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Martyrs' Shrine – 1971

(May to October)

* opening date: May 15

* Mass schedule for *May 15 to June 19* (only):
  Sundays: 0900, 1000, 1115, 1945
  Weekdays: 0800, 1030, 1945

* We still need your generous support for the new building program and for improvements on the grounds.

* *Grounds fee:* to help with rising maintenance and improvement costs $1.00 per car ($5.00 per bus). Season pass ($5.00).

17th Century Indians

MARTYRS' SHRINE MESSAGE

Spring 1971, Volume 35, Number 1

Selective Bibliography

1. Sources

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2. General Information

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MARTYRS' SHRINE MESSAGE

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IN THIS ISSUE

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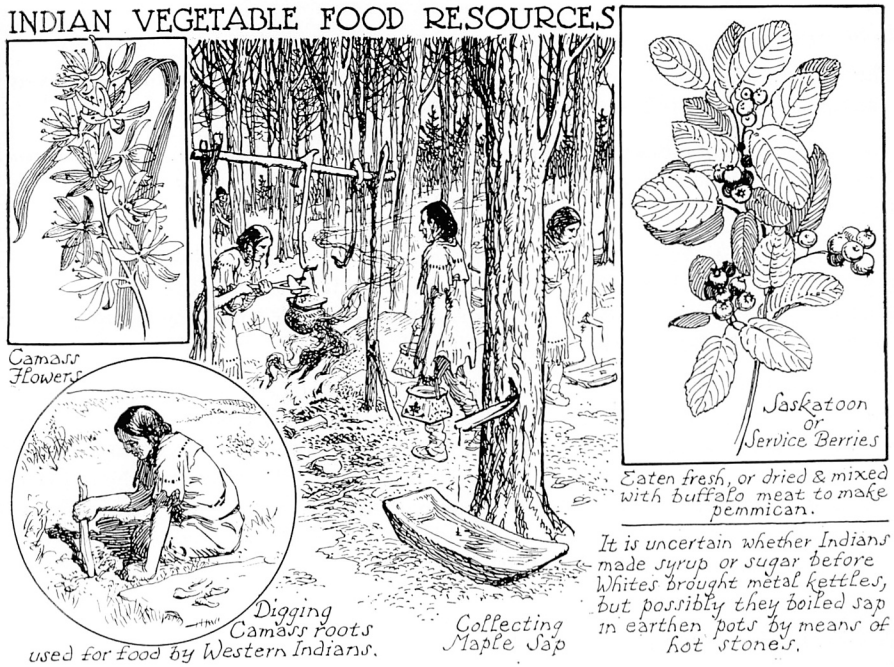
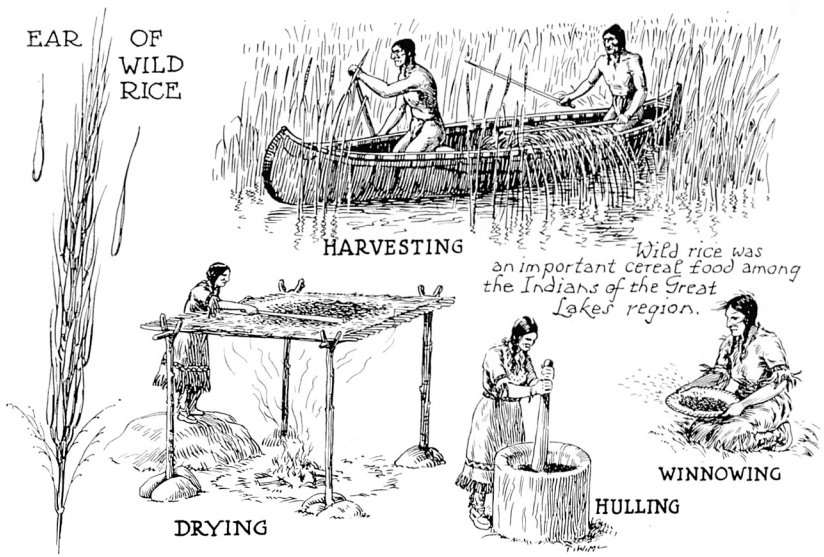
INDIAN VEGETABLE FOOD RESOURCES





From the Imperial Oil Collection

From the Imperial Oil Collection

thing inside and out?" The Indians think that grease is good for the skin and makes it supple.

The Indians are witty and fond of jests, and they can act very prettily. If, as sometimes happens, the object of their wit appears on the scene, they will break off the conversation and welcome him to their circle, as if he had not been mentioned. Those who hear that they have been ridiculed never flare up but they reply contemptuously that the joker lacks wit; of course they repay like with like. In their meetings, whether they are discussing their own affairs or treating with strangers, sobriety is the rule. On occasion they can speak so cleverly and so persuasively that the French have been moved to admiration, especially when they parry their opponents with wit or refute them extemporaneously with conclusive argument. Those who possess this inherent gift of eloquence naturally govern and rule the rest, their influence corresponds to their eloquence and this eloquence has no other source than nature; they are simple people and have enjoyed the advantage of no other training. Hence it may be inferred that some of them possess ability and sound judgment; those who have lived among them report that as a rule they excel our peasants in both respects. Their bodies are tall and well-formed and they possess both strength and agility, having more dignity than beauty. In appearance they are very like the extant busts and pictures of the ancient Romans. That they are a robust people is manifest from the fact that weak constitutions could not long survive amid such toil and poverty. A hunchback is rare, as is a man with a pot-belly or with one eye.

Editor's comment . . .

About this issue

We are devoting the present issue to the Indians of 17th century New France. Actually, we have in mind those years of the 17th century when the French, first under Champlain, then his successor Montmagny, made serious efforts to build a new world colony while linking themselves in a special way with the Huron people of North Simcoe county.

In other words, we shall examine that period of Canadian history which roughly embraces the first half of the 17th century. Huronia, we will recall, collapsed under pressure from the Iroquois in 1649 and 1650. The Hurons, killed, captured or scattered, left their last and best of homelands to disappear rapidly as an Iroquoian people, once so well identified and so well established.

It may help the readers of the *Message* to have an overall view of the Indian situation at the time of the mission to Huronia, begun with much hope under the Recollets in 1615 and terminated so tragically under the Jesuits in 1650.

