

**ETHNOHISTORY OF THE ALGONKIAN SPEAKING
PEOPLE - GEORGIAN BAY**

ETHNOHISTORY OF THE ALGONKIAN SPEAKING PEOPLE OF

GEORGIAN BAY --- PRECONTACT TO 1850.

By

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ABSTRACT

The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay occupied the shoreline and island environment of eastern Lake Huron, in Georgian Bay, between the French and Severn Rivers. They were likely the product of a constant cultural flux of peoples who came to occupy the shores and islands of Georgian Bay perhaps as early as 1200 A.D., although the archaeological evidence is problematic. Often regarded by vague reference by historical observers who included them with the Nipissing and the Ottawa during the seventeenth century, the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples were likely peoples of various origin. During the nineteenth century they appear in the historical records as Mississauga, Ojibwa, and Potowatomi, although these are often political identifications.

This study attempts to piece together the ethnohistory of the Georgian Bay Algonkian by presenting an ethnographic account dating from precontact times to 1850. The presence of Algonkian speaking peoples in the Georgian Bay region has largely been neglected by ethnohistorians. Identified as convenient trading partners (Heidenreich 1971: 293), and economic dependents of the Huron (Trigger 1976, 1: 168; 1985: 205), the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples

have been considered to have had little influence in the region (Jenness 1932: 276). It is not surprising that little is known about them. Culturally, they have been relegated to a rather ethnographically ambiguous position in Great Lakes culture history.

By examining the archaeological, environmental, and historical record this study argues that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were strongly influenced by both their geographic and political position in an environment where year round subsistence was available from fishing, small game mammals, and corn (either traded or cultivated). This economy in turn, influenced their ritual, political and social organization. The extensive temporal depth of this adaptation is followed through an examination of regionally important historical influences, including a devastating war with the Iroquois, various fur trades, an influx of native immigration, government sponsored settlement programs, and land surrenders. Within this context, the history of the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay achieved cultural definition.

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PREFACE

This study included research and analysis of historical documents in the Public Archives of Canada, the Public Archives of Ontario, the Legislative Library of Ontario, the United Church Archives, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Royal Ontario Museum, and various private manuscript collections. Field research involved formal tape recorded interviews with members of band councils, chiefs and elders of the Parry Island, Shawanaga, and Moose Deer Point Indian communities, and informal discussions with elders concerning the oral traditions of their history.

I am indebted to my informants Chief Flora Tobobondung, Mrs. Rosie Rice, Mrs. Thelma Pegahmagabow, Mr. Wellington Wheatley, Mr. Stanley Manitowaba, Mr. Peter Pemajuan, Chief Roger Jones, Mrs. Margaret Jones and Mrs. Martha Williams. I am especially indebted to Mr. Ted Wheatley for his friendship and willingness to instruct me in the history of his people. Meegwetch Ted. Mr. Wheatley is a direct descendant of Mr. James Walker, one of the informants of Diamond Jenness when he was on Parry Island in

1929. Thank you Joyce Tobobondung and your family for allowing me the hospitality of your home.

I owe gratitude for funding the field research to the Urgent Ethnology Department of the National Museum of Man, now the National Museum of Civilization. I am indebted to the late Dr. Edward Rogers of McMaster University and the Royal Ontario Museum, for so patiently guiding me through the research, as chair of the committee, until his death. He generously offered his encouragement and kindness to me over his last years, providing not only a model of scholarship but friendly support. Dr. Rogers also graciously allowed me access to the field notes of his work on Parry Island. I wish to thank my committee members: Dr. David Damas for rigorously organizing the administrative aspects of my program and for assuming the supervision of my committee in its latter stages; to Dr. William Noble, for his continuing interest and guidance with the archaeology of the study, and Dr. Richard Preston for his willingness to join the committee and critically appraise the thesis.

I wish to thank Sydney K. Baxter for carefully reading this thesis, for making suggestions for its improvement, and for undertaking the laborious technical aspects of converting the text into a presentable form. I wish also to mention my son Gary Lovisek whose presence and friendship with the children of Parry Island allowed me to

gain a more intimate view of the field work part of the program. To both I express my deepest gratitude for seeing me through this lengthy process.

I should like to thank Dr. James V. Wright of the National Museum of Civilization for generously providing me with a copy of his unpublished findings on the Shebishikong site, the Archivists and Librarians at the Public Archives of Ontario, the Public Archives of Canada, the University of Toronto Libraries, McMaster University Library, the Baldwin Room of the Metropolitan Toronto Library and the United Church Archives. Special gratitude is owed to Mr. Ray Smith of the Parry Sound Library, Mr. John Macfie of Parry Sound, and Ms. Shirlee Ann Smith of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

As in many ethnohistorical studies, there were problems securing satisfactory data as reconstruction is often based on fragmented and isolated notes. By adopting a regional perspective these difficulties are reduced, if less specific in historical and ethnographic detail. Using a regional approach assumes that the Algonkian speakers of Georgian Bay would not be analyzed in isolation from other native groups. This is essential to the reconstruction of a group's land use activities given the economic influence of other peoples. It serves to remind the reader that the Algonkian speakers of Georgian Bay were not only part of a

physical environment, but subject to political influences from other native groups.

Several anthropologists have conducted field work in the Georgian Bay region. In 1929, Frederick Johnson wrote briefly about the material culture of Parry Island. He concluded that Parry Island was the eastern limit of Central Algonkian culture, and that it was probably through the Parry Islanders that many Eastern Algonkian features came into contact with the Central Algonkian culture (1929: 203, 204, 216).

Shortly after, Jenness published his remarkable study (1935) of the Parry Island Ojibwa. Although this study is considered by many to be the definitive analysis of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, and by extension, the Southeastern Ojibwa culture (Rogers 1978), there are problems with his description of their history and socio-economic organization that merit reexamination. The richness of Jenness' description of the Parry Island Ojibwa cannot be easily extended to his 'aboriginal' proposition, for he relies on few historical sources. Jenness rarely distinguished between the cultural or political affinity of his informants which included Ottawa, Ojibwa, and Potawatomi. His classification of the Parry Island Indians as Ojibwa has not been accepted without reservation by all anthropologists, particularly those who have undertaken

field work in the Parry Island area.¹ As a result of Jenness' indiscriminate use of his informants, there are marked discrepancies in the ethnographic support that he elects to address, particularly about land tenure and land use.

Although Jenness recognized and reported the importance of fishing and small game in Georgian Bay (1935: 16), he misunderstood fish spawning patterns and their seasonal effects.² Despite describing a rich fishing culture, he used the Parry Island Ojibwa to further his position in the hunting territory debate, stressing the communal aspects of their hunting organization, thereby confusing both its ideological and practical manifestations. He presents the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay 'aboriginally' as big game hunters, rejecting the importance of small animals and fish. His emphasis on the 'chase,' (moose in winter, beaver, deer and woodchuck in spring), and on a clan system of social organization (Ibid: 7, 10, 14), arguably predisposes the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking

¹ Rogers believed that of Jenness' informants, only Mary Sugadub was an Ojibwa and that his Parry Island Ojibwa study should properly be Parry Island Potowatomi (E.S. Rogers 1987: personal communication).

² Jenness indicated that whitefish, sturgeon and trout spawned near shore in fall (1935: 11). Sturgeon are a spring spawning fish. Whitefish and trout spawn in the fall at off shore island and shoal locations.

peoples, ethnographically, to appear as communally organized big game hunters. This study challenges that position by exploring and documenting a fishing/small/corn adaptation.

Dunning (1974) studied the "Pine Tree Indians," a pseudonym for the Georgina Island band in Lake Simcoe. Dunning's fieldwork, undertaken in the 1950s, focused upon the contemporary environment of the Georgina Island community. More recently Rogers and Tobobondung (1975) reconstructed the history of Algonkian farming on Parry Island from 1820 to 1875, contributing the first ethnohistorical study of the region.

From a broader cultural perspective, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay when considered as Southeastern Ojibwa (Rogers 1978) have not been studied extensively in the literature. Most studies of the Ojibwa involve the Northern Ojibwa (Dunning 1959; Hallowell, 1949; Landes, 1937, 1938; Rogers, 1963; Bishop, 1974). Radin wrote briefly on the Southeastern Ojibwa of the Sarnia area (1924: 491-530; 1928), and Skinner described the Ojibwa of Southeastern Ontario and lower Michigan (1911: 117). Rogers (1978) synthesized various historical and cultural evidence into a general picture of the Southeastern Ojibwa.

The text throughout this study refers to the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples, although no such society ever existed. The native groups now called Ojibwa

for example, descend from bands believed to have been closely related, which, during the early historical period, came under the various names of Algonquin and Ottawa. Most Ojibwa use the word *anissina.pe* (human being) to describe themselves (Baraga 1878. 2: 38). There are various spellings and names for the Ojibwa, although the root meaning of the self-designation *ocipwe* (Goddard 1978: 768) is uncertain. It is commonly held to derive from the band known in the seventeenth century as Outchibous (Ibid: 769).

A familiar conundrum for students of ethnohistory is to reconcile historical and oral testimony.³ It is often tempting to give credence to archival sources because of their presumed virtues of truth and posterity. An unhappy result has been to incorporate only that oral testimony which has been supported by archival data, a tendency which belittles the very core of fieldwork. An overriding consideration in this study can be found in the words of the historical geographer, Hugh Prince (1971: 23), who noted that documents make "faithful servants" but "inadequate masters." Prince cautions that documents are not simply

³ As the study area, the "Georgian Bay region" is not often directly identified in the documents, the data is frequently adapted from the literature relative to the immediate areas surrounding it. For example, the phrase "north shore of Lake Huron" is used to include the east shore of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, a consideration that requires this study to extrapolate and distinguish between groups when necessary.

legacies of impassive instruments which accurately portray reality, but are an active agent which present a perception of reality (Ibid).

Native oral history is especially challenging because oral traditions demonstrate a tendency to be ahistorical: History is viewed as a cultural transformation which guides the social, political and moral order (Parker 1916). The challenge has been to integrate oral traditions with ethnohistorical fact (Trigger 1980: 10-11) without sacrificing the integrity of either. The approach taken in this study is to allow the sources to speak as an integrated whole, sometimes balanced from one perspective, sometimes another, so an integrated reconstruction of the culture of the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples can be expressed from various perspectives. The emphasis shifts between environment, archaeology, history, ethnography, until a comprehensive portrait of Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples emerges.

The study attempts to reconstruct a society based on ecological principles of land use within an historical context. It assumes that ecological principles influence subsistence and cultural development, but recognizes that historical influences are essential to the reconstruction of a cultural group. This places the study of the Algonkian speakers of Georgian Bay into the theoretical framework of

cultural ecology, pioneered by Steward (1955), placed in theoretical context by Harris (1968), and tailored to Canadian indigenous peoples by Cox (1973; 1988). The cultural adaptation that emerges from this study is a focus on fishing.

Many cultural ecological studies are inevitably concerned with a logical integration of parts into a functioning system. The risk for the anthropologist doing ethnohistory is using models to substantiate undeveloped parts which lack historical support. This is where the anthropologist scans the models for possible explanations and endeavours to make facts fit. The danger in this approach lies in generating historically unsubstantiated impressions of culture history. This can be offset by attempting to achieve a consistency throughout a number of conceptual domains.

The organization of this study is as follows: Chapter One introduces the Georgian Bay region, giving a sense of place to the study area. Chapter Two identifies the environmental features and reconstructs the vegetation of the region before Euro-Canadian settlement, concentrating upon its resource potential. This chapter also discusses important climatic changes in the region. Chapter Three introduces the Shebishikong site, and assesses plausible subsistence practices derived from archaeological sources.

Chapter Four details the seventeenth century occupation of the region. The importance of subsistence fishing and small game hunting is drawn from several historical sources. Chapter Five highlights the post-1649 changes in subsistence and land use, the expansion of native people into the southern reaches of the region, and the competing land use practices that emerge to adapt to the French and English trades. Chapter Six focuses upon nineteenth century immigration, land tenure, and the local effects of the fur trade. Chapter Seven concludes the study with a summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE GEORGIAN BAY REGION

The Geography

"Nothing but a barren map of rocks guarded by thousands of islands" was how one nineteenth century observer described the Georgian Bay region (Keating's Report, August, 1852, RG 10, vol. 198, pt. 1: 116270-3). The study area, extending about 20,000 square kilometres, lies predominantly in the Canadian Biotic Province of the Southern Canadian Shield.

Georgian Bay, drawing its name from King George IV (Barry 1968: 3),² is the eastern arm of Lake Huron and has been sometimes called the sixth Great Lake. It is bound on the west by Lake Huron, on the north by the French River, on the south by the Severn River and Lake Simcoe, and on the east by the Great Lakes watershed boundary at the height of lands in Algonquin Park (see fig. 1). It is positioned in a southeast to northwest direction, separated from Lake Huron at the north by Manitoulin Island, and to the south by the

¹ The area was once known as New Ontario (Sessional Papers, Report of the Survey and Exploration of Northern Ontario, 1900 (v), xxiii, 254).



Fig. 1 GREAT LAKES REGION

Saugeen Peninsula (Hamilton 1893: 31), which, for the purpose of this research excludes the Bruce Peninsula. The region is exposed to prevailing westerlie winds, and to northern storms (Ibid). Aligned in a north-south direction, it extends across a north latitude between 44° and 46° and a western longitude between 80° and 82°.

The Georgian Bay region includes the municipalities and surrounding districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka. Its present identity is largely known because of its location within southern Ontario's recreation hinterland. This area includes large tracts of park areas designated for recreation, private cottages and camps. Most of Ontario's summer camps are found in Muskoka where most rural dwellings are cottages (Dean ed. 1969: 81). A large amount of the land is Crown land held by the Government of Ontario. Tourism, the economic mainstay of the region, is supported principally by the urban residents of the Toronto region (Ibid).

Native Population and Economy

Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking native peoples reside in the region and have been included in the ethnographic category of Southeastern Ojibwa (Rogers 1978: 760). It will be evident that cultural melding significantly influenced the early and later groups residing in Georgian

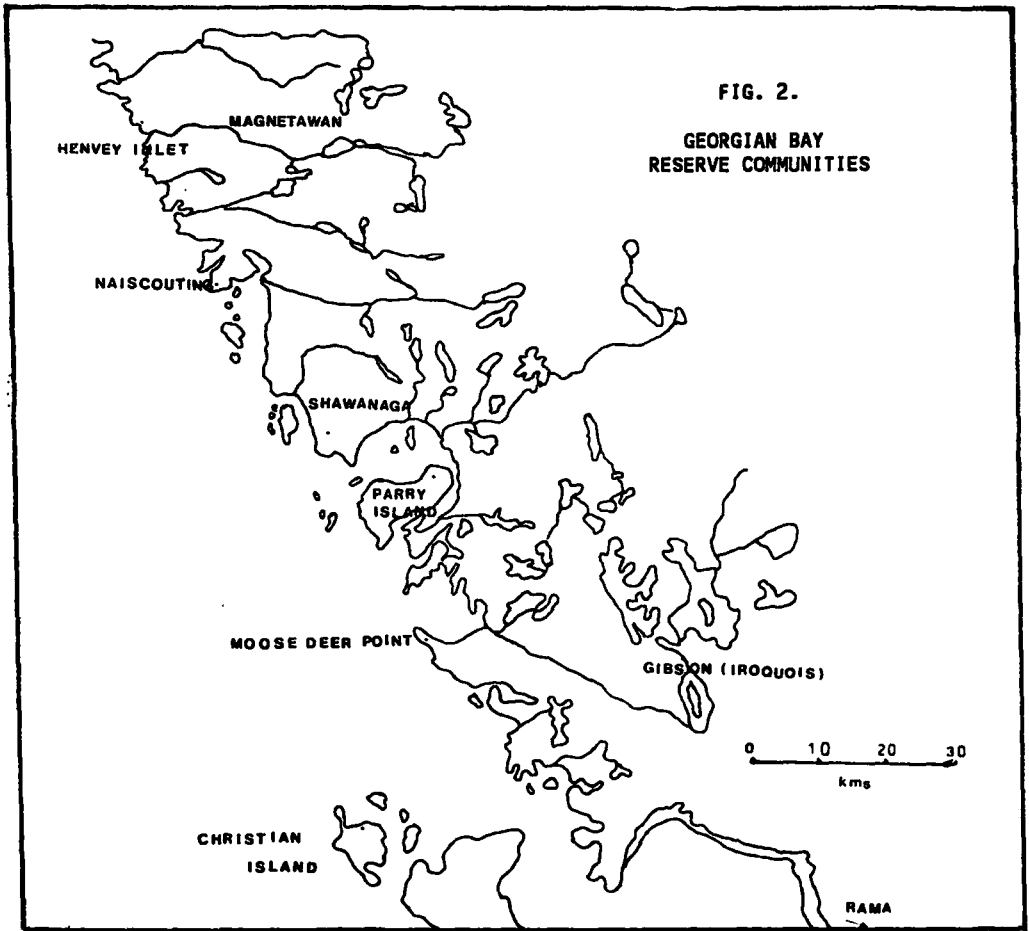
Bay which prevents positive identification. The people usually classified as Southeastern Ojibwa inhabit the area extending from Southern Ontario along the east shore of Georgian Bay, west along the north shore of Lake Huron, a short distance along the northeast shore of Lake Superior, and extending onto the Upper Peninsula of Lake Michigan (Ibid). Antecedents of various native peoples, known in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as Chippewa, Ojibwa, Mississauga, and Saulteaux, the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay were known during early contact as Ottawa (Odawa) and Algonkian (Ibid; Waisberg 1984). A survey of dialects in this area identifies the Central Ojibwa-Odawa dialect, and the Eastern Ojibwa dialects (Rhodes 1976: 130-131), both of which were spoken in the Georgian Bay region (Goddard 1978: 583; J. Rogers 1975).

There are difficulties using linguistic associations to identify groups, complicated principally by the prevalence of trade languages which facilitated communication between speakers of different languages (Rhodes 1982: 1). As the Huron fur trade expanded, so did their language which came to be widely used in the Eastern Great Lakes region (Heidenreich 1971: 231). In addition to Algonkian, the Nipissing for example, also spoke Huron (Wrong ed. 1939: 86). The trade language spoken in the Georgian Bay region after 1649 was likely Eastern Ojibwa,

rather than a true Algonquin or Nipissing dialect (Rhodes 1982: 2-3). To the south of the region Ottawa was spoken, and to the north, Cree was the trade language (Ibid). This linguistic characteristic often came to be applied to groups as a cultural identification, contributing to errors in judgement of a groups' cultural orientation (cf. Greenberg and Morrison 1982: 75, 81). Ottawa, for example, like Algonkin, is an identification troubled by interpretative problems, for both spoke 'Ojibwa' dialects (Piggot 1978; Gilstrap, 1978).

Today, the study area is home to seven mixed Ojibwa/Potowatomi bands residing on island and shoreline reserves at Moose Deer Point, Parry Island, Shawanaga, Naiscouting, Magnetawan, Christian Island, and Henvey Inlet (see fig. 2). The population of status native people living in these reserve communities is under 1,500, with Christian Island being the largest with 550 residents. Moose Deer Point represents the smallest with 80 persons as of 1982 (Georgian Bay Tribal Council Memo, 1982). An Iroquois band also resides at the Gibson Reserve near Bala; they migrated to the region in 1884 from the Lake of Two Mountains (Du Vernet 1986: 76).

Located in the heart of cottage country, native bands have recognized the employment potential of



diversification. On Parry Island these include leasing lands for cottages, constructing and leasing cottages, marina services, guiding, commercial fishing, and sugar bush operations. In the past, logging was an important industry (Sinclair 1987: 78) employing many Georgian Bay Algonkians.

Regional History

Historically, Georgian Bay provided a highway for westward exploration. The region evolved into a trading route for various native groups, such as the Nipissing, Ottawa, Huron, and later, the French and British. The embouchure of the French River, provided a trading thoroughfare for more westward and northern trade. The north and south direction of exploration and economic incentive paralleled the physiography.

The French River drains Lake Nipissing where the Nipissing Algonkians lived, fished, and traded (fig. 3). They routinely wintered in the south with the Huron (Thwaites ed. 1959, 21: 239). The Huron were a large Iroquois speaking group which practised horticulture, and resided in villages directly south and east of Georgian Bay, and west of Lake Simcoe. The Georgian Bay region, situated between these two groups, was occupied in 1615 A.D. by an Ottawa group, *Les Cheveux Relevé* (Biggar 1932, 4: 233, 235; Waisberg 1985). At the same time, to the northwest of Lake

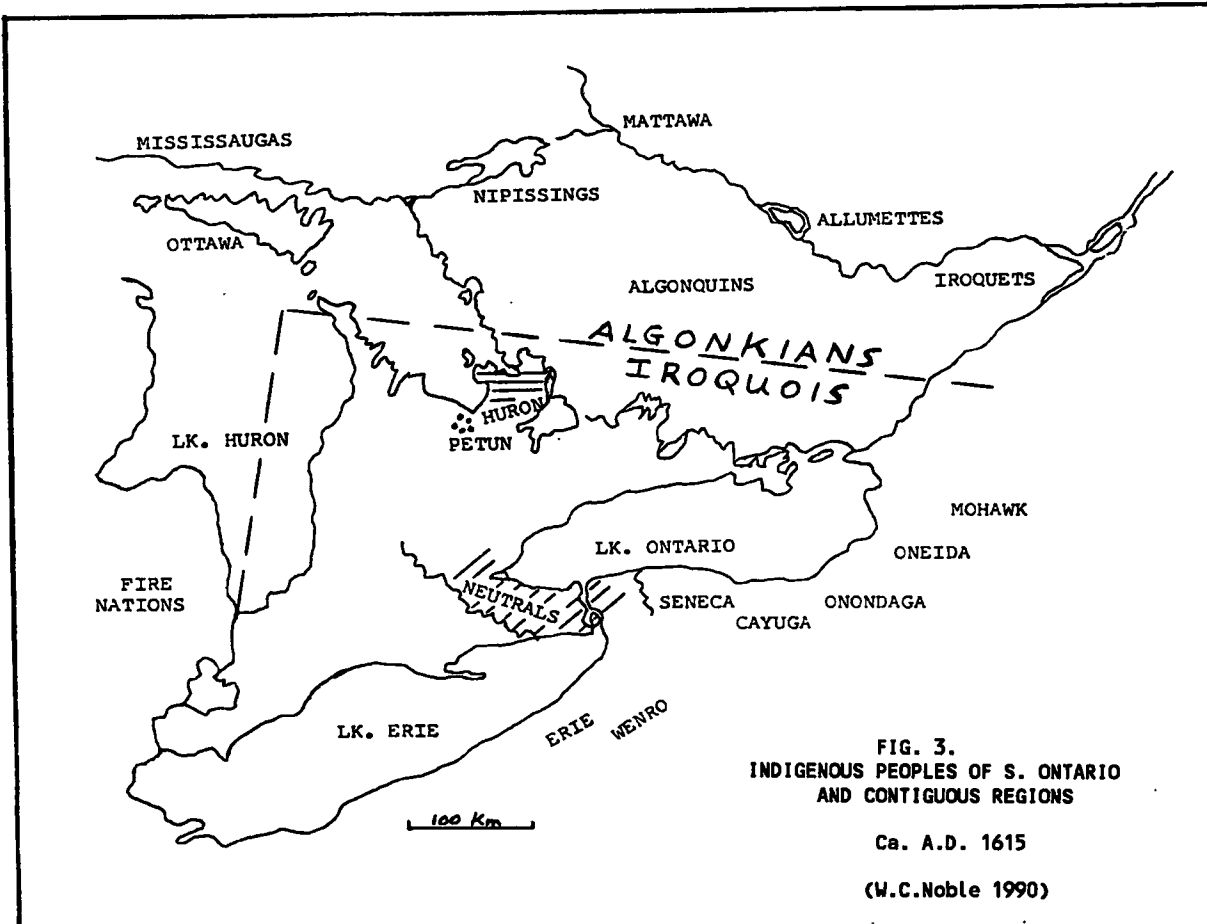


FIG. 3.
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF S. ONTARIO
AND CONTIGUOUS REGIONS

Ca. A.D. 1615

(W.C.Noble 1990)

Huron, and extending along Lake Superior, were the Ojibwa (Ibid). The Cheveux Relevé were located on Manitoulin Island and probably the northern Bruce Peninsula. The Petun Iroquois occupied the area below the Niagara Escarpment in the Nottawasaga and Collingwood Townships, along the Lake Algonquin shoreline (Garrad and Heidenreich 1978: 394).

Access to the Georgian Bay Region

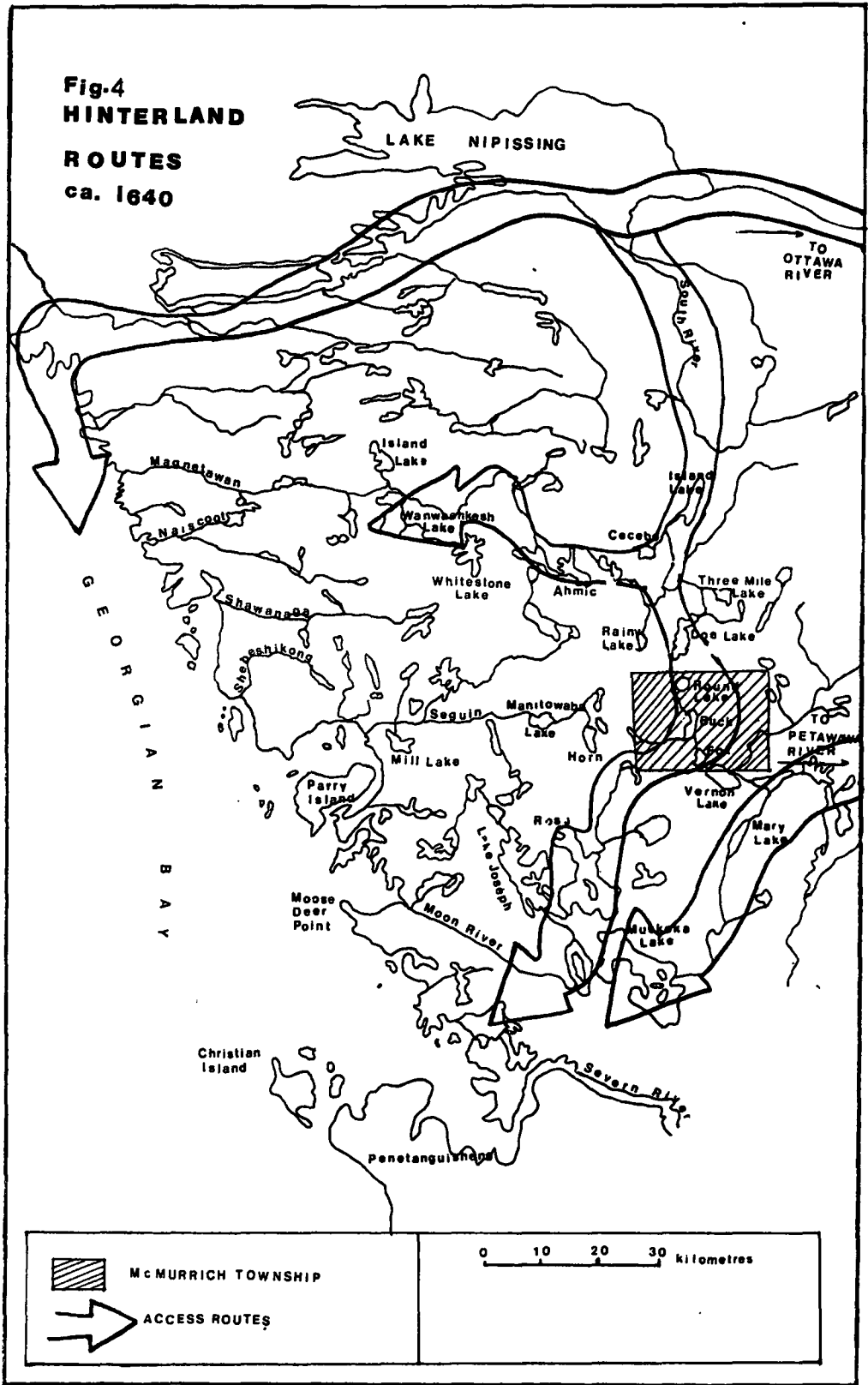
French expansion through Georgian Bay followed the most convenient navigation route, running along the inside channel passage which follows the shore line to Honey Harbour. The alternative route, the outside passage, circumvented Beausoleil Island in the south (Brunton 1969: 9,11). The island topography offered the early explorers convenient stop-over locations and navigation alternatives.

Although it is believed that access of native peoples and traders followed that of the early explorers along the Georgian Bay shoreline (Morse 1979: 60-64, 70), this does not appear to have been the only route. Unknown to early European explorers were several routes used exclusively by native people until their later discovery by European surveyors and explorers of the nineteenth century. The Europeans commonly used the Ottawa River-French River entrance (Biggar 1932, 4: 233, 235). The Ottawa Valley

Algonkin² however, also used a hinterland route originating from Allumette Island in the Ottawa River. This route went along the Petawawa River to Trout Lake, Cedar Lake, Catfish Lake, Burnt Lake, Red Pine Lake, White Trout Lake, Otterslide Lake, and Burnt Island Lake which fed into the Ox-tongue-Muskoka drainage system, and to Georgian Bay (see fig. 4) (Lovell 1857: 63; Gentilcore and Head 1984: 117). Whether or not this more southerly cross-country route was used aboriginally to any degree, is difficult to document archaeologically and historically (Noble 1991: personal communication).

From the north at Lake Nipissing, a route following the South River, exaggerated on Bressani's 1657 map *Novae Franciae Accurata Delineatio* (Heidenreich 1971: Map 10), to the Magnetawan River, negotiated difficult portages into a series of lakes, to either the Shawanaga River, or to Georgian Bay (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 113, 116). This route continued via Doe Lake, Buck Lake, and Lake Vernon into the Muskoka drainage system (Ibid: 109; Murray 1963: 63-64). Its drainage system was navigable during high water in the spring, and perhaps in fall after the rains had

² The Algonkin comprised closely related bands who inhabited the Ottawa Valley, and adjacent regions to the east (Day 1978: 792). They spoke a type of Algonquin which was common to the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Saulteaux (Ibid). Culturally they were close to the Nipissing and Ottawa.



begun.

From the south, the combined portage and canoe route from Lake Ontario leading to Lake Simcoe was used through Lake Couchiching, west along the Severn River to Georgian Bay. Georgian Bay could also be reached from points north and west on Lake Huron, and south and west along the southern end of Georgian Bay.

The Cartographic History of the Region 1615-1649

The image of the Georgian Bay region has been shaped by a variety of circumstances that often have little to do with the region's ecology. Vague descriptions of its topography led to its character not being fully understood until the late nineteenth century when the emergence of the modern tourist landscape, boomed in 1881 (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 109). This was fostered in part by a romantic idea of the 'wild' country (Squire 1988: 238). Collectively captured by the Group of Seven artists (Boulet 1982: 28), the Georgian Bay landscape has come to be symbolized by the coniferous character of Tom Thompson's 1917 oil paintings, the "Jack Pine" and "West Wind." The "Jack Pine" is a well known painting depicting a wind-swept pine tree, precariously rooted to the Canadian Shield which serves as a visual metaphor for the region.

Samuel de Champlain (ca. 1570-1635) was the first European to record an impression of Georgian Bay (Biggar 1929), though Brulé and Le Caron had previously been through the area (Heidenreich 1976: 28). Champlain dismissed the region as "bad country" (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 47-48). Travelling along the eastern shores of Georgian Bay on route to the Huron, he described an uninhabited landscape, both rugged and flat, slightly covered by trees, and took particular notice of the oak tree, as if it were the representative species (Ibid). After progressing south of the 44° latitude, he became impressed with the "very fine" well-cleared country (Ibid: 50).

Early maps depicting Georgian Bay (Heidenreich 1971; Gentilcore and Head 1984) contain some basis in fact, but suffer from misguided elements or distortions. Maps conceived during early French exploration were evidently unknown to later British exploration, and this situation prevented a comprehensive cartographic view of the region until the early nineteenth century.

In 1616, Champlain, or his Paris cartographer, sketched the earliest detailed version of Georgian Bay, identified as *Mer Douce*. Figure 5 represents the state of geographical and ethnographical knowledge of the region. Ignoring the configurations of the island geography of the region, this map did not give the detail his reputation as

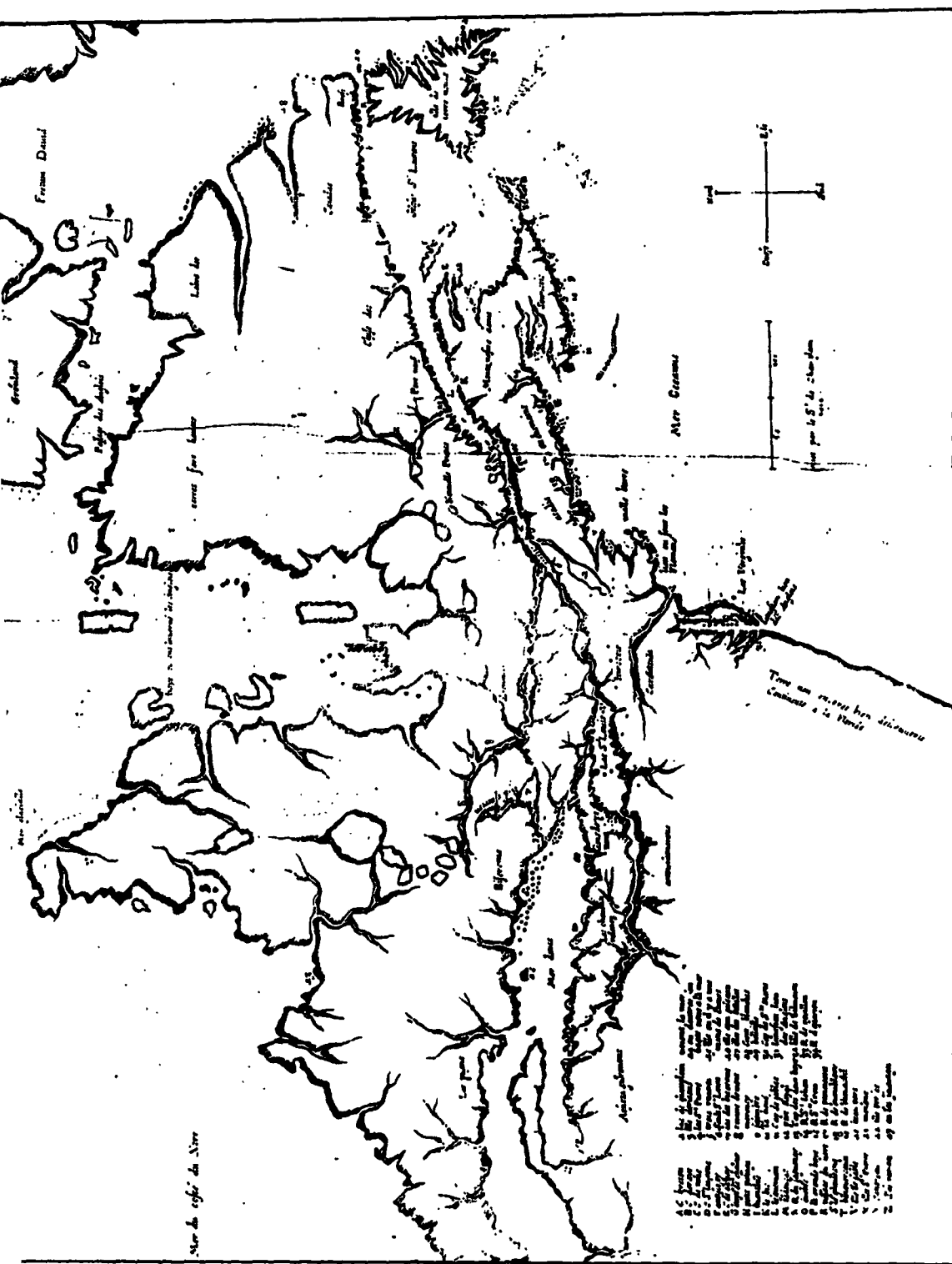


FIG. 5. CHAMPLAIN'S 1616 MAP, LA NOUVELLE FRANCE (From: Gentilcore and Head, 1984)

observer would suggest (cf. Trigger 1971: 89), however it does demonstrate initial perceptions, however indifferent, of the region. Not only does this map ignore the island geography, the hinterland is portrayed as a void through which a haphazard river is shown to flow. It is conceivable that this lack of detail can be attributed to Champlain not having actually seen the mainland as he navigated Georgian Bay. Dense foliage during his voyage in July probably made it difficult for him to distinguish the thousands of islands from the shoreline.

Perhaps controlling his disappointment at not finding salt water in Georgian Bay, Champlain named the Bay *Lac du Mer* or Freshwater Sea (Heidenreich 1976: 23). Champlain's interests appeared singularly directed to finding areas rich in fertile soils, trading peoples, natural resources, and fur trading avenues, all matters of official French interest at the time. For these reasons he was not particularly interested in making a systematic assessment of the Georgian Bay region. Fortunately, after incorporating native information, as well as accounts from Etienne Brulé, Champlain created the famous *Carte de la Nouvelle France, 1632* (fig. 6). The puzzling branched river feature disappears in this map, replaced by two inlets, each featuring native lodges. This map, an elaboration of the original 1616 map, is the first map to provide ethnographic



FIG. 6. CHAMPLAIN'S 1632 MAP, CARTE DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE
(From: Gentilcore and Head, 1984)

information of the region. Indeed, the very small size of Georgian Bay, the western part which is both eclipsed and levelled on Champlain's 1616 map, may demonstrate the lack of geographical information known to Champlain's native informants. Hostilities with peoples resident on these shores may account for the lack of information. The Ottawa (Cheveux Relevé or Ondatahouats), for example, were reported to be allied with the Neutral in war against the Fire Nations (Assistaeronon) (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 97,99).

In 1653 Du Val furthered Boisseau's *Nouvelle France* 1643 map, adding rivers to the two inlets (fig. 7) and by placing and identifying *Algomqvins* (Algonkians) in the region's hinterland (Heidenreich 1971: Map 5). For the most part this map reiterates Champlain's 1632 map. If, however, the information on these maps is accurate, it implies that Algonkians were living in perhaps eight to eleven lodges at the mouth of, or along rivers extending from, two inlets. These inlets, which appear closer to the French River in Laigniet and de Fer's *La Nouvelle France* 1669 map, and evenly spaced in Boisseau's *Nouvelle France* map, may correspond to either Bying Inlet of the Magnetawan River, Shawanaga Inlet, or to the mouth of the Moon River-Muskoka River system.

Drawn sometime before the Huron were dispersed in 1649, but after 1644, Francesco Bressani's *Novae Franciae*

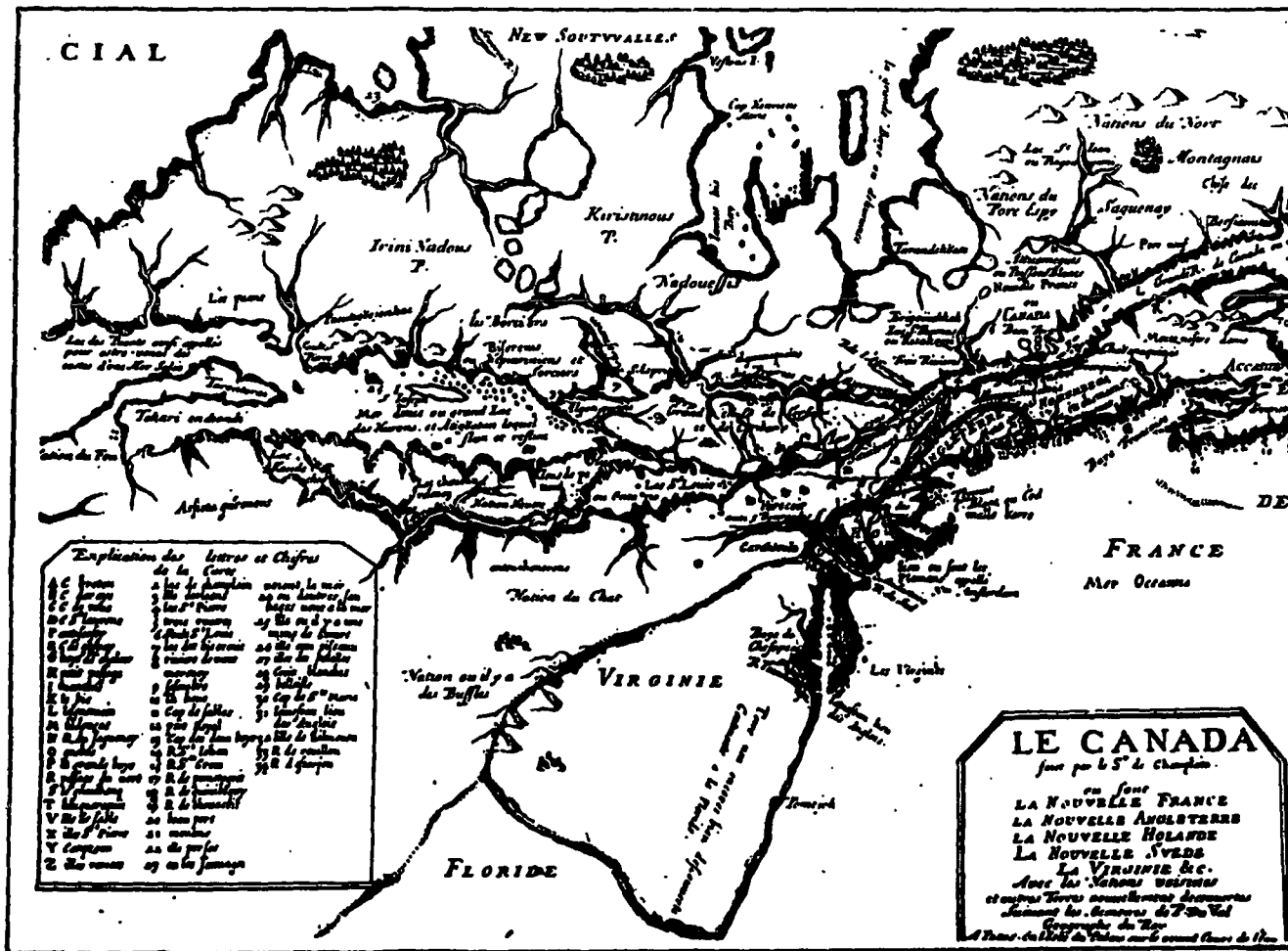


FIG. 7. EASTERN CANADA SECTION FROM DU VAL'S "LE CANADA" 1653
 (From: Heidenreich, 1971)

Accurata Delineatio (fig. 8) is one of the few early maps to show exceptional detail of both Georgian Bay's island geography, and interior lakes and rivers. This map shows the drainage system of Georgian Bay with accuracy to make comparisons to contemporary maps.

Bressani's exploration of the region seemed to have originated from the shoreline of Georgian Bay, systematically following rivers inland until reaching and recording a lake, before turning around and heading back to the shoreline to repeat the exercise. There is some evidence from this map that Bressani was acquainted with portage connections between drainage systems. His placement of a lake flowing out of what must be the South River into Lake Nipissing, suggests he was familiar with the series of portages that would have been necessary to make the hinterland route south. The South River actually flows into Bray Lake which is a small, unlikely lake to have received such attention on Bressani's map, unless it had an importance to Bressani's native guides.

Curious, from an ethnohistorical perspective, is how Bressani acquired this information. Did he actually explore the routes, or, like Champlain, rely upon informant testimonials? His narratives in the Jesuit Relations do not provide information on how this effort was realized. The interior of Georgian Bay region was not known to be used by



FIG. 8. 1657 NOVAE FRANCIAE ACCURATA DELINEATIO - BRESSANI
 (From: Gentilcore and Head, 1984)

the Huron (Heidenreich 1971: 205-210).

The identification of the Muskoka Lakes and Lake Rousseau, corresponding with the southern inlet suggested by Champlain's maps, appear on Bressani's map. He also identified what may be the Pickerel River, where it meets the French River; the Key River as far as Lake Kawagimon, the Magnetawan River to Wahwashkesh Lake, the Naiscouting River to Harris Lake, which also drains into Magnetawan River; and a chain of lakes descending from *Wahwashkesh* Lake, tentatively identified as Whitestone Lake, Beaver Lake (*Ahmic* Lake), and Doe Lake.

Suggested by their placement on the map are the Shawanaga River and Lake, the Sequin River, and Isabella Lake. Most strongly suggested are the twin branches of the Muskoka River drainage system originating at Moon River (Moose Deer Point), which flow into the Muskoka Lakes and the Lake of Bays, the largest of the interior lakes. The Severn River was apparently known east to Lake Kashe.

These advances made to the identification of the geography of Georgian Bay were abruptly lost by the destruction and dispersal of the Huron in 1649. In maps drawn after 1649 by Sanson in 1656, *Le Canada ou Nouvelle France*, and Du Creux's 1660 *Tabula Novae Franciae*, Bressani's cartographic gains were reduced to vague masses of indistinct meanderings. Du Creux, of course, never

visited North America (Gentilcore and Head 1984), but he was the official Jesuit historian.

These early maps demonstrate the extent to which the region remained unexplored. They hinted at the existence of native people living in lodges at two uncertain locations, at or near inlets, or along rivers corresponding with the location of inlets. The presence of hinterland routes, distinct from the conventional shoreline route, have been identified, as have the features of the landscape, which likely prompted Champlain to dismiss the region.

As this study will argue, Georgian Bay had been occupied by native peoples whose presence, limited to a few scattered lodges sketched on early maps, demonstrated a complex adaptation to specific environmental constraints. This study attempts to reconstruct the culture of these peoples by examining their land and resource use patterns in an environment that held little interest to early explorers except perhaps Bressani. An initial step will examine the environment facing native people in Georgian Bay, before the region was settled by Euro-Canadians.

CHAPTER TWO
GEORGIAN BAY REGION ENVIRONMENT

Faced with the observations of only a few explorers and surveyors, the problem of extrapolating from localized observations to reconstruct a regional landscape, requires an approach which explores modern ecosystems and archaeology. An exploration of regional environmental influences provides important clues to the nature of seasonal flexibility, and land use practices that can then be compared to archaeological and historical documentation. The object of this chapter is to provide data that has bearing on the land use potential in the region. It does not, and cannot, provide a complete analysis of the environment.

The native people of Georgian Bay likely recognized rights and relationships to natural resources. Land use in Georgian Bay applied to "things growing in, living on, attached, or contained in the land or water" (Crocombe 1974: 1). This would include, arboreal, lacustrine, riverine, terrestrial and avian resources. Classifying the native use of resources in the Georgian Bay region may lead, as Crocombe (Ibid: 2) suggests, to distinctions among rights:

to hunting, fishing, foraging, gardening etc. This shifts the subject of land use to that of land tenure when specific patterns of behaviour controlled the use of environmental resources which is the subject of subsequent chapters. Crocombe clarified the distinction: land use is the physical exploitation of the land by man, which is conditioned by tenure, which in turn results in particular uses. In this respect, the environment can facilitate or inhibit the degree to which native groups "will want to claim and exercise rights over the land, and the kinds of uses to which they can put the land" (Ibid: 3).

Aspects of land tenure will unfold in this study as the culture of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay is reconstructed from archaeological and historical sources. This chapter is concerned with identifying the land use potential in the region. Detail is provided about climate, geography, and ecology, as they provide a framework through which native land and resource use and tenure, in Georgian Bay can be examined. Environmental variables play an important role in modifying land use practices in hunting, fishing, gathering, and incipient horticulture. Data, for example, regarding variation in the number of frost free growing days, can be used to identify the importance of, and the potential locations of areas suitable for horticulture, e.g., areas bordering Georgian Bay have

longer frost free periods than farther inland. Assuming a similar growing season, or at least one supporting a longer shore line growing period to that inland, did native peoples take advantage of this during the seventeenth century, or did the climate and vegetation so change that native people invoked completely different environmental strategies? Did the region undergo a Little Ice Age, and if so, what effect did this have on land and resource uses?

Topography of Georgian Bay Region

Dominated by an exposed shoreline consisting of a "bewildering maze of water and land, alternating in every variety and size," without hesitation, the principal feature of the Georgian Bay region's geography is its thirty thousand islands.² They range in size from a tiny outcrop of one third of an acre, to Parry Island which is 19,015 acres (Leithc 1955: 58). Many of these islands originated through a rise in the water level, drowning intervening lowland, followed by successive invasions of land (Judd and Speirs 1964: 82) Indeed, over half of the islands adjacent

¹ Sketches from the early history of Parry Sound and area, compiled from documents in the Local History Society of the Parry Sound Public Library Board, n.d., unpublished manuscript.

² The total would be almost 100,000 if islets are included. The number varies depending on water levels, which has important land use considerations.

to Parry Island connect to Parry Island under naturally low water conditions (see Hansen 1981: 23). The isolated island ecosystems selectively eliminate certain predator species, providing a boon to certain wildlife (Smith 1989: 325-6).

These islands bewildered most cartographers and explorers who were confused by the puzzle of islands, inlets, headlands and bays. For this reason, as previously noted, much of the area was for a long period, unexplored. It is doubtful the actual shore line was ever approached, except seasonally by native peoples.³ Curiously, in 1615, Champlain described Georgian Bay's vegetation as being "slightly covered by trees" (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 47-48). As previously noted, it is difficult to know whether Champlain actually saw the Georgian Bay shoreline because of the density of islets which lie close to the shore. During high water levels, the numbers were likely greater.

The shoreline is indented by three major peninsulae: at Bying Inlet, at the entrance to the Magnetawan River; Shawanaga Inlet, at the entrance to the Moon River discharging into the estuary at Moose Deer Point to Lake Muskoka; and, at the Severn River, providing access into Lake Simcoe in the south. Parry Sound (and Parry Island)

³ David Thompson Letters, M.G. 19, A 8,3. Letter 28, David Thompson to J.M. Higginson, Provincial Secretary, April 17, 1843, Montreal, PAC. Copy also in Murray (1963: 136). Jameson, a nineteenth century observer, mistook 20 or 30 islands for one island (1838.3: 323).

lie in the centre.

The shore is transected by several drainage systems, few which comprise major rivers. South of the French River are the Pickerel River, the Magnetawan River, the Moon River-Muskoka River, and to the extreme south, the Severn River which flows into Lake Simcoe. Most of the drainage systems in Georgian Bay follow pre-glacial joint fractures.

Physiography

The introduction summarized the physiography of Georgian Bay as a study of "frequent rock outcrops." This landform exhibits the coarse shallow texture of soils on the Precambrian shield, which explains why less than 10% of the shoreline and interior is today occupied by farms. The one exception to this rocky surface is a narrow corridor around Lake Muskoka where between 50-70% is used for farm land (Dean ed. 1969: 57,58,81). The topography is heavily influenced by glacial activity characterized by gravel hills and ridges, sandy outwash plains, swamps and rock outcrops (Dice 1943: 14-15).

Situated on the southern end of the Canadian Shield, Georgian Bay lies within the Grenville Front, a geological boundary between the younger Grenville Province to the south, and the older Superior Province to the north. Within this Front, rocks are igneous and metamorphic, principally

gneiss and granite, radiating a pink hue to the exposed landscape. The altitude above sea level gradually ascends from shoreline to the hinterland in Algonquin Park, beginning at 213 metres and rising to 457 metres in the Park, to become part of the Madawaska highlands (Brown, McKay and Chapman 1980: 60). Cutting through Algonquin Park is a prominent fault system responsible for the height of land which divides the drainage systems flowing east into the Ottawa River, and west into Georgian Bay.

Vegetation

Great Lakes ecologists traditionally divide regions into vegetation zones to reflect broad differences between southern and northern forests. The problem with such zones is that although they demarcate large-scale regions, they can obscure as much as they reveal. The presence of widely different vegetation compositions attributed to drainage patterns, hilliness of ground, range of soil, nature of bedrock, location of native settlements, all play important roles in determining the flora and fauna that once existed. The precontact landscape was conceivably a patch work of diverse variety (Cronon 1983: 27).

At least one scholar has been prompted to consider whether the climate and vegetation in Georgian Bay has changed from that of the seventeenth century. Heidenreich

(1971: 61) concluded that the vegetation mentioned in the historical records is present today and that the climate and vegetation was the same as today.

Using this reasoning, similar conclusions cannot always be drawn as readily for the Georgian Bay region. The impression given by Champlain of Georgian Bay was one "slightly covered by trees," of which he identified only the oak (Biggar 1929, 3: 47-48). This is an unlikely forest given the Mixed Forest nature of the region, dominated by white and red pine, hemlock, yellow birch, intermixed with sugar maple, red oak and white elm.⁴ Early European explorers commonly associated certain types of soils, some which were perceived to be better for agriculture, by tree species. Oak and pine were often considered to have barren soils, whereas hickory, maple, ash, and beech produced rich black humus through leaf drop (Cronon 1983: 115).⁵ When Champlain dismissed Georgian Bay, and identified only the oak, he may simply have been making assumptions about the vegetation on the basis of its perceived soil potential.⁶

⁴ Oak is generally a transitional species, colonizing before more tolerant species arrive (Heidenreich 1971: 187). It is possible that Champlain was viewing a forest undergoing such a transition.

⁵ Oak was more subject to ground fires and the resulting thinner soils were thought by European settlers, to require more preparation work (Cronon 1983: 115).

⁶ When he finally reached Huronia he identified elm, fir, beech, wild grape, cherry, wild plum, and the mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) (Heidenreich 1971: 60-61), species generally identified with good soils.

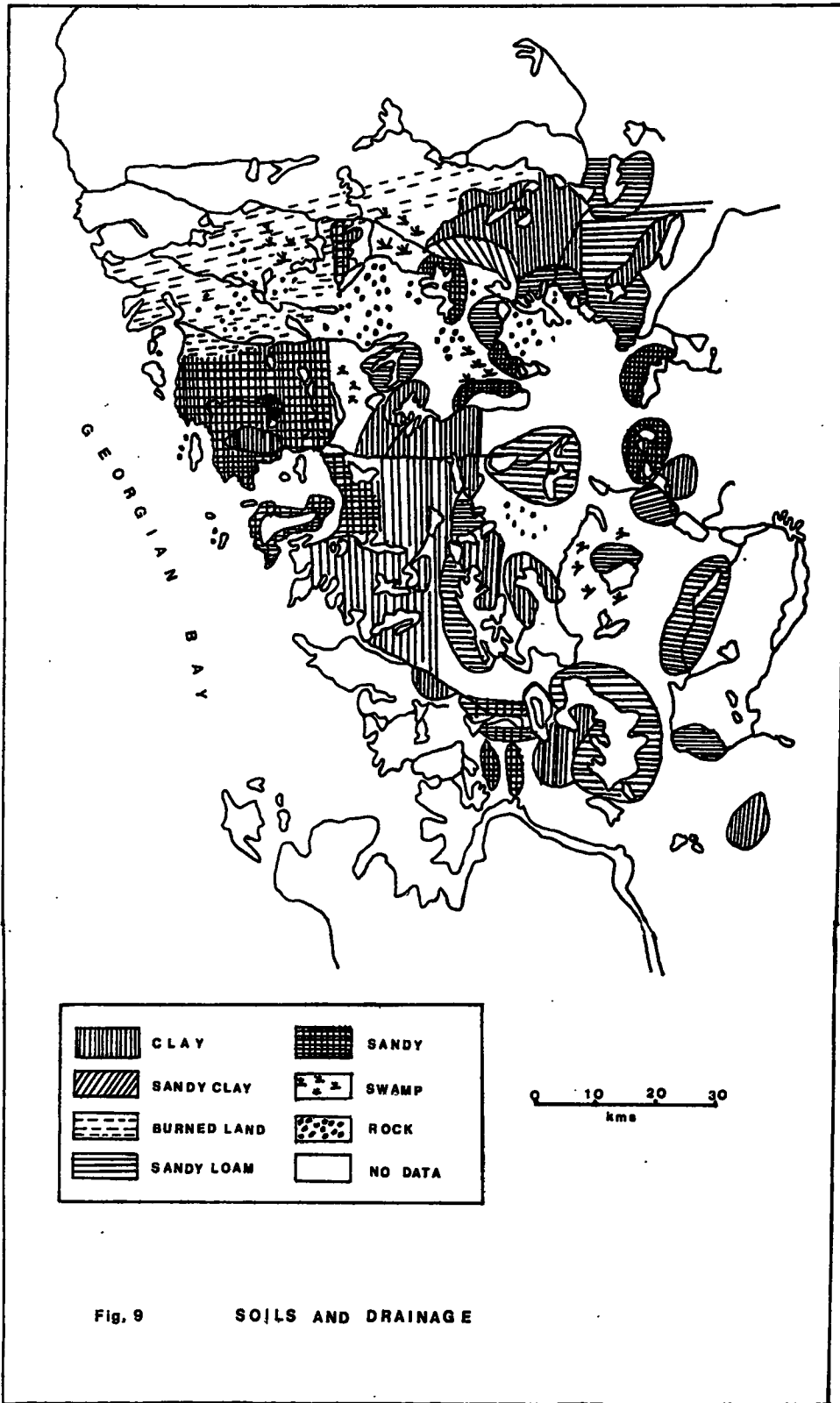
The Récollet, Gabriel Sagard, visited the region less than a decade after Champlain, describing dense woods of rotting lands, full of trees, rocks, stones, and mosquitoes (Wrong ed. 1939: 63), an image suggesting a mature, if decaying, forest.⁷ Within a decade of the dispersal of the native peoples by the Iroquois in 1649, the explorer Radisson described rocks, sand, and, in contrast to Champlain's picture of sparse vegetation, very large trees "big and high" (Adams ed. 1961: 85).

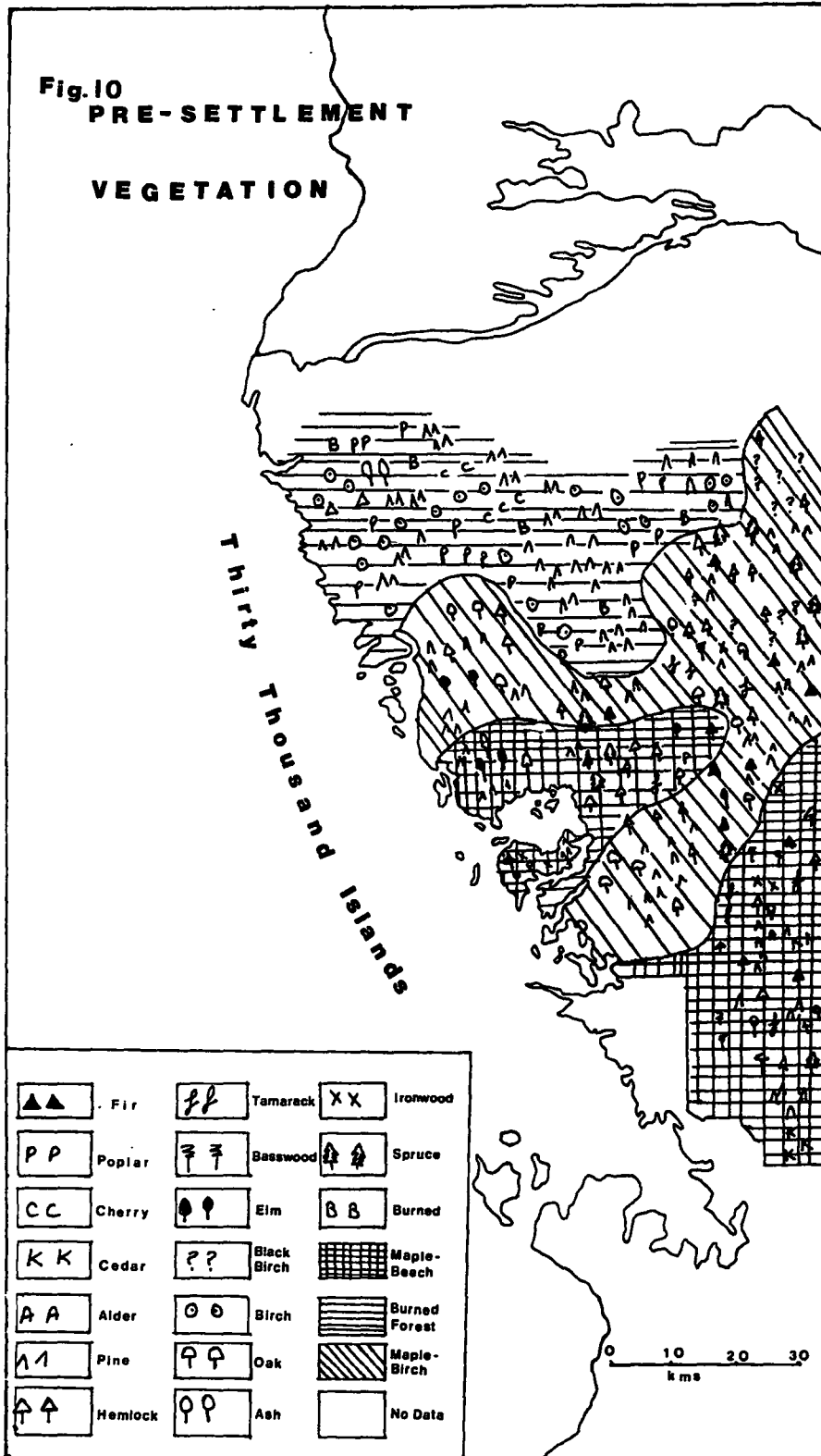
These seventeenth century observers, Champlain, Sagard, and Radisson, offer little from which to compare vegetation patterns and reach similar conclusions to those of Heidenreich. It is also difficult to unravel to what extent individual perceptions and preconceptions coloured the ways in which these early observers saw the Georgian Bay landscape, for each visited only a small fraction of the region.

Georgian Bay: Subsistence and Settlement

Between 1850 and 1877 Georgian Bay was surveyed for settlement. Compiled from the scattered records of surveyors, figures 9 and 10 have reconstructed the pre-

⁷ Sagard, dismayed by its "ugly surface of great rocks", generally did not find the Algonkian environment an inviting one (Wrong ed. 1939: 90).





settlement vegetation and soils. This reconstruction is a composite portrait of certain environmental elements as reported by the surveyors.⁸ Its purpose is to provide environmental data from which to draw inferences about expected land and resource uses. Personal observations abound, however, particularly about soils, which were often reduced to simple pronouncements of being either 'bad' or 'good.' In Georgian Bay, soils actually vary from peat, muck, marl, clay, silt, sand, gravel, boulder and sand (Cleland 1966: 9).

As a major segment of a Mixed Forest, Georgian Bay lies in a transition area between coniferous forest to the north and deciduous forest to the south (Falls and Soper 1964: 26). The fauna in a Mixed Forest is also a mixture of southern and northern elements: Fewer animals are active in winter, and more birds migrate than in the Deciduous Forest (Ibid: 27).⁹

⁸ Surveyors were under instructions to report on agriculture capability, potential water power sites for milling activity, and pine stands, destined for the lumbering industry. To the disappointment of the surveyors, most of the pine identified in the area was not found in groves but was scattered indiscriminately (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 94). Although the forest was optimistically described as a "vast pinery", the pine were considered to be of very poor quality and too widely dispersed to be lumbered. The Muskoka Lakes area was the only area identified to have sufficient quantities and quality of pine for lumbering (Ibid: 98).

⁹ Fauna reaching the northern edge in a Mixed Forest include wood duck, eastern grey squirrel, eastern cottontail, and long-tailed weasel. Species which reach their southern limits in the Mixed Forest are snowshoe hare, northern flying squirrel, red squirrel, woodland jumping mouse, and porcupine (Falls and Soper 1974: 28).

In their field notes, the surveyors rarely described shrubs and herbs which are important sources of subsistence to native populations. Shrubs of the Mixed Forest include: Beaked Hazel (*Corylus cornuta*),¹⁰ Fly-Honeysuckle (*Lonicera canadensis*), Bush-Honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), Choke-Cherry,¹¹ Red-Berried Elder (*Sambucus pubens*), Mountain Maple (*Acer spicatum*), Speckled Alder (*Alnus rugosa*),¹² Round-leaved Dogwood (*Cornus rugosa*), and Skunk-Currant (*Ribes glandulosum*). In restricted areas were Pin-Cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica*), Prickly Gooseberry (*Ribes*, spp.)¹³ American Yew (*Taxus canadensis*), Snowberry, Green Alder (*Alnus crispa*) and Striped Maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*).

Characteristic herbs include: club-mosses (*Lycopodium* spp.), Rattlesnake-Fern (*Botrychium virginianum*), Wild Lily-of-the-Valley (*Maianthemum canadense*),¹⁴ Twisted-stalk (*Streptopus roseus*), Goldthread

¹⁰ The nuts of these shrubs were collected for food (Ferri 1989: 131).

¹¹ These contain abundant pectin producing a natural jelly (Ferri 1989: 132).

¹² In spring the buds could be used as food. During the spring, summer and fall the leaves could be eaten (Ferri 1989: 135).

¹³ As food this shrub provided fruit in summer and fall, and leaves spring, summer and fall (Ferri 1989: 138).

¹⁴ The rootstocks may have been used as a vegetable. The seeds were an important source of starchy materials for cooking (Ferri, 1989: 131).

(*Coptis groenlandica*),¹⁵ Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis montana*), Sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*),¹⁶ Bunchberry (*Cornilus canadensis*), Star-Flower (*Trientalis borealis*), Bedstraw (*Galium triflorum*), Partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*), Twin-flower (*Linnaea borealis*) and Large-leaved Aster (*Aster macrophyllus*) (Ibid: 27).

The map of pre-settlement vegetation (fig. 10) suggests that the Mixed Forest can be subdivided into two sub-forests, the Maple Birch Forest, and the climax Maple Beech Forest. A third area, represented as burned lands,¹⁷ may have been originally part of the Maple Birch Forest.

The map suggests that 'good' soils, classified as sandy loam and clay subsoil, were confined to narrow belts around certain major lakes and rivers. The presence of such soils is however, often that of a thin veneer, considered

¹⁵ The roots are edible, spring, summer and fall (Ferri, 1989: 138).

¹⁶ The roots of sarsaparilla, (*Aralia racemosa*) are edible spring, summer and fall (Ferri, 1989: 140).

¹⁷ Between 1922-24, and 1928, 399 fires were reported in Georgian Bay region, burning a total of 73,704 acres. Over four years this averaged to almost a 100 fires per year burning 18,426 acres, slightly less than the size of Parry Island (Department of Lands and Forests Reports, History of the Logging Industry Parry Sound Forest District, W.G. Dyer n.d.: 3).

Repeated fires destroy hemlock, beech and juniper. Oak regenerates through root sprouting (Cronon 1983: 50).

unsuitable for horticulture¹⁸ (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 88, 91). The exception was a small belt of land around Muskoka Lake. Along the shoreline, sandy and sandy loam soils are concentrated on Parry Island, and in areas north as far as the Magnetawan River, and south at Beausoleil Island. This area overlaps to a large extent with an isolated pocket of Maple Beech Forest.

