As stated in the wire which I sent you, and which is quoted above, the Cattaraugus Reservation held its Strawberry Celebration yesterday. I was advised by one of the Indians of the Allegany Reservation, while attending this ceremony, that the Allegany Reservation will hold its Strawberry Celebration next Sunday, June 23. The hour for this Strawberry Ceremony is usually from about 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. I have been unable to learn when the Tonawandas will conduct their Strawberry Ceremony.

You ask to be advised of the places where these ceremonies are to be conducted on the various reservation, and I presume you would like information also as to how you may reach the various reservations. All of the ceremonies of this nature are held at the reservation longhouse. Anyone on the reservation can tell you the location of this longhouse. If you plan to travel by train to the Seneca reservations, you would go to Akron, New York, to reach the Tonawanda Reservation, to Gowanda, New York, in visiting the Cattaraugus Reservation, and to Salamanca, New York, for the Allegany Reservation.

I would suggest that you wire Wilford Crouse, President of the Seneca Nation, Quaker Bridge, New York, to verify the information I have given you relative to the date when the Strawberry Celebration will be held on the Allegany Reservation, as the person who gave me the information could have been mistaken.

If you are near Buffalo in connection with your visit to any of the Seneca reservations, I shall be glad to have you call at my office, 807 Stock Exchange Building, which would give us an opportunity to discuss these matters more fully, and in the meantime, if we can be of any further assistance to you, do not hesitate to write us.

Sincerely yours,

C. H. Berry

CHAS. H. BERRY,
SUPERINTENDENT.

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