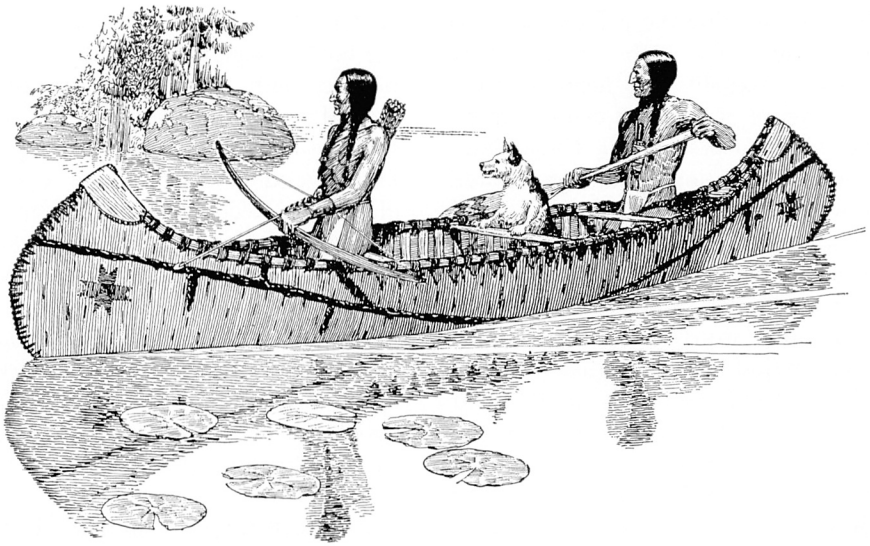
Obviously, it would take a book or two even to attempt to do justice to all that is implied in "Indians of 17th century New France." However, we are bold enough to sketch the general picture, and, then, being on surer ground, we feel more capable of describing the Huron nation as it was known and understood by Champlain, the Recollet Sagard, Jean de Brébeuf blackrobe *par excellence,* and so many other observant and articulate missionaries.

In our days, serious readers would like to know more about the beginnings of Canada and, in particular, about the first inhabitants we have, since Columbus, grown used to calling "Indians." In a sense, it is a pity that we can say only so much in the limited space of one issue of the *Message*. The subject is a fascinating one, and, rather encouragingly, grows more revealing and appealing as our archaeologists and anthropologists expand their research and record for us their observations.

Martyrs' Shrine, along with Ste-Marie, necessarily recalls Old Huronia. To understand and appreciate what Huronia was and then ceased to be we must review the story of the Indians of our 17th century New France.

The Indian Tribes of New France

A. J. Macdougall, S. J.

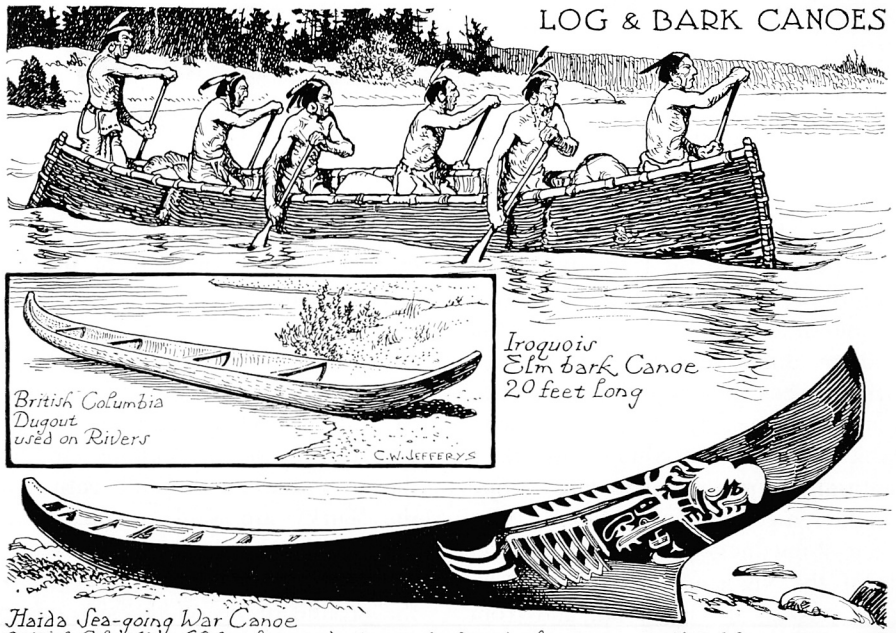


When the first European explorers came to North America in the 16th and 17th centuries, or earlier, they encountered various Indian tribes. At first, such encounters were short-lived and had little lasting impact either way. In time, however, as the white man came to stay in the new land, the contacts multiplied, the interracial and intercultural conflicts grew, and the tensions mounted.

We know from our history that the Indians did not originate in America, either North, Central, or South. Their forebears seem to have come from Asia and, as a result of climate changes and migratory patterns, probably crossed over to America by Bering Strait. When did this first take place? Possibly about fifteen thousand years ago.

One can imagine the constant moving about in a vast land in order to obtain food, shelter, improved living conditions, and so much else. This would encourage a natural flow southward and southeastward. At any rate, by the time Spanish, Portuguese, French and English invade the Americas, "Indians" are living from

to them for they say that if they stand their legs swell at once. In France something to drink is served with the meals and people will drink as they eat; the Indians finish their eating before they will drink at all and when they drink they take nothing to eat. In France the host sits with his guests and serves the food; among the Indians the host never eats with his guests, he serves the food himself or has some one to serve it, but he never has any part in the feast. In France a dinner is served on dishes and the table is set with them, so that each guest may help himself to the food he likes best; among the Indians it is the host who gives each guest what and how much he thinks right. The French indulge in conversation at dinner; the Indians are generally silent. The French have a proverb "*la sauce vaut mieux que le poisson*"; the Indians have no sauces, liking their food cooked as plainly as possible. We Europeans season almost all our food with salt in order to bring out the flavour; the Indians say there is a kind of bitterness in salt and they detest Dutch cheese, rape, mustard, pepper, and other stimulants of the palate. There is a story about mustard, which we have on the authority of the guests who were present. An Indian had been asked to dinner by a Frenchman and seeing mustard on the table for each to help himself, as they do in France, and wishing to investigate more carefully, and ignorant of its potency, helped himself to a spoonful and put it in his mouth. The mustard was nippy and attacked his nose and head at once. The fellow did his best to keep his self-possession, but his face worked and he could not help shedding tears and the French laughed long and loud. In France butchers sell the bones with the meat, they generally appear on the table together; the Indians, men and women alike, separate the meat from the bones with such skill that meat is generally cooked without the bones. However, they do cook the bones and serve them, but not to strangers; and when the bones have been picked, they do not throw them to the dogs, but burn them in the fire or bury them in the ground or lay them out on some high place, taking very great care that the dogs should not get them. This is no doubt in accordance with an absurd superstition, which is still prevalent among those savages who have not yet been reached by the Faith, that if the beavers' bones are given to the dogs, the beavers will not let themselves be caught, fearing no doubt a like indignity. In common conversation we Europeans make an apology if we have to mention the foot or the shoe; Indians are not ashamed to mention both. Indeed, when they are eating, if they have not a plate they do not hesitate to place their portion on the end of the mocassin or sometimes on the bare foot; with equal stolidity they will wipe their greasy fingers on their boots or—and this seems to us much more boorish—on their hair. Europeans, whose manners are polite, use a fork at table in order to avoid touching the greasy food; the Indians use only their fingers, nature's fork and, if you say you would rather use a real fork and not get grease on your fingers, they say, "You think that a heinous offence? Isn't grease a good



From the Imperial Oil Collection

one end of America to the other. We have only to recall the natives Christopher Columbus met in 1492 and improperly named "Indians." We can think of the Aztecs of Mexico and that Mayan civilization of Central America, and of those Indians of Stadacona who fraternized with Jacques Cartier in 1534.