The potential of the soils for horticulture near the shore at Parry Sound had been the subject of experiment by settlers who attempted, with moderate success, to grow grapes, wheat, oats, peas, barley, rye, Indian corn, and root vegetables (Ibid). Champlain also reported that corn, a small quantity of squash, and an abundance of berries grew along the shore (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 42). The shoreline area proved favourable for such plants because of the proximity to the lake. The sandy soils suggested that working the ground was relatively easy, and did not require sophisticated horticultural tools.

Growing season statistics are useful in establishing those crops that may feasibly have been expected to reach maturity, and the expected times for sowing and harvesting

¹⁸ Horticulture is defined as the small scale planting of annual crops, chiefly corn and perhaps squash in small plots. Maintenance of the crop is marginal and restricted to planting and harvesting. Agriculture, in distinction, suggests both the planting of crops and animal husbandry. For this reason, unless domestic animals were known to be kept, the term horticulture is preferred in the text.

(Phillips 1972: 31). The mean annual frost free period along the shore between Parry Sound and the south end of the region is the longest at 140 days; inland in Muskoka was shorter, between 120 and 130 days; and in Algonquin Park, the frost free period was only 90-100 days (Ibid). This variation gives the eastern shore of Georgian Bay a growing advantage of between 10 and 20 days, compared to areas within 32 kilometres of the shore (Ibid: 32).¹⁹ As corn is one of the few annual crops that requires the full frost-free period to complete its life cycle, varieties must be carefully selected to make peak use of heat, and to avoid freeze damage.²⁰

The reported planting date for corn near Matchedash Bay was July 1 (Murray 1963: 12). Although this date appears rather late in the historical record, in 1780, it falls into the period covered by the Little Ice Age climate

¹⁹ Plant growth is dependent not only on the length of growing season but on the amount of heat available during the period. Usually measured by growing degree days or the number of degrees of mean daily temperature above 6°C (42°F). The shore line to the south of the Magnetawan River at Bying Inlet enjoys 3000-3199 growing degree days, Muskoka has 3000 growing degree days, and Algonquin Park the least, with 2800 days (Phillips 1972: 37).

²⁰ The corn maturity rating is expressed in "corn heat units" (CHU). CHU assumes that corn is planted when daily mean temperatures in spring reach 13°C (55°F), ceasing at 0°C (32°F) or less. The seasonal or annual sum of CHU is the sum of daily values above the growing season (Phillips 1972: 38). Mean annual heat units for corn grown along the shore was 2300-2499 CHU, 2100-2299 CHU in Muskoka, and 2100 CHU in Algonquin Park. To the south, Huronia would likely have had 2500-2699 CHU (Ibid), slightly longer than Georgian Bay. The total heat available for crop growth is actually somewhat less along the Georgian Bay perimeter (Ibid: 15).

characterized by increased precipitation (Ball 1975: 219), which will be discussed further in this chapter. A rather late planting date may be explained by the cooling effect of the lake, which postpones blossoming during the spring when there is less likelihood of a damaging frost. This extends the growing season further into the autumn (Brown, McKay and Chapman 1980: 13). This would however, imply that seeds could actually be planted earlier along the shore areas because of the earlier snowfall which insulated the ground from frost (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 101, 109).

Planting corn on July 1 appears impractical from an environmental perspective. Champlain's observation, of corn and squash growing in the region about August 1, 1615, also questions such a late planting date.²¹ It is unlikely that one month growth of corn would be visible to attract Champlain's notice, unless he happened to stop at a location where corn seedlings were evident.²² As the first frost in Huronia occurred on September 10, 1615, and the first snow on October 18 (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 58,79), corn planted on July 1, could not reach maturity in 72 days. If lake effects protected the harvest from the first frost

²¹ Squash has a slightly lower resistance to frost than does corn. Corn can tolerate a soil temperature of 10°C (50°F), squash is killed at a soil temperature of 13°C (55°F) (Bennett, 1982: 29).

²² Of course areas consistently used for corn could become a persistent feature in the landscape (Heidenreich, 1971: 176).

experienced at Huronia, but snow²³ did occur by October 18, this still allowed 110 frost free days, time to assure a harvest for corn planted on July 1.²⁴ As the first snow in 1634 did not occur until December (Thwaites ed. 1959, 8: 143), the probabilities of a successful July 1 planting date are improved. It is also not known whether the reported July 1 planting was a second planting.

Fauna and Fish

The following resources were reported by surveyors for the Maple Beech Forest: bass, speckled trout, trout, whitefish, pickerel, muskellunge, lake trout, salmon trout, perch, pike, deer, beaver, mink, otter, fisher, marten, wolves, corn, potatoes, maple sugar, perch, rabbits, voles, duck, cranberries, and wild rice (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 90, 93, 97).

The Maple Birch Forest had fewer types of fish and fauna including: bass, speckled trout, trout, whitefish,

²³ Snow is not as damaging to plants as frost, for it can insulate plants from cold.

²⁴ Will and Hyde suggest corn maturation dates of between 100 and 132 days depending on variety (1917: 314-315). Of course, corn could be, and was, harvested by native people unripened (Kinietz 1965: 370-371).

sturgeon, beaver, mink, otter, deer and moose.²⁵ Sturgeon were identified in the South River²⁶ which flows into Lake Nipissing, and in Georgian Bay where they reportedly weighed between 80-100 lbs (Ibid: 18).

Potential subsistence resources identified in the recently burned lands included bass, pickerel, speckled trout, and immense quantities of cranberries. As expected, deer and fur bearing animals were scarce (Ibid: 61, 110-111). The successive stages of regrowth after a fire on lands not previously cleared, initially succeeds through "scrub timber" (pitch pine, spruce and white birch) (Ibid: 157). Fifteen years after a fire, repopulation is followed by poplar and various combinations of birch, oak and cherry bush (Ibid: 100, 197).²⁷

Drainage

Rivers connected to several lakes in the Maple Birch

²⁵ Moose were reported to have migrated out of Huronia during the 1630s and onto the Canadian Shield (Wrong ed, 1939: 223-225). Moose may have been marginal to Georgian Bay for its habitat is boreal forest (Peterson 1966: 326; Prescott 1975: 494).

²⁶ Champlain noted that the Nipissing fished "the river" for sturgeon, pike and carp (Biggar ed. 1936, 6: 251-2) which may have been the South River.

²⁷ This is based on the vegetation succession pattern reported for previous corn fields: sumach, cherries, raspberries, haythorn, elm, poplar, birch, white pine, oak, then beech, basswood, hemlock (Heidenreich 1971: 187).

Forest were of small dimension and typically sluggish,²⁸ fed mainly by springs and swamps. The evolution of the drainage basin after the glaciers retreated was slower than in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region. This resulted in the characterization of the interior lands of Georgian Bay's drainage system as poorly drained lakes and swamps (Chapman and Putnam 1966: 125). Chapman and Putnam (Ibid: 123) speculate that the sluggish characteristic of the rivers and streams draining into Georgian Bay was probably more pronounced in the past when water levels in Georgian Bay were higher. The exception to the slow moving streams and rivers is the Severn River which has a fairly uniform flow because its basin includes Lake Simcoe (Ibid: 125). For most of the Georgian Bay interior, supporting basins are absent. Recent changes in water regulation activities, dating to the 1860s, principally dams, now maintain a uniform flow.

Very few rapids or falls were reported in the region. Streams dropped in water level between 1.2 and 2.4 metres during the summer months (Kirkwood and Murphy 1978: 189; 192). Except in locations where rapids provided potential spawning grounds, the inland lakes were isolated from larger water systems. The associated lack of nutrients

²⁸ The Shawanaga River was described as being 50 feet wide and 18 inches deep and sluggish. RG 1, H.B.-2, Box 9, PAO.

did not stimulate the production of an adequate food chain, which prevented large fish populations, making these lakes easy to fish out.²⁹ Characteristic of shallow lakes in temperate regions is a low oxygen level during the winter stagnation period, which could prove detrimental for fish populations during long, cold, winters.

Many of the rivers in Georgian Bay have a large width to depth ratio designed to contain spring flooding.³⁰ This increased width adjusts to spring flooding with only slight increases in velocity or channel depth. During low discharge periods, however, the rivers and streams may simply disappear underground (Bloom 1969: 61,63).

The interior geography of Georgian Bay took on a different appearance in the spring when freshets made formerly disconnected drainage areas, accessible. Languid, formerly subsidiary streams during most of the summer and fall, enlarged access to adjacent interior lands during the spring and late fall.

The area noted by the surveyors to exhibit the most portage and canoe routes was in McMurrich Township, at the

²⁹ In 1837, explorer and surveyor David Thompson noted that his netting attempts did not produce any fish; "all we can get is a chance Bass with the Hook" (Murray 1963: 87; Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, 1955, Museum Bulletin). Water regulation projects and fish stocking programs have developed more productive fish populations.

³⁰ The depths of streams and rivers in Georgian Bay's interior may reach 2.4 metres, the width can reach 30.5 metres (Bloom 1969: 61).

centre of the region (fig. 4). From this location navigation is possible from the Muskoka River to Vernon, Fox and Buck Lakes. From the north, access is by way of the Magnetawan River and Big Eye Lake. Buck Lake and Big Eye Lake were connected by Indian trails or portages by way of Round Lake which allowed auxiliary access from the Muskoka River to the Magnetawan River using inland routes (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 113, 116). The topography prevented easy access from the Magnetawan River: frequent rapids at certain seasons, and shallow waters at other times, made it difficult if not impossible to descend the rivers (Ibid: 34). For other rivers, spring flooding made ascent demanding and time consuming. One very rapid stream took two days and eight portages to ascend, but only half a day to descend (Murray 1963: 36). In contrast, the Muskoka River was reliably accessible, and portaging, uncomplicated (Lovell 1857: 102).³¹

The swelling of the Shawanaga River in the spring provided access to interior hunting and fishing areas as far north as Lake Nipissing (Murray 1963: 19).³² Indeed, this

³¹ The banks of the many of the rivers and lakes were either low and marshy, or high and rocky, reaching between fourteen and fifty feet making access from a river inland treacherous (Murray 1963: 37, 40).

³² Numerous remains of hunting and fishing apparatus on streams flowing from the south of Ahmik Lake leading to Shawanaga River were reported by surveyors (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 109).

river may have been taken as far as Wawashkesh and Ahmik Lakes before trunk streams were used (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 107).³³ The Sequin River, a major route leading from the hunting ground of the Manitowaba family³⁴ into Parry Sound, dried up in summer (Ibid: 101-102). This river, known locally as *sehavrani-winishing*, described a place to camp in the spring.³⁵ The Rosseau River (*Rinuwahbikung*) was similarly used in the spring when there was plenty of water (Ibid: 105).

Island Resources

Although the islands were surveyed in 1820 by surveyor Bayfield, descriptions of vegetation do not appear until the 1850s, before the islands were to be surrendered to the government during the Robinson Huron Treaty negotiations. Of the few islands described, few were given much value by government evaluators. The principal value attributed to them was the fisheries, notably for whitefish, and "salmon trout," known commonly as lake trout (*Salvelinus*

³³ *Ahmik* (Beaver) Lake was hunted for its namesake, and used for maple sugar (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 110). See also, Geological Survey of Canada, Report of Progress for the Years, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856. Toronto, John Lovell, 1857: 109.

³⁴ Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 28, 1983; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

³⁵ Interview with Johnson Tobobondung, originally recorded in 1965 by John Macfie. Tape was transcribed on July 5, 1983, Parry Sound.

numaycush).

The islands identified as fisheries include: the Shawenagan Islands, considered to be the centre of trout fishing in Georgian Bay; the Indian Islands, Limestone Islands, and Bustard Island for whitefish (fig. 11).³⁶ Island resources reported during the seventeenth century included wild geese, ducks, squirrels, chipmunks, partridges, muskrat, and berries (Wrong ed. 1939: 190, 248).

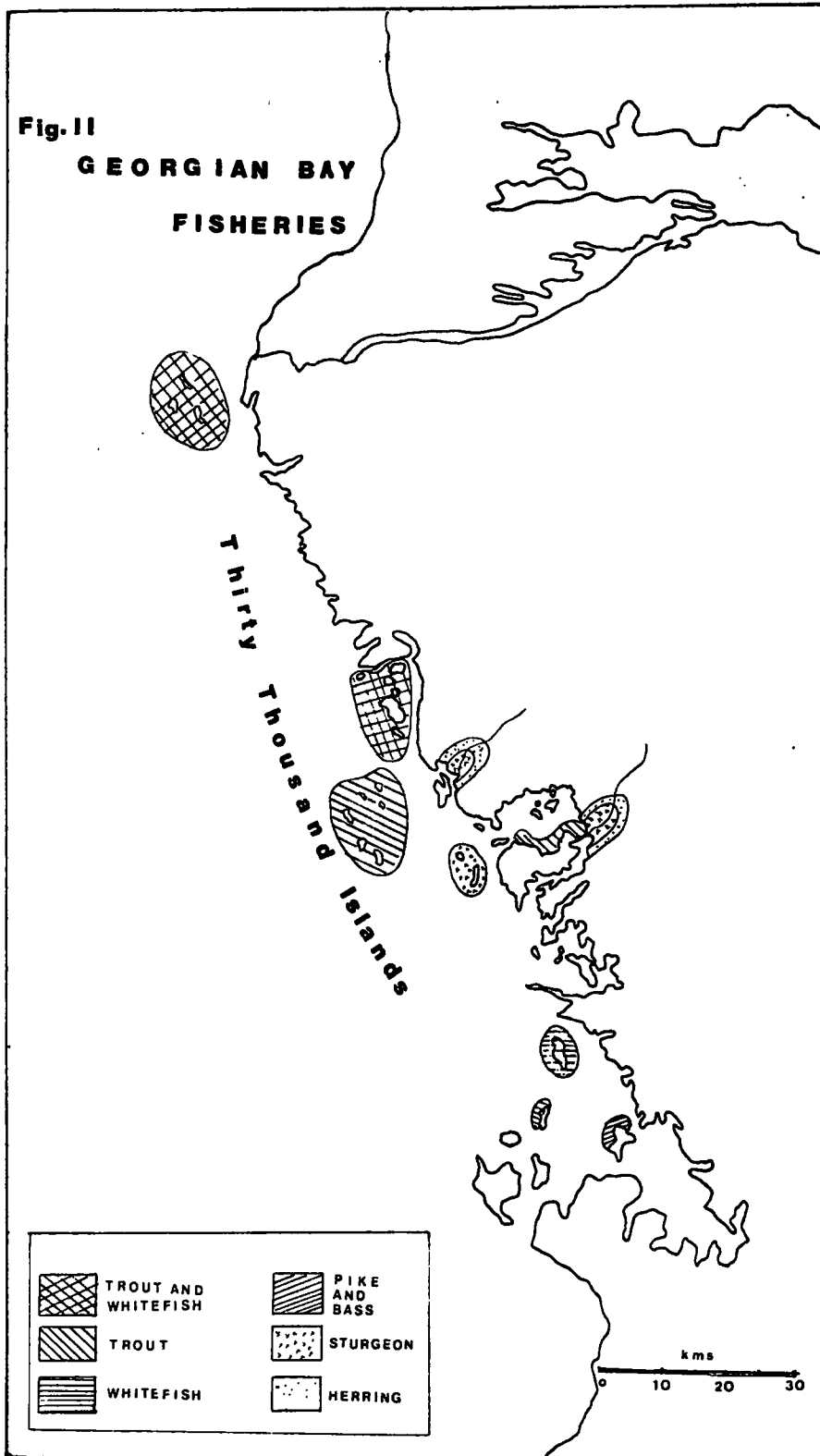
The island vegetation may have been subject to more frequently set fires: "Vast fires" were reported during the nineteenth century on the islands to deter insects (Jameson 1838,3: 333). For its proximity to fisheries, soil conditions, frost-free conditions, and controlled fires, activities associated with horticulture were likely concentrated on natural clearings on the islands.

The following inferences can be drawn regarding the potential native land and resource use in Georgian Bay:

1. Seasonal limitations imposed constraints on movement into and out of the hinterland. During summer and early fall, streams, rivers and portage

³⁶ Information relating to the Great Manitoulin Islands, the Island of La Cloche and other Islands on the North Shore of Georgian Bay. Napier's Report, 1856: 63.

Between 1900-1901 the Georgian Bay fisheries produced trout, pickerel, whitefish, pike, and sturgeon. Both sturgeon and pickerel decreased in commercial production in 1901 (Ontario Sessional Papers, 1902 (34(7)), Third Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to S.T. Bastedo, Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries).



connections could not be easily navigated, suggesting that canoe access to and from the hinterland likely occurred in the spring and during the latter part of fall. During the winter, providing the rivers froze, access could have been possible by foot.

2. Hinterland routes to the interior likely followed the Shawanaga and Muskoka Rivers and their conjunctive portage routes.

Although the Magnetawan River was identified as a possible route, the Muskoka River was a more reliable route given the problems of access on the Magnetawan River. An alternate route linked the Magnetawan by the Shawanaga River which intersects the Magnetawan at Ahmik Lake, providing access either to the Muskoka River or to the South River and Lake Nipissing.³⁷

³⁷ These two drainage systems may identify the anonymous rivers recorded on the early maps of the region. If supporting archaeological research can be found to identify occupations at or near these two river basins, evidence of native occupation along or at the mouth of the Shawanaga River and the Muskoka River during Champlain's visit in 1615 A.D. could be confirmed. The South River stretches between 80 to 100 miles south of Lake Nipissing to the north branch of the Muskoka River passing through Doe Lake, Buck Lake, Fox Lake, Vernon Lake, Mary Lake and (Murray 1963: 64 n.76). It is likely that archaeological research along this river will yield important evidence in support of the Nipissing using this route into the Georgian Bay hinterland, and perhaps

3. The area encompassed by linking the major routes and connecting portages likely defined the extent of the interior resource use.

4. Rivers outside the major routes could allow increased use of near-interior areas only during the spring when rivers were enlarged by the seasonal volume of water.

5. Most rivers could provide native people access to Georgian Bay from the hinterland during the spring, late fall, and in winter, providing ice cover was sufficient to support transportation.

6. Shore to island access was less restricted than that to the inland hinterland. Access was possible by canoe during spring, summer and fall. Winter access depended on ice conditions. Access from the shore to adjacent bays which froze earlier, likely limited use.

7. Concentrated resource use was likely restricted to certain islands: the Shawenagan, Bustard, Limestone, and Indian islands for fishing.

8. The horticultural potential of island locations was encouraged by the natural presence of clearings free from timber, the presence of light sandy soils,³⁸ and access to fisheries and other game. When precipitation values, temperature, and the number of frost free days are considered, the shore/island area proves to be the most promising location for horticulture.

9. Fauna, fish and vegetation sources are more diverse in the Maple Beech Forest. The exception is large game, such as moose, which are restricted to the Maple Birch Forest.

10. The Maple Beech Forest and Maple Birch

³⁸ Northern horticulture is restricted to areas where glacial action deposited clay, sand and other lacustrine materials (Sinclair 1987: 84).

Forest overlap in an area bound by the Magnetawan and Muskoka Rivers, including its identified portage systems. This ecotone harbours diverse vegetation, and a greater number of important niches, providing a potentially resource rich area.

11. Fish appear to be an important resource both in the hinterland and on the islands. Inland fisheries however, were more likely to undergo changes in fish population because of the natural limitation of the drainage system.

12. Per unit area, the island environment in Georgian Bay produced greater food sources than did the interior hinterland, by providing fish, horticultural opportunity, wild plants (berries) and small mammals.

Early Historic Vegetation and Climate³⁹

Although inferences about potential land use have

³⁹ To determine the precontact forest, data ranging from 1000 A.D., 1200 A.D. and 1550 A.D. has been used. The geographical focus is generally circumspect to the Georgian Bay region, extending to the French River-Lake Nipissing drainage system (Brizinski 1978), Bois Blanc Island in Lake Huron (McPherron 1967), and to Methodist Point near Penetanguishene (O'Brien 1976).

been suggested from the reconstruction of the pre-settlement vegetation, the question of climatic change in Georgian Bay must also be considered. The pre-settlement environment may have suggested possible land and resource use patterns directly linked to the period ca. 1800-1870, but does it reflect the environment facing seventeenth century native people or precontact peoples?

On the basis of pollen analysis⁴⁰ and historical evidence Heidenreich determined "no major climatic changes" occurred in the area to the immediate south of Georgian Bay occupied by the Huron (1971: 61). Does his evidence apply to Georgian Bay region?

By comparing the vegetation reconstructed from the survey accounts with the forest suggested by carbon findings in the French River/Lake Nipissing area dating to 1000 A.D. (Brizinski 1978: 144), the forest transition over 800 years saw the disappearance of red pine, red oak, and the emergence of white and black birch, ironwood, alder, cedar, poplar, elm and beech. These changes were probably attributable to the tolerance levels of the species, as well as intraspecific competition (cf. Kormondy 1969: 155). The

⁴⁰ Cleland cautioned against attempts to reconstruct vegetation sequences by the use of pollen samples as they do not proceed over the entire area at the same rate (1966: 18).

characteristic assemblage persisting in both forests included the following survivors: tamarack, spruce, hemlock, balsam, pine, maple, basswood, oak, ash, and cherry.⁴¹ Achieving a diverse balance of species equally tolerant of moist, cool conditions, and dry, warm conditions, the pre-settlement environment was likely resistant to major climatic change.⁴²

In Georgian Bay the climate in 1000 A.D. was likely warmer than that of the pre-settlement period. The Lake Nipissing Forest, composed of white oak, pin cherry, sumach, red pine, tamarack, hemlock, balsam, pine, maple, basswood and white ash (Brizinski 1978: 144) suggests, by the varieties of deciduous species, a warmer climate with perhaps better soils associated with increased organic material.⁴³ The Lake Nipissing Forest appears to conform to the climate occurring during the Bois Blanc phase, dating between 1000 A.D. and 1200 A.D. at the Juntunen

⁴¹ Of these species, maple provided the most food sources: leaves, cambium, sap and buds. Tamarack provided cambium and needles; spruce, cambium, gum and leaves; hemlock, cambium, and leaves; balsam, gum and cambium; pine, cambium and seeds; basswood, gum and flowers; oak, acorns which were an important source of flour for bread; and cherry, for fruit, and leaves (Ferri 1989: 131,135-141). Ash provided fibre for basket-making (Ibid: 134).

⁴² Climax communities are adapted to prevailing climate as well as local microclimates. They are stable without remaining static (Kormondy 1969: 160, 163).

⁴³ The greater variety and number of deciduous trees, the better the soils as a result of leaf drop (Cronon 1983: 115-116).

archaeological site, which was warmer than today (Cleland 1970: 266).

After 1200 A.D. the region experienced a cooling, demonstrated by an increased swamp and bog environment at Juntunen. Fishing was found to be the principal subsistence activity (Ibid). In 1300 A.D., subsistence changes were also reported in the Lake Nipissing-French River area (Brizinski 1978: 256-257). This was demonstrated by increased bipolar industries, imported cherts, and summer activities at Lake Nipissing (Ibid). The summer activity may have encouraged the need to obtain aquatic sources which could be preserved over the winter months. Trigger (1985: 98) postulated that a shift to a cooler and drier climate around 1300 A.D. may have produced summer droughts and soil depletion, signified by smaller corn cobs in the south,⁴⁴ although Griffin contends there was a brief return to a favourable climate between 1450 A.D. and 1550 A.D., which he associates with the development of horticulture in Iroquois culture (Griffin 1961: 711).

Pollen from the Methodist Point site in Penetanguishene, suggests that a cooling recurred in 1550 A.D. (O'Brien 1976: 9). A comparison of faunal material

⁴⁴ In the western Great Lakes area, climatic regression reduced the number and intensity of agriculture sites on Oneota sites in Wisconsin and at Juntunen, both at the periphery of corn horticulture (Cleland 1970: 4, 199, 266).

from Huron villages dating between 1475 A.D. and 1635 A.D. shows a marked change in subsistence in 1550 A.D. when fish, the dominant subsistence source, were reduced to a frequency equal to that of mammals, which had increased.⁴⁵

<u>DATE</u>	<u>% FISH</u>	<u>% Mammal</u>
1475 A.D. - 1525 A.D.	49.6	31.3
1500 A.D. - 1550 A.D.	58.1	30.6
1525 A.D. - 1575 A.D.	69.9	19.1
1550 A.D. - 1600 A.D.	44.1	44.3
1620 A.D. - 1635 A.D.	63.5	23.6

A cooler climate may also be indicated by the presence of woodland caribou at the Lawson Site, Middlesex County, Ontario (Cleland 1966: 35), although this is not without dispute from other archaeologists (Noble 1991: personal communication).

Cleland's study of the changes in subsistence patterns in the Straits of Mackinac between 1300 A.D. and 1780 A.D. suggests that climatic change influenced the percentage of faunal materials in each of the occupations, but was insufficient to alter the type of species taken

⁴⁵ Compiled from faunal data described for Methodist Point Park (O'Brien 1976: 93-97).

(1970: 8,9).⁴⁶

These examples provide regional support for Bryson's and Padoch's finding that a Little Ice Age climate occurred between 1150 A.D.- 1200 A.D., but that it recurred in 1550 A.D., somewhat earlier than its 1600 A.D. estimation (1981: 12, 15). The type of subsistence change that this climate may have influenced depended on whether the group practised horticulture or depended on fishing, hunting and other resources. Evidently the fishers and hunters at Juntunen intensified their fishing efforts, and the horticultural people at Methodist Point increased their hunting and decreased fishing.

O'Brien's conclusion that the present conifer-hardwood forest of the Penetanguishene area was established after 1550 A.D.⁴⁷ (1976: 8) suggests it is possible to extend the pre-settlement vegetation and climate of Georgian Bay as it had been reconstructed, to that of the seventeenth century. Indeed, pollens also appear during the cooling were identified as white pine, oak and birch, which appear in the Maple Beech and Maple Birch Forests of the pre-settlement forest in Georgian Bay.

⁴⁶ The exception was redhead duck (*Aythya americana*) which was the subject of modern hunting pressure (Cleland 1970: 9).

⁴⁷ Bowman provides a date of 1534 A.D. for a rise in pine at Crawford Lake in southeastern Ontario (1980: 119). O'Brien's conclusions were based on a report by Burden and McAndrews (1973).

Perhaps more indicative of climatic cooling in Georgian Bay is the shift between coniferous and deciduous species, resulting in a Mixed Forest structure favouring a coniferous assemblage. The ratio of deciduous trees compared to coniferous trees in the prehistoric forest of Lake Nipissing, is twice that of the pre-settlement forest. Detailed pollen studies from lake sediments annually laminated⁴⁸ confirm changes in composition within deciduous hardwood forests during the Little Ice Age (Bernabo 1981). While these changes do not imply a change in the biomass of the forests, it is unlikely a steady state would continue (Wahl and Lawson 1970).

In a diverse biota, such as that characterized by the prehistoric Lake Nipissing Forest, composed of at least eleven species,⁴⁹ there is less likelihood of a major shift in one species affecting the whole. The ecosystem could simply continue (Kormondy 1969: 159). The diversity maintained in the pre-settlement forest, now containing sixteen species, suggests that the ecosystem functions could continue relatively undisturbed. Differences in the

⁴⁸ The samples were taken from Marion Lake in the Lower Michigan area. Bernabo employed regression methods to calibrate pollen. A regional application of this method demonstrated a distinctive pollen zone coinciding with the Little Ice Age. One effect in the Upper Lake Michigan region, was the expansion of Beech beyond its limit around 1200 A.D. (Webb 1981: 185).

⁴⁹ This excludes sumach which is generally classed as a shrub.

prevalence of particular species within the forest type, suggests climatic changes were of a localized microclimatic adaptation. As Cleland (1970: 8,9) concluded, the percentage frequency of faunal remains may change, but the species types remained constant.

The Little Ice Age Climate in Georgian Bay

The Little Ice Age climate has often been linked to the Neo-Boreal climate (1550 A.D.- 1850 A.D.), represented by cool summers and cold autumns (Bryson and Wendland 1967: 296). As noted, Bryson defined Little Ice Age temperatures as cooler ca. 1200 A.D.,⁵⁰ and between 1600 A.D. and 1915 A.D. The coldest periods were estimated to be between 1600 A.D.- 1630 A.D. and 1670 A.D.- 1720 A.D. (Bryson 1974; Bryson and Padoch 1981: 12). Ball has suggested that the principle phase occurred between 1500 A.D. and 1700 A.D.⁵¹ (1985: 227), while Wilson's work among the Eastern James Bay Cree⁵² places the Little Ice Age climate between 1550 A.D.- 1850 A.D., the coldest period occurring between 1811 A.D.-

⁵⁰ Bryson and Padoch (1981: 15) suggest the cooling was a result of expanding sea ice in Greenland and Iceland causing temperatures to drop rapidly between 1150 A.D. and 1200 A.D.

⁵¹ Ball (1975: 219) suggested that between 1780-1850 the advance of European Alpine Glaciers resulted in increased precipitation rather than a decrease in temperature.

⁵² Wilson examined Hudson's Bay Company records from 1814-1821 (1985: 149).

1820 A.D. (1985: 149-150). Rogers⁵³ (1986: 206) confines the Little Ice Age climate in the subarctic to 1500 A.D.-1750 A.D.

Despite the variations in climate attributed to these various geographical settings, the association of the Little Ice Age to the neo-boreal climate has led some scholars to interpret the Little Ice Age climate in literal terms, i.e. as one characterized by severely cold temperatures. Heidenreich for example, argued against the presence of the Little Ice Age climate in Huronia based on the reported historical frequency of droughts in seventeenth century Huronia (1971: 58). He questions whether observations of European climate, from which the Little Ice Age climate derived, could be applied to Georgian Bay (Ibid: 59).

The suggestion that the Little Ice Age climate could have radically altered the vegetation pattern in Georgian Bay deserves comment. If the presence of a Little Ice Age climate meant colder winter temperatures, temperatures would have had to drop to -45°C . in the winter months in Georgian Bay, which is below the freezing tolerance of northern red oak, american beech, sugar maple, white ash, and yellow birch (Marchand 1987: 54-55). To eliminate hemlock,

⁵³ I am indebted to the late Dr. Edward Rogers for introducing the importance of the Little Ice Age climate to native land use practices.

basswood, red pine, jack pine, white spruce, larch, balsam fir, poplar, and paper birch, killing temperatures between -60°C and -80°C would have had to occur (Ibid). As this does not appear in the vegetation reconstruction, temperatures in Georgian Bay likely did not reach this level of severity.

A colder climate may have killed sensitive sub species like red oak, which today has a northern limit south of Georgian Bay (Falls and Soper 1964: 24), but the temperatures for its destruction would have had to be equally severe to also have killed sugar maple, white ash, and yellow birch (Marchand 1987: 54).⁵⁴

The view that the Little Ice Age climate introduced a major cold spell into the region is based on an extreme idea of what this climate would actually produce. The Little Ice Age climate was not a progressively colder climate, but one of marked variation occurring from period to period, and from year to year. Record cold spells followed record heat (Lamb 1977: 465). For this reason the Little Ice Age climate is perhaps better characterized as localized uncertainty rather than persistent climatic hardship engendered by cold harsh temperatures. Difficulties imposed by this climate were not simply

⁵⁴ Red oak is considered sensitive to kill off compared to other oaks (Marchand 1987).

attributed to lower temperatures, to which any generation could adapt, but were marked by variation in temperatures (Lamb 1982: 219). A 'warming' period could bring cold winters, a 'cooling' period, hot summers (Ibid: 231). The climate is perhaps better described as unpredictable, not simply, or always, colder.

This climate did not mean frozen rivers in the middle of June,⁵⁵ but was distinguished by erratic, variable temperatures, appearing as perhaps a cold March and a cool June (Pfister 1982: 116). Such support could be drawn from reports noting the dates of river freezing and thaw,⁵⁶ harvest quality, or unusual weather events. These reports however, are not consistently available for Georgian Bay. For this reason, documentary evidence suggesting variable temperatures have instead been used as evidence in support of the Little Ice Age climate in the region.

Therefore, Heidenreich's argument based on the documented presence of droughts, does not preclude a Little Ice Age climate from occurring in the region. Indeed, the

⁵⁵ The climatological historian Lamb incorrectly reported that one of Champlain's parties was able to walk over the ice to an island in Lake Superior in June of 1608. Thanks to Dr. Noble for drawing my attention to the historical improbability of this.

⁵⁶ Moodie and Catchpole (1975) reconstructed climate from a content analysis of dates given for freeze-up and break-up derived from Hudson's Bay Company records. As water transport was important to the conduct of the Company's trade, observations relating to freeze and thaw were described with great regularity (Ibid: 28).

incidence of drought, rather than demonstrating dry or hot conditions, should be reexamined in light of the equally reported recurring threat of crop failure attributed to rain rot, a worry to the Huron especially during the relentless rains of April and May 1623 (Wrong ed. 1939: 178). In 1637, the Jesuit Le Jeune reported:

Here we are at the 30th of May, and the corn has hardly begun to grow, and this only in some places; many have not yet planted seed, and others complain that their seed is rotting in the ground; we have had almost continual rain for 15 days (Thwaites ed. 1959, 13: 249).

It should also be noted that the Huron may have experienced drought conditions after only three days without rain (Tooker 1964: 26).

The charred remains at Cahiaque, a Huron town site, imply that flint corn (*Zea mays indurata*) exceeded flour corn (*Zea mays amylacea*) by a ratio of three to one (Heidenreich 1971: 173). As flour corn required 30 days longer than flint corn to mature (Ibid), the possibility of reduced frost free days associated with an unpredictable climate exists. The arid climate projected by Heidenreich's evidence of droughts, may in fact have characterized a climate of increased variability. Under this analysis the evidence supports the need for a careful definition of the terms "Little Ice Age Climate" and 'drought.' Neither may be attributed to the commonly

prescribed characteristics associated with these terms.

Temperature Variation In the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries⁵⁷.

Pfister (1982: 86) and Herlihy (1982: 1333-135) distinguish between two categories of documentary evidence, non-instrumental observations of weather factors, and proxy data, which incorporates reports of harvests, pollen etc. Ideally, cross referencing between the two sources would filter individual observations. Proxy data however, is simply not obtainable from the available historical documentation. Fish and corn harvests were not recorded by the observers of the weather. On the positive side, most of the observations recorded were close to the time that the event had been observed.

The samples provide a useful impression to the presence of a variable weather pattern in the Georgian Bay region. In several observations there is an association made between the observed weather as a perceived threat to subsistence. An observation of excessive rain may not imply conditions that prevent fishing or the drying of fish or other resources if taken as a characteristic by itself. When

⁵⁷ An observer's report of "unusual weather" may be thought of as "normal" to an inexperienced observer. Subjective bias prejudices most of these observations. Sources for the eighteenth century do not directly relate to Georgian Bay region. The absence of historical sources for this period has forced extrapolation from areas to the south and north.

fishing and other subsistence practices were seen to have been seriously curtailed, and attributed to the weather, then it is understood that climate may have modified not only the preservation of resources, but the capture or collection of that resource.

1. Champlain recorded the first frost in Huronia on September 10, 1615 and the first snow on October 18 (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 58,79).⁵⁸

2. In 1623, relentless rains were reported to destroy Huron crops (Wrong ed. 1939: 178).

3. Northern Algonkians were said to have been almost exterminated by famine in 1637 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 11: 197). Famines were reported for the Huron in 1638, 1643, and 1649⁵⁹ (Heidenreich 1971: 58).

4. In 1646 there were reports of snow

⁵⁸ Heidenreich suggests the frost date is 17 days earlier and the snow appeared a month earlier than average (1971: 56, 57).

⁵⁹ Famines were also reported in Europe in 1623 and 1649 (Appleby 1981: 63).

lasting four or five months in Georgian Bay (Thwaites ed. 1959, 28: 97; 30: 87, 109).

5. Winter ice fishing failed in Georgian Bay in 1649 (Ibid., 35: 175).⁶⁰

6. The winter of 1660-61 was mild, the spring cold and stormy: "winter and white frosts continued until the middle of May" at Keweenaw Bay.⁶¹ This contributed to poor winter fishing and moose hunting in the spring (Ibid).

7. By 1669 more native groups came to depend upon the whitefish fishery at Sault Ste. Marie, resulting in formal alliances to share resources (Ibid. 54: 131).

8. In 1670 the Mississauga, Nipissing and Ottawa were unable to catch any fish in Georgian Bay (Ibid. 55: 135, 137, 143, 145,

⁶⁰ Water levels in Georgian Bay had risen four feet between 1649 and 1650 (Heidenreich 1971: 65) suggesting increased precipitation, perhaps denser snow cover.

⁶¹ Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 31 vols. (Madison 1885-1931, 16: 22; hereafter cited as WHC).

147, 153), attributed to bad weather and "contrary winds" (Ibid. 56: 100). Their diet was reduced to roots, acorns and lichens (Ibid. 55: 145), not game.

9. In 1671, short winters were reported at Michilimackinac, beginning long after Christmas, and ending in the middle of March (Ibid. 55: 173).

10. The Puan, located near Green Bay, sought spiritual assistance in 1672-74 to send them sturgeon as they were late spawning. Reports from Jesuits Louis André and Claude Alloués described an unusually severe winter (Ibid. 58: 275).

11. The Indians experienced such a bad winter a few years before 1723, they resorted to their shaman "to dissipate this unfriendly snow" (Ibid., 67: 155).

12. Deer hunting was unsuccessful in 1794 as little snow had fallen. The Indians north of Lake Ontario reportedly almost starved

when they could not track them (Robertson ed. 1911: 215).⁶²

These reports suggest that inclement weather throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth century occurred in Georgian Bay. Bryson and Padoch's finding of an improved climate between 1630 and 1670 (1981: 12) is not supported by the above reports. The reports also suggest that the observers perceived that the threat of a changing climate on land use was experienced in two principal areas, fishing and horticulture. To a lesser extent, poor hunting conditions as a result of climate was identified.

Temperature Variation During the Nineteenth Century

Recent historical records abound with reports of unusual weather:

1. Before 1812, the weather was exceptionally dry. The lowering lake levels was reported as alarming, and drought common (Shortt 1913: 80-81).
2. Incessant rains were reported in 1821 which affected potato and oat crops

⁶² Severe winters were reported in 1705 and 1740 which contributed to high deer mortality among the Iroquois (Engelbrecht 1987: 16).

(Glazebrook ed. 1938: 4).

3. In 1825, Bayfield reported extreme temperature ranges in the region. He recorded temperatures reaching a high of 40°F during the day, falling to -33° F at night (Bigsby 1850. 2: 83).

4. Fish were scarce during the winter and spring of 1830. Gardens failed at the Hudson's Bay post in Lacloche district because of persistent rains in May (Lake Lacloche journal 1830/31. Hudson's Bay Post Records, 1M779, vols. 1-7).

5. In 1833, the crops failed in Lacloche district because of little rain. Frost was settling in early summer (Ibid).

6. Late rains in the fall of 1834-5 reportedly killed most of the rabbit population (HBC 109/a/3, 1834-1835, Lacloche Post).

7. In 1840, a mild winter without snow until after January 20, was followed by a wet

February, and a cold spring. March temperatures plunged to -26°F (Glazebrook ed. 1938: 313, 315).

8. In 1842 favourable hunting conditions (i.e. plenty of snow) during the fall and winter were reported at La Cloche Island (Ibid: 397).

9. In 1843 snow persisted from November to April. Ice did not melt on Lake Huron until May (Ibid: 436).⁶³

The climate of the early 1800s was described as 'unusually' moist and cool, and characterized by colder, longer springs and sometimes milder winters. This change in seasonal length was an important feature of the Little Ice Age climate (Lamb 1977: 451-452, 465).⁶⁴

⁶³ Sir George Simpson Governor of Hudson's Bay Company remarked on the 'backwardness' of the season after he was detained by ice on his trip to Lacloche in May 1841 (Williams ed. 1975: 20).

⁶⁴ Actual affects of a Little Ice Age climate could have been realized in the Great Lakes region by 'teleconnection', which predicts that changes occurring in western Europe will occur in Eastern North America (Eichenlaub 1979: 233). This would translate into an equator dip of the upper air westerlies over eastern North American which would increase in size, spawning cold air masses (Ibid). Eichenlaub suggests that the Great Lakes area, which is located downstream of the forcing action of the Rocky Mountains, is poised at a critical point. Small changes in circulation could be amplified in the Great Lakes (Ibid: 234).

Specific data describing freeze and thaw is found in James Clerihue's diary⁶⁵ (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 63) which reported the freeze and break-up of the Muskoka River over an eight year period between 1869-1877.⁶⁶ Clerihue described weather conditions characterized by a prolonged fall and spring, shorter and milder winters, frequently terminated by unpredictable thaws.

The temperature range during this period, compared to 1980 findings, suggests 1876 experienced greater temperature extremes, except during the fall when the range was similar to that of the 1980 record. Taking the maximum temperatures reached, all seasons in 1876 were warmer than in 1980. Taking the minimum temperatures, all seasons, except the fall, were colder than the 1980 figures. Fall was consistent in temperature variation in both years.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Two years after Clerihue had abandoned his diary, "fearful hailstorms" were reported in August, contributing to the starvation of several settlers (LePine 1983: 11).

⁶⁶ This period falls well into the Little Ice Age period 1600 A.D.-1915 A.D. specified by Bryson and Padoch (1981).

⁶⁷ Based on Clerihue's report (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878) fall frost had a 33% probability of occurring on November 19, although on two occasions it did not occur until the middle of December. 50% of the spring thaws occurred on April 8, the remainder occurred as early as January 20, or as late as March 31, a difference which could add or subtract, two months to winter.

Temperature Degree Differentials (Fahrenheit) Between Minimum and Maximum Temperatures:

	1876	1980
January	37.5	18.0
April	54.6	18.0
July	46.5	20.0

This would imply that not only could Little Ice Age effects be evident as seasonal irregularities, they could appear differently in different decades (Lamb 1978).⁶⁸

Changes in Lake Levels

Large changes in annual precipitation are reflected in changes in lake levels.⁶⁹ Record high precipitation resulting in high lake levels could be followed by below-normal precipitation, and low lake levels. This could play havoc with spawning runs, expected fishing harvests, corn harvests, and the population cycles of wetland species. As spring spawning is triggered by water temperature,⁷⁰ spawning periods could vary sharply from year to year, or decade to decade, evident by the late arrival of sturgeon reported between 1672 and 1674 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 58: 275).

The Georgian Bay region likely experienced variable,

October	50.3	45.0
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(Taken from Phillips (1972); Brown, Mckay and Chapman 1980).

⁶⁸ The European climate during the 1600s was characterized by severe winters. The 1620s experienced wet, cool, summers. During the 1680s and 90s, both summers and winters were cold (Lamb 1978).

⁶⁹ Localized disturbances called seiches, an effect brought on by strong winds or sudden pressure changes, result in a piling of water at the down wind end of Georgian Bay. This has the effect of changing lake levels if for a short period of time (Phillips 1972: 36) which can result in changes in harbour depth, and increased shoreline erosion (Eichenlaub 1979: 181).

⁷⁰ Spring spawning fish such as sturgeon, catfish, perch, northern pike, and white sucker spawn at temperatures between 5°C and 10°C (Cleland 1982: 766-7).

unstable temperatures between 1623 and 1879. These conditions probably affected native land and resource use potential in Georgian Bay in several ways:

1. The effects could upset harvest expectations, posing a need for a storage of reserves, or ready access to alternate supplies. The change in seasonal length was an important feature of the Little Ice Age climate, alternately shortening or lengthening harvest seasons.

2. Increased preservation of food stuffs and the need for storage vessels corresponds with a wetter, unstable climate. The need for storage vessels likely increased to protect foods from dampness during a period when hunting and fishing were difficult. Food caching would have been increasingly warranted.⁷¹ An unpredictable environment could see major changes in trade practices, such as a trade in preserved goods, and perishables, or in products which could be

⁷¹ Because of the rocky nature in Georgian Bay, stone pits were likely preferred over trenches.

used to preserve foods. Trading was likely encouraged during seasonal cross-over times, intensifying alliances for trade and access to resource rich areas.

3. Excessive rain in the fall months may curtail preservation practices which rely on sun and air drying of fish and berries. A wet fall could reduce the yield of preserved fish as smoking required increased labour (racks, shelter, wood, tending). Milder, rainy winters prevented both the hunting of animals, and ice fishing.⁷²

4. Rivers froze or thawed earlier than expected (Lamb 1982: 219), interrupting faunal movement between ecological zones.⁷³

The appearance of ice cover in winter results in a change in the climate along the

⁷² The James Bay Cree use a *michwap*, either occupied by the group or built specifically to dry fish over a fire. Preston reports that not only was the *michwap* comfortable, it could dry up to 50 one pound fillets without inconvenience to the occupants (1991: personal communication).

⁷³ Champlain's war party was threatened by thaw (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 93). On December 4, most of the rivers, lakes and ponds south of Huronia were solidly frozen to use 'sledges' to cross them. A few days later, thaw was reported.

shoreline (Phillips 1972: 6). Snow pack represents an important source of water for Georgian Bay. If the winters were as mild as suggested by the 1876 data, ice fishing, if possible, was probably restricted to inlet areas and rivers where ice formation was more likely.

5. Depending on water levels and the length of the winter, extended freezing suffocated fish resources and aquatic animals, such as beaver, located in inland shallow locations. Recurrent changes in rainfall often had considerable effect on muskrat, which were sensitive to water level changes (Ray 1974: 30). Low levels could also affect wild rice (Ibid: 31). The reverse is also true. As noted, the area around Green Bay, Lake Michigan, experienced an unusually severe winter and a cold March (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 301). This did not, however, affect sturgeon harvests which were abundant in rivers caught with nets under the ice after

March 24 (Ibid).⁷⁴

6. Increased snow density could affect animal harvests. The supply of deer meat varied depending upon snow (Ibid., 17: 141-143). Rogers (1986: 206) noted that Little Ice Age effects may have been destructive to moose and caribou populations. Wilson (1985: 183) found that the James Bay Cree's need for firewood increased, fish and game were scarce, and gardens failed, making them more dependent on food stuffs from the trading posts.

7. Cooling increased the wetness of the ground, the overflow expansion of lakes and rivers, both improving or preventing canoe navigation and exploration in the region.

8. Groups residing in boreal forests

⁷⁴ At the mission at St. Francois Xavier in the Great Bay des Puans (Green Bay) measurements of ice depth were recorded by a Jesuit. He reported that although ice could be three feet thick in the Bay, the river which discharges into the Bay was half that thickness. This is where the Indians were netting sturgeon under the ice (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 303). The association of cold weather with fishing was first introduced by Cleland, based upon his archaeological findings at the Juntunen site (1970: 266).

experiencing colder temperatures became more dependent on food stuffs from the warmer areas south, either through trade or seasonal relocation (Dawson 1987: 163).

A cooler, variable, and moister climate probably had the largest impact on water levels in Georgian Bay.⁷⁵ Heidenreich suggests that the level of Georgian Bay in 1649 was 581 feet, three feet higher than today, and about the same amount lower than the water levels in the early 1800s (1971: 65).

Between 1820 and 1869⁷⁶ the water level dropped three feet, but rises of one foot were also reported. The 1820's lake level may have been 5.45 feet higher than the 1649 estimate, but was over 1.45 feet higher than 1650. The

⁷⁵ Differences in water elevations today can be attributed in part to the amount of water diverted into the Great Lakes, the construction of control works at the outlet of Lake Superior, and alterations in channel outlets which connect to various bodies of water in Great Lakes (See Hansen 1981: 23).

⁷⁶ 1820 was described as 4.6 feet greater than 1911. The average level between 1860-1952 was 580.57 feet, the highest monthly mean occurring in 1838, was 584.69 feet. The lowest mean since 1860 was recorded in 1934 at 577.42 feet. For the ten year period between 1860 and 1870 the water levels generally fell from a high of 583.00 feet to 580.00 feet in 1869. Yearly intervals generally were no more than one foot. The variation over a longer period of time, 1860-1952 shows a fall of 5.37 feet.

If Heidenreich's estimates are added, 1649 at 581, 1650 at 585, the estimation for 1820 was 586.45, higher than both seventeenth century calculations. Without including these two early estimates, the 1820's estimate would be 585.87, still slightly higher (Pamphlet 1951: no 24. Water Levels of the Great Lakes, by Charles A. Price, a Paper delivered at the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association held at Toronto, August, 1951).

average change was 3.45 feet higher. Although fluctuation suggests that assessing water levels on the basis of elevation is unreliable, as it ignores the effect of vector winds, barometric pressure, survey error and land uplift,⁷⁷ lake levels do rise or fall in response to unpredictable changes in rainfall, temperature and other elements affecting the hydrology (Butterfield 1986: 117-119). This suggests that if the Little Ice Age climate produced greater precipitation, lake level changes likely provide a valuable clue to determining the associated impact on subsistence resources.⁷⁸

Variations in water level between three and five feet, could have had major effects on aquatic resources. Possible cultural responses in Georgian Bay include the following:

1. Refinements to fishing technology may have resulted. With higher water levels,

⁷⁷ The maximum rise rarely exceeds a foot over 100 years (Report to the Province of Ontario by Hydro-Electric Power Company of Ontario on Variations in Great Lakes Water levels, June 22, 1964). This report concludes that the main factors in water level variation are precipitation run-off and evaporation.

⁷⁸ Artificially raised water levels attributed to water regulation and lumbering likely account for the unusual absence of pictographs in the Muskoka-Haliburton-Algonquin Park area (Dewdney 1962: 158). The water levels today are much higher in certain areas than formerly. Invasions of the predatory sea lamprey via the St. Lawrence River, a result of the construction of the Trent Canal, decimated Georgian Bay fish populations, particularly whitefish.

net fishing⁷⁹ may have been preferred to spear fishing. This could encourage net fishing and the abandonment of localized shoal fishing, affecting also the types of fish caught.

2. Rising water levels have a serious bearing on pike spawning (Weller 1981: 45). It is also difficult to catch sturgeon in unusually high water levels which alters spawning behaviour, frustrating regular fishing techniques (Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg 1988: 197).

3. Higher water levels flood river mouth areas and expand wetlands, which support wetland species such as beaver.

⁷⁹ The Knechtel site, which demonstrates cultural continuity from the Archaic through to the initial Woodland (Saugeen) culture, provides a regional example of a culture adapting to "gradually lowering water levels" over a period of 800 years (Wright 1972a). When Georgian Bay water levels were at their highest level, the Knechtel people used a harpoon technology to spear fish. As the water level dropped, they relied to a greater extent on net sinkers to catch the now deeper fish, supplementing this harvest by increasing their exploitation of land animals (Ibid: 55-56). Ramsden (n.d. 43) suggests that rather than a shift from fish to mammals, the fauna represents a change in site function. The Rocky Ridge site successively assumed different roles in a continuing but stable subsistence pattern.

4. Higher water levels increase the number of potential fishing islands, perhaps encouraging the disbanding of fishing parties to island shores. Fishing for shoal spawning fish was curtailed during higher water. Lower water exposes the shoals to spawning fish. Lower water also may reduce the number of fishing islands.

The preceding summary of environmental considerations and limitations suggests the importance of aquatic species in the region, the potential locations for horticulture and major fishing activity, the geographical extent of the interior hinterland, and the seasonal restrictions on navigation. It has also provided important environmental information about climatic influences and its potential effects on the harvesting of subsistence resources throughout the period of study.

Summary

Conditions for land use practices, derived in part from surveyor's reports, geography, ecology, and climate, suggest that the focus of native subsistence activity may have had a tendency to concentrate at island and shoreline areas of the region. The long narrow strip of shoreline and

islands could be viewed as a separate climatic unit of moderating temperatures and precipitation, compared to inland conditions. This area supported horticulture, some hunting, and most important, fishing. Aquatic forms likely provided a reliable year round resource base. Land game was also available, but not to as great extent as that of aquatic species. Productivity varied according to water levels and climate.

Access within the region was reduced between the hinterland and shore by seasonal conditions affecting water levels in rivers and streams. Access from the hinterland to the shore of Georgian Bay was possible during early spring and late fall. Access to the hinterland was most readily navigable in late fall. The difficulties imposed by seasonally fluctuating conditions may have encouraged sustained use of the shoreline and island environment. These considerations had important restrictions on the pattern of native movement which had to be coordinated with seasonal conditions.

The Little Ice Age climate influenced the region in subtle, but pronounced ways. The impact of this climatic phase resulted in unpredictable weather patterns and lake level changes suggesting that aquatic forms were abundant and noteworthy and were likely the most dependable food source throughout the period of the changes that this

climatic pattern produced. How these resources came to be used is influenced by historical and cultural influences, as their exploitation was not simply a response to the environment.

Chapter Three introduces the native peoples who exploited the region before Champlain's arrival in 1615. Focusing upon the various environmental strategies toward land and resource use in the region, the archaeology of the Shebishikong site suggests that a subsistence based on fishing, small aquatic animals and variable quantities of corn provides the organizing principle from which to interpret cultural development within the region.

CHAPTER THREE
THE PREHISTORY OF GEORGIAN BAY REGION
THE SHEBISHIKONG SITE

Although environmental influences may initially shape the range of choices available to a people in a given moment, culture certainly reshapes the environment in its response to those choices (Cronon 1983: 13). Comprehensive information about the prehistory of Georgian Bay region is restricted by the lack of archaeological sites. The one site in the region, Shebishikong, suffered from inadequate chronological control in its examination, which prevents the building of a cultural chronology from which to document persistence and change. Relying upon archaeological interpretations from outside the region, Shebishikong can, however, provide insight about location, resource use, trade, cultural influences, and social organization of the precontact Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples.

The Shebishikong Site

Most of the islands between the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island have been described by archaeologists as

'vener' sites.¹ These thin cultural deposits were a result of lake level fluctuations and isostatic rebound (Wright 1965: 191). The sites were mostly represented by scattered flakes, fire stones and the occasional artifact reflecting a seasonal use (Wright 1977: 15-16). A majority of these sites were situated in protected bays, and behind bedrock outcrops, suggesting that sheltered locations were critical during the windy, autumn months (Wright 1981: 57). Faunal remains recovered from these islands were typically fall spawning fish and migratory water fowl, supporting a fall occupation. The scarcity of sites demonstrates a low population density for the area (Wright 1965: 191). The thin deposits are consistent with a general picture of small extended families seasonally gathering around abundant resources (cf. Dawson 1982: 81).

Archaeological sites that can be directly linked to the prehistoric Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples are

1 The island survey involved sites in the western arc of the island archipelago in Georgian Bay, spatially connected to Manitoulin Island in the north and the Bruce Peninsula in the south. Ancestral Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples probably did not routinely exploit these islands as they are not within easy reach of the study area, hindered by the effects of deflected water currents. Surface currents generated in Lake Huron flow eastward between Manitoulin Island and the Bruce Peninsula, at which point they divide northward toward Henvey Inlet and south toward Penetanguishene. This leaves the Parry Sound area relatively 'calm' (Report of the Select Committee of the Ontario Legislature on Lake Levels of the Great Lakes, 1953: Plate no. 5). Algonkian canoeists rarely strayed far from the shores of Georgian Bay as their bark canoes were fragile and leaked (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 45). Wright, however, found evidence at Glen, an historic fishing site, that native people were equipped to navigate 8 km of open water (1981: 57).

few. The Shebishikong site, formerly known as the Parker site, is one site,² located 40 km northwest of Parry Sound near Dillon (fig. 12). Excavated in 1954, Shebishikong was investigated using a technique which resulted in severe component mixture.³ Additionally, the surface level of the site had been badly disturbed by bulldozing. Wright's revised identification of materials⁴ determined that Shebishikong's level 1 contained artifacts ranging between 1200 A.D. and 1650 A.D. (1980: 4). Level 2 had few artifacts, which Wright had not attempted to reinterpret. In addition, three pits yielding few materials were also recorded.

² It may be more appropriate to call it a cultural fragment given its inherent dating problems. W.C.Noble calls Shebishikong an extensive enigmatic multi-component site (1991: personal communication).

³ The University of Toronto crew under Dr. J.N. Emerson used 5' squares and 6" levels resulting in considerable component mixture. Wright suggests that the excavation technique required much tighter vertical controls (Wright 1980). A super-positioned site, the stacking of deposits without a convenient layer of sediments, usually calls for hearth and pit testing as they stand isolated from the mix (Wright 1976: 16).

⁴ Wright's report makes tentative ceramic identifications, reporting similarities of a general nature (1980: 3). He is more thorough with the lithic materials, but admits his identification of specific flint sources are judgmental (Ibid: 8). Wright made no attempt to quantify the faunal material, except by impression (Ibid: 11). Surface materials, because of the disturbed nature of the site, were given " cursory consideration" (Ibid: 14).

Wright's reconsideration of the Shebishikong material introduced faunal and detrital materials which had not been included in his earlier (1965) examination. He also disagreed with Emerson's ceramic classification of certain vessels. Blackduck was considered to be less extant than originally thought, and Huron-Petun, more representative of the site. Wright was able to identify abraders and heavy tools, which had not been included in the 1965 assessment. He found notable differences in the interpretation of trade goods, revising what was formerly considered a trade kettle arrowhead to a trade kettle scraper.

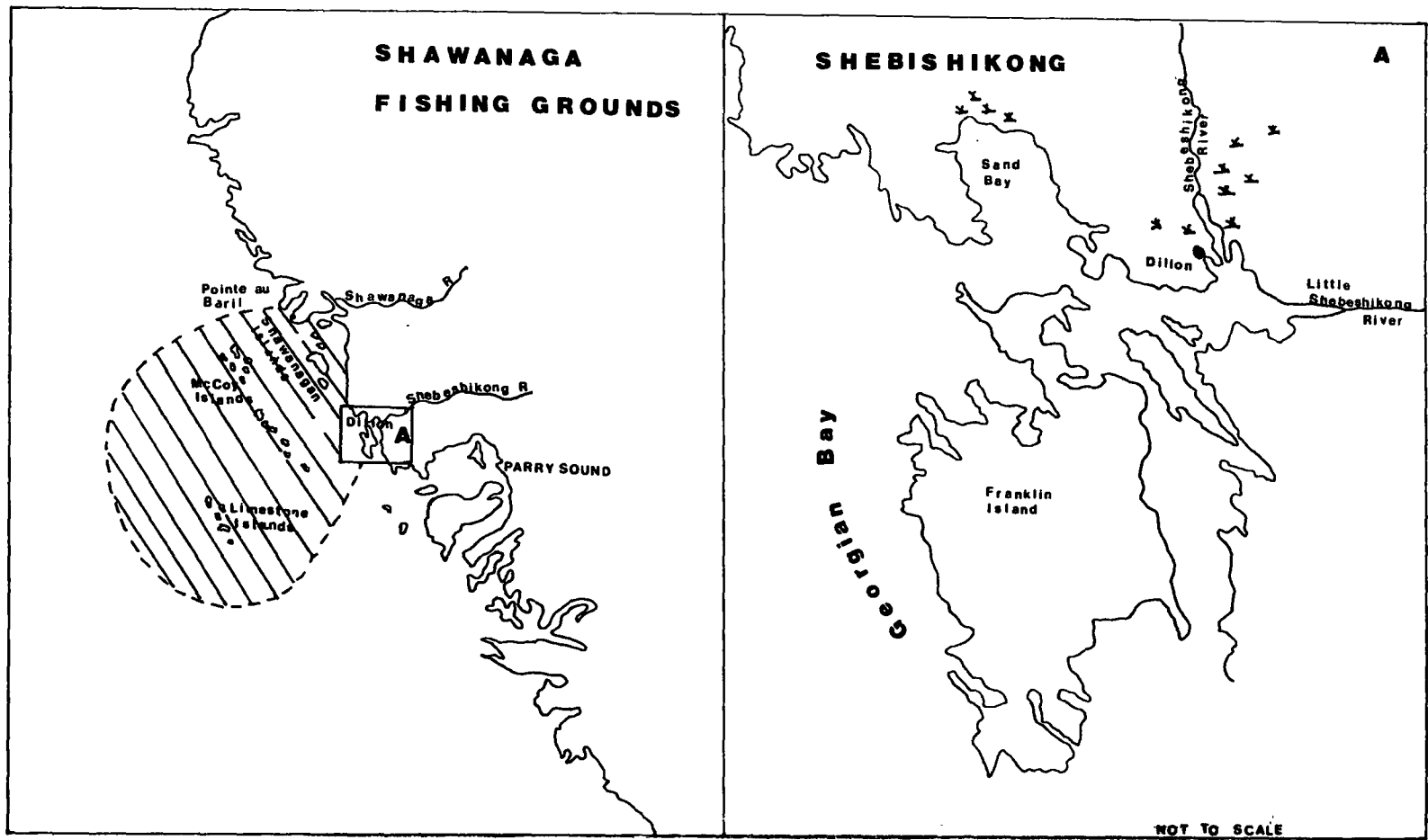


FIG. 12. SHAWANAGA FISHING

SHEBISHIKONG SITE

The lack of diagnostic artifacts, stratification, and carbon samples, seriously erode expectations of an accurate dating of the Shebishikong site. As a super-positioned site, comparisons and conclusions could not be verified by any methodology that relies on chronology. Before the super-positioning was discovered, the confusing nature of the site had generated several opposing interpretations of the site's function: Brose regarded Shebishikong as a protohistoric Ottawa site (1978: 579); Fitting and Cleland (1969: 299) interpreted it as a small winter hunting camp, and Cleland later proposed that it fell into the middle historic period, 1670-1760 (1970: 207). The following evidence suggests Shebishikong was principally a warm weather occupation.

There are few analytical options available to interpret a site as limited as Shebishikong. The first is to isolate the individual holdings and compare them with geographical and period appropriate materials. The second is to speculate about expected finds as a result of the features already known from other sites. Difficulties arise with either approach as they both sacrifice the cultural integrity of the site. A compromise is to focus on a narrow reconstruction that emphasizes the character or 'flavour' of the site (cf. Dawson 1987: 155), concentrating on those features which expose potential land and resource uses.

Circumstantial evidence, including ceramic seriation and unit comparison with geographically appropriate sites, provides an important basis from which hypotheses can later develop. Conclusions are equally determined by known environmental limitations. The site must, however, remain an enigma in view of the severe limitations of its evidence.

Shebishikong did not fall into the island survey of sites. It is situated on shore, in a protected bay, adjacent to the confluence of the Shebeshikong and Little Shebeshikong Rivers (fig. 12). This location provided access to the island sheltered waters of Georgian Bay, and to the interior wetlands.

Geographically, Shebishikong is located between three hinterland routes providing access to both Lake Nipissing and Huronia without recourse to the Georgian Bay shore route. The site also provides easy access to the principle fisheries of Georgian Bay in the Shawanaga Inlet, access into Parry Sound, and into the hinterland via the Sequin River. Shebishikong was also within reach of the Shawanaga River and its connections to Lake Nipissing.

The site is located in an area historically and ethnographically associated with fishing activities. Shebishikong is considered to mark the ancestral fishing

grounds of the Shawanaga Ojibwa Band.⁵ This territory extends from Shebishikong Point into Georgian Bay, west to the Limestone Islands, Point au Baril, including the bays and islets, and to the Shawanaga River as far as Point Anderson (fig. 12).⁶ The Shebishikong River and Bay were notorious locations for pirate fishing at the turn of the nineteenth century,⁷ when they were principally exploited during the spring. Herring was also taken by native fishers using herring nets at Shebishikong until early November, before Shebishikong Bay froze.⁸ Fishing nets were gradually fanned west to the Limestone Islands as the shallow areas close to the shore continued to freeze.⁹

⁵ Shawanaga residents claim to have occupied two village sites traditionally, one at the shoreline or landing where they moved in the spring for fishing, followed in the fall, by dispersal throughout the islands between Shebishikong and the Limestone Islands. During the winter the band moved one mile above sea level to their winter camp, safely removed from the winds of Georgian Bay (Interview with Margaret Jones, Shawanaga Reserve, August 22, 1983; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Shawanaga).

⁶ Shawanaga Band Council Records, Special Council on Fishing Grounds, 1911.

⁷ District Fishing Overseer, Captain Angus Macaulay, frequently cruised the area around Shebishikong Bay and River looking for illegal fishing both in the spring and fall (Ontario Sessional Papers (34(7)) 1902. Third Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. "Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to St.T. Bastedo, Esq. Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries", 59-73).

⁸ Ontario Sessional Papers (34(7)) 1902. Third Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. "Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to St.T. Bastedo, Esq. Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries", 71-72.

⁹ Ontario Sessional Papers (34(7)) 1902. Third Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. "Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to St.T. Bastedo, Esq. Deputy

Native people then travelled to the islands in Frederick Inlet (near McCoy) with herring nets, where they could also hunt and trap deer, and duck.¹⁰

Subsistence

The subsistence products¹¹ of successive occupations at Shebishikong included: bear, beaver, clam, moose, duck (black), channel catfish, lake sturgeon,¹² northern pike, turtle (snapping and painted), otter, muskrat and mink. There was also evidence of additional unidentified bird and fish bones. The most common remains were beaver and turtle. There was no evidence of deer in level 1 (Wright 1980: 11).¹³

All the fish recovered from the site spawn in the spring. Channel catfish spawn in late spring or summer when

Commissioner of Fisheries", 73.

¹⁰ Ontario Sessional Papers (34(7)) 1902. Third Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. "Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to St.T. Bastedo, Esq. Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries", 59-73.

¹¹ Fish types were identified from the surface sample only, as fish recovered in Shebishikong's level 1 were not identified.

¹² Sturgeon bones are cartilaginous and do not preserve well in the ground (Rostlund, 1952: 12).

¹³ Beaver generally can be taken as a good indicator of wildlife diversity, including such species as muskrat, otter, moose and shore birds (Collins 1976: 133-4). Black duck winters in Georgian Bay extending as far north as Sault Ste. Marie. It lives on the shallow margins of lakes, ponds, quiet streams, and marshes (Godfrey 1966: 85-86).

water temperatures reach between 23.9° C and 29.5° C. Spawning takes place in secluded, semi-dark nests built by the male. Females spawn once a year and the eggs hatch at temperatures between 15.6° C and 27.8° C (Scott and Crossman 1973: 608). Although they spawn in spring, channel catfish feed on trout and whitefish eggs during the fall (Heidenreich 1971: 211). As both trout and whitefish are fall spawning fish, which were not identified at Shebishikong, it is likely the catfish recovered from the site were caught during the spring.

Catfish could be caught with virtually any type of fishing equipment (Rostlund 1952: 33). They were also least affected by climatic changes because of the sizable range in spawning temperature. Catfish provided a consistent food supply in Georgian Bay dating from the Archaic period, and are frequently recovered from archaeological sites (Wright 1972a: 43). As food value, catfish provide an impressive 1,000 calories per pound (Rostlund 1952: 4).

Sturgeon spawn in the latter part of May (Heidenreich 1971: 209), but are present in the region all year (Rostlund 1952: 11). They provide half the caloric value of catfish, ranging between 400-500 calories per pound (Ibid: 4) but were a larger fish.

