

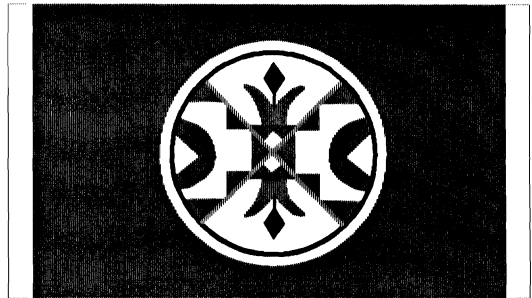
MICMAC



The Micmac live in the north-eastern United States and in the Maritime provinces of Canada. They may have been the first Native Americans to have encountered the white man, since their ancient lands included those areas of the American continent explored by intrepid Norsemen

nearly a thousand years ago (ANAI, 79-80).

This international nature of the Micmac family influences their use of symbols. Many Micmac in Canada—where one-quarter Indian blood is needed to receive rights and benefits—migrate to the United States, where one-sixteenth is sufficient. Perhaps as a result, many Micmacs within the United States use the official flag of the Canadian Micmac. This flag usage proclaims the unity of the tribe despite its division by an international boundary. (At least two other eastern Native American flags have a similar international usage—the Mohawk and the Iroquois League flags fly in both the U.S. and Canada.)



The Micmac flag has a red field with narrow vertical yellow stripes on each end of the flag. In the center is a large yellow disk about two-thirds the height of the flag. It is edged by a narrow black outline and a wider yellow band. The inner circle is divided diagonally into quarters by narrow black lines. The upper and lower quadrants contain a stylized plant in green, black, and red on yellow, while the left and right quadrants bear traditional native designs of red on yellow on blue, edged in white.

The yellow disk can be seen to represent the sun, which in North America rises first over the Micmac; its division into quarters recalls the moon in its four phases and all the traditional Native American attributes of the number four—the cardinal directions, seasons, races of man, and so on. As with most Canadian flags, the flag has width-length proportions of 1:2, as opposed to the 2:3 or 3:5 proportions common in the United States. ☛