Eastern Canada

Our Canada in the 17th century had Indian tribes in the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, parts of the prairies and along the West Coast. Since we are interested in 17th century New France, we must restrict ourselves to eastern Canada, i.e. to Acadia, Quebec, Ontario, and the northern parts of New York State and the State of Maine.

In a sense, it is nearly impossible to determine with precision the various tribes that inhabited this northeastern part of North America. There were so many mergings, migrations, adoptions, varying names for the same tribe, so many similar patterns in dress, food, customs and warfare. Nevertheless we can establish the major divisions among the Indian tribes and classify most of them according to these general divisions.

To be sure, we should realize that many Indians lived rather according to smaller units, in bands or the association of several families, even when they actually belonged to the larger groupings of clan and tribe. The clan referred to those people of the same tribe who claimed descent from some real or imaginary ancestor. These clans usually bore the names of animals or birds: Turtle, Deer, Bear, Loon, Beaver, Duck.

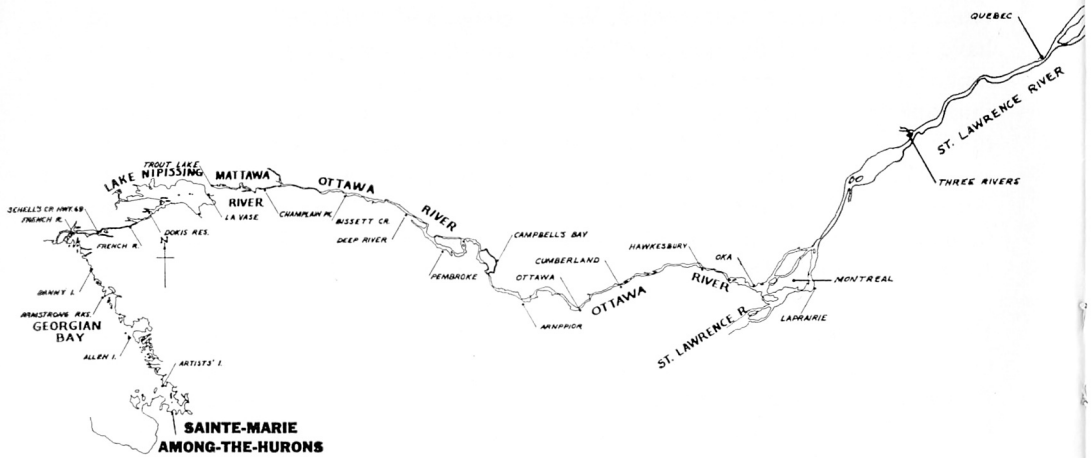
The two main divisions, by language and "culture," in New France are the Algonkian (to be distinguished from Algonkin or Algonquin) and Iroquoian (to be distinguished from Iroquois). If we were to push somewhat beyond the strict area of New France, we would have to consider two other groupings or divisions: the Southern Indians, i.e. south of New York and Ohio, and the Dakota or Sioux, found in the area north of the Mississippi. These Southern Indians, of a milder disposition, were commonly known as Cherokees, Choctaws, Seminoles. The Sioux also included the Winnebagoes from around Green Bay, Wisconsin, about whom we have some information in the *Jesuit Relations.*

The Algonkians

By far the most numerous group, the Algonkian tribes stretched from the far north around Hudson Bay to the Atlantic seaboard, and from the Maritimes across New England, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and into the modern States of Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana. They may have been as numerous as 150,000 to 200,000.

Of course, not all these people spoke exactly the same tongue. But the language was a basic one, and the differences, though perhaps less marked, would have been something like what we experience today in regard to Italian, French and Spanish.

Mostly nomadic, these tribes led a rude existence, hunting and fishing, gathering berries and wild rice, housed in roughly built single family wigwams, clothed in animal skins, and exposed to various extremes of climate and much hardship. It was



not unusual for them to suffer for lack of food, especially in a severe northern winter. They also tended to be very warlike and could cause their neighbors much anxiety and embroil them in unending conflict.

They hunted moose, deer and caribou, used toboggans, snowshoes and the graceful birch-bark canoe, and traded the pelts of lynx, otter, fox, marten, and, especially, beaver. In return they sought food, tobacco, iron tools, guns, kettles and brandy.

Because they were so widespread, the colonization by the French and English in time affected mainly their lands and provoked some bitter confrontation and harrowing incidents.

These Algonkian tribes were known, in the Maritimes, as Micmacs or Souriquois and Malecites; through New England, as Mohicans, Massachussets and Abenakis; to the north, as Montagnais (Lac Saint Jean area), Aitikamegues or White Fish (St. Maurice River area), Algonquins or Algonkins (north of the Ottawa river), People of the Island (Allumette), and the Iroquets of the lower Ottawa river; and towards the northwest, as Mascoutens or Fire Nation, Ottawas, Potawatomis, Nipissings, Chippewas, People of the Sault, Illinois and Ojibwas. And other names could be added.

Apparently, Chippewa is another form of Ojibwa, and sub-divisions of the Ojibwas were Missisaugas, Ottawas and Potawatomis.

Even this brief review will give us some idea of how widespread the Algonkian family of Indians was in the 17th century.

The Iroquoians

The other major family of Indians in New France is called today Iroquoian, or sometimes Huron-Iroquoian, but we must not confuse the term Iroquoian with the people traditionally known as the Iroquois. These were only five tribes among many who had formed a powerful league or confederacy. The French called this group the Iroquois; the English simply referred to them as the Five