Northern pike spawn as soon as the ice melts. To capture pike, shallow weedy areas around the Shebishikong

River were likely closed off with nets and weirs (cf. Heidenreich 1971: 212). Northern pike are more susceptible to water temperature changes. They fail to spawn in water temperatures less than 45° F, when they remain 'green' (Schryer et al 1971: 34). They are also rather low producers of food value, providing only 350 calories per pound (Rostlund 1952: 4).

Turtles are active during warm weather. Snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) were active during the summer and early fall months in Georgian Bay. Painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta marginalis*) was likely captured along the shallow marsh areas of either of the two Shebeshikong Rivers (cf. Heidenreich 1971: 212).

The faunal evidence is clear that based on evidence of spawning patterns, Shebishikong was probably used during the spring and summer. It is difficult however, to prove that it was not used during the winter, given the possibility of a second location inland, the size of the site, and the ethnographically supported probability of winter ice fishing. Unequivocal seasonal indicators are rare, especially given the scarcity of sampled data. Indeed, Shebishikong may later prove to be a shoreline extension of a settlement pattern which extends further inland.

The amount of fish bone recovered from Shebishikong

was small compared to the quantity recovered from the fall occupied Glen site on Flowerpot Island in the western arc of Georgian Bay.¹⁴ This lack of evidence for fishing, given the location of Shebishikong to important fisheries, is difficult to reconcile with the ecology and ethnography which suggest the importance of fishing and aquatic resources in the site. Shebishikong was presumably an attractive location in the spring, given the presence of spring freshets which made the interior accessible from the shore. This also made Georgian Bay approachable from the hinterland. Applying the principles of resource optimization expounded by Rogers and Black (1976), the Shebishikong people likely sought food when it was most readily available. This suggests that spring spawning fish should have provided a major part of the subsistence. Lack of representation of this resource at Shebishikong either reflects an adaptation where fishing was not a major harvesting source, or that conclusions about resource use are inhibited by the interpretative limitations of the site.

Various cultural possibilities explain the absence

¹⁴ This historic Ottawa fishing site yielded almost 50% fish bone, notably lake trout followed closely by small mammals, waterfowl, turtle and mollusca (Wright 1981: 52). Lake trout were exceptionally large, requiring a model of a 100 lb specimen for comparison identification. The Glen site is located on Flower Pot Island which, in addition to Bear Rump (Echo Island), were also identified as fishing stations by fishing inspector Gibbard (Canada Sessional Papers, Sessional Paper No. 11, 1862, Crown Lands Report)

of fish bone at Shebishikong:¹⁵ Whole fish could have been prepared by smoking and drying, and consumed elsewhere, or they could have been eaten whole (Tooker 1964: 68).¹⁶ The James Bay Cree ate entire fish, excluding gallbladder, stomach contents and large bones (Berkes 1977: 304). For ritual purposes the bones could have been given special status, and released back into the water to propitiate the appropriate spirits (Hultkrantz 1984: 872). Fish could have been transported and marketed elsewhere, ground into a flour-like substance (Thwaites ed. 1959, 51: 71), or the uneaten parts could have been fed to domestic animals: Fish was used as dog food and to bait traps among the Northern Ojibwa (Rogers 1972b: 10). Fish bone were suspected by Hamalainen (1983: 58) to be the most susceptible to sampling error, given the analysis of bone material from the historic Petun site Plater-Martin dating 1639-1650.¹⁷

The Shebishikong people exploited mature beaver. Only one juvenile beaver was recovered in Level 1 (Wright 1980: 11), which is unusual in a strata containing faunal

¹⁵ It is unlikely the site was excavated using screening or flotation devices from which small fragments of bone material could have been collected.

¹⁶ Fish eaten whole were likely found with human waste (Limp and Reidherd 1979: 70-78).

¹⁷Indeed, Hamalainen (1983: 63) considered the fish fauna on this site an 'interference', as it seriously affected the sample by not supporting the other findings excavated from the site.

material dating over four hundred years. Since beaver propagate in spring, the preference for mature animals may suggest fall exploitation. Beaver however, were considered easy to catch in the spring when they left their huts to look for food (Jenness 1935: 16). The presence of mature beaver suggests that the Shebishikong people demonstrated some measure of control over beaver harvesting, which may have important territorial implications. Young beaver may have been left undisturbed as a conservation measure for the expected future use of a family or group. Beaver were probably captured in the wetlands near the Shebeshikong rivers, along with the other aquatic species recovered from the site. The Shebeshikong rivers likely provided access to a succession of food sources throughout the year.¹⁸

Bear could be readily hunted as they swam from island to island, between points of land,¹⁹ and at their

¹⁸ The Summer Island III occupation dating 1250 ±100, was occupied by 25-40 inhabitants in April through September. It was probably a fishing station exploiting spring spawning sturgeon, using netting and spearing technology. During the latter part of the summer, bear and beaver were hunted. In the fall this group left the site to gather wild rice (Brose 1970: 4).

¹⁹ For food, bears were speared in the water as they swam from island to point when they could easily be floated to a shore location. For ritual purposes, bears were taken in January for the annual Bear feast. These animals would be speared through their breathing hole. This method is thought to have been performed last at Parry Island, in 1901 (Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 18, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island). Parry Island Ojibwa recognize bear ceremonialism, particularly the exclusion of young females from eating bear meat (Interview with Flora Tobobondung, July 23, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island).

feeding areas close to berry patches during the summer and fall.

Despite Champlain's report of corn and squash in 1615 (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 42), there was no evidence of horticulture recovered from Shebishikong, although several corn storage pits have been identified in the Parry Sound area, dating to 1560 A.D. which suggest the Shebishikong people were acquainted with corn.²⁰ No horticultural tools²¹ such as worked bone, were present at Shebishikong.

Tool Use²²

Few projectile points were recovered from the Shebishikong site, confirming Dawson's finding among the northern Ojibwa that points were more important in interior regions than they were along the shores of the Great Lakes

²⁰ Some 50 pits measured 5 feet by 7 feet, and 2.5 feet deep. The pits were usually constructed out of stones because of the swampy nature of the ground. Laidlaw indicated that larger pits found around Balsam Lake, dug to a depth of 10 feet, were used by the Iroquois in their war against the Mississauga. Groups of smaller pits were used to hang meat in the summer, while other pits were used as "sorcery pits" for ceremonies (Ontario Sessional Papers, 29, 1897-1898. Annual Archaeological Report, Appendix to the Report of the Minister of Education. Balsam Lake by George E. Laidlaw, p. 81).

²¹ Johnson reported a straight sharpened stick was the principle instrument used at Parry Island (1929: 195).

²² Detailed analysis of the lithic materials is offered here because of the absence of such materials in the 1965 study of Shebishikong, and the importance of such items in determining land use. As the writer is not an archaeologist, this analysis will present as much detail of the lithic material so conclusions can be clearly traced. An archaeologist might present this material in a different way.

(1987: 153). The tool kit recovered from Shebishikong was unspecialized, consisting primarily of scrapers, wedges, cores and points, which accounted for almost 90% of the stone tools. Specialized tools were limited to two chithos,²³ likely used to manufacture the stone tools (Wright 1980: 9). Wedges were the only item to appear in both levels of the site, including the disturbed surface.²⁴

Because of the extensive time span estimated for the site, 1200 A.D.- 1650 A.D. for level 1 (Wright 1980: 4), Shebishikong probably emerged during the period of climatic cooling, a period associated with fishing activity at the Juntunen site²⁵ (Cleland 1970: 266). Similarly, the presence of a cooler, moister, climate at Juntunen was characterized by a decrease in points and bifaces, and an increase in scrapers (McPherron 1967: 267). The neighbouring Lake Nipissing/French River region experienced increased summer activity indicated by a prolific number of

²³ Heavy tools, such as the chithos, were actually recovered from the surface (Wright 1980: 9). The chithos explains the cutting of slate and quartzite detritus occurring in level 1.

²⁴ Total lithic yielded 26 recoveries from level 1, and 24 from the surface, for a total of 50. The combined lithic assemblage consisted of: 30 scrapers, 2 arrowheads, 3 wedges, 4 chithos, 2 flake knives, 1 flint blade, 1 soapstone pipe, 1 ground slate, and 1 abrader (Wright 1980).

²⁵ The Juntunen people were marginally horticultural Algonkian group (McPherron 1967: 106) who inhabited the north shore of Lake Huron from 800 A.D. to 1300 A.D. If Shebishikong dates, as Wright suggests, to 1200 A.D., it was contemporaneous with Juntunen for at least a century.

scrapers, and a subsistence established on the exploitation of aquatic mammals, specifically beaver and muskrat (Brizinski 1978: 221, 258; Brizinski and Savage 1983: 35).²⁶ Scrapers were also abundant at the Dougall fishing site at the narrows between Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching (Wright 1972c: 7). The prevalence of scrapers at Shebishikong suggests cutting and scraping was a major activity. This can reasonably be associated with the exploitation of aquatic mammals.

The Shebishikong people did not make exclusive use of raw material from local tills as they also used imported materials, namely Port Franks and Onondaga flint. Port Franks flint is found on the southern shore of Georgian Bay. Onondaga flint (Lockport flint) occurs on the Niagara Escarpment, from the Hamilton region south to the north shore of Lake Erie (Wright 1972a: 11). Some of the miscellaneous flints recovered at Shebishikong originated at either Fitzwilliam Island or Manitoulin Island (Ibid). These flint sources suggest that the directions of trade influence extended to the south shore of Georgian Bay and west, and to the north shore of Lake Huron to Manitoulin Island (fig. 13).

The detritus recovered from all levels at

²⁶ The Nipissing demonstrated a cultural sequence dating from 3255 B.C. to 1900 A.D. (Brizinski 1978: 12).

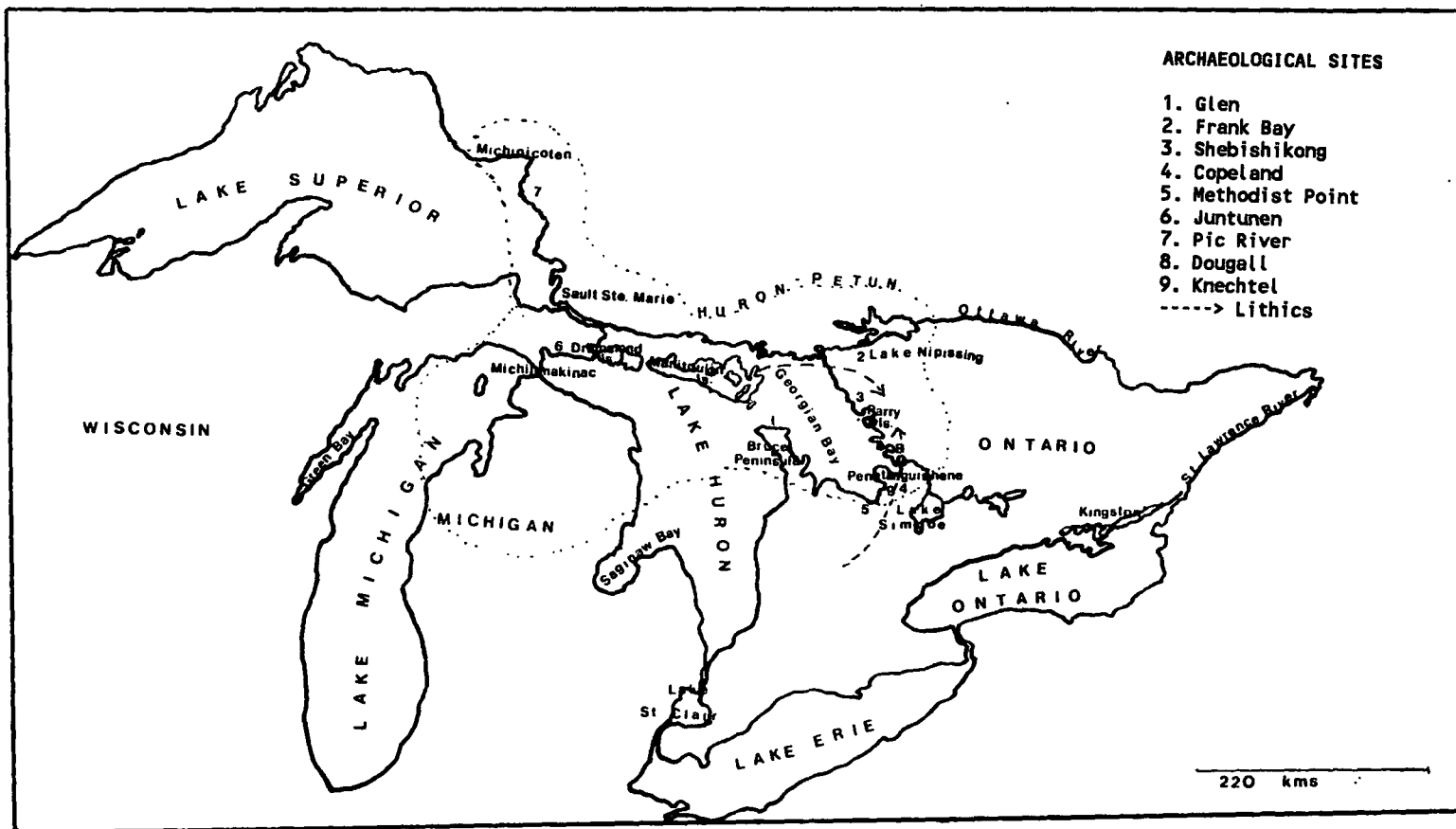


FIG. 13. PRE CONTACT INFLUENCES

Shebishikong was of individual flakes, not shatter, suggesting that pieces were brought from elsewhere to the site in preforms or chunks. Level 2²⁷ detritus principally consisted of flint flakes, including cherts derived from Port Franks and Onondaga materials. Quartz flakes, flint flakes, and slate were recovered in the pits associated with the site.²⁸

Both levels of Shebishikong support a preference for flint tools. Level 1 indicates that Onondaga flint and local flint were selected equally, Port Franks flint was used to a lesser extent. Lithic elements in both levels included quartz, Port Franks flint, Onondaga flint, and slate.

Port Franks flint may have been used on the site after 1300 A.D., but before the introduction of Onondaga flint, which appears to have been actively used during the Middleport period, between 1400 A.D. and 1500 A.D. This is

²⁷ Based on admittedly tenuous ceramic relationships, Level 2 and the three pits generally give the impression of Princess Point and Late Pickering cultural manifestations. If consolidated, the ceramics are generally cord-malleated, and smoothed over cord-malleated, with one possessing a coil break, perhaps Point Peninsula. One likely specimen in level 2 had been subjected to extensive water abrasion (Wright 1980: 12) and may have been part of a much larger site now eroded by changing bay and river levels. The suggestion of Point Peninsula is further supported by the recovery of other Point Peninsula vessels on the surface along the edge of an eroding sand pit (Ibid).

²⁸ The pits at Shebishikong share much with level 2. Detritus consisting of 50% quartz, 15.6% miscellaneous, 9.4% flint, 6.3% quartz crystal, 6.3% slate, 6.3% Port Franks, and 3.1% Onondaga flint. The remainder was composed of local quartz.

when these materials are represented in the French River-Lake Nipissing drainage basin (Brizinski 1978: 173).²⁹

Exotic cherts recovered at a Lalonde site³⁰ at Methodist Point also point to this same period (O'Brien 1976: 82).

There was a practical difference between the materials recovered from the historic fall fishing site at Glen and those recovered at Shebishikong.³¹ Scrapers were more important and varied at Shebishikong, judging by the preference for exotic materials. The Glen tool kit was dominated by celts, abraders, and hammerstones (Wright 1981). Tools constructed from slate, flint and quartz were probably made at Glen. Tools constructed out of sandstone, chiefly abraders and hammerstones, were either brought to the site or cached on site.³² Similarly, quartzite,

²⁹ Onondaga chert has been recovered from the Lake Nipissing region from the Archaic period (Brizinski 1980: 235, 251). It also appears in level 2 of the Shebishikong site, which conceivably predates level 1.

³⁰ This is the BeGx-11 site dating 1500 A.D. to 1550 A.D. which may mark the beginning of extensive trade networks in the region (O'Brien 1976: 82).

³¹ Wright did not compare Glen with Shebishikong because of the chronological problems (1981). The comparison offered here is of a general nature, offering important distinctions between warm weather and cool weather fishing sites.

³² Slate tools were probably constructed at Glen as most of the detritus was slate (40.7%), and 25.9% of the stone tools recovered from the site were slate. Sandstone, accounted for 22.2% of the artifacts, although no detritus was indicated. Fitzwilliam Island flint, which is local to the site, accounted for 11.9% of the detritus, quartz was 2.8%. Onondaga flint and Port Franks flint, accounted for a small proportion of lithic materials, exclusively found in cores and core fragments. Positive identity of these exotic cherts is uncertain (cf. Wright 1981: 49).

copper, Onondaga flint and Port Franks flint tools showed a small percentage of detritus, suggesting these objects were brought to the islands, before they were retouched.

At Shebishikong most of the tools³³ made from quartzite and flint were introduced to the site.³⁴ Only tools manufactured from quartz and quartz crystal were likely made at Shebishikong. Although slate detritus³⁵ was present, slate tools were not, suggesting the removal of these objects elsewhere, perhaps, as the Glen site suggests, to fall occupations on the islands. Indeed, the Glen site showed a high incidence of slate knives which may have been used in the same capacity as the wedges at Shebishikong --

³³ From the sample of specimens identified by Wright (1980), Onondaga flint had been used for the manufacture of both end and side scrapers. Port Franks flint was selected for bifaces (actually a bifacial fragment). Quartz had a broad range of uses in end scrapers, wedges, and knives. Flint was also used for side scrapers, arrowheads, wedges, and knives. Heavy tools, principally the chithos were made from local minerals, slate and quartzite. Quartz crystal was the medium chosen for cores.

³⁴ Of the tools identified by Wright (1980), 53.8% were fashioned from quartzite of which 1.7% detritus was recovered. The presence of Onondaga flint indicates, similarly to that at Glen, that preforms may have been introduced to the site. Flint use shows a ratio of tools to detritus of 23:1, supporting the speculation that flint tools were brought to the site. Both quartz, accounting for 19.2% of the lithic items and 61.7% detritus, and quartz crystal, 3.8% tools to 7.5% detritus, suggest local manufacture.

³⁵ Slate and red siltstone originating from the north shore of Georgian Bay was used for Robitaille stone beads (Fox 1979: 83). The slate could have originated with the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples.

as an all-purpose cutting tool.³⁶ As the only biface recovered was thought to be constructed from the poorly represented Port Franks flint,³⁷ hunting does not appear to have been an important activity at Shebishikong. Only one projectile point and one partial point were found in Level 1. Such low frequency in a level encompassing 400 years of occupation also suggests that hunting was unimportant to the subsistence at Shebishikong.

The lithic material shows evidence of bipolar technology. End scrapers³⁸ had been thinned by bipolar impact to remove larger flakes. A quartz wedge had similarly been crushed (Wright 1980: 6,7).³⁹ Cutting tools demonstrating retouch or special functions are absent at Shebishikong (Wright 1965: 211), implying the site was occupied by a people principally adapted to local resources. The low frequency of retouched scrapers suggests that work

³⁶ The pattern of lithic material selection for tools favoured quartz and slate, because of availability and thus easy replacement. The presence of quartz in Algonquin Park was a local adaptation to fishing and small game hunting when better quality chert was unavailable (Hurley et al 1972: 200).

³⁷ This was actually a fragment that was potted and fragmented by heat-fracturing, presumed to have been discarded. Wright (1980: 8) classifies this object as 'rejection'.

³⁸ The limitations of the site excavation prevent associations that would associate flint end scrapers with historical materials, as was the situation in Algonquin Park (Hurley et al 1972: 120).

³⁹ Quartz, slate, quartzite and mica could have been locally mined using the chithos (Canada Sessional Papers, 40, No. 12, 1906. Sessional Paper no. 26. Geological Survey of Canada, The Muskoka District, Dr. T. L. Walker).

such as skinning small animals, cleaning fish, and cutting vegetable matter was important.

There are metric similarities between the end scrapers recovered at Shebishikong and Glen.⁴⁰

End Scrapers Compared by Metric Similarity

	Height	Width	Length	Weight
Shebishikong	3.3mm	18.9mm	20.8	3.2g
Pic II	5.8	21.5	28.7	
Sidey Mackay	-	22.0	29.0	
Methodist Pt	9.0	18.0	18.0+	
Knechtel 5	3.6	18.2	21.4	2.4
Knechtel surface	5.8	11.5	36.8	
Knechtel 11	3.0	14.7	27.0	
Glen	3.1	19.0	21.0	4.0

There are also important similarities to those at the Knechtel Level 5 site. Although the occupation of this site was hardly contemporaneous,⁴¹ the Knechtel people represent a local accommodation to fishing in the waters of Georgian Bay. The size of the end scrapers recovered at

⁴⁰ (Compiled from Wright (1965, 1966, 1972b, 1981); O'Brien (1976); Garrad 1978).

⁴¹ Knechtel was occupied from the Archaic period through to the early Woodland period. Level 5 dates to 1740 BC ±45 (Wright 1972b: 57).

Shebishikong, compared to Knechtel 5, suggest an adaptation to similar aquatic resources. The Knechtel people subsisted on catfish, pike, sturgeon, various other fish, mammals and reptiles (Wright 1972b: 45, 46).⁴²

Ceramics

Unlike the ceramic tradition to the north of the Great Lakes which is strongly influenced by Blackduck, ceramics recovered from the Georgian Bay area are a discontinuously borrowed trait (Wright 1965: 216). Ineffective in establishing temporal or spatial continuity, they can however, demonstrate the directions influencing Georgian Bay region.

The ceramic recoveries at Shebishikong convey sequential influences by Middleport, Lalonde, and Huron Petun cultures (Wright 1980: 3). Additionally, Wright identified Blackduck,⁴³ variant Juntunen and Peninsular Woodland ceramics. These ceramics suggest a sphere of cultural influence encircled by the Georgian Bay/Lake Huron area. In this respect they parallel the influences

⁴² Level 5 is also the only level at Knechtel where sturgeon appear in the faunal sample (Wright 1972b: 45, 46).

⁴³ Very little Blackduck pottery was recovered at Shebishikong which would have positively identified the site as Ojibwa. The frequency was actually reduced from an original estimation in 1965 of three, to one in Wright's 1980 review. This absence is consistent with the frequency identified in Lake Nipissing, where a single vessel and two rims were recovered (Brizinski 1978: 153).

suggested by the trade in exotic materials. The question is, then, whether the ceramics were products of introduction, or the result of indigenous development? Like the Frank Bay site at Lake Nipissing (Ridley 1954), Shebishikong is, by geographical association, linked to a large Iroquoian horticultural community at Huronia, and likely duplicated the cultural developments going on in the south.

Following the example of the Lake Nipissing peoples, the Shebishikong people, from 1300 A.D. to contact, may have manufactured Iroquois pottery, if they made pottery at all (cf. Brizinski 1978: 241). The Campbell Bay site in the French River-Lake Nipissing drainage system, seasonally occupied from 1500 A.D.- 1630 A.D., suggests that almost 90% of the 'Huron' pottery was imitation ware.⁴⁴ Evidently Nipissing women shared or copied the ceramic technology of their Huron neighbours (Ibid: 37, 47), a characteristic also reported at the Glen fall fishing site (Wright 1981: 55).

Pottery at Shebishikong could be classified as varied, or more accurately as "one of everything," everything being principally of Lalonde type.

⁴⁴ This quality refers to poor execution in forming the design elements (Brizinski 1978: 47). Wright believes the pottery at Glen was made by Algonkian potters applying motifs from a previous century to seventeenth century Lalonde high collar vessels (Wright 1981: 55). Finding Huron-Petun pottery on historic Ojibwa sites which are common to late prehistoric Huron-Petun sites, has proven to be a perplexing variation in ceramic analysis (Wright 1965: 200).

Representatively, Shebishikong ceramics compare by type to the Copeland site,⁴⁵ a 1500 A.D.- 1550 A.D. Lalonde period occupation near Barrie, Ontario. Both sites share a similar percentage frequency of Lalonde High Collar, Black Necked and Ontario Oblique. Both sites also share Huron Incised, Sidey Notched, Lawson Opposed and Middleport Oblique markings, although not in similar quantities. Shebishikong also compares in type with the Sidey Mckay site (cf. Garrad 1978: 25).⁴⁶ This loose comparison suggests that pottery may have spread directly to Shebishikong by the ancestral Petun, through groups such as the historic Ottawa who traded with the Petun,⁴⁷ or the Nipissing.

The Copeland site may have been ancestral to the Huron Bear (Cord) tribe (Ibid: 15, 20) which historically established exclusive trading rights with the Nipissing (Thwaites ed. 1959, 14: 37). The presence of pottery representative of the Copeland site at Shebishikong suggests

⁴⁵ Of the 12 ceramic types recorded at Copeland, 7 (58%) appear in Shebishikong's level 1. In terms of frequency, Lalonde High Collar is represented by 13.6 % at Shebishikong, 14.8% at Copeland; Black Necked at 4.5% to 3.7%, and Ontario Oblique at 2.3% to 3.7%. Absent from Shebishikong, but present at Copeland, were Sidey Crossed, Copeland Incised, Warminister Horizontal (also present at Glen), Warminister Crossed, and Niagara Collared.

⁴⁶ They both share Black Necked, Huron Incised, Lawson Incised, Lawson Opposed and Sidey Notched, although again not in similar quantities (cf. Garrad, 1978: 25).

⁴⁷ Historically, the Ottawa traded with the Saulteur and other Ojibwa bands along the east and northeast shore of Lake Superior, northwest to the Puan (Wrong, ed. 1939: 64,67; Thwaites ed. 1959, 14: 155).

several possibilities:

1. Shebishikong was occupied by Nipissing peoples. Having established trading contacts with Copeland, trading continued into historic times with the Huron Bear or Cord Tribes.
2. Shebishikong was an Ojibwa occupation which participated in trade for ceramics with Lalonde people, and later the Huron Bear or Cord Tribe.
3. Shebishikong traded with the Nipissing.
4. Shebishikong was an Ottawa occupation trading with the Nipissing and the Huron.

Although there are similarities in ceramic content to the hinterland interior sites around Algonquin Park, Shebishikong ceramics were found to differ in several ways. Shebishikong ceramics shared a predominantly Huron and Neutral Wenro type, compared to that of the eastern Algonkian sites in the Algonquin Park-North Bay corridor. These types included Middleport, Lawson, Ontario Horizontal,

Ontario Oblique, Middleport Oblique, Uren Corded, Black Necked, Sidey Notched, and Huron Incised. Although Lalonde High Collar is evenly distributed throughout the area (Mitchell 1975: 62), Huron Incised and Sidey Notched ceramics were recovered only in the western part of the Algonquin Park area along the Petawawa River (Ibid). Lalonde pottery was punctated around the collar base and below the lip on Shebishikong vessels (Wright 1980: 15), an expression absent in the Algonquin Park-North Bay corridor (Mitchell 1975: 63).⁴⁸ The Black Necked pottery common to the corridor also differed from the variant found at Shebishikong.⁴⁹

The ceramics also differ in geographically appropriate ways. Northern Huron ceramic types prevailed at Shebishikong. Pickering ceramics, although present at Shebishikong, were more important to the Algonkin corridor sites (cf. Mitchell 1975: 67, 68). This finding suggests that ceramic influences affecting Shebishikong originated from the south, continued north to the Lake Nipissing area,

⁴⁸ Lalonde influences seem to have spread along Georgian Bay to Lake Nipissing following the Mattawa river route to Ottawa, backtracking along the Petawawa tributaries (Mitchell, 1975: 65).

⁴⁹ Algonquin Park Black Necked ceramics have incipient triangular punctate motifs on the interior rim, usually close to the lip (Mitchell 1975: 63). They were also the most prolific pottery type recovered from the area. The one sample from Shebishikong was illustrated with incised obliques above horizontal incised lines above incised opposed obliques (Wright 1980: 15).

or along the Petawawa River as far as the western section of the Algonkian Park-North Bay corridor. This area had been historically exploited by the Nipissing.⁵⁰

Wright questioned how pottery had integrated into Algonkian society, given extensive female mobility which likely contributed to a heterogeneity of ceramic styles (1972a: 92). The Juntunen site suggests that between 1200 A.D. and 1400 A.D. pottery was used principally for the preparation of fish, both cooking and oil extraction, a process which resulted in a glue-like residue on the pots (McPherron 1967: 47). These pots saw little use as storage vessels. At Lake Nipissing/French River sites, pots, used to prepare corn 'gruel' (Brizinski 1978: 53), were used as storage vessels, and were probably traded.⁵¹ Such uses, strongly linked to the presence of horticulture and trade, may have increased the demand for pots as a medium of exchange. Pots were historically associated with feasts and banquets, and reported in use among the Georgian Bay Algonkian when fishing was plentiful (Wrong ed. 1939: 110,186).

⁵⁰ There is no evidence of aboriginal occupation on the Amable du Fond River system between Wilkes and Kioshkoki Lakes (Hurley et al, 1972: 15). Surveys along the Mattawa River show evidence of transient occupation (Tyyska, 1975: 121).

⁵¹ Based on Brizinski's findings, 57.1% of the 14 vessels recovered were used to cook gruel, 28.6 % were used for storage or trade. 14.3% were broken during firing.

Birch bark containers were, however, far more suitable to Algonkian society. They were portable, resistant to breakage, and required less energy (i.e. firing) to make. Huron pots were well-known for their limitations storing moist substances, when they became soft and broke apart (Ibid: 109). This disadvantage may have restricted pottery to specific uses, such as cooking corn gruel, storing dry substances, or as a trade item. Even the Huron stored corn in birch bark bags (Ibid: 60). The fur trader Perrot during the seventeenth century reported that birch, elm and pine barks had replaced pottery as storage vessels, cooking pots and dishes (Blair ed. 1911-12: ft. 80). Having potentially a short life span, pottery may have been readily disposed of, subject to hasty imitation, and somewhat peripheral to subsistence. Pottery use among the Nipissing appears associated with the change in diet to corn, and as a product of trade. There is no evidence at Shebishikong from which to base similar conclusions.

From the perspective of social organization, the presence of juvenile ceramics at Shebishikong (Wright 1980: 12),⁵² and the small size of pottery at Glen (Ibid 1981:

⁵² The percentage of juvenile pots at Shebishikong was 7.6% in level 1, and 35.7% at the surface which shows a very high frequency of juvenile activity. Wright described the juvenile ceramics as being of "inept handling of the paste" (Wright 1980: 17). Compared with the Lalonde Copeland Site, where 7.37 % of the pots are juvenile samples, Shebishikong level 1 shares an almost equal percentage at 7.6%. The surface level portrays a different picture as 35.7% of the vessels were

55) may support an occupation by small family groups. These unskilled potters, perhaps children, may have been copying Huron-Petun and Lalonde designs.

Precontact Land and Resource Use in Georgian Bay

The combined faunal and lithic material reported at the Glen and Shebishikong sites express seasonal approaches to Georgian Bay during the fall-winter, and spring-summer months.⁵³ The spring-summer, and perhaps early fall, river and shore line occupation exploited diverse species: sturgeon, northern pike, duck, catfish, moose, beaver, mink, otter, turtle and clam. The fall-winter island occupation secured lake trout, waterfowl, hare and beaver for subsistence. During the fall, mobility was exercised in the island environment. During the spring, activity concentrated along the shore and near river mouths.⁵⁴ As the spring spawning period was of longer duration than fall spawning, because of the overlap in the spawning periods of individual species from March to early June, the spring-

classified as juvenile pots.

⁵³ This presumes that the Shebishikong people exploited the most reliable resources, but did not neglect the least reliable (cf. Lee 1968: 41). An economic adaptation established on fishing, does not preclude some hunting.

⁵⁴ The Shebishikong site does support group activities concentrated around river mouths and Georgian Bay. Whether territories could be said to center around the rivers (cf. Finlayson 1977: 561) has yet to be determined.

summer occupation may have attracted a larger occupation. The river mouths were preferred because most spring spawning fish do not school or spawn in open waters (Heidenreich 1971: 19). It is likely that the Shebishikong people looked to the Shebeshikong River to provide for their immediate subsistence needs, particularly during the spring, before turning their attention in the fall toward Shebeshikong Bay (and the Georgian Bay islands) for fishing, hunting and trapping.

The occupation at Glen suggests that fall-winter resource use required special cutting tools. Thirty-seven per cent of the tools recovered were either biface or slate knife uses.⁵⁵ The remainder of the fall-winter tool kit consisted of celts which may have functioned as ice chisels used in ice fishing. Skinner (1921: 202) for example, reported that the Menominee lashed celts to a stout handle to cut holes in the ice. Fishing equipment likely moved with the group as it left the shore and moved to the fishing islands. During the winter the group could maintain an inland village some miles inland, away from approaching westerlie winds, but within reach of the islands in Georgian

⁵⁵ Absent from what is representative of the lithic technology in the region are irregular unifacially flaked slate knives found scattered along the east shore of Georgian Bay, as far west as Blind River (Wright 1981: 55). These knives were associated with fall fishing locations judging by their recovery from the Glen site.

Bay for winter fishing and trapping.

Shebishikong was a sheltered, well-drained site close to fresh water, extensive fishing, relatively good, sandy soils, firewood, and to a large hinterland. In many respects, this settlement pattern is similar to a Pickering pattern of land use ca. 800 A.D.-1250 A.D. as it was represented at Rice Lake near Lake Simcoe. Pickering base camps were at river mouths for fishing, followed by movement to inland villages for consumption and storage (Pearce 1978: 21-22). The ethnographic identification of a second camp inland suggests this pattern was feasible.⁵⁶

Archaeological evidence shows that the hinterland area extending as far east as Algonquin Park did not form part of the exploitation range⁵⁷ of the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples. The archaeology of Algonquin Park suggests exploitation concentrated during the Late Iroquois period, 1400 A.D. to 1600 A.D. when it was primarily used during warm weather. Few of the sites in the Park were located along the drainage basin readily accessible to Georgian Bay, along the Muskoka-Oxtongue route (Hurley et al

⁵⁶ (Interview with Margaret Jones, Shawanaga Reserve, August 22, 1983; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Shawanaga).

⁵⁷ The exploitation range refers to an indefinite area of habitual exploitation (Rogers and Black 1976: 25).

1972: 65).⁵⁸ Additionally, as warm weather sites (Hurley and Kenyon 1970: 122-125) they were used principally for fishing and hunting, as was Shebishikong.⁵⁹ Historically Algonquin Park was used by wintering Algonkin returning to the Ottawa Valley from Huronia (Hurley et al 1972: 7).⁶⁰

Cultural Identification of Shebishikong

Shebishikong emerged during the swamp and bog climate of Juntunen, and continued through the florescence of Iroquois culture in southern Ontario and the cooling period of 1550 A.D.⁶¹ The temporal range of Shebishikong's level 1 ends in 1650 A.D. (Wright 1980: 4), corresponding with the

⁵⁸ Of 281 sites recorded in Algonquin Park, only 12 (4.2%) were identified in the southwest Oxtongue-Muskoka drainage basin excluding Smoke, Canoe, Teepee and Big Porcupine lake (Hurley et al 1972: 65,185). It is possible that twentieth century water regulation activities destroyed sites.

⁵⁹ Sites identified on water systems accessible to Georgian Bay suggest a connection between quartz lithics and historic elements. Few projectile points were recovered and flint was scarce (Hurley et al 1972: 75), suggesting the Park was not hunted for large game. A higher frequency of quartz tools were identified in the Georgian Bay drainage basin than in sites draining into the Ottawa watershed where chert tools predominate. This may suggest that tools used by peoples entering the area from Georgian Bay were locally available and disposable.

⁶⁰ Three glass beads, one which was identified to date to 1600 A.D.-1620 A.D. were recovered from Algonquin Park (Hurley et al 1972: 84), suggesting Ottawa Valley Algonkin bearing trade goods on route to their wintering grounds at Huronia. The Algonkin were known to bring hatchets, wampum, kettles, exotic cherts, and Iroquois prisoners with them (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 102-103).

⁶¹ Between 1550 A.D.- 1600 A.D., Lalonde, or Northern Division Huron, with the exception of two groups who later became the Petun, united with the Southern Division Huron (Wright 1966) consolidating into a extensive settlement in what is now known as Huronia (Heidenreich 1971).

destruction of Huronia to the south, and the dispersal of the Huron and several Georgian Bay native peoples by the Iroquois.

The presence of stone tools, detritus, juvenile pottery, and fauna suggest the Shebishikong people were performing multiple tasks such as tool and pottery making, and food preparation. Scraping and cutting activities dominated the site occupation. Familiar with local lithic sources, they also maintained ties to other areas for sources of Port Frank and Onondaga flint. The spatial limits of the trade, demonstrated by the presence of Onondaga, Port Franks flint, and Manitoulin Island/Fitzwilliam Island flint, extended to locations circumscribing Georgian Bay. The radius of culture contact was likely contained between 200 and 400 kilometres of Great Lakes shoreline. The political significance of these limits depends on whether the prehistoric people of Shebishikong were the merchants or recipients of the trade.⁶²

On the basis of lithic assemblage, Shebishikong compares favourably to sites culturally associated with the

⁶² The presence of Onondaga material at Lake Nipissing suggests trade with the prehistoric Huron (Brizinski 1978: 235, 251). It is not as clear whether the presence of this flint at Shebishikong pointed to prehistoric Huron trade or trade with the Petun and/or Neutral, with the Ottawa as likely purveyors (Heidenreich 1971: 228).

Northern Ojibwa,⁶³ sharing scrapers, projectile points, wedges, and other special use tools (cf. Dawson 1987: 152). Although the frequency was very low, the identification of Juntunen and Blackduck ceramics may suggest an Ojibwa influence at Shebishikong. The difficulty identifying archaeological sites with cultural entities makes this suggestion speculative. The lack of a dated chronology intensifies the problem (see Noble 1982: 36). Unlike areas north of Lake Huron which have been strongly associated with the Northern Ojibwa, and where the major ceramic tradition is supported by Blackduck (Dawson 1987),⁶⁴ the major ceramic tradition in Georgian Bay is Huron-Petun, reflecting cultural influences from the south. Shebishikong lacks a strong secondary ceramic tradition as ceramics representative of Blackduck, Juntunen, and Michigan figure equally if infrequently, in the sample. Michigan ceramics including stamped, push-pull, Juntunen, and Mackinac have been associated in historic times with Potowatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa in northern Michigan (Ibid: 156). Pottery

⁶³ Notably included are the Nyman, Michipicoten, Pic River, Mound Island, McCluskey and Potato Island sites (Dawson 1987: 152).

⁶⁴The combined association of Huron-Petun ceramics, a simple tool kit, Peninsular Woodland and eighteenth century historic items concurs with Northern Ojibwa temporary camp sites investigated on Lake Superior (Dawson 1987: 115, 162).

resembling Huron-Petun⁶⁵ of the Late Iroquois period occur in mixed ceramic components dating from the fifteenth century to the present (Ibid.).

The slight shift in ceramic styles to Huron-Petun styles experienced at Juntunen (McPherron 1967: 279)⁶⁶ evidently intensified at Shebishikong judging by the predominance of these types.⁶⁷ A variant ceramic type was assigned to Juntunen ware (Wright 1980: 3) suggesting the possibility of contact between the two sites. Occupied from at least 1200 A.D., the Shebishikong people were observers, if not direct participants in the developing horticulture south of the region.⁶⁸

The introduction of exotic cherts at Shebishikong during the Middleport period⁶⁹ marked an acceleration in

⁶⁵ In the Georgian Bay region, the Nipissing, Ottawa, or Algonkin manufactured pottery of Iroquois style (Wright 1981: 58).

⁶⁶ Juntunen shifted toward Iroquois style pottery from the previous Wisconsin Bois Blanc phase (McPherron 1967: 279).

⁶⁷ Huron-Petun pottery was introduced much later to the Lake Superior region. It did not appear at Michipicoten until 1450 A.D. (Dawson 1987: 157).

⁶⁸ Yarnell argues that the northern limit of corn growing was reached sometime between 1100 A.D. and 1200 A.D. at Juntunen (1964: 14). Brizinski suggests an earlier date of 1025 A.D. for the introduction of corn at Lake Nipissing (1978: 129).

⁶⁹ The Middleport period has often been associated with rapid change. This is inconclusive as Trigger has pointed out (1985: 91). Some archaeologists extend the period to between 1250 A.D. and 1400 A.D. which slows the change, others shorten it substantially to 50 years. Middleport has generally been dated 1300 A.D. to 1400 A.D. (Wright 1966: 64).

trading activity. This coincides with activities at Lake Nipissing where trading activities in 1300 A.D. stabilized between the Nipissing and Iroquois (Brizinski 1978: 235, 251). This may have encouraged the occupation of the Shebishikong site which, in turn, was stimulated by a bipolar industry, increased imported lithic materials, and the presence of a dominant Iroquois ceramic tradition on the site (cf. Brizinski 1978: 256). The location of the Shebishikong site, between two trading groups, the ancestral Huron and the Nipissing, and their historic predecessors meant Shebishikong potentially enjoyed access to a reliable and lucrative trade.

The prehistoric people of Shebishikong may have been part of a general reorganization of peoples seeking relationships with a horticultural trading economy, perhaps having assimilated corn growing practices as a secondary occupation to fishing and small game subsistence. How dependent they were on the presence and practice of horticulture has yet to be explored.

Precontact Social Organization

Cleland (1982) offers a view of precontact social organization of Great Lakes peoples which rests on a single type of fishing activity, the gill net fishery. He argues that the development of a fall gill net fishery during the

Late Woodland period, which marked a departure from the previous pattern established on spring spawning fishing, radically altered the social organization of Great Lakes fishing peoples by increasing food, labour requirements, and population (1982: 778). This expansion contributed to a gradual shift in social organization toward greater group definition and identity. In Cleland's view, this strengthened affinal relationships supporting band endogamy and stability. Hickerson (1967) has associated this condition with seventeenth century social organization by residential clans, as an important characteristic of the precontact social organization.

The value of this model to the understanding of precontact Great Lakes social organization has been challenged at the very core of its argument--that Great Lakes native peoples fishing using a gill net during the Late Woodland period. Recently examined Juntunen ceramics⁷⁰ established that seine nets having a mesh of less than 2.0-3.0 cm, were the only type of net used at Juntunen (Petersen et al 1984: 205). Mesh measuring between 1.5-2.3 cm are suitable not only for fish, but to catch fowl and small mammals, making it an effective all-purpose device (Ibid:

⁷⁰ This involved measuring cordage, netting, and twinning which had been impressed into ceramic material at Juntunen (Petersen et al 1984: 205).

204). Such nets were also reported to have been used in the seventeenth century to ensnare duck, pike, and carp (Thwaites ed. 1959, 56: 121).

On the basis of the fish bones recovered from the Shebishikong site there is little to suggest that nets were used. The three fish species, sturgeon, pike and catfish, would not usually be caught during a single sweep with a seine net. Without evidence of the various size and types of fish, the use of nets at Shebishikong cannot positively be determined.

Evidence for Cleland's gill net model of precontact social organization is also unsupported by the archaeology of fall fishing sites in Georgian Bay, represented by thin deposits of cultural materials consistent with small groups of peoples. The island geography likely dispersed fall group activity into discrete island locations. Within the context of subsistence fishing⁷¹ the importance of fall spawning fish to spring spawning fish, however, is difficult to judge without the archaeological presence of larger site locations, or of comparable quantities of each type of spawning fish.

Cleland presents the Late Woodland gill net fall

⁷¹ Berkes describes subsistence fishing as local, non-commercial fishing oriented not primarily to recreation, but for the procurement of fish for the consumption of fishers, their families and their community (1990: 35).

fishery as a labour intensive "community enterprise" involving cleaning fish, gathering firewood, constructing smoking racks, and sustaining fires, activities important to the preservation of fish (1982: 779). These activities would depend upon when the fish were eaten. If fish were consumed quickly, within a week or two, they were likely partly cooked and dried for a few hours only (Rogers 1973a: 67), reducing the labour and time involved. Rogers also found that drying fish may have taken more time, but it used smaller fires (Ibid: 68). How much could be stored depended upon the number of persons preserving fish, the fuel used for smoking, how available containers were, and weather conditions. Heavy rains impeded air drying as the probable method of preservation, although smoke houses may have been built to dry fish. The lack of archaeological support for the preservation of fall spawning fish is probably linked to the small number of the exploiting group, the time-consuming method of preservation, and operational difficulties arising by not having access to metal knives and tools⁷² (cf. Knight 1978: 217). Cultural reasons were undoubtedly important. Spiritual beliefs in abundant year round fisheries, and trade opportunities for food with neighbouring groups

⁷² This situation no doubt improved with the introduction of European trade goods exchanged with the Nipissing and the Huron, and later with the Récollets and Jesuits.

would not have placed great importance on preserving fish. Why fish were stored is another problem that Cleland does not consider. Was the preservation of fish in recognition of scarcity, attributed to climatic influences, or for its exchange value? As Suttles has noted, an occasional period of scarcity is not reason enough for most people to store food every winter (1968: 64).

Cleland notes that larger fish could be exploited with the gill net (1982: 774). The size of the trout caught at the Glen site, weighing perhaps 100 lbs, suggests that only a few fish were necessary to feed a family over the entire winter.⁷³ It also suggests that nets may not have been the suitable method to catch such a large size of fish.⁷⁴ It is also difficult to reconcile how gill net fishing as described by Cleland, involving an activity lasting for such a short period, between 2-4 weeks, so

⁷³ There is ethnographic support for this contention. Ted Wheatley indicated that a family fishing for trout near Parry Island during the early winter needed only three or four fish to feed the family for the entire winter (Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 16, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island). Dr. Fikret Berkes doubts that many of these 'senior fish' could be caught. Dr. Preston suggests six pounds per adult per day as a likely consumption figure (Preston 1991: personal communication). This does not explain however, the archaeological findings at the Glen site.

⁷⁴ Champlain reported enormous trout in Georgian Bay in 1615: "I have seen some that were as much as four and a half feet long, and the smallest one sees are two and a half feet in length" (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 45-46). Smaller size trout were considered to have been difficult to catch with nets because of their smooth skin. Unless the mouth was open, which would snag the net, trout simply swam through the mesh (Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

influenced a group's social organization over the duration of the seasonal cycle. Although Cleland built an important social organization model around the gill net fishery, without apparent prehistoric evidence of the gill net, or of large groups, the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples as they are represented at the Shebishikong site, did not likely achieve the social organization he suggests.⁷⁵

Although the archaeology of the Georgian Bay region provides little evidence from which to construct a model of social organization, the Shebishikong and Glen materials suggest small groups exploited fishing and small game resources on shore locations near river mouths during the spring, and on off-shore locations on the islands during the fall. The settlement pattern was probably composed of several extended families⁷⁶ perhaps sharing one housing structure, exploiting the spring and summer resources of the river mouth and bay area. In the fall this group dispersed to the islands to fish for fall spawning fish. Their winter occupation is uncertain, but they may have located inland of

⁷⁵ Despite these reservations, Cleland's study of the Great Lakes fishery provides an important contribution to the role of native fishers in the Great Lakes region.

⁷⁶ The presence of juvenile ceramics reinforce the presence of family groups involved in resource activities during the spring/summer occupations. The Naomikong Point site, between Sault Ste. Marie and Whitefish Bay, is a Laurel Middle Woodland site where fishing increasingly played an important role (Janzen 1968: 100-101). From the location of the site and the distribution of net sinkers, the extended family acted as an independent unit netting fish (Ibid: 91).

their spring and summer residence, but remaining close to the aquatic resources in Georgian Bay. By restricting themselves to the islands over the winter, they risked the beginning of spring thaw, which could inhibit their ability to reach spring spawning grounds. The exploitation of mature beaver may, as previously noted, suggest that groups may have annually occupied the same spring and summer locations.

The Little Ice Age climate likely intensified the subsistence pattern based on fish, aquatic mammals, and corn as represented by archaeological findings at Juntunen and Lake Nipissing-French River sites. Convincing evidence of this subsistence pattern in Georgian Bay, as represented by the Shebishikong and Glen sites, is however, unsupported. It is also unlikely that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay lived exclusively on a fish diet.⁷⁷ Support for corn is as yet speculative.

The cooling period after the florescence of the Iroquois culture in 1550 A.D. may have exacerbated concerns over perishable goods, leading to investments in storage activity and trade.⁷⁸ How this was reflected in the social

⁷⁷ Preston suggests such a diet would be "dismally dull" (1991: personal communication).

⁷⁸ To what extent the prehistoric trade was balanced between perishable and non-perishable goods is not known. Obviously flints, cherts, metals, and other items have a long life span and travel further

organization remains to be explored.

Bone Ritual

As in other areas, the Shebishikong site suggests interesting possibilities about the ritual nature of the people who once occupied the site. Findings from the site suggest ritual activity in two areas: bone ritual to beaver and fish bones, and the presence of copper oxide which had been wrapped in birch bark. The first two practices witness the importance of fish and aquatic mammals to the group's cultural identity. They also serve as an important link to the practices of earlier peoples, providing some evidence of regional cultural continuity.

Disregarding sampling error and non-cultural considerations, a few items suggest the extent to which the archaeological sources infer ritual activity at Shebishikong: Certain anatomical features of the beaver were ritually treated. The skull and forelegs were present (Wright 1980: 11), but there was no evidence of feet, pelvis or shoulder bones. The skull and forelegs had been charred by fire (Ibid).⁷⁹

distances than do preserved fish, hides, and berries.

⁷⁹ Traditionally, the knee caps, feet, hands, head and tail were placed at a mouth of the creek (Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 8, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island)

Although it is often assumed that the presence of charred beaver bone suggests beaver were roasted before being eaten, charred bone is not always a direct result of the cooking process. Roasting is an easy cooking method but it results in waste. Not only is a quantity of nutritious liquid lost, but the meat shrinks substantially. Boiling beaver requires less fuel and provides the added benefit of a nutritious broth (Ferri 1989: 95). The one advantage to roasting over boiling was that the meat could be made edible faster, which was important to mobile groups. Boiling also removed the taste of smoke (Preston 1991: personal communication). Roasting may have also required leaving the skin attached which destroyed the value of the fur.⁸⁰

If the bones were charred during roasting, much of the meat and fat were also likely reduced to an inedible state. The only parts of the animal that were charred by roasting were those bones located at the extremity of the animal, unprotected by fat and muscle, and directly applied

⁸⁰ Preston suggests that roasting beaver with the skin on is not necessary and that such a practice, as it has been recorded by the Jesuits may relate to a first kill or "an ethnologically idiosyncratic practice." Commonly, the beaver is roasted by being suspended on a cord above, and to one side of the fire. It is regularly rotated, the drippings caught in a container at the side of the fire, and little burning of flesh or bone takes place (1991: personal communication). When beaver skins were of little value, as was the case when the Iroquois prevented their trade ca. 1659-1660, the Kilistinon broiled beaver over the fire "as is done with Swine in France" (Coulson ed. 1970: 217-235). Fur trader J.D. Cameron suggests that a large "singed roasted Beaver" was a traditional feast dish. This practice, which destroyed the animal's fur, was returned to by the Indians when fur traders would not trade for beaver skins (Glazebrook ed. 1938: 435-436).

to the fire, not just the skull and forelegs. What this suggests is that beaver bones were deliberately charred by being placed in the dying embers of the fire, after the animal was cooked. Landes noted that beaver bone were placed into the fire by the Ojibwa for use in scapular divination (1938: 134). Preston however, suggests that simple, ritually modest (or ritual-free) disposal may also have been the reason (1991: personal communication). Among the Nascapi, the beaver shoulder bone, pelvis, patella and foreleg were used in divination. When these bones, particularly the pelvis, were subjected to heat, the burned areas, in the form of spots and cracks were interpreted by a shaman (Speck 1935: 117, 142, 145, 165). Thus, the evidence of charred beaver bone does not necessarily support roasting as a preferred method of cooking at the Shebishikong site. Unlike the beaver bone recovered from Shebishikong, fish bone had been purposely kept from the fire (Wright 1980: 11).

Other examples of this ritual activity to both beaver and fish bone have a lengthy history in the surrounding area. Special rites were given to beaver bone after 500 A.D. - 800 A.D., judging by the presence of similar elements on Lacloche Island (Greenman and Stanley 1940: 195-199). Unburnt fish bone had also been recovered from a hearth (Ibid: 195). The intentional charring of beaver bone, and

the preservation of fish bone from fire, were practised by earlier cultures, notably Saugeen, an early Woodland manifestation dating from 700 B.C. to 800 A.D.⁸¹ (Finlayson 1977: vii, 480, 561). Indeed, carriers of the Saugeen focus were thought to have followed a way of life similar, if not ancestral, to the historic Algonkian (Wright and Anderson 1963: 57; Finlayson 1977: 606).⁸²

Copper was identified among the recoveries at Shebishikong in the form of a folded sheet of birch bark which had been preserved by copper oxide (Wright 1980: 10).⁸³ Copper was described by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century as having been recovered from the bottom of the Great Lakes, believed to be a present from the underground gods. Native people were known to preserve copper, wrap it, and consider it as their most precious possession. These objects were also believed to have been inherited, some from "time immemorial" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 50: 265). A similar object was described in the eighteenth century at Lake Superior by Kohl (1860: 60), which had been carried in a

⁸¹ Saugeen was once believed by Janzen (1968: 105) to be similar to the Naomikong Point site.

⁸² Saugeen culture was adapted to the littoral regions of the north shore of Lake Erie, the east shore Lake Huron, south shore of Georgian Bay and the major rivers at the Grand, Upper, Thames, Maitland, Saugeen and Nottawasaga (Finlayson 1977).

⁸³ The amount recovered at Shebishikong was minute compared to that from the Juntunen site where more than 700 pieces were found in the level, ca. 1200 A.D.-1400 A.D. (McPherron 1967: 106).

medicine bag and passed on from father to son.⁸⁴

Although native copper was undoubtedly important in the upper Lake Superior and western Lake Michigan area where it was once mined, the minute recovery at Shebishikong suggests that, at most, only small fragments of copper may have been traded by the Ojibwa, Nipissing or Ottawa who were most likely to have contacts in these areas.⁸⁵

How the Shebishikong people responded to changes in climate, resources, and to products of trade, is poorly understood. How the Shebishikong people as fishers and small game hunters responded in ritual activity to an emerging horticulture culture to the south, enveloped in its planting mythologies, is impossible to determine without a detailed chronology and understanding of Algonkian ideology. Were the Shebishikong people threatened by the presence of the large sedentary pallisaded villages of the Huron emerging during the sixteenth century, or were they seduced by the presence of corn, and trade goods? Did their ritual activity intensify under the presumed stress, and did new ritual practices appear?

⁸⁴ 'Coppers,' which were a three foot beaten piece of copper, were broken during the memorial potlatch for a deceased chief for West Coast native peoples. The fragments of copper were referred to as the "bones of the deceased" and were given to high ranking guests. These coppers were originally associated with mortuary rites (Drucker 1965: 65).

⁸⁵ Heidenreich reported that the amount of copper recovered from Huron archaeological sites was also very small (1971: 227).

The Shebishikong people shared with previous cultures, ritual beliefs directed toward beaver and fish bones, notably present in the Saugeen culture dating to 700 B.C. to 800 A.D. as it was expressed on the southern shores of Georgian Bay. To the extent a cultural relationship can be established between Shebishikong and Saugeen is a subject for further archaeological research.

The interpretation of land use in Georgian Bay has assumed a site specific land and resource use pattern, if somewhat restricted to a presumed single group of people. Perhaps two, if not more, discrete cultural occupations took place at Shebishikong. Much more archaeological work is necessary. The prehistoric people of Shebishikong were likely part of a general reorganization of peoples who sought greater participation in a horticultural economy through trade, perhaps by accommodating corn growing and corn trading with fishing and small game hunting activities. Corn planting and harvesting could have been accommodated into a fishing/small game economy supported by a climate which could have encouraged island and shoreline occupation. Certainly a simple fishing technology would have promoted a mobile subsistence concentrated at fishing locations on islands or shorelines.

It is appropriate therefore, given the limitations of the Shebishikong site, to be cautious about descriptions

of native subsistence simply on the basis of the expected proportion of food sources obtained by a certain activity, especially when such estimates are not available, and when it can not be balanced against the perceived importance of the food gathering activity. Until a cultural chronology of Shebishikong is refined, the prehistory of the Georgian Bay region must remain speculative. This implies that a regional synthesis, built on one site, the Shebishikong site is, at this time, premature.

Summary

In an attempt to gain an understanding of the precontact subsistence pattern, liberty had to be taken with the chronology to attain a simultaneous perception of the cultural pattern, given the paucity of information. Although Shebishikong is not an ideal example from which to base an understanding of land use in Georgian Bay, the following can be made about precontact land use.

Shebishikong emerged during the Little Ice Age climate ca. 1200 A.D. The region was occupied by a low population density living in small family groups which principally exploited the shore line and island environment. Although fish were not a major feature of the archaeological recovery, fishing, along with aquatic animals, likely played an important role in the land use and subsistence pattern

which included sturgeon, pike, trout, catfish, moose, beaver, turtle, clam, waterfowl and small game. Large game hunting did not play a major role in land use at Shebishikong, and there is no evidence to suggest the hinterland region, extending as far as Algonquin Park was exploited by Georgian Bay native people. The exploitation range seasonally may have concentrated on the shoreline and island environment, although alternatives exist. Based upon its possible classification as a warm weather site, and given the environmental variables discussed in the previous chapter, an island and shoreline occupation where fishing played an important role must be considered to be somewhat more than a surmise. To present the contrary view, that of a hunting adaptation, challenges the archaeological findings at Shebishikong, the findings from other Great Lakes sites, and the climatic influences discussed earlier. The volume of potential food resources in the waters of Georgian Bay, the archaeological absence of large quantities of fish bones⁸⁶, and the disturbed nature of the Shebishikong site, calls to attention further explanations.

The following possibilities may explain the shore and island occupation of Georgian Bay, and the lack of

⁸⁶Perhaps the lack of fish bones at Shebishikong supports the ritual value of the bones. Should quantities of fish bone material be recovered in the future, the relationship between ritual and action would require reexamination.

archaeological evidence of hinterland land use:

1) The Georgian Bay shoreline region was exploited by several groups.

2) The area was used by various changing, segmented groups of either Nipissing, Ottawa, or Ojibwa to take advantage of local trading with the Huron and middlemen trading. Land use patterns were likely seasonal if not constantly in a state of flux.

3) The area was continuously inhabited by small groups of Algonkian speaking peoples since 1200 A.D. who later developed important trading relationships with the groups ancestral to the Huron which were likely based on a subsistence fishing/small game economy. How distinct this occupation was from that of the precontact Nipissing, Ottawa and Ottawa Valley Algonkin may be impossible to determine without a larger inventory of sites and comparative ethnohistorical research.

4) The area was consistently inhabited by Ottawa Valley Algonkin, many of whom who were later dispersed and killed by epidemic and Iroquois wars.

All of the above are possibilities, however, the probability of the third option, is supported by historical evidence, details of which are offered in Chapter Four.

Ritual practices, reflected in beaver and fish bone ceremonialism, suggest cultural continuity within the region, which may have a historical depth dating to 700 B.C.

The Shebishikong people were culturally influenced by horticultural cultures to the south, principally by the Iroquois culture, which is reflected in the lithic and pottery samples. The expanse of that influence extended around the littoral region of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, suggesting a trading radius of between 200 and 400 kilometres.

This chapter has provided an impression of the aboriginal land use pattern practised by the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples. Although the Shebishikong site provides tentative answers to certain questions about location, cultural influence, and resource and land use, to appreciate what the archaeological data means in socio-economic terms, historical evidence needs to be considered. Heeding the cautions of Sanger (1982: 195),⁸⁷ this

⁸⁷ Sanger determined that the prehistoric pattern of the Passamaquoddy Bay area was characterized by winter use of the coastal areas and summer use of the inland areas. This is the exact opposite of the standard ethnographic model of winter/inland, summer/coastal occupation.

discussion has carefully avoided extensive use of historic documents to explain prehistoric events. Chapter Four considers these very sources to develop and refine the land use pattern of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay during the seventeenth century.

The historic presence of European traders altered the winter coastal pattern as trade became limited to the summer months (1982: 195). The potential use of the islands and shoreline year round in Georgian Bay region may also challenge the ethnographic model.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE ALGONKIAN SPEAKING PEOPLES OF GEORGIAN BAY
1615-1649

This chapter relies heavily on a wealth of works: the explorations of Samuel de Champlain who spent five months living in Huron villages in late 1615 and early 1616; Gabriel Sagard, a Récollet lay-priest, who recorded his experiences in Le Grand Voyage du Payes des Hurons in 1623; and the most valuable collection of information, The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents. The latter contains the observations of Jesuit missionaries who undertook evangelical missions, principally among the Huron, but also among Algonkians, from approximately 1634-1649, before the Huron were dispersed by the Iroquois. Few other explorers appreciated the ecological relationships within the region as the Jesuits and Récollets, for they contended with the everyday realities of living in this environment. For this reason, their observations of native practices are especially important.¹

¹ Although the Jesuits may not have been equally familiar with all parts of the Georgian Bay Algonkian seasonal cycle, contributing to some degree of distortion, their observations attempted to be comprehensive. Heidenreich (1971) and Trigger (1969, 1973, 1985) provide excellent

The Southeastern Ojibwa

The Southeastern Ojibwa include the Marameg, Ojibwa (Outchibou), Mantouek, Noquet, Saulteaux, Mississauga, Amikwa, Nikikouek, Achiligouan, Outchougai, and Ousaouarini (Rogers 1978: 761). Of these eleven groups, the last four have been historically identified as residing in the Georgian Bay region, and more than half of all Southeastern Ojibwa groups exploited the fish, mammal and plant resources of the region at one time or another.²

Culturally, Georgian Bay has long been identified with the Ottawa (Odawa) (Jenness 1932; Quimby 1960), who have been historically described as a semi-sedentary trading peoples living in villages.³ The name Ottawa has been extended to innumerable nations, as well as localized over one band or tribe, depending on the observer.⁴ For this reason the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were often arbitrarily included under both Ottawa and Algonkian

secondary sources to Huron materials.

² This includes the Amikwa, Saulteaux, Mississauga, and Nikikouek.

³ To be an Ottawa during this particular historical period, meant to be a trader (Fitting 1970: 195). It also implied a semi-sedentary residence pattern cultivating corn. Male hunting parties left villages in the hands of women and children for long periods of time when they were occupied with trading excursions in the summer months. Fishing activities did not provide their chief subsistence (Ibid: 196).

⁴ At the time of European contact the Ottawa spoke a southeastern dialect of Ojibwa (Feest and Feest 1978: 772).

labels (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 127).⁵ Waisberg (1977: 23) concluded that the Ottawa must have participated in multiple 'lifestyles,' adapting to conditions in the Great Lakes. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were largely Ottawa (Odawa) (Noble 1991: personal communication). Their adaptation to Georgian Bay region demonstrates one such variation.

How the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay came to be identified with the Ottawa can be traced to a single observation made by Champlain, who mentioned meeting 300 Ottawa (Cheveux Relevé) males near the French River, claiming to be picking berries (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 44). They were described as having their bodies and faces painted, and were carrying clubs, bows, arrows, and shields (Ibid: plate III). There is little doubt about the reasons for their presence in Georgian Bay in 1615, and berry picking is probably not one of them. Waisberg (1977: 33) found it difficult to credit 300 Ottawa males picking berries during the raiding season. He believes the Ottawa were either humouring Champlain or evading his inquiries. Their painted descriptions suggest that the Ottawa were in Georgian Bay to rendezvous at the French River in preparation

⁵ Compared to Jenness' map (1932: 266) which he optimistically dates to 1525 A.D., Noble's representation distinguishes the Ojibwa presence in the Georgian Bay region.

for either trading or raiding. Further evidence of sustained resource use by this Ottawa group in the region, except for the questionable berry picking proposition, is historically unsupported. As later identified by the Jesuits, the historic Ottawa, came to be known to be composed of four large groups: the Sinago, Kiskakon, Negouichiriniouek, and Nassauaketon (cf. Waisberg 1977: 127, 132), none of whom have been historically linked to the region. The 'Ottawa' who came to compose the Georgian Bay Algonkian, did not appear to conform either by identity or known cultural practice to the cultural group who later came to be described as Ottawa.

The Protohistoric Algonkian Speaking Peoples of Georgian Bay, 1615-1649

Not only has there been confusion over the identity of the historic Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, their location in the region has also been the subject of confusion. Scholars who have attempted to map the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay have proposed several group identities and placements. Heidenreich (1971: map 24) initially identified the pre-1649 Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as Northern Algonkin, later changing this identification to Ojibwa (Harris ed. 1987, 1: plate 34). Employing a broader time frame, 1650-1850, Rogers suggested

an alternate identification of groups, placing them at locations near present day reserves (1978: 761). Both agree that the Outchougai⁶ and Ouasouarini resided in Georgian Bay (although Heidenreich's more recent version does not (Harris ed. 1987, 1: plate 34)), but differ as to their locations. The Sagaharini, whom Heidenreich considered local to the region, were not considered by Rogers.

The distribution of the individual groups named in Georgian Bay may be partially reconstructed from the records. Champlain's untitled map drawn in 1616 indicated solely the location of the Nipissing (*Bissiriniens*), north west of Lake Nipissing and actually closer to the north shore of Lake Huron than Lake Nipissing, in a location later associated with the Ojibwa. This map was probably the result of information supplied by Ottawa informants who met Champlain on the French River (Heidenreich 1976: 87).

More promising, the Récollet Sagard described the presence of groups residing in 'lodges' along the shoreline of Georgian Bay in 1623. He visited two such lodges along the shore, bartering corn for fish and bark (Wrong ed. 1939: 248, 249).⁷ Sagard described the lodges as elliptical

⁶ Trigger maintains that the Outchougai were either Ojibwa or Ottawa (1976.1: 166).

⁷ This observation of the settlement pattern can be compared with Champlain's *Carte de la Nouvelle France* of 1632, apparently copied from a birch bark and charcoal map drawn by Ottawa and Nipissing informants

structures⁸ equipped with two fireplaces, sheltering several families (Ibid: 185). Sagard's orientation of the lodges does not appear to coincide with identifiable geographical positions, except those which were placed at, or near the mouth of the French River (Ibid: 248-249).