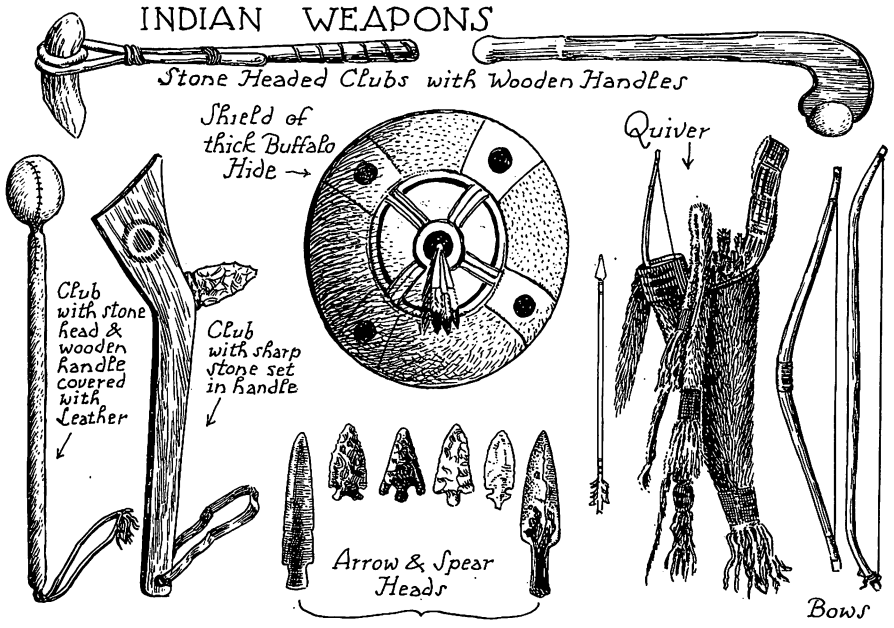
Extracts from Ducreux

From the Imperial Oil Collection

Contrary to the prevalent opinion in Europe they are far from dull; their minds are keen and their judgment is sound, though in other respects the Indians differ very much from ourselves. That they possess intelligence could be seen from the skill with which they do everything, from their natural eloquence which finds scope in their meetings and councils, from their shrewdness in daily intercourse, from the vigorous memories which they possess in childhood, and from their ready apprehension of the facts and mysteries of the Faith. That they differ from us in many of their customs will be plain from the following facts.

Europeans take their food from a table and do not recline, according to the universal custom of the ancients, but sit; the Indians squat on the ground when they are eating, as the Turks are said to do. Seats, benches or chairs are never used or mentioned among them; they sit on the ground or lie on the side except when they are out on the trail or engaged in hunting. Standing is torture

alms-dish, and the spoon with which I ate was as big as a small dish or saucer. For my apartment and quarters they gave me for myself alone as much space as could be occupied by a small household; they turned one out for my sake the day after my arrival. In this particularly I noted their kind affection and that they wished to make me happy and to help me and serve me with all the attention and respect due to a great chief and war-leader, such as they deemed me. Since they are not accustomed to make use of a pillow I used at night a log of wood or a stone which I placed under my head, and apart from that lay merely on the mat like them, without coverlet or any kind of bed, and on so hard a spot that when I got up in the morning I felt all bruised and broken, head and body. In the morning after waking and a brief prayer to God I breakfasted on the trifle that our woman savage had brought me.



From the Imperial Oil Collection

Nations; and these called themselves the People of the Longhouse.

These Iroquoian tribes are strangely present in the heart of Algonkian territory, in northern New York State and southwestern Ontario, and in the Georgian Bay area of Simcoe county. They really constitute an island in an Algonkian sea. And yet they are powerfully present and inhabited the more fertile land.

They strike us as more intelligent, better organized, more enterprising, and more dynamic. They were semi-sedentary and semi-agricultural and active traders with other Indians and later the Europeans. They lived in a more substantial kind of dwelling, called a cabin or longhouse, which normally eight to ten families shared. They hunted and fished less than their Algonkian neighbors, and grew and ate corn as their staple food, along with pumpkins, squash, sunflower seeds and beans. They also gathered wild fruit and nuts.

As a group, they were not as "artistic" as the Algonkians who made better wampum, pipes and other gaily colored articles. However, they had developed a loose yet effective system of government, and many of their members were renowned for their eloquence and well reasoned argument. We have some impressive examples of this preserved for us in the *Jesuit Relations.*

Two main confederacies among the Iroquoian tribes stand out at this time: (1) the so-called Iroquois (an Algonkian word for serpent or bitter enemy) of Five Nations, made up of, from east to west, Mohawks (Algonkian word for man-eaters), Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayagus and Senecas; and (2) the Hurons or Wendats, four tribes called the Bear, the Rock, the Cord and the Deer. There were other confederacies at the time such as the Tobacco group and the Neutrals. Other Iroquoian tribes of this period were the Eries, or the Cat Nation, and the Susquehannas.

The Five Nations, dwelling in the northwest part of New York State, controlled the waterways: the St. Lawrence, the Hudson, the Richelieu and lesser rivers, Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario. To the south of them lay the Susquehannas, their bit-

ter and constant foes. Their other longstanding enemies were the Hurons who had gradually, it seems, withdrawn from the St. Lawrence to settle north of Lake Simcoe and along and in from various bays of Lake Huron. To the west of the Hurons lived the Tobacco nations, a smaller confederacy, formerly at enmity with the Hurons but now their close allies and much like them in language, temperament and customs. They grew a large crop of tobacco and traded this commodity for furs and other articles.

To the southwest, east of Niagara and hemmed in by Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair lived the Neutrals, so called because they maintained a policy of strict neutrality in the constant warfare between Iroquois and Hurons. The other Iroquoian tribe, the Eries, dwelt along Lake Erie.

Hurons versus Iroquois

We are not sure of the reasons that set Hurons against Iroquois, in the pre-European era. No doubt, they had something to do with trade, trespassing and personal grudges. However, it is a well established fact that they were at loggerheads before the arrival of the French. Once the Hurons allied themselves with the French and gradually became masters of the fur-trade, this hostility, perhaps in earlier times confined to raids and feuding, erupted into a bloody and destructive warfare.

As far as we can make out, the five Nations numbered about 12,000 or slightly more. Their arch rivals, the Hurons, in 1639, had about the same population. But, if we are to believe Champlain and Brébeuf, the Hurons were much more numerous in previous decades, perhaps as many as 30,000. Recurring epidemics and warfare had destroyed about half of the Huron population.

It is interesting to note that, while the two large Iroquoian confederacies were bitter enemies, the Algonkian neighbors of the Hurons were also their good friends. Indeed, groups of Algonkians lived in the midst of the Hurons, and among the Tobaccos too. They also fought against the common enemy the Five Nations.

For a long time, the Iroquois, though fierce and crafty warriors, could barely hold their own against the Hurons and the Algonkians. Even in 1640 we hear of the Hurons capturing one hundred Iroquois. The turning point came about 1642 when the Dutch who inhabited the area just south of the Mohawks freely traded firearms to the Iroquois in exchange for furs. The French, on the other hand, were loath to adopt such a policy towards the Hurons and Algonkians and provided only a few muskets to the Christian Indians whom they trusted more. Thus armed the Iroquois rapidly became the dominant force and swept all before them, even making life terribly miserable and precarious for the French at Three Rivers and Montreal.

Iroquois domination

The main issue, of course, was the fur-trade so tightly controlled by the Hurons for decades. With the depletion of furs in their own territory, the Iroquois cast envious eyes on the Canadian northwest and manoeuvred to win part or all of its fur supply.