Twenty years after Sagard's visit, between 1640 and 1649, the Jesuits recorded the names of groups inhabiting Georgian Bay region (fig. 14).⁹ From north to south these groups were catalogued as: the *Achiligouan* or "people with feathers on top," located at the mouth of the French River; the *Nikikouek*, or "Otter people,"¹⁰ the *Outchougai*¹¹ or

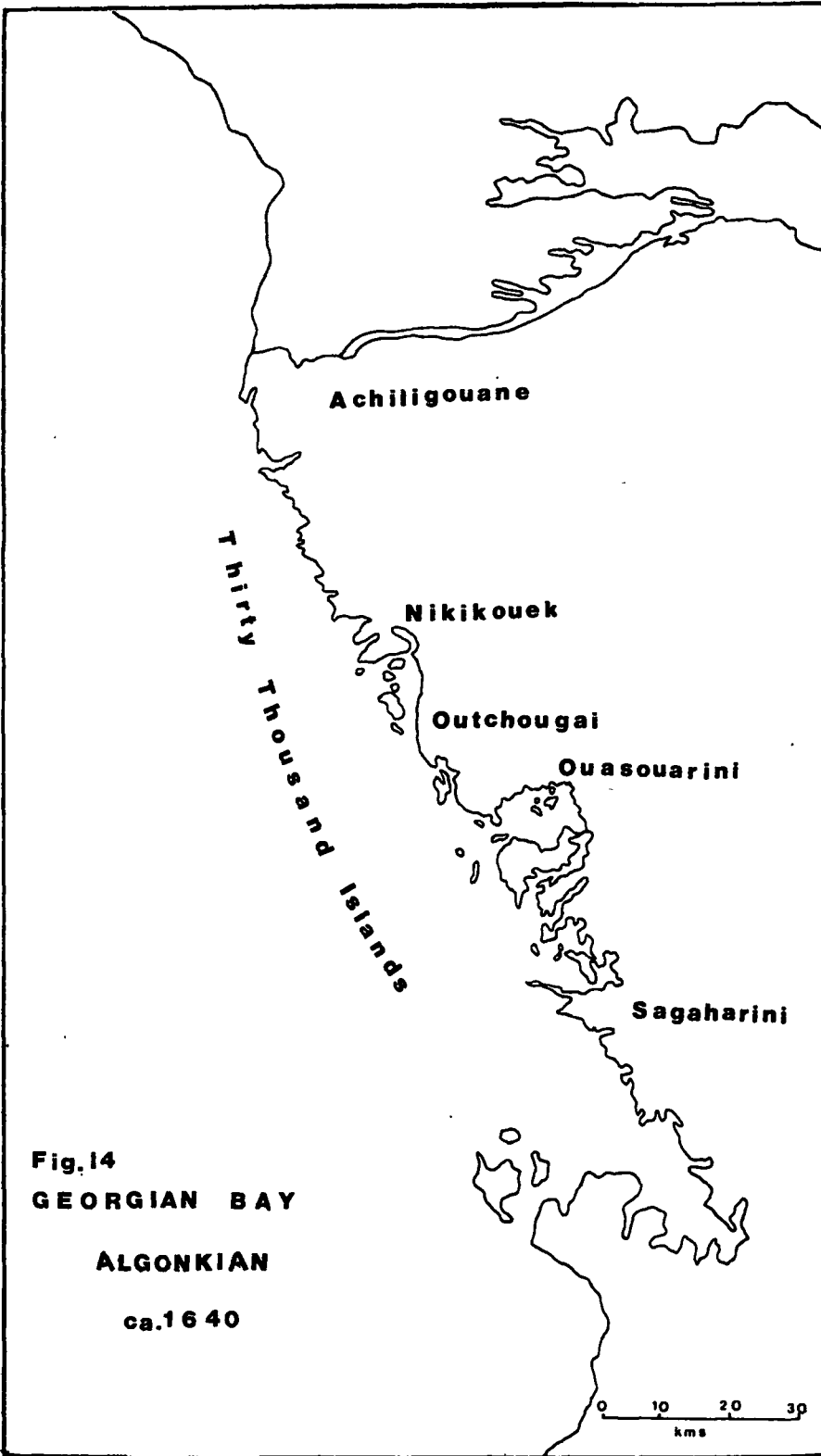
(Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 104-5).

⁸ Jameson later described them as "an egg cut in half lengthways" (1838.3: 32).

⁹ Few Jesuits spoke Algonquin. Notable exceptions were Claude Pijart, who learned the language in 1640-41 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 20: 93), Charles Raymbault (Ibid. 23: 207), and possibly Menard. By 1643, Claude Pijart was the only missionary who could speak Algonquin before the Huron dispersal in 1649.

¹⁰ The *Atontrataronon* (*Tontontaratontironon*) were also called the "Otter Nation" (White 1913: 467). They were a small Algonkian group living on the St. Lawrence River near the mouth of the Ottawa River before their dispersal to the St. Elizabeth Jesuit mission to the south of Lake Simcoe in 1641. St. Elizabeth was reportedly destroyed in 1642 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 26: 175; 27: 37) which may account for the presence of the "Otter People", *Nikikouek* living among the islands of Georgian Bay in 1648-49. It is conceivable that the *Atontrataronon* and the *Nikikouek* were the same people. This would give their immediate origin as the St. Lawrence-Ottawa Valley area. *Tawendettaroron* is Huron for otter (John Steckley 1984: personal communication).

¹¹ This name may derive from 'bear' and is related to *Roquai* (Johnson 1982: 4).



"Bear people,"¹² the *Ouasouarini* who were "people who resided on or by a place where something is reflected"¹³ or 'catfish'; and the *Sagaharini*, "people who dwell by a lake" who were at the immediate south end of Georgian Bay just north of Huronia¹⁴ (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 229, 258; Goddard 1978: 770; Johnson 1982: 2, 4). These names commonly referred to either a personal or a descriptive characteristic of the location occupied. There is no suggestion they refer to clan names (Johnson 1982: 5). It is likely that some groups were so concentrated in a well-defined location that their identity became associated with that location, notably the *Ouasouarini* and the *Sagaharini*. From the perspective of territorial ethnicity¹⁵ the *Outchougai* or the *Ouasouarini*, as they were identified by the Jesuits made likely candidates for the occupation of the

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Sausswakissing* is Ojibwa for Parry Island, meaning "place where birch is reflected upon the waters" (Johnson 1982: 4). The *Ouasouarini* have been called "catfish people" from *awa.ssi.*, meaning bullhead (Goddard 1978: 770), as were the *Marameg*, who resided on Lake Superior (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 133). Such merely underscores the "historical vagaries of naming" (Mason 1976: 361).

¹⁴ People having this name were recorded previously near the Rideau Lakes in eastern Ontario (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 258). It is conceivable that the named groups embraced multiple ethnicities, for as Mason found, "pseudoethnicities haunt history" (1976: 359).

¹⁵ This attributes a group or groups to an archaeological site or component on the basis of suggestive areal correspondence (Mason 1976: 351). Strict historical documentation is not required by this method. Simply being in the area is sufficient cause for the association (Ibid: 361).

Shebishikong site (fig. 14).

The protohistoric Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were described as speaking the same language as the north shore (Lake Huron) Algonkians (Thwaites ed. 1959, 33: 149). If they were not speaking a common trade language,¹⁶ it is possible they were speaking Ojibwa.

Trade in Georgian Bay: The early contact period

The historical period as it is uncertainly represented at Shebishikong,¹⁷ corresponds with three centuries of trading activity. The early historic period, coinciding with European trading, likely dates ca. 1590 A.D.- 1650 A.D.,¹⁸ the middle historic period corresponds

¹⁶ Le Jeune in 1632-33 described a jargon used between Algonkian speakers and the French which was neither French nor 'sauvage'. Algonkians communicated to each other in a 'patois', which could not be understood by the Europeans (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 258).

¹⁷ The historic items identified by Wright (1980: 10) in Shebishikong's level 1 include: French cobble-core gun flints, French bottle glass sherds, an iron knife and tip fragment, a brass scraper derived from a cut-up brass kettle, a rim rod, and worked glass which had been ground along the edges. The surface yielded European-style clay pipes (one impressed with a 'D'), brass kettle fragments including a rolled bead, iron awl and other iron items, a lead musket ball, a length of rod, and a gun flint, considered to be of French or Dutch style. The collection also included white seed beads, and porcelain (Ibid: 19, 20).

¹⁸ The date 1590 A.D. was determined from several findings. Huron ceramics dating between 1590 A.D. and 1670 A.D. were associated with projectile points and trade items at Lake Nipissing (Brizinski 1978: 141). At the BeGx-11 site at Methodist Point, dating 1500 A.D. to 1550 A.D. (O'Brien 1976: 79), plain trumpet and plain conical pipes appear to be of the same style to that recovered at Shebishikong (Ibid: 45; Wright 1980: 5). This provides a general time frame for Shebishikong. Trigger (1985: 152) also noted that intact trade goods including axes, iron knives and glass beads appear after 1580 A.D. in Neutral grave sites.

to the period ca. 1720 A.D., and the late historic period, 1800 A.D.- 1830 A.D. contains the short reign of the Hudson's Bay Company and the British period in the region. The early period is the focus of the present discussion.

The Georgian Bay Algonkian, sheltered perhaps from history by their occupation of a few islands among several thousands, have been historically overshadowed by the mercantile activities of various seventeenth century middlemen operating in Georgian Bay, notably the Huron, the Nipissing, and the Ottawa. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay culture, as represented by the Shebishikong site, clearly did not exist in isolation from regional influences such as trade, horticulture, and the economic systems of other cultural groups. Trading influences established by non-European materials, continued into the early historic period. Although the presence of Onondaga material on Lake Nipissing has been interpreted to identify trade between the Nipissing and the prehistoric Huron (Brizinski 1978: 235, 251), whether the presence of this material at Shebishikong points to direct trade with the

The date of 1650 A.D., taken from Wright's dating of Shebishikong's level 1, corresponds with the historical documentation of the Huron dispersal by the Iroquois.

Huron, Nipissing, or Ottawa is not as clear.¹⁹ The Shebishikong people may have traded quartz tools and projectile points with southern horticultural peoples, as quartz tools were abundant on historic Huron sites such as the Robitaille site between 1620 A.D. and 1640 A.D. (Fox 1979: 63).²⁰ Slate and red silt stone originating from the north shore of Georgian Bay had been used to make Robitaille stone beads (Ibid: 83).

The early historical period at Shebishikong is characterized by the remanufacture of brass kettles into knives, scrapers, and rolled beads, suggesting that brass materials were valued by the Shebishikong people principally for their tool making properties. Brass and glass objects were readily converted into scrapers or similar cutting objects, underscoring the importance of this type of tool to the occupation and land use at Shebishikong.²¹

Initial contact with brass kettles probably came in

¹⁹ Confining Shebishikong's trade to the Jesuits, the Huron and the Petun, an iron knife corresponding to Garrad's "type 3" or "stemmed knife with pronounced heel" (Garrad 1969: 2,3,8) was recovered from Shebishikong's level 1. As similar specimens have been recorded at the Huron Ste. Marie I site and a Petun site (Ibid: 2, 8), Shebishikong trade connections indicate exchange with the Huron, facilitated by Ottawa middlemen (Wrong ed. 1939: 66). The type recovered among the Nipissing (cf. Ridley 1954: 49) appears from Garrad's description to be a "type 2".

²⁰ Projectile points on Petun sites (*Attignawantan*) may also be of Algonkian origin (Fox 1979: 81).

²¹ At the Dougall fishing camp located at the narrows between Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching, copper kettle fragments had also been converted into knives or scrapers (Wright 1972a: 11).

the form of scrap which had seen extensive prior use. Kettles were bulky, heavy items which the French could only supply in limited quantities because of the transportation costs (Ray 1974: 81). As no rims were found at Shebishikong, it is unlikely that the Georgian Bay Algonkian had access to unbroken kettles before direct contact with Europeans. Old knives, blunt awls, and well worn kettles were probably the types of materials exchanged (Blair ed. 1911-1912.1: 174). The kettle fragments recovered from Shebishikong suggest that historically the site was used during the period of European contact with the Huron. At the Huron Ball site, for example, dating 1600 A.D., historic items included 75 fragments of kettles which had been cut into beads and projectile points (Knight 1978: 61).

Shebishikong's cultural location between the Nipissing and the Huron must have improved, from a contact and trading perspective, after 1615 A.D. when the Huron trade route shifted from the St. Lawrence River north to the French River.²² This relocation likely had important repercussions on the number of trade goods entering the region.

A potential source of the brass scraps at Shebishikong were the Huron, perhaps exchanged through

²² Heidenreich believes the Georgian Bay route of trade was not used until 1615 A.D. (1971: 245).

Nipissing or Ottawa traders. Upon their return from trading with various Algonkians, the Huron were known to trade French trade goods, initially with the Nipissing, followed by a two day market with the Ottawa (Wrong ed. 1939: 63, 66). An alternate source of trade goods was the Ottawa Valley Algonkin,²³ who were reported trading with the Huron as early as 1603 (Biggar ed. 1922, 1: 164). Historic items recovered from Algonquin Park include kaolin pipe stems, gunflint, iron nails, and glass beads, one dating between 1600 A.D. and 1620 A.D. (Hurley et al 1972: 84). This type of bead compares with similar objects at Cahiaque, confirming trade connections between the Ottawa Valley Algonkin and the Huron.

The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay probably did not have consistent or direct access to

²³ The Algonkin were closely related bands inhabiting the Ottawa valley and adjacent regions during the first half of the seventeenth century. Linguistically they spoke a dialect of "Middle Tier" Algonquin which was intelligible to Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Sauteaux (Day and Trigger 1978: 792). Culturally similar to the Nipissing and Ottawa, and likely the Georgian Bay Algonkian, they included the Weskarini or Petite Nation, in the Lake of Two Mountains region, the Matouweskarini located in the Madawaska River valley near present Golden Lake, the Keinouche, who may be Champlain's "Nibachis" in the Muskrat Lake region of the Ottawa River, and the Kichisiperini, whose main encampment was on Morrison Island, the Otaguottouemins who resided in the upper part of the Ottawa Valley between the Kichisiperini and Lake Nipissing, and the Onontchataronon, or People of Iroquet who lived in the valley of the South Nation River in Eastern Ontario (Ibid). All had varying degrees of access to Georgian Bay region, the most frequent visitors were likely the Kichisiperini, the Keinouche, and the Matouweskarini. During the 1640s the Weskarini first sought refuge with the Kichisiperini (Allumettes). Both later sought refuge with the French settlements along the St. Lawrence River (Ibid: 794).

undamaged trade goods until after the missionaries arrived.²⁴ The Récollets brought awls²⁵ and beads which the Nipissing favoured²⁶ (Wrong ed. 1939: 87). The Récollet Sagard, traded directly with Georgian Bay native peoples, in one instance, offering a clasp knife for a piece of sturgeon (Ibid: 249).²⁷ The Jesuits came armed with awls, pocket knives (*jambettes*), fish hooks, glass beads, and rings, to buy fish, corn, squash, and other articles (Mealing ed., 1978: 49). European metal fish hooks may have been introduced directly to the region by 1637²⁸ (Thwaites

²⁴ The first to arrive were the Récollets, (1623-1629) followed by their rivals, the Jesuits (1634-1649). Contact with Europeans occurred before 1615, with Brulé and the Récollet Le Caron, neither of whom recorded their experiences. Documented contact began in 1615 with Champlain's visit, followed closely in 1623 by the Récollet Sagard. In 1637, the Ottawa returned to the Jesuits over two thousand beads, believed to have been stolen from Brulé. The Ottawa thought the beads were responsible for a small pox epidemic (Thwaites ed. 1959, 14: 103; 13: 131, 133).

²⁵ Awls were used by some native people to perforate their ears (Thwaites ed. 1959, 22: 237) although traditional uses for sewing leather was probably important.

²⁶ Red coloured glass beads were however, not favoured by the Nipissing (Wrong ed. 1939: 249). Glass beads were introduced to Lake Nipissing ca. 1600 A.D., persisting until 1650 A.D. (Brizinski 1978: 201).

²⁷ Jesuit missionaries were known to provide iron arrow-points to Montaignais children, and to supply new converts with knives, rings, awls, needles and other "trinkets" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 11: 227). They rewarded their catechism students with knives, axes and caps (Ibid. 23: 311).

²⁸ Nails could be twisted into hooks.

ed. 1959, 12: 119),²⁹ although native hooks made of wood and bone were reportedly found in fish, probably trout, in 1623-24 (Wrong ed. 1939: 189).³⁰ By 1641, unbroken kettles circulated throughout the region (Thwaites ed. 1959, 23: 215). The items introduced by these early missionaries were new, not used, which likely enhanced their exchange value.³¹

Trade goods circulated through native groups in a variety of ways including "theft, salvage, pillage, donation, and exchange" (Bailey 1969: 48). After pillaging the tents of Algonkin wintering in Huronia in anger over their adoption of an Iroquois slave (Biggar ed. 1932, 4: 285) the Huron were able to supplement their trade stores with wampum, female prisoners, hatchets and kettles (Ibid. 3: 285). Trade goods were later offered in compensation. Blood feud, and failing to assuage hostilities with presents was given as the reason for endemic warfare (Thwaites ed.

²⁹ Fish hooks were rare in Northern Ojibwa Late Woodland sites (Wright 1966: 57). Only one iron fish hook was recovered from Pic River I, a Northern Ojibwa site on Lake Superior. This hook, on closer examination, may have actually been a bent awl (Ibid: 69).

³⁰ This challenges Jenness' finding that hooks and lines were not used among the Parry Island Ojibwa until after European contact (1935: 16).

³¹ No numbers are given of the content of each Jesuit's purse, but the number generally was between 24 and 36 pocket knives, 72 awls (1/2 gross), 100 fish hooks, and an undisclosed number of coloured and plain beads. These were quickly exhausted in trade for food as their food supplies were limited to prunes and raisins (Thwaites ed. 1959, 12: 119-121).

1959, 10: 225). Higher prices, assessed by the quality and quantity of goods, were required for "foreign feuds" which was attributed to the greater political sensitivity attached to these alliances. The circumstances fostering the demand and supply of trade goods were undoubtedly complex.

Shebishikong's historical materials however, yielded small quantities of metal tools. Brass and glass items likely improved the existing technology of scrapers rather than functioning wholly for its exchange value.

Conceivably, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were motivated to maintain the same standard of living as their wealthy neighbours (see Thwaites 1959, 8: 57-59), and were no doubt encouraged by a desire for goods to obtain such goods to compensate for blood feuds. As it takes a "powerful magic to spill blood and not be overtaken by blood revenge" (Campbell 1987: 297), trade goods likely filled an important role substituting for the magic. Thus, the motive for trade goods was not solely for their immediate and practical use, but to avert present and future blood feuds thereby maintaining some degree of autonomy. Compensation likely shifted from blood (warfare), to goods, as trade goods became increasingly available. In this respect trade goods provided an important medium to avert war (and contribute to alliance), perhaps as much as it was the object of hostilities.

Local Trade

The local, secondary trade in non-European items, between the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay and the Huron was primarily a trade in perishable goods. For this reason the volume and exact nature of the items exchanged between them cannot be supported by archaeological sources. Historically the items exchanged included corn, nets, fish, skins,³² (Trigger 1976. 1: 169) bark, fibres, dried berries, venison, birch bark canoes (Waisberg 1984)³³ and ornaments of shell and copper³⁴ (Jenness 1932: 113). Whether the trade included maple sugar, is uncertain. Jenness reported that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay bartered maple sugar with the Huron (1935: 14). The historical documents do not mention the production of maple sugar in Huronia or Georgian Bay region, although they report that the Montaignais obtained maple sap from the shavings of maple trees during famine (Thwaites ed. 1959, 6:

³² The prized furs were black squirrel skins and racoon skins, not beaver (Thwaites ed. 1959, 33: 193). It is through these that 'wealth' came to be evaluated in these communities. These skins were so valuable they were not traded with the French (Ibid).

³³ The aboriginal production of maple sugar is currently a subject of controversy in the literature (see Mason 1987, Holman 1984). Historical documentation in the Georgian Bay region does not suggest maple sugar was an important exchange item, or subsistence item, despite an abundance of maple trees. It was not until 1722, that the Ojibwa were documented making maple sugar (Thwaites ed. 1959, 67: 95).

³⁴Shebishikong however, does not support an extensive trade in copper.

273, 329). Kay (1984: 281) thought sugar could not be made without kettles and hatchets, although the sap could be obtained thereby. Waisberg (1984) however, appears to agree with Jenness by suggesting the Nipissing exchanged maple sugar with the Huron.

The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay had a considerable reputation for craft work in birch bark,³⁵ deer skin,³⁶ and quills which was valued by the Huron who did not develop these skills to the same level of sophistication, despite their ceramic making abilities (Wrong ed. 1939: 102).³⁷ The nature of this industry suggests that perhaps females of Algonkian speaking peoples in Georgian Bay provided the bulk of the trade products,

³⁵ Birch bark was an essential item for water transportation, particularly important to northern groups where it was too cold for birch bark to grow (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 115-117; 46: 257-277). The Georgian Bay regional groups also made birch bark bowls for drinking and eating, sashes, collars and bracelets. They had an extensive, well developed material culture (Wrong ed. 1939: 102). Johnson commented upon the extensive birch bark industry at Parry Island, distinctive perhaps by its lack of decoration. Compared with other examples, he found Parry Island to be the northern boundary of ash splint basket work, and the eastern boundary for rush mats (1929: 203). He concluded that the birch bark styles stood at the eastern most limit of Central Algonkian characteristics (Ibid: 216).

³⁶ The importance of deer skins for clothing and for the territorial organization of the Huron cannot be underestimated. Champlain mentions the importance of deer skins in the exchange (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 55), most of which likely originated at Neutralia (Prevec and Noble 1983: 50, 51). Gramly (1977) has demonstrated that the demand for deer skins by the Huron was of major importance, probably met through local trade.

³⁷ Huron pots at this time were described as made of sandstone, round in shape "like a ball", without hands or feet, having a slight lip, or 'mouth' (Wrong ed. 1939: 110).

trading them with Huron purchasers. Males may have been involved in the trading of European trade goods, considering its importance averting blood feud, leaving females to market food and other perishable goods destined for domestic use.³⁸

An overlooked, but lucrative, component of the local trade involved the influence the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay had upon Huron ritual practices. Through their reputation as skilful fishers and hunters, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay marketed their fishing and hunting amulets to the Huron who valued them so highly, they bequeathed them to their descendants. So expensive were these items that they were considered "the most costly merchandise of the country" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 33: 33,227). As the most valued item of the local trade, they were designed to improve Huron fishing and hunting skills. They were not manufactured items, but items which had been ritually sanctified. Stones, perhaps fossils (Jenness 1932: 177), believed lost in the forest by 'demons' were thought to bring success to hunting and fishing (Thwaites ed. 1959, 39: 227). Other items included fish bones (particularly that of the longnose gar fish), bear

³⁸ The work of females is concealed in the documents. Women and children traded fish with the Jesuits in other Great Lakes locations (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 267). They likely welcomed European technology in the form of kettles, awls and cloth (cf. Van Kirk 1980: 6).

mandibles, raven's beak, sturgeon ganoids, and eagle and owl claws, all which were believed to change form (Ibid. 26: 267; 39: 27). The ritual object *par excellence* was *onniont*, a dried piece of snake or 'serpent' (Ibid. 33: 215), probably claimed by the Georgian Bay Algonkians to actually be derived from the mythological figure *Michipeschew* (Ibid. 50: 289):

Our Hurons say they themselves know nothing of that wonderful Serpent, but that all their knowledge of it is derived from the reports of the Algonquins who sell to them, at a high price, even a piece so small that it is difficult to make out whether it is wood, leather, or a morsel of flesh or fish (Ibid. 33: 215).

If nothing else, the native people of Georgian Bay must have sorely tested the evangelical efforts of the Jesuits.

What this exchange does not clarify is how, if these ritual objects were impotent without the visions that were associated with them, they could have maintained their exchange value as a fetish. Jenness (1932: 176) suggests these ritual objects may have sustained their power on the basis of sympathetic or associative magic and for that reason they would be generically classified as 'medicines', which would broaden that category of exchange to include both herbal remedies, magical amulets and rites (Ibid: 113). The importance of these items is difficult to interpret

archaeologically; unless they were associated with a burial, or found in conjunction with recognizably identified ritual objects, they could have been overlooked. In return for these ritual objects, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay received corn, tobacco, wampum and fishing nets³⁹ (Biggar ed. 1933, 5: 53, 151).

Unlike the Nipissing who established camps close to the Huron to trade skins and dried fish, and who remained in the vicinity all winter, the Huron were forced to visit the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay on their frozen islands⁴⁰ which were actually considered to be a:

convenience to these peoples [Huron] for, as soon as the ice is strong enough, they take corn to the Algonquins, and bring back quantities of fish (Thwaites ed. 1959, 13: 249).

Why the Huron would make this effort to buy fish when the Nipissing were located much closer with prepared supplies of dried fish⁴¹ may indicate an important feature

³⁹ Fibre for finished nets may also have been traded (Cleland 1982: 763). This may be an important distinction. If nets were traded then the type of nets used by the Huron may also be presumed to have been used by the Algonkian speakers. If only the fibres were traded, the Algonkian nets may have been tailored to their own design. Modification of Huron nets was of course, also possible.

⁴⁰ How far the Huron ventured to rendezvous with the Georgian Bay Algonkian is not known. One likely location judging by geographical proximity and inference by Sagard, would be Beausoleil Island.

⁴¹ Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg (1988: 199) maintain the fish were sturgeon. Considering the fall fishing season, the fish were just as likely to have been trout or whitefish.

of the trading relationship between the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay and the Huron. On the surface, the trade between them was one of barter -- fresh fish for corn. Yet, a small group like the Georgian Bay Algonkian did not require more corn than they could have grown themselves, unless they traded it. Given plentiful fishing, the incentive to cultivate the soil beyond a small quantity was probably negligible. Similarly, the Huron had large supplies of dried fish available to them from the Nipissing, and by their own fishing (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 167-168).

The incentive for this local trade could have been motivated by several reasons. The Huron may have simply required large quantities of fish supplemented from all groups fishing in the region. They may also have simply preferred fresh fish to dried fish, and the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay may have wanted specific types of corn which they could or did not cultivate, such as corn which had already been ground into flour.⁴² Trading may have simply provided a means of consolidating alliance so the goods exchanged were perhaps not as important as the relationship. Once a trading relationship was established into what Jenness has called a "firm friendship" (1932:

⁴² The Huron grew flour corns which were more difficult to grow, and required longer frost free days (Heidenreich 1971: 173).

296), Huron families⁴³ may have extended ritual kinship to their Algonkian trading partners. This could lead to persistent relations over time between individual Huron and Georgian Bay Algonkian groups. The exchange of corn, or corn flour, for fish may also have provided an opportunity for the Huron to obtain the coveted hunting and fishing amulets and medicines. This was particularly important if the trade was not primarily economically motivated as Heidenreich (1971: 292) has argued.

This picture of the relationship between the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay and the Huron contrasts with that of Trigger (1976 1: 168) who depicts the Algonkian as a desperate people who "enhanced their chances for survival" by wintering with the Huron.⁴⁴ Adopting Trigger's view, the chance to winter among the Huron relieved the Algonkians from having to "disperse in the forests in a sometimes unsuccessful search for game" (1985: 205).

Rather than being a dependent member in the Huron trading network, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian

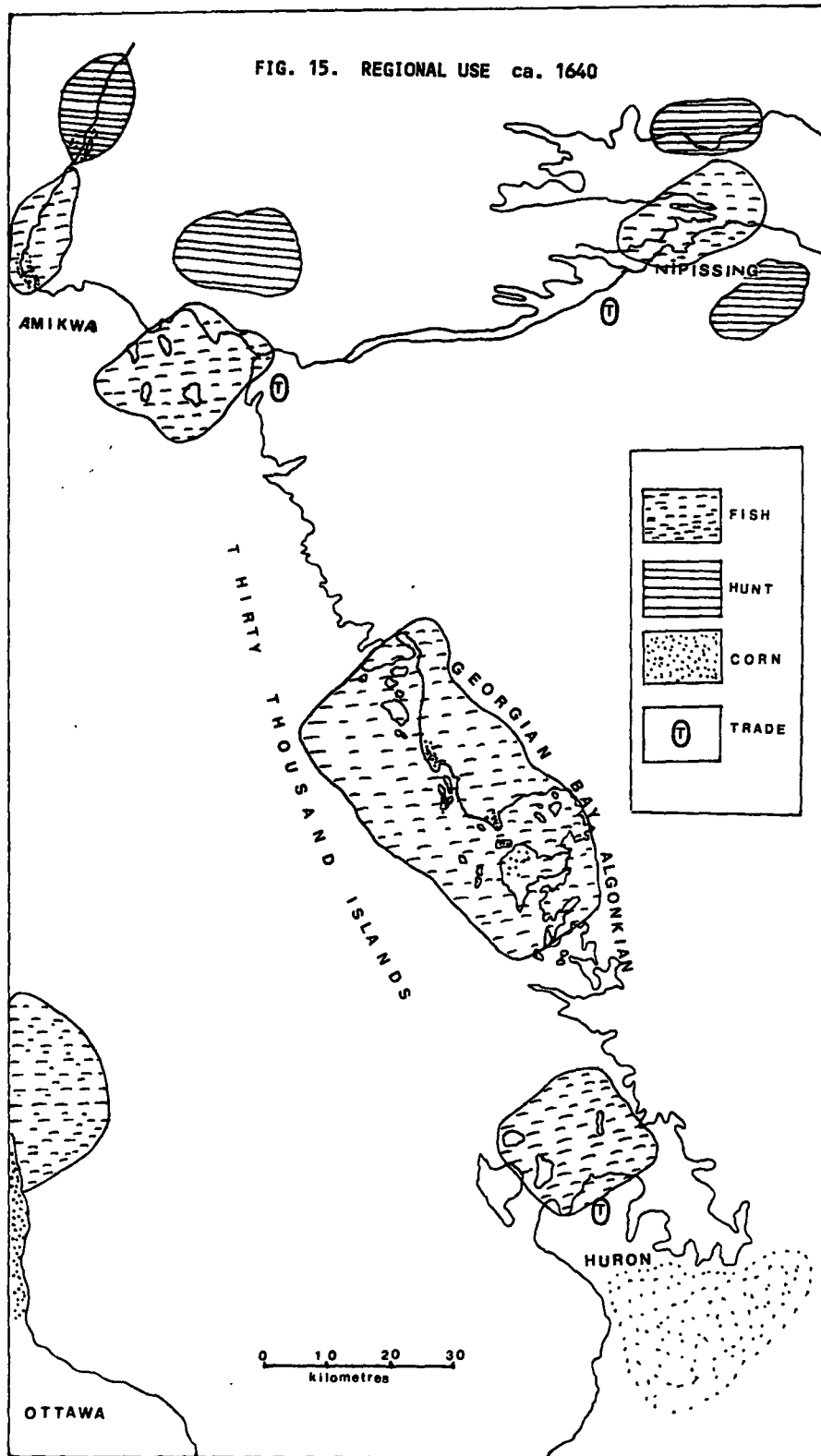
⁴³ Huron trading was established by a connection between one Huron family based on the principle of lineage prerogative: "several [Huron] families have their own private trades...children share rights of the parents" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 10: 223-225).

⁴⁴ Moodie described the relationship to corn as "easing the subsistence" of those Algonkian groups who wintered and traded with the Huron (1980: 277).

Bay strongly influenced Huron culture through customs and rituals which were not only well respected by the Huron, but had important commercial value (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 197, 199, 210). Trigger's characterization of the sojourning Algonkian may have been influenced by the conventional portrayal of most Algonkian speaking peoples, as small scattered bands of hunters barely existing on the Canadian Shield. Partly because of their contact with horticultural peoples, but also because of their access to trade, and their fisheries, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay do not readily conform to this view. They appear to have enjoyed a richer existence than their other Algonkian contemporaries, which did not depend on their wintering with the Huron. Indeed, there is archaeological evidence supporting the historical reports, which will be introduced, that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, unlike the Nipissing and the Eastern Algonkin, did not winter at Huronia. This is an important finding that serves to distinguish the cultural adaptation of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay from other Algonkian speakers such as the Nipissing and the Algonkin.

The Subsistence Economy of the Algonkian Speaking People of Georgian Bay

The Georgian Bay region was exploited by several groups during the seventeenth century (fig. 15). The



southern part of the region was dominated by the Huron who were traders and horticulturalists, and the northern part by hunters (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 133-135). Midway between the two resided varying levels of fishers, hunters, and horticulturalists. The study area was exploited by fishers who participated in both hunting and horticulture.⁴⁵ The north shore of Lake Huron was used by hunters who both fished and planted corn; the difference was one of emphasis. One group in particular, the Mississauga, represented a land use pattern well-adapted to such integrated use. By locating beside a river, the Mississauga enjoyed access to sturgeon fishing, planted corn on the well-flooded flats,⁴⁶ and used the Mississauga River as a route inland to hunting areas during the winter (Kinietz 1965: 370-372). Similarly, the north shore Amikwa planted corn, fished and hunted (Ibid). The cycle of seasonal and spatial activities in Georgian Bay for each of the groups is shown in figure 16. Although such distinctions have been made for analysis, these classifications were not mutually exclusive. All groups could engage to some degree in all subsistence

⁴⁵I use the term 'fishers' as a convenient designation to describe a people who subsisted principally on fish, but also small aquatic mammals and small amounts of corn. Important to this classification is the important ideological focus fishing played in the cultural identity of the people, and to the social and political organization of the group.

⁴⁶ The annual flooding of the Mississauga River probably provided excellent weed control on the river flats (Smith n.d: 6).

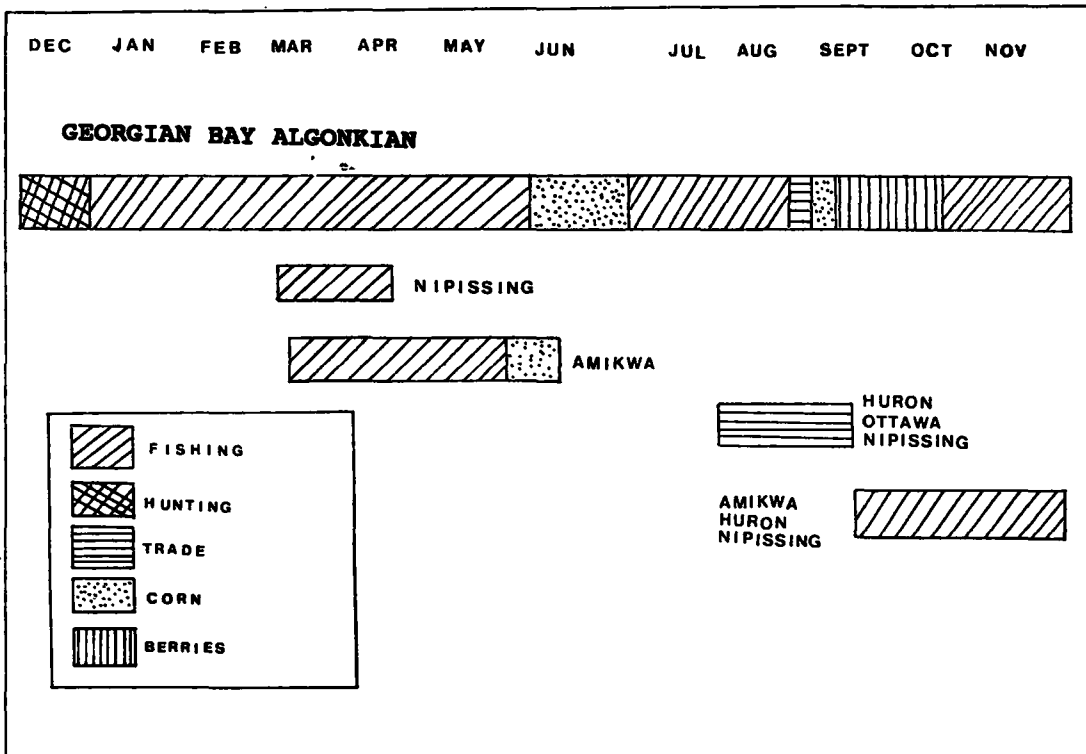


FIG. 16. SEASONAL ACTIVITY ca. 1640 A.D.

activities. The emphasis changed, depending upon perceived political and economic advantages and the local limitations of the environment.

Reported incidents of conflict between these groups was rare. The Jesuits did not witness any in the region, although mention is made of an incident between the Amikwa and the Nipissing in 1636 which forced the Amikwa to construct a 'fort' after the Nipissing broke a peace treaty (Thwaites ed. 1959, 10: 83).⁴⁷ A broken peace treaty would certainly have jeopardized movement in the region. How long this warfare continued is uncertain: A future alliance between the Amikwa and Nipissing is not reported until 1662 when both were reported to have fled to Lake Nipigon (Blair ed. 1911-12.1: 173-174). It is unlikely however, the discord lasted for 30 years without some mention of it in the Jesuit Relations. From the 1640s onward, the principal conflict that would occupy most of the next 50 years involved the Iroquois.

Subsistence and Ritual

The Jesuits described the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as "very intelligent, and excelling in all

⁴⁷It is possible the source of the hostility was related to epidemic diseases which ravaged the area, and its perceived association with witchcraft.

kinds of fishing" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 210). They lived almost exclusively on the islands and shore "on the water or on desolate rocks beaten by waves and storms," except when they were trading (Ibid. 18: 229-231). They subsisted on the "fruits of the earth," and were, despite the available trade goods, reported to have little material wealth (Ibid. 33: 151-155; 35: 179, 181), a description borne out by the Shebishikong material. They were described as "constantly dividing themselves up into smaller groups" over the rocks and islands of Georgian Bay, much to the distress of the Jesuits who could not convert them, given their 'nomadic' habits (Ibid. 33: 179, 189).

When fishing is a principal part of the subsistence of a group, it is not unusual to find ritual action manifested by mythological associations. Although ritual focus is a tenuous measure of subsistence, it does provide a useful proof (Preston 1991: personal communication). Symbolically representative of fish ceremonialism is reincarnation: Fish bones returned to the water become fish again (Thwaites ed. 1959, 50: 289). The spiritual world of a fishing people is likely in or under the water, where important elements are charged with symbolic associations of birth and rebirth. This is mythologically reinforced by the

Amikwa creation myth describing their origin⁴⁸ from the corpse of a Giant Beaver which reportedly emerged from Lake Huron (Blair ed. 1911-12.1: 62-63), symbolizing recognition of a primal being and a condition where birth (and rebirth) is stronger than death. Similarly, Landes reported the Ojibwa returning beaver bones to their 'natal waters' (1938: 134).

Contemporary versions of this mythology translate the corpse of the Giant Beaver to Nanibush, the Ojibwa culture-hero who made dams on all the rivers to catch beaver (cf. Clark 1960: 5). Nanibush hunts the Giant Beaver *Wabnik* from Lake Superior to Georgian Bay. The Giant Beaver, half dead, turned to stone. Nanibush seeking its hiding place, shattered stones in Georgian Bay which created the existing maze of islands. The "creation myth" described by the Amikwa to the Jesuits, has now been transformed to reflect Christian influences by separating the deity, *Wabnik*, from its progeny, Nanibush. Interwoven through this mythology was certainly the earth-diver theme used by Algonkian groups to explain world creation. This sacred myth sees Nanibush, after a massive flood, sending a variety of aquatic species to dive into the primal sea, to find and bring to the

⁴⁸ The Amikwa certainly nurtured an ancestral mythological association to the northern parts of the region, if not specifically to Georgian Bay.

surface a particle of earth which is then used to create the world. In many versions, the species successful in finding the earth, is the beaver. Indeed, the archaeology supporting fire avoidance of fish bone⁴⁹ in combination with beaver bone rituals, may signify an ideology developed toward a similar allegory. This may also cast the beaver, normally a terrestrial animal traditionally associated with hunting rituals, in a somewhat different etiological classification.

Nor is there a convenient relationship between what are considered large game and the strategies associated with its capture. Sagard, and perhaps the Algonkian, viewed the sturgeon to be a large animal, hunted with a spear, and considered to be of the same stature as a bear or a moose (Wrong ed. 1939: 113). Jenness also considered the sturgeon and the bear to be the same, as they were viewed as such by the Parry Island Ojibwa. Sturgeons apparently 'changed' to bears when the berries ripen (1935: 80). This is likely an example where the ritual essence of the two were exchanged

⁴⁹ "They [Outaouacs] believe, moreover, that the souls of the Departed govern the fishes in the Lake; and thus, from the earliest times they have held the immortality, and even the metempsychosis, of the souls of dead fishes, believing that they pass into other fishes' bodies. Therefore they never throw their bones into the fire, for fear that they may offend those souls so that they will cease to come to their nets" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 50: 289). Campbell notes more generally that, "the bone does not disintegrate and germinate into something else, but is the undestroyed base from which the same individual becomes magically reconstructed" (Campbell 1959: 291).

for it is the nature of most ritual sacrifices to sacrifice the animal to itself, most pronounced in bear ceremonialism (see Hallowell 1926).

The net was an important object of ritual activity by the seventeenth century Georgian Bay Algonkian (Wrong ed. 1939: 188-9), as was the sturgeon (Thwaites ed. 1959, 50: 289). Netting fish was a mythologically sanctioned activity prescribed by Nanibush, the trickster-transformer cultural hero.⁵⁰ The net was "exhorted to be of good courage and so to act that the fishing be successful" (Ibid. 17: 197, 199). Sacrifices were made to the water spirit to obtain good sturgeon fishing (Ibid. 50: 289). Overseeing this ritual, the sun was recognized as the master of fishing and of life, and was asked to provide sturgeon (Ibid. 58: 273). The importance of the sturgeon to Ojibwa subsistence, economy, society and religion has been reported for the Rainy River Ojibwa (Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg 1988).⁵¹ For the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, fishing was

⁵⁰ Nanibush, like all culture-heros was literally and figuratively torn apart and scattered, dismembered over land and water (cf. Campbell 1973: 93) including the islands of Georgian Bay. His leg is believed to lie on the west side of the Naiscoting River, broken off in a battle with his enemy (Symons 1946: 279). Nanibush appears invincible or a fool depending on whether he is dealing with tangible forces of the universe, or the limitations of temporal life (Campbell 1989: 2.2: 175).

⁵¹ Hultkrantz associated the sturgeon with spiritual power controlling both the fish and fisheries, and found the Ojibwa to have one of the most developed fish beliefs. Importantly he based his analysis primarily on the Parry Island Ojibwa (1983: 5; 1984: 874).

synonymous with sturgeon which were sought year round (Thwaites ed. 1902: 8). Capture was preceded by a sturgeon feast to welcome the return of the sturgeon to Georgian Bay⁵² (Wrong ed. 1939: 247), and by a ritual marriage of two young females to a net (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199, 201). A *fish preacher*⁵³ appealed to the spirit of the net to care for their families, to keep their nets free from harm, and to preserve their canoes from mishap (Blair ed. 1911-12: 287).⁵⁴ By using a net without the ritual consecration by the *fish preacher*, Georgian Bay fishers likely risked catching too many fish, producing waste. By using the spear, the individual fisher had more control over the amount of fish caught, and avoided taking too many.

⁵² This welcome may not have been dissimilar from that of the Northwest Coast Indian's practice of the First Salmon Rite (Drucker 1965: 94). Sagard noted that "the master of the feast sung continuously for the 'success and glory of his feast'."

⁵³ Although this individual was likely a shaman, there is little reference that the *fish preacher* transported himself to the other world to release fish and game souls, which is the essential characteristic of circumpolar shamanism. That ritual objects were important to the Georgian Bay Algonkian suggest that these were used to make the transformation to the spirit world. Although little is made of the *fish preacher*, the few description that survive were of Huron specialists, who, although they may trace their occupation to an Algonkian cultural origin, were working within Iroquoian cultural subtleties.

⁵⁴ Contrary to Rostlund (1952: 156) who thought the ritual marriage to the net, and the fish preachers, were Huron practices, these practices were copied from the Ojibwa (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199, 201). The Huron kept their nets in their lodges as did the Georgian Bay Algonkian (Ibid. 57: 267) to protect it from 'seeing' undesirable actions, such as the burning of bone or skins, or sensing reprimands, which it then may report to the fish spirits, preventing fish from "feeding the net" (Wrong ed. 1939: 187).

Taking more fish than one needed could be met by a visit of the Great Snake, Great Nzagima, the chief of the water serpents (Jenness 1935: 39, 80), a mythological figure which may have been the Algonkian version of the Sumerian serpent-god Ningizzida, from which mortal life arises and returns (cf. Campbell 1968: 17). The *fish preacher* was such a venerated personality that his role established in Algonkian ritual was adopted by the Huron. Here the *fish preacher* reportedly played an important role in the fall before trout fishing when strong winds would prevent the Huron setting their nets and endanger the harvest (Wrong ed. 1939: 186).⁵⁵ A sketch of what may be a *fish preacher* attracting fish by using a flute or pipe is shown in figure 17.⁵⁶ This figure also shows various fishing equipment that may have been used by the Georgian Bay Algonkian, including a

⁵⁵ The concern among the Huron was not so much fear of spiritual retribution as it was for a successful harvest. "Fish preachers" among the Huron were eagerly sought to "assure large catches of fish" for which they were paid handsomely (Trigger 1969: 32).

⁵⁶ The sketch originates from *Codex Canadensis* c. 1700. It is reproduced in *The Exploration of North America 1630-1776* by Cumming et al, 1974: 51 which is where this copy is taken.

scoop net and a serrated fishing spear.⁵⁷

Georgian Bay Algonkian ritual ceremonies toward fish focused upon attracting and finding fish. Because detailed information about fisheries, including the life cycle and distribution of fish species (Berkes 1990: 40) would be essential to subsistence fishing, is perhaps why the *fish preacher* had been elevated among the Georgian Bay Algonkian. This individual performed a rite which manifested and held the interests of the group together. The necessity for the rite suggests that fish were unpredictable, or were perceived to be so, which in turn, sustained the demand for ritual, and for *fish preachers*.⁵⁸ It also suggests that poor fishing reflected spiritual concerns which required a ritual remedy. Indeed, the ritual marriage to the net reportedly emerged after the Georgian Bay Algonkian were

⁵⁷ Landes proposed that fish totems conferred powers netting valuable fish like sturgeon by controlling the waters. The price for such control was a taboo on eating fish (1968: 26). Whether the Georgian Bay *fish preachers* were restricted from eating fish is not known. Certainly Sagard's description of a Georgian Bay sturgeon feast in 1623 suggests the master of the feast abstained from eating. By using Landes' understanding (conceivably the Ojibwa understanding) of the fish totem, it is possible that the *fish preacher* functioned within the context of a covenant with the deities controlling the waters and the fish. The identification of a specialized individual's powers may have functioned as a seventeenth century prototype of the totem. Hultkrantz (1983: 11) however, argued that the agricultural preoccupation with calendar ceremonialism and the quest for personal guardian spirits eclipsed the old beliefs centred on fishing, supplanting an earlier belief in fish owners (Ibid: 15).

⁵⁸ Lee (1968: 40) has stated that the less predictable, more expensive food sources were reflected in myth and ritual.



FIG. 17. SKETCH OF FISH PREACHER

ORIGINAL IN CODEX CANADENSIS c. 1700
REPRODUCED HERE FROM CUMMING ET AL 1974:51

taken by surprise by poor fishing (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199, 201). This likely involved a shamanic 'visit' to the spirit of the net.⁵⁹ This reinforces the proposition that environmental concerns, either real or perceived, were critical to the emergence and continuation of rituals which expressed a spiritual relationship to the environment.

Noted earlier in the discussion of the archaeology of Georgian Bay region, was the absence of a gill net fishery, considered by both Rostlund (1952) and Cleland (1982) to be the cornerstone of the Great Lakes fishery. The identification of the type of net used by the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples is difficult without archaeological support. Without evidence of the mesh size, or the size and type of fish captured, it is difficult to positively identify traditional use of the gill net.⁶⁰ Historical observers rarely discriminate between the types of nets used, often referring to all nets simply as 'seines.' The differences in the two types of nets and

⁵⁹ The soul or *oki* of the net appeared as a man who claimed to have lost his wife. The Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples responded to this appearance by holding a council in which they determined that the net would not only have a new wife, but two new wives. This marked the origin of the marriage of two females to a net (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199). When the Huron learned of this ritual, they immediately appropriated the ceremony into their fishing preparations (Ibid: 201).

⁶⁰ This would certainly question Wright's supposed finding of a 'ghost' gill net, evident by net sinkers, used on Bear Rump Island dating to the middle Inverhuron tradition 1000 B.C. to 500 B.C. and used by Cleland (1982: 770) to support his conclusions about the importance of gill net fishing to the precontact Algonkian.

their use are mesh size, water depth, the means of propelling the net, and the species of fish caught. Gill nets have a large mesh size, ranging from contemporary standards in the Georgian Bay fishery from 2.5 inches to 5.5 inches,⁶¹ compared with the mesh size identified at Juntunen which was between .8 and 1.8 inches (Petersen et al 1984: 205). The seine net was used in shallow water, where the sinkers could touch bottom, ensnaring both small and large fish. The seine was principally used to sweep spawning grounds, discriminating little between the size or condition of fish. During the 1850s it was labelled "the besom of destruction," as it caught fish before they could spawn.

The gill net was suspended in deep water to ensnare fish by its gills. It did not interfere with the spawning grounds and collected larger, if fewer fish.⁶² For these reasons, it is difficult to determine the relative proportion of types of fish, especially without quantitative values from the Shebishikong site to compare.

The seventeenth century documents suggest Georgian Bay fishers preferred to exploit shallow water fisheries,

⁶¹ Macfie, n.d.: 48; Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

⁶² Canada Sessional Papers No. 12, 1860. Report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the year 1859. Annual Report of the Superintendent of Fisheries for Upper Canada, Appendix 30: 83. Cleland illustrates the differences between the seine and the gill nets in two sketches (1982: 775-776).

probably using a seine-type net, spears, and fish hooks. The diversity of these instruments likely contributed to an efficient exploitation of fish.

Gill net fishing was unsuitable for deep water fishing in seventeenth century Georgian Bay. The Georgian Bay Algonkian rarely ventured into deep water claiming that their canoes leaked (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 45).⁶³ Off-shore shoal net fishing was considered particularly formidable, as currents and winds would break nets, dashing them on the rocks or to the bottom of the lake (Thwaites ed. 1959, 55: 165). As nets became an important trade item during the early part of the seventeenth century, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were relieved of the work and time finding and processing the net fibres, and making the nets. Nets also had to be stored and 'protected' from malevolent influences (Wrong ed. 1939: 187).⁶⁴

A net resembling a seine⁶⁵ was used to catch various types of fish year round. Although nets were

⁶³ The canoes were probably small enough to navigate rocks, narrows, over rapids and for portage (Wrong ed. 1939: 246).

⁶⁴ The net gave the fish the choice to surrender itself. A condition of the sacrifice was the proper care of the bone, which was the object of reincarnation, hence propagation. Fish caught by other means, such as by spearing, was probably ritually similar to hunting, and may have involved similar ritual practices.

⁶⁵ Linguistically the Ojibwa do not make a distinction between the seine and the gill net, *ninpaqibadi*: "I catch fish with nets" (Kohl 1860: 327). Long's dictionary (1791: 225) translates *assubbub* as a net for fishing.

reportedly used to catch sturgeon under the ice in March (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 301; Jenness 1935: 16), it is difficult to understand how the nets could hold this size of fish. This winter net apparently reached the bottom of the bay, as do seine nets, where it was moved from one hole to another (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 166-168). It is conceivable that the sturgeon were trapped by ice which confined them to one area (cf. Rogers 1972a: 7) and the nets were used as an underwater fence. These nets would have had to be extremely durable to support the large size of sturgeon.

Although there is no archaeological evidence of this, ethnographic data support the catching of ling, or burbot (*lota lota*). This fish spawns between January and March in shallow water between one and four feet deep when it produces high yields (Scott and Crossman 1979: 642-644). It is possible that the early March net fishing as reported by the Jesuits, incidentally or intentionally also trapped burbot.⁶⁶

Nets were also reportedly used to ensnare quantities of small fish such as herring, small trout and small whitefish, and to capture fowl and small mammals during the

⁶⁶ Cleland (1970: 9) determined from archaeological recoveries at Fort Michilimackinac that burbot were probably caught by the French using iron hooks. This interpretation may rest on his assumption that burbot were exclusively found in deep waters and could not be taken relatively easily under the ice with nets. Steckley (1986) suggests burbot, or what Sagard called Einchataeon, and Heidenreich, catfish, was important to the Huron fishery at early contact.

fall (Thwaites ed. 1959, 56: 121; 57: 265; Ibid. ed. 1902: 9). This multiple use supports the widespread use of nets of, presumably, variable mesh size and strength. Depending upon the size of the sturgeon caught, which by Sagard's observation were large enough to feed 50 men⁶⁷ (Wrong ed. 1939: 247), seine nets were likely restricted in use to collect spawning fish. Given its potential size, spears were more likely the expeditious means to capture sturgeon (Thwaites ed. 1959, 56: 123), especially if they were near the surface of the water. Seine net operation may have been restricted to rivers, narrow channels and small bays, features characteristic of much of the Georgian Bay shoreline. A smaller mesh size increased the chances of catching various types of small fish, which may be, from a subsistence basis, more important during winter and early spring when other subsistence sources were likely reduced.⁶⁸

Indeed, nets used by the Great Lakes Algonkians were most frequently described to catch sturgeon under the ice, and, in the fall, to take herring (Ibid. 57: 265). The significance of using nets to capture sturgeon under the ice

⁶⁷ Sturgeon weighing between 75-100 lbs were reported as recently as the early 1820s (Gourlay 1822: 175).

⁶⁸ Berkes has reported that fishers could alter either the scarcity or abundance patterns of fish by altering mesh size (1977: 289).

in March suggests a specialized fishery in which sturgeon were taken in quantity, before the spawning run in May.⁶⁹ This operation required nets which could withstand barbed movements through the ice, and support the potentially large size of the sturgeon. This also meant that the Georgian Bay fishery provided subsistence at times not clearly associated with spawning,⁷⁰ contrary to that suggested by Cleland who restricts the Great Lakes fishery to one of spring and fall spawning fish (1982: 766).

Trout were speared by torch light and taken in shallow waters. Indeed, trout spawn in waters of less than a foot in depth (Scott and Crossman 1973: 220, 222, 227). Although herring and sturgeon could have been caught in weirs and traps which could operate without the presence of fishers, this type of fishing is not reported by the sources. Weirs are also ineffective unless the fish are moving uniformly in one direction and in large numbers.

Although fish hooks were used by the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay (Wrong ed. 1939: 189) and actively traded by the Jesuits, the extent to which they were used is uncertain. Rostlund (1952: 113) speculated that hooks would play a small role in a staple fishery,

⁶⁹Spawning periods, as noted in Chapter Two were subject to changes in weather.

⁷⁰ Unless burbot were the species actually sought.

reasoning that any fish that could be taken by a hook could also be fished in some other way (Ibid: 115). Hooks may have provided the Georgian Bay Algonkian the means to catch deep water fish close to shore, or from a canoe, if gill nets were not used. More importantly, fish hooks increased the diversity of methods used to catch fish, improving fishing efficiency. A chronic problem facing seventeenth century Georgian Bay fishers was weak fishing line, as the materials available to produce fishing line were simply not strong enough to hold large fish (Wrong ed. 1939: 189). Hooks were likely successful with smaller fish. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay also may have used fish hooks to troll, which proved an efficient way to catch fish when moving between fisheries, to the shoals, or to other spawning areas.⁷¹ They may have attached the hooks to poles to catch sturgeon trapped in a staked weir (Schoolcraft 1855: 52)⁷² which would have expanded the role of the sturgeon fishery and the importance of fish hooks. More importantly, hooks attached to poles provided an excellent way to catch fish trapped by ice near shore (Rogers 1972a: 7), increasing the effectiveness of winter

⁷¹ Jenness (1932: 61) stated that fishhooks served only for jigging or trolling. They would be baited with a piece of fish, a stone or bone.

⁷² Weirs were used to collect sturgeon. They were called *namekowagan* or, "sturgeon's yoke" (Schoolcraft 1855: 52).

fishing. A productive fishery incorporating fish hooks likely depended on the number of lines set, the number of hooks per line, the number of hooks lost, the size and quantity of fish hooked, and the length of the seasons they could be used.

Under conditions such as those in Georgian Bay where fishing was adapted to a shallow water fishery, several methods developed to fish and trap food: spear fishing, torch light fishing, shallow net fishing, ice fishing using decoy, cairn fishing, and the use of nets to capture fowl and small game.⁷³ Spearing, including torch light fishing and ice fishing, were unlikely to over-exploit fish populations, or create a large surplus. Successful cairn fishing had the potential of producing more fish, but this depended on how the fish were retrieved from their trap, by pole and fish hook as Schoolcraft observed (1855: 52), by scoop net, or bow and arrow.

The fishing equipment used by the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay demonstrates a varied but vested interest in fishing. They incorporated an extensive fishing complex consisting of spears (harpoons and leisters), decoys, nets, awls, fish hooks, birch bark torches, lines,

⁷³ How prevalent spears were in small game capture is not known. The Mississauga reportedly used them to capture muskrat in the nineteenth century (Weedon to Williams October 15, 1923, RG 10, vol. 2330, 67,071-3, pt. 1).

floats, sinkers, stone tools, celts (ice chisels), and canoes. It was how this technology was deployed however, that was important to the adaptation in Georgian Bay. This technology incorporated all-purpose devices: spears to catch mammals and fish, nets to trap or ensnare both small game and fowl and fish, allowing an easy switch between small game aquatic animals and fishing. This technology has been described as complex compared to that of hunters (Rogers and Black 1976: 6); the effort to manufacture, maintain, trade, and transport these items shows a strong cultural commitment to fishing.

Seasonal Fishing and Hunting

Subsistence fishers, as hunters (cf. Lee 1968: 42), rely on other food sources such as corn, berries, molluscs, barks, moose, deer, bear, and small mammals to supplement their diet. Fall marked the most bountiful season, when corn and squash could be harvested, trout, deer and duck were available, and berries and other wild fruits could be collected and dried (Jenness 1935: 108). The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay dispersed among the islands and shoals to gather bark, berries, and fish at night by torch for trout and whitefish (Thwaites ed. 1959, 35: 179, 181, 229-231). Fall spawning trout were speared in the

shallow, shoal areas off shore. Herring⁷⁴ were collected by a seine-type net⁷⁵ near shore, speared or netted under the ice in the winter. The spears were likely wooden and attached to a barbed head of bone as they were reported for the Huron (Trigger 1969: 30).⁷⁶

As fall was a dangerous time to net fish in Georgian Bay because of the winds, storms and thick fogs, nets, when used, were likely cast with extreme caution.⁷⁷ Despite their location off shore on the islands, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay likely fished in shallows, located between 1/2 league to a league⁷⁸ from the shore of an island (Wrong ed. 1939: 186), not in deep water.⁷⁹ This would seem to preclude the use of gill

⁷⁴ Heidenreich determined that the herring described by the Jesuits were actually shallow water cisco (*Coregonus artedii*) which schools in late fall in shallow waters, spawning until late spring (1971: 210).

⁷⁵ Rostlund (1952: 85) suggests these early nets were not hauled through the water but trapped fish acting as a weir or tidal trap.

⁷⁶ Among the Huron, hunting was less important than fishing although animal skins were necessary for clothing (Trigger 1969: 31).

⁷⁷ Ontario Sessional Papers, 1902 (34 (7)) Third Annual report of the Department of Fisheries of the Province of Ontario, 1901. Report of Captain of the Cruiser Gilphie to S.T. Bastedo, Esquire, Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries.

⁷⁸ Based on an examination of Champlain's maps, a league ranged between 2.8 and 3.1 statute miles (Heidenreich 1976: 47) which averages 2.9 statute miles. Off shore fishing ranged between 1.5 miles and 2.9 miles.

⁷⁹ Rostlund (1952: 152) suggests the Huron lacked off-shore fishing gear, and as a result they could not take full advantage of the fishery. This questions whether the Huron were making or using gill nets. If the Huron were providing the Georgian Bay Algonkian with nets, it is unlikely they had gill nets. Moussette (1979: 66-67) however, suggests

nets.⁸⁰

The effects of wet conditions on subsistence, likely encouraged by the Little Ice Age climate, are difficult to interpret from the historical sources. During the fall when the weather could be unpredictably wet, and the Huron fishers could not dry fish, they spiked fish on poles before packing them into casks (Wrong ed. 1939: 186). The motivation to dry fish may have been greater for some groups such as the Nipissing who relied on this product in their commercial exchanges with the Huron. It may not have been as important to the Nipissing diet who were known to prefer "fresh food," (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 229-231; 21: 239-241), or to the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay who traded fresh frozen fish with the Huron. The importance of winter ice fishing must also be considered as it may have reduced the importance of drying fall spawning fish for

the Huron used gill nets. He cites a reference by Sagard to the Huron setting a net at night and lifting it in the morning, and notes Sagard's use of the word *rets* (Wrong ed. 1939: 364) which translates to gill net to support his view. Since the use of a gill net implies surplus production of fish and a motive and method to preserve quantities of fish, the existence of a precontact gill net fishery must rest on other than historical interpretations.

⁸⁰There were several disadvantages using gill nets. The major disadvantage was that fish snared by this method spoiled within a short period of time if they were not removed from the water. If the nets could not be lifted because of bad weather, the fish spoiled. A greater risk for future productivity was the danger of a net drifting and becoming lost, capturing more fish. The decaying fish pollutes the area to other fish, destroying the fishery (McCullough 1989: 30). This would imply that the use of gill nets would require careful timing, and attention.

those groups actively engaged in a winter fishery.

Fall fishing continued until the end of November, when, after battling winds, snow and ice, the Georgian Bay Algonkian abandoned their canoes and walked to their wintering grounds (Ibid. 30: 87, 89, 109). Their wintering location was selected close to places where sturgeon could be netted under the ice in March.⁸¹ Wintering locations were also selected for ice fishing, perhaps influenced by the presence of fish wintering ranges,⁸² the expected depth of ice near river mouth locations,⁸³ the location of food caches, and their proximity to the buyers of their fish and suppliers of corn. It is also probable that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay selected winter sites close to a spring or stream, to safeguard a reliable water supply (cf. Konrad 1975: 15). An important feature of the climatic influences in the region was as the weather cooled, it was believed that more fish could be caught (Thwaites ed. 1959,

⁸¹ Among the Menominee, the high water period following winter thaw, resulted in a resounding, rhythmic beat against rock in a drumming fashion interpreted as the sound calling the sturgeon (Skinner 1921: 199). Grumbling point near Henvey Inlet was considered a sacred site by the Parry Island Ojibwa for this reason (Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 12, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island).

⁸² Many fish establish home ranges during winter and summer. Muskellunge remain in areas between 0.6 to 1.1 hectares in water less than 2.0 metres deep. Home ranges were established by males when the water reached less than 5°C and greater than 15°C. These ranges were vacated as spring thaw developed (Minor and Crossman 1978: 146,148).

⁸³ The Puan made camps near the entrance of rivers in readiness for the net ice fishing of sturgeon (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 301).

54: 151).

Some groups, notably the Nipissing and the Algonkin, routinely wintered close to the Huron.⁸⁴ The Nipissing prepared for this seasonal activity by catching and drying fish in Georgian Bay, and trading these with the Huron for corn (Ibid. 21: 239). The Nipissing wintered in large groups⁸⁵ among the Huron Attignaouantan (Bear Tribe), where they bartered dried fish, hunted, and traded (Ibid).

The practice of wintering in southern Georgian Bay may date to 1550 A.D., based on archaeological findings at Methodist Point Park. Algonkian awls appear on Huron sites dating between 1550 A.D. and 1600 A.D. (O'Brien 1976: 82), corresponding with the cooling climatic period discussed earlier. It is uncertain to what extent or how the Nipissing were extended the privilege of wintering with the Huron. The Ottawa Valley Algonkian, who were most likely out of their own beaver hunting stocks by 1626 A.D., went hunting in Neutrialia (Fitzgerald 1982: 300) where the beaver were barely exploited by the Neutral who concentrated on deer, racoon, and squirrel (Prevec and Noble 1983: 50).

⁸⁴ The Ottawa, and possibly some Amikwa, wintered among the Petun (Garrad and Heidenreich 1978: 396).

⁸⁵ The Nipissing once carried seven canoes of 70 dead from a winter spent at Huronia (Thwaites ed. 1959, 14: 37). Assuming that a 50% death rate is not unexpected in an unimmunized population under these conditions (Dobyns 1966: 407), the Nipissing wintering population may have included 140 people.

Fitzgerald (1982: 300) speculates that the Algonkin exchanged steatite (soapstone), chlorite, and European goods for the privilege of hunting.

The location of the Nipissing wintering camps may have been at or near vacated Huron beach camps, although during the 1640s the Nipissing wintered progressively closer to the Jesuits. In 1637, the Nipissing were reported a quarter of a league away; in 1640, 100 paces away; and in 1643, 'almost to our doors' (Thwaites ed. 1959, 13: 191; 27: 55; 14: 7; 20: 97). Toward the final years of Huronia, in 1648⁸⁶ some Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, also wintered close to the Jesuit missions (Ibid. 33: 151, 153, 155). This was no doubt prompted by increasing hostilities with the Iroquois and the need to seek protection.

Rather than winter in the hinterland parts of the Canadian Shield, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay wintered close to the Georgian Bay shoreline, ten or twelve leagues⁸⁷ from Huronia (Ibid. 23: 231). The location was presumably selected because of an abundance of

⁸⁶ In 1648, two missions were established to work with the Lake Huron native peoples. The Mission of the Holy Ghost was established for the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples and the Nipissing, and the Mission of Saint Peter was established for the north shore Algonquins (Thwaites ed. 1959, 33: 155).

⁸⁷ The distance was between 29 and 35 miles, assuming a league measures 2.9 miles.

fish, and access to trade and corn (Ibid. 30: 87,89,109; 28: 97). Ice fishing typically supplied plentiful amounts of fish (Ibid. 35: 175) although it involved making holes in the ice two or three feet thick through which nets were then cast. The mesh size of the ice net was likely smaller than that used in the spring, especially if they were cast to catch herring (Ibid). A smaller mesh ensured a larger quantity of fish as small fish could also be caught.

Subsistence available to the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay during the winter likely included stored fruits, nuts, and plants. They also had the option of moving out of the region to find other sources of subsistence, to pay for the privilege of hunting in richer regions, or to remain in the region, fishing, and trading with neighbouring groups, sharing resources. The latter option appears to describe the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay during the seventeenth century.

Spring saw several Algonkian groups, notably the Nipissing, leave their wintering grounds at Huronia, travelling and fishing in Georgian Bay on their way to trading destinations in the north near James Bay, if they did not return to their pre-wintering locations at Lake Nipissing (Ibid. 14: 37). Fishing expeditions may have taken them as far as Parry Sound, or Shawanaga, depending on

which access route they took to the interior hinterland.⁸⁸

In March, if they were not netting sturgeon, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay probably collected acorns before heading to places more open to the southern sun where the ice melted, opening the river mouths to fishing (Ibid. 35: 135, 183). Acorns were roasted in ashes for twelve hours to reduce their bitterness, before being ground into a flour-like substance (Ibid. 55: 151) which may have served as a corn flour substitute. As acorns require considerable collection and processing efforts, the decision to search for them suggests fishing and hunting failed, and their storage of foods, if they preserved one, expired. During famine, acorns were considered a delicacy (Ibid. 35: 127).⁸⁹ The Jesuits however, were known to exchange acorns with the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay for fish (Ibid. 35: 99).