In the 1640s and early 1650s the

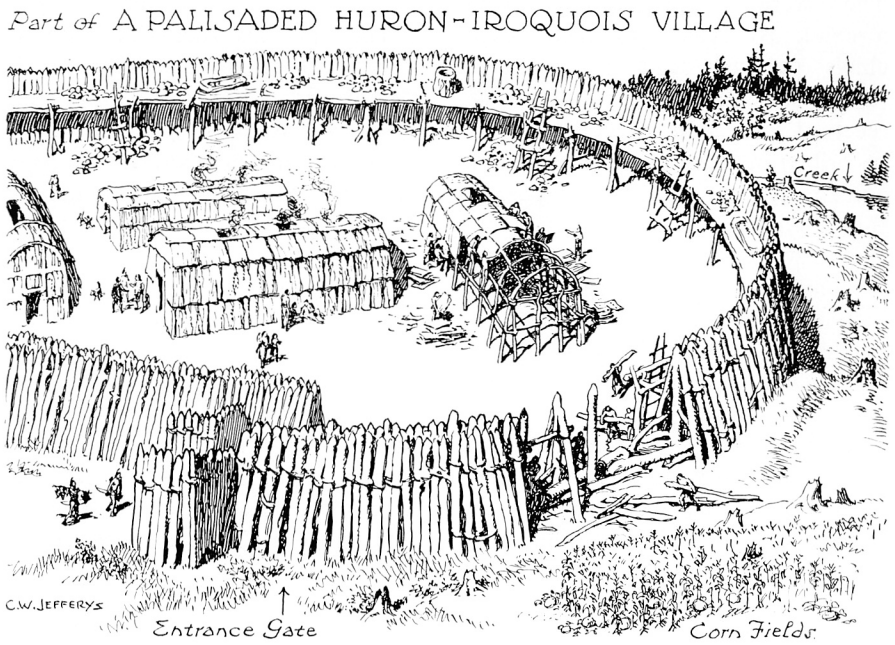
try, I found two Huron women near a cross-road and asked them which way to take to get to the town whither I was bound; I did not know the name of it, still less which of the two roads I ought to take. These poor women took enough trouble to make themselves understood, but there was no way of doing so. Finally, through the inspiration of God, I took the right road, and at the end of some time found my savages sitting in the shade under a tree in a fine large meadow where they were awaiting me, much troubled as to what had become of me. They made me sit down beside them and gave me stalks of Indian corn to suck which they had gathered in a field near by. I observed the way they used them and found them quite good to suck. After that, as I passed through another field full of beans I picked a dishful of them, which I afterwards had boiled in our hut, although the pods were already rather hard; this served us for a second feast after our arrival.

The feast provided for us on our arrival was Indian corn pounded, which they call *Ottet,* with a little piece of smoked fish for each person, boiled in water, for that is the only sauce of the country, and my beans served me for the following day. After that I found the *sagamité* made in our lodge good, because it was cooked in quite a cleanly fashion; I was unable to eat it only when stinking fish was shredded into it or other small things they call *Auhaitsique,* and likewise *Leindohy,* which is corn put to rot in mud or stagnant and marshy water for three or four months, and nevertheless highly relished by them. Sometime we used to eat wild pumpkins, boiled or else roasted under hot ashes. These I found very good, as likewise heads of Indian corn roasted before the fire, and also the grains of it stripped off and roasted like peas in the ashes. Wild blackberries the woman savage used often to bring me in the morning for my breakfast, or else stalks of *Honneha* to suck, and anything else she could, and she used to be careful to prepare my *sagamité* first, in the cleanest wooden or birch-bark bowl; it was as broad as an

Medicine Men singing to drive away evil spirits afflicting a sick Indian.

From the Imperial Oil Collection

Extract from Sagard



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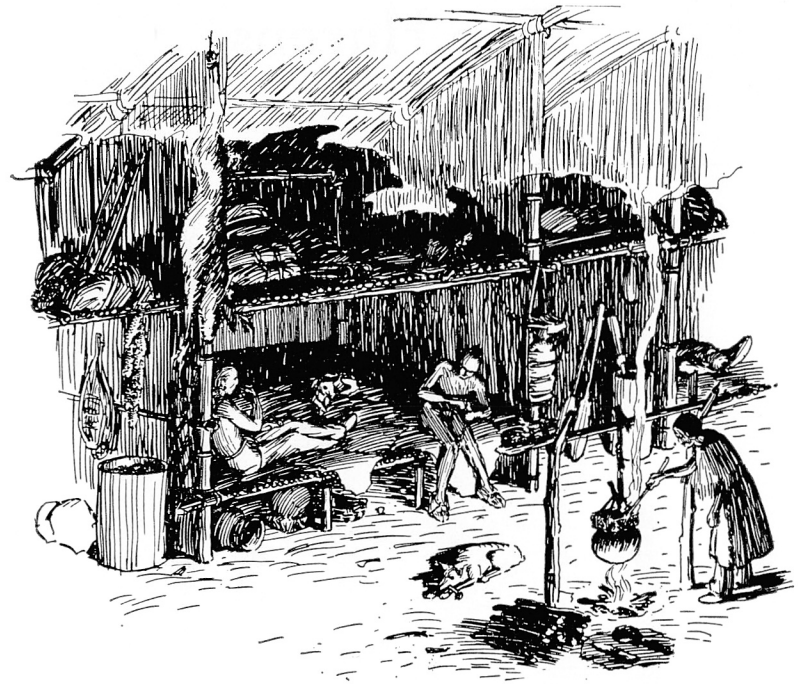
Two days before our arrival among the Hurons we came upon the Freshwater sea, over which we passed from island to island, and landed in the country so greatly longed for on Sunday, the festival of St. Bernard, about midday, with the sun beating down perpendicularly upon us. The savages, having thrust their canoe into a wood near by, loaded me with my clothes and bundles which before they had always carried on the trails. The reason was the great distance from here to the town and because they were already more than sufficiently burdened with their goods. So I carried my bundle, with very great difficulty both on account of its weight and the excessive heat and from the great weakness and debility that I had for a long time been feeling in all my limbs. Furthermore, because they made me take the lead according to their custom, for the reason that I could not keep up to them except with great trouble, I lost the right track and found myself alone for a long time, not knowing whither I was going. At last, after having walked far across coun-



Five Nations overwhelmed the Hurons and destroyed them as a nation. This is the story we know so well. But they also, in subsequent years, attacked and systematically destroyed the Tobaccos, the Neutrals and the Eries. They experienced much more trouble trying to overcome the fierce, warlike Susquehannas, and they only succeeded here because of the diseases that attacked and weakened this people and because of white interference. They also weakened and frightened the various Algonkian tribes who then prudently withdrew further north.

Ironically enough, despite their many victories, the Iroquois never really inherited the Huron monopoly on the fur-trade. The astute Ottawas diverted it to themselves.

Therefore, in the period of history we are considering, we see the emergence of the Iroquois as the most powerful Indian group in New France and New England, feared by Indian and White alike. In these tribes, the Indians of North America, of New France, reached the height of their development as a dynamic and political force. However, this rise to power did not last long. Rapid colonization in New France and New England gradually destroyed the Iroquois' strategic position and stripped them of their power.

The Hurons

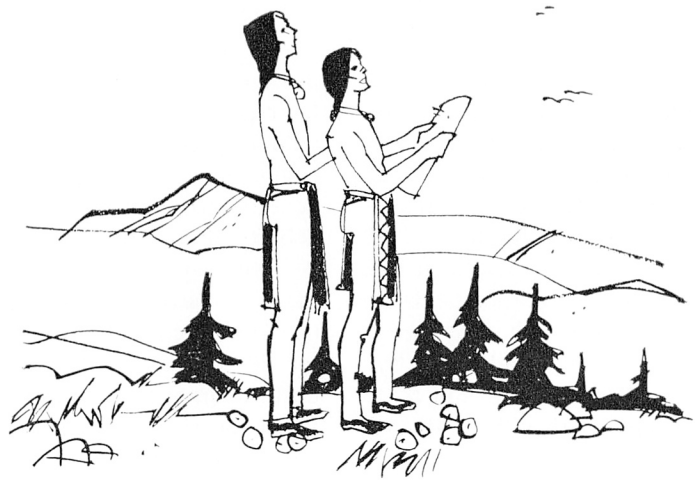
It is possible and not improbable that at some unknown time in the past the Indian people we know as Iroquois and Huron were but a single nation. This was noted over three hundred years ago by Father Jerome Lalemant (Thwaites J.R. XXI 193-5). Some authorities have even supposed that the Hurons were the original stock from which sprung the many branches of the Iroquoian family. This was certainly stated by Father Chaumonot — a missionary thoroughly versed in the language who had lived among both Huron and Iroquois — in his autobiography (Paris edition 1885 p. 81) "as this language is so to speak, the mother of many others, particularly of the five spoken by the Iroquois, when I was sent among the latter, though at the time I could not understand their language, it took me but a month to master it; and later, having studied only the Onondaga dialect, when present at the Councils of the Five Nations, I found that by a special help of God, I could understand them all". A later missionary among the Iroquois Father Etienne de Carright to call a council, to make treaties, close the country to strangers, and make public announcements. One of his special tasks was the settling of quarrels.

Naturally, it was not all work. There were some advantages to being a chief. By reason of their office, chiefs enjoyed seats of honor at feasts, were given special portions, received gifts, and, of course, could be bribed in order to propose a trade agreement or permit a passage through a given territory.

The surest way to stand out among the chiefs and so become the really influential individual in a village or neighborhood was through superior intelligence, popularity, generosity, eloquence and wise conduct. Such gifts or qualities impressed one's fellows enormously. It was for reasons of this kind that the Hurons made Father Jean de Brébeuf a chief with the right of calling a council in his cabin.

To sum up, then. While there may have been some outstanding leaders —we can think of a Hiawatha, Tessouat, chief of the Allumette Island tribe of Algonkins, Atironta, the Darontal of Champlain's acquaintance, and his successor Jean-Baptiste Atironta, and Ahatsistari, the famous Huron war chief,—we must never forget that the office of chief had many democratic overtones and was part of a more complicated social context than at first meets the eye.

The significant factors in the limitation of a chief's role and power were the system of government and the social structure. We know enough too about the Iroquoian type of Indian to realize that he was fiercely independent, impulsive at times, and extremely sensitive of his own position in the Indian society to which he belonged.



Iroquoian sachems

The Iroquoian tribes, on the other hand, being more sedentary and so more organized, had a more developed system of chiefs or sachems. We hear of chiefs for the affairs of state and other chiefs for the affairs of war. These civil chiefs could be numerous, as they would be appointed to look after embassies, trade agreements, or to organize ceremonial dances, games, funeral ceremonies and feasts, especially the great feast of the dead.

Such men, in order to succeed and exercise their authority, had to be eloquent and persuasive of speech. On a larger scale, they had to have proved themselves in the management of trade agreements, intertribal negotiations, peace treaties, or as great fighters in battle.

While we may read about hereditary chiefs or sachems among the Five Nations or Iroquois and among the Hurons, this actually meant that the chieftainships belonged to certain families. However, this did not prevent gifted and successful people from becoming chiefs.

The office of chief, then, was not strictly hereditary in the sense of passing from father to son. A man simply had to prove himself and be accepted as such. Indeed, the chieftainship was partly hereditary and partly elective. The successor of a deceased chief had to be selected from his relatives, usually from his nephews or grandsons. But care had to be taken that the man was both qualified and acceptable to the community at large. And, furthermore, a candidate could refuse the office.

Democratic elements

In the Iroquoian system of government, councils had to meet and deliberate on more serious questions: whether to go to war, or agree to this treaty, or to conduct some other important business. Such councils were usually composed of the "old men" and included, of course, the chiefs.

Among the Five Nations, such decisions usually demanded unanimity, whereas among the Hurons a majority vote seemed to be sufficient. The chiefs would then be obliged to act in accordance with the directives given. And even in more ordinary matters the influence of the chiefs was often inferior to the collective wisdom of the elders who exercised great moral influence over the clans and tribes, particularly at the level of village life.

We should also recall that, at least among the Iroquois, in their longhouse type of society, women played a special role and were instrumental in confirming or abolishing offices. We also hear of some female chiefs among the Oneida tribe.

Nor should we underestimate the important role of the medicine-men or sorcerers who practised at times an indirect yet influential kind of leadership. We know too that such men were occasionally elected chiefs.

It is important to remember that the individual chief's power depended on his position and persuasion. He had no right to issue commands, nor any special force of compulsion. As a matter of fact, individual Indians could act as they wished, even contrary to the desire of the chief. But among a chief's prerogatives was the

heil who was one of the greatest philologists among the missionaries chose the Huron dialect as the basis for his work to be used by future Iroquois missionaries — his Radices Huronicae.

But however true this may be, by the time of the opening of their culture to the ravages of the white man or European the Iroquois and the Huron were distinct though related people. Both were a union of a number of separate clans.

Much has been written of the Iroquois League—the Five Nations (later Six Nations). Not so much has been said of the Huron League.

League of Four Nations

The Huron or Wendat as they called themselves were a league of four nations, having a common language but differing traditions. These nations were the Attignawantan (JR XIX 125, XXIII 43, etc.) or Nation of the Bear (JR XXXIV 131), the Attigneenongnahac (JR XV 57, XXI 169, etc.) or the Nation of the Cord (Jones 1909 p. 72). The Arendahronon (JR VIII 71, JR XIII 37 etc.) or the people of the Rock (Jones 1909 p. 68) and Tohontaenrat (JR XIII 55, JR XXVI 293 etc.) or Nation of the White Thorns (Jones 1909 p. 179).

It seems that later, another group, the Ataronchronons, is mentioned. They were but a congeries of other clans who in the latter years of Huronian existence had in small detachments moved nearer to Ste Marie and had occupied the country near Mud Lake, whence they derived their name "People who dwelt beyond the Fens" (Jones 1909 p. 447). The Attignawantan and the Attigneenongnahac who called each other brother and sister were the most important, largest and oldest nations of this league, having lived in the country for more than two centuries. The other two were more recently joined to the Huron League, the Arendahronon about 1590 and the Tohontaenrat about 1610. These last two may have been the Laurentian Iroquois met by Jacques Cartier in 1535 (Tooker p. 3 and p. 10-11).