With fishing occupying spring, summer, fall and winter, it is difficult to place hunting into the seasonal cycle. The documents provide few accounts of hunting, which would not be unusual if Jesuit contact with the native peoples had been restricted to periods of favourable

⁸⁸ Possible routes are outlined in Chapter Two.

⁸⁹ According to Jenness (1932 :43) nuts, including the hickory, chestnut, butternut and acorn were more prominent than fruits in the Iroquoian diet.

weather. The descriptions of winter ice fishing, however, discredit this presumed bias. It is plausible given the importance of the fisheries that the same areas used for fishing were also used for hunting (cf. Chamberlain 1888: 154) especially as the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, like the Huron and Ottawa, rarely went inland to hunt:

The Outaouas and the Hurons could never subsist here without the fishery; for they are obliged to travel about twenty leagues in the woods, before they can kill any harts or elks, and it would be an infinite fatigue to carry their carcasses so far overland (Thwaites ed. 1905: 147).

Hunting likely provided them with clothing, bedding, and food (Jeness 1932: 46). Whatever small game the Georgian Bay Algonkian hunted, they apparently killed for skin. Sagard described Algonkians hunting muskrat exclusively for fur, the meat thrown aside (Wrong ed. 1939: 248). Like many fishing and small game hunting peoples, the Georgian Bay Algonkian probably caught as much fish as they needed, and as much game as they could catch (cf. Lee 1968: 41). They exploited the most reliable source, but did not neglect the less reliable (Ibid). For this reason, the fauna recovered from Shebishikong, including small mammals,

deer, moose and bear, likely contributed to a fishers' diet.⁹⁰

Regional Subsistence Scheduling Among Groups

Without evidence of a settlement pattern as expressed by the structures occupied by native groups, this section will instead provide spatial patterns, the extent of probable exploitation, as it can be tied to expected seasonal rhythms. Year round exploitation of the fishing resources in Georgian Bay suggests a pattern of concentrated island/shoreline land use. There is little in the historical sources to suggest that other groups, like the Nipissing, Ottawa, Huron, or Petun were however, prevented from fishing in Georgian Bay. The Ottawa were principally documented as living in the western section of Georgian Bay on the islands linking to, and including, Manitoulin Island (Thwaites ed. 1959, 189: 229-231) and the Bruce Peninsula, particularly at Flowerpot Island, as demonstrated by the Glen site (Wright 1981). The Petun were barred from the region by territorial restrictions imposed by the Huron (Thwaites ed. 1959, 21: 177, 203, 205). They likely fished in the same area as the Ottawa and were known to make fish

⁹⁰ Not apparent from the records is the attitude toward food and food shortages. Cronon (1983: 41) suggests native people consciously chose hunger, rather than work harder during the leisurely times of summer. This likely kept population densities low.

nets (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 95-96,136). The seventeenth century Huron and the Algonkian speaking peoples groups could have exploited separate resources, and in so doing, avoided potential conflict. The Huron preferred whitefish, trout, sturgeon and pike (Heidenreich 1971: 209); the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay preferred sturgeon, herring and trout.

Another means of avoiding competition was to concentrate spearing or trolling to the off-shore shoals in places where Huron nets could not be set. In this way the Georgian Bay fishers avoided the problems facing fishers during the 1850s, that of destroying the netting areas by spearing, which bloodied the water.⁹¹ Figure 18 illustrates a pattern of decentralized fishing, conducted away from settlements: The north shore Ojibwa⁹² perhaps fished on the islands adjacent to Manitoulin Island; the Ouasouarini and Outchougai on the Shawenagan fishing islands, and the Huron concentrated on the islands in and around Christian Channel, perhaps fishing off the north shore of Giant's Tomb (Isle Traverse), judging from Sagard's

⁹¹ Spearing also made fish less desirable for salting. Canada Sessional Papers No. 12, 1860. Report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the year 1859. Report of the Fishery Overseer for the Division of Lakes Huron and Superior, William Gibbard: 85.

⁹² A trading relationship did exist between the Ojibwa and the Ottawa (Thwaites ed. 1959, 14: 155). Whether Algonkian goods were exchanged with groups who likely produced the same products, is not known from available sources.

description (Wrong ed. 1939: 189) and the known presence of a trout fishery.⁹³

Potential conflict between groups was averted by exploiting different fish populations, using fishing methods which were not intrusive upon other group's effort, and by creating alliances, sustained through an exchange for fish.

Horticulture in Georgian Bay

Although corn was traded between the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay and the Huron directly, and perhaps indirectly through the Nipissing, how important this item was to the local subsistence of small, dispersed mobile peoples who had been described by Champlain to have cultivated some corn, is uncertain. Samples of the type of corn, evidence of storage pits (see Laidlaw 1897: 81), or other indications of the quantity of corn planted by the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, did not survive the excavation of the Shebishikong site. It is possible that flint corn (*Zea mays indurata*) was sown, which produced a hardier flour with a minimum amount of cultivation (Will and Hyde 1917: 284). This type of corn was favoured by many Algonkians as it grew better under colder conditions (Ibid:

⁹³ Information relating to the Great Manitoulin Islands, The Island of La Cloche and Other Islands on the North Shore of Lake Huron and on the East Shore of the Georgian Bay: 60.

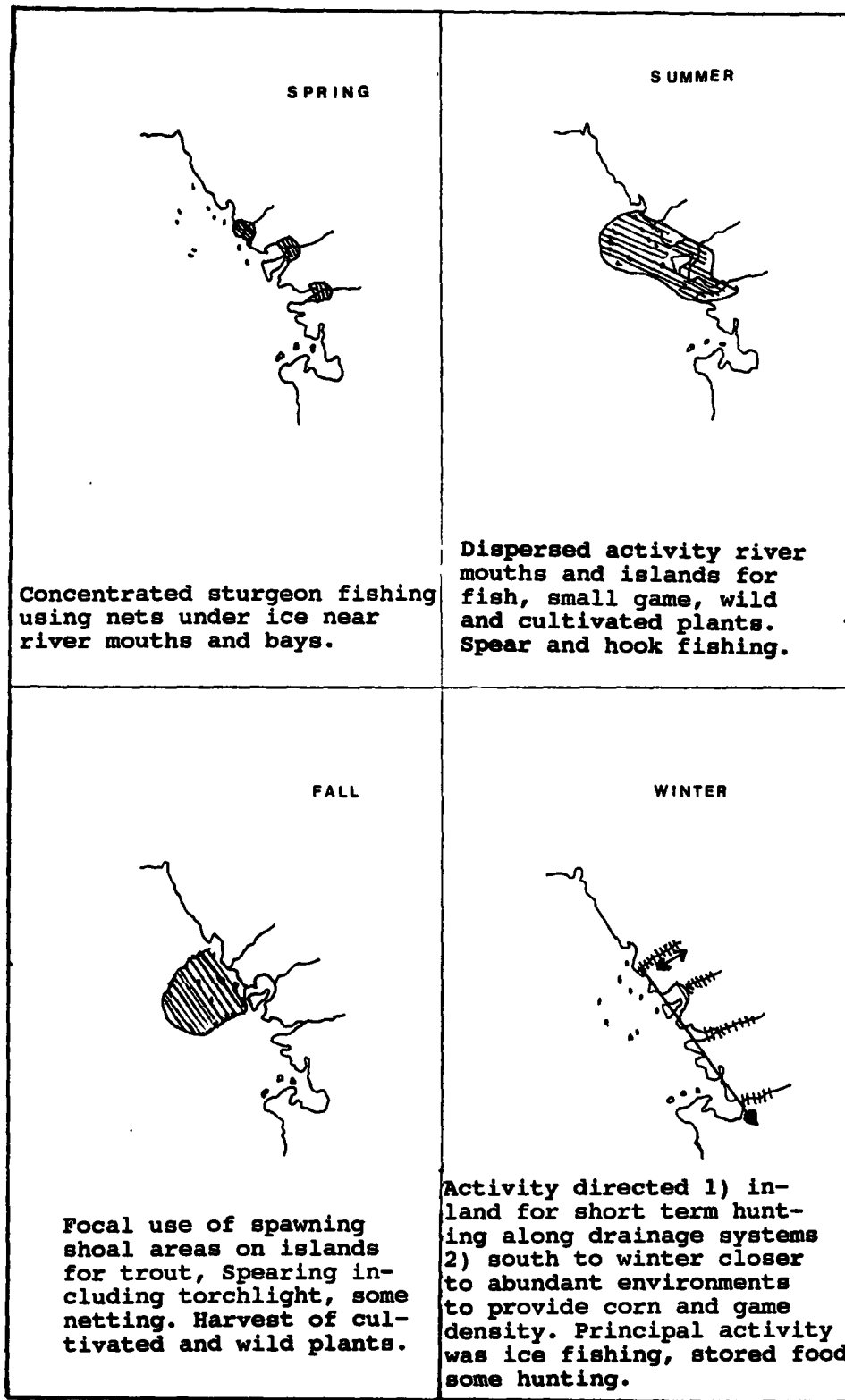


FIG. 18. SEASONAL USE OF GEORGIAN BAY

117). Historical evidence suggests the Ojibwa harvested "green corn," corn which had just reached the sweet milk stage⁹⁴ (Ibid). This corn could have been consumed immediately,⁹⁵ as green corn has yet to reach its full carbohydrate content, it is unsuitable for grinding.⁹⁶

This suggests that the Georgian Bay Algonkian grew corn for immediate consumption, stored little for later use (despite the storage pits)⁹⁷ and relied on alternate (Huron) sources for corn flour and trade. As the Nipissing principally traded for corn (both dried and flour), they too were unlikely to store green corn, given its storage limitations.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ The Jesuits described the Nipissing as growing corn for pleasure, preferring "fresh food" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 18: 229-231; 21: 239-241).

⁹⁵ The Huron had a practice of submerging fresh corn in stagnant water for several months, resulting in a fermented "stinking corn" *leindohy*, relished by the Huron, if repulsed by Sagard (Wrong ed. 1929.3: 97).

⁹⁶ It is uncertain whether green corn had good storage properties. Will and Hyde (1917: 117-118) suggest that green corn was par boiled, dried, shelled and cached for the winter. The urgency to store green corn was to prevent its loss to birds, drought, rot, or robbery (Ibid: 123,143, 185). If a longer harvest was uncertain, due to such losses, this corn would prove a dependable source and be preserved over the winter.

Ceci disagrees suggesting that green corn which had yet to convert its starch, would be immature for grinding (1979-80: 56). Visser (1986: 30) indicates sweet corn did not respond well to either drying or lengthy storage.

⁹⁷ These storage pits may actually be of Lalonde origin.

⁹⁸ The Nipissing did not bring corn with them during their winter with the Huron (Thwaites ed. 1959, 21: 239-241), they arrived "supplied with all other goods" except corn (Ibid. 21: 239-41).

The Huron were reported to grow corn in amounts sufficient to last two or three years. This was either in anticipation of bad weather or trade potential (Wrong ed. 1939: 103), if not for both reasons.⁹⁹ If the Huron were experiencing difficulty growing flour corn,¹⁰⁰ it is questionable that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay with fewer frost free days, poorer soils, and a smaller population were growing this type. Famines reported among the Huron in 1638, 1643, and 1649 (Heidenreich 1971: 58) attributed to weather conditions presumably also affected the Georgian Bay Algonkian's ability to grow corn, although local variations in rain and temperature may not have affected crops to the same degree. Drought could, however, have increased pressure on the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay for alternate food stuffs, particularly under conditions when fishing failed, as it did in 1649 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 35: 175). As gardens were simply an invitation to Iroquois raiding parties, fear of the Iroquois during much

⁹⁹ Suttles (1968: 64) argued that occasional scarcity was insufficient reason for most people to store food for the winter.

¹⁰⁰ Charred corn at Cahiaque, a Huron village site, suggested to Heidenreich that flint corn outnumbered flour corn by a ratio of three to one (Heidenreich 1971: 173). Sykes (1981: 24) questions this finding wholly on the basis that it is impossible to distinguish the two types except through the composition of the endosperm. Sagard, however, mentioned that corn ripened in 4 months and in some places 3 months (Wrong ed. 1939: 104), recognizing perhaps a distinction between flour corn and flint corn. Flour corn required an additional 30 days growing time to that of flint corn.

of the 1640s prevented several Algonkian groups from growing corn (Ibid. 25: 105-111; Wrong ed. 1939: 846). These considerations suggest that the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were not producing high yields of corn.

Corn was, however, an essential component to a diet dominated by fish.¹⁰¹ Access to people who grew it, combined with the environmental conditions to grow small amounts of corn, had major consequences for the way the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay conducted the rest of its food-gathering activities in the region. To what degree the pattern of land use was adapted to a horticultural source (cf. Fitting 1970: 144) is uncertain without knowing corn yields, or the volume of trade. Corn likely contributed to the large gatherings of linguistically similar peoples wintering near large populations of horticulturalists.¹⁰² It was politically sound for the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay to cultivate a relationship with corn growers, or corn traders, in this case the Huron, Ottawa, and Nipissing, than intensively to cultivate corn themselves. The spatial patterns in the

¹⁰¹ Fish provides important oils, protein, and minerals, but lacks carbohydrates.

¹⁰² Trigger (1976.1: 168) speculated that the trading arrangements between the Huron and Algonkian (Nipissing) probably resulted in the development of an unusually high population density north of Huronia. Considering the spatial patterns expressed by the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples, he may have been considering the winter aggregations.

region suggest a weakly defined pattern of regional symbiosis which permitted an efficient use of horticultural resources over the region.

Social Organization of the Protohistoric Algonkian Speaking Peoples of Georgian Bay

Were the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay small groups of scattered bands, or were they united by more complex principles of social and political organization? Neither the historical documents, nor the informants are helpful describing the organization extant during the seventeenth century. Nothing survives of the kinship nomenclature, making a reconstruction of social organization speculative. Filling this deficiency are the theoretical interpretations made by anthropologists, particularly Harold Hickerson (1960; 1962; 1967), whose extensive writings have presented a particular view of Ojibwa social organization.¹⁰³

Hickerson's model proposes that the seventeenth century Ojibwa were composed of socially autonomous, self-sufficient, corporate, and exogamous territorial communities, organized on the basis of patrilineal descent

¹⁰³ Unfortunately, Hickerson's distribution of Ojibwa (Chippewa) ignores those in southern Ontario and the Georgian Bay region (Rogers 1973b: 85).

(1967: 324-325). These territorial, unilineal descent groups were organized to exploit hunting and fishing grounds collectively and corporately, by occupying specific territories on the Great Lakes and the adjacent interior. As a result of the increasing demands of the fur trade, established territorial patterns were disrupted, reducing the clans to extended families (Ibid: 326).

The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay who were "constantly dividing themselves up into smaller groups" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 33: 179,189) make unlikely candidates for Hickerson's vision of clans. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay demonstrate a territorial occupancy that was conditioned by a seasonal, spatial scheduling of resources, reinforced by good access to trade and the adroit avoidance of intergroup conflict.¹⁰⁴ It is questionable they were organized in rigid, patrilocal, patrilineal bands controlling defined territories. The wintering practices of the Nipissing and Ottawa Valley Algonkin demonstrate that groups leased rights to hunt and trap elsewhere, sometimes among horticultural groups, later returning to their 'home' areas to fish, trade, plant, or take tolls.

Large "sedentary fishing communities" supported by a whitefish fishery (Hickerson 1967: 324) is also unsupported

¹⁰⁴ Eighteenth century Ojibwa were known to plan their movements to avoid conflict (Bain ed. 1901: 125).

by the historical evidence which suggests a fishery in Georgian Bay sustained by sturgeon, herring and trout.¹⁰⁵ The absence of extensive netting activity, limited to the early spring and winter, coupled with the lack of preservation of surplus production, likely kept harvests and the group size small. Although descriptions of winter fishing suggest a dependable fish supply, it also suggests a reduced importance attached to the preservation of fall fish, and a preference for fresh fish. Despite Rostlund's assertion that the amount of fish preserved or stored was a measure of the importance of fishing in the economy (1952: 138), one must question, as does Knight (1978: 217), whether the preparation and preservation of fish entailed more limitations than catching fish, especially when winter ice fishing, using nets, was practised, and there was an existing supply of dried fish and corn.¹⁰⁶ Because of the available technology, the adverse ice conditions in spring, the annual variations in water levels, the timing of annual spawning, and the political environment, fishing and small game hunting provided a stable subsistence base for small groups. As summer was the traditional raiding period

¹⁰⁵ Hickerson's work may have some bearing on the expert whitefish fishers at Sault. Ste. Marie (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 131).

¹⁰⁶ Improperly dried fish turned mouldy and spoiled. Even well dried fish was subject to infestation by insects unless carefully and regularly inspected (Stewart 1977: 124).

(Thwaites ed. 1959, 22: 269,279,307) this also kept local groups¹⁰⁷ small and mobile (Ibid. 27: 47,49).

The Georgian Bay Algonkian lodge described by Sagard (Wrong ed. 1939: 248, 249) suggests the size of the local group or extended family. The number of hearths reported in the lodges, as an indicator of the number of nuclear families (cf. Heidenreich 1971: 115, 123), suggest perhaps two extended families each, for a total of 24 people per house, a size which has some support from archaeological findings.¹⁰⁸ Two lodges housing 24 people suggests a Georgian Bay spring population of approximately 48 people. Sagard also reported that a sturgeon feast attracted 50 male guests, which suggests a larger social unit of perhaps more than 200 people.¹⁰⁹ This estimate, as an indication of local population, may be inflated by the invitation of non-Algonkian, including Sagard, and some Huron. It may also have included Nipissing who may have recently left Huronia in the spring, and who were fishing in the area as they headed to Lake Nipissing or James Bay to trade (Thwaites ed.

¹⁰⁷ Local groups were small, autonomous groups of between 20 and 50 people consisting of only two kinds of social units, families and related families.

¹⁰⁸ Upper Great Lakes sites suggest warm weather occupations of between 25-40 individuals, exploiting spring spawning fish, such as sturgeon, using a netting and spearing technology (Brose 1970: 4).

¹⁰⁹ This estimate assumes a ratio of one male to four people (Kay 1984: 272).

1959, 14: 37).

The size of local groups varied to correspond with resource capability, perhaps from five to fifty individuals, depending upon leadership and witchcraft phenomena (Rogers and Black 1976: 32). As little political coordination was required to redistribute food, the family unit or the extended family was the practical unit of exploitation (Ibid).

This does not imply that large sedentary groups could not have been supported by the productive capacity of the fisheries, only there is no historical evidence that larger groups were present in the region or that these groups engaged in the preservation of surplus production. The historical references describe the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as 'nomadic'. Certainly, they moved between island and shore locations, moving closer to the Huron and Jesuits in the winter. From a regional perspective, mobility was restricted to fishing islands, river mouths, and wintering locations near the large population of Huron, Nipissing and Algonkin. When the archaeological absence of inland hinterland exploitation is considered, it shows a picture of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay pursuing a shoreline and island occupation foremost characterized by fishing, small game hunting, corn growing, and local trading. This contrasts

with the land use pattern proposed by Heidenreich (Harris ed. 1987.1: plate 34), which depicts the Algonkian as following the standard ethnographic model of a summer-shoreline, winter-hinterland pattern.

The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay commuted between islands within a relatively close range, likely repeatedly using a few fishing sites. These sites were concentrated near spawning areas at river mouths, and on off shore shoal areas, but were not exclusively used during spawning periods.¹¹⁰ The preference for these sites resulted from the combination of local fish populations and the limitations of their fishing technology. The shoreline and islands provided a setting for the integration of several resource uses: berries, corn, fish, fowl, and small game which were available at approximately the same time in the early fall on the islands, and which suggested a form of sedentism. Food caching would also contribute to a lesser degree to keep groups sedentary. The capacity to store food would extend resource scheduling by providing an alternative to mobility, compatible with groups who are collectors, not foragers (cf. Bailey and Parkington 1988: 9). The Algonkian

¹¹⁰ Indeed, Cucin and Reigier (1965) suggest that the success of the Georgian Bay whitefish fishery was due to the presence of fishing refuges. Rostlund argues that much of the Great Lakes fishery was untouched because native technology was "not equal to the opportunity" (1952: 152). The Dougall site, located at the narrows between Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching, continued to be used as a fishing site for approximately 2,000 years (Wright 1972c: 3).

speaking peoples of Georgian Bay probably fall into a classification between sedentism and mobility, a 'sedentary-cum-mobile society' (Ibid).¹¹¹

To what extent does Hickerson's model misrepresent the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay social organization? The dynamic of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay social relationships was one of systemic segmentation. Reports of their constant dividing prevented them from establishing corporate groups larger than the nuclear or extended family, although larger groups during winter were suggested by the Nipissing and the Algonkin. This fluid social organization potentially inhibited political centralization and stratification. The social structure was likely organized by concession, fission or blood feud. Lee (1972: 127) has effectively challenged the notion that concentration and dispersal, characteristic of hunter-gatherer societies, was exclusively an ecological response. Without ecological necessity, groups simply concentrated and dispersed in response to economic and political relations. This is well expressed in Georgian Bay.

Limited corn growing was unlikely to have influenced

¹¹¹ As Greenberg and Morrison (1982: 92) point out, there is much confusion over mobility for trade and warfare, and mobility for subsistence.

the system of social organization. Whatever the social organization of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, it likely did not put them at risk from other groups, rather, it allowed military action when necessary, and provided year round access to aquatic resources, to corn growers and to traders.

Fission appears to have been an adaptation to both the political circumstances of hostilities, and seasonally scheduled resource exploitation with other groups. It may also have functioned as a means to maintain political autonomy¹¹² through isolated gatherings which were important to internal politics and external relations, particularly in circumstances of endemic warfare. The only way to avoid indefinite fission and segmentation was for these groups to be exogamous, which is reflected in the mixed ceramic collection at Shebishikong. Inter-marriage between groups, notably the Nipissing and the Algonkin, although probably the Ojibwa as well, provided a means of reducing intergroup conflict to a domestic dispute. Culturally, fission contributed to the ebb and flow of isolation and re-incorporation, which was the basis of many

¹¹² Smith understood the fissionable nature of Ojibwa social organization as a means through which to pursue alliances and interests, make decisions, and maintain trust of only close kinsmen (1973: 11). Smith's argument is that factional dispute maintained traditionally important values through a long-term balance of opposition among factions (Ibid: 12).

fishing communities (cf. Taylor 1981: 777). While fishing may have naturally dispersed the Georgian Bay Algonkian, the political reality of regional scheduling, combined with the Iroquois threat, cemented this pattern.

Wintering in large aggregations is imperfectly understood. If the size of the group is governed by the scarcity of food, then a large aggregation suggests plentiful food supplies. Unquestionably, the example of the Georgian Bay fishers suggests that contact with, and access to other food sources, were important considerations for their ability to subsist in larger groups.¹¹³ The presence of corn, trade, and related peoples, surely stimulated this wintering organization, demonstrated foremost by the Nipissing and Algonkin. Aggregation provided a functional reason for related groups to unite after dispersed fall activity (Thwaites ed. 1959, 24: 267, 273) when they were engaged in either hunting, toll-taking, fishing, or trading. Not only was their access to trade goods improved by moving closer to similarly speaking Algonkian, their social and political spheres were undoubtedly broadened. Winter may have been the occasion for marriage, although potentially

¹¹³ Central Algonkian groups were accustomed to wintering in large aggregations during the winter after the 'Great Freeze' set in (Tax 1955: 244). They hunted during the fall and consumed dried corn over the winter (Ibid).

diverse kinship systems may not have supported fixed rules of residence. Greater access to trade goods may have encouraged practices which recognized bride service. Given a potential marriage universe between Nipissing, Ottawa, Huron (possibly slaves of the Huron), Algonkin, Ojibwa, and other Georgian Bay Algonkians, the consequences of marriage between fishers, horticulturalists and traders, likely resulted in varied internal organization.

Set against this large winter grouping is the spring sturgeon ritual when invitations were sent, presumably to dispersed individuals.¹¹⁴ The possibility of the spring pre-spawning period being a time for local groups to reconvene after dispersing to ice fish and hunt, would suggest spatially diversified winter activities. Additionally, the feast ritual suggests a prescribed group composed of males led by a ritualist who ceremonially prepared and sampled the first sturgeon. The relationship between these males may define the extent of the regional band. The regional band is the largest group which can be identified in the region (cf. Rogers and Smith 1973: 19,44). In the Georgian Bay region it was likely a seasonal phenomenon which might assemble in various forms. In early

¹¹⁴ Formal invitations were issued to the males invited to the sturgeon feast (Wrong ed. 1939: 247). This suggests that the guests were not nearby to hear the general announcement.

spring this group of perhaps 200 people, may meet during the festivities associated with the sturgeon feast, and again, in winter, to trade with the Huron and other Algonkians.

A useful model from which to reconstruct the social organization of the seventeenth century Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay is the home base model, developed to describe the fish and hare subsistence pattern of the Weagamow Ojibwa from 1880-1920 (Rogers and Black 1976).¹¹⁵ This model would portray the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as efficiently exploiting resources from a central location, such as that existing at Shebishikong. This location may have been occupied for the longest period of the year, possibly March through October judging from the faunal remains from Shebishikong, which provided access to a succession of food sources, and to several travel routes to reach and distribute resources (cf. Rogers and Black 1976: 21, 23). Satellite camps, which were temporary and smaller, could be established on the islands by one or two families, organized to exploit a particular resource, in this case, fish, mammals, corn, or wild plants.

The home base group or local group would be composed of one or more families related consanguineously or affinally

¹¹⁵ The reliance on fish and hare at Weagamow developed under conditions of environmental duress. Nets did not, however, play an important role in this subsistence (Rogers and Black 1976: 14, 17).

(Ibid). The labour requirements could have been organized by as few as four individuals operating a seine-type net,¹¹⁶ if they used canoes (see Masson 1890.2: 345-6), a mixed aged group who could manage a seine net (Cleland 1982: 777-778),¹¹⁷ one to two individuals to spear, often a husband and wife team (McCrimmon 1956: 16), or to a small group who built fish weirs.¹¹⁸

Uncertain is whether fishing activity was segregated by age (agility) and sex (cf. Watunabe 1968: 76). Age and sex ratios were found to be difficult to maintain through a fish and hare subsistence pattern (Rogers and Black 1976: 33). Adjustments to balance the ratios were accommodated by marriage alliance, including polygynous arrangements. Post marital residence would change from one spouse to another (Ibid). The strenuous activity involved in fish spearing¹¹⁹ may have been delegated to younger males, leaving net fishing, and perhaps ice fishing, to older

¹¹⁶ Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg (1988: 198) refer to this type of net as a drag net.

¹¹⁷ Small bays could be fished by two to three men using a seine net 100 yards in length (Commercial Fishing, Macfie n.d. : 49).

¹¹⁸ The absence of historical documentation describing the construction of weirs or dams, does not mean the Georgian Bay Algonkian speaking peoples did not practice this type of fishing. Weirs were likely used in a shallow water fishery. Good evidence of this type of fishery would suggest collective activities that may have important consequences to the social organization.

¹¹⁹ The Jesuits noted that whitefish fishing at Sault Ste. Marie was a specialized fishing activity -- "not all persons were fitted for this kind of fishing" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 131).

males.¹²⁰ Activities associated with fish preservation and cooking likely fell to the female, although females did fish. Raudot, writing in 1709, described women as skilful fishers (Kinietz 1965: 369). Women helped to set the nets in winter, made nets, and hauled and preserved fish (Landes 1938: 14). They also converted the products of fishing and hunting into edibles, clothing, decorative arts and matting (Ibid: 10).¹²¹

Political Organization Among the Protohistoric
Algonkian Speaking Peoples of Georgian Bay

During the seventeenth century, local group leadership among the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay rested with a *shamanic persona, the fish preacher*.¹²² As the principal ritualist, the *fish preacher* performed rites to bring success to group fishing by holding a sturgeon feast, and a ritual marriage to the seine net.

¹²⁰ It is not known whether fishing partners were sibling or agnatic, whether ownership of the fishing gear was divided between partners so that one depended on the others's share to fish, or if each individual was independently equipped. Conceivably nets were jointly owned, spears and canoes individually owned. How fishing equipment was inherited is equally uncertain.

¹²¹ Jameson believed that Ojibwa women were equally expert in procuring subsistence and enjoying rank (1838.3: 308).

¹²² The Nipissing were initially referred to as sorcerers because they constantly consulted the spirits for divination (Thwaites ed. 1959, 5: 219), presumably through shamanic intervention. They may have had more sorcerers (shamans) among them than any other group (Ibid: 288 n.51).

The *fish preacher* does not appear to have been a political leader or chief, but his identification with fishing activities underscores his importance in the ritual, social, and economic life of the group. As it is the most powerful individuals who control¹²³ the 'boss' species (Black 1974: 6,7), in this case the sturgeon, this lends support to the notion that the *fish preacher* was, in many ways, responsible for the group's welfare. The rituals attended by the *fish preacher* provided cultural strength to the fishery. The shaman was both a protector and priest of a definite group of relatives.

Among many Algonkian speaking peoples the shamanic figure is often a divisive force if not 'dreaded' (Thwaites ed. 1959, 3: 91). His presence may have encouraged fissioning. If every local group was headed by a *fish preacher*, there was likely conflict, perhaps ritual 'duelling,' between various local group personalities or factions.¹²⁴ In the context of intragroup dynamics, shamanic reprisal acted as a vehicle of social control which kept the group size small.

¹²³ In the case of fish, the operative word is 'discover' not control. Traditional hunting medicines facilitated the discovery of game. They did not expedite their slaughter (Sallot and Peltier 1978: 102).

¹²⁴ The relationship between groups may have been subject to ritual feuding (Rogers 1974: 11-12).

The presence of the *fish preacher* also casts a different perspective on the place of trade goods in the region. A shaman, unlike a chief, was not compelled to redistribute goods within the community. Such goods could be directed into sacred objects and channelled into sources of power as they were often considered the exclusive property of the shaman (Morrison 1976: 12). Because ritual objects and medicines provided a valued part of the trade of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, the role of the ritualist was undoubtedly strengthened, for it was through ritual action that the stones, bones, and animal parts that made up the lucrative trade in ritual objects with the Huron, were sanctified.¹²⁵

The *fish preacher* was likely entering into 'community' with the game or fish spirits, and in this way fulfilling a function within a broader social and cosmological scheme (Preston 1975).¹²⁶ Rather than as a source of coercive power where the shaman used his power to acquire food when game spirits were unwilling to offer game

¹²⁵ There are subtle differences in the ritual behaviour of hunters and fishers regarding who ceremonially handles certain species. Only a hunter could bring success to his family, but fishers, surrendered their personal autonomy to the skill of their fish preachers.

¹²⁶ The Ojibwa Power Control Belief System encompassed the idea of not being controlled by the environment which was possible by finding the proper balance of power (Black 1974: 6-7). If the spirits were the power givers, it would be prudent to maintain good relations with the animals, in this case fish, who held power over subsistence and shelter (Ibid: 12).

(Tanner 1979: 174,175), power was linked to a responsibility to fulfil obligations for the human role in a natural cycle, as equal participant. The latter explanation better describes the relationship between fishers and fish spirits. From the view of social structure, one must learn whether the individual fisher, unlike the hunter, was absolved of all spiritual communication which was relegated if not usurped by the *fish preacher*. Under these conditions, the role of *fish preachers* in Georgian Bay would undoubtedly, flourish.

The redistribution of trade goods may have come attached with heavy social obligations, for a *fish preacher* as a shaman, was not only curer, diviner, and spirit communicator, but a manipulator of people (Morrison 1976: 12).¹²⁷ The presence, power, and number of shamanic leaders likely increased under unpredictable environmental circumstances, as when they were called upon "to dissipate this unfriendly snow" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 67: 155). Under the unpredictable conditions of the Little Ice Age climate, the demand for and presence of shamans was likely enhanced. New *fish preachers* regularly appeared among the Huron, attempting to gain recognition, and presents, by inventively

¹²⁷ The local groups were united during important feasts, such as the sturgeon feast, in which males were sent special invitation by a "master of the feast", perhaps a powerful shaman-chief (Wrong ed. 1939: 247).

prescribing fishing rituals designed to improve the prosperity of the fishery (Ibid. 19: 87).

Political organization above the position of the shaman chief is indirectly implied by the existence of a hereditary chief, who was installed during a Feast of the Dead ceremony. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were likely participants in the Feast of the Dead ceremony although they did not hold the ceremony.¹²⁸ To the host groups, the Feast confirmed hereditary rights to the position of chief, and validated their social position.¹²⁹ Solidarity was extended by the basic social unit, the local group, through which the leadership position was transmitted to the heir.

If Feasts occurred only at the inauguration of a new chief, the small number of such Feasts recorded, suggests long term leadership and group political stability. There were four feasts reported in the Lake Huron/Georgian Bay

¹²⁸ All of the groups historically documented to have hosted a Feast of the Dead were groups whose subsistence included a strong emphasis on fishing. Fish, however, did not feed the feasts. The Amikwa depleted game in Lake Huron in the summer of 1670 to host the Feast of the Dead (Bishop 1986: 49).

More recently, a version of the Feast of the Dead was celebrated on Parry Island at the close of trout fishing season when the camps were filled with food (Jenness 1935: 108). In this case fishing could easily provide the surplus necessary for feasting.

¹²⁹ Of the several potlatches among the Northwest Coast Indians, the honouring of the death of a chief by transmitting his status and position to his heir was of major importance: "Each chief gave only one major potlatch in his career -- that in which he formally assumed his title" (Drucker 1965: 60).

region in the seventeenth century. The first in 1641, held by the Nipissing to elect new chiefs,¹³⁰ the second in 1660 by the Saulteur, the third by the Amikwa in 1670, and the fourth was hosted jointly by the Nipissing and Achiligouan in 1681 (Ibid. 62: 201, 203). If each of these ceremonies were given expressly to elect new chiefs, hereditary leadership was regionally stable, changing approximately every forty years, the period between the successive Nipissing sponsored feasts, or, between ten and twenty years, the period between feasts. This suggests a remarkable degree of political group stability lasting between ten and forty years which may have important implications for the duration of political groups as autonomous entities.

Territoriality

It is difficult to establish how territorial infrastructures were organized in a geography of thousands of islands, open waters, bays, and seasonally restricted interior access routes. Although there is no historical evidence of a toll¹³¹ on Georgian Bay, tolls operated at

¹³⁰ Despite the prevalence of shamanic activity reported for the Nipissing, leadership was directed by a "war captain" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 27: 55).

¹³¹ Intertribal law during the seventeenth century recognized the right of groups to control passage through their territory and to demand payment of tolls, usually corn, if they so desired (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 110). Detail of the ownership of trading routes or river systems was evident from the Huron, to whom the control over the trade route was a

Lake Nipissing (Thwaites ed. 1959, 44: 249), and at Sault St. Marie (Ibid. 33: 149). Certainly, the Ottawa (Cheveux Relevé) controlled the French River access route¹³² (Biggar ed. 1929, 3: 42). Recognition of some form of territorial prerogative was evident by the custom of groups to use war paint before passing through another's land (Wrong ed. 1939: 65).¹³³

There is little to suggest that the region was defended, that tolls were in place, or that a hunting territory system was operating. To the extent *fish preachers* could be said to 'own' or manage fishing sites for the benefit of the group, cannot be ascertained without evidence of a surplus derived from such ownership.¹³⁴ The

means toward the acquisition of wealth and status (Trigger 1969: 38). The toll system appears to have emerged with the decline of traditional middleman trading. Instead of acting as the exclusive purveyors of trade goods, former middlemen began to charge tolls to traders travelling through their territory (Heidenreich and Ray 1976: 23). The Algonkin (notably the Allumette) turned to toll taking after losing their middlemen position in the trade (Thwaites ed. 1959, 6: 19; 10: 70). Former trading blockades were absorbed by a group co-ordinated toll-taking system, enhanced by Huron participation in the trade.

¹³² The Ottawa were known to have extensive trade contacts to the north and west of Georgian Bay (Wrong ed. 1939: 64-66). There is no evidence that the Ottawa travelled beyond the mouth of the French River prior to the 1650s (Heidenreich and Ray 1976: 13).

¹³³ Killing likely required ceremonial protection, manifested by some form of decoration. A sketch from Codex Canadensis, ca.1700 (reproduced in Rogers (1978: 761) depicts an Amikwa male decorated with a sun picture on his chest and numerous scarified and geometric designs etched on his body.

¹³⁴ If there was evidence to support the *fish preacher* as owner of the fishing site, arguments about a ranked organization would follow.

historical evidence suggests only that the families of the girls ritually married to the net were entitled to an additional share of the net's produce (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199, 201). This suggests that fish harvests were communally distributed among the group led by a *fish preacher* but two families received extra portions. Catching small fish such as herring, was probably a cooperative activity (Wrong ed. 1939: 231) either among family members or a local group.

The environmental and archaeological findings suggest that group activities concentrated around river mouths and islands during the spring, summer and fall. If these were consistently used resource sites,¹³⁵ territories could be said to center around the rivers (cf. Finlayson 1971: 561). For lands along a single watershed, such as that attributed to the Mississauga, the watershed could be the focus of both subsistence and political sanction. The Mississauga, and the earlier Saugeen manifestation, were oriented toward river fisheries, which may have supported band territories (cf. Wright and Anderson 1963). In places of extraordinary plentiful fishing, such as that recorded at Sault Ste. Marie, several bands gathered to share the wealth, but all acknowledged the mutual right to use the

¹³⁵ This is supported by the archaeological recovery of mature beaver at Shebishikong.

site for whitefish fishing exclusively, as the site belonged to the Saulteaux.¹³⁶ This leads to the conclusion that if territorial boundaries around fisheries can be defined, they were likely concentrated at or near river mouths, and were subject to usufructuary conditions (see Crocombe 1974).

If the Georgian Bay Algonkian territorial prerogative rests on a concept of band territory, it likely corresponded with the area within a local group's subsistence, where political and ritual sanctions could be immediately expressed. Usufruct was crucial, as different groups of people could have different claims to the same exploitative zone, depending on how they used it. Different species and subsistence strategies might require, or least encourage, different notions of usufructuary rights. Planting fields, areas for gathering edible roots, fishing sites, and trading areas, all involved different locations, and different rights (cf. Cronon 1983: 80; Crocombe 1974).

Who were the Algonkian Speaking Peoples of Georgian Bay?

Only tentative conclusions can be drawn from this discussion about the cultural identity of the Algonkian

¹³⁶ In 1670, the Outchibous, Marameg and Noquet united with the Saulteaux which permitted each group usufructuary rights to the extensive whitefish fishery near St. Mary's rapids (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 132). Each group however, continued to maintain its own hunting territories independently.

speaking peoples of Georgian Bay because of insufficient evidence. In contrast to the two long distant trading Algonkian peoples, the Ottawa and the Nipissing, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay participated in a local trade of fish, crafts, and ritual objects with the Huron. They lacked the wealth attributed to the traders, perhaps due to indifference, fished year round on or near the shores of Georgian Bay, rarely ventured out of the region, traded in fresh rather than preserved fish, and did not appear to winter with the Huron, although they remained within reach of them to trade. They planted some corn and squash, exploited resources on the islands, but did not appear to exploit the interior hinterland. The archaeological evidence suggests the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay also participated in hunting, principally, although not exclusively, directed at small aquatic species. The social and political organization of these peoples was likely influenced by a fishing ideology, exercised through the political persuasion of shamanic persona known to the Jesuits as *fish preachers*.

There are of course, other equally plausible possibilities for the origin of the groups that have been come to be identified as Georgian Bay Algonkian.

- 1) Georgian Bay region was not consistently

exploited by any one group because of a complex overlapping pattern of seasonal scheduling.

2) The region came to be consistently exploited only after 1640 A.D. when fugitive Algonkin escaping Iroquois incursions on the St. Lawrence River Valley moved into the region.

3) The region was used by various changing, segmented groups of either Nipissing, Ottawa, or Ojibwa to take advantage of local trading with the Huron and other middlemen traders.

4) The region was continuously inhabited by small groups of Algonkian since 1200 A.D. who developed important trading relationships with the Huron that were not based on long distance trade as practised by the Nipissing and the Ottawa.

To confirm or deny these possibilities, further archaeological research is required. The historical evidence however, provides good support to the last proposition.

Disorganization -- 1649

Iroquois raiding to gain access to furs and destroy its competition, which had accelerated during the 1640s, terminated in the destruction of Huronia in 1649. Instead of the usual skirmishes, genocide appeared to be the Iroquois intent, armed as they were with guns made available to them by the Dutch. In the aftermath, Huronia was described as a "place of horror and of slaughter." Lake Nipissing was described as "nothing but a solitude" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 11: 57-59; 35: 201).

Many of the Huron and Algonkian survivors of this unprecedented massacre escaped to the security of the islands of Georgian Bay, and to the interior hinterland, a "retired country surrounded on all sides by lakes, ponds, and rivers," which was inaccessible to the Iroquois (Ibid. 30: 87, 89, 109; 35: 173). The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay responded to the Iroquois threat by continuously changing their location, depending upon the peril they perceived it posed (Ibid. 32: 179, 180).

For the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay, 1649 was a particularly devastating year. Seasonal patterns were not only upset by the fears of Iroquois attack (Ibid. 35: 179, 181), they also faced drought, lost trade in corn, and failed in their attempts at winter fishing. The combined effect of epidemics and warfare on the Georgian Bay

Algonkian eclipsed participation in their seasonal cycle, resulting in abrupt cultural loss, as cultural information was lost with the death of elders, potentially increased witchcraft attacks, intensified fission, and shattered fishing, hunting, and trading. Minois (1987: 210) however, provides evidence that killer epidemics such as the plague and tuberculosis, did not kill older people but tended to single out young children and young people.

During these difficult years, subsistence was often reduced to a diet of ground fish bones and tree bark (Ibid. 51: 71, 259). Local trading was interrupted, as were the prospects to produce surplus fish, and other items of trade. Georgian Bay region became politically and economically unstable.

Summary

Although large gaps exist in the documentation, and many themes remain to be explored, this chapter has identified the Georgian Bay Algonkian and other native groups which came to be associated with the region during the seventeenth century. The land use activities of the Georgian Bay Algonkian were focused on year round, shallow water subsistence fishing, including hunting of principally aquatic animals, and some horticulture. Not only did fishing, particularly sturgeon fishing, govern seasonal activities, it played an extremely important role in the

ideological, social, political, and economic organization of these groups.

Trading opportunities improved for the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as missionaries became attracted to work among the Huron and ventured into Algonkian communities. The shift in trade routes from the St. Lawrence River to that of Georgian Bay, a result of the Iroquois threat, undoubtedly enhanced access to trade goods. An important trade in perishables (fish and corn), and ritual objects and medicines, suggests a response to climatic influences, and a need for ways to diminish its effects.

Rather than being dependent parties upon the larger horticultural Huron, the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay proved to be autonomous, well-respected fishers and small game hunters likely tied through fictive kinship to individual Huron groups. Their fishing and hunting skills were so admired by the Huron that the symbols of their skill, their ritual objects, became the most valued items of trade. The rituals and ceremonies that promoted successful fishing and hunting readily diffused and influenced Huron practices.

Unlike the groups they are often thought to emulate, the Ottawa and the Nipissing, the Georgian Bay Algonkian demonstrate a distinct seasonal variation in their economic

practices, particularly during the winter when they, unlike the Nipissing, did not winter with the Huron, nor did they provide preserved food items in trade or engage in long distance trading as did the Nipissing or Ottawa.

A fishing and small game economy did not contribute to the emergence of large groups, except perhaps during the winter when large groups may have organized to be closer to the Huron. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were organized into small groups which were quick to undergo fission as they exploited the island and shore environment of Georgian Bay. Rarely did they venture into the hinterland for resources. The most important period for these fishers was in March when they fished with nets under the ice for sturgeon. Although fishing included a complex assortment of techniques and instruments, there is little to suggest that deep water gill net fishing was important. The Georgian Bay fishery was principally a year round shallow water, spear and net fishery.¹³⁷ Fishing was well integrated to other resource activities, such as collecting berries, corn, and hunting for small game. The Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were not producing high yields of corn, given their occupation with fishing. Their demand for corn,

¹³⁷ The fishery as a shallow water spear and net fishery, thought by Cleland to represent the period before 1000 A.D. (1982: 768-769) continued throughout most of the historic period in Georgian Bay region.

perhaps corn flour, was met in trade with the Huron.

The small family groups, led by *fish preachers*, distinguished a social organization which was easily subjected to fission and feud (see Smith 1973: 11). This was offset by the ceremonials oriented toward fishing which promoted cultural strength. Although a model was provided to interpret possible social organization, the question remains to be decided whether this model actually mirrored seventeenth century conditions.

Territorial prerogatives are uncertain in an environment where several groups exploited different parts of the region. It is likely that characteristics suggesting territoriality were concentrated near traditional fishing locations. Because of the political environment of the time which saw the growth of Jesuit established missions for displaced peoples, a land tenure system characterized by a rigid ownership of territory was unlikely.

Setting aside the disruption driven by the dispersal of native peoples in 1649, the post 1649 years in Georgian Bay, being without the presence of Huron horticulturalists and middlemen traders, provides an opportunity to examine to what extent the land use pattern of year round island and shore exploitation had been influenced by their presence, and to the political reality of the Iroquois presence.

Fishing and small game hunting were clearly the

mainstays of Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay subsistence and land use during the first half of the seventeenth century, and a major resource in the regional economy. How persistent and practical this was in the post 1649 environment is addressed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE ALGONKIAN SPEAKING PEOPLES OF GEORGIAN BAY
1649-1780

The previous chapter described seventeenth century land use in Georgian Bay by concentrating on subsistence fishing, small game hunting and small quantities of corn, obtained either through trade, or cultivated. During the latter half of the seventeenth century and during the eighteenth century, the land use pattern associated most closely with the Mississauga (Oumisagi) came to dominate much of the southern and hinterland parts of the region. Nonetheless, subsistence fishing, small game hunting and corn, as the principal subsistence, continued to thrive in Georgian Bay native communities.

The history and organization of Georgian Bay Algonkians are obscured during the eighteenth century by scant documentation. Unlike the discussion of the seventeenth century which could focus on a cultural reconstruction of the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay land use practices, the eighteenth century presents a scarcity of regionally specific documents, which prevents anything more than a general understanding of the changes

that occurred. The history of this period is intensely political. This is reflected in alliances made, and the movement of numerous native people through the region. For this reason this discussion relies heavily on the events and influences of the period to gain an understanding about eighteenth century native land use. It is a process which places the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay in a larger political context, but, through lack of direct evidence, prevents a detailed understanding of its culture. The focus of this chapter investigates the capacity of subsistence fishers and small game hunters to meet both fur trade incentives, and subsistence requirements, during times of political disruption.

As noted, regional historical documentation for the period 1649 to 1780 is scarcely available. Extrapolating data from adjacent regions to reconstruct the land use pattern in Georgian Bay poses certain risks. Preconceptions, drawn from a literature steeped in fur trading activity, present the Georgian Bay Algonkian as either assimilated into the fur trade as hunters (Hickerson 1962; Bishop 1974), or destroyed by raids and disease (Heidenreich 1971: 265).

An added difficulty concerns the position of marginal peoples who principally exploit fisheries, hunt small game and cultivate some corn in an emerging fur trade

economy. Errors in this assessment of the evidence could present a confused pattern of land use, if extended to the Georgian Bay Algonkian. An example of this would be to apply the land use pattern associated with the Mississauga, who extended their diversified hunting, fishing, and planting into the southern parts of the region, to Georgian Bay. As noted in the previous chapter, this pattern was distinct from that developed before 1649.

Who were the Algonkian Speaking People of Georgian Bay?

The Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay emerge from the seventeenth century amidst a new and confusing plethora of group names based upon both English and French terminologies (Smith 1975: 211). By the eighteenth century one name, the Mississauga,¹ came to identify all native people inhabiting the north side of Lake Huron (Bain ed. 1901: 35).² It also came to be applied to most Algonkians moving into southern Ontario (Smith 1975: 216).

Adding to the confusion of cultural group identity

¹ Although Smith (1975) has detailed how the eighteenth century Mississauga emerged in 1760, his interest was to establish their cultural affinity as Ojibwa.

² Mitchell's "Red Lined map" of 1755 (revised 1775), which became the most influential map of North America in the eighteenth century (Gentilcore and Head 1984: 38) recognized the territorial spread of "Mississauga" over most of the north shore of Lake Huron, including the Georgian Bay area.

is the reality of adoption of one group by another, and the creation of composite bands. For example, the Tangwanaron,³ an apparent composite Ojibwa and Huron group, may have taken up permanent residence in Georgian Bay after 1649. Nipissing women who had been captured by the Iroquois, became slaves or were adopted into Iroquois society.⁴ Some Nipissing incorporated with Ottawa and Delaware.⁵ The assumption that groups remained homogeneous in a political environment heavily entrenched by war is unrealistic.

A perplexing question raised by the war of 1649 is whether the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay were organized in groups large enough, before their untimely dispersal, to lead an independent existence in Georgian Bay, or small enough that changes to their population during and after the war with the Iroquois, were not as severe a threat to their continued cultural autonomy. Some scholars (Heidenreich 1971; Trigger 1985) describing the impact of the collapse of Huronia, have favoured an interpretation that supports a massive population decline. While this

³ The Tangwanaron initially withdrew to Lake Nipissing only to return later to the Moon River area north of Matchedash Bay (Thwaites 1959, 30: 87,89,109).

⁴ The Nipissing males were killed (Thwaites ed. 1959, 36: 189).

⁵ Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, Collections and Researches, 40 vols. (Lansing: The Society, 1877-1929), 34: 162, 163 (hereafter cited as MPHSC); (WHC. 16: 370)

situation may apply to the Huron, other than applying Dobyns (1966: 407) theoretical projections broadly, was it equally applicable to the smaller Algonkian populations? Is it satisfactory to conclude that the presumed population decline of a large sedentary population was sufficient to destroy a social organization of groups whose ability to survive may have been predicated on its very size?

In the Lake Huron area, the association of peoples by name, after 1649, differs only slightly from that of 1640. The Jesuit Gabriel Dreuilletes' 1657 list of native groups identifies the Amikwa, Ouasouarini, Nikikouek and the Mississauga (Thwaites ed. 1959, 44: 251). The principal difference in this rendering of names was the disappearance of the Sagaharini and the Outchougai name from the region, and the extension of one group name, the Mississauga, to all groups located on the north shore of Georgian Bay.

Native groups came to be identified by similar names over extremely wide areas rather than being fixed by differentiated names and localities. Names were also extended to allied nations for trading purposes. An additional difficulty is that several groups used the same totemic designation. The author of a 1736 evaluation of native group names cautioned that the totem (or armorial bearing) of two groups could be identical, such as that used

by both the Saulteaux and Mississauga.⁶ These two groups recognized distinctions between each other which were difficult for early European observers to discover.

As Schmalz (1984) and Eid (1979) have shown, there is much evidence to support an Ojibwa claim to conquest over the Iroquois to account for their presence in Georgian Bay and southern Ontario. The validity of this theory of native history certainly must be tempered by the political realities of competing native groups exerting possession over lands. Most notable of these were those Ojibwa who claim to have settled on the banks of the Mississippi River before being expelled from the western shore by the Sioux. Continued skirmishes with the Sioux forced their retreat to Green Bay on Lake Michigan, where they remained for an unknown period under the French regime. They claimed to have traded at Michilimackinac and eventually settled on Lake Superior before migrating to Lake Huron. These Ojibwa rejected the ancestral prerogative of the native people already residing in Georgian Bay. They dismissed the claim of these peoples as original inhabitants claiming the original Georgian Bay Algonkian had been destroyed by the Iroquois, and small pox, which erased their rights to exist

⁶ Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York, 25 vols. (Albany: Weed Parsons, 1853-1887, 9: 1053-1058; hereafter cited as N.Y. Col.Docs.).

as a 'nation.' This vocal group of Ojibwa further claimed that the descendants of the 'original' Georgian Bay peoples were now living at Lake of Two Mountains.⁷

In this way, an intrusive, politically aggressive Ojibwa group was able to extend their claim to Georgian Bay and Southern Ontario, not by a perceived conquest over the Iroquois, but by political finesse. Indeed, those Ojibwa (Mississauga), cited by Schmalz, represented by Paudash, claiming to have won lands by conquest over the Iroquois, also claimed to be of Shawnee ancestry.⁸ Whether this has cultural or historical validity,⁹ or is more likely a

⁷ Report of the Honourable Commissioner of Crown Lands Relative to the claims of certain Indians to territory on the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior. November 4, 1847, RG 10, vol. 163n, 2401-2500.

⁸ Testimony of Johnson Paudash, RG 10, vol. 2332, 67,071-4D: 33., September 26, 1923, Rice Lake. The Shawnee were an Algonkian people who inhabited the present area of Kentucky before migrating to Virginia and the Carolinas in 1683 (Thwaites ed. 1959, 47: n.145; Callendar 1978: 622). With respect to their Shawnee roots, the Shawnee report to have divided in 1749 into two divisions of 300 warriors because of the lack of goods available to them for trade. One division eventually settled at the Sonontio River, or Lower Shawnee Town, and was occupied until 1758 (WHC 18: 20). The location of the remaining division is uncertain. Once established, however, they soon became embroiled in hostile skirmishes with the Iroquois, whom this other group of Shawnee, eventually routed. There are many similarities between this version and that provided by the Mississauga. See also Copway (1850: 23) who also refers to a Shawnee connection in conjunction with Pontiac's rebellion. Curiously, both the Sauk and the Fox claimed to be Ojibwa in origin before internecine quarrels parted them. They claim the identical place of origin as the Ojibwa, the St. Lawrence River, from where they had been driven by the Iroquois and the Wyandot to the Upper Great Lakes (Blair ed. 1911-12. 2: 183).

⁹ In 1681 Shawnee were reported at Teiaiaagon at the mouth of the Humber River in company with Sieur de La Salle (Robinson 1965: 38-39). In 1735 the fur trader Rosseau, who later set up a post on the Humber River, was employed by La Saussaye, who frequently traded with the Shawnee at Detroit (Ibid: 89). In 1743 La Saussaye was instructed to accompany an embassy to the Shawnee to achieve their emigration to

political identification which can be traced to loyalty to the Shawnee leader Tecumseh, is uncertain if plausible. The Shawnee were known to have contributed most to the defeat of General Edward Braddock in the war of 1812 under Tecumseh (Robinson 1965: 89). The claim by the Mississauga to Shawnee ancestry, is intricately tied to their overt loyalty to the British government and their participation as warriors under Tecumseh. This fealty to the notable war leader likely translated into a political platform which merged with their claim to Shawnee ancestry.¹⁰

This diverts the subject of cultural affinity among so mixed a population as Great Lakes Algonkians, to one of political identification, extended either to a great leader, or, on a local level, to the political identification to a chief, thereby confusing further the more obvious vestiges of cultural identity. Essential to a historical appreciation of the culture history of the Great Lakes Algonkian peoples, where so many cultural groups co-existed, and so many political intrigues were cultivated, native groups may have been constantly subject to fission and

Canada (Severance 1917.1: 321). In 1745 Shawnee reportedly left Detroit and moved to "La Belle Riviere", the Ohio River where they later joined with the Kicapoo and Mascoutin (WHC 18: 11,12).

¹⁰ The claim to Shawnee origins was made as recent as 1936 by Francis Pegahmagabow of Parry Island who notified the Canadian Government that through genealogical connections from his great grandfather, Francis was related to Tecumseh. Francis Pegahmagabow to DIAND. March 9, 1936, RG 10, vol. 3161.

renewed political identification. The political differences between groups continued to be marked by preferential alliance, contributing to divisions within cultural groups.

The theory supporting the conquest by the Iroquois, however valid this is to native perception of culture history¹¹ and to known historical documentation, may also have unintentionally disposed the claim of other Algonkians to control of their lands. By glossing over this political reality in making the assumption that an Ojibwa (or Mississauga) identification was culture-specific, theories so based may actually distort the historical reality. What this argues for is the relationship between the empirical facts of Algonkian cultural history, rather than solely placed on the facts themselves.

The Return of Lake Huron Native Peoples

After 1649, the Georgian Bay region was controlled by the Iroquois who settled in small bands in villages along the north shore of Lake Ontario at places leading to trails and waterways into the region (Murray 1963: xxxix).¹² They

¹¹ Which must also be tempered by Parker's caution (1916) stated in the preface of this study, that oral traditions have a tendency to be ahistorical and refer to a cultural transformation.

¹² The Raffeix map, drawn between 1671 and 1680, places the Iroquois villages on both sides of Lake Ontario. It recognized the Georgian Bay shoreline route as *chemin des Outawuacs* (Gentilcore and Head 1984: 19).

concentrated their raiding activities along the French River, hoping to intercept what little trade persevered. They were also known to exploit the Huron-Ottawa tract for beaver (Ibid: xli).

As early as 1653, a group of Ottawa organized a scouting party to return to their former territory, but, upon spying Iroquois, made a hasty retreat to Lake Michigan (Blair ed. 1911-12. 1: 151-2, 157). The Mississauga¹³ were more successful in their attempt to return. After electing a war chief (WHC. 16: 26),¹⁴ they temporarily joined forces with the Nikikouek and the Saulteaux to defeat a party of Iroquois (Ibid: 13; Thwaites ed. 1959, 38: 181). Bringing 400 people, they returned to Lake Huron to fish and hunt in the islands of Georgian Bay (Thwaites ed. 1959, 55: 133, 135). They were later joined by the Achiligouan and the Amikwa¹⁵ (Ibid. 54: 133), restoring if not the same groups, the association by name of many of the pre-1649 north shore named groups to their previous locations.¹⁶

¹³ The pre-1649 group identified on the Mississauga River.

¹⁴ Hereditary or ascribed status was not significant during times of change and stress (Smith 1973: 13.n.2).

¹⁵ Galinee's map of 1669 places the Amikwa close to what appears to be the Spanish River. Large game, indicated by a *grande chasse d'origineau*, appears on the chain of islands between Flowerpot Island and Manitoulin Island (Gentilcore and Head 1984: 18).

¹⁶ The Nikikouek are briefly cited in a 1681-3 Jesuit journal where they, with the Amikwa and Mississauga, were "scattered on that lake [lake Huron]" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 62: 203).

In 1664 a fresh war was about to engage the Lake Huron native groups, this time with the Sioux (Ibid. 50: 279). As a contrary force to that of the Iroquois menace, war with the Sioux compelled many groups who had temporarily moved west¹⁷ of Lake Huron, to return and settle on Manitoulin Island,¹⁸ as they were now also safe from the Iroquois (Ibid. 57: 203; WHC. 16: 79). Under these circumstances, war and peace returned many Algonkian speaking groups to the Georgian Bay region.

The return of native groups to the north shore of Lake Huron/Lake Superior was not only motivated by reasons of safety from both the Sioux and the Iroquois, but for reasons commonly associated with the idea of homeland:

One's longing for his native land is not stifled by distance, -- least of all among Savages, who possess an incredibly strong attachment for the country of their birth, -- as soon as they saw some prospect of being able to return thither in safety, as a result of the peace with the Iroquois, they hastened to do so (Thwaites ed. 1959: 55: 133, 143).

Decisive control of Georgian Bay and the north shore of Lake Ontario was a source of tension between the newly

¹⁷ The western movement of groups is often an illusion created by the documents which were increasingly biased toward the west as the French moved westward. The real 'movement' may have been in the recorded observations (cf. Syms 1982: 3-4), not the groups themselves.

¹⁸ Manitoulin Island had been selected by the Jesuits to preserve the trade between the Huron, Algonkians, and the French (Thwaites ed. 1959, 34: 203, 205). The Island had the distinct advantages of abundant fisheries and good soils (Ibid: 207).

returned Georgian Bay Algonkian and the Iroquois. Despite a peace agreement in 1666, relations were uneasy, confined as they were within a complex web of political relationships, not only with each other, but with the French, the English and other native groups (Wraxall 1915: 18).

At this stage the Iroquois were more interested in securing their position as middlemen in the fur trade between the Ojibwa and the trade to the south of Lake Ontario at Albany (New York), rather than simply being the hunters and trappers of furs (Robinson 1965: 15-16). Their war-weakened position, combined with pointed persuasion from the English, eventually resulted in a compromise (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 203). Formal peace was ratified in 1689 (Wraxall 1915: 15).

Historical Summary of the Fur Trade and Politics

New political relationships were reflected throughout Georgian Bay region in a myriad of ways. In 1660 the French selected Chequamegon near Keweenaw, Lake Superior, to establish a post (Eccles 1974: 56), upsetting the Jesuit's plan for Manitoulin Island to function as the new regional trade center (Thwaites ed. 1959, 34: 203, 205, 207). Despite the French presence, furs continued to be transported by the Ottawa along the French River until 1667 (Ibid. 50: 261). Although the source of the furs is

uncertain, it is unlikely they originated from Georgian Bay.¹⁹

The trade items filtering into Georgian Bay from the French traders are difficult to assess from the Shebishikong material. The presence of French gun flints, one dated to 1720, and French bottle glass (Wright 1965: 197), support limited trade with the French during the early eighteenth century.²⁰ English trade goods appear in the southern part of the region at the Dougall fishing site sometime between 1670 A.D. - 1760 A.D. and included English manufactured gun flints, koalin pipes, iron rods and 'blood red' beads²¹ (Wright 1972c: 12). The iron rods may have been used as fishing spears.²²

As trade goods came to be directly exchanged at French and British trading posts, the purveyors of trade goods were no longer missionaries. The 1670s saw the steady

¹⁹ Eccles (1974: 125) believes the source to be the Assiniboine and the Sioux.

²⁰ Schmalz (1984: 343) would prefer that the evidence of this gun support his thesis that the Ojibwa and allies did not move into a vacant Georgian Bay region and southern Ontario, but won the area by conquest over the Iroquois.

²¹ As previously noted, red beads were disliked by the Nipissing and possibly by the Georgian Bay Algonkian, who preferred the white beads at Shebishikong (Wright 1980).

²² During the seventeenth century groups adopted similar trade goods acquiring a homogeneous Great Lakes Indian Culture (Quimby 1960: 147-157). A comparison between the Shebishikong historical materials and the Dougall site materials, however, suggest discrete influences, one French and the other English and Dutch.

movement of *coureurs de bois* into the Great Lakes region (Morton 1963: 65).²³ They introduced specific trade goods, principally the gun and the kettle, to potential fur carriers (Blair ed. 1911-12.1: 330-331). Their selection of trade goods corresponded with gender and age: guns were given to young men, to both protect themselves from attack and to hunt animals, and kettles were distributed not to women, but to older men to supposedly cook the meat that the young men brought back from their hunts (Ibid). Women were instead given awls and knives to kill and cut meat. *Rassade*, variously coloured round French beads of porcelain and glass, were distributed to children. Once relations between trader and fur carriers became established, the trader distributed fur trade staple items, including muskets, powder, ball, cut lead, axes, more knives, kettles, and awls, fish hooks, and flint stones (Ibid: 377-378).

The native groups who were attracted to the trade, and who were actively recruited, were not principally those Algonkians engaged in subsistence fishing and small game hunting. In 1673, the native groups attracted to hunting were groups located inland of Lake Superior: "the English have already diverted a great many of the inland savages who visit Lake Superior, and attracted them to themselves by

²³ Traders who stopped in Georgian Bay region were likely small independent operators who left few records of their experiences.

their great liberality" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 21, 23). Some of these native groups were resident in the area around Hudson's Bay, nomadic hunting and fishing peoples who exploited the northern parts of Ontario as far as James Bay (Ibid. 33: 67). They had been recruited as hunters for the fur trade when they were fishing at the Sault (Ibid: 23; WHC. 16: 63).²⁴ The only group that can be conclusively linked to the region eventually to become active participants in the trade, were the Mississauga. By 1679, Mississauga had moved into the Lake Muskoka area (Murray 1963: xli), and had begun exploiting the hinterland region for fur. They traded at the Seneca Iroquois village of Ganestiquiagon near the Rouge River (Robinson 1965: 15-16).

By 1673 the French had established Fort Frontenac at the east end of Lake Ontario near Kingston (Ibid: 15-16). This provided a base for *coureurs de bois* to carry on a trade with various native groups (Preston and Lamontagne eds. 1958: 103). Whether or not they ventured into Georgian Bay, is uncertain. By 1680, the need for Ottawa middlemen to make the journey to Montreal had been eliminated by

²⁴ These Inland people or *nopiming daje inini*, included virtually anyone living inland from the St. Lawrence-Ottawa River-Great Lakes water route (Greenberg and Morrison 1982: 85). If this is true, then some Georgian Bay Algonkian may also have participated.

coureurs de bois,²⁵ who were both eager to transport trade goods west, and not at all concerned about undermining the trade to Fort Frontenac (Eccles 1974: 107, 112). With direct trade now available through French posts, the pre-1649 trade route system, which had incorporated the shoreline of Georgian Bay, collapsed (Waisberg 1977: 101). Former middlemen, like the Nipissing and Ottawa, attempted to preserve their economic positions as traders, but were increasingly drawn into providing furs by hunting and trapping (Ibid; Feest and Feest 1978).

Albany traders sent by the Governor of New York, Thomas Dongan, were first known to approach native people around Michilimackinac in 1686, when they tempted them with goods at very low prices (Eccles 1974: 119).²⁶ Native groups who were enticed by them, found themselves in the difficult position of being unable to reach the traders because of the Iroquois, who refused to allow them passage (Ibid: 135). The Iroquois also managed to keep the English traders out of their territory so as not to erode what the Iroquois saw as their own lucrative middleman position.

²⁵ The relationship between the *coureurs de bois* and the Mississauga was evidently quite close as they were personally allied to them through "marriage and manners" (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 2: 153; The Papers of Sir William Johnson, 14 vols. Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1921-1965, 12: 57-58; hereafter cited as J.P.).

²⁶ This effort to entice them was not repeated. Subsequent trips by the Albany traders met with jail sentences. Their Canadian guides were subsequently executed (Eccles 1974: 119).

The competitive trade created by the French and the English traders to the south of Lake Ontario at Albany, probably introduced lavish goods to the region.²⁷ The most important trade item may have been cloth. Native people preferred English wool cloth to the poorer quality French cloth (Ibid: 137). Albany's attractions in 1738 were diverse: brandy, better quality goods, and a better price paid for beaver (Preston and Lamontagne eds. 1958: 225).²⁸

The French quickly responded to the movement of Lake Huron native groups south, by establishing fur trading posts along the north shore of Lake Ontario. By this action they took on the competing tasks of attracting Iroquois hunters for trade, while also providing refuge to the Algonkian (Ibid: 131). Fur trading posts quickly became melting pots for various native populations (J.P. 4: 244-45), further contributing to diverse cultural entities.

A turning point in regional politics was marked in 1701. When the post at Michilimackinac was forced to

²⁷ Without archaeological support, the types and amounts of goods are speculative. Certain items, like clothing, would not have survived. Other items such as silver bracelets were largely portable and would likely show up in burial sites.

²⁸ The economic response of native people toward trade goods is well documented in the literature (Rich 1970; Ray 1974; Ray and Freeman 1978).

close,²⁹ a treaty between the Iroquois and the Mississauga provided access to the Mississauga to the Albany (New York) traders. A new post was opened at Detroit,³⁰ and various native people from around Michilimackinac were encouraged to move there (Eccles 1974: 136).

The treaty negotiated between the Iroquois and the Mississauga in 1701 included various group names, none of which had been reported before 1649. They included groups identified as: Nipissing (*Skighquan*), Ojibwa (*Estjage*), Mississauga (*Assisagh*), Adirondack (*Adirondax*), and three other groups, the *Karhadage*, *Adgenauwe*, and the *Karihaet*, whose origins are unknown (Wraxall 1915: 39, 64).³¹ By endorsing their leadership position as one of the seven nations (N.Y.Col.Doc. 4: 899), the *Assisagh* (Mississauga), provided the political leadership to represent this allied group. The emergence of the eighteenth century Mississauga as a political force resulted in the political

²⁹ The post was closed in an effort to quell the Anglo-American plans of westward expansion by relocating the post at Detroit (Eccles 1974: 136). During this time there was a glut of beaver of the market, most being shipped to Montreal. The French were eager to reduce the number of soldiers and traders west, to reduce the glut (Ibid.).

³⁰ Cadillac had convinced the French Government to establish a post, Fort Pontchartrain, at Detroit, to prevent the English from establishing a similar post there (Stone and Chaput 1978: 604; Eccles 1974: 135; MPHC. 33: 424-452, 384).

³¹ To say, as Smith does (1975: 211), that the Mississauga in this context were Ojibwa, suggests that it is possible, by historical means to distinguish cultural and political differences. The Nipissing may or may not have been Algonkin, and the Adirondack were Algonkin not Ojibwa (White 1913: 6).

identification, through association, of several formerly distinct groups. By 1707, other groups joined the alliance, to have access to the 'best Markett' (Wraxall 1915: 66). One of the principle incentives for the alliance was the promise of unmolested travel and trade throughout each group's territory, strengthened by allied military protection (Ibid: 72).

Geographical conditions suggest that the groups who came to form this alliance where in some way spatially connected to the Albany trade route. Such an alliance enabled groups ranging from Lake Nipissing (*Skighquan*) to the Ottawa Valley (*Adirondax*) to participate in the trade at Albany. The groups that were strategically positioned to control access, in this case the Mississauga and the Iroquois, however, dominated much of the political landscape near the Georgian Bay region. Alliances between groups were not restricted to the Mississauga (*Assisagh*) in Southern Ontario; other cultural groups situated on Lake Huron were similarly allied. Led by a Mississauga chief, Chief Miscouakey, an alliance of Ottawa, Potowatomi, Sauk, Fox, Mascouten, Kicapoo, Winnebago, Menominee, Saulteur, and Mississauga (MPHC. 1907: 458) was organized into distinct districts, concentrated around the principle fur trading posts at Saginaw, Detroit and Michilimackinac. Relationships between the groups were likely based on

kinship. Chief Miscouakey's brother, Jean Le Blanc, for example was chief of an Ottawa group located at Detroit (MPHC. 1903: 163). Indeed, groups residing near Detroit were composite villages of Nipissing, Outchibou and Amikwa (Thwaites ed. 1959, 51: 60), which further obfuscates cultural and political affiliations.³²

Not only did this treaty provide access to British trade goods, it provided these groups with a market for corn, especially important after the loss of the Huron suppliers. In 1708, north shore Mississauga and Saulteur prepared to meet the Iroquois to buy corn (Preston and LaMontagne eds. 1958: 206).

Between 1701-1715, with the fort at Michilimackinac shut down, there were few options open for Lake Huron Indians to trade on the north shore. In the summer of 1708, nine canoes of Mississauga and Saulteur arrived at Fort Frontenac carrying only enough skins to bargain for passage to Albany (Ibid: 206-7).

During the 1720s, fur trading activity increased in the areas supplying Forts Frontenac, Quinte, and Niagara on

³² Given the mobility of native groups, the Ojibwa, for example could spend a summer as a Noquet, another season as a Saulteur or Marameg (Fitting 1970: 194). They could even stop being Ojibwa if they chose, as was demonstrated when the Mississauga joined the Iroquois as the Seventh Nation of the Iroquois (Ibid). Fitting further complicates the picture by suggesting that groups shifted their identification during the period in the same way the Ottawa Nassauaketon associated with the Potawatomi (Ibid: 194).

Lake Ontario (Ibid: 214-215), despite several groups on Lake Huron and Lake Erie having shifted their trade south to Albany that year. These groups had wanted to trade at Albany for a long time but had been hindered by the disruptive activities of the French (Wraxall 1915: 144-5). In 1725 more than one hundred canoes made their way to Oswego, many carrying Nipissing and Sauteaux from Lake Huron (Ibid: 265).

It is difficult to determine how many of the furs traded in this complex trading network originated in Georgian Bay. The Mississauga were known to trade large game skins such as moose, deer, and bear at the French posts, as these skins were difficult to transport the longer distance to the English at Albany. These skins were evidently not appreciated by the English who did not 'esteem' them (Severance 1917. 1: 166). The better quality furs were reserved for the English traders and exchanged for luxury items such as silver bracelets, which cost less than that asked by the French (Ibid: 119).

By 1718 a group of Mississauga were reported living at Matchedash Bay.³³ They were described as being of the 'crane' totem (WHC. 16: 370; N.Y. Col. Docs. 9: 889, 1056). This was likely a composite group as the Mississauga north

³³ Matchedash Bay was previously known as Sturgeon Bay (Canada 1891: 15 Map No. 5) suggesting the attraction of a fishery.

of Detroit, also designated as crane, shared their village with Nipissing, Outchibou, and Amikwa. Some of the Nipissing also settled and incorporated with Ottawa and Delaware (MPHC. 34: 162, 163; WHC. 16: 370) although animosity of some native people over the lack of goods, encouraged some groups to fission and move away from the fur trading centre at Detroit (WHC.18: 20).

In 1736 native groups in Georgian Bay were officially enumerated³⁴ which reported the location, size of the group, and their 'armorial bearing' or totem, of groups known to the French in the Great Lakes region (fig. 19). The Nipissing were reported at Lake Nipissing; Mississauga were at Matchedash Bay, and on Manitoulin Island where they were made up of two groups identified by catfish and crane totems. Although the catfish designation implies the presence of the pre-1649 Ouasouarini,³⁵ it may also refer to the later seventeenth century Marameg, who were

³⁴ Two complementary reports recorded the name and location of Ojibwa groups in 1736. The first is credited to Chauvignerie, (Schoolcraft 1855: 558), the second to Seieur de Joncaire (N.Y.Col.Docs. 9: 1052-1058), who was commandant of Fort Frontenac 1712-1746 (Preston and Lamontagne, eds. 1958: 467). Thwaites believes the author to be neither of the two but rather, Jean Baptiste Celeron, commandant at Detroit 1742-3, and Niagara, 1744-46 (WHC. 17: 207). The former 1736 version, (N.Y.Col.Docs. 9: 1053-1058) appears to have been abbreviated from the latter (Enumeration of the Indian Nations who have relations with the Government of Canada, the Warriors of Each, with their Armorial Bearings. PAC, MG 1, reel F-66, A.N. C 11A, Vol. 66, fos. 236-247).

³⁵ This assumes catfish is taken as its literal meaning, not "at a place where something is reflected."



Fig.19 GREAT LAKES NATIVE GROUPS ca. 1736 (TOTEMS)

also known by the catfish designation.³⁶ No groups were recorded in the previous locations of the pre-1649 Ouasouarini,³⁷ Sagaharini, or Outchougai. The Mississauga group on Manitoulin Island were divided into groups of perhaps 120 people.³⁸ A sizable population of 600 were reported at Matchedash Bay³⁹ (WHC. 17: 246).

There was a general decline in trade activity on the north shore of Lake Huron during the 1740s when fur trading posts experienced a shortage of goods (Ibid: 449). By 1745, this shortage, combined with the low price paid for furs by the French at Michilimackinac, convinced some native people who usually traded there, to trade at Saginaw Bay with the English (WHC. 1906. 17: 449; 1908.18: 67, 100-1). They were reported to have brought over 300 pounds of fur. Because English traders were able to entice the Indians with presents (WHC. 18: 67, 100-1), by 1750 many Lake Huron native groups were reported flocking south to the English posts at the expense of the French fur trading posts

³⁶ Johnson identifies marameg as "bad fish" or "rainbow trout" (1982: 5).

³⁷ During the 1690s, the Ouasouarini temporarily relocated near Sault Ste. Marie (Thwaites ed. 1959, 44: 52).

³⁸ The number was given as 30 warriors of Crane and Catfish (Enumeration of the Indian Nations who have relations with the Government of Canada, the Warriors of Each, with their Armorial Bearings. PAC, MG 1, reel F-66, A.N. C 11A, Vol. 66, fos. 236-247).

³⁹ The Enumeration indicated 150 warriors.

(Robinson 1965: 119, 142). The trade was so poor at Fort Rouillé that the French refused to supply Indians with canoes, hoping to prevent their travel to Oswego (Ibid). By 1761, the Ojibwa Chief Wabbicomicot was formally welcomed by Sir William Johnson to the Albany trade. Wabbicomicot was willing to hunt and trade provided he received clothing, ammunition, a gun and a spear (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 3: 454, 576).

Hunting of skins for clothing had all but been eliminated by 1750 when the French fur traders began supplying complete sets of clothing to the native people (WHC. 18: 193-4). They also equipped them with portage collars, snow shoes, and bear skins (Ibid: 195). This satisfied two objectives on the part of the French, it maintained good relations by respecting the gift-giving protocol (cf. Ray 1974), and it enabled native people to reduce the time spent hunting to supply their clothing needs. They now could spend more time hunting for commercially valuable furs.

British Trade: A New Policy Toward Trade

An important consequence of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) was the possession by Britain of the territory "as far as the Mississippi." This expanse of territory which included Georgian Bay, extended from the south end of

Lake Nipissing to the west side of the Ottawa River, and south to the St. Lawrence River (the Upper Country) (Shortt and Doughty eds. 1918. 1: 131-146; Nicholson 1979: 21). A new policy toward trade, officially supported by the Royal Proclamation of 1763, preserved a tract of land in the Great Lakes region which allowed trade, but prevented non-native settlement. One condition provided native people, who had supported the French in the war, to continue to enjoy their right to possess lands under the new British government (Short and Doughty eds. 1918. 1: 131-146). Although the Royal Proclamation recognized Georgian Bay as a hunting ground, and in this way preserved the fur trading interests, the Georgian Bay Algonkian were not content with the nature of that trade. Despite the attempts of the new British government to guarantee native people their right to territory, the British, being soldiers and not traders, neglected to provide them with the expected presents (Rich 1967: 131). They complained particularly about receiving presents only when their military presence was required against the French (Ibid: 132). In addition, the new government had drawn a "Plan for the Future Management of Indian Affairs,"⁴⁰ which increased restrictions upon fur traders by requiring licenses, fixing set times and places

⁴⁰ Referred to in the 32nd Article of the Foregoing Instructions to Governor Carleton, January 3, 1775 (Smith ed. 1975: 6).

for trade, and restricting the sale of liquor and credit to the Indians. This confinement of trading posts to littoral areas was a major departure from former French fur trading policy. The posts selected included the existing French posts of Fort William (*Kanamistigoua*) on Lake Superior, Michilimackinac, Green Bay (*Baye des Puants*) in Lake Michigan, Detroit, and Houilliatanon on the Wabash (*Ouabache*) River (Ibid: 94). Thus, one of the effects of this plan was to restore the fur trade to the north shore of Lake Huron.

By the 1770s Georgian Bay became a small part of the Albany hinterland trade stretching around Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and Lake Huron, which reportedly employed more than 10,000 hunters (J.P. 4: 245).⁴¹ The real trade, however, was with the 'back Indians'⁴² of the region who traded large parcels of furs in small parties⁴³ (J.P. 8: 274; 11: 203). Despite political and economic incentives to hunt,

⁴¹ During the 1770s almost half of all the native hunters worked the Albany northern hinterland, the area around Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario (J.P. 4: 245). Johnson reported that the entire northern district of the Albany fur trading empire involved primarily Huron, Algonkin, Iroquois, Ottawa, Potowatomi, Ojibwa, and Menominee (exclusive of the Sioux). They traded at Oswego, Niagara, Fort Pitt, Detroit, Michilimackinac, Le Bay, Fort Charles, Illinois, Chicoutami, Saginaw, Fort Frederick, and St. John's River (Ibid: 557).

⁴² The 'back Indians' was a term apparently used to distinguish native groups from those identified as Mississauga.

⁴³ The Mississauga were apparently trading in single skins (J.P. 8: 274). The "back Indians" warned them that "they better know how to hunt or the English will despise you" (Ibid: 271).

fishing provided an important means of subsistence:

Our young men are very much in want of spear to kill fish with, they are under the necessity of making use of wood, which by no means answers the purpose, & indeed they cannot procure subsistence.⁴⁴

It was not until 1780 however, that the British interest in fur trading was officially introduced to Georgian Bay. An agreement between Governor Haldimand and the local chiefs of Georgian Bay opened the rivers and lakes to government trade (Johnson 1973: 22-23). This agreement allowed various traders to establish posts in the area: Herkimer at Rice Lake, Hare on the east side of Lake Simcoe, Cowan at Matchedash Bay, La Ronde at Lake Nipissing, and Quetton St. George at the Lake Couchiching narrows (Murray 1963: lii, 10). Taking up the remainder of trade locations was a deluge of traders described to be of 'low circumstance' who were indebted year after year to the merchants of Montreal (Davidson 1918: 256).

The reality of war with the Americans forced Simcoe's government to adopt a slightly different approach to the native presence. It abandoned its previous policy of encouraging native people to hunt in politically sensitive

⁴⁴ Rough draft of Proceedings of a Council Held at St. John Rosseau, August 26, 1793. Simcoe Papers. PAO

areas as a deterrent to possible American invasion,⁴⁵ in favour of securing land surrenders in locations merited to have military importance (Surtees 1975: 263). The government urgently needed a harbour and naval base at Penetanguishene. This required a formal surrender of the Matchedash Bay area by native people who claimed the land stretching from the Severn River to Penetanguishene (Canada 1891: 15, 17). Four chiefs representing three totem groups, the 'reindeer,' 'otter,' and 'pike' totems, claimed interest in this area (Ibid: 15). Chief Ningasam of the reindeer totem was recognized as the chief of Lake Huron, and Chief Assance, of the otter totem, was chief of Matchedash Bay (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 4: 272). It is likely that the area extending from Matchedash Bay to Penetanguishene was held in the interest of the two other chiefs, Wabuniguan of the 'pike' totem, and Chabondasheam, like Ningasam, of the 'reindeer' totem. With this recognition of territory attributed by totem, led by a chief, large areas of Georgian Bay's shoreline came to be defined as a single territorial

⁴⁵ Simcoe was especially concerned that native people continually hunt in the areas of the Grand River and Detroit, and on the Huron reserve. He evidently believed that a native presence along politically sensitive areas would protect the Canadian border from American encroachment. By encouraging trade between the traders on both sides of the border, Simcoe could maintain his native border guards without unduly aggravating the Americans (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 1: 296). With this strategy Simcoe also aimed to reach the illegal trade in goods in which "grasping traders" diverted furs from the shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Huron through Long Point, Kingston and Michilimackinac, to markets in the Northeastern United States (Ibid: 404).

unit, as it was surrendered.⁴⁶

Native Land Use In Georgian Bay: Subsistence

Although there are few specific references to the subsistence practices of the post-1649 Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay, information that survives supports the continued importance of subsistence fishing, small game hunting and corn, either cultivated or through trade.

If the period between 1600-1812 in Georgian Bay was characterized as one of chronic turmoil and extensive movement on part of the native peoples (Rogers and Tobobondung 1975: 254), the period immediately after 1649, was absolute confusion. Marked by skirmishes between various Lake Huron groups and the Iroquois, punctuated by short outbreaks of peace in 1666 and 1689, subsistence was undoubtedly upset by fears of Iroquois attack (Thwaites ed. 1959, 35: 179, 181). This forced the Georgian Bay Algonkian to seek remote places, both on the islands, and outside the region, for subsistence and protection (Ibid. 35: 185). The subsistence problem was not as much one of diminished game, but fear of staying too long in an area to fish and hunt

⁴⁶ Ningasam's (Cut Nose) interest in Lake Huron may have actually extended only as far north as Parry Island, judging from the Saginaw chief Nebawquam's claim in 1818 to lands extending from Drummond Island to the east shore islands of Parry Island (Colonel Robert McDouall regarding Captain Payne's Survey of Drummond Island, October, 1815. RG 8, C-258: 399. PAC).

productively (Waisberg 1977: 86). Many Lake Huron groups between 1666-1668 were reportedly eating tree bark, moss, ground fish bones,⁴⁷ fish, and variable amounts of Indian corn (Thwaites ed. 1959, 51: 59, 71, 259).

Not only was political instability responsible for the poor subsistence in the region, climatic changes contributed an important influence.⁴⁸ Supplies of fish dwindled during the mild winter reported in 1660-1661, contributing to both poor winter fishing and poor moose hunting in the spring (WHC. 16: 22).

Subsistence fishing was safer and more productive in certain areas, such as Michilimackinac, where the fall herring fishery was important and abundant (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 265-267). The Georgian Bay Algonkian may have been attracted to these rich fisheries for herring, carp, pike, whitefish, sturgeon and trout (Ibid. 55: 159). Michilimackinac was also a popular wintering location⁴⁹ (Ibid: 167), undoubtedly enhanced by the opportunity to preserve fish and other foodstuffs. Despite climatic

⁴⁷ This was used as a substitute for corn flour.

⁴⁸ The post 1649 years are well represented by poor weather (See Chapter Two).

⁴⁹ Michilimackinac had important religious significance. It was considered to be the origin of fishing in the Great Lakes where nets were invented (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 210). The lakes, particularly Lake Superior, were regarded by the Ojibwa as aspects of a divinity which were offered sacrifices (Ibid. 50: 265).

changes, sturgeon proved to be the most dependable source of food. It was taken year round by spear and net. Most however, were taken by net under the ice in March, before the spring spawning run.⁵⁰ This guaranteed the Georgian Bay Algonkian subsistence during one of the harshest months of the year (Ibid. 57: 301). Fishing was so productive during the fall of 1671 in the Green Bay area, that the Jesuit Louis André complained of not being able to kneel to pray in the native lodges for the abundance of fish (Ibid: 265).

Although historical support is often inconclusive, there is much to suggest a continued cultural importance attached to fishing. In 1666-7, sacrifices were reportedly made to Michipichoux to obtain good sturgeon fishing (Ibid. 50: 289). Sturgeon feasts continued to be reported into the 1680s (Blair ed. 1911-12.1: 287).⁵¹ The islands continued to be used for fishing, and for local trading (Thwaites ed. 1959, 50: 267). Native groups were reported to reside in small groups of 40 people, living on sturgeon, corn, and game (Blair ed. 1911-12.1: 303-304). The diet of these subsistence fishers was reported by Jesuit observers to be one of fish and corn, "not meat" (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54:

⁵⁰ Mentioned earlier, this may actually suggest the harvesting of burbot.

⁵¹ Sturgeon Feasts were recorded among the Rice Lake Mississauga in the nineteenth century (Chamberlain 1888). Other feasts continued after 1649.

131).

The Mississauga River remained rich in sturgeon which were caught with nets and by small weirs (*mitchikan*), during the spring and summer (Ibid. 58: 273; 55: 135; Bain ed. 1901: 35; WHC. 16: 68). The Mississauga, Sauteaux, and Nipissing fished at Sault Ste. Marie with scoop nets, drying fish over wooden frames to prepare it for the winter. These groups also traded fish at Michilimackinac to other native groups, including the now displaced refugee Huron, and the Ottawa (Blair ed. 1911-12: 276, 281). Fishing at Michilimackinac between 1671-1701 for the Huron and Ottawa was principally a fall activity exploiting lake trout and whitefish using gill nets (Smith 1985: 97). It is this evidence that suggests the historical presence of gill net fishing in Lake Huron and probably Georgian Bay.⁵²

By 1680, surplus fish were largely directed to a French fur trade economy. Although native peoples realised a profit on everything they sold, they were described as being 'uneconomical', as they did not save a surplus for themselves (Ibid: 276, 283).⁵³ Preservation of fish for other than that destined for trade, continued to play a

⁵² Rogers suggested that gill nets were likely the result of European contact, principally through the introduction of twine (1972a: 7).

⁵³ It is possible they simply gave away their surplus to relatives needing food, as was the custom of many native peoples.

small role. Whenever fishing was successful, fishers preserved only a 'little store' (WHC. 16: 25). This suggests a continued reliance upon winter ice fishing, and alternate food sources for subsistence, preserving only what they planned to market. Indeed, winter ice fishing was lucrative. Conditions reported at Michilimackinac describe one individual spearing 40 or 50 fish under the ice in three hours (Thwaites ed. 1959, 55: 159). Indeed, fish comprised 74.1% of the faunal assemblage at the mission at St. Ignace (Smith 1985: 100).

The fur trader J. Long described the importance of winter ice fishing using nets. Over a period of two months, he reported a harvest of eighteen hundred pounds of fish (Long 1791: 57). Winter fish had the advantages of easy preservation as they were simply hung by their tails across sticks to freeze (Ibid). The Georgian Bay Algonkian probably used three methods of ice fishing: they cut a large opening in the ice and set nets; they cut a small hole from which to angle, or they cut two holes in a line, passing a line from hole to hole through which they hauled a net (Ibid). This latter method is a widely distributed technique and may involve several holes and quite long nets. The main drawback was getting a large number of fish on a very cold day as this caused problems to the hands which stiffen. If this occurred, the fisher would substitute his

teeth for his hands (Preston 1991: personal communication).

The apparent reluctance to preserve fish was not shared by all Algonkian peoples. Some native peoples, most notably the Nipissing, invested much effort preserving fish for trade with the Huron as they did before 1649. The Amikwa were known to cache surplus dried fish before going to trade with the French (Blair ed. 1911-12: 276; Adams ed. 1961: 85). In this they were assured of a food supply after having left the region for purposes of this trading. It is plausible that active long distant traders in the Georgian Bay region participated to a greater extent in fish preservation than marginal traders.

Adaptation to Eighteenth Century Fur Trading

The post-1649 Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay were faced with several choices over the next 50 years: to continue subsistence fishing, small game hunting, and corn cultivation; to adapt their subsistence to the changing demands of direct trade with the French and British;⁵⁴ or to diversify their subsistence efforts to follow that characterized by the pre-1649 Mississauga, that of a

⁵⁴ The archaeology of Michilimackinac shows that the British occupation was marked by less fish and an increase in fowl, attributable to their use of firearms. The fish taken by the British were of greater variety than that of the French, suggesting extensive netting. Unlike the French, the British relied less on the native people to provide subsistence (Cleland 1970: 15).

fishing, hunting, and planting pattern concentrated at a watershed location. The river mouth/inland pattern is the land use pattern most familiar to anthropologists for it describes native people hunting inland in winter, and fishing and trading on shoreline or coastal waters in spring (cf. Sanger 1982: 196). It is a pattern strongly identified with the fur trade.

Some Georgian Bay Algonkian likely 'became' Mississauga, which had both political and land use implications outside the immediate region. Others may have continued their fishing and trading activity, now redirected from Huronia to other trading areas such as Chequamegon, Michilimackinac, and Sault Ste. Marie. Still others may have modified their fishing to increase commercial hunting for trade, the usual portrayal of native peoples when faced with fur trade influences. Critical however, to the option exercised in the Georgian Bay region was the importance of remaining close to the shores of Georgian Bay year round. To sustain fishing, hunting had to be close to the Georgian Bay fisheries, either on the islands, shoreline, or the near interior, and for specific, if short periods, so as not to endanger peak fishing.

Increased hunting or trapping among the Georgian Bay Algonkian would have gradually dispersed them outside the shoreline and island areas into the hinterland interior.

This was now made encouraged by the practice of baiting traps with castoreum⁵⁵ (cf. Cooper 1938, Wells 1973: 481) which permitted the extension of traplines over an increasingly wider area. Beaver could not only be taken from the usual locations along rivers and beside ponds, but extended to previously isolated beaver. The provision of steel traps by fur traders may also have facilitated an intensification of hinterland beaver trapping. However, available records suggest "professional hunters," chiefly Iroquois, were generously supplied with steel traps when they were instructed by the fur traders to range freely and hunt wherever it was convenient (Nicks 1980: 90).

For some the dispersal to hunt and trap was planned to coincide either before or after spring and fall spawning times, marking a shift toward a greater reliance on spawning periods. Ice fishing may have become less important as fall fish were preserved for use during the winter, and hunting encouraged. If the most likely type of subsistence within the region reflects the environmental limitations, the Algonkian speaking people who remained all year in Georgian

⁵⁵ It is not known to what extent castoreum may have been an ingredient in traditional hunting medicines of the Georgian Bay Algonkian. It was not reported to be used among the Nipissing until 1793 (Tyrrell ed. 1931: 73) although castoreum had been exported from Canada to Great Britain since at least 1748 when over nine hundred were shipped (Davidson 1918: 269). Since 1583, castoreum was used to make medicine and perfume when it was shipped from the colonies to Britain (Quinn ed. 1979, 4: 307).

Bay would likely continue with some form of fishing. It would be a major change in subsistence for the Georgian Bay Algonkian to abandon fishing completely and give up the pursuit of small aquatic animals in favour of commercial hunting of fur bearing animals exclusively without finding a motivation to rely on alternate sources of food.

The continued importance of fishing is reflected in the choice of trade goods made by the Georgian Bay Algonkian. They preferred metal spears⁵⁶ to guns and traps⁵⁷ and their demands for trade goods rarely excluded metal fish spears and fish hooks. In furthering native fishing, French posts on Lake Ontario in 1722-23 stocked a specific type of fish hook, a catfish hook (Preston and Lamontagne eds. 1958: 211), suggesting either this type of fish was preferred, or that the hook was found suitable for catching large, and/or bottom feeding fish.

The French fur trading posts did not at least initially, provide fish nets to native peoples in Georgian Bay region although they may have acted as redistribution

⁵⁶Although it is not clear whether these were actually metal heads, not shafts, the weight of a metal shaft may have been an issue.

⁵⁷ Simcoe Papers. Rough draft of Proceedings of a Council Held at St. John Rosseaux, August 26, 1793. PAO.

Fish spears and fish hooks were an important part of the supplies in 1788 (Robinson 1965: 250). In 1818, 700 fish hooks were included as part of the government's complement of trade goods (Inventory of Indian stores transferred by Thom.G. Anderson Store keeper Indian Department to W. Trew, Store Keeper Drummond Island, June 25, 1818, PAO).

centres for Huron or Ottawa produced nets. The Huron and Ottawa were using gill nets, if not making them (Smith 1985: 97). The French posts did trade 'thread', probably cotton, which, depending on its durability may have been used to make nets.⁵⁸ Presents given to an Ojibwa party in 1783 included two pairs of fish spears and eight lbs of net thread. This was considered sufficient for a group of twelve people headed by two males (MPHC. 2: 356-357). The extent to which European fibres replaced native plants to make nets is not known. The Parry Island Ojibwa were reported to have made nets from false nettle (*Urticastrum divaricatum*) using cedar for floats (Jenness 1935: 16).

If any single item became important to the Georgian Bay Algonkian during this period, it was corn. Procurement of corn proved to be an important incentive for subsistence fishers to hunt commercially. Corn ranked second to fish in its perceived subsistence value, and was particularly sought when fish failed. When this happened, subsistence fishers hunted for furs to buy it (Bain ed. 1901: 53). Since corn had also become dangerous to grow during the period of sustained raiding, for maintenance and harvesting risked personal exposure, corn cultivation could have only added

⁵⁸Henri Joutel reported in 1687 at Mackinac that the Indians made nets from "ordinary sewing thread" which could catch fish weighing up to ten pounds (Kinietz 1965: 29).

little to the Algonkian food supply during the years of sustained hostilities. The diminished supply was further compounded by weather; thick fogs reported at several locations on the north shore of Lake Huron prevented corn from ripening. This suggested that if corn had been planted it had to be picked unripened, if it was picked at all (Hennepin 1698: 117; Kinnietz 1965: 322, 370). Since a sack of corn was considered quite expensive, costing 12 beaver skins (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 285) this encouraged many Great Lakes Algonkians to continue if not increase their fishing (Bain ed. 1901: 53)⁵⁹ and to continue their often futile attempts to grow corn.

Corn cultivation continued in the region, principally on the islands (Kinnietz 1965: 370; Bain, 1901: 36). Although there is insufficient data to document the extent of island cultivation, a recent study of island gardens among the Ojibwa of northwestern Ontario (1805-1875) suggests the Ojibwa preferred to garden on islands where frosts were not as great a cause for concern as the sandy loam soils increased its protection from frost. If fire was the chief method used to clear the land, the island location had the advantage of containing wild fires by the

⁵⁹ The British later provided corn to the native groups. In 1796, 500 bushels of corn were destined for the those living around Michilimackinac (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 4: 245).

surrounding water. Animal and insect predation was also reduced, leaving the greatest danger to corn production to be trespass. These gardens were not only used for corn, but included other Ojibwa crops, potatoes, beans, squashes, pumpkins and carrots (Waisberg and Holzkamm 1990: 5-7, 19).

The harvest from these island gardens was important and likely expanded⁶⁰ given the value of corn, but how much it contributed to the diet is unknown. With the considerable production from Huronia now lost, the total quantity of corn available to native people likely declined in the immediate region, although production concentrated at Green Bay, Mackinac Island, and Detroit, and for a brief, if fertile phase at Chequamegon Bay on the south shore of Lake Superior (Moodie 1980: 281).⁶¹ To the extent the Georgian Bay Algonkian attempted to provide for their own supplies by increasing corn production, is difficult to assess without quantitative data.

The immediate problem integrating hunting into a

⁶⁰ Moodie suggests the fur trade helped to expand agriculture into areas and among peoples where cultivation had not been previously practised (1980: 281).

⁶¹ Moodie describes Chequamegon as a "small scale Huronia in the new French trade of the upper lakes" (1980: 281). In building his argument about the increasing importance of agriculture (actually horticulture) in the fur trade economy, Moodie suggests the Amikwa and Mississauga did not cultivate corn until after the collapse of Huronia (Ibid: 282). As this study has shown, cultivation of corn among Great Lakes Algonkians certainly preceded the fur trade, although circumstances resulting from the historic events accompanying the fur trade likely intensified native production where it was possible.

subsistence fishing cycle is reconciling peak fishing periods with peak hunting periods, which occur in the Georgian Bay region at the same time (Heidenreich 1971: 209) and where hunting opportunities were limited (Berkes 1990: 39). A large population, such as the Huron, could segregate into distinct groups of fishers and hunters to take advantage of both game populations in often widely dispersed locations. Such an option was not as easily exercised by smaller groups. The risk for native populations who principally fished, was that hunting had the potential of preempting spawning runs or planting times, interrupting winter, fall, and early spring fishing.

One of the ways in which increased hunting for fur bearing animals may have been incorporated was by segregating fishing and hunting activities by gender and age. Older males and females could continue to fish, leaving the younger males to hunt. "Young men" often left native communities to hunt and fish for fur trading posts.⁶² The Georgian Bay Algonkian may have excelled in fishing, it is also likely there were good hunters in every group.

⁶² Rough Draft of Proceedings of a Council held at St. John Rousseaux, August, 26, 1793 Simcoe Papers, PAO. Sir William Johnson was interested in recruiting the Mississauga to hunt and trade for him urging Chief Tequakareigh to send some of his "young men" to hunt and fish for the garrison.

Another solution was to increase the use of nets during fall fishing, and to preserve fish when it was plentiful, which would then supply the subsistence needed both during and after the time expended hunting for furs. Commercial fishing did not conflict as much with hunting activities as subsistence fishing did as commercial fishing was limited to the spring and fall (cf. Rogers 1972a: 34). The transition to incorporate increased hunting for fur bearing animals into an environment which supported a principally fishing subsistence pattern may have extended the use of nets to the capture of beaver under the ice in winter (WHC. 16: 19; Hennepin 1698: 518).⁶³ This type of net was likely made from deer skin (Tyrrell 1931: 235-6) which made it durable, for it had to be plunged into and dragged through the ice. Although netting beaver could eliminate all beaver from the lodge, eventually depleting their population, this method was also well-suited for conservation. The net must be pulled as soon as the beaver goes in or it will chew its way out. Because the beaver are alive, the hunter has the option of selecting which beaver may be killed or returned to the water. This is what the historical sources, in particular Hennepin, incompletely

⁶³ The ice was pierced above the beaver lodge with the handle of a hatchet. Once the beavers's passage was determined, a net 'a fathom long' attached to two sticks was cut through the ice. One person handled the net while the other broke the lodge apart (Hennepin 1698: 519).

described (Preston 1991: personal communication).

This method of capturing beaver was certainly arduous. According to Hennepin (1689: 518), netting beaver first required testing likely locations by hammering through the ice with the handle of a hatchet or stake to find the beaver's track. A net "a fathom long" was then introduced to the hole. If the beaver were not attracted to the net, they had to be routed, which meant intensive chopping through the beaver lodge where up to a foot of frozen wood and earth, "as hard as a Stone" would be encountered. The beaver could then be driven to the net:

They labour extream hard in this manner from Morning till Night without eating any thing, for all that do not take above three or four *Caftors* [castors] (Hennepin 1689: 519).

This method of catching beaver may have been associated with the use of hunting territories which was implied by the faunal material at the Shebishikong site where only mature beaver were recovered, perhaps using this very means of capture.

The logistics which involved incorporating increased hunting, required an expansion of resource areas that had been concentrated principally around river mouths and islands. To compensate for this deficiency, some Great Lakes native peoples chose to negotiate contracts to share their fishing areas with hunters. The Saulteaux, principally

known for their adept exploitation of the rich fisheries at Sault Ste. Marie, negotiated a reciprocal resource use contract with three hunting groups with whom they exchanged usufructuary rights to the fishery. Those having such rights to the fisheries at Sault Ste. Marie were described as 'borrowers' (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 133). In return, the Marameg, Noquet, and Outchibous permitted the Saulteaux access to their hunting areas near Thunder Bay, the northeast shore of Lake Superior north of Sault Ste. Marie, and Keweenaw Bay (Ibid. 54: 132).

When these groups made an agreement to transfer land use, they likely did so through their respective political or kinship communities, as a way of determining the customary rights each band was allowed in a given area (Cronon 1983: 61). These rights were subject to limitations, restricting many of the privileges commonly associated with ownership: A user could not, for example, prevent other band members from trespassing, as in a family hunting territorial system, nor could they derive rent (including a tribute or toll) from the resources (Ibid: 62). The introduction of trade goods into Georgian Bay likely made fishing and hunting easier, but it did not radically alter the subsistence pattern. The loss of a regular supply of corn was a more important consideration, which may initially have resulted in increased beaver hunting to obtain it.

Climactic influences which limited corn cultivation, especially on the Mississauga River may have been the incentive for many groups to seek favourable conditions to grow corn.⁶⁴ The dispersal of the Huron, and the peace agreements with the Iroquois, opened the way for the Mississauga to take advantage both of better corn growing areas, and to participate in the southern Albany fur trade (N.Y.Col.Docs. 9: 888).⁶⁵

The land use activities of the north shore Lake Huron groups appear to have altered little from that before 1649. Some groups like the Amikwa returned to plant gardens and hunt moose near Manitoulin Island (Kinietz 1965: 370; Thwaites ed. 1959, 55: 153) as they had been reported to do earlier. What did change was their choice of wintering location, which shifted from former locations near the Petun and Ottawa in southwestern Ontario, to Lake Erie, inland on the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, and Saginaw Bay⁶⁶ (Thwaites ed. 1959, 44: 251; 60: 217, 219, 221-227).

⁶⁴ Konrad's (1973) comparison of archaeological site material in the Toronto area found Historic Mississauga sites to be located on well drained, gentle sloping land, having a loam and sandy loam soil texture, soils which were easy to work for growing corn.

⁶⁵ The Mississauga were described as 'domiciliated' and horticultural, in contrast to other groups who were described as warriors (Severance 1917. 2: 153).

⁶⁶ Fitting suggests that the Saginaw valley during the seventeenth century was open to almost every group in the Great Lakes region (1975: 37).

A fishing subsistence pattern was continued by some Mississauga along the shore of Lake Ontario. Salmon (perhaps this also includes lake trout (*Salvelinus numaycush*) were speared by torchlight in November, and caught in spring during spawning runs. In winter, they fished through the ice for muskelonge and pickerel using wooden fish decoys, line and a blanket which was used to keep the fisher warm and block intrusive light from the fishing hole. They also hunted for deer, although light snow conditions limited the number that could be taken. During the spring, maple sugar was produced before heading for the salmon spawning areas (Robertson ed. 1911: 209, 213, 308, 328).

The Mississauga adopted fur trading and hunting by expanding commercially their fishing and hunting. Their approach to land use concentrated their settlement near rivers, which traditionally provided them with a diversified economy based on corn cultivation, fishing, and hunting. This adaptation eventually evolved into a system of hunting territories.⁶⁷

In this century there are strong indications of

⁶⁷ The historical presence of hunting territories emerged during the Williams Commission, which resulted in the Williams Treaty of 1923. Oral testimony supported a system of hunting territories which likely emerged around 1812, if not before (RG 10, vol. 2330, 67,071-3, pt.2). An earlier draft thesis, Rights of Passage: Ethnohistory of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, (1989) discussed the details of the system.

varying participation of native groups in the fur trade, not unlike that advanced by Morantz (1980). A subsistence based on fishing and small game hunting was by far the most time consuming, and most important occupation for some Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay. Like Morantz's 'coasters' (1980: 46-48), they supplied fur trading operations not only with fish, but with other items -- pitch, corn, and crafts (WHC. 17: 352).⁶⁸ When a hunting and fishing arrangement could not be reached, access to fur bearing animals may have been restricted to poorer areas, forcing some groups to forego fur trapping. Assuming a consistent land use pattern, the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay were likely seeking new markets to buy corn, nets, fishing equipment, and trade goods, where they could sell fish, crafts and other items. Satisfying both these requirements were the European traders.

Changes in Land Uses

The emphasis on land use in the eighteenth century appears to shift from the shore and islands to the hinterland region, which came to be exploited as discrete

⁶⁸ Morantz suggests 'coasters' were profoundly affected by the fur trade (1980: 47). There is no evidence to suggest subsistence fishers consumed European goods at a higher rate than inland peoples, considering inland peoples, as hunters, were actively pursued by the fur traders.

hunting grounds. How intensively the Iroquois exploited the Georgian Bay hinterland cannot be determined from the historical or archaeological sources (cf. Hurley et al 1972), although access was probably initiated from the south. The Iroquois were known to hunt for beaver in small groups of up to ten males, which then divided into individual trapping at appropriate beaver locations. Their hunting was often jeopardized by their small size which placed them at risk from Mississauga groups, who later replaced them hunting in the region (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 203).

Although Smith (1985: 119) states that fishing technology had not altered as a result of European influence, positive identification of the gill net, the introduction of metal fish spears, abundant metal fish hooks, and the now obtainable cotton thread and perhaps twine, suggest an intensification of the fall net fishery, particularly deep water fishing. Gill net fishing placed a greater importance, notably for the Ottawa and Huron at Michilimackinac, to fish fall spawning fishing, namely trout and whitefish (Hennepin 1698: 116), confirmed by the archaeology at St. Ignace where Smith (1985: 101) reported gill nets with a four to five inch mesh. Additionally, French refuse pits at Fort Michilimackinac support a subsistence of fall fish. The predominant fish, however,

continued to be sturgeon (Cleland 1970: 11), which were plentiful in spring but could be caught all year.

An increased number of ready made fish hooks relieved the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay of having to make them out of wood or metal scraps. This in turn diversified their fishing options, which may have intensified trolling and angling. The motivation underlying the place of fishing in the fur trade was not to produce more fish, but to make fishing easier. Metal fish hooks⁶⁹, netting threads, and metal spears likely increased leisure time, or time to trap fur bearing animals.

The spear and hook fishery did not lessen with the fur trade. Spears were used to capture beaver, muskrat, and bear, and came without the time consuming preparation involved making and repairing nets. If the group size continued to be small, the demand for fish was not likely increased, except that necessary for trade.

Although the date for its introduction is uncertain, the fur traders introduced the practice of salting and barrelling fish which radically altered the native method of preserving fish, if not the social organization involved with its production. This method of preservation was in some respects an improvement over that of smoking and drying

⁶⁹ Fish yields may also have been increased by stringing several hooks on one line, or setting numerous lines in different locations.

by removing it from a reliance upon weather conditions, firewood supplies, the labour associated with smoking, and the necessity of making containers to hold the fish. It did, however, require salt, barrels and a preference for salted fish.⁷⁰

As an individual could both catch and preserve large quantities of fish, the social organization composed of several individuals smoking and drying fish theorized by Cleland (1982: 778) was no longer justified. To the extent salted fish replaced other methods of preservation is not known. It is possible that it was a method reserved exclusively for commercial fishing, reserving traditional methods for native use.

Social and Political Organization

There is comparatively little data on the Georgian Bay Algonkian's social and economic life. Rogers (1978: 762) reasoned that the constant regrouping of peoples disrupted the socio-political organization, which hindered the development of new structures. In addition, the Europeans attempted to gain political control over these

⁷⁰ The cultural aversion to salt among the Iroquois is described by Waugh (1973: 152). Although salting fish eventually replaced smoking and drying, salted fish would be placed into a hole in the ice overnight and eaten the next day as 'fresh fish' (Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

structures, which suppressed their natural development (Ibid). Inferences that can be drawn from this lie within historical-functional analysis.

A major feature of social organization in the eighteenth century was the appearance of totems. Identified since 1718, totem names, particularly the crane and catfish, figure prominently in the region. Totems were associated by European observers with war: The totemic emblem provided a means of identifying individuals by their own and their wives' totem.⁷¹ The reason for this practice was likely attributable to the exigencies of warfare. By identifying a greater number of potential relatives, the warrior theoretically increased his protection.⁷²

Alternately, the use of totems may have been associated with land use agreements which permitted different groups seasonally to both occupy and exploit resources. In this way the totem functioned in a social and political capacity to support these exchanges.

Wintering, previously established with the Huron and Ottawa in the southern parts of the region, shifted west and

⁷¹ Enumeration of the Indian Nations who have relations with the Government of Canada, the Warriors of Each, with their Armorial Bearings. PAC, MG 1, reel F-66, A.N. C 11A, Vol. 66, fos. 236-247. PAC.

⁷² Long (1791: 86), who was adopted by the Indians, describes the totem exclusively as a guardian spirit.

south to Lake Erie. The Nipissing and Amikwa wintered here between 1671-1677, hunting bear, deer, and turkey (Thwaites ed. 1959, 44: 251; 60: 217, 219, 221-227). Sturgeon, venison and fowl were the attraction at Lake Erie (Hennepin 1698: 314). In 1680, under the protection of the French, the Ottawa extended their hunt to the territory of the Fox Indians (Outagamis) (Blair ed. 1911-12. 2: 125). Other alliances were struck between the Wyandot, the Ojibwa, the Ottawa, and the Potowatomi, which permitted each of these groups to hunt throughout the territory of the others (Ibid., 2: 189). These arrangements allowed groups to hunt for valuable furs, and continue to live in a region where game may not have been plentiful, or where it was otherwise politically impractical for them to hunt.

An important feature of this wintering phenomenon was the division of wintering groups into organized hunting areas. Each family was allotted a certain territory by the chief where they divided themselves into 'tribes' (Kinietz 1965: 237). Sanctions against trespass were manifested by moral influence (Thwaites ed. 1905: 481). Through this type of wintering activity emerged elements of the hunting range system.⁷³ That this organization was also extended to the

⁷³ In a family hunting territory system, a hunting group habitually returns to the same well defined hunting area (Speck 1915, 1915a, 1923). A hunting range system is also characterized by the return of a hunting group to the same area every year, but this group does not possess

presence of hunting groups is suggested by a single description of the Georgian Bay Algonkian who, as "back Indians," traded large parcels of furs in small parties (J.P. 8: 274). This implies the presence of hunting groups, possibly led by a captain or leader (cf. Bishop 1974: 268-9, 329).⁷⁴ The practice of awarding medals (both metal and enamel) to chiefs was introduced as early as 1707-1710 (Eccles 1974: 137), a feature which may have been instrumental in encouraging or sustaining an existing trading captain system (see Morantz 1980).

The organization of groups into discrete temporary hunting areas accommodated politically allied parties without encroaching upon the hunting areas exploited by the lending group. The decision to distribute such lands rested with the chief in whose territory the wintering groups hunted. The system operated for as long as the alliance was acceptable, and the chief willing to provide usufructuary rights. This would suggest that a group's important

exclusive rights to the resources and the area is not sharply bound (Rogers 1963a: 82).

⁷⁴ In newly acquired territory, the chief was initially elected to office before inheritance came into effect. The allocation of territory initially went to these 'warriors', thereby providing the structure in which ownership of territories came into being (Copway 1850: 140). It was preferred that the chief have a large family so that his actions would be perceived to be for the good of the community at large, rather than for reasons of personal gain. In the same respect there was distrust of individuals who did not have large families because they were seen to be either victims of witchcraft, or a perpetrator who, through bad practices, allowed the vengeful return of bad medicine onto their own family members.

commercial hunting activities were not confined by the environmental limitations of the Georgian Bay region.

On the surface, the size of groups in the region increased from the pre-1649 years, particularly Sagard's early estimate. Reports suggest impressive populations of 550 and 600 people.⁷⁵ Compared, however, to Champlain's report of 700 people fishing at Lake Nipissing in 1615, it is perhaps precipitous to conclude that group size necessary expanded after 1649. The reportedly large population comprised a collection of allied but temporary groups, former traders, hunters and fishers, not unlike the agreement reached between the Saulteur and the three hunting groups who agreed jointly to exploit the fishery at Sault Ste. Marie. To test for population increases, it would be necessary to determine the flow of groups both into and out of the region, a difficult task given the history of migration throughout the region. Although the size of the groups had reportedly increased, the operative group size implied by the social organization remained the same: Native peoples reportedly continued to divide into several families to live along the shore of the lake (Margry ed.

⁷⁵ The union of four groups provided a large population of 550 people (Thwaites ed., 1959, 54: 133-135), but they did not all live together in one village. The group estimated to be 400 people consisting of Achiligouan, Amikwa and Mississauga (Ibid. 54: 133-135) may also have similarly exchanged reciprocal rights with the Saulteaux to fish at Sault Ste. Marie, and to hunt north of Lake Huron and in the islands.

1886: 6-8).

Collectively, the Mississauga⁷⁶ gave the impression of exhibiting a large increase in population by increasing the numbers of population centres that came to be identified by either the political identification, Mississauga, or the totem identified with them, in this case, crane. In this respect, the presence of Mississauga cannot be associated with significant population growth or expansion,⁷⁷ but with the circulation of a common term to identify Algonkian speakers, some of whom may have previously or recently lived in the area (cf. Greenman and Morrison 1982: 91). After surviving conditions of war and disease, the group identified on the Mississauga River before 1649 could not have undergone such massive increases in population.

Through negotiated alliances and kinship structures,

⁷⁶ Like the southwestern Ojibwa who moved south to Minnesota under Iroquois pressure and with fur trade incentives (Smith 1973: 14), the composite Mississauga also moved south, driven by the incentive of the British trade at Albany, and their need to resolve access to it by negotiating relationships with the Iroquois (Smith 1975: 218). The Mississauga were also encouraged to move south by the collapse of the post at Michilimackinac and by the poor corn growing conditions on the north shore near the Mississauga River.

⁷⁷ The southern expansion of southeastern Ojibwa as represented by the Mississauga, did not parallel that of the southwestward movement of the Ojibwa into Minnesota, the upper peninsula of Michigan and Wisconsin during the late seventeenth century (Smith 1973: 11). In this context, the population density increased, as did band and village size, which placed a greater reliance on cooperative activities (Ibid). There is, however, an interesting similarity between the two southern expansions. The movement for the southwestern Ojibwa was precipitated by warfare with the Dakota. The southeastern Ojibwa expansion was influenced by warfare and alliance with the Iroquois.

many groups reestablished their position, each retaining some level of autonomy, each able to exist and coexist both fishing and hunting.⁷⁸ The people who can be regarded as forming the southern expansion of Mississauga can perhaps be traced to 80 men who belonged to several bands living on the borders of Lake Huron and Lake Erie. On May 23, 1723 these men brought a peace pipe to Albany when they declared their interest in becoming the Seventh Iroquois nation (Wraxall 1915: 144). The number of eighty men suggests a representative population of possibly 320 people.

Obviously many pre- 1649 Lake Huron groups survived in their identities into the eighteenth century. Some were organized into small groups of 40 or 50 people who merged with other groups to form regional bodies up to 500 people when circumstances such as war or trade, warranted it. Smith (1973: 15) believes that accompanying the larger population was the development of totemic clans which integrated neighbouring peoples by providing cooperation in warfare and hunting, and provided a structure through which to transfer the position of chief. In this way the totem functioned to integrate people who could not otherwise

⁷⁸ The attention of this discussion is concentrated on those historical elements that may have infringed upon those native groups who chose to remain in the Georgian Bay region. From an historical perspective, the history of the region, by necessity, derives in part from what is known about the Mississauga.

claim kinship relationships (Ibid): "If a family left a certain area it came under the totem of the group to which it attached itself."⁷⁹ The totemic group functioned politically over resources by virtue of the resource privileges allocated to them by the chief, and became known by that chief's totem. Mrs. Ashewasega, who originated from Saginaw Bay explained:

When she go to the chief he told her to go to a certain section. Years ago they always had their *dodem*, they have an animal and it's sort of related to you as a brother. She told him what her *dodem* was and the chief said for her to go to this certain section....When they got to this place, the same place where they had traplines for every individual tribe that had a *dodem*, whether it was beaver, eagle, loon, or whatever it was-- traplines for each of these villages. You can't live in another *dodem* area. You have a certain *dodem* and if you go down trapping or hunting in that area, if your game runs over the line you cannot touch it. You have to keep your side of the line, because the chiefs of all these traplines were the head of each village. They [the lines] all run in a square or a long [rectangle]....right down to the shoreline. They had ducks and everything.⁸⁰

This system allowed dispersed peoples to maintain bonds over widely scattered areas (Rogers 1978: 763). From

⁷⁹ Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 22, 1983; Field notes, J. Lovisek, Shawanaga Reserve.

⁸⁰ Interview with Mrs. Ashewasega, August 16, 1966; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island. It is likely that the section to mark the entrance to the area was marked with the figure of a totem on a fence post (Assikinack 1858: 119).

a political perspective, the totemic association likely functioned as a means for groups to identify with allied peoples, especially when usufructuary rights were involved. It characterized a fluid cultural association, challenging views of cultural autonomy, especially in a region where so many diverse groups congregated.

The actual number of band members who could claim a kinship relationship to someone of the same totem was probably quite small, comprising perhaps a quarter of the number of the band (Jones 1861: 138). Thus, to suggest that leadership was represented by the largest totemic group (Smith 1973: 15) expresses a political, not genealogical reality. Totems were recognized in Georgian Bay exclusively as part of territorial allotment or of personal guardianship. They were not identified with clans.

With the shift toward greater exploitation of fall spawning fish, a social organization similar to that earlier proposed by Cleland (1982: 778) may have now emerged. Assuming fall fishing merited increased attention to provide a surplus for trade and as a support for winter hunting, winter ice fishing may have decreased in importance as groups headed south to Lake Erie and Saginaw Bay to hunt and fish. This would have adjusted the previous winter organization formerly characterized by large co-residential groups.

Territoriality

Trade during the eighteenth century became redirected and reoriented from the Georgian Bay-French River-Lake Nipissing-Ottawa River route to the shores of Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, and Lake Ontario. Fluid territorial occupancy continued to be structured by alliance and treaty (Thwaites ed. 1959, 54: 132),⁸¹ as it was before 1649. Territoriality had clearly shifted from trading routes north and east of Georgian Bay, to areas south at Lake Ontario, and west at Michilimackinac. As early as 1703, territorial hegemonies carved into the Great Lakes shoreline came to be defined by usufructuary privileges.⁸² The groups claiming districts around Lake Huron, notably, the Kicapoo, Mascouten, and the Fox, "separated, each to his allotted place, to carry on their hunt" (Blair ed. 1911-12. 1: 249). These districts were concentrated near fur trading locations, at Saginaw, Detroit, and Michilimackinac (MPHC. 1907: 458), supporting the equal importance of

⁸¹ Polygyny may have been one of the ways of controlling relations, and thus alliances, trade, and property (Waisberg 1977: 142). Polygyny was reported in 1672-3 for the Mississauga (Thwaites ed. 1959, 57: 215). War which often eliminated men from a community (Loftfield 1975: 290) likely encouraging polygyny.

⁸² Chief Miscoouakey held the status of spokesman for the groups who had 'districts' around Lake Huron. These included the allied "Outawa, Pottawatomi, the Sakis, Outagamis [Fox or Renards], Mastrowtins [Mascouten], Kicapoo, Oupigos [Winnebago], Malomnys [Menominee] the Saulteaux and the Misissaguez" (MPHC. 1907: 458). Many of these groups who traded with the Iroquois maintained territorial hegemonies around Lake Huron, principally on the western and northern shores.

hunting and access to fur trading posts.

Detailed evidence of the existence of a hunting territorial system is documented between 1740-1760 in areas to the north and west of Georgian Bay.⁸³ Hunting territories were also recorded in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan in the Saginaw Valley where:

the lands belonged to this family, and it had therefore the exclusive right to hunt on them. This is according to the custom of the people for each family had its own lands (Bain ed. 1901: 142).

Hunting territories were reported east of the region at Lake of Two Mountains in an area bounded by the Ottawa River as far west as Lake Nipissing. Territory was subdivided between several families which was later inherited. The families were exceedingly strict about their territories counting trespass as 'invasion warranting death' (Bain ed. 1901: 23).⁸⁴

Territoriality in the Georgian Bay region became an issue that was resolved by the need for groups to maintain access to posts, fishing locations, trade, and to coordinate

⁸³ The most descriptive portrait of the seasonal cycle refers to groups who had between 1740-60, adapted to a family hunting territory system. Their presence on the shores of Lake Huron was restricted to sturgeon fishing from May through to August on St. Martin's island (Bain ed. 1901: 121, 142). The rest of the year was spent hunting for bear, elk, otter and beaver. During the spring, they made maple sugar (Ibid: 142).

⁸⁴ Although the given date for the existence of hunting territories among the Lake of Two Mountains Algonkian is 1761, Cooper thought it was likely in operation a generation or two before this (1939: 73).

winter hunting in unfamiliar locales. The exploitation of the hinterland area was likely a major change in resource use in the region. Indeed, hunting territories may have served as a systematic means of exploring the hinterland, reducing competition, and controlling conflict (Burley 1981: 213). It is uncertain to what extent river mouths or islands came to be dominated by groups. As they turned inland to integrate increased hunting into their fishing cycle, conflict between groups was likely averted through the mutual recognition of a hunting territorial system. The totem may have served as a device to distinguish such claims.

Summary

This discussion provides an overview of the eighteenth century Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay. Without access to either historical or archaeological sources that can be directly linked to the region, the cultural dynamics and land use changes of subsistence fishers and small game hunters must remain inconclusive. They are overshadowed by those native groups who came to participate actively in hunting and trapping, thus attracting the attention of historical observers.

The picture presented by the eighteenth century materials suggests that the Algonkian speaking people of

Georgian Bay had not adapted wholly to a trapping and hunting economy, but continued to place importance on fishing for subsistence, and increasingly for commercial reasons. As commercial fishing could be learned in one season, whereas to be a skilled fisher could take perhaps 10 to 20 years (Rogers 1972a: 36), commercial fishing was more readily incorporated into a hunting economy. It is unlikely the Algonkian speaking people of Georgian Bay abandoned fishing when, as a food source, it was superior to hunting, more plentiful, with fish being easier to obtain, a predictable resource and one easy to store (Heidenreich 1971: 212) particularly when it now had commercial value. With established small game hunting of aquatic animals, the Georgian Bay Algonkian were well equipped to continue to function as fishers and small game hunters in a fur trade economy.

The presence of fur trading posts did not radically alter fishing technology. The centres of fur trading activities also provided extensive fishing prospects (WHC. 16: 77). The Georgian Bay Algonkian continued to spear and net fish, although metal spears and abundant metal fish hooks made fishing easier, diverse, efficient and

lucrative.⁸⁵ Cotton thread improved the quality and perhaps the longevity of nets. There was no evidence that the fishers were dependent on the posts for food, although native corn was in demand and circulated through the posts. The trade in corn marked a change in native relations, for exchange, previously negotiated directly with the producer, formerly the Huron, was now made through Europeans.

Despite the stability of fishing, the Georgian Bay Algonkian were likely compelled to increase their hunting efforts to obtain trade goods, and corn, and to consolidate their territorial position in relation to other groups increasingly disposed to active participation in a fur trade economy, particularly the Mississauga. Competition over hunting areas adjacent to fish spawning areas, may have influenced some form of control over the fish spawning areas met by incorporating them into a hunting territorial system. In this way, hunting territories provided a legitimate means to recognize a group or family's prerogative to exploit both the important fishing sites and adjacent hunting grounds. It also functioned to control parts of Georgian Bay where there were limited opportunities for hunting.

The fishing and small game subsistence described in

⁸⁵ A contemporary investigation of subsistence fishers in Georgian Bay suggest that when only angling is considered, native fishers still obtained more than four times as much fish per unit of effort (Berkes 1990: 39).

the previous chapter continued with minor variations through the latter part of the seventeenth century, and the eighteenth century. The fishing technology had not largely altered, although net use diversified, as did the emphasis on fall fishing. Fish preservation which extended the seasonal use of fish, may also have increased in importance. The important question which arises from this discussion is how the Georgian Bay Algonkian responded to the continued presence of fur traders, and the emerging patterns of land tenure associated with the hunting territoriality system among groups, particularly the Mississauga who shared much of the region. What role could an economy based on fish, small game and limited horticulture play when faced with the historic events of the nineteenth century?

CHAPTER SIX
THE GEORGIAN BAY OJIBWA (NATIVES)
OF 1790-1850

During the period between 1790-1850 political realities continue to complicate the identification of the composition of groups in Georgian Bay, principally because of the influx of a diversity of groups, many of whom were not principally fishers. As in the period leading up to 1649, Georgian Bay became a refuge for displaced peoples mostly Ojibwa, in the early 1800s. This confounding heterogeneity suggests some of the difficulties establishing the identity of the Georgian Bay native people in the nineteenth century. The identification of the land use patterns is further obfuscated by issues of land tenure and resource prerogative. Land use came to be interpreted almost exclusively in terms of land tenure.

Fur trading activities accelerated, and quickly disappeared in the region. By the nineteenth century Georgian Bay was regionally exploited using two land use patterns, both having roots established in the 1640s. To the south, the Mississauga land use pattern, characterized

by a diversified occupation, dominated much of the region. On the shoreline and island areas, fishing continued to be combined with some form of hunting until 1850, when native peoples surrendered lands which had been used exclusively for hunting. Within a few decades the fur trade had passed through the region when much of Georgian Bay region came to be surrendered under terms of the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, and again, later, by the Williams Treaty of 1923.¹

Group Displacement and Movement, 1794 - 1850

Political unrest between 1794 - 1820 caused rapid and major population changes throughout Georgian Bay. Driven by various treaties, mostly made in the United States, primarily the 1795 Treaty of Grenville, the 1807 Treaty of Detroit, and the 1819 Saginaw Treaty,² Georgian Bay experienced extensive immigration (cf. Bald 1954: 112). The principal route taken by these native peoples was along the western side of Lake Michigan, north to the strait of Mackinac to Drummond Island, east along Lake Huron, and south into the region (Ibid: 112). The principal native

¹ It was not until the first half of the nineteenth century, inspired by political uneasiness after the war of 1812 that Georgian Bay was given serious geographical scrutiny by the British. In 1820, Bayfield, Admiralty Surveyor (Murray 1963: 22) began his survey of the islands, where he imparted a British inspired toponomy to the region.

² The British Government in Canada relied upon the Indians from Saginaw to come to Matchedash Bay to help drive the Americans away (Allen 1971: 170).

people who participated on the side of the British in the war of 1812 were from the Mississippi and Missouri River areas, particularly the region between the Missouri and Ohio Rivers. They included Wyandot, Delaware, Shawnee, Kickapoo, Potowatomi, and Ottawa (Davidson 1918: 298). Motivated by the need to maintain access to particular fur trading posts, the defense of Upper Canada by these native groups was contingent upon a promise made by General Brock to protect their lands from the American government (Ibid: 217, 298).

Under the Treaty of Ghent, both the governments of the United States and Britain agreed to restore territory as it was held in 1783, much to the consternation of the fur traders. The British base at Michilimackinac was moved to Drummond Island, and then later returned to the United States, which eventually forced the British to establish in 1829 a military post at Penetanguishene (Barry 1978: 38-39).

The subsequent need for a harbour and naval station led to the surrender of Penetanguishene in 1798 (Canada 1891: 15). This involved the purchase of the district of Matchedash, which stretched from the Severn River to Penetanguishene. The map accompanying the surrender grossly distorts the region by placing Sandy Island (Isle Aux Sables), which is actually to the west of Parry Island, in Matchedash Bay (also known as Sturgeon Bay) (Ibid: Map No.5: 15). In the group exodus were native people, identified as

'otter' who were estimated to have a population of 230; the 'reindeer' with a population of 125; and the 'catfish' with a population estimated to be 69, for a total of 424.³ In 1815, Chief Misquakey (Yellowhead) of the reindeer totem, Chief Assance, of the otter totem, and Chief Kenaybecoinini of the catfish totem,⁴ tried to persuade British authorities to recognize their right to resources in Georgian Bay.⁵ After being given refuge in the region under the authority of the British government,⁶ they demanded certain articles in compensation for their surrender of lands, which included 'seines'⁷ and fish hooks,⁸ suggesting the importance of fishing to their subsistence.⁹

³ Minutes of Council at York, with the Rain Deer, Otter, Catfish and Pike Tribes from Chippewa of Lake Huron. June 7, 1817. RG 10, vol. 34, 19881; also RG 10, vol. 34, 18670.

⁴ Two years later they were joined by Chief Manitonobe of the "pike totem" (Canada 1891: 47).

⁵ These groups had been hunting beaver in the Saginaw Bay area when they sought the protection and asylum of the British government on Canadian soil. (Minutes of Council at York, with the Rain Deer, Otter, Catfish and Pike Tribes from Chippewa of Lake Huron. June 7, 1817. RG 10, vol. 34, 19881; also RG 10, vol. 34, 18670)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Whether it is an actual seine net, or the term is being loosely applied to include all types of nets, is not clear.

⁸ "Minutes of Indian Council on June 7, 1817 at York with the Rain Deer, Otter, Catfish and Pike tribes" RG 10, vol. 34, 19831. What they eventually received in this exchange were kettles, clothing and knives (Canada 1891: 15).

⁹ The Chief of Rice Lake also wanted payment for surrendered lands in axes, hoes, spears and a blacksmith (Ibid: 72). Without a blacksmith, native people repaired spears by forging a broken iron spear in the fire, and beating it with a hammer against a large stone (Head 1929:

After the war of 1812, the British government distributed presents to native peoples at Drummond Island. The introduction of this practice so close to the international border was designed to attract native people from surrounding areas, and encourage them to remain under British rule. At Michilimackinac the American government countered this practice by distributing presents of their own. This had the desired effect of fostering discord and jealousy, particularly among the Ojibwa at Drummond Island.¹⁰

The political aftermath of the war of the 1812 and the Treaty of Ghent, was the territorial upheaval of those native groups whose lands were now arbitrarily divided by two governments. Some native groups found their spring and summer residences to be under British control, and their hunting or wintering areas under American control. Craig (1963: 4) noted that the Indians felt "betrayed and deserted" by the boundary arrangements which left their traditional hunting grounds within the new republic.

The chiefs at Saginaw Bay exercised command over

304-305).

¹⁰ July 10, 1818. RG 10, vol. 35, 20469. In 1827 Chief Ashawgashel of Drummond Island left for Michilimackinac with the intention of soliciting payments for lands from the United States government, that belonged to their forefathers who had lived on Drummond Island and Beaver Island.

lands around Lake Huron, similar to the situation reported in 1703 when certain groups maintained districts around Lake Huron.¹¹ As outlined in the previous chapter, several north shore Lake Huron native groups were accustomed to both wintering and trading at Saginaw Bay. Chief Nebawquam,¹² for example, who resided at Saginaw, was "Grand Chief and Proprietor" of Drummond Island and the Manitoulin Islands, including some of the islands in Georgian Bay. These groups located primarily at Saginaw Bay did not simply supplant other native groups in the region, rather they occupied lands where they already claimed rights to resources, particularly "in the Sound."¹³

Before Drummond Island had come under American control, the British government encouraged the exodus of Potagansee Ojibwa residing there. The Potagansee Ojibwa¹⁴

¹¹ Aysee Waswani, father of Abram Assance, originated from Saginaw (Testimony of George Copegog, RG 10, vol. 2332, 67,071-4A: 55. September 17, 1923).

¹² Chief Nebawquam claimed he was the first to "raise the hatchet and fight the Big Knives [Americans]". After the war he resented the British for occupying his lands on Drummond Island. July 10, 1818, RG 10, vol. 35, 20469.

¹³ The "Sound" referred to Matchedash Bay, including the stretch of shoreline between Penetanguishene and Parry Island (Canada 1891: 15). This was a prerogative which had been established by their chiefs and extended through their totem and was reflected in the various treaties both before (in 1798) and after the war of 1812 (Ibid).