Of all the four nations the Arendahronon were the most easterly and the group first met by the French. Father Jerome Lalemant (JR XX 19) states this in most clear terms, but the Nation of the Bear were the most receptive to Christianity.

Related People

Neighboring people of similar language were the Tobacco Nation, consisting of two clans, the Wolves and the Deer; the Neutrals made up of an indeterminate number of clans; the Nation of the Cat. Non Iroquoian people nearby were the varied tribes of the Algonquian tongue.

Their Name

The Hurons called themselves Ouendat but the more modern form is Wyandot. The word means either the people of one tongue or the people of one land apart (Island). The name given them by the French was 'Huron', a nickname given them because of a hair style suggestive of the bristles on a boar's head. French sailors are said to have exclaimed at the sight "Quelle Hure" and from this the name was coined and was later applied indiscriminately to all.

Their Country

Our knowledge of the Hurons begins with the coming of Father Joseph le Caron, a recollet friar, and Samuel de Champlain, explorer to the land of the Hurons in 1615. The story of Champlain was told in our last number. Whatever their previous wanderings may have been, by the early part of the seventeenth century the home proper of the Huron people was a very small and limited portion of Ontario. From northwest to southeast it was a truly tiny bit of land at most fifty miles in length and scare twenty in width (JR VII 225). Its western limit was washed by the waters of Nottawasaga Bay, a name given to the most southerly part of Georgian Bay, itself but a landlocked extension of Lake Huron. To the north the land of the Hurons was separated from what is now the Muskoka District by Matchedash Bay, another inlet of Georgian Bay, into which flows the Severn River. On the east, Huronia is limited by Lakes Couchiching and Simcoe. Now draw a line from the end of Lake Simcoe over to Nottawasaga River and this is the land of the Hurons. At its greatest extent this country could be crossed in three or four days (JR VIII 115).

The greater part of Huronia was cleared land and consisted of plains surrounded and intersected by lakes and streams. Tooker (p. 12) quoting from Sagard and from Champlain has this "the country was full of fine hills, open fields, very beautiful broad meadows bearing much excellent hay, and in many places there was much uncultivated wheat, which has an ear like rye and grains like oats" (Sagard).

There were forests containing oaks, beeches, maples, cedars, spruces, yews, elms and other types of trees (Sagard 91; Champlain 51) and, in the interior, forests of fir (Champlain 51). The country was warmer and more beautiful and the soil richer and better, the farther south one went (Sagard 91). Although the soil of the country was quite sandy, it produced a quantity of corn (JR VIII 115).

As to the relative position of the Hurons and their mortal enemies the Iroquois or the Five Nations, they were about one hundred and fifty miles from the Senecas who were the nearest of their enemies and two hundred and fifty from the Mohawks who were the farthest away. The great barrier between Huron and Iroquois was the broad expanse of Lake Ontario. However, this did not prevent constant and ever increasing antagonisms between the Huron and the Seneca who were the nearest and most feared of the Iroquois nation. The end of the Huron People came in 1649-50 when the Iroquois destroyed the last of the Huron towns and the remnants of a great people scattered to the four winds of the earth.

The Hurons Dispersed

The story of the scattered Huron may well be told in Father Jones' summary of the Huron dispersion or final settlement.

"At the present time (1909) there are but three groups of Indians of Huron stock extant. One at Le Jeune Lorette, near Quebec, the second in the neighborhood of Sandwich, Essex County, Ontario, and the third on the Wyandot Reservation in the State of Oklahoma.

The Indian Chiefs

It may be difficult for most of us to conceive the role of an Indian chief in the 17th century. Influenced, as we are, by television, movies and popular reading, we may have a very simplified notion of what an Indian chief really was. Perhaps we tend to picture him as a powerful, independent leader who swayed his people at will. In reality, the office of chief implied a much more complicated kind of leadership.

Among the nomadic Algonkians, the chieftainship seemed to be less well developed. As they usually travelled about in small bands, it was the natural leader or skilled hunter who assumed the role of band leader or chief. Only where we find a heavy concentration of bands forming a tribe do we see important chiefs emerging, and here too it depended a great deal on the natural qualities of the individual.

Father Biard, an early Jesuit missionary in Acadia, describes conditions as they were about 1615. He informs us that among the maritime Algonkians the eldest son of some powerful family became the chief.

crosse matches, and funeral ceremonies, and those concerned with affairs of war (JR X 229-231, XVI 229).

The councils of war were held in the house of the war chief . . . Councils held to govern the country and relating to maintenance of order were held in the "house of the council."

Most of the chieftainships were hereditary in certain families. The other chiefs derived their influence from some quality perhaps intellectual superiority. These chiefs held no higher rank than any other of their group, except his own qualities gave him preeminence. One rather strange thing is that usually a chief's children did not succeed him, but properly his nephew or grandson.

These chiefs with the old men met in the council of the village. This council was held in the chief's house unless it was expedient to hold it elsewhere. The meetings were almost daily (JR X 213). Around a great fire the councillors sat on mats. The great chief held first rank and was seated so that he could see everyone in front of him. Women and girls took no part in this council, nor normally did young men under thirty. Although anyone could express an opinion the old men controlled the council (JR X 213).

This village council had its counterpart in the council of the Nation. Decisions were made by a plurality of votes. But no decision could actually be enforced on anyone unless perhaps for crime (see Tooker P. 52)

Their Religion

In many ways this was formless and it is difficult today to outline their main beliefs. Probably the best first hand account is to be found in the 1635 Relation of Fr. Brébeuf (which we have published recently in our Shrine Message). Fair summaries may also be found in both Trigger and in Tooker. Suffice it to say—that they had a belief in a supreme deity but there was no organized complete theology as such. Certain myths, certain ceremonies have been noted and described, but the whole is rather confused and confusing.

Travel

A last note may be added here on travel. For this within the country of the Hurons, both native and missionary had to travel by foot or canoe. No animals could be found to carry them. Their largest canoes held five or six men and the smallest two. They were made of birchbark light enough to merely skim over the water and to be easily carried by one man on his head and shoulders. The Indian could under favourable conditions travel up to 30 leagues a day.

The Indian also travelled by land and would walk up to 40 leagues without food, taking only a little tobacco and his arms. If they were in canoe or on a longer trip their food consisted of crushed corn boiled to a consistency of glue. This was called Sagamité and was eaten twice a day after they pitched camp in the evening and before they set out in the morning. It was not appetizing but was sufficient for their needs. At times if they were fortunate they might catch a fish or two on route and this would be added to their otherwise very sparse meal.