¹⁴ Potagansee is Ojibwa for "many bays" or "many inlets" which describes a topographical feature of Drummond Island. Clifton suggests that this group was a composite group of half breeds (Clifton 1975: 106). The Potagansee have often been confused with the Potawatomi (Copway 1850: 191) and the Ottawa (Jameson 1838: 21).

were a group whose head chief, Debawganinene, also resided at Saginaw, and controlled territory which extended from Drummond Island to Saginaw. The Potagansee did not need much encouragement from the British government as their chiefs, Shomen, Nebawquam, and Shaguish, complained that their situation was desperate as their land was poor in game, crops, fish and hare. In all, fifty families eventually moved to Penetanguishene, including 80 men, 87 women and 83 children.¹⁵ The British government promised to supply them with presents, on condition they took up farming.¹⁶

This suggests that the nineteenth century Georgian Bay Algonkian were composed of several groups who resided on both sides of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan, extending from Matchedash Bay to Saginaw Bay. The Georgian Bay Algonkian were also subject to racial mixing owing to the exigencies of fur trading activities, if it were not actually encouraged as the ideal trading alliance (see Brown 1980; Dickason, 1985; Van Kirk, 1980). A distinct Métis community, however, did not emerge in Georgian Bay. The presence of *couriers de bois* throughout the eighteenth

¹⁵ Anderson to Givens, September 14, 1832., RG 10, vol. 54.

¹⁶ Ibid.

century who promoted marriages *a la facon du pays*¹⁷ (Van Kirk 1980), combined with the presence of racially mixed voyagers, and Potagansee after 1820, were probably the most influential forces in the region. Mixed bloods integrated either into a native or non-native culture. Their identification was one not so much of economic pursuit, which had little significance until the government imposed restrictions upon annuity payments, as it was a cultural identification, the rules which were defined by the groups themselves. Although it is difficult to positively identify the native people of Georgian Bay during this period, it is likely that they were for the most part Ojibwa, probably metis.¹⁸

Government Plans to civilize: Coldwater

Finding the "nomadic habits"¹⁹ of the Georgian Bay

¹⁷ Marriages of this type underline the importance of such an arrangement to both the trader and the native bride. Through this kind of marriage, a trader not only enjoyed preferential trade but was compelled to adapt to a native way of life (Van Kirk 1980: 53).

¹⁸ The term metis was rarely used in the Georgian Bay region. Like other Great Lakes mixed-blood populations, the Georgian Bay metis appeared to have no sense of themselves as a distinct ethnic group, which may have been attributed to the absence of endogamy (see Gorham 1988: 39, 49, 50). Indeed, the mixed-blood population between 1730 and 1830 hardly carried positive connotations. After 1820 the term 'half-breed' was common (Ibid).

¹⁹ "Nomadic habits" was an often used generic phrase to identify Indians who hunted and fished. Hunting was viewed by missionaries as an 'evil' which diverted them from farming. (J.B. Macaulay Report to Sir George Arthur, April 22, 1839., RG 10, vol. 718: 41-44)

Ojibwa unacceptable to 'civilization', the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Sir John Colborne, set aside land between the Narrows on Lake Couchiching and Orillia, and Coldwater on Matchedash Bay, where resident native people, and the pending influx of Potagansee Ojibwa, could settle and practice agriculture.²⁰ Not all of the Potagansee agreed to emigrate. Some, who were located along the north shore of Lake Huron, continued to live in small cedar bark houses, and grow corn and potatoes. This group, encouraged by the fur traders who saw that hunting and trapping would be discouraged by such a scheme, opposed Colborne's civilizing efforts.

Many native groups located to the south of Georgian Bay accepted Colborne's offer of settlement, and in September, 1830, the chiefs and headman of Yellowhead's band settled at a village at the Narrows. The band under Assance settled at Coldwater, and Snake's band moved to Snake Island in Lake Simcoe (Murray 1963: ivii). Due to its proximity to the Coldwater reserve, Penetanguishene became both a distribution centre and a fur trading depot (Osborne 1902:

²⁰ Givens to Anderson, November 6, 1830., RG 10, vol. 499.

127; Surtees, 1969).

Later, the region experienced yet another exodus, this time of mixed blood fur traders and their families²¹ who intended to redirect their trading activities from Penetanguishene (Osborne 1902). Using a massive iron canoe, (*canot du nord*),²² having a carrying capacity of fifteen people, they collected furs from locations along the Georgian Bay shoreline as early as 1816 (Ibid: 127).

Staying remarkably free from these civilization schemes, some Georgian Bay Ojibwa continued to fish, harvest corn, and hunt. Described as 'heathens' by the missionaries, they hunted beaver and other animals for skins in the interior during the autumn months, supplied with dried fish in the event their hunting was unsuccessful.²³ They returned to Georgian Bay in the winter, cutting holes in the ice and spearing fish. While their daily catch could reach 100 fish, they could also spend days laying on the ice without success. Snares were set to catch hare in this

²¹ This included 75 families in all.

²² It had been constructed by Toussant Boucher, a voyager turned blacksmith. Despite its innovative design it had several problems, particularly with portages, and riding over waves, when it would fill with water (Barry 1978: 42, 94).

²³ Report of the Special Commissioners to Investigate Indian Affairs in Canada, Sessional Papers, Canada, 1858, Appendix 21.

event.²⁴ A similar pattern was described for those living inland near Lake Rosseau.²⁵

Under the weight of the steady influx of families, the population to the immediate south of Georgian Bay experienced considerable growth.²⁶ By 1828, the Yellowhead 'reindeer' band, for example, consisted of 550 individuals (Murray 1963: 103). The population of Georgian Bay, however, remained small as most immigrants were attracted by the civilization schemes to the south of the region.²⁷ In 1842 the population was under 250.²⁸ The largest group consisted of 109 people led by Chief Mishgongay exploiting the area between Henvey's Inlet, north to the southeast mouth of the French River and Lake Nipissing. A second tract spread south from the French River to Head Island and was led by Chief Mukatamishquette and his band of 25 people,

²⁴ Report of the Special Commissioners to Investigate Indian Affairs in Canada, Sessional Papers, Canada, 1858, Appendix 21.

²⁵ "S.R.G. Penson describes the settlement of Muskoka with reference to Port Carling and Lake Rosseau, 1869." Penson Memoirs, MU 2314, PAO.

²⁶ The population of native people between Penetanguishene and the Sault, including the north shore of Lake Huron and Saugeen, at this time (1840), was reported to be 1,044 (Bartlett to Ironside, September 12, 1859. RG 10, vol, 13,358).

²⁷ Civilization schemes were not exclusive to the area south of Georgian Bay. Similar projects were attempted at Lake St. Clair in the southwestern corner of Ontario, and at Manitoulin Island (Surtees 1975: 269).

²⁸ Report on the Affairs of the Indians in Canada, laid before the Legislative Assembly, 1845, Canada, Department of Crown Lands, 1846.

and a third, led by Chief Nawbequaeshik, between Head Island and Parry Sound, supported 40 people (fig. 20).²⁹

The Collapse of Coldwater

Coldwater did not prove to be a successful experiment, riddled as it was with religious and political conflict (Leighton 1977: 115). Neither did its collapse halt the movement of native peoples through the Georgian Bay region. In 1835, 215 Ojibwa and Potawatomi from Milwaukee on Lake Michigan were reported at Penetanguishene waiting for presents.³⁰ Dissatisfied with the terms of the Milwaukee Treaty in 1833,³¹ they sought asylum on the basis of their participation in the war of 1812.³²

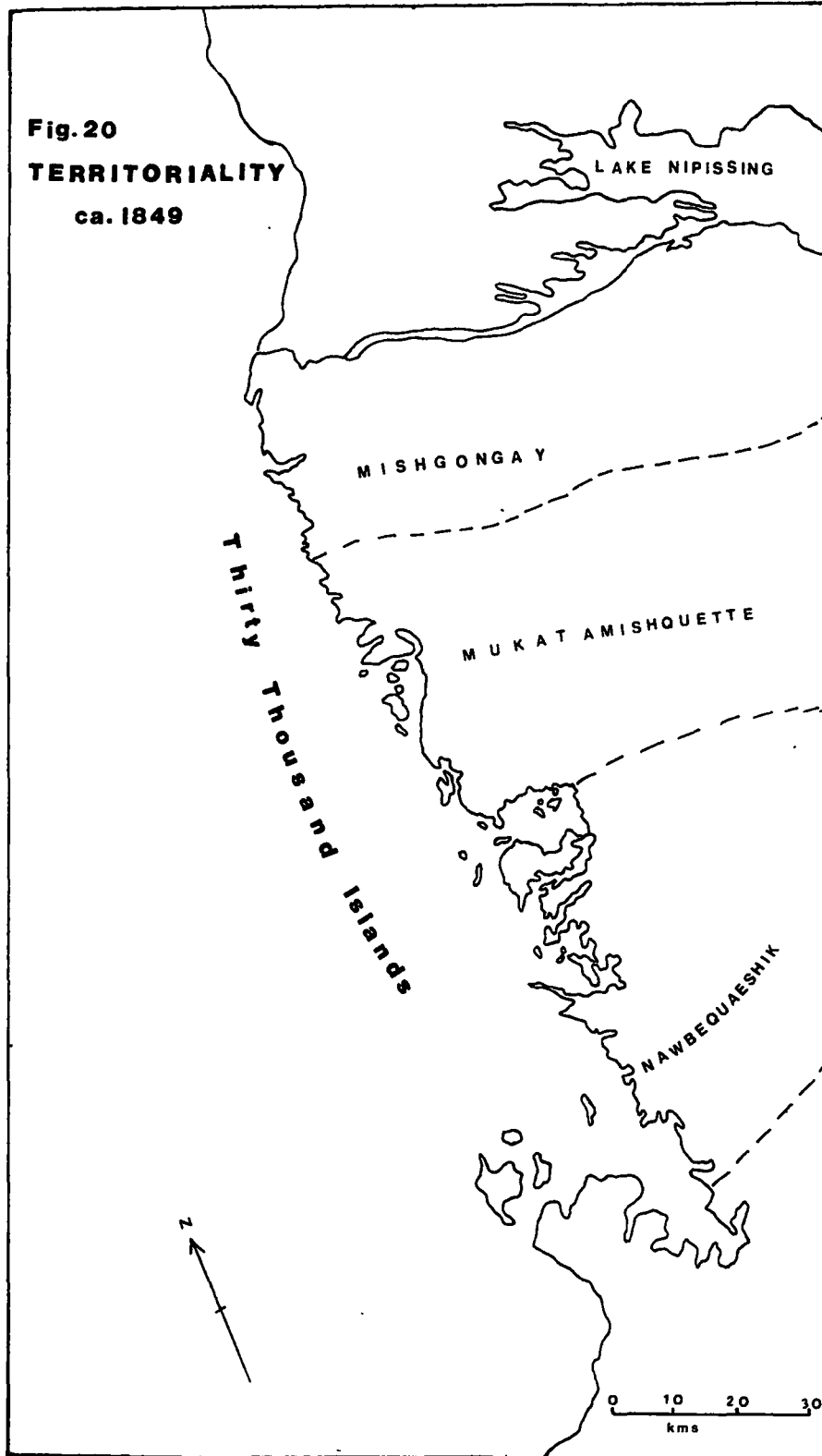
By 1837, 1,465 Potawatomi were on their way to Canada following the shore of Lake Michigan into the Straits

²⁹ Shebishikong was located in this tract (Report of Commissioners A. Vidal and Thomas G. Anderson on a visit to Indians on the North Shore of Lake Huron and Superior. Irving Papers, MU 1464, 26/31/04, PAO).

³⁰ At the Credit River, presents included blankets, awls, sewing needles, pipes, knives, flints and shot (J. Givens, June 20, 1829, James Givens Papers, John Ross Robertson Collection, Baldwin Room, Toronto Metropolitan Library). Hooks and fish lines formed part of the government stores at Drummond Island (Diary of Thomas Gummersall Anderson, a visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Cobourg. September 5, 1849, Baldwin Room, Toronto Metropolitan Library).

³¹ The Milwaukee Treaty in 1833 ceded Potawatomi lands west of Lake Michigan to the government of the United States. In return, the Potawatomi were given lands in Kansas and Iowa (Lawson 1920: 98).

³² Jones and Keating to Higgeson, June 15, 1844, RG 10 vol. 2789.



of Mackinac, to either Manitoulin Island or south to Penetanguishene. Potowatomi from Keweenaw made their way to Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island and Parry Sound. Others originating from Racine, Kenosha, Waubesa and Wawkegon settled at Christian Island (Clifton 1975: 75). Their settlement concentrated along points, islands, peninsulas, and other remote locations along the Georgian Bay shoreline (Ibid: 83-85). The Moose Deer Point reserve³³ in Georgian Bay was one such community founded by a Potowatomi clan segment (Ibid).

After the Coldwater experiment was dismantled in 1838, many native people were described as aimlessly moving from island to island in Georgian Bay.³⁴ Former bands, attracted by religious similarities, fissioned and moved to new locations. Many moved to Owen Sound to become members of the Saugeen band, while others moved to Manitoulin Island, Beausoleil Island, and later in 1865, to Christian Island.³⁵ Some of the Potagansee Ojibwa who had remained unattached to these bands, eventually settled at West Bay

³³ The writer spent some time on Moose Deer Point.

³⁴ John Sunday, "Report to the Aborigine Protection Society" 1839: 3.

³⁵ Beausoleil and Christian Island Agency Correspondence regarding the desire of the Chippewa of Christian Island to remove the rest of the band from Manitoulin and Parry Islands to Christian Island, December 26, 1883, RG 10, vol. 2239, 46,055; Report on Christian Island, 1925, RG 10, vol. 788.

(*Michikewadenong*) Manitoulin Island.³⁶ On August 9, 1836 some Georgian Bay Ojibwa surrendered islands in Lake Huron, and settled on Manitoulin Island (Canada 1891: 112-113).³⁷

The migration of various groups to the Georgian Bay area dropped sharply after 1840 when the British government ceased to pay annuities to United States Indians.³⁸ In response to a reserve set up for them under the Robinson Huron Treaty in 1850, the Shawanaga band under Chief Muckatamishiquot moved from the northern district under Superintendent Ironside to Sandy Island.³⁹ The total population of the Sandy Island band was 106, and included two "common chiefs."⁴⁰

The Georgian Bay Fur Trade 1790-1850

Compared to other historical influences, the fur

³⁶ Report on Christian Island, *Ibid.*

Despite the failure of the Coldwater experiment, the government decided to transfer the experiment to Manitoulin Island. In an effort to collect the wandering groups "in the wild districts around Lakes Huron and Superior," a village was created at Manitouwaning where it was envisaged the Indians would be safely removed from the influence of white settlements, and where they could gradually acculturate before being forced to assimilate (Bleasdale 1974).

³⁷ Report on Christian Island, Beausoleil Island, Snake Island Band, *Sessional Papers, 1858*, Rev. P. Jacobs' evidence. Appendix No. 31.

³⁸ Report on the Affairs of the Indians in Canada, laid before the Legislative Assembly, 1845, Canada, Department of Crown Lands, 1846.

³⁹ In 1850, Anderson received a letter from Chief Muckatamishiquot, Chief Nowquaeskick, and one other unnamed chief, and their bands who had been under Ironside's jurisdiction as Indian Superintendent at Amherstburg between 1830 and 1845 and of the Northern Superintendence from 1845-1863, requesting that they receive their presents at Penetanguishene (RG 10, vol. 536, c13355).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

trade has been considered the source of enormous impact on native societies. For this reason alone, no discussion of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa is complete without recognition of its influence. The Georgian Bay fur trade shares common themes with other parts of Canada, however, it also provides a regional variation not shared by other fur trades.

The fur traders were understandably displeased with both the missionaries and the government settlement schemes of the 1820s and 1830s, because underlying both was the goal of diverting the Georgian Bay Ojibwa from fishing, hunting and trapping. The government, for example, refused to recognize the debts owed to traders, anticipating that this would encourage native people to take up horticulture. This led to a serious problem for the fur traders to whom the Indians owed large debts: In 1829, three Georgian Bay bands led by Chiefs Yellowhead, Assance and Snake, were in debt for £1,044.⁴¹ Hunting activity continued, despite government reports that the Georgian Bay/ Lake Simcoe area was exhausted of fur.⁴² The traders need not have worried that the Georgian Bay Ojibwa would give up their hunting activities, for despite being paid to clear land, they

⁴¹ Irving Papers, MU 1516, PAO. This debt was later liquidated by land payment monies.

⁴² "Snake Island", Appendix No. 2, Canada Sessional Papers, 1858.

continued to hunt and fish. It is within this context that the Georgian Bay fur trade took shape.

The political environment of the early 1800s induced the North West Company to petition for land at Kempenfelt Bay and Penetanguishene to maintain an open route from Georgian Bay to the northwest, and to lessen the conflict with the American traders from Fort Erie to Sault Ste. Marie (Davidson 1918: 132). Their interest in the Georgian Bay area was motivated by its potential value as a supply route to the posts located to the north and west of Lake Huron. Attracting local trade does not appear to have been a major concern (Firth ed. 1962: lxi,153).

A focal point for the fur trade since 1800 was the Parry Sound area, situated at the confluence of inland portage routes along rivers. Fur trading posts at Shawanaga, Isle Aux Sable, Bob's Island, Dillon (on the Little Shebeshikong River) and Partridge Bay, (fig. 21) were strategically situated to accommodate traffic from both the island and hinterland hunting grounds (Bigsby 1950), although trading appears to have concentrated near fishing locations.⁴³ Little information is available concerning activities at these posts as the records of the itinerant

⁴³ There were, in addition, many posts situated inland from Georgian Bay: Lake of the Bays, (then called Trading Lake), Bigwin Island, Yoho Island, and Doe Lake which were used by traders as temporary quarters (Shirreff 1831).

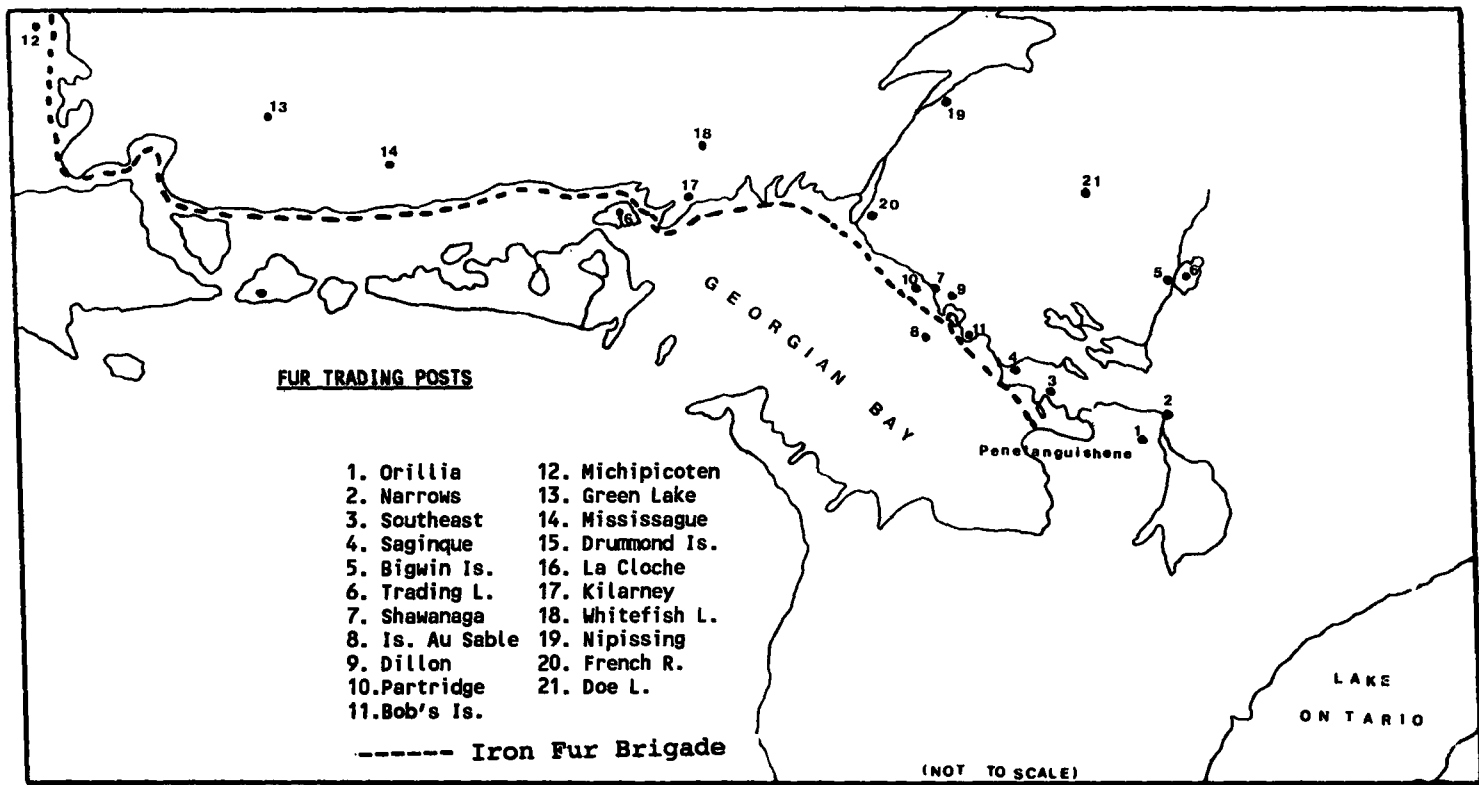


Fig. 21 FUR TRADING POSTS CA. 1800 - 1860

traders have not survived. It is not until 1827, at the height of the Coldwater experiment, that the Hudson's Bay Company established posts in the region. Through this one company's trading practices, a picture emerges of land use during the fur trade period in Georgian Bay.

The Legacy of the Hudson's Bay Company in Georgian Bay

A large number of posts were established in, and just outside the region during the late 1820s and early 1830s. Eight posts were operated by the Hudson's Bay Company,⁴⁴ and ten by the competition.⁴⁵ In addition to these, the iron canoe (*canot du nord*) collected furs between Penetanguishene and Drummond Island (Osborne 1902).

The inspiration for the Hudson's Bay Company interest in Georgian Bay was strategic as the region was not known to be rich in beaver. After the merger of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821, the administration of the Company was divided into a "North District" and a "South District" (Rich 1960, 3: 406;

⁴⁴ These include Green Lake, Whitefish Lake, Nipissing, French River, Shawanaga, Isle aux Sables (Sandy Island), Saginque and Lacloche. (HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post).

⁴⁵ HBC B 109/a/3, Returns for 1834-35, Lacloche Post.

Mitchell, 1977: 149).⁴⁶ The London Committee of the Company saw the function of the South District Lake Huron posts as being external to its normal business (Rich 1960, 3: 435) for, despite its merger with the North West Company in 1821, competition continued to create problems, this time, from free traders to the south. Even as the Hudson's Bay Company was closing down posts in the north, it was forced to open several posts along a narrow strip of Georgian Bay, in a region which held poor prospects for trade.⁴⁷ As part of the Lake Huron area, Georgian Bay was classified a frontier zone, a designation that ordered the extermination of beaver. The formula for the 'sterilization' of a new district or frontier area was to begin, or increase, the use of steel traps, and to encourage the baiting of traps with castoreum (Ibid: 2: 190,471). In this way the competition from the free traders could be prevented from intruding upon what the Hudson's Bay Company considered, "our own proper country" (Ibid: 432-3).

⁴⁶ This division into departments or "districts" was thought to increase the efficiency of operations. The North Department was operated by a Governor and seven or more chief Factors; the South department had a governor and at least three chief factors (Rich 1960, 3: 406). The Southern district was essentially composed of former North West Company posts in the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay region, including the posts at Lake Nipissing, Lake Timiskaming and Grand Lake (Ibid: 434).

⁴⁷ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, McBean, Lacloche Post. Lacloche, operated by the Chief Factor John McBean, consisted of a "factory", a large log house, an extensive store to contain the goods bartered with the Indians and huts inhabited by work people, hunters and voyagers.

Georgian Bay could then serve as a protective barrier, restricting the opposition from encroaching upon the Company's valuable fur assets north of Lake Huron (Ibid. 3: 435,471).

By 1826 the situation had become critical. Free traders working out of Newmarket had reached north to the mouth of the French River.⁴⁸ Under this pressure the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company abruptly shifted to its frontier policy of beaver extinction: Georgian Bay region was to become a beaver wasteland for in this drastic way could the objective of blocking the opposition be achieved.⁴⁹ In keeping with the policy of protecting the rich furs in the northern interior, skilled⁵⁰ traders were sent into Georgian Bay region with instructions to encourage the Indians, and any white hunters, to hunt the region to extinction. Georgian Bay was to be hunted out mercilessly (Rich 1960, 3: 432-3).

Before this policy was realized, the Georgian Bay region had quickly become the scene of fierce rivalry

⁴⁸ HBC B. 134/c/1, 262d-263, McBean to McGillivrays, Thain & Co., March 5, 1826.

⁴⁹ Although the idea had been introduced as early as 1822, this extermination policy was not put into operation until 1829 (Rich 1960, 3: 432).

⁵⁰ 'Skilled' is used here to mean skilled in deception. McBean, an individual whose only talent was 'low cunning and falsehood' was sent to the Georgian Bay region. He was able to acquit himself during periods of intense competition (Williams ed. 1975: 181).

between the free traders and the Hudson's Bay Company traders. Described as "infested by petty adventurers"⁵¹ who were mostly of mixed blood, these free traders held the advantage of knowing the country exceptionally well. One such individual, Dokis, who was outfitted from Penetanguishene, skirted Georgian Bay collecting furs from as many native people as he could claim kinship.⁵² He was established permanently at a post at Grand Point in Lake Nipissing.⁵³

Inability to compete successfully with the free traders was only one of the problems faced by the Hudson's Bay Company traders. In 1827 the Shawanaga, Sandy Island (Isle Aux Saubles), and Sagingue posts failed because the

⁵¹ HBC D 4/33/21d. The perception of the free traders has generally been dictated by characteristics imposed on them by the Hudson's Bay Company traders, who were unfailingly abusive. Because the free traders left very few records, their relationship with the native people has suffered from this prejudice, one that may be unwarranted. Many of the free traders were closely related to the Georgian Bay Algonkian in a way that is yet to be explored. Borland, a fur trader at Holland Landing, for example, played an important role leading 200 Georgian Bay Algonkian into battle (Murray 1963: 114n.49).

⁵² Dokis' marketing practices, such as giving excellent prices for furs but charging higher prices for goods, was met with reluctant admiration by his competition. The giving of cash for furs was standard practice for the free traders in the area (Hudson's Bay Company Records, Temiscamingue District, October, 24, 1876, Envelope #3, 6165,6180, MU 1399 PAO). Another trader, Alexander Bailey, a French half-breed, was married to a "full blooded Indian" who was "skilled in the use of herbs". His post was established in the Muskoka Lakes area ("S.R.G. Penson describes the settlement of Muskoka with reference to Port Carling an Lake Rosseau, 1869", Penson Memoirs, MU 2314 PAO).

⁵³ Hudson's Bay Company Records, Temiscamingue District, October, 24, 1876, Envelope #3, 6165,6180, MU 1399 PAO).

native people suffered from the ague,⁵⁴ and were unable to hunt. The posts were additionally plagued by an unproductive fishery. The fur returns for the next year, 1828-9, were also poor with beaver reported as noticeably scarce. The opposition was in part responsible for the scarcity by promising high prices for beaver, but the shortage could also be attributed to excessively high water which reduced muskrat and mink populations,⁵⁵ and, or so it appeared to the traders, caused bear to 'migrate' north.⁵⁶

The Hudson's Bay Company traders were additionally troubled by poor transportation of their supplies from Moose Factory. In 1829-30, supplies did not reach the post until August 18, after the competition had already set up to trade. The only advantage to come of this, from the Hudson's Bay Company's trader's view, was that the opposition quickly exhausted its supply of trade goods.⁵⁷

Both the Shawanaga and Sandy Island (*Isle Aux Sable*) posts, nearest to Parry Island, did not yield a large harvest of furs. The fur returns for the Hudson's Bay

⁵⁴ Malaria was rampant at this time (Lower 1965: 185). In Upper Canada during the 1790s, both Europeans and Indians were struck with "Fever & Ague". Indians were reported to be dying in great numbers (Ibid).

⁵⁵ Environmental responses which are attributed to high water have been discussed in Chapter Two.

⁵⁶ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, McBean, Lacloche Post.

⁵⁷ HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post.

Company posts in June 1829 reveal that most furs circulated through Lacloche.⁵⁸ The iron canoe brigade was believed to have taken an additional 450 lbs of fur that year.⁵⁹ The fur trade returns yielded a quantity of bulk furs (primarily muskrat and a few marten) but little in the way of beaver.⁶⁰ The Georgian Bay Ojibwa appear to have selectively traded their furs, perhaps saving whatever beaver remained in the region to trade with the free traders. The fur returns from posts situated close to the Georgian Bay fisheries were noticeably smaller than those elsewhere. This may reflect the strength of the competition to lure furs from the Hudson's Bay Company post, thus diminishing their recorded returns, or it supports the continued importance of fishing over hunting.⁶¹

⁵⁸HBC B 109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post.

<u>Fur Returns</u>	
Green Lake	291 lbs
Whitefish Lake	360
Nipissing	700
French River	233
Shawanaga	243
Isle Aux Sauble	208
Sagique	399
Lacloche	844

⁵⁹ HBC B 109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post. Furs were valued by weight and not by "Made Beaver" (MB), which was the Hudson's Bay Company's usual unit of evaluation (Ray 1974: 61).

⁶⁰ HBC B 109/a/3, August 4, 1831-32, Lacloche Post.

⁶¹ By examining the harvest returns from contemporary Georgian Bay subsistence fishers the findings suggest a tendency for the smaller communities to proportionally produce more fish.

The Hudson's Bay Company experienced great difficulty recruiting native people to hunt for furs, forced as they were to combat the trading loyalty of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa to their kin.⁶² They eventually imported native hunters from the Northern Department. This placed them in an unfavourable position over the degree of control they could exert over the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, either in directing their selection of trade goods, or in their hunting. The Company feared that the few hunters they did persuade to hunt would shift allegiance to the opposition.⁶³

Decline of Hudson's Bay Company in Georgian Bay

By 1830, less than four years after Hudson's Bay Company posts had been established in Georgian Bay, zealous tactics of both the free traders and the Hudson's Bay

<u>Community</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Capita per harvest</u>	<u>Average per person</u>
Henvey Inlet	23	19	.86
Shawanaga	69	42	.60
Parry Is.	176	29	.16
Magnetawan	40	12	.30
Wikwemikong (Manitoulin Is)	1829	209	.11

Adapted from (Berkes 1990: 37).

⁶² The Timiskaming Indians also proved loyal to their Canadian traders, so much so that the Hudson's Bay Company was never able to overcome this prejudice (Mitchell 1977: 152-153).

⁶³ Indeed, the Hudson's Bay Company also faced problems with their own staff abandoning the Company to become free traders (HBC B 109/a/3, June 10, 1828, Lacloche Post). Staff deserted the Whitefish Post and went to Newmarket where they were promised better conditions (Bloom 1978: 40).

Company traders quickly reduced the supply of both furs and trade goods. The extreme competitiveness of the trade forced the Hudson's Bay Company to incur the expense of continually tracking potential hunters and their furs. Natives known to hunt were not left for more than ten days without being checked for furs, a practice described by the traders as "annoying, harassing and wasteful of provisions" (Glazebrook ed. 1938: 315). Once the Company realized its policy of diminishing beaver returns, the outlying (flying) posts along Georgian Bay were withdrawn to the central post at Whitefish Lake on the north shore of Lake Huron. The Shawanaga post was left to manage the trade from Sandy Island and Saginque posts.⁶⁴ The notes of fur trader Duncan Cameron predicted that increasing settlement among the islands and shores of Lake Huron, including Georgian Bay, would soon destroy the trade. Fur returns support this prediction as they continued to be poor during the 1840s, and progressively deteriorated. Even at this late date, however, the role of Georgian Bay region as a barrier to the north continued to be recognized (Ibid: 344-5).⁶⁵ By 1860, it appeared to fur trader Roderick McKenzie that every native person between the French River and Penetanguishene

⁶⁴ HBC B 109/a/3, Returns for 1832-33, Lacloche Post.

⁶⁵ HBC B 109/a/3, September 5, 1829, Lacloche Post.

was trying to trade furs in a "broken down district." He complained that a trader could carry in his arms the few furs traded from the shores of Lake Huron.⁶⁶

Extenuating circumstances surrounding the fur trade competition in the region reflected an environment that was perceived to be lucrative in fur trading activity, despite an actual dearth of furs. The combination of a relative abundance of food resources, a plethora of fur traders, and a bonanza of trade goods, created an atmosphere of intense fur trading activity in Georgian Bay. Although fur was scarce, proving the effectiveness of the extermination policy, this did not seem important to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa who enjoyed the benefits of a ready market of traders for fish, corn, sugar, horticultural produce, and game. As in the earlier fur trade described for the eighteenth century, the Georgian Bay Ojibwa realized the advantages that accompanied a competitive trade: ready access to a variety of trade goods with minimal effort being devoted to hunting, combined with the additional benefit of annual presents distributed by the government. This kept the Georgian Bay Ojibwa independent, with varying levels of participation in fur trading, and without strong allegiance to one post.

⁶⁶ Roderick McKenzie to Stewart, December 29, 1669, Hudson's Bay Company Records, Temisgamingue District, MU 1399 PAO.

There was a distinct shift from the exchange of packs of furs of the previous years to the single skins traded during the competitive 1820s and 1830s. This suggests that the Georgian Bay Ojibwa could take a traditional leisurely approach to the collection of furs (cf. Bishop 1981: 48), and reap extravagant trade goods in the process. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa could afford to be particular about the trade goods they wished, as they were offered such a competitive selection. There is little to suggest that this trade in single skins required a hunting group organization. Hunting and trapping appeared opportunistic, if secondary to fishing, and cultivation.

Fishing for the Fur Trade

The Hudson's Bay Company posts located in Georgian Bay depended upon fish as both a food source and a trade item. Fishing depended upon such variables as the height of the water, and the intensity of the winds during the fall months.⁶⁷ Trout and whitefish were caught in the fall with nets, lines and spears,⁶⁸ and were salted for the winter.

⁶⁷ Predominant westerlies blow across Georgian Bay (Putnam 1952: 213-224). Good fishing translated to between 18 and 20 barrels of fish from the Shawenagan fishing islands (HBC B 109/a/3, August 4, 1831-32. HBC B 109/a/3, Returns for 1834-35, Lacloche Post).

⁶⁸ The spear was considered "household furniture" in 1807. Two types were identified, a javelin type, and one with a fork with prongs attached to long shaft. For years native peoples came to have these sharpened (Surtees 1983: 71).

Some of the free traders purchased salt from the Hudson's Bay Company post, for without a supply of salted fish they risked severe food shortages.⁶⁹ The Hudson's Bay Company traders were convinced that fur returns depended upon the amount of fish caught for the winter, for without an adequate food supply native groups refused to hunt and trap.⁷⁰ This suggests that hunting and trapping furs was of less importance to subsistence than fishing.

Fishing and horticulture were rewarding in 1832-33 with Shawanaga producing 20 barrels of fish, and 50 bushels of potatoes.⁷¹ The next year was not as favourable for crops. Lack of rain in 1833-34 destroyed most of the potato crop. The remainder was reduced by an early frost.⁷²

Georgian Bay fish supplies were also used to support

⁶⁹ HBC B 109/a/3 September 5, 1829, Lacloche Post.

⁷⁰ Bishop recognized that fish were the most important food exchanged by the Northern Ojibwa (1974: 115).

⁷¹ HBC B 109/a/3, Returns for 1832-33, 1834-35 LaCloche Post.

There is no evidence to support that isinglass, a substance derived from the air bladder of the sturgeon, was being used in the trade as it was among Rainy River Ojibwa (Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg 1988) and in the Lac la Pluie district (Holzkamm and McCarthy 1988). Until the 1860s, sturgeon were considered a nuisance to commercial fishers in the Great Lakes. They were not desired as a food fish because they were so large. They often damaged nets when they became entangled in them. If caught they were destroyed. During the 1860s however, techniques for processing sturgeon eggs to caviar and smoking sturgeon flesh were introduced into North America with the result that the sturgeon suddenly became a highly prized commercial fish. Since sturgeon do not mature until they are 20 to 25 years old, this population could not support the intensive fishing that resulted from its popularity. By 1900 sturgeon were no longer commercially significant in the Great Lakes (McCullough 1989: 77-78).

⁷² HBC b 109/13, Returns for 1832-33, 1834-35, Lacloche Post.

inland native hunters who subsisted principally on hare. The late rains during the fall of 1833-34 destroyed the hare population, forcing many inland groups to depend upon the posts for food:⁷³ One family brought in two marten in exchange for potatoes and fish.⁷⁴

Excessively high water conditions in 1830 reduced muskrat, marten, and bear returns. Heavy rains also affected the gardens which were reported to have failed in the district. The fisheries were "tolerably good," except in the winter and spring, which circumstance caused the Georgian Bay Ojibwa to suffer.⁷⁵ This is the first evidence to suggest that year round fishing was important to some groups.

Unfortunately, the district fur returns do not record the amount of fish exchanged by the native population. They provide only enough information to verify that the fish taken were principally fall spawning trout and whitefish.⁷⁶

As earlier identified, one of the principal problems

⁷³ HBC b 109/13, Returns for 1832-33, 1834-35, Lacloche Post.

⁷⁴ HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post.

⁷⁵ HBC B 109/a/3, Returns for 1830, Lacloche Post.

⁷⁶ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, Lacloche Post. Nets were primarily used for the salt and barrel fish processing--spearing caused too much blood.

facing the incorporation of hunting into a fishing cycle is reconciling the two activities, especially when peak periods occur simultaneously. Chapter Three suggested that women may have been important fishers. Jameson observed that women in Lake Huron fishing communities enjoyed rank, and were equally expert in gaining subsistence (1838.3: 308). She also suggested married females returned to their parents during fishing season (Ibid: 217),⁷⁷ which may have allowed younger males a greater opportunity to hunt, while assuring a food supply.

The increased use of nets, particularly gill nets, resolved the timing problems coinciding with peak hunting and fishing periods. Nets, in combination with preservation, provided surplus production which could be used to support hunting during the late fall and early winter. Nets could be set then left, permitting the fisher to hunt locally for many hours, depending on when the nets were to be lifted. Hunting for subsistence and trapping for fur would have been close to the fishing areas.

Not surprisingly game animals quickly depleted in the region during the competitive fur trading activity between 1828-1840. This did not, however, signify the

⁷⁷ The female received a canoe when she married (Interview with Mrs. Ashewasega, August 27, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island) In the early 1800s, native women were reported fishing using spears (Head 1829: 316).

collapse of a sustained yield from the fisheries or planting activities. Collapse of the fisheries was not likely attributable, at any point up to 1850, to over-fishing.⁷⁸ Explanations for the lack of fish production continued to be the result of climate, disease, or cultural influences.

A decreased effort toward fishing is not suggested by the Georgian Bay fur trade, which was both competitive for furs, and was initially dependent upon fish. The fur traders for this reason, did not attempt to alter subsistence fishing. They depended on the fisheries for food and trade, and recognized the important connection between a productive fishery and the practical aspects of hunting, however skewed by the effectiveness of the extermination policy.⁷⁹ The fur trade had few repercussions on fishing in Georgian Bay. The size of groups likely remained small, hunting and trapping for furs was nominal and did not require elaborate organization. The

⁷⁸ Holzkamm, Lytwyn and Waisberg (1988: 203) suggest that sturgeon were over-exploited by commercial fisheries, after which the sturgeon population could not recover. Unlike the fishery at Rainy River, Georgian Bay fisheries offered diversified fish populations. Once the Georgian Bay fisheries were discovered by non-natives, the region saw extensive commercial fishing, principally during the fall. The largest stations were at Bustard Island, Minks, Snakes and Champlain Island near the Shawenagan islands. The yield was 1000 barrels annually (Macfie Commercial Fishing, n.d.: 46).

⁷⁹ This contrasts with the attitude displayed by the British fur traders in the Lake Nipigon area which discouraged fishing. When asked for nets, the fur trader Duncan Cameron chided the Indians for being 'women', telling them that good hunters could always find game (Masson ed. 1891: 281).

degree to which larger numbers congregated around fur trading posts cannot be known without further evidence.⁸⁰

Trade goods

Archaeological support for this period at Shebishikong is restricted to European pipe bowls, which broadly date to the period between 1812-1904 (see Forma 1972: 44). At Shebishikong, the pipes probably date between 1812-1840 given the Hudson's Bay Company presence near Shebishikong between 1827-1836, and the presence of similar pipe bowls at Schoonertown on the south side of the Nottawasaga River three miles south of the river mouth on Lake Huron (Conway 1975: 8, 11). This site was occupied as a winter quarter for British vessels between 1814 to 1817 (Ibid: 12).

The Hudson's Bay Company district reports describe an exchange in single skins, mostly muskrat, otter, marten, and bear,⁸¹ all which could be captured on the islands and shoreline of Georgian Bay. There is little however, to indicate how these furs were obtained. Single skins were usually bartered for liquor (Glazebrook ed. 1938: 315).

⁸⁰ The Bellamy site, a late historic Ojibwa habitation near the Sydenham River, supports a traditional subsistence pattern of deer, small game and fish. The fish included gar, drum, bowfin, channel catfish, lake sturgeon, rock bass and sucker (Ferris et al 1985: 18).

⁸¹ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, McBean, Lacloche Post.

Guns were likely used,⁸² but marten traps were made by native people. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa also likely traded fish, corn, sugar, potatoes and meat (venison).⁸³

The nineteenth century fur trade continued to emphasize a trade in luxuries, principally fine quality clothing and fabrics.⁸⁴ This is also evident in the archaeological findings at the Bellamy site where many of the trade goods recovered were personal items, including silver broaches and earrings (Ferris et al 1985: 11).

Disliking the poor colour⁸⁵ of the Hudson's Bay Company's stock, the Georgian Bay Ojibwa "would not on any consideration have any of them."⁸⁶ The quality of the Company's goods was so poor the Georgian Bay Ojibwa refused them, even when they were in debt to the Company, and in "absolute want" of the article.⁸⁷ The Georgian Bay Ojibwa clearly preferred the opposition's goods, which included

⁸² The gun flint recovered from Shebishikong dated much earlier, to 1720 A.D.

⁸³ Evidence of Rev. Vogler, Appendix No. 28, Canada Sessional Papers, 1858.

⁸⁴ The clothing included shawls, cloths, sheets, and printed cottons (HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, Laclache Post).

⁸⁵ No doubt the Georgian Bay Algonkian were knowledgeable about the quality of such luxuries, for they did not hesitate to return coats to the Hudson's Bay Company when they discovered the colour faded from blue to grey after they were exposed to sunlight (HBC B 109/e/i. 1827-28, Laclache Post).

⁸⁶ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, McBean, Laclache Post.

⁸⁷ HBC B 109/a/3/June 16, 1828, McBean, Laclache Post.

fine quality cloths of various colours, calicoes, frock coats, silk belts, trousers, waist coats, shawls, and silk and cotton handkerchiefs. This caused the Hudson's Bay Company to experience 'mortification' at seeing valuable furs being given to its opposition.⁸⁸

Increased rivalry between fur buyers brought competitive prices, and a greater access to trade goods. This only added to the amount of goods circulating in the region, augmented no doubt by annual presents distributed from the British government. It did not appear to induce the Georgian Bay Ojibwa to increase the number of furs they offered for sale.⁸⁹

Seasonal Cycle and Settlement of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, 1790-1850

In the shadow of Sagard's 1623 tour, Anderson⁹⁰ in 1849 toured the Georgian Bay shoreline when he reported his observations of native groups in Georgian Bay. At Shawanaga, he recorded native people composed of three groups living in lodges occupied by what appear to be

⁸⁸ HBC B 109/e/i, 1827-28, Lacloche Post.

⁸⁹ A negative correlation existed between the price of furs, and the number of furs offered for sale: The better the price the fewer the number of furs offered for sale (Ray and Freeman 1978: 218-221).

⁹⁰ Thomas Gummingsall Anderson (1789-1875) had a career in Indian affairs extending from 1815 to 1858. From 1829-1837 he was Superintendent at Coldwater, and from 1845 to 1858, he was Chief Superintendent for Canada West (Murray 1963: 109 n.39).

nuclear families.⁹¹ The average size of the group was 20 people, including Chief Pamasegai's band of 11, to Chief Medwiash's of 30.⁹² One group was described as living part of the year on Sandy Island, and spending the rest of the year on the mainland where they supported themselves "by the Chase and by fishing."⁹³ Native people were also identified at three locations, Shawanaga, Sandy Island and Beausoleil Island, all important fishing locations.⁹⁴

In addition to these encampments, many native people were reported 'living' in their canoes among the islands.⁹⁵ Others were reported living on the islands in small camps of approximately five dwellings where the principal activities were repairing fish nets, and pounding corn into flour (Bigsby 1850: 94,95,97).

⁹¹ This is based on his recording of one band of 11 people living in 2 lodges, and another band of 20 people living in 4 lodges (Diary of T.G. Anderson, a visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Cobourg. September 5, 1849. Baldwin Room, Toronto Metropolitan Library).

⁹² Diary of T.G. Anderson, a visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Cobourg. September 5, 1849. Baldwin Room, Toronto Metropolitan Library.

⁹³ Report of the Special Commissioners to Investigate Indian Affairs in Canada, Sessional Papers, Canada, 1858, Appendix 21.
This band had been originally placed at Sault Ste. Marie in 1850 when they numbered 93 individuals. Their population in 1856 had risen to 145, the result principally of immigration.

⁹⁴ Irving Papers, MU 1464, Box 26, PAO.

⁹⁵ Diary of T.G. Anderson, a visiting Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Cobourg, September 5, 1849, Baldwin Room, Toronto Metropolitan Library.

Settlement

Closely linked with the government's agricultural experiments, Methodists, operating out of York, Amherstburg, and Penetanguishene, were able to attract native people from various locations (Graham 1973: 8). The Ojibwa of Lake Huron and Lake Simcoe had been exposed to these missionaries at Holland Landing by 1826 (Ibid: 46).⁹⁶ Missionary activity directly influenced the development of some villages (Jameson 1838.1: 296). The Rice Lake village was established in 1818, Chemong Lake in 1829, Alnwick in 1830, Rama in 1838, and Scugog in 1843-44 (Rogers and Tobobondung 1975: 264). Beausoleil Island and Snake Island were established at the same time as Rama (Graham 1975: 34). Similar villages in Georgian Bay, however, developed much later: It was not until 1874 that 20 log 'shanties' appeared at the northern end of Parry Island.⁹⁷

Before 1874, the nineteenth century settlement pattern concentrated on the shoreline and islands for residence, cultivation and fishing. The interior hinterland

⁹⁶ The relationship between the government communities and the Methodist Church was fraught with political conflict. As the Methodist Church was based in the United States, and Methodist clergy and teachers were American, they were not well received by the government of Upper Canada which was staunchly Anglican. Graham provides good material on the mission movements in her thesis, "Strategies and Souls" (1973), as does Donald Smith (1975a). Primary source material include O'Meara, 1848; Bliss, 1885; Pitezal, 1857; Slight, 1844 and Jones, 1861.

⁹⁷ Canada, Sessional Papers 1875, No. 8: 37.

was also exploited for limited hunting and trapping.⁹⁸ A major problem facing the occupation along the shoreline and islands was the presence of reptiles, specifically the Massasauga rattlesnake. Camps were forced to move as conditions became intolerable. At Shawanaga, no less than 170 rattlesnakes were destroyed in one summer.⁹⁹

Two other reasons are reported for the selection of specific locations by native peoples. Not surprisingly, proximity to fishing locations was one; indeed, two years after the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850,¹⁰⁰ a government sponsored survey party was informed by Chief Mekis that the band wished to exchange their reserve on the mainland at Parry Sound for Parry Island, because of the greater abundance of fish.¹⁰¹ The second reason given was

⁹⁸ Irving Papers, MU 1464, Box 26, PAO.

⁹⁹ Keating's Report. August, 1852. RG 10, vol. 198, pt. 1: 116270-3. The native respect for the reptiles was evident in Henry's voyage. The Algonkian addressed a rattlesnake they had inadvertently come upon as 'grandfather,' beseeching it to take care of their families in their absence (Bain ed. 1901: 170).

¹⁰⁰ The Robinson Huron treaty surrendered territory as far south as Penetanguishene, north to Batchewana Bay on the northern shore of Lake Superior, together with the islands in these lakes opposite to the shore, and as far inland as the height of land separating the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, and all unceded lands within the limits of Canada West (Canada 1891: 149).

¹⁰¹ J.S. Dennis, "Report, Diary and Field Notes," vol. 2, May, 14, 1852. Despite this exchange, the Parry Island Band claimed on four subsequent occasions, in 1877, 1910, 1923, (just after the William's Commission), and in 1983, that it was entitled to occupy a reserve on the mainland as well as on Parry Island (Mekis to Macdonald, RG 10, vol. 3161, 363,644; Lyon to Scott, November 22, 1923, RG 10, vol. 3161, 363,644; Hansen, 1983).

subjective; places were valued as sacred burial grounds and birth places:

when not induced by fishing they have taken their Reserves merely from association. The graves of their dead and the places of their birth; this seems to have directed their choice.¹⁰²

Certain islands and lakes were given special status as they marked the burial location for the hereditary chiefs.¹⁰³ The hereditary chiefs of the Yellowhead family were buried on Horse Island, which was located on the northeast part of Chief's Island in Lake Simcoe.¹⁰⁴ Native people refused to live on this island as it was considered sacred ground.¹⁰⁵

The district fur trading reports demonstrated three patterns of land use, corresponding to those of the 1640s, operated in the region in the early nineteenth century. One

¹⁰² Keating's Report. August, 1852. RG 10, vol. 198, pt. 1: 116270-3. Mailhot (1986: 98) recorded a similar situation for the Montaignais who recognized these memorable places as places of birth, death and burials.

¹⁰³ Hammond, 1905a: 84.

¹⁰⁴ Mrs. Jacobs testified that Mary Lake, or Negigshigishing, "where Big Otter lay," was the burial ground of 'Otter,' "where he lived, hunted, died and was buried" (RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 143. September 21, 1923, Rama). Similarly, Chief John Elliott Bigcanoe noted that Georgina, Snake and Fox Islands were reserved by the "old chiefs of their tribe" (RG 10, vol. 2331-4A: 33. September 15, 1923, Georgina Island). Jim York indicated that his grandfather was buried at his hunting limit (RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 148-149, September 21, 1923, Rama).

¹⁰⁵ Hammond, 1905a: 77-85.

strategy was to fish and trade on the north shore of Lake Huron near Whitefish Lake, travel south in August and September¹⁰⁶ to the islands near Shawanaga to harvest corn, and then return north into the interior to hunt and trap over the winter, in a pattern reminiscent of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Amikwa. A second strategy was to remain on Georgian Bay until late in the fall, preserving as much fish as possible, which could be taken to fortify a winter spent inland.¹⁰⁷ This is a pattern previously documented for north shore inland groups. The third strategy was to both collect and preserve corn and fish, but remain on the islands and shore of Georgian Bay, ice fishing, hunting and trapping. This latter pattern corresponds to seventeenth century subsistence fishing in the region, and to the ethnography of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa as it will be now reconstructed.

In the nineteenth century the Georgian Bay region was described as providing very good, if limited, areas for horticulture,¹⁰⁸ which is to be expected given the

¹⁰⁶ An August harvest suggests that corn was planted in May or early June. An incident was reported on September 5, 1829 of a family group frightened from their corn fields by two Matagami Indians, locally described as cannibals (HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post).

¹⁰⁷ HBC B109/a/3, September 3, 1829, Lacloche Post.

¹⁰⁸ HBC B109/e/i, June 16, 1827, Lacloche Post.

environmental limitations.¹⁰⁹ Deer, raccoon, and bear were abundant.¹¹⁰ Fish were also plentiful as it was boasted that one man with one spear could catch as many fish as thirty-five men could eat in a day.¹¹¹ The region was reported rich in venison, as more than 273 lbs of chevreuil (roe deer) were collected from native people by the Hudson's Bay traders in 1829.¹¹²

The seasonal pattern of the nineteenth Georgian Bay Ojibwa revolved around fishing, small game hunting, deer, and the cultivation of small patches of corn and potatoes.¹¹³ Limited attempts at horticulture were possible with the use of twisted sticks, usually taken from upturned tree roots. They were used to work the earth by

¹⁰⁹ These are outlined in Chapter Two. Despite the agricultural schemes at Coldwater, corn and potato cultivation was limited in the region for environmental reasons. It is unlikely that corn and potatoes provided the sole means of subsistence in the region. The practice of horticulture and agriculture beginning from 1820 is discussed by Rogers and Tobobondung (1975).

¹¹⁰ Deer were plentiful as the shore of Lake Huron was described as a "country of all others for game" (William Dunlop to his sister Helen Boyle Dunlop, 1827, Scotland, Dunlop Papers, MU 2104, PAO).

¹¹¹ William Dunlop to his sister Helen Boyle Dunlop, 1827, Scotland, Dunlop Papers, MU 2104, PAO.

¹¹² HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post. Trumplines were reportedly used in the 1870s to haul venison (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 12).

¹¹³ Potato pits were lined with hemlock brush to give flavour to the potatoes (Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 12, 1983; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Moose Deer Point).

preparing small knolls.¹¹⁴ After the grass was burned from the planting area, usually a hill clearing, kernels of corn which had been soaked in water overnight, were planted in each hill. Dried grass was piled on top to cover the seeds.¹¹⁵ Although they practised a rudimentary form of horticulture, they did not depend upon the harvest as corn and potatoes were looked upon as 'luxuries' not necessities.¹¹⁶ The supposed lack of incentive can be associated with the presence of alternate, dependable food resources, principally fish and small game.

In early spring the Georgian Bay Ojibwa collected maple sugar from the groves on the islands of Parry Island, Rose Island, Sandy Island, Batteau Channel on Parry Island, and Three Mile Lake.¹¹⁷ The maple groves were privately exploited by an extended family. The camp was changed

¹¹⁴ Keating's Report. August, 1852. RG 10, vol. 198, pt. 1: 116270-3; also Report on the Affairs of the Indians in Canada, laid before the Legislative Assembly, 1845, Canada, Department of Crown Lands, 1846.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 14, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island. There is no evidence that the Georgian Bay Algonkian fertilized the soil other than burning the vegetation ("S.R.G. Penson describes the settlement of Muskoka with reference to Port Carling and Lake Rosseau, 1869". Penson Memoirs, MU 2314, PAO).

¹¹⁶ Report of the Special Commissioners to Investigate Indian Affairs in Canada, Sessional Papers, Canada, 1858, Capt. Anderson's evidence, Appendix, No. 29. Kane however, described them raising a good deal of corn, which was dried and pounded (1968: 6).

¹¹⁷ Duncan Frazer Macdonald Diary, May 3, 1888. Parry Sound Regional Library, Parry Sound. If all of the maple trees on Parry Island were considered for maple sugar, over 90,000 trees could be tapped (Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 14, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island).

infrequently, usually only when a family grew tired of the camp or wished to move to a location with better trees. A wooden spigot was hammered into the maple tree, and birch bark dishes were placed to catch the sap. A wooden trough, resembling a canoe in length and shape, was used to store the sap overnight until it could be boiled the next day. The boiled sap was preserved under ground in birch bark dishes which were fashioned to allow each dish to fit exactly into the top half of the underlying dish. The sugar-filled dishes were then stacked and preserved with a covering of hemlock boughs.¹¹⁸

Cranberries were harvested by tapping them into a canoe, in a way not dissimilar to the harvesting of wild rice. The cranberries were harvested when they were still white, before being stored in a cool damp place to ripen.¹¹⁹ The most abundant berries were cranberries and blueberries. Blueberries were preserved by cooking and storing them in deer greased birch bark boxes (Rogers and Tobobondung 1975: 319). Dried blueberries were used to season sturgeon.¹²⁰ There is no evidence that berries were

¹¹⁸ Interview with Thelma Pegahmagabow, July 23, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island. See also interview notes, July 12, 1966; July 22, 1963; E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Rosey Rice, August 23, 1982, Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹²⁰ Interview with Miss James, August 29, 1963; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

preserved and hoarded for religious ceremonial purposes, as they were reported at the Manitou Reserve (Landes 1937: 94).

Although small quantities of wild rice were harvested, they served a more important purpose of locating potential areas for waterfowl.¹²¹ Naiscouting was one of the few areas along the Georgian Bay shoreline where wild rice was traditionally harvested by the Shawanaga band.¹²² The summer months were considered the best time to pick medicinal plants as the flower was in bloom, aiding in its identification.¹²³

Fishing in Georgian Bay

Fishing continued to be central to the land use practices in the nineteenth century.¹²⁴ Rogers' (1978: 765) suggestion that fishing during the nineteenth century may have been more important to native people of southern Ontario and Michigan, than hunting and trapping, certainly is borne out in Georgian Bay region.

¹²¹ Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1984; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹²² Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1984; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹²³ Interview with Gordon Jacobs, August 18, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹²⁴ Several field interviews provide ethnographic support to Georgian Bay Algonkian fishing practices. From the perspective of continuity and accuracy, many of the informants interviewed by Rogers in 1963 and 1964, were interviewed twenty years later by the writer.

A variety of fish types were known to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, which exceeds that cited in the historical sources. These include dogfish (*gigomac*), green bass (*shegun*), suckers (*napin*) (from which only the heads were taken) black bass (*muckatashegun*), catfish (*ouassi*), whitefish (*ticamac*), trout (*meycous*) muskelonge (*muskanoshay*), herring¹²⁵ (*kawis*), northern pike (*conoga*), pickerel (*ougans*), rock bass (*kudosh*), sun bass (*musgokadash*), perch (*soway*), and sturgeon (*nemay*), from which the oil rendered a butter-like substance.¹²⁶ Except the specific organs mentioned above, the stomach and the gall bladder, all parts of the fish were used or eaten.¹²⁷ The location of the fishery was adjusted in the summer, fall, and winter, corresponding to individual species and their spawning movements. Lake trout which averaged between five and ten pounds, but could reach fifty pounds, were taken in late October in shallow waters, and on shoals where

¹²⁵The exact collapse of the herring fishery in Georgian Bay is unknown but attributed to overfishing, particularly on the use of the bull net. Short term increases in suspended sediments in the water, combined with heavy fishing may have driven herring populations below the critical threshold. There may also be a relationship between the appearance of rainbow smelt in the Great Lakes and the decline of herring (McCullough 1989: 78-79).

¹²⁶ Sturgeon has the largest oil content and greatest food value (Rostlund, 1952: 5).

¹²⁷ Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 17, 1963; September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

they spawned.¹²⁸ To capture them, the female lead was identified by her position ahead of the males. After killing the female, carefully avoiding spilling any blood, the males could then be easily speared.¹²⁹

Areas selected for troll fishing were determined by the stomach contents of the fish caught. If, for example, trout were feeding on crayfish, the Georgian Bay Ojibwa trolled in areas known to have a gravel bottom.¹³⁰

A substance made from the gum of a pine tree was used as fuel for a birch bark torch.¹³¹ The light penetrated to the bottom of the water where trout and whitefish could be readily speared. This combined torchlight fishing, *waswa*,¹³² and spearing, *koah*, was executed by two individuals, one positioned to steer the

¹²⁸ Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 6, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹²⁹ Autumn fishing for trout was undertaken at spawning areas close to the shoals where the trout would lie "like mermans" (Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 6, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island).

Mermans were *maymaygwayshi*, spirits who live behind rock faces and steal fish from nets. Their faces have been described as covered with fur or hair (Dewdney and Kidd 1962: 13,14). Jenness indicated that the individual hosting a sturgeon feast without holding the proper rituals risked being turned into a mermaid (1935: 43).

¹³⁰ Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 6, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹³¹ White pine is used to furnish the gum to glue the seams of their canoes (Kirkwood and Murphy 1878: 15).

¹³² Flare fishing was considered to be an Algonkian cultural trait, absent among the Huron (Flannery 1939: 18-19; 139). Rostlund suggests it originated outside of North America, as did the gill and seine net, the leister, torchlight, and jigging fish hook (1952: 158).

canoe and hold the torch, as the other speared and hauled in the fish. A leister, a spear having side prongs to grasp fish, was also used. Traditionally the fish were smoked and dried over hot coals for use over the winter.¹³³

Torchlight spearing and trolling were the fishing methods used by both the Georgian Bay Ojibwa and Métis. These two forms of fishing were practised on shoals where it was impractical to set nets. The harvest was bountiful: Two persons in one night filled and emptied their boat three times.¹³⁴ Usually two trolling lines were used per boat which could yield two to three barrels of trout per day trolling.¹³⁵

The Georgian Bay Ojibwa applied various root and herb based medicines to their fishing equipment to secure successful fishing. *Wekan* and *waboosejibu*, native medicines, were dried and cut up into a fine substance, sprinkled on fish nets¹³⁶ and lines, and were left to dry in the sun. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa insured that the

¹³³ Interview with Mrs. Pegahmagabow, September 17, 1963; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹³⁴ Interview with Mrs. Pegahmagabow, September 17, 1963; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹³⁵ Interview with Mrs. Pegahmagabow, September 17, 1963; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹³⁶ Ted Wheatley insisted that the seine net was not traditionally used at Parry Island and that it was introduced by the Europeans (Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

medicine was washed from the nets and lines after its use to prevent overfishing.¹³⁷

Winter ice fishing continued to play an important role to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa.¹³⁸ Ice fishing required extremely cold temperatures, as mild weather endangered safety. Sturgeon were speared along the shore of the mainland and islands where the water was shallow. After a test hole was chiselled into the ice, the bottom of the lake was examined for the distinctive snail-like paths caused by the movements of the sturgeon. An ideal location to fish was at the intersection of these paths. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa used a harpoon, or spear with a detachable head, which could be retrieved by a line.¹³⁹ The spear was aimed at the back of the sturgeon's neck to reduce the amount of bleeding, which would cloud the water. Sturgeon were speared in January, February, and March, although the latter month was preferred, as the sunlight was stronger, and the underwater trails could be seen under the ice without having

¹³⁷ Interview with Mrs. Pegahmagabow, August 22, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island; Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹³⁸ The Mississauga at Rice Lake were described as "exceedingly skilful" with the spear. Ice fishing was also very productive (Chamberlain 1888: 154) but depended upon temperature, snow cover, ice thickness, and sunlight (Krech 1978: 723).

¹³⁹ Jenness (1935: 15) described a specialized spear for catching sturgeon which had two or three prongs fastened to a pole 25 to 30 feet long. When the spear hit its mark, it detached from the pole shaft, still attached by a piece of raw hide.

to break it open. When a hole was made, its circumference was carefully tapered and ringed with hemlock brush to prevent the reflection of a surfacing sturgeon deterring other sturgeon from the opening.

During the early twentieth century, ice fishing was carried out in a lean-to made from seven poles, six feet long. Notches were cut in the ice to support the poles. The ends were tied with birch bark or basswood string and covered with tarpaulin or a blanket. The lean-to had to be open at the top to accommodate the length of spear. Traditionally a much longer spear was used, threaded through a sleeve of clothing, or blanket, formerly a buffalo skin. If the spear was unattached to a line, the depth of fishing was restricted to the length of their poles, which has been reported between 35 and 45 feet during the first half of the nineteenth century (Kohl 1860: 328-329), shortened to between 25 and 30 feet by 1885 (Cleland 1982: 763). The fisher held the spear in one hand, manoeuvring a decoy (*quae*),¹⁴⁰ in the other.¹⁴¹ The Georgian Bay Ojibwa carried six or seven different types of decoys with them

¹⁴⁰ Literally 'female'.

¹⁴¹ The Indians of Rice Lake made an opening with a tomahawk, and on their hands and knees, cast a blanket over themselves so as to darken the water and conceal themselves (Traill 1836: 171).

when they fished.¹⁴² The decoy was made out of ironwood, or maple. The harder and heavier the wood, the less porous, giving it a usable depth of 35 to 40 feet. The decoys were carved, coloured, and charred with markings to resemble a minnow or herring. Whitefish, sturgeon, pike, trout, and muskelonge were also speared.¹⁴³

Winter ice fishing was a time consuming activity. At Parry Island it meant a walk of between 16 - 18 miles after leaving camp at 3:00 a.m. to reach the fishing site by 9:00 or 10:00 a.m. Fishing hours were restricted to actual day light, and involved long periods lasting for three or four days until sufficient fish were taken.¹⁴⁴ To keep warm, a fishing location between a high rock and level ground was preferred for a fire could be made to heat the rock and reflect warmth.¹⁴⁵

Winter net fishing involved a slightly different technique. A birch bark pole was stripped and cut to a

¹⁴² Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁴³ Interview with Ted Wheatley, July 12, 1966; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island. Rogers (private communication, 1986), indicated that pike, trout and muskelonge were decoyed. Jenness indicated that whitefish and trout were speared (1935: 15). Rostlund (1952: 29) did not think that spears were much used on whitefish, and that gill nets were the effective method of capture. Schoolcraft, however, reported whitefish taken by net and spear (1852: 53).

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

length of approximately four feet to launch a net which was attached to a forty foot pole. Additional holes spaced at approximately thirty foot intervals were chiselled into the ice to allow the net to be moved between the holes.¹⁴⁶ Whether a stronger mesh was used for winter fishing is uncertain, though likely, as the ropes used to haul the net through the ice probably needed reinforcement. The skill involved in ice fishing by the Rice Lake Indians was reported as 'remarkable,'¹⁴⁷ providing 200 pounds a day (Chamberlain 1888: 154). Winter ice fishing was improved by using a dog or hand sled¹⁴⁸ to transport the fishing equipment and fish back to the camp. Toboggans were not used because they were too low to the ice and its contents could be easily flooded. Unlike sleds, toboggans could not serve as sleeping platforms on top of the ice.¹⁴⁹

Nets set in the winter were left thirty hours before the first lift. The fisher was careful to cut a hole in the ice about four feet square to drag the net and release the

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 6, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island; Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁴⁷ Jenness however, indicated that ice fishing yielded a "slim harvest" at Parry Island (1935: 11).

¹⁴⁸ Hand sleds were made from cedar, 5.5 feet with runners measuring 6 feet but bent to 5.5 feet (Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

¹⁴⁹ Dog sleds probably resulted in a large increase in fish (Berkes 1977: 291) as more fish could be hauled back to the village site.

fish from it, without tearing it. Net sinkers were made from oblong stones. Winter nets were set a foot from the bottom, in about twelve feet of water. Corks were made from cedar, eighteen inches long, flat and sword-shaped, notched at one end to hold the string to the net.¹⁵⁰ Small flat cedar buoys likely reduced the loss to winter nets through icing (cf. Berkes 1977: 294). Snow was thrown on the net to clean it,¹⁵¹ and the nets were dyed a blue colour with herbs to camouflage it to the colour of weeds.¹⁵²

Sturgeon were also taken in the spring along the shore as they washed in with the debris,¹⁵³ and 'hunted' in the early fall "after the blueberries were on the bush."¹⁵⁴ They were exploited during the summer months by an extended family consisting of four or five brothers and their families. One fishing range included the triangle between the Seguin River, into Georgian Bay to Sandy Island, and back to Parry Island. The waters around Sandy Island were

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁵² Interview with Ted Wheatley, September 30, 1964; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁵³ Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 6, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹⁵⁴ This practice was reported for the Ojibwa at Sarnia (Radin 1928: 662).

shallow which were considered ideal for sturgeon fishing.¹⁵⁵

Navigation was an important aspect of fishing technology. Canoes were built in August.¹⁵⁶ The birch bark canoe was essential to fishing operations on the islands. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa of the nineteenth century used two different sizes of canoes, a smaller one for fishing, hunting, and trapping, and a larger one for making longer voyages. Birch bark canoes were used for fall and late spring hunting when the waters were fairly clear of ice, and longer distances were travelled. During the summer they were usually constructed out of large sections of bark, free from knots.¹⁵⁷

Elm bark canoes were both used to navigate in waters where 'scum' ice was prevalent, and in colder waters when travel required more stable transportation.¹⁵⁸ Dugouts

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 8, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island; Interview with Stanley Manitowaba, July 28, 1983, Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹⁵⁶ HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post.

¹⁵⁷ The Parry Island Ojibwa stopped making birch bark canoes sometime between 1890-1900 (Interview with Mr. Johnson Tobobondung, July 29, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

¹⁵⁸ Birch bark canoes were abandoned when ice formed on the bay. Adapting to ice on the water was a recent accommodation introduced by the use of the elm bark canoe.

made from "cork pine" were also used.¹⁵⁹ Rogers suggests dugout canoes were adopted from either non-native or other native groups, such as the Potowatomi (1965: 458), a likely probability considering the nature of immigration to the region. The dugout was not used for hunting, because of its weight which could not be easily portaged.¹⁶⁰

Social and Political Organization

Although there are few cases recorded that suggest the social composition of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa in this period, the native people from Whitefish Lake who kept corn fields near Shawanaga apparently hunted primarily in dyads consisting of father and son (or son-in-law), and brother and brother-in-law, not family groups.¹⁶¹ One or two hunters, individually or in pairs, brought in a few furs, usually marten, muskrat, and otter. They trapped beaver

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 6, 17, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island. "Cork pine" is a pine that remains dry and reportedly grew at Killbear Point before it was cut down (Ibid). This may be what was referred to as yellow pine (Gourlay 1822: 464).

¹⁶⁰ Ritzenthaler (1953: 168) suggested that the destruction of birch trees by lumbering may have encouraged the use of dugouts among the Potowatomi. Birch bark was however, reported as plentiful and essential for canoe making at the Muskoka River height of land at this time (Murray 1963: 160).

¹⁶¹ Such dyads, included: Blackbird, and his brother-in-law Ominise; Mayhontepinesse and his brother-in-law; Frise and his son-in-law; Serpent and his son; and Petatacushkin, and his sons (HBC B 109/a/3. September 1, 1830, January 27, 1831, February 1, May 29, 1831, Lacloue Post).

almost nominally, principally to obtain alcohol.¹⁶² The trade in single skins reported at Georgian Bay Hudson's Bay Company posts does not support a hunting group organization.

The warmer months permitted a small group size of between 30 and 50 persons, composed of between six and ten nuclear families,¹⁶³ nothing like the 100 to 300 Bishop proposes (1974: 7) for the Northern Ojibwa. The size appears to have been a compromise to the subsistence pattern, and the political conditions resulting from diverse immigration. Fishing group organization focused on the nuclear family (Head 1829: 282).

The gill net fishery may have encouraged a two person agnatic crew, consisting of father and son, brother and brother, or husband and wife dyads, which may reflect a bilateral kinship structure. In important ways this organization was no different from that described for hunting. It would suggest that changes in social organization corresponding to increased hunting did not

¹⁶² A study of the Lac Du Flambeau Ojibwa assessed alcohol behaviour during the early part of the nineteenth century. Although alcohol was eagerly sought, supplies were limited and were often watered down or bartered for increased supplies (Waddell 1984: 264; Ray and Freeman 1978: 137). Intoxicated states were infrequent, for the Ojibwa spent most of their time collecting wild rice, corn, meat, grease, sugar and peltries. Waddell concluded that the Ojibwa were no more abusive of alcohol than any other population, including the trading post employees (1984: 264).

¹⁶³ Two bands were composed of 27 men and their families, or about 54 members in each group (HBC B109/a/3, June 10, 1829, Lacloche Post).

necessarily change from that involved in subsistence fishing and small game hunting.

What cannot be determined from the data is to what extent the size accommodates the political reality of the various immigrant groups who may have chosen to remain autonomous, because of cultural dissimilarity, and a fear of witchcraft. Immigrating native groups who settled in Georgian Bay attempted to be as self sufficient as possible, protecting themselves from each other through the respective strengths of their shamans. Indeed, the number of a shamans that a village could claim demonstrated the extent of their power.¹⁶⁴

Intermarriage between different groups often involved a process where women were "given away" to obtain gardening land.¹⁶⁵ Marriage not only involved the bride moving to her husband's place of residence, but often involved the family of the bride moving as well. An explanation given for this suggests that the family wished to ensure that their daughter was cared for. The fear associated with intermarriage was probably a result of the diversity of groups inhabiting the region, and the

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Ted Wheatley, August 17, August 26, 1982; Field Notes, J. Lovisek, Parry Island.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Mrs. Johnson Tobobondung, July 15, 1963; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

uncertainty of their respective 'power':

Years ago when a girl was spoken for, if you don't give her away they would bring a curse to her and she would die. That's the way we lived years ago, so possessive. Once they think they'd like a girl for their son they'd have to give her regardless. They were so dangerous in that way. So, they decided, we might as well give up our girls or give them the curse, the whole family, you don't know what these people are likely to do to people right here.¹⁶⁶

Indeed, members of the Parry Island band were reluctant to marry into communities that had sizable populations as the risk of sorcery increased with the size of the population (cf. Rogers 1963b). A larger population implied an increased number of 'relatives,' any one of whom might become envious or jealous and take to witchcraft against the in-marrying individual and their family.¹⁶⁷ By practising a system of sororal polygyny, which several did,¹⁶⁸ the number of relatives were reduced. This preference suggests a corporate element to marriage which

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Mrs. Johnson Tobobondung, July 12, 1966; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Mrs. Ashewasega, August 16, 1966; Field Notes, E. S. Rogers, Parry Island.

¹⁶⁸ In 1849, Anderson had been told of an Indian who had 'only' one wife but to possess her, he had to kill his older brother to whom she belonged. Yellowhead's brother and John Assance each had three wives who were sisters. After Assance's conversion to Christianity he gave up his two younger wives, but not without noting that the tradition was for a man to have as many wives as he could support (Jones 1861: 152-3). Assance later resumed living with these two wives (Ibid: 153). James Asquabe's second wife was also from the Snake family (Testimony of Charles Bigcanoe. RG 10, vol. 2331-4A: 21. September 15, 1923, Georgina Island).

limits the number of in-laws by anticipating the sororate. It had the desired effect of creating multiple bonds while securing stable group relationships.¹⁶⁹ Polygyny,¹⁷⁰ combined with a preference for marrying sibling spouses, post-partum restrictions upon sexual access, and a greater age at paternity,¹⁷¹ counter the theory that intermarriage leads to an expanding universe of relations. It also, in turn, encourages larger agnatic sibling sets (Martin 1984:

¹⁶⁹ The creation of multiple bonds is also accomplished through cross-cousin marriage (Eggan 1955: 532). Kinship terms collected by Jenness (1935: 115) suggest the presence of a sororate by the equivalence of terminology between mother's sister and step mother, *no'ce*.

¹⁷⁰ In an 1812 census, gender composition for the Snake, Yellowhead and Assance band heavily favoured females RG 10, vol. 31, 18689. As this census was taken just after the war, the gender ratio may represent a population traumatized by a loss of adult males through military service. A census taken in 1873 however, indicates that Georgian Bay Algonkian bands headed by Maishegongai and Paimosagai also favoured females (Census of the Ojibwa and Ottawa of Manitoulin Island, 1873. RG 10, vol. 1920, 2865).

¹⁷¹ The mean age of marriage among Georgian Bay Algonkian males was 28, which corresponds with the cross-cultural studies associated with polygyny (Lee and Devore 1968: 209; Martin 1984: 296). This age was attributed to military participation which delayed marriage when the male was under no obligation to support a wife or family. Chief Waubojig refused to marry early so that his attention would be singularly focused on war. At the age of 30 he married a widow with whom he had two sons (Jameson 1838: 209). Some immigrant groups, like the Potawatomi, the males married much earlier than the Georgian Bay Ojibwa. Potawatomi males married at the age of 18 or 19 years old. This may have contributed to friction with Ojibwa males over females (Interview with Mrs Asheshewaga, September 16, 1963; Field Notes, E.S. Rogers, Parry Island).

Other considerations are involved in this kind of interpretation, including longevity. With extreme longevity, which has been associated with the groups to the south of the region, families could remain larger for a longer period of time and kin co-existence was more frequent (Mendels 1978: 245). The age differential between marriage partners suggested males remained longer with their parents (Testimony of Gilbert Williams. RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 145. September 21, 1923, Rama; Testimony of Sarah Marsden. RG 10, vol. 2332, 67,071-4D: 178. September 24, 1923, Scugog Reserve, Port Perry Ontario).

301) which may have provided the social structure for subsistence fishing and hunting. This practice restricted the number of affinal contacts, thus maintaining a small group size.

Georgian Bay Chiefs

The designation of 'chief' has been indiscriminately applied to various categories. It has been applied to the head of an extended family, and also to that of chief of a band. Its application to hunting territorial systems includes both heads of families, and the chief of the band who is often called "head chief," a hereditary position.¹⁷² When, for example, the leadership of the groups became entangled in religious differences, the band members chose leaders based upon the principle of heredity, although Smith suggests that hereditary or ascribed status was of lesser significance during change and stress (1973: 13. n.2.)

After Pontiac's Rebellion and the war of 1812, there emerged a new type of chief in Georgian Bay established by colonial military policy. The practice was to give every male who participated in support of the British, a medal for

¹⁷² This is described by Smith as the "civil chief" (1973: 16).

his loyalty.¹⁷³ Anderson provided each of the chiefs with a medal and flag¹⁷⁴ with which to demonstrate their loyalty to Britain,¹⁷⁵ a practice which was not always favourably received. When *Piz hi ki* (the Buffalo) was presented with a medal, he responded haughtily: "What need of this? It is known to all whence I am descended" (Jameson 1838: 203), giving pointed reference to his hereditary right to be chief. One result of this practice of creating "medal chiefs" was the disparity between the traditional hereditary chief and the newly created medal chief:

You know that in former times there were few chiefs...the young men were obedient to their Head Men. But abuses have crept in. Medals have been given, and chiefs created, without regard to the hereditary line of their Fathers; and in many instances, without regard to merit or capability of conduct.¹⁷⁶

Intent upon the abolishment of a system he once orchestrated, Anderson later revised his position when he

¹⁷³ RG 10, vol. 2164; Testimony of David Simcoe, RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 128 September 20, 1923, Rama; Francis Pegahmagabow to Diand, March 9, 1936. RG 10, vol. 3161, 363,644.

¹⁷⁴ Identifying them as *kiwaydiwini*, loyalist Indians.

¹⁷⁵ Anderson to Ironside, June 5, 1850, RG 10, vol.536, 13355. Anderson certainly did not initiate this practice. Silver medals and flags, "the usual badges of distinction" were supplied to native supporters in 1793 by Alexander McDonell (Murray 1963: 20).

¹⁷⁶ Minutes of the General Council of Indian Chiefs and Principle Men, July 30, 31, 1846: 7. Mimeograph copy Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Library.

ordered that chiefs should be selected by the 'best' claim to the chieftainship.¹⁷⁷ This encouraged the re-emergence of individuals who could claim hereditary rights to the position of chief, as no doubt the rivalry between Naoquaeshick and Pegahmagabow for succession to Chief Mekis's position of the Parry Island band demonstrates.¹⁷⁸ Naoquaeshick who descended from a shaman, lost his bid for the leadership to Pegahmagabow, despite his having proof of descent from four generations of chiefs.¹⁷⁹ Hereditary claims to the chieftainship were clearly recognized as the strongest claim to be made among the Georgian Bay Ojibwa.¹⁸⁰ This did not, however prevent an elected chief from becoming the principle choice, particularly when that individual was the son of a shaman. William King, the son of the shaman Muskudo, became the elected chief of the Moskoko band, wielding extensive power and respect, in contrast to the holder of the position of hereditary chief

¹⁷⁷ Minutes of the General Council of Indian Chiefs and Principle Men, July 30, 31, 1846: 7. Mimeograph copy Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Library.

¹⁷⁸ Pegahmagabow possessed a medal (probably from the war of 1812) in support of his position (Bartlett to Pennefather, September 26, 1860, RG 10, vol. 546).

¹⁷⁹ Bartlett to Pennefather, September 26, 1860, RG 10, vol. 546.

¹⁸⁰ In 1845 members of the Rama band refused to place its support in chief Yellowhead, preferring Thomas Nanigishkung as he was the maternal grandson of the old chief, Kenice. This does not preclude "structural amnesia," which allowed the Georgian Bay Algonkian to be selective in their genealogies (Rama Band Resolution, May 26, 1845, RG 10, vol. 405).

who was described as "weak and ineffectual."¹⁸¹

The creation of these "medal chiefs" challenged the stature of both the hereditary chiefs (Jameson 1838.3: 203), and the shamanic leaders, perhaps contributing to an even greater dispersal into smaller groups when disputes arose. Shamanic leaders continued to administer to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, particularly to those who were not attracted to the European religions. They continued to rely upon traditional shamanic means of control. The chiefs at Parry Island continued to be responsible for issues involving resource management, not unlike the *fish preacher* of the seventeenth century. They instructed band members when to pick cranberries, and restricted fishing activity if fish were considered to be in low supply (Rogers and Tobobondung 1975: 293).

Territoriality

The study would not be complete without some recognition of the role of hunting territories in the region which falls into the realm of land tenure. The preceding chapters have placed the Georgian Bay Algonkian within the historical context of their political and physical

¹⁸¹ "S.R.G. Penson describes the settlement of Muskoka with reference to Port Carling and Lake Rosseau, 1869." Penson Memoirs, MU 2314, PAO.

environment during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. Territorial prerogatives over this period have been expressed as the rights of passage, (and the evidence of tolls), rights to hunt deer, beaver, and "other quadrupeds," and, finally, to the existence of discrete territories employed specifically for hunting. The basis of these prerogatives has been linked to political alliances and conflict between groups, as much as it has to the specific demands of fur trading practices, policy, and government action. Although the land tenure principles of usufruct have remained stable, the prerogatives attached to them have dramatically shifted in emphasis.

The Hunting Territorial System

The roots of a hunting territorial system were established in the previous century by the presence of several groups known to have practised some form of organized hunting. The reasons, however, for the emergence of a family hunting territorial system among the Mississauga, are many.¹⁸² It is probable that they can be

¹⁸²The conditions for the emergence of family hunting territories in the region are detailed in an earlier version of this thesis. The ethnographic support for these findings comes an analysis of testimony during the Williams Commission from 57 informants, some born as early as 1833.

linked to the period after the war of 1812 when beaver had multiplied at an extraordinary rate (Cruikshank ed. 1923, 3: 55; McLean 1932: 15), and when warriors returning from the war were looking for official recognition of their military efforts.¹⁸³ In addition, the area was now undergoing a surge of immigration from peoples who were already familiar with a hunting territorial system.¹⁸⁴

Subsistence fishers, once they had either been pressured or attracted to the idea of commercial hunting, theoretically made good candidates for a fixed system of territoriality (cf. Bishop 1974: 209-10). They principally remained in the same locality year round, and enjoyed a regular food supply without having to depend upon the yield from the territory to provide subsistence. Their problem was to balance spawning runs with prime hunting, trapping and trading periods, and to find adequate game sources close to their fishing sites. As Chamberlain (1888: 154) reported for the Rice Lake Mississauga, the same areas used for

¹⁸³ Their claim to lands by virtue of their military participation reassembles the Loyalist claim to lands. After all, the Six Nations Iroquois had been rewarded with land for their support of Britain during the War of Independence in 1783 (Johnston ed. 1974: xxxviii). Native lands were also taken up, sometimes illegally, to provide land for loyalists (Walker 1968: 2-7) which may have associated with in the native view, the practice of giving lands for loyalty to Britain. The association with being a warrior and of having a hunting territory is strongly represented in the Williams Commission documents (see for example, Testimony of John Bigwin, Williams Commission. RG 10 vol. 2332, 67071-4A: 93. September 20, 1923., Rama).

¹⁸⁴ Some had hunting territories in Illinois along the Chicago River. RG 10, Vol. 3313.

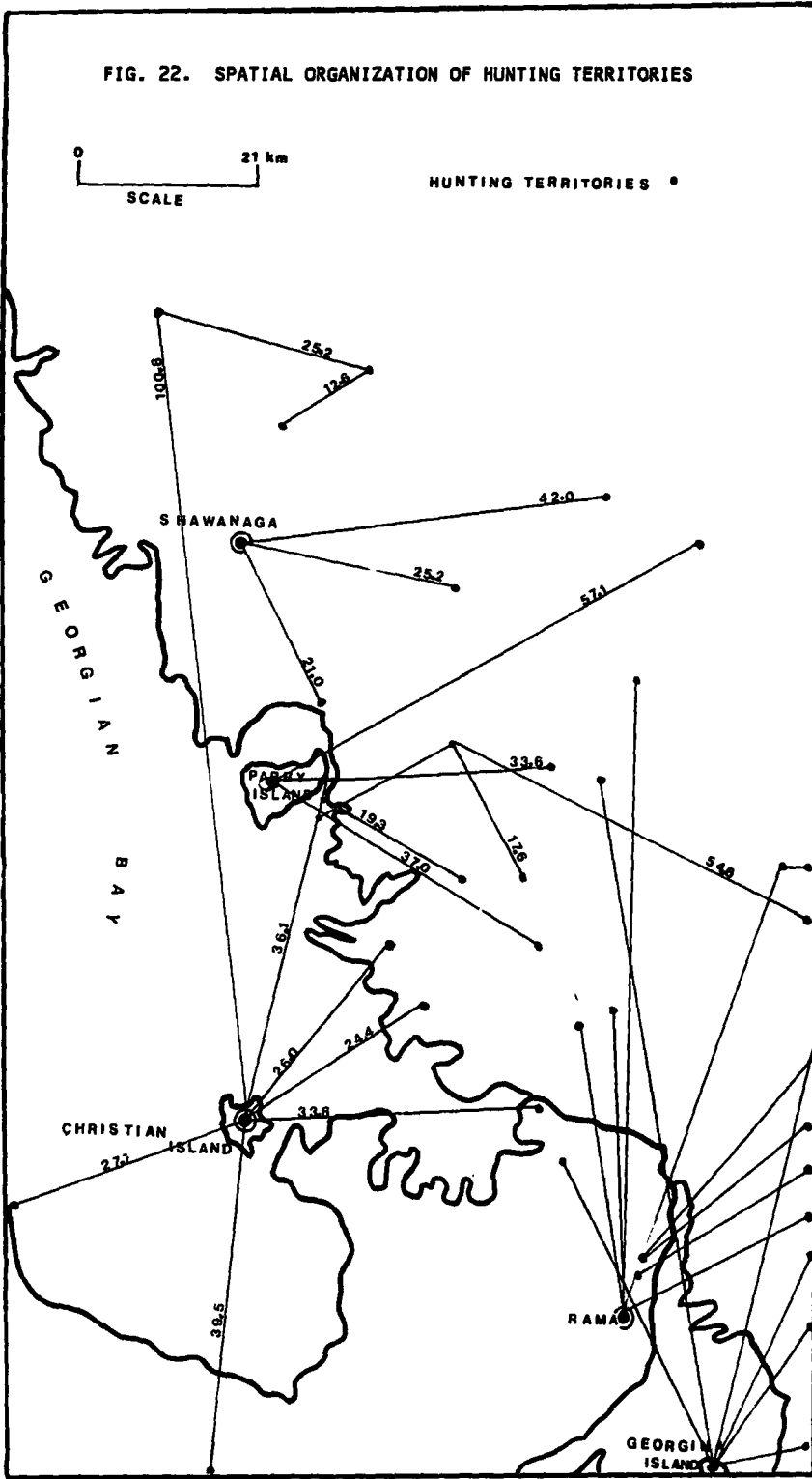
fishing were also used for hunting. If this applies to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, a land use pattern similar to that expounded for the Mississauga, that of a river mouth/watershed exploitation, may have characterized much of the fur trade period in the region. Indeed, hunting territories used by the Georgian Bay Ojibwa were found to be more accessible than those located farther south (see fig. 22).¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the average distance to hunting territories from Parry Island and Shawanaga was 25 miles, compared with 57 miles from the more southern Rama, Christian Island and Georgina Island bands.¹⁸⁶ Rarely did the Georgian Bay Ojibwa travel inland of the wetlands or lakes to hunt.¹⁸⁷ In Georgian Bay the locus of hunting territories concentrated in the wetland areas near river mouths, (fig. 23) and on the islands.

The Georgian Bay Ojibwa willingly surrendered their hunting areas to the government in 1850 when they believed that these lands were no longer productive (Surtees 1983: 74-75). The land use pattern of the Ojibwa then returned to

¹⁸⁵ This finding is based on a comparison of distances to the hunting territories as determined by the Williams Commission data.

¹⁸⁶ This was determined by reconstructing the hunting territories from the Williams Commission material and measuring the distances by band location.

¹⁸⁷ Testimony of George Copegog, RG, vol. 2332, 67,071-4A: 57,58. September 17, 1923, Christian Island; Testimony of Frank Joe, RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 140. September 20, 1923, Rama.



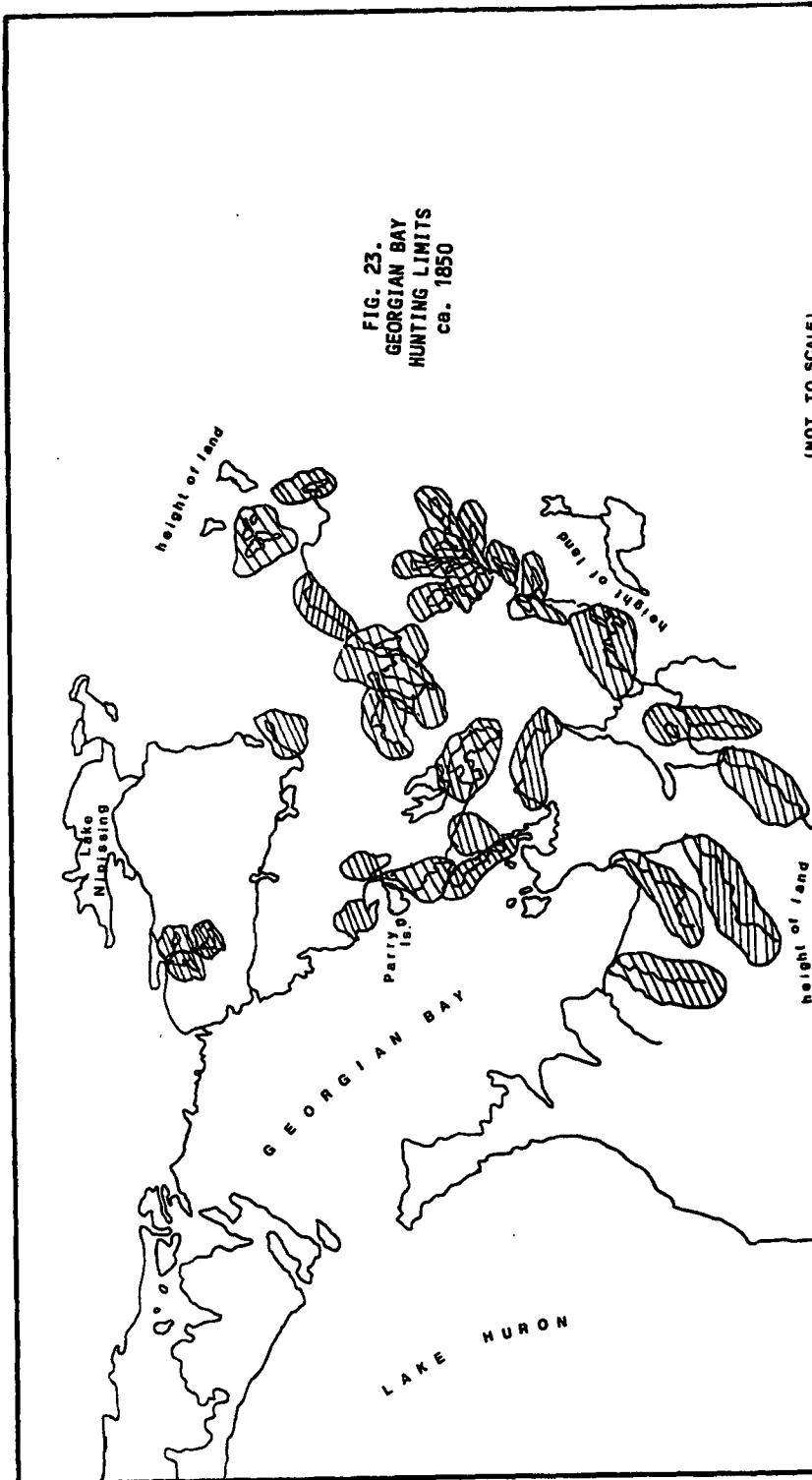


FIG. 23.
GEORGIAN BAY
HUNTING LIMITS
ca. 1850

that of subsistence fishing, planting and small game hunting, which later took on contemporary adaptations in marina and fishing guide operations.

The question that emerges from the fur trading material is whether hunting territories were practical in a competitive trading environment, poor in beaver, but rich in fishing. Competition certainly reduced the need for furs and the need for a system to manage them (Bishop 1974: 211). Bishop argues that it was under conditions of population pressure and reduced fur that family hunting territories emerged for the Northern Ojibwa (Ibid: 212). Historically, this would suggest that hunting territories probably functioned after 1812, until the Hudson's Bay Company entered the competition in 1827. They may have re-emerged after 1860 when the Hudson's Bay Company was no longer an influence or a threat.¹⁸⁸

Native migration 1850

The movements of peoples after 1850 was markedly different, if selective, from the organized, often government sponsored migration of family groups noted earlier in the century. Maketaupau (Black Potatoe) for

¹⁸⁸ It may be that it is to this period that the hunting territories identified by the Williams Commission inquiry in the early 1900s most apply.

example, had lived with his grandfather on Lake Michigan from where he made regular trips to Drummond Island and later Manitoulin Island for government distributed presents. After restrictions were placed upon the distribution of presents to American Indians, like Maketaupau, sought adoption by a north shore band; Maketaupau's father was adopted and placed on the pay list of the Spanish River band; one of Maketaupau's brothers was added to the Whitefish band, and another brother was adopted by an unnamed band in Georgian Bay.¹⁸⁹ The social dynamics of this displacement has the male members of the nuclear family, and conceivably their immediate family, dispersed among several bands. The implications for social organization with regard to hunting group organization, totemic structures, intermarriage etc. are thus further complicated. This practice of dispersing male members among several bands may have integrated dispersed bands over time into a larger body of relatives. Indeed, the male members of Maketaupau's family may have been practising a long standing adoption practice, which in this case, was viewed to have real economic purpose -- that of continuing to

¹⁸⁹ Irving Papers, MU 1465, Public Archives of Ontario. Genealogical data support origins from Cross village 60 miles west of Mackinac, from Beaver Island, from Saginaw, and from the west shore of Lake Huron (Macrae to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, February 18, 1899, RG 10, vol. 2832, 170,073-1).

receive government presents. If this proves to be the case, native communities linked by kinship through dispersed adoptive measures would certainly improve our understanding of native social organization during this period of transition.

Land Surrenders

Land surrenders, similarly, related to the 'sale' of specific uses of the land. Rights to fishing, gathering, or hunting privileges, or their right to cornfields were not surrendered in the various treaties. The rights surrendered were those of exclusive occupancy; the right to occupy the land jointly with another party who could establish a village, where cornfields could be planted, or trade was a discretionary right. The Georgian Bay Ojibwa gave up none of their sovereignty, and relinquished few of their activities on the land, particularly fishing. Surrender may have simply meant conferring a right of ownership identical to their own, not possession of the land as a tradeable commodity (cf. Cronon 1983: 67).

Despite this perspective, without some recognition of hunting territories, it is doubtful the Georgian Bay Ojibwa claims to land use in the region would have received Euro-Canadian recognition. The government of Canada defined native rights to land almost exclusively as hunting rights,

a definition which reached an extreme interpretation in Borron's report. This report unequivocally stated: "so far as an Indian could be said to have a domicile, it was undoubtedly his hunting ground...it was on these furs that the real Indians surrendered territory."¹⁹⁰

Following this definition, a land use system established on a resource base consisting principally of aquatic sources would have had little leverage in treaty negotiations. Indeed, although Borron recognized the important role of fish to the diet of "real Indians," he attributed subsistence fishing most frequently with 'half-breeds' (Ibid). In this view, he presented a common misunderstanding of Indians and half-breeds based on occupational diversity, with the importance of fishing unduly minimized.

Fishing continued to play an important if understated role in Georgian Bay Ojibwa land use in the first half of the nineteenth century. Issues over land

¹⁹⁰ Supplementary Report by E. B. Borron on the Right of Half Breeds to participate in the Benefits of Robinson Treaties, October 27, 1894, Irving Papers MU 1465, 27/32/09 PAO.

This functional view of the Indian deviated from that established in legislation respecting Indians. The Enfranchisement Acts of 1869 introduced a racial definition based upon blood quantum: "no person of less than one-fourth Indian blood" (House of Commons Debates, 2. Sess., 1 Parl., 1869: 23). This definition was later amended to include band membership as a principle criteria, in conjunction with blood: "a male of Indian blood belonging to a particular band; a child of such person or a woman who is married to such person" (House of Commons Debates, 3 Sess., 3 Parl., 1876: 869-870).

tenure strongly associated with hunting dominate the documentation of this period, despite recognition that fish provided an important subsistence and commercial base. Although fishing was essential to the subsistence and economy, this activity did not extend over large expanses of land, and as such, its value was not regarded as a "compensable property right," and was given little attention (Cumming and Mickenberg 1972: 260).

Who are the Georgian Bay Ojibwa?

The problems identifying the Georgian Bay Ojibwa have been portrayed in historical context. Following their land surrenders the Georgian Bay Ojibwa can now be viewed within the setting of the present day Georgian Bay native communities. These communities correspond with the government's administrative unit of the 'band,' which includes individuals whose allegiance and history may lie outside the anthropological definition of a band.

Because of the overlapping boundaries of administrative bands and anthropological bands, a single definition is inadequate to describe Georgian Bay Ojibwa band composition. There is evidence to support the definition of a band on the basis of the nodal kindred (Goodenough 1962: 10), i.e. organized by kinship where genealogies can be traced to one dominant sibling group or

part of a sibling group and where segmentation follows sibling lines, either consanguineal or through affinal kinship (Helm 1965: 381). Chief Yellowhead and his brother Akepatawewe, who was war chief, composed the sibling core of the Yellowhead band in the 1790s. Chief Thomas Assance and his brother, Chief John Assance composed the core of the Beausoleil Island band (later Christian Island), in 1846.¹⁹¹

When the population universe is broadened to include the administrative band, the term "composite hunting band" has been advanced to represent bands composed of unrelated families, integrated by common association rather than kinship (Steward 1955: 143). This describes the Georgian Bay Ojibwa. When placed however, within its wider social spectrum, aspects appropriate to the "trading post band" which emerged as a response to the fur trade (Rogers 1983: 115) must also be considered, for this was a composition of several groups who exploited an area around a fur trading post, even if activities focused on fishing and horticulture. The trading post band was not a political unit, but an aggregation of families who stayed together for

¹⁹¹ Minutes of the General Council of Indian Chiefs and Principle Men on the Proposed Removal of the Smaller Communities and the Establishment of Labour Schools. From Notes in shorthand and otherwise by Henry Baldwin, Barrister at Law, Secretary to the Chiefs in Council. July 30, 31, 1846. Mimeograph copy Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Library.

a limited time. Indeed, the presence of a trading post could be considered as the basis of a new amalgamation of groups, sometimes replacing the former regional or local band (Smith and Rogers 1973: 22). It is not difficult to see how this organization might also describe the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, given the establishment of fur trading posts at or near important fisheries which was also close to fur trading posts.¹⁹² It is also uncertain whether the posts were in place for a sufficient time for such an organization to emerge, particularly when the Hudson's Bay Company posts operated in the region for less than a decade.

Making distinctions between a social organization structured on a nodal core and that of the trading post band may be arbitrary, except to the uncertain subject of the 'origin' of the band. If trading post bands lacked strong kinship relationships as their basis of organization, this did not preclude establishing kinship relationships over time, giving them the appearance of nodal kindred. The existence of a composite or trading post band does not preclude the existence of bands as comprehended by a "linked family band" (Helm 1965: 375), functioning within the

¹⁹² The trading post band has been viewed as a response to a closer linkage with the Euro-Canadian economic system, akin to the trading post-mission complex (Helm and Damas 1963) represented by greater sedentary activity and intensive exploitation of a more restricted territory.

confines of the administrative unit. A rigid definition of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa band fails to recognize the flexibility and adaptability of band organization. From this perspective, the 'band,' as it applies to the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, incorporates socio-territorial organization broadly.

The flexibility of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa band organization enabled it to fission. David Simcoe (RG 10, vol 2331, 67,071: 131, September 20, 1923) recounted how internal fission was responsible for the creation of new bands which have come to represent the Georgian Bay Ojibwa band:

In 1850 --I am not going to tell crooked, I say true what I know, there was one band in a reservation living. That is Rama Indians and the Chief of the band was in Orillia and he was Miskwahke, Chief Miskwahke. In 1850, that was when they get together, the head men and the head warriors and Aissance parted with Miskwahke and went away to Lake Huron, he and his band. Then another Chief, Chief Snake, he went to Lake Simcoe and settle there on that Snake Island, and then again Chief Yellowhead, William, it was, came here and settle here in what we call Rama now and the Indian department purchased this land from Chief William Yellowhead, from his land, and bought this 2,000 acres then and we are separate. How is it that if they part from me, part from dealings with me, and leave it all and go away and say "Never mind with it all", how is it when men is parted then they can come back and claim it like these Indians are doing now? When Yellowhead and Chief Miskwahke parted, and Chief Aissance and Snake, his councillors were parted, they ask Miskwahke what is the reason of living in this country and they

leave this country and go there.¹⁹³

Although Simcoe claims the date of the fissioning to be 1850, Dunning (1974) reported a similar if abbreviated story and provides a much earlier date, 1837, which corresponds more closely with the collapse of the government settlements at Coldwater. Indeed, the historical records report that in 1815 the 'otter,' 'reindeer' and 'catfish' bands united to form "one nation" before being joined by the 'pike' band in 1817.¹⁹⁴ David Simcoe's interpretation was likely based upon the political history of the Rama band which recognized Chief Mesquaaki as the head chief, and three principal warriors, Assance, Yellowhead, and Snake. These warriors, except for Yellowhead,¹⁹⁵ moved away from Mesquaaki's band and his territory to become chiefs in their own right. Assance apparently went north to Lake Huron and Snake went south to Lake Simcoe.¹⁹⁶ At Mesquaaki's death, Yellowhead took control of his territory, his name, and the 'reindeer' totem. Those who left to join the new groupings

¹⁹³ Testimony of David Simcoe, RG 10, vol 2331, 67,071: 131, September 20, 1923, Rama.

¹⁹⁴ Minutes of Council...June 7, 1817., RG 10, vol. 34, 19881. The 'pike' tribe were located west of Lake Simcoe, and between Kempenfelt Bay and Jackson's Point.

¹⁹⁵ Yellowhead was related to Mesquaaki through a maternal ancestor and was considered a Muskoka Indian.

¹⁹⁶ These ambiguous directions must refer to the north shore of Lake Huron and south to Saginaw Bay in the case of Assance, and, Snake Island in Lake Simcoe.

used their personal totems earned through military participation: Assance was an 'otter' and Snake a 'catfish.' Members from Assance's band later formed the core of the Christian Island administrative band. Yellowhead's and part of Snake's band formed the Rama band. The remaining members of Snake's band became members of Georgina Island and Christian Island. In addition each of these administrative bands also contained new members from the various groups who migrated into the area after the war of 1812.

The designation "Georgian Bay Ojibwa band" includes members who formed a self-sufficient community who might belong to various administrative bands (cf. Rogers 1963a: B3). The band may have originated with as few as three families¹⁹⁷ which was small, compared to the Timiskaming band, for example, which had been formed from seven families (Speck 1915b). Compared to the administrative size of the band in 1923 which was composed of thirty families on Georgina Island, sixty families at Rama and forty-seven families on Christian Island, only three families had hunting territories on Georgina Island; six families at Christian Island, and eleven families at Rama, including the Asquabe, Bigcanoe, Yellowhead, and Snake

¹⁹⁷ Testimony of Charles Bigcanoe. RG 10, vol. 2331-4A: 9,11. September 14, 1923, Georgina Island.

families.¹⁹⁸ These numbers suggest that the operable family size was between four and six members, and that the total Georgian Bay Ojibwa population having access to hunting territories to over 10,000 square miles was between 80 and 120.¹⁹⁹ The population above this number was largely attributed to immigration. In 1910, for example, there were 108 individuals designated as members of Parry Island which was augmented by an additional 110 non-members. The number of non-members steadily outpaced members through to 1913 when the band registered 111 members compared to 134 non-members (Rogers and Tobobondung 1975: 281). It is probable that in most cases the operable band population was less than half of the administrative band population size.

Summary

Immigration, both planned and opportunistic, of a variety of native peoples, principally from other Great Lakes locations north and west of the region, spurred by various political exigencies, confuse the cultural identification of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa during the first

¹⁹⁸ Testimony of John Elliott Bigcanoe, Charles Bigcanoe. RG 10, vol. 2331-4A: 9,15. September 14, 1923, Georgina Island; Testimony of John Bigwin, RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,071-4A: 94. September 20, 1923, Rama; Testimony of Thomas Kadegegwon RG 10, vol. 2331, 67,0781-4A: 42. September 17, 1923, Christian Island.

¹⁹⁹ The administrative band aggregate population was closer to 647 including 118 at Georgina Island, 250 at Rama, and 279 at Christian Island (Ibid).

half of the nineteenth century. It likely produced uneven distribution and distinctive combinations, contributing to complex if overlapping territorial patterns which may not be detected without a more detailed understanding of their origins. The scale of the analysis has attempted to focus on those historically identified groups who were observed to concentrate in Georgian Bay.

Land use activities which once extended around Georgian Bay to Saginaw Bay, Lake Michigan, were seriously interrupted by the changing political boundaries between American and British interests. Subsequent treaties and surrenders of land forced many Great Lakes native people who had divided their activities between the two locations, to return to Georgian Bay where they attempted to satisfy both fishing, trapping, and hunting. This contributed to various means of land use organization, facilitated by a totemic system and complemented by a hunting territorial system. All groups participated, in different measures, in fishing, hunting, and horticulture, depending on their proximity to principle fisheries, their exposure and in some cases, acceptance of various government agricultural projects, their access to rich fur bearing areas, and their cultural preference.

Georgian Bay likely experienced fluctuating populations of people, attributable to the immigration of

peoples attracted to, and later disenchanted with, the region and its government projects to the south. The collapse of Coldwater in 1838 certainly saw an influx of native people to the region who were often later reduced to living in their canoes among the islands of Georgian Bay.

Competing against the government and missionary influences which had been directed at resettling native people in agricultural villages, fur traders attempted to keep them hunting and fishing. A focal point for their activities was outside the area of direct influence of the government and missionaries, along the Georgian Bay shoreline near Parry Sound. Although the region was hardly wealthy in beaver, other skins provided a steady if small trade. Intensely competitive trading followed the Hudson's Bay Company to the region in 1827. The rationale underlying this trade was not the traditional relationship between fur trader and native hunter which characterized other fur trades for Company policy was to eliminate all beaver from the region, in this way preventing their competition from reaching the rich beaver areas north of the region. The principal objects of their trade were alcohol, and quality clothing.

The competitive fur trade period in the region did attract a trade in furs, if not particularly beaver. Recognizing the importance of fishing to the subsistence of

the native people, and to the trade, the fur traders were unlikely to alter a practice which encouraged hunting and trapping, for without a supply of fish, the Georgian Bay Ojibwa simply did not hunt.

Similar patterns of exploitation and land use emerge in the nineteenth century to that in previous periods. The difference was the degree to which fishing extended the hunting period, and the importance of fish preservation, which reduced the need to fish all year. The importance of the sturgeon fishery was surpassed by a fall fishery, emphasizing the taking of fish which could be readily preserved for the winter, and winter fishing which involved little preservation. Although this is the impression of the historical documents, the ethnographic evidence upholds the continued importance of sturgeon and several other types of fish to the local subsistence.

Although supporting evidence is not present, the emphasis on fall spawning fish over the once important spring fishing of sturgeon suggests that the fur trade encouraged a major change in the type of fish caught by altering the seasonal emphasis. This would underscore the commercial aspects of fishing, where much of the fish caught were preserved and marketed. The degree to which winter ice fishing was eliminated from the seasonal pattern, replaced by dried or salted fish, is difficult to determine without

quantitative data. The ethnographic support however, places a continued importance on fishing as a year round activity.

A major change in land use patterns occurred with increased exploitation of the hinterland, the commercial production of potatoes, and the introduction of salting as a form of fish preservation. As fishing shifted from subsistence to commercial purposes, the geographic scope of the activity likely decreased, concentrating communities to congregate for longer periods at the most commercially viable fishery, the fall fishery. The stabilizing effect of this was reinforced by the presence of the fur trading posts, which have often been cited in the development of the phenomenon of trading post bands. Commercial hunting for fur bearing animals for the trade, aided by steel traps, and the use of professional hunters, expanded exploitation into hinterland areas. Exploitation of the hinterland was motivated by some native groups by the loss of traditional hunting lands in areas outside the region, principally in Saginaw Bay.

Leadership among the Georgian Bay Ojibwa was structured on principles of inheritance, either to a chief or a shaman. The landscape was scattered with locations where chiefs were buried, lending an important sense of place for the Georgian Bay Ojibwa.

Group size remained small, rarely exceeding 50

people. Hunting was engaged in by dyads of father and son, or brothers. Evidence of hunting groups is not supported in the region. Fishing groups were dominated by the nuclear family.

Hunting territories emerged in the region, although there is little likelihood they flourished during the period of beaver extermination. The emergence of this system of organized hunting areas was a response to incorporating increased hunting to a fishing seasonal cycle in locations close to fishing and planting locations. It provided a means for diverse peoples to exploit a region which was seasonally restricted to access, and where access routes were likely shared. Political and historical factors suggest an origin of the hunting system of land tenure to immigrating groups, previously established at other Great Lakes locations to the west and south.

Berkes (1990: 41) suggests that native subsistence fishers have been ignored partly because of the lack of published information. In this regard, the Georgian Bay region is no exception. Without an ethnographic or ethnohistoric perspective, it is easy to understand how the Georgian Bay Ojibwa could be arbitrarily assigned to the role of hunters; to many, they probably 'looked' like hunters. This study suggests that commercial hunting and trapping in Georgian Bay land use was both marginal and

secondary to a subsistence based on fishing and small game hunting. This study has further sought to isolate that importance, by considering the historical influences, and the cultural processes by which the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay responded to those influences.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this research has been to provide ethnohistoric content to a Great Lakes region culture, the Georgian Bay Algonkian. It invites further empirical testing and rebuttal, for as new data and interpretations emerge, contributions can be made for continual expansion. The Georgian Bay Algonkian have been placed within the historical context of their political and physical environment from precontact to 1850. Ethnographic, historical, and archaeological sources have established the basis for several conclusions. This analysis presents the development of Georgian Bay Algonkian culture as one adapted to the littoral regions of the east shore of Lake Huron, where aquatic forms provided the principle subsistence resources, supplemented by small game and corn. There is much to suggest that fish were regarded as staples in Georgian Bay Algonkian communities and this emphasis has been posited as being reflected in other aspects of their culture and social organization.

The most effective approach to the study was a regional emphasis. A regional approach may mask the

differences within Georgian Bay communities, but this problem has been largely offset by field work and consultation of the local histories of the Parry Island, Moose Deer Point, and Shawanaga reserve communities. A regional perspective provided a means of dealing with diverse and ill-defined cultural groups, while preserving the element of regional homogeneity. Indeed, the complexity of peoples was demonstrated only at this level of analysis. As such the study reconstructs how the region came to be occupied by various groups, focusing attention on the historical and political understanding of land use conditions. An underlying political force in the Georgian Bay region throughout its history, was the presence of numerous groups practising varied land use patterns, exhibiting differing socio-political organizations, and alternate seasonal uses of Georgian Bay resources. The objective was to consider the dominant pattern and from that generalization provide a balanced representation of the Georgian Bay Algonkians in terms of their subsistence, ideology, social and political organization.

While many writers have recognized the abundant fishing areas, such as those in the St. Mary's River near Sault Ste. Marie (Bishop 1974; Hickerson 1962; 1967), few have recognized subsistence fishing as a major feature of

Georgian Bay region native land use.¹ This neglect has been addressed in the Great Lakes area by Cleland (1982: 764), who attributes this to the anthropologist's propensity to cast fishers as hunters, warriors, or fur traders. In recognizing the predominance of subsistence fishing, together with small game hunting and corn among the Georgian Bay Algonkian, the investigation of land use practices in the region became focused. Their geographic position within Georgian Bay was instrumental in the way in which other aspects of their culture and social organization functioned, and from which ideological, political, social, and economic activities found their origins and sustained their variations.

This analysis has repeatedly posed the question: Who were the Georgian Bay Algonkian? There is no clear portrait of the Georgian Bay Algonkian as a single cultural entity over time, as there is little to suggest that the Shebishikong people were ancestral to the nineteenth century Sandy Island Ojibwa, or seventeenth century *Ouasouarini*.

¹ Hickerson recognized the importance of the fisheries to Ojibwa groups in the northern Great Lakes in both aboriginal and historical times (1962: 81). From this premise, and without having explored the land use implications of fishing, he elaborated a system of social organization focused on fisheries as centres of "great communal activity" (Ibid). He concluded that the fisheries were to the Northern Algonkians what the agricultural village was to the Iroquois (Ibid: 82). Much of Hickerson's later work did not illuminate the land use implications of fishing, but instead, used fishers to support his aboriginal clan organization among the Ojibwa.

This is why the study has been cautious to continually re-identify groups which I have called the Georgian Bay Algonkian, within the context of known historical and political circumstance, and which have usually been called the Georgian Bay Ojibwa. Because their identification rests on confused and varied political and historical changes that influenced the region, what emerges is a cultural melding of groups and a cultural adaptation to the littoral parts of Georgian Bay which has come to identify the Georgian Bay Algonkian culture. Rather than presuming cultural identity, the political identities of peoples and how this fused with cultural identity is discussed.

Does a political definition clarify the adaptation or confuse it? Certainly it increases the complexity of understanding origins of the groups, and acts as caution for researchers not to consider similar names to be the same peoples. The confusing elements of political identification is brought clearly into focus during the eighteenth century, most notably by the claim by peoples to belong to certain cultural groups wholly by political association.

The Culture History of Georgian Bay

While the culture history of the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay is imperfectly known, six eras can be distinguished, each marking a period of historical,

political, or environmental change. The first five provide the focus for this study. In brief, they include:

1) Little Ice Age Climate, 1200 A.D. - 1550 A.D.

Precontact adaptation to climatic changes in the region, contributing to a subsistence established on aquatic sources, by small family groups. Use of corn likely intensified with trade with horticultural groups to the south. Trade in lithics circumscribed Georgian Bay in a 200 to 400 km radius.

2) Indirect Contact with Europeans, to 1615 A.D.

Indirect contact with the Georgian Bay Algonkian dates from precontact times. European trade goods appeared at Lake Nipissing and Methodist Point in approximately 1590 A.D. The Shebishikong site suggests a European presence, but does not reveal a date for the protohistoric introduction of European trade goods.

3) Direct Contact with Europeans, 1615 A.D.- 1649

A.D. The contact period with Europeans stretches from a few years before 1615 A.D., with the arrival of Etienne Brulé, and more directly to Champlain in 1615, closely followed by the Récollets and the

Jesuits. It ends abruptly in 1649 with the dispersal of the Huron by the Iroquois. This period saw Georgian Bay Algonkian groups moving closer to Huronia, and even taking up residence in some Huron-Petun villages.

4) Relocation of Lake Huron Groups 1650 A.D. - 1790

A.D. The era between 1650 - 1790 shows the return of several Lake Huron groups to the region, and the restructuring of some groups toward greater hunting. Others continued to fish. The centres of fur trading provided important fishing prospects. Defined territorial rights to fishing areas became absorbed in the competition for hunting areas by groups exploiting the hinterland regions.

5) Multiple Historical Influences, 1790 A.D. to 1850

A.D. This period was characterized by native group migration, government agricultural schemes, fur trading competition, and land surrenders. Fishing persisted all year, but commercial hunting or trapping, which now extended into defined tracts of the hinterland, and a hunting territorial system, became a prescribed part of the subsistence pattern.

6) The Reserve period, 1850 to Present. The movement of the Georgian Bay region groups to reserves, as outlined in the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, is characterized by commercialized fishing, logging and participation in trades involved with tourism.

Historical analyses may yet reveal changes within each era, particularly during the turbulent 1790 A.D. - 1850 A.D. period where the principal historical influences, the fur trade, government plans to civilize native peoples, and native immigration, have been compressed into a short sixty years. As the purpose of this discussion has been to concentrate within the imposed geographical boundary of the region, and to direct the investigation to ethnohistoric concerns, principally to changes in land use, the periods selected illuminate important changes and persistence, and reflect that goal.

The study has shown how a regional group devised and applied a system of belief, of social and political organization and trade, to a land use based on year round fishing, small game hunting, and corn. Faced with few other studies of inland shore fisheries in the Great Lakes region, the seemingly obvious link was to the prototype of fishing societies in North American on the North West Coast. These

fishing peoples however, inhabit a temperate climate adjacent to ocean fisheries of which there is little to compare to the more modest fish sources in the inland fresh water fisheries of the harsher climate of the Great Lakes region. It is also clear the Georgian Bay Algonkian fishers did not engage extensively in surplus production or the preservation of fish harvests nor were they sedentary which were key to the cultural development of the North West Coast fishing peoples. The Georgian Bay Algonkians also lacked a value system to translate preserved fish into prestige (through exchange and potlatch) which accounted for the rich ceremonials and elaborate social organization characterizing the North West Coast fishing culture. In view of these differences, it should also be noted that fishing as the principle subsistence in Georgian Bay employed native peoples year round, unlike the North West Coast where fishing was restricted to spawning periods.

Some aspects of a fishing focus have obvious relationships. Others do not fit the preconceived notions anthropologists have of fishers. Do anthropologists classify groups by the composition of their diet, by their allocation of time dedicated to one pursuit over another, by their perception of themselves as fishers or hunters balanced on an established belief system, by environmental circumstance, economic opportunity, or choice? The important question is

what the anthropologist infers about cultures classed as hunters or fishers. There is scientific validity to classifying cultures by subsistence, but it is unreasonable to presume cultural traits simply by identification of that category. This is aptly demonstrated by the Georgian Bay Algonkians who as fishers, share many traits with hunters.

It was thus outside the scope of this study to draw extensive comparisons with other fishing societies, for few studies directly relate to inland fisheries in North America.

There is little evidence to suggest that this subsistence pattern radically changed over time in the Georgian Bay region. The changes appear to have been marked by a growing tendency toward increased commercialization of both fishing and hunting, increased horticulture and concentrated fishing during peak spawning periods. Intensive fishing and fish preservation during the fall improved the possibility of winter hunting, especially in a region not known to have rich game resources, or easy access to the hinterland until after 1860 following water regulation activity which encouraged uniform water flow. This in part diminished the role of winter fishing, and eroded the cultural significance of the early spring ice fishing of sturgeon. The use of gill net fishing as an accommodation to fur trade influences, provided essential technological

support to a diversified fall fishery. This change in emphasis however, does not appear to extend to other aspects of the social and political organization, especially those envisaged by Cleland (1982).

In approaching the task of reconstructing the history of the Georgian Bay Algonkian, several principal themes were adopted: the identity of the Georgian Bay Algonkian, seasonal cycles, trade, social-political organization, territory, and land tenure. An essential part of that reconstruction has been a consideration of environmental influences, as it may have appeared to successive occupations in the region. One of the fundamental objectives was to isolate those areas of the region, based on resource endowment and potential, where native occupation was most likely to have concentrated; these were later compared with available historical and ethnographic evidence. Evidence of resource potential, and climatic changes in the period, suggested that the climate in Georgian Bay was not the same as today, and was subject, with varying response, to the Little Ice Age.

An important finding of this study has been that the predominance of occupation and use of the region's island and shore line resources over that of a pattern characterized by a winter dispersal to the hinterland. Complementing this finding was the identification of a

possible interior trade connection between Lake Nipissing and Georgian Bay which may have been used by the Nipissing. Rather than skirting the shoreline of Georgian Bay mirroring Champlain's route, this route was inland, following a route of portages and waterways. Except for use of this specific route, exploitation of the hinterland was of marginal importance to the cultural development of the region. The Georgian Bay Algonkian appear to have been attracted to locations which supported fishing and small game hunting, provided natural clearings, and sandy soils for horticulture, provided shelter from the westerlie winds, and were convenient for trading.

The Shebishikong site analysis provides insight into precontact land use, cultural extent, social organization and territoriality. The precontact Georgian Bay Algonkian may have emerged as a cultural entity during the Little Ice Age climate ca. 1200 A.D - 1500 A.D. although archaeological support is limited. Living in small groups they appear to have exploited the shore line and island environment. Although fish were not a major feature of the archaeological recovery, sturgeon, pike, trout, and catfish were recovered from the site and likely played an important role to subsistence. In addition, moose, beaver, turtle, clam, waterfowl and small game added variety to the land use and subsistence pattern. Large game hunting did not play a

major role in land use and there is slight archaeological evidence to suggest that the hinterland region was exploited. Compared against the volume of food resources in the waters of Georgian Bay, the archaeological absence of large quantities of fish bones, coupled with the poor condition of the site, leaves the findings for this early period inconclusive and puzzling.

The precontact Georgian Bay Algonkian were not isolated from other Great Lakes locations or from the cultural developments occurring in the south among Iroquois cultures. They were observers, if not participants in the developing horticulture south of the region and influences are also seen in their ceramics. Contacts outside the region are demonstrated by lithic materials derived from locations circumscribing Georgian Bay within a radius of 200 to 400 kilometres of shoreline. The political significance of this culture contact depends on whether the precontact Georgian Bay Algonkian were the merchants or recipients of that exchange.

The analysis of the seventeenth century which is supported principally by historical documents, is central to the study of Georgian Bay Algonkian culture as it illuminates cultural organization. The importance of a specialized Georgian Bay fishery, characterized by shallow water, spear, net, and hook fishing is clearly documented,

but the practice of a gill net fishery is unsupported by historical documentation until the eighteenth century. Sturgeon provided the principle food source, followed by fall spawning lake trout and herring. In their trading relationships with the Huron, furs were not as important an item to the Georgian Bay Algonkian as has been thought, although considerable beaver pelts found their way to the Petun (Garrad 1985). This relationship did not exclusively depend on the exchange of corn.

Despite the supposed attractions of hunting brought about by the fur trade, the Georgian Bay Algonkian continued to fish using traditional methods. Indeed, a case is made that an abandonment of fishing in favour of hunting or trapping was not at any point, other than as a brief segment of the seasonal cycle, characteristic of the adaptation. Although Hickerson (1970: 106) for example, argued that the Ojibwa abandoned their fisheries to trap in prescribed hunting territories during this time, the debate continues today over the aboriginality of certain hunting practices, and territorial systems. Hunting territories among the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, appear to be a nineteenth century phenomenon influenced largely by political concerns.

The eighteenth century is poorly known. The argument is made however, that with established small game hunting of aquatic animals, the Georgian Bay Algonkian proved well

suited to function as fishers in a fur trade economy. The centres of fur trading activities provided extensive fisheries where the Georgian Bay Algonkian continued to spear and net fish. The introduction of metal spears, abundant metal fish hooks, and twine sustained their fishing efforts. There is no evidence that they were dependent on the posts for food, although native corn, after the collapse of Huronia, was in demand and now circulated through the posts as a valued commercial item. This may have contributed to increased efforts to grow corn, although there are no quantitative estimates on which to base this. Some Georgian Bay Algonkians were likely compelled to increase their hunting and trapping efforts to obtain trade goods, corn, and to consolidate their territorial position in relation to other groups who were increasingly disposed to the perceived benefits of participation in a fur trade economy, in particular, the Mississauga. Competition over hunting areas adjacent to fish spawning areas, may have influenced some form of control over the fish spawning areas met by incorporating them into an abbreviated hunting territorial system, although there is little historical evidence for this.

Despite the historical evidence of north shore native immigration through the Georgian Bay region on route to fur trading posts at Lake Ontario and Albany (New York),

there continues to be evidence for a land use pattern based on subsistence fishing, small game hunting and corn. Many Georgian Bay Algonkian probably abandoned subsistence fishing and adapted to the diversified land use practice traditionally practised by the Mississauga, namely one of a river mouth occupation which combined fishing with horticulture and hunting. This pattern of land use was particularly well-suited to a burgeoning fur trade, as it provided food, fur, and an opportunity for territorial occupation.

The focus of the study of the eighteenth century was to test whether a land use pattern of subsistence fishing, small game hunting and corn could survive the presence of French and British trading interests. An important change which disguised the cultural identity of the Georgian Bay Algonkian was the changing political definition of groups which became shrouded by the prolific political activity of one group, collectively known as the Mississauga (Bain ed. 1901: 35; also Smith 1975: 216).

There were several attractions compelling some north shore groups to move south of the region including: access to the fur trade at Albany (New York), the desire for better land for horticulture, the opportunity to exploit fur bearing animals in the hinterland using a route from Lake Simcoe (and equipment supplied by the fur traders which made

trapping isolated beaver possible), and to consolidate a locus of political activity and trade. Also apparent is not all groups adopted this Mississauga type land use pattern. Indeed, subsistence fishers hunted for furs, however, the focus of their activity continued to be fishing. Fishing actually may have increased during this period to cope with the loss of corn in the diet. Fish could be exchanged for corn, or to meet the expanding demands of the fur traders for food. Without evidence of harvest returns, however, the analysis must remain tentative.

Subsistence fishers working in a fur trade economy operated in several ways: they increased their production and preservation of fall fish to support winter hunting; they negotiated political agreements with other groups to share their fisheries in exchange for access to richer hunting grounds; they increased the use of nets which provided a greater surplus for exchange; and, they took advantage of the presence of fur trading posts to exchange fish, crafts and other items. Increasing commercialization of both fishing and trapping emerges during this period.

Nineteenth century Georgian Bay was characterized by native immigration, combined with intensified exploitation of the hinterland which was facilitated by professional hunters who had steel traps and castoreum for bait. The split land use pattern practised by some Algonkian who

wintered near Saginaw Bay, Lake Michigan, and Lake Erie, unfolds in response to the changing political boundaries between American and British interests. This forced many Algonkians to seek asylum in the Georgian Bay region.

The fur trade in nineteenth century Georgian Bay did not rest so much on the marketing of furs as it did on protection of the furs to the north, and was largely influenced by the "extermination policy" of the Hudson's Bay Company (Rich 1960, 2: 190,471), and the presence of competitive free traders. Following the example set by previous fur trade enterprises in the region, the nineteenth century trade offered a competitive selection of goods to the Georgian Bay Algonkian, which did not rest on bountiful fur harvests.

The greatest change during the fur trade period was the seasonal shift to increased trapping of small game in the hinterland. Significantly, subsistence fishing, including winter ice fishing, persisted well into the 1850s.

Despite vigorous trading on part of several competing parties, fishing was a prerequisite for hunting, for not only did fish provide the Georgian Bay Algonkian diet during hunting, but it supplied an important exchange item at the fur trade posts.

The native hunting territorial system appears to have emerged sometime after 1812 in response to military

events.² This period introduced new and returning native groups to the region, many of whom were already familiar with a hunting territorial system in Saginaw Bay. Competing political identities fused with cultural identities to surface during this period to claims to land on the basis of loyalty to the British.

Subsistence fishers adopted a hunting system devised to accommodate the fisheries, rarely extending beyond the wetlands, or Georgian Bay. Many territories included island locations where both horticulture and fishing could be practised. Use of the hunting territories was limited to a short season in the fall, which allowed other groups such as the Mississauga, to exploit the area during the winter and spring. Organization into hunting groups as developed in the literature is unsupported by the historical evidence. The system of hunting territories arose partly through importation by immigrating family groups, and partly as a means to distinguish exploitation areas between various groups. The totem provided a social means to establish and sustain that distinction, although the guardian spirit aspect of totems was recognized.

An essential feature of the social organization was

² An earlier thesis draft, Rights of Passage: Ethnohistory of the Georgian Bay Ojibwa, (1989) discussed the details of the system and how conditions for its emergence arose in 1812.

a flexible, small group organization, well-suited to the dynamics of the biophysical environment, the geography of several thousand islands, the political and economic conditions, and the cultural development of small groups being led in the seventeenth century by shamanic persons known as *fish preachers*. Throughout the periods of the study the size of the Georgian Bay Algonkian groups remained small. The extended family and later the nuclear family was the practical unit of exploitation. Subsistence fishing as an individual or family undertaking fits well with the behavioural patterns of the Ojibwa as described by Rogers (1972b: 34). The possible exception to this group size is that of winter co-residential groups during the seventeenth century which may have been large. There is no evidence of clans, corporate structure, or an organization based on patrilineal descent, although leadership positions among north shore Lake Huron groups were inherited. The view that a subsistence base of fish, small game and horticulture would contribute to larger more sedentary groups does not find support in the Georgian Bay region, not because of resource limitations, but because of political and cultural realities.

The major question emerging from this study is how feasible was an Algonkian land use adaptation to aquatic sources compared to the hunting orientation which dominates

current understanding of Algonkian economy. Rostlund (1952: 155) suggested that attributes such as diet, technology, and social organization were important areas from which to begin an analysis. The Georgian Bay Algonkian consumed fish, manufactured and used fishing implements, had a specific vocabulary distinctive to fishing, practised a form of social organization that was appropriate to fishing under Georgian Bay conditions, and most importantly, sustained a belief system concerning fishing and water spirits that dominated their world view. Future research must examine the possible distinctions and similarities which will contribute to the identification of a distinct Algonkian fishing adaptation.

Bishop (1986: 49) argues that continuity and persistence among Ojibwa groups over time is predicated on whether it is social organization or the forces of production that are investigated. The former gives the impression of not having changed through time, while the latter indicates rapid change. This line of reasoning does not hold for the Georgian Bay Algonkian. There may be some basis for this application to big game hunters who exchanged bows and arrows for guns, but there is no equivalent analogy to describe the technological changes, or their lack, similarly affecting an adaptation to fishing and small game hunting. Fishing technology changed slowly. Because an

increased efficiency in fishing technology does not imply a replacement of less efficient implements (Cleland 1982: 781), fishing becomes efficient through the continued use of diverse methods: net, spear and hook. This questions Rostlund's assumption that a fishery based on nets was superior to one where other means were also used (1952: 102). Rostlund did note, however, that the failure to use nets could be related to both environmental influences, and cultural reasons (Ibid: 88). European influence could have improved the durability of fishing threads, fishing spears, and hooks, and altered preservation practices by introducing the salt and barrel method of preservation, but the success of the fisheries depended on climatic factors, fish populations, and individual skills, all of which were perceived by the Georgian Bay Algonkian to be sanctioned through belief and ritual practices. Indeed, Berkes (1990: 39) argues that subsistence fishing is the most persistent segment of a traditional wildlife-based native economy.

As in any reconstruction there is the danger of overstating the place of a particular subsistence, in this case, fishing, when quantitative and archaeological support is lacking. The very reason that little is known about subsistence fishing stems from the difficulty investigating and quantifying harvests. Until these kinds of evidence can be found, the value of this study must rest on its

integrated approach which considers various influences.

Having described the Algonkian speaking peoples of Georgian Bay as having a subsistence pattern based on fishing/small game/corn such a portrayal claims a certain latitude in the use of the archaeological and documentary sources. The approach used in this study compromises certain features of Georgian Bay Algonkian culture, aspects of hunting for example, and detailed information about the social and political organization could not be examined in detail. Before these and other aspects of Georgian Bay Algonkian culture can be examined, one must have an understanding of the overall land use, and the historical events influencing the region. This study has been aimed toward providing that ground work.

Future Research

In the context of the present study, several areas of future research should be considered by interested researchers. Subjects raised by this study warranting further research include an examination of the prehistoric and historic shore and island archaeological sites which are poorly understood, and not fully analyzed. An archaeological investigation of the apparent absence of hinterland use, and the intensive island/shore resource use would assist in clarifying this problem. A detailed and

accurate chronology for the Shebishikong site is necessary, as is the identification and analysis of other local sites. Larger samples could certainly help determine the prehistoric land use pattern which has operated in the Georgian Bay region.

A systematic survey of ritual objects may lead to an understanding of precontact mythologies, particularly the consistent ritual practices employing animal bones.

The question of leadership by shamanic characters, and the presumed re-distribution of trade goods into ritual sources by these individuals, are intriguing areas of inquiry. An example of important relationships between ritual action and perceived environmental changes, is suggested by the relationship between the ritual marriage of two females to a net (Thwaites ed. 1959, 17: 199, 201). This practice, prompted by an unprecedented failure of fishing, diffused between cultural groups, and may have contributed to important changes in social and economic organization.

The role of women in fishing societies poses an important theme that remains to be developed. Analysis of female participation in the fishery could provide evidence bearing on the nature of the socio-political organization in Georgian Bay. As females were conceived as being married to the fishing net, they were evidently construed as fertile

symbols to the fishing harvest of sturgeon. There is no indication that women were perceived as being ritually polluting to fishing, as they could be for hunting, which suggests their role has important implications to the operational organization of the local groups.

The Algonkian speakers of Georgian Bay demonstrate that not all Algonkian people uniformly adapted to a hunting subsistence or to similar historical influences. This study promoted the importance of the inland shore fishery, the interrelationships between native economies, the process of adaptation to technology, and the cultural context to changes brought by contact. More importantly it described the cultural sequence of events that identifies the culture history of the Algonkian speakers of Georgian Bay dating from 1250 A.D. to begin with the findings from the Shebishikong site, and ending in 1850 to coincide with the Robinson Huron Treaty. The unifying theme which links this uneven period is a fishing focus. It is from this that inferences are drawn to model the cultural development in the Georgian Bay region.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>JP</u>	<u>The Papers of Sir William Johnson</u>
<u>MPHC</u>	<u>Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections</u>
<u>N.Y.Col.Docs</u>	<u>New York Colonial Documents</u>
<u>WHC</u>	<u>Wisconsin Historical Society Collections</u>

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