The Quebec group is made up principally of the descendants of the Cord Clan of Huronia proper (JR XLIII 191) and of not a few Mohawks." (They have largely married with the French and have lost their language.) "The Tohontaenrat and a considerable part of the Rock Clan had as early as 1650 or 1651 gone bodily over to the Senecas (JR XXXVI 179) while the remainder of the Rock Clan cast their lot in with the Onondagas and the Bear Clan with the Mohawks (JR XLIII 115) immediately after the massacre by the Iroquois of the Hurons on the Isle of Orleans May 20, 1656.

The group now residing in the vicinity of Sandwich, Ontario are the remnants of the Petun or Tobacco Nation with possibly a slight intermixture of Neutrals, who after many vicissitudes had been induced to leave Mickilimackinac (whither they had first fled) when Detroit was founded.

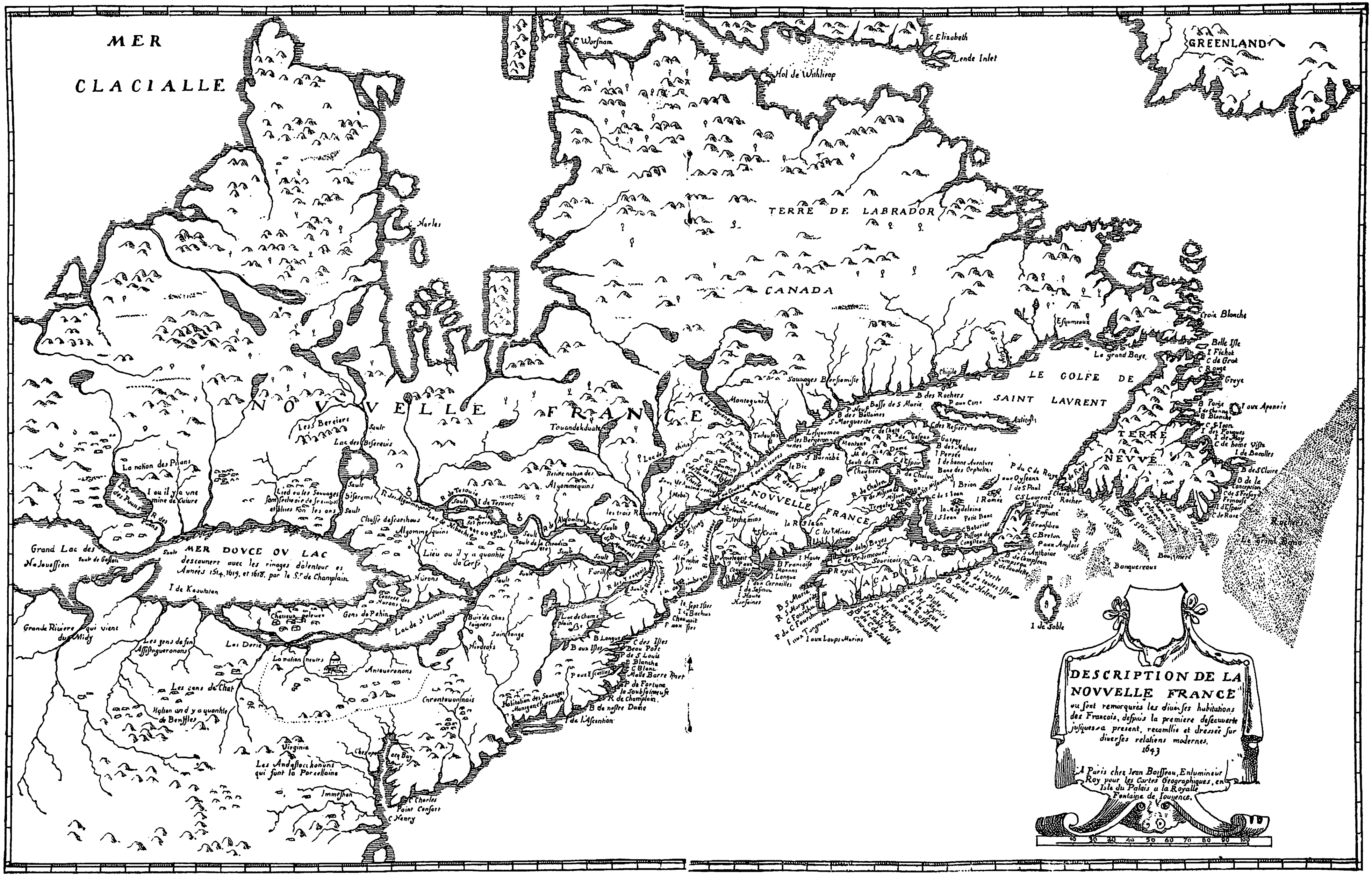
The third group, now settled on the Wyandot Reserve, Oklahoma, are the descendants of that portion of the Detroit Petuns who, under the war chief Nicolas broke from those of the Assumption Mission between 1744 and 1747.

The once powerful Neutrals no longer exist as a distinct tribe. They have been completely merged in other Indian tribes. The Relations and other contemporaneous documents refer to them seldom and but briefly in the years following the great dispersion."

Their Government

Father Bressani describes their system of government in quite simple terms. He says (JR XXXVIII 265) "These people have neither king nor absolute prince, but certain chiefs like the heads of a republic, whom we call captains different from those in war. They hold office commonly by succession on the side of the women, but sometimes by election. They assume office at the death of a predecessor, who is, they say, resuscitated in them . . . These captains have no coercive power . . . and obtain obedience by their eloquence, exhortation and entreaties."

As Tooker puts it though and in this differs somewhat from Fr. Bressani "The 'old men' in a village decided all matters within the village and their advice was tantamount to an order (JR X15) . . . Certain of these men were chiefs. These were of two types: those concerned with affairs of state, with the affairs of both Hurons and foreigners, as for example, feasts, dances, games, la-


MER
CLACIALLE
GREENLAND
C Elizabeth
Lende Inlet
Hol de Wohlstrop
C Worsnam
C Harles
TERRE DE LABRADOR
CANADA
NOVVELLE FRANCE
LE GOLFE DE SAINT LAVRENT
TERRE NEVVE
NOVVELLE FRANCE
ACADIE
MER DOVCE OV LAC
descouverte avec les rivages d'alentour es Années 1614, 1619, et 1618. par le Sr. de Champlain.
Grand Lac des NeJouessions
Grand Riviere qui vient du Midy
Lac de St Louis
Virginia
Les Andastoe honons qui sont la Porcellaine
Immesthen
C Charles
Point Consort
C Henry
Croix Blanche
Belle Isle
Les Bereiers
La nation des Puans
Hurons
Gens de Petun
I de Sable
Banquereaux
Le grand Baye
Tadoussac
Montaguets
DESCRIPTION DE LA NOVVELLE FRANCE
ou sont remarqués les diverses habitations des François, despuis la premiere descouverte jusques a present, recueillie et dressée sur diverses relations modernes. 1643
A Paris chez Jean Boisseau, Enlumineur du Roy pour les Cartes Geographiques, en l'Isle du Palais a la Royalle Fontaine de Jouvence